

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

MAIN SERVICE AREAS

Our main service points are:

- i.- Accident and Emergency Unit which operates on 24 hours basis
- ii.- Anaesthetic Unit with routine EPIDURAL analgesia for pain-free labour
- iii.- Ambulance services
- iv- Cancer treatment services using a Linear Accelerator and other equipments
- v - Dental and Maxillofacial services
- vi.- Dietetic services
- vii.- Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) Speech Therapy and Audiology Treatment Services including cochlea implantation
- viii Family Planning and Reproductive Health services
- ix - Family Medicine; GOPD, GPOPD and VIP/ Private Wing
- x. - Haemodialysis services for patients with kidney malfunction
- xi. - In-Patients Wards comprising VIP/Private Wing, Semi-Private & Open ward
- xii.- Intensive Care Unit (ICU) to cater for serious medical and surgical cases
- xiii. -In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF) Services
- xiv. -Labour Ward/Theatres for deliveries and infant care facilities
- xv. - Laboratory services in microbiology/ parasitology, haematology/ blood transfusion/ morbid anatomy/ histopathology, chemical pathology, immunology, etc
- xvi. - Medical Physics
- xvii - Medicine Department

- xviii. - Non-Clinical Services such as Administration, Engineering, Finance, etc
- xix. - Nuclear Medicine with fully functional Gamma Camera
- xx. - Nursing Services
- xxi. - Obstetrics and Gynaecology where endoscopic surgery is performed
- xxii. - Ophthalmology
- xxiii - Oncology and Radiotherapy
- xxiv.- Paediatrics and neonatal care services for sick children
- xxv. – Pain Management & Palliative Care
- xxvi - Pharmacy
- xxvii - Physiotherapy services
- xxviii- Psychiatry services
- xxix- Radio-Diagnostic services using ultra-modern X-ray machines such as mammography, 16 -Slices CT-Scan, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI),etc.
- xxx.- Surgery: General, Orthopaedic, Neurosurgery and Spine where a full range of minor and major operations including endoscopic, knee and hip replacement procedures are performed
- xxxi - Urology services including Trans-urethral prostatectomy .

THE NUCLEAR MEDICINE

The Nuclear Medicine Department offers the following medical investigations:

CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM

- Gated Stress Myocardium Perfusion study
- Venography
- Lymphangiography

- Stress MUGA
- Resting MUGA

GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT

- Blood Pool study for GI Bleeding
- Gastro-Oesophageal Reflux study
- Gastric Emptying
- GER and Gastric Emptying
- Hepatobiliary Scan
- Meckel study
- Salivary Gland study

TUMOUR IMAGING

- Gallium Scan
- 1-131 MIBG Scan
- Parathyroid Scan
- Scintimammography

BRAIN

- HMPAO Brain SPECT
- Radionuclide Cisternography for CSF Leak
- SPECT for Brain Tumour recurrence
- MIBI Brain SPECT
- ECD Brain

SKELETAL SYSTEM

- Bone Scan
- SPECT Bone Scan
- Bone Marrow Imaging
- Infection Imaging
- P-32 Therapy for Bone Metastasis

- Strontium Therapy for Bone Metastasis

RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

- Lung Ventilation and Perfusion
- Lung Ventilation
- Lung Perfusion

THYROID IMAGING

- 99MTC Thyroid scan
- 1-131 Uptake and scan
- 1-131 Whole Body scan
- 1-131 Therapy for Thyrotoxicosis
- High dose 1-131 Therapy for Thyroid Cancer

GENITOURINARY SYSTEM

- ❖ DTPA Scan and GFR
- ❖ Captopril DTPA study for screening of Renal Hypertension
- ❖ DMSA Scan
- ❖ Renal Transplant Evaluation
- ❖ Testicular Scan

INFECTION IMAGING

- ❖ Leucocyte Scan for infection

SERVICOM WORK ETHICS

- Proper dressing and appearing responsible
- No loitering in the corridors
- Keep offices and toilets clean
- No closing before time
- Be guided by the concept of quality service delivery
- Always be on your seat

- Response to request from clients must be processed within (15) working days by schedule officers, or acknowledgements sent within 48 hours if the matter is complex
- All matters pertaining to ad-hoc and special assignments should be handled within the specified period
- Attend to customers/clients politely and specify time targets for attending to them
- Reasons for delays should be explained politely.

DRESS CODE (SERVICOM)

The following are the modes of dressing for men and women Public Servants:-

FOR MEN

- Complete agbada with cap.
- Kaftan with cap
- Complete Suit
- Long sleeve shirt and trouser with tie
- Long sleeve shirt and trouser with tie (with or without coat)
- French suit

FOR WOMEN

- Skirt suit
- Complete suit (with ladies tie or without)
- Buba and Iro
- Wrapper and Blouse
- Trouser and shirt or trouser and blouse(not jeans)
- 'Agbada' (free wear)
- Long Skirt and Blouse

Dress decently to project and Maintain your personality!

Dress moderately to protect dignity!!

Dress responsibly to promote the public Service!!!

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH A PSYCHIATRIST

Could you kindly introduce yourself?

My name is Dr Olusola Ephraim Oluwanuga, I am a Fellow of the West African College of Physicians Psychiatry. I studied medicine at the University of Ibadan and had my Master degree in Physiology.

What prompted you to choose Psychiatry as a specialty?

In my pre-clinical years, we took Psychology lectures and it was there I developed interest in Psychiatry because I found it enjoyable and fascinating.

Could you kindly inform us about Psychiatry and its scope?

Psychiatry is one of the areas of specialization in medicine, correctly described as Psychological medicine. Doctors in this field look at disorders of thinking, feeling, behavior and understanding. It is also regarded as a neuroscience. There are other fields closely linked with Psychiatry such as neurology and neurosurgery.

