

HEALTH MATTERS

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JUNE • 2014



JUNE IS YOUTH MONTH!

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH ● Contraception advice
● Prostate cancer on the rise ● ..and a pull-out comic!



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If you finish high school, get a job, and get married before having children, you have a 98% chance of not being in poverty.

IT TAKES TWO TO CAUSE A PREGNANCY, BUT ONLY ONE TO PREVENT IT. BE THAT ONE.



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Message from...

**KZN Health MEC,
Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo**



AS WE CELEBRATE June as youth month, the Department of Health in KwaZulu-Natal would like to once again reiterate that the youth are not just our future, but play an important role in shaping our present society. The Department of Health has created youth friendly environments in our facilities so that the youth are able to freely and confidentially discuss their health concerns.

WITH MORE YOUNG people migrating to cities there is also a ticking health time bomb in the rise of lifestyle diseases. Diabetes is no longer something associated with the elderly. It is a disease affecting young people too and our youth are in a position where they can prevent this. Lifestyle diseases are brought on by unhealthy habits, and the ownership and responsibility for prevention lies with you.

WE CANNOT ESCAPE the fact that influence of friends and others in the same age group play an increasing role in behaviour which includes indulging in reckless sexual conduct. But it is a choice and one that must be made wisely. Do you give in to fit in with your friends or do you do the responsible thing which saves your health, giving you a longer, better and healthier lifestyle?

AS ADULTS it remains our responsibility to equip young people with adequate knowledge, self-esteem and life skills to ensure their healthy development. It is also our responsibility to enhance the concept of gender equality from a young age through the tasks and

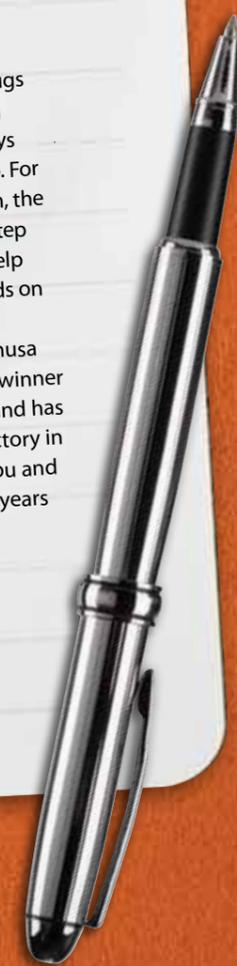
responsibilities we allocate to them in the homesteads and in the society at large.

AS WE CELEBRATE our youth, I would like to call on our young people to make the most of their unique position in history today. It is time to take on the role of leadership and being a good example to others in society. Good nutrition, exercise and responsible sexual behaviour through condom use and circumcision are not impossible goals. They are achievable and the rewards are priceless. It is a reward for life.

A DRUG FREE young generation is everyone's responsibility and whilst these are challenges which are not unique to KZN alone, we must lead the way in stamping out the damage caused by drug abuse to the moral fabric of our society. The onus is on all of us not to experiment, taste, sell or get hooked on drugs such as Whoonga, Nyaope and Kubar. Drug abuse kills the mind, body, soul and destroys self-worth. It's not worth the high. Full stop. For those who are battling with drug addiction, the Department is here to help. Take the first step and come forward – we can provide the help needed to get back your life, but it depends on how much you are willing to fight for it.

FINALLY, I wish to congratulate Bongmusa Mthembu, our province's first Comrades winner in 19 years. He is an inspiration to us all and has put our province on the map with his victory in this year's Comrades. Well done Mthembu and let's keep our place in the Comrades for years to come!

God Bless!



inside



SAY NO TO DRUGS



CONTRACEPTION UPDATE



MENS HEALTH



WHY CUBANS LOVE SA

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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 031 562 9803, write to us on PO Box 25439, Gateway 4321 or email editor@ezempilohealthmatters.co.za

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JUNE
is National
Blood Donor
Month

SAVING MOTHERS, SAVING BABIES, SAVING LIVES!

Every day thousands of people die because they could not get a blood transfusion. This also includes many new mothers who die whilst giving birth because they lose a lot of blood. As part of your contribution to saving lives, why not start this month with donating blood – afterall, it is Blood Donor Month. To help you get started, here's what you should know:

Blood types

There are four blood types - A, B, AB and O. These are also identified by a negative or positive – which has nothing to do with their HIV status. Type O blood is always in demand because it can be given to patients of any blood group in an emergency.

