

HEALTH MATTERS

FREE

Ezempilo

EDUCATE || INFORM || EMPOWER

EDITION 2 • 2012



KZN HEALTH READIES ITSELF

for Easter Roads

**TB:
We can stop
the spread**

MEC DHLOMO HANDS OVER AMBULANCES



health

Department:
Health
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL



If you are HIV Positive,
get tested for TB

Cover your mouth when
coughing as TB spreads
through the air

Keep windows open for
fresh air and to keep the
germs out

Take your medicines
regularly, on time, every day.

It's important to complete
the course of treatment,
even if you are
feeling better.

**TB. WE CAN STOP IT
IN OUR LIFETIME**

TB CAN BE TREATED

Don't delay if you think you have it



health

Department:
Health
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope

Message from...

Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo, MEC: KZN HEALTH

The focus for this year's World TB Day is mine workers as a rallying cry for coordinated action in our fight against the disease.

Mining has amplified HIV and Tuberculosis (TB) epidemics through social, political, and biological risks posed to miners and their communities.

"If TB and HIV are a snake in Southern Africa, the head of the snake is here in South Africa. People come from all over the Southern African Development Community to work in our mines and export TB and HIV, along with their earnings. If we want to kill a snake, we need to hit it on its head," says Health Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi.

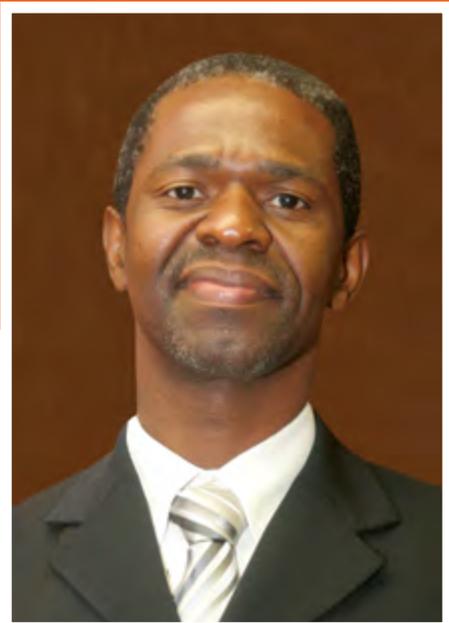
During this year's World TB Day we must evaluate the sources of ineffective responses and identify mechanisms for ensuring effective care and norms of responsible mining. We must argue that action is needed by all to spur the development of effective governance systems being constrained by domestic vested interests.

Generally, we are seeing both the fruits of concerted action to control TB and the lethal nature of the disease's on-going burden, especially for the communities near mines. Globally, the World Health Organization reports that TB incidence rates may have peaked and that mortality is beginning to fall - a sign that the Millennium Development Goal of reversing TB incidence is achievable. Almost 60 per cent of TB cases are now detected and, out of those, the vast majority are cured. Over the past decade, thousands of patients have been placed on effective TB treatment thanks to the efforts of our government working with civil society and a wide range of partners.

At the same time, TB has reached an epidemic scale. It still kills many people every day. The number of people falling ill with TB continues to rise. TB is the disease most people with AIDS actually die of and now the existence of extensively drug-resistant TB not only threatens us with a new pandemic, but also poses a serious risk to the effectiveness of HIV treatment programmes.

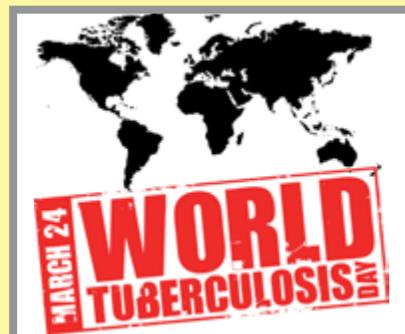
To highlight the grave public health threat and the need for a stepped up response, we are focusing our efforts on the mining communities to call for a Stop to TB. We hope mine bosses will do the same. But we must give life to this call.

A cure for TB has been available for more than 50 years. Yet many people still do not see the importance of the life-saving treatments. Let this be the year to scale up action against all forms of TB anywhere and everywhere.



