Walk this way...

Let’s go Mushing for Brushing!

YKHC’s Dental Dept. was a proud sponsor of this year’s Bogus Creek 150 Sled Dog Race. Mr. Toothman leads a line of youngsters to M.E. School for a rousing presentation on the benefits of brushing...and mushing! (see p. 6)
YKHC Board of Directors

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Emmonak .................................... 949-3500
St. Mary’s .................................... 438-3500
Toksook Bay .................................. 427-7810

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Phillips Ayagnirvik ........................ 543-6700
Village Services ........................... 543-6740
Home Care Services ...................... 543-6170
**AHEC Career Pathways connects with Delta villages**

The Career Pathways Program joined Mekoryuk’s three-day annual Reindeer Festival on December 8 to promote health careers to K-12 students and adults.

Evening activities followed an afternoon school visit and Native Youth Olympics event, and included traditional dancing, raffle prizes, display tables of arts and crafts, education, and health careers information, and concluded with fiddle dancing by festival participants.

More recently, Career Pathways visited Tuluksak and Akiachak in the Yupiit School District to talk with students about various health career paths, education programs and scholarship opportunities.

Career Pathways will visit other area school districts in the months to come.

Native dancing at the Mekoryuk Reindeer Festival. (Photo by Nancy Widrig.)

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**For information about upcoming activities, or for health careers information, contact the YK-Area Health Education Center, Career Pathways Program at 907-543-6986, or 1-800-478-3321, ext. 6986.**

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Take care of your heart

February is the month we celebrate Valentine’s Day. Instead of thinking about chocolates and Valentine’s Day, let’s think about heart health and Valentine’s Day.

Did you know that heart disease strikes people with diabetes about twice as often as it strikes people without diabetes? That’s the bad news. The good news is that simple, positive steps can be taken to prevent heart disease—whether we have diabetes or not.

Try the following:

- Engage in 30 minutes of vigorous activity on most days of the week
- Enjoy a healthy diet with plenty of vegetables, fruits, and whole grains
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Avoid cigarette smoke
- Laugh! It helps reduce stress and anxiety
- Get your cholesterol checked. If it is too high, follow your health care provider’s advice for lowering it

While it is important to know how to protect our hearts, it is also important to know the warning signs that you may be having a heart attack. Remember that most heart attacks begin slowly with mild pain.

Here are the signs to watch for:

- Chest discomfort (uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of the chest)
- Pain or discomfort in the arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach
- Shortness of breath
- Breaking out in a cold sweat
- Nausea
- Lightheadedness

If you think you may be having a heart attack, call 911 immediately. Don’t diagnose yourself! Let a professional do that for you.

Be good to your heart. Cupid will thank you!

Do you know about your school’s wellness plan?

All schools are required to have local wellness policies in place to help students develop lifelong behaviors of good nutrition and physical activity. Ask what your school is doing and how you can help.

Call Diabetes Prevention & Control:
907-543-6133 or 1-800-478-3321 ext. 6133

Does your community need money for physical activity equipment?

Letters recently went out from the Diabetes Program to Traditional Councils and other community organizations with applications for activity projects. Think about how your community can work together to increase physical activities in your village.

One community is considering requesting grooming equipment for the ski trail they have built. Think also if there is anything you could do with a neighboring village. Or, how about a garden project?

The requests are due back at Diabetes by February 28.

Diabetes radio program

Second Wednesday of the month at 10 a.m. on KYUK

January 10 featured an interview with Olga Anvil and Elias Venes. Olga shared some of the challenges she has faced and the activities she has added to her life. She has also made efforts to improve her diet and eat healthy. Elias continues to live a very active lifestyle and eat nutritionally healthy foods to stay fit and trim. They are both inspirations for us all!

February 14: Dr. Dan Smith will be interviewed about keeping your heart healthy with diabetes. Listeners will also meet the Healthy Heart grant coordinator, Ben Marx. Tune in to learn about things of the heart on Valentine’s Day!

Influenza!

You or someone in your family may be due for the flu shot.

This year everyone who wants protection from the flu virus is welcome to get the flu shot.

Please call your village clinic to get an appointment.

In Bethel you can get an appointment at YKHC by calling 543-6442, at the Public Health Center at 543-2110, or the Bethel Family Clinic at 543-3773

The best way to protect our patients, our families and our children is by getting a flu shot this year

Parents and Grandparents of young children and anyone in contact with children younger than 5 (and elders and patients with chronic illnesses) ought to get the flu shot—not just for themselves, but to protect their loved ones.

