



Healthy People Newsletter

APRIL 2021

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This newsletter is interactive! Click a topic to jump directly to the article.

National Health Observances

APRIL 2021

Alcohol Awareness Month

Autism Awareness Month

Donate Life Month

Minority Health Month

Women's Eye Health and Safety

Month World Health Day (7)

Healthcare Decisions Day (16)

Donation Life Blue & Green Day (16)

World Hemophilia Day (17)

Public Health Week (5-11)

Infertility Awareness Week (18-24)

World Immunization Week (24-30)



BETTERSAFE

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY

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THE IMPORTANCE OF IMMUNIZATIONS

VACCINES WORK FOR ALL

During the month of April, National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) and World Immunization Week are recognized. Both emphasize the importance of protecting people with vaccines against diseases and death.

NATIONAL INFANT IMMUNIZATION WEEK - APRIL 26-MAY 2, 2021

National Infant Immunization Week focuses on protecting children two years and younger from vaccine-preventable diseases and has been doing so for over 25 years. Through immunization, we can now protect infants and children from 14 vaccine-preventable diseases before age two, including polio, whooping cough, the mumps, diphtheria, and chickenpox.

The Center For Disease Control (CDC) reports that routine childhood immunization among children born from 1994-2018 will prevent:

- » An estimated 419 million illnesses
- » 8 million hospitalizations
- » 936,000 early deaths over the course of their lifetimes
- » Net savings of \$406 billion in direct costs and \$1.9 trillion in total economic impact

NIIW provides an opportunity to:

- » Highlight the dangers of vaccine-preventable diseases
- » Educate parents about the importance of vaccination in protecting their children



- » Encourage better communication between healthcare professionals and parents about vaccination

The CDC has created a free reference guide to help parents take the stress out of getting vaccinations. You can download it for free here: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/visit/tips-factsheet.pdf>.

Some of their tips and tricks include:

1. Come prepared: Read any vaccine materials you received from your child's health care provider and write down any questions you may have.
2. Have a distraction ready: Bring a favorite toy or book, pacifier, and a blanket that your child uses regularly to comfort your child.
3. When it comes to older children: be honest with them. Explain that shots can pinch or sting, but that it won't hurt for long. Tell them you have gotten them too when you were their age.

4. At the doctor's office: comfort your child by cuddling, singing, or talking softly.
5. Smile and make eye contact with your child. Let them know it is okay.
6. Take a deep breath with your child to help them "blow out" the pain.
7. Point out interesting things in the room to your child, see if you can make a game out of it.
8. Your healthcare professional may cool or numb the injection site to reduce the pain associated with your child's shots.
9. After the shots: encourage your child to drink liquids to stay hydrated. It's normal for some children to eat less during the 24 hours after getting vaccines.

Doctors also recommend that you pay extra attention to your child for a few days after they get vaccinated. If you see something that concerns you, call your doctor.

WORLD IMMUNIZATION WEEK - APRIL 24-30, 2021

World Immunization Week is dedicated to promoting the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against diseases and death and emphasizes the importance of protecting people with vaccines throughout the lifespan and how society can benefit as we collectively pursue this goal. In fact, the CDC reports the total estimated number of deaths averted globally from 2011-2020 with vaccines is 23.3 million.

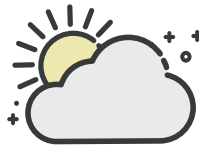
While NIIW is dedicated to protecting children 2 years and younger, World Immunization Week reminds us that adults need to keep their vaccinations up to date as well. Immunity from childhood vaccines can wear off over time and, as adults, you are at risk for different diseases.

All adults need an annual influenza (flu) vaccine and to stay up-to-date on their Td, DT, DTaP, or Tdap vaccines to protect from tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis. Depending on your age, health conditions, job, lifestyle, and travel habits, you may need other vaccines. The CDC provides information about what vaccines are recommended for you based on the following categories

that pertain to you: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/index.html>

- » Adults 19-26 years old
- » Adults 50 years or older
- » Adults with Health Conditions
- » Pregnant Women
- » Healthcare Workers
- » International Travelers
- » Immigrants and Refugees





DAY IN DAY OUT
WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR LIFESTYLE

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UNDERSTANDING AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental disorder that may involve persistent challenges in social interaction, speech and non-verbal communication, and restricted/repetitive behaviors. The effects of ASD and the severity of symptoms vary in each person. ASD includes several conditions that previously were diagnosed separately: autistic disorder, pervasive development disorder not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS), and Asperger syndrome.

FAST FACTS ABOUT ASD FROM THE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC)

- » It is estimated that 1 in 54 children in the United States is affected by autism spectrum disorder
- » ASD is about 4 times more common among boys than girls
- » ASD can be detected at 18 months of age or younger
- » There is no cure for ASD

CAUSES

The CDC continues research on possible causes and risk factors for the disorder. There may be many different factors that make a child more likely to have ASD, including environmental, biological, and genetic factors. Studies so far have shown:

- » Children who have a sibling with ASD are at a higher risk of also having it.
- » Children born to older parents are at greater risk.