INSIDE this issue

- 3 **School Health Week 5-9 March**
- 4 **Through the Keyhole**
Championing the rights of those with disabilities
- 5 **International Women's Day: 8 March**
A woman's health is a community issue
- 6 **Awareness this Month: World TB Day 24 March**
TB is curable - Act now to get it treated
- 8 **Can you Breastfeed when you're HIV Positive?**
Yes! Yes! Yes!
- 10 **KZN Health News**
- 12 **Freedom of Choice Cartoon**
- 14 **March Awareness Days**
- 16 **Circumcise Be a real man!**



With thanks from the following contributors

COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, KZN DEPT OF HEALTH

Zohra Mohamed Teke (Editor)

WRITERS

Kathy Waddington
Coliwe Zulu
Derick Matsengarwodzi

DEPT PHOTOGRAPHER

Themba Mngomezulu (Office of the MEC)

CARTOONIST

Dudley Viall

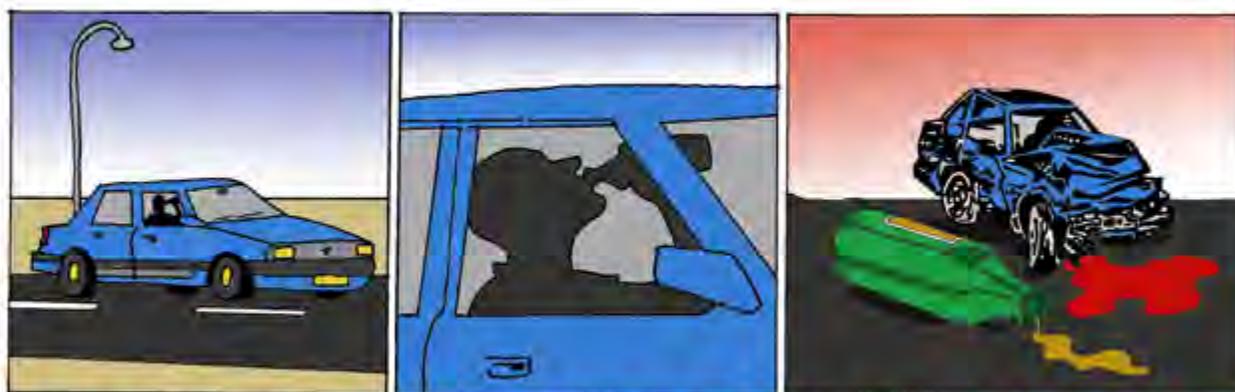
DESIGNERS

Carolyn Raad
Tanya Campher

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 P O Box 25439, Gateway 4321.

COPYRIGHT

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.



ARRIVE ALIVE - DON'T DRINK ON THE ROAD

"A healthy mind develops in a healthy body."



School Health Week 5-9 March

There's an old saying that says "a healthy mind develops in a healthy body." But, sadly the good eating habits that many of us grew up with are no longer there. Most of our children are either not getting enough to eat or are eating the wrong foods, with some at risk of becoming overweight.

As we celebrate School Health Week, KZN Department of Health would like to appeal to teachers, community members and even pupils to do more to encourage health eating.

As a community we must be more vigilant about who the school going children in our area are, and make sure that those from child headed homes are getting something to eat before starting their day.

WESTERN EATING = UNHEALTHY BODY

With many of us leading busy life, too often our children are being fed junk food. It's time to stop this

practise, and think carefully each time we buy that fried chicken, burger and chips.

Are we giving our children a treat or are we setting them up to become unhealthy adults?

Take Sizwe who lives with his two siblings. Fortunately, before their mother's death, she taught them to be self sufficient and to eat healthy meals. Today they still work in their own backyard garden where they harvest

fresh vegetables for their meals. "We cannot afford to buy vegetables because we don't have the money so we take very good care of our vegetable garden because it's our source of food, thanks to the lessons our mother taught us.

We hardly get sick because we eat fresh, healthy food, not processed food like junk food," explains Sizwe, adding that they grow beans, spinach and cabbage.



**EAT HEALTHY,
STAY HEALTHY!**

Through the Keyhole...

CHAMPIONING THE RIGHTS of those with DISABILITIES



Mgcineni Lembethe

IT'S BEEN A LONG ROAD TO WALK FOR MGCINENI, WHO HAS BEEN FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHTS OF THOSE WITH DISABILITIES SINCE 2002.

As an Occupational Therapist Assistant at Townhill Hospital, his passion to the cause was finally recognised when he was rewarded by the Premier's Office last year. "When I started calling for people with disabilities to be recognised, I was called a political activist seeking recognition because they did not understand my calling in life which was to support people living with disabilities and know their rights," he said.

After forming a group, Mgcineni describes how, fed up with not being heard, he went to a local supermarket in a wheelchair, to raise attention to the difficulties those with disabilities face every day when they cannot access public places due to the lack of wheelchair access. Although not mentally or physically challenged, Mgcineni says he wanted to

experience the segregation that those with disabilities face daily. His efforts to enter the shop were unsuccessful because there was no wheelchair entrance. "This one move made a lot of change. We called for changes in construction of buildings to be in compliance with the rights of those with disabilities," he says, adding that he went on to call for children with disabilities to be enrolled in public schools and not confined to special institutions to eliminate stigma, went on to help source walking aids for the physically challenged and to top it all - became an ambassador to get youth involved in male circumcision.

