

the health advisor

Candy-
Flavored
Tobacco
Products
Target Youth

Take Steps
Now—
Reduce Your
Chances for
Diabetes

**State Surgeon General Fosters Interagency Agreement
for Florida's Children and Youth**

November/December 2008
Office of Marketing

DOH MISSION: TO PROMOTE, PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALL PEOPLE IN FLORIDA.

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Official Newsletter of the Florida Department of Health
Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H., State Surgeon General
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2008

National Health Observances

NOVEMBER

Great American Smokeout, 20
National Family History Day, 27
Health Information Technology Week, 2–8
GERD (Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease) Awareness Week, Nov. 25–Dec. 1
Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month
American Diabetes Month
Diabetic Eye Disease Month
Lung Cancer Awareness Month
TMJ Awareness Month
National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month
National Hospice Palliative Care Month
Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month
Pulmonary Hypertension Awareness Month

DECEMBER

World AIDS Day, 1
National Aplastic Anemia and MDS Awareness Week, 1–7
National Handwashing Week, 7–13
Safe Toys and Gifts Month



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KIMBERLY A. BERFIELD, DEPUTY SECRETARY OF ADVOCACY AND POLICY

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State Surgeon General Fosters Interagency Agreement for Florida's Children and Youth

by Stephanie Turnau, Office of Marketing

“Interagency
collaborations
such as this will
continue to
increase access to
health care and
reduce health
disparities in our
state.”

State Surgeon General
Ana M. Viamonte Ros

The Greatest Need

On September 29, State Surgeon General Ana M. Viamonte Ros of the Florida Department of Health signed an interagency commitment to promote and protect the children and youth of Florida. This agreement between the departments of Health, Children and Families, Juvenile Justice and the agencies for Health Care Administration and Persons with Disabilities, will serve families and children in need by reducing unnecessary delays in receiving assistance and services.

This agreement is part of the Children and Youth Cabinet created by Governor Charlie Crist in November 2007. Too often families and children in need do not receive the benefits they are eligible for because of differing agency procedures, a forest of paperwork or simple language barriers. The agreement stipulates that each agency appoints a “champion” who will work to coordinate services and improve communication between the agencies involved in a child’s care. This new level of cooperation will ensure that the child receives the maximum benefit of services.

This agreement extends beyond the agencies’ headquarters in Tallahassee. Local review teams will also be created from each agency. These teams will review the needs and procedures in their communities and strive to best serve their clients.

Children and Youth Cabinet

Florida’s Children and Youth Cabinet was created in 2007 and is led by Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp. The 20-member board ensures that public policies relating to children are fostered through an interagency collaboration to efficiently and effectively improve the quality of life of children and youth in Florida.



Candy-Flavored Tobacco Products Target Youth

submitted by the Tobacco Education and Use Prevention Program

Each day more than 4,000 young people between the ages of 12 and 17 try their first cigarette, and another 1,140 become regular daily smokers. More than 28 million packs of cigarettes are bought or smoked by kids in Florida each year. That number will continue to increase as new tobacco products are marketed to youth and exploit their attraction to candy flavors.

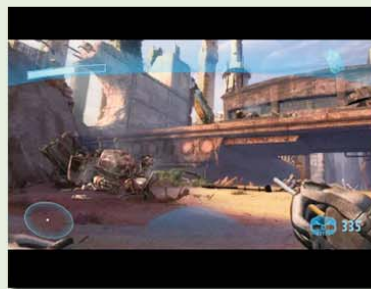
“Flavored cigars and cigarettes are designed to appeal to youth, enticing them to try new tobacco products,” said Kim Berfield, Deputy Secretary of the Florida Department of Health. “Candy and fruit flavorings hide the taste of tobacco and give a false sense that these products are not harmful, which is not the case.”

Cigarettes with kid-friendly flavors such as grape, strawberry, pineapple, coconut, citrus, chocolate, toffee and mint have been introduced over the past several years and are rapidly gaining in popularity despite their harm. Complete with stylish and colorful packaging, sales of these cigarettes are increasing. This explosive growth in flavorings has expanded to include spit tobacco as well—with flavors of berry blend, mint, wintergreen, apple blend, vanilla and cherry.

