



Healthy People Newsletter

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National Health Observances

June | 2019

Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month

Men's Health Month

Migraine and Headache Awareness Month

PTSD Awareness Month

Scleroderma Awareness Month

Cancer Survivors Day (2)

Community Health Improvement Week (2-8)

Family Health & Fitness Day USA (8)

Men's Health Week (10-16)

Blood Donor Day (14)

Nursing Assistants Week (13-20)

Healthcare Risk Management Week (17-21)



PROTECTING YOURSELF & YOUR FAMILY *from Emerging Disease*

News stories and headlines warn us about new and/or re-emerging diseases seemingly every year. But how much of a danger do these diseases really pose? What can you do to reduce the risk from new diseases in your community?

Emerging diseases are caused by microbes, usually bacteria or viruses, that haven't infected people before or that already infect people but have moved to new places.

New diseases emerge all the time from the animal world. Part of the reason is that the genes in bacteria and viruses are always changing. These gene changes, called mutations, help microbes survive and spread. Some make it possible for bacteria or viruses that once only infected animals to infect people.

Bacteria and viruses often get from animals to people by way of insects and parasites. The most common of these are mosquitoes and ticks.

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF DISEASE & INFECTIONS

The modern world has changed how animals, insects, and people encounter each other. Deforestation increases the chances that humans come in contact with forest-dwelling creatures and insects. As people move further into undeveloped areas, they become more likely to encounter animals and insects that carry microbes they haven't been exposed to before.

More people moving to large cities also plays a role in the spread of disease. When millions of people live close to each other—and close to mosquitoes that like to live in cities—diseases can move quickly.

Changes in the environment can also contribute. Most microbes—and the insects that carry them—can only live within a narrow range of conditions. With a warming

planet, these infections shift geographically into new areas.

On the surface, the numbers look alarming. Between 2004 and 2016, nine new diseases that are spread by mosquitoes and ticks were found in the U.S.

The number of people exposed to these diseases is also rising. For example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported a record number of tickborne-disease cases nationwide in 2017: almost 60,000.

But new insect-borne diseases are still less frequent than some other better-known diseases. In comparison, experts estimate that over a million people get the flu every year in the U.S.

Most people who catch a disease carried by mosquitoes or ticks fight off the invaders quickly.

It's still important to know what new diseases are in your area. Many of these diseases have vague symptoms, such as fever, a rash, body aches, or feeling very tired. People and their doctors may not always suspect exposure to an insect-borne disease.

Different new diseases tend to cluster in certain areas. Most cases of Lyme disease occur in the Northeast and upper Midwest. Dengue fever has been seen in warm areas such as Florida and Texas.

Your local public health office can give you information about what new diseases are found in your area.

PROTECT YOURSELF

Depending on where you travel, you may come into contact with diseases that are rare in the U.S. Before you travel, talk to your doctor about getting vaccinated. It will help keep you safe and healthy. It will also help make sure that you don't bring any serious diseases home to your family, friends, and community.



REDUCE YOUR RISK OF DISEASES SPREAD BY MOSQUITOES AND TICKS:

- » **Check your yard.** Pour out standing water in old tires, flower pots, buckets, toys, or any other place where mosquitoes can breed. This includes even the tiniest places where water can collect.
- » **Use insect repellent when going outside.**
- » **Wear long sleeves and pants.** Fabric can help prevent bugs from getting to your skin. Tuck your pants into your socks when walking in an area with ticks.
- » **Use screens on open windows.** Screens can keep mosquitoes from getting in the house. Use air conditioning instead, if possible.
- » **Check your body for ticks.** After being outside in an area with ticks, check your body in the mirror. Have a family member look at areas you can't see.
- » **If you find a tick, remove it immediately.**
- » **Treat your pets with flea and tick preventative.** This can keep them from bringing bugs into the house.



THE FACTS ON *Fats*

Recommendations about dietary fat have shifted over the last two decades. From the 1970s through the 1990s, nutrition researchers emphasized eating a low-fat diet. This was largely because of concerns about saturated fats. Saturated fat that's in the bloodstream raises the levels of LDL cholesterol—the “bad” cholesterol. This in turn raises the risk of heart disease.

But when people started following low-fat diets, they didn't only cut saturated fats. In many cases, they replaced healthy unsaturated fats with processed carbohydrates. Many adults would consume fat-free foods, like cookies, crackers, and ice cream, made with refined grains and sugar. As scientists have learned, those replacement calories matter. Studies have shown that replacing saturated fat with unsaturated fat reduces the risk of heart disease. However, replacing saturated fat with simple carbohydrates, such as added sugar and white bread, does not.

Experts note that there's still a misconception that eating fat—any kind of fat—is bad. That it will lead to heart attacks, or weight gain, but this isn't true. People should be encouraged to eat healthy fats.

“GOOD” FATS

Research has shown that unsaturated fats are good for you. These fats come mostly from plant sources. Cooking oils that are liquid at room temperature, such as canola, peanut, safflower, soybean, and olive oil, contain mostly unsaturated fat. Nuts, seeds, and avocados are also good sources. Fatty fish—such as salmon, sardines, and herring—are rich in unsaturated fats, too.

