

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Mohammad Masood Athar, MD, MPH

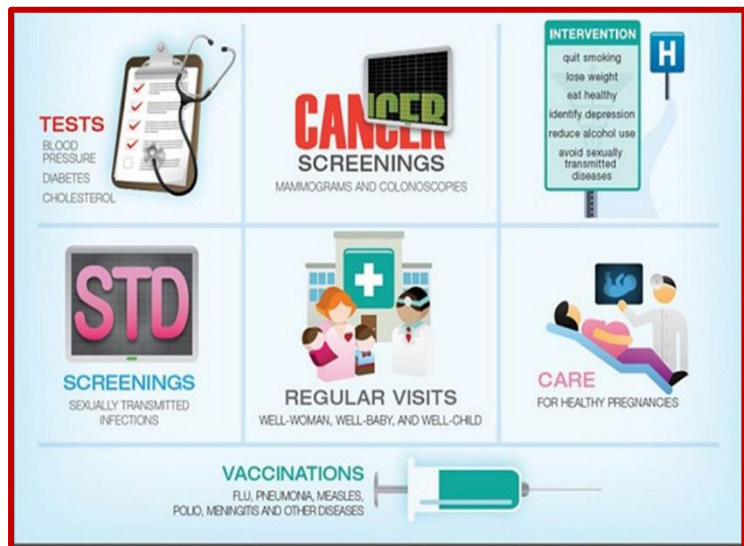
AWARENESS SAVES LIVES, KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

Good health is essential for every human being. Health changes frequently sneak upon us. Sometimes the changes are so trivial, we don't even notice a change in our health at all, until they start to affect our ability to do the things important to us. Health information is essential for maintaining good health, preventing diseases as well as making sound health decisions.

Screening and early diagnosis saves lives

A screening test is done to detect potential health disorders or diseases in people who do not have any symptoms of disease. The goal is early detection and lifestyle changes or surveillance, to reduce the risk of disease, or to detect it early enough to treat it most effectively. Screening tests are not considered diagnostic

but are used to identify a subset of the population who should have additional testing to determine the presence or absence of disease. When it comes to cancer, timing is everything. The sooner you know, the sooner the treatment can be provided. Early detection is key, because treatments are more likely to be effective in the early stages of cancer. It has been shown to reduce deaths from colorectal, breast, and cervical cancers. Screening women 40 and over with mammography has contributed to steady declines in the breast cancer death rate since 1990. Early detection of colorectal cancer and polyps in men and



Cervical Cancer, Colon-Rectal Cancer, and Breast Cancer are highly preventable- in all these cancers common denominator is female.

women 50 and older has helped lead to declines in incidence and deaths from this cancer. Use of the Pap test in adult women has led to dramatic drops in cervical cancer deaths in the US; in many countries where Pap tests are

If men and women followed colorectal screening guidelines at age 45, would save 33,000 lives yearly.

not available, cervical cancer is the major cause of cancer deaths in women.

When it comes to cancer, timing is everything. The sooner you know, the sooner the treatment can be provided. Early detection is key, because treatments are more likely to be effective in the early stages of cancer. You don't have to wait until you are symptomatic to discuss screening options with your health care provider. Screenings can detect the presence of cancer before you have any symptoms at all. Talk to your health care provider today if you have a family history of cancer or are part of a high-risk group. You don't have to wait until you are symptomatic to discuss screening options with your health care provider. Screenings can detect the presence of cancer before you have any symptoms at all. Talk to your health care provider today if you have a family history of cancer or are part of a high-risk group.

Timely, age & sex related 'Health Screening' can save more than 100,00 lives yearly.

Vaccination Saves Lives

Immunization against vaccine preventable diseases, nearly 20 million cases of diseases are prevented, including over 40,000 deaths.

The terms immunization, vaccination, and inoculation are often used interchangeably, but the terms technically have different meanings. Vaccination is the act of introducing a vaccine into the body to produce immunity to a specific disease while Immunization is the process by which a person becomes protected against a disease through vaccination. Hence, vaccines are the products that produce immunity from a disease and can be administered orally, via injection or through an aerosol spray. The term inoculation, meanwhile, is often used interchangeably with vaccination or immunization.

The newborn babies are immune to many diseases because they have antibodies they got from their mothers. However, this immunity goes away during the first year of life. If an unvaccinated child is exposed to a disease germ, the child's body may not be strong enough to fight the disease. Before vaccines, many children died from diseases that vaccines now prevent, such as whooping cough, measles, and polio. Those same germs exist today, but because babies are protected by vaccines, we don't see these diseases nearly as often. Infants are often more vulnerable to disease than older children and adults, and often the diseases are more serious in infants than in older children. Children should have 80 percent of their immunizations by age two.

Vaccination saves 2 million lives Worldwide every year.