Like cigarettes, cigars are addictive and deadly and often marketed in a wide variety of kid-friendly flavors. Cigars are thought to be a safe alternative to cigarettes, but they contain the same toxic and carcinogenic compounds. Cigar smokers can spend up to an hour smoking a single cigar that can contain as much tobacco as a pack of cigarettes. Small flavored cigars—a growing trend—can be inhaled and smoked like cigarettes, making these cigars even more harmful. The estimated 13.6 million Americans who are current cigar smokers are susceptible to cancers affecting the lungs, oral cavity, larynx and the esophagus. Users who inhale cigar smoke put themselves at risk of developing coronary heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.



Reaching Younger Smokers



Because youth smokers become adult smokers, Tobacco Free Florida recognizes the importance of reaching this age group before they are exposed to tobacco products. The campaign’s most recent youth-focused television ad resembles a video game in which a fictional game character survives a vicious robotic onslaught only to die after smoking a cigarette.

“The commercial targets youth ages 11–17 and attempts to capture their attention in a world crowded with ‘typical’ marketing messages,” says Berfield. “The format is relevant given the explosion in the gaming market and one with which the intended audience is spending considerable time involved with.”

To view the commercial or for more information on Tobacco Free Florida, please visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com.

Take Steps Now— Reduce Your Chances for Diabetes

submitted by the Diabetes Prevention and Control Program



TAKE SMALL STEPS TO PREVENT DIABETES IF YOU HAVE TWO OR MORE OF THE RISK FACTORS LISTED BELOW:

- ◆ You are 45 years old or older.
- ◆ You are overweight.
- ◆ You have a parent, brother or sister with diabetes.
- ◆ Your family background is African American, American Indian, Asian American, Hispanic American/Latino or Pacific Islander.
- ◆ You had diabetes while pregnant or had at least one baby weighing more than nine pounds.
- ◆ You have been told that you have high blood pressure (140/90 or higher).
- ◆ You are fairly inactive or exercise less than three times a week.

Over 1.5 million Floridians have diabetes. About 500,000 Floridians have diabetes and do not know it, and there are 3.5 million obese Floridians at risk for developing type 2 diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes occurs when the body either cannot use the insulin produced in the pancreas or the pancreas does not produce enough insulin. Type 1 diabetes occurs when the pancreas undergoes an autoimmune attack by the body itself and is rendered incapable of making insulin. Both types of diabetes result in above-normal levels of glucose (sugar) in the blood.

“Having diabetes places a person at increased risk for a number of serious, even life-threatening complications such as heart attack, stroke, kidney disease, blindness or amputation of the foot or leg. Smoking increases the risks of these complications,” said Betsy Wood, R.N., M.P.H., Chief of the Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

The bureau has three important recommendations for Floridians with diabetes:

- Ask your doctor for assistance in getting diabetes self-management education.
- If you smoke, it’s never too late to quit. Contact Florida’s Quitline for free guidance: 1-877-U-CAN-NOW.

■ Remember the ABCs of diabetes care: Learn your A1C (the value that determines your blood sugar), blood pressure and cholesterol goals and ask your doctor how you can achieve them.

The Good News: Type 2 Diabetes can be Prevented or Delayed

A large study, the Diabetes Prevention Program, showed that if people at risk for type 2 diabetes lost a small amount of weight (five to ten percent of total body weight) and became more active (30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity) they could prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

Free and Convenient Continuing Education Opportunities are Available

The Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, in partnership with St. Petersburg College, sponsors online education located at www.onlinece.net. Florida physicians, nurses, dietitians and certified health educators can earn credit at no charge, while scholarship dollars last. The public can access the modules at any time.

The following diabetes courses are available:

- Addressing the Psychosocial Aspects of Diabetes
- Diabetic Retinopathy
- Diabetes and Women Through the Life Stages
- Core Competencies in Diabetes Care: Educating Patients and Health Care Providers
- Helping People Change: Self-Management Support Theory and Practice

Learn More

For more information about diabetes or to get involved in preventing and controlling diabetes, please visit the Diabetes Prevention and Control Program’s Web site at www.floridadiabesity.org or call 850.245.4330.



A



B



C

A: Handheld dental X-ray

B: CyberKnife

C: Barbara Dickey, Antonee Hobbs, Jerri White, Betsey Hines (l-r) learn about a CT simulator from medical physicist Matthew Crljenjak, Tallahassee Memorial Regional Medical Center.

