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Make Health Priority for National Men's Health Week

National Men's Health Week, June 12-18, is dedicated to raising awareness of preventable men's health problems and the importance of early detection through regular checkups and screenings.

Currently in America:

- 29 million men have high blood pressure, a condition that can often be both avoided and managed with regular exercise, a healthy, low-fat diet and quitting or never smoking
- 50 million men have high cholesterol which many men may also avoid or manage with a healthy diet and regular physical activity
- 8 million men have diabetes. Again, genetic influences aside, for many men, diabetes can be managed or avoided altogether by fighting obesity and overweight, two main risk factors for diabetes, with regular exercise and a healthy diet.



Men's health isn't just a men's issue; it's a family issue, as well. Women can take advantage of National Men's Health Week by urging the men in their lives to schedule checkups and health screenings.

Check with your local health department and other health providers to find out if any special events, programs or other observances are planned during National Men's Health Week.

For more information, visit:
www.menshealthnetwork.org

www.mensfacts.com

DPH: Kentucky Men's Health at High Risk

By Beth Crace

The best chances of avoiding diseases are prevention, self-examination and regular physician visits. Regular screening can catch many diseases at an early stage, when treatment is most likely to be successful.

DPH recommends that men meet with their physician at least once a year, especially those over 50. If you don't have a physician, contact the local health department to determine which screenings are offered there.

"Men just don't get checkups like they should," says William D. Hacker, M.D., Department for Public Health commissioner and CHFS' acting undersecretary for health. "Statistics indicate that men tend to visit the doctor half as often as women. On average, men die six years younger than females. If men would just get an annual physical, we might see a lot of diseases and deaths prevented."

A routine physical examination is an ideal opportunity to ask questions about health concerns and receive the necessary screenings to detect disease at an early stage.

Men have higher death rates than women for each of the 15 leading causes of death except Alzheimer's disease. According to the Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, the three leading causes of death among Kentucky's male population are:

- Diseases of the heart
- Cancer
- Unintentional injury

Here are a few areas men should consider when reviewing their health:

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Routine physical exams. A routine physical is an ideal opportunity to ask questions about health concerns and receive the latest information to remain healthy. Routine visits become more important and should occur more frequently after age 50 when the rates of heart disease and cancer increase for most men.

Blood Pressure. High blood pressure increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. Reading higher than 139/89 milligrams of mercury may require some lifestyle changes or medication to bring the blood pressure under control.

Cholesterol. High cholesterol also increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. If your doctor plans to check your cholesterol, ask if you need to fast (not eat food for six to eight hours before your blood is drawn). Your total cholesterol number should be below 200.

Diabetes. Diabetes is a common condition that greatly increases the risk of other medical problems including heart disease, kidney failure, blindness and circulatory problems. Screening is the best way to detect diabetes because adults who develop diabetes will have few, if any, symptoms. You should maintain a glucose level below 100 to prevent any complications due to diabetes.

Prostate Cancer screening. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in men. Screening for early stages of prostate cancer remains controversial. Men who are older than 50 and younger men with a family history of prostate cancer should discuss the risks and benefits of screening with their doctor.

Colon Cancer Screening. Colon cancer is the third leading cause of cancer deaths in men. Everyone over 50 should be screened for colon cancer regularly. Younger men with a family history of colon cancer should also be screened.

Immunizations. Immunizations are a simple and effective way to avoid important infections. Talk to your doctor about which immunizations are appropriate for you.

Staff May Submit Questions for Secretary's Forums

By Anya Armes Weber

The final two spring Secretary's Forums are scheduled for later this month, and staff has a new option for being involved.

Staff may anonymously submit questions to members of leadership through the CHFS Listens Web site. The form is accessible from this link: <http://chfs.ky.gov/contact/online.htm>. Staff may also e-mail their questions directly to chfslistens@ky.gov.

Frankfort-based staff may also drop their questions in specially marked boxes located in the lobbies of the Human Resources and Health Services buildings.

"Leadership wanted to give staff from both the central and field offices another opportunity to voice their concerns," Secretary Mark D. Birdwhistell said. "I especially hope that employees outside Frankfort will take advantage of this technology to connect with the central office."

Questions will be read and answered at the final spring forums. Here are the dates.

- **11 a.m.-noon, Thursday, June 22** – Human Services and Secretary's Office
- **11 a.m.-noon, Tuesday, June 27** – Children and Family Services

Employees who have not yet attended the forums are invited to either session. Supervisors should ensure coverage for their offices.

Wellness Ambassadors Making Progress

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Our Wellness Ambassadors continue to pursue their personal health objectives. Here's a look at how things went for some of them a couple of months ago, in April.

Julie Franklin

April Summary: As mentioned previously, I joined Curves, a women's fitness center. When I was measured this month I'd lost several inches. However, I'm not convinced, but I'm still working on it. Once pretty weather is here to stay, I hope to walk more in the evenings.

Steve Davis

Week 1: Continued to walk consistently, three times per day, 1 hour total. Reduced caffeine consumption significantly (from approximately eight, 12-ounce cans per day, to zero). Made healthy food choices (increased fresh fruit consumption, particularly during breakfast and lunch).

Week 2: Still battling late night "activity cravings." Began working on reducing food portions and eliminating between meal snacks. Increased walking before and after work hours. Continued to walk at work, weather and schedule permitting.

