Eating healthier can help reduce many chronic diseases from heart disease to type 2 diabetes, some cancers and obesity. Many of us don’t eat enough fruits and vegetables daily. In fact, it’s estimated only 25 percent of people in the United States consume an adequate amount, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

March marks National Nutrition Month, a great time to refocus on making better educated food choices and sharing that knowledge with our family and friends.

Join us as we celebrate National Nutrition Month:

**What:** Keep an Eye on Nutrition

**When:** March 4, 9-11 a.m.

**Where:** 9850-A Emmett F. Lowry Expressway, Community Room A-108, Texas City, TX 77591

**What:** Come and learn more about nutrition with WIC including fun booths and activities. The event features Galveston’s Own Farmers Market, HEAL’s KC the Carrot, Master Gardeners and many more!

**Come Celebrate with Us!**

National Nutrition Month

March 4 | 9 AM - 11 AM

Come learn more about nutrition with WIC, including fun booths and activities!

**Featuring:**
- Galveston’s Own Farmers Market,
- HEAL’s KC the Carrot,
- Master Gardener and many more!

**Tips from the Eat Right, by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.**

- **Eat a variety of nutritious foods every day**
  - Include healthful foods from all food groups
  - Hydrate healthfully
  - Learn how to read nutrition facts panels
  - Practice portion control
  - Take time to enjoy your food

- **Plan your meals each week**
  - Use a grocery list to shop for healthful foods
  - Be menu-savvy when dining out
  - Choose healthful recipes to make during the week
  - Enjoy healthful eating at school and at work
  - Plan healthful eating while traveling

- **Learn skills to create tasty meals**
  - Keep healthful ingredients on hand
  - Practice proper home food safety
  - Share meals together as

**Nutrition Month page 13**
ARC to host low-cost pet vaccine clinics March 20, 21

The Galveston County Animal Resource Center (ARC) is happy to host two low-cost pet vaccination clinics on Friday, March 20 and Saturday, March 21. Both clinics are open to residents of any city and will include pet microchipping and county registration.

Low-cost vaccinations, flea control and heartworm testing and treatment services through ARC range from $15 for a rabies vaccine for both dogs and cats to $60 for the dog package and $45 for the cat package.

Specific pricing is online at www.gchd.org/arc. Microchips are available for all cats and dogs, regardless of jurisdiction, for just $20 each.

County regulation requires pet owners who live in the municipalities served by the ARC (Bayou Vista, Hitchcock, Kemah, La Marque, Texas City, Tiki Island and unincorporated Galveston County) to register their pets. There is no registration fee for pets that are already microchipped. Registration for pets that are not microchipped is $20 and includes a microchip. The fee is $15 for pet owners age 65 and older.

Both clinics will take place at ARC, located at 3412 25th Avenue North (Loop 197 North) in Texas City from noon-2 p.m. Friday, March 20 and noon-3 p.m. Saturday, March 21.

Appointments are not needed. Cash, check and major credit cards are accepted. For more information call 409-948-2485.

Galveston County MRC receives national award

The Galveston County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) in December received the 2020 Operation Readiness Award from the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). The award will provide a personal trauma kit and tourniquet to MRC members who are current on their basic life support, American Heart Association CPR/AED and Stop the Bleed training. The award will also provide CPR/AED and basic life support training and certification to 150 citizens at no cost as well as MRC member recruitment. To learn more about Galveston County MRC, visit www.gchd.org/MRC.

Pictured from left are Galveston County MRC Coordinator Richard Pierce and volunteers Marilee Stripling, Kevin McLaughlin, MD and Ruth Kai.
Colorectal cancer screenings save lives. Regular screenings, beginning at age 45, is key to preventing the disease.

Colorectal cancer affects both men and women and is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. March marks National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, a time to highlight risks and symptoms.

Men and women ages 45-75 should be screened for colorectal cancer regularly. Those older than 75 should ask their doctor if they should be screened and how often, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“Screenings allow your doctor to find pre-cancerous polyps. That’s good because those polyps can then be removed before possibly becoming cancerous,” said Cynthia Ripsin, MS, MPH, MD, medical director for Coastal Health & Wellness (CHW). “Polyps are abnormal growths and over time may turn into cancer.”

One screening option is the fecal immunochemical test (FIT) screening. This screening tests for hidden blood in the stool, a symptom of colorectal cancer. CHW offers FIT screenings to insured and uninsured patients. Uninsured patients who have positive test results also qualify for a free colonoscopy.

Each year, an estimated 140,000 Americans are diagnosed with colorectal cancer with more than 50,000 dying from the disease. Risk for the disease increases with age. More than 90 percent of colorectal cancers occur in people who are 50 years old or older, according to the CDC.

“I can’t stress enough how important it is to get regular screenings. Not only could pre-cancerous polyps be found and removed, early cancer can be found while it’s still early and treatment is most effective,” Ripsin said.

Risks include a personal or family history of colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer. However, colon cancer is the third most common cancer, excluding skin cancer, in the United States so even if no one in your family has ever had colon cancer you still are at risk. Other risk factors include Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis and genetic syndromes like familial adenomatous polyposis or hereditary nonpolyposis colorectal cancer.

Symptoms may include blood in or on stool, stomach pain and aches or cramps that do not go away and losing weight with no known reason. While these symptoms may also be caused by something other than colorectal cancer, it’s important to contact a healthcare provider if symptoms are present.

“There aren’t always symptoms when you have pre-cancerous polyps and colorectal cancer, especially in the early stages,” Ripsin said. “That’s why regular screenings are so important.”

What can you do to reduce your risk of colorectal cancer?
LAMB CHOPS WITH ORANGE SAUCE

Ingredients

• 1/2 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
• 2 Tbsp. orange zest
• 1 tsp. fresh or 1/2 tsp. dried thyme
• 1/8 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
• Nonstick cooking spray
• 8 small lean lamb chops, about 1/2-inch thick (about 4 ounces each)
• 1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms
• 1/2 cup dry white wine

Directions

In a shallow baking dish, combine the orange juice, orange zest, thyme and pepper; mix well.

Trim all excess fat from the lamb chops and place in a baking dish. Spoon the orange juice mixture over the chops; cover and refrigerate for 3–4 hours, occasionally turning chops.

Coat a large skillet with nonstick cooking spray; place over medium-high heat until hot.

Remove the chops from the marinade, reserving the marinade; arrange in the skillet. Brown the chops on both sides, remove from the skillet and set on a plate lined with paper towels.

Reduce the heat to medium, add the mushrooms and sauté until just tender. Stir in the reserved marinade and wine and bring to a boil.

Return the lamb chops to the skillet; cover, reduce heat and simmer for 10–12 minutes or until the sauce is reduced to about 1/2 cup.

Transfer the lamb chops to a platter, spoon the orange sauce on top and serve.
This year’s IT’S TIME TEXAS Community Challenge comes to an end on March 1. Overall, Galveston County communities have earned more than 1.56 million points in the quest to eat healthy and be more active.

A BIG thank you to City of League City Mayor Pat Hallisey and the city council for supporting the IT’S TIME TEXAS Community Challenge with the mayor’s pledge and city council pledge. Let’s get healthy, Galveston County!

IT’S TIME TEXAS COMMUNITY CHALLENGE
SCORES | AS OF FEBRUARY 25, 2020

LARGE CITY CATEGORY
13th place in category | League City - 76,650

MID SIZE CATEGORY
★ 2nd place in category | Texas City - 2,010,100
17th place in category | Galveston - 41,750

SMALL CATEGORY
16th place in category | Santa Fe - 59,400
29th place in category | Dickinson - 22,050
33rd place in category | Friendswood - 17,200
81st place in category | La Marque - 3,750

EXTRA SMALL CATEGORY
6th place in category | Clear Lake Shores - 112,950
34th place in category | Kemah - 6,200
70th place in category | Bayou Vista - 1,700
WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

COVID-19 is a new virus that causes respiratory illness in people and can spread from person to person. The outbreak began in December 2019 and Chinese health officials have reported thousands of infections in China, including some that resulted in death.

