



# Wellness Newsletter

Augusta Technical College

## Are You and Your Family Up-To-Date on Your Immunizations?

August is National Immunization Awareness Month, and the Augusta Technical College Wellness Committee is asking students, faculty and staff to check if they and their loved ones are up-to-date on their immunizations. Vaccines are a key to a healthy life for people of all ages and cultures in our community, and it is important to be up-to-date. In August, parents are enrolling children in school, older students are entering college and adults and the health care community are preparing for the upcoming influenza season. This makes August a particularly good time to focus community attention on the value of immunization.

Vaccines have been used since the 1700's and are recognized as among the safest and most effective means of preventing life-threatening infections. Vaccines work by telling the person's immune system to prepare itself for possible exposure to disease-causing viruses or bacteria. This not only protects the immunized person, but it often limits the bug's ability to pass from person-to-person. Thus, people who cannot be immunized because of underlying medical conditions or who fail to respond to immunization are still protected by virtue of what is referred to as community or herd immunity.

In August, the National Partnership for Immunization encourages people of all ages to check their immunization records to make sure that they are up-to-date. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that children receive vaccines against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, chickenpox,

polio and others. Adolescents should be vaccinated against hepatitis A, hepatitis B and meningococcal disease, and others that may have been missed earlier. Those recommended for adults include vaccines against influenza, pneumococcal disease, tetanus and diphtheria.

Before these vaccines became available these diseases caused tens of thousands of deaths each year in the US. Because today's vaccines are safe and effective, members of our community can, and should be protected by being up-to-date on their immunizations.



For more information about vaccines and which ones are right for you, visit the National Partnership for Immunization Web site at :

<http://www.partnersforimmunization.org>

Volume 2, Issue 2  
Summer 2006—August

### National Health Observances

- *Eye Injury Prevention Month*
- *MedicAlert Awareness Month*
- *National Immunization Awareness Month*
- *World Breastfeeding Week (1st-7th)*

### Inside this issue:

|                       |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <i>Breastfeeding</i>  | <i>p.2</i> |
| <i>Eye Injury</i>     | <i>p.2</i> |
| <i>Healthy Recipe</i> | <i>p.1</i> |
| <i>Immunizations</i>  | <i>p.1</i> |
| <i>MedicAlert</i>     | <i>p.3</i> |

## Lava Flows

- 2 cups frozen sliced strawberries in juice, defrosted
- 2 cans coconut milk drink mix (use low-fat brand)
- 2 cups pineapple juice (light)
- 6 shots coconut rum or light rum
- \* For mocktails, omit liquor and use a few extra ice cubes
- 1 tray of ice

Blend strawberries in a blender on high until smooth. Place 1/2 cup strawberry puree in the bottom of 4 hurricane or double rocks cocktail glasses. Rinse blender and return to motor base. Place remaining ingredients in blender and blend on high until smooth. Pour pina coladas into glasses on top of the strawberry puree. The puree will run up through the pina colada, making a lava flow effect. These can be made as mocktails for the kids or cocktails for big kids. The recipe calls for defrosted frozen sliced strawberries. When you bring them home from the market, place them on a dish in the refrigerator so they will be soft and ready to process. The dish will catch any leaks or moisture from defrosting.

<http://www.foodtv.com>



## Eye Injury Prevention Month

August has been officially recognized as Eye Injury Prevention Month. For this reason, a focus is placed on protecting your eyes in various environments, namely the workplace.

Eye injuries of all types occur at a rate of more than 2,000 per day. In particular, an estimated 1,000 eye injuries occur in American workplaces alone. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) found that almost 70% of the eye injuries studied occur from falling or flying objects, or sparks striking the eye.

The best ways to prevent injury to the eye is to always wear the appropriate eye protection. Surprisingly, the BLS reports that approximately three out of every five workers injured were either not wearing eye protection at the time of the accident or wearing the wrong kind of eye protection for the job. To be effective, eyewear must fit properly and be designed to effectively protect workers while they work. It is estimated that over 90% of eye injuries are preventable with the use of proper safety eyewear. The Occupational Safety Health Ad-



ministration, OSHA, has standards that require employers to provide their workers with the appropriate eye protection.

In addition to the proper safety eyewear, early detection and treatment of eye conditions and diseases are essential to maintaining good vision at every stage of life. According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, AAO, children with a family history of childhood vision problems should be screened for common childhood eye problems before the age of 5. Although most young adults have healthy vision, if eye problems such as visual changes, pain, flashes of light, seeing spots, excessive tearing, and excessive dryness occur, they should see an eye doctor. Adults between the ages of 40 to 65 should have an eye exam every two to four years. Adults over the age of 65 should have an eye exam at least every one to two years. Ultimately, the key to preventing eye injuries is to take a more proactive approach to sustaining healthy vision.