INSPIRED BY FAMILY VALUES

Mgcineni is one individual whose passion and determination produced results, yet he remains humbled by it all. He explains simply that growing up with people who experienced disabilities made him more sensitive and wanting to change things for the better. His mother is epileptic while his father and elder sister are

both mentally challenged and on treatment. "From childhood I was always worried about the lack of understanding of disability in the community. As an Occupational Therapist Assistant today some of his duties include imparting life skills to patients with substance abuse problems who are on rehabilitation. It's a position he thrives on and is proud to be working in a field he is so passionate about, which goes to prove:

All it
takes
is
one
person
to
make a
difference



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: 8 MARCH

WHILE WOMEN ALL OVER THE WORLD CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY THIS MONTH, IN SOUTH AFRICA THE STRUGGLE OF OUR RURAL WOMEN IS STILL AN ISSUE WHICH NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED.

Women in rural areas continue to work long hours to look after the needs of their family and community. Her health is often the last thing on her mind, and even when she falls sick, she seldom goes to the clinic. "There will be nobody to cook or look after my family if I go to the clinic" is often the reason. For example, TB is spreading among men and women, yet fewer women get treatment – with more women than men dying from TB because they do not access treatment often. KZN Health have made Maternal health a priority to ensure more women have access to health - but women need to empower themselves to make use of this access.

Why is it so important for a woman to be empowered?

Empowering yourself as a woman means everyone benefits – yourself,

your family, and your community!

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has had a unique impact on women, made worse by their role within society

A woman's health is a community issue.

and their biological vulnerability to HIV infection.

Sexual Health Choices

Being faithful to your partner is no protection against HIV if your partner is not faithful too. If you are worried, don't stay silent. You can talk to health workers who will tell you more about how to protect yourself.

Throwing out old ideas

Older women often make the mistake of thinking that sexually transmissible infections STIs only affect young people, when in fact sexually active people of all ages need to take precautions and practice safe sex.

What are the risks to women if they are not given a choice?

These include pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD's).

If accidents happen

If you've had unprotected sex or the condom breaks or comes off during sex, emergency contraception can

be taken to reduce the risk of pregnancy. If you do participate in unprotected sex you should get tested at the clinic.

HOW MEN CAN HELP

A man can help improve women's health by:

- Raising his children to respect women and treating girls and boys as equals
- Listening to his partner's and daughters' concerns and see if a solution can be found to meet the needs of everyone in the family
- 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
- Be faithful to his partner or if he cannot, practise safe sex.
- Not tolerating ANY kind of violence against a woman
- Encourage his children to care for their physical health
- Working to change the image that a strong man is one who has sex with many women.

AWARENESS THIS MONTH: WORLD TB DAY 24 MARCH



TB IS CURABLE. ACT NOW TO GET TREATED.

TB is a serious disease that can spread easily indoors – especially if it is TB in the lungs! People who are HIV positive often get TB because their immune systems are weak and they cannot fight off the virus easily. You can get TB without being sick. If you leave it untreated, it can lead to death – which is why it is very important to get tested for TB regularly and continue with treatment. The KZN health department and eThekweni's Health Unit offers TB treatment at over 300 Primary Health Care clinics across KZN so patients no longer need to visit hospitals for this.

WHAT IS TB AND HOW IS IT CAUSED?

TB is caused by a small germ in the body and is mainly spread through the air. However healthy people can usually fight the germ. For those who are ill, weak, malnourished, very young or very old or have HIV, the TB germs attack their body, and they are unable to fight against the germ because of their weak immune systems.

WHEN TO GET TESTED FOR TB

Get tested at any public clinic or hospital for free if you have any of the following: chest pains, not feeling hungry, tiredness, night sweats or fever, a cough for more than two weeks or coughing up blood, or unexplained loss of weight.

If you are HIV positive it is especially important to get tested.

HOW DO I TAKE MY MEDICINE?

Take your medicines in the way that your health worker tells you to.

If you have more than one medicine, take them at the same time.

Medicines are usually taken from Monday to Friday of each week.

If your medicines are nearly finished, you can take your green card to any clinic. They will give you more medicines.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I DON'T GO FOR TREATMENT?

You will spread the disease to others and more people will be infected. TB can lead to death if left untreated.

MUST I FINISH MY TREATMENT?

If you stop your treatment before your health worker advises you to, you can get TB again. It takes at least six months to 1 year to cure TB.

