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NIH Partners with Local Shopping Mall to “Share the Health”

Sixth Annual Premier Health and Fitness Expo Features Free Fitness Activities, Interactive Health Exhibits, Health Screenings, Mini-Lab Sessions, Prizes and More

Bethesda, Maryland – The National Institutes of Health (NIH), part of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), is sponsoring a day of free health-centered fun for all ages on Sunday, May 15, from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the newly renovated Westfield Shoppingtown in Wheaton. *Share the Health: NIH’s Premier Health and Fitness Expo* offers area residents an opportunity to participate in interactive health exhibits, health screenings, hands-on lab experiments, lab-art workshops, fitness activities, and more.

“This event promotes community health through the prevention of disease,” said NIH Director Elias A. Zerhouni, M.D. “NIH scientists will share easy and fun ways to improve fitness and maintain good health, while bringing our message of health to the public.”

Attendees can talk about health issues with NIH physicians and scientists, while visiting interactive exhibits from nearly all of NIH’s 27 Institutes and Centers. People of all ages can learn about dental hygiene, diabetes, bone health, alternative medicine, infectious disease prevention, and the effects of drugs and alcohol on the brain.

Local area hospital staff and the Uniformed Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service, HHS, will offer free health screenings to help community members evaluate if they are at risk for high blood pressure, skin problems, head and neck cancer, or obesity. NIH health educators will also provide the latest in NIH health research through a variety of fun and interactive exhibits.

Community members can surf reliable, science-based Web sites and explore consumer-friendly sites, such as NIHSeniorHealth.gov and MedlinePlus. Experts will be on hand to show participants how to access health information on the Internet. Children can don lab coats and goggles, while performing hands-on lab experiments. They can also jump on a Moon Bounce, play games and win prizes.

Guests can also scale a rock-climbing wall, explore the multi-sensory “Drunken Brain” exhibit, and navigate an obstacle course while wearing “Fatal Vision” prism goggles, which throw off eye-muscle coordination. This experience is designed to simulate the loss of muscle coordination and balance that occurs during alcohol intoxication. Teens can also check out the latest health-related computer games and Web sites designed just for them.

Share the Health is sponsored by the NIH Office of Community Liaison (OCL) and the NIH Recreation and Welfare Foundation. Metro’s red line to Wheaton station offers the most convenient mode of transportation to the Expo. For more information about this free event, call the NIH Office of Community Liaison at 301-496-3931 or visit <http://sharethehealth.od.nih.gov>.

The NIH Office of Community Liaison is dedicated to serving the interests and well being of the community surrounding NIH. Its role at the NIH is to partner with the community to address issues of common interest. The OCL works with community members to provide information about NIH and to share NIH’s resources with its neighbors. For more information, visit <http://ocl.od.nih.gov>.

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