

# The HEALTH ADVOCATE

## TIPS FOR A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE



A publication of the Health Committee of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc., Bergen/Passaic Chapter  
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### EAT RIGHT WITH COLOR

The American Dietetic Association went with color for March's nutrition month to highlight the nutrients and phytochemicals—contained in the colors of plants—that can help protect us from certain diseases.

Studies have shown that eating a variety of fruits and vegetables, as part of a diet low in saturated fat, cholesterol and sugar, can help control blood pressure, lower cholesterol, and may reduce risk of osteoporosis, dementia and certain cancers while also boosting your immune system. Plus, their high fiber and water content will fill you up, keep you satisfied longer, and help you maintain a healthy weight.

When choosing your produce, aim to turn your plate into a color wheel so you get a wide variety of phytochemicals and their antioxidant power.



**Green** produce indicates antioxidant potential and may help promote healthy vision and reduce cancer risks.

Fruits: avocado, apples, grapes, honeydew, kiwi and lime

Vegetables: artichoke, asparagus, broccoli, green beans, green peppers and leafy greens such as spinach

**Orange** and **deep yellow** fruits and vegetables contain nutrients that promote healthy vision and immunity, and reduce the risk of some cancers.

Fruits: apricot, cantaloupe, grapefruit, mango, papaya, peach and pineapple

Vegetables: carrots, yellow pepper, yellow corn and sweet potatoes

**Purple** and **blue** options may have antioxidant and anti-aging benefits and may help with memory, urinary tract health and reduced cancer risks.

Fruits: blackberries, blueberries, plums, raisins

Vegetables: eggplant, purple cabbage, purple-fleshed potato

**Red** indicates produce that may help maintain a healthy heart, vision, immunity and may reduce cancer risks.

Fruits: cherries, cranberries, pomegranate, red/pink grape fruit, red grapes and watermelon

Vegetables: beets, red onions, red peppers, red potatoes, rhubarb and tomatoes

**White, tan** and **brown** foods sometimes contain nutrients that may promote heart health and reduce cancer risks.

Fruits: banana, brown pear, dates and white peaches

Vegetables: cauliflower, mushrooms, onions, parsnips, turnips, white-fleshed potato and white corn

A colorful meal is not only visually appealing, but it also contains a variety of nutrients and is quite flavorful.

### KEY FACTS ABOUT CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE (CKD)

→More than 26 million American adults have CKD and millions more are at risk and don't know it. Since early kidney disease has no symptoms, and can become kidney failure with little or no warning, kidney disease has been labeled a "silent killer" and a "quiet epidemic."

→The incidence of end-stage kidney failure is rising fast, with more than 526,000 Americans currently receiving treatment for kidney failure (also called end stage renal disease, or ESRD). This includes more than 367,000 dialysis patients and 158,000 people with functioning kidney transplants.

→Each year, more than 87,000 Americans die from causes related to kidney failure.

→Of the more than 105,000 Americans currently awaiting organ transplants, 83,000 are waiting for a kidney.

→Diabetes is the number one cause of kidney failure in the U.S. Along with high blood pressure, these two major risk factors account for nearly 85% of new cases of kidney disease.

→Kidney disease hits minorities disproportionately, with African Americans affected at a rate more than three times as great as among Caucasians. Hispanics,

Asians, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans and the elderly are also at increased risk.

→Cardiovascular disease is the number one killer of people with CKD. (Individuals with early stages of CKD are 5 times more likely to die from heart disease than to reach end stage kidney disease.)

→On average, there are more than 16,500 kidney transplants performed each year in the U.S.

### **WOMEN AND GIRLS AND HIV/AIDS**

Women and girls of color – especially black women and girls, bear the majority of the burden of HIV/AIDS. In the last three years, the rate of HIV/AIDS diagnoses for African-American females was nearly 20 times higher than Caucasian females and nearly 4 times as high as the rate for Hispanic/Latino females. It is the third leading cause of death for black women between the ages of 25 and 44. About 65 percent of new AIDS cases among American women are African-American, along with 68 percent of new cases among American teenagers are African-American as well. Black people account for more new HIV infections, more AIDS diagnoses, more people living with HIV/AIDS and more deaths related to the disease than any other racial or ethnic groups in America.

Generally women are at a greater risk of heterosexual transmission of HIV. Biologically they are twice more likely to become infected with HIV through unprotected heterosexual intercourse than men. The earlier an HIV infection is diagnosed, the easier it will be to maintain an individual in good health and for preventing further transmission.

Women should schedule an HIV test if they have the following:

- Unprotected vaginal, oral or anal sex with multiple partners or someone whose status is unknown
- Injected drugs or steroids or shared equipment (i.e. – needles, syringes)
- Exchanged sex for money or drugs
- Been diagnosed with or treated for hepatitis, tuberculosis or an STD (i.e. – syphilis, gonorrhea).

The CDC says that 1 in 5 people living with HIV do not know they are infected. Getting tested is the first step to protecting yourself and others. Early diagnosis allows for counseling and prompt treatment.

To make the process a little easier, you can even get tested when going for your biannual dental check-up, and it only takes 20 minutes. Although it is not available

nationwide yet, it is called a Rapid Oral HIV Test. Upon arrival at your dentist office you can inquire if the test is available. Patients are tested with a swab and can wait to receive their results the same day.

### **BODY, MIND, AND SPIRIT CONNECTIONS: THE KEYS TO INITIATING AND SUSTAINING WELLNESS**

How do you feel when you hear about the rape of women in countries where rape is utilized as part of war? What happens when or if you receive a cut off notice from Verizon Wireless, PSE&G or another company? Or like many of us you receive a call at work that a love one is ill or has made their transition.

Will you feel horrified and anxious thinking about the first example? Will you feel anxious or saddened or other feelings as you think about responses to the other examples. The major focus of these ideas is to call our attention to the mind/body/spirit connection. There is an anatomical and physiological aspect to this discussion that has to do with the orbit frontal area of our brains which acts as a relay station that transmits the quality of mood and relationship to our bowel, heart, reproductive system, lung, skin, and other functions. Truly our bodies are perfect machines as long as we take good care of them.

Much of western medicine is focused on taking care of us after we are sick and gradually a shift is occurring which mandates us to consider the concept of wellness. Wellness focuses on the active process of becoming aware of making choices to create a more successful existence and involves physical, emotional, intellectual, social, environmental, occupational, nutritional, leisure and spiritual dimensions. It incorporates disease prevention and health promotion approaches.



As we approach getting older, let us also be wiser in incorporating wellness into our every day existence. Ultimately, it will lead to improved health status, greater productivity, enhanced social relationships, personal growth, and an improved quality of life. And it costs very little or nothing to adapt to a wellness lifestyle!

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