

# HEALTH MATTERS

# Ezempilo

FREE

EDUCATE || INFORM || EMPOWER

OCTOBER • 2016



**KZN welcomes graduate nurses**  
**Be a paramedic ● Herbal enema warning**



**health**  
Department:  
Health  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

And  
more  
inside!

FIGHTING DISEASE, FIGHTING POVERTY, GIVING HOPE

BREAST CANCER  
AWARENESS  
MONTH

# BREAST CANCER Awareness



**SUPPORTING THE FIGHTERS.  
ADMIRING THE SURVIVORS.  
HONOURING THE TAKEN.  
AND NEVER, EVER GIVING UP HOPE.**



FIGHTING DISEASE, FIGHTING POVERTY, GIVING HOPE



## Message from... KZN Health HOD, Dr Sifiso Mtshali



**IN MY SHORT TIME SINCE** being appointed as Head of the KZN Department of Health, I have come to realise that the Department has many excellent programmes that are making an impact on the health of our citizens. We have innovative and transformational strategies in relation to health care. We have achieved a great deal of success in programmes such as the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV; Medical Male Circumcision; Nurse-Initiated Management of Anti-Retroviral Treatment (NIMART); TB treatment and cure rate, and our reduction of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM).

**WE ALSO HAVE STRONG** executive leadership in our Honourable MEC for Health, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo, whose vision and passion spurs us on to do better and build on our strengths. The employees of the Department are our greatest strength, because without them our services will not be successful. KZN Health sets ambitious targets which can be difficult to attain – this does not mean that we are not achieving, but rather that we are trying to over-achieve within the constrained resource envelope available.

**WHILE WE MAY BE** the epicentre for HIV and AIDS, we have certainly made remarkable progress in the fight against the disease. We have reduced our mother to child transmission rate to 1.2%, we reached 1 million patients on ART in 2015 and we now have nurse initiated treatment for HIV and AIDS through our NIMART programme. We are also continuing with campaigns to promote behaviour change – campaigns against illegal abortion, sugar daddies, teenage pregnancy and substance abuse and promotion of healthy lifestyle, to name a few.

**OUR MEDICAL MALE CIRCUMCISION** programme is running smoothly, and we have performed in excess of 700 000 MMC's since 2010. We also reduced severe acute malnutrition in under 5's new cases significantly and our household visits have expanded drastically, demonstrating our extended reach and access to care.

**SINCE WE STARTED** Operation Phakisa (Big Fast Results), we are seeing improvements in the Ideal Clinic Realisation and Maintenance (ICRM) programme, with 141 of our clinics having achieved more than 80% against the National Core Standards. We have also improved medicine dispensing with more than 155 000 patients receiving their chronic medication at various community distribution points.

**WE ARE ON THE RIGHT TRACK**, but there is still a lot more to be done. There is no room for complacency in our sector, as we deal with people and their health. Each and every individual is called upon to help us reduce the burden of disease in the province. This they can do by taking charge of their own health and being aware of the warning signs pointing to possible health risks. Whilst the Department can provide preventative health care, it is ultimately the people who must embrace the measures introduced. We encourage you to get tested for diseases, so that if they are detected, interventions can commence early. Diseases are easier and cheaper to treat when detected early. We also need to move away from the fallacy that by not getting tested for diseases – and therefore not knowing whether we have them or not – means that we don't have them.

**DISEASES OF LIFESTYLE** can be controlled through healthy living – inclusive of healthy nutrition, good habits and exercise. The department is alive to the importance of providing citizens with information in a developmental state. We urge people of the province to use information, education and communication material availed to them by the department.

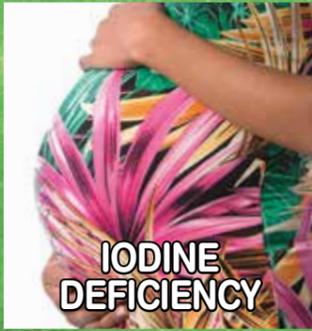
**WE UNDERSTAND THAT** it's not easy out there, but we have to deliver services, so we need people who are dedicated. To be in the health sector is a calling. Once again, I'd like to thank all of those who give of themselves selflessly. You are much appreciated.

God bless!

