

A photograph of a smiling Black man and a smiling woman with a red headscarf, both looking towards the right. They are outdoors in a bright, sunny setting with a blurred green background.

A Year of Health

A Guide to a Healthy 2013
for You and Your Family

Health tips and information about bones, joints, muscles, and skin





Who developed this planner?

This planner was created to provide African American individuals with information and resources about staying healthy and managing conditions of the bones, joints, muscles, and skin.

It was developed by the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS). As part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the NIAMS supports scientific medical research that helps people live healthier lives. The facts and information in this planner are based on proven studies.

Use this planner to help you keep track of your own health or the health of a family member.

Keep this planner in a place where you will see it every day. It is designed to hang on your wall, and can also be used on a desktop, tabletop, or countertop. Each month you will find questions and answers about health topics that are important to your community. Take a few minutes every month to read about the featured subject. Even if it may not apply to you or your family, it may be helpful to a friend or neighbor.

How to use this planner.

- Write down the medicines and supplements you take each day so you know what you have taken.
- Write down any new health problems or pains you have.
- Use the “notes” section to write down things you want to remember, including questions for your health care provider.
- Bring this planner with you when you visit your health care provider to help you remember what you wrote down.
- Use the stickers at the end of the planner to remind you about appointments, blood tests, and taking medicines.

This planner is just the beginning!

The NIAMS and the NIH offer helpful information on a variety of topics, in addition to the ones listed in this planner. You can access this information or have **free** publications mailed to you by visiting <http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural>, or by calling the NIAMS toll-free number at **877-226-4267** (TTY: 301-565-2966).



A Year of Health

A Guide to a Healthy 2013
for You and Your Family

Health tips and information about bones, joints, muscles, and skin





Keeping Your Bones Healthy

Why is bone health important?

Healthy bones allow you to do many of the activities you love, like enjoying the outdoors with your family and friends, gardening, golfing, and dancing. If you don't take steps to keep your bones healthy, you can lose too much bone and develop osteoporosis, a condition in which the bones become weak and are more likely to break.

What do my bones need to stay healthy?

- Calcium from dairy products, green leafy vegetables, calcium-fortified foods and beverages, and dietary supplements.
- Vitamin D from fortified milk, eggs, liver, fatty fish such as salmon, and dietary supplements.
- Weight-bearing or weight-resistant exercise such as walking, playing sports, or lifting weights. You can even make your own hand weights by filling two empty water bottles with sand or pebbles.

Find out more!

The Federal Government has **free**, easy-to-read information about bone health.

You can order these and other titles and topics from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), by visiting <http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural>, or by calling toll free at **877-226-4267** (TTY: 301-565-2966).

- ▶ *Healthy Bones: Why They Matter for African Americans*
- ▶ *Osteoporosis and African American Women*
- ▶ *Bone Health for Life: Easy-to-Read Information for Patients and Families*

January 2013

Help protect your bones by getting enough calcium and vitamin D each day.

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African American History Month

What does my heritage have to do with my health?

African Americans have a rich heritage rooted in a deep sense of family, community, and resilience. African Americans rely on a heritage of faith, hope, and progress. These values and traditions are resources to mobilize and use in promoting health. A first step in promoting health is learning about the increased risk for health conditions like vitiligo, osteoarthritis, or lupus. Learn what you can do to manage these and other conditions to live an active and healthy lifestyle.

What can I do to improve my health?

To mark African American History Month, pledge to do one thing to improve your health and your family's health. Here are some ideas:

- Find a family recipe for a healthy dish made with calcium-rich foods, such as salmon, almonds, or green leafy vegetables. Get creative with “soul foods” and cook them with less fat and salt, ingredients that contribute to weight gain and health problems like heart disease.

- Schedule yearly checkups at the doctor for yourself and your family members. If you take care of older family members, help them make their appointments as well.
- At a family gathering or reunion, talk about any health issues, such as lupus, arthritis, or vitiligo, that run in your family. Keep a list in a safe place and share it with your children and grandchildren.

Find out more!

The Federal Government has **free**, easy-to-read information about health.

You can order these and other titles and topics from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), by visiting **<http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural>**, or by calling toll free at **877-226-4267** (TTY: 301-565-2966).

- ▶ *Calcium and Vitamin D: Important at Every Age*
- ▶ *Questions and Answers about Vitiligo*
- ▶ *Lupus: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*

February 2013

*"We have strong connections with family,
and family doesn't mean just immediate family."*

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Keeping Your Muscles Healthy

Why are healthy muscles important?

You have more than 600 muscles in your body. Muscles help you walk, move, lift things, pump blood through your body, and breathe. Strong muscles help you keep your balance, so you are less likely to get hurt by slipping or falling.

How can I keep my muscles healthy?

- **Exercise.** When you make your muscles work, they respond by growing stronger. It's important to do different kinds of exercise to work all of your muscles. You could walk one day and lift weights the next. Remember to take it easy. Don't try to fit all of your activity into one evening or weekend.
- **Eat a balanced diet.** This will help manage your weight and will provide a variety of nutrients for your muscles. Eat plenty of vegetables, and if you like seafood, try broiling or baking instead of frying.
- **Listen to your body.** If your muscles are bothering you, tell a doctor about any discomfort you feel.

Find out more!

The Federal Government has **free**, easy-to-read information about muscle health.

You can order these and other titles and topics from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), by visiting <http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural>, or by calling toll free at **877-226-4267** (TTY: 301-565-2966).

- ▶ *Exercises to Try: Strength Exercises*
- ▶ *Exercises to Try: Balance Exercises*

March 2013

Increase your exercise level gradually,
and vary your routine.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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Keeping Healthy as You Age

What should I know about aging and health?

Exercise and physical activity are good for just about everyone, including older adults. Exercise and physical activity can:

- Help improve your ability to do the everyday things you want to do.
- Help preserve your bone density.
- Keep joint pain from getting worse.
- Improve your balance so you can keep from falling.

How can I stay fit and prevent falling?

- Try the four types of exercise: endurance, strength, balance, and flexibility. All four types are important for your health and will help you make the most of your personal and family activities.
- Get a walking partner. Talking while walking is social and passes the time, and a partner can motivate you to stick with it.
- Keep floors free of clutter and wear rubber-soled shoes to avoid slipping.
- Many falls happen at night, so keep a flashlight next to your bed in case you need to get up in the dark.



Find out more!

The Federal Government has **free**, easy-to-read information about aging and health.

You can order these and other titles and topics from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), by visiting <http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural>, or by calling toll free at **877-226-4267** (TTY: 301-565-2966).

- ▶ *Preventing Falls and Related Fractures: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*
- ▶ *Osteoporosis: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*
- ▶ Visit <http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural> to participate in the National Institute on Aging's Go4Life program.

April 2013

“My encouraging words are: take it day by day.”

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Living With Autoimmune Conditions

What should I know about autoimmune conditions?

Your immune system is the network of cells throughout your body that act together to defend you from infection. Sometimes problems with your immune system cause it to identify your body's own healthy cells as invaders and then attack them. This is called an autoimmune condition. Lupus and rheumatoid arthritis are two examples.

How can I recognize an autoimmune condition?

Some African Americans, especially African American women, are at increased risk for certain autoimmune conditions such as lupus. You can help yourself and your loved ones by knowing some of the common symptoms. A common sign of autoimmune disease is inflammation, which can cause redness, heat, pain, swelling, rashes, and fatigue. If the condition affects the joints, you might also experience stiffness in the joints.

Find out more!

The Federal Government has **free**, easy-to-read information about autoimmune conditions.

You can order these and other titles and topics from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), by visiting <http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural>, or by calling toll free at **877-226-4267** (TTY: 301-565-2966).

- ▶ *Understanding Autoimmune Diseases*
- ▶ *The Many Shades of Lupus: Information for Multicultural Communities*
- ▶ *Rheumatoid Arthritis: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*

May 2013

"I read as much as I can about my condition."

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Notes	<i>Lupus Awareness Month</i> <i>Arthritis Awareness Month</i> <i>National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month</i>	April 2013	1 ☽	2	3	4
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Living With Joint Pain

What should I know about joint pain?

Joint pain often indicates that you have arthritis. Two common types are osteoarthritis and gout. Another type is rheumatoid arthritis. But there is a lot you can do to feel better and stay active even if you have pain.

How can I feel better?

- Exercise and move all of your joints. Walking helps circulation, supports the joints, and strengthens the muscles.
- If you have a sore joint, you can use an ice pack or a bag of frozen vegetables on the sore spot.
- Do your best to maintain a weight that is right for you, since too much weight can make your knees and hips ache.
- Speak up. Tell the doctor if your pain is improving or worsening. Medicines can reduce pain and stiffness, and a doctor will know if joint replacement is an option you should consider.

Find out more!

The Federal Government has **free**, easy-to-read information about joint pain.

You can order these and other titles and topics from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), by visiting <http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural>, or by calling toll free at **877-226-4267** (TTY: 301-565-2966).

- ▶ *Osteoarthritis: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*
- ▶ *Gout: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*
- ▶ *Joint Replacement Surgery: Information for Multicultural Communities*



Keeping Your Skin Healthy

Why is healthy skin important?

Your skin is the largest organ of your body and plays an important role in protecting it. It holds body fluids in, prevents dehydration, and keeps harmful germs out. Since your skin is so important, you should keep it as healthy as you can.

How do I keep my skin healthy?

- Exercise. It increases the flow of blood to the surface of your skin.
- Eat a balanced diet that includes protein like fresh seafood, fruits such as peaches and bananas, vegetables like sweet potatoes and leafy greens, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat dairy products.
- Get enough sleep. This helps improve your overall health, which is good for your skin.
- Use sunscreen if you are outdoors for more than a few minutes. Sunscreen helps to reduce the chance of skin cancer and wrinkles. The sun's harmful UV rays affect everyone, not just people with fair skin.
- Be aware. If you notice itching or red areas, see a dermatologist (skin doctor). These could be signs of a skin condition like dermatitis or psoriasis.

Find out more!

The Federal Government has **free**, easy-to-read information about skin health.

You can order these and other titles and topics from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), by visiting <http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural>, or by calling toll free at **877-226-4267** (TTY: 301-565-2966).

- ▶ *Psoriasis: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*
- ▶ *Acne: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*
- ▶ *Atopic Dermatitis (Eczema): Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*

July 2013

Avoid getting a sunburn. Not only does it hurt, it can also increase your risk for skin cancer.

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Preventing Sports Injuries

What should I know about sports injuries?

Two of the most common sports injuries are sprains and strains.

- A sprain affects a ligament, and pain is the first signal of a sprain. You may then see swelling.
- A strain affects a muscle or tendon. You may experience pain, a muscle spasm, or loss of strength in that area.

How can I prevent sports injuries?

- **Warm up.** Stretching can help reduce the chances of muscle strain.
- **Cool down.** Do exercises to loosen the muscles that have tightened during exercise. Walking is a good example.
- **Wear properly fitting shoes.** They don't need to be expensive. Just be sure they are comfortable and provide shock absorption and stability.
- **Don't do all of your exercise on the weekend.** Maintain a moderate activity level throughout the week.

Find out more!

The Federal Government has **free**, easy-to-read information about sports injuries.

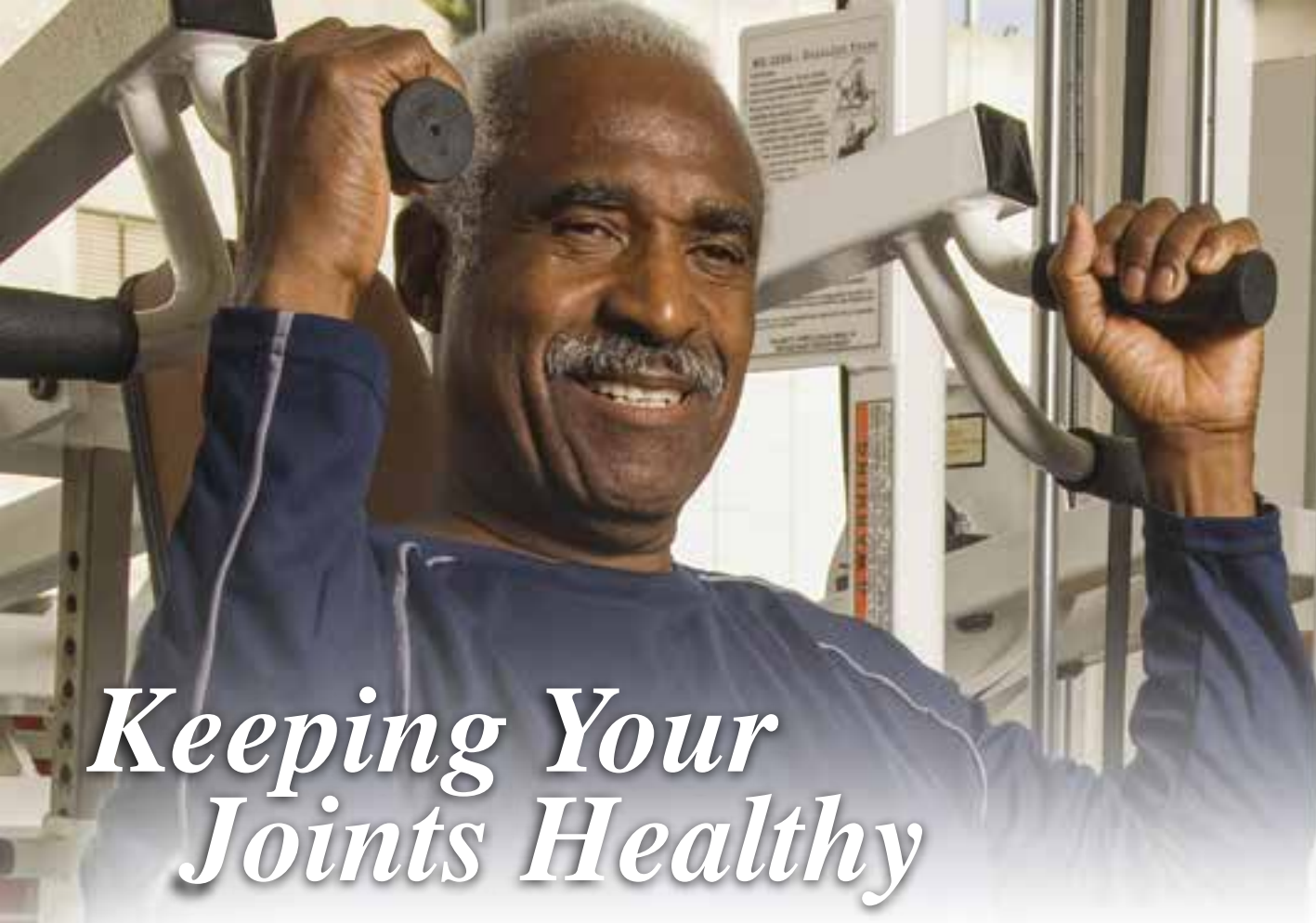
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- ▶ *Sports Injuries: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*
- ▶ *Sprains and Strains: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*
- ▶ *Childhood Sports Injuries and Their Prevention: A Guide for Parents With Ideas for Kids*

