

# Health Matters for Rural Women

SEPTEMBER 2007

A Publication of the **Arizona Rural Health Office at the University of Arizona Mel & Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health**, in collaboration with the **Arizona Rural/Frontier Women's Health Coordinating Center**

## Why Rural Women's Health Matters

Back from a summer break, this month's *Health Matters for Rural Women* addresses a variety of topics. Women are integral to their communities, thus their health is important, too. *Health Matters* opens with a piece about why a women's health council is an important priority for addressing and improving women's health and well-being.

This year's Rural Health Conference explored how rural and public health responds to changes in traditions and technologies. It is essential that rural women are part of these conversations, to share traditions and keep up with new technologies.

Women in rural areas hold many jobs and fulfill many rolls. A new photographic exhibit offers a look into the experiences of women and men working in farms in Arizona and Sonora who might otherwise be invisible or forgotten. Certainly, women's work in many areas can come with occupational health concerns. It is hoped that the exhibit will encourage thought and conversation about women working in rural areas.

Please share this newsletter. Get people talking about rural women's health. Listen to the needs and ideas from women themselves. Thanks for reading and enjoy.

## Why do we need a women's health council?

Like other marginalized populations, women's health has not received appropriate attention in terms of research, policy, planning, programming, and services.

Historically, health care for women has focused on reproductive health – in part because that is one aspect of women's health that is obviously unique and in part because maternal mortality rates were the leading cause of death. We now know that women are unique in other physical health issues and that chronic diseases are now the leading cause of death for women.

Employment policies now allow women to take sick leave to care for children or maternal leave after a birth of a child. Men's lives,

children's lives and communities as a whole have also improved as these new policies spill over, such as paternity leave. When women's health needs improve, family and community life improves as well.

There are crucial health differences between men and women. Yet many women do not know that they react differently to some medications, are more vulnerable to some diseases, and even may have different symptoms.

Women access and use health care differently based on life experiences, socio-economic status, ethnicity, age, and abilities. Women's income levels, educational attainment,

and employment status predict their ability to access important health care resources including health insurance, medical services, and preventive care. Therefore, in order to improve women's health, we must work for improvements in other important areas.

Adapted from the New Mexico Governor's Women's Health Advisory Council Report December 2006.

See the full report here:  
<http://www.health.state.nm.us/OPMH/WHACReport.pdf>

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## Fruits and Veggies – More Matters

### Easy ways to get more fruits and veggies in your diet:

- Add fruit to your cereal, yogurt or oatmeal.
- Snack on fruit during the day. Grab an apple, banana, or some grapes on your way out the door.
- Eat a colorful salad at lunch with a variety of vegetables.
- Make fruits and vegetables about half your plate.
- Snack on raw veggies with a healthy dip.
- Enjoy your favorite beans and peas – add them to salads and low-fat dips.
- Eat at least two vegetables with dinner.
- Have fruit for dessert.

September is National Fruit and Vegetable Month, which provides an opportunity to look at little changes that can make a big difference in health and wellness.

Fruits and vegetables are a good source of vitamins and minerals. Many are lower in calories and higher in fiber than other foods. As part of a healthy diet, eating fruits and vegetables instead of high-fat or high-calorie foods may make it easier for you to control your weight.

Compared to people who eat few fruits and vegetables, those who eat more generous amounts along with a healthy diet are likely to have reduced risk of chronic diseases including stroke, type 2 diabetes, some types of cancer, and perhaps heart disease and high blood pressure.

A common response to the call to eat more fruits and veggies often includes the concern that fresh fruits and veggies are not available and are more expensive. See below for some ideas

to save time and money.

Get the most nutrients: cook for the minimal recommended time, using as little water as possible.

More information is available from [fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov](http://fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov) including:

- A tool to calculate how many fruits and veggies are right for you based on your age, sex, and activity level
- Fruit and vegetable of the month
- Recipes and tips
- Free brochures available to download

**How many cups do you need?** Daily amounts are now recommended as cups, not servings. For more information and to see what ½ a cup and 1 cup look like, visit [fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov](http://fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov)

	Age	Fruits	Vegetables
<b>Less Active</b>	19-30	2 cups	2 ½ cups
	31-50	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
	51+	1 ½ cups	2 cups
<b>Moderately Active</b>	19-50	2 cups	2 ½ cups
	51+	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
<b>Active</b>	19-30	2 cups	3 cups
	51+	2 cups	2 ½ cups

#### Save time:

- Pick fruits and veggies that require little peeling or chopping
- Prepare extra veggies and freeze leftovers for quick sides.
- Choose ready-packed salads.

#### Save money:

- Buy fresh fruits and veggies when they are in season.
- Prevent waste by storing properly.
- Purchase frozen, canned or dried varieties.
- Visit a local farm or farmer's market.

#### Save time and money

- Plan meals ahead.
- Buy in bulk, prepare extra, and freeze leftovers for later.
- Make vegetable-based one-pot meals using beans.
- Keep it simple. Choose quick and easy recipes.

## Report from the Rural Health Conference

The Rural Health Office at The University of Arizona Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health and the Arizona Rural Health Association, Inc., held the 34th Annual Arizona Rural Health Conference at beautiful Fort McDowell Radisson in Fountain Hills, AZ Jul 30th to Aug 1st. The longest running rural health conference in

the nation, the Annual Arizona Rural Health Conference provides an environment for networking and exchange among professionals and community members for rural Arizona and the southwest.