COVID-19 is most commonly spread from an infected person to others through:
- Respiratory droplets released into the air by coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands
- Rarely, fecal contamination

Patients with COVID-19 have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms including fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

The CDC recommends precautions that are similar to the ones you should take to avoid the flu:
- Wash your hands with soap and water often.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

If you are experiencing fever, cough or difficulty breathing, and have traveled to China or been exposed to a sick traveler from China in the last 14 days, please contact the Galveston County Health District at one of the following phone numbers for guidance: 409-938-2215, 409-938-2208, 409-938-2350 or 409-938-2322.
Out and about: Community outreach

In January, GAAA crews supported the Special Olympics in Galveston at the Polar Plunge. Participants swam in the Gulf of Mexico. GAAA Director of EMS Amy Weber and Clinical Compliance Coordinator - Paramedic Brad Starkey attended.

Calendar of Events

**Diabetes 101**
The Galveston County Health District (GCHD) Diabetes 101 class meets each Wednesday, 3-4:30 p.m. and is a support group for those living with diabetes. Topics include monitoring blood glucose, healthy eating, meal planning, understanding food labels, counting carbs and managing stress through increased activity. Classes take place in the GCHD Texas City WIC classroom, 9850-B Emmett F. Lowry Expressway, Suite B-101.02. Registration for the group is required by calling 409-938-2293 or emailing chs@gchd.org.

**Mother’s Milk Club – Texas City**
The Galveston County Health District’s Mother’s Milk Club meets 5:30-6:30 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday of each month at the Texas City WIC Clinic, 9850 Emmett F. Lowry Expressway, Suite B-101. For information, call 409-949-3471.

**Mother’s Milk Club - Dickinson**
The Galveston County Health District’s Mother’s Milk Club meets 5:30-6:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at the Dickinson WIC Clinic, 2401 Termini St., Dickinson. For information, call 409-337-7606.

**Mother’s Milk Club - Galveston**
The Galveston County Health District’s Mother’s Milk Club meets 5:30-6:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at the Galveston WIC Clinic, 4700 Broadway, Suite F102, Galveston. For information, call 409-763-7207.

**Free WIC cooking class**
Learn how to cook with Galveston County Health District’s Women, Infant and Children (WIC) services and Galveston’s Own Farmers Market to create low-cost, delicious and healthy recipes.

For more information, call 409-949-3471. All ingredients are provided and you get to eat the food you create! This is a FREE class open to WIC clients.

**Healthy Concepts Clinic**
Healthy Concepts Clinic (HCC) is a public health clinic that offers STD, HIV, Syphilis, Hepatitis C, Chlamydia and Gonorrhea testing as well as Tuberculosis case management and treatment. The Texas City clinic, located at 9850-B Emmett F. Lowry Expressway, Suite B103, is open Wednesdays 1-5 p.m.

The Galveston clinic, located at Island Community Center, 4700 Broadway, Suite F101, is open Mondays 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
GCHD, CHW staff wears red to support heart health
‘It’s TIME’ to eliminate Tuberculosis

March 24 marks World Tuberculosis (TB) Day, a time to educate the public about the impact of TB around the world.

This year’s theme is “It’s TIME” and Galveston County Health District (GCHD) is working to bring awareness and to eliminate this deadly disease.

TB is not a disease of the past. It can happen anywhere and can affect anyone. TB is caused by bacteria that spreads through the air from person to person. Bacteria gets into the air when a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, speaks or sings. People nearby may breathe in the bacteria and become infected.

If not treated properly, TB disease can be fatal. Those infected with TB bacteria who are not sick may still need treatment to prevent TB disease from developing in the future.

“TB disease is not spread by shaking someone’s hand, sharing food, sharing toothbrushes or kissing,” noted GCHD Chief Nursing Officer Eileen Dawley, RN.

There are no confirmed TB cases in Galveston County so far this year. The TB Prevention and Control Program is currently treating 10 TB and two suspect cases. There were 12 cases in 2019, 14 cases in 2018, seven in 2017 and 13 in 2016.

