

Announcements

Arthritis Awareness Month — May 2013

May is Arthritis Awareness Month. Arthritis affects an estimated 50 million U.S. adults (1) and continues to be the most common cause of disability in the United States (2). This year's theme, "Faces of Arthritis," (<http://www.arthritis.org/facesofarthritis>) is designed to challenge arthritis stereotypes and educate the public about the impacts of arthritis, along with promoting clinical and public health interventions to control it.

Common arthritis stereotypes suggest that arthritis only affects older adults and that it is inevitable and untreatable. However, arthritis can affect persons at any age, including children, and most persons with arthritis are aged <65 years (3). Further, arthritis comprises a set of diseases that are not a normal part of aging. Even after arthritis is diagnosed, there are many measures that can minimize disease progression and joint pain as well as help patients maintain function. For example, persons with arthritis can supplement clinical management with physical activity, which reduces arthritis pain and helps manage coincident problems, such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity (4). In addition, self-management education helps persons with arthritis gain control of their condition by learning techniques to manage their symptoms and reduce pain and activity limitations (5).

Information about ways to help manage arthritis is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis>. Additional information is available from the Arthritis Foundation (<http://www.arthritis.org>) and the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (<http://www.nih.gov/niams>).

References

1. CDC. Prevalence of doctor-diagnosed arthritis and arthritis-attributable activity limitation—United States, 2007–2009. *MMWR* 2010;59:1261–5.
2. CDC. Prevalence and most common causes of disability among adults—United States, 2005. *MMWR* 2009;58:421–6.
3. Helmick CG, Felson DT, Lawrence RC, et al. Estimates of the prevalence of arthritis and other rheumatic conditions in the United States: part I. *Arthritis Rheum* 2007;58:15–25.
4. Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee. Physical activity guidelines for America. Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; 2008. Available at <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/report/default.aspx>.
5. Brady TJ, Murphy L, O'Colmain BJ, et al. A meta-analysis of health status, health behaviors, and healthcare utilization outcomes of the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program. *Prev Chronic Dis* 2013; 10:120112.

Drinking Water Week — May 5–11, 2013

The United States has one of the safest public drinking water supplies in the world (1). Tap water not only provides water for daily activities such as drinking, bathing, and cooking, it also benefits the entire community by providing water to serve businesses, schools, and hospitals, and to promote overall health (2). May 5–11, 2013, is Drinking Water Week, an annual observance whose theme "What Do You Know About H₂O?" underscores the many ways in which all consumers can get to know their water (3).

Disinfection and treatment practices, as well as the environmental regulation of water pollutants, have substantially improved domestic water quality during the past century and have led to a marked decrease in the incidence of waterborne diseases such as typhoid fever (4–6). Despite these improvements, sources of drinking water still can become contaminated and lead to adverse health effects (7).

New challenges to the U.S. water supply include aging drinking water infrastructure, the impact of climate change on water availability and quality, chemical contamination of water sources, emerging pathogens, and the development of new ways to obtain and use water. Drinking Water Week is a time to highlight the importance of safe drinking water and recognize that protecting and reinvesting in water infrastructure is crucial to the health of persons living in the United States.

References

1. US Environmental Protection Agency. Drinking water and health: what you need to know. Washington, DC: US Environmental Protection Agency; 2009. Available at http://water.epa.gov/drink/guide/upload/book_waterontap_full.pdf.
2. CDC. Achievements in public health, 1900–1999: changes in the public health system. *MMWR* 1999;48:1141–7.
3. American Water Works Association. Drinking Water Week 2013. Denver, CO: American Water Works Association; 2013. Available at <http://www.awwa.org/resources-tools/public-affairs/public-affairs-events/drinking-water-week/dww-materials.aspx>.
4. CDC. Achievements in public health, 1900–1999: safer and healthier foods. *MMWR* 1999;48:905–13.
5. CDC. Summary of notifiable diseases—United States, 2010. *MMWR* 2012;59(53).
6. Cutler D, Miller G. The role of public health improvements in health advances: the 20th century United States. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research; 2004. Available at <http://www.nber.org/papers/w10511.pdf>.
7. US Environmental Protection Agency. Drinking water contaminants. Washington, DC: US Environmental Protection Agency; 2011. Available at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/contaminants/index.html>.