



April 2018

## April is Humor Month

Laughter heals. It has been shown that an avid sense of humor is beneficial in alleviating the effects of chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes. According to the American Heart Association, laughing regularly releases endorphins and other hormones that help to relieve stress. Laughing makes your body "feel happy" and helps everything run smoothly overall in terms of bodily processes (blood flow, metabolism, sleep tolerance). Laughing more has also been associated with reduced inflammation in the body. This is important to note as additional stress can tighten blood vessels which reduces blood flow to the heart. When considering someone who is overweight and experiences different stressors on a daily basis, a dose of laughing can help relieve the tension accumulating in their body. With all this said, laughing more can help to reduce the risks of stroke and heart attacks.

### Here are some tips for the month of April:

1. Take the time to remind yourself of a funny memory.
2. Spend more time with individuals who you know you can have a good laugh with.
3. When you laugh, don't hold back!

(American Heart Association, 2017.)



To learn more please [click here](#).

## The HIV Crisis in South Florida and the use of (PrEP)



A disproportionate number of Floridians are currently living with HIV. In fact, South Florida contains the highest rate of new HIV cases in the US and many Floridians don't even know that they have the illness. The impact is felt across all counties in South Florida as Public Health advocates push to promote healthier sex practices and the necessary testing. The crisis is of particular concern especially among the youth populations in South Florida. Better management of the disease is necessary in order to reduce the transmission of the disease. The Florida Department of Health has made strides in educating the community but there is still more work to be done.

The World Health Organization reports that the use of the "PrEP" pill is a highly effective method to contain the spread of this virus. The pill is especially useful for individuals at high risk of contracting the infection. PrEP stands for pre-exposure prophylaxis and acts as a "blocker", so to speak, from developing the virus. There is a lack of awareness on the availability of PrEP which may prove to be a very effective way of curbing the wave of new HIV infections.

(World Health Organization, 2017.)



To learn more please [click here](#).

## Contact Lenses: Useful Tips

According to the FDA more than 40 million Americans wear contact lenses or glasses. When deciding whether or not contact lenses are right for you, there are a few things to consider to ensure safe use. Before you are able to use your lenses, a doctor will determine what prescription is needed. Contact lenses should never be sold over the counter.

**#1- Sterile Use** - Proper handwashing is very important when using corrective lenses. If used improperly, infections such as pink eye (conjunctivitis) can occur. Other infections can also be transferred to the eye if bacteria from the hands are not washed away before application. It is important to wash hands very thoroughly with warm water before applying the lenses to the eye. Making sure your fingernails are free from any dirt particles that may enter the eye, is also important.

**#2- Wearing Schedule** - The wearing schedule is also an important factor when using contact lenses. Individuals who tend to wear disposable contact lenses for 8 hours or more every day, may want to have a day when that do not wear their contacts and alternate with a pair of glasses. These types of lenses can be used for up to two weeks depending on the brand. You should always consult with an eye doctor before using new contacts or deciding what schedule is right for you. In terms of extended wear contacts, it is recommended to have a night of rest for your eyes following your scheduled removal day. This will give the eye a break and also reduces the risk of infection. Setting an alarm can help to remember when to remove your lenses.

**#3- Additional Tips**- Contact lenses should never feel uncomfortable when being worn. "Feeling" contact lenses in your eyes, particularly the edges of the lenses, may be a sign that they need to be flipped over. Swimming with contact lenses is not recommended as bacteria from the pool can get stuck in between your lenses and your eye. If you are diabetic and use contact lenses, you should take extra precautions when using contact lenses. Those who are diabetic are more likely to have vision problems so being cautious when using contact lenses is very important.

## Events Calendar

### April 2018

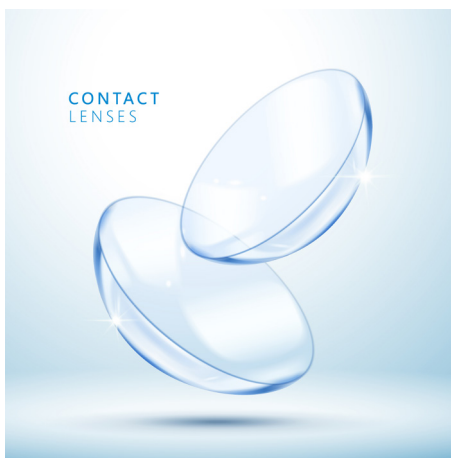
April 5th- Worksite Wellness Committee meeting- (Thursday) 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm, Florida Department of Health in Miami Dade Beacon Center 8323 NW 12th St., Suite 212, Miami, FL 33126

April 14th- 2nd Annual Spring into Health Free Community Health Fair - (Saturday) 10:00 am - 2:00 pm, 13498 NE 8th Avenue North Miami, FL

April 17th- Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Committee - (Tuesday) 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm, Beacon Center 8323 NW 12th Street Suite 212, Conference Room, Doral, FL 33126

April 20th- Children's Issues Committee - (Friday) 9:30 am - 11:30 am  
Healthy Baby Taskforce - (Friday) 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm  
United Way of Miami-Dade Center for Excellence Building  
3250 SW 3rd Avenue Miami, FL 33129

April 29th- Active Life Expo - (Sunday) 9:00 am - 2:00 pm  
5855 Southwest 111th Street, Pinecrest, FL 33156



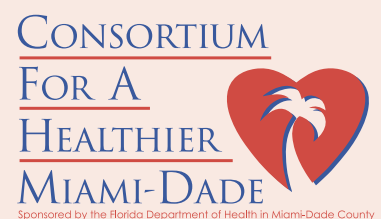
## Join the Consortium For A Healthier Miami-Dade

### Healthy Environment, Healthy Lifestyles, Healthy Community

The Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade was established in 2003 by the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County to address the increasing rate of chronic disease in the community. The goals of the Consortium are to:

- Integrate planning and assessment processes to maximize partnerships and expertise of the community in accomplishing its goals.
- Increase the percentage of adults and children who are at a healthy weight.
- Build and revitalize communities so people can live healthy lives.
- Increase access to resources that promote healthy behaviors.

Membership is free and open to all individuals who support the vision, mission and goals of the Consortium. To become a member and learn more visit our website [www.healthymiamidade.org](http://www.healthymiamidade.org)



Sponsored by the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County