

May 2021 Hot Topics

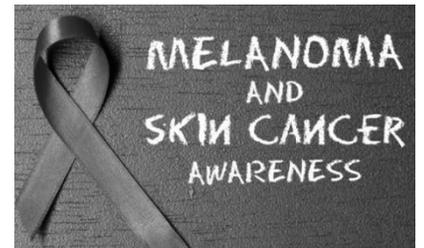
Arthritis Awareness Month - Arthritis is very common but is not well understood. Actually, “arthritis” is not a single disease; it is an informal way of referring to joint pain or joint disease. There are more than 100 types of arthritis and related conditions. People of all ages, sexes and races can and do have arthritis, and it is the leading cause of disability in America. More than 50 million adults and 300,000 children have some type of arthritis. It is most common among women and occurs more frequently as people get older.



Common arthritis joint symptoms include swelling, pain, stiffness, and decreased range of motion. Symptoms may come and go. They can be mild, moderate, or severe. They may stay about the same for years but can progress or get worse over time. Severe arthritis can result in chronic pain, inability to do daily activities and make it difficult to walk or climb stairs.

Arthritis can cause permanent joint changes. These changes may be visible, such as knobby finger joints, but often the damage can only be seen on X-ray. Some types of arthritis also affect the heart, eyes, lungs, kidneys, and skin as well as the joints. Everyone has a different experience with arthritis, so honest and thorough communication with your doctor is essential to ensuring that you are getting the right treatment. The better you are at communicating with your doctor, the better your chances are at getting back to feeling like you again. For more information go to <https://www.arthritis.org/health-wellness/detail?content=aboutarthritis>

Melanoma Skin Cancer Prevention - Spot the Cancer You Can See When It is Easiest to Treat. The world’s most common cancer is a relentless disease that strikes one in five people by age 70. The good news is that 99 percent of all cases are curable if they are diagnosed and treated early enough. But to stop skin cancer, we must spot it on time. Skin cancer is the cancer you can see. Unlike cancers that develop inside the body, skin cancers form on the outside and are usually visible. That’s why skin exams, both at home and with a dermatologist, are especially vital.



Early detection saves lives. Learning what to look for on your own skin gives you the power to detect cancer early when it’s easiest to cure, before it can become dangerous, disfiguring or deadly.

Examine your skin once a month, learn about the warning signs of skin cancer and know what to look for during a self-exam. If you spot anything that just doesn’t look right, get it checked by your dermatologist as soon as possible. See your dermatologist annually - Get a full-body, professional skin exam once a year or more often if you are at higher risk for skin cancer. Make the most of your appointment with these tips. If you have never seen a dermatologist, our physician finder can help you locate one. Click here for more information <https://www.skincancer.org/>

National High Blood Pressure Education Month - High blood pressure (also referred to as HBP, or hypertension) is when your blood pressure, the force of blood flowing through your blood vessels, is consistently too high. Know your numbers!

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

Your blood pressure reading is recorded as two numbers:

- **Systolic** blood pressure (the top number) — indicates how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls during heartbeats.
- **Diastolic** blood pressure (the bottom number) — indicates how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls while the heart is resting between beats.

To learn more, go to <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure>

Mental Health Awareness - Mental Health Awareness Month has been observed in May in the United States since 1949. The month is observed with media, local events, and film screenings. Mental Health Awareness Month began in the United States in 1949 and was started by the Mental Health America organization. During the past year, we at Mental Health America have witnessed an unprecedented increase in the numbers of people experiencing mental health problems. In November 2020, the CDC reported that 44 percent of us were dealing with either depression or anxiety. While historically data shows us that 1 in 5 adults will experience a mental health problem, these days it certainly feels like it is 5 in 5. [Click here to access the toolkit.](#) The 2021 Toolkit is based once more on the theme of Tools 2 Thrive (especially during a pandemic) – will help us do just that. Six topics comprise the toolkit – Adapting After Trauma and Stress, Processing Big Changes, Getting Out of Thinking Traps, Radical Acceptance, Taking Time for Yourself, and Dealing with Anger and Frustration. Together, these tools help us develop and employ the resiliency that will take us to brighter days. You can also here for more information <https://mhanational.org/>

