

July 2021 Health Awareness Topics



July is Healthy Vision Awareness Month - If your eyes *feel* healthy, it is easy to assume they *are* healthy. But many eye diseases do not have any warning signs — so you could have an eye problem and not know it. The good news is, there is a lot you can do to set yourself up for a lifetime of seeing well from wearing your sunglasses to eating eye-healthy foods, like salmon and kale! Getting older increases your risk of some eye diseases. You might also have a higher risk of some eye diseases if you:

- Are overweight or obese.
- Have a family history of eye disease.
- Are African American, Hispanic, or Native American

Other health conditions, like diabetes or high blood pressure, can also increase your risk of some eye diseases. For example, people with diabetes are at risk for [diabetic retinopathy](#) — an eye condition that can cause vision loss and blindness. If you are worried you might be at risk for some eye diseases, talk to your doctor. You may be able to take steps to lower your risk. For more information go to <https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/healthy-vision/keep-your-eyes-healthy>.

July is Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month - **Over** 300,000 children in American have Arthritis! Juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA), one form of juvenile arthritis, is quite prevalent, affecting more than 50,000 children in the United States alone. JIA is often referred to as juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA) in the United States. Other specific names and forms of juvenile arthritis include:

- systemic onset JIA or Still’s disease
- oligoarticular JIA (affecting fewer than 5 joints)
- polyarticular JIA (affecting five or more joints)
- enthesitis-related arthritis
- juvenile psoriatic arthritis



When juvenile arthritis first shows its symptoms in a child’s body, many parents write off swollen joints and fever as a flu bug or think that a sudden rash might have occurred from an allergic reaction. The symptoms might even recede slightly before showing up again, sometimes delaying diagnosis for quite some time. For more information go to <https://curearthritis.org/juvenile-arthritis/>.



July is Sarcoma Awareness Month - **Sarcoma** is still considered to be the “forgotten cancer.” Sarcoma is a rare cancer in adults (1% of all adult cancers), but rather prevalent in children (about 20% of all childhood cancers). It is made up of many “subtypes” because it can arise from a variety of tissue structures (nerves, muscles, joints, bone, fat, blood vessels – collectively referred to as the body’s “connective tissues”). Because these tissues are found everywhere on the body, Sarcomas can arise anywhere. Thus, within each site of the more “common” cancers there is the occasional surprise sarcoma diagnosis (e.g., breast sarcoma, stomach sarcoma, lung sarcoma, ovarian sarcoma, etc.). The most frequent location are the limbs since this is where most the body’s connective tissue resides. They are commonly hidden deep in the body, so sarcoma is often diagnosed when it has already become too large to expect a hope of being cured. Although a lot of the lumps and bumps we get are benign, people should have them looked at by a doctor at an early stage in case it is sarcoma. Sarcoma is sometimes curable by surgery (about 20% of the time), or by surgery with chemotherapy and/or radiation (another 50-55%), but about half the time they are totally resistant to all these approaches—thus the extreme need for new therapeutic approaches. Click here for more information <https://www.curesarcoma.org/>.



July is UV Safety Awareness Month - July is designated as Ultraviolet Safety Month, during which the goal is to spread awareness about the importance of protecting skin and eyes from the harmful effects of UV rays. Most individuals do not realize that UV light is a form of radiation. Radiation is the emission of energy from any source. Radiation has many different types, but UV radiation is a form of electromagnetic radiation. The main source of UV radiation is the sun, although it can come from man-made sources such as tanning beds and welding torches. Radiation exists across a spectrum from very high energy, such as x-rays and gamma rays, to very low energy, such as radio waves. UV rays have more energy than visible light, but not as much energy as x-rays. The sun emits radiation in the form of UV light, which is classified into three types by wavelength: UVA, UVB, and UVC. The ozone layer is a protective layer in Earth's stratosphere that blocks all UVC light, but UVB and UVA light pass through it. UVA penetrates deeply into the skin. It is the type of UV radiation that causes wrinkling or leatherng of the skin. UVB is the type of radiation that causes sunburns. Exposure to both UVA and UVB are associated with the development of skin cancer, so it is important to protect the skin during exposure to sunlight. Click here for more information on this topic and 6 steps for choosing a clean and safe sunscreen <https://www.everydayhealth.com/skin-cancer/awareness-month/>.