Announcements

National High Blood Pressure Education Month — May 2014

May is National High Blood Pressure Education Month. High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, is the leading risk factor for stroke and a major cause of morbidity and mortality (*1*). In the United States, nearly one in three adults has hypertension, but only about half (47%) of those have it under control (*1*). Hypertension is considered the "silent killer" because it can damage the heart, brain, and kidneys without any symptoms (*1*). Each day in the United States, nearly 1,000 deaths are associated with hypertension (*2*). National High Blood Pressure Education Month aims to save lives by increasing awareness and educating the public about cardiovascular risks and how to prevent them.

To control hypertension, patients can take medications as directed, measure their blood pressure, and eat a lower-sodium diet and more fruits and vegetables (*1*). Health-care providers can use electronic health records, blood pressure monitoring, and a team-based care approach to help improve their patients' hypertension control (*3*).

CDC's Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention focuses on promoting cardiovascular health and improving quality of care for all and eliminating disparities associated with heart disease and stroke. Additional information is available at http://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure and http://www.cdc.gov/stroke.

References

1. CDC. Vital signs: awareness and treatment of uncontrolled hypertension among adults—United States, 2003–2010. MMWR 2012;61:703–9.
2. Kochanek KD, Xu JQ, Murphy SL, Miniño AM, Kung HC. Deaths: final data for 2009. Nat Vital Stat Rep 2011;60(3).
3. Go AS, Mozaffarian D, Roger VL, et al. Heart disease and stroke statistics—2014 update: a report from the American Heart Association. Circulation. 2014;128:e28–e292.

Older Americans Month — May 2014

Each May, the nation celebrates Older Americans Month to recognize older persons for their contributions and provide information to help them stay healthy and active. This year's focus is injury prevention, with the theme "Safe Today. Healthy Tomorrow."

Injuries and violence are serious threats to the health of persons aged ≥65 years. Unintentional injuries among this population result in approximately 48,550 deaths annually (*1*). Falls are the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries among older adults (*2*). About a third of those aged ≥65 years fall each year, resulting in costs of nearly $30 billion annually (*1*). Older adults are also at higher risk for traumatic brain injury and injuries associated with residential fires, abuse and maltreatment, and suicide (*3*).

To improve older adult health, CDC works to reduce risk factors for injuries and ensure widespread adoption of effective injury prevention strategies. Information on fire safety and interventions to prevent falls among older adults, for example, can be found at http://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalsafety. Information and resources (including posters and sample articles) about Older Americans Month are available at http://www.acl.gov/newsroom/observances/oam/index.aspx.

References

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2. CDC. Web-Based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS). Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2014. Available at http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars.
3. CDC. Violence prevention. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2014. Available at http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention.