

GET WELL & Stay Well

A Publication of the UMMC Patient Resource Center Summer 2007

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 fun for children and adults includes lots of time outdoors and in pools, and you will find summer sun safety tips for the entire family in our article, "Staying Cool in the Heat." Staying connected to family and friends when hospitalized is also important, and our article on the CaringBridge service explains how easy it is to communicate via a personalized Web site.

For the third year, the Patient Resource Center participated in its community fitness program, **Get Fit Kids™**, with an overwhelming response. Over 400 school-age children participated from three Baltimore City elementary schools in 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. The University of Maryland Medical Center also partnered with the Ray Lewis Foundation and sponsored four children from the **Get Fit Kids** schools to participate in the annual Ray's Summer Days Youth Fitness Clinic at Patterson Park in June.

The Patient Resource Center also completed a year-long grant from the Baltimore City Health Department, which provided tobacco prevention education to pre-kindergarteners in public and private city preschools. 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 KIDS™ Crosses the Finish Line in Baltimore City Schools



This spring, over 400 students at three Baltimore City elementary schools counted their steps by wearing pedometers as part of **Get Fit Kids™**, a 12-week program that challenged the students to take at least 13,000 steps a day. The goal was to increase their activity level and improve their health. **Get Fit Kids** is the latest version of **Get Fit Maryland™**, an award-winning wellness program from the University of Maryland Medical Center, the University of Maryland School of Medicine, and Merritt Athletic Clubs, who joined together in 2005 to create a walking program aimed at raising awareness of the obesity epidemic and cardiovascular disease.

Get Fit Kids got in step in March at Westside Elementary when students in the third through fifth grades received backpacks filled with a pedometer, log book, a pen and a water bottle. Third through fifth graders at Bentalou Elementary and Frederick Elementary also participated in the program. During the program, the students tracked the number of steps registered on their pedometers each day. Other activities such as dancing or bicycling could be included in the step count as well.

"For adults, the goal is to walk at least 10,000 steps a day, but children are generally more active and should strive to get more steps. Based on the research for elementary school-aged children, we recommend at least 13,000 per day," says Anne Williams, RN, MS, director of **Get Fit Kids** and manager of the Patient Resource Center at the University of Maryland Medical Center.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, the number of overweight school-aged children (ages 6-19 years) has nearly tripled since the 1970s.

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Staying Cool in the Heat

ADAPTED FROM CRAIG THORNE, MD, DIRECTOR OF EMPLOYEE HEALTH, UMMC

Summer time is here and with it brings the hot, hazy, and humid weather. No matter how much you like the heat, it can get to the best of us. If you like spending a lot of your time outside in the summer heat, read the following tips to help you keep your cool.

EXTRA FLUIDS: During hot weather, you will need to increase your fluid intake, regardless of your activity level. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. During heavy exercise in a hot environment, drink two to four glasses (16-32 ounces) of cool fluids each hour.

Warning: If your doctor generally limits the amount of fluid you drink or has you on water pills, ask how much you should drink while the weather is hot. *Don't drink liquids that contain alcohol, or large amounts of sugar—these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also, avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.*

REPLACE SALTS AND MINERALS: Heavy sweating removes salt and minerals from the body. These are necessary for your body and must be replaced. If you must exercise, drink two to four glasses of cool, non-alcoholic fluids each hour. A sports beverage can replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat. However, if you are on a low-salt diet, talk with your doctor before drinking a sports beverage or taking salt tablets.

WEAR APPROPRIATE CLOTHING AND SUNSCREEN: Wear as little clothing as possible when you are at home. Choose lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. Sunburn affects your body's ability to cool itself and causes a loss of body fluids. It also causes pain and damages the skin. If you must go outdoors, protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat (also keeps you cooler) along with sunglasses, and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher (the most effective products say "broad spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection" on their labels) 30 minutes prior to going out. Continue to reapply it according to the package directions.

SCHEDULE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES CAREFULLY: If you must be outdoors, try to limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours. Try to rest often in shady areas so that your body's thermostat will have a chance to recover.

PACE YOURSELF: If you are not used to working or exercising in a hot environment, start slowly and pick up the pace gradually. If exertion in the heat makes your heart pound and leaves you gasping



for breath, STOP all activity. Get into a cool area or at least into the shade, and rest, especially if you become lightheaded, confused, weak, or faint.

