

# HEALTH MATTERS

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AUGUST • 2013



**BREASTFEEDING**  
WHY IT'S IMPORTANT  
EVEN IF YOU'RE HIV+



**CAREGIVING**  
COULD YOU MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE?



## Saluting mothers of our nation



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Health  
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Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope

WOMEN'S MONTH  
AWARENESS

# Happy Women's Month!

KZN Department of Health wishes to salute all women in our province during Women's Month. As we pay tribute to the role played by the mothers of our nation in achieving a democratic South Africa, the Department would like to encourage all women to play an even greater role in improving the health outcomes of women and children in our province.

## THIS CAN BE DONE BY:

- Booking early at your clinic as soon as you know you are pregnant
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle by encouraging healthy eating choices and exercises regularly
- Making sure that your child receives all the immunisations needed
- Uniting and speaking out against rape in the community
- Being able to say no to sex without a condom



**REMEMBER! HEALTH CARE IS A RIGHT, BUT HEALTHY LIVING IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!**



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# Message from

**KZN Health MEC  
Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo**



August is Women's Month and while we pay tribute in remembering the thousands of women who marched to the Union Buildings on 9th August 1956 to protest against the extension of apartheid's pass laws to women, we cannot forget that although women to this day continue to play an important role in shaping our country, they continue to face major challenges in society.

A serious concern is the continued abuse and rape of women, especially the elderly and babies. The abuse of women, including rape which is a criminal act, is not only a cruel and despicable act but it also undermines efforts to fight the spread of HIV and Sexually Transmitted Diseases.

As traumatic and painful as it is, I would like to call on all women who are the unfortunate victims of a horrendous crime like rape to please not only report the incident to the police but to also ensure that they visit one of our health care centres within 72 hours, wearing the same clothing that they wore during the incident so that evidence can be collected. Many rape cases which come before our courts do not succeed because of the lack of evidence, and the only way to ensure a successful conviction is to keep your clothing on, do not wash and report the crime as quickly as possible, preferably within a few hours, so that the evidence can remain intact. The Department of Health in KwaZulu-Natal has a partnership with the National Prosecution Authority so that victims of rape who report the crime also receive legal assistance.

I would also like to call on all community leaders to assist our awareness campaigns to fight the scourge

of violence and abuse of women in our communities. It is only by speaking out that we can put an end to the rape and abuse of our women, elders and children.

While celebrating this month as women's month, please can I also urge all pregnant women to register their pregnancies as early as possible at their local clinic. Our studies have shown that the earlier you book your pregnancy, the better your chance of delivering a healthy baby. If there are any problems, your health worker can assist in finding a solution if you present early enough. This will save yours and baby's health, so please do the right thing and book early.

Finally, I wish to thank all the dedicated female health workers, women patients and the mothers of our nation for their bravery, commitment and dedication. Your patience in the face of adversity, ability to multi-task and strong faith that everything will work itself out is the reason God gave you the gift of motherhood!

Here's wishing all women in our province a very happy, healthy and safe women's month!

*Healthy mothers raise healthy children. Healthy children grow up stronger and better educated and help build more prosperous communities. And a health system that delivers for mothers and children will deliver for the whole community.*

# inside



**STOP CHILD RAPE**



**BREASTFEEDING**



**CAREGIVING**



**AWARENESS DAYS**

... **STOP CHILD RAPE** It's time to break the silence and speak out against rape.

... **BREASTFEEDING** Keep our handy guide to get you and baby off to the best start.

... **KZN NEWS** Health department launches Phila Mntwana Centres, plus more!

... **COMIC** Women's rights are human rights

... **COMMUNITY CAREGIVING** What you need to know to make a difference

... **AWARENESS DAYS** Key dates to remember in August

... **WOMEN'S HEALTH** is a community issue, but YOU must also take responsibility

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

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Too many children are raped and too many parents are scared to speak out. It's time to say enough is enough. Without our united voices, rapists will continue their crimes knowing they cannot be stopped. Only last month, an eight year child in Umthwalume was raped while fetching water. We must put a stop to it before more children become victims.



## Nandi's Story\*

On Monday July 15 eight-year-old Nandi was raped by a known community member. The little girl, who lives with her gogo while her mother studies, was at the river fetching water when she was attacked. Her attacker was seen walking around the neighbourhood hours before the rape took place, and waited for Nandi to go to the river where he cornered her. He lied and said he had been sent by her grandmother to help her carry the water. He then dragged her to a nearby forest where he raped and tried to strangle her. Nandi was found in the forest by her grandmother who went to search for her when she did not return. Her brave grandmother quickly took her to the local police to report the rape. Nandi is now receiving counselling and medical treatment.

*An innocent life changed in a second.*

\* Name has been changed

For many children who are raped, reporting it to their parents can be scary, and many choose not to say anything. It's important for the family or caregiver to listen and support the child, and this is how you can do this:

**IF A CHILD REPORTS RAPE**

If a child tells you that they have been raped, you are their only hope at that moment. It is important to listen to the whole report, without trying to fill in the details. Assure the child of the help you will provide. "The mistake that most mothers make when the child reports is to call other family members and make the child repeat it; this makes the child feel insecure and doubt whether she is safe, and this is why

there are cases of children who change their stories because they doubt that the family member believes them," says Sergeant Mzila of the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offence Unit. One of the most important points to remember is to report the rape to the police as soon as possible, before taking a bath so that the doctor can get samples from the victim.

**WARNING SIGNS THAT A CHILD HAS BEEN RAPED**

- Complaining about their private parts being painful
- Suddenly reclusive and not taking part in activities that they usually enjoy
- Trouble sleeping or eating
- Sudden fear of male figures

**Where to get help**

- Childline National Helpline..... **0800 05 55 55**
- SAPS (Family violence, Child protection and Sexual offences Unit)..... **10111**
- or any local police station
- Child Welfare ..... **031 312 9313**

**Be brave, speak out against rape. It's time to kick rapists out of our communities by breaking the silence!**

## SAY NO TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IS A COWARDLY ACT! A WOMAN'S BODY IS HER RIGHT.

NO MEANS NO, AND IF A WOMAN DOES NOT WANT TO HAVE SEX WITHOUT A CONDOM, IT IS HER RIGHT. FORCING A WOMAN TO HAVE SEX IS RAPE AND IS A CRIME PUNISHABLE BY LAW.

LET'S STOP THE VIOLENCE AND BREAK THE SILENCE. UNITE AS A COMMUNITY TO SAY WE WILL NOT TOLERATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN.



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Should I breastfeed my baby if I am HIV positive?

YES, YES, YES!

# BREASTFEEDING

*Still the right thing to do...*

*\* Even if you're HIV positive*

BREASTFEEDING IS ONE of the best ways to ensure your baby does not catch the HIV virus, because breastmilk offers the most effective protection against disease. For this reason, the KZN Department of Health has called on all new mothers to help step up its campaign to reduce the transmission of HIV from pregnant women to their babies – one of the ways to do this is to make sure that new mothers who are HIV positive breastfeed exclusively for at least six months, whilst on ARV treatment. In 2010 the Department stopped issuing formula to hospitals

and clinics to encourage new mothers to breastfeed their babies. In order to help new mothers with all they need to know about breastfeeding, the Department will also provide training for health workers across the province so that they are trained on all aspects of breastfeeding. Along with this, the Department has also established 'Human Milk Banks' in the province to support premature and sick babies in high care units that may not have access to their own mother's milk. Speak to your health worker about this, or contact the Department directly

to find out more. To help you care for your breasts when breastfeeding, use this useful guide to get you and baby off to a good start:

## Caring for your breasts when breast feeding

Many women think they do not have enough milk to breast feed. But even mothers who don't get enough to eat can generally make enough milk for their babies. The amount of milk your breasts make depends on how much your baby suckles. The more baby suckles, the more milk is produced!