- » Individuals with certain genetic conditions, such as fragile X syndrome, Down syndrome, Rett syndrome, or tuberous sclerosis, have a higher chance of having ASD.
- » When taken during pregnancy, certain prescription drugs such as valproic acid and thalidomide, have been linked with a higher risk of ASD.
- » There is some evidence that the critical period for developing ASD occurs before, during, and immediately after birth.

Some people have had concerns that ASD might be linked to vaccines that children receive, however studies show there is no link between receiving vaccines and developing ASD.

SYMPTOMS

People with ASD often exhibit problems with social, emotional, and communication skills. Some common signs and symptoms may include:

- » Repeating certain actions/behaviors
- » Resistant to minor changes and trouble adapting when routine does change
- » Trouble relating to others or not having an interest in other people at all
- » Avoiding eye contact
- » Desire to be alone
- » Trouble discussing their feelings or understanding the feelings of others
- » Loss of speech or delayed language development

Autism Speaks, a non-profit organization that helps educate and bring awareness of this topic to the public, wants you to know that not all children with autism show all of the signs. That is why a professional evaluation is crucial.

TREATMENT

No treatment has been shown to cure ASD, however there are intervention services that may reduce symptoms, improve cognitive ability and daily living skills, and maximize the ability of the child to function and participate in the community. Research shows that early intervention services - from birth to 3 years of age - can greatly improve a child's development and result in better outcomes. Intervention services are highly individualized as the way that ASD affects each person differs and may include:

- » Speech Therapy
- » Occupational Therapy
- » Social Skills Training
- » Assistive Technology
- » Discrete Trial Training
- » Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention
- » Pivotal Response Training
- » Verbal Behavior Intervention



RESOURCES

Understanding the causes of autism and its impact not only on the child but the family is important. To help further the discussion, we've collected some free resources for you to use and recommend reaching out to your local autism organization to get involved.

Autism Spectrum Disorder Brochure

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/autism-spectrum-disorder/index.shtml>

Frequently Asked Questions

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/topics.html>

Screening and Diagnosis

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/screening.html>

Accessing Services

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/accessing-services-for-autism-spectrum-disorder.html>

Tackling Behavior Challenges

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/behavioral-resources>

Family Member Support (Parents, Grandparents, Siblings)

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/support-family-members>



TAKECHARGE

WELCOA'S SELF-CARE BULLETIN

BRING LAUGHTER INTO YOUR LIFE

APRIL IS NATIONAL HUMOR MONTH

"A day without laughter is a day that is wasted."

— Charlie Chaplin

April 1, otherwise known as April Fool's Day, kicks off the 45th anniversary of National Humor month. Created by comedian and best-selling author Larry Wilde in 1976, the goal is to honor those that make us laugh and bring awareness to how important laughter is to our overall health and wellbeing.

FUN FACT: A Vanderbilt University study showed that laughing for 15 minutes can burn between 10-40 calories. If you add that up, you can lose between 1-4 pounds a year!

LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

Self-care is important and, unfortunately, humor is an often overlooked self-care tool. There is truth to the old saying "Laughter is the best medicine!" When you laugh, your brain activity changes in ways that lower your stress response by reducing inflammation and stress hormones, improving circulation, and enhancing the immune system.

Humor also allows you to see things in a new way. It is about allowing yourself to see the lighter side of life more often and use it as a way to release tension and re-energize yourself. So to help you out, we have provided a list of 30 ways to bring laughter into your life.

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Talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.

Might we suggest a challenge?

For the next 30 days, use one of the suggestions below (or one of your own) to increase laughter in your day. Keep track of what you do and how it made you feel. At the end of the month, look back and compare the days you added laughter and the days you didn't. You might be surprised how one little act can make a big impact not only on your mood but on the people around you.

TIPS FOR BRINGING MORE LAUGHTER INTO YOUR LIFE

1. Spend time with funny people: surround yourself with people who laugh easily and can make you laugh.
2. Listen to (or watch) clips of people laughing—it's contagious!
3. Find the funny in everyday occurrences. Everything in life can be drama or comedy—it is up to you to decide which. For example, if you spill your coffee, say something like "The coffee is on me today!" and laugh about it.

4. Follow your favorite funny people on social media. Often times social media is linked to negativity, but you can control what you look at. By following and liking more pages that make you smile and laugh, humor will show up more often in your feeds.
5. Schedule a 'fun break' on your calendar. It is far too easy to get wrapped up in the day's work—remember to take time to laugh by scheduling 5 minutes on your calendar to look at funny videos or read a joke book. You will be recharged and ready to take on the rest of your tasks with a new energy.
6. Start a humor journal: write down three things each day that you found amusing. Any time you are feeling down and need a smile, look back on your humor journal.
7. Watch a comedy show: whether in person or digitally, a comedy routine is a sure-fire way to have a few laughs!
8. Play games: get some family or friends together (in person or virtually) to play a fun game.
9. Watch a funny movie: pick a favorite or get recommendations from friends and then settle in for some laughs.
10. Strike up a conversation: instead of talking about the weather, ask somebody what was the last thing that made them laugh.
11. Challenge a friend or family member to lip sync with you. Find a song and lip sync together or against each other—the more into it you each get, the funnier it becomes! Check out some of Jimmy Fallon's lip sync battles or the Lip Sync Battle YouTube channel for some hilarious inspiration.
12. Imitate a funny clip from a show or comedy routine. Repeat back a funny conversation from a television show or comedy routine trying to imitate accents and voices—do this with a friend or family member for even more laughs.
13. Dance: learn a new dance or challenge some friends to a dance-off!
14. Try one of these 65 bad puns and one-liners:
<https://bestlifeonline.com/bad-funny-puns/?nab=1>
15. Combine two stress relieving activities at once and laugh while doing yoga. Yes, it's been a thing since the mid-2000s and there are over 20,000 free social laughter clubs in 110 countries across the world.



Find a laughter yoga club near you:

<https://laughteryoga.org/finder/find-club/>

16. Try some tongue twisters:
<https://www.everythingmom.com/activities/50-tongue-twisters-for-family-fun>
17. Test out the Laughter Wellness Method and these laughing exercises:
<https://www.laughteronlineuniversity.com/laughing-exercise-101/>
18. Send a funny greeting card to a friend, family member or coworker.
19. Take an online comedy course:
<https://www.skillshare.com/browse/comedy>
20. Act like a kid again: use your imagination, make up a silly story, go to the zoo, head to an amusement park—the possibilities are endless! According to the Association for Applied and Therapeutic Humor, adults laugh on average 17 times per day and kindergartners over 300 times per day. Aim to find your inner child and have some fun!



TO YOUR HEALTH

WELCOA'S ONLINE GENERAL WELLNESS BULLETIN

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Parkinson's Disease Awareness

April is Parkinson's Awareness Month with World Parkinson's Day recognized on April 11 each year. Parkinson's disease (PD) is a neurodegenerative brain disorder, which means it is a progressive loss of nerve cells and/or their function. Symptoms generally develop slowly over the years and can look different from one person to another. The cause remains largely unknown and while there is no cure, options are available to treat symptoms including medications, physical/occupational therapy, exercises, and surgery. To read more about what Parkinson's disease and resources available, visit: <https://www.parkinson.org/understanding-parkinsons>.

When you hear about Parkinson's, many people think about the famous actor Michael J. Fox and his outspoken advocacy over the last 20 years through his foundation, books, and interviews. But did you know that he was diagnosed in 1991 at the age of 29 and still continued to work on his hit television show Spin City for another seven years before publicly announcing his diagnosis? Other famous people that have been diagnosed with some form of Parkinson's you may recognize include Neil Diamond, former President George H.W. Bush, Muhammad Ali, Alan Alda, Ozzy Osbourne, and Robin Williams.

MOVEMENT SYMPTOMS OF PARKINSON'S

- » Tremor or shaking - occurs mostly at rest, 'pill-rolling' motion in the hands, usually affect one side of the body, temporarily worsened by fatigue, stress, or intense emotions
- » Slowness of movement (Bradykinesia) - reduction of automatic movements like swinging your arms when you walk, difficulty initiating movements, and general slowness in physical actions



- » Dizziness or fainting
- » Postural Instability - trouble with balance and falls
- » Rigidity - stiffness which can lead to achiness or pain in the muscles or joints affected
- » Dystonia - sustained or repetitive muscle twisting, spasm, or cramping

NON-MOVEMENT SYMPTOMS OF PARKINSON'S

- » Cognitive changes - problems with attention, planning, language, memory, or even dementia
- » Mood disorders - depression, anxiety, apathy, or irritability
- » Hallucinations or delusions
- » Constipation and nausea
- » Sleep disorders - insomnia, excessive daytime sleepiness, Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS), vivid dreams, or REM sleep behavior disorder (RBD)
- » Speech and swallowing problems - changes in or difficulty chewing, eating, speaking or swallowing

STATISTICS FROM THE PARKINSON'S FOUNDATION

- » Approximately 60,000 Americans are diagnosed with PD each year.
- » More than 10 million people worldwide are living with PD.
- » Incidence of Parkinson's disease increases with age, but an estimated four percent of people with PD are diagnosed before age 50.
- » Men are 1.5 times more likely to have Parkinson's disease than women.
- » Medications alone cost an average of \$2,500 a year and therapeutic surgery can cost up to \$100,000 per person.

EXPERIENCE WHAT IT IS LIKE TO LIVE WITH PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Parkinson's NSW, an organization based out of Australia, created an interactive online experience called The No Escape Room. This gives the user the chance to "step into the shoes of someone living with Parkinson's."

To try it out visit: <https://noescaperoom.com.au/>



There are **no limits** to what
you can accomplish,
except the limits you place
on your **own thinking**.

Brian Tracy

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ONEDIGITAL