

Public Health Notes

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NH DHHS Mission Statement: To join communities and families in providing opportunities for citizens to achieve health and independence.

Physical Activity: The New Year's Resolution and Beyond



Many New Hampshire residents will make a resolution about exercising more in the coming year. With all the different messages and publications about exercising, it's hard to know what type of exercise to do and for how long.

Here's the good news—the recommendations have been simplified. For starters, the term “exercise” has given way to the expanded term of “physical activity.” The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS) defines physical activity as: “...any form of exercise or movement of the body that uses energy. Some of your daily life activities—doing active chores around the house, yard work, walking the dog—are examples.”

You do not have to train for a marathon or join a gym. To stay active you can garden, dance, shovel snow, and stack wood. It can be as simple as turning off the computer or television and playing outside with family or friends.

Any amount of physical activity is better than none. A physical activity you enjoy is much more likely to become a part of your daily routine. Being active with a friend or relative can also increase your chances of sticking with your routine.

For adults, the US DHHS recommends a total of 150 minutes per week of moderate physical activity. You can even do activities in 10-minute sessions. Walking as a part of daily work and lunch breaks is an easy way to make physical activity part of a busy day.

Physical activity can help control your weight, reduce your risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some cancers, strengthen bones and muscles, improve your mood, and increase your chances of living longer.

Physical activity has also been shown to improve the ability to perform daily activities and even prevent falls in older adults.

“In New Hampshire, 62% of adults are overweight,” said New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Director of Public Health Dr. José Montero, “and the problem is getting worse. Even small changes, such as walking 10 minutes more per day, can have a big impact.”

Many New Hampshire cities and towns are working to make physical activity more accessible to their residents. Adding sidewalks, bicycle lanes, crosswalks, and landscaped buffers between busy streets and pedestrians are just some of the ways cities and towns can make walking and bicycling safer, easier and more enjoyable.

For more information on how cities, towns, schools and child care programs can help people be more physically active, visit the DHHS Obesity Prevention Program website at www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/nhp/obesity.htm.



Important Dates

January is National Birth Defects Prevention Month
January is National Radon Action Month
January is Thyroid Awareness Month
January 8-14 National Folic Acid Awareness Week
January 16-22 is Healthy Weight Week
February is Low Vision Awareness Month
February is National Children's Dental Health Month
February is American Heart Month
February 7-14 is Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week
February 3 is National Wear Red Day
February 14 is National Donor Day



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New HPV Vaccine Recommendations

In October, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted to recommend the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine for 11- and 12-year-old boys. The vaccine, which protects against certain strains of the virus that cause cancer, has been recommended for girls in the U.S. since 2006.

HPV is the most common sexually transmitted disease in the United States. At least half of sexually active people will get it at some point in their lives. Each year in the United States there are about 18,000 cases of HPV-related cancers in women and about 7,000 in men.

The vaccine can be given later, but the greatest impact can be had when the vaccine is given at ages 11 or 12 where there is a better immune response compared with older ages. The vaccine is also most effective when it is given before there is exposure to the virus, which occurs through sexual contact. HPV vaccination of males offers an opportunity to decrease the burden of HPV-related disease in both males and females.

In October 2009, quadrivalent HPV vaccine was also approved for use in boys and young men. The quadrivalent HPV vaccine is covered for both girls and boys through the Vaccines for Children Program, which means in New Hampshire the vaccine is free for children up through age 18.

For more information about this vaccine or any others, please contact the NH Department of Health and Human Services, Immunization Program at 603-271-4482 or visit their webpage at www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/immunization/index.htm.

Cooking for a Crowd, the Healthy Way

The *Fruit and Veggie Quantity Cookbook—Revised Edition* was launched recently by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Obesity Prevention Program (OPP). The OPP partnered with New Hampshire Hospital Food and Nutrition Services to test all 31 recipes.