Symptoms include a bad cough that lasts three weeks or longer, chest pain, coughing up blood or sputum (mucus from deep inside the lungs), weakness or fatigue, weight loss, appetite, chills, fever and sweating at night.

“If you’re experiencing these symptoms, it does not necessarily mean you have TB,” Dawley said. “However, if you have the symptoms and fall into high risk categories like working in a homeless shelter or health care facility, or have visited an area where TB is common, it’s important to get tested and see your doctor.”

GCHD’s TB Prevention and Control Program provides complete evaluation, chest x-ray and treatment services for TB disease in Galveston County residents, as well as case management of TB cases and suspected cases, including those medically managed by other healthcare providers.

For more information, visit www.gchd.org/tb and www.cdc.gov/tb.
GCHD joins Mainland Mardi Gras parade
GCHD joins Mainland Mardi Gras parade
HEART DISEASE

refers to several types of heart conditions. The most common type in the United States is coronary artery disease, which affects blood flow to the heart.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in both men and women. **630,000 Americans** die from heart disease each year. That’s around 1 in every 4 deaths.

**Are you at risk for heart disease?**

High blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol and smoking are key heart disease risk factors. Other risks include:

- Diabetes
- Overweight and obesity
- Poor diet
- Physical inactivity
- Excessive alcohol use

**You are in control!**

Adopt healthy eating habits by limiting foods with salt and sugar. Get active! Exercising just 20 minutes a day can make a difference! Stop smoking! Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States.

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**WARNING SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK**

- Chest pain or discomfort
- Upper body pain and discomfort in arms, back, neck, jaw or upper stomach
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea, lightheaded-ness or cold sweats

**WARNING SIGNS OF A STROKE**

- Sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or difficulty understanding speech
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or lack of coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

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GCHD.ORG

www.gchd.org  Facebook.com/GCHDinfo  Twitter.com/GCHDinfo
March 15-21 is National Poison Prevention Week

NUTRITION MONTH

a family when possible
• Reduce food waste
• Try new flavors and foods

When choosing whole grains, lean protein and colorful fruits and vegetables, it's important to savor the flavor – and be creative in the kitchen.

Fruits and vegetables provide vitamins, minerals and antioxidants in all forms, whether it's fresh, frozen, canned or dried. They're also low in calories.

Looking for something sweet to eat? Pick up some fruit. It's naturally sweet and can help fight cravings so that you don’t find yourself reaching for a candy bar or piece of cake.

When it comes to dairy, choose low-fat or fat-free options for milk, yogurt and cheese.

Go for whole grains when building your plate. Whole grain bread, brown rice and quinoa are great options.

For breakfast, whip up a bowl of oatmeal. Whole grains not only provide vitamins and minerals, but dietary fiber. At least half of the grains you eat should be whole grains.

Finish off your plate with lean protein like round steaks and roasts, skinless poultry, fish, eggs, beans, nuts and seeds.

For free resources on how you can live a healthier life, check out HEAL at gchd.org/HEAL. You'll find free recipes, cooking tips, links to resources including free fitness trackers and exercise videos and more.

#PreventPoison

Have a Plan for Protection:

> Always use and re-seal child safety caps.

> Lock up household cleaners, laundry pods and medicines. Keep them out of sight.

> Never call medicine “candy.”

> Keep the poison hotline number 1-800-222-1222 nearby.
COLORECTAL CANCER

Diet

• According to the CDC, medical experts often recommend a diet low in animal fats and high in fruits, vegetables and whole grains to reduce the risk of other chronic diseases such as coronary artery disease and diabetes. This diet may also reduce the risk of colorectal cancer.

• Research is underway to find out if changes to your diet can reduce your colorectal cancer risk.

Aspirin

• Researchers are looking at the role of some medicines and supplements in preventing colorectal cancer. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force found that taking low-dose aspirin can help prevent cardiovascular disease and colorectal cancer in some adults, depending on age and risk factors, according to the CDC.

Healthy choices

• Some studies, according to the CDC, suggest that people may reduce their risk of developing colorectal cancer by increasing physical activity, limiting alcohol consumption and avoiding tobacco.

For more information, visit https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal.