

# HEALTH CONNECT



CONNECTING PATIENTS FOR BETTER HEALTH

**MAY 2018**

## MELANOMA AND SKIN CANCER BY THE NUMBERS

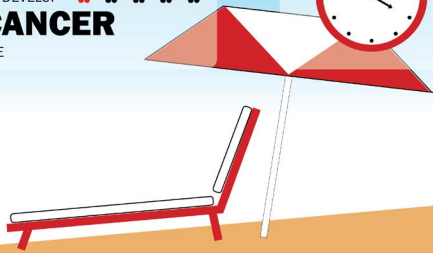
**SKIN CANCER**  
IS THE MOST COMMON CANCER IN THE  
UNITED STATES

**MELANOMA**  
IS THE SECOND MOST COMMON  
CANCER IN WOMEN AGES  
**15 to 29**

CURRENT ESTIMATES ARE THAT  
**1 IN 5**  
AMERICANS WILL DEVELOP  
**SKIN CANCER**  
IN THEIR LIFETIME



ON AVERAGE  
**ONE**  
AMERICAN  
DIES FROM MELANOMA  
**EVERY  
HOUR**



## Protecting Skin: Safe Tips for the Summer Sun

A big concern during the summer months is exposing skin to damaging ultraviolet rays for long periods of time. The long exposure can invite a host of ailments including skin cancer and melanoma. Here are some tips for braving the harsh ultraviolet rays this summer.

### *Don't skimp on sunscreen.*

Generously apply sunscreen to all exposed skin, including ears, neck, hands, feet and lips. Make sure the sunscreen is broad-spectrum and water-resistant and has an SPF of 30 or higher. Reapply every two hours and after swimming or sweating.

### *Wear protective clothing and sunglasses.*

Sunscreen can't block 100 percent of the sun's rays, so wear clothing for added protection. Ideal clothing includes lightweight, long-sleeved shirts and pants, and sunglasses with UV protection.

### *Seek shade whenever possible.*

Shade is a powerful ally between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. when the sun's rays are the strongest. If there's no shade around, create it using an umbrella or a wide-brimmed hat.

### *See something, say something.*

When detected early, skin cancer – including melanoma – is highly treatable. Check skin regularly, and if any new suspicious spots appear or any part of the skin is changing, itching or bleeding, see a board-certified dermatologist.

This summer, enjoy the sunny weather, but be cognizant of the dangers of exposing skin to harmful UV rays without taking the necessary steps of protecting skin.

## Fast Facts About Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a disease of the bone that makes a person's bones weak and more likely to break. Approximately 10 million Americans have osteoporosis and another 44 million have low bone density, placing them at increased risk.

Currently, 54 million Americans, half of all adults age 50 and older, are at risk of breaking a bone and should be concerned about bone health. One in every two women and one in every four men will break a bone in their lifetime due to osteoporosis. Statistically, the incidence is greater for women than their chances of a heart attack, stroke and breast cancer combined.

Just like most diseases, the keys to preventing and managing the disease is a balanced diet, regular exercise and living a healthy lifestyle.

The National Osteoporosis Foundation recommends five steps to improve bone health, and prevent osteoporosis and broken bones:

- Get the daily recommended dose of calcium and vitamin D.
- Do regular weight-bearing and muscle strengthening exercises.
- Don't smoke and limit alcoholic beverages.
- Talk to a healthcare provider about the chances of getting osteoporosis and ask for their recommendation about getting a bone density test.
- Take an osteoporosis medication when recommended by a doctor.

For more resources and information about osteoporosis and what can be done to prevent or manage it, visit the [National Osteoporosis Foundation](http://www.nof.org).

Check out  
NMCP  
on social  
media



**Nurse Advice Line 24/7**  
800-TRICARE  
(800-874-2273)

**Hampton Roads  
Appointment Center**  
(866) 645-4584

**Emergency Room**  
(757) 953-1365

**Pharmacy Refill**  
Local: (757) 953-MEDS (6337)  
Toll Free: (866) 285-1008

**Information**  
(757) 953-5008

**Customer Service Office**  
(757) 953-2600

**Relay Health Secure Messaging**  
<https://app.mil.relayhealth.com/>

## May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month

In honor of National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth's Wellness Department challenges all adults to get 30 minutes of physical activity every day.

