

# Healthwise

The Official Newsmagazine of MFHN

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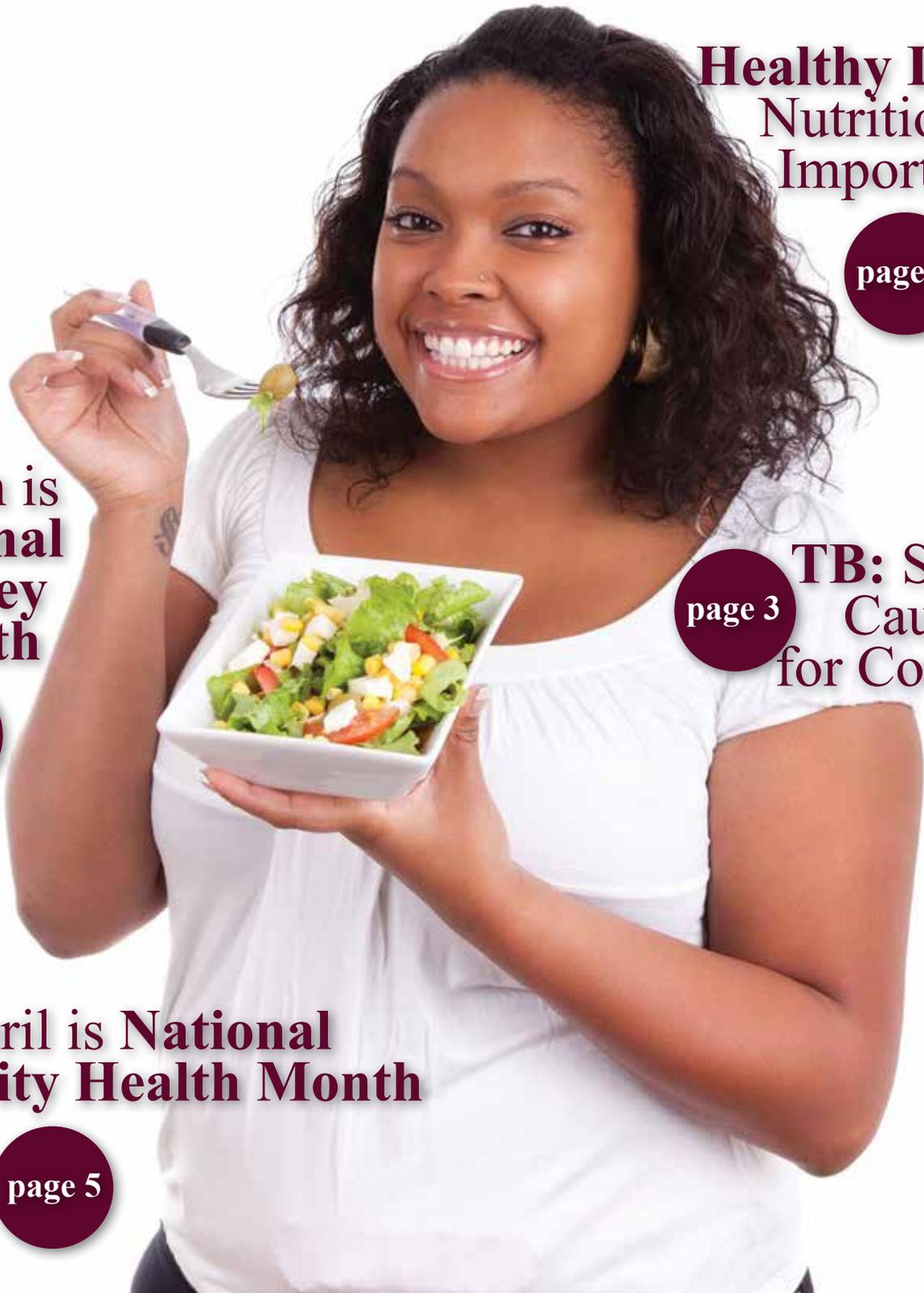
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# March is National Kidney Month

*By Patrick Beaty, M.D., MFHN Chief Medical Officer*

About 26 million Americans (13% of the U.S. adult population) suffer the effects of Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD). The rate is predicted to increase due to several risk factors, which include an aging population (Baby Boomers), and high rates of obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure. CKD also affects young and middle-aged adults due to other conditions which are less common.