It is very important to complete the full treatment.

HELP WITH TAKING YOUR MEDICINE

It is a good idea to get somebody to help you take your medicine.

Ask at the clinic about getting help with taking your medicine.

You can choose your helper – the person can be a neighbour or a nurse at a clinic. It is important that the person is nearby and easy to get to every day.

Your helper will keep your medicine and give it to you every day. Your helper will also encourage you to carry on with the treatment when you get tired of it.

It is important to take your medicine everyday – even when you feel better, until your health worker tells you to stop.

CAN I USE TRADITIONAL MEDICINE TO CURE TB?

Many people go to traditional healers (sangomas) to help cure their TB. This is fine but it is still important to take your TB medicine from the hospital or clinic even if you go to a sangoma. The TB medicine that your doctor gives you will make sure that you get better from TB.

SOCIAL GRANTS

The South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) offers help to people living with HIV or TB under the temporary disability grant and may continue up to 12 months. All HIV patients qualify for the SASSA grants amounting to R1010.00 a month.

To find out more on how to apply contact SASSA on 031 360 5103.



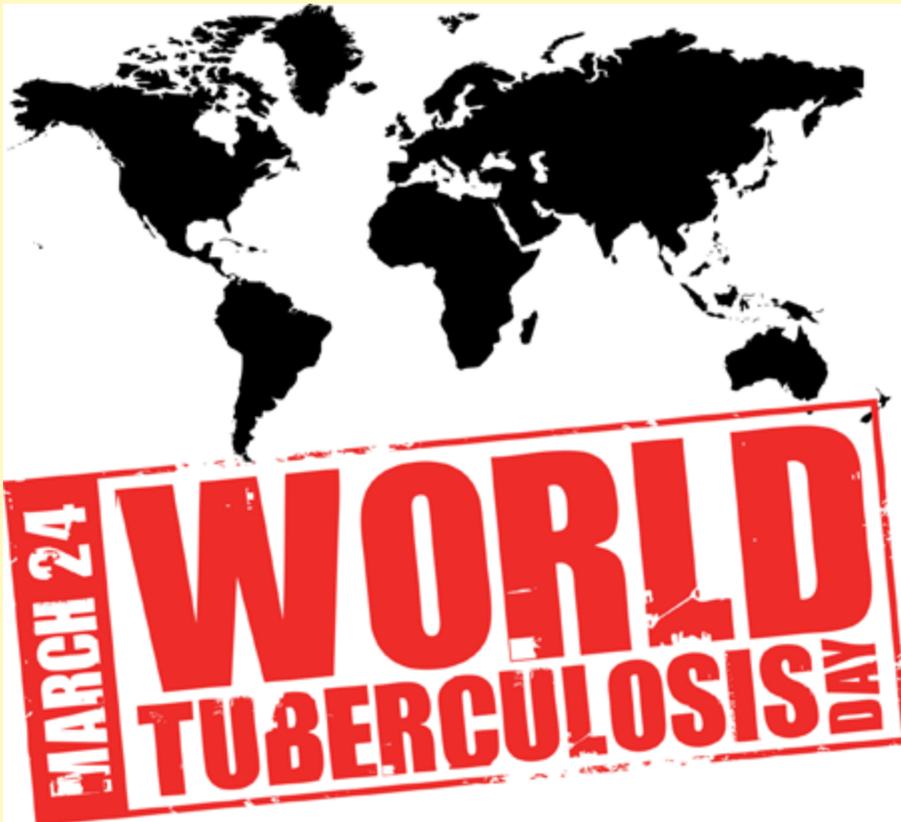
health

Department:
Health
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope

WORLD TB DAY:

24 March 2012



DEALING WITH TB WHEN YOU HAVE HIV

People who have HIV or AIDS are more likely to get TB because their immune systems are low – that is, their bodies are too weak to fight off infections and certain germs that attack the body. Because TB can spread through the air, it means those with the HIV/AIDS virus are more likely to catch the disease. The good news is that TB can still be cured even if you have HIV or AIDS - as long as you complete your TB treatment.

Is TB really serious?

Yes, especially if you have HIV.

When your immune system is weak, untreated TB infection can quickly turn into TB disease. Without treatment, TB disease can cause you to get very sick or even die. That is why it is very important to get tested and treated for TB. Completing your medicine can save your life.

Do all people with HIV get TB disease?

No, but it does mean you have a greater chance of getting TB disease if you have both TB infection and HIV

infection. That is why you should get tested asap for TB if you have any of the symptoms

THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF TB IS TO CURE THOSE WHO HAVE TB!

We all need to unite to fight against TB in order to protect the spread.

