

HEALTH MATTERS

Tobacco May Claim 1 Billion Lives

Prevention policies urged

(AP)—The World Health Organization warned in a new report that the "tobacco epidemic" is growing and could claim 1 billion lives by the end of the century unless governments dramatically step up efforts to curb smoking.

In its first comprehensive report on tobacco use in 179 countries, the U.N.'s health agency said governments around the world collect more than \$200 billion in tobacco taxes every year but spend less than one-fifth of 1 percent of that revenue on tobacco control.



Smoking tobacco will lead to unprecedented levels of disease and early death, according to a new report from the World Health Organization.

The report calls on all countries to dramatically increase efforts to prevent young people from beginning to smoke, help smokers quit and protect nonsmokers from exposure to second-hand smoke.

It urges governments to adopt six "tobacco control policies" — raise taxes and prices of tobacco; ban tobacco advertising, promo-

tion and sponsorship; protect people from second-hand smoke; warn people about the dangers of tobacco; help those who want to quit smoking; and monitor tobacco use to understand and reverse the epidemic.

Dr. Douglas Bettcher, director of the World Health Organization's Tobacco Free Initiative, said WHO estimates 5.4 million smoking-related deaths a year, rising to more than 8 million a year by 2030 if nothing is done. That adds up to 175 million between 2005 and 2030. Beyond that, he said, deaths will continue to rise and statistical projections put the death toll at near 1 billion by the end of the century.

Testing Critical in AIDS Fight for Pregnant Woman

The African-American community is being urged to step up HIV testing and counseling, especially among pregnant women.

"Getting an HIV test takes courage, but it is a tremendous act of compassion and hope," said Pamela W. Barnes, president of the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation. "Knowing your HIV status is the essential first step to eradicate this disease and one of the simplest ways to help save an

infant's life."

High rates of HIV infection in the African-American community are alarming. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, blacks make up approximately 13 percent of the U.S. population, but accounted for 49 percent of new HIV/AIDS diagnoses.

The rate of AIDS diagnosis for black women was nearly 23 times the rate for white women.

HIV/AIDS infection among Af-

rican-American infants is high as well. Of the 141 infants infected with HIV in 2006, 65 percent were black.

Testing is a key component of HIV prevention, and testing of pregnant women is one of the most effective ways to reduce mother-to-child transmission.

"The good news is we are not powerless to stop it, Barnes said. "Thanks to groundbreaking medical advances, it is now possible for

an HIV-positive woman to give birth to a healthy, HIV-negative baby. This is why it is so important that all pregnant women get tested early, so we can stop HIV before it moves into the next generation."

Universal, routine counseling and HIV testing are the most effective ways to increase the number of pregnant women who know their HIV status, and give them the chance to protect their own health and the health of their babies.

HEALTH WATCH

Heart Awareness -- Wednesday, Feb. 20 at 4:30 p.m., Dr. David J. P. Barker presents a talk on how nutrition in the womb affects heart disease. On Wednesday, Feb. 27 at 4:30 p.m., Dr. Maureen Mays lectures on the topic 'Heart Healthy Everyday.' Registration is required by calling 503-418-3748.

Tools for Caregivers -- Six-week educational series are offered to help family caregivers take care of themselves while caring for a relative or friend with a chronic illness. The classes are being held at several locations and dates. Call 503-413-6465 for more information.

Newborn Care -- Saturday, Feb. 16, from noon to 5 p.m., expectant parents will learn tips and techniques for caring for their newborn; \$45 fee per couple. To register, call 503-574-6595.

For Big Brothers & Big Sisters-To-Be -- Saturday, Feb. 16, from 10 to 11 a.m., special sibling classes for children ages 3 to 6 are offered to help them to prepare for their role as an older sibling. \$20 fee (2 adults, 1 child). To register, call 503-574-6595.

Parenting Classes -- Newborns don't come with instruction manuals but parents and parents-to-be can learn about a variety of topics from pain and childbirth to breastfeeding to infant CPR and much more. For a schedule of events, call 503-574-6595 or visit: providence.org/classes.

Cancer Resource Center -- Providence St. Vincent Medical Center and the American Red Cross have joined forces to create the first in-hospital resource center providing books, printed material, computer access and more for individuals and families dealing with cancer. The center is open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Stroke Alert Screening -- Check your carotid arteries with a painless ultrasound to assess your risk. Fee \$40. To schedule a screening, call 503-251-6137.

Food for Life: A Cooking and Nutrition Series -- Learn about the influence of diet on cancer, including cooking demonstrations, food samples and more. This four-part series begins Thursday, Feb. 21 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. To register, call 503-256-4000.

Smoke-Free Support Group -- meets Mondays, 7 to 8 p.m. For more information, call 503-256-4000.

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- Be willing to have a nerve conduction test
- Not be taking insulin
- Not be pregnant or nursing, and haven't had a baby in the last three months
- Not have any implanted electronic devices (such as a pacemaker)

Participants will wear one of three strength magnets for six weeks. You will attend four study visits at the Clinical and Translational Research Center of Oregon Health & Science University and three visits at the Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation Clinic. The study will last about 5 months. You will be compensated at the completion of each phase of the study, up to a possible total of \$300 for the entire study.

For more information, please call 503-552-1749

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