<http://www.foh.dhhs.gov/>

## What is World Breastfeeding Week?

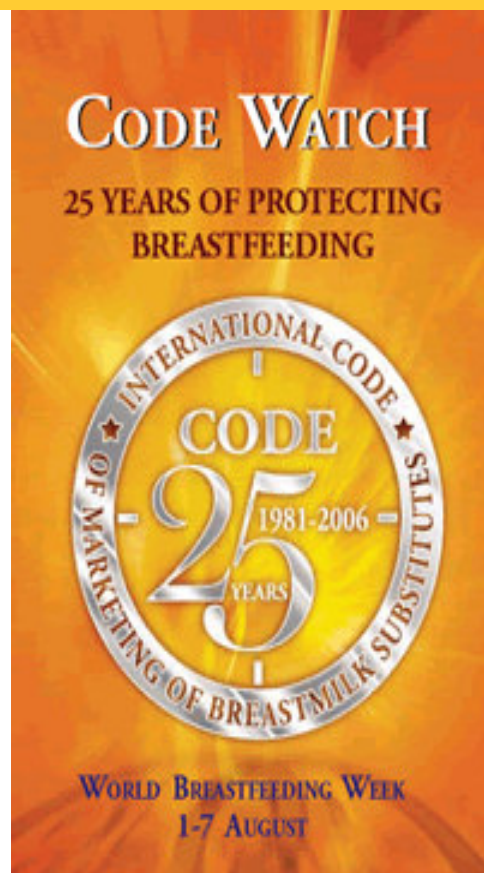
The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) was formed in 1991 to act on the Innocenti Declaration (1990) to protect, promote and support breastfeeding. The Innocenti Declaration was produced and adopted in 1990 by participants at the WHO/UNICEF meeting on "Breastfeeding in the 1990s: A Global Initiative." The document lists the benefits of breastfeeding, plus global and governmental goals.

As part of its action plan to facilitate and strengthen social mobilization for breastfeeding, WABA envisioned a global unifying breastfeeding promotion strategy. A day dedicated to breastfeeding was suggested to be marked in the calendar of international events. The idea of a day's celebration was later turned into a week.

This has become to be known as World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) celebrated every 1-7 August to commemorate the Innocenti Declaration. World Breastfeeding Week was first celebrated in 1992. Now it involves over 120 countries and is endorsed by UNICEF, WHO and FAO.

The theme for 2006 is "Code Watch: 25 Years of Protecting Breastfeeding." The International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes, also known as "The Code," marks its 25th anniversary in 2006. Adopted by the World Health Assembly in 1981, The Code is an international public health recommendation which seeks to give women pure facts about feeding their babies, free of aggressive infant formula marketing influences, so that mothers can make well informed feeding decisions. Marketing refers to all promotional activities by manufacturers and distributors, from advertising and labeling to their relations with health workers and their associations.

For more information: <http://worldbreastfeedingweek.org/>



## MediAlert Foundation International: Celebrating 50 Years of Saving Lives

It all began when 14 year-old Linda Collins cut her finger playing with an air rifle. The physician treating Linda wanted to give her a tetanus shot. In case she was allergic, he first did a scratch test, rubbing a bit of the tetanus antitoxin into her cut to see if she would react. Linda's body did react; she almost died. Linda's father, also a doctor, was worried that she could have a fatal reaction if she ever received the antitoxin again. He asked Linda to carry a note tied to a bracelet to warn medical personnel about her allergy.

Three years later, Linda went to Stanford University outfitted with a shiny new silver bracelet with an emblem bearing the words "MediAlert" in red on one side and a list of her allergies on the other. Linda's Stanford classmates liked the idea and requested their own emblems. Linda's parents, Dr. Marion Collins and his wife Chrissie, founded MediAlert on March 25, 1956. Today, Linda's original bracelet is on display in the Smithsonian, and MediAlert is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

### Now Serving 4 Million... and Growing

The first bracelets were created in the Collins' garage. Today, there are over 200 styles of emblems laser-engraved in the Turlock facility and shipped around the world. The emblems can be worn as bracelets or as pendants. Different styles of the bracelets mean even the most fashion conscious pre-teen will have something to choose from.

Paul Kortschak, President and CEO of the foundation, believes MediAlert's greatest innovation is this central database of information and the ability to access it around the clock. "We've expanded our horizons in order to embrace healthcare informatics," Kortschak says. "Essentially, we store critical medical information on behalf of four million individuals around the world."

### Technology to the Rescue

An individual's information is stored in MediAlert's database that provides critical medical information when emergency workers call the 24-Hour MediAlert Hotline. The database is capable of securely storing scanned copies of legal documents such as advanced directives or living wills. Paul Angelo, a paramedic, says he often uses MediAlert to follow patients' advanced directives. "If I find a MediAlert bracelet that says 'Do Not Resuscitate' then I'm clear

on what the patient wishes." With a call to the emergency number, MediAlert can fax the document wherever it's needed.

Under the leadership of Paul Kortschak, MediAlert is responding to a national push toward more accessible medical records. He and his team envision MediAlert members having access to all their test results, drug and allergy lists, doctor appointments and hospital visits any time they need them – not just during emergencies.

Many parents use the MediAlert emblem for their children simply for identification reasons. Children wearing the emblems can get help while maintaining their privacy. Kortschak points out "The MediAlert bracelet has a unique member number on it with our 24-Hour hotline number so if a child wanders off, there's a way of being able to identify who that child is while preserving privacy." He added "MediAlert is your ehealth trustee, preserving your privacy while protecting your life."



MediAlert has introduced new products and services in place both for wellness as well as emergencies. One such service, called the Health Enhancement System (HES), provides remote tele-health monitoring with a machine to take vital signs at home and transmit the information to the central station at MediAlert. The HES Monitor supports health status monitoring seven days a week allowing preemptive care to be delivered by alerting the patient or their caregiver to

even small changes in health and may help prevent unnecessary and disruptive ER visits and hospitalizations. Another service that MediAlert recently announced is to provide subscriber-specific medical information during 9-1-1 calls. This specialized data will supplement the traditional location and telephone number information currently delivered with 9-1-1 calls. This service will provide first responders with vital medical information earlier in the response cycle, enabling them to better prepare for and deliver critical services when someone makes a 9-1-1 call. All of these programs help MediAlert enhance its robust information repository service making it an indispensable service to members and their families.

To learn more about MediAlert go to:

<http://www.medicalert.org/>