What are the areas mostly neglected or not known by people under psychiatry?

What people fail to understand is that Psychiatric illnesses are medical conditions. People need to seek for help early and often. In most cases patients are taken to so many places before going to see a Psychiatrist whereas early presentation is always the best.

What advice do you have for patient relations?

I am calling on any one who is related to a patient with mental illness to see it as an illness and to be hopeful about successful treatment. Sometimes Psychological illness may be chronic but often time they are not chronic. Stigmatization is the biggest problem of our patients. Patients are excluded from family affairs and social activities and this may aggravate the situation.

What are the major challenges you have been facing as a Psychiatrist ?

The major challenges we face quite often are difficulty in follow-up of treatment. Patients may not be readily willing to come to hospital, family may give up. Psychiatrists practice should be supported by psychologists, social workers and

Psychiatric Nurses for proper care of patients and to counsel family members.

Do you have any message for staff of National Hospital?

Keep doing your best, take care of yourself, don't neglect yourself if you are facing any difficulty or some stressful conditions, please open up and speak to somebody. Eat a balance diet, sleep well, think positively and have a positive attitude.

Please ma, do you have any call to make to the government?

I am happy to note that Government is becoming more interested in issues of mental health. Currently, there is Mental Health Action Committee and hopefully there will soon be a revised national mental health policy and a bill to address the needs for the mentally ill and the activities of mental health workers. So we are looking forward for this to come into reality so that we can achieve the goal of improved mental health services for all Nigerians.

NHA NEWS

NUCLEAR MEDICINE RADIOACTIVE IODINE: AN EFFECTIVE THERAPY FOR THYROID DISORDERS

Radioactive Iodine a therapy under nuclear medicine could be used effectively in the cure of thyroid disorder. This was made known recently by Dr Jawa Z. M. The pioneer of Nuclear medicine in Abuja during a grand round clinical committee at the National Hospital Abuja.

Dr. Jawa who is also a staff of the Hospital emphasized that thyroid disorders mostly affect women but rare and severe in men.

As indicated by the expert in this area, radioactive iodine therapy provides quick and effective clinical outcome, it improves the quality of life of patient. Additionally, it helps patients in regaining their lost weight. It also improves pigmentation (beauty).

CMD NHA URGES VOLUNTEERS TO JOIN PALLIATIVE CARE

The Chief Medical Director, National Hospital Abuja, Professor Bello Bala Shehu has urged volunteers to join Hospice and Palliative Care Association which aims at improving the quality of life

of patients with life threatening sickness. The CMD made the urge through the Chairman Medical Advisory Committee(CMAC) of the Hospital; Dr Obasi Ekunmakama during the 4th Annual General Meeting & Scientific Conference of Hospice and Palliative Care Association (HPCAN) that took place recently at the National Hospital Abuja. The Role of Family and Community members in Palliative Care was the topic discussed during the Conference.

The conference which was aimed at cross fertilization of ideas has drawn competent/eminent speakers to speak on various issues so as to help improve on the services of participants as care givers.

The occasion was graced by HPCAN President, Dr. T.A. Olasinde, Representative of CMD-NHA, Dr. Obasi Ekumankama, C-MAC and Chairman of the ceremony, Professor Durosinmi Etti- OON

SPINAL BIFIDA AND HYDROCEPHALUS CHILDREN CELEBRATE AT NHA

A special day/programme for the Spinal Bifida and Hydrocephalus children was held recently in the National Hospital, Abuja.

The idea of celebrating these serious birth defect babies and their parents was conceived out of a strong passion and empathy of the coordinator of the programme, Sister Olubumi Lawal who is also a Nurse in the National Hospital, Abuja.

This grand occasion was characterized by events aimed at educating parents particularly women on the need to take precautionary measures by continuous intake of the B-vitamin and folic acid before, during and after birth, as it plays an integral role in the prevention of this congenital malfunction resulting in serious defects on baby's brain and spine.

Dr. Olusesi, who was the Chairman of the occasion called on those who graced the occasion to do all it takes to put smiles on the faces of the parents of these children, particularly now that they are under intense pressure of stigmatization as a result of lack of adequate awareness on the ailment by people who consider it as a spiritual attack.

Other events to celebrate these babies were pep talk on the Management of Spinal Bifida and Hydrocephalus given by Dr. Mahmud, a Neurosurgeon, a brief of paediatrics' perspective of Spinal Bifida and Hydrocephalus by Dr. Muktar Yola, a Consultant Paediatrician and

Neonatologist who represented the HOD Paediatrics. Barr. Chris Mamman, an Assistant Director/HOD Legal gave a talk on child rights. A drama presentation was also carried out by NYSC members, followed by donations and presentation of gifts to the parents of the babies.

NHA CMAC ADVISES BREAST FEEDING MOTHERS

The Chairman Medical Advisory Committee (CMAC) of National Hospital Abuja, Dr Obasi Ekunmakama has advised spouses to ensure continual breast feeding of their babies exclusively for a maximum of two years; as breast milk is very important and essential to the survival of the child's development, growth, psychological and emotional stability. The CMAC gave the advice recently during a public lecture to mark this year (2011) breast feeding week at the National Hospital Abuja.

Earlier at the occasion, Dr Ekunmakama, who represented the Chief Medical Director of the Hospital, Prof Bello Bala Shehu blessed the breast feeding mothers with words of commendation and prayer.

The breast feeding week which was targeted at creating awareness on the importance of breast feeding was made colourful in National Hospital by a lot of

programmes that include paper presentations, wards visitations and gifts presentations.

To encourage breastfeeding mothers, there was also a competition on the healthiest exclusively breastfed infant baby present. Babies Izichukwu Jonathan, Etang, Enock Noah and chidinma Joan Chukwu emerged as the healthiest babies. The criteria for their selection were based on weight, immunization status, positioning during breast feeding and the skin appearance. Gifts were also presented to them.