Other sponsors of the event included: HealthNet of Arizona, the Arizona AHEC

Program, Biltmore Cardiology, Copper Queen Community Hospital, Southeast Arizona AHEC, ValueOptions, Arizona Department of Health Services Bureau of Health Systems Development, Arizona Public Health Association, Regional Center for Border Health,

*Story continues on page 3*

## On Display: Farmworkers Photographic Exhibit



"Farmworkers in Arizona and Sonora: Who Will Tell Their Stories?" photo installation was on display at the 2007 Rural Health Conference. The exhibit begins with images from Yuma County, Arizona, followed by images from the Sonoran region. View the photographs from beginning to end provides a little-seen view of farmwork in both regions and emphasizes the common issues shared by the Arizona-Sonora region as a whole.

The photographic exhibit was compiled by Jill Guernsey de Zapien and Sonia Medina at the University of Arizona Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health. The

collected is intended to bring attention to the farmworkers in Arizona and Sonora who put the food on our tables.

The River of Time Museum in Fountain Hills and Lower Verde Valley will be showcasing the photo exhibit for a couple of months. More information about the museum, including location and hours, can be found at:

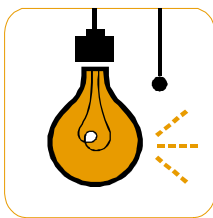
<http://riveroftimemuseum.org/>



Many thanks to Campesinos Sin Fronteras, Centro de Investigacion en Alimentacion y Desarrollo, and el Colegio de Sonora/Zuckerman College of Public Health Diplomado en Salud Publica for the photographs.

## Rural Health Conference Report

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Smith Group, and the Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association.

This year's conference, which drew over 165 participants, was entitled Traditions and Technologies: Rural and Public Health Responding to Change. A spectrum of leaders from around the state addressed the question: "How have rural, border, and tribal communities used their traditions and technologies to respond to health trends and diverse health issues experienced among their people?" Workshops were offered from people

working across the state and addressed the themes of the conference. Themes included healthy living, jobs into careers, rural community development, and rural hospitals and health care networks.

A major conference highlight was the keynote address by Dr. George Blue= Spruce, Jr., DDS. MPH. Dr. Blue Spruce, who is the nation's first American Indian dentist, spoke about his historic career in healthcare and particularly about the importance of culturally competent care and the need to support more American Indian people in the health professions. Other major speakers included Sarah Kraner Allen (Arizona Department of Health

Services), Duke Duncan, MD, Roger Hughes, PhD (St. Luke's Health Initiatives), L. Gary Hart, PhD (UA MEZCOPH Arizona Rural Health Office) and Brad Tritle (Arizona Government Information Technology Agency). In addition, Ms. January Contreras, health policy advisor to Governor Janet Napolitano, addressed conference participants on the subject of access to health care.

For additional information or follow-up on the conference, please contact Jennifer Peters ([petersjs@u.arizona.edu](mailto:petersjs@u.arizona.edu)) or Rick Swanson ([RSwanson@northcountryhc.org](mailto:RSwanson@northcountryhc.org)).

## Add to Favorites: Resources

### Arizona Resources

#### 📁 Arizona Nutrition Network

Eat Well Be Well is a site with information for parents, fun and games for kids, recipes, and commercials. In English and Spanish.

[www.eatwellbewell.org](http://www.eatwellbewell.org)

#### 📁 Arizona Farmer's Market Nutrition Program

AZ FMNP is administered by AZDHS in collaboration with the Association of Arizona Food Banks and the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. AZ FMNP is a program to increase fruit and vegetable intake for women and children participating in the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

<http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/ncdps/azfmp/index.htm>

### National resources

#### 📁 Staying Active and Eating Health

From womenahealth.gov - Tips for eating healthy, healthy dieting, health recipes, and staying active.

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/FitnessNutrition/>

#### 📁 American Dietetic Association

ADA serves the public by promoting optimal nutrition, health and well-being. ADA members are the nation's food and nutrition experts, translating the science of nutrition into practical solutions for healthy living.

[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

#### 📁 Nutrition.gov

Provides easy access to food and nutrition information from across the federal government. It serves as a gateway to reliable information on nutrition, healthy eating, physical activity, and food safety for consumers.

<http://www.nutrition.gov/>

#### 📁 USDA Economic Research Service

ERS research examines the effect of economic factors, nutrition education, and food policy on food choices and, in turn, dietary quality.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Browse/DietHealthSafety/>



## Upcoming Health Events

**September 18, 2007**

### Take a Loved One for a Checkup day

Part of Closing the Health Gap, it's your chance to encourage those you love to visit a health professional -- or at least make an appointment to visit one. More information:

<http://www.omhrc.gov/healthgap/2006drday.aspx>

602-569-2888

<http://www.rfwhcc.org/pdfs/yumastd.pdf>

### October 20, 2007 Invaluable Medical Assistant Seminar

Women's Health: Improving the Quality of Life  
Phoenix College, Phoenix, AZ  
[http://www.aachc.org/eventsf\\_events.php?event\\_id=142](http://www.aachc.org/eventsf_events.php?event_id=142)

Find additional information and events at  
<http://www.rfwhcc.org/>

If you would like to join the Arizona Rural Women's Health Initiative or get more information, please visit our website:

[http://www.rho.arizona.edu/Programs/azrwhi/AzRWHI\\_Council.aspx](http://www.rho.arizona.edu/Programs/azrwhi/AzRWHI_Council.aspx)

If you have any suggestions or comments, or if you would like to contribute an article about a program or event related to rural women's health, please contact:

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This issue will be archived at:  
[http://rho.arizona.edu/programs/azrwhi/azrwhi\\_newsletter.aspx](http://rho.arizona.edu/programs/azrwhi/azrwhi_newsletter.aspx)

### September 20, 2007 Strategies to Prevent Obesity Conference

Yuma Health Services District Auditorium  
9am-4:30pm, to register contact Marsha Kolich at [consultmmk@aol.com](mailto:consultmmk@aol.com) or

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Health Matters for Rural Women:

The newsletter of the Arizona Rural Women's Health Initiative

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