

# JET OBSERVER

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Photo by PH2(SW) Gabriela Hurtado

## HealthFest 2004 draws more than 800 people

Above, More than 270 people participated in the 5K cross country race at the NAS Oceana HealthFest May 19. Right, Oceana Fitness, Sports and Aquatics Director Gary Thomas prepares a healthy and delicious dish at HealthFest. Left, Michael Sampson of South Beach Scooters demonstrates a scooter to PSD Officer in Charge Lt. Cmdr. Karin Vernazza at HealthFest 2004.



Photo by PHAN Timothy Bensken



Photo by PH3 Amanda Robinson

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# Oceana Health Promotions' Preventive Health Assessment program is an eye-opener for Sailors

by Elizabeth Poe

Since late last fall, more than 180 service members stationed at NAS Oceana have been identified as having high cholesterol. The majority of these Sailors were completely unaware that they had elevated cholesterol levels until it was discovered during a Preventive Health Assessment appointment at Branch Medical Clinic Oceana.

The Navy requires Sailors to receive physical exams every five years, but health problems can easily arise within that time frame. One of the reasons the PHA program was created was to ensure a comprehensive annual individualized appointment for Sailors that included a medical record review to verify required screenings and immunizations as well as provide counseling for self-reported health risks.

"High blood pressure, high cholesterol and obesity can contribute to heart disease, which can cause shortness of breath and, in extreme cases, chest pain during the PRT (Physical Readiness Training) run as well as PRT failures," said Lt. Cmdr. Nancy E. Holmes, Division Officer for Health Promotion, Population Health, PHA

Clinic at Branch Medical Clinic Oceana. The purpose of the PHA program is to keep Sailors and Marines healthy, medically ready and fit to deploy.

"We want to get people screened to identify potential health risks that may lead to disease before the disease develops," Holmes said. The results of the PHA visit determine if Sailors are at risk for health-related problems as well as if they are fit to participate in the Physical Readiness Test.

Prevention is the key to help reduce health care costs.

Holmes, who got the PHA program for NAS Oceana shore-based tenant commands up and running within 15 months, has a master's of nursing degree from Johns Hopkins University and came to Oceana prepared to manage the PHA program. The Oceana PHA program has been noted as a benchmark wellness program and was selected as a poster board presentation at the 2003 TRICARE conference.

Holmes credits the success of the program to the base command fitness leaders. "These people work hard and are dedicated to the goal of PHA. We couldn't have done it without them," she

said, adding that being a CFL is almost always a collateral duty.

The program works and Holmes has the data to prove it. "We continually evaluate the program and improve it," Holmes said. There are 21 Oceana commands which are on board with the PHA program. As of March 1, there was a 72 percent PHA completion rate base-wide.

People with high blood pressure and high cholesterol are more likely to be overweight and less likely to be active.

"They may not necessarily be out of body fat standards, but they may be overweight or obese by the nationally recognized body mass index standards," Holmes said.

The PHA appointment only takes about 20 minutes. Medical records are reviewed to ensure that service members are up to date with health screenings. Height, weight, BMI and blood pressure are measured and immediate family medical history is reviewed.

Men are asked if they perform a monthly testicular self-exam. Testicular cancer is the most common form of cancer for men between 15 and 35, according to the American Cancer Society.

Women are asked if they do a monthly breast

self-exam. Breast cancer is the most common cancer women face. The ACS advises women to have annual mammograms beginning at age 40.

Individualized patient centered counseling is provided based on self-reported risk factors noted on the Health Risk Assessment Survey. This 21-question computer survey is anonymous and only identifies you as a member of your particular command. The HRA survey enables BMC Oceana staff to track commands' use of alcohol and tobacco, nutrition habits and safety choices for those who participate in the survey. For example, base-wide the survey revealed that 95 percent of Sailors at Oceana report that they do not eat the recommended five or more servings of fruits and vegetables, and 14 percent do not even brush their teeth daily. Less than half of people who take the survey report using spirituality to help them deal with stress.