The programme was coordinated by Paediatrics department in conjunction with Nursing Services, Obstetrics and Gynaecology departments; and it was also graced by consultants paediatricians: Dr Patient Ahmed (former CMAC), Dr Lamidi Isah. Audu (former CMAC), Dr Mariya Mukhatar Yola and Matron Christiana Atafo.

KOREAN FOUNDATION DONATES MOBILE CLINIC TO NATIONAL HOSPITAL ABUJA.

The Korean Foundation for International Healthcare (KOFIH) has donated two mobile Clinics to the Federal Ministry of Health In Abuja for onwards transfer to the

National Hospital and University of Abuja Teaching Hospital Gwagwalada.

Receiving the vehicles, the Honorable Minister of Health Prof. C.O. Onyebuchi Chukwu said one of the vehicles is meant for internal medicine and digital X-ray while the other is for general mobile clinic services.

The National Hospital team led by Dr Obasi Ekunmakama Director Clinical Services (DCS) and Chairman Medical Advisory Committee also graced the occasion.

Subsequently at the National Hospital, the Foundation conducted three days training on the vehicles and their equipments.

UN BUILDING BOMBING – NHA RECEIVES COMMENDATION

The Management and Staff of National Hospital Abuja have received lots of commendation for prompt medical services rendered to the victims of the UN Building Bomb blast.

The words of commendation were given by important personalities from the presidency, various Ministries religious/professional bodies, and delegates from United Nations.

In a related development, about 200 Nigerians Volunteers and the National Blood Transfusion Services have donated

considerable parts of blood to the blood bank of national Hospital to facilitate treatments of the victims where necessary.

In addition, donations of cash and consumables have also been made by different organizations, Ministries and individuals which include: Ministry of Police affairs, Federal Ministry of Health, police Community Relations Committee Zone 7 Abuja, National Council for women Society, A corp Member, Tooichi Izuchukwu, Mr Annette Dorey and Doctors without Borders.

MIS RELEASES COMPREHENSIVE NHA TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

The Management Information Services Department of National Hospital Abuja has recently produced a comprehensive Telephone Directory and made it available to all Heads of departments and unit of the Hospital. The Head of the MIS disclosed that the directory is meant to ease communication among staff and thereby urged staff to utilize it well and to furnish the department with updates, omission or correction to feature in subsequent publication.

NHA CONDUCTS PROMOTIONAL EXAMS

Promotional Exam in National Hospital Abuja has commenced this September to promote deserving staff to higher positions. The exercise is expected to cover staff in both Junior and Senior Cadre. It could be recalled that similar exercise was conducted early this year. This indicates Management commitment to ensure that staff welfare is not compromised.

ARTICLES/CONTRIBUTIONS FROM STAFF

LASSA FEVER: AWARENESS, TREATMENT PROTOCOL AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES

By Pharm. Kilani, Jelili Adewale, *FPCPharm.*
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Description: Lassa fever is an acute viral haemorrhagic illness lasting 1-4 weeks duration. It may involve multiple organ systems but it does not affect the central nervous system. It was described for the first time in the 1950s, however the pathogenic virus was not identified until 1969 when it was isolated from an American missionary nurse who contracted the disease while working in **Lassa**, a town in Borno, Nigeria. The virus is a single-stranded RNA virus belonging to the virus family **Arenaviridae**.

Lassa Fever Outbreaks

Lassa fever outbreaks have occurred in Nigeria, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. There was an outbreak within the first quarter of 2009 and affected patients were brought for treatment in National Hospital and the lives of about seven patients diagnosed with Lassa fever have been lost. It has also been reported that at least seventeen (17) people (including a former senator and ambassador) died of Lassa fever in 2010 during a recent outbreak in Kebbi state. Professor George Akpede, the chairman, National Lassa Fever Stakeholders Forum, said recently that no fewer than 51 million Nigerians were at risk of contracting Lassa fever which has now become an annual endemic disease. He further stated that Lassa Fever-related illnesses may reach three million with an annual death rate of about 58,000. (See *Daily Trust*, Tuesday, May 18, 2010, page 8)

Disease Transmission: Lassa fever occurs more often in the dry season, rather than in the rainy season. The vector or reservoir is *Mastomys natalensis*, a rat that commonly inhabits houses in Africa. It is known as *Ekú Asin* among the Yorubas; *Jagba* among the Hausas and *Nkapi* among the Igbos. This rat has a characteristic foul odour and a markedly pointed mouth. Thus it should be noted that not all types of rats transmit the disease.

The disease is transmitted to humans through ingestion of food/drink already contaminated with the rat's urine or faeces. But human-to-human transmission can occur via ingestion of food or drink which has also been contaminated with the urine, faeces, saliva, vomitus, or blood of the infected person. Person-to-person transmission can also occur through needlestick injuries or contamination of broken skin with infected blood. **Aerosol transmission** can also occur via inhaling contaminated dust. **Laboratory transmission** can also occur particularly in the hospital environment in the absence of adequate infection control measures.

The virus enters the human body through the bloodstream, lymph vessels, respiratory tract, and/or digestive tract. It then multiplies in cells of the reticuloendothelial system. Virus replication in the reticuloendothelial cells causes capillary lesions. These capillary lesions lead to erythrocyte and platelet loss, with mild to moderate

thrombocytopenia and a tendency toward bleeding. Capillary lesions also cause increased vascular permeability and hemorrhage in various organs, e.g. the stomach, small intestine, kidneys, lungs, and brain. The incubation period is 5 to 16 days.

Hospital staff and those who look after infected patients are at the greatest risk. In some areas, the prevalence of antibodies among the general population is up to forty per cent, indicating that not all people have the severe form of the disease.

Symptoms and Signs: Symptoms begin with gradually progressive fever, weakness, malaise, and gastrointestinal symptoms (such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, dysphagia, stomach ache); symptoms and signs of hepatitis may occur. Symptoms progress over the next 4 to 5 days to prostration with sore throat, cough, chest pain, and vomiting. Patches of white or yellow exudate may appear on the tonsils. 60 – 80% of patients have systolic BPs of < 90mmHg with pulse pressures of < 20mmHg, and relative bradycardia is possible. Facial and neck swelling and conjunctival oedema occur in 10 to 30%. Occasionally, patients have tinnitus, epistaxis, bleeding from the gums and venipuncture sites, maculopapular rash, cough, and dizziness. 20% of patients develop sensorineural hearing loss, often permanent. In patients who will recover, defervescence occurs; fatally ill patients often develop shock, delirium,

rales, pleural effusion, and, occasionally, generalized seizures. Pericarditis occasionally occurs. The degree of fever and the amino-transferase levels correlate with disease severity. Late sequelae include alopecia, iridocyclitis, and transient blindness.

Diagnosis: Because the symptoms of Lassa fever are so varied and non-specific, clinical diagnosis is often difficult, especially early in the course of the disease. Lassa fever is difficult to distinguish from many other diseases which cause fever, including malaria, shigellosis, typhoid fever, yellow fever and other viral haemorrhagic fevers. Definitive diagnosis requires testing that is available only in highly specialized laboratories.

Laboratory specimens may be hazardous and must be handled with extreme care. Lassa fever is diagnosed by detection of Lassa antigen, anti-Lassa antibodies, or virus isolation techniques. Lassa fever is suspected in patients with possible exposure who have a **viral prodrome** followed by unexplained disease of any organ system except the CNS. If suspected, liver function tests, urinalysis, serologic tests, and possibly CBC should be obtained. Proteinuria is common and may be massive. AST and ALT levels rise ($10 \times$ normal), as do LDH levels. The most rapid diagnostic test is PCR, although demonstrating either Lassa IgM antibodies or a 4-fold rise in IgG antibody titre using an indirect fluorescent antibody technique is also diagnostic. Although the virus can be

grown in cell culture, cultures are not routine. **Due to the risk of infection, particularly in patients with hemorrhagic fever, cultures must be handled only in a biosafety level 4 laboratory.** Chest x-rays, obtained if lung involvement is suspected, may show basilar pneumonitis and pleural effusions.

Prognosis: Recovery or death generally occurs 7 to 31 days (average 12 to 15 days) after symptoms begin. Mortality occurs in 16 to 45%. Disease is severe during pregnancy. Mortality is 50 to 92% in women who are pregnant or who have delivered within 1 month. Most pregnant women lose the foetus.

Treatment Protocols

The only known treatment for Lassa fever is the antiviral drug **Ribavirin**. It is an effective treatment for Lassa fever if given early on in the course of clinical illness. Once the laboratory investigations confirm the diagnosis of Lassa fever, the patient should be **isolated and barrier-nursed**. Ribavirin has been found to be exceptionally effective in saving lives of victims. Even though Ribavirin is a toxic drug with harsh side effects but so far it's the only one known to work. It must be given quickly and aggressively, usually **for approximately 10 days**, and works best when administered through an IV route.

A **loading dose of 33mg/kg body weight** should be administered first. Thereafter, doses of **16mg/kg body weight** should be

administered **every 6 hours for four days**. Thereafter, doses of **8mg/kg** body weight should be administered **every 8 hours for the next 6 days**. A treatment chart should be completed for each individual patient clearly laying out the correct dosages to be administered each time. Ribavirin injection comes as 100mg per ampoule, thus a patient weighing 70kg will receive **23 ampoules** as a loading dose. Ribavirin does not require dilution before being administered. Once started, ribavirin treatment should not be discontinued until the 10-day course is completed.

An alternative regimen is to administer for adults, Ribavirin: **2-gm (i.e. 20 ampoules) loading dose**, followed by **1 gm** every 6 hours for 4 days, followed by **0.5 gm** every 8 hours for 6 days. Treatment is most effective if instituted within 6 days of the onset of fever. Experience has shown that **rigors** may occur if the drug is given as a **bolus injection**, but that this can be overcome by giving it as an **infusion over 30 minutes**. The very high dosage recommendations found in '**A Compendium of Clinical Medicine**' by A.O. Falase & O.O. Akinkugbe are no longer used.

Prophylactic Oral Ribavirin Treatment Protocols

Currently, there is no effective prophylactic treatment for Lassa fever. However, some sources recommend **prophylactic doses of Ribavirin for**

people coming in high-risk contact with viremic patients. However, once symptoms set in, then it is too late to use oral Ribavirin. **Either of the two regimens** below can be used: **400mg** every 6hours for 7–10days; or **1g** every 6hours for 4days, then 500mg every 6hours for 2days. The common brand of the tablet, **Copegus®** is presented as 200mg Ribavirin tablet.

As some of the symptoms include fever, vomiting and diarrhoea **fluids and electrolytes** should be administered to restore balance. The problem with fluid replacement is the permeability of the blood vessels, so the patient must be watched carefully for **signs of pulmonary oedema**. Excessive blood loss should be watched for. The patient may need **blood and platelet transfusions** to replace what is lost through the organs and veins. A careful watch should be kept on the patient's blood pressure and oxygenation. **Interferon therapy** has also been used intravenously and found to be helpful in fighting off the illness.