Week 3: Made conscious effort to reduce unhealthy food habits and choices, including breads and starchy foods. Continued with fruit and vegetable choices. Increased soy-based recipes for protein and to combat cravings.

Week 4: Experienced a very noticeable change in awareness and energy and a decrease in the number of minor headaches. I attribute this to eliminating caffeine. My desire and taste for a Diet Coke also have noticeably decreased. I continue to walk approximately one hour each day.

Barriers: Unpredictable, busy work and home schedules have affected my eagerness to stay on the wellness wagon. Inclement weather also has affected my level of commitment.

Encouragement/Recommendations: Blowing it a little bit is no excuse to blow it completely.

Kedra Weinrauch

Week 1: I am eating fruits and veggies, walking two times per week and still trying to stop smoking.

Week 2: Still eating fruits and veggies, stopped smoking and I walk with a friend twice per week.

Week 3: Joined the YMCA in downtown Louisville. It's great! Got my own locker and new workout clothes.

Week 4: I worked out at the gym three times, walked with a friend at Cherokee Park one or two times. I'm eating fewer fruits and veggies this week and succumbing to more chocolate temptation.

Week 5: In spite of having an ear infection this week, I worked out three times! I haven't smoked for several weeks! I'm eating fruits and veggies and feeling better.

20 adoptions finalized in Louisville as part of Adoption Week

By Anya Armes Weber

During June 1-9, Jefferson County's Department for Community Based Services office participated in Adoption Week, a joint effort between the Cabinet and the Kentucky Court of Justice when communities celebrate adoption.

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Twenty children were scheduled to have their adoptions finalized in Jefferson County Family Court last week.

Jefferson staff also worked at recruitment booths at 12 public libraries throughout Louisville. One lucky adoptee, TyRee, was selected to throw the first pitch at the Louisville Bats June 5 game.



TyRee, pictured here with Buddy Bat, threw out the first pitch at the Louisville Bats game June 5 at Slugger Field. TyRee was adopted June 1.

Cabinet Procedures Have Central Location on CHFS Intranet

How do I request outside training? Where do I get a Purchase Request Form? How do I get reimbursed for travel expenses? Where do I go for help concerning technology?

If you've ever asked yourself these questions, we have a solution for you! The CHFS Intranet now has a one-stop-shop for all of your policy, procedure and form needs.

You don't have to go from one department link to the next trying to find the right policy, procedure or form. Simply go to the [CHFS Policies and Procedures Directory](#) when you need any Cabinet policy information and save your valuable time!

If your agency has policies posted to the intranet that are not listed in this directory, have your

agency's site editor contact the [CHFS OIT Web Team](#).

Performance Evaluation Program Audited

Quality Improves by 8 percent

The Office of Human Resource Management has completed an audit of the Cabinet's 2005 employee performance evaluations. The goal of the audit was to confirm regulatory compliance, determine effectiveness of the evaluation program, and identify trends and training opportunities.

The quality of CHFS' performance evaluations increased by 8 percent from 2004 to 2005.

"Quality" is assessed on the degree to which job duties are defined; expectations are defined; supervisory comments address each job duty and expectation; and supervisory comments support ratings.

The Cabinet's [complete audit results](#), as well as [statistical data](#) provided by the Personnel Cabinet, are posted on the CHFS intranet site.

Each agency head and evaluation liaison is being provided the data for their particular agency for distribution to agency supervisors.

We're making great progress on improving the integrity of the evaluation process within CHFS, but there's still room to grow. We will modify the evaluation training to address these opportunities for improvement.

Should you have questions regarding any of this data or suggestions for improvement, please contact Dawn Williams, CHFS Evaluation Coordinator, at 564-7770, x3910 or at DawnD.Williams@ky.gov.

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CHFS Focus Health Tip of the Week

Make Time for Dad During Men's Health Week

Submitted by Anne Parr, R.N.

This week is National Men's Health Week, an annual awareness week observed each year the week prior to Father's Day.

The purpose of Men's Health Week is to heighten the awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys.

Give Dad a unique gift this Father's Day. Instead of another tie or garden gadget, help him celebrate National Men's Health Week.

Here are some ideas to help dad improve his health and manage his weight:

Take your dad to a community health fair. Many health fairs, sponsored by national health organizations or community groups, offer free health screenings that check cholesterol, blood pressure, bone density and more. Your local newspaper, hospital or clinic can provide information on upcoming fairs.

Remind your dad to schedule regular checkups. Your father's physician can screen and treat common health conditions that affect men, such as prostate cancer, colorectal cancer and cardiovascular disease. Regular checkups help your dad's doctor monitor changes in his condition.

Become a kid again. Remember when you begged dad to play catch with you in the backyard? Encourage your dad to exercise again. Choose something your dad likes to do, and try to do it with him a few days a week.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Employee Enrichment is a weekly feature for CHFS staff. These tips for making work better focus on team building, customer service and personal development.



How will you spend your lunch break today? If you packed a sandwich to eat at your desk as you work, or worse, you plan to grab chips and soft drink on your way to a meeting, you may want to rethink your midday plans.

Getting away from your workspace for a proper meal – even a small one – is important, according to troubleatwork.org.uk, a British career advice Web site.

Leaving your desk to stop and eat offers many benefits, including:

- Providing a change of scenery
- Giving you energy
- Easing stress buildup
- Resting your body
- Refreshing your brain

Making time for lunch is a smart work move that can help improve your overall work performance.