The results of the PHA visit determine if a Sailor needs to be referred to a primary care manager for a PRT screening, annual wellness exam or follow up. Additional referrals include health promotion classes, Family Service Center for anger management or stress management counseling, or the Oceana Fitness and Sports Center for an

individualized fitness assessment. Not all Sailors will need a referral.

PHA staff follow up with Sailors who had abnormal cholesterol levels three months to six months after the initial PHA visit. "If you cut down on the fat in your diet, you incorporate exercise and quit tobacco products, you could probably bring down high cholesterol without needing medication. That's why it's really important to ensure Sailors receive the education they need to make a behavior change and to repeat cholesterol testing," Holmes said.

Participant feedback has been more than positive. "People really appreciate it," she said. More than 95 percent of people report that the PHA visit was beneficial and that they had their risk factors for disease identified. Of those individuals, the majority reported that they are willing to make a behavior change to address their health risks.

For more information on the Preventive Health Assessment Program or any Health Promotion program, contact Holmes at 314-7084 or e-mail neholmes@mar.med.navy.mil. For more information on body mass index, go to www.nhlbhsupport.com/bmi.



**HN Charles Brennan logs information into the Health Risk Assessment Survey program on the computer in the Health Promotions department at Branch Medical Clinic Oceana with Lt. Cmdr. Nancy E. Holmes, Division Officer for Health Promotion, Population Health, PHA Clinic at Branch Medical Clinic Oceana. The 21-question survey tracks commands' use of alcohol and tobacco, nutrition habits and safety choices**

## What do command fitness leaders say about the Preventive Health Assessment and Physical Readiness Training?

*"If you have high blood pressure and don't know it, it could cause a stroke, heat exhaustion or a heart attack during the PRT run."*

— AT1(AW) Anthony Ward

by Elizabeth Poe

Oceana command fitness leaders must ensure that physical readiness is optimal for their command. CFLs must keep track of their command's Sailors' paperwork and make sure everything is up to date. One of their tasks is to ensure service members receive an annual

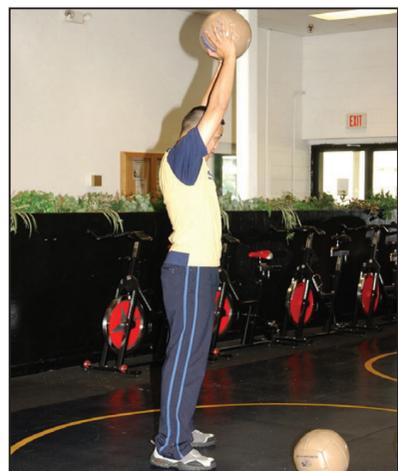


Photo by PH2(SW) Gabriela Hurtado

**ABF2 Ranilo Untivero, assistant command fitness leader at ASD Fuels/Supply, leads the command's Sailors in Pilates, a system of conditioning exercises May 11.**

Preventive Health Assessment at Branch Medical Clinic Oceana.

Command fitness leaders are usually E-6 and above, required to be CPR qualified, non-users of tobacco products, have an overall PRT score of "Excellent Low" or better, be within maximum weight for height standards or no more than 21 percent body fat for males or 32 percent body fat for females, and complete the approved CFL certification course.

CFLs use the online Physical Readiness Information Management System Web-based software, or PRIMS, to collect physical readiness data, track command PFA results as well as manage Fitness Enhancement Program and administrative data.

ATC(AW) Joe Acevedo, Training Programs coordinator for Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Unit Oceana, is also the command CFL for 224 Sailors. CNATTU's PHA compliance rate is more than 90 percent.

Acevedo says the PHA program benefits Sailors. "When you go from sea duty to shore duty, the fact that you don't have a corpsman in house like you do in the squadrons or ships company, a lot of the medical information gets pushed to the wayside. People don't keep up with it the way they do on sea duty. PHA gives us a great vehicle to maintain immunizations, blood work, eye, ear and dental exams that you would normally get caught up on in a five-year physical," he said.

