

Noninfectious Diseases and Disabilities

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your teen's health class is currently studying noninfectious diseases, which we define as those diseases that are not transmitted through contact with others. Included in this category are cardiovascular diseases—those of the heart and blood vessels—as well as cancer, diabetes, and arthritis.

Some questions your teen will explore as we study this chapter are: *What causes high blood pressure, and how can it be treated? What lifestyle choices will help me reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease? Why should I worry about cancer and heart disease when I am still a teenager? Why do diabetics have to take insulin? What causes arthritis?*

To support and extend our classroom work, please plan to complete one or more of the following activities with your teenager:

- With your teen, collect brochures and pamphlets from such organizations as the American Cancer Society or the American Heart Association. Share the material with the rest of the family, and then challenge each family member to identify at least three new facts he or she learned about noninfectious diseases.
- Ask your son or daughter to explain how people can lower their risk of heart disease. Together, investigate your family's history of heart disease.
- Ask your teen to explain the seven warning signs of cancer. Encourage all family members to discuss what they can do to be alert to the early warning signs of cancer.

Please plan other activities you think will help your son or daughter develop and maintain healthful lifestyle habits that will help reduce the risk of diseases in his or her adult years. Thank you for supporting our classroom work. Feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss your child's health education.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher