



HEALTH PROMOTION

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MARCH 2011

Monthly Health Observances:

National Brain Injury Awareness Month

National Nutrition Month

National Women & Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (9 Mar)

Kick Butts Day (Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids) (23 Mar)

Schedule of Events/Workshops:

01 Mar: Stress Management, 0830-1600

National Brain Injury Awareness Month

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a serious health problem in the United States. Each year, TBIs contribute to a substantial number of deaths and cases of permanent disability. Recent data shows that, on average, approximately 1.7 million people sustain TBI annually.

A TBI is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the normal function of the brain. Not all blows or jolts to the head result in a TBI. The severity of a TBI may range from "mild" (i.e., a brief change in mental status or consciousness), to "severe" (i.e., an extended period of unconsciousness or amnesia after the injury). The majority of TBIs that occur each year are concussions or other forms of mild TBI.

To learn more about TBI, visit www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/TBI.htm. (CDC, 2011)

National Nutrition Month

National Nutrition Month is a nutrition education and information campaign sponsored annually by the American Dietetic Association. The campaign is designed to focus attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing healthy eating and physical activity habits.

This is the perfect time to consider and follow the dietary guidance from the U.S. National Cancer Institute and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration:

- The best way to maximize the health promoting benefits of fruits and vegetables is to eat a variety. Color is an easy way to think about variety, which is central to good nutrition.
- Most people tend to eat the same fruits or vegetables every day – strive to have something from each color group daily, and then vary the choices you make within each group every day.

(American Dietetic Association, 2011)

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

March 9 is National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. It is a day to recognize the special risks HIV/AIDS poses for women and girls, and to raise awareness of the increasing impact this disease has on this population. We encourage women and girls to know their HIV status and get tested.

In 2007, more than a quarter of the diagnoses of HIV infection in the United States were among women and girls aged 13 years and older. The numbers are unsettling: More than 278,000 women and adolescent girls in this country are living with HIV; and almost 94,000 American women and girls with AIDS have died since the epidemic began. Women and girls of color – especially black women and girls – bear a disproportionately heavy burden of HIV/AIDS. In 2007, for female adults and adolescents, the rate of HIV/AIDS diagnoses for

02 Mar: Anger Management, 0830-1600

black females was nearly 20 times as high as the rate for white females and nearly 4 times as high as the rate for Hispanic/Latino females. Relatively few cases were diagnosed among Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander females, although the rates for these groups were higher than the rate for white females.

07 Mar: Urinalysis Coordinator's Course, 1300-1600

CDC estimates that 1 in five people living with HIV infection in the United States do not know they are infected. Getting tested for HIV is the first step to protecting yourself and others. Knowing your own HIV status and that of your male sexual partners is critical because 80% of new HIV infections in American women and girls result from sex with an infected male partner. Early diagnosis of HIV allows for counseling and prompt treatment. HIV treatment prolongs life and reduces the risk of further HIV transmission. If you are a pregnant woman, it is especially important that you get tested early to help ensure, that if you are HIV-positive, you do not transmit the virus to your unborn child.

09 Mar: Healthy Communication in Relationships, 0830-1130

Make National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day a day to get the facts about HIV – to learn how HIV is spread, if you are at risk, and how to protect yourself and your loved ones.

If you are a parent, talk with your kids about HIV. Every 35 minutes a woman tests positive for HIV in the United States. It's time to get tested.

10 Mar: Alcohol 101, 0830-1130

To find an HIV testing location near you, go to www.hivtest.org. (CDC, 2011)

Kick Butts Day

Kick Butts Day was launched in September 1995 by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, which is the country's largest non-government initiative ever created to protect children from tobacco addiction. The Campaign's main goal is to protect children from exposure and addiction to tobacco. The Campaign strives to achieve this goal in four ways: (1) by raising awareness that tobacco use is a pediatric disease; (2) by changing public policies to limit the marketing and sales of tobacco to children; (3) by altering the environment in which tobacco use and policy decisions are made; and (4) by actively countering the tobacco industry and its special interests.