Large studies have found that replacing saturated fats in your diet with unsaturated fats can reduce your risk of heart disease by about the same amount as cholesterol-lowering drugs.

"BAD" FATS

So are there fats you should avoid? Only a few years ago, doctors still had to advise people to avoid so-called trans fats in their diets. These largely manufactured fats could be found in things like margarine and many processed foods. They have been shown to raise the risk of heart disease.

Since 2015, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has taken steps to remove artificial trans fats from the food supply. Most trans fats now in food come from the small amounts found naturally in animal products, like meat and butter.

Nutrition experts still recommend that people minimize the amount of saturated fat in the diet. But researchers are now looking at whether the type of food that saturated fat is found in matters. For example, the influence of plant-based saturated fats, such as those in coconut and palm oil, is still unclear and being researched further.

DETERMINING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

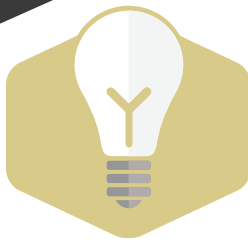
Researchers know that there are big differences in how people's bodies react to different types and amounts of fat. But they still don't know why. Studies have found that genes aren't likely responsible.

If there's one thing that the research has shown, it's that the science of diets is very complex. Experts have moved away from focusing on single nutrients—such as fat—by themselves. Instead, researchers now talk about healthy dietary patterns; ways of eating that take all aspects of the diet into account.

CHOOSING YOUR FATS

- » **Eat plant-based foods.** Plants can contain healthy fats, as well as important vitamins and minerals.
- » **Include plant oils in your diet.** Healthy choices include canola, peanut, olive, safflower, soybean, sunflower, corn, and nut oils.
- » **Replace foods containing saturated fats** (like butter or lard) with healthier unsaturated fat options.
- » **Limit fatty red meat.** Instead, eat more fish, poultry, or lean meats.
- » **Reduce sugars and replace processed grains,** such as white bread and white rice, with whole grains and brown rice. The body can use simple carbohydrates to make saturated fats.





FEELING MOODY?

What's Normal vs What's Not

Some people are more moody than other people. Normal mood actually varies from person to person. That's because we all have different “temperaments,” or combinations of personality traits that are biologically based. These are fairly stable over time.

Considerable research shows that people really differ in their basic temperament. There are some people who temperamentally are always in a “good” mood. And there are people who are temperamentally always in a “bad” mood. People who have a more negative temperament tend to have a higher risk for mood and anxiety disorders.

WHAT MAKES OUR MOOD?

It's not only temperament that affects how you feel each day. Daily habits that affect your ability to manage stress—like diet, exercise, sleep, or how much alcohol you drink—play an important role, too.

If you address those factors—have good diet, good exercise, good sleep-wake habits, regular activities, routines, and try to disconnect from work and other stressors—those do have beneficial effects on mood and keeping you healthy.

Other biological factors can affect your mood too, like hormones. Women may experience shifts in hormones during their menstrual cycles, pregnancy, and menopause that cause mood changes. Men can have decreases in testosterone as they age, which has been linked to depression.

Certain medical conditions, such as a vitamin deficiency, can make you feel “down” or lack energy. Mental health conditions like depression and bipolar disorder can also cause you to feel very sad and have low energy.



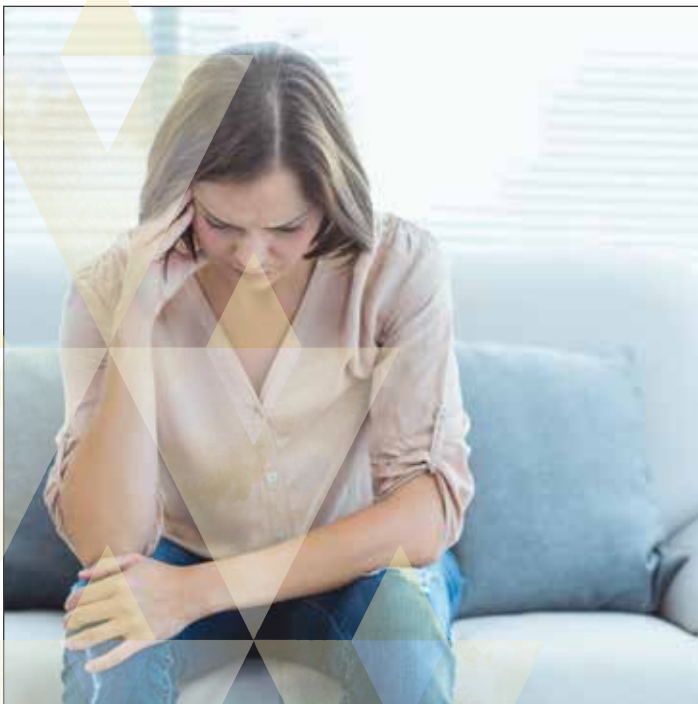
Other mental health conditions can cause mood issues as well—for example, anxiety disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder, and personality disorders.