# inside



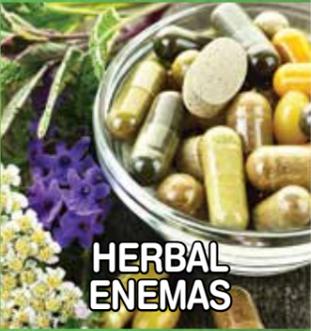
**PARAMEDIC TRAINING**



**IODINE DEFICIENCY**



**GRADUATE NURSES**



**HERBAL ENEMAS**

- ... **BREAST CANCER** How to do a self-examination
- ... **WANT TO BE A PARAMEDIC?** Expert advice
- ... **KZN HEALTH NEWS** Latest from your DOH
- ... **MENTAL HEALTH** Helping someone who is mentally ill
- ... **ARE YOU LOW ON IODINE?** Find out what this means
- ... **COMIC** Focus on obesity
- ... **AWARENESS DAYS** Health days this month
- ... **MORE NURSES FOR KZN** Department welcomes more graduate nurses
- ... **HERBAL ENEMAS** Department issues strong warning
- ... **MEDICAL MALE CIRCUMCISION** Not a licence for unprotected sex, warns MEC

*With thanks to the following contributors:*

- KZN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH: COMMUNICATIONS UNIT
- ZOHRA MOHAMED TEKE (EDITOR)
- THEMBA MNGOMEZULU (DEPARTMENT PHOTOGRAPHER)
- SARA AULD (GRAPHIC DESIGNER)
- DR GUGU MAZIBUKO (TRANSLATOR)

PICTURES: shutterstock.com and supplied

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

**COPYRIGHT & ADVERTISING**

All content published in this magazine remains the copyright of Ezempilo...Health Matters and may be freely reproduced and distributed for educational purposes only, with permission.

**WARNING! INFECTION CONTROL**



Images featured in EZEMPILO are for representation purposes only, are not intended to portray actual people and do not necessarily represent the content of articles.

**OCTOBER is...**

## Breast cancer awareness month

One of the most serious diseases faced by women is breast cancer. But, the good news is that if it is found early enough there is a good chance of beating it. Doing simple, self-examination of your breasts regularly is especially important so that you can pick up any change in your breasts and have it checked at your clinic.



**Who is at risk of breast cancer?**

- \* While older women are at a higher risk, younger women can also be affected.
- \* Women whose mothers, sisters or grandmothers have had the disease are more at risk.
- \* A woman who has never given birth or has a baby after the age of 35 is at greater risk.
- \* Women who drink two or more drinks of alcohol a day are at risk of developing breast cancer.

**What are the symptoms?**

- \* A lump in the breast or armpit area – though most lumps are normal, if they feel unusual have them checked!
- \* The breast changes in size or shape
- \* The skin of the breast dimples
- \* The nipple turns inward
- \* There is an unusual discharge from the nipple
- \* The skin on the breast, nipple or the dark area surrounding the nipple is scaly, red or swollen
- \* The skin of the breast has the look or feel of an orange peel

*Early detection saves lives!*

**HOW TO EXAMINE YOUR BREASTS**

- 1 Lie down with your right arm behind your head – this makes it easier to feel all the breast tissue.
- 2 Use the pads of your three middle fingers on your left hand to feel for lumps in the right breast. Start by feeling the tissue closest to the skin; then a little bit harder to feel a little deeper; and press to feel the tissue closest to your chest.
- 3 Repeat the exam on your left breast, putting your left arm behind your head and using the finger pads of your right hand to do the exam.
- 4 Stand in front of a mirror, look at your breasts for any changes of size, shape, contour, dimpling, or redness of the nipple or breast skin.
- 5 Check each underarm while sitting up or standing and with your arm only slightly raised so you can easily feel in this area.

**Do breast self-examination once a month during your period and at the same time of day every month.**

**Treatment**

- SURGERY** is needed to remove the abnormal growth and is successfully used to prevent cancer from spreading.
- CHEMOTHERAPY** is done by inserting a drip into a vein in your arm, to attack or kill cancer cells.
- RADIOTHERAPY** utilises a type of laser to destroy cancer cells.

**WE HAVE COME A LONG WAY IN TREATING CANCER SO FACE IT, DON'T FEAR IT!**



**health**  
 Department:  
 Health  
 PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

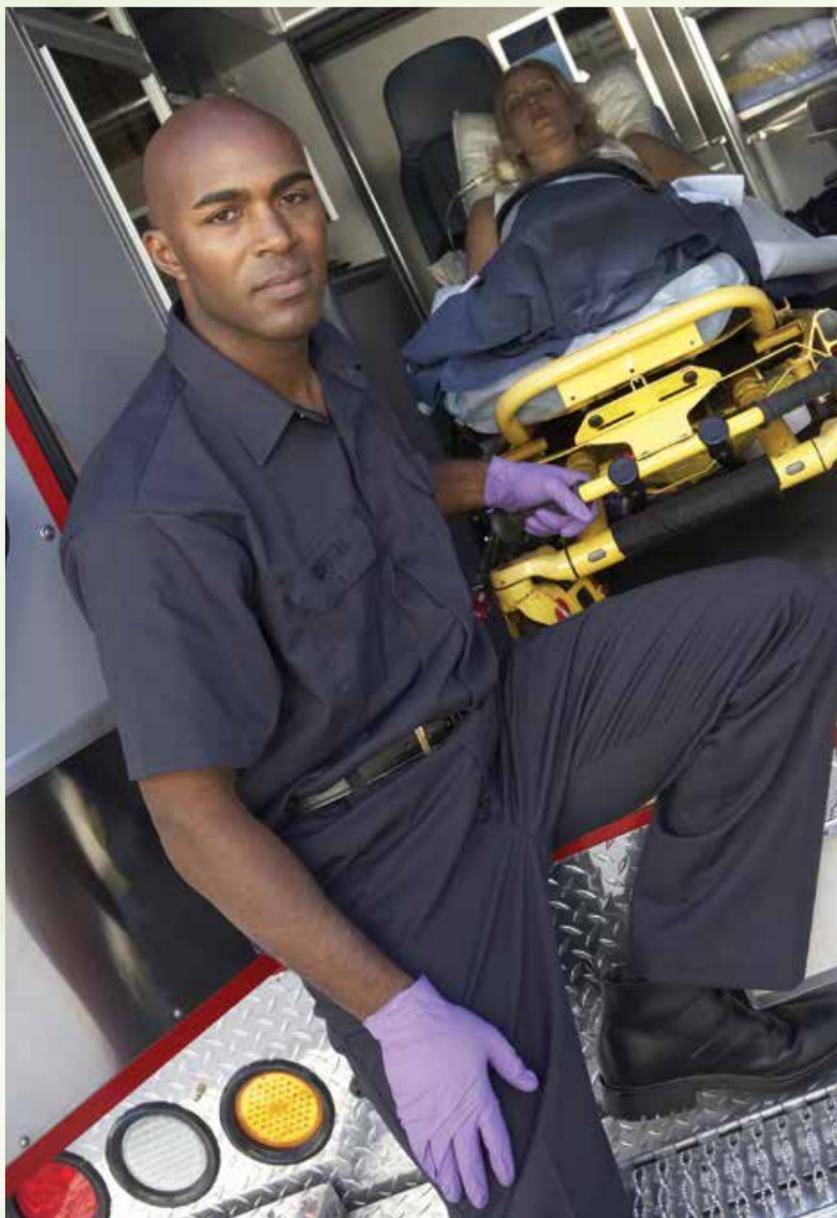
**FIGHTING DISEASE, FIGHTING POVERTY, GIVING HOPE**



# So you want to be a paramedic?



A complete guide to what it takes from KZN Health's Robert McKenzie



## PARAMEDIC AND EMS TRAINING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Many young South Africans wish to become paramedics. However, many do not know what the requirements and different training options are and how to access them. Most people also don't know that there are several different qualifications available and several different levels of care at which paramedics operate.

One of the main functions of paramedics is to provide Emergency Medical Care to patients in the pre-hospital setting. This means that the patient is not in a health facility – this could be at the patient's house or work place, in the street or down an embankment. Paramedics respond and treat and stabilise the patient on the scene before transporting them to a health facility in an ambulance.

Paramedics can provide more than just simple "first aid". Procedures and interventions that can be provided by paramedics differ, according to their qualification.

Paramedics also continue the medical management of patients in the ambulance while the patient is being transferred between hospitals.

Paramedics can also be trained to perform medical rescue, which includes using the "jaws of life" to rescue people from crushed cars and using complex rope systems to rescue people in the mountains.

## Do you have what it takes?

Being a paramedic is not a 'job' but a calling, which requires you to be:

- \* Confident
- \* Outgoing
- \* Physically fit and healthy

The pressure placed on paramedics can be demanding and stressful. But, it is a rewarding profession.

Paramedics normally work on a shift system, which varies, but the standard shift is a two day shift, then two night shifts followed by four days off, before coming back to work day shift again.

The environment that paramedics work in is very dynamic – most people are used to an office, while a paramedic's calling can be anytime, anywhere. This can be to a home, an office, a factory, on the road side, in the mountains, in a block of flats and places with little or no easy access.



### EMERGENCY CARE TECHNICIAN

Two years of formal training

### ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT PARAMEDIC

These are pre-hospital advanced life support providers. Training includes advanced airway management, IV drug therapy up to schedule 7 drugs, advanced midwifery, advanced resuscitation, aviation medicine, marine medicine.

**South African Advanced Life Support Paramedics are highly in demand throughout the world due to the nature of training and skills.**

### Training

There have been massive changes in the way paramedics are trained. Short courses have fallen away and been replaced with courses that are all NQF recognised and that can smoothly progress from one to the other.

- \* **Emergency Care Assistant (ECA)**  
A one year course.
- \* **Emergency Care Technician (ECT)**  
A two year course, or only one year if the ECO has been completed.
- \* **Bachelor of Health Sciences**  
A four year course provided at universities. It is level NQF8 and equips the paramedic with all the necessary skills to practice as advanced life support.

