

Health/Education

Eye and foot exams are key to preventing diabetes complications

CONTRIBUTED STORY
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Having annual dilated eye exams and routine foot exams will aid those with diabetes avoid serious complications related to the disease. Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness and lower limb amputations.

During November the American Diabetes Associations along with many health care organizations throughout Oregon and SW Washington will offer free eye, foot, and glucose screenings for people with diabetes. Screening are designed to encourage those who have diabetes to take charge of their disease prevent future complications. During their lifetime, nearly half of American's estimated 16 million people with diabetes will develop some degree of retinopathy, the most common form of diabetes eye disease. Usually, diabetic retinopathy has no early symptoms and visual impairment does not develop until the disease has advanced into its later stages. Diabetic retinopathy damages the tiny blood vessels in the retina, the light sensitive tissue that lines the back of eyes. As many as

24,000 people go blind each year from the disorder, making it a leading cause of blindness among people ages 20-74. Statistics from the Oregon Health Division indicate one Oregonian become blind daily. Over 90 percent of these cases can be prevented with early detection and prompt treatment. People with diabetes can also develop many different foot problems. Even ordinary problems such as cuts, blisters, calluses or corns quickly get worse and lead to serious complications. About one in five people with diabetes are hospitalized because of foot problems. The risk of amputation is 15-40 times greater for those who have diabetes.

Diabetes can cause nerve damage that impairs sensation in the feet. Loss of sensations, attributable to neuropathy, can cause a person with diabetes to burn their feet or even step on a tack without feeling it. About 60-70% of people with diabetes has mild to severe forms of neuropathy and it is more likely to effect people who have had diabetes for a long time or whose glucose control is poor. Maintaining good blood glucose control is an important step in preventing nerve damage. Another

self-preventative measure is to skin, and feel for very cold or hot areas. Routine foot exams by a physician can also check feet for pulses, reflexes, calluses, infections and sores as well as nerve damage. Routine foot care is a key factor in protecting the feet from damage.

For more information about activities call the American Diabetes Association at (1-888) 342-23483. Examples of organizations providing screening include Pacific University College of Optometry Vision centers, Clatsop County Diabetes Coalition, Center for Health Mind & Body (The Dalles), Adventist medical Center, Douglas County Diabetes Coalition, and McKenzie Willamette Hospital (Springfield).

To receive free information about heart, eye and foot care tips call the Association's Information Line at (1-800) 342-2383. Ask for the brochure "Diabetes What to Know Head to Toe" to receive a free filament that can be used to test feet for loss of feeling. The filament comes in a cardboard holder with simple instructions for its use. Information is also available on the Association's website at www.diabetes.org/adaor.

African American Health Coalition begins HIV outreach campaign

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The African American Health Coalition is expanding its program to include HIV education and outreach. On December 1st, the African American Health Coalition (AAHC) will begin providing HIV education and outreach services targeted to African American living in the Portland area.

The AAHC program will include community presentations and regular, ongoing contact with places in the community where people gather. The AAHC will urge community members to know the facts about HIV and how it is and is not spread. In addition, they will educate people about how to protect themselves. They will also emphasize the need for those at risk to get tested for HIV and help connect them with community testing resources.


"We are very excited to be able to provide these services" says Corliss McKeever, Executive Director of AAHC. "We are committed to promoting positive health and wellness in the community and HIV. Is a issue we just can't ignore"

As with the other health issues we work on, we want emphasize early detection. The earlier someone is diagnosed with HIV, the better," says McKeever. "We want to get people talking about HIV is an issue we just can't ignore" Initial funding for this project comes through the Multnomah County

Health Department's HIV Prevention services. "We like the idea of supporting an agency that has an overall health focus," says Lorean Nichols, Manager of HIV Prevention Services for the Health Department. "There has been such a stigma attached to HIV disease, it makes sense to integrate it into an overall health focus. We are hoping that will help get the community engaged and

involved in HIV prevention." Other AAHC projects include the Wellness Village, an annual wellness conference and community health fair; the National Black Leadership Initiative on Cancer; and Sister Circle, a project that provides support, case management and outreach for breast and cervical cancer survivors. The kick-off of this project coincides with World AIDS Day December 1.





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Smoking ban doesn't hurt liquor or beer sales

CONTRIBUTED STORY
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Study shows no overall economic impact on bars while employees and customers get significant health benefit. Corvallis bar patrons are complying with the city's ban on smoking-meaning a major health benefit to the employees and the customers of those bars. A majority of these persons are non-smokers. Further, Corvallis' ban on smoking in bars had no overall impact upon sales of liquor or beer. This and other finding were contained in a study released today by the Health Division of the Oregon Department of Human Services. "We are extremely happy with the results of the survey. These finding mirror those from a recent study of California bars", Benton County health educator Dana Kaye said. "We can successfully protect employees and customers from the cancer-causing chemicals in secondhand smoke without hurting business." The study noted that there was a regional decline in video poker, and a larger decline in few Corvallis bars. Other significant study findings: 67% percent of Corvallis bar customers said they like the bar experience better now than when smoking was allowed. Every worker and customers in Corvallis bars is now protected from cancer causing secondhand smoke, including the 54% of people employed in the Corvallis bars and the 66% of Customers who do not smoke. Almost 7 to 10 customers in Corvallis and comparison community establishments remained loyal to the same bars after the ordinance went into effect. Almost 9 in 10 customers in the Corvallis bars spend as much time or more in bars now as they did before the ordinance went in to effect. 9 in 10 customers also report spending as much or more money on food and alcohol in bars as they did before the ordinance. Corvallis servers reported less eye irritation than before the ordinance, and less than other servers in the comparison communities. 2 of every 3 customers in the Corvallis bars like the smoking prohibition ordinance. The study, conducted by the Pacific Research Institute under contract with the Oregon Health Division, was designed to assess the health and economic effects of the Corvallis smoking ban in bars. It compared liquor and beer sale data from similar periods. Analysis of this and other data, researchers found that the ban had no impact on liquor or beer sales, which declined equally in both communities and in the Corvallis establishments that were already smokefree. In 1998, Corvallis voters upheld a city council decision to implement a ban on smoking in

bars. That ban was passed to protect employees and customers from secondhand smoke. According to Kaye, other studies elsewhere have found that, like bars, restaurant sales are also unaffected by similar ordinances designed to protect employees from secondhand smoke. According to Kaye, other studies else where have found that, like bars, restaurant sale are also unaffected by similar ordinances designed to protect employees from secondhand smoke. Research on smoking Ban in Corvallis Bars 1. Did the Corvallis ordinance simply move secondhand smoke from area to another? There is little evidence of a migration of Corvallis customers to non- Corvallis bars. Seventy-two percent of the customers in Corvallis said they went to the same bars before and after the ordinance. Likewise, although some smoker from Corvallis may have gone to the bars near Corvallis, the vast majority of the patrons in the non-Corvallis bars did not come from Corvallis.

Evidence from this study suggests that the Corvallis ban was associated with an increased propensity of smoking customers to quit smoking, which has also been found in research in other setting. Also, studies elsewhere show that smokers do not travel to new places just to be able to

smoke. In fact, studies show that once a smoking prohibition goes into effect, smokers quickly adapt and their drinking habits remain the way they were before the prohibition. Bans on smoking in the workplace not only reduce secondhand smoke exposure directly, workplace smoking prohibition have a indirect benefit of helping people who want to quit actually succeed quitting, thereby reducing secondhand smoke further. 2. Do the health benefits of the ordinance outweigh whatever economic losses there might have been? Clearly, saving people's lives while not hurting the Corvallis bar business in general is a win-win situation. In spite of owners' concern, the objective data from this study suggest that the ordinance itself did not cause overall revenue decline in the bars in Corvallis. OLCC data show a 5.6% decline in dispenser sales in Corvallis, while Albany had 5.7% decline. Likewise, there were no statistically significant differences in malt beverage sales between Corvallis and bars in the surrounding areas. At the same time, enormous health benefits were obtained by protecting every worker and patron in the Corvallis bars from secondhand smoke, which contains over 50 cancer-causing chemicals.

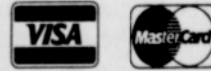
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