

Edgecombe County

Health Department

2909 Main Street

Tarboro, NC 27886

252-641-7511

Health Connections

www.edgecombecountync.gov/health/health.aspx

JANUARY 2011

The Health Department now offers **FREE** flu shots for everyone 6 months old and up. Come get yours today!

ON THE MENU

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County Employees Wear Red Feb 4th!!!!

Rocky Mount Office:

155 Atlantic Avenue

Rocky Mount, NC 27801

252-985-4100

Protecting Your Heart

February is here, once again. It's a time where you might be thinking of your sweet-heart, but it's also a time where you should think of your own heart. Heart disease is a top killer of both men and women in America. In 2009, there were 17,133 deaths related to heart disease in North Carolina alone. That averages to 47 people everyday. While these statistics are scary, there are several things you can do to lower your risk of heart disease:

Know Your Numbers

Knowledge is a great weapon in the fight against heart disease. Knowing your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar numbers will help you see when you are at greater risk for heart disease. Talk with your doctor or local health department for more information in understanding these numbers.

Eat Healthy, Be Active

Get active! Being physically active and eating healthy is one of the best ways you can protect yourself from heart disease. Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and healthy grains. Also, make sure to stay healthy by being physically active 150 minutes per week.

Kick The Habit

Kick the habit of smoking this year and get the added benefit of a reduced risk of heart disease! Smoking raises the risk of heart disease (as well as several other diseases). Contact your local health department for resources to help you quit!

Another way to become involved is to spread awareness of heart disease. Many churches and community organizations will be joining the fight for awareness by participating in National Wear Red Day on February 6th. Wear Red Day is a day where individuals and groups commit to wear red to spread awareness of the dangers of heart disease. County employees are urged to participate on February 4th. We encourage everyone to get out there and wear red on February 4th and 6th! With these simple, proactive steps, you can fight back against heart disease. This February, don't just skim through these recommendations, but take them...to heart.

Free Mammograms?

Noticed the “Free Mammogram” signs popping up all over Edgecombe County? Ever wondered where those signs come from? Dr. Steve Hoard is the man behind the signs. He is on a mission to spread the word about free mammograms to income eligible women. The signs, appearing on one side in English and on the other Spanish, are planted all over Edgecombe County, including in front of the hospital and the health department. The goal is to get as many women as possible to ask about getting a free mammogram. Since the initiative began, the Edgecombe County Health Department has gone from close to no calls per day to an average of 10 calls per day of women in search of a free mammogram. The free mammogram he speaks of comes through BCCCP (Breast & Cervical Cancer Control Program). BCCCP, pronounced ‘bee-sip’, has been specific guidelines a woman must meet before she can be considered eligible for a free mammogram.

To be eligible for BCCCP a woman must:

- * Have no insurance of any kind (including Medicare and Medicaid)
- * Live 250% below the Federal poverty level
- * Be an Edgecombe County resident

For more information about BCCCP, please call (252)-641-5260.



Your Clicker and Your Ticker

A new study released this month in the American Journal of Cardiology looks at the effects of screen time on overall health. Researchers found that people who spent more than 4 hours/day in front of a screen (tv, computer, or gaming) while outside of work had a substantially increased risk of heart disease and type two diabetes regardless of workout routine. Participants in the study had a 113% increased risk of heart attack and stroke. Participants also had a 50% increased risk of death by any cause. These are frightening results, but there are things you can do to get more active:

- 1) Step away from the screen—Limit your television watching, videogame playing, or internet browsing time. Some alternatives include: going for a walk, playing a board game, visiting friends, etc.
- 2) Get more active—If you don’t want to miss that favorite show, then find ways to get active while watching. Commercial breaks can become activity breaks! Do some pushups, situps, or just walk around. It will get you moving and it will make commercial breaks seem to go by quicker.
- 3) Plan it out—Plan your alternative activities or activity breaks ahead of time and commit. It’s up to you to stay healthy. Do it your way!

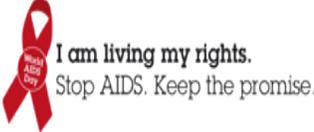
Folic Acid

January 2-8 is National Folic Acid Awareness Week. Folic Acid is the man-made form of the naturally occurring Folate, which is a B-Vitamin. It is essential to a healthy body, especially in women. Its primary functions include:



- Creating New Cells
- Preventing Neural Tube Defects in Pregnant Women (Anencephaly and Spina Bifida)
- Preventing Miscarriage

It is recommended that a woman gets around 400mcg everyday. There are many ways to get it. The quickest and easiest way is to take a folic acid supplement or multivitamin. Another way is to eat leafy, green vegetables that contain folate. Folate is not as easily absorbed by your body as folic acid; however, since it comes from vegetables, it does give you other great benefits such as fiber and other vitamins/minerals. A final way is to check fortified foods such as cereals. Check the label and make sure that it has 100% of the daily recommendations for folic acid. Do not worry about getting too much. Since Vitamin B is a water soluble vitamin, if you ingest more than your body needs, it will simply excrete the excess. The risk of folic acid toxicity is low.



HIV/AIDS AWARENESS





As you may or may not know, HIV and STD testing is now available on a walk-in basis on Thursday evenings at both the Tarboro and Rocky Mount offices of the Edgecombe County Health Department. On the first and third Thursdays of every month walk-ins will be accepted between 5pm and 6pm at the Tarboro office, while on the second and fourth, walk-ins will be accepted at the Rocky Mount office from 5pm until 6pm. Testing is quick, confidential, and everyone who gets tested gets a free T-Shirt. The Edgecombe County Health Department is trying to make the public aware that HIV is a huge problem in this area of the state with Edgecombe county having the second highest HIV/AIDS rates in the state.