GET THE FLU SHOT TO PROTECT YOU & TO PROTECT THE ONES YOU LOVE!
Think about your heart this month

February is the American Heart Association’s National Heart Month. Throughout the month, YKHC Healthy Hearts will be providing education and activities related to the health of the heart.

Heart Disease and Diabetes

It has been well established that having diabetes increases one’s risk to developing heart disease. Diabetes can cause arteries to clog, blood pressure to rise, kidneys to fail, and heart tissue to degenerate. It is inevitable that heart disease will lead to heart failure and eventually be fatal if proper care is not provided and appropriate lifestyle changes do not occur.

Fortunately, diabetes is controllable and people can prevent heart disease and live a long, happy, and healthy life. Healthy Hearts provides care and support for lifestyle changes for Alaskan Natives and American Indians diagnosed with diabetes. Members who join the program can develop the knowledge and skills necessary to eat healthier, reduce excess body fat, and enjoy more physical activity.

For more information on Healthy Hearts, call Ben Marx at 1-800-478-4471 ext. 6904 or 543-6904.

Bethel Community Presentation

You are invited to a Heart Healthy Dinner

with a special presentation by Maggie Barnett
Family Nurse Practitioner, Masters in Nursing Alaska Heart Institute
Wednesday, February 28 6:00 p.m.

Sponsored by:
YKHC Diabetes Prevention & Control 543-6133
YKHC Healthy Hearts Project 543-6999

Making life changes to live healthier with diabetes

David Nanalook is a traveler. He likes to get out and about where he’s hunting, fishing, translating, and meeting with the people. He says he used to be shy, but that’s hard to believe when you talk to him. As pastor of the Moravian Church, he’s a born leader and just maybe he’ll use his convincing skills to teach you a thing or two about what it’s like to be diabetic.

Medications are tricky; they can be very good and they can be bad. Most of the time, people with diabetes take medication to help their body process the sugars as best it can. For David, taking the medications wasn’t always good. He felt funny; he had buzzing; he just didn’t like it. So he didn’t take them.

Luckily, his provider listened to his concerns and was able to change the medication to better suit him. Oftentimes, it works that way—try something and then change it to best fit you. Well, after the change, David got it into his head, “You are master of your meds.”

David’s a popular guy. With his fun, uplifting energy, he gets invited to many potlucks and around here potlucks always mean lots of food, tasty food. He’s learned to accept some offers and say “no thank you” to others. But it’s been really hard, especially when it’s something he loves, like akutaq.

Changes David has made

- Learning to say “no” when offered foods
- Learning how do you deal with foods you love to eat but know they can affect your diabetes
- Including more activity in your life

Hardest thing about having diabetes

Food changes, more walking, remembering to take medications, and not running out of medications.

His message about diabetes

- [Eating too much sugar is] “like putting gasoline in your food”
- People don’t connect what we put into our bodies with what happens to us.
Is your child using alcohol? Are you interested in a prevention program to educate your child about alcohol? Bethel’s new Youth and Family Program, *Nutaglunii*, is here to help.

The program, open to 10–17-year-olds, is unique in that it interweaves prevention, research-based addiction treatment, mental health treatment modalities, and the Native cultural traditions of the Yup’ik Eskimo.

The program is based at PATC but services are provided in the clients’ homes or community venues whenever possible, and at times that are accessible to the whole family. The goal is to help client youth and families to discover their own motivation to make and sustain positive life changes, strengthen healthy family bonds, take back their developing personal power, and build a positive sense of self.

If you are interested in learning more about the program or have questions, please call 543-6740 or come by PATC.

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Have brush will mush...

**MR. TOOTHMAN RIDES AGAIN!**

Bogus Creek musher Bev Hoffman met with an eager group of children from Ayaprun Elitnaurvik and M.E. School on January 18 at a special event put on by YKHC Dental and the K-300 committee.

Riding past a crowd of students with Mr. Toothman in her sled, Hoffman shouted, “We’re mushing for brushing!” After a short meeting with Hoffman, Mr. Toothman led students into the M.E. gymnasium where the Dental team shared a strong message with students about the importance of brushing.

As part of the sponsorship efforts for the Bogus Creek 150, YKHC Dental strongly advocated for dental hygiene highlighting the importance of daily tooth brushing in a “Mushing for Brushing” campaign. Toothbrushes and toothpaste were generously passed out to young children and adults at both the school events and at the Bogus Creek start line on January 19.

In a region where cavity rates are more than double the national average and where tooth decay affects more people in the Delta than any other health issue, the “Mushing for Brushing” campaign brought public awareness to the issue and the need for good oral hygiene.

