

News

New Year, New You

To say 2016 was a mountain of a year is an understatement. For many of us, it felt like we were plummeting down a black diamond slope with one ski pole, locked in bindings, bound for destruction. But, the good news is 2017 is upon us and thus a new beginning. We have the decision to transform bad habits to good and cast procrastination to the side for productivity. As we begin the New Year with renewed vigor, don't forget to include your pet in your plan for success.



Dr. Jasmine Streeter, Veterinarian and her dog Sheba are ready for the new year

For those striving for a more active lifestyle, consider including your pet. According to the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention, 53.8 percent of dogs and 58.2 percent of cats are estimated to be overweight or obese. Imagine what a few more minutes strolling the block or playing tag could do for your dog. Cats can be a tad bit more challenging to exercise but trust me it can be done. The goal is

guilty of splitting a medium fry and hamburger (sans onions) a time or two. If you must share, split an apple or a little grilled chicken instead of a chili cheese coney. This goes for cats and mini pigs too, which are at an increased risk of being overweight. When feeding consider following the size and dietary guidelines generally found on the back of the feed bag. A good rule of thumb for your pet is to

feed based on the size they should be according to breed standard.

“If healthy eating is on your to-do list, put your pets on the list also

to figure out what excites your cat. If they're food-motivated, try grabbing a little bit of food out of their bowl and have them chase each treat as you slide it across the floor. If they prefer to chase or are "prey driven," try running with a feather cat toy or shoelace around the house to get them moving. You may need to wiggle the feather or laces to keep them interested. I get quite the arm workout when I do this with my cat because she's only interested as long as the object is sporadically moving.

If you want to read more but are lacking a little motivation, read to your pet. I guarantee they'll be interested or at least make the experience more entertaining. If you want to get out of the house but don't have a buddy, take your pet. Many cats and dogs love a good road trip and there are medications to prevent car sickness if that's an issue. Animals can be incorporated into many facets of your life and activities with a little bit of planning and an open mind. With 2016 behind us, we can only go up from here. Wishing you and yours, growth, prosperity, and success for this Happy New Year!

If healthy eating is on your to-do list, put your pets on the list also. Many of us feel better when we indulge with our pets, if not to reduce our own calories. I admit, I have been

Send your pet questions to drjasmine@theskanner.com

Young Blacks Benefit from HPV Vaccine, Experts Say

By Stacy M. Brown (The Washington Informer/NNPA Member)

Higher rates of cancers associated with the human papillomavirus (HPV) occur in African Americans compared to Whites, according to a nationally renowned physician Dr. Alison Moriarty Daley.

While some Black parents have concerns about vaccines for HPV including that their children are too young to even consider sex, health experts say that the vaccine - particularly Gardasil 9 - does more than help prevent the sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV).

“The rate of those contracting HPV-associated cancers varies by race and ethnicity, African Americans are hit hardest

“It's a safe and effective form of cancer prevention,” said Daley of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, an organization with its headquarters in New York.

HPV is the most common sexually transmitted disease in the United States, Daley and other health experts said.

Of the estimated 79 million Americans, currently infected with HPV, half of those newly infected with HPV are between 15-24 years of age, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The vaccine is recommended for girls and boys between 11 and 26 years old.

“Acquisition of the HPV virus happens pretty quickly after the initiation of sexual activity. So, that's why it's important to vaccinate early to prevent the virus before anyone's exposed to it,” she said.

The link between HPV and cervical cancer is irrefutable, Daley noted.

“We know that HPV is the cause of cervical cancer,” she said. “And even just last year, there were 12,900 new cases of cervical cancer and 4,100 deaths attributed to cervical cancer.”

Reportedly, HPV is also linked to certain cancers of the mouth, throat and genitals in both men and women.

The original recommendation of three doses of the HPV vaccine was amended in October to just two doses

for children younger than age 15. Older teens and young adults still require three doses.

The rate of those contracting HPV-associated cancers varies by race and ethnicity, African Americans are hit hardest - men and women - according to officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

- Black and Latino women had higher rates of HPV-associated cervical cancer than White and non-Latino women. Black women had higher rates of HPV-associated vaginal cancer than White women while African-American and Latino wom-

en had lower rates of HPV-associated vulvar cancer than White and non-Hispanic women, according to the CDC.

- Rates of anal and rectal HPV-associated cancers were also higher in Black men when compared with White men, but lower in Black women when compared with White women.

- In all races and ethnicities, men had higher rates of HPV-associated oropharyngeal cancer than women while Black and Latino men and women had lower rates of HPV-associated oropharyngeal cancers than white and non-Latino men and women.

In order to boost HPV vaccination, doctors should be more assertive when bringing up the topic with parents, Noel Brewer, a health and behavior scientist at the University of North Carolina, told NPR this year.

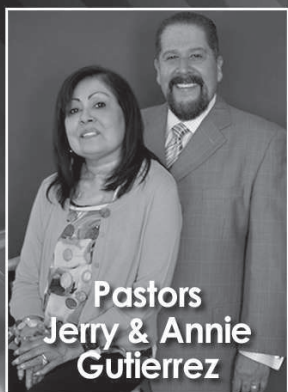
Brewer knew from earlier research that doctors contribute to that low vaccination rate because “doctors should be more assertive when bringing up the topic with parents,” especially when children are 11 or 12 when its recommended the vaccine be given.

Also, because the vaccine is more effective at ages 11 and 12, the CDC now recommends only two doses instead of three.

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