Tuna Salad With Fresh Dill

Ingredients

- 1 (6 ounce) can tuna
- 1/4 cup diced celery
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh dill weed
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced green onion
- 2 tablespoons fat-free mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons plain low-fat yogurt
- 1/2 teaspoon prepared Dijon-style mustard

Preparation Instructions

In a small bowl, mash tuna with juices from can. Add celery, dill, parsley, chives, mayonnaise, yogurt, and mustard; mix well.

Nutritional Information

Serving size 5
Calories 50
Total Fat 0.4g
Cholesterol 10mg
Sodium 83mg
Carbohydrate 2.3g
Fiber 0.2g
Protein 9.1g

www.allrecipes.com

Edgecombe County Health Department
2909 Main Street
Tarboro, North Carolina 27886
Health Director—Karen Lachapelle, MAEd

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Newsletter prepared by:

Derrick Haskins, BS

DEALING WITH STRESS

Stress! It hides itself in many forms, but we all have to face it. It's the ticket you get on the way home from work. It's the son that forgot it was picture day until you were walking out to the car. It's wondering if you're going to make it to that next paycheck. There are certainly many ways we can become stressed. A person under stress may show certain "signs" of stress such as: anxiety, change in eating and/or sleeping habits, irritability, depression, etc. Not only that, but, stress (especially chronic stress) can have a very serious impact on your health. It has been shown to cause or exacerbate many health conditions such as: increased blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, depression, etc. For this reason, it is important that we spend some time learning how to manage and overcome our stress. The first step in managing your stress is understanding where your personal stressor(s) come from. What makes you the most stressed? Write down on a piece of paper all of the things that give you stress. The next step is to find a way of alleviating that stress. Many studies have shown that exercising is a powerful way to combat stress. If you're feeling overly stressed, try going for a walk, riding a bike, or going for a swim. Another way to overcome stress is by taking a breather. Every time you start to feel overwhelmed with stress, breathe deep breaths in and out. Finally, look back at your sheet. Make another column if you have to and ask yourself, "Is this stress within my control? Is there anything I can do to take control of this stressor?" In reality, many of the things that stress us out on a daily basis are outside of our control. Accept your limitations, that you can't control all stress, and try to deal with the ones you can. One last thing, and I can't "stress" this enough...you can overcome your stress! Believe it!

MAKE IT YOUR MISSION

TO FIGHT HEART DISEASE IN WOMEN



Heart disease is still the No. 1 killer of women, taking the life of 1 in 3 women each year. This means women just like you – mothers, sisters, friends – are dying at the rate of one per minute. In fact, in the time it takes to read this, another woman will die from heart disease. It simply does not have to be that way. At the American Heart Association, we work every day to fund research and fight this killer so that more women can be saved. But we need your help. This National Wear Red Day®, join our mission to ensure we never have to deny research that could save a woman's life. Help raise the funds needed for lifesaving educational programs and the development of new treatments to fight heart disease.

On February 4, 2011, or any day, Make It Your Mission to Save Lives. **Together we can make a difference.**

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Be well



2010 Community Health Assessment Completed

A community survey was conducted March through August 2010, in order to provide residents an opportunity to express their opinions and concerns about the quality of life in Edgecombe County. The survey contained questions about the economy, education, environment, health, housing, leisure, safety, social issues, and transportation. Survey participants were asked to assess a variety of community issues and to score them as either major problems, moderate problems, minor problems or not a problem.

Surveys were distributed at strategic sites throughout the county in order to reach a variety of residents. A total of 760 surveys were collected, of which, 623 surveys were eligible. The age range of citizens answering the survey was fairly even – respondent's age ranged from under 18 to over 65 years old. Both female (74.1%) and males (25.9%) participated in the survey. Citizen's race was primarily black (63.4%) and white (28%). Twenty-nine percent of respondents were high school graduates, 21.6% had some college, and 24% had less than a high school diploma.

In addition to the community survey, a key informant survey was sent out to 65 local business owners/leaders, agency directors, board of health members, county commissioners, town officials, health care providers, leaders from county departments, churches, civic groups, law enforcement, and fire and rescue. Key informants were asked questions on community strengths in addition to the community survey questions. Forty-seven surveys were returned. The majority of respondents were white (64.4%; black 31.1%), age 40 to 54 (42.6%), and female 52.3% (male 47.7%).

Based on the findings from the community and key informant surveys, combined with the health data, the Edgecombe County Community Health Assessment Advisory Group identified 15 chief health and social concerns for the county. The top health and community concerns are as follows: Lack of Jobs, Unemployment or Underemployment, Teen Pregnancy, Overweight & Obesity, Chronic Disease, Poverty, Drug Abuse, HIV/AIDS/STD's, Crime, Lack of Affordable Medical Care, Lack of Affordable Medical Care, Gangs, Family Violence/Child Abuse, Illiteracy, and Alcohol Abuse.

After reviewing and discussing this information, the Edgecombe County Advisory Group members participated in rating the top 2 out of 15 community concerns using a Prioritization Worksheet. The worksheet asked that each of the issues be ranked according to three criteria: Magnitude of the Problem, Seriousness of the Consequences, and Feasibility of Correcting the Problem. Results of these worksheets were calculated to come up with the top 2 priorities, which are as follows:

Selected Priority Issues:

- 1. Overweight & Obesity**
- 2. Chronic Disease**

Next steps will be bringing the advisory and work groups back together to develop an action plan for the community to work on to address the two priority issues. For more information about the 2010 Community Health Assessment, please contact Michelle Etheridge @ 252-641-7526. A full copy of the final report can be viewed and copied on the Edgecombe County Health Department's website: <http://www.edgecombecountync.gov/health/healthed.aspx>.

