

# The Delaware Office of WOMEN'S HEALTH *Newsletter*

January 2015

Providing information and awareness about women's health issues.

## A Parting Word From Jennifer Wooleyhand

In my last days before retiring from the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH), I'm reflecting on the 10 years I've spent here: the people, the events, and the changes I've seen, the things I've learned, and the skills that have been honed. It's been a rewarding and enriching experience.

My primary role at DPH was to create or edit messaging — advertisements, posters, pamphlets, brochures, newsletters, commercials, and the occasional press release. Each message had expert subject matter from the programs; after our editing and layout skills were applied, I never doubted that each message was going to be the most effective and error-proof that it could be. And in the end, there is no small amount of pride in that. What DPH has to say is critical for the well-being of so many, and there is no room for error, no room for a missed opportunity. It's important for me to believe in the subject and substance of a message to work on it; I've been really fortunate to have had that here.

I hope that the good work of DPH (illustrated so well by this very newsletter from our Office of Women's Health) and its committed partners isn't solely appreciated by those who receive the information prepared—but that you all do, as well. It's an evolving but critical role you play, and you play it very well.

- Jen W.



Jennifer Wooleyhand, DPH

### POINTS of INTEREST:

Jan. 15, 2015  
8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

#### **A Cancer Survivorship Conference: After Ringing the Bell**

Rehoboth Beach Country Club  
221 West Side Drive  
Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971  
email [jallegro@cscde.org](mailto:jallegro@cscde.org) or call  
302-645-9150.

Jan. 15, 2015  
8:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

#### **LIFE Conference**

Dover Downs Hotel  
1131 N. DuPont Hwy.  
Dover, Delaware 19901  
[Stefanie.Lancaster@state.de.us](mailto:Stefanie.Lancaster@state.de.us)  
and cc: [Pat.Maichle@state.de.us](mailto:Pat.Maichle@state.de.us)  
[orinfo@lifeconferencede.org](mailto:orinfo@lifeconferencede.org)

Feb. 28, 2015  
6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

#### **Southern Lights of Life An Evening of Living and Giving Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition**

Dover Downs Conference Ctr.  
1131 N. DuPont Hwy.  
Dover DE 19901  
Contact Michelle Marshall  
302-672-6435

The Office of Women's Health  
(OWH) Newsletter:

- Karen McGloughlin, *Editor*
- Jennifer Wooleyhand, *Newsletter Design, writing, art, & photos*

TO SUBSCRIBE PLEASE CALL  
302-744-4703 or e-mail request to:  
[OWH@state.de.us](mailto:OWH@state.de.us)

#### **HAVE A SUGGESTION?**

If you have an idea, resource, news item, or event you would like to share with the Office of Women's Health, please contact [OWH@state.de.us](mailto:OWH@state.de.us)

#### **SPREAD THE WORD:**

Please forward this email to a friend. Effective community partnerships depend upon the sharing of resources.

## Tell Us! How do you practice self-care?



We all work too hard; life is incredibly demanding. Yet, we know that stress can be extremely unhealthy, and that taking care of ourselves is critical.

Many of us have wisely developed ways to de-stress, taking mini-vacations from the chaos to help us unwind after a particularly stressful day or week. Some de-stress by having a top-of-your-lungs sing-along in the car ride home, soaking in a hot, bubble-filled midnight bath, or watching funny YouTube videos.

Do you have a favorite way to de-stress?  
We would love to hear how you practice self-care.

Share with us.  
E-mail your idea to [OWH@state.de.us](mailto:OWH@state.de.us).

The Office of Women's Health was created to increase the health knowledge for all Delaware women and engage them in leading healthier lives.



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
Division of Public Health



## Study Ties Teen Smoking to Risk of Severe Menstrual Cramps



Women who started smoking at a young age may be at increased risk for chronic, severe menstrual pain, a new study suggests. About 29 percent of women experience severe menstrual pain. While smoking is suspected as a risk factor for severe menstrual pain, the evidence is inconclusive.

