

GET WELL & Stay Well

A Publication of the UMMC Patient Resource Center Summer 2005

Welcome to Summer

Summer is here, and with it, come longer days, warmer weather and outdoor activities. Summer is also host to a variety of important health topics, which we feature in this issue of **GET WELL & Stay Well**.

Summer means vacations and usually travelling to a different destination. It might be helpful to read our article on travel abroad with tips to keep healthy. Summer fun for children includes lots of time outdoors on bikes and scooters and in pools, and you will find a valuable article on summer safety tips for kids. Summer is also the time for finding wonderful, fresh produce, and you will find an article in this issue on the health benefits of summer produce.

The Patient Resource Center has participated in its first community fitness program, Get Fit Maryland™, with an overwhelming response. Over 3,000 people signed up for a three month walking program complete with pedometers to measure their progress. Find out how the program got started, and track its progress in our feature article. We continue to look for new ways to meet the community's needs through education, health screenings, and information.

Please look at our course schedule and read our informative articles, and learn how to better care for yourself and others. Our vision is to help people—**GET WELL and Stay Well**.

Stay Healthy,
Anne D. Williams, RN, MS
Editor

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Get Fit Maryland™ Hits the Ground Walking



How many steps do you have today? Since May 1, employees, staff, and the public have been walking more than ever and have started counting their steps everyday. The Medical Center joined with the School of Medicine and Merritt Athletic Clubs and launched Get Fit Maryland™. The 12-week program is aimed at preventing obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease one step at a time, so to speak.

For its first year, the program has been a huge success with over 3,000 people registered. Entire offices are challenging each other to reach the daily goal of 10,000 steps, and some even have friendly competitions going as well. Mariellen Synan, Community Outreach Coordinator, reports that several local businesses and churches have

also joined in the walking program. "The response has been huge; people are definitely interested in getting healthy and fit," states Synan. "Patients notice my pedometer, and then they show me theirs; it's a nice way to start a conversation about exercise and fitness with patients," reports Gloria Moses, CRNP.

People who registered for the program received a pedometer to count their steps along with monthly log books to record their steps. Each month, participants turn in their log books and receive an incentive to keep walking. To help people out along the way, several indoor and outdoor walking trails have been developed, according to Anne Williams, RN, MS, Manager of the Patient Resource Center. "Both the indoor and outdoor trails will soon be marked with signs, and the trail maps will be available online soon," according to Williams. The indoor trails begin at the UMMC Patient Resource Center, and the outdoor trails begin across from the Medical Center at the Health Sciences Library.

To kick off the program, Governor Ehrlich spoke on April 29 at the Medical Center in support of the program. Along with University of Maryland at Baltimore President David Ramsay, Dean Donald Wilson from the School of Medicine, Ed Notebaert, Medical System CEO, and Leroy Merritt, CEO of Merritt, the Governor stepped into wet concrete to dedicate outdoor walking trails around the Medical Center (see photo at right). The men "cemented" their support of the program and their interest in promoting healthier lifestyles for Marylanders.

Plans are already underway to expand the program next spring based on the success and interest this year. For more information on Get Fit Maryland™, you can contact the Patient Resource Center at 410-328-9355 or on the web at www.getfitmaryland.org.



Making Travel Safer: Minimizing Infectious Hazards

Elizabeth P. Fuss, RN, MS, CIC

Ah, summer. Time to get away, go to exotic places, or maybe take a cruise. But wait—is there something travelers need to know before they depart? There sure is. Being prepared and knowledgeable about the risks of becoming ill helps one to have a safe, enjoyable experience and to come home healthy.

A person's risk of becoming ill during travel depends on many factors, such as the living conditions, sanitation and hygiene standards of the area being visited, and the immunization status of the people being visited as well as the individual traveler. Especially vulnerable travelers are young children, the elderly, pregnant women and immunocompromised individuals such as those infected with HIV and long-term steroid users. All travelers should contact a physician with expertise in travel medicine at least 6 weeks before departure so that necessary immunizations can be effectively given. University of Maryland Medical Center has a Traveler's Clinic, and for more information or to make an appointment, call 410-328-5196.

