



Easter Seals
DISABILITY SERVICES

NEW JERSEY

Creating Solutions, Changing Lives!

Healthy Lifestyles!



Women's Health Week was recognized in May to create awareness to help women learn how to achieve longer, healthier lives.

Women of all ages can be proactive by engaging in a healthy lifestyle and getting regular physical exams.

Early intervention and preventive care are the best ways to find health issues at their earliest and most treatable stages.



♥ **Heart disease** in women is often diagnosed at an advanced stage. Addressing risk factors such as elevated cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity, sedentary lifestyle, diabetes, and smoking greatly reduces a woman's risk of cardiovascular disease-related illness and death. Healthy doses of nutrition and regular physical activity help to improve weight and overall health!

♥ **Mammograms** are the only sure way to detect breast cancer early. If you are 40 years of age or older, you should have a mammogram once every year.

♥ **A regular Pap Test** is the best tool for finding and treating cervical cell changes before they progress to cervical cancer.

Talk to your healthcare provider about screenings and how often you should have them. If you are coordinating care for a family member with a disability, ask your provider and diagnostic center for assistance in assuring a positive experience. Request a visit to the site in advance and ask for a demonstration of the procedure and equipment that will be used. This may be helpful in reducing anxiety at the time of the procedure.

Did You Know?



Through the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides low-income, uninsured, and underserved women access to timely breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services.

The New Jersey Cancer Education and Early Detection Screening Program (NJCEED) is part of the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services. NJCEED provides comprehensive screening services for breast, cervical, prostate, and colorectal cancer. The services include education, outreach, early detection, case management, screening, tracking, and follow-up. Breast, cervical, prostate and colorectal cancers can be treated more effectively when found early.

Persons eligible for these services must be at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level and be uninsured or under-insured.

For more information, call
1-800-328-3838 or visit
www.state.nj.us/health/cancer/njceed/index.shtml

Easter Seals New Jersey

Healthy Lifestyles
MAY-JUNE

- **Women's Health**
- **Back Pain**
- **Safe Summer Foods**



Dates to Remember:

- **Saturday August 30th**
Disabilities Awareness Day at Six Flags Great Adventure

Easter Seals New Jersey
25 Kennedy Blvd, Suite 600
East Brunswick, NJ 08816
732/257-6662

eastersealsnj.org/health



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Visit eastersealsnj.org/health to watch a video about the **Be Well! & Thrive™** Program!



Back Pain in People with Disabilities

Back pain is a problem that most individuals will deal with at some point in their life. For people with disabilities, back pain is even more prevalent as the barriers to physical activity are greater.

However, there are ways that will help people with and without disabilities to prevent and address spinal health. Here is a three-pronged approach to spinal health.

- ♥ **Proper orthopedic screenings.** Discuss orthopedic health with your doctor and determine if a referral is needed to screen for and treat potential injuries to the spine or other joints.

Address back pain with your doctor to rule out potential serious sources before moving into treatment and prevention efforts. Your orthopedic doctor may screen for bulging or herniated discs leading to nerve compression, or other diseases of the spine. Once any major issues are ruled out, other preventative measures can be looked at.

- ♥ **Weight management.** Excess weight puts us at greater risk for disease and increases the strain on our joints. Weight can be managed best by eating a healthy diet and getting the recommended amount of physical activity to create the proper calorie balance for weight maintenance or reduction. Registered dietitians can be a great source of support and education on healthy diet as it relates to your specific disability. In many cases, these services are covered by insurance.

- ♥ **Address activity and fitness.** Research in the last decade strongly links increased sitting time to all-cause mortality. The sedentary lifestyle is also detrimental to spinal health. While in the seated position our largest muscle groups are inactive and muscle imbalances are created. This eventually leads to injury.

Increasing activity should be incremental with a focus on proper movement patterns and the incorporation of flexibility where it is not contraindicated. For those who are already experiencing back pain, physical therapy may be indicated by your doctor before starting a fitness program on your own. Be sure to talk to your doctor about how your medications may affect the exercise response. Keeping the spine supple, the core strong, and the body active will help to reduce or prevent back pain.

—Robin Nussbaumer, *Exercise Physiologist, Easter Seals NJ*

While developing Easter Seals New Jersey's Be Well! & Thrive™ exercise program, we realized that poor posture and faulty body mechanics could lead to injury and minimize the positive effects of an exercise program. Therefore, we designed each sequenced exercise session with posture and spinal alignment and core strength exercises.

Improved posture leads to improved body mechanics and reduces the risk for back injuries and back pain. When selecting an exercise program for individuals with developmental disabilities be sure to select a fitness provider who understands the special needs of persons served.

For additional information about safe exercise for people with developmental disabilities, please contact bewell@nj.easterseals.com.



Eat and Enjoy the Bounty of the Season Safely!



It's that time of year when we get outdoors, plant our gardens, and stop at local farm markets for the freshest produce the season has to offer.

There's nothing like a fresh, locally grown organic mixed-greens salad or just-picked berries. To ensure the enjoyment of our seasonal bounty, it's important to reduce the risk of contamination that may cause foodborne illnesses. Below are some recommendations the Food and Drug Administration recommends to reduce the risk.

Avoid cross-contamination:

- Keep fruits and vegetables that will be eaten raw separate from other foods—such as raw meat, poultry or seafood — and from kitchen utensils used for those products.
- Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils and counter tops with soap and hot water between the preparation of raw meat, poultry and seafood products and the preparation of produce that will not be cooked.
- If you use plastic or other non-porous cutting boards, run them through the dishwasher after use.

Prepare Safely:

- When preparing any fresh produce, begin with clean hands by washing them for at least 20 seconds with soap and water before and after preparation.
- Cut away any damaged or bruised areas on fresh fruits and vegetables before preparing and/or eating; produce that looks rotten should be discarded.
- Wash all produce thoroughly under running water before eating, cutting or cooking, including produce grown conventionally or organically at home, or purchased from a grocery store or farmer's market. Washing fruits and vegetables with soap or detergent or using commercial produce washes is not recommended.
- Even if you plan to peel the produce before eating, it is still important to wash it first so dirt and bacteria aren't transferred from the knife onto the fruit or vegetable.
- Scrub firm produce, such as melons and cucumbers, with a clean produce brush.
- Dry produce with a clean cloth towel or paper towel to further reduce bacteria that may be present.

For more information visit: www.fda.gov/food/resourcesforyou/consumers/ucm114299

—James Richardson, *Certified Holistic Health Counselor, Easter Seals NJ*