

HEALTH / FAMILY

Diseases that Discriminate

African American Health Coalition teaches healthy habits to combat diseases targeting African Americans

BY DAMARCUS REDEAU/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Did you know that African Americans have the poorest health profile of any racial or ethnic group in Oregon?

The African American Health Coalition Inc. is here to help. Its mission is to promote and improve wellness among African Americans living in Oregon through health education, advocacy and research.

In 1989, African Americans were concerned about their health because the deadly diseases were haunting them. AIDS and cardiovascular disease, leading to stroke, heart attacks and diabetes, are today's main killers of African Americans.

In 1996, the African American Health Coalition

started an annual wellness conference with free tests and screenings. This will be the 8th annual wellness conference.

The African American Health Coalition of Oregon is the only recipient of the Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) grant. The grant funds 29 various classes ranging from strength training, African dance, salsa, water aerobics, yoga, conditioning with 11 different venues including the Whitaker track. All classes are free.

"Our hope is that the African American community members take advantage of the opportunity to increase physical activity," explains Dora Asana, the program director of the African American Health Coalition.

The REACH program and the African American Health Coalition are having their first annual Wellness Within REACH Walk on September 6th. The walk is a fundraiser to keep free classes going in the community. There is a choice between a 1.5-mile walk and a 4-mile walk. The walk begins and ends at Dawson Park at 9 a.m. with warm-up, music and activities for children at 8 a.m. To participate in the walk, there is a \$15 per person. Register in person at the African American Health Coalition,



Program Director Dora Asana

2800 N. Vancouver Ave., Suite 100 or by mail with a check payable to African American Health Coalition Inc. Mail to 2800 N. Vancouver Ave., Suite 100 Portland, OR 97227.

HEALTH BRIEFS

STAY SHAPELY - EXERCISE SAFELY

Being outdoors in warm weather can be invigorating, especially after spending months inside due to the cold and rain. Although summer brings many opportunities to participate in outdoor physical activities, it is important to understand how to safely and effectively exercise in the heat. For example, when is the best time of day to exercise outside in order to avoid heat exhaustion? Answer - experts recommend that people avoid exercising outside in temperatures over 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Hear other tips from Providence experts about staying fit - and healthy - when exercising this summer.

KEEP MOSQUITOES AT BAY THIS SUMMER

While we won't be immune to the West Nile virus this summer, there are many things we can do to limit our risk of exposure. Curtailing outdoor activities at dusk when mosquitoes are most active; keeping windows and doorways tightly sealed; installing window and door screens to keep insects outside; and wearing protective clothing when working outdoors are among a few suggestions to reduce the risk. Providence experts can shed light on these suggestions and others - like the safest ways to use insect repellent - to thwart pesky critters and the diseases they harbor.

PROTECTING YOUR SKIN FROM SUNBURNS

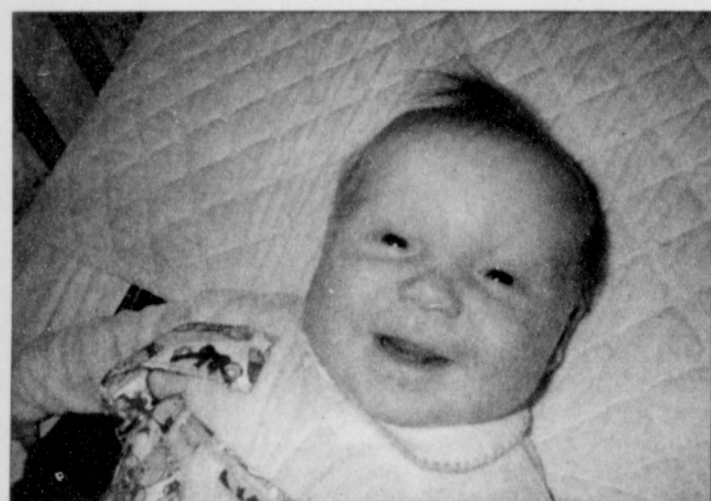
Although most of us love the warmth and light of the sun, too much sun exposure can cause significant damage to human skin. Over time, the sun depletes skin of natural lubricating oils. Its ultraviolet radiation can cause short-term burning, long-term changes in the skin's structure, or far worse - skin cancer. Each year, more than 1 million Americans are diagnosed with skin cancer, the most common type of cancer in the United States. Learn about the appropriate use - and strength - of sunscreen, as well as other "sun safe" tips from Providence specialists.

STAY SMART AND STAY AFLOAT

Tragic water accidents happen quickly - it can take only a second for something disastrous to occur. Advance planning, however, can minimize the risk and prevent the most common water injuries and accidents. Common sense tips - such as enrolling your children in swimming lessons and teaching them to always swim in supervised water - are among the many tips Providence experts can offer about water safety and what to do in the case of water-related emergencies.

'B' SAFE IN YOUR BACKYARD!

Backyard injuries are common in the summer, and sometimes inevitable, but being prepared can help minor injuries from becoming far worse. Insect stings can be avoided by using repellent, but if your child is stung, remove the stinger by scraping it away with your fingernail. To prevent barbecue burns, place a screen over the grill and make sure the grill, barbecue or propane tank is in an open area with no overhanging trees or branches. Also, remember to use extreme caution when operating lawnmowers and never allow children to ride on riding lawnmowers. Learn more from our experts on how to prevent backyard injuries from becoming backyard emergencies.