We can do this by:

- Educating our communities and family on TB, the signs and how it is spread.
- Getting tested for TB, and encouraging those around us to get tested – especially if living with someone who has TB
- Try to have fresh air in closed areas – keep windows open, as this reduces the spread of germs
- Let plenty of sunlight in – sunshine helps kill TB germs
- Making sure we know who has TB in our area, how they are being treated and when a person is cured.
- Encouraging TB patients to use DOTS – Directly observed Treatment, short-course. These are people (usually a health worker, neighbour, friend or volunteer) who makes sure that a sick person takes the necessary medicine at the right time and ensures there is a record of this.

TB is a community problem

Get tested. Get treated. Get cured.

CAN YOU BREAST FEED WHEN YOU'RE HIV POSITIVE?

YES! YES! YES!

GOGOS, nurses and doctors have always agreed on one thing – breast feeding is the one thing that gives your baby the best start in life. That's because only breast milk contains perfect food ingredients to help your baby grow properly, plus more special ingredients that protect their young immune system.

But HIV/AIDS made people worry when they first found out the virus could be passed on in breast milk. Some decided maybe formula-feeding would be safer and tried that. But, results have shown that bottle-feeding is a big risk.

HIV-positive babies are twice as likely to die if they're fed formula

milk, which is one of the reasons KZN Health decided to stop supplying formula milk to all hospitals and clinics and to encourage women to breastfeed exclusively.

Now at last everyone's sure breastfeeding is best whether you're HIV-positive or not – but you do have to be careful how you breast feed if you're HIV-positive, and to help you understand, here are some guidelines from the experts:

1. Make sure you're on ARVs or your baby is on nevirapine (speak to your health worker about this).
2. For the first six months, your baby must have breast milk breast milk - and only breast milk.

3. Don't be tempted to give juice or even water if baby's thirsty – give only breast milk until six months. Breastmilk contains enough water to quench your baby's thirst.

4. Only introduce solids at six months.

5. If you're leaving baby with a caregiver, express your milk so the caregiver can give it at feeding time. It will keep safely outside a fridge for up to six hours.

6. If anyone questions what you're doing, explain the reasons why breastfeeding is best, and that all doctors and clinics now support this exclusively!

STILL WORRIED ABOUT BREAST FEEDING?

Separating the myth from the facts



A myth is something that people say without actually having any proof to support their statements. We asked health experts to explain if they were true or not, and this is what they had to say:

MYTH 1: “Breast milk is no better than formula from a bottle – just choose which is easier for you”

FACT: Breast milk contains about 100 special ingredients that formulas can’t exactly copy, which is why it’s called

nature’s miracle food. The special ingredients in breast milk helps your baby’s new body digest fat as well as a body-building protein.

MYTH 2: “My milk’s too weak – I must give baby a bottle instead”

FACT: Believe it or not, that thin-looking milk in the first few days is probably the strongest milk of all because it contains an extra top-up of the ingredients that protect your baby to boosts his immune system in the

first weeks and months of life. So this is a good sign and it means you must carry on breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is a wonderful investment for your baby’s future physical and emotional health, encouraging baby’s teeth, gums and jaw to develop properly, helping protect him against infections and allergies, developing his brain and giving the two of you a closeness you couldn’t get any other way.

MYTH 3: “Breastfeeding is too difficult”

FACT: Some mothers are scared of breastfeeding because they believe it should be natural and they should get it right first time. Relax and allow baby to attach well onto your breast (most of the dark part of your breast should be in his mouth) because his suckling helps your body make more milk. If you’re nervous and hold baby away, he’ll just nibble your nipple which can be sore and give you cracked nipples. It also means you won’t make enough milk.

MYTH 4: “I don’t have time to breastfeed”

FACT: Stop a moment and think about the time (and money) you spend buying formula, equipment, sterilizing bottles, mixing the feed and even checking it’s the right temperature after being kept in the fridge. Breast milk is always at the right temperature!

KZN HEALTH



health

Department:
Health
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

NEWS

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope



MEC Dhlomo with Head of Ministry Ms Makhanya and team celebrating the handing over of new ambulances



From the desk of Deputy Manager, Media Liaison, Chris Maxon

ZN READY FOR NHI PILOT PHASE

The wait is finally over. After years of planning towards a new National Health Insurance plan which will provide equal and fair access to all South Africans, the test phase will finally be rolled out across our country next month. It's the start of a new era in health care delivery, and one that we should all support. As part of the preparations towards this, KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo handed over the first batch of 17 revamped state of the art mobile clinics that will offer improved services, sufficient space for examinations and privacy.

This forms part of the Department's plan to increase primary healthcare which is the cornerstone of delivery of the new health plan. It means taking health care to the people, providing access and treatment of

diseases which do not require hospital intervention. "The World Health Organisation states that any reform in primary healthcare represents a single great opportunity for the improvement of the lives of people and performance of the healthcare system as a whole," said Dr Dhlomo during the unveiling of the mobile clinics Pietermaritzburg's Grey's Hospital. The Department has spent more than R100 million to improve its fleet including the revamp of mobile clinics. There are currently around 170 mobile clinic vehicles which were designed in the '80s. These have proven 'not to be friendly' to staff as the nursing staff are accommodated where patients are examined. Many of these old vehicles could not travel in some of the rural areas where the terrain is terrible. "This intervention is part of our plans to prepare for the implementation of the National Health Insurance and

towards our goal of a long and health life for our people. Through these clinics we will be able to improve on cancer, TB and screenings in areas where we are unable to offer a fixed clinic due to population size," added the MEC.

The new vehicles will provide a comprehensive package of primary healthcare services especially for the enhanced school health programme and for mainly rural communities. They are fitted with electrical power and water facilities, environmentally friendly and, have low fuel consumption.

The clinics are being distributed to all Districts in KZN as a first batch with more to come in the new financial year. The mobile clinics are just the start of what's to come as the Department continues to invest in the health of our people, it's about working together for a better society!

KZN HEALTH



health

Department:
Health
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

NEWS

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope

EASTER HOLIDAYS

- go easy on the drinking
- your life depends on it

Easter is a time of celebration. Our province comes alive with a party atmosphere, the beaches are full, and everyone is in a happy mood.. and so the beer flows.

Unfortunately it's also a time when road accidents increase, family fights as a result of too much of drinking cause hurt, break-ups and serious injuries. Death is often the result of our over indulgence at this time of the year.

Every year is a cause for concern as our ambulances and health facilities remain on high alert in preparation for Easter road accidents. Many accidents can be avoided if we all act responsible on the roads – which can save lives! Most innocent victims who lose their lives in road accidents are young children, mums and breadwinners. Families are left without support, when we can avoid this. Many accidents are caused by people driving too fast, not obeying the rules of the road, taking too many chances – and sometimes being drunk behind the wheel or walking while under the influence along the highway.

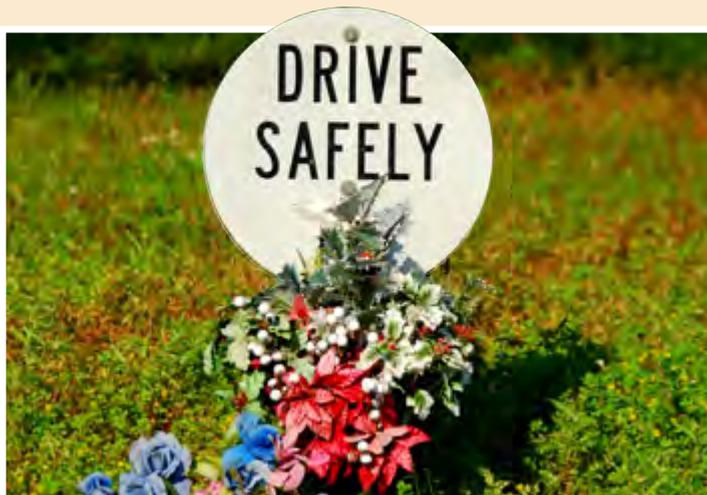
Maybe this is the year to change things for the better.

Remember if you are caught in a roadblock you can't refuse to take a breathalyser test. **THAT'S THE LAW.**

On a public road nobody can drive a vehicle; or get into a driver's seat of a motor vehicle, the engine of which is running, while under the influence of liquor or a drug.

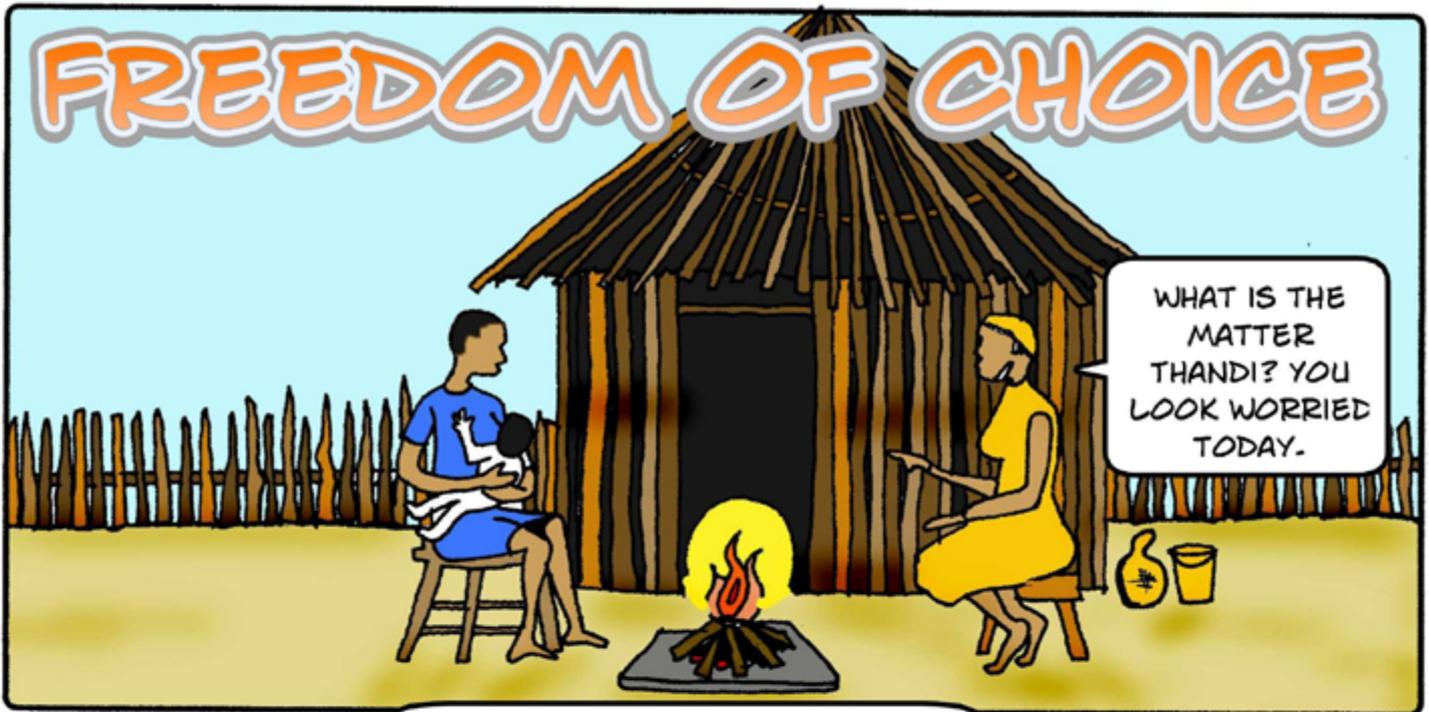


From the desk of Deputy
Manager, Media Liaison,
Chris Maxon



**DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE.
THINK AND ACT RESPONSIBLY,
REMEMBER YOUR DECISION
COULD SAVE OR TAKE A LIFE.**

FREEDOM OF CHOICE



OH ZINZI, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT MY HUSBAND. LAST NIGHT HE WANTED TO HAVE SEX WITHOUT A CONDOM. I SAID NO, AND NOW HE IS ANGRY WITH ME.

ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT FALLING PREGNANT?

WELL, THAT AS WELL, BUT SOME OF THE WOMEN HAVE TOLD ME THAT HE SLEEPS WITH OTHER WOMEN. NOT ONLY ME. I ASKED HIM, AND OF COURSE HE DENIES IT. HE SAYS I DON'T TRUST HIM. WHAT IF HE GIVES ME HIV? OH ZINZI, WHAT MUST I DO?

THANDI, YOU MUST TRY AND SPEAK TO HIM AND MAKE HIM UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS ABOUT SAFETY AND NOT TRUST. HE MUST EITHER STOP SLEEPING WITH OTHER WOMEN OR WEAR A CONDOM.

I SPOKE TO MY LOCAL CLINIC WHO GAVE ME ADVICE ON HOW TO SPEAK TO MY HUSBAND ABOUT THIS. YOU SHOULD VISIT THE CLINIC TO GET THIS INFORMATION AND GIVE IT TO YOUR HUSBAND. IF HE UNDERSTANDS THE RISKS, HE WILL BE MORE CAREFUL.



FOR MORE SUPPORT ON YOUR RIGHTS AS A WOMEN CONTACT SIZANI NGUBANE AT THE RURAL WOMENS MOVEMENT: 031 579 4559 OR 073 840 5151

March



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 10 MARCH

One hundred years ago, on the first International Women's Day women around the world took to the streets to demand basic rights, including the right to vote, the right to equal wages, and the right to an education.

That passion for basic rights still shines strongly in South Africa as it does in other parts of the world. As South Africans, it's important to remember the women who stood before the might of apartheid machinery, fighting against the laws of apartheid. We should remember too, that women in our rural areas continue to struggle – against poverty and social exclusion. The struggle for the rights of women is not over, despite our achievements.