Not everyone thinks a lot about preventive health measures when they seem in good health. "But a lot of things can change," he said. Some CNATTU Sailors have been surprised to learn that they had high cholesterol or high blood pressure during a PHA.

Teamwork is what makes the PHA program work at CNATTU. "We have a very professional crew," Acevedo said. "I implemented a program where I coordinate with Medical, sched-



**AT1(AW) Anthony Ward (I), command fitness leader for Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Detachment, runs with AIMD Sailors during the Physical Readiness Training Run May 11. Ward, and Assistant Command Fitness Leader**

ule the appointments and put the word out to our people. Everyone, from the CO, XO and CMC, makes sure everyone makes their appointment. Everybody's got to do it," he said.

Assistant CNATTU CFLs ATC(AW) Gracie Maklary, AT1(AW/SW) Terry Brown and AM1(AW) Timothy Secord and CNATTU CMC AVCM(AW) Todd Woody helped tremendously to make the program work.

ABF2 Ranilo Untivero is the assistant command fitness leader at ASD Fuels/Supply. It is a collateral duty for the Sailor who is in charge of Fuels accounting and inventory. The 164 Sailors in the command exercise together three times a week.

**AT1(AW) Kevin Mabe taught the proper methods of running and exercise to 265 Sailors in the Fitness Enhancement Program during the last PRT cycle. More than 185 of those Sailors passed the PRT this month.**

Like other CFLs, Untivero is responsible for physical readiness for the command, but when he took over as assistant CFL, he was concerned about the health of his shipmates. "I saw the importance of getting in shape to be in physical condition to do their jobs," Untivero said.

ASD Fuels/Supply Sailors participate in circuit training, aerobics, Pilates and run 1.5 miles twice a week. Every month, ASD Fuels/Supply conducts a mock PRT. Untivero said the Sailors start out slowly to build muscle and avoid physical injury.

Untivero finds satisfaction in helping his shipmates prepare for the PRT. Many of the Sailors

in the ASD Fuels/Supply Fitness Enhancement Program have lost weight, got back in the body composition standards for the Navy and are no longer required to participate in FEP.

"They're all happy about it and very thankful. It's personal to them," he said. "The PRT and the PHA programs are really effective. People are really surprised to see a change in themselves both physically and mentally because, with most of the people, it's changed their lifestyles," he said. "It uplifts morale and helps people achieve their goals. Without passing the PRT, they wouldn't be able to stay in the Navy."

ASD Fuels/Supply has a 97 percent compliance rate with the PHA program. Taking the PHA makes people aware of their own health, Untivero said. "The biggest investment you have is your health. It saves the Navy in terms of retention - there's a lower turnover of personnel."

The pilot PHA program began with Oceana Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Detachment in December 2002.

AT1(AW) Anthony Ward and AT1(AW) Kevin Mabe are full-time command fitness leaders for about 1,600 Sailors at AIMD.

Even with such an enormous number of people, they have succeeded in making sure 1,000 AIMD Sailors have had a PHA.

"We are constantly tracking people in PRIMS, communicating with Medical to get appointments and getting the word out to our command when we do have available appointments," Ward said.

Both Sailors believe in the PHA program as a screening program to ensure Sailors' health during the PRT run

"If you have high blood pressure and don't know it, it could cause a stroke, heat exhaustion or a heart attack during the run," Ward said.

"We've had Sailors who said they were worried about running the PRT and we sent them to

Medical to get checked out. It turned out that one guy had a blockage in his heart," Mabe said, adding that now with the PHA in place, Sailors follow through with medical referrals.

"It keeps them honest, too," Ward said. Some Sailors had taken the PRT test in the past, even though they knew they had high blood pressure or high cholesterol, simply because they wanted to get it over with.