Palliative care should be provided for pain using **narcotic analgesics**. Non-narcotic analgesics are used to treat the pyrexia. **Antibiotics** are given to ward off secondary infections during recovery such as aseptic meningitis, global encephalopathy with seizures, cerebellar ataxia (uncommon), encephalitis and deafness (common). Temporary or

permanent deafness in one or both ears occurs in 29% of Lassa fever patients. Although the virus may no longer be found in the blood during convalescence, pericarditis can occur, especially in males. Patients who will survive begin to defervesce 2-3 weeks after onset of the disease. In contrast, patients who are at the greatest risk of dying usually develop shock, clouded mental status, agitation, rales, pleural effusion, and sometimes *grand mal* seizures. The **four symptoms associated with a 2.5-fold or higher risk of mortality are: vomiting, sore throat, tachypnea (rapid breathing), or bleeding.**

Preventive Measures

Hospital staff and patients' relations should be protected while treating the Lassa fever patient. **Needlestick injury** with a contaminated needle should be avoided. **Sexual intercourse** with a confirmed case should be avoided. **Other mucosal contacts** with body fluids from a confirmed case should also be avoided. **Note also that the Lassa virus will be present in the body of a person who has died from the disease. So care must be taken when washing the corpse or during autopsy examinations.**

Always remember safe nursing and universal safety precautions with all patients.

- ❖ Handle and dispose of sharp instruments carefully

- ❖ Decontaminate instruments and other equipments safely
- ❖ Wash hands with soap and water after contact with body fluids
- ❖ Safely dispose contaminated water
- ❖ Handle specimens safely
- ❖ Minimise use of invasive procedures
- ❖ Use oral Ribavirin for prophylaxis in high risk patients

And as soon as you suspect Lassa fever:

- ❖ Isolate the patient.
- ❖ Restrict access to the isolation area.
- ❖ Do not allow anyone with open cuts or wounds to look after patients with Lassa fever.
- ❖ Wear protective clothing.
- ❖ Follow the rules of **barrier nursing.**
- ❖ Instruct non-professionals especially cleaners on self-protection.

References:

1. **W H O Fact Sheet** N°179 Revised April 2005
2. **F M O H Document:** What Health Workers Should Know about Lassa Fever
3. **Tara K. Harper, TKH Virology Notes:** Lassa Fever, 2004.
4. **A.O. Falase & O.O. Akinkugbe, A Compendium of Clinical Medicine,** 2nd Ed., 2000, pp823-825

HEALTHY LIVING

BY ADIO RASQA ADETONA AHR, MHIM, CCR

What Is Healthy Living

World health organization defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of diseases or infirmity. Health is overall condition of an organism at a given time in regard to soundness of body or mind and freedom from diseases or abnormality.

It is equally defined as a combination of the absence of illness, the ability to cope with daily activities, physical fitness and a high quality of life.

Healthy living is therefore making deliberate positive choices that enhance your personal, physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. This includes choosing nutritious foods that are not injurious to health, stay physically active and choosing not to smoke or drink alcohol.

Staying healthy is a great way to feel more energetic, alert, confident and happy. Healthy living is not only essential but is also required to cope with all pressures of life activities.

Therefore, healthy living is predicated around 4 major components and they are

1. Food and Nutrition

- Balance diet
- Healthy weight
- Healthy habits

2. Physical Activity

Exercise to reduce pains, weight, and to be alert/active

3. Mental health/Stress

Mind/body connection, Keeping your emotional health, Coping with stress.

4. Preventing Health Problems

Preventive exercise, Health self-management, Genetic testing, Reducing terminal diseases risk (e.g cancer, heart diseases), Preventing STDs, Avoid substance/drugs abuse, Avoid/quit smoking

These are connected to form a whole called healthy living

What Constitutes Healthy Living

This means choosing eating habit, physical and mental activities that enhance one's physical and mental health and avoiding all acts or activities that can put one's health to test or trial. Therefore anything that will ensure wholesomeness of environment and maintain complete

well being of the man in this environment constitutes healthy living. These components can be listed as follows:

- a. **Housing-** A well ventilated and spacious house devoid of overcrowding with clean environment.
- b. **Water and Sanitation** – Infection free source of portable water and sanitary disposal of both liquid and solid wastes to avoid infections
- c. **Pollution-** Pollutions of any type –air, noise and water are injurious to health. Emission of carbon monoxide through the smokes from the exhaust of vehicles and generators and the noises there from are hazardous and this works against healthy living.
- d. **Personal hygiene-** This need to be observed and maintained at all time in handling our food and personal effects.

Essential Features Of Healthy Living

There are a lot of differing opinions of the best way to make healthy living happen. There is no one secret to keeping your health at its best than by starting to make simple, easy choices

that can help reduce health risk especially heart diseases and stroke. While a Canadian hypertension education programme executive Dr. Sheldon Tobe believes that prevention and treatment of high blood pressure and heart disease is the answer Dr. Ruth Mepherson a researcher on heart diseases recommended monitoring cholesterol profile and blood pressure as a way out.

Dr. Robert Reid a behavioral change expert agreed that choosing activities that will reduce your weight as well as staying connected with family and friends help to make you healthy, Mrs. Carol Dombo- Registered Dietitian and a Nutritionist Consultant stressed the need to choosing healthier foods, making time to prepare healthy meals at home which should include a lot of vegetables, whole grains and lower fats.

In harmonizing the opinions of these four experts they agreed on these 10 tops tips as essential features of healthy living.

1. If you smoke, become smoke-free

2. Be aware of your cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar levels and keep them normal.
3. Engage in regular physical activities at least 30 minutes most days of the week –choose activities you find fun so you do them.
4. Achieve and maintain a healthy weight
5. Consume at least five servings of vegetables and fruits per day by including vegetables every meal and fruits.
6. Develop and maintain personal relationship to help reduce stress that can lead to unhealthy habits.
7. Choose lean meat, fish, poultry and meat alternatives such as beans along with lower fat milk and milk products
8. Include a small amount of soft non-hydrogenated margarine, vegetable oils and nuts each day.
9. Make at least half of your grain products whole grain each day.
10. Choose foods that lower in sodium and limit the amount of

salt you add in cooking or at the table.