In about two years' time private colleges will start training for the ECO and ECT courses. Several universities currently offer the Bachelor of Health Sciences. In Kwa-Zulu Natal this course is provided at Durban University of Technology.

### Entry requirements guidelines

Applicants with a national senior certificate with a higher certificate endorsement must have the following subjects and ratings:

- \* English (3)
- \* Mathematics (3) or Mathematical Literacy (6)
- \* Life sciences (3) and /or Physical science (3)
- \* Additional subject 1 (3)
- \* Additional subject 2 (3)



## Types of paramedic work available

These are the different levels of care:

### BASIC LIFE SUPPORT

(short course)

These practitioners provide basic medical care to patients in emergencies, including CPR, stopping bleeding, helping women in labour and other non-invasive procedures.

### INTERMEDIATE LIFE SUPPORT

(short course)

These practitioners provide intermediate medical intervention including IV therapy (drips) bronchodilators, defibrillation (shock), chest decompression etc.



health

Department:  
Health  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

FIGHTING DISEASE, FIGHTING POVERTY, GIVING HOPE

The Department of Health offers bursaries each year and more details are available at:

[www.kznhealth.gov.za/bursaries.htm](http://www.kznhealth.gov.za/bursaries.htm)

For more information on how KZN EMS works, go to:

[www.kznhealth.gov.za/EMS.htm](http://www.kznhealth.gov.za/EMS.htm)

# KZN HEALTH



health  
Department:  
Health  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

# NEWS

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope



## HEALTH EMPLOYEES RECOGNISED FOR LONG SERVICE

PASSION, SELFLESS DEDICATION and an unwavering will to always serve the public with distinction. These are the three common qualities that have underpinned the longevity of three employees of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health who received accolades recently, after 40 years of service.

The employees are Deputy Principal of the KZN College of Nursing Ms Shanti Ramkilowan; pool vehicle driver Mr Jabulani Gumede; and the Chief Director: Executive Support Service Ms Prasheeka Padayachee.

**Ms Shanti Ramkilowan** joined the Department as a nursing student at RK Khan Hospital in Chatsworth, Durban, in 1973. She then worked her way up the ranks, becoming a midwife at Northdale Hospital before getting her diploma in nursing education in 1981. This allowed her to become a nursing lecturer. In no time, she had been promoted to senior lecturer. She became assistant manager at Grey's Hospital nursing college in 1997. The following year, she became deputy principal of the then Natal College of Nursing, acting as the principal soon afterwards until 2004. For the past 11 years, she has been one of two vice-principals of the KZN Nursing College, responsible for 10 of the Department's 25 nursing schools and four campuses in Zululand, Amajuba, Umzinyathi and King Cetshwayo (ex-Uthungulu) districts.

**Mr Jabulani Gumede**, a father of four children and two grandchildren who lives at Imbali Township, Pietermaritzburg, joined the Department in 1976, as a general worker. He became a driver five years later. The soft-spoken, well-dressed 64 year-old is a stickler for time management, and says he has never been involved in a single motor vehicle accident in his career - except for minor fender-benders which were caused by other drivers. "Time is everything," he says, in IsiZulu. "You have to be on time. It's a mark of respect for other people. When you are late, you end up making mistakes."

His advice to others who wish to have similar staying power in the workplace? "You must learn to be content with what you have. Finding faith at a young age has helped me a lot in my life. Many people that I started working with left. I must admit, there were times when I thought I'd leave, but I didn't. There'll be ups and downs in life. You just persevere, work hard, and respect yourself, your job and the people around you."

**Ms Prasheeka Padayachee's** commitment to service excellence is second to none. Never one to settle for less, her job entails providing executive support to the Head of Department and the MEC, covering a wide range of strategic activities.

The 59 year-old, who has three children and one grandchild, has a National Diploma in Public Administration and started out as an administration clerk at Northdale Hospital on 01 May 1975. Having served for 17 years at the hospital, she was promoted to the post of Principal Personnel Officer in the former General Provincial Services. In March

1993 she moved to what is now the current Co-Operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) before moving up the ranks to become Director: Executive Support Services in the office of the HOD, where she is currently based. "Young people should learn

that a qualification does not get you where you want to be immediately - give yourself time to acquire experience and become an expert in your job before taking the next step. Be objective, honest and conduct yourself with integrity. Never give up."

Congratulating the three employees, KZN Health HOD said:

*"We are really fortunate to have in our midst people who are so dedicated to their work. They are a huge inspiration and a great example for others to learn from."*

## DOH cracks the whip on obesity

70% of South African women are overweight



**WE ARE DRINKING OURSELVES SICK** with sugary drinks. South Africans have become so addicted to fizzy drinks that we are now amongst the world's top ten consumers of sugary drinks - and it's getting worse.

### Department takes action

With 70% of South African women and 40% of men either overweight or obese, the government is not taking any chances. A national campaign will soon be launched by the Healthy Living Alliance (HEALA) to reduce the addiction to fizzy drinks.

"We have the highest obesity rate in sub-Saharan Africa," says Lynn Moeng, the

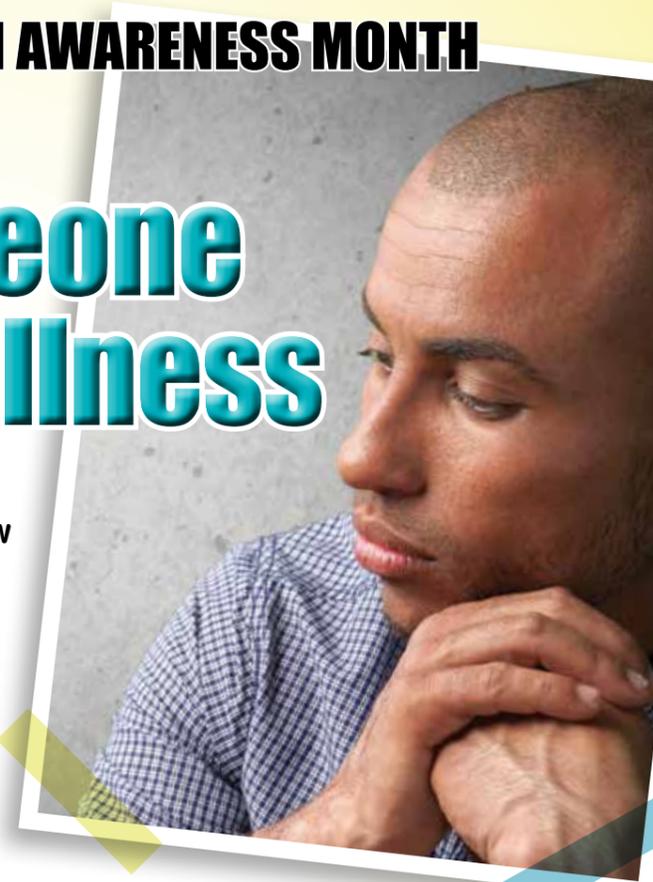
Department of Health's Chief Director of Health Promotion, Nutrition and Oral Health. "This is impacting on the health of our nation. But by making changes, including reducing the consumption of sugary drinks, people can improve their health and their life expectancy."

Next year, the government plans to tax sugary drinks according to how much sugar they contain. Research shows that a 20% tax on sugary drinks will reduce obesity by 3,8% in men and 2,4% in women, resulting in 220 000 fewer obese adults. We urge all South Africans to take charge of their health and switch from drinking sugary drinks to water.

**OCTOBER** is MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

# Helping someone with mental illness

Understanding mental health illness can be frightening, challenging and something that few of us expect to be dealing with in our lifetime. But, what do you do if it affects someone you love or care about? To help you understand, we've put together a guide to make it easier for you to help reach out to someone needing help with this condition.



## Q How do I know if someone has a mental illness?

Only a trained professional can diagnose someone with a mental illness. If you notice changes in a person's mood, their behaviour, energy, habits or personality, you should encourage them to see their health professional who can make a proper diagnosis. Do not ignore symptoms that you notice or assume they will go away. Each person is different and not everyone experiencing a mental illness will show the typical signs and symptoms.

## Q How do I approach someone with mental illness?

Give the person opportunities to talk. It can be helpful to let the person choose when to open up. If they don't, speak openly but sensitively about your concerns. Choose a suitable time to talk in a space you both feel comfortable where there will be no interruptions, when you are both sober and in a calm frame of mind. Let the person know you are concerned about them and are willing to help. If the person doesn't feel comfortable talking to you, encourage them to discuss how they are feeling with someone else.

## Q What support can I give someone with mental illness?

- \* Treat them with respect and dignity
- \* Do not blame them for their illness
- \* Offer emotional support and understanding
- \* Encourage the person to talk to you
- \* Be a good listener
- \* Give them hope for recovery
- \* If they need information, make sure the resources you provide are accurate and appropriate to their situation.

## Q What should I avoid doing that is unhelpful?

- \* Telling them to 'snap out of it' or 'get over it'
- \* Being hostile or sarcastic
- \* Being over-involved or over-protective
- \* Nagging
- \* Telling them to 'put a smile on their face,' to 'get their act together' etc.
- \* Trying to cure the person or come up with answers to their problems.

## Q What if the person doesn't want help?

You should find out if there are any reasons why they don't want help – they may be based on mistaken beliefs. You may be able help the person overcome their worry about seeking help. If they still don't want help after you've explored their reasons, let them know that if they change their mind in the future they can contact you. You must respect the person's right not to seek help unless you believe they are at risk of harming themselves or others.

