

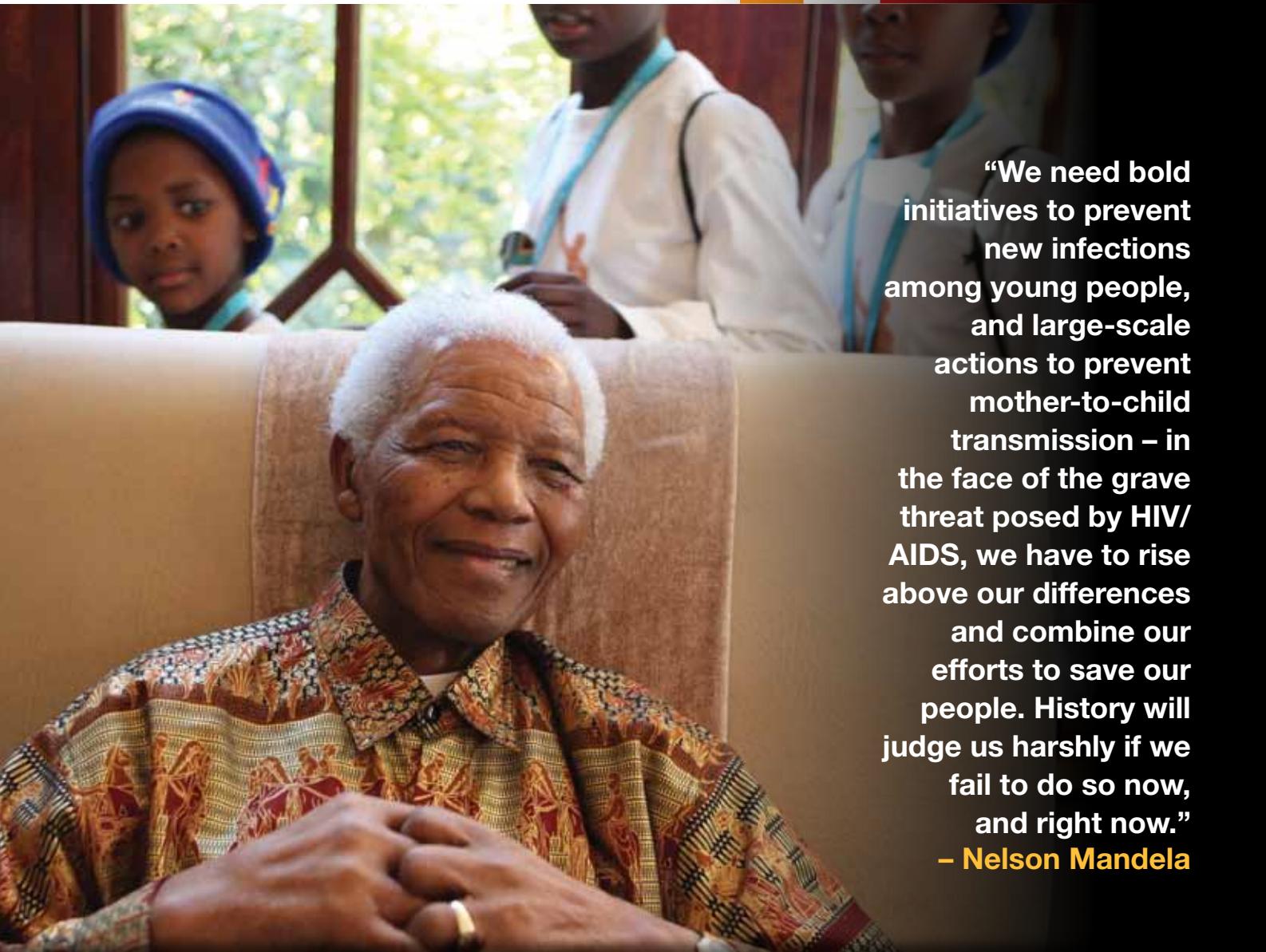
# HEALTH MATTERS

# Ezempilo

EDUCATE || INFORM || EMPOWER

FREE

JULY • 2013



“We need bold initiatives to prevent new infections among young people, and large-scale actions to prevent mother-to-child transmission – in the face of the grave threat posed by HIV/AIDS, we have to rise above our differences and combine our efforts to save our people. History will judge us harshly if we fail to do so now, and right now.”  
– Nelson Mandela

*Nelson Mandela Day 18th July*



health

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Health  
**PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope

MENTAL HEALTH  
AWARENESS

# HEALTH CARE IS A RIGHT

## HEALTHY LIVING IS A RESPONSIBILITY



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# Message from

**KZN Health HOD,  
Dr Sibongile Zungu**



## IMISEBENZI KAHULUMENI IYABONAKALA

In his recent budget speech, our honourable MEC for Health in KZN, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo highlighted an important point: 'Imisebenzi Kahulumeni Iyabonakala'. We have indeed turned the corner.

While there is a lot more to be done to improve health services, we also need to acknowledge and thank health workers and all role players who continue to soldier on, working long hours and often with stringent constraints. They are our unsung heroes who, despite the many challenges, continue to put their best foot forward, trying against all odds, to make a difference in health care delivery. It is their efforts that have brought about the positive changes we are seeing today, in areas where a few years ago, the outcome and predictions looked bleak.

I am pleased to report that today some of the positive areas of change include those at the heart of our commitment to health. We often battled with maternal and child health as too many mothers and babies were dying from HIV related illnesses. In 2009 the HIV prevalence among pregnant women stood at 39.5%. It now stands at 37.4% while in transmission of mother to child the infection has dropped from 19% to 2.1%!

This success in health outcomes also means that people are listening to the voice of reason. More mothers are making sure that their babies are immunised on time and more pregnant women are booking early at their clinics for antenatal care. All this shows that we are moving in the right direction in changing health care for the better - slowly but surely.

For this I would like to thank everyone for committing to this process. Patients, health workers and all stakeholders. Thank you for never faltering in the eye of the storm. Despite all the obstacles that lie ahead, I am confident that we are definitely starting to see the fruits of all your hard work in improving the health of people in KZN.

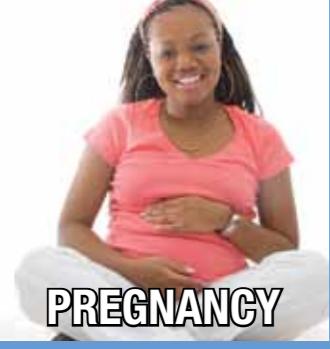
As a Department, we are also moving up a gear to put systems in place to support the increasing demand. Our vacancy rate has dropped from 23.5% in 2009 to 4.5% in 2012, and we are continuing to fill more much needed posts.

Some of our challenges that we continually face is the issue of many graduate doctors not wanting to work in rural areas, where the need is the greatest for health care services whilst our recent investigations revealed that some of our state doctors are working in their private practices when they should be treating patients at public hospitals and clinics. This unethical behaviour creates a greater burden on many of our honest doctors who work hard, long hours to deliver beyond expectations. Health care is a profession of ethics and we are bound to that code. I would like to appeal to all our health staff to please uphold that code of conduct. We are not a police state and your profession is guided by your conscience and commitment to the vow taken, noting the words "I will treat without exception all who seek my ministrations, so long as the treatment of others is not compromised."

God bless.

*"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."* – Nelson Mandela

# inside



PREGNANCY



DRUGS



DEPRESSION



KZN NEWS

**CIRCUMCISION** Why women need to play a more active role

**PREGNANCY** How to tell if something is wrong

**KZN HEALTH NEWS** Latest Department update on progress in the Province

**COMIC** What to do if you have a STI

**DRUGS** Kick it out, take back your community

**AWARENESS DAYS** July is Mental Health Awareness Month

**KEYHOLE** King Edward's Angel of Mercy



*"I dream of an Africa which is at peace with itself."*

– Nelson Mandela

Your suggestions and comments are welcome, and if you have been impressed by a health worker who provided an outstanding service, let us know and we will feature them! Contact us on [editor@ezempilohealthmatters.co.za](mailto:editor@ezempilohealthmatters.co.za) or 031 562 9803 or write to us at PO Box 25439, Gateway 4321.

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# CIRCUMCISION

## TIME FOR WOMEN TO PLAY A GREATER ROLE

**FACT**  
Circumcision reduces the spread of HIV by **60%!**

Over 257,000 men have been successfully circumcised in KZN, which means more people are reducing their risk of getting and spreading HIV in the province. And with the establishment by the Department of Health in KZN of a Medical Male Circumcision Centre of Excellence for the training of medical circumcisions, KZN is definitely turning the corner in reducing the spread of HIV. But, a Centre cannot work in isolation, and women need to play a greater role in encouraging all males in the family to do the right thing and get circumcised. Ezempilo spoke to Dr Sandile Tshabalala, head of the KZN Department of Health's, Circumcision Program...

### BELIEF #1

**Circumcision reduces the sensation of the male sexually**

**FALSE** This is not true , as sex, especially with a male, starts with the brain. It is this part of the body that releases the feel good chemicals.



**Why should women play a greater role when circumcision is a male thing?**

**DR TSHABALALA** Women are often victims of HIV, especially when their partners start sleeping with other women, which is one of the main ways that HIV is spread. By encouraging their partners to get circumcised, women are also protecting themselves from this spread.

**What are the rights of women when it comes to sex and circumcision?**

**DR TSHABALALA** The first right of a woman in a relationship is to be able to say yes or no to sex. Within an HIV context, a woman should say "let us use a condom unless we know our status". Although your status is confidential, if it will affect your partner he or she has a right to know. Mothers are the center of any home, and it is their responsibility to encourage their children to behave responsibly, and to ensure that their sons get circumcised as young as possible. It is usually easier for a woman to encourage circumcision than a man, as often men do not like to take orders from other men.

### BELIEF #2

**A circumcised man can satisfy his partner better**

**UNPROVEN** Although many circumcised men have reported this, there is no study confirming it.

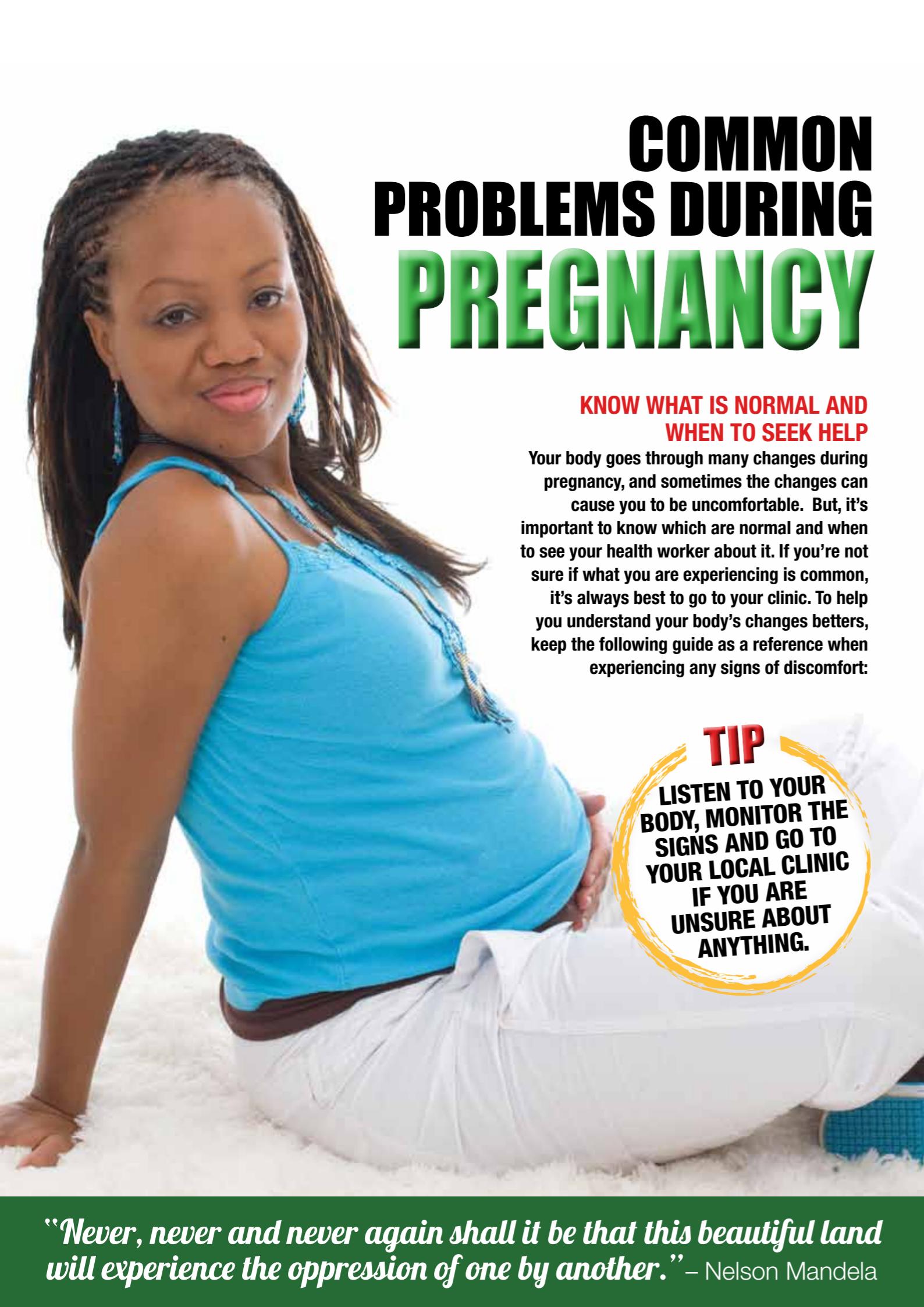
### BELIEF #3

**Many men die after being circumcised**

**FALSE** Definitely not true if done correctly. The Department of Health encourages all men wishing to be circumcised to use the services of those medically trained to perform circumcisions, and who have been approved by the Department of Health.

**REMEMBER circumcision helps to reduce the spread of HIV – it does not prevent it!**

*"I stand here before you not as a prophet, but as a humble servant of you, the people."* – Nelson Mandela



# COMMON PROBLEMS DURING PREGNANCY

## KNOW WHAT IS NORMAL AND WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Your body goes through many changes during pregnancy, and sometimes the changes can cause you to be uncomfortable. But, it's important to know which are normal and when to see your health worker about it. If you're not sure if what you are experiencing is common, it's always best to go to your clinic. To help you understand your body's changes better, keep the following guide as a reference when experiencing any signs of discomfort:

**TIP**  
LISTEN TO YOUR BODY, MONITOR THE SIGNS AND GO TO YOUR LOCAL CLINIC IF YOU ARE UNSURE ABOUT ANYTHING.

### Nausea or vomiting

This is a very common side effect of pregnancy, and can be worse in the morning especially within the first three months of pregnancy. It helps to eat something dry, like crackers or dry bread before you have a complete breakfast. It's best to eat small amounts of food several times a day, and avoid eating large meals. Also try to avoid oily and greasy foods, these will make the nausea worse.

### Burning or pain in your stomach/chest

The most common cause of this is acid indigestion (when the acid from your stomach come back up your body instead of going down). It's not a serious problem but can make you feel very uncomfortable in your chest. Try sucking on a hard sweet and sleep with your head slightly raised by adding more pillows underneath. Have smaller meals and avoid rich, greasy foods.

### Swelling of the feet

Many pregnant women notice their feet swell during pregnancy. This is common and happens because your body is storing more fluid than usual. It can also be caused by the pressure of baby in the womb, especially during the last months. Try to relax at different times of the day with your feet up and eat less salt and salty foods. It becomes worse if you are not eating well, so make sure you have plenty of healthy food, including fruits and vegetables.

If your hands and face are also swelling, don't ignore the signs as it is serious – visit your clinic immediately. It could be a sign of preeclampsia which is life threatening for you and baby. This is when your blood pressure rises during pregnancy, you have too much protein in your body and in severe cases, it can affect your liver and other organs in your body.

### Lower back pain

Very common during pregnancy as baby gets heavier. Try to do mild exercises (even walking every day for 30 minutes) and using the right posture when you stand and sit – try to keep your back straight.

### Anemia

Many women in rural areas are anaemic (a shortage of red blood cells) even before pregnancy and then become worse after they fall pregnant. Having enough red blood cells is important because one of the most important things they do is transport oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body. To ensure you don't become anaemic, it's important to eat well. If you are anaemic, try to eat foods with more protein and iron. These include the following:

- Beans
- Chicken and fish
- Milk, cheese and eggs
- Dark green, leafy vegetables.

**Speak to your health worker who may give you iron tablets to take if your levels are too low.**



### Constipation

You may experience this during pregnancy, although it is not very common. Drink plenty of water and eat fruits every day. Get plenty of exercise, and do not take any laxatives!



*“Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will experience the oppression of one by another.”* – Nelson Mandela

*“Give a child love, laughter and peace, not AIDS.”*

– Nelson Mandela

# KZN HEALTH

## NEWS

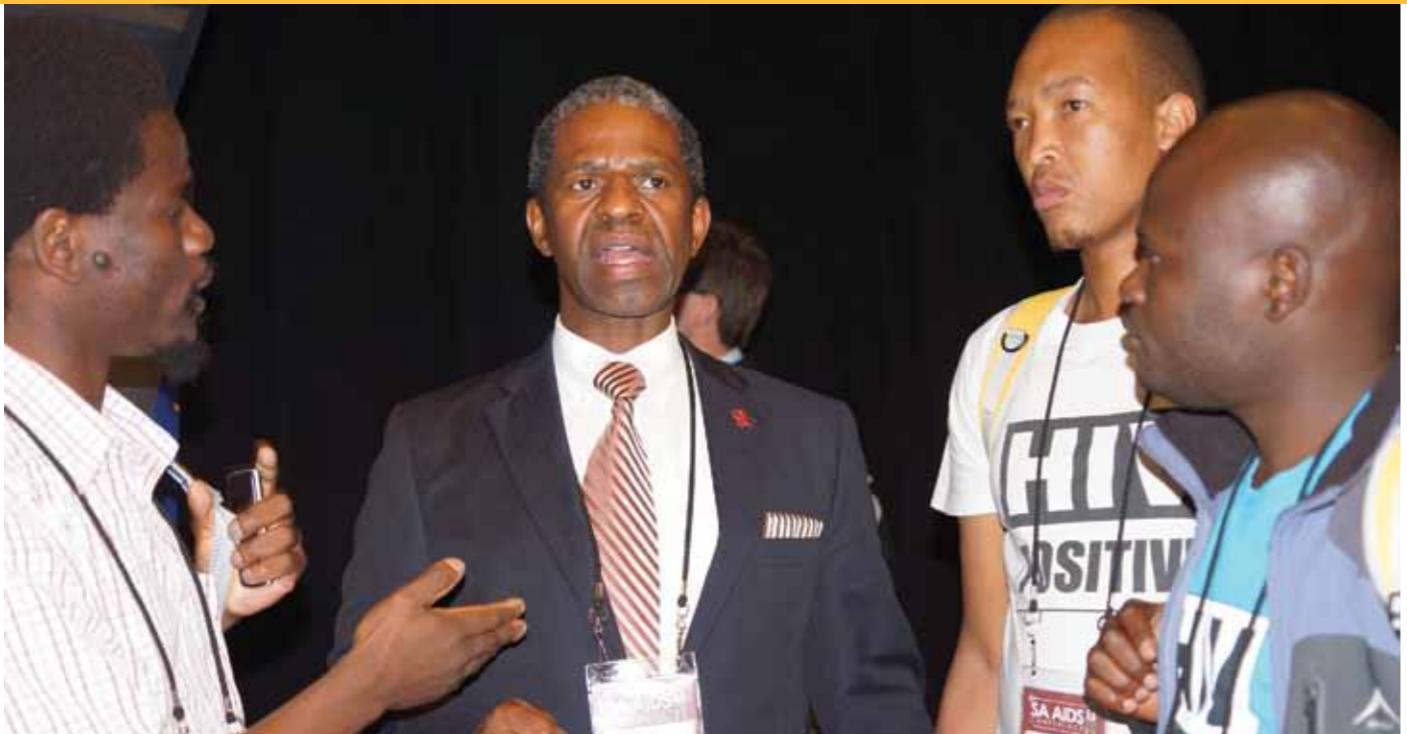


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Top experts and role players from the health sector praised KZN at the recent conference on AIDS which took place in Durban. KZN was hailed for being the leading province in the prevention of HIV to unborn babies, with figures from the Medical Research Council showing that the rate now stood at 2.1% - a marked turn around since KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo made saving mothers and babies a key focus of the Department's health campaigns.

## KZN HAILED FOR ITS PROGRESS IN FIGHTING HIV AND AIDS

Commending the efforts of everyone involved in the fight to reduce mortality rates and HIV transmission from mother to child, MEC Dhlomo said the results were a direct result of efforts to save mothers and children. These included:

- Babies to be given Nevirapine syrup in conjunction with breast milk, which is highly encouraged.
- MEC Dhlomo encouraged health workers to continue their efforts to save mothers and babies, and called on all women who suspect that they may be pregnant to visit their local clinic as soon as possible - within the first two months of pregnancy.

### BATTLE NOT OVER YET

Despite the promising outlook, the MEC said the province still had a large number of people infected with HIV and that plans were in place to step up the fight to reduce the figures. "This province has plans to combat TB, HIV, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. We have set a target to decrease the spread of HIV by 50% and to decrease the effect of HIV within the community. There are also plans to ensure that everyone who requires treatment has access to it," said Dhlomo in his address to the conference.



### DO YOU KNOW YOUR STATUS?

Whilst the Department continues to encourage everyone to know their HIV status, MEC Dhlomo said this remained one of the biggest challenges. He added that that there are many people who do visit the clinics for advice and counselling but do not check their HIV status, and end up leaving the clinic without receiving important advice that they could benefit from if they are infected. Some of the key benefits of knowing your status include:

- Learning you are HIV positive allows you to take control and receive help to improve your prognosis.
- Early intervention will assist you to live a healthier life.
- It will also help you protect your partner and make more informed decisions.

### I AM RESPONSIBLE...

- ✓ I must take responsibility for my own health and HIV status
- ✓ If I am HIV negative, to stay negative
- ✓ If I am HIV positive, to seek support and services to ensure I am healthy and don't spread the virus to others, be they partners or children.

"No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more

or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they naturally to the human heart than its opposite." – Nelson Mandela

# WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTION

YEBO ANNA! WHY ARE YOU LOOKING SO WORRIED? HOW ARE THINGS WITH YOU AND THABO?

THAT IS JUST THE PROBLEM. LAST NIGHT WE HAD AN ARGUMENT ABOUT HIM NOT WANTING TO WEAR A CONDOM. I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF HE IS FAITHFUL TO ME OR NOT.

WHAT IF I DO HAVE AN INFECTION? WHAT THEN?

WELL, MOST SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS CAN BE TREATED. YOU MUST JUST NOT LEAVE IT TOO LATE BECAUSE IF YOU DO IT CAN LEAD TO COMPLICATIONS.