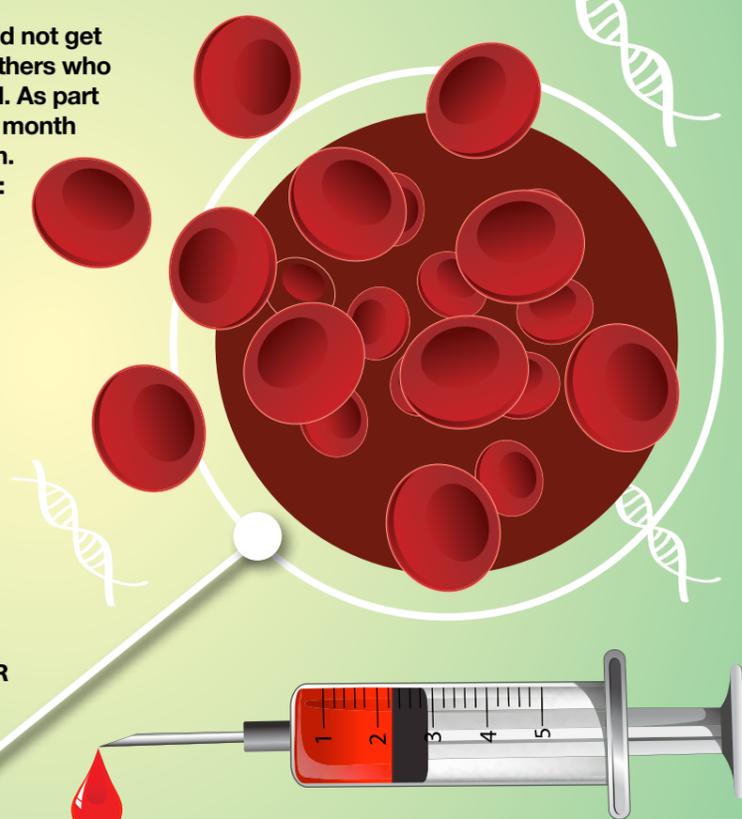
Easy, safe, free

In South Africa, blood donation is done through the South African National Blood Service (SANBS). Donating blood is easy, safe and free – and takes about 30 minutes.

You cannot get HIV by donating blood!

Blood donated in South Africa is among the safest in the world. That's because of the cutting-edge technology that is used to screen for any transmissible viruses. This ensures that, if you need a blood transfusion, the blood you receive is virus free.

THERE HAS NEVER BEEN AN INCIDENT OF A DONOR CONTRACTING HIV FROM DONATING BLOOD.



Giving safe blood

Despite the technology to screen blood, you should not donate unless you know your blood is safe. The following people should not donate blood due to the risks of transmission:

- People who are or may be HIV positive
- People who have hepatitis B, hepatitis C or syphilis
- Those who have recently had more than one sexual partner or don't know their partner's sexual history
- People who have injected themselves with drugs

There are also certain medications that can prevent you from donating blood. Tell the person taking blood about any medicine you are taking and they will give you more advice.

Who can donate?

To donate blood you must:

- Weigh 50kg or more
- Be between 16 and 65
- Be in good health
- Lead a sexually safe lifestyle
- Consider your blood safe for transfusion

**YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A DOCTOR TO SAVE LIVES.
DONATE BLOOD. IT'S SAFE. SIMPLE. AND SAVES LIVES.**



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TRUE STORY

WHEN A VICTIM BECOMES A FIGHTER

A broken home and then raped – how one young girl went through it all... and came out tops.

*Yandie is a 25 year old woman living with her mother in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Her father left when she was a baby so it's always been just her and her mother who works hard to make ends meet. This is Yandie's story...

"I wanted to go to a wedding with a new friend from school, but my mother was not happy about it. She didn't know my friend well so wasn't comfortable. But my friend said she would paint my nails if I went so I begged my mother and she finally agreed" explains Yandie.

After the wedding another party began during a shisa nyama. But with the alcohol a fight broke out, separating Yandie and her friend, who fled the scene in fear. "I couldn't find my friend. I was scared and started walking home. Suddenly this guy came and said he would walk me home. I said I was fine but he then threatened me with a knife and dragged me to a nearby shack. He did not use any condom and raped me for hours. I cried and begged him to stop but he carried on, and then passed out when he was finished with me. I ran out with just my coat on," says an emotional Yandie.

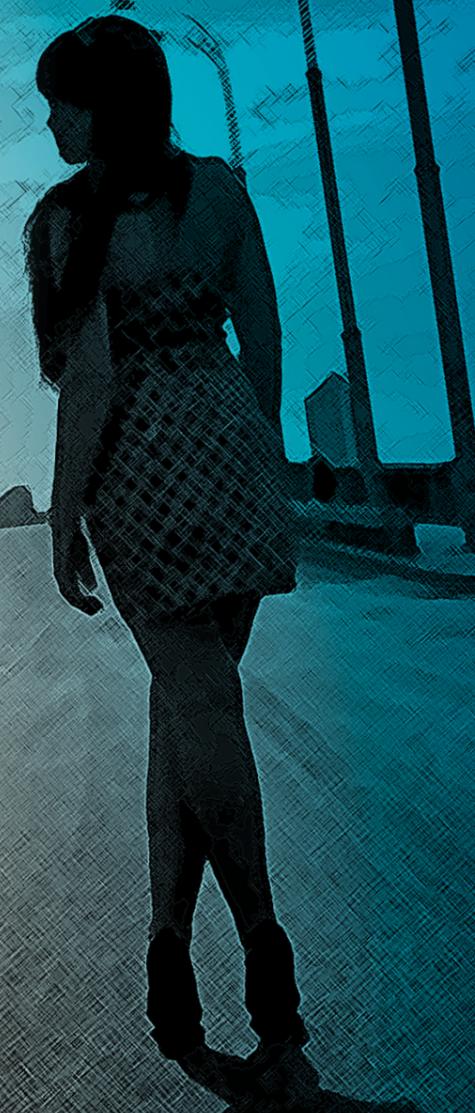
The court process

Even though Yandie was terrified of facing her mother, she went home and explained everything about what happened. Shocked and very angry, her mother insisted they report it immediately to the police. Charges were laid and Yandie was treated and counselled. She was very lucky she was not pregnant but was treated for a sexual disease. Yandie identified her rapist and the matter went to court. Yandie won her case and the rapist was jailed.

Picking up the pieces

It was a long, painful journey but Yandie says she was not going to let the rapist ruin her life twice. Her matric results came through and she passed with flying colours – receiving three distinctions! What's more, she was also accepted at UKZN where she is currently completing her third year BCom in Finance and Economics. "I'd like to do my Honours next year," she says excitedly. Asked what kept her focused, she says: "My education and goals. I didn't want my dreams to be taken away from me, no matter. I was not going to let the rapist decide my future."

**Name has been changed.*



WHAT DOESN'T BREAK YOU WILL MAKE YOU STRONGER. DON'T GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS.



JUNE 24-28

What are you doing about it?

DRUG AWARENESS WEEK

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 will often commit crimes, go hungry or neglect their families. This leads to drug use becoming a problem for the entire family and communities.

HOW PRIMARY HEALTH CLINICS CAN HELP

PHCs in communities can make referrals for professional help needed to overcome addiction. PHC's are located within communities so use them as your first step.

STEP 1 How to tell if someone you know has a drug problem

Before deciding on what assistance you can offer someone affected by substance abuse, always be sure that it's not any other problem, like financial or domestic. Some of the signs you can look out for include:

- Failure to report for work, attend school, or strange behavior at home
- Neglecting the house or children
- Not able to sleep or eat well at night
- Avoiding people or places
- Short temper and irritable mood
- Neglecting physical appearance
- Wearing sunglasses when it's not needed
- Constantly wearing long-sleeved clothing especially in hot weather
- Socialising with known substance abusers
- Unusual borrowing of money from friends, co-workers or parents
- Stealing small items from employer, home or school

STEP 2 Find a local treatment centre

If you suspect that your child is using drugs, stay calm and discuss this with him. If you are sure, have him checked by a doctor or a professional counsellor. If he is already addicted, he will need professional help over a period before he can remain drug-free. Try to keep his day busy under adult supervision and busy with things like sports or reading. Your local Primary Health Clinic will provide any referrals needed for treatment which can include hospitals where the person can be assisted with detoxing and alcohol addiction.

STEP 3 How your community can help

- Hold meetings to discuss substance abuse in your area
- Invite speakers to talk to school-aged children
- Invite parents into schools to meet with teachers
- Collaborate with churches in the area
- Form a community coalition
- Be good role models



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

National Hotline Call Centre
0800 121314
for Alcohol and Drug Abuse, available 24/7. Services are free.

Alcoholics Anonymous
0800 246432

Narcotics Anonymous
083900962

SA Depression and Anxiety Group
0800567567

Lifeline
0800 246432
are available 24 hours a day for assistance with suicide prevention.



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Which
contraception
is best for me?

Implant
PILL

condom

IUD

sterilisation



IT'S YOUR CHOICE

The KZN Department of Health fully supports the principle that all women, irrespective of their HIV status, have a right to choose their contraception or family planning method. This also means that no woman should be forced into using any particular contraceptive method.

So what's best for you as a woman?

As a woman, the decision to plan for a family empowers you with the choice. A planned pregnancy means a better future because you can avoid the financial and health stress if you are not ready for a baby. While many teenage girls today feel their boyfriends will take care of them if they are pregnant, the sad reality is that they are left on their own without education or means to support themselves and the baby. So whatever you decide on, remember to choose wisely knowing that family planning is planning your future.

I'm HIV positive; does it mean I have to accept sterilisation?

The Department of Health has a clear policy about this. No woman should be forced into any method of contraception,

including sterilization. It's also important to know the rules of offering sterilization to any woman. Before offering this procedure, the doctor must be sure that:

- The patient has received all the information and advice about sterilization in her language of choice and that makes an informed decision on the matter – without any pressure or force.
- The patient must understand that sterilization is a permanent and non-reversible procedure. This is why it is mostly suitable for those who are sure that they never want children.
- When a woman gives permission for the procedure there must be at least one other health worker present who must also sign the consent form to confirm that the woman made the decision after receiving all the advice and counselling on the matter and that she is mentally competent to make the decision of her own free will.
- It is ideal for the counseling to take place with both the woman and her partner present, but there is no requirement that the partner must be involved in the informed consent process.

Keep the page opposite as a reference to help you understand the different contraception choices. Share it with others in your social circle – it will help them to make the right choices too.

FAMILY PLANNING METHOD	PROTECTION FROM PREGNANCY	PROTECTION FROM STIs	POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS	IMPORTANT INFORMATION
CONDOM FOR MEN	★★★★ VERY GOOD	GOOD		Most effective when used with spermicide and lubricant (liquid to wet the condom)
CONDOM FOR WOMEN	★★★ GOOD	GOOD		Less effective when the woman is on top of the man during sex
DIAPHRAGM (with spermicide)	★★★ GOOD	SOME		Most effective when used with spermicide
SPERMICIDE	★ SOME	SOME	SKIN ALLERGY	More effective when used with another method like diaphragm or condom
IMPLANTS	★★★★★ BEST	NONE	NAUSEA, HEADACHES, CHANGES IN MONTHLY BLEEDING	This method may be dangerous for women with certain health problems
INJECTIONS	★★★★★ BEST	NONE	NAUSEA, HEADACHES, CHANGES IN MONTHLY BLEEDING	This method may be dangerous for women with certain health problems
THE BIRTH CONTROL PILL	★★★★★ BEST	NONE	NAUSEA, HEADACHES, CHANGES IN MONTHLY BLEEDING	This method may be dangerous for women with certain health problems
THE MUCUS METHOD	★ SOME	NONE		To use this method correctly, a woman must understand when she is fertile
BREAST FEEDING (during the first six months only)	★★★ VERY GOOD	NONE		To use this method, she must give her baby only breast milk, and her monthly bleeding must not have returned yet
PULLING OUT (withdrawal)	★ SOME	SOME		More effective when used with another method like spermicide or diaphragm
IUDs	★★★★★ BEST	NONE	HEAVY AND PAINFUL MONTHLY BLEEDING	This method may be dangerous for women with certain health problems
STERILIZATION	★★★★★ BEST	NONE		Women or men will not be able to have babies after this operation



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NEWS

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MEC DHLOMO HAILS CONTRIBUTIONS BY PEPFAR

KZN HEALTH MEC, DR SIBONGISENI DHLOMO recently thanked partners of the Department of Health for their contributions in fighting the many diseases plaguing the province.

Thanks to funding by the US Government through the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), through which the Rosary Clinic at Osizweni was established, patients in the area have been able to access ARV's since 2004. "At that time it was only tertiary hospitals that were administering them in this country. I would therefore like to thank PEPFAR for taking this bold step, which has contributed to saving and prolonging the lives of many people in this rural community of Blaaubosch," said MEC Dhlomo during a recent handover of the clinic to be run by the KZN Department of Health.

Dhlomo added that the province had benefitted in a number of ways through this partnership, including:

- Strengthening of the health system infrastructure through capacity building
- Human resources support
- Improving health information systems
- PEPFAR is also supporting the districts on prevention programmes for key populations including commercial sex workers, farm workers, migrant workers and long-distance truck drivers
- SACBC has also been one of the Partners that have provided us with infrastructural support in the form of

Park homes in districts like Ilembe, Umkhanyakude and Amajuba

- SACBC has also provided us with TB and HIV services which resulted in increased access to treatment in the sub-districts they are operating in.

The clinic currently has over 1800 patients on ART treatment and MEC Dhlomo called on the community to make use of the free health services which also include:

- Information, Education, Counselling (IEC)
- HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT)
- Adherence counselling to people who have tested HIV+
- ART and ongoing monitoring

R15 million clinic donation for Umlazi

THE AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION (AHF) was applauded for its R15 million investment towards expansion of the Ithembalabantu Clinic in Umlazi which provides a range of services to more than 16 000 people living with HIV.

Launching the expansion, AHF President, Michael Weinstein outlined his organisation's commitment to assist the province of KwaZulu-Natal in its fight against HIV and AIDS. Weinstein stressed that one of the key issues today was not just about the numbers of people in the ARV programme but also about the availability and adherence to treatment.

In his address, MEC Dhlomo indicated that through working together with organisations like AHF, KwaZulu Natal has made huge progress in reducing the number of people dying from AIDS related diseases resulting in an increase in life expectancy rising to 60 years - up from 56.5 years in 2009.

The MEC also pointed out that partnerships between organisations and the Department of Health also led to the prevention of Mother to Child Transmission growing from strength to strength resulting in a significant reduction of mother to child transmission of HIV in the province. "This is attested to in a report by the



Medical Research Council (MRC), which indicated that the Province has managed to reduce mother to child transmission from 19% in 2007 to 2,1% in July 2012 and the Routine Department of Health Information Survey [DHIS] data which says that currently Mother to Child Transmission rate is at 1.6%," added MEC Dhlomo.

Commending the contribution by AHF, the MEC said it was unusual for donors to provide brick and mortar for building, pointing out that

most international donors limit themselves to research; medication and advice. The MEC also called on the people of Umlazi to make use of the existing facility for testing so that they know their status and said men should lead the way in this effort aimed at saving and prolonging life to those infected.

The construction of the expansion is due to begin this month with an anticipated completion date of January 2015.

Plan to act against drug abuse

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH in KwaZulu-Natal has taken the lead in implementing a master plan to combat rising rates of drug abuse in the province, writes Department Communications Head, Sam Mkhwanazi.

A recent report by the World Health Organisation on South Africa's problem of alcohol abuse confirms what the Department has already established: that rising numbers of South Africans

are turning to alcohol and substance abuse. To confirm this, one only has to look at the statistics of fatalities and people who are injured as a result of traffic-related incidents each year.

To address this, the Department's master plan is aimed at addressing the following:

- Improve the training of health personnel in the detection, diagnosis and management of patients affected by substance abuse
- Integrate the treatment and management of victims of substance abuse into the primary healthcare system
- Improve the detection rate for alcohol and substance abuse at antenatal clinics and provide the requisite services to reduce the incidence of foetal alcoholic syndrome
- Use counter-advertising to challenge some of the myths propagated by advertisers
- Focus on the dangers of drinking and driving, while promoting healthy lifestyles and road safety
- Encourage parents, teachers and other adults NOT to condone cigarette smoking, nor the use of alcohol or illicit drugs
- Establish educational programmes for pregnant adolescents, sex workers,

homeless and orphaned children and other people who are considered to be at risk

- Institute vigorous multi-media campaigns to educate children and adolescents about substance abuse, including working closely with drug action committees and a roll-out of the Anti-Whoonga Campaign.