In the field of radiation therapy, new sophisticated CyberKnife equipment uses a radiation beam the size of a pencil to focus on tumors in the brain sparing normal brain tissue. The Gamma Knife, using 201 cobalt therapy sources, focuses from many directions to irradiate the exact tumor. Other major medical improvements include treatment for liver cancer. This often terminal cancer is now being treated with radioactive microscopic glass or ceramic beads that are implanted into the liver. The beads are too large to fit through the capillary blood vessels and end up clotting in the tumor and irradiating the tumor. All of these treatment devices have improved the survival rate and quality of life for many cancer patients.

Bureau of Radiation Control Celebrates National Radiation Protection Week

by Debbie Gilley, Bureau of Radiation Control

Florida's Bureau of Radiation Control joins with the Health Physics Society and the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors in celebration of the efforts of radiation safety professions working to protect citizens from unnecessary radiation exposure while enjoying the benefits of new medical imaging and radiation therapy technology.

November 2–7, 2008, marks the celebration of the discovery of X-rays by Wilhelm Rotegen in 1897.

This year the bureau chose "Radiation Safety in 21st Century Medicine" as the theme for its celebration. Floridians benefit from this technology in health care which includes new imaging technology such as Positron Emission Tomography Computed Tomography (PET/CT). PET/CT can detect microscopic cancer cells. This provides the physician additional information to determine appropriate treatment which will improve the quality of life and longevity of the cancer patient.

In the field of radiation

The bureau's staff provides appropriate regulatory oversight to ensure the X-ray device or radioactive material meets safe standards. Registration, evaluation and inspection procedures may need to be developed for new uses; some technology such as the electronic brachytherapy device will require new regulations. This is a microscopic X-ray tube that can be implanted into the tissue to irradiate from inside the body instead of outside the body and is currently being used in the treatment of breast cancer. Florida is fortunate to have a radiation control staff dedicated to working with the medical community to ensure that these alternatives are available.

Debbie Gilley, Environmental Manager for the DOH Bureau of Radiation, new member of the Advisory Committee on the Medical Uses of Isotopes (ACMUI)

Debbie Gilley has been appointed state government representative of the ACMUI. Gilley has more than 20 years of experience with the Florida Bureau of Radiation Control working as a manager and evaluator in the radioactive materials program, the technology certification program and inspection program.

The ACMUI advises the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission on policy and technical issues that arise in the regulation of the medical uses of radioactive material in diagnosis and therapy. The ACMUI membership includes healthcare professionals from various disciplines who comment on changes to NRC regulations and guidance; evaluate certain non-routine uses of radioactive material; provide technical assistance in licensing, inspection and enforcement cases; and bring key issues to the attention of the commission for appropriate action.

Medical isotopes are used in nuclear medicine and radiation therapy for diagnostic, therapeutic and research purposes. Nuclear medicine involves using radioactive materials to perform body function studies and organ imaging, analyze biologic specimens and to treat, manage and prevent serious disease. Radiation therapy uses radiation such as gamma rays to destroy cancer cells or keep them from reproducing.

The Florida Department of Health Encourages Floridians to Get Ready for Flu Season

by Susan Smith, Office of Communications

The Florida Department of Health (DOH) recognizes fall as the historical beginning of influenza (flu) season and urges Floridians who have not already done so to get their flu shots today. In Florida, the disease usually peaks in late January or February and continues through March. It is important to start vaccinating early and to continue flu vaccination throughout the winter months and beyond.

In the United States, the flu results in approximately 200,000 hospitalizations each year. Annually, over 36,000 people in the U.S. die from the flu, and most are age 65 or older. More people die from flu than from any other vaccine-preventable disease.

“Floridians still die from diseases that are easily prevented by safe and effective vaccines,” said Charles Alexander, Chief of the DOH Bureau of Immunization. “Children, adolescents and adults should be screened for recommended vaccines at every medical visit.” Parents and caregivers can contribute to the safety and well-being of children by having them immunized. It is also important that adults, parents and grandparents who are in close contact with young children be immunized as well. Each year, over 20,000 children under age five are hospitalized from influenza. Children under age two are as likely to be hospitalized as adults who are 65 or older.

The top three reasons to get your flu vaccine: prevent influenza-related death, prevent severe illness and protect other people.

The flu is serious. Each year in the United States, on average:

- More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications;
- 36,000 people die from flu.

Source: Centers for Disease Control

