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Florence Nightingale:

Nurse, Statistician, Public Health Reformer

Florence Nightingale was an extraordinary woman...intelligent, perceptive, driven, quick-witted, and a bit of a rebel. Although she is often referred to as "The Lady with the Lamp" and is typified as the patient, caring nurse wandering tirelessly from soldier to soldier in the dead of night during the Crimean War, this is only the tip of the iceberg when telling her story.

Born of very wealthy English parents in Florence, Italy, she held in her hands the future most young women dreamed about in the early to mid 1800s...a pampered existence for which not much would be required of her but to exist. Florence was born on May 12th, 1820 and at the age of 17, she committed herself to nursing and openly rebelled against the preferred status of most women at the time to become a wife and mother. Her parents were not thrilled. Nursing at this time was a career with a bad reputation and was filled by poor women of questionable virtue. She was going against the grain of

society and her family was stricken when she openly announced that she was called from God to be a nurse and was dedicating her life to nursing of the poor and indigent.

Flo began her nursing training by doing it. She worked in poor houses,

infirmaries, and became a leading advocate in improving medical care for poor people. She became politically active in London, helping to reform the Poor Laws. She gained experience at a Lutheran religious community called Kaiserworth on the Rhine and considered this a turning point in her career, thereafter publishing a book about her experiences there. In 1853 she accepted a position of superintendent at the Institute for the Care of Sick Gentlewomen in London. Flo's father continued to send her a monthly stipend to live on during this time, allowing her to pursue personal goals...certainly a benefit of her heritage that most women did not have at the time. During this time, Flo was romantically involved with Richard Milnes and Sidney Herbert, both politicians. Richard asked Florence to marry him but she rejected this fine offer to pursue her own interests in nursing. She felt that marriage would interfere with what she had been called to do and did not want to be tied down.

Florence Nightingale is most noted for her contributions to the soldiers and hospitals during the Crimean War. She got permission to lead a band of 38 volunteer nurses, trained by her, to Turkey to attend to the wounded there. She and her nurses were met by horrific conditions, unimaginable by today's standards...massive infections, little medicine, filthy hospitals, overworked medical staff. It is estimated that over 4000 soldiers died

in the hospitals there the first winter...but most died from typhus, cholera, and dysentery rather than their battle wounds. Conditions in the hospital were deplorable. They were overcrowded and had defective sewers and poor ventilation which was the cause of most of the death, they later surmised. This experience led Flo to begin collecting evidence about the effect of living conditions on deaths. This led to a more sanitary design in hospitals. Flo was appointed to the Royal Commission on the Health of the Army, writing an 1000-page statistical report and eventually leading the implementation of its recommendations in the field.

Flo died at the age of 90 after a few years of being bedridden. This did not stop her however, from her bed she did pioneering work in hospital planning, statistical reports on health, and continued to support the many nurses across several countries that she had trained over the years. Florence had opened colleges and programs for nurses, published several books and articles on nursing, recommendations for changes in the medical field, and was honored by leaders everywhere. She was the first woman to receive the Order of Merit in 1907 and was awarded the Royal Red Cross by Queen Victoria. She was a mentor to Linda Richards "America's first trained nurse", making her the seed that started us all.

CELEBRATE NURSES WEEK MAY 6-12

Body Mass Index (BMI)

How Do You Measure UP?

By Susan Kimmel R.D.

How does BMI Relate to Health?

BMI stands for body mass index – one “tool” to gauge your body weight in relation to your height and, at the same time, your risks for weight-related health problems. BMI is used as a screening tool to identify possible weight problems and is used to determine the federal government’s official definition of adult overweight and obesity.

To calculate BMI values for adults, multiply your weight in pounds by 703, divided by your height in inches, then divide again by your height in inches. The ideal number should be between 18.5 and 25. Limitations of BMI are that while it is a good measure of obesity for most people BMI does not provide actual information on body composition. For example, very muscular people may fall into the “overweight” category when they are actually healthy and fit and people who have lost muscle mass, such as the elderly, may be in the “healthy weight” category – according to their BMI- when they actually have reduced nutritional reserves. Here is an EXAMPLE of a BMI calculation:

A person who is 5 feet 6 inches (66 inches) tall and weighs 155 pounds has a BMI of 25:

BMI = 703 x 155 (wt) divided by 66 (ht) then that product divided by 66 (ht) again.

$703 \times 155 = 108965$ ---- 108965 divided by $66 = 1651$
--- 1651 divided by $66 = 25$.

Healthy Weight for Most People: BMI between 18.5 and 24.9

Overweight:	BMI from 25 up to 29.9
Obese:	BMI of 30 or higher
Extremely Obese:	BMI of 40 or higher
Underweight:	BMI below 18.5

BMI is generally related to body fat. Higher BMIs usually mean higher body fat. As body fat or BMI increases, especially from values 30 or greater, health risks increase. It’s important to remember that BMI should be used as a general guideline. Many factors need to be considered when judging how much any individual person should weigh such as amount of muscle, location of excess body fat, and family history of health problems Where your body stores fat is a clue to your healthy weight.

Are you shaped like an “apple” or a “pear”?

Apples –excess abdominal or upper body fat has been shown to increase the risk for some health problems such as diabetes, high cholesterol levels, heart disease, breathing problems and high blood pressure, even, for some individuals, when the BMI falls within a healthy range.

Pears-excess body fat carried below the waist in the hips, buttocks and thighs hasn’t been shown to be as risky for health problems but may increase your risk for varicose veins and orthopedic problems such as osteoarthritis.

If your BMI should fall out of range, move more, eat fewer calories and contact a dietetic professional for help. Visit www.consumer.gov/weightloss/bmi.htm for a BMI table and a BMI calculator or www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi for just a BMI calculator.



References

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SPRING into a HEALTHY LIFESTYLE!

By Susan Kimmel R.D.

The good news is that weight management, a component of a healthy lifestyle, is really very simple – it consists of a balancing act between the calories consumed (eaten) and the calories spent in exercise and/or daily physical activity. Simply put the cause of overweight is - more calories consumed than burned. One pound of body fat equals about 3,500 calories. You can lose about 2 pounds a week just by eating 500 calories less each day, for a week, than you currently do. Be sure to apply the same principles – variety, balance and moderation – to both your food choices and your physical activities as you develop your healthy lifestyle plan.

A healthy lifestyle is a choice – it is not something that just happens. So make a plan – every successful outcome starts with a plan. And be sure to think long-term and act gradually. Start with your current weight or your lifestyle, not where you want to be. Evaluate your current lifestyle while maintaining your current weight – stopping weight gain is a big step for many people and is the first step to weight loss – then identify and take steps to change your lifestyle and the weight will come off naturally. But be flexible in your planning. Each person is individual in their needs – what works for one person may not work for another as evidenced by the multitude of diet books on the market. There will be trial and error in this process – as you change and become healthier you will continue to find changes to make to keep sticking to your plan realistic and enjoyable. Living healthy should be an enjoyable part of life – not perceived as deprivation. Focus on a healthy lifestyle for a lifetime – not on “dieting”. Again, personalize your efforts to fit your lifestyle. Consumers have the excellent benefit of having balanced menus planned by registered dietitians which provide an excellent plan for healthy eating if adhered to. This may be a starting point for staff members in learning to plan their own healthy meals. Menus generally follow the Food Guide Pyramid and American Heart Association Guidelines for Heart Healthy Eating. A healthy lifestyle can be achieved by understanding and making a series of steps in the following areas of your life. Perhaps you can study then make changes in one area each week. Then in six weeks you should have a

better understanding of yourself and your body’s needs and want to make healthy lifestyle changes.

Are you Adequately Hydrated?

Water is the single most important nutrient for our bodies. It is involved in every function in our bodies which are made up of over 70% water. You can live several weeks without food but only a few days without water, yet most of us live in a constant state of under-hydration. If you wait until you are thirsty to drink water, then you are most likely already dehydrated. Many of us no longer recognize when we are thirsty and actually mistake feelings of thirst for hunger. If you think you are hungry, try drinking water first. Some of the symptoms of inadequate water intake may include headaches, back pain, joint aches, dry skin, allergies, heartburn, constipation and memory loss.

How much should I drink? Take your body weight in pounds and divide it by 2. That is how many ounces of water you need every day. There are 8 ounces in a cup. If you weigh 150 pounds that will be 75 ounces of water a day. Do you see how easy it would be to become dehydrated if you are overweight? But you won’t consume it all in liquid form. Increase your intake of salads, vegetables and fruits since they all contain a high percentage of water and they will provide about a quart (4 cups) of fluid a day. Drink 30 minutes before meals or 2 hours after meals. Try not to drink excessive amounts past 7 PM as doing so may interfere with your sleep. It is possible to drink too much water. There is a psychiatric condition called psychogenic polydipsia, which is drinking excessive amounts of water and can lead to dangerous electrolyte imbalances.

HOW MUCH AND WHAT TYPE OF WATER ARE YOU CURRENTLY CONSUMING EACH DAY AND WHEN DURING THE DAY?