It is a well-known fact that involvement in substance and illicit drug abuse usually results in crime, road traffic accidents including those involving pedestrians, as well as injuries due to intoxication. This not only impacts on the burden of care at our health institutions, but also negatively affects the budget and the province's economic productivity.

The KZN Department of Health will therefore be working with stakeholders from different spheres of government including the police, Department of Education, Department of Social Development, business and faith based community organisations.

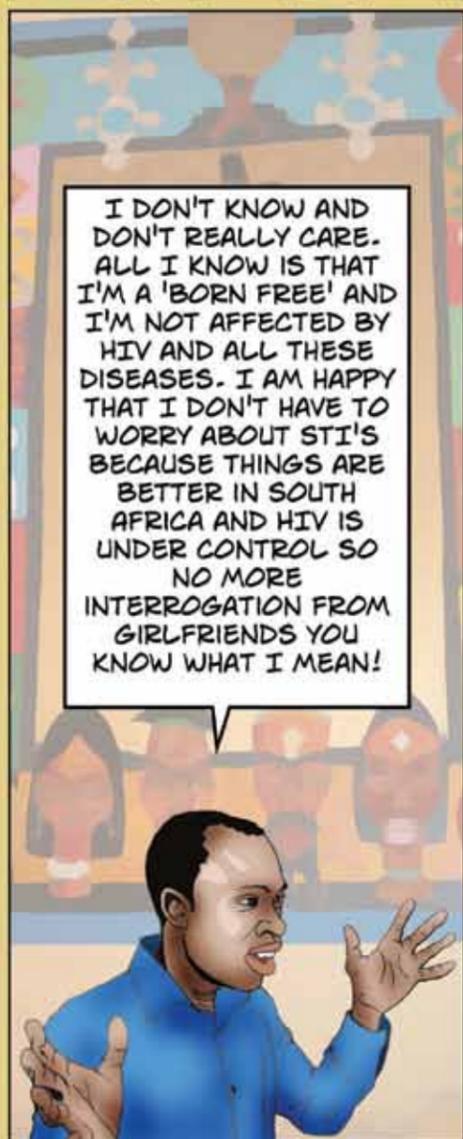
The Department would like to call on every person in the province to play a proactive role in saying NO to drug and substance abuse - only then can we overcome this challenge and the damage caused to our people and economy.



JUNE IS YOUTH MONTH, LET'S MOVE FORWARD!



HEY GUYS, WHAT'S THE FUSS ABOUT THIS BEING YOUTH MONTH AND WE MUST GET TESTED AND ALL THAT?

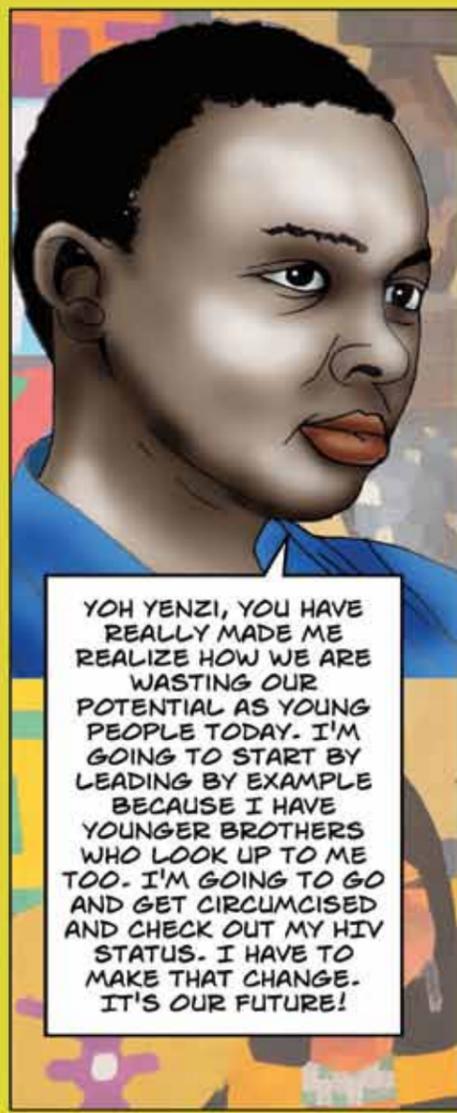


I DON'T KNOW AND DON'T REALLY CARE. ALL I KNOW IS THAT I'M A 'BORN FREE' AND I'M NOT AFFECTED BY HIV AND ALL THESE DISEASES. I AM HAPPY THAT I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT STI'S BECAUSE THINGS ARE BETTER IN SOUTH AFRICA AND HIV IS UNDER CONTROL SO NO MORE INTERROGATION FROM GIRLFRIENDS YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN!