Mr. Toothman reminds everyone to “Brush, brush, brush your teeth, brush them every day!”
Health Aide Corner

Health Aides’ resourcefulness makes a difference

By Leif Albertson

Andrea Matchian

Snow and fog continued to choke the coastal village in which Andrea Matchian found herself. As a float health aide she was accustomed to dealing with unfamiliar surroundings, poor weather and medical emergencies, but this time was different.

The patient was a 5-week old infant who came in with a fever. Before Andrea even finished the exam, she had a Bethel doctor on the phone. This child was clearly having severe respiratory distress. A quick look out the clinic window into the unapologetic whiteness made it obvious: no planes would be coming in today.

Carefully following the doctor’s instructions, Andrea delivered oxygen to her patient and prepared additional equipment in case the child stopped breathing altogether. Then, from the medical supplies at the clinic, she selected a 24-gauge intravenous catheter. She took a deep breath, knowing she would need to insert the diminutive needle into a barely visible vein on the back of the sick infant’s hand.

Comforting the patient’s mother, she steadied her hand, focused her thoughts and advanced the razor sharp bevel of the needle towards the child’s pale hand.

Four hours later, help finally arrived in the form of a Blackhawk helicopter courtesy of the Alaska National Guard. Out of the deafening cloud of blowing snow surrounding the helicopter, the familiar form of blue and yellow uniforms emerged. Aeromed paramedics had arrived.

“Out of the deafening cloud of blowing snow surrounding the helicopter, the familiar form of blue and yellow uniforms emerged. Aeromed paramedics had arrived.”

Onlookers stared in disbelief as paramedics with the sick child shrouded in a bright blanket hurried up the hospital ramp to the emergency room. Now everything was in the hands of the emergency room staff. Her work done, Andrea slipped unnoticed from the hustle of the Emergency room and headed home to her own family.

Andrea Matchian is originally from Chevak, and has recently moved to Bethel.

Special thanks to Dr. Roll and Dr. Carrellas for their support.

Special thanks to Gemma Akerelrea, CHP, for her role in dealing with this emergency in a compassionate and professional manner.

Clotilda Tikiun

Disturbed by an infant’s death in her community, CHA Clotilda Tikiun asked herself what she could do to prevent this sort of tragedy in the future.

She recognized the importance of the health aides who arrived on the scene to deliver emergency care, but still felt an important step was missing. How can we improve the emergency medical care available to infants and children throughout the Delta? The simple answer: increase the number of emergency
It’s not as hard as you think! A healthy diet and lifestyle are the best weapons you have to fight cardiovascular disease. By making these simple steps part of your daily life, you can achieve long term benefits to your health and heart.

Start by knowing how many calories you need daily to maintain your weight. Do not consume more than you know you can burn up every day.

Engage in regular physical activity to burn up those calories you take in. Aim for at least 20–30 minutes of moderate exercise daily or on most days of the week. If 30 minutes at one time is not doable, divide it into 10-minute sessions throughout the day. To make exercise more fun and enjoyable, do it with your family and be healthy together.

Here are some activities the whole family can do together:
- Dance and move to the music
- Play active games indoors and outdoors
- Take a walk together
- Throw and kick a ball
- Shoot and dribble a basketball

Eat a variety of nutritious foods from all the food groups. Base your eating pattern on these recommendations:
- Choose lean meats and poultry without skin and prepare them without added saturated fat.
- Select fat-free, 1 percent fat or low-fat dairy products.
- Cut back on foods containing partially hydrogenated vegetable oils to reduce trans fat in your diet.
- Cut back on foods high in cholesterol. Aim to eat less than 300 milligrams of cholesterol each day.
- Cut back on beverages and foods loaded w/adder sugar.
- Choose and prepare foods with little or no salt.
- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. That means, one drink per day if you’re a woman and two drinks per day if you are a man.
- Keep an eye on your portion sizes.
- Stop smoking, if you smoke, and stay away from second-hand smoke.

**Women, Infants & Childrens Program**
907-543-6459
Toll Free: 1-800-764-6459

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**Here are a couple of heart healthy recipes that are easy to prepare and heart friendly.**

**Teriyaki Salmon**

1 lb Fresh Salmon cut into 4 oz. pieces
Prepare the marinade: 1/3 cup low-sodium soy sauce
¼ cup red wine
¼ cup honey
1 tbsp canola oil
½ tsp ground ginger
½ tsp dry mustard
¼ tsp garlic powder

Combine all ingredients of the marinade and mix well. Pour over the salmon and marinate in a ziplock bag for at least 3 hours.
Remove the salmon, and discard the marinade.
Grill (or bake) until fish begins to flake.