Exercise helps everyone reach their personal best! With exercise, most people look good, feel good, improve their health and perform at their peak on and off the job. There is no such thing as a quick fix! Everyone must set goals, focus on reaching and maintaining a healthy weight for life. Making improvements to exercise routines starts with a change in mindset.

Start by setting "SMART" goals. Use this method to establish realistic fitness goals to turn thoughts and good intentions into action.

- **Specific:** *Goals must be detail oriented.* Those who struggle with sticking to a regular routine should not say they are going to exercise more. Instead, they should commit to going to the gym three times this week. Determine which days which work best with schedules. Keep it simple, take is slow, and keep trying until there is success.

- **Measureable:** *Goals must be calculable.* To monitor progress, track body weight and body composition over time or log the distance of each run. Simply put, write it down and examine patterns. Make change when necessary, and work within limits and build up. It is okay to feel it wasn't done right the first time. Make changes and move forward.

- **Attainable:** *Goals must be realistic.* Those who are not an experienced hikers should start with a few local day hikes before signing up for a three-day trek through the wilderness. Consider a brisk walk for 15-minutes three times a week then build up. Follow up the second week by increasing a 15-minute walk to 25 minutes. Or do 15 minutes of walking and increase the number of days to four to five times a week. The goal is to be active and keep moving forward.

- **Relevant:** *Goals must be appropriate.* Those who want to improve their flexibility and range of motion should consider adding a yoga class or stretching exercises to their routine instead of more weight training activities.

- **Time-Bound:** *Goals must have deadlines.* Those who want to be more physically active as a family could organize a weekend basketball tournament and practice shooting hoops together every night after dinner to get ready for the big game.

Essentially, being physically fit is important for everyone! Keep moving, commit to a change in mind and never give up.

## HEALTHY WEIGHT

### **ShipShape Weight Management Program:**

8-week intensive program for adults. To register, call the HRAC at (866) 645-4584.

**Right Weigh:** 4-week program for learning to manage your weight the right way. To register, call (757) 953-9247 or 953-1927.

For more information on Health Promotions and Wellness Department programs and resources, call (757) 953-1927.

## TOBACCO CESSATION

### **Tobacco Cessation Class**

1st and 3rd Tuesday  
of every month from 1 – 3 p.m.

### **One-on-One Counseling**

Call today to schedule!

For more information, call  
(757) 953-1927 or 953-1934



**1 in 3**

children are physically active every day.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BY THE NUMBERS

**28%**

of Americans aged six and older are physically inactive.

Less than

**5%**

of adults participate in 30 minutes of physical activity each day,

and only

**1 in 3**

adults receive the recommended amount of physical activity each week.

Only

**6 States**

require physical education in every grade, K-12.

**52%**

is the national average for regular exercise.





# May is Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month

By Rebecca A. Perron  
NMCP Public Affairs Office

Allergies are one of the most common chronic diseases. An allergy occurs when the body's immune system sees a substance as harmful and overreacts to it. The substances that cause allergic reactions are allergens. When someone has allergies, their immune system makes an antibody called immunoglobulin E. These antibodies respond to allergens. The symptoms that result are an allergic reaction.

In the Allergy Clinic at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, the most common diagnosis is allergic rhinitis. Food allergies are number two. For kids, the most common food allergies are milk, egg and peanut.

According to the clinic's division officer, Cmdr. William Chin, the treatment protocol offered to their patients varies depending on the type of allergy, its severity, and whether the patient is a child or an adult.

## Seasonal Allergies/Asthma

"When it comes to airborne allergens, called aeroallergens, they are difficult to avoid," said Chin, a board-certified internist who is allergy fellowship trained. "Allergic rhinitis manifests in the nose causing a runny nose and itchy eyes."

## GET CONNECTED

Download the NMCP app today and get access to:

- News and announcements
  - Interactive maps
  - Pharmacy wait times
  - Telephone directory
  - Relay Health
  - ICE feedback
- and so much more!



Chin said over-the-counter allergy medications, such as a topical nasal steroid (nose spray) is the best medicine since it helps reduce histamine production. Another option is oral anti-histamines. While the nasal spray is more effective, it must be used daily and takes four weeks to reach maximum effectiveness. Oral medications can be taken as needed and begin to take effect in 15 minutes.