HITTING THE SKIES, SEAS, AND ROADS

One aspect of airplane travel that made the news in recent years involved the spread of tuberculosis. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) investigated 6 instances of airline passengers with infectious TB and in two cases there was documented transmission. CDC concluded that being on a flight longer than 8 hours and being seated near or working near an infectious person were risk factors for transmission. Fortunately, they concluded that the risk does not appear to be greater than being in any enclosed space with an infectious TB case.

A well-known problem for travelers is illness transmitted by food and water, characterized by diarrhea, vomiting and sometimes fever. For example, poor sanitation can lead to amebiasis, swallowing water while swimming has

caused cryptosporidiosis, and eating uncooked foods can result in hepatitis A. The havoc that noroviruses can wreak on cruise ships has also been well documented.



HEALTHY TRAVELERS' TIPS

- What's a traveler to do?
- Wash your hands!
- Avoid raw food
- Eat only cooked food that is still hot or fruit that you can personally peel
- Avoid street food vendors
- Drink only canned or bottled water and soft drinks, beer, wine and beverages made with boiled water
- Avoid ice
- Use bottled water for brushing teeth and dentures

Travelers are also vulnerable to diseases such as Lyme Disease and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever transmitted by ticks; malaria, West Nile virus and dengue fever carried by mosquitoes; and River Blindness caused by black flies in places like Brazil, Columbia, southern Mexico, and Central Africa. The best protection against these critters is avoidance:

- Avoid rural locations and outdoor activity at dawn and dusk
- Wear tucked-in long-sleeved shirts, long pants, hats
- Apply DEET-containing repellents to skin and clothing
- Use permethrin-containing repellents on shoes, bed nets, camping gear
- Keep bed nets tucked under mattresses even during the day
- Inspect for ticks during outdoor activity and at the end of the day

MORE INFO

Want to know where you can get more information?

- The UMMC Intranet—UMMC Employee Links—Travel Medicine www.cdc.gov/travel
- Traveler's Health hotline: 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747)
- If going on a cruise check the Vessel Sanitation Program inspection reports at www.cdc.gov/nceh/vsp

Home again, home again. Enjoy your pictures and souvenirs. Also, be aware that symptoms of some illnesses may not occur for weeks, months or even a year. If you become ill after traveling overseas, inform your physician where you have traveled within the past 12 months.

Remember the goal is not to stay at home, but to travel safely!

Summer's Bounty

Angelina Mason, Nutrition Intern, Anne Williams, RN, MS

One of the best things about summer is the abundance of fresh, seasonal produce. Trips down the produce aisle of the grocery store, roadside produce stands, farmers markets, and small vegetable gardens entice as they overflow with their variety of colorful, fragrant, crisp, succulent and flavorful vegetables and fruits.

PACKED WITH POWER

Vegetables and fruits are loaded with vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants, and a variety of other beneficial compounds collectively known as phytochemicals that are only found in the plants that we eat. Not only does produce pack a powerful nutritional punch, but it tends to be low in calories, giving us

another reason to eat up. It is recommended that Americans eat at least 5 fruits and vegetables daily. Summer produce makes it easy to load up on 5 or more servings!

WHAT TO BUY WHEN?

June is the month when most summer produce starts to come in.

Vegetables in early summer:

Asparagus, Spinach, Snap Beans, Beets, Broccoli, Cauliflower

Vegetables in mid-late summer:

Tomatoes, Corn, Kale, Collard Greens, Okra, Squashes



Summer Safety for Kids

Karen Hardingham, RN, BSN



This summer, children will be rushed to the Emergency Department nearly 3 million times for serious injuries resulting from motor vehicle crashes, drownings, bike crashes, pedestrian incidents, falls, and other hazards. “The fun and relaxation of summer can be deceptive when it comes to safety. Kids are exposed to more dangers because they tend to be more active” said Karen Hardingham, Coordinator of Safe Kids Baltimore. “The good news is the majority of these can be avoided by taking a few simple steps.”

The warm weather usually sends children to the nearest swimming pool. Taking the time to teach children how to be safe when swimming can help avoid a drowning, which nationally is the second leading cause of unintentional injury related death among children ages 1 to 14. Childhood drownings and near drownings occur silently and within a matter of seconds, typically when a child is left unattended or unsupervised near a pool or an open body of water. Following these steps can help keep your children’s time around water fun and safe.

TEACHING KIDS SAFE POOL USE:

- Always supervise swimming children or children near water—never leave them alone—even for a moment!
- Teach children to never swim alone—even when they are older
- Learn CPR for adults and children
- Make sure children take swimming lessons when they are ready—usually after age 4
- Don’t let kids dive into water that is less than nine feet deep
- Realize that children can get into trouble in the water even if they know how to swim or are wearing a life jacket
- Empty & turn over wading pools as soon as they are empty

IF YOU OWN YOUR OWN POOL:

- Have a fence that separates the pool from the house and yard
- Keep a phone and emergency numbers near the pool
- Use a gate or pool alarm
- Keep rescue equipment near the pool

FOR OCEANS, LAKES, AND RIVERS:

- Make sure kids swim only in areas marked for swimming
- Never allow them to dive into ocean, lakes or rivers because you do not know how deep the water is
- Make sure everyone wears a coast guard approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD or Life Jacket) near or in the water on boats
- Water wings and inner tubes are not substitutes for life jackets
- Don’t allow children to drive jet skis

Children also tend to spend a fair amount of time on their bikes, scooters, and skateboards during the summer. Bicycles are associated with more childhood injuries than any other consumer product except the automobile. Head injuries are the leading cause of death and permanent disability related to bicycle crashes. Bicycle helmets have been shown to reduce the risk of head injury by at least 85%. Unfortunately, only about 15-25% of children on bikes wear helmets. Children’s actions when on bikes and other wheeled devices can also put them at risk. Help protect your child on bikes and other wheeled devices by:

TEACHING KIDS THE RULES OF THE ROAD:

- Bikes, scooters, skateboards and inline skates are vehicles—not toys
- When on the road, ride with the traffic and as far to the right as possible.
- Learn and use appropriate hand signals
- Respect traffic signals
- Stop and look left, right, and left again before crossing an intersection.
- Don’t ride when it’s dark
- Don’t negotiate! If you don’t wear a helmet—you don’t ride it!
- Helmets must always be worn with bikes or any wheeled device.

TEACHING KIDS TO USE PROPER GEAR:

- Bikes – helmet
- Scooters – helmet, knee pads, elbow pads
- Skateboards – helmet, knee pads, elbow pads, wrist guards
- Inline skates – helmet, knee pads, elbow pads, wrist guards

If you would like more information on water safety, bike safety, or any other unintentional injury risk area, please contact Safe Kids Baltimore at the University of Maryland Hospital for Children at 410-328-7532. Karen Hardingham, Coalition Coordinator, can also be reached via email at khardingham@umm.edu.

Fruit in season early summer:

Strawberries, Raspberries, Blueberries, Blackberries, Watermelons, Melons

Fruit in mid-late summer:

Cherries, Boysenberries, Peaches, Plums

BUYING FRESH PRODUCE

Select vegetables and fruits based on color, appearance, feel and smell. Vegetables and fruit that have bright, intense color are most appealing. Produce should be free of bruises and mold. Ripe fruit is soft, but not mushy, while vegetables should be crisp. All produce, including organic produce and melons should be thoroughly washed in cold water before it is peeled, sliced and eaten. Supermarkets usually carry a very good selection of seasonal produce, have convenient locations and hours,

and tend to have a reliable inventory. In other words, you can be reasonably confident that you can buy what you want on your way home from work. Produce stands are usually very seasonal, carry a small range of products, and may not have convenient hours. Farmers’ markets are usually open on week-ends and have the best local selections. The growers themselves (and their families) man the booths. Shopping for produce at farmers’ markets can be a fun family experience. Everyone can sample the produce before you buy as well as try varieties of vegetables and fruits that are not found in supermarkets. Another fun family experience is to pick produce at a local farm. Kids love to see how produce grows, and you can’t get your fruits and vegetables any fresher!

Enjoy the bounty of summer vegetables and fruits daily, and remember, deeply colored produce provides the greatest nutritional punch! *Strive for five!*

July/August/September 2005 Calendar

To register for classes (except for Stork's Nest, Childbirth and Infant Care), please contact the Patient Resource Center at 410-328-WELL (9355). All sessions are free unless noted.

Classes

Stork's Nest—Prenatal Education

July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

August 5, 12, 19, 26

September 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

All classes run from 10:30-12:30 every Friday. Please contact Stork's Nest at 410-328-2944 for info and registration.

Childbirth Education and Infant Care

Please contact Childbirth Office at 410-328-2944 for fees and registration for the following courses.

Childbirth Preparation

Wednesdays beginning on Sept 7, 7–9:00 pm

Childbirth Weekend Marathon

July 16 & 17

August 13 & 14

September 17 & 18

October 15 & 16

Breastfeeding

July 18 from 6–8:30 pm

August 8 from 6–8:30 pm

Infant Care

August 24, 7:30–9:30 pm

September 13, 7:30–9:30 pm

October 26, 7:30–9:30 pm

Infant Safety and CPR

July 25, 7:30–9:30 pm

August 29, 7:30–9:30 pm

September 20, 7:30–9:30 pm (call for location)

Yoga (Prana)

Mondays at 6–7:00 pm – Starting again in September!

Cost: \$10 for employees weekly or \$100 for 10 weeks. \$12 for public weekly or \$120 for 10 weeks. \$15 for walk-ins (Walk-ins are welcome.). \$25 Reimbursement for benefit-eligible employees.

The Solution® Method Training

Tuesdays 6–8:00 pm

12 Week Group—ongoing. Provides support and training in the skills of self-nurturing and effective limits, which turn off the drive to go to excess with food, working, spending, etc. Cost: \$399. \$25 Reimbursement for benefit-eligible employees.

Smoking Cessation—American Lung Association's Freedom from Smoking®

8 weeks. Tuesdays, 12 noon–1 pm beginning September 6.

Call 410-328-9355 for registration. Don't have to quit the first day Cost: Free through a Baltimore City Health Dept. Grant (includes ALA educational packet).

Food Safety...It's in Your Hands

Mondays 10:00 am

For any Cancer Center patients, families, or caregivers. 9 Gudelsky Conference Room near the BMT unit entrance.

Support Groups

Leukemia and Lymphoma Support Group

4th Tuesdays each month at 3:30 pm

UMMC Patient Resource Center

Free to all adults/families with Leukemia, Hodgkins or non-Hodgkins Lymphoma, or Myeloma. Call Tracy Orwig at 410-825-2500 or Beth Wintermute at 410-328-3595 to register or for information.

Lunchtime Series

Women's Health Topics

To register for the light lunch seminars, please call 410-328-6338. All sessions held in the Patient Resource Center.

Permanent Birth Control—Is It for You?

July 12, 12 noon

Events

Get Fit Maryland

Monthly Log Book Checks with Incentives, July 6, 7, 8 & August 1, 2, 3, 11 am–2 pm

Patient Resource Center

Blood Drive

July 1, 9 am–5 pm

UMMC Employee Learning Center

Minority Women's Health Summit

July 30, 10 am–3:30 pm

UMMC Learning Center

Child Safety Seat Check

July 21, 10 am–2 pm

Fox Chevrolet, Security Blvd. (Parking lot across from Fox.)

Bethel AME Church Community Health Awareness Day

August. 27, 11am–4 pm

Bethel AME Church

Free Mammograms and Pap Tests

To women over 40 years living in Baltimore City. Offered by the Baltimore City Cancer Program at UMMC Cancer Center. Call 410-328-HOPE (4673).