

Vision: African Americans in Montgomery County will be as healthy and safe as the rest of the population.

Mission: To Eliminate health disparities and improve the number and quality of years of life for African Americans.

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Cancel Out Cancer

by: Ardandia Campbell

Colorectal cancer is one of the most common cancers in adults and the third most common cancer found in men and women in this country.

African Americans have the highest colorectal cancer incidence and mortality rates of all racial groups in the United States. Because African Americans are less likely to have colorectal cancer diagnosed in the earliest, most treatable stages where the survival rate is relatively 90 percent, their survival are not as good as other racial and ethnic groups. From 1992 to 2000, the five-year relative survival rate for African-Americans with colon cancer was 55 percent compared with 64 percent for whites.

The American Cancer Society estimates that there will about 108,070 new cases of colon cancer and 40,740 new cases of rectal cancer in 2008 in the U.S. Combined, they will cause about 49,960 deaths.

Colorectal cancer begins with a growth (polyp) that is not yet cancer and develops in either the colon or the rectum. While the exact cause of most colorectal cancers is not known, there are certain known risk factors. There are two types of risk factors: those that can be controlled and those that cannot be controlled. Risk factors that can be controlled to reduce chances of developing colorectal cancers include smoking and tobacco use, a diet high in red meats and cooking meals at very high heat, lack of exercise, being overweight, alcohol consumption, and having type 2 diabetes. Less certain factors include working a night shift, testicular cancer survivors, and men who receive radia-

tion therapy for prostate cancer. Risk factors that cannot be altered include age, race, gender, having had polyps or colorectal cancer before, having a history of bowel disease, family history, and certain family syndromes.

Like with other certain cancer types, most people with early colon cancer do not have symptoms. Symptoms usually appear with more advanced disease. Typical signs and symptoms include a change in bowel habits such as diarrhea, constipation, or narrowing of the stool that lasts more than a few days; a feeling that you need to have a bowel movement that doesn't go away after doing so; rectal bleeding, dark stools, or blood in the stool; cramping or stomach pain; weakness and tiredness.

African Americans have the highest colorectal cancer incidence and mortality rates of all racial groups in the United States.

The American Cancer Society recommends screening tests as a method for detecting and preventing colorectal cancer. In many cases, screening tests can find colorectal cancers at an early stage and greatly improve the chances of successful treatment and also help prevent some cancers by allowing doctors to find and remove polyps that might become cancer.

Screening tests that can find both colorectal polyps and cancer include flexible sigmoidoscopy (flex-sig), colonoscopy, double contrast barium enema (DCBE), and virtual colonoscopy. The Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) is a simple at-home test that checks stool

Continued on p.3

From the Director's Desk

by: Darlene Coles Boyd

Take Care of Your Heart

Cardiovascular disease or heart disease causes more deaths in Americans of both genders and all racial and ethnic groups than any other disease. It is also one of the leading causes of disability in the United States.

The disparity of heart disease and African Americans

African American adults are less likely to be diagnosed with heart disease than the general population; however they are more likely to die from heart disease.

- In 2004, African American men were 30% more likely to die from heart disease, as compared to non-Hispanic white men.
- African Americans were 1.4 times as likely as non-Hispanic whites to have high blood pressure.
- African American women were 1.7 times as likely as non-Hispanic white women to be obese.

Heart Disease Risk Factors

Risk factors for heart disease are conditions or behaviors that increase your chance of getting the disease. Some risk factors for heart disease can be treated or controlled and some cannot.

The risk factors that you cannot change include:

- A family history of early heart disease
- Age—for women, heart disease risk increases at age 55; for men, it's age 45.

The risk factors that you can control are:

- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- Your weight
- The amount of exercise that you do
- Diabetes (either with diet or with medications)

Please note that:

The more risk factors you have, the greater your risk of developing heart disease and the higher your level of each risk factor, the greater your risk of developing heart disease.

The best way to prevent heart disease is to:

- Know your risk factors
- Tell your health care provider if you believe that you have any risk factors

We want to hear from you!

Submit your comments and suggestions at:

www.onehealthylife.org

click on the **CONTACT US** tab.



May is National High Blood Pressure Education Month

For information on blood pressure screening, call
240-777-1833.

