

## Cancer Control Month

April is Cancer Control Month, and with that in mind you may have noticed Relay For Life efforts ongoing in Clay County and surrounding areas. The local Relay For Life Celebration is scheduled for June 6, 2008, from 6:00 pm to 6:00 am at the old high school football field. Relay For Life was started in 1985 by Dr. Gordy Klatt, in Tacoma, Washington. Dr. Klatt spent 24 hours circling a local college track, while friends paid \$25 to run or walk 30 minutes with him. He raised \$27,000 to fight cancer that first year; all the while he envisioned a 24 hour team relay effort to get more people involved and raise more money. Check out [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org) for more history about Relay For Life, support group information, tips to reduce risks of cancers, and many other ideas and info.

## Energy from Nutrients

Last month we listed all six nutrients and mentioned that carbohydrates, proteins, and fats provide energy, in a form known as calories. Carbohydrates and proteins provide four calories per gram, while fats provide 9 calories per gram.

It is important to know the role of these three nutrients so that you can moderate the intake of each based on the value they provide to your body in your efforts to improve or maintain your health. So, if you have not been reading those food labels for calories, fats, proteins, carbohydrates, fiber, etc., now is the time to start.

## Proteins

This month we will take a closer look at proteins and the role they play in our health. Proteins are nutrients that help build and maintain body tissues and are a vital part of every body cell. Muscle, bone, connective tissue, teeth, blood, and vital organs all contain protein. Amino acids are the building blocks of protein and join together in a chain formation. There are 20 different amino acids and the body can make all except nine, and these nine are called essential amino acids, because they have to come from food. Protein- rich foods are classified as complete protein or incomplete protein depending on the amino acids they contain. Complete proteins are foods that contain all the essential amino acids that the body needs and in the proper amount. Sources include meat, chicken, turkey, fish, eggs, milk, cheese, and many soybean products. Incomplete proteins are foods that lack some of the essential amino acids. Sources include beans, peas, nuts, whole grains, and seeds themselves. By having a combination of incomplete proteins throughout the day, a person can still receive all the needed amino acids. So, proteins build new body tissues during growth periods, such as childhood and pregnancy. Throughout life, proteins are constantly being formed to replace damaged or worn out body cells. Proteins are also found in hormones, which regulate body chemical reactions, and antibodies, which help identify and destroy bacteria and viruses that make us sick. Although proteins provide energy, their main job for the body is growth and repair of body tissue. Remember, when you decide to train to have big, strong muscles, you can not do it without proteins.

From the Nurses' Desk

Nurse Teia—You may be asking yourself, “How many hours of sleep does my child need each night?” The ideal amount is 10-12 hours per night. When children don't get enough sleep, they can not focus on their schoolwork; they have trouble remembering things, can become irritable, and are more likely to catch colds and flu.

Here are some tips to help ensure that your child gets enough sleep:

- \*Set a regular bedtime.
- \*Be consistent with the chosen bedtime (including weekends).
- \*Establish a relaxing bedtime routine.
- \*Beware of caffeine.

Nurse Amanda—Before venturing out and enjoying the great outdoors, make sure you take some precautions against becoming infected with Lyme disease, a disease transmitted from the bite of an infected tick.

- \*Wear light-colored clothing.
- \*Wear a hat and long sleeved shirt.
- \*Tuck your cloths in.

- \*Use an insect repellent with DEET on exposed skin and cloths.
- \*Stay in the middle of hiking trails to avoid underbrush and fallen trees.
- \*After being outdoors, perform tick checks and shower immediately if possible.
- \* Lyme disease can start a few days or weeks after a tick bite.

Nurse Tiona—Why hand washing is important? Germs can be spread several different ways: through dirty hands, contaminated water and food, contaminated surfaces and a sick person's body fluids. Good hand washing is your first line of defense against the spread of illnesses. Here is a list of tips for hand washing:

\*Wash hands in warm water.

\*Use soap and lather up for 10-15 seconds, make sure to get in between your fingers and nails. (Also, don't forget your wrist.)

\*Rinse and dry with a clean towel.

If you have problems with getting your children to wash their hands, try these tips. Use colorful soaps made especially for kids. Also there are soaps that come in different shapes or fun scents to make hand washing more fun. Have your child sing a favorite song while washing.

### Next Month

In May, we will delve into fats and show they are not as evil (moderation is the key) as everyone thinks they are and that they are necessary for a healthy body. Also, with spring here, use yard work and house work as part of your exercise program, both are good ways to exercise muscles and get the heart rate up. Until then, keep up the efforts for a healthier you.