The risk factors for CKD are diabetes mellitus, hypertension, cardiovascular disease and a family history of kidney disease before the age of 60. Less common causes include obesity, autoimmune diseases such as Lupus, frequent urinary tract infections and prior kidney injury. There is a high prevalence in African-Americans due to their rates of diabetes and hypertension.

Signs and symptoms of CKD are often found late in the disease process. These include ankle swelling, fatigue, difficulty in concentrating, decreased urine output and possible blood in the urine. These symptoms are found in more advanced disease. At this stage, a patient may require preparation and planning for dialysis, which works as an external kidney and removes the impurities from the blood. Another consideration which should be discussed is kidney transplantation, since dialysis would be lifelong if the patient has End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD).

Prevention of Chronic Kidney Disease means taking care and control of your overall health. This includes proper exercise, a low-salt diet, weight control, smoking cessation and avoidance of heavy alcohol use. For patients with hypertension and diabetes, it is absolutely important to control blood pressure and glucose levels. Common drugs such as ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) and Naprosyn (Aleve) should be used with caution, because they may cause renal (kidney) failure when taken on a long-term basis.

The kidneys are two bean-shaped organs located just below the rib cage on each side of the spine, at the small of the back. Each is about the size of a fist. It is important that you have regular visits with your physician, who can screen and monitor your kidney function. Call 201-478-5827 and schedule your appointment at Metropolitan Family Health Network today.

## A Message from the President & CEO

*Dear Friends:*

*While it may be difficult, it's very important that you always speak up and be honest about your health – and your health concerns – with your doctor and caregiver.*

*We want to provide you with the best care possible. In order to do that we need for you to tell us about any aches or pains you may have as well as your health history and your family's health history. You should also tell us about any medication – even over-the-counter meds – you may be taking.*

*You should never feel embarrassed or shy about talking with your doctor or caregiver. We all want what you want – for you to be as healthy as possible!*

**Joan Dublin**

Joan Dublin, RN, MPA, ACHE  
President and Chief Executive Officer

# TB: Still a Cause for Concern



**March 24<sup>th</sup> is World Tuberculosis Day.** Tuberculosis (TB) is a lung disease caused by germs spreading through the air from person to person. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was no treatment for TB. It was the leading cause of death in the U.S. Today, thanks to the creation of vaccines and medicines, TB is still a life-threatening problem in the U.S., but it is treatable.

The World Health Organization reports that about one-third of the people on earth are infected with TB. In 2015, there were more than 9,500 cases of TB reported in 27 states and the District of Columbia – an increase of 1.6% since 2014. Fortunately, the number of people in the U.S. who die from TB has continued to decrease, but the disease itself can be devastating.

When someone with TB disease coughs, sneezes, speaks, or sings, anyone nearby can breathe in TB bacteria and become infected. Most of the time, a person's im-

mune system can stop TB bacteria from growing. Even still, the bacteria continue to live in the lungs and the body carries TB silently.

There are two types of TB infection: Latent TB infection and TB disease.

Millions of people in the United States have Latent TB infection. They do not feel sick, do not have any symptoms, and cannot spread TB to others. But even if they don't feel sick, people infected with TB bacteria need medicine to prevent developing TB disease later, and possibly passing it on to others. If not treated, Latent TB infection may become TB disease.

People with TB disease have active TB germs in their bodies, and can spread the germs to others. People with weak immune systems – especially those with HIV – are most at risk for developing TB disease. Symptoms of TB disease include:

- A bad cough that lasts 3 weeks or longer
- Pain in the chest
- Coughing up blood or mucus from deep inside the lungs
- Weakness or fatigue
- Weight loss
- No appetite
- Chills
- Fever
- Sweating at night

TB is diagnosed with a simple test and is usually part of routine preventive care. There are two kinds of TB tests – a skin test and a blood test. These tests tell the doctor that a person has TB, but not whether it is Latent TB infection or TB disease. If a person has a positive TB test, other tests such as chest x-ray and mucus samples are needed.

TB is very serious, but it can be treated. If you think you have TB, visit your health provider immediately! Call 201-478-5827.

