



Wellness Newsletter

Augusta Technical College

Preventing Birth Defects

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Did You Know?

- Birth defects are the leading cause of death in children less than one year of age—causing one in every five deaths.
- 18 babies die each day in the U.S. as the result of a birth defect.
- Defects of the heart and limbs are the most common kinds of birth defects.
- Millions of dollars are spent every year for the care and treatment of children with birth defects.

Birth defects are a serious problem. One in 33 babies is born with a birth defect. Many people believe that birth defects only happen to other people. Birth defects can and do happen in any family. About 120,000 babies in the U.S. each year have birth defects.

Birth defects are abnormal conditions that happen before or at the time of birth.

Some are mild—like an extra finger or toe. Some are very serious—like a heart defect. They can cause physical, mental, or medical problems. Some, like Down syndrome or sickle cell anemia, are caused by genetic factors. Others are caused by certain drugs, medicines or chemicals. But the causes of most defects are still a mystery.

The good news is that ways of preventing and treating birth defects are being found. Genes that may cause birth defects are being discovered every day, providing hope for new treatments and cures. Genetic counseling can provide parents with information about their risks based on family history, age, ethnic or racial background, or other factors.

Better health care for mothers with problems like diabetes or seizures can improve their chances of having healthy babies. Immunization prevents infections like German measles (rubella) that can harm unborn babies.

Today, babies born with birth defects can live longer and healthier lives. Special care after birth and newborn screening tests can help save these babies.

What Steps Can Women Take For Healthier Babies?

Not all birth defects can be prevented. But a woman can increase her own chance of having a healthy baby. Many birth defects happen very early in pregnancy, sometimes before a woman even knows she is pregnant. Remember that about half of all pregnancies are unplanned. Therefore, every woman should:

- Take a multivitamin that has folic acid in it every day.
- Have regular medical check-ups.
- Talk to her health care provider about any medical problems and medicine use (both over-the-counter and prescription).
- Ask about avoiding any substance at work or at home that might be harmful to a developing baby.
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet.
- Avoid eating raw or uncooked meat.
- Avoid alcohol, tobacco, and street drugs.

To learn more about preventing birth defects : <http://www.marchofdimes.com>

National Health Observances

- *Cervical Health Awareness Month*
- *Healthy Weight Week (15th—21st)*
- *Thyroid Awareness Month*
- *National Birth Defects Prevention Month*
- *National Certified Registered Nurses Week (22nd—28th)*
- *National Glaucoma Awareness Month*
- *National Volunteer Blood Donor Month*

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Celebrate Healthy Weight Week

Healthy Weight Week is a time to celebrate healthy lifestyles that last a lifetime and prevent eating and weight problems.

Eat well, live actively, and feel good about yourself and others.

It's a welcome change from the dieting and bingeing that typically begin the New Year!

Healthy Weight Week (January 15th– 21st) celebrates a healthy non-diet lifestyle for people of every size. It helps us move ahead to healthy habits we can live with the rest of our lives – sound habits that prevent eating and weight problems instead of intensifying them.

Traditionally Americans begin a diet the first week in January and "blow" it the second week. Healthy Weight Week is a time to stop dieting for good and get on with living our lives in healthy ways, feeling good about ourselves and others.

"We want to shift our national focus to health and wellness," says Frances Berg, whose organization Healthy Weight Network started the Slim Chance Awards 18 years ago and Healthy Weight Week four years later.

"Diets don't work. Neither do pills or potions. What works is to develop a healthy, normalized lifestyle that allows excess weight to come off naturally. This takes time, but it is the healthy and lasting way to deal with weight," says Berg.



How to Celebrate Healthy Weight Week with Personal Activities

1. **Live actively.** Each day of Healthy Weight Week be a little more physically active than usual. Focus on the pleasure of movement and the benefits in renewed energy, fun, social interaction, stress relief and health (not calories burned). Don't overdo it. Find an easy level with activities you enjoy -- and think about keeping it up all year.
2. **Eat normally.** Free yourself from diets. Resolve to stop diet- and weight-obsessed thinking. Eat 3 meals each day during Healthy Weight Week, with 1 or 2 snacks to satisfy hunger. Respond to your body's internal signals of hunger and fullness. Notice how much better you feel!
3. **Eat nutritiously.** Choose balance, variety, moderation. Balanced eating of all 5 food groups ensures getting the many nutrients you need (breads and grains, fruits, vegetables, meat and alternates, milk and dairy). Enjoy variety from each food group. Eat moderately to avoid extremes. With sound nutrition you'll have a new zest for living, more creativity, brain power, energy, better health, and a strengthened immune system.
4. **Feel good about yourself.** Nurture yourself. Take time to appreciate and respect your unique self, your talents, interests and experience. Work on body image issues -- you're okay just as you are. Use positive self-talk, affirmations, and visualizations. Get comfortable with the real you.
5. **Relieve stress.** Take 10 minutes each day for a relaxation technique. Or just empty your mind and let your body go limp. Get in the habit of taking a 30-second relaxation break occasionally. Be sure to have some fun in your day -- get playful, laugh out loud. If you don't have a friend handy, how about a pet?
6. **Feel good about others.** Respect and accept people as they are. Appreciate diversity and each person's special qualities. Avoid comparing yourself.
7. **Strengthen social support.** Maintain positive, supportive relationships with family and friends. Build pleasant social networks wherever you spend your day. Volunteering is a great way to feel needed and get involved.

Cervical Cancer & Early Detection

Cervical cancer is nearly 100 percent preventable, yet according to the American Cancer Society, an estimated 13,000 new cases of invasive cervical cancer will be diagnosed in 2002 and about 4,100 women will die of the disease. The good news is that cervical cancer is preventable and curable if it is detected early; in fact, the occurrence of deaths from cervical cancer has declined significantly over the last 20 to 30 years

Cervical cancer rates are higher among older women; however, cervical intraepithelial neoplasia (or CIN), the precursor lesion to cervical cancer, most often occurs among younger women. Screening younger women using the Papanicolaou (Pap) test is an important strategy that can actually prevent cervical cancer from developing almost 100 percent of the time. Minority populations and persons of low socioeconomic status are affected disproportionately as well.

Studies that have identified risk factors associated with cervical cancer have shown that cervical cancer is closely linked to:

1. Failure to receive regular Pap test screening
2. Human papillomavirus (HPV) infection
3. Certain sexual behaviors (see below)
4. Immunosuppressive disorders such as HIV/AIDS

Experts agree that infection with certain strains of the HPV is one of the strongest risk factors for cervi-

cal cancer. The sexual behaviors specifically associated with greater risk are intercourse at an early age, multiple male sexual partners, and sex with a male partner who has had multiple sexual partners. Experts also agree that one of the most important things women can do to reduce their risk of cervical cancer is to receive regular screening with a Pap test.

1. Pap testing should begin at age 21 or 3 years after onset of sexual activity.
2. Pap testing should be repeated at least every 3 years.

Pap screening can be discontinued at age 70 for women with an intact cervix, who have had 3 consecutive satisfactory normal/negative pap tests, and have had no abnormal pap tests in the previous 10 years.

Women who are past menopause (change of life) still need to have regular Pap tests. However, women who have undergone a hysterectomy in which the cervix was removed do not require Pap testing, unless the hysterectomy was performed because of cervical cancer or its precursors.

1Source: Cancer Facts and Figures 2002, American Cancer Society, 2002.

To find out more about cervical cancer and Pap testing, visit <http://www.nccc-online.org>

30-Minute Turkey Chili

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium yellow onion, chopped
5 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tablespoon kosher salt
2 teaspoons chili powder
1 teaspoon dried oregano

1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 chipotle chile en adobo, coarsely chopped, with 1 tablespoon sauce
1 pound ground turkey
1 (12-ounce) Mexican lager-style beer
1 (14 1/2-ounce) can whole peeled tomatoes, with their juice
1 (15 1/2-ounce) can kidney beans, rinsed and drained

Sliced scallions, cilantro sprigs, avocado, sour cream, grated Monterey jack cheese, and/or tortilla chips, for garnish

Heat the olive oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion, garlic, salt, chili powder, and oregano and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 3 minutes. Stir in the tomato paste and the chipotle chile and sauce; cook 1 minute more. Add the turkey, breaking it up with a wooden spoon, and cook until the meat loses its raw color, about 3 minutes. Add the beer and simmer until reduced by about half, about 8 minutes. Add the tomatoes--crushing them through your fingers into the skillet--along with their juices and the beans; bring to a boil. Cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until thick, about 10 minutes.

<http://www.foodtv.com>

National Volunteer Blood Donor Month

Blood is traditionally in short supply during the winter months due to the holidays, travel schedules, inclement weather and illness. January, in particular, is a difficult month for blood centers to collect blood donations. A reduction in turnout can put our nation's blood inventory at a critical low.

AABB, in conjunction with America's Blood Centers and American Red Cross, is celebrating National Blood Donor Month (NBDM) 2007 to encourage donors to give or pledge to give blood.

Every day in our country, approximately 39,000 units of blood are required in hospitals and emergency treatment facilities for patients with cancer and other diseases, for organ transplant recipients, and to help save the lives of accident victims. Our goal is to help ensure that blood is available to patients whenever and wherever it is needed because it is the blood on the shelves that helps save lives.

If you are at least 17 years of age (some states permit younger people to donate with parental consent), weigh at least 110 pounds and meet other donor requirements, you may be eligible to donate blood. Celebrate NBDM with AABB by donating blood and encouraging others to do so as well.

Frequently Asked Questions About Blood Donation

Will donating blood hurt?

You may feel a slight sting in the beginning lasting only a couple of seconds, but there should be no discomfort during the donation.

Are blood donors paid?

No. Blood collected for transfusion in the US is given by volunteer blood donors.

Why are there often blood shortages?

Most blood centers strive to maintain an optimum inventory level of a three-day supply. Due to unpredictable demands from trauma incidents the inventory fluctuates hourly. When the blood supply drops below a three-day level, blood centers begin alerting local donors to increase the inventory to a safe operating level.

Can I get AIDS from donating blood?

No. There is no risk of contracting AIDS or any other disease through the donation process. Each collection kit is sterile, pre-packaged and used only once.

Do I have enough blood in my body to donate?

Yes. The body contains 10 to 12 pints of blood. Your whole blood donation is approximately one pint.

How much blood is taken?

For a whole blood donation, approximately one pint (which weighs about one pound) is collected. For a platelet donation, the amount collected depends on your height, weight and platelet count.

How much time does it take for my body to replace the blood that I donated?

Not long at all. The volume of fluids will adjust within a few hours of your donation. The red blood cells will be replaced within a few weeks.

How long until my blood is used?

Most blood donations are processed and available for use within 48 hours.

Are the health history questions necessary every time I donate?

To ensure the safest possible blood supply, all donors must be asked all the screening questions at each donation. The FDA requires that all blood centers conform to this practice.

Is there anything I should do before I donate?

Be sure to eat well at your regular mealtimes and drink plenty of fluids.

If I just received a flu shot, can I donate blood?

Yes. There is no waiting period to donate after receiving a flu shot.

If I have a cold or the flu, can I donate blood?

In order to donate, blood centers require that you be in generally good health and recommend that you are feeling well.

How long will the actual donation process take?

The actual donation takes about 5-10 minutes. The entire donation process, from registration to post-donation refreshments, takes about one hour.

How will I feel after I donate?

Most people feel great after giving blood. If you feel any abnormal symptoms, let a staff member at the blood donation center or blood drive know. You should avoid lifting heavy objects or strenuous exercise for the next 24 hours; otherwise you can resume full activity as long as you feel well.

What can you do if you aren't eligible to donate?

While a given individual may be unable to donate, he or she may be able to recruit a suitable donor. Blood banks are always in need of volunteers to assist at blood draws or to organize mobile blood drives. In addition, monetary donations are always welcome to help ensure that blood banks can continue to provide safe blood to those in need.

To learn more about donating blood check out the following website: <http://www.aabb.com>

