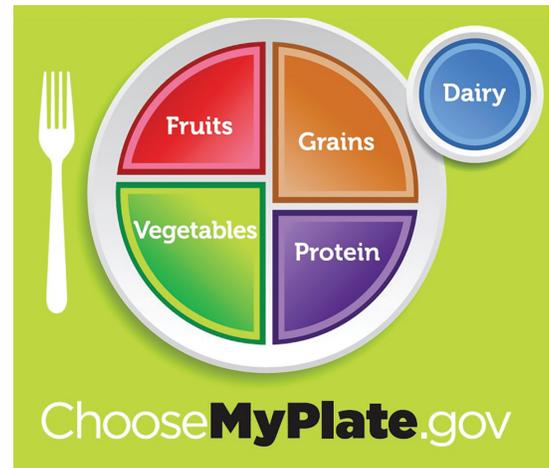


CONNECTIONS

SEPTEMBER
2016

NEWSLETTER OF THE FULTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH (PICH) PROGRAM



Seize the Moment!

During September, the Fulton County PICH Program is encouraging healthy eating habits and regular physical activity; sharing diabetes prevention and management strategies; and working to help create more smoke- and tobacco-free environments.

Take Stock

The 30 days of September include commemorations of health topics important to PICH, namely National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month; Fruits & Veggies – More Matters® Month; Whole Grains Month; Family Health & Fitness Day (9/24); Women’s Health & Fitness Day (9/28); and World Heart Day (9/29). With obesity rates of 22% for adults and 33% for 2-17 year olds in Fulton County, let’s use the month-long focus on healthy living to assess eating and exercise habits for all family members and make adjustments. Get started with the quick quiz at bit.ly/2bLWTbn.

Work Out

Is everyone in the family engaged in moderate to vigorous physical activity each week? To lower the risk

of heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity and type 2 diabetes, adults should aim for at least 2 hours and 30 minutes each week. Kids should be active 60 minutes a day. The PICH Program’s work with interfaith active living groups and its support of creative PE instruction in schools and Atlanta’s Relay Bike Share are helping Fulton County residents start and maintain a regimen where they live, learn, work and worship. To learn more, visit the PICH website at the address below.

Mind Your Table Matters

Do the plates at family meals have vegetables, fruits, grains, protein, and dairy? The nutrition experts at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) created the MyPlate graphic, shown above, as a guide to building healthy meals. Understanding that good nutrition habits should start early in life, PICH is sponsoring workshops to help day care centers across Fulton County develop and implement healthy eating and physical activity protocols. Nutritionists say starting with small changes can make nutritious meals more palatable, especially to children. Get more details and tips at www.choosemyplate.gov.



Fulton County Considers Smoke-Free Parks

There is no risk-free level of secondhand smoke. Even brief exposure can cause immediate harm from arsenic, cyanide, formaldehyde, methane and more than 250 other toxic chemicals in tobacco smoke. Studies show that prohibiting smoking in public places helps improve air quality, the health of workers and that of the general population. As the Fulton County Board of Commissioners considers adopting a smoke-free ordinance for County-managed parks, the PICH Program and other groups are disseminating information about the effects of secondhand smoke on public health. Many municipalities within Fulton County already have banned some form of smoking in their parks, including Alpharetta, Atlanta, Hapeville, Johns Creek, Milton, Roswell, Sandy Springs and Union City.

ACTIVE LIVING

Don't Ignore Diabetes Risks

More than 29 million people in the U.S. have diabetes. Most of them have type 2, a chronic condition in which the body doesn't use insulin well and can't keep blood sugar at normal levels. Consult a doctor and get tested if the risk factors listed below apply to you or a family member.

- Being overweight
- Being 45 years or older
- Having a parent or sibling with type 2 diabetes
- Being physically active less than 3 times a week
- Having gestational diabetes or giving birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds.

Knowledge provides the power to manage the condition or prevent its onset through behavior change. That's why the PICH team and its partners at the Diabetes Community Action Coalition regularly host informational workshops and offer educational resources to the public. Read more at www.dcafulton.org. Know someone with diabetes? Register at conta.cc/2aPYKgG for the Diabetes Fun Walk on Oct. 1.



Let's Curb Childhood Obesity

A 2015 report estimated that one in three Fulton County children is overweight or obese. Among the common causes: too much inactivity; poor access to physical activity and affordable healthy foods; and easy access to cheap, high-calorie fare. Childhood Obesity Awareness Month is a good time for parents to monitor their youngsters' routines to ensure that they are developing healthy habits and to become a role model and partner in the effort. The *Washington Post* recently reported on research showing that kids whose parents joined them in healthy eating, moderate-to-vigorous physical activities and limited electronic device use were more likely to meet recommended guidelines in those areas. The takeaway: When it comes to preventing childhood obesity, parental guidance is suggested.