STRAIGHT AFTER WORK I'M GOING TO THE CLINIC TO GET TESTED FOR SDI'S. YOU KNOW, I THINK THABO HAS A GIRLFRIEND IN THE CITY,

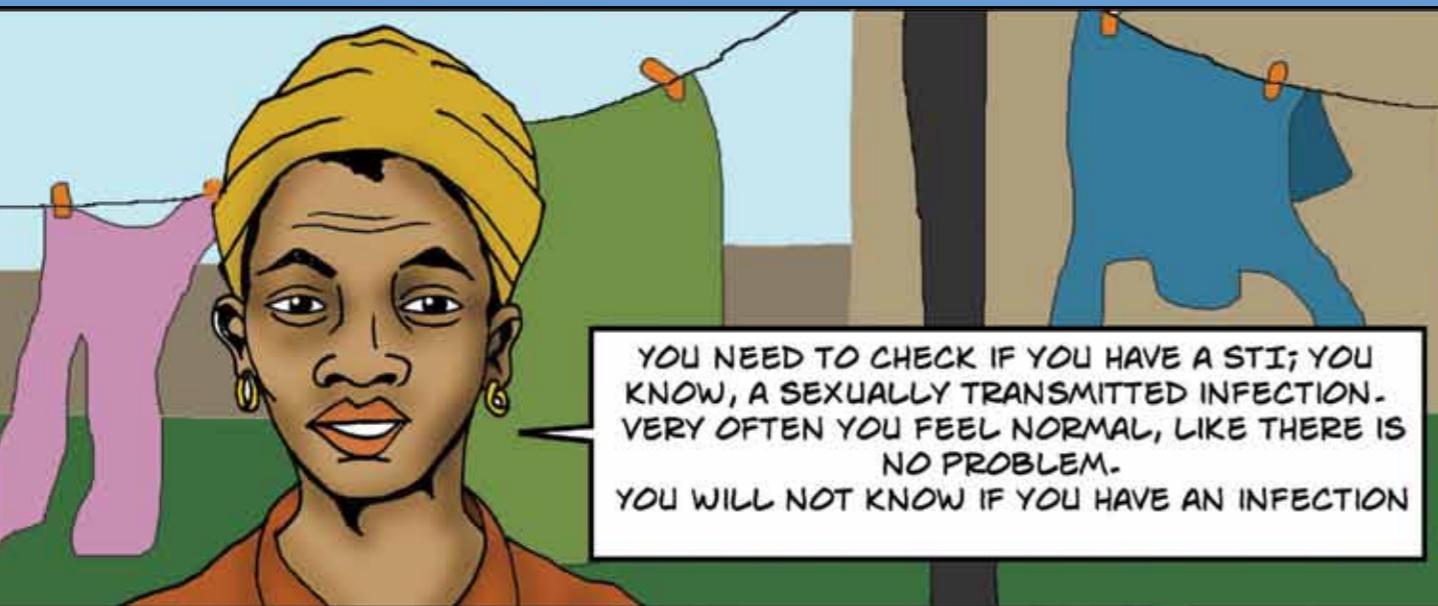
SO I HAD BETTER NOT TAKE A CHANCE. I WILL DEFINITELY GO



YO, ANNA, YOU REALLY MUST GO TO THE CLINIC.



BUT WHY?  
THERE IS  
NOTHING  
WRONG WITH  
ME.



YOU NEED TO CHECK IF YOU HAVE A STI; YOU KNOW, A SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTION. VERY OFTEN YOU FEEL NORMAL, LIKE THERE IS NO PROBLEM. YOU WILL NOT KNOW IF YOU HAVE AN INFECTION



I HAD A S.T.I. LAST YEAR. AT FIRST I KNEW NOTHING ABOUT IT, AND JUST BY CHANCE A FRIEND ASKED ME IF I GO FOR REGULAR CHECK-UPS.

I WENT FOR A TEST AND THEY FOUND THAT I DID HAVE A S.T.I. THEY GAVE ME MEDICINE AND IN A FEW WEEKS I WAS FINE. YO!



IF YOU ALREADY HAVE A SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTION OR YOU THINK YOU ARE AT RISK:

TREAT IT EARLY DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOU ARE ILL.

HELP YOUR PARTNER TO GET TREATED AT THE SAME TIME OTHERWISE YOU CAN GET INFECTED AGAIN.

MAKE SURE TO TAKE ALL MEDICINES GIVEN TO YOU FOR THE TREATMENT EVEN IF THE SIGNS GO AWAY.

PRACTICE SAFER SEX. YOU CAN ALWAYS GET ANOTHER STI OR HIV/AIDS IF YOU DON'T.



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# DRUGS

**GET RID  
OF THEM!**

## TAKE BACK YOUR COMMUNITY



How many times have you heard of someone in your area being robbed by their own family member – because of drugs? We all know that drugs and alcohol addiction are dangerous. Yet people use these to escape their hardships, forget the hunger or calm the pain. Once they become addicted it's hard to stop. To get more drugs, addicts often turn to crime, even if it means stealing from their own family to support their addiction. This leads to the issue becoming a problem for the entire family and communities. Instead of ignoring the issue, take control. Learn all about the addiction and how you can help someone you care about overcome it too.