## Oral Cancer: What It Is, How to Prevent It

According to the Oral Cancer Foundation, there are about 50,000 cases of oral cancer diagnosed each year in the U.S. Oral cancer – cancers of the mouth and throat – affects people age 40 or older more than any other age group. For every woman, there are two men who get oral cancer. The disease occurs twice as often among Blacks as Whites.

The death rate for oral cancer is higher than most other cancers – about one person dies from oral cancer every hour of every day. This is because oral cancer can go unnoticed in the early stages when it might best be treated. By the time oral cancer is diagnosed, it has often advanced and spread to other parts of the body, usually the lymph nodes in the neck.

### Causes of oral cancer

Among those over 50 years of age, tobacco use – including smokeless tobacco products – and excessive alcohol consumption are responsible for at least 75% of oral cancers. Those who both smoke and drink have a 15 times greater risk of developing oral cancer.



In recent years, nonsmokers under the age of 40 with Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) have become the fastest growing group at risk for developing oral cancers. Both men and women are equally at risk for oral cancers caused by HPV.

Other risk factors include poor oral health care, overexposure to the sun, and not eating enough fruits and vegetables.

### Know the signs of oral cancer

Oral cancers are sometimes painless and

may not be easy to recognize. Some of the symptoms include:

- A white or red patch, or a lump or sore in the mouth or on the lips that does not heal within 14 days
- Pain or difficulty swallowing, speaking or chewing
- Hoarseness that lasts for a long time
- Numbness in the mouth and facial region
- Trouble breathing or speaking
- A persistent earache or sore throat.

### Prevention and treatment

The best way to prevent oral cancer is:

- Don't smoke or use tobacco products
- Brush your teeth and floss twice a day
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. (Experts estimate that your risk for oral cancer goes down by 50% percent for each additional portion of fruits and vegetables you eat each day.)
- Wear a lip balm with sunscreen
- **Have regular dental check-ups twice a year!** You will be examined for oral cancer as part of your check-up, so call 201-478-5875 and schedule your appointment now.

## Healthy Living: Nutrition is Important

Data from the National Health and Nutrition Survey show that more than two-thirds of American adults and one-third of U.S. children are overweight or obese. Those who are overweight or obese are more apt to develop type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, osteoarthritis, and breast, colon, kidney and other types of cancer. Poor eating habits – and lack of exercise – are the biggest contributors to becoming overweight or obese.

The human body needs a number of nutrients that can only come from a diet that includes a variety of healthy foods. Fueling the body with these foods helps you control your weight, feel better, work better, and sleep better.

A healthy diet is one that steers clear of trans fats, cholesterol, salt and added sugar. It includes: fresh, frozen or canned vegetables and fruits; whole grain products (breads, cereals, pasta made from rice, wheat, oats, barley or other cereal grains); fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products (cheese, yogurt); lean meats, fish, beans, eggs and nuts; and small amounts of saturated fats such as canola or olive oil.

### Small changes make a big difference

To have a healthy diet, you don't have to change what you eat all at once. Try



incorporating some of the following into your daily eating habits:

- Fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables. Mix vegetables into your favorite dishes.
- Switch from white to whole wheat or multi-grain bread.
- Choose leaner cuts of beef (where the label reads 90% lean or higher); opt for turkey or chicken breast instead of legs and thighs.
- Drink water or water infused with fruit instead of sugary drinks.
- When shopping, read the Nutrition Facts label to choose lower sodium versions of canned and frozen foods.
- Eat fish and seafood at least once or twice a week.
- Eat fewer foods that contain added sugar and solid fats, such as cakes, cookies, ice cream and other desserts, as well as pizza, sausage, hot dogs, bacon, and ribs.

The benefits of eating healthy add up over your lifetime. You may notice that you get fewer colds, or that you have more energy. You may even take eating healthy for granted someday. But don't. Eating healthy is one of the best ways to take care of yourself and your family.

## STI or STD? What's the Difference

For a long time, STD was the most commonly used term for sexually transmitted diseases. People who are infected don't always experience symptoms or have their infections develop into diseases. For example, most women who contract HPV (human papilloma virus), a sexually transmitted infection (STI), will not develop the resulting disease, cervical cancer.

Health care professionals began using the term STI to point out the difference between infection and disease, to encourage more people to get tested for STIs, and to reduce the shame sometimes associated with STDs. They want men and women to know that one in two sexually active people will get a STI or STD by the age of 25; STIs are usually easily treated; and most will clear up within two years.