It's okay once in a while for people not to have a good mood. Moods that fluctuate occasionally are a normal thing. It's when it's combined with other symptoms—like significant distress and/or impairment of function or relationships—that it becomes an issue. People may not know when their mood has become a problem. Friends and family members should be open and honest with each other and let them know what they're seeing.

MANAGING YOUR MOOD

Mood is a normal part of life, and having emotions is a normal part of life. Sometimes you feel more negative than other times. That's not necessarily bad.

One common and effective strategy for both children and adults to use when feeling bad or down is called attention refocusing. Meaning that they stop paying attention to whatever is making them miserable or unhappy and they start putting their attention elsewhere.



For kids, this may mean finding a specific task to do when they're upset, like helping a parent with chores or finding someone to play with. For adults, it may mean having a conversation with a friend or going for a walk or to see a movie.

Experts often find that people with depression or other mental health conditions tend to turn to coping strategies that worsen their mood rather than lift it. For example, thinking about what's bothering them over and over again or avoiding or hiding their feelings. These strategies can make negative feelings stronger or last longer.

Charting your moods can help you figure out what's affecting how you feel too. There are even apps that help. If your mood is making it hard to cope with daily life, talk with your health care provider. If you're having suicidal thoughts, call your doctor immediately or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A MOOD DISORDER

If you've been feeling down or lacked energy for a while, talk with your doctor. Here are some things to look for:

- » Continuously feeling sad, anxious, "empty," or irritable
- » Feeling guilty, worthless, helpless, or hopeless
- » Losing interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
- » Low energy or fatigue
- » Moving or talking more slowly
- » Feeling restless or having trouble sitting still
- » Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- » Difficulty sleeping, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
- » Thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempts
- » Difficulty controlling worries
- » Aches or pains, headaches, or digestive problems without a clear physical cause



DID YOU KNOW?

Most adults should have a cholesterol test every 4 to 6 years. That's because nearly 78 million American adults have high levels of the type of cholesterol that's linked to heart disease and stroke.

KEEPING YOUR CHOLESTEROL *In Check*

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that your body needs to function properly. It travels through your bloodstream to reach the cells that need it. Your cells use cholesterol for many important functions, like making hormones and digesting fatty foods.

But too much cholesterol in your blood can cause waxy buildup called plaques in blood vessels. These plaques can eventually become inflamed and rupture, leading to a clot. If a clot blocks blood flow through an artery in the heart, it can cause a heart attack. Or, if this happens in the artery of the brain, it can cause a stroke.

Cholesterol travels through the bloodstream in particles called lipoproteins. There are different types of lipoproteins that have different effects.

Low-density lipoproteins, or LDLs, contribute to plaques. LDL cholesterol is sometimes called “bad” cholesterol.

The most common cause of high LDL cholesterol is an unhealthy lifestyle. Excess body weight and eating a lot of animal fats are linked to high levels of LDL cholesterol. The genes that you inherit from your parents, other medical conditions, and certain medicines can also cause high cholesterol.

You may also have heard about “good” cholesterol: high-density lipoproteins, or HDL. HDL particles absorb cholesterol and carry it to the liver. The liver then flushes it from the body. That's why scientists previously thought that raising levels of HDL cholesterol might lower your risk for heart disease and stroke.

But recent research suggests that HDL cholesterol works better in some people than others. And clinical trials haven't found that medicines aimed at raising HDL cholesterol reduce the risk of heart attack. There's still a lot to learn about HDL.



Lab tests can measure the different types of cholesterol in your blood. How often you should get tested depends on your age and other risk factors, including a family history of high cholesterol or heart disease.

If tests show that you have a high level of LDL cholesterol, your doctor may order additional tests. You can try to lower it by eating a heart-healthy diet, being physically active, and losing excess weight.

For some people, lifestyle changes aren't enough to lower LDL cholesterol. Your biological makeup can be a strong influence on cholesterol buildup, too. In these cases, a type of drug known as a statin is the usual treatment. Doctors may combine statins with other drugs.

If your LDL cholesterol is very high, it's important that your family members get tested, too. If your genes put you at risk for high cholesterol, your close relatives might have a similar risk.

Talk to your doctor about getting tested. And remember that heart-healthy lifestyle changes can not only lower cholesterol levels but also bring many long-term health benefits.

KEYS TO KEEPING YOUR CHOLESTEROL ON THE RIGHT TRACK

- » Maintain a healthy weight.
- » Choose a nutritious diet. Limit red meat and get plenty of fish, nuts, whole grains, beans, fruits, and vegetables.
- » Get enough physical activity. Before starting, ask your doctor what level is right for you.
- » Talk with your doctor to see if medication is right for you.



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WHAT YOU DISLIKE IN
ANOTHER
TAKE CARE TO CORRECT IN
YOURSELF.

- THOMAS SPRAT