## Q What if the person is feeling suicidal?

Suicide can be prevented. Most suicidal people do not want to die. They simply do not want to live with the pain. It is important to take suicidal thoughts and behaviours seriously. Openly talking about suicidal thoughts and feelings can save a life. It is important that you know the warning signs and risk factors for suicide, and the reasons why a person might have thoughts of suicide and encourage them to seek help. Get the help needed if you can - speak to your local clinic, pastor or anyone who can assist.

**23** **OCTOBER** is NATIONAL IODINE DEFICIENCY DISORDER DAY

# The dangers of iodine deficiency

**WARNING!**  
Iodine deficiency in pregnant & breastfeeding women can cause brain damage to your developing baby

Mothers are often so busy taking care of their children that they forget to take care of themselves. This day is a reminder to all women, especially those who are pregnant, to eat healthily and make sure they get enough iodine.



## Why is it important?

Iodine is chemical used by our thyroid gland which helps control heartbeat, cholesterol and weight, balances hormones and process food. The thyroid gland is low in the front of your neck. Women naturally lack iodine because their thyroid gland is twice as big as that of men.

## Effects on a baby

The lack of iodine in a pregnant woman can lead to the following:

- \* Risk of losing the baby or a still birth
- \* Risk of delivering a premature
- \* Risk of birth abnormalities including brain damage, problems with growth, hearing and talking.
- \* Even a small lack of iodine during pregnancy, can lead to low intelligence in children.

## What foods should pregnant women avoid?

Avoid foods like cabbage, peanuts, soy flour, brussels sprouts, cauliflower and broccoli as these slow down your iodine.

## Signs that you may not be getting enough iodine

Consult your clinic if you are pregnant and experience any of the following, which may be a sign that your body is not getting enough iodine:

- \* Tiredness – more than usual
- \* Cold hands and feet
- \* Poor concentration and memory
- \* Enlarged Thyroid gland

**Don't eat more salt than usual, but try to buy iodized salt instead of normal sea salt.**

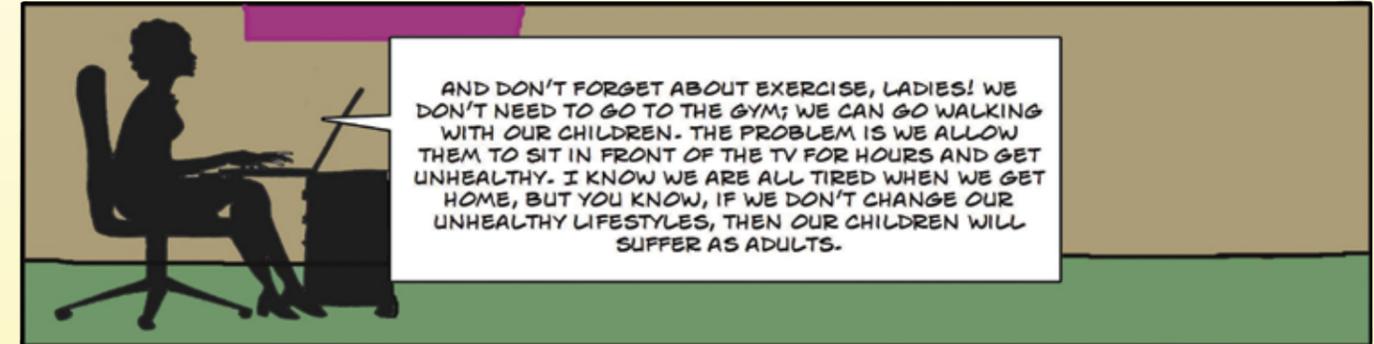
## MAKE SURE YOU ARE GETTING ENOUGH IODINE

Normally we only require a teaspoon of iodine in a lifetime, but because it cannot be stored for long periods our bodies, we need to take in tiny amounts often. The best way to increase your iodine levels is to eat more seafood and fish. Other foods that contain iodine are eggs and dairy products, onions and radishes.



**health**  
Department:  
Health  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

# NATIONAL OBESITY MONTH



**IT'S EASIER TO PREVENT DISEASE THROUGH HEALTHY EATING AND EXERCISE - AND IT'S CHEAPER TOO. DON'T TAKE A CHANCE ON YOUR HEALTH. A HEALTHY NATION BEGINS AT HOME. MAKE A START TODAY.**



**health**  
Department:  
Health  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**FIGHTING DISEASE, FIGHTING POVERTY, GIVING HOPE**

# OCTOBER



## 1 International Day for Older Persons

Older people make major contributions to society, through volunteer work, sharing their experience and knowledge, caring for grandchildren and even those left orphaned. This day pays tribute to their efforts, so take time to show them you care and speak out against all forms of violence towards our elderly.