### Can the Department of Health assist people with substance abuse?

Yes. If a person needs to know whether their use of alcohol or drugs is a problem they can be screened at their nearest PHC clinic, while hospitals can assist with detox services for those with a drinking problem.

### How can you protect your child from substance abuse?

If you suspect your child is using drugs, stay calm and discuss this with him. If you're sure, have him checked by a doctor or a professional counselor – speak to your clinic about this. If he is already addicted, he will need professional help over a period of time before he can remain drug-free. Try to keep him busy with sports, helping out in the house, or other things to keep his mind off drugs.

### SOME SIGNS OF DRUG ADDICTION

Some of these signs could be for other reasons, but it's important to monitor them so that you are aware there may be drugs involved:

- ✗ Failure to work, attend school, or general strange behaviour at home
- ✗ Repeated absences or poor work performance
- ✗ Neglecting the house or children
- ✗ Acting strangely while driving or operating a machine
- ✗ Unable to sleep or eat well
- ✗ Avoiding people or places
- ✗ Doesn't care how he/she dresses
- ✗ Getting angry very quickly (short temper)
- ✗ Wearing sunglasses when it's not needed – avoiding sunlight
- ✗ Wearing long-sleeved clothing in hot weather
- ✗ Hanging out with substance abusers in the community
- ✗ Unusual borrowing of money
- ✗ Stealing small items from employer, home or school



### A COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

As a community we all need to come together to encourage Ubuntu values and good behavior. This means setting a good example too, through holding adults accountable when they provide alcohol to children and reporting anyone you know in your area who is selling or dealing in drugs in any way. The only way to clean up our communities is to expose that are destroying the moral values of the children in the community.

### How communities can help

- ✓ Your local pastor, clinic or local social service agency
- ✓ Contact the Department of Social Development which provides information on treatment programs close to you
- ✓ National Hotline Call Center on 800 121314 for Alcohol and Drug is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can assist with court orders, family interventions, treatment and anything related to alcohol and drug abuse. Services are free
- ✓ Alcoholics Anonymous 0800 246432
- ✓ Narcotics Anonymous 083900962.
- ✓ SA Depression and Anxiety group on 0800567567 and Lifeline 0800 246432 are available 24 hours a day for assistance with suicide prevention.



**SAY NO TO DRUG ABUSE**  
Unite and take back your community!

"Let us give publicity to H.I.V./AIDS and not hide it, because the only way to out and say somebody has died because of H.I.V./AIDS, and people

make it appear like a normal illness like TB, like cancer, is always to come will stop regarding it as something extraordinary." – Nelson Mandela

JULY

## MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

### Time to remove the stigma

People are sometimes quick to label someone with mental health problems as "crazy". This leads to people saying things about mental issues which are not true and discriminates against those affected. Unfortunately because of fear of being stigmatised many patients suffering from mental health issues are too afraid to ask for help and so they become worse and live in fear.

The truth is mental health illnesses can be managed through medication, and we need to encourage those that need help to go out and speak to their local health worker at the clinic. Why not use this month to educate others at work, school, church and others in your community on mental health illnesses? That way we can all work together to remove the stigma and bring hope to those affected by it. Try using the following information to help others understand the issue:



**Is someone with a mental illness 'possessed'?** A person with mental illness is not 'possessed'. It is important to seek advice from a doctor or health worker on what medical help is available. Often, people with severe mental conditions need to take medication to keep it under control so that they can cope.



*"I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons with equal opportunities."* – Nelson Mandela

"We have a critical task in this province to increase awareness about mental health. We have a duty to transform mental health services to ensure that they comply with the culture of human rights that has been ushered in through the introduction of the Mental Health Care Act No. 17 of 2002"

– KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo

### DEPRESSION IS A COMMON FORM OF MENTAL ILLNESS

Just as a person's body can be healthy or unhealthy, so can a person's mind and spirit. For women, this can be very difficult to cope with, especially after giving birth because of the change in her body and hormones. Women respond differently to men when they experience stress which makes them more likely to get depressed, and although it is highly treatable, most people suffering from depression don't go for treatment because of the stigma and because they don't recognize it as a mental illness.



### SIGNS TO WATCH OUT FOR

If someone you know is acting strangely, or if a new mother does not seem excited about her baby, look out for the following signs that they may be depressed. Speak to them, support them and encourage them to seek help.

