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Improving the health of Durham
& NC communities since 1989

June 2018

Healthy Sunday Topic: Men's Health and Medication Management

Men's Health

June is men's health awareness month. The purpose of Men's Health Month is to increase awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of diseases among men and boys.



Edward Clemons, Jr., DDS, PA., a dentist at Clemons Cosmetic and Family Dentistry in Durham North Carolina says, **"Most men need to pay more attention to their health. Compared to women, men are more likely to make unhealthy and risky choices such as smoking, overindulging in alcohol, and putting off regular checkups and medical care. Many of the major health risks that men face like colon cancer or heart disease can be prevented and treated with early diagnosis. Health screening tests can find diseases early, when they are easier to treat. It's important to get the screening tests you need."**

Leading Causes of Death in African American Males

- 1. Heart Disease:** Heart disease is the **leading cause** of death for men in the United States, killing 321,000 men in 2013. That is **1 in every 4** male deaths.
- 2. Cancer:** Second leading cause of death in men. Most common cancers are prostate, colon, lung, and skin. In 2014, African American men were more likely to get cancer and die from it than any other race.
- 3. Accidents:** Males continue to be at risk for death due to unintentional injury. Males 15 to 64 years of age are 2-3 times **MORE** likely to die from an accident than women of the same age. Men are 3-4 times more likely to commit suicide.
- 4. Stroke:** Every 40 seconds, someone in the U.S. has a stroke. It is the 5th leading cause of death in the United States. Approximately 795,000 people have a stroke each year. .
- 5. Homicide:** Victims of homicide most commonly between the ages of 15-34 in highly populated, urban areas.

What Can You Do?

- **Get Informed!!** Know your family history and ask your doctor questions about your health
- **Prevention and Early Detection** are KEY to staying healthy and living longer
- Obtain a **Primary Care Doctor** who you can see at least once a year
- Get **health screenings early** as recommended by your doctor
- Maintain a **healthy lifestyle**



Medication Management

Medications can save lives. However, it is important to be aware of how to safely take and handle your medications in order to use them safely and effectively.

- 1) Make sure you know why you're taking each medication and the possible side effects.
- 2) Maintain an up to date list of your medications and take it with you to each physician visit. Be aware that OTC medications and supplements should also be on the list as they also have possible side effects.
- 3) Store your medications as indicated on the label and properly discard them after you have finished using what is needed (ask your pharmacist how to discard since some medicines should not be flushed).
- 4) Do not keep old pain or antibiotic prescriptions as these can be hazardous to your health or others' health.
- 5) Minimize the number of physicians and pharmacists that you see so that they are aware of and can manage all the medications that you are taking.

Medication is also important to mental health. Diseases such as Alzheimer's disease, depression, bipolar, and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can be improved when the right medication is used as directed by a physician.

Dr Brenda Jamerson, PharmD., faculty at Duke University and researcher in the field of pharmacogenetics and health outcomes says, "remember that your pharmacist is also part of your health team and is a great resource for any questions regarding your medicine. Ask your pharmacist 1) how your medications work, 2) how the medicine may interact with other OTC or prescription medicines, and 3) specifics about side effects and missed doses."



A list of questions to ask your pharmacist may be found at:

www.webmd.boots.com/medications/guide/questions-pharmacist In addition, you can also ask your doctor or nurse either at the clinic or call them if you have any questions.

Remember the ABC's

Ask your Physician, Pharmacist, or Nurse for help to understand proper use of medication

Be informed about the medication side effects

Comply with the instructions on when and how long to take the medication especially medications for depression and bipolar disorders need to be taken as directed and not skipped.

For More Information

Men's Health - <http://www.menshealthnetwork.org/>

Recommended health screenings- <http://www.menshealthnetwork.org/library/pdfs/GetItChecked.pdf>

Resources for Mental Health – 919-651-8401 (24 Hr. Service) – <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net>

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