## 9 Partnership against AIDS anniversary

South Africans with HIV and AIDS are living longer and healthier lives than ever before thanks to our collective efforts. This week is a reminder of how far we've come when working together to address AIDS.

*Together we are stronger!*



## 10 World Mental Health Day

Each year millions of people are diagnosed with a mental health disorder, yet few understand the problem. There is help out there – encourage those with a mental health condition to seek treatment so that they can live productive lives. **Mental illness is not a curse!**

## 12 World Arthritis Day

Arthritis is a disease that causes pain and loss of movement of the joints. Although there is no cure, it is a manageable condition.

## 16 World Food Day

Food costs are rising and we need to do more as a community to overcome food shortages. Education, skills training and even setting up community vegetable gardens are all ways we can work to end poverty.



## 16 World Spine Day

Back pain is the number one reason for time off work. Learn more about avoiding back injuries, such as correct posture when lifting heavy objects.

## 17 World Trauma Day

Trauma is a major cause of death and disability across the world. This day focuses on how to deal with trauma.

## 20 World Osteoporosis day

Osteoporosis is a disease of the bone affecting mainly women over the age of 50 and is treatable. Ask your health worker about your choice of care.

## 23 National Iodine Deficiency Disorder Day

Iodine is an important mineral needed for growth, especially in pregnant women because it helps a baby develop in the womb. **Speak to your clinic about how to make sure your body is getting enough iodine.**

## 24 World Polio Day

Polio has been virtually wiped out in most countries, so keep it up and ensure your child is vaccinated, on time, every time!

## OCTOBER 9-15 National Nutrition Week

Being underweight is one of the most common nutritional problems affecting South Africa's preschool children. Start a vegetable garden and teach children the value of eating and a living healthily!



## OCTOBER 15-19

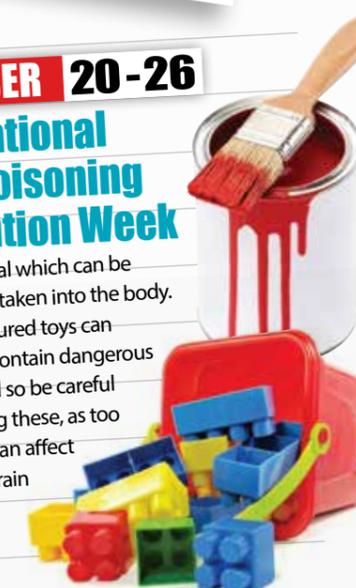
### National Obesity Week

While lack of nutrition affects many children, equally dangerous in our society is the problem of obesity, mainly due to unhealthy food choices. Eating healthy, nutritious meals begins at home and we need to encourage children at an early age that fast food is not a healthy alternative.

## OCTOBER 20-26

### International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week

Lead is a metal which can be dangerous if taken into the body. Brightly coloured toys can sometimes contain dangerous levels of lead so be careful when buying these, as too much lead can affect a person's brain and bones.



## OCT 28 - 3 NOV

### World Stroke Week

**Around 60 people die in South Africa every day from a stroke.** Speak to your health worker about ways you can prevent a stroke.



health

Department:  
Health  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

FIGHTING DISEASE, FIGHTING POVERTY, GIVING HOPE



More than 1 000 new graduates enter health care service!

# KZN boosts health care in the province

Healthcare in KZN has received a major boost with the graduation of 1501 new nurses this month.

Among them are 280 specialist nurses who are trained in specific health disciplines such as Advanced Midwifery, Orthopaedic Nursing Science, Operating Theatre Technique, Critical Care Nursing, Child Care Nursing Science, Ophthalmic Nursing, Psychiatric Nursing and Basic Midwifery. These include:

- \* 19 graduates for Ophthalmic Nursing, adding to 14 who graduated in 2014 and six more in 2015. They will now be instrumental in improving eye care services in the Province;
- \* 59 Advanced Midwifery and Neonatal Care; adding to the 61 who graduated in 2014.
- \* 41 for Orthopaedics Nursing Science, adding to the 48 who graduated last year; as well as the 41 who were produced in 2014. They will now be dispatched to all Health Districts, so as to curtail the transportation of patients to tertiary hospitals.

Also among the graduates are nurses from 11 other categories, including the Professional Nursing course diploma programme, professional nurses from the 2 year bridging course, enrolled nurses, nursing auxiliaries, basic midwives, psychiatric and primary health care nurses. Speaking at the graduation ceremony in Pietermaritzburg earlier this month, MEC Dhlomo called on all graduates to accept and treat the noble nursing profession as life-long training experience. "Continue treating patients with compassion as pronounced in the Nurses Pledge, where it says 'the total health of my patients will be my best consideration,'" said MEC Dhlomo. He added that KZN as a province has to perform better than any other province, as it carries a status of being the epicentre for

HIV and AIDS and tuberculosis (TB), high maternal and child mortality, alarming and ever-increasing incidence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) as well as the pandemic of violence and trauma. "These are what the Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi refers to as 'four highways along which South Africans are marching to their graves.' It rests on your shoulders as nurses to ensure that this country meets the identified key targets set out by the health sector," MEC Dhlomo told the graduates. Hailing the efforts of nurses in the province, he said without them the Department would not have been able to:

- \* Reduce mother to child transmission of HIV from 22% in 2008 to the current level of 1.2%
- \* Increase the number of facilities to access ART to close to 700
- \* Have 1,3 million patients on ART
- \* Have more 72% of these patients on ART managed at primary health care level.

*"The total health of my patients will be my best consideration."*

– from The Nurses Pledge

# MEC Dhlomo issues warning on herbal enemas

MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo has issued a stern warning about the dangers of using herbal enemas for the treatment of ailments in children.

This follows a recent spike in the number of children presenting at public healthcare facilities with complications after being given the herbal enemas. In certain households, enemas are used to treat, among others, constipation, diarrhoea and vomiting, abdominal pain, "isolo", abnormal stool colour or for bowel cleansing.

However, MEC Dhlomo says some enemas produce strong herbal toxins that are dangerous to the rectum and internal organs, as they are not examined for safety and regulated by the Medical Control Council under the Medical Control Act. This is in terms of the strength, ingredients, expiry date, as well as the mode of delivery.



*"We are extremely concerned by what has been happening, and encourage parents and guardians of all sick children to rather come to health facilities if the children are sick, so that they can be treated. This includes adults as well."* – Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo

MEC Dhlomo's advice for treatment of mild diarrhoea at home

## SUGAR/SALT SOLUTION

8 level teaspoons of sugar



Half a teaspoon of salt



One litre of cooled, boiled water

Mix all ingredients together and sip regularly.

If your child's condition does not improve after using the Sugar Salt Solution, you must take the child to the clinic immediately. This is applicable in situations where the child:

- \* Is an infant under 2 months of age, who is not feeding and has a fever
- \* Vomits everything
- \* Has fast or irregular breathing
- \* Has chest in-drawing
- \* Is weak, lethargic or unconscious
- \* Is having fits/convulsions
- \* Passes a lot of watery stool and has sunken eyes or a sunken fontanelle (a space between the bones of the skull in an infant), or the watery stool contains blood
- \* Cannot breastfeed or unable to drink
- \* Has an injury where bleeding is severe



health  
Department:  
Health  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

# “Circumcision is not a licence for unprotected sex”

Medical circumcision lowers the risk of HIV infection by **60%**

– KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo talks tough

**K**waZulu-Natal Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo has urged all men to remember that medical male circumcision is not a license for them to have unprotected sex, as it only lowers the chances of HIV infection by 60%.

Speaking after personally circumcising four men at Mbumbulu, MEC Dhlomo said: “We strongly appeal to parents and guardians of all boy children in KwaZulu-Natal to take advantage of the medical male circumcision camps that we have organized throughout the province during the school holidays. This is not only about cutting the foreskin – it also entails exposing young males to mentorship, moulding and life orientation. By attending these camps, the boys are taught how to become good and responsible men of tomorrow, who respect themselves, as well as women and children.”

**Since 2010, KwaZulu-Natal has medically circumcised more than 700 000 men and boys, since his Majesty, King Goodwill Zwelithini, revived the tradition of circumcision.**

MEC Dhlomo says the province is particularly proud to report that no death has occurred since the initiation of the programme. However, he issued a strong warning that MMC should not be used as a license for wayward and sexually irresponsible behaviour, stating that circumcision only lowers the risk of HIV infection by 60%.



“Medical Male Circumcision is not a license to behave anyhow. Do not make the mistake of having unprotected sex just because you are circumcised. If you test positive you will be counselled and initiated on treatment. If you test negative, you must strive to remain negative for as long as you live. You can achieve this by ensuring that you use Dual Protection, which entails using condoms during every episode of sex, and combine this with contraceptives for women to avoid unwanted pregnancy.”

The MEC urged young people to remain sexually responsible and make the right

decisions at all times. “Even when you go to your matric dance, you must always make sure you come back clean and free of diseases. You must remain HIV-free so that you can go to university and Tertiary Vocational Education and Training (TVET), graduate, so that you can find work and fulfill your dreams. You’re at a crucial moment in your lives. Whatever you do can either lead you to a good future or to a bad future. It is up to you to make the right decision. Do not waste your life. Look after yourself. That is all we ask of you.” added MEC Dhlomo.

**DO NOT WASTE YOUR LIFE. LOOK AFTER YOURSELF.**



**health**

Department:  
Health  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**FIGHTING DISEASE, FIGHTING POVERTY, GIVING HOPE**