

### In This Issue:

- ◆ **Cornerstone of Health**
- ◆ **Physical Activity: New Year's Resolutions**
- ◆ **January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month**

### Cornerstone of Health

Dr. Sheila Pinette, Director of Maine CDC



Dr. Sheila Pinette

Scientific research shows that regular physical activity not only promotes health and well-being, it also reduces the risk of developing many chronic diseases and of becoming overweight or obese.

Walking routes offer a safe and fun way to get health-promoting physical activity. Walking requires little or no equipment and can be enjoyed by most individuals, regardless of their abilities. Many routes are also wheelchair accessible.

**Healthy Maine Walks** is the most comprehensive listing of walking routes in the state. A Healthy Maine Walk is an accessible indoor or outdoor walking route that most people can walk in one hour or less at a brisk pace. Walking routes may be a local high school track, a downtown "museum in the streets" trail, or a portion of a larger trail system. This website is designed specifically to provide users with information about where to find places to walk near where they live, work or play to help them lead an active healthy lifestyle.

To learn more visit: [www.healthymainewalks.com](http://www.healthymainewalks.com).



### More Exercise, An Excellent New Year's Resolution

January is known as a time for making New Year's Resolutions. Exercise one New Year's Resolution that has many positive health benefits; has a variety of approaches depending on one's interests; can be very inexpensive; can be done alone or with a group; and has benefits for both employer and employees. Employers may want to ask employees to read the following information and then challenge them to make a New Year's Resolution that will reap positive rewards for all.

If you were told of a pill that could do the following:

- Control your weight
- Reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease
- Reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome
- Reduce your risk of some cancers
- Strengthen your bones and muscles
- Improve your mental health and mood
- Improve your ability to do daily activities and prevent falls, if you're an older adult
- Increase your chances of living longer

wouldn't you take your daily dose and recommend others do so as well? What if you knew this pill worked even on smokers, the obese, those already suffering from diabetes and up to 40 other chronic diseases? Employers, if you could do one thing for your employees to increase productivity, increase safety, improve mental and physical health, reduce absenteeism and reduce the chances for the onset of chronic disease or the worsening of existing conditions, wouldn't you do it?

What is the magic pill you ask? Exercise! Regular physical activity. Just 30 minutes a day, five days a week, can achieve all of the above. Taking this medicine doesn't even have to be in 30 minute doses. The same benefits can be obtained through three, 10 minute bouts of moderate to vigorous (heart rate is up, sweating is happening, and you'd have trouble carrying on a conversation during it) physical activity a day. The best part; this is as simple as taking a brisk walk. No special equipment, membership or training required.

If you can do one thing for your business to have significant benefits for everyone, this is it. Physical activity is the equal opportunity miracle drug. There are many resources at your disposal to implement programs, events and activities at your worksite to help increase the amounts of physical activity your employees accumulate.

**For more information about the connection between physical activity and health:**

[US CDC Physical Activity and Health](#)

[Exercise is Medicine](#)

**For physical activity in the workplace ideas:**

[CDC Physical Activity for Everyone](#)

[American Cancer Society Active for Life](#)

[The President's Challenge for Groups](#)

[CDC Healthier Worksite Initiative](#)



Paul R. LePage, Governor

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

## January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

Employers can play a key role in supporting their employees to get the preventative screenings they need to reduce their risk of developing cervical cancer.

Worksite policies can promote a corporate culture of good health. In addition, an employer's health benefits can affect an employee's willingness to seek preventative services and clinical care. Here are actions any employer can take to create opportunities for employees to reduce their risk of cervical cancer.

- Provide coverage for preventive services such as Pap tests for cervical cancer screening
- Provide sick leave or flex-time for women to receive cancer screening services or follow-up visits
- Reduce out-of-pocket costs for cervical cancer screening services
- Encourage health plans to send reminders to both employee members and providers about cervical cancer screening

### Cervical Cancer is Highly Preventable:

Before the development of the Pap test, cervical cancer was one of the most common causes of cancer death for American women. As an available, accepted, and cost-effective screening test, the Pap test can detect cervical cancer early when treatment is most effective. If women receive regular screenings, the Pap test can detect cervical cell changes before they become cancerous.

Women ages 21 to 65 are recommended to receive a Pap test every three years to screen for pre-cancerous cells growing in the cervix. As the Human papillomavirus (HPV) is associated with most cervical cancers, current cervical cancer screening recommendations also include the high-risk HPV DNA test along with the Pap test. This co-testing method is recommended for women age 30-65. Women should talk to their doctor about which screening tests to get, and how often they need to be screened.

### Cervical Cancer Facts:

- 85% of Maine women, age 18 and older, reported a Pap test in the past three years. (2010 Maine BRFSS)
- Most recent Maine data available reports:
  - ◆ 48 cases of invasive cervical cancer were reported to the Maine Cancer Registry in 2010
  - ◆ 13 women died due to cervical cancer in 2010
  - ◆ Between 1995 and 2010, there was an approximate 40% decrease in the number of Maine women being diagnosed with cervical cancer.
- Modifiable risk behaviors to reduce the risk of cervical cancer include smoking cessation, healthy eating, moderate or vigorous physical activity, maintaining a healthy body weight, and safe sexual practice.
- Routine HPV vaccination (3 doses) is recommended for girls and boys at age 11 or 12 years

The Maine CDC Breast and Cervical Health and Colorectal Cancer Control Programs can provide information about cancer screening tests as well as resources for free cancer screenings.

For more information call 1-800-350-5180 or visit <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/population-health/bcp/>

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, or national origin, in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, or activities, or its hiring or employment practices. This notice is provided as required by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Maine Human Rights Act and Executive Order Regarding State of Maine Contracts for Services. Questions, concerns, complaints or requests for additional information regarding the ADA may be forwarded to DHHS' ADA Compliance/EEO Coordinators, 11 State House Station – 221 State Street, Augusta, Maine 04333, 207-287-4289 (V), 207-287-3488 (V), TTY users call Maine relay 711. Individuals who need auxiliary aids for effective communication in program and services of DHHS are invited to make their needs and preferences known to the ADA Compliance/EEO Coordinators. This notice is available in alternate formats, upon request.

## January Health Observances

- ◆ [Cervical Health Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [National Birth Defects Prevention Month](#)
- ◆ [National Glaucoma Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [National Radon Action Month](#)
- ◆ [Thyroid Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [National Folic Acid Awareness Week](#) (January 4-10)

## February Health Observances

- ◆ [American Heart Month](#)
- ◆ [National Wear Red Day](#) (February 1)
- ◆ [National Children's Dental Health Month](#)
- ◆ [National Donor Day](#) (February 14)
- ◆ [Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week](#) (February 7-14)
- ◆ [International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month](#)

## Health Resources



**Department of Health and Human Services**

Maine People Living Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives

Paul R. LePage, Governor Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner