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LORRAINE LATHAN and the WAATPN

Preventing **BLACK LIFE** from going up in **MENTHOL SMOKE!**

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THIS ISSUE



MINISTER AND DOCTOR JOIN FORCES TO IMPROVE TRUST BETWEEN COMMUNITY AND RESEARCHERS!



Special focus on **DIABETES!**



FIVE BACK TO SCHOOL TIPS THAT SUPPORT KID'S MENTAL, EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Making THE ROUNDS

NEWS&VIEWS ABOUT HEALTH, MEDICAL ISSUES LOCAL AND NATIONAL

OUTREACH COMMUNITY Health Centers announces plans for new 58,000 square-foot healthcare facility on West Capitol Drive

New facility will allow organization to consolidate healthcare services under one roof

Outreach Community Health Centers (OCHC) today announced plans to build a new 58,000 square-foot addition west of its existing 210 W. Capitol Drive location. The building, estimated at a cost of \$15 million, will connect to the current clinic building. OCHC is working with bond and corporate counsel at Husch Blackwell LLP and the Cities of Glendale and Milwaukee to introduce, authorize and utilize tax-exempt bond financing for the Project.

The addition will expand OCHC's capacity to serve more patients and provide critical behavioral health and primary care services to Milwaukee's uninsured, underinsured and homeless populations.

"Our organization's long-term strategic plan has included a new building for a

number of years," said Constance Palmer, President and CEO for Outreach Community Health Centers. "Now that we have assembled a dynamic leadership team and established a solid financial foundation, there is no better time than now to invest in our future."

This new innovative space will be pa-

vehicle for buildings and organizations to deliver more thoughtful and intentional spaces that enhance human health and well-being. Certification takes place through the International WELL Building Institute™.

Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2022 with anticipated occupation of the new building in summer of 2023. All current patient services will continue to be provided during construction. The project team currently includes: Continuum Architects + Planners, Emem Group and JCP Construction.

"Consolidating into one location will position our organization to effectively respond to the critical needs of our community, while delivering the highest quality care," Palmer added.

Over the last 38 years, OCHC's programs have grown to provide a strong continuum of care which respond to the whole life needs of clients and patients. For more information, please visit www.ochc-milw.org or call 414.727.6320.



tient-friendly and community-focused. It will offer underground parking and three floors of space to house all the programs currently operated out of the 711 W. Capitol Drive building, as well as provide for the expansion of behavioral health services, care coordination and case management.

When completed, the building will be one of the first WELL Certified buildings in the state of Wisconsin. The WELL Building Standard was developed by the International WELL Building Institute as a

DHS Releases New and Updated Resources for Schools to Keep Students Safe

Resources include updated guidance on outbreaks and new testing communications toolkit

To help keep students and teachers safe during the 2021-2022 school year, the Department of Health Services (DHS) launched a K-12 School Testing Program communications toolkit.

This toolkit will support school districts and school administrators' efforts to connect with school staff, families, and communities about the COVID-19 testing opportunities available to them through the schools participating in this program.

DHS has also released an updated version of the Guidelines for the Prevention, Investigation, and Control of COVID-19 Outbreaks in K-12 Schools in Wisconsin, a resource for school administrators and local and tribal health departments to use as they work together to make decisions about layered prevention strategies and to prevent and control COVID-19 outbreaks.

"It is important to remember that the most effective tool in our toolbox is vaccination. Masking up inside and getting

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BACK TO SCHOOL: FIVE TIPS for Supporting Kid's Mental and Emotional Well-being

By Dr. Rhonda Randall,
Chief Medical Officer at
UnitedHealthcare

More than a year and a half since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the toll on our physical and mental health is clear and well-documented – and, we're learning, may be affecting children and teenagers disproportionately.

Recent research from the Kaiser Family Fund reports that more than 25% of high school students experienced worsening emotional and cognitive health during since March 2020, and more than 20% of parents with children ages 5-12 reported similar worsening conditions for their children.

As we move into the new school year, helping to provide our kids and teens with the nec-

essary support, structure and tools to help them manage their feelings and adjust to ongoing changes of daily life is imperative. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance states that "students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction in the fall 2021 is a priority."

Below are a list of tips and suggestions on how to better manage children's emotional health and wellbeing as we head back to school:

Tip #1: Share information. The CDC is a great resource for learning how to talk to your child about COVID-19. It's important to provide children with appropriate support sooner rather than later.

Talk with your child, be emotionally supportive and understand worries may extend beyond the anxieties that may come with heading back to the classroom for a new school year. Be proactive about learning what steps you can take to help reduce the amount

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Men Moving Forward

Providing a Healthy Outlet for Prostate Cancer Survivors

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer among American men, but for Black men it's an even more prevalent disease than among their white counterparts.

The statistics alone tell the story.

Black men are 60% more likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer than white men. It can be seen in maps charted by researchers at the Medical College of Wisconsin Cancer Center, that show higher rates of cancer and related mortality rates in predominantly Black Milwaukee neighborhoods.

Connecting African American men with health care and cancer screening is critical, and educating prostate cancer patients on lifestyle habits after cancer treatment is just as important. Lifestyle choices – diet, exercise habits, mental health – affect treatment side effects, the chance of cancer coming back and other health conditions.

In 2019, the MCW Cancer Center launched **Men Moving Forward**, a free 16-week program specifically designed for African American men that focuses on exercise and diet routines in addition to providing camaraderie and support among prostate cancer survivors.

Participants are also invited to stay in the program even after completing the initial 16 weeks.

"I love the instructors," Howard said. "They're not doing this just for the check, they're really interested in helping you and showing you how to do things right."

Dr. Melinda Stolley, associate director of cancer prevention and control at the MCW's Cancer Center and lead researcher of **Men Moving Forward** said the program is a product of having conversations with African American men and learning what they wanted as a resource for cancer survivors.



Participants in the Men Moving Forward program engage in regular exercise to build strength and decrease body fat with the goal of developing a stronger, healthier person.

Leonard Wilson, owner of Divine Intervention Fitness, oversees the workout plans and actual workouts done by program participants. The program also includes a nutritionist and cook who provide guidance on proper diet in addition to cooking demonstrations on how to make healthy meals.

Perhaps the most important aspect of **Men Moving Forward** is the ability for prostate cancer survivors to come together to share their own experiences.

"We've heard from men who talk about how isolated they felt in survivorship," Dr. Stolley said. "They didn't want to burden friends or family with their issues, and this program creates a brotherhood of men that are able to come together and freely talk about their experiences."

Rev. Joseph Jackson, 68, who presides over Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Milwaukee, has been going to **Men Moving Forward** sessions for eight weeks and is impressed.

"I thought I was doing OK (with exercise) until I got into this program," Rev. Jackson said.

After weeks of building endurance and strength using resistance bands and free weights, in addition to eating a healthier diet, Rev. Jackson is seeing a noticeable difference in his physical stamina and appearance. He even gets compliments from friends and members of his congregation.

"I'm usually in and out of my seat to the podium during services," Rev. Jackson said. "Now I'm standing throughout the entire service."



In addition to exercise, the Men Moving Forward provides guidance on healthy eating and how to prepare easy, nutritious meals.

William Harrell, 67, has completed the program and has continued to participate because of everything it offers.

Men Moving Forward is operated in collaboration with the Milwaukee Recreation Department, which is unique in that such programs are usually conducted through health systems or research centers. Having the Recreation Dept. as a collaborator helps make it more accessible to the population it is designed to help.

Dr. Stolley said the hope is that **Men Moving Forward** can morph into a permanent program focused on healthy eating, exercise, and mental health.

"We want people to know about this, we want people telling their friends and family members about it," Dr. Stolley said.

"I love this program. I'm a regular, said 67-year-old Ron Howard, who has been a participant since its launch. They teach you how to eat right, how to exercise right, everything I get out of the program I share with others."

Howard was treated for his cancer in 2016 and joined the program once he learned about it.

Men Moving Forward brings African American prostate cancer survivors together twice a week over a 16-week period to receive instruction in effective exercise habits and healthy eating, which focuses on eating more vegetables and fruit. There's even a chef who comes in and shows participants how to make healthy meals.

In addition to helping African American men lead healthier lives the program is providing researchers an opportunity to understand the biological connection between certain behaviors and mitigating chances of cancer recurring along with other health conditions.

The exercise and diet components of the program are designed to increase muscle mass and decrease fat within the body, creating a stronger, healthier person.

"It's a good program. If you want to get your health back, if you want to get your spirit back, change your eating habits and lose weight, join this program, Harrell said."

WAATPN WORKING TO PREVENT BLACK LIFE FROM GOING UP IN MENTHOL SMOKE!

By Thomas E. Mitchell, Jr.

Those who know Lorraine Lathan really well probably think her crusade against smoking and tobacco products is due to her late father's excessive smoking habit and his struggle to quit.

That's not quite right.

Though she is widely known in the community and Wisconsin as director of the Wisconsin African American Tobacco Prevention Network (WAATPN) and the Wisconsin Tobacco Prevention and Poverty Network, Lathan's passion for social activism and making a difference in people's lives—especially in communities of color and low-income individuals—goes back farther than the WAATPN.

But memories of her father Dr. Levi Lathan's constant smoking (Pall Mall was his cigarette of choice) and his efforts to 'kick-the-habit cold turkey' serves as a constant reminder of her mission...her purpose: to put the cigarette industry out of business by denying them the key thing they need: smokers, especially Black smokers.

A professor at Northwest University, Dr. Lathan died more than 35 years ago at the age of 50 with six children (three college graduates, and three in college at the time) and a wife. Though he died from diabetes, Lorraine said her father's condition was complicated by his ongoing battle with his 'tobacco addiction.'

"He made several 'cold-turkey' attempts at quitting," Lathan recalled in a recent interview about the WAATPN's on-going anti-menthol cigarette campaign. "He switched to a pipe, but then went back to Pall Malls (a popular non-menthol brand at the time). But he was never able to fully quit."

Lathan added it's been scientifically proven that cold-turkey attempts are less effective than smoking cessation programs and 'quit aides' (e.g. products like 'The Patch').

Lathan's father grew up in the south and—unlike the documented fact Black Americans start smoking at a later age—started smoking as a teenager (although neither of his parents smoked).

Dr. Lathan's story is an all too familiar one as it relates to the unhealthy relationship between African Americans and tobacco/menthol products.

African Americans constitute a disproportionate number of smokers in Wisconsin and America.

Nationally, Black Americans have a higher smoking rate than the general population; and suffer worse health outcomes related to smoking though—as noted—they start later and smoke fewer cigarettes on average than non-Black adults.

In the U.S. annually, 45,000 African Americans die each from smoking related illnesses. In the state, the rate of tobacco usage is higher among Black adults (26 percent) than the national average for other adults (16%). Nine in 10 Black Wisconsinites smoke menthols.

And its menthol cigarettes that are at the heart of these disproportionate statistics and deaths. Menthol is a flavor compound that masks the burning sensation of smoking by stimulating cool receptors in the nose and mouth, allowing people to inhale deeper. Menthol also triggers receptors in the brain, which

"Tobacco companies have shamelessly used messages and images from Black culture to target urban, poor, African American communities. They even made donations to organizations serving people of color to gain favor within these communities."

—WAATPN's Lorraine Lathan

makes it more addictive and harder to quit.

In 2011 and 2013, an FDA advisory committee reported menthols aren't any more toxic than other cigarettes, but suggested the minty flavoring mitigated the aforementioned harshness of smoke and the irritation from nicotine.

Thus, the 'menthol effect'—according to the report—"may increase the likelihood of nicotine addiction" and make it harder than other cigarettes to quit.

"Removal of menthol cigarettes from the marketplace," researchers concluded in a resulting paper, "would benefit the public health."

Menthol has been banned in several countries, including Brazil, Canada, Ethiopia, Turkey, Moldova, the European Union, the United Kingdom (Great Britain), and the state of Massachusetts.

Menthol became the tobacco product of choice for African Americans in the 1980s during what was called the 'menthol wars.'

According to Kali Holloway in her May 10, 2021 Daily Beast article, 'The Ridiculously Racist History of Menthol Cigarettes': "cigarette companies were blunt in their internal memos about pushing menthols on young, Black smokers and prospective smokers."

Tobacco companies with brands like Newport, Salem, and Kool openly competed for market shares in the Black community with slick ad campaigns on billboards, and in Black newspapers and magazines. The companies offered free cigarette packs at high-traffic areas and popular street corners in low-income Black neighborhoods.

"Tobacco companies have shamelessly used messages and images from Black culture to target urban, poor, African American communities," Lathan wrote in the spring edition of 'Healthy Start.' "They even made donations to organizations serving people of color to gain favor within these communities."

She pointed to the long-running Newport Kool Jazz Festival sponsored by Kool cigarettes as an example of big tobacco's efforts to maintaining the ownership of the hearts and minds of smokers.

As it was during the menthol wars, cigarette companies are using the same tactics to lure and hook African Americans: reducing the prices in Black communities where there are more tobacco retailers than in the suburbs, placing the product at eye-level.

Teens and young adults are bombarded with slick advertising of menthol products in the stores and outside with billboards that promote the color green, which

many teens and young adults recognize as the principal color of Newport's packaging, which triggers their need to smoke.

As a result of the constant 'in-your-face' marketing, millions of dollars an hour are generated at the point of sale. Lathan said it's difficult for her organization to counter that type of financing that makes becoming addicted easier.

Lathan noted the tobacco companies have stopped producing all but one type of flavored E-cigarettes. The remaining flavor...menthol.

The WAATPN executive director and her organization has been honing in on how to prevent people from smoking, and helping those who are still smoking to stop.

One project they have been using is the 'No Menthol Sunday' event. It's a national initiative in which the WAATPN joins the Center for Black Health and Equity in providing the faith-based community of nationally and in Wisconsin with the tools to discuss the importance of living a tobacco-free life and the role of menthol in quitting tobacco.

Tobacco retailers in the community have been willing and enthusiastic partners with the WAATPN for the last three years the effort has been in existence. These retailers not only DON'T sell menthol products on the designated Sunday, they also pass out information to customers as to why they don't sell menthol on that particular Sunday.

The aim of the yearly effort is to create a tobacco-free generation. For the last three years, the WAATPN has worked with retailers in not selling tobacco items to minors. The organization provided signage to the stores prohibiting the sale of menthol cigarettes.

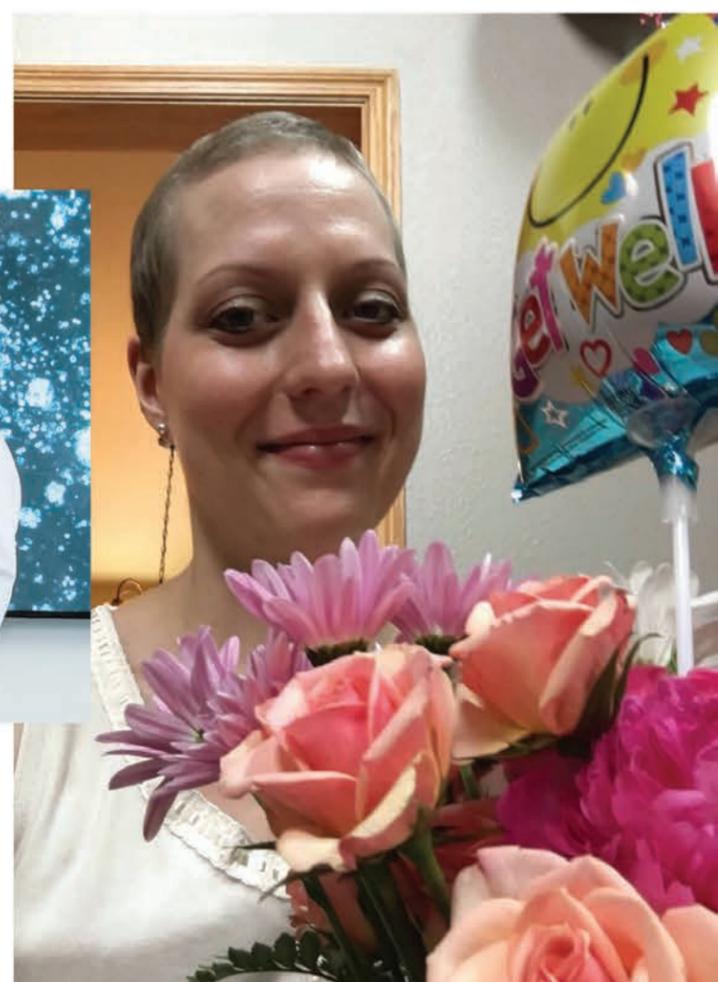
The project has now expanded beyond Milwaukee to other parts of the state. Lathan stressed her organization doesn't restrict its anti-menthol emphasis to just early spring of each year.

Their year-round anti-smoking education includes an emphasis on menthol.

Lathan sees the fight against smoking and menthol-flavored cigarettes as a social justice issue. "It's not for lack of effort on the part of prevention partners that menthol continues to reduce the expectancy of Black lives," she said in the Spring Healthy Start edition.

To learn more about menthol tobacco products or get connected with local prevention efforts, visit: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/tobaccochanging/menthol.htm>, or call 1-800-QUIT NOW.

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What You Need to Know About...

DIABETES



Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States. Adults aged 50 years or older with diabetes die 4.6 years earlier, develop disability 6 to 7 years earlier, and spend about 1 to 2 more years in a disabled state than adults without diabetes.

About 34.2 million people—or 10.5% of the US population—had diabetes (diagnosed or undiagnosed) in 2018. This total included 34.1 million adults aged 18 years or older, or 13% of all US adults. About 7.3 million of these adults had diabetes but were not aware that they had the disease or did not report that they had it.

After almost two decades of continual increases, the incidence of diagnosed cases of

diabetes (type 1 and type 2 combined) in the United States decreased from 2008 to 2017. Diabetes incidence is the rate of new cases of diagnosed diabetes. About 1.5 million new cases of diabetes (6.9 per 1,000 persons) were diagnosed among US adults aged 18 years or older in 2018.

The decrease in diabetes incidence may be due to multiple factors that cannot be determined by current data.

Compared to adults aged 18–44 years, incidence rates of diagnosed diabetes are estimated to be higher among adults aged 45–64 years and among those aged 65 years or older.



What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a group of diseases characterized by high blood sugar. When a person has diabetes, the body either does not make enough insulin (type 1) or is unable to properly use insulin (type 2). When the body does not have enough insulin or cannot use it properly, blood sugar (glucose) builds up in the blood. Prediabetes is a condition in which blood sugar is higher than normal but not high enough to be classified as diabetes.

People with diabetes can develop high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and high triglycerides (a type of fat in the blood). High blood sugar, particularly when combined with high blood pressure and high triglycerides, can lead to heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney failure, amputations of the legs and feet, and even early death.

Diabetes is also associated with increased risk of certain types of cancer, such as liver, pancreas, uterine, colon, breast, and bladder cancer. High blood sugar also increases a person's chance of developing dementia and Alzheimer's disease. In addition, the average medical costs for people with diagnosed diabetes are 2.3 times higher than costs for people without diabetes. These higher costs are often caused by diabetes-related health conditions and resulting hospitalizations.

People with diabetes, their caregivers and health care providers, departments of health, policy makers, and community organizations can help to reduce the risk of serious diabetes-related complications.

For people with diabetes, research^{6–10} shows that:

- Blood sugar management can reduce the risk of eye disease, kidney disease, and nerve disease by 40%.
- Blood pressure management can reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke by 33% to 50% and decline in kidney function by 30% to 70%.
- Cholesterol management can reduce cardiovascular complications by 20% to 50%.
- Regular eye exams and timely treatment could prevent up to 90% of diabetes-related blindness.
- Regular foot exams and patient education could prevent up to 85% of diabetes-related amputations.



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Diabetes and your feet

What is the link between diabetes, heart disease, and stroke?

High blood glucose from diabetes can damage your blood vessels and the nerves that control your heart and blood vessels. Over time, this damage can lead to heart disease.

People with diabetes tend to develop heart disease at a younger age than people without diabetes. Adults with diabetes are nearly twice as likely to have heart disease or stroke as adults without diabetes.^{2,3}

The good news is that the steps you take to manage your diabetes also help lower your chances of having heart disease or stroke.

What else increases my chances of heart disease or stroke if I have diabetes?

Your risk for heart disease is greater if you are male rather than female, whether you have diabetes or not.² If you do have diabetes, other factors add to your chances of developing heart disease or having a stroke.

Smoking

Smoking raises your risk of developing heart disease. If you have diabetes, it is important to stop smoking, because both smoking and diabetes narrow blood vessels. Smoking also increases your chances of developing other long-term problems such as

- lung disease NIH external link
- lower leg infections and ulcers
- foot or leg amputation

High blood pressure

If you have high blood pressure NIH external link, your heart works harder to pump blood. High blood

pressure can strain your heart, damage blood vessels, and increase your risk of heart attack, stroke, and eye or kidney problems. Have your blood pressure checked regularly and work with your doctor to control or lower high blood pressure.

Abnormal cholesterol levels

Cholesterol NIH external link is a type of fat, produced by your liver and found in your blood. You have two kinds of cholesterol in your blood: LDL and HDL.

LDL, often called “bad” cholesterol, can build up and clog your blood vessels. High levels of LDL cholesterol raise your risk of developing heart disease. HDL is sometimes called “good cholesterol.” Higher levels of HDL is linked to lower risk for heart disease and stroke. To improve LDL and HDL levels, limit the amount of fat in your eating plan, eat more plant-based foods, and get regular physical activity.

Another type of blood fat, triglycerides, also can raise your risk of heart disease when the levels are higher than recommended by your health care team.

Obesity and belly fat

Being overweight or having obesity can make it harder to manage your diabetes and raise your risk for many health problems, including heart disease and high blood pressure. If you are overweight, a healthy eating plan with fewer calories and more physical activity often will lower your blood glucose levels and reduce your need for medicines.

Excess belly fat around your waist, even if you are not overweight, can raise your chances of developing heart disease.

Foot problems are common in people with diabetes. You might be afraid you’ll lose a toe, foot, or leg to diabetes, or know someone who has, but you can lower your chances of having diabetes-related foot problems by taking care of your feet every day. Managing your blood glucose levels, also called blood sugar, can also help keep your feet healthy.

How can diabetes affect my feet?

Over time, diabetes may cause nerve damage, also called diabetic neuropathy, that can cause tingling and pain, and can make you lose feeling in your feet. When you lose feeling in your feet, you may not feel a pebble inside your sock or a blister on your foot, which can lead to cuts and sores. Cuts and sores can become infected.

Diabetes also can lower the amount of blood flow in your feet. Not having enough blood flowing to your legs and feet can make it hard for a sore or an infection to heal. Sometimes, a bad infection never heals. The infection might lead to gangrene.

Gangrene and foot ulcers that do not get better with treatment can lead to an amputation of your toe, foot, or part of your leg. A surgeon may perform an amputation to prevent a bad infection from spreading to the rest of your body, and to save your life. Good foot care is very important to prevent serious infections and gangrene.

Although rare, nerve damage from diabetes can lead to changes in the shape of your feet, such as Charcot’s foot. Charcot’s foot may start with redness, warmth, and swelling. Later, bones in your feet and toes can shift or break, which can cause your feet to have an odd shape, such as a “rocker bottom.”

Tips to Take Care of Your Feet

- Check your feet every day.
- Wash your feet every day.
- Smooth corns and calluses gently.
- Trim your toenails straight across.
- Wear shoes and socks at all times.
- Protect your feet from hot and cold.
- Keep the blood flowing to your feet.
- Get a foot check at every health care visit.

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Paul Bradbury



Alcohol and Sleep

You might be familiar with the term “night-cap,” or in other words, when you turn to alcohol as a means to wind down for the night before you go to bed.

It turns out that alcohol is the most common sleep aid used — roughly 20% of U.S. adults consume alcohol before bed.

Feeling drowsy enough to fall asleep may lead you to finally close your eyes, but the sentiment that alcohol is good for your sleep is actually a myth.

Drinking before bed has a number of negative effects on the quality of your rest, your sleep-wake cycle, and the important processes that occur while you’re asleep.

The only type of alcohol humans are able to ingest without fatal consequences is ethanol, which is the byproduct of grain and fruit fermentation processes.

It’s a clear liquid that your body absorbs through the gastrointestinal tract, and is classified as a drug due to its depressive and psychoactive effects on our body.

As such, when it comes to drinking alcohol, moderation is key. Otherwise, drinking too much before bed can seriously impact your quality of sleep and how you perform in your day-to-day routine.

How Does Alcohol Affect Sleep?

Drinking before bed does more harm than good to your health, and can really throw off important natural processes that occur in your body during sleep.

There are several reasons why you should avoid turning to an alcoholic beverage before bed. Although you may seem drowsier initially after drinking it, the sleep inducing effects of alcohol can quickly wear off and result in the

What’s In Alcohol?

(continued on page 10)



We are currently offering the Moderna vaccine only (18+)

We are offering COVID-19 vaccinations to all people in our community age 18+

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Minister and doctor introduce curriculum that closes trust gap between community and researchers



Rev. Deborah Thomas

Issues of mistrust and misunderstandings exist between community members and health care researchers.

That is the primary reason two local leaders – Rev. Dr. Deborah Thomas and Dr. Carol Williams – are collabo-



Dr. Carol Williams

rating to launch a unique curriculum to address these issues.

Known as the Cancer Disparities Curriculum for Research and Community Scholars, their curriculum will intentionally bring Milwaukee community members and early career biomedical researchers together to engage in shared learning.

Community scholars and research scholars will not only examine the origins, causes,

and factors that promote cancer disparities but also design potential solutions.

Cancer disparities are differences in outcomes (e.g., incidence, diagnosis, and mortality) among groups of people.

Significant disparities occur based on where people live, their race or ethnicity, and their gender, among other factors.

Cancer biomedical research does not often consider these disparities and their biomedical impact (e.g. trauma, stress, nutrition, sleep) which limits advancements in care for a broader diversity of people.

This curriculum aims to reduce cancer disparities and remove barriers to health equity by promoting understanding of why disparities exist; addressing issues of mistrust, bias and racism head-on; and fostering relationships within communities to develop projects that address their unique needs.

“Mistrust of the healthcare field and biomedical research is prevalent among members of communities,” said Rev. Deborah Thomas, retired MATC faculty member and founder and pastor of House of Grace Kingdom Ministry.

“Researchers may be unaware of the reasons for this mistrust and have a poor understanding of the social de-

terminants that give rise to cancer disparities. We want to eradicate these misunderstandings and help community members and researchers work together.”

The curriculum will provide scholars with opportunities to learn, to work effectively with each other, and to build trust and equitable partnerships while also developing shared understanding of factors that promote cancer disparities.

Scholars will participate in lessons and lectures as well as create a project to present to other community members and researchers.

“In the next few years, we hope to grow interest and enthusiasm for this program so

“Mistrust of the healthcare field and biomedical research is prevalent among members of communities. Researchers may be unaware of the mistrust and have a poor understanding of the social determinants that give rise to the social disparities. We want to eradicate these misunderstandings and help community members and researchers work together.”

—Rev. Deborah Thomas

we can enroll more scholars,” said Dr. Williams, eminent scholar with the MCW Cancer Center Biology Program.

The first cohort will assemble in Fall 2021 and include

eight to twelve scholars – with an equal number from the community and biomedical research departments at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Application materials can be obtained from akrause@mcw.edu.

The curriculum is fully funded by Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment.

According to Kristen Beyers, lead researcher for ‘Breast Cancer, Race and Place,’

“Racial disparities in breast cancer mortality rates continue to persist in Milwaukee county.

“These disparities exist despite the availability of early detection and treatment therapies known to lengthen survival among diverse

population groups. “Racism and racial residential segregation are widely considered to contribute to health disparities, such as breast cancer survivorship.”



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Alcohol and Sleep

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following:

- Alcohol is a diuretic which means it promotes the body to produce more urine. You'll have the urge to use the bathroom more often in the night when you drink before bed, interrupting your sleep.
- It will relax your muscles including the ones that shouldn't relax, such as your throat muscles. When you drink alcohol before bed, you're more likely to snore or experience sleep apnea, a condition in which your airway becomes blocked or even gives way when you're sleeping. Alcohol only makes the issue worse, and can lead to sleep interruptions throughout the night for you and your partner.
- Alcohol can suppress melatonin, a natural hormone that sends signals to your body to indicate it's time to rest, and helps to regulate your sleep/wake cycle. With a decrease in melatonin production, you can struggle with sleep latency and staying asleep.
- Alcohol interferes with how your nervous system regulates your heart rate, body temperature, and blood pressure, which can contribute to night sweats and an uncomfortable night's sleep.
- Alcohol is known to cause sleepwalking and sleep-eating if you overdo drinking before bed, which are both potentially dangerous to an individual's health.
- Alcohol reduces rapid eye movement (REM) sleep. It's the phase of your sleep cycle when you dream — and the most restorative time of the night. Not being able to stay in the REM phase long enough makes you feel tired and groggy the next day.
- Alcohol also disrupts circadian rhythm, an essential element to your body's functions. The circadian rhythm is your body's master clock, in other words, it helps to regulate your sleep/wake cycle, metabolism, moods, your immune system and more.

Alcohol, Sleep, And Weight Loss

For those who are trying to live a healthier lifestyle or are trying to lose weight, alcohol's impact on sleep directly affects weight loss. Interestingly enough, they

are all related in several ways.

Quality sleep is essential for weight loss, as a poor night's sleep slows your metabolism and makes it more difficult to lose weight. If you're interfering with sleep by consuming alcohol at bedtime, you're disrupting your circadian rhythm (the body's master clock) which regulates your metabolism and other body functions vital for weight loss.

Additionally, if you're struggling with weight, you should know that alcohol is filled with empty calories. Consuming empty calories right before you go to bed increases your daily calorie intake, and your chances of burning off the calories at night are much lower. One beer, for example, is around 154 calories while one shot of vodka is around 97 calories — this adds up quickly if you have multiple drinks before bed.

Trying to get through the day on poor-quality sleep causes your body to release cortisol, a stress hormone. Your body could hang on to body fat as a result of a cortisol release, which is obviously counterproductive for weight loss.

Furthermore, waking up feeling groggy after a bad night of sleep may cause you to crave sugar and caffeine for an energy boost. Unfortunately, sodas, sugary snacks and certain coffee drinks are calorie-heavy and can keep you from making the progress you're striving for in your weight loss journey.

Alcohol's Effect On Your Sleep Stages

Your body goes through five different sleep phases when you fall asleep, counting REM sleep as the last stage. The first nREM sleep stages (one and two) are both considered light sleep periods. During these stages, your body temperature decreases and heart rate slows down while all of your muscles relax. Next come stages three and four, when your body is in its restorative state. This promotes muscle tissue growth and repair, and your brain disposes of waste. It helps ensure you wake up feeling rested, energetic and refreshed, not only physically but mood-wise as well.

About 90 minutes into falling asleep, you'll enter the REM sleep phase which will reoccur about every hour and a half. REM sleep is the stage where you are most likely to dream, and your eyes are quickly moving back and forth under your eyelids — hence the name rapid eye movement. REM sleep is important because it contributes to memory and knowledge retention, and your ability to efficiently problem solve.

Five Tips for supporting Kid's Mental and Emotional Well-being

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of stress in their lives and help provide a strong support system for getting through possible challenges that may arise.

Tip #2: Help them feel secure. Going back to school may be daunting for children, especially after the stress and disruption of the pandemic. The CDC emphasizes -- Be reassuring about their safety and validate their feelings by emphasizing that it's OK to feel upset, scared, anxious, down and even angry.

You might also share how you manage your feelings to help them learn from you. Make sure your children know they can ask questions at any time. For adolescents, consider walking them through the use of self-care tools like the Sanvello app to help navigate difficult emotions.