Researchers analyzed data from 9,000 women taking part in a long-term study of women's health in Australia. About 14 percent of the women had chronic, severe menstrual pain. Current smokers who started smoking by age 13 were more likely to have chronic, severe menstrual pain.

When the investigators took other factors into account, they concluded that current smokers who started smoking by age 13 were 60 percent more likely to have chronic, severe menstrual pain than non-smokers. The study was published online Nov. 17, 2014 in the journal *Tobacco Control*. Smoking is known to reduce blood flow in the arteries, which could cause severe menstrual pain, according to the researchers. They also said smoking may affect hormones involved in menstruation.

SOURCE: *Tobacco Control*, news release, Nov. 17, 2014

For more about this, visit <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/285561.php>

## Older Adults and DEPRESSION

Depression is not just a case of “the blues.” It is a true and treatable medical condition. Older adults are at an increased risk for experiencing depression.

### How Do I Know It's Depression?

Someone who is depressed has feelings of sadness or anxiety that lasts for weeks at a time.

He or she may also experience:

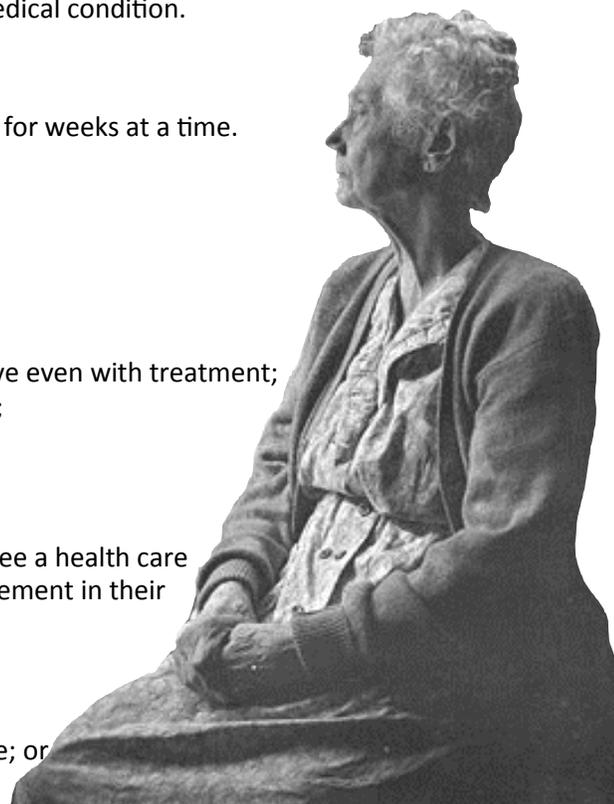
- Feelings of hopelessness and/or pessimism;
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness and/or helplessness;
- Irritability and restlessness;
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies once pleasurable;
- Fatigue and decreased energy;
- Aches or pains, headaches, or digestive problems that do not improve even with treatment;
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering details, and making decisions;
- Insomnia, early-morning wakefulness, or excessive sleeping;
- Over-eating or appetite loss; and/or
- Thoughts of suicide and/or suicide attempts.

If you are concerned about a loved one, offer to go with him or her to see a health care provider to be diagnosed and treated. Most older adults see an improvement in their symptoms once treatment is underway.

If you or someone you care about is in crisis, seek help immediately:

- Call 911;
- Visit a nearby emergency department or health care provider's office; or
- Call the toll-free, 24-hour hotline of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK ( 800-273-8255), or for TTY: 800-799-4TTY (4889) to talk to a trained counselor.

For more information, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/aging/mentalhealth/depression.htm>



# Drugged driving



Driving after taking an over-the-counter medication should be a carefully and cautiously made decision. We've become reliant on these medicines, and accept them as safe because they're easy to buy; but that doesn't mean that they don't require some responsible thinking from us to ensure absolute safety.

