



March 2021

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

MEDDAC Bavaria Preventive Medicine Newsletter



For all current and updated COVID-19 limitations visit:
www.7atc.army.mil and the [U.S. Army Garrison Bavaria Facebook Page](#)



Get vaccinated.



Wear a mask.



What is happening in March:

National Kidney Month
National Nutrition Month
National Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Month
National Women & Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (March 10)
National Sleep Awareness Week (March 14 - 20)
St. Patrick's Day (March 17)
World Tuberculosis Day (March 24)
National Doctor's Day (March 30)



Stay 6 feet from others,
and avoid crowds.



Wash
hands often.

March is National Nutrition Month



"Let thy food be thy medicine", said Hippocrates (a long, long time ago), but the sentiment still rings true. **National Nutrition Month**, celebrated every year in March, stresses the importance of a balanced diet and exercise.

For the year 2021, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics put out the following weekly key factors:

Week One: Eat a variety of nutritious foods every day! Include healthful foods from all food groups - Avoid distractions while eating
Learn how to read Nutrition Facts Panels - Hydrate healthfully - Take time to enjoy your food

Week Two: Plan your meals each week! Use a grocery list to shop for healthful foods - Be menu-savvy when dining out - Choose healthful recipes to make during the week - Enjoy healthful eating at school and at work - Plan healthful eating while traveling

Week Three: Learn skills to create tasty meals! Keep healthful ingredients on hand - Practice proper home food safety - Share meals together as a family when possible - Reduce food waste - Try new flavors and foods

Week Four: Consult a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN)! Ask your provider for a referral to an RDN - Receive personalized nutrition advice to meet your goals - Thrive through the transformative power of food and nutrition

Additional sources are: www.eatright.org / www.cdc.gov/healthyweight

Next Issue: April 2021 © MEDDACB Preventive Medicine

MARCH 10

NATIONAL
WOMEN & GIRLS
HIV/AIDS
AWARENESS DAY



National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NWGHAAD), is observed annually on March 10. NWGHAAD increases awareness, sparks conversations, and highlights the work being done to reduce HIV among women and girls in the United States while showing support for those with HIV. *Let's Stop HIV Together* aims to empower communities, partners, and healthcare providers to reduce HIV stigma and promote prevention, testing, and treatment among all people in the United States.

The National Sleep Foundation's annual Sleep Awareness Week will be held **March 14-20, 2021**. The annual event celebrates sleep health and encourages the public to prioritize sleep to improve their overall health and well-being. More than 18 million American adults have sleep apnea.

Here are five healthy habits to ensure your body gets the rest it needs to function best:

Stick to a Schedule. It can be tempting to stay up late and sleep in on weekends, but we really set ourselves up for a difficult work week. Our bodies have an inner "clock". Our brain knows when it's day time or night time based on our sleep schedule and cycles. When we mess with the time frame by dramatically changing our sleep habits a few days a week, we can spend the rest of the week making up for it.

Limit Caffeine Intake. When we are tired, it's easy to turn to coffee or energy drinks as a quick pick me up.

A cup or two of coffee in the morning can be beneficial. But studies have shown that those who drank four or more caffeinated beverages in a day were more prone to insomnia. On those especially difficult days, it's best to go for a quick walk outside or rest your eyes for a moment to refresh yourself. Powering through until an early bedtime is your best bet for making up that sleep deficit.

Have a Nighttime Routine. As infants and children, we typically had some type of nighttime routine. It may have consisted of a bath, a bedtime story, and a lullaby. The things signaled our bodies and brains for sleep. Why not establish a regular routine in your adult life to achieve the same end? Incorporate a relaxing yoga routine into your evening activities. Turn off the TV and put away your phone for some quiet reading before bed. Even as little as fifteen to twenty minutes of reading can help your mind settle down from the constant stimulation of the day.

Exercise. Regular exercise in your week can help promote the hormone melatonin, known as the "sleep hormone." Just make sure your exercise isn't too close to bedtime or it may have a counterproductive effect. Exercise can not only help regulate your sleep patterns but also boost your general mood and wellness.

Think Sleepy Thoughts. It can be difficult to shut our brains off after a full day's events. There's a never-ending source of problems to solve, things to worry about and events to replay. Write down whatever threatens to run around and around in your mind, preventing sleep. If you're still unable to fall asleep after 20 minutes or so, get up and go to the other room to read or write until you feel drowsy. Once a pattern of insomnia or sleep deprivation has developed, our minds can create a self-fulfilling problem. Worrying about not being able to sleep has proven to be even more harmful than the lack of sleep itself. If you've continued to struggle with your sleep habits, despite your best efforts, do not hesitate to speak with your healthcare professional. They can help you come up with a plan that will fit you best. The long term negative effects of sleep deprivation are far too serious to go unattended.

Sources: www.thensf.org/sleep-awareness-week / www.health.mil



March is National Kidney Month, a time when communities across the country raise awareness about kidney disease. This year's focus is on taking charge of your health and the many factors that go into managing your kidney disease.

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is a serious condition affecting 37 million people. Often overlooked until symptoms appear, CKD is progressive and can put you at risk for serious health complications including kidney failure. Adopting a healthy lifestyle can help you manage and slow progression of CKD and its complications.

Follow these healthy lifestyle tips to take charge of your kidney health:

- Manage blood pressure and monitor blood glucose levels. Work with your health care team to develop a plan to meet your blood pressure goals and check your blood glucose level regularly if you have diabetes.
- Take medicine as prescribed and avoid NSAIDs like ibuprofen and naproxen. Your pharmacist and doctor need to know about all the medicines you take.
- Aim for a healthy weight. Create a healthy meal plan and consider working with your doctor to develop a weight-loss plan that works for you.
- Reduce stress and make physical activity part of your routine. Consider healthy stress-reducing activities and get at least 30 minutes or more of physical activity each day.
- Quit smoking. If you smoke, take steps to quit.

It may seem difficult, but small changes can go a long way to keeping your kidneys and you healthier for longer. Sources: www.kidney.org / www.cdc.gov/kidneydisease

National Kidney Month

MARCH IS BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH



A traumatic brain injury—or TBI—is a blow or jolt to the head that disrupts the normal function of the brain.

The severity of the TBI is determined at the time of the injury and may be classified as: mild, moderate, severe, or penetrating.

MORE THAN 430K
TBIs REPORTED
SINCE 2000 BY
MEMBERS OF THE
U.S. ARMED
FORCES¹

82.4%
CATEGORIZED AS
MILD TBI, ALSO
KNOWN AS
CONCUSSION

ONLY 16.9%
TBIs DIAGNOSED IN
THE DEPLOYED
SETTING²

WHAT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES CAN LEAD TO A TBI?



Military Training Exercises



Sports and Recreational Activities



Motor Vehicle Collisions

HOW CAN I BE TBI READY?



- Wear a helmet
- Practice safe driving techniques
- Be aware of your surroundings
- Check out health.mil/AHFTF for more safety tips!



Learn to recognize signs and symptoms like:

- Headaches
- Trouble sleeping
- Blurred or double vision
- Memory problems
- Check out health.mil/TBIFactSheets for more information!



See your health care provider to be screened as soon as you experience a potentially concussive event.

Check out the Patient and Leadership Guide at health.mil/TBIPatientResources

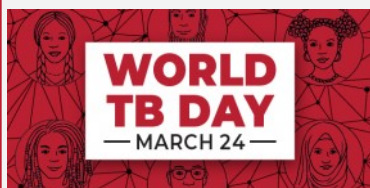
MHS Military Health System
health.mil

health.mil/BIAMonth | #BIAMonth

Just a thought (a Preventive Medicine Column)

COVID-19 variants and mutations: All viruses naturally mutate over time and Sars-CoV-2 is no exception. For example, flu viruses change often, which is why doctors recommend that you get a new flu vaccine every year. Mutations don't always change the behavior of the virus, but sometimes they can mutate in a way that helps it survive and reproduce. Viruses carrying these mutations can then cause more infections. Sars-CoV-2 variants have different origins but share a mutation in a gene that changes the spike protein, which the virus uses to latch on to and enter human cells more easily.

This is why wearing a mask, social distancing, hand hygiene, good ventilation indoors and limiting gatherings of people in close proximity with poor ventilation is important even though we now have a vaccine.



World Tuberculosis Day was created by the World Health Organization (WHO) to spread knowledge and awareness of tuberculosis, an infectious disease that kills millions every year. Tuberculosis is easily curable, but it can lie dormant and undetected for years, so it's important to spread awareness.

The WHO chose March 24 as World Tuberculosis Day to commemorate the day Dr. Robert Koch discovered TB bacillus, the bacterium responsible for the disease.

You can find more information on: www.cdc.gov/tb / www.who.int/campaigns/world-tb-day

Why World Tuberculosis Day is Important:

A. Many people still suffer from tuberculosis

It may seem like an outdated disease, but around one-third of the world's population is infected with tuberculosis. It's estimated that 2 billion people have tuberculosis. In 2016, 10.4 million people contracted TB, and there were 1.7 million TB related deaths.

B. It's closer to home than you'd think

Although TB is a bigger problem in third world countries, its impact stretches closer to home than you might think. In 2014, there were 9,412 new cases of TB in the United States. In 2016, Tuberculosis was reported in all fifty states, with California, Texas, New York, and Florida topping the list.

C. We can stop TB

Due to its outdated misconception, tuberculosis is not seen as a relevant issue. Spreading awareness about the disease can help those at high risk seek treatment. If those who are likely to be affected get vaccinated, the disease could be eradicated, and we could see an end to tuberculosis in our lifetime.