April Issue Includes

- National Minority Health Awareness Month
- Alcohol Awareness Month
- World Health Day (April 7)

National Minority Health Awareness Month
To improve health and eliminate the health care disparities of minorities, the Office of Minority Health (OMH) was established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The OMH focuses on different areas affecting minorities in health care. For example, cultural competency is the way patients and doctors discuss health concerns without cultural differences getting in the way. Health care services that are respectful and responsive to the health beliefs, practices and cultural and linguistic needs of patients can help bring about positive health outcomes. To learn more about the OMH and their offerings, go to www.omhcr.org.

You may also visit StayWell Online at https://uclivingwell.online.staywell.com and go to the “Family Centers” menu. Choose Men’s or Women’s Health to learn more.

Alcohol Awareness Month
Alcoholic beverages have no nutritional content and some people should not drink alcohol at all. Drinking alcohol can impair judgment and lead to addiction and other health issues. Studies show that women who drink more than one drink per day, and men who drink more than two drinks per day, raise their risk for motor vehicle crashes, high blood pressure, stroke, violence, suicide and certain types of cancer. Too much alcohol may cause social and psychological problems, cirrhosis of the liver, inflammation of the pancreas, and damage to the brain and heart.

Drinking in moderation may lower the risk for coronary heart disease, mainly among men over age 45 and women over age 55, but it should not be used as a substitute for a healthy diet, exercising and quitting smoking. To learn more about the various positive and negative aspects of alcohol consumption, visit www.ncadd.org.

Visit StayWell Online at https://uclivingwell.online.staywell.com and type “alcohol” in the Search box to learn more.

World Health Day
The World Health Organization (WHO) is responsible for providing leadership on global health matters, shaping the health research agenda and setting norms and standards. In addition, the organization articulates evidence-based policy options, provides technical support to countries, and monitors and assesses health trends.

Celebrate World Health Day on April 7 by taking time to learn more about many health concerns such as Avian Flu, bottled water, environmental or adolescent health, food borne diseases and more. Visit www.who.int.
Monthly WellTips

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

What are the risks and symptoms of alcoholism?
If you have an immediate family member who is affected by alcoholism, you may have problems with alcohol down the road. Children of alcoholics are about four times more likely to develop alcohol problems, says the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). Alcoholism isn’t determined only by the genes you inherit, though. More than half of all children of alcoholics don’t become alcoholics. Many factors influence your risk of developing alcoholism. These include how your parents raised you, your friends, your stress level, and how available alcohol is.

According to the NIAAA, alcoholism is a disease that includes the following four symptoms:

1. Craving—a strong need or urge to drink
2. Loss of control—not being able to stop drinking
3. Physical dependence—withdrawal symptoms, such as nausea, sweating, shakiness, and anxiety, when you stop drinking
4. Tolerance—the need to drink greater amounts of alcohol over time

What to do
If you’re worried that your family’s history of alcohol problems or your troubled family life puts you at risk of becoming alcoholic, here are some steps from the NIAAA to help prevent it:

- Avoid underage drinking. The risk for alcoholism is higher if you begin to drink at an early age. This is because of both social factors and genes.
- Drink moderately as an adult. If you have a family history of alcoholism, you are at greater risk of becoming dependent on alcohol. You should approach even moderate drinking with caution, because you may find it difficult to stay at that level.

Seek help
If your family has problems with alcohol and you’re concerned you may be heading that way as well, talk with your doctor or substance-abuse counselor. They can recommend support groups or organizations. You can have your doctor assess your drinking. He or she can tell you if you need to cut back and advise you how to go about it.

Alcohol Resources:
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
www.niaaa.nih.gov
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https://uclivingwell.online.staywell.com