Some common non-prescription medicines, such as antihistamines, anti-diarrheals, and anti-nausea medications, can impair your ability to drive and operate other vehicles and machinery safely. The effects can last for several hours, possibly affecting your driving into the next day, as well. The effects may also be greater and last longer if you haven't had enough sleep prior to taking the medication.

Always carefully read the labels of nonprescription medicines before you take them — especially before driving.

- Check to be sure you're not taking more than one medicine with the same active ingredient.
- Read the entire "warning" section on a medicine's label to learn if you should avoid that medication entirely, or if it should not be used with any condition you have, whether you should ask a health care provider whether you can use it, or when you should stop using it.
- Check the "When using this product" section of the label to find out how the medicine may affect you and whether there are warnings about drowsiness or impaired driving.
- Check labels for information on how the medicine reacts with products such as alcohol, sedatives or tranquilizers, and be aware of how it may interact with other medicines you're taking.

Whenever possible, use medicines that do not have active ingredients that cause drowsiness or affect your ability to drive or operate machinery. Your health care provider or pharmacist can suggest the best non-drowsy alternatives. Why is this so important? Impaired driving is risking your safety, that of your passengers, and anyone sharing the road with you. Stay alert. For more, go to <http://www.fda.gov/drugs/resourcesforyou/ucm079514.htm>

## Every Kiss Begins With

# 80 Million Germs

A kiss isn't just a kiss: it's also an opportunity to transfer millions of germs. That's the word from new Dutch research that suggests 10 seconds of lip lock can translate into 80 million germs moving from one person to the other. And two people who smooch a bunch of times each day will end up sharing similar germs.

In one experiment, the researchers gave 21 couples a probiotic drink containing bacteria before they kissed. Swab samples afterwards showed the transfer of those 80 million germs.

But in the big picture, according to the news release, the mouth is home to more than 700 types of bacteria, but the body houses more than 100 trillion microorganisms, which help with tasks like fighting disease and digesting food.

The study was published in the journal *Microbiome*. SOURCE: BioMed Central, news release, Nov. 16, 2014

For more information, go to <http://consumer.healthday.com> or <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19828260>

# Women *and* Sleep

Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z



Getting the right amount of sleep can lead to a longer, healthier life. On the other hand, the more common complaint—failure to get enough sleep — can lead to a range of health problems, from being more likely to catch a cold, gain weight, or be at greater risk for heart disease or diabetes.

For optimum health and function, adults should get seven to nine hours of sleep daily. Over 60 percent of women regularly fall short of that goal, failing to go to bed on time or staying there long enough. Getting enough sleep is just as important to well-being as is eating a healthy diet and getting regular exercise.

Tips for getting the rest you need:

- Create a sleep sanctuary. Reserve your bedroom for sleep and intimacy. Keep it on the cool side. Banish the television, computer, smart phone, tablet, and other diversions from that space.
- Nap only if necessary. Napping an hour or two in the afternoon can supplement hours missed at night, but can also interfere with your ability to sleep at night and throw your sleep schedule into disarray.
- Avoid caffeine after noon, and go light on alcohol. Caffeine can stay in your body for up to 12 hours. Alcohol can act as a sedative, but it also disturbs sleep.
- Get regular exercise, but not within three hours of bedtime. Exercise acts as a short-term stimulant.
- If you've skimped on sleep for decades, it could take a while to adjust. Plan a vacation with a light schedule and few obligations; not a whirlwind tour of all the sights or to plan a loved one's wedding. Then, turn off the alarm clock and sleep every night until you awaken naturally. Initially, you may sleep 12 hours or more every night; by the end, you'll be getting about the amount you need to awake refreshed.
- Avoid backsliding into a new sleep debt cycle. Try to go to bed and get up at the same time every day. At the very least, turn in at the same time on weekdays. Use weekends to make up for lost sleep.

For more on this, go to: [http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/brain\\_basics/understanding\\_sleep.htm](http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/brain_basics/understanding_sleep.htm)

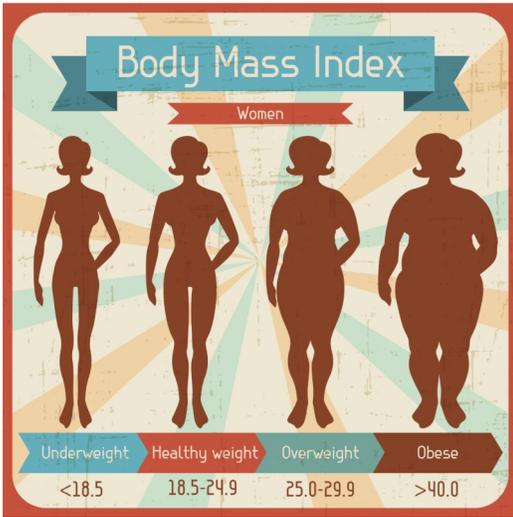
**WE GET IT.**  
The flu takes thousands of lives each year in the U.S.  
The flu vaccine saves lives.  
**GET IT.**

A photograph of a diverse group of people of various ages and ethnicities, all smiling. Below the photo is a dark blue banner with white and yellow text.

Go to [www.flu.Delaware.gov](http://www.flu.Delaware.gov) or call 800-282-8672 for more information.



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
Division of Public Health



With all the talk about the obesity epidemic and stress eating, it is easy to forget that being underweight is also a serious health concern. In fact, the same charts we use to classify the health risks associated with excess weight indicate that being underweight poses similar health risks.

## So...How Do I Gain Weight?

Everyone should know how to calculate their body mass index. If you have lost enough weight that your Body Mass Index is below 19, you should speak to your health-care provider.

Similar principles apply to those trying to gain weight as those trying to lose it. Knowing your eating habits is the key to changing them. An excellent strategy to begin gaining weight is to figure out why you are losing it. Keep a food journal. Write down everything you eat, no matter how small. Include the date and time, and how you were feeling at the time. This will help you figure out if you are affected by stress or other factors. At the end of one week, look back at the notes to get a clear picture of the times you were over-stressed and also the times when you were likely to under-eat.

The simple answer is to add more food to your diet. Often people find they are skipping meals or eating too little during high-stress times because they are too busy to stop and eat. Plan some breaks in your schedule, set an alarm, and carry healthy snacks. Try to reduce your overall stress level. Look at your food log and identify high-stress times. Prioritize and rearrange your schedule when possible. Schedule stress breaks and combine them with a snack. Explore other ways to reduce your stress. If you continue to have problems managing your weight, speak to your doctor. For more information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/index.html>

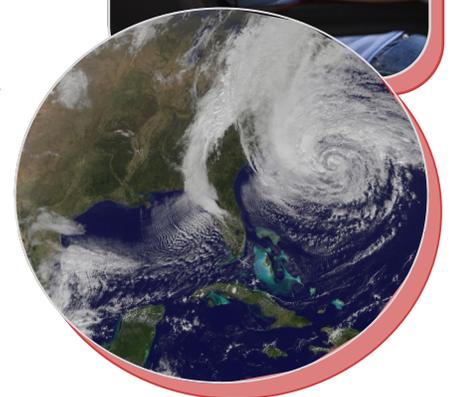
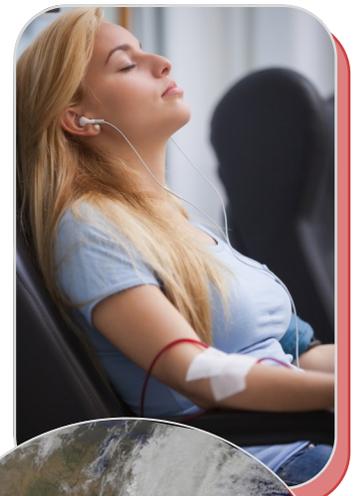
## Many Dialysis Patients Ill-Prepared *for Emergencies*

Dialysis treatment removes waste, salt, and excess water from kidney-failure patients. People on dialysis rely on water, electricity, and transportation to get to their treatments, making them particularly vulnerable during emergencies or natural disasters. And although their health depends on working technology, many kidney-failure patients on dialysis are not prepared for natural disasters or other emergencies, new research finds.

The research also discovered that the health outcomes for this at-risk population can be markedly improved when health care providers supply dialysis patients with emergency information packets. The packets contain detailed information about their medications, dialysis schedule, individual health issues, and contact information for other dialysis centers.

Contact your physician to learn more about how you should be prepared in the event of an emergency.

SOURCE: American Society of Nephrology, news release, Nov. 13, 2014  
[http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory\\_149444.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_149444.html)



## Health Tip: Cutting Back on

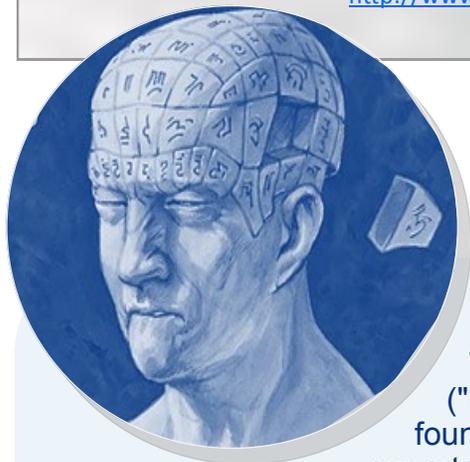


Too much salt can raise blood pressure and cause related complications like heart failure.

### How to consume less salt:

- Eat fresh foods, rather than packaged or prepared varieties. And don't add salt.
- Steer clear of convenience foods, such as instant cereals and puddings, canned soups, frozen meals, packaged mixes of rice and pasta, and gravies.
- If you eat frozen entrees, buy those that contain less than 600 mg of salt.
- Use orange juice or pineapple juice as a base for meat marinades, instead of salt.
- Look for spices and seasonings that don't contain salt.
- Consult your doctor before using salt substitutes, to ensure iodine safety levels.

<http://www.cdc.gov/salt/>



## Trans Fats May Sap Your Memory

Trans fats, a type of dietary fat known to increase blood levels of LDL ("bad") cholesterol and decrease levels of HDL ("good") cholesterol, is found in most of our favorite junk foods. And these fats aren't just clogging our arteries; new research shows they might also affect our memory.

Young and middle-aged men who ate large amounts of trans fats showed a significantly reduced ability to recall words during a memory test, according to findings released by the American Heart Association. The higher the trans fat consumption, the worse the performance. Small levels of trans fats naturally occur in milk and meat products. Artificially created trans fats like partially hydrogenated oils are widely used in processed foods, fast food, baked goods, snack foods, frozen pizza and coffee creamers. Yet another reason to eat a salad for lunch!

SOURCES: Nov. 18, 2014, presentation, American Heart Association annual meeting, Chicago, IL. For additional information visit [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory\\_149528.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_149528.html)

## Maple-Roasted Sweet Potatoes Recipe

*A delicious and nutritious winter favorite!*

### Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 pounds sweet potato(es) peeled and cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces (about 8 cups)
- 1/3 cup(s) maple syrup, pure
- 2 tablespoon butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- pepper, black ground, to taste

### Preparation:

Preheat oven to 400°F. Arrange sweet potatoes in an even layer in a 9-by-13-inch glass baking dish. In small bowl, combine maple syrup, butter, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Pour the mixture over the sweet potatoes and toss to coat. Cover and bake the sweet potatoes for 15 minutes. Uncover, stir, and cook, stirring every 15 minutes, until tender and starting to brown, 45 to 50 minutes more.

