



NEW JERSEY

Easter Seals New Jersey

Healthy Lifestyles

JANUARY-FEBRUARY

New Year's Resolutions Heart Health

Dates to Remember:

- **Saturday April 12th**
5th Annual
Walk With Me & 5K Run
walkwithme.org/nj
- **Wednesday April 30th**
32nd Annual Conference
on Recreation for Individuals
with Disabilities
- **Saturday May 10th**
Special Needs Parents
& Caregiver Retreat at
Camp Merry Heart

To learn more
about the above, visit
eastersealsnj.org

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eastersealsnj.org/whowear

Creating Solutions, Changing Lives!

Healthy Lifestyles!

Does Your Resolution Include Steps Toward a Healthy Lifestyle?

January, the start of the new year, is the time when many people make resolutions that often include a plan to eat better, get more exercise, and maintain a healthy weight.

By maintaining a healthy weight and being physically active, you can help prevent chronic diseases including Type 2 Diabetes and Heart Disease. Losing even a small amount of weight and simply going for walks everyday can go a long way toward a healthy lifestyle.

With frigid temperatures upon us and walking paths covered with snow and safe or convenient to walk outdoors. Walking in an indoor mall, or up and down the aisles in a supermarket or store keep the body in motion, burn calories, and increase circulation.

How many steps do you walk each day?



Wearing a pedometer is an easy way to track your steps each day. Start by wearing the pedometer every day for one week. Put it on when you get up in the morning and wear it until bed time. Record your daily steps in a log or notebook and by the end of the week you will know your average daily steps. You might be surprised how many (or how few) steps you take each day. It takes just over 2,000 steps to walk one mile, and 10,000 steps is close to 5 miles.

*Take steps today for a healthier lifestyle
in the New Year!*

February is American Heart Month



This annual observance reminds us that Heart Disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, but there are steps we can take to reduce our risk.

According to the National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD), adults with disabilities have an increased risk for heart disease related illnesses. High blood pressure, high LDL (bad) cholesterol, and smoking are the primary risk factors for heart disease. Lifestyle choices such as being overweight/obese, a poor diet, physical inactivity, excessive alcohol use and smoking also play a key role in Heart Disease.

Heart disease is preventable and manageable.

Here are simple tips that will help reduce the risk for heart disease:

- **Start with a healthy diet.** Choose more fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Reduce animal fats by selecting leaner meats or choose plant based proteins such as beans, nuts and seeds, and choose low-fat dairy.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** See your physician to determine a safe and healthy weight that is just right for you. Your physician can recommend steps to help achieve your ideal weight.
- **Regular physical activity and exercise** have many benefits including helping to manage weight, lowering cholesterol, and building a strong heart. Check with your physician prior to starting any new exercise regimen.
- **Stop smoking and reduce alcohol use.** Smoking significantly increases risk for heart disease and alcohol consumption increases blood pressure.

For more information visit www.nchpad.org and search for articles on Heart Disease.

-by James Richardson, Health and Wellness Coordinator, Easter Seals New Jersey

Oral Health = Overall Health



Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body!

Oral health is an important part of a daily self-care regimen.

Dental problems, if left untreated, can lead to bigger systemic health issues (diseases that affect the entire body).

Regular flossing and brushing help to keep the gums healthy to prevent gingivitis (inflammation of the gums), periodontal disease (disease of the gums), and prevent cavities (an infection that causes destruction of the teeth).

The American Dental Association recommends scheduling regular dental checkups, eating a balanced diet, and limiting snacks which may reduce your risk of developing tooth decay and gum disease. Professional cleanings are the only way to remove tartar, which traps plaque bacteria along the gum line.

According to **Disability.gov**, sometimes dentists are willing to set up a payment plan or lower the cost of their services for

patients who pay cash, so you should always ask before scheduling your appointment. You can also get discounted services at dental schools or federally-funded health centers.

In addition, the **Dental Lifeline Network (dentallifeline.org)** has more than 15,000 volunteer dentists who offer donated dental services to people with disabilities or those who are elderly or medically at-risk.

Visit **Disability.gov** for additional resources on assistance programs that can help you save money.



Special Needs Parents and Caregiver Retreat

Registration is now open for Special Needs Parents and Caregiver Retreat day on **Saturday, May 10th from 9am- 4pm** at Easter Seals New Jersey's Camp Merry Heart, located in scenic Hackettstown.

This event is designed to educate, raise awareness, and impart the importance of self care and sustainability across the lifespan of caring for a person with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

At the retreat, parents and caregivers will:

- Develop strategies for building wellness and healthy living into the family lifestyle
- Learn how to manage chronic stress
- Learn about maintaining weight with physical activity and exercise
- Learn how to improve overall health and well being
- Learn about supports and services for persons with disabilities in the state of New Jersey

Discuss topics such as:

- Caregiver demands
- Time and financial obligations on the family
- Daily stressors and strains that affect the marital relationship
- Challenges in balancing the needs of other children/siblings
- Difficulty finding child care to support employment and sociability
- Adaptations and limitations to one's life expectations and experiences

The cost is \$65/pp and includes a light breakfast and lunch, informative lectures, wellness information sessions & activities, resource packets, and networking with other caregivers. Please register by April 23rd.

Online registration will be available at eastersealsnj.org or for more information, contact Laura O'Reilly, R.N. AVP Health and Wellness, at bewell@nj.easterseals.com.

Did you know?

Promoting inclusion and healthy communities | Easter Seals New Jersey and National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD)

Easter Seals New Jersey has been selected to be a lead organization in New Jersey for NCHPAD's Inclusive Health Coalition.

The Township of Maplewood and Easter Seals New Jersey's Be Well! & Thrive™ Health and Wellness Program are working together to promote health and wellness for all people by promoting inclusion in recreation, health and wellness and public health activities.



Want to find out how you, your loved one, or your group can get involved?

See how Easter Seals New Jersey is taking steps to address chronic health issues for people with disabilities at eastersealsnj.org/health