STAY COOL INDOORS:

Stay indoors and, if at all possible, stay in an air-conditioned place. If your home does not have air conditioning, go to the shopping mall or public library—even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler when you go back into the heat. Call your local health department to see if there are any heat-relief shelters in your area. Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, fans will not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off. Use your stove and oven less to maintain a cooler temperature in your home.

USE A BUDDY SYSTEM: When working in the heat, monitor the condition of your co-workers and have someone do the same for you. Heat-induced illness can cause a person to become confused or lose consciousness. If you are high-risk for heat-related illnesses, you should have a buddy to check on you throughout the day. People who are over 65 years of age, are overweight, have high blood pressure, heart disease, asthma, or who take certain medications are all examples of people at high-risk for heat-related illnesses. If you are 65 years of age or older or are at high-risk, have a friend or relative call to check on you twice a day during a heat wave. If you know someone in this age group, check on them at least twice a day.

ADJUST TO THE ENVIRONMENT: Be aware that any sudden change in temperature, such as an early summer heat wave, will be stressful to your body. You will have a greater tolerance for heat if you limit your physical activity until you become accustomed to the heat. If you travel to a hotter climate, allow several days to become acclimated before attempting any vigorous exercise, and work up to it gradually.

DO NOT LEAVE CHILDREN IN CARS: Even in cool temperatures, cars can heat up to dangerous temperatures very quickly. Even with the windows cracked open, interior temperatures can rise almost 20 degrees Fahrenheit within the first 10 minutes. Anyone left inside is at risk for serious heat-related illnesses or even death. Children who are left unattended in parked cars are at greatest risk for heat stroke, and possibly death. When traveling with children, remember to do the following: Never leave infants, children or pets in a parked car, even if the windows are cracked open. To remind yourself that a child is in the car, keep a stuffed animal in the car seat. When the child is buckled in, place the stuffed animal in the front with the driver. When leaving your car, check to be sure everyone is out of the car. Do not overlook any children who have fallen asleep in the car.



A Window to the World—Staying Connected When Hospitalized

Keeping friends and family updated regarding the condition of a hospitalized loved one can be very challenging and exhausting. University of Maryland Medical Center, UM Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Cancer Center, and the UIM Hospital for Children are official sponsors of CaringBridge, an Internet service developed to help patients and their families stay connected with loved ones during medical treatment. In minutes, families can easily create a secure CaringBridge Web page. They can then sign-in at any time to post journal entries and photographs for their friends and family members. Visitors who are provided the Web site address and password can read updates and post their own messages of support, love, and encouragement for the family. Celebrating 10 years of service to the community, CaringBridge reports that over 400 million people have experienced their services since its inception.

How does the family/patient connect?

- An individual visits www.caringbridge.org to create a secure, personal Web site in a few minutes.
- The patient or family member writes journal entries for their circle of family and friends to read.
- Friends and loved ones can then send messages of encouragement and support in a guestbook for the patient and family to read.
- Patients or families may create their site at home, from their hospital room, or in the Patient Resource Center. Staff in the Patient Resource Center can assist with creating the Web site if needed.

The personal site is private and only those with the site address may visit.



CaringBridge is a nonprofit, free online service connecting friends and family when a loved one is receiving care.

What Patients and Families are most likely to benefit?

- Sudden illness or trauma
- Long term hospitalization
- Critical Care
- Oncology
- Transplant
- Obstetrics
- Pediatrics/neonatal patients and others...

For questions or assistance, contact the Patient Resource Center at 410-328-WELL (9355) or log onto www.caringbridge.org.

GET FIT KIDS CROSSES FINISH LINE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



These overweight children are much more likely to become overweight or obese adults. “With television, computers and video games, today’s kids are leading a more sedentary lifestyle and gaining weight, which puts them at greater risk for health problems such as heart disease,” says Dr. Kari Bichell, MD, MPH, and medical director for **Get Fit Maryland** and an assistant professor of family medicine at the University of Maryland School of

Medicine. “And, because of the growing obesity rate in kids, we are also seeing more and more children with Type 2 diabetes, once called adult-onset diabetes, which is directly related to obesity. We hope **Get Fit Kids** provided a way for these children to get moving and reduce their risks for these potentially serious health problems.”

Get Fit Kids offers a great opportunity to get kids on a path to lifelong fitness and health, and we have been eager to see how these students respond to the pedometer program,” says Giancarla Calzetta, community health director with Merritt Athletic Clubs. A survey at the end of the program found that 98% of the children rated the **Get Fit Kids** program as Excellent or Very Good, and 95% of the children also stated that they would continue to try to get an hour of physical activity daily even after the program had ended.

