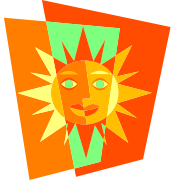


Your Health Your Life

A Women's Health
Newsletter from the
Atlantic County
Division of Public Health

April - June, 2007



Spring Sun Safety Tip

As the days lengthen and the weather warms up, more people are outside enjoying the sunshine. Many individuals are thinking about swimsuit season. If you desire a more bronzed complexion, consider the sun-safe alternatives. Many salons offer spray-on tans and there are self-tanning lotions and products available at your local retailer.

And while you are there, check out the sunglasses and hats available for spring and summer fashion that "block the sun, not the fun." By following these simple sun safety tips, you can protect yourself and your family from the sun's damaging rays:

- Apply sunscreen whenever you're outdoors: Adults should use sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher. Children should use SPF 30 or higher.
- Apply sunscreen every two hours, and after swimming, perspiring, or towel-drying off.
- Wear UV protective sunglasses.
- Wear a hat with a wide brim.
- Seek shade at peak sun hours.



National Health Observances April:

Alcohol Awareness Month
Women's Eye & Safety Month
National Public Health Week (2 - 8)
2007 Walk America (28 - 29)

May:

National Women's Health Week
National Osteoporosis Awareness & Prevention Month
Better Sleep Month
Lyme Disease Awareness Month
World No Tobacco Day

June:

Home Safety Month
Sun Safety Week

Tips for Keeping Feet Healthy and Strong. . .

Movie stars are often put to the task of getting in shape for their on-screen leading roles. But while they know how to pump up their biceps or crunch their abs, many movie stars, like most regular people, neglect strengthening their feet and ankles, which bear the brunt of impact during any workout.

While it is extremely beneficial to get a cardio workout, being physical can wreak havoc on our feet. "A 120-pound person walking one mile exerts the equivalent of approximately 63 tons, which is a force greater than 125,000 pounds on each foot," says American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) member Dr. Jane Andersen. While our feet are designed to handle the stress of a workout, by strengthening them with simple exercises, we may be able to lessen injuries and even prevent some.

So, before hitting the treadmill to get in shape for your starring role at the beach this summer, keep feet healthy, agile and strong by kicking off each workout with foot exercises, and cooling down with a foot massage.

Some examples of Footwork Exercises

- 1. Toe Points** - While standing, do toe raises, toe points and toe curls. Hold each position for five seconds and repeat ten times. This is a perfect way to help alleviate toe cramps and strengthen calf muscles.
- 2. Toe Squeezes** - Place a foam toe separator between your toes and squeeze for five seconds. Repeat ten times.
- 3. The Roll** - Apply light pressure and roll a golf ball under

the ball of your foot for approximately two minutes. This creates an instant massage for the bottom of the foot. This exercise is perfect for people who suffer from plantar fasciitis (heel pain syndrome), cramps or arch pain (and it feels great!).

Some examples of Foot Massage Techniques

A foot massage not only helps to release tension in your feet, but also helps to increase circulation and maintain the health of the skin on your feet.

If you are giving yourself a foot massage, simply lift your foot across your lap to begin.

Next, apply a generous amount of emollient-enriched skin lotion or Vitamin E cream to hydrate the skin. This will also allow for your hands to be able to move smoothly over the foot.

1. Warm-Up - To begin stimulating circulation and warming up your foot, hold the foot in your hands. Starting at the top of the foot, begin a long, slow stroking motion with your thumbs, from the tips of the toes, down your sole to your heel and up to your ankle. Retrace your strokes back to the toes and repeat 3-5 times or until the foot feels warm.

2. Ankle Rotations - To loosen the ankle joint and relax your feet, cup the foot under the back portion of the heel in order to brace the foot and leg. Grip the foot with the other hand and turn it slowly at the ankle five times in each direction.



Atlantic County Division of Public Health: Working for Healthy People and Healthy Communities

Atlantic County Executive, Dennis Levinson. Atlantic County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Joseph F. Silipena, Chairman.