August 2013

"I do daily stretching. If I feel pain, I try to take it easy."

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Keeping Your Joints Healthy

Why are healthy joints important?

A joint is where two or more bones are joined together. Joints have cartilage, which acts as a spongy shock absorber on the ends of the bones to protect bones by preventing them from rubbing against each other.

How can I keep my joints healthy?

- **Exercise.** This helps keep the muscles around your joints strong, and strong muscles take the strain off the joints. Exercise also pumps blood to the joints and helps them work the way they should. Try walking, jogging, or swimming.
- **Eat a balanced diet.** Too much weight means too much stress on your joints. Control your weight by eating less fat and sugar and more fruits and vegetables.
- **Live a healthy lifestyle.** This means getting enough sleep, exercising, and eating well.



Find out more!

The Federal Government has **free**, easy-to-read information about joint health.

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- ▶ *Living with Arthritis: Easy-to-Read Information for Patients and Families*
- ▶ *Shoulder Problems: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*
- ▶ *Knee Problems: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*

September 2013

“When my joints are stiff, I go to the gym and walk on the treadmill. It helps a lot.”

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Managing Pain

What should I know about managing my pain?

Pain can arise from many different sources, such as knee problems, gout, or an autoimmune condition like lupus. The best things you can do are:

- Exercise moderately when possible. Walking each day can help many conditions that cause pain.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Less weight means less pressure on joints and other parts of the body. Ask a doctor what weight is healthy for you.
- See a doctor regularly, and take your medicines as directed.
- Try to set realistic goals and priorities, and get enough rest.
- Surround yourself with family and friends. Playing card games or board games can help keep your mind off the pain, and being with others reminds you that you are not alone.

Find out more!

The Federal Government has **free**, easy-to-read information about conditions that cause pain.

You can order these and other titles and topics from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), by visiting <http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural>, or by calling toll free at **877-226-4267** (TTY: 301-565-2966).

- ▶ *Pain: You Can Get Help*
- ▶ *Pain: Hope Through Research*

October 2013

*"I walk a lot and read a lot. I like to knit and keep busy.
Friends help me with my appointments."*

SUNDAY							MONDAY							TUESDAY							WEDNESDAY							THURSDAY							FRIDAY							SATURDAY						
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Living With Back Pain

What should I know about back pain?

Back pain can have different sources, from muscle spasms to disk problems. It can also be a sign of a condition like scoliosis, arthritis, or fibromyalgia.

How can I prevent back pain?

The best things you can do to prevent back pain are:

- Exercise often and keep your back muscles strong and flexible.
- Eat a well-balanced diet and maintain a healthy weight. Get enough calcium and vitamin D every day. Green leafy vegetables are a good source of calcium.
- Try to stand up straight and avoid heavy lifting. If you do lift something heavy, bend your knees and keep your back straight.

Find out more!

The Federal Government has **free**, easy-to-read information about back pain.

You can order these and other titles and topics from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), by visiting <http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural>, or by calling toll free at **877-226-4267** (TTY: 301-565-2966).