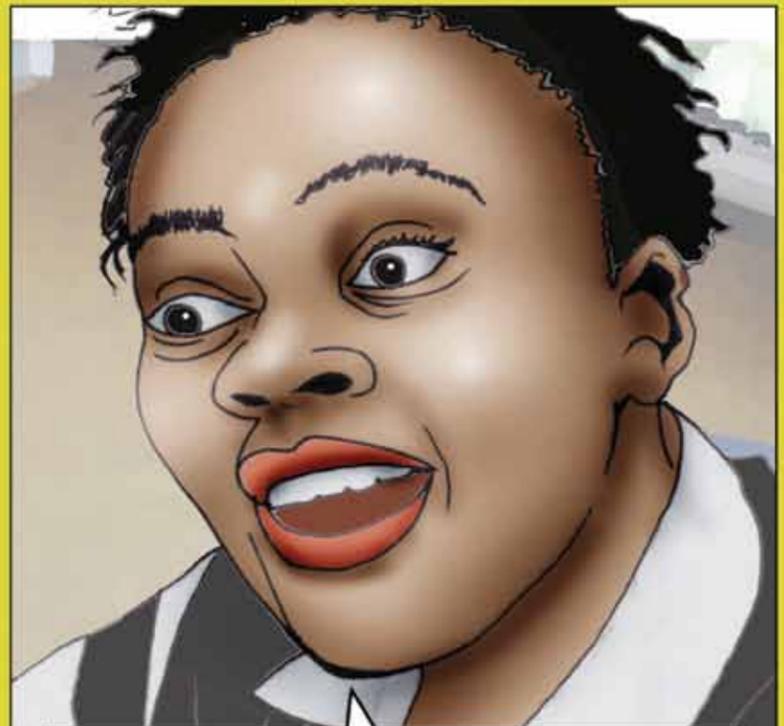
AHWEH YUSI, HOW CAN YOU BE SO IGNORANT AND THINK YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HIV AND STI'S ANYMORE? DO YOU KNOW THAT THERE MOST NEW HIV INFECTIONS ARE FROM YOUNG PEOPLE WHO DON'T EVEN KNOW THEY ARE HIV POSITIVE? THANKS TO ARV'S AND HIV TESTING PEOPLE ARE LIVING LONGER TODAY BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE SHOULD FORGET ABOUT IT AND JUST ASSUME THAT HIV IS A THING OF THE PAST. HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN TESTED FOR HIV FOR EXAMPLE?



I HAVE ALSO BEEN CIRCUMCISED.



YOH YENZI, YOU HAVE REALLY MADE ME REALIZE HOW WE ARE WASTING OUR POTENTIAL AS YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY. I'M GOING TO START BY LEADING BY EXAMPLE BECAUSE I HAVE YOUNGER BROTHERS WHO LOOK UP TO ME TOO. I'M GOING TO GO AND GET CIRCUMCISED AND CHECK OUT MY HIV STATUS. I HAVE TO MAKE THAT CHANGE. IT'S OUR FUTURE!



YOU SEE, AS YOUNG PEOPLE WE ARE NOT PLAYING THE LEADERSHIP ROLE WE CAN PLAY. OUR FREEDOMS WERE WON THANKS TO A BIG PART BEING PLAYED BY YOUNG PEOPLE BACK THEN. WE DON'T HAVE THOSE BATTLES ANYMORE, THAT'S WHY WE SHOULD USE OUR YOUTH TO FIGHT AND RAISE AWARENESS OF DISEASES WHICH WILL AFFECT OUR FUTURE SOCIETY. HOW WILL WE ANSWER WHEN OUR CHILDREN ASK US WHAT ROLE WE PLAYED TO PREVENT DISEASES WHICH CAN KILL? COME ON GUYS, WE NEED TO BE MORE PROACTIVE IN OUR HEALTH. AND I'M NOT JUST SAYING ALL THIS BECAUSE I WANT TO BE A NURSE NEH?!

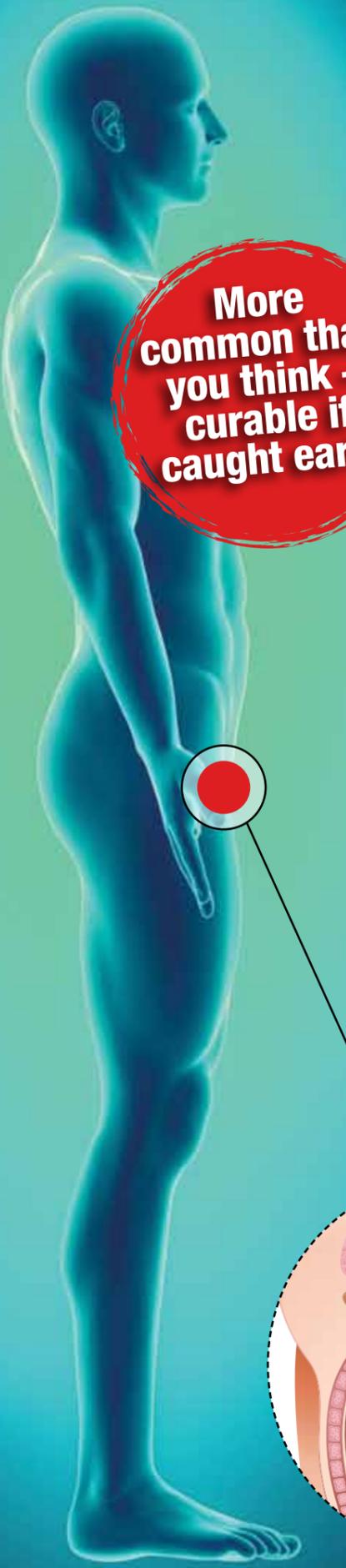
SET AN EXAMPLE. TAKE THE LEAD. KNOW YOUR STATUS. IT SHOWS YOU CARE.