In the weeks following September 11, 2001, five people died after receiving anthrax spores through the mail. Since then, bioterrorism has been a public health threat that is impossible to ignore. In 2005, millions of people prepared as best they could for Hurricane Katrina. The devastating winds and soaking rains were only a prelude to a series of severe public health threats. Almost all health and sanitation services were knocked out and government emergency response was crippled. The water running through the streets of New Orleans became so toxic that those who touched it risked becoming sick. The aftermath of the storm vividly illustrated that New Orleans' most vulnerable populations – poor, young, elderly and chronically ill – were disproportionately impacted by the disaster.

Today, the threat of a flu pandemic looms, creating a greater sense of urgency to prepare. As a result, local, state and federal governments, along with a multitude of nonprofit organizations, have made efforts to educate Americans about what they need to do to prepare for the next emergency, whether natural or man-made. Yet despite growing threats and a host of awareness campaigns, Americans remain largely

unprepared for public health emergencies. In a recent national poll, only 31 percent of Americans have any emergency plans in place. For some of the nation's most vulnerable populations – including mothers with young children, hourly-wage workers, and people with chronic illnesses – being prepared is an even bigger challenge. The Atlantic County Division of Public Health would like to help close the gaps in current emergency preparedness plans by ensuring that all Atlantic County residents have a plan. Together, we can "Take the First Step" toward preparing effectively for public health threats.

For more information on how you can TAKE THE FIRST STEP! and be prepared for public health emergencies, contact the Division of Public Health at 609-645-5935 or visit our website: www.aclink.org/publichealth.

To help you get started on your way to prevention, remember, the Atlantic County Division of Public Health offers preventive screenings at our Live Stronger, Longer Clinic, Women's Health Clinic and Men's Health Clinic. To schedule an appointment or for more information call us at: 609-645-5933



What can you do to stay healthy and prevent disease? You can practice healthy behaviors by

talking to your health care provider about taking the following screening tests. These tests help find diseases early when they are easier to treat.

- **Obesity:** Have your body mass index (BMI) calculated to screen for obesity. (BMI is a measure of body fat based on height and weight.)
- **Breast Cancer:** Have a mammogram every 1 to 2 years starting at age 40.
- **Cervical Cancer:** Have a Pap smear every 1 to 3 years if you:
 1. Have ever been sexually active.
 2. Are between the ages of 21 and 65.
- **High Cholesterol:** Have your cholesterol checked regularly starting at age 45. If you are younger than 45, talk to your doctor about whether to have your cholesterol checked if:
 1. You have diabetes.
 2. You have high blood pressure.
 3. Heart disease runs in your family.
 4. You smoke.

- **Colorectal Cancer:** Have a test for colorectal cancer starting at age 50. Your doctor can help you decide which test is right for you. If you have a family history of colorectal cancer, you may need to be screened earlier.
- **Diabetes:** Have a test for diabetes if you have high blood pressure or high cholesterol.
- **Depression:** Your emotional health is as important as your physical health. If you have felt "down," sad, or hopeless over the last 2 weeks or have felt little interest or pleasure in doing things, you may be depressed. Talk to your doctor about being screened for depression.
- **Osteoporosis (Thinning of the Bones):** Have a bone density test beginning at age 65 to screen for osteoporosis. If you are between the ages of 60 and 64 and weigh 154 lbs. or less, talk to your doctor about being tested.
- **Chlamydia and Other Sexually Transmitted Infections:** Have a test for chlamydia if you are 25 or younger and sexually active. If you are older, talk to your doctor about being tested. Also ask whether you should be tested for other sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.

For more information on what you can do to get and stay healthy, call the Division of Public Health at 609-645-5935 or check out our website, www.aclink.org/publichealth.

Wellness Tip of the Quarter: Walk your way to fitness

Think you can't do the cardio required to get your heart into shape? Think again. Even a modest walking program can bring body benefits. In a recent study involving 40,000 women, study participants who walked as little as one hour per week had a significantly lower risk of heart disease than those participants who were sedentary. Walking one hour per week at a moderate pace can reduce your risk of heart disease by as much as 50%.