WORLD KIDNEY DAY 10 MARCH

Our kidneys do a very important job in our body – cleanse and get rid of all the unwanted substances that are not good, so if we do not take care of our kidneys, they cannot do their job, which can lead to your body shutting down. To keep your kidneys healthy, make sure you:

DON'T SMOKE

This is the simplest, most important lifestyle habit to change to reduce the risk of kidney disease.

LIMIT YOUR ALCOHOL

Excessive alcohol intake can lead to heart disease and high blood pressure, increasing the risk of kidney disease.

NUTRITION

The food you eat plays a huge role in your well being. It can help to prevent some diseases, and help to manage others. People who are overweight are more likely to develop diabetes and high blood pressure - major risk factors in kidney disease.

EXERCISE

Not only will exercising help you to keep your body in shape, it can also reduce the risk of developing heart disease and diabetes. You only need to exercise for 30 minutes at least five days a week to benefit!



WORLD HEAD INJURY AWARENESS DAY 20 MARCH

Whether it's a mild bump on the head or a severe brain injury the results can be devastating. The Day reminds us on how we could reduce the day-to-day accidents and brain injuries only if we are careful. It brings our attention to helmets and seat belts. It has become very important to educate and to make the world aware of how a very little injury to your brain can spoil your whole life.



USUKU LWAMALUNGELO ABANTU, NGOMHLAKA 21

Lawa ngamalungelo nenkululeko efanele bonke abantu, kodwa njengoba sibona, ziningi kakhulu izikhathi lapho la malungelo ecekelwa phansi.

Namuhla kugxilwe ezenzweni zobuntu nozwelo kanye nokuthuthukiswa komnotho emazweni afufusayo lapho kunokuhlukumezeka okuningi okusenzeka.

AWARENESS DAYS



MARCH 24 WORLD TUBERCULOSIS DAY



WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY 21 MARCH

Down's syndrome is a lifelong condition that causes delays in learning and development. It cannot be cured, but people with the condition can be supported to live a happy and independent life. Most parents find out that their baby has Down's syndrome soon after their birth. People with this condition need our support and love, not isolation. We should remember that whatever their condition, they are human beings too, with feelings and needs – just like everyone else.

This day is aimed at raising attention to TB and the challenges we face on the issue. The day also co-incides with the Department of health's 'Kick TB Campaign' which aims to involve scholars in the fight against TB and promote healthy lifestyles. This campaign will help the country realise its vision of "A South Africa that is free of TB and the stigma surrounding the disease". TB today remains an epidemic around the world, causing the deaths of several million people each year, mostly in developing countries.

It was also on this day in 1882 when Dr Robert Koch announced that he had discovered the cause of tuberculosis, the TB bacillus. His discovery opened the way towards diagnosing and curing TB. The message is that TB can be cured. Get diagnosed, stick to your treatment and help others who

have TB stick to their treatment too – as a community we can make a difference.

SCHOOL HEALTH WEEK: 5-9

Our Government has pledged to put the health of school children first by rolling out the School Health Screening Programme which brings basic health screening to learners at schools in areas that have been identified as priority health districts. These include schools in areas least likely to have access to health care services.

The Department of Health, in partnership with the Department of Basic Education, is currently conducting basic health screening for Grade 1 and Foundation phase learners. This week is about ensuring we monitor the health of our school children, as they are the future society.

Circumcise be a REAL Man!

THE KZN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HAS BEEN SAYING IT ALL ALONG, CIRCUMCISION IS IMPORTANT TO REDUCE THE SPREAD OF SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS. IT ALSO REDUCES - NOT CURES THE SPREAD OF AIDS.

Thabo Mavundla, a newly circumcised 19 year-old spoke to Ezempilo about his experience.

Why did you have it done?

Thabo: Mainly for health reasons. I was told it's healthier to have your foreskin removed because there's less chance of infection and it reduces the spread of HIV and AIDS.

Secondly, it was for cultural reasons. We believe that only when you are circumcised can you be called a real man.

Were you scared?

Thabo: Yes, a bit. But I got all the information and advice about it from my local clinic which also made sure I had it done through a trained health worker and not just anyone who claimed he could do it. This made me feel more confident about having it done, because I knew someone who was trained in the procedure was going to do it.

Did it hurt?

Thabo: Only a little for the first few days, but my health worker gave me some tablets for the pain which helped me.

What did your friends think?

Thabo: They thought I was very brave, and although they thought I was foolish before, after I had it done, a few of them also decided to do it. I am proud I have done it. I know I made the right decision.



be wise, circumcise!