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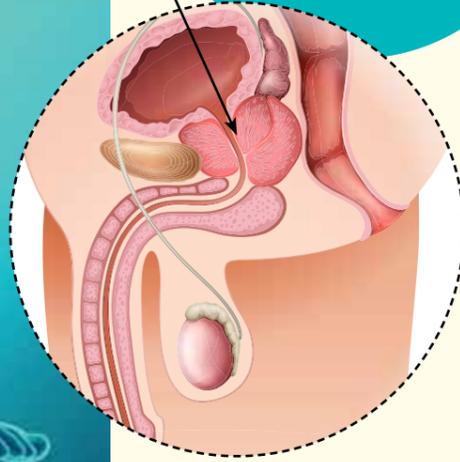
More common than you think – curable if caught early

What every man should know about PROSTATE CANCER

The Department of Health's Sindi Mthethwa from the Chronic Diseases Programme provides outlines why signs of possible prostate cancer should not be ignored – especially if you're a male over 50 years.

Black South African men are more likely to be diagnosed with advanced stage prostate cancer 7-10 years earlier than other South African males, according to research from the Department of Health. This is worrying, especially as it means more men are likely to be diagnosed at a late stage when little can be done. With prostate cancer developing without any symptoms, it's important to go for regular check-ups so that your health worker can pick up any signs that you may be at risk. To make it easier, we've put together the following guide on all you need to know about prostate cancer.

WHAT IS THE PROSTATE?
The prostate is part of the male reproductive system and is just below the bladder in front of the bowel. Its main role is to produce fluid that protects and enriches sperm.



Prostate cancer is when some of the cells of the prostate reproduce more quickly than a normal prostate, causing a tumor. If this tumor is left untreated, the cells become cancerous and can start attacking other parts of the body. The best form of treatment and possible cure is to control the cancer when it is still in the prostate gland, before it spreads. One of the most worrying things about prostate cancer is that it develops without any symptoms. However, if you watch your health and go for regular check-ups, it is possible to pick up the first signs so that you can be treated early.

ADVANCES IN CANCER TREATMENT MEAN IT IS NO LONGER UNTREATABLE.

Who is most at risk?

- **AGE:** Men over 50 years old are at high risk.
- **FAMILY HISTORY:** You are more likely to be affected if you have a brother or father who has had prostate cancer.
- **LIFESTYLE:** An unhealthy, high fat diet, being overweight, smoking and not taking enough exercise will all put you at risk – even if you are younger than 50!



REMEMBER! Prostate cancer usually grows more slowly than other types of cancer.

...SO WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Once your health worker or doctor confirms that your prostate needs further tests, he or she will book you in to undergo a test for prostate cancer. There are two tests that can be done which are:

BLOOD TEST (PSA: Prostate Specific Antigen)

The PSA blood test looks for a protein that is produced by prostate cells. A high PSA is a sign that you need further tests and does not automatically mean you have prostate cancer. Older men often have higher levels of PSA, but it is also used as a sign for doctors to perform further tests so don't be alarmed if you are first told about high PSA levels.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION (DRE: Digital Rectal Exam)

The DRE exam involves the doctor inserting a gloved finger in your anus where he is able to feel part of your prostate. Some of the things he will look for is swelling, hardening or any lumps on the prostate which might be a sign of a tumor or other problems.

What happens if the tests confirm prostate cancer?

Your doctor will refer you to an oncologist (cancer specialist) who will then discuss different treatment options for you. Some of these include surgery, chemotherapy and radiation. The hospital will also be able to provide you and your family with advice about the changes needed in your lifestyle.



Early warning signs

- Difficulty in passing urine which is often slow.
- Unable to control the start or stop of urine
- Feeling like you need to pass urine often, especially at night

These symptoms can also be related to other factors, such as inflammation of your prostate, and do not necessarily indicate cancer. It's still an important sign that something in your body is not right and needs to be checked by your health worker.



Late warning signs for prostate cancer

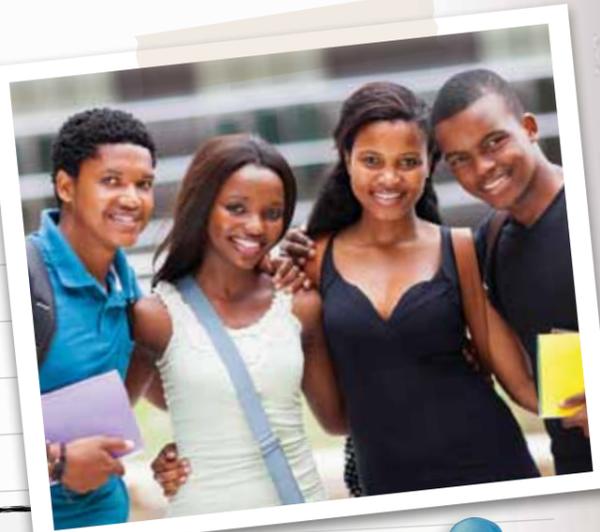
- Unable to pass urine
- Lower back pain
- Blood in the urine or semen
- Painful ejaculation
- Erectile dysfunction
- Weight loss

THE KEY IS HEALTHY LIVING AND REGULAR CHECK-UPS PREVENTION IS THE SAFEST WAY TO PROTECT YOUR HEALTH AND IT'S A CHOICE YOU MAKE.