Chin said that most often when the treatment is not being effective, many times the patient is not complying with the correct dosage of medicine. Chin said they work with patients to ensure they are educated on medication compliance and understand their asthma action plan.

"We also see patients who are having difficulty controlling their asthma," Chin said. "We evaluate whether aeroallergens are playing a role. If the allergy tests are positive, we add immunotherapy (allergy shots) as an adjunct treatment. If the asthma is driven by the aeroallergen, and you treat that, then the asthma gets better."

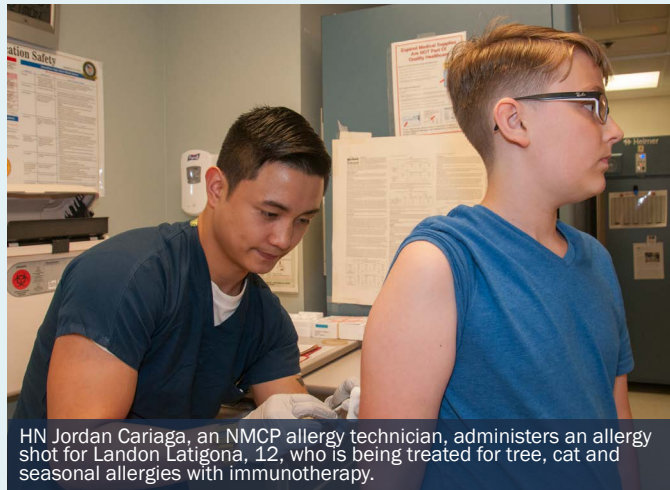
Allergy shot treatment takes eight-to-nine months to reach maximum effectiveness. NMCP's Allergy Clinic has developed a cluster protocol to help active-duty patients reduce the time away from their command when undergoing allergy shot treatment.

## Food Allergies

For food allergies, there is currently no FDA-approved treatment, so avoidance is key. Food allergens are mostly in the pediatric community and are discovered when they get introduced to that food.

Type 1 food allergies can be life-threatening, while type 3 is intolerance by the body but is not life-threatening. Peanuts and shellfish are common type 1 food allergens. A reaction tends to happen within minutes of ingesting the food, and up to two hours afterward, and is caused by the protein the food. Patients

who are having a reaction must use their epinephrine injection first. Some patients are afraid to use the injection, and reach for an antihistamine first. But an antihistamine will only treat the histamine release and not the entire reaction. If the epinephrine injection first is used after 15 – 30 minutes,



HN Jordan Cariaga, an NMCP allergy technician, administers an allergy shot for Landon Latigona, 12, who is being treated for tree, cat and seasonal allergies with immunotherapy.

organ failure may not be reversible.

"Patients, as well as their caretakers, must understand that if they are having a reaction, they must use their epinephrine injection," Chin said. "For a food allergy/anaphylaxis plan, it is usually used to educate their caretakers on what to look for, as well as to educate the patient on using the epinephrine injection first.

With type 3, milk is a common intolerance, and a person may have symptoms such as diarrhea. For this food, it's the body's reaction to the sugar in milk.

"We make recommendations for what food each patient should avoid," Chin said. "But they have to come with a suspicion because the allergy testing across the board is not accurate without a history of a reaction. Testing can help confirm the suspicion of an allergy along with a history of reaction to a particular food."

Chin said after initial skin and blood testing, they retest patients every 12 months with repeat skin and blood tests. Most children can outgrow milk and egg allergies by age 6, but only 20 percent of children can outgrow peanut allergies. The remaining food allergies are lifelong.

**118,000**  
patients with a PCM at one  
of our 10 facilities

**22**  
Medical Home  
Port teams

**440,000**  
patients we serve – active duty,  
retired and families



The General Pediatrics Department at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth is conducting three physical rodeos this spring and summer for summer camp and kindergarten, sports and back to school.

Each rodeo will have a dedicated team with extended hours to meet all physical needs, including asthma action plans, immunizations and forms needed for school.



Camp/Kindergarten

May 21 – 24

Sports

July 23 – 26

Back to School

Aug. 21 – 24



**PEDIATRICS**

Physical

**RODEOS**

For those assigned to NMCP Pediatrics as their PCM and are in need of physicals, call (757) 953-7716 now and select option 3 to schedule an appointment!