

## National Health Observances for the month of October

October is Eye Injury Prevention Month. More than one million people suffer from eye injuries each year in the United States. Eye safety is important, because 90 percent of the eye injuries could have been prevented with protective eyewear. The leading causes of eye injuries include sports accidents, consumer fireworks, household chemicals and battery acid, as well as workshop and yard debris. Learn to protect yourself from serious eye injuries by taking a few simple precautions, such as wearing eye protection for yard work, woodworking and with the use of strong chemicals, practicing fireworks safety, and seek the help of a medical professional if you sustain an injury to the eye, odds are it will not “get better in a few days”. Go [www.aao.org/aaosite/eyemd/injury.cfm](http://www.aao.org/aaosite/eyemd/injury.cfm) for more information about eye safety and the prevention of injuries.

October is also National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. One of the earliest signs of breast cancer can be an abnormality that shows up on a mammogram before it can be felt. The most common signs of breast cancer are a lump in the breast; abnormal thickening of the breast; or a change in the shape or color of the breast. Finding a lump or change does not necessarily mean that a person has breast cancer. Mammography screening remains the best available method to detect breast cancer early. However, no medical test is always 100 percent accurate, and mammography is no exception. So it is important to obtain an annual clinical breast exam and to perform monthly breast self-exams. For more information check out [www.nbcam.org](http://www.nbcam.org), there is a plethora of information at this website that is too vast for me to cover in this column. So, if you do not feel like reading more just go ahead and schedule that mammogram, you will be glad you did.

## Water

Well, we have come to the grand finale of our in-depth look at the six nutrients needed by the body and water is the last, but certainly not the least. There is not a whole lot to say about water other than to talk about the body's needs and uses; because we all know where to get water and what it looks like. One great benefit of water is there are no calories to count to take the fun out of drinking it. Water may have surprised some of you as a nutrient, but water makes up the 60 percentage of our body weight. Water is a regulator and is vital to every body function. It carries other nutrients to and transports waste from your cells, mainly through plasma in your blood. Water lubricates your joints and mucous membranes, it allows you to swallow and digest foods, absorb nutrients, and eliminate wastes. Perspiration, commonly known as sweating, helps your body cool down and prevents the buildup of internal heat.

Lack of water can lead to dehydration, a condition that occurs when you don't have enough water in your body to carry out normal functions. Even mild dehydration can drain your energy and make you tired. How much water do you need? That depends on you and your activities. There are three approaches a person can take about drinking water, 1) Replacement, 2) Eight 8-ounce glasses a day, and 3) Dietary recommendations. Factors that affect how much water you drink are 1) Exercise, 2) Environment, 3) Illnesses or health conditions, and 4) Pregnancy and/or breastfeeding. You may want to consult with your doctor to determine which approach is best for you.

Ten reasons to drink more water:

1. Reduce hunger
2. Look younger (drink up people)
3. Enhance fat loss
4. Stay regular
5. Build more muscle
6. Cushion joints and muscles
7. Healthy skin
8. Reduce risk of heart attack
9. Get energized and be more alert
10. Flush toxins and prevent kidney stones

Nurse Tiona: Keeping a good health record for your children will save you time for any emergency situation and filling out that back to school information page. Here are some helpful hints to aid in the collection of your child's health records.

- \*Contact information for all doctors, specialists and dentist.
- \*Date of birth, social security numbers and immunization record.
- \*Emergency contact and phone numbers.
- \*Insurance information.
- \*Make a list of the medication that your child is taking and the correct dose and include the name of the physician that prescribed the medication.
- \*Any known medication or food allergies.
- \*Any past and/or present health conditions.
- \*Any type of surgery.
- \*Any family history of illness that is known.

All this information will provide a physician or even a school nurse with valuable information about your child's health. They will be able to provide better care.

### Next Month

I guess next month will have to be a surprise, I have about three topics I am working on at the moment and none of the three are standing out just yet. Rest assured it will pertain to personal wellness. Until then, keep up the efforts for a healthier you.