

First, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of you that have given me positive feedback on my initial Coordinated School Health (CSH) newsletter. Feel free to quote, copy, and rebroadcast items from the newsletter without the expressed legal, written consent of myself. Also, I would like to apologize to those people who do not have internet access or just do not like using it when I have to shorten details by providing websites to gather information. My goal is to provide the healthiest information to everyone in a limited amount of space, so if you have a question that you want answered that needs the help of the internet and you fall in this category, please contact me I and I will do my best to help. For more personal items you may want to consult your doctor.

I failed to mention last month that I will be pointing out one to three National Health Observances each month that are important to everyone's general well being. So with that in mind, October is National Breast Cancer Month and National Dental Hygiene Month. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women, aside from skin cancer. The most common risk factors are sex, age, personal history, family history, and breast cancer genes. For other risk factors go to www.nbcam.org and remember mammography screening remains the best available method to detect breast cancer early. So please, schedule those mammograms. Did you know that the enamel on your teeth is the hardest substance found in the human body? It has a ranking of 5 on Mohs hardness scale, while diamonds, the hardest substance in the world has a ranking of 10. Proper oral care consists of brushing teeth everyday, flossing, and scheduling regular oral checkups (every six months). At any age, a complete oral health home program includes sound nutritional habits. Many of the foods that help your body build strong muscles and bones also help build strong, healthy teeth and gums. Go to www.adha.org for oral health tips for all ages and how to identify potential problems. Drinking water is essential to everyone to sustain a healthy diet and keep the body hydrated during physical activity. Water regulates body temperature, carries nutrients to cells and tissues throughout the body, improves digestion, and removes wastes and toxins from the body. Ideally a person needs to drink 64 ounces of water a day. If you regularly exercise, you need to drink 1 to 2 cups of water at least two hours before and drink water during and after exercise. If you work outdoors in hot and humid weather and with winter approaching in insulated clothing, you need to replenish the body's fluids lost through sweating. Also, indoor heat can cause the skin to lose moisture and running the heat full time is not too far away.

Last month we talked about walking being the most basic form of exercise. You may have started walking, or maybe you want to do some other form of exercise; no matter what you choose let's go over some beginning tips. Start off slowly and build up gradually, many people start off at a frenzied pace (working out to long or too intensely) and become sore and injured. Listen to your body. If you feel pain or shortness of breath take a break, you may be pushing your body to hard. Consider your fitness goal: is it to lose weight, feel better, or build muscle? Consider activities you enjoy, if you enjoy it the more likely you will continue. You might include someone to exercise with you; some things are more enjoyable to do together. Finally, allow your body to recover, because if you injure yourself it will dampen and discourage your spirit. These are just a few tips to get started.

With the holidays fast approaching, next month we will take a look at how to handle all the eating that goes on during that time of the year. Remember, you are never too young or old to change your nutritional or physical activity habits.