Health Risks Associated with Developmental Disabilities
Objectives:

• Describe 3 risk factors that impact the health of people with DD.
• List 3 signs of pain that a nonverbal person might display.
• Describe how brushing teeth can prevent heart attack and stroke.
• List 2 health risks of being immobile.
• Name 2 causes of urinary incontinence.
• Identify 3 ways to better communicate with people who are dual diagnosed with DD and MI.
Life expectancy for people w DD:

Severe disabilities or Down syndrome: mid-50s:
Mild/moderate DD: early 70s

(Bittles et al., 2002; Janicki, Dalton, Henderson, & Davidson, 1999).
Still a gap in **access** and **quality** of healthcare

**Factors:**

- lack of physician and nurse training
- low Medicaid reimbursement
- vulnerability of individuals with DD
The leading causes of death in general population:

1. Heart disease

2. Cancer

3. Lower Respiratory Disease (pneumonia)

(CDC 2010 Mortality Data)
Healthcare issues for Ohioans with DD:

Smoking prevalence: **50% higher in DD population**

**Overweight or obese:** 67%

**No Exercise or inactive:** 84%

*No annual dental visit: 42%

*No mammogram in past 2 years: 47%

*No pap test within the past 3 years: 51%

No prostate screening PSA > age 50: **83%**

No colon cancer screening > age 50: **90%**

No Flu vaccination: **61%**

No Pneumonia vaccination: **84%**

(NCI State Report: Ohio 2009-2010)
Leading causes of DD:

- Autism (PDD)
- Cerebral Palsy
- Down Syndrome
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

-all have inherent health risks
Autism: 1 in every 88 people

(Pervasive Developmental Disorder)

**Health Risks:** GI problems, seizures, being misunderstood (resulting in psych meds, restraints)
Cerebral Palsy - 1 in every 500 people

Health Risks: choking due to chewing and swallowing difficulties, falls/fractures due to poor balance and coordination, seizures.
Down Syndrome - 1 in every 700 people

Health Risks: heart defects, thyroid disorders, infections, G.I. disorders, cataracts, leukemia, testicular cancer, osteoporosis, and early Alzheimer’s
Alzheimer’s in Down syndrome:

25% of people with Down syndrome over age 35

-progression can take 5-20 years

(Web MD 2012)
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
1 in every 1000 people

Health Risks: attention deficit & psychological issues

Faces in Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

Discriminating Features:
- short palpebral fissures
- flat midface
- short nose
- indistinct philtrum
- thin upper lip

Associated Features:
- epicanthal folds
- low nasal bridge
- minor ear anomalies
- micrognathia

In The Young Child

Streissguth, 1994
**Seizure Disorders**: approximately 35% of people with developmental disabilities have seizures, as opposed to 2.5% of the general population.

**Health Risks**: falls with head injuries and fractures, lifelong medication side effects, choking, drowning.
Health Risk: Poor communication
Majority cannot describe symptoms well!

-misunderstood, blamed as “behavior”,
-chronic condition could lead to early death,
-minor infections can become septic
Signs of pain:

* Increased **acting out** or **restless, anxious**

* **Refusal** to go to work or join activities
* **Changes** in sleeping, eating, or drinking

* Increase in **pulse, blood pressure, breathing**

**TRAIN STAFF TO ALWAYS TAKE VITAL SIGNS!**
Communication via pictures, electronic apps
Health Risk: being immobile or inactive

• OSTEOPOROSIS / FRACTURES
• DEHYDRATION
• UTI
• CONSTIPATION / Bowel Obstruction
• BLOOD CLOTS (DVT)
• SKIN BREAKDOWN
PRESSURE POINTS
Health Risk: MEDICATION side effects

Majority average 5-9 medications per day!
• **Health Risk:** **MEDICATION side effects**

• **Fall risk:** head injury, broken bones: seizure medications, psych, pain, allergy, BP

• **Constipation:** risk of fecal impaction, even death: seizure medications, psych, pain, iron, diuretics

• **Weight gain:** risk of diabetes, heart disease, HTN: seizure medications, psych, diabetes, steroids
  Paxil, Risperdal, Depakote, Diabeta, Diabinese, Inderal, Nexium, Prevacid