WHAT STEPS ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE TO CONSUME MORE FLUIDS EACH DAY?

Sleep and Rest to Restore your Body

Sleep regulates release of important hor-

mones such as growth hormone which causes children to grow and adults to regulate muscle mass and control fat. Another hormone, leptin, is secreted during sleep and directly influences appetite and control of weight. It tells the body when it is “full”. When leptin levels are low – runaway appetite results.

Sleep slows the aging process and is reported to be one of the most important predictors of how long a person will live. The term “beauty sleep” is literally true.

Sleep boosts the immune system by increasing the level of natural killer cell activity which destroys viruses, bacteria and cancer cells.

Sleep improves brain function.

Sleep reduces cortisol levels. Excessive stress raises cortisol levels causing you to be more irritable, and prone to depression, anxiety and insomnia by disrupting neurotransmitter balance in the brain.

Studies have shown that a sleep deficit of 3-4 hours a night over the course of a week put individuals into a pre-diabetic state of not being able to process carbohydrates effectively.

Lack of sleep slows your reaction time, shortens your attention span, reduces your sex drive, invites disease and impairs your memory, your decision-making process and your coordination.

How much sleep do I need? 7 to 9 hours a night/day (depending on your schedule) are recommended.

Many of us take pride in the few hours of sleep that we believe that we really need but we need to realize that when we cheat the body from getting the sleep it needs, we may eventually suffer the consequences health-wise.

And one of the basic principles is a day of rest. Take time to rest. Take one day a week to do nothing but rest. This may mean going out for a meal, watching a good movie or spending time with family or friends – it does not mean cooking, cleaning house or working in the yard. BE HEALTHY!



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THE POST SCRIPT

A publication of
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All articles to be considered for submission to this newsletter should go to Georgia Swank at the above email address. We welcome your comments and ideas!

ANNOUNCING the PAL WEBSITE!

www.palrx.com

The Pharmacy Alternatives website is up and running! Please visit today and regularly as new resources and information will be added monthly. On the website, you will find:

- Information about Pharmacy Processes
- Payment sources: Medicare Part D, Medicaid, Private Insurances
- Locations of our services and areas of new growth
- Informational links to hundreds of resources you will love on the internet related to developmental disabilities services, nursing organizations, educational links, downloadable trainings, etc.
- CE opportunities—links to outside CEs and some of our own too
- FORMS—downloadable pharmacy and medical forms
- Research in the DD field—read actual studies, be informed on what's coming in the future
- The Post Script—archived newsletters since Feb. 2007
- PAL's Leadership Team—learn all about us and contact info

CHART YOUR COURSE: THE TICKET TO BETTER SURVEY READINESS

Survey-ready is the way we all want to be all year long. The way to do this is to have good systems and supports in place all the time, that promote actions and interventions that are quality-based, proactive, and meet all regulations and guidelines. We know that documentation is a big part of 'proving' what we've done to meet these goals. "If it wasn't documented, it wasn't done" is the mantra we are continually trying to get our staffs to grasp. So, what's so hard about documenting something? Or keeping documentation at the ready for those special moments when a surveyor asks for the lab results for a lab done in August 2007?

The problem is—SYSTEMS! In particular, the systems your operation/facility uses (or maybe, doesn't use enough) for organizing all of the endless amounts of narrative notes, assessments, histories, physician orders, diagnostic

test results, observations, and other various and sundry pages of data. **DO YOU HAVE A SYSTEM? IS IT A GOOD SYSTEM?** What IS a good system? A good system should:

- Be logical
- Be sturdy, stand the test of time (Are your charts falling apart? You could lose valuable information that way.)
- Have a sufficient number of divisions or tabs for labeling information within a given area (medical chart, file, etc.)
- Make information easily retrievable (Can you find what you need quickly?)
- Have an inherent order across all areas ie. an accepted CHART ORDER which should be displayed in the front of each chart, making the information system clear to others reading the chart (physicians, case managers, ER personnel, outside services)

- A designated person or position who is responsible for maintaining of the chart/file/etc. who will periodically thin the contents that will go into an archived chart area (this should also maintain all of the systems of being easily retrievable, logical, etc.)

Updating your data management systems could be the ticket to better quality of care for your clients. Having a good chart system will improve time management across all areas, improve efficiency of personnel in reviewing of charts, making recommendations, decrease "lost" items, resulting in better quality of care for your clients. Remember that YOU are not the only one that needs to find the information in that chart or file. Creating a level of organization that supports good documentation practices is a no-brainer. **SO, CHART YOUR COURSE & GET THOSE CHARTS IN ORDER!**