21 Mar: Urinalysis Coordinator's Course, 1300-1600

The Campaign encourages young people to become youth advocates to support tobacco ordinance in their communities. Youth advocate-led initiatives include holding tobacco control activities and events (e.g., Kick Butts Day), and helping to educate peers on the dangers of tobacco.

(www.preventionpartners.com)

29 Mar: Stress Management, 0830-1600

Teens and Alcohol

It is estimated that 5.9% of kids between the ages of 12 and 14 years old use alcohol at least once per month. And, 93.4% of them get their alcohol for free: in their home or from a family member (44.8%), from another underage person (19.6%), from an unrelated adult (13.5%), or from a friend's home (6.8%). You may think that only 5.9% of the kids in this age bracket are not a lot people, but that is 709,000 kids in the U.S. drinking alcohol at an age where doing so is extremely dangerous on several levels! About 111,000 of these kids reported getting alcohol from a parent or guardian. (Data from the National Survey on Drug Abuse and Health).

So what's the big deal? Consider these facts:

- People who begin drinking before the age of 15 are six times more likely than those who start at or after age 21 to develop **alcohol addiction**.
- **Alcohol poisoning** is the most immediate concern related to teenage drinking. This condition, which often results from binge drinking, is the result of having an extreme amount of alcohol in your system and can cause vomiting, seizures, loss of consciousness, and even death.
- Alcohol consumption can have **adverse effects on nearly all bodily organs**, most notably the liver and the brain. Repeated or excessive alcohol consumption often leads to **cirrhosis of the liver**; a disease that prevents the liver from removing toxins from the body. During teenage years, the brain is still rapidly developing, and alcohol use at any level can slow or even stop further **brain development**. Exposing the brain to alcohol prior to about age 20 or 21 may interrupt key processes of brain development, possibly leading to mild cognitive impairment as well as to a further escalation of drinking. (The brain's frontal lobe is the last to fully develop, and is the location of our decision making processes. Imagine a life of adolescent-style decisions and never growing out of that).
- Because alcohol affects a person's decision-making abilities, teenage drinking is associated with a plethora of **risky behaviors** that can have negative health impacts. Underage drinking significantly increases the likelihood of being sexually active and having **unsafe sex**. Teenage use of alcohol is associated with many adolescent risk behaviors, including other **drug use, delinquency, weapon carrying, fighting**, and perpetrating or being the victim of **date rape**. The most publicized risk behavior associated with teenage drinking is **drunk driving**. At least 10% of high school seniors admit driving after drinking alcohol!

Adolescence is a transition time when the body is undergoing many significant changes, such as hormonal alterations and brain development. It is also a time when young people feel pressure to "fit in" or "go along with the crowd" in order to be accepted socially. These new circumstances can be confusing and difficult for youth to understand and deal with. Often their ability to make correct and safe decisions is also at a stage of immaturity. If you're an adult responsible for the care of an adolescent, be a part of the solution, not part of the problem. Parents and other adults need to be aware that providing alcohol to children and adolescents can put them at risk!

Do You Know.....

Have you ever heard or seen the term "Schedule I Drug" when you read an article in the newspaper, magazine, on the web; or listening to the news on television? Here is a quick breakdown of what each "Schedule" category entails:

Schedule I,

A category of drugs not considered legitimate for medical use. Included are heroin, lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), and marijuana.

Schedule II,

A category of drugs considered to have a strong potential for abuse or addiction but that also have legitimate medical use. Included are opium, morphine, and cocaine.

Schedule III,

A category of drugs that have less potential for abuse or addiction than Schedule I or II drugs and have a useful medical purpose. Included are short-acting barbiturates and amphetamines.

Schedule IV,

A medically useful category of drugs that have less potential for abuse or addiction than those of Schedules I, II, and III. Included are diazepam and chloral hydrate.

Schedule V,

A medically useful category of drugs that have less potential for abuse or addiction than those of Schedules I through IV. Included are antidiarrheals and antitussives with opioid derivatives.

For more information visit the US Drug Enforcement Administration website at: www.justice.gov.

For more information, please contact Health Promotion at 451-2865.