

# FORGING THE FUTURE:



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## Friday FACTS

5 December 2003

"Leadership, Partnership, and Championship"

### TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT CLINICIANS SCREEN ADULTS FOR OBESITY

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force today (12/1/2003) recommended that clinicians screen all adults for obesity and offer obese patients intensive counseling and behavioral interventions to promote sustained weight loss or refer them to other clinicians for these services. These findings are published in the December 2 issue of the *Annals of Internal Medicine* and can be viewed on the AHRQ Web site at: <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/3rduspstf/obesity/obesrr.htm>.

Obesity is associated with many significant health problems, including high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, premature death, and decreased quality of life. Health care providers should screen for obesity using the body mass index, which the Task Force said is a valid and reliable screening test. People with a BMI between 25 and 29.9 are considered overweight, and those with a BMI of more than 30 are considered obese. BMI is calculated either as weight in pounds divided by height in inches squared multiplied by 703, or as weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared. An on-line BMI calculator can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/calc-bmi.htm>.

Clinicians may also consider measuring patients for centrally located body weight, which is independently associated with cardiovascular disease, using waist circumference as a measure.

### Simple Steps to Reduce Your Household Energy Use

Winter is fast approaching and along with it rising costs for home heating. Here are some suggestions from the Alliance to Save Energy to lower your energy bills:



- \* Lower your thermostat in the winter (for each degree that you lower your thermostat, you can save about 3 percent on your heating bill.
- \* Replace all light fixtures and bulbs that operate for four or more hours a day with ones that use fluorescent bulbs.
- \* Set your water heater thermostat at 120 degrees or "low."
- \* Wrap your hot water tank in an insulating "blanket" if it feels warm to the touch.
- \* Use warm or cold water for laundry whenever possible.
- \* Landscape around the home-- planting evergreen trees on the north side and deciduous (leafy) trees on the south side of a home can block winter winds and summer sun.

### PREVENTION FOR THE HOLIDAYS PACKAGES

The holidays are fast upon us and PERS-66 has put together two "Prevention for the Holidays" packages, "Be Safe, Be Smart, Be Sober-Alcohol Abuse Prevention for the Holidays" and "Drug Use Prevention for the Holidays". Concise and informative, these packages offer many ideas to reduce alcohol and drug use by sailors during the holidays and can be integrated into your command's current prevention programs. Both packages are available for immediate download by logging on to PERS-6 Website at: [HTTP://NAVDWEB.SPAWAR.NAVY.MIL](http://NAVDWEB.SPAWAR.NAVY.MIL) and clicking on the "Prevention for the Holidays" icon.



**"Those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything."**

— George Bernard Shaw