*Take steps to
control your
controllable
risk factors.*

Colon Cancer (continued)

samples for hidden blood which can be a sign of cancer, polyps, or other internal disorders. The American Cancer Society notes this test is less invasive however it is less likely to find polyps.

Since more than nine out of 10 people found to have colorectal cancer are older than 50, the American Cancer Society recommends that men and women at average risk of colorectal cancer should begin screening tests at age 50.

The American Cancer Society advises men and women age 50 and older to follow one of the following five testing schedules: (1) colonoscopy every 5 years; (2) yearly fecal occult blood test (FOBT) or fecal immunochemical test (FIT) plus flexible sigmoidoscopy every 3-5 years; (3) yearly fecal occult blood test (FOBT) or fecal immunochemical test (FIT); (4) flexible sigmoidoscopy every 3-5 years; (5) double-contrast barium enema every 5 years. Men ages 50 and older are recommended to have annual digital rectal exams as well however this is not a stand-alone test for colorectal cancer.

For more information about receiving low-cost or free colorectal cancer screenings, please call the African American Health Program at 301-421-5410. The African American Health Program helps refer clients to the Montgomery County Cancer Crusade, which offers colorectal cancer screenings to county residents.

1. American Cancer Society Cancer Reference Information. Overview: What is Colorectal Cancer? Retrieved from http://www.cancer.org/docroot/CRI/content/CRI_2_2_1X_What_is_colon_and_rectum_cancer_10.asp?sitearea on 4/10/2008.

2. American Cancer Society Cancer Reference Information. Overview: Colon and Rectum Cancer. How Many People Get Colorectal Cancer? Retrieved from http://www.cancer.org/docroot/CRI/content/CRI_2_2_1X_How_Many_People_Get_Colorectal_Cancer.asp?sitearea on 4/10/2008.

3. American Cancer Society Cancer Reference Information. Overview: Colon and Rectum Cancer. What Causes Colorectal Cancer? Retrieved from http://www.cancer.org/docroot/CRI/content/CRI_2_8_What_Causes_Colon_and_Rectum_Cancer.asp on 4/10/2008.

4. American Cancer Society Cancer Reference Information. Overview: Colon and Rectum Cancer. How is Colorectal Cancer Found? Pages 1-4. Retrieved from http://www.cancer.org/docroot/CRI/content/CRI_2_2_3X_How_is_colorectal_cancer_found.asp on 4/10/2008.

5. American Cancer Society Detailed Guide: Colon and Rectum Cancer. What Are the Risk Factors for Colorectal Cancer? Retrieved from http://www.cancer.org/docroot/CRI/content/CRI_2_4_2X_What_are_the_risk_factors_for_colon_and_rectum_cancer.asp?sitearea=CRI on 4/10/2008.

6. Cancer Fact Sheet from the Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from www.atsdr.cdc.gov/COM/cancer-fs.html on 4/10/08.

7. American Cancer Society Cancer Figures and Facts 2008. Retrieved from www.cancer.org/downloads/STT/2008CAFFfinalsecured.pdf on 4/10/2008.

Visit our new website!
onehealthylife.org

It will provide you with information
on our programs and services, AAHP publications
and valuable information on how you can live and
enjoy a healthy and active life!

Diabetes Corner

DIABETES DINING CLUBS FOR PREVENTION AND CONTROL

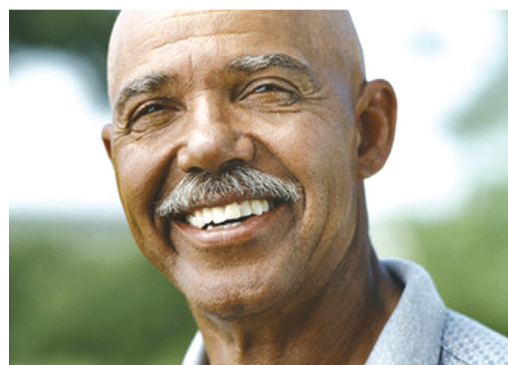
Goshen United Methodist Church
19615 Goshen Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20876
June 2, July 7, Aug 4

Lincoln Park Community Center
357 Fredrick Ave., Rockville, MD 20850
June 9, July 14, Aug 11

Colesville United Methodist Church
52 Randolph Rd., Silver Spring, MD 20904
June 26, July 24, Aug 28

Dinner contribution - \$5.00
Enjoy physical activity, healthy food, meeting
new friends, and learning new things!

Must register one week before club night



FREE DIABETES SELF MANAGEMENT CLASSES

4 class series held monthly at:

Mount Jezreel Baptist Church
420 University Blvd. E, Silver Spring, MD 20901
June 3, 10, 17, 24

Stewartown Homes
9310 Merust Lane, Gaithersburg MD 20876
July 9, 16, 23, 30

WhiteOak Library
11701 New Hampshire Ave, Silver Spring, MD 20904
August 6, 13, 20, 27

Classes include: Educational
materials/activities, Light dinner, Door prizes

**CALL DIANE HERRON
301-421-5767 TO REGISTER**

Pre-Term Labor

by: Nia Williams, RN

What is Preterm Labor?

Preterm labor is labor that occurs before the end of 36 weeks of pregnancy. Researchers have identified African American women younger than 17 or older than 35 to be at a greater risk of experiencing pre-term labor⁽¹⁾. It happens when the uterus begins to contract at a regular pattern and intensity, causing the cervix to thin out and open. A baby can be born too soon if efforts to stop preterm labor fail. Babies born too soon are at increased risk for all sorts of health and developmental problems and even death. Babies born between 20 and 37 weeks are considered premature and may need special care and attention in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), until they are stable enough to be reunited with the family in the home.

NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit):

The NICU staff consists of specialized physicians, nurses, and case managers working together to keep the family informed, but most important, to provide meticulous care to premature infants. This care is comprised of ongoing physical assessment, lab work as needed, and optimum nutrition necessary for weight gain, and overall physical and mental development. This highly skilled unit also promotes a nurturing environment to provide the right amount of stimulation to meet the individual needs of each preemie.

Signs of Preterm Labor:

- Contractions: Regular contractions are 10 minutes apart or closer. You may or may not experience pain during contractions.
- Low, Dull Backache: Back pain below the waistline which may come and go or is felt constantly.
- Stomach Cramps: You may or may not experience diarrhea.
- Pressure: The baby feels heavy or a feeling of pushing down low in your pelvis. This pressure comes and goes.
- Leaking, Gushing of Fluid: If your water breaks, you will feel a CONTINUOUS light or heavy flow from your vagina.
- Menstrual type cramps: You may feel cramps low or near the pelvic bone, similar to cramps before or during your period. They may come and go or be constant.
- Changes in Discharge: You may notice a watery, mucous-like, or bloody / pinkish/brownish discharge from the vagina.

Call your healthcare provider right away if you notice any of these signs or other unusual symptoms!

References:
1. March of Dimes - www.marchofdimes.com



Diabetes Classes

The AAHP Diabetes Program is making a list of individuals, businesses, churches and organizations that would be interested in receiving flyers for upcoming diabetes classes for their own information or to promote in their "communities".

For information, please contact Linda Goldsholl at 240-777-1701 or linda.goldsholl@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Miles of Smiles with Sherry Little

by: Xerxeser Kayodé

The African American Health Program (AAHP) strives to achieve excellence in all of its programs in order to adequately and efficiently serve and address the healthcare needs of the African American community of Montgomery County. Among its several health areas of focus is oral health care, too often neglected and not considered a healthcare priority.

Although oral health is not a top concern for many, AAHP continues to emphasize that maintaining good oral health provides a positive outcome on an individual's entire physical well-being. With a pleasant and fervent attitude, AAHP has a new and rejuvenated spirit to help the program in its mission to eliminate health disparities within the African American community.

Sherry Little comes to the program with expertise in the oral health care field.

As current director of the Montgomery County Colesville Dental Clinic, Sherry has the knowledge and network capabilities to provide dental care assistance for the uninsured and low income residents of Montgomery County. Ms. Little has served on the AAHP Oral Health Coalition for a number of years and now sits as chair of the committee.

During the past several months, Sherry has led the coalition in its Oral Health Campaign which kicked off in February 2008. The Campaign comprises of education, advocacy, screenings and treatment. During the months of March and April, the campaign held two screenings, in which all participants were eligible to make an appointment to receive dental services at Montgomery County dental facilities located throughout MD.