Some common STIs are herpes, HPV, chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and trichomoniasis.

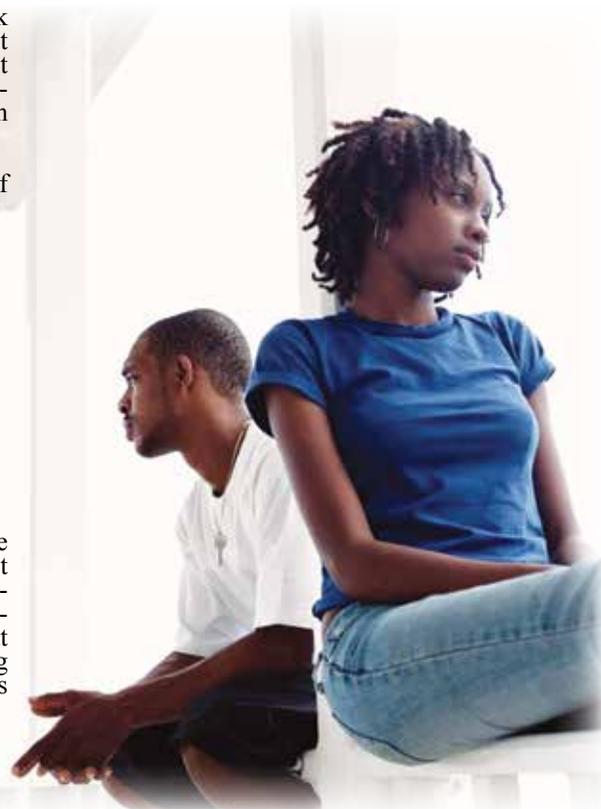
Infections are often the first step to developing diseases. People with a STI may not even know it, and this can be serious because someone who has an infection can be contagious. Additionally, STIs

like herpes and syphilis increase the risk of HIV. A pregnant woman can transmit infection to her baby, which can result in stillbirth, neonatal death, and low-birth weight. STIs can cause infertility in women.

Some of the most common symptoms of STIs are:

- Itching and/or discharge from the vagina or penis
- Pain during sex or when urinating
- Pain in the pelvic area
- Soft, flesh-colored warts around the genital area
- Painless red sores in the genital area, anus, tongue and/or throat
- Swollen glands, fever and body aches
- Unexplained fatigue, night sweats and weight loss.

Sex is a normal and important part of life that is more enjoyable when there is trust between partners. Health care professionals recommend practicing safe sex: using condoms; asking and knowing about one's partner's sexual history; and being tested for STIs, if there are any symptoms or even the thought of being infected.



# April is National Minority Health Month



Hudson County is one of the most ethnically diverse areas of the United States. The beautiful blend of different races, ethnicities, nationalities, abilities and genders is what makes our region – and our country – so dynamic. This diversity can also create challenges in health care, because people from different ethnic groups are often affected differently and with higher rates of certain diseases, illnesses, and suffering.

As a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), Metropolitan Family Health Network doctors, providers and staff members keep up with the latest research and information on the causes and best ways of treating illnesses and diseases in different age, gender, and ethnic groups. We care for the “whole person,” and we know that what may be good for one person will not necessarily be good for someone else. Our patients receive care from health professionals and staff who are representative of our community and speak the languages of our patients. We have programs and policies to help everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religious belief, physical abilities or economic status.

National Minority Health Month was started in 1915 when Dr. Booker T. Washington wrote to leading African American newspapers and proposed the observance of “National Negro Health Week.” He wrote: “Without health and long life, all else fails.” Dr. Washington urged churches, schools, businesses, local health departments and professional associations to “unite ... in one great National Health Movement.”

Today, Dr. Washington’s movement is a month-long, federal, state, and local observance that seeks to eliminate health disparities and to achieve health equity so we all can enjoy a stronger, healthier, happier and more prosperous community.

## M.D. Spotlight

### Ralph Pellecchia, M.D., Obstetrics and Gynecology

Making certain that women receive the care and treatment they need and deserve is Dr. Ralph Pellecchia’s top professional priority, and that is undoubtedly one of the greatest reasons his patients are so devoted to him.