JUNE

National Youth Month

Nearly 35% of our population in KwaZulu-Natal is under 15 years of age. As we celebrate youth month and recall the bravery of young people who fought against apartheid in 1976, it's time for the youth of today to prepare as future leaders in the country. Taking responsibility for your health as a young person means a healthier nation of tomorrow. Avoiding reckless sexual behavior and planning for the future are ways young people can live up to their responsibilities in shaping a new society.



Men's Health Month

JUNE 2 Cancer Survivors Day

More black South African men are being diagnosed with prostate cancer, and as a man it's important to ensure you go for regular check-ups, as prostate cancer is one of the few cancers which can be cured if treated early. Adopt a healthy lifestyle and watch your diet – simple ways you can reduce your risk! Cancer doesn't have to be a death sentence, it can be beaten!



National Blood Donor Month

The South African National Blood Service is once again appealing for more people to donate blood. Keep the guide on donating blood (inside this issue) and use it to educate others in your community on donating blood. It's safe, free and saves lives!



JUNE 3-9 World Heart Rhythm Week

What would you do if someone with you had a heart attack? Would you know how to perform CPR? This week raises awareness of what to do and how you can make a life-saving difference by using CPR. Be prepared and learn something new today – you might just need it to save a life!



Don't say no to help that could save your life!



JUNE

1

JUNE

4

International Children's Day

Every year on this day people around the world take part in action to protect children from abuse. Do your bit and encourage children to report abuse without fear.

Victims of Aggression Day



JUNE

5

World Environment Day

Every year the world celebrates Environment Day as a way to encourage us all to become more aware of how our lives are affected by the environment and our food choices. This means for example, selecting foods that have fewer or no chemicals in the production process. Where you can, try to buy and support food grown locally – and even better, why not start your own vegetable garden and encourage others in your area to do the same? By reducing the amount of rubbish we use we also create a better environment which benefits everyone.

JUNE

21

National Epilepsy Day

One in every 100 people has epilepsy. It is not witchcraft but is caused by a seizure in the brain. The most difficult thing that epileptics have to face is other people's attitude. This day is used to educate people on the condition and how to help those affected by it.



JUNE 15

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

Protecting, not abusing Gogo, is our responsibility

Gogo, grandma, ouma, nan. In any language, gogo is the most important person in the family. She is the one who continues to look after children long after her retired age. Yet many gogos today get taken for granted. It's a sad reality that many even use their pension money to support their children. Take a stand and protect your gogo from being exploited. Our elders need love, care and support. It's their right.

JUNE 17-28

National Polio Immunisation Campaign (Second Round)

The Department of Health continues its drive this month to immunise children under five years against polio and measles. **DON'T MISS OUT!** Ask your clinic for more details.

Give Polio and Measles a Final Push



health

Department: Health
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope



From Cuba with love....



Dr Gustavo Lopez

Stanger Hospital Medical Manager

Dr Lopez and his wife were among the first group of Cuban doctors who came to South Africa in 1998 as part of a Cuban-SA agreement established by our late former president Nelson Mandela. And for the couple, KwaZulu-Natal has become home.

But what do they think of our health system compared to Cuba – a country which leads the way in preventing diseases through Primary Health Care – and South Africa’s move towards a similar approach over the next 13 years through the National Health Insurance (NHI)?

“Government hospitals carry 80% of the healthcare burden. Resources are scarce and need to be utilised properly. Primary Health like the NHI is based on preventing disease rather than curing it. I’ve been following the pilot programmes in KZN and already see the difference,” says an excited Lopez, who is passionate about making a difference in South African health care.

Their journey in South Africa has not always been easy, and at first he and his wife wondered if they made the right decision – but the desperate situation of patients needing their help convinced them they had to stay on. “ARV’s were not available in South Africa then and part of being a doctor is to save lives, yet we were unable to. Ninety percent of our patients were dying but we couldn’t turn our backs and today I am so glad we stayed on, KwaZulu-Natal is home,” adds Lopez.

And at Stanger hospital, Lopez is helping to realise many goals, including caring for staff wellness which he says is crucial. “Staff work under difficult conditions and this can lead to frustration and unhappiness. The MEC of Health, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo came up with a great idea that wellness programmes for staff should be introduced



“The current health system is not only unfair, it is also unsustainable”

in an attempt to address these issues and we drive this at the hospital,” says Lopez who set up a hospital soccer team.

Behind every successful man is a woman as they say, and Graza Lopez not only supports her husband, but is a talented

individual in her own right. With a Master’s degree in infectious diseases, specialising in TB and HIV infections, she runs this programme at Stanger Hospital and is a talented artist too which she has used to transform many of the hospital’s walls.

As thanks to the couple for never giving up on South Africa, they are being pampered with a spa treat, worth R1500, courtesy of Fleur de Lis Spa, a luxurious spa within Coastlands Hotel in Umhlanga and the Ridge.



To contact them call: **031 271 8228** (Ridge) or **031 415 6582** (Umhlanga)