Determinants Of Healthy Living

This is referred to as social determinants of health and they are the economic and social condition under which people live which determines their health.

These determinants as recognized by World Health Organization are listed below:

- a. Income and social status – senior and junior staff dichotomy, poor and rich
- b. Employment/working condition
- c. Social and physical environments
- d. Personal health practices
- e. Belief and culture(religious and cultural beliefs)
- f. Food security- household food security
- g. Housing condition

All these affect the way people live, their consequent chance of illness and their risk of premature deaths.

This is applicable to both rich and poor, excessive intake of fatty and starchy foods, affect the poor while the rich suffer from in-take of contaminated frozen and canned foods. Therefore there is need to ensure healthy diet which is the diet that is arrived at with intent of improving or maintaining optimal health.

Common Behaviors That Affect Your Health

What comes to mind when you think of taking risks with your health—driving recklessly, or may be abusing alcohol or illegal drugs? Those behaviors are certainly risky. Other dangerous behaviors that negatively affect one's health are tobacco use, unbalanced nutrition (too many calories and/or too much of one food group and not enough of the others) and a lack of physical activity and they are some of the key risk factors for the most common causes of death.

What can I do to reduce my risk?

The following are 3 of the most important ways to reduce your risk of the top 3 causes of death:

1. Quit smoking, or don't start.
2. Eat fewer high-fat foods and more fruits and vegetables.
3. Be more physically active.

Even by doing just one of these things, you will improve your health and reduce your risk of heart disease, cancer and stroke which is the top 3 causes of deaths.

How To Achieve Healthy Living

To achieve healthy living the following are recommended:

i. Balanced Diet

Balanced diet is otherwise called healthy diet which is one that is arrived at with intent of improving or maintaining optimal health. This is usually involved consuming nutrients by eating the appropriate amounts from all of the food groups including an adequate amount of water.

Benefits of a balanced diet;

- Improves your immune system
- Increases energy levels, vitality and alertness
- Decreases your risk of heart diseases and diabetes
- Help you cope with stress

Eating healthy diet will enable you to meet up with your daily required calories in-take

of the five major food groups with portion control of each food group totaling your necessary calories in-take. The five major food groups are:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Lean Meats, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts, legumes
- Bread, cereals, rice
- Milk, yogurt, cheese

Taking balanced diet is important for achieving healthy living. Your body needs the right types of food are the right proportions to give it energy and strength it needs.

ii Healthy weight

Healthy weight is a weight just enough the owner of body can carry and he/she is still active and alert to carry out all daily activities.

A combination of factors determines weight and that is why is difficult to set an exact ideal weight that applies to every one. In getting healthy weight the following should be worked out.

- a) **Body Mass Index (BMI):** BMI is a ratio of your height and weight. It applies to ages 18 through 65 except if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. To calculate BMI divide your weight in kilograms by the square of your height in meters

or find your BMI by using BMI chart.

- b) **Waist Circumference:** Another method of assessing whether you are healthy weight is to measure your waist which is achieved by taking the measurement while standing upright, breath in and out to let out all air in your lungs then breath normally. Place tape around your waist between the bottom of your ribs and the top of your hip bones, hold the tape firmly but do not press in and make sure the measuring tape is parallel to the floor to avoid a misreading or wrong reading.

Take the reading – if a man measures more than 102cm(40 inches) or a woman measures more than 88cm(35inches) are at risk of developing health problem such as heart diseases, high blood pressure and diabetes(source: Heart and Stoke Foundation, Canada)

- c) **Body Fat:** You can measure amount of fat in your body using scales designed for this purpose called fat analyses. This is achieved by using the analyzer to pass a small safe electrical signal through your body. Lean tissue, such as muscle and blood contain water and act as conductors of the

electrical signal while fat resists it. The greater the resistance, the more body fat you have.

If your BMI and waist circumference indicate that you are overweight, changes your lifestyle could help you control your weight. Think about how you can make changes to your diet and involve more in physical activity over the long term. Therefore maintaining healthy weight will enable you to remain healthy.

iii. Engage in exercise and physical activities

It is often thought that physical activity and exercise are one, however they are slightly different. Exercise can be categorized as a form of time physical activity that is planned, structure and repetitive, its main objective is to improve or maintain physical fitness or the other hand physical activity are all activities either planned or unplanned.

Exercise and physical activity can be a life saver, most days of the week you can do physical activity to lower your risk of heart diseases and stroke because it will reduce your blood pressure. Results of this are reduce stress levels, increase energy, improve sleep and digestion.

It equally gives you better health, improved posture and balance, more confidence and a more positive outlook on life. Regular exercise is a versatile weapon in the fight against chronic pain, when you are inactive your muscles-including your heart lose strength and work less efficiently and your risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes increases, inactivity can increase fatigue, stress and anxiety as well.

iv. Rest and Relaxation

Take some time to rest and relax, adequately connect with friends and family to interact, chat, and discuss problem, bordering mind, crack joke and laugh. This will not only ensure healthy living but it will also create peaceful environment to nurse good health.

Having enough sleep is wonderful in refreshing and restoring you back to healthy condition.

CONCLUSION

No substitute to healthy living, only healthy person can lead an economically productive life. Health is wealth and is a scarce commodity bestows on us by Almighty God and should be guarded jealously at every stage in life.