• **Drug interactions:** OTCs + Rx = DANGER
  blood thinners, allergy, decongestants, acetaminophen
**Health Risk:** Missing Lab Tests

- **Drug levels:** Dilantin, Phenobarb, Depakote, Tegretol, Lithium
- **Liver function tests:** Depakote (Valproic Acid)
- **Electrolytes:** low sodium due to Tegretol (Carbamazapine)
- **Blood count:** Tegretol, Primidone
Health Risk: Poor ORAL CARE

Why is a healthy mouth so important?
For eating without pain, chewing fruits and veggies, meats, pizza.
To prevent diseases: heart attack & stroke
Periodontal Disease Can Affect Your Heart & Body

Emerging evidence shows a relationship between periodontal disease, cardiovascular disease and other chronic diseases — the common link is inflammation.

The presence of periodontal diseases may be associated with heart attacks, strokes, kidney disease, diabetes, preterm births and prosthetic joint complications.
• **Gingivitis**: inflammation of the gums due to bacteria: plaque under the gum line that isn’t removed *within 24 hours*.

• **Periodontitis**: Infection in gums and bone
  Gums pull away from the tooth; *teeth may loosen and fall out.*
Why people get Periodontal Disease:

• **Poor oral hygiene**

• **Medications** that cause dry mouth

• **Diabetes**—bacteria love sugar!

• **Smoking**- 300% more likely, due to weaken immune system and less saliva, which allows more bacteria.
Health Risk: Unrecognized Infections

Lack of IC knowledge among staff and people with DD

One bacteria divides into two every 20 or 30 minutes. Bacteria can become millions in just a few hours.

MRSA (staph infection)
Methicillin-Resistant Staph Aureus
Health Risk: *abuse/neglect* due to lack of staff understanding

Incontinence
Types of Urinary Incontinence (UI)

- **Urge**: Short time interval between first urge to urinate and loss of bladder control

- **Overflow**: Weakened bladder muscle or blockage of urine outflow causing bladder to overfill and leak

- **Stress**: Loss of urine with coughing due to damaged sphincter muscles

- **Functional**: Loss of bladder control due to difficulty reaching toilet
Causes: Think “DRIP”

- Delirium
- Restricted mobility
- Impaction, Infection, Inflammation
- Pharmaceuticals (MEDICATIONS)
Urinary Anatomy
Health Risk: smoking

Smoking prevalence is 50% higher among people with disabilities

(29.9% vs. 19.8%)
Health Risk: Mental Illness and DD

Life expectancy with severe and persistent MI is 25 years less than the general population, even without DD.

Risks: obesity, diabetes, heart disease, infections, injuries, abuse: due to lack of staff understanding
Mental Health Conditions

- Depression: 66
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: 60
- Bipolar Disorder: 53
- Impulse-Control Disorder NOS: 51
- Mood Disorder NOS: 50
- Autism: 40
- Schizophrenia: 35
- Psychotic Disorder: 31
- ADHD: 31
- Schizoaffective Disorder: 30
- Anxiety Disorder: 29
- Intermittent Explosive Disorder: 25
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder: 23
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: 22
- Personality Disorder NOS: 7
- Self-Injurious Behavior: 7
- Panic Disorder: 6
- Other: 3
- Remaining: 2
You tube:

Anxiety: OCD, PTSD
Schizophrenia
Bipolar/ Depression
Autism/PDD
ADHD
Talking to someone with a Mental Disorder:

HALT YOUR IMMEDIATE REACTION (Take a deep breath, be calm and kind.)

ACKNOWLEDGE HOW THE INDIVIDUAL FEELS (“You seem really angry”)

LET THEM HAVE CHOICES (Focus their thoughts. Either this or that?)

TIME TO REVIEW (Behavior Support Plan or Guidelines)

Handout
Resources:

DODD: Every Healthy Person

CDC: Immunization Schedules

Communication: Hospital Communication Book

Surround Toothbrush

DVD: Optimizing Primary Care of Individuals with I/DD

Books: Health Matters

Droid and Iphone Apps: American Sign Language,