Tip #3: Listen and watch. Parents, friends, teachers and family may often be the first line of defense for a child who may be struggling with their mental and emotional well-being yet unable to articulate their needs.

Let them know you are here to listen and it's safe to share how they're feeling. Pay attention to more than just their words - it's critical for parents to be aware of their children's moods and uncharacteristic changes in behavior so they know when it's time to seek expert support.

Tip #4: Help define boundaries and create regular routines. Consider limiting exposure to news coverage — including social media — and prioritizing and establishing a regular routine that provides children with structure when not in the classroom as this may help better manage children's emotional wellbeing. For example, consider after-school activities, sports, or hobbies that interest your child.

Top Tip: Take Action. Make sure to discuss your concerns with your pediatrician or family physician as soon as possible. Your doctor may recommend a plan of action or even a counselor who might help find ways to reduce any unhealthy stress and improve overall health.

For more health and wellness information, visit UHC.com.



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DHS Releases New and Updated Resources for Schools to Keep Students Safe

(continued from page 2)

tested if you have COVID-19 symptoms are additional, important steps we can take to help protect ourselves, our families, our kids, and our teachers and school staff," said DHS Secretary-designee Karen Timberlake.

"That is why I am so grateful to see districts and schools collaborating with their public health officials, consulting this guidance, and enrolling in our testing program.

I know this work will help protect the health of our students, and help ensure the quality of their education and the safety of our teachers and staff."

As of mid-July, over 300 public school districts and private/independent charter schools had enrolled in the testing program, representing over 50 percent of public school districts and 10 percent of private/independent charter schools in Wisconsin.

As of current enrollment, the testing program has the potential to cover almost 60 percent of Wisconsin students.

A one-time consent form signed by a parent or guardian will allow students to participate in the testing program. Enrollment remains open(link is external), and interested districts and schools are encouraged to learn more about the COVID-19 K-12 School Testing Program.

"As a former Wisconsin school district leader who led a school district through COVID-19 last year, I know many students and families desire in-person learning and a safe return to the classroom this fall. We want schools open for in-person instruction. And we want to keep kids, educators, and families safe," said Wisconsin State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly.

"The joint guidance we are strongly recommending districts follow provides a roadmap for a safe return to in-person school."

The Delta variant is highly infectious and is widespread in all part so Wisconsin, as it is across the country.

As the Delta variant spread increases, so does the risk that new, potentially more dangerous variants will develop.

That is why state health officials are urging all eligible Wisconsinites to get the COVID-19 vaccine, wear a mask indoors or when gathering outside, and follow other best health practices.

The vaccine is extremely ef-

easy to customize to the unique needs of each district and school.

Many schools are hosting COVID-19 vaccination clinics for their staff, eligible students, family members, and in comes cases, the general public. Visit

the DHS COVID-19: K-12 Schools webpage or vaccines.gov(link is external) to learn more about available vaccine providers and sites.

Parents and guardians can also learn more about the importance of testing by watching

testimonials from Wisconsin parents and school administrators in the COVID-19 Testing in Schools video, and can visit the COVID-19 Healthy Kids webpage for other resources about protecting children from COVID-19.

"As a former Wisconsin school district leader who led a school district through COVID-19 last year, I know many students and families desire in-person learning and a safe return to the classroom this fall. We want schools open for in-person instruction. And we want to keep kids, educators, and families safe."

—Wisconsin State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly.

fective against serious disease, hospitalizations, and death. While getting vaccinated remains the very best way to stop the spread of this deadly virus, we also need to have multiple layers of protection including universal masking in schools, particularly to protect those who are too young to get the vaccine as well as those with compromised immune systems.

"If your child is 12 years old or older, please get them vaccinated. And make sure you get your COVID-19 vaccine, too," said Secretary-designee Timberlake.

"Each additional person who gets vaccinated helps protect their family, their community, and our entire state. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine is an individual action that has community-wide impact."

Schools will keep their students and staff safe by following this updated guidance and implementing testing.

The updated school outbreak guidance emphasizes the importance of safe, in-person instruction by providing layered prevention strategies, including promoting COVID-19 vaccination among staff and eligible students, universal mask-wearing regardless of vaccination status, screening testing, and others.

The new communications toolkit includes a suggested timeline, key messages, and sample internal and external messages, all of which are



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Protect your family from COVID-19



The COVID-19 vaccine is the greatest hope we have for our community to overcome the pandemic and return to normal activities. By having our children vaccinated, we prevent the virus from further infecting our community.

All families with children 12 years old and older can now schedule appointments online to receive the vaccine at Children's Wisconsin. The vaccine is free to families. To schedule your child's appointment, visit childrenswi.org/covidvaccine.

Learn more at
childrenswi.org



Kids deserve the best.