# AWSHIP

## AWARE

**ASIAN WOMEN’S ACTION FOR RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AWARE UPDATE</th>
<th>UV SAFETY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOLATE</strong></td>
<td><strong>PROBIOTICS</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*Asian-American Women’s Health Initiative Project at Boston University*
AWARE CONTINUES
The AWARE study expands social media outreach

Researchers of the AWARE study enhanced outreach to surrounding communities through events in the early summer months and recently by launching the AWSHIP Instagram account empowerasianwomen. The AWSHIP Instagram account features inspiring messages and AWSHIP updates. A recent post describes a new paper from AWSHIP published in the British journal, Advances in Dual Diagnosis. The article is titled “Intersection of Suicidalty and Substance Abuse among Young Asian-American Women” and is written by Dr. Hyeouk Chris Hahm. The Instagram account will continue to share the latest research findings on Asian-American women’s mental health. For more information, follow AWSHIP on Instagram at empowerasianwomen.

The AWARE Study is still recruiting participants! Please tell your family, friends, and network! We can be reached at (617) 358-5148 or sswAware@bu.edu

Upcoming Events

Quincy Moon Festival
The August Moon Festival will take place on Sunday, August 17th, 2014, 11 AM-5 PM, on Hancock St by Quincy Center. It will be a community festival of vendors, food trucks, games, activities, and performances for families! AWSHIP will also have a table, so come by and say hello!

TV Appearance with Viet-AID
Dr. Hyeouk Hahm will be interviewed live on VATV on Wednesday, September 10th at 7:00 p.m. on Comcast 9/RCN 15. Live streaming will be available on www.bnnv.org. She will be discussing AWSHIP and the AWARE Intervention.
Volunteer Opportunities

ASPIRE

ASPIRE is currently looking to give Asian-American women valuable non-profit experience! Volunteer opportunities are available in various areas such as marketing, grant writing, conference planning, finance, etc. If interested, please contact Joyce Wang at joyce@girlsaspire.org.

Asian Women for Health

Asian Women for Health is looking for volunteer committee members with the possibility of joining its board! If you are interested and an experienced and committed business professional, please contact Selena Tan, stan@asianwomenforhealth.org, or Chien-Chi Huang, cch@asianwomenforhealth.org.

UV Safety

Facts and safety tips on ultraviolet (UV) light and skin health

The rate of melanoma, a type of skin cancer, has increased over the past years. The American Cancer Society estimates that at present, more than 120,000 new cases of melanoma are diagnosed each year in the U.S. The skin is the body’s largest organ, and it is important to protect despite the strong and beloved social practice of summer tanning.

Federal Occupational Health (FOH) is a government agency that promotes safety and health programs. During the summer, the organization focuses on UV safety and protection from such harmful rays.

The FOH website (http://www.foh.hhs.gov/calendar/july.html) provides information on methods to prevent skin cancer, including the use of sunscreen. Individuals of various skin tones can acquire skin cancer and UV damage to the skin can occur in just fifteen minutes. The most common type of cancer in the United States is skin cancer and exposure to UV rays over a lifetime is a clear risk factor for developing skin cancer. FOH suggests that people should utilize a sunscreen with sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher and to reapply after swimming, sweating, or being in the sun for more than two hours, even on a cloudy day.

Other sun safety practices include seeking shade and...
FOLATE: Nutrition facts for women

Beneficial nutrition for women varies from men, and one specific difference is the vitamins and minerals that women are advised to consume during pregnancy. For example, pregnant women are advised to consume folic acid and folate, vitamin B9, to prevent their unborn children from developing neural tube defects. Prevention through vitamin B9 is especially important during the first twelve weeks of pregnancy.

Folate and folic acid are different forms of the same vitamin. Folic acid is synthetic while folate naturally exists in foods. Women of child-bearing age are typically advised to take a supplement of folic acid since the recommended dosage of the vitamin cannot be easily absorbed if only consumed as natural folate. Also, taking a supplement continuously could reduce the risk of neural tube defects if a woman is unknowingly pregnant and does not determine she is pregnant until after the critical early weeks, making it too late to start taking supplements.

Natural folate can be found in many foods including spinach, asparagus, oranges, bran flakes, tomato juice, and more.

Folate and folic acid have other health benefits besides those associated with pregnancy. One benefit relates to lower risk of stroke and cardiovascular disease. Some studies have also linked low folate levels to depression. Research has shown that high folate levels may cause problems as well. One suggested risk is linked to vitamin B12 deficiency. Folic acid supplementation at high levels may prevent doctors from noticing signs of vitamin B12 deficiency, such as a specific type of anemia. According to the National Institutes of Health, other studies have sparked concerns about high folate levels may be linked to preneoplastic lesions that can increase certain cancer risks. For more information on folate and folic acid, speak with your healthcare provider.

References:
http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Folate-HealthProfessional/#b2
http://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements/folate/background/hc6-26059475
http://www.bluegoodfood.com/ho/wto//guide/five-nutrients-every-woman-needs

Probiotics & Blood Pressure

Most people have heard of probiotics from commercials advertising yogurts like Activia that contain these microorganisms that are supposedly good for health. While the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has yet to confirm or deny if probiotics have health benefits, new research has started to shed light into possible other benefits to these live microorganisms beyond the supposed link to the human digestive system. Recent research published in Hypertension noted that taking probiotics led to lower blood pressure levels overall for individuals with hypertension.

References:
http://nceam.nih.gov/health/probiotics/introduction.htm

Probiotics are commonly found in advertised yogurts like Activia

Photo credit: www.spaparazzi.com

Photo credit: www.transformationswellness.net
Pilates: History and Benefits

Pilates is a fitness method developed by Joseph H. Pilates, a German-born resident of England during the early 1900s. Pilates had many illnesses as a child but was so interested in fitness that he became a circus performer and a boxer. During World War I, he developed resistance exercises for soldiers to complete in their beds.

Joseph Pilates defined his techniques as “contrology.” In 1926, Pilates brought his exercise techniques to the U.S. by opening a studio in New York City. The Pilates.com website describes a wide-range of benefits from the exercise including increased flexibility, a stronger core and back, and enhanced sports performance. The Pilates method has grown in popularity with celebrities, dancers, professional athletes, and more seeking the fitness routine to improve their bodies and well-being.

References:
http://www.jillianhessel.com/pilates_biodgraphy.html
http://unitedstatespilatesassociation.com/about-uspa/joseph-pilates/

What is PCOS?

PCOS is short for polycystic ovary syndrome, a disorder that results in possible infertility, irregular menstrual cycles, and further hormonal or possible circulatory complications. While the cause of the syndrome is unclear, women with PCOS have higher than normal levels of androgens that alter typical ovulation likely resulting in irregular menstruation. Also, many women will show cysts on their ovaries as another symptom of the disorder. Doctors believe that the syndrome may be related to insulin levels and genetics.

If PCOS is suspected, doctors will conduct a physical exam, blood tests, or even a pelvic ultrasound since it is difficult to determine PCOS with only one method. The pelvic ultrasound can reveal if there are any cysts on the ovaries. PCOS is of greater concern for women that are trying to become pregnant, since PCOS is a common reason for infertility because it prevents regular ovulation.

The treatments for PCOS focus on the specific symptoms experienced by the patient. Birth control may be prescribed to regulate hormones to aid menstruation. Other medication can be utilized to help improve ovulation. Considering that obesity is common among women diagnosed with PCOS, dietary changes and increased exercise may help reduce symptoms.

These lifestyle changes could also help regulate a woman’s hormones thereby regulating her ovulation and menstruation.

References:
http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/pcos/basics/definition/con-20028841

Photo credit: www.pilatesandrea.com

Photo credit: http://www.learningradiology.com

An ultrasound displaying cysts in the periphery of the right ovary

Photo credit: pilateslifestyle.biz
Coming Soon…The Fall Issue

Boston University School of Social Work
264 Bay State Road
Boston, MA 02215