Sherry is passionate and retains a committed spirit to lead this coalition in order for AAHP to effectively address and serve the health care needs of African Americans.

Sherry has embraced the goals and the mission of AAHP and continues to be a valuable advocate for oral health care. We salute her for her efforts!



AAHP Announcements

Free Education Classes: Childbirth and Breastfeeding

The S.M.I.L.E. Program Presents:
FREE Childbirth Education/Breastfeeding
Education Classes

To be held at:
14015 New Hampshire Ave
Silver Spring, 20904
June 23-26, 2008
6pm-8pm

Please call to register: (301) 421-5489

SPECIAL PRIZES FOR THOSE WHO
ATTEND ENTIRE SESSION

A Path to Wellness

Prepare to Celebrate on June 14, 2008
with the Health Freedom:
A Path to Wellness.

Begin or continue your journey to physical wellness by walking at this annual event at Woodlawn Manor Park, and retrace the steps of the freedom seekers of the Underground Railroad.

For more information to register call
AAHP at 301-421-5445 or visit our website
at onehealthylife.org/press.htm



your life to a healthy sex life!

Get **T**ested!
Get **I**nvolved!
Get **E**ducated!

Call 301-421-5425 for more
information and for a free HIV test.

The RED RIBBON Report

by: Dr. Bola Idowu, Amani Bisle, Armando Sullivan and Maria Truong

Communicating with Teens about HIV/AIDS Letters from Teens to Parents

Parent/child communication about tough, yet critical issues on sexually healthy and safer choices is often lacking for several reasons. Most parents are often ill-equipped as to how to communicate these issues with their teens, especially in an environment that allows mutual discussion. The topic of safe sex is sensitive and often considered taboo.

Review of literature reveals that most attempts by parents to impart sexuality information to young people tend to be in a 'top down' communication style that denies teens the opportunity to discuss their own thoughts, feelings, and desires or to draw links between their own and their parents' perspectives ⁽¹⁾. Results from other studies show that parents do not provide all the information about sex that young people need. In one survey, only 38 percent of young women and 25 percent of young men said they have received useful ideas and information from their parents that helped them talk about sexual issues with their girlfriend or boyfriend ⁽²⁾. Evidence from another study shows, just over 54 percent of students reported discussing HIV with their parents. Slight differences were observed by race/ethnicity (white, 54.1; African American, 55.7; Latino, 54.5; other, 55.5 percent) but varied significantly by gender (females, 59.7; males 49.2 percent) ⁽³⁾.

The African American Health Program (AAHP) HIV Prevention Services unit is working with several students from John F. Kennedy High School on a project, "Agent of Change" to increase awareness of HIV to parents and their teens. Some of the activities planned include developing a brochure that is teen friendly and a poster presentation at an upcoming Teen Expo. The following are short letters from the three 10th graders who have been working on the project. The first 2 letters are to parents and the last one is a letter to other teenagers to be an advocate for themselves.

Dear Parent,

At a time in their lives when your babies are developing as adults, isn't it crucial to give them positive life lessons? I, Amani Bisle, a teenager truly believe that you can make a difference. Everyday, another teen in high school is pregnant. PREGNANCY...this used to be part of a marital agreement that couples made when they were financially, physically and emotionally stable. Now it is just a rush of impulsive thinking. If this worries you, then I am here to tell you that this could be your teenager. So talk to them before they make their mistakes.

Amani Bisle

(John F. Kennedy High School; Sophomore)

Dear Parent,

Not talking to your teen about HIV/AIDS is not a good idea. Teens need to know all the facts so that they can make smart and healthy decisions about the lifestyles that they choose to live. Not giving them all the facts can really hurt them. HIV/AIDS is a big deal and teens need to know about it. Without knowledge of it they may partici-

Red Ribbon Report cont.

pate in risky behavior and do something that cannot be undone. Teens who do not know enough about HIV/AIDS are the ones that make the careless decisions about sex that could possibly lead to their premature death in the future. Please talk to your kids about this serious topic.

Armando Sullivan

(John F. Kennedy High School; Sophomore)

Advocate for Yourself

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a big issue because it is such a deadly virus that spreads everyday. Most people do not take responsibility of their own life to practice safe sex or to get tested. It is very important to be an advocate for teen safe sex and a healthy lifestyle because we live in a world of peer pressure. According to AAHP's motto, "One healthy life leads to

another." We live in a community that has each person feeding off of what they see and hear, including teenagers as young as 13. Can you imagine being a teenage mother? You are still a baby yourself, yet you have another along the way. It seems as if sex is what makes people "cool." But is it "cool" when you find out that you are going to be living with HIV or HPV for the rest of your life? Every person has to be able to control their own life, decide when they are ready and when they can wait. But are these decisions the right choices for your lifestyle and your health? Real friends would not push you into doing something you do not want to do. You have a whole life ahead of you; do not let HIV stand in the way.

Maria Truong

(John F. Kennedy High School; Sophomore)

The HIV Prevention Services unit of AAHP appeals to parents and guardians as the summer months draw near to take time out to talk with teenagers about sexually healthy and safer behavioral lifestyles. The following links below will provide some tips and ideas to help parents reach out to their teens.

References:

1) Yowell CM. *Risks of communication: early adolescent girls' conversations with mothers and friends about sexuality.* J Early Adolesc 1997; 17:172-96.

2) Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation & YM Magazine. *National Survey of Teens: Teens Talk about Dating, Intimacy, and Their Sexual Experiences.* Menlo Park, CA: The Foundation, 1998.

3) Parent-Child Communication: Promoting Sexually Healthy Youth retrieved 4/10/2008 from <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/parents/research.htm>

Other Resource links

www.talkingwithkids.org
<http://www.kff.org/entpartnerships/talkingwithkids/index.cfm>
<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/parents/research.htm> - <http://www.4parents.gov/talkingto teen/index.html>

Community Bulletin Board

Teen Health Expo 2008

May 17th, 12pm-4pm

Montgomery College

7600 Takoma Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20904

For more information contact

GapBuster Learning Center at 301-588-5500

Women's Health Fair

Department of Health and Human
Services Women's Health Fair

May 30th, 10am-2:30pm

751 Twinbrook Pkwy, 2nd Floor
Rockville, MD

For more information contact AAHP
at 240-777-1833

Nursing Program with Free Tuition

A Nursing Program with Free Tuition: If you know a young person between ages 18-28 who is interested in nursing-and who would be agreeable to moving out of town to further a dream-the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) is offering FREE tuition, FREE books, a \$250 monthly stipend, and guaranteed job placement as a nurse at Providence Hospital upon graduation (it's a 3 year program) with a starting salary of \$40,000. The program is recruiting new students now!

Please contact Ms. Beshon Smith
at 202-266-5481 or email
BSmith@urbanalliance.org



14015 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20904

P: (301) 421-5445

F: (301) 421-5975

onehealthylife.org



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AAHP NEWSLETTER

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RESOURCES

African American Health Program	240-777-1833
S.M.I.L.E. program	301-421-5489
Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening	
2424 Reedie Drive, Wheaton	240-777-1750

COMMUNITY CLINICS

Community Clinic, Inc.	301-340-7525
L'A.M.I. Family Health Clinic	301-434-8400
Mobile Medical Care, Inc.	301-493-2400
Colesville Adult Dental Center	301-384-9795
The People's Community Wellness Center	301-847-1172
• Men's Clinic • Prostate Cancer Screening • Women's Clinic	
Colorectal, Prostate, Oral Cancer Screening	301-977-5255
Diabetes Education Classes	301-421-5767
G.O.S.P.E.L. Program	240-777-1772
HIV/AIDS Services, 2000 Dennis Ave., Silver Spring	240-777-1869
Maternity, Family Planning, Child Health Services	240-777-1635

SERVICE ELIGIBILITY UNITS

Germantown, 12900 Middlebrook Rd	240-777-3591
Rockville, 1335 Piccard Dr.	240-777-3120
Silver Spring, 8630 Fenton St.	240-777-3066
Smoking Cessation	240-777-1734
Oral Health	240-777-3848

Can't find a Montgomery County Government service? Call 240-777-1245



14015 New Hampshire Avenue
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