**Pineapple-glazed Chicken Thighs**

6 pc skinless, bone-in chicken thighs
Fresh ginger, cut into ¼ inch slices (approx. 3” piece)
2/3 cup pineapple juice
2 Tbsp reduced-sodium soy sauce
1 Tbsp sesame seeds
1 cup pineapple chunks
3 green onions, thinly sliced, including green portions

Coat a large nonstick frying pan with nonstick cooking spray and place over medium heat. Add chicken and ginger and cook, turning chicken every few minutes until well browned on both sides.
In a small bowl, stir together the pineapple juice and soy sauce. Pour into the the frying pan, let boil and cook for 3 minutes.
Uncover and add the sesame seeds & the pineapple chunks.
Continue cooking, turning chicken occasionally until opaque through out and the liquid has reduced to a glaze. Transfer to a platter and serve garnished with sliced green onions.

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**"Forget-Me-Not"**

Your community support group for and about cancer.
Esther “Bunny” Venus
907-534-4087
Forget_me_Cancer@yahoo.com
FLOAT COATS FOR SALE!

Toksook Bay Subregional clinic has float coats made by Mustang Survival on sale at $125 each

Sizes Small to 3XL are available as long as supplies last.

Contact the Toksook SRC at 907-427-3500 or come by the Toksook Bay Subregional Clinic

These coats are excellent for boating and fishing in the Delta!

A Message from the Pharmacy Billing Office

Greetings to everyone in the Delta! Once again we would like to ask for your help in assisting us in updating your patient records in our electronic system. Please check with our pharmacy Business Management staff by calling 543-6462 and verifying your prescription insurance information. If we do not have a record, you will be billed for the entire balance of the medications.

We ask that you bring in or send us a copy, front and back, of your prescription insurance card. You may also fax us front and back copies of your card to 543-4688. Please remember to include your full name, date of birth, how you are related to the cardholder if the name on the insurance card is different, and a contact number where we can reach you.

Note that on some cards both of your medical as well as your prescription coverage is printed on the same card. Sometimes the letters “RX” are used to denote pharmacy drug coverage.

We hope to be able to reduce the amount that you will be billed directly by having this information. All claims are being backdated to October 1, 2005. If you are a non-Native beneficiary, in some cases, you may be billed for the full amount of your medications if your insurance declines payment, insurance requests patients to self submit claims, or medications include over-the-counter drugs.

Primary prescription insurance billing is provided as a customer courtesy. The patient is responsible for any secondary insurance coverage he or she may have. Note that Registration at the hospital only handles medical insurance covering your visit but not your prescriptions. Please remember to present your prescription insurance information at the pharmacy window.

With your assistance we hope to be of continued service to all of our patients.

Contact the Pharmacy Billing Office for more information

907-543-6462
EPSTD training begins for Health Aides

Preventative health screening exams will now be offered closer to home with the continuation of EPSTD (Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment) training for our Health Aide providers, with the first training session completed this past month.

EPSTD training allows Health Aides to offer a holistic examination for children and young adults. Often referred to as “well-child exams,” the exam involves a physical examination, growth and developmental screening, dental screening, immunizations if needed, age appropriate laboratory screening, and health education. If the examination indicates a child requires further follow-up in any of the above areas, referrals are generated to the appropriate departments and agencies.

“Children should get their EPSTD exams regularly, even when the child is healthy,” said Elena Hererra, EPSTD Nurse Practitioner and program coordinator. “These exams provide early assessments of your child’s health and screens for future health concerns.”

EPSTD training is offered for Health Aides certified at Session III or above. The first training of the year began last month, January 25, with three Community Health Practitioners completing the course—Tony Brown of Aniak, Bessie Francis of Toksook Bay, and Norma Shorty of Emmonak.

With the addition of more EPSTD trained Health Aides at the village level, the amount of travel to the Subregional Clinics and Bethel will decrease for this service, improving the access to care for our patients.

“The examination offers a very important way to ensure that young children of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta receive appropriate health, mental health and developmental services,” Herrera added.

EPSTD exams are offered to all Medicaid eligible children from birth to 20 years of age. YKHC’s EPSTD program recommends examinations begin at 2 months of age, and every couple months until the child reaches 6 months, then re-examinations every three months until 24 months. Examinations should continue every year between the ages of 3 and 6, and then every other year from ages 6-20.

Bethel area children can receive a well-child examination from their provider by calling the appointment desk to schedule an appointment.

If you’d like to know more about the EPSTD examinations, please ask your village Health Aide, or you can call 543-6859 or 1-800-478-3321 ext. 6859 for more information.

HEALTH AIDES, from p. 7

care providers. She sat down and drafted a letter detailing her plan.

As a mother herself, she reflected on the time she had spent at ANMC with her own baby. The staff there took the time to train her to do CPR. Why not offer this CPR training to mothers here in the Delta while they are in Bethel?

She sent her letter out and it was well received. Starting in January, the YKHC EMS department entered into a partnership with the Prematernal Home to offer a monthly course to expectant mothers. Those who complete the two-day Medic First Aid-Pediatric course receive a certificate. Topics covered include choking, CPR, and basic first aid.

We at the Community Health Aide Program want to thank Clotilda for taking the initiative to make her idea a reality. By enlisting mothers from across the Delta we will greatly increase the number of trained emergency responders.
Welcome back for the next installment of the 2007 “Physical Therapy for Healthy Joints” column! Today we will review some common problems with the knee joint. This column will focus specifically on “The Knee” joint, with an entire article on the “Patello-Femoral Joint” next month. In April, the column will have some easy exercises to keep your knee healthy.

There are three basic classifications of knee problems: meniscal, connective tissue (includes muscles, tendons and ligaments) and bony. All three are inter-related, so if you have a problem in one area, chances are there is a real or potential problem in another area.

The two menisci inside the knee provide cushioning and stability. These structures can be injured with twisting movements, hyperextension or hyper-flexion movements, sudden forceful pressure through the joint, or may wear away with general use. There is only blood flow to the outer 1/3 of the menisci, so any injury to this area may heal without surgical intervention. Any injury to the remaining 2/3 will not heal. A torn area that does not heal needs to be removed by an orthopedic surgeon. This procedure is called an “arthroscopic debridement.” If the loose piece is allowed to flap around inside the joint, it can cause further damage to the joint surfaces, and may lead to more problems down the road.

It is especially important to have the procedure done if your knee is “locking up.” This is a sign there is significant damage to the meniscus. To complicate the picture, a locking knee can also be caused by problems in the patello-femoral joint. We will look at this issue next month.

When you tell a provider about your knee problem, the symptoms you report can SOUND like a meniscal injury to your therapist or medical provider, but can actually be caused by an imbalance in your muscles.

Your hamstrings travel down the back of your leg from your hip to just below your knee. They wrap around the sides of your knee, and allow your lower leg to twist a bit. This motion is important for those of you involved in sports, or walking on the tundra. Imagine how hard it would be to play basketball or go berry picking if your knee was a simple hinge joint, only allowing flexing and extending!

If your hamstrings are tight or strained, you may feel pain at their insertion—close to the joint line on the medial and lateral part of your knee. This is often the site of pain when there is a meniscal injury. Also, tight hamstrings put pressure on your knee joint to flex (bend).

When you stand up, your quadriceps move your knee into an extended (straight) position. If your hamstrings are unable to fully relax, the combined pressure in the knee caused by both muscles working at the same time increases the wear and tear on your cartilage, and can cause early or excessive degeneration.

Over time, this can lead to irreversible bony changes commonly known as arthritis. Degenerative changes in the joint surfaces (known as “degenerative arthritis”) cannot be reversed, but in many cases can be prevented.

IMPORTANT! Not all joint pain is caused by degenerative changes. Joint pain MAY resolve if it is treated quickly. X-rays can show degenerative changes in the joint, but the changes may not be apparent for some time after an injury.

Last month we talked about the bones in the knee being lined with cartilage. This cartilage allows the joint surfaces to slide and glide smoothly and easily. Once this cartilage is worn away, it does not regenerate.

Some people seem to have stronger cartilage than others and can withstand more wear and tear in their joints. Regardless of your genetic makeup, it is important to protect the cartilage in your body. You get what you are born with, and that is it! If you are asking your legs to carry 20, 30, 40 extra pounds around all day, every day, imagine what is happening to your poor menisci, and your cartilage!

These are just some of the common problems people have with their knees. If you have any questions about specific problems you are having, please call the Physical Therapy Department at 543-6342 to set up an appointment.

We also travel to the subregional clinics on a regular basis, and are happy to see you closer to home.

Look for more information next month about the patello femoral joint!
Quality Care at every level

Customer Comment—
"Health Aides and Providers were concerned and professional"

- Village Clinics
- Subregional Clinics
- Bethel Hospital
- Residential Facilities
- Home Care
- Aeromed Air Ambulance

www.ykhc.org