Vaccination of adults is equally important given that more than 25% of mortality are due to infectious diseases. Vaccines are recommended for adults based on age, prior vaccinations, health conditions, lifestyle, occupation, and travel. All adults need immunizations to help them prevent getting and spreading serious diseases that could result in poor health, missed work, medical bills, and not being able to care for family. For example, all adults need a seasonal flu (influenza) vaccine every year. Further, adults need to keep their vaccinations up to date because immunity from childhood vaccines can wear off over time. You are also at risk for different diseases as an adult. Vaccination

is one of the most convenient and safest preventive care measures available. For instance, in the US, as many as one in five individuals get influenza each year, and while

**Vaccines Protects Future Generations and
Vaccination Saves Lives!
Using vaccine smallpox, was eradicated from the
face of the planet and polio, is near eradication.**

the virus can be mild in some years, it can be very severe in others, causing debilitating illness and kills around 36,000-40,000 even in previously healthy people.

Lifestyle Diseases

Lifestyle diseases share risk factors like prolonged exposure to three modifiable lifestyle behaviors -smoking, unhealthy diet, and physical inactivity, result in the development of

**37.3 million
Americans have
diabetes, and
8.5 million adults
are not diagnosed.**

chronic diseases, specifically heart disease, stroke, diabetes and metabolic syndrome, obesity, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and certain forms of cancer. More than 40% population suffers from chronic diseases, are responsible for more than 20% of all hospitalizations and the leading causes of disability and death.

The medical literature clearly indicates that heart disease often has the onset in adolescence, therefore warrants special attention. The process of

**Each year, chronic
diseases cause 7 of
10 deaths among
Americans. Heart
disease, cancer, &
stroke account for
more than 50% of all
deaths each year.**

atherosclerosis starts as early as age 15 and enhanced by smoking, high fat diet, high blood

**75 million US adults have High Blood
Pressure, 11 million are unaware.**

pressure, diabetes, obesity, and sedentary lifestyle. Obesity (overweight) and high cholesterol is major risk factor for heart disease. Around 10-12% adolescents between ages 12-17 are overweight, the incidence is higher between Asians and African Americans. Childhood obesity doubles the risk of obesity in adulthood

**One in two
smokers ultimately
dies because of
deadly habit
started in
adolescence.**

and carries a high risk of developing heart disease. More than 35% American populations below age 19 have cholesterol above normal. One percent increase in cholesterol level increases the chances of heart attack by 2%. About 25% of young adults are sedentary and not engaged in regular exercise. Inactivity increases the risk by twofold of heart disease and 50% chances of developing high blood pressure. Hence lifestyle, at the individual level are individual characteristics that influence the behavior, which is reflected in individual's lifestyle. Findings suggest that being physically active, being of normal weight, avoiding smoking, and eating healthy diet confer the lowest risk of total mortality and chronic, noncommunicable disease, particularly cardiovascular disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and obesity. The various healthy lifestyle profiles appeared to be associated with gains in life-years without major chronic diseases.

Every Individual is responsible for her/his Health and Well-being

The Creator's words across major religions and faiths are very precise, and each word has a specific meaning within a certain context. The God, most Gracious, breathed into

Then He proportioned him and breathed into him of His Spirit... Quran 32:9

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostril the breath of life. Bible Genesis 2:4-5, 7

human His spirit to bring to life. That means we as humans are the custodian of His spirit, the honor of guest is reflected onto the house, and the guest's perfection has made it perfect as well. Our body is like a guesthouse where soul stays for an appointed period. Thus, our physical bodies are a trust from God, all praise to Him, and we are accountable for how we look after our health and well-being.

..."Prajāpati" desired, 'May I propagate.' He practiced austerity. His breath became alive. With that breath (asu) he created asuras/manuv (man). Chapter IX Vedic & Puranic

Therefore, every individual is responsible for her/his own health and well-being. One of the ways to thank Almighty is to take care of our 'health', make it a priority in life.

National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP) revealed that only 1.1% Asian/Pacific Islander women utilize the program. The various other studies as well described multiple factors: general aversion to health-related matters and avoiding regular checkups, inaccessibility due to issues like not having insurance, the inaccuracy of information that you find online can breed ignorance and potentially do harm. The main issue seems to be lack of awareness, hence, raising health awareness in the community is of prime importance. People can only be able to access, utilize, and benefit from healthcare services if they have proper information about these services.

One of the biggest tools to fight health conditions is through the power of health education and promotion. Raising health awareness, the people acquire the knowledge, skills, and information to make healthy choices, enabling them to have better control over their own health and wellbeing, and adopting healthier lifestyles. Further, being aware of a disease and its symptoms means people are more likely to take preventative action, and go for check-ups, tests, and health screenings.

Therefore, community awareness is a crucial aspect of preventive healthcare and influencing individuals which is the key factor in improving the overall community health. Health promotion and education, and prevention programs can be well delivered to the community through Places of Worship. Remember, the choices an individual make has a dominant influence on their health and wellness, therefore, every individual is responsible for her/his own health and well-being. Have a control over your health & wellbeing, adopt healthier lifestyles, getting regular check-up with your Doctor/Physician/Health Care Provider and appropriate age & sex related screening tests and vaccinations.

And whosoever saves a life, it is as though he had saved all mankind. Quran 5:32