Remember the following recommendations:

- Try and keep your Body mass index (BMI) in a healthy range.
- Try and eat plenty of fibres
- Have 8 glasses of water a day
- Limit or stop alcohol and caffeine consumption
- Reduce sugar in-take

These and others are license to achieve healthy living in life.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Stress is difficult for scientists to define because it is a highly subjective phenomenon that differs for each of us. Things that are distressful for some individuals can be pleasurable for others. We also respond to stress differently. Some people blush, some eat more while others grow pale or eat less. There are numerous physical as well as emotional responses as illustrated by the following ***list of some 50 common signs and symptoms of stress.***

1. Frequent headaches, jaw clenching or Pain
2. Gritting, grinding teeth
3. Stuttering or stammering

4. Tremors, trembling of lips, hands
5. Neck ache, back pain, muscle spasms
6. Light headedness, faintness, dizziness
7. Ringing, buzzing or "popping sounds"
8. Frequent blushing, sweating
9. Cold or sweaty hands, feet
10. Dry mouth, problems swallowing
11. Frequent colds, infections, herpes sores
12. Rashes, itching, hives, "goose bumps"
13. Unexplained or frequent "allergy" attacks
14. Heartburn, stomach pain, nausea
15. Excess belching, flatulence
16. Constipation, diarrhea
17. Difficulty breathing, sighing
18. Sudden attacks of panic
19. Chest pain, palpitations
20. Frequent urination
21. Poor sexual desire or performance
22. Excess anxiety, worry, guilt, nervousness
23. Increased anger, frustration, hostility
24. Depression, frequent or wild mood swings
25. Increased or decreased appetite

26. Insomnia, nightmares, disturbing Dreams.
27. Difficulty concentrating, racing thoughts
28. Trouble learning new information
29. Forgetfulness, disorganization, confusion
30. Difficulty in making decisions.
31. Feeling overloaded or overwhelmed.
32. Frequent crying spells or suicidal thoughts
33. Feelings of loneliness or worthlessness
34. Little interest in appearance, punctuality
35. Nervous habits, fidgeting, feet tapping
36. Increased frustration, irritability, edginess
37. Overreaction to petty annoyances
38. Increased number of minor accidents
39. Obsessive or compulsive behavior
40. Reduced work efficiency or productivity
41. Lies or excuses to cover up poor work
42. Rapid or mumbled speech
- 43 Excessive defensiveness or suspiciousness
44. Problems in communication, sharing
45. Social withdrawal and isolation
46. Constant tiredness, weakness, fatigue

47. Frequent use of over-the-counter drugs
48. Weight gain or loss without diet
49. Increased smoking, alcohol or drug use
50. Excessive gambling or impulse buying

As demonstrated in the above list, stress can have wide ranging effects on emotions, mood and behavior. Equally important but often less appreciated are effects on various systems, organs and tissues all over the body.

There are numerous emotional and physical disorders that have been linked to stress including depression, anxiety, heart attacks, stroke, hypertension, immune system disturbances that increase susceptibility to infections, a host of viral linked disorders ranging from the common cold and herpes to AIDS and certain cancers, as well as autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis and multiple sclerosis. In addition stress can have direct effects on the skin (rashes, hives, atopic dermatitis, the gastrointestinal system (GERD, peptic ulcer, irritable bowel syndrome, ulcerative colitis) and can contribute to insomnia and degenerative neurological disorders like Parkinson's disease. In fact, it's hard to think of any disease in which stress cannot play an aggravating role or any part of the body that is not affected.

STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Stress management strategy 1: Avoid unnecessary stress

Not all stress can be avoided, and it's not healthy to avoid a situation that needs to be addressed. You may be surprised, however, by the number of stressors in your life that you can eliminate.

- **Learn how to say “no”** – Know your limits and stick to them.
- **Avoid people who stress you out**
- **Take control of your environment** – e.g. If the evening news makes you anxious, turn the TV off.
- **Avoid hot-button topics** – If you get upset over certain topics like politics, cross them off your conversation list or excuse yourself when it's the topic of discussion.
- **Pare down your to-do list** – Analyze your schedule, responsibilities, and daily tasks. Drop tasks that aren't truly necessary to the bottom of the list or eliminate them entirely.

Stress management strategy 2: Alter the situation

If you can't avoid a stressful situation, try to alter it. Figure out what you can do to change things so the problem doesn't present itself in the future. Often, this involves changing the way you communicate and operate in your daily life.

- **Express your feelings instead of bottling them up.** Communicate your concerns in an open and respectful way. If you don't voice your feelings, resentment will build and the situation will likely remain the same.
- **Be willing to compromise.** When you ask someone to change their behavior, be willing to do the same.
- **Be more assertive.** Don't take a backseat in your own life. Deal with problems head on.
- **Manage your time better.** Poor time management can cause a lot of stress.

Stress management strategy 3: Adapt to the stressor

If you can't change the stressor, change yourself. You can adapt to stressful situations and regain your sense of control

by changing your expectations and attitude.

- **Reframe problems.** Try to view stressful situations from a more positive perspective. Rather than fuming about a traffic jam, look at it as an opportunity to pause and regroup, listen to your favorite radio station, or enjoy some alone time.
- **Look at the big picture.** Take perspective of the stressful situation. Is it really worth getting upset over? If the answer is no, focus your time and energy elsewhere.
- **Adjust your standards.** Perfectionism is a major source of avoidable stress.
- **Focus on the positive.** When stress is getting you down, take a moment to reflect on all the things you appreciate in your life, this simple strategy can help you keep things in perspective.
- **Adjusting Your Attitude**

How you think can have a profound effect on your emotional and physical well-being. Each time you think a negative thought about yourself, your body reacts

as if it were in the throes of a tension-filled situation.. Eliminate words such as "always," "never," "should," and "must." These are telltale marks of self-defeating thoughts.

Stress management strategy 4: Accept the things you can't change

Some sources of stress are unavoidable. You can't prevent or change stressors such as the death of a loved one, a serious illness, or a national recession. In such cases, the best way to cope with stress is to accept things as they are.

- **Don't try to control the uncontrollable.** Many things in life are beyond our control—particularly the behavior of other people. Rather than stressing out over them, focus on the things you can control such as the way you choose to react to problems.
- **Look for the upside.** As the saying goes, "What doesn't kill us makes us stronger." When facing major challenges, try to look at them as opportunities for personal growth and learn from your mistakes.
- **Share your feelings.** Talk to a trusted friend or make an appointment with a therapist.