- Sad, anxious or 'empty' feelings
- Feeling hopeless and thinking of the worst
- Irritable and restless
- Feeling guilty, worthless and/or helpless
- Not interested in activities or hobbies, or in sex
- Always tired
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering details and making decisions
- Unable to sleep at night or sleeping too much, not wanting to wake up to do anything
- Overeating or appetite loss
- Thoughts of suicide/suicide attempts

### DID YOU KNOW?

73% of mental illness remains undiagnosed, untreated and unsupported (depression amongst new mothers) is higher amongst those earning a low to middle income?

- WHO TO CONTACT FOR HELP**
- Durban and Coastal Mental Health on 031 207 2707
  - Your nearest public healthcare facility

**Let's work together to remove the stigma**

*"and free society in which all persons with equal opportunities."* – Nelson Mandela

# Keep your babies skin as soft and dry as mother nature intended.

The Secure Lockdry System of Huggies Dry Comfort delivers up to 9 hours dryness while the cottony cover allows baby's skin to breathe, giving mom a little breathing room too.



Trust Huggies mom,  
to keep baby comfy,  
happy and dry.



## HUGGIES® Dry Comfort®



**HUGGIES**  
Disposable Nappies

Dry Comfort **BABY CORNER**

## BREAST IS BEST!

Breastfeeding is the best start you can give your baby, but Huggies understands that it's not easy for every mother and sometimes can be frustrating, especially if you're a new mother. So help make it easy for you and baby, we've put together some top breastfeeding tips so that both you and baby can enjoy the time and allows baby to sleep better at night too. A well fed, well rested baby means a rested mom too!



1. Feed baby as soon as you can – straight after the birth is best, if you and your baby are well.
2. Ask your health worker or someone with experience for help with positioning – if it hurts, there's a problem. Initial tenderness is normal. Soreness that gets worse is not.
3. Keep your baby close to you. Skin contact is soothing for your baby.
4. Feed baby often in the early days – offer breastmilk at least every 2 hours, or more often if baby demands it.
5. Offer both breasts at every feed. It doesn't matter if your baby only takes one.
6. Don't give your baby bottles of anything while you're still establishing breastfeeding. The use of a bottle can affect her 'skill' at breastfeeding.
7. If you have pain after a while during breastfeeding, see your health worker, it could be thrush on your nipples and both you and baby will need treatment.
8. Let baby breastfeed until she is full, don't time her!
9. Gently remove your baby from the nipple by sliding your finger into the corner of your baby's mouth and pull baby away from the nipple, gently.
10. Squeeze a little milk onto your nipple and massage this in. If possible leave your nipples to dry in the open air. This helps against infection.

## Huggies® Top Breastfeeding Tips

Breast milk is complete nutrition for baby, so give your little one the best start in life.



through the keyhole

# King Edward's Angel of Mercy – SISTER PROTASIA MFEKA

It's often said that nursing is a calling. But to really exceed expectations takes a special person. And at King Edward VIII Hospital, patients have singled out Sister Protasia Mfeka as that special nurse – an angel in a nurse's uniform.

A patient recently wrote in to Ezempilo commanding Sister Mfeka and had this to say: "She always wears a broad smile on her bubbly face even when under stress; she has performed beyond normal working hours but the smile never fades away and she waits until the last patient is attended to. "I have been attending the hospital since 2007 and have seen how sister Mfeka assists deaf patients. She will sit down next to them and start a dialogue by writing down their complaints to understand their problems."

## Dedicated to her patients

Speaking to Sister Mfeka, it is soon clear that she has a passion for nursing. As the Sister-in-charge of the hospital's Haematology Clinic, she admits she begins her day just before sunrise, looking forward to helping the many patients who come through. "I love my patients. I will always phone them if they miss their appointments. I value them and would like to see them live longer and more productive lives and they always appreciate what I do. Each morning, with the help of supporting staff we attend to more than fifty patients without turning away even one of them. Sometimes we have to work until after six o'clock, after our finishing time. My husband

will wait for me while I attend to my patient before we leave. My patients come first," she explains.

## Smiling in Times of Challenges

A nursing graduate of the same hospital she currently serves, Sister Mfeka is humbled by the patient's praise of her dedication, saying she simply enjoys what she does, despite the hard work. Together with her supporting staff, Sister Mfeka also invites motivational speakers to encourage patients to have a positive attitude and often spend time beyond the normal working hours helping patients deal with their illnesses. And with the emotional trauma of dealing with life threatening illnesses, Sister Mfeka understands that her task requires patience and understanding – qualities she seems to be naturally gifted with, which is why she also received an award for her excellent service from the hospital.

The haematology clinic deals with mainly cancer patients, attending to their treatment, blood transfusion and chemotherapy. And with a sister in charge like Sister Mfeka, patients attending the clinic feel better knowing that their health care is in good hands!

We thank you Sister Mfeka for providing a place of hope to all your patients. Keep up the dedicated work!



I love my patients... I value them and would like to see them live longer and more productive lives...

*"Sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great.  
You can be that generation."* – Nelson Mandela