



Milford Health

March 2014



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Table of Contents

March Health Observances.....	3
Keep you Kidneys Healthy.....	4
Quick Tips for a Better Nights Sleep.....	5
Obesity.....	6
Eye Health.....	7

3 Days/3 Ways

Milford’s 3 Days/3 Ways program is designed to get people prepared for any type of emergency. The message is simple: be ready to survive for a minimum of 3 days after a disaster. With a large disaster a community can go a long time without assistance so make sure to be prepared with these 3 easy steps:

- 1.) Make a plan
- 2.) Build a kit
- 3.) Get involved

Volunteer.

Strengthen the public health infrastructure of your community; join your local MRC today.

To learn more about joining MRC [click here](#)



March Health Observances

						1
2 <u>National Sleep Awareness Week® (2-9)</u> <u>Patient Safety Awareness Week (2-8)</u>	3 <u>National School Breakfast Week (3-7)</u>	4	5	6	7	8
9	10 <u>National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day</u> <u>Brain Awareness Week (10-16)</u>	11	12	13 <u>World Kidney Day</u>	14	15
16 <u>National Poison Prevention Week (16-22)</u> <u>Flood Safety Awareness Week (16-22)</u>	17	18	19 <u>Certified Nurses Day</u>	20 <u>National Native American HIV/AIDS Awareness Day</u>	21	22
23	24 <u>World Tuberculosis Day</u>	25 <u>American Diabetes Alert Day</u>	26	27	28	29
30 <u>Doctors' Day</u>	31					

Monthly Health Observances

[National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month](#)

[National Nutrition Month](#)

[National Endometriosis Awareness Month](#)

[Save Your Vision Month](#)

[National Kidney Month](#)

[Trisomy Awareness Month](#)

[Workplace Eye Wellness Month](#)

Keep Your Kidneys Healthy

March is national kidney month. This is the perfect time to learn more about how to keep your kidneys healthy and what you can do to avoid or delay the arrival of kidney failure.

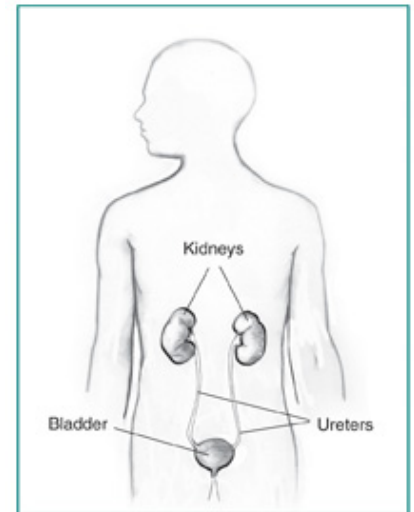
Kidneys are two bean-shaped, fist-sized organs located on either side of your spine in the middle of your back. These organs have multiple purposes that are essential to living; they maintain a balance of water and concentration of minerals, remove waste by-products from the blood after digestion, muscle activity, and exposure to chemicals or medications, produce renin (enzyme that helps regulate blood pressure), produce erythropoietin (stimulates red blood cell production), and produce an active form of vitamin D that is needed for bone health.

Over time kidneys naturally begin to lose function, but because we have two, the natural function loss is not too big of a problem. The real problem appears when kidney function starts to deteriorate due to some sort of kidney disease. Loss of kidney function, also known as acute kidney injury can be caused by a traumatic injury with blood loss, the sudden reduction of blood flow to the kidneys, damage to the kidneys from shock during a severe infection called sepsis, obstruction of urine flow, such as with an enlarged prostate, damage from certain drugs or toxins, or pregnancy complications, such as eclampsia and pre-eclampsia, or related HELLP Syndrome. If a decrease in kidney function lasts longer than three months it is technically called chronic kidney disease, which is particularly dangerous and often irreparable.

To avoid any type of damage to your kidneys due to disease there are many preventative steps you can take. According to the National Kidney Disease Education Program, here are a few tips for keeping your kidneys healthy.

- Keep your blood pressure at the target set by your health care provider. This can delay or prevent kidney failure.
- If you have diabetes, control your blood glucose level.
- Keep your cholesterol levels in the target range.
- Take medicines the way your provider tells you to.
- Cut back on salt. Aim for less than 1,500 milligrams of sodium each day.
- Choose foods that are healthy for your heart: fresh fruits, fresh or frozen vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy foods.
- Limit your alcohol intake.
- Be more physically active.
- Lose weight if you are overweight.
- If you smoke, take steps to quit. Cigarette smoking can make kidney damage worse.

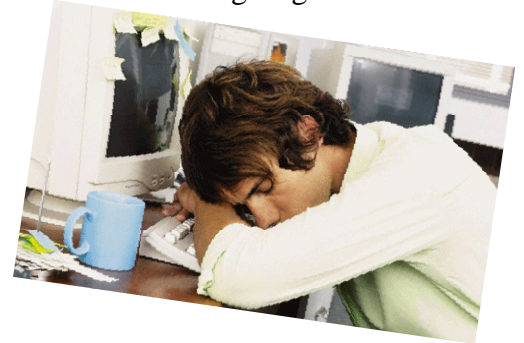
To learn more about your kidneys, click [here!](#)



Quick Tips to a Better Nights Sleep

Often times the pressures from our everyday lives prevent us from being able to get the quality sleep that we need. Although you can not control all the factors that are keeping you up at night, you can practice ways that will encourage better sleep. Here are some simple sleep trips:

- **Avoid naps** – Any type of shut-eye within eight hours of your bed time can sabotage a good night's sleep.
- **Monitor your bedroom temperature** – The best sleep temperature for most people is between 68-72 degrees.
- **Reserve the bed for rest and relaxation** – Avoid doing work, talking on the phone, or watching TV in bed.
- **Avoid caffeine** – Caffeine in the morning may be fine for some people, but after 12, try to avoid any food or drinks that contain caffeine
- **Exercise regularly** – Physical activity can promote better sleep, just be sure you finish any vigorous exercise within 3-4 hours before your bedtime.
- **Watch what you eat** – Avoid eating heavy foods and big meals late in the day. Some people do well with light evening snacks of sleep inducing meals, such as complex carbs and dairy foods; just be sure to finish any snack at least an hour before bed.
- **Avoid alcohol** – though alcohol may make you feel sleepy, after the effects wear off, alcohol actually causes more restlessness at night.
- **Stop drinking within two hours of bedtime** – This will help prevent middle-of-the-night bathroom trips.
- **Do not Smoke** - Nicotine is a stimulant, just like caffeine. Smoking can keep you from falling asleep and worsen insomnia. If you are not considering quitting, try to avoid smoking within four hours of your bedtime



- **Keep pets off the bed** – Cat or dog's night moves may interrupt your sleep. The fleas, fur, dander, and pollen they bring along may also trigger your allergies.
- **Block your clock** – Glancing at the clock can cause you to worry about how few hours of sleep you will be able to get; therefore keeping you awake longer. Either block your clock or turn it away from view.
- **Lower lights** – Lowering the lights 2-3 hours before your bedtime helps send signals to your brain to produce melatonin, a hormone that brings on sleep.
- **Establish a bedtime routine** – Go to sleep and wake up around the same time every day – including weekends. This will help keep your body on a healthy sleep-wake cycle.
- **Go to the bathroom right before bed** – This can reduce your chances of having to get up in the middle of this night to use the bathroom.

If your sleeplessness lasts over a month, there may be a deeper problem. Contact your doctor to help identify and treat any underlying causes there may be.

Obesity

Obesity is often referred as weighing too much, but that is not correct. Obesity is when someone has too much body fat, which is measured by one's body mass index (BMI) along with their waist size. According to the CDC, if someone has a BMI of 30 or higher, they are officially considered obese. To determine your BMI, click [here](#)!



Most of the time the rigmarole of our everyday lives causes us to reach for prepared foods, go out to eat, or simply go to the drive through. But, these types of foods tend to be high in fat and calories, and are also served in portions that are just much too big for us. With barely enough time or energy to make dinner, exercise often gets put on the back burner. The combination of these factors is a recipe for disaster; when more calories are consumed than they are burned, you gain weight. Of course if your family has a history of obesity, there is an even greater tendency to gain weight than someone without that type of family history.

Obesity can be accompanied by many other complications, both physical and mental. If you are obese, the likely hood of you developing serious health issues increases dramatically. For instance, you could develop high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, cancer, sleep apnea, depression, gynecological problems, osteoarthritis, skin problems, and many more. Obesity can also lower your quality of life, causing disability, physical discomfort, sexual problems, shame, and social isolation.

While not all causes of obesity can be controlled, that should definitely not stop you from believing that you have a chance of obtaining and/or maintain a healthy weight. There are still plenty of factors that can be controlled in order to prevent obesity. Some tools of treatment include:

- Dietary changes
- Exercise and activity
- Behavioral changes
- Prescription weight-loss medications
- Weight-loss surgery.

For further information on how to treat obesity, click [here](#).

Eye Health



The eyes are often times a much overlooked element when it comes to our health; yet, it is hard to imagine what life would be like without our sense of sight. Although you may think your eyes are in perfect health, common vision problems may leave you unaware that your eye sight could significantly be improved by a pair of glasses or contact lenses. In fact, some common vision problems such as

glaucoma, diabetic eye disease and age-related macular degeneration often have no warning signs and can only be detected by a dilated eye exam.

According to the national eye institute, a dilated eye exam is when your eye care professional places drops in your eyes to dilate, or widen, the pupil to allow more light to enter the eye. This allows your eye care professional to get a good look at the back of your eyes to detect for any signs of damage or disease. But of course while doctor's visits will be very helpful, there are many things you can do in order to retain your vision in the mean time. For instance:

- **Eat Right** – A diet consisting of rich fruits and vegetables, especially dark leafy greens helps keep eyes healthy. Eating fish high in omega-3 fatty acids has also been seen as beneficial.
- **Maintain a healthy weight** – Being overweight or obese can increase the risk of developing diabetes which can lead to vision loss.
- **Wear protective eyewear** – This includes safety glasses and goggles, safety shields, and eye guards specially made to provide the correct protection during certain actives.
- **Wear sunglasses** – Aside from being fashionable, sunglasses protect your eyes from the sun's ultraviolet rays. When buying sunglasses look for ones that block out 99 to 100 percent of both UV-A and UV-B radiation.
- **Rest your eyes** – Spending a lot of time focusing at any one thing can often times cause you to forget to blink. To help reduce eyestrain, try the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look away about 20 feet in front of you for 20 seconds.
- **Clean your hands and contact lenses properly** – To avoid the risk of infection, always wash hands thoroughly and disinfect contact lenses before placing them on your eyes.