Each month, the students had their log books checked and, if they logged their steps, they received monthly incentive prizes, such as a **Get Fit Maryland** wristband or socks. Students who finished the 12-week program received a jump rope and a certificate of completion.

Additionally, Bentalou Elementary School had the largest percentage of students completing the program with a 47% completion rate and won free tickets to a summer Orioles game.

To extend the fun and fitness for the kids, the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC) was a corporate sponsor of the Ray’s Summer Days Youth Fitness Clinic. The fitness clinic hosted and attended by Ray Lewis brought 600 Baltimore City youth to Patterson Park on June 9 for a fun and challenging morning workout. UMMC was able to sponsor children who completed the Westside and Bentalou Elementary Schools’ **Get Fit Kids** programs to join in the fitness fun. “We hope to continue to collaborate with the Ray’s Summer Days in the future to broaden the message that ‘fitness can be fun,’” says Anne Williams. “Both the University of Maryland Medical Center and the Ray’s Summer Days are committed to working on improving youth fitness and health.”



July/August/September 2007 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 and held at the Patient Resource Center unless otherwise noted.

Classes

Stork's Nest – Prenatal Education

July 6, 13, 20, 27

August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

September 7, 14, 21, 28

All classes run from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm every Friday

Please contact Stork's Nest at 410-328-2944 for information and registration.

Childbirth Education, Infant CPR, and Infant Care

Please contact the Childbirth Education office at 410-328-2944 for class information and registration for Infant Care, Breastfeeding and Infant CPR.

Yoga (Prana)

Thursdays, 6 – 7 pm

Weekly—ongoing

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.

Pilates and Yogalates

Weekly—starting in September

Call 410-328-9355 for registration and information.

Smoking Cessation – American Lung Association's Freedom from Smoking® 8 weeks, Tuesdays, 12 noon – 1 pm Next class beginning September 11

Cost: Free (includes ALA educational packet).

Call 410-328-9355 for registration and information. You don't have to quit the first day!

Spine/Orthopedics Pre-op Class

Wednesdays, 11 am – 1 pm

Call Cindy Fox or Pauline Esoga at 410-328-5360 for more information.

Food Safety...It's in Your Hands Mondays, 10 am

For any Cancer Center patients, families, or caregivers. Contact Hadas at 410-328-5462 to register. 9 Gudelsky Conference Room near the BMT unit entrance.

Massage (Seated)

Fridays, 12 noon – 3 pm

Cost: \$14 for a 15-minute seated massage
Call Patient Resource Center to schedule an appointment.

Support Groups

Transplant Support Group—

Education Series

3rd Tuesday each month from 5 – 6:30 pm

Resuming in September

Leukemia and Lymphoma

Support Group

4th Tuesday each month at 3:30 pm

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 more information.

Bariatric Support Group

2nd Wednesday each month from 6 – 8 pm

Free to adults in the bariatric bypass surgery program. Call Nadja Muchow at 410-328-8936 for more information.

Breast Cancer Support Group

4th Thursday each month at 12 noon

Free to all women with breast cancer. Call Stacey Stephens at 410-328-4673 for more information.

Inflammatory Bowel

Disease Support Group

1st Thursday each month from

6:30 – 7:30 pm

Call Nadja Cheevers at 410-328-6172 for more information.

Violence Intervention Program (VIP) Support Group

Thursdays, 1 – 3 pm

Call Adrian Barnes at 443-506-7519 for more information.

Events

'Church Without Walls'

Annual Health Fair

July 14, 11 am – 3 pm

Lots of free health screenings, health information, light refreshments, and fun for all. UMMC is a proud sponsor of this community event.

Lafayette Square, Baltimore

Talmudical Academy Community Health Fair and Carnival

September 2, 1 – 6:30 pm

University of Maryland Hospital for Children is a proud sponsor of this event and will offer health information and "Ask-a-Doc" services.

Northwestern High School, corner of Park Heights and Fallstaff in Pikesville

Blood Drive

July 9 and September 5, 9 am – 3 pm

Give the gift of life...donate blood!
UMMC Patient Resource Center and Paca/Pratt Building

Blood Pressure Screening

September 20, 11 am – 2 pm

Check out your blood pressure and check out former NFL Coach Don Shula!

Free Mammograms and Pap Tests

To women over 40 years of age living in Baltimore City.

Offered by the Baltimore City Cancer Program at UMMC Cancer Center. Call 410-328-HOPE (4673).

GET WELL & Stay Well is produced by the UMMC Patient Resource Center.

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