Dr. Pellecchia earned his Bachelor of Science degree from State University of New York at Binghamton and attained his medical degree at Albany Medical College where he was presented with the Kenneth M. Archibald Prize for Outstanding Achievement, which is awarded for thoughtful care of patients and enthusiastic acquisition of skills and knowledge in obstetrical practice. He went on to complete his post-doctoral training as a resident at University of Medicine and Dentistry - New Jersey Medical School and received the Residents Research Award while there.

After completing his residency, Dr. Pellecchia established a private practice in Mount Kisco, NY. In 2000, he went to Jersey City Medical Center and served as New Margaret Hague Faculty Staff Attending Physician. In 2002, he was named Clinical Director of Women’s Health Services for the Family Health Center of Jersey City Medical Center, and in 2006, Dr. Pellecchia became the Director of Obstetrics & Gynecology (OB/GYN) here at MFHN. A Fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Dr. Pellecchia resides in Allendale, NJ.





**MFHN Celebrated "Give Kids a Smile" Day with FREE Dental Exams.** On Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, Metropolitan Family Health Network provided 40 children with dental examinations, fluoride treatments and referrals and appointments for follow-up care. The daylong event was devoted exclusively to children 17 years of age and younger. There were educational games to help the youngsters learn about food choices that will help keep their teeth healthy, instruction on proper brushing and flossing, and goodie bags with oral care products, fruit and toys.

**Metropolitan Family Health Network Staff Members Participated in a Roundtable Discussion Organized and Hosted by Congressman Donald M. Payne, Jr.** on Saturday morning, February 18<sup>th</sup> in Newark, NJ. MFHN Chief Operating Officer Scott Carey and Certified Application Counselor Stephanie Lee took part in the discussion of how repealing the Affordable Care Act and possible Medicaid roll-backs would impact Metropolitan's patients and the health of the community.

**Kudos to Health Service Manager Wanda Flecha** for being our first HI-FIVE (Health Informatics For Innovation, Value & Enrichment) graduate! The training program from Columbia University is designed for health-care professionals to update their health information technology knowledge within the context of the most relevant topics in today's healthcare world. It is case-based and tailored to specific health care roles, including physicians, nurses, medical assistants, care coordinators, IT/data analysts and community health workers. The program is funded by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology.

**Congratulations to Starlette Pace** on the February 16<sup>th</sup> birth of her beautiful daughter Harlowe Avery, who weighed 7 lbs., 9 oz. Best wishes from everyone at MFHN!

## Come to Our Open House!

Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
at our 935 Garfield Avenue Center in Jersey City



- Join in our early celebration of National Doctors' Day!
- FREE exams and referrals
- FREE advice on healthy eating from NJ-SNAP (New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education)
- Meet representatives and learn more about products and services from
  - AstraZeneca
  - Dexcom® Continuous Glucose Monitoring
  - Hudson River Radiology
  - Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson
  - Jersey City Medical Center / RWJBarnabas Health
  - Novo Nordisk®
  - Pfizer
- Meet representatives from healthcare insurance providers
- Giveaways • Light refreshments • More



## **Kids' Corner: Healthy Kids Learn Better**

There are many, many things to learn in the world. There are lots of different ways to learn. You can learn by reading, watching, listening, trying new things and even playing. Learning makes you smarter. The more you learn, the more things you can do, and the more dreams you can make come true.

Did you know that being healthy – eating the right foods, playing and exercising – makes it easier for you to learn? It's true! It turns out you can't eat just your favorite foods and be healthy. To be healthy, you also cannot just sit and watch TV or play on the computer or tablet.

To be healthy, your body needs lots of fruits and veggies, plus milk, yogurt, cheese, bread and cereal, and meat, fish, beans, eggs and nuts. These foods have vitamins and nutrients that are like fuel for your body – especially for your brain. Think about yourself like you are a rocket. You put these foods inside yourself and, boom! You can take off and do so many things. You can run, skip, dance, and play with your friends. You can learn better. You can have more fun!

You can still have cake, ice cream, cookies, chips or soda. Just not too much, because those things can slow you way, way down. Instead, when you want a snack, have an apple, a "cutie" tangerine, banana, carrot or celery stick. Try some new foods, too. Drink water instead of soda. Move – run, jump, skip, have fun playing sports – every day. That's what you have to do to get and stay healthy ... and smarter!