## What to watch out for when breast feeding

### SORE OR CRACKED NIPPLES

If you feel pain from breastfeeding, it means baby is not getting enough of the breast in its mouth. If baby only suckles on the nipples, they will soon become painful or cracked, which can lead to infection.

#### Prevention and treatment

- Hold baby so that he gets a good mouthful around the nipple.
- Do not pull your breast out of baby's mouth. Let him feed as long as he wants. If you need to stop before baby is done, pull down gently on his chin.
- Treat sore nipples with breast milk at the end of feeding by rubbing some milk over your nipples. Do not use soap or cream – the body makes a natural oil that keeps the nipples clean.
- Avoid rough or tight clothing.
- To help sore nipples heal, leave your breasts open to air and sun if possible.
- Continue to feed from both breasts.
- If the pain is too much, remove milk from your breasts by hand and feed the baby breast milk with a spoon until the breasts heal – the sore should heal in two days (ask your health worker to show you how remove milk by hand from your breasts).

### PAIN AND SWELLING IN THE BREASTS

When milk first comes in, breasts often feel swollen and hard. If you breastfeed less, your milk supply will reduce, so it is important to keep breastfeeding baby on demand.

#### Prevention and treatment

- Start breast feeding within the first hour after birth.
- Make sure you are holding baby correctly.
- Feed baby often, and on both breasts, taking turns.
- After feeding, apply cool, wet cloths to the breasts to help with any swelling, which should go down after two days.

### BLOCKED DUCT

If there is a painful lump in the breast while breast feeding, it may mean that a duct (the spots around the nipple) is blocked by milk. It's important to continue breastfeeding so that the duct can empty and the breast does not get infected. The milk is still safe for baby.

#### Treatment for a blocked duct

- Apply warm wet cloths to the painful breast before you breastfeed.
- Continue to feed the baby often, especially from the painful breast, making sure baby is suckling on the breast correctly.
- As baby feeds, gently massage the lump, this will help clear the blocked duct.
- Change feeding positions to help the milk flow from all parts of your breast.
- If you cannot breastfeed, remove the milk by hand to clear the blocked duct.
- Wear loose clothing and rest as much as you can.

Most blocked ducts clear up in 24 hours. If you have fever for longer than that, you'll need treatment for breast infection. Contact your health worker for help with this.



**REMEMBER, breastfeeding is the best start you can give to your baby. IT'S FREE and has all the protection baby needs, so do the right thing, for baby and you!**

# KZN HEALTH



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# NEWS

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MEC Dhlomo together with Premier Mkhize and Queen Thandi Zulu at the launch of the Phila Mntwana Centres

## MAJOR BOOST FOR CHILD HEALTH CARE AS DEPT. LAUNCHES PHILA MNTWANA CENTRES

The Department of Health in KZN has partnered with the provincial Legislature to set up child care centres throughout the province, known as Phila Mntwana Centres. This means better access to health care for your child and more children living healthy and longer lives.

### Why is the Department establishing these centres?

Severe acute malnutrition in children under the age of 5 is a major concern as young children and many children under 5 years die because they are not getting enough nutrition to help them grow and the lack of access to health care. Children in this age group are also at risk of many illnesses such as diarrhoea, acute respiratory infections and other communicable diseases like TB. Children that are highly malnourished also have a higher risk of dying than well-nourished children. To ensure children are able to receive priority health care, the Department of Health together with the Provincial Council on AIDS led by Premier Dr Zweli Mkhize, decided to set up the Phila Mntwana Centres to address child health care and reduce the number of children dying in communities.

### How will the Centres work?

The Phila Mntwana Centres will serve as health promotion and disease prevention sites for children in the community and will be based at ward level. They will ensure immediate help is given to parents of children under five requiring assistance and will be referred to other public health facilities if further intervention is needed to address a specific health problem of the child. The Centres will be opened daily and will be operated by Community Care Givers skilled to provide advice and care on how to prevent diseases. The community care team will also be assisted by mobile clinics and family health teams from time to time.