Ward manages the Fitness Enhancement Program for AIMD. More than 185 people out of the 265 Sailors who had to participate in FEP passed the last PRT, and 55 of them passed with a "good low."



**AM2(AW) Jim Mando (I) of AIMD 500 Division checks in for the PRT test May 11. AIMD Assistant Command Fitness Leader AT1(AW) Kevin Mabe (on computer) and AIMD Command Fitness Leader AT1(AW) Anthony Ward (I) use**

Perhaps most importantly, Ward tries to impart his fitness and dietary wisdom to the Sailors he helps. He stresses the importance proper exercise and running techniques, the importance of flexibility and stretching as well as proper nutrition. Some Sailors in the AIMD Fitness Enhancement Program have managed to cut between one and seven minutes off their PRT run time simply by learning how to run correctly.

Ward says most people simply feel better when they watch what they eat, exercise and drink a lot of water, and they like feeling good.

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# HealthFest 2004 draws more than 800 people

by JO3 Amanda Robinson and Diana Settles

NAS Oceana held the official kick-off for Oceana-Dam Neck IN MOTION during the 15th Annual HealthFest at the Fitness Center May 19. During this National Employee Health and Fitness Day, more than 800 Sailors, Marines, and military affiliates attended the event, designed to promote the importance of physical activity and healthy nutrition habits. The event showcased approximately 43 booths filled with educational information from both base-wide physical activity, recreation, sports, and nutrition services and vendors throughout the Hampton Roads community.

HealthFest included a 5K cross-country race with 272 human runners and one dog finishing. The race was officially started by Capt. David Hiland, Commanding Officer of Navy Environmental Health Center, Portsmouth. Hiland's remarks to the audience before the race emphasized the importance of physical activity participation among all age groups. Other events during the festival included free health screenings, fitness equipment displays, free healthy choice food samples – including stir fry and vegetable pizza – and a dip contest for muscular fitness enthusiasts.

Fitness, Sports and Aquatics Director Director Gary L. Thomas said the HealthFest was a big success. "We wanted to get new blood in here and teach them that it's not how pretty you look, but how healthy you get. Our numbers were way up for the race and attendance."

HealthFest was the official kickoff of the Navy's new campaign called "Get

Moving Navy," a campaign initiated by the Navy Surgeon General and the Assistant Secretary of the Navy. NAS Oceana has launched "Oceana/Dam Neck in Motion," the Navy's only demonstration site for "Get Moving Navy." This campaign is designed to motivate military personnel and their families toward improving physical activity during daily living, making healthier food choices, and improving overall healthy lifestyle habits.

"Our goal is to create and maintain a fit and healthy force. That goal extends beyond the battlefield, to the home front," said Surgeon General, Vice Adm. Michael Cowan. "Get Moving Navy" is an initiative promoted and endorsed by the surgeon general. "Encouraging healthy lifestyle choices and avoiding obesity, in particular, are among the most important factors in achieving this goal," Cowan added.

According to Cowan, obesity is as much a concern in the military as it is in the civilian sector. Almost 80 percent of today's recruits who exceed weight-for-height standards when they enter the military leave before they complete their first term of enlistment. This in turn increases the cost of recruitment and training. He and other military leaders say it's now time to fix this growing problem. "Our business is being prepared to fight and win America's wars," added Cowan. "We need all Sailors and Marines physically fit to support that mission, and we want their families to enjoy the same level of health."

NAS Oceana is currently developing a model physical activity and nutrition campaign that other installations Navywide will soon model.



PH2 J. Scott Campbell of Visual Information Support Center Oceana participates in the 5K cross-country race with his dog Gohan.

Photo by PH2(SW) Gabriela Hurtado



Photo by PHAN Timothy Bensken

Left, Maj. Chris Tansey of Marine Aviation Training Support Group stretches before participating in the 5K cross-country race. Right, AEAN Amy Cruz of Fighter Squadron 32 performs a demonstration on the aerobics machine.



Photo by PH2(SW) Gabriela Hurtado