- **Learn to forgive.** Accept the fact that we live in an imperfect world and that people make mistakes. Let go of anger and resentments.

Stress management strategy 5: Make time for fun and relaxation

you can reduce stress in your life by nurturing yourself.

- **Set aside relaxation time.** Include rest and relaxation in your daily schedule. Don't allow other obligations to encroach. This is your time to take a break from all responsibilities and recharge your batteries.
- **Connect with others.** Spend time with positive people who enhance your life..
- **Do something you enjoy every day.** Make time for leisure activities that bring you joy.
- **Keep your sense of humor.** This includes the ability to laugh at yourself. The act of laughing helps your body fight stress in a number of ways.
- **Learn the relaxation response**

You can control your stress levels with relaxation Regularly practicing these

techniques will build your physical and emotional resilience, heal your body, and boost your overall feelings of joy and equanimity.

Stress management strategy 6: Adopt a healthy lifestyle

You can increase your resistance to stress by strengthening your physical health.

- **Exercise regularly.** Physical activity plays a key role in reducing and preventing the effects of stress. Make time for at least 30 minutes of exercise, three times per week. Nothing beats aerobic exercise for releasing pent-up stress and tension.
- **Eat a healthy diet.** Well-nourished bodies are better prepared to cope with stress, so be mindful of what you eat.
- **Reduce caffeine and sugar.** By reducing the amount of coffee, soft drinks, chocolate, and sugar snacks in your diet, you'll feel more relaxed and you'll sleep better.
- **Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs.**
- **Get enough sleep.** Adequate sleep fuels your mind, as well as

your body. Feeling tired will increase your stress because it may cause you to think irrationally.

Culled from :

http://www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_management_relief_coping.htm, www.stress.org.

HOW DO YOU SEE YOURSELF

From Gloria Uzendu.

The more time you spend, feeling sorry for yourself, the more things you will have to be sorry about.

If you insist on seeing yourself as a victim, you will end up experiencing your life as a victim.

It doesn't have to be that way. Because, you can choose right now and everyday; to see yourself in a positive empowering light.

The way you see yourself is up to you. It doesn't have anything to do with circumstances.

See yourself as the unique, beautiful, creative and effective person you know you are. See yourself as a bundle of positive, inspiring an meaningful possibilities that are well on their way to being fulfilled.

See that you are able to successfully handle whatever life sends your way. See

that you are able to thrive and grow and make positive meaning out of the world in which you live.

See yourself as constantly moving forward through it all, with love joy and purpose. And what you see, you will be. Remember you are not alone God's goodness and mercy will always follow you all the days of your life and with God all things are possible.

QUOTES AND WISE SAYINGS

Only one rule in medical ethics need concern you - that action on your part which best conserves the interests of your patient.

~Martin H. Fischer

A doctor who cannot take a good history and a patient who cannot give one are in danger of giving and receiving bad treatment.

~Author Unknown

As it takes two to make a quarrel,
so it takes two to make a disease,
the microbe and its host.

~Charles V. Chapin

Diagnosis is not the end, but the beginning of practice.

~Martin H. Fischer

Surgeons must be very careful
when they take the knife!
Underneath their fine incisions
stirs the Culprit - Life!

~Emily Dickinson

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES

The following members of staff have been blessed with bouncing babies recently,

- Hajiya Rakiya Hussain
(Health Record)
- Malama Hafasat Musa
(Health Record)
- Malama Khadijat Oliyinde
(Radiotherapy).
- Mrs Juliet Onwuchekwa
(Health records)
- Mrs Ola Ojoma
(Management information services)
- Malam Bello Ibrahim (CMD Office)

The babies have been named: Zeenat, Maryam, Asiyat, Emmanuel, Ayomikun, and Zainab respectively. On behalf of the Hospital Board, and entire staff, The

Management of National Hospital Abuja expresses delight and heartily congratulates them on these bountiful blessings.

CONDOLENCE

With deep sense of loss, the Management of National Hospital hereby commiserate with the family of late Mr. Edet Offiong Okon whose death occurred recently after a brief illness at his home town, Okoyong, Odukpani Local Government Area of Cross River State of Nigeria.Until his demise. Late Edet Offiong Okon was a Higher Health Assistant (Mortuary) attached to the mortuary unit of the Department of Morbid Anatomy of the hospital .He is survived by Four (4) children, a wife and other relations.

APPRECIATION TO ALL STAFF

On behalf of the Hon. Minister of Health, Prof. C. C. Onyebuchi, the Hon. Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Senator Bala Mohammed, the Board and Management of National Hospital, Abuja, I wish to thank all members of staff for their prompt response to the medical challenges posed by the UN House Bomb blast victims brought to the Hospital on 26th August, 2011.

It is noteworthy to mention that out of a total of 74 victims brought to this Hospital, none died while receiving care and treatment. While some of the patients were referred to other facilities on their own request, others have since been discharged. As at today, only one of the bomb blast victims is still receiving treatment and her condition is very stable.

Finally, I wish to take this opportunity to thank all members of the health team on duty on 26th August, 2011 and all others who rendered valuable assistance during the period.

I sincerely hope that the demonstration of the team work exhibited during the incident will continue in all our services to the patients.

Signed

Prof. B. B. Shehu

Chief Medical Director/CEO

For all your enquiries, Please reach us on:

092908807 - } --- Communication (Direct line to the Hospital)

0809- 751 - 9764} “

0809 -752 - 0012} “

0807 -226 - 1913}----- Ambulance

0703 -492 - 8531} “

0803 -787 - 9543----HOD Mgt. Inform Services)/Servicom Nodal Officer

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