### What Services Will Phila Mntwana Centres Offer?

The Centres will offer the following services throughout the province:

- Growth monitoring.
- Screening for malnutrition.
- Supply of vitamin supplements.
- Diarrhoeal Disease Intervention.
- Promotion of breastfeeding.
- Screening of TB.
- Tracing of defaulters; that is immunization and other well child services.
- Referral for further management.
- HIV and AIDS support.

## BEWARE false advertising claims

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH has begun an investigation into the sale of illegal medical products and has called on everyone to be more vigilant when buying such products.

The Provincial Council on AIDS, led by Premier Zweli Mkhize has tasked KZN Department of Health led by MEC Dhlomo, to look into the products that are being advertised by people pretending to be traditional healers, pharmacists, doctors, etc. "As Government we want to see a healthy nation and would like to work hand in hand with all sectors to address this issue. We appeal to all illegal producers and advertisers of medical



products to stop doing this because it affects the lives of people," said Dr Dhlomo.

The Department will engage further with role players in the coming months to map out a strategy to address the matter but has urged members of the public to be more careful when buying medical products that are not registered as not only are they illegal but can cause harm and lead to death.

## Halala RK Khan Hospital!

Durban's RK Khan Hospital has just won a top award in Africa for introducing a creative way of reducing waiting times at its Pharmacy.

THE HOSPITAL WALKED AWAY with the top award of Innovative Partnerships in Service Delivery, which was presented during a congress of African Ministers of Public Service held in the Republic of Congo last month. RK Khan Hospital CEO, Dr Prakash Subban explains how the hospital took the top position: "We were faced with long queues in our pharmacy, with more than 1800 outpatients attending on a daily basis. This left many patients angry, staff unhappy at working overtime and everyone generally dissatisfied with the service they were receiving. We had to come up with a way to address all of this within our budget constraints. We decided to engage with our local community centres which included temples, churches and community halls and together set up a program where we now use these centres for patients to collect their chronic medication on certain days. We will still

screen patients at the hospital but then refer them to their closest participating community centre to collect their on-going medication. This means less waiting at the hospital pharmacy and, because the centres are close to the community, patients go directly there, saving on transport costs as well," said an excited Dr Subban.

Congratulating the hospital on their award, KZN Health's Head of Department, Dr Sibongile Zungu said the department was looking at rolling out similar programs in other hospitals to reduce waiting periods. "We are proud of R K Khan Hospital's success, and their model demonstrates what the National Health plan is about. It's about working together with the community and empowering people to take responsibility and we would like to see this in other state health facilities too," said Dr Zungu.



# WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

HELLO ZAMA, WHY THE SAD FACE, WHAT'S WRONG?

HELLO LINDI, I'M VERY SCARED AND HURT. IT'S JABU. HE RAPED ME LAST NIGHT AND NOW HE'S GONE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I MUST DO.

HAIBO! ZAMA, THAT'S TERRIBLE! HOW COULD HE RAPE YOU?

HELLO SISI. SORRY BUT DID I HEAR YOU SAY JABU RAPED YOU? HE IS MY FRIEND, HOW CAN YOU ACCUSE HIM OF THAT, HE CAN'T RAPE YOU WHEN YOU ARE IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM!

EISH XOLANI! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU! JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE IN A RELATIONSHIP IT DOESN'T MEAN HE CAN DO WHATEVER HE WANTS WITH HER. HER BODY IS HER RIGHT AND EVERY WOMAN HAS RIGHTS IN A RELATIONSHIP. IF A WOMAN SAYS NO TO SEX AND A MAN FORCES HIMSELF ON HER, THAT'S RAPE! IT DOESN'T MATTER IF HE IS HER HUSBAND, BOYFRIEND OR SOMEONE ELSE. IF A WOMAN SAYS NO, IT MEANS NO.