Adrian Pearson was born in Portland using a rare frozen egg technique.

Frozen Egg Bears Healthy Baby

OHSU fertility experts help couple have first baby born on West Coast using cryopreservation

The University Fertility Consultants at the Oregon Health & Science University have successfully frozen human eggs that have resulted in the birth of a baby boy. It is the first successful birth using this method on the West Coast, according to David Battaglia, Ph.D., who utilized a technique that was developed in Bologna, Italy. He is also an associate professor of obstet-

rics and gynecology. Egg freezing technology is just emerging as a viable option for patients and this birth is one of about 25 such births in the United States and one of about 130 worldwide.

Adrian Alexander Pearson, was born March 22, 2003. He weighed in at 9 pounds, 2 ounces, 21 inches long, and with a head of red hair.

Survey Tracks Domestic Violence Against Pregnant Women

Public health researchers in the state Department of Human Services (DHS) say new data about abuse to pregnant women underscore the serious impact of domestic violence in Oregon.

"Domestic violence against pregnant women occurs several times each day in Oregon," said Ken Rosenberg, M.D., medical epidemiologist in DHS. "And it usually doesn't begin or end with pregnancy."

Rosenberg's survey estimates that 2.6 percent of Oregon's pregnant women were physically hurt by their husband or partner in 2000. It also estimates that 3.6 percent were physically hurt by their husband or partner before they became pregnant.

Findings are based on the on results of the 2000 DHS Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitory Survey (PRAMS), an ongoing survey of women who have recently given birth. A total of 2,100 new mothers participated, and the survey is designed to be representative of the entire population of Oregon women who recently gave birth. Findings include:

When asked, "during your recent pregnancy did

your husband push, hit, slap, kick, choke or physically hurt you in any other way," 2.6 percent of respondents answered yes. When extended to the entire population, this represents 1,126 new mothers.

• The survey found that 0.8 percent of respondents,

Domestic violence against pregnant women occurs several times each day in Oregon.

—Ken Rosenberg, M.D., medical epidemiologist in DHS.

representing 346 new mothers, said someone else had physically hurt them while they were pregnant.

• In addition, 3.8 percent of women respondents, representing 1,646 new mothers, reported being physically hurt by their husband or partner in the 12 months before they became pregnant.

Diversity Manager Announced at Providence

Lolita Burnette has joined Providence Health System as its new regional diversity manager. In her new position, Burnette will focus on expanding diversity awareness and practices throughout the organization.

"I'm excited to be here at Providence, and to have the opportunity to work with people who are so committed to honoring diversity in the workplace," said Burnette. "People are the key to holding diversity initiatives together, and no two people are the same. Our aim is to help people interact even more effectively with each other in the workplace and with those whom they serve."

Burnette has served as a director of information technology, and has worked in publishing, public rela-



Lolita Burnette, Reed College alum, will bring focus to diversity awareness

tions and consumer marketing. She also has more than 20 years experience in organizational development and human resources. Burnette was most recently the owner of

Achievement Architects, a consulting firm. She had previously served as human resources director for the City of Gresham, US West Communications (now Qwest) and Pacific Bell Directory. She has a bachelor's degree from Reed College. Her post-graduate work includes certification in equal employment opportunity and affirmative action practices from Cornell University and MBA coursework from the University of Phoenix.

"As part of our Mission and Core Values, our goal at Providence is to ensure that diversity is interwoven into the fabric of everything we do," said Baruti Artharee, regional director of Diversity Initiatives. "I know Lolita will help us continue our progress toward that goal."

Bill Could Reduce HIV Deaths

Senator Gordon Smith (R-OR) proposed a bill that could reduce AIDS death by 50 percent. A new study by the Early Treatment for HIV Act of 2003 (ETHA) finds that passing ETHA would reduce the death rate for people with HIV on Medicaid by 50 percent over 10 years.

"This study shows that the lives of people with HIV can be greatly improved through the passage of ETHA," said Smith. "Some people living with HIV and AIDS get the latest medical treatment, but too many do not. This is literally a life and death issue for many Oregonians, and ETHA can help many more

Americans enjoy long, healthy lives."

The study found that providing early intervention care through ETHA significantly delays the progression of HIV disease, increases the life expectancy of HIV positive individuals and is highly cost effective.

African American Health Coalition, Inc.

1st Annual

Wellness Within REACH Walk

September 6, 2003

What

Join us for the 1st Annual Wellness Within REACH Walk Sat. September 6, 2003! Walk the 1.5 or 4-mile course.

When

The walk begins at 9:00 a.m. Other event activities begin at 8:00 a.m.

For more information

For more information about participation or to volunteer contact the African American Health Coalition, Inc. at 503-413-1850, whoamer@aahc-portland.org or mfield@aahc-portland.org

Where

Start and finish at Dawson Park, located at N. Vancouver and Stanton in Portland, OR.

Why

The purpose of the walk is to celebrate our community's health and sustain ongoing free physical activity classes for African Americans in the Portland metro area.

Entry

Entry fee is \$15 per person.