- ▶ *Back Pain: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts*
- ▶ *Back Pain: Handout on Health*



Clinical Trials

What should I know about clinical trials?

Clinical trials are carefully controlled medical research studies to see whether new therapies are safe and effective. These studies help doctors learn how people respond to medicines or other new or improved treatments. Participation is voluntary, and you can stop at any time.

What are the benefits?

You can:

- Gain access to new research treatments, often at little or no cost.
- Get expert medical care.
- Help future generations of patients.

How can I decide if I should participate?

Find out as much as possible about the clinical trial. A few questions to ask the researchers are:

- What is the purpose of the study?
- What kinds of treatments are involved?
- Who will be in charge of my care?

Ask a friend or relative to come along for support and to hear the answers to the questions. You might also bring a tape recorder to record the discussion and replay it later.

Find out more!

You can visit <http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural> to find out about the research studies available in your area for your condition.

December 2013

Clinical trials look for better ways to treat and prevent disease.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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					Notes	<i>Questions I want to ask about a research study:</i>

Other Federal Resources

Additional health resources for you and your family from the following U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) agencies:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Arthritis Program is working to improve the quality of life for people affected by arthritis and other rheumatic conditions by working with states and other partners to increase awareness about appropriate arthritis self-management activities and expanding the reach of programs proven to improve the quality of life for people with arthritis.

<http://www.cdc.gov>

Key Public Health Messages

<http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/basics/key.htm>

Health Resources and Services Administration

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is the primary Federal agency for improving access to health care services for people who are uninsured, isolated, or medically vulnerable.

<http://www.hrsa.gov>

HRSA in Your State

<http://datawarehouse.hrsa.gov/FactSheetNav.aspx>

Find a Health Center

<http://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov>

Indian Health Service

The Indian Health Service (IHS) is responsible for providing Federal health services to American Indians and Alaska Natives. The mission is to raise the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level.

<http://www.ihs.gov>

Contact the nearest IHS facility for more information on local health resources and medical assistance for eligible recipients of IHS health care. The following website includes a directory of areas and facilities:

<http://www.ihs.gov/findhealthcare>

National Institutes of Health

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is the nation's medical research agency—making important discoveries that improve health and save lives.

<http://www.nih.gov>

Clinical Trials

<http://clinicalresearchtrials.nih.gov>

National Institute on Aging

<http://www.nia.nih.gov>

Go4Life program

<http://go4life.nia.nih.gov>

Senior Health

<http://nihseniorhealth.gov>

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

<http://www.ninds.nih.gov>

Office of Minority Health

The Office of Minority Health (OMH) is dedicated to improving the health of racial and ethnic minority populations through the development of health policies and programs that will help eliminate health disparities.

<http://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov>

Office on Women's Health

The Office on Women's Health (OWH) works to improve the health and sense of well-being of all U.S. women and girls. OWH serves as the focal point for women's health activities within HHS offices and agencies. OWH leads programs to improve women's health and collaborates across HHS and with other partners on women's health activities.

<http://www.womenshealth.gov>

You can order these resources by calling 800-994-9662 (toll free).

Best Bones Forever!

<http://bestbonesforever.gov>

Could I Have Lupus?

<http://www.couldihavelupus.gov>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.







<http://www.samhsa.gov>

You can order resources by calling 877-SAMHSA-7 (877-726-4727) (TTY: 800-487-4889).

Use the stickers to help remember important dates and appointments.

On this page you will find stickers that you can peel off and place on the dates that you wish to highlight. Use these stickers to mark appointments and things about your health that you want to remember or share with a health care provider.

There are stickers to mark:

-  Health care appointments
-  Reminders to refill prescriptions
-  Days you feel good
-  Days you don't feel well
-  Blood work or vaccinations
-  Days you exercised

Important Information:

NIAMS Publications: 877-226-4267 (toll free) (TTY: 301-565-2966) _____
<http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural> _____

Doctor _____
Doctor _____
Doctor _____
Pharmacy _____
Family Member _____
Family Member _____



January

*Keeping Your
Bones Healthy*



February

*African American
History Month*



March

*Keeping Your
Muscles Healthy*



April

*Keeping Healthy
as You Age*



May

*Living With
Autoimmune Conditions*



June

Living With Joint Pain



July

*Keeping Your
Skin Healthy*



August

Preventing Sports Injuries



September

*Keeping Your
Joints Healthy*



October

Managing Pain



November

Living With Back Pain



December

Clinical Trials

You can take steps to make 2013 a healthy year.

Each month of this planner highlights a different topic. Over the course of the year, you will find information that you and your family can use to stay healthy and manage certain health problems.