



California Area Indian Health Service

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Area Director's Message Ms. Margo Kerrigan, MPH



Ultraviolet Light (UV) Safety Tips



While some exposure to sunlight can be enjoyable, too much is dangerous. Not only can sunlight cause sunburns, but it can also cause eye damage. Studies show that exposure to bright sunlight may increase the risk of developing cataracts and macular degeneration, both leading causes of vision loss among older adults. Too much exposure to ultraviolet light (the radiation put out by the sun) can damage the cornea, the eye's surface, or even cause cancerous growths on

the eye. The more exposure to bright light, the greater the chance of developing eye conditions. Everyone, including children, is at risk for eye damage from exposure to sunlight. Eyes never recover from UV exposure. Take these steps to help protect your eyes and your eyesight:

- Select sunglasses that block ultraviolet rays. Make sure the sunglasses block 97 to 100% of UV-A and UV-B rays. Do not select sunglasses based on color or cost; the ability of sunglasses to block UV light is not dependent on the darkness of the lens or how expensive they are
- If possible, select sunglasses that wrap all the way around to your temples to keep light from coming in the side
- Even if you wear contacts with UV protection, wear sunglasses
- Wear your sunglasses whenever you are outside, but especially in the early afternoon and in higher altitudes, where UV light is more intense. Remember that the sun's rays can pass through haze and thin clouds, so wear sunglasses even on cloudy days

(continued on page 3)

What You Should Know About Performance Measures By Wendy Blocker, MSN

Does your health facility have performance measures for the clinical care you receive? Do you know what performance measures are? Have you ever heard of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)?

Performance measures tell us something important about health care services and processes. They are tools to help us understand, manage, and improve what health facilities do. Performance measures let us know:

- How well we are doing
- If we are meeting our goals
- If you are satisfied
- If processes are in control
- If and where improvements are necessary
- If there is a need to try new things

Performance measures, including ones required by GPRA, give health facilities the information needed to make smarter

decisions about how they care for you. In addition, annual reports on GPRA measures show Congress how well the Indian Health Service (IHS) is performing and are linked to the annual budget request for IHS. One example of a clinical measure is the GPRA measure that looks at the number of patients aged 18 years and older that are screened for depression. The goal for this measure is to screen every patient every year for depression. There are other measures that monitor immunizations for elders and children, cancer screenings, care for patients with diabetes, and a variety of other procedures to identify problems early and prevent disease.

Most performance measures can be grouped into one of the following six categories of good care:

- Safety: You should not be harmed by the care that is intended to help you
- Efficiency: Care should be given

without wasting equipment, supplies, ideas, and energy

- Effectiveness: Care should be based on scientific knowledge and offered to all who could benefit
- Patient-Centered: Care should be respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs, and values
- Timeliness: Excessive waiting and delays in care should be reduced both for those who receive care and those who give care
- Equitability: Care should not vary in quality because of personal characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, geographic location, nor socio-economic status

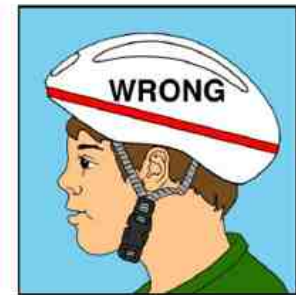
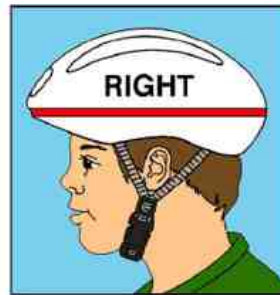
You as a patient can ask your clinic if it is using performance measures and how it is doing on providing quality care to its patients and to you.

Bicycle Helmets Can Help Prevent Injuries By Lisa Nakagawa, MPH

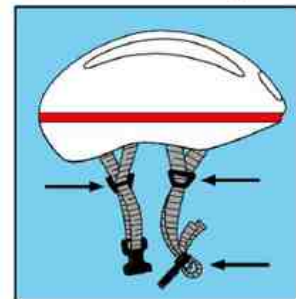
Each year, more than 500,000 people in the U.S. are treated in emergency rooms, and more than 700 people die as a result of bicycle-related injuries. Children are particularly at high risk for bicycle-related injuries. In 2001, children 15 years of age and younger accounted for 59% of all bicycle-related injuries treated in emergency rooms.