Each recipe serves 25, 50, or 100 and is designed for use in schools, child care settings, camps, worksite cafeterias, college cafeterias, congregate meal sites, and restaurants. All the recipes comply with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which can be found at www.dietaryguidelines.gov.

The recipes can easily be used with National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The quantity recipes:

- Use United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recipe format
- Identify USDA commodity fruits, vegetables, and beans
- Identify USDA Child Nutrition Program Food Components

Family-size versions of the recipes are available and taste-test survey forms are also included. Hard copies of the cookbook with color pages and colored tabbed dividers can be purchased: \$5 for New Hampshire public schools and nonprofit organizations, \$10 for all others. Your check covers a portion of printing and shipping costs. The cookbook can also be downloaded for free off the OPP website: www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/nhp/healthyrecipescooking.htm.

Research shows that when healthy food is tasty,

02.06.2012 – Wear Red Day for Women's Health

Wear Red Day is an annual event sponsored by the American Heart Association that encourages people to wear red in support of women's heart health. Heart disease is still the number one killer of women in the United States. The goal is to dispel rumors and raise awareness about the risks. Historically men have been the subjects of research done to understand the risks for heart disease and stroke, which led to a reduced awareness among women of the dangers. Know your risks, get tested, and get healthy! To learn more, visit www.goredforwomen.org, www.cdc.gov, or www.dhhs.nh.gov.

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available, and affordable people are more likely to eat better.

The OPP is part of a consortium of organizations implementing the New Hampshire Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) plan. For more information about the OPP contact them at 603-271-4551 or visit the program website at www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/nhp/obesity.htm. To learn more about HEAL, visit www.healnh.org.

The WIC Program and How It Impacts the People of New Hampshire

Many people may have heard the acronym WIC before but were not aware of the impact WIC has on more than 18,000 women and young children monthly in New Hampshire. WIC is a federal nutrition and health program for pregnant women, new mothers, and young children up to age 5 administered in New Hampshire by the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Section at the Division of Public Health Services at DHHS. The services provided by the New Hampshire WIC Nutrition Program include nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion and support, vouchers to purchase nutritious foods, the Text4baby free text messaging service, and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) for low-income seniors.

WIC works to improve healthcare access for low- and moderate-income women and children with, or at risk of developing, nutrition-related health problems,

including overweight, obesity, and type-2 diabetes. WIC provides individual nutrition education and healthy foods, enabling families to make life-long healthy eating and life-style choices. Recent changes in the WIC food packages help to ensure that participants can easily make nutritious choices, including fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables, low-fat dairy products, and whole grain breads and cereals.

Nationally, WIC has been shown to promote health and health care savings through lower Medicaid costs associated with prenatal WIC participation and improved birth weight for WIC infants.

Nutritionists and breastfeeding peer counselors are available at all clinic locations to help pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers to breastfeed their new baby, and offer counseling, manual and electric breast pumps, and overall support for breastfeeding.

Families who believe they may be income eligible for WIC can call 1-800-942-4321 to find the local WIC agency nearest to them. Appointments are available in the early evenings for working and busy parents at more than 70 different clinic sites through the State. If women and children are enrolled in Healthy Kids Gold–Medicaid, TANF, or SNAP, they are automatically income-eligible for WIC.

Text4baby is a free service expectant moms, new mothers, and family members can sign up for to receive text messages timed to the baby's due date or birthday about a wide range of topics, such as prenatal care, delivery, immunizations, and car seat use. To sign up for this free service, text the word BABY to 511411.

CSFP provides free food and nutrition information to promote good health for children up through age 5, women for a year after the birth of a child, and seniors 60 years of age or older and whose income is 130% of the federal poverty level or less. The income levels for WIC and CSFP can be found at www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/nhp/wic/eligibility.htm.

For more information about the WIC Nutrition Program in New Hampshire, call 1-800-942(WIC)-4321 or 603-271-4546 or visit the website at www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/nhp/wic/index.htm. Families that are interested may also use the new online WIC prescreening tool at www.fns.usda.gov/wic.