XOLANI, HE IS YOUR FRIEND NEH? SO YOU MUST KNOW THAT HE HAS BEEN SLEEPING AROUND WITH OTHER WOMEN. I DON'T WANT TO GET A SEXUAL DISEASE. LAST NIGHT HE CAME HOME DRUNK AND WHEN I SAID NO, HE JUST RAPED ME. HE DOESN'T EVEN USE CONDOMS, SERIOUSLY HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF SOMEONE DID THAT TO YOUR SISTER?

THIS IS NOT RIGHT. ZAMA, I'M SORRY I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT ALL THIS. YOU ARE RIGHT, NO MAN HAS A RIGHT OVER A WOMAN'S BODY EVEN IF THEY ARE IN A RELATIONSHIP. I'M DISAPPOINTED IN JABU, HE SHOULD BE ACTING MORE RESPONSIBLY. THIS IS WHY WE ARE HAVING A PROBLEM WITH HIV AND AIDS. AS MEN WE DON'T THINK ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES.

SHO XOLANI, I'M SOOO HAPPY YOU THINK LIKE THAT. MAYBE YOU SHOULD EDUCATE YOUR FRIENDS TOO. ZAMA, AS WOMEN WE NEED TO BREAK THE SILENCE ON RAPE BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY WAY WE CAN STOP IT. I WILL HELP YOU AND WE CAN GO AND REPORT IT AT THE POLICE STATION?

YOU'RE RIGHT. IF WE DON'T SPEAK OUT, THIS WILL JUST CONTINUE. THERE WILL BE MORE RAPE AND MORE SEXUAL INFECTIONS. I WANT TO REPORT JABU SO THAT HE KNOWS I AM SERIOUS ABOUT THIS.

**STOP THE VIOLENCE, BREAK THE SILENCE!**



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# DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BECOME A CAREGIVER?

Thousands of South Africans live with some form of disability or illness where they are unable to care for themselves and depend on the services of a community caregiver. The role of caregivers extends beyond health care as many provide emotional and mental support to those in need. So, what does it take to become a caregiver and make a difference to someone's life?

*It's important to allow the patient in your care to do things they are capable of – this gives confidence and helps them to become self-sufficient*

## Qualities Needed

Being a caregiver doesn't mean anyone can become one and claim a caregiver's subsidy. It involves patience and understanding of the person in your care, especially as the person you are caring for can have mood swings, get angry quickly and may sometimes even reject you. Being a caregiver is a calling because it means caring for those in need. The Department of Health in KZN provides training for caregivers and can also provide some useful information to assist in the role.



## What Services Do Caregivers Provide?

Caregivers provide assistance to those with health problems, be it mental or physical. Some of the services provided by a caregiver include bathing, dressing, cooking, ensuring that the patient is taking their medication regularly and accompanying the patient to their clinic or hospital appointments. It's important for the caregiver to be able to assess a patient's home environment and determine what changes may be needed to make the patient more comfortable and practical. But, say experts, it's also important to allow patients in your care to be part of the decision making process regarding their surroundings.

## Empower the person in your care

It's important to allow the patient in your care to do things they are capable of – this gives confidence and helps them to become self-sufficient where possible. Try not to do everything for them if they are able to carry out basic functions like washing, dressing, eating. If need be, teach them ways they can do these things for themselves. Mentally challenged patients may be slow learners and may require breaking tasks into smaller areas. Be patient with them and allow for repetition if necessary – they need your support and encouragement. Teach younger members of the family to show understanding and to be sensitive towards the patient. The support of family and community is important for a patient in overcoming their health challenges.

## Care Dependency Grant

If you are taking care of a child under 18 years with a severe disability and need of full-time and special care, you may qualify for a special care dependency grant of R1200 per month from the Department of Social Development.

## Do you qualify?

You must:

- Be a parent, primary caregiver or a foster parent appointed by the court
- Be a South African citizen or permanent resident
- Not earn more than R151 200 a year if you are single. Your combined income should not be above R302 400 a year if you are married.

## WHO TO CONTACT

South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), 1 Bank Street, Pietermaritzburg

Tel: ..... **033 846 3300**

Call Centre: ..... **079 780 9040 / 079 780 9040**



## Tips for Caregivers

- Keep the health worker or doctor informed about the patient's health progress and any side effects of medication.
- Keep a notebook of the patient's health and take it along to clinic appointments.
- Always ask questions if you are unsure of what to do.



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# 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®

Disposable Nappies

### Dry Comfort®

# HUGGIES BABY CORNER

Disposable Nappies Dry Comfort

## 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!

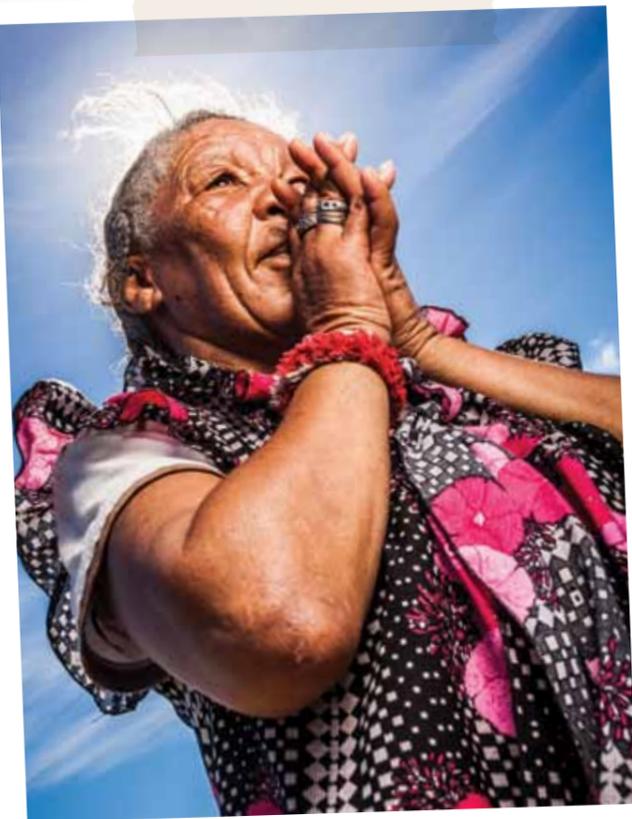


1. Feed baby as soon as you can – straight after the birth is best, if you and your baby are well.
2. Ask your health worker or someone with experience for help with positioning – if it hurts, there's a problem. Initial tenderness is normal. Soreness that gets worse is not.
3. Keep your baby close to 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 Breast-feeding Tips

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

# AUGUST



## National WOMEN'S MONTH

*Wathint abafazi wathint imbokodo You strike a woman, you strike a rock!*

As we celebrate the mothers of our nation, KZN Department of Health would like to call on all communities to step up their fight against violence towards women. Too many women, children and even our elderly are being raped daily and in their homes, their place of safety. During this month let us do more to come together as communities to protect our women and children and most importantly, to take leadership and report the violence. We need to break the silence to stop the violence!

**Organ Donor Month**

Organ donors are desperately needed to save lives of many people who suffer life threatening diseases. However, the government has also warned people not to be tricked into selling any body parts for money - this is illegal. Saving a life does not need to be done in an illegal manner, you can make a difference to those who need your help, speak to your health worker about organ donation, but do not be tricked into selling your organs by those just wanting to make money!

## AUGUST 12 International Youth Day

International Youth Day was created by the United Nations on 12 August 2000. The aim of the day is to raise awareness of international youth, their role and needs in society. The youth have an important role to play as future leaders and as a Department, we would like to call on them to lead responsibly in their health decisions too! Circumcision, use of condoms and voluntary HIV testing all show responsibility in taking control of their lives.



## 1-7 AUGUST World Breastfeeding Week

Many years after gogo said breast milk is best, experts now agree with her! During this week, health organisations around the world repeat their call to new mothers to breastfeed their babies, because breast milk is the best start you can give to your child in life. It has everything a baby needs to protect them against infection.

## AUGUST 5-9 RHEUMATIC FEVER WEEK and RHEUMATIC HEART DISEASE WEEK

Rheumatic fever is a serious disease that usually affects children and young adults. It affects different areas of the body, including the bones, heart, skin, nervous system and brain. It can develop after a serious infection with a sore throat. There is no actual cure but medication can reduce the pain. For best advice speak to your health worker or contact KZN Health on 0800 00 5133.

## AUGUST 6-12 POLIO AWARENESS WEEK

Polio is a highly contagious viral infection that can lead to breathing problems, paralysis and sometimes death, if not treated properly. Those who are vulnerable to contracting the virus are pregnant women, children and those with weakened immune systems. South Africa is currently polio free thanks to government efforts to wipe out the virus, but mothers still need to ensure that their children receive the polio vaccine so that we continue to remain polio free as a country.

## AUGUST 26-31 AFRICAN TRADITIONAL MEDICINE WEEK

Modern medicine has an important role to play in treating diseases, but that does not mean we should no longer appreciate the customs and traditional ways of healing which have been helping people for many years. This week is aimed at raising awareness of the important role traditional healers play. But while we need to respect their role, it is also important to visit those that are recognised by the Department of Health to ensure they are legitimate.

## From 15 AUGUST Bone Marrow Donation and Leukaemia Awareness Month

Leukaemia is cancer of the blood (or bone marrow, which is the soft tissue at the centre of the bones). Treatment requires someone with matching tissue type to donate a stem cell (stem cells are the foundation for every organ and tissue in the human body) which can help to repair or replace tissue damaged by diseases such as cancer, diabetes and other blood conditions. 75% of people suffering from leukaemia in South Africa are under 25, and those of African descent have the hardest time finding a suitable donor. Why not make a difference to someone's life and register to become a donor? It's safe, free and you could save a life! To find out more, contact The Sunflower Fund toll free on 0800 12 10 82



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# WOMEN'S HEALTH IS A COMMUNITY ISSUE

*Educate a woman and you educate a nation...  
educate a man, and you educate an individual!*

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH in KZN has made maternal health a top priority but women's health will only improve if women take the opportunity to act responsibly regarding their health. Often women, especially in rural areas, work long hours to look after the needs of their family and community. A woman sometimes does not pay attention to her health because she is too busy taking care of her family, saying "I can't go to the clinic today because there's nobody to cook or look after my family." This has led to more women dying from TB, for example, because fewer women access treatment regularly – yet TB affects both men and women.

## Act as a community to encourage good health of women

When a woman's health is good, everyone benefits. It means she has the energy and strength to do her daily work and fulfill the many roles she has in her family and community. A healthy woman also means healthier babies and a healthy nation!

## A Woman's Right to say No

A woman is more at risk of contracting a sexual disease than a man because women often do not experience any signs of infection, and a man's sperm can travel into her blood. But the problem is women are still scared to say no to unprotected sex. A woman has a sexual right to say no to sex without condoms, especially if her partner is being unfaithful. As a community, we can encourage men to respect the choices of women (a woman is not disrespecting her culture if she refuses to have sex without a condom, she is protecting her health).



## HOW MEN CAN HELP

Any man can help improve women's health by:

- Raising his children to respect women and treating girls and boys as equals
- Taking responsibility for family planning
- Encouraging his partner to go for regular health check-ups and help with the money needed
- Taking turns to care for the children and help around the house
- Being faithful to his partner and practicing safe sex
- Not tolerating ANY kind of violence towards a woman
- Encouraging his children to care for their physical health and teaching them how to prevent common illnesses through healthy choices.
- Working to change the image that a strong man is one who has sex with many women. A strong man is a strong partner!