All helmets sold in the U.S. must meet the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) standard and are required to have the CPSC approval sticker affixed on the inside of the helmet. It is also important that the helmet fits correctly, so that it can properly protect the head.

A bicycle helmet should be worn level on the head and cover the forehead. **DO NOT** tip it back so your forehead is showing. The straps should always be fastened, to make certain the helmet does not fall off the head. Adjust the straps to ensure the helmet is snug and can not be pulled or twisted around on your head.



Wear the helmet flat on the head, not tilted back at an angle!



Make sure the helmet fits snugly and does not obstruct the field of vision.
Make sure the chin strap fits securely and that the buckle stays fastened.

Pregnancy and Oral Health By Steve Riggio, DDS

If you are pregnant or thinking about becoming pregnant, it is very important to pay particular attention to your teeth and gums. There are a couple of common myths about



pregnancy and teeth: “You lose a tooth for every pregnancy you have” and “If you don’t get enough calcium during your pregnancy, your body takes it from your teeth”. Neither one is true. Tooth decay, not pregnancy, can cause tooth loss. The decay process results from dental plaque, which is made up of harmful bacteria. These bacteria use the starch and sugars in food to produce acid. This acid eventually causes destruction of tooth enamel. The more often we eat starchy or sugary foods, the greater number of acid attacks to the enamel.

Gums that become red and tender and likely to bleed is a condition called gingivitis. Many pregnant women experience gingivitis. It often appears in the first trimester and is the result of changing hormone levels. The increase in hormone levels exaggerates the way gum tissues react to irritants in the dental plaque. Untreated gingivitis can lead to serious gum disease called periodontitis. Recent evidence

suggests that periodontitis is linked to premature birth and low birth weight. You can prevent gingivitis and periodontitis by keeping your gums and teeth clean.

If you are planning a pregnancy, schedule a dental checkup. Having your teeth cleaned and examined can reduce the risk of tooth decay and gingivitis. When you visit the dentist, please let your dentist know:

- If you have a high-risk pregnancy
- What month of the pregnancy you are in
- Any changes in your oral health
- If you are taking any medications
- If you have noticed any swelling, redness, bleeding or sores in your mouth

Taking care of your mouth is important, not just for your own sake, but also for the sake of your unborn baby.

Ultraviolet Light (UV) Safety Tips *(continued from page 1)*

- Wear sun protection year round; sun damage to the eyes can occur any time of the year, not just in summer. Your eyes can be damaged from UV light reflecting off of sand, snow, water, or pavement
- In addition to your sunglasses, wear a broad-rimmed hat to



protect your eyes and your face from UV light

- Make sure to take special care on very bright days. Intense, excessive exposure to UV light can damage the eye's surface
- Remember to protect children's eyes from the sun as well. Have them wear hats and sunglasses when playing outside, and try to limit sun exposure between the

hours of 10am-2pm, when the sun's UV rays are the strongest

For more information on UV safety, visit the American Academy of Ophthalmology web site at <http://www.aao.org>.

Eyes never recover from UV exposure.

Summer Thirst & One Healthy Choice By Beverly Calderon, RD, CDE

Summer is here, temperatures are high and thirsts are too! Drinking water is one healthy choice you can make. Oh, you've already been told drinking water is best and sugar-sweetened beverages are not the best choice. So, why not always pick water first? The bottom line is it comes down to what you want for your health. Here is information that may help you decide to choose water first.

- Water is best for hydrating, but only if you drink it
- Water generally costs less than sweetened beverages
- Being mildly dehydrated can slow metabolism
- Drinking a glass of water can curb the munchies most of the time
- Water helps keep body temperature normal, lubricates and cushions joints, helps get rid of wastes through urination, perspiration, and bowel movements
- Beverage manufacturers made 15 billion gallons of soda in 2000, twice as much as in the 1970s, and 54 gallons for every man, woman and child
- One 32-ounce regular soda has 310 calories and 26 teaspoons of sugar. Drinking 11-12 servings contains enough calories to add one extra pound of weight
- Americans drink twice as much soda as they did in the 1970s
 - Many 12 to 19 year old children drink 16 ounces of regular soda a day (almost a gallon a week)
 - 12% of preschoolers and 32% of school-aged children drink 9 ounces of sweetened beverages a day
 - 22% of adolescents drink 26 ounces of sweetened beverages a day
 - Adults increased drinking sweetened beverages by 100% from 1977 to 1995
- Drinking sugar-sweetened beverages is associated with weight gain, obesity, and diabetes
- Obesity rates in the United States are leveling off, but not among Native Americans, African American women or Hispanics
- Over \$147 billion dollars a year is spent on obesity-related problems, double of what was spent only ten years ago
- The healthiest way to reduce caloric intake is to decrease consumption of added sugars (and fats and alcohol), according to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005

Additional Resources:

Let's Move, America's Move to Raise a Healthier Generation of Kids

<http://www.letsmove.gov/>

How Sweet Is It? See How Much Sugar is in Soda, Juice, Sports Drinks, and Energy Drinks

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-drinks/how-sweet-is-it/index.html>

Does Drinking Beverages with Added Sugars Increase the Risk of Overweight?

http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/nutrition/pdf/r2p_sweetend_beverages.pdf

Rethink Your Drink

http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/drinks.html

Water: Meeting Your Daily Fluid Needs

<http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/water.html>

Healthy Beverage Kit

<http://www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/Nutrition/>



Whooping Cough: Is Your Family Protected? By Susan Ducore, RN, MSN



Whooping Cough, known medically as pertussis, is a highly contagious disease caused by a type of bacteria called *Bordetella pertussis* with outbreak peaks in August and September. It is one of the most commonly occurring vaccine-preventable diseases in the United States.

According to the California Department of Health website, Dr. Mark Horton, Director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), is urging Californians to get vaccinated against pertussis without delay. On June 24, 2010, Dr. Horton warned that the State is on pace to suffer the most illnesses and deaths due to pertussis in 50 years. As of a news conference on that date, Dr. Horton declared Whooping Cough an epidemic in California; asking that children be vaccinated against the disease and parents, family members and caregivers of infants obtain a booster shot." CDPH reports that as of June 15, California had recorded 910 cases of pertussis, four times as many as from the same period last year when 219 cases were recorded. Five infants — all under three months of age — have died from the disease this year.

What are the Signs and Symptoms of Whooping Cough?

- The disease starts like the common cold, with runny nose or congestion, sneezing, and maybe mild cough or fever
- Approximately 2 weeks after the symptoms start, severe coughing begins
- Pertussis is known to be most severe for babies, with more than 50% of them needing to be hospitalized
- Pertussis can lead to pneumonia (lung disease) and other serious complications, and in rare cases can lead to death



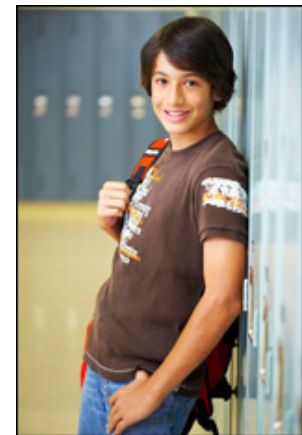
What Can You Do To Protect Yourself, Your Family and Your Community?

- The best way to prevent pertussis is to get vaccinated. Ask your physician or other health care professional if you and your family members are up-to-date on your adult, adolescent and childhood immunizations
- Make sure that infants and young children in your household are fully vaccinated, getting their recommended five shots on time, at the recommended age intervals
- Adolescent and adult vaccination is important especially for families with or around new infants

- If you have any of the aforementioned signs and or symptoms seek medical attention immediately and follow the prescribed treatment
- Parents can protect their very young infants, those not fully immunized based on age, by minimizing close contact with persons who have cold symptoms or cough illness

Additional Resources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <http://www.cdc.gov/DiseasesConditions/>
 California Department of Public Health - www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/default.aspx
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Vaccine Preventable Disease Information - <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/default.htm>
 The Indian Health Service - Division of Epidemiology and Disease Prevention - www.ihs.gov/Epi/



Important Events

2010 National Behavioral Health Conference (July 27-29)

Hosted by: Indian Health Service/Bureau of Indian Affairs

Location: Sacramento, CA

The event is targeted toward social workers, counselors, therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, traditional service providers, physicians, nurses, Tribal Leaders, behavioral health and health program administrators, community health representatives, and all other interested community members.

Contact: info@bhconference.com

