

**Chapter****13****Parent Letter and Activities**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

In your teen's health class, we are currently studying noncommunicable diseases—those diseases that cannot be spread from person to person. The first diseases we will study are allergies and asthma. We will discuss ways to manage these chronic diseases. Next, our study of cancer will explore how cancer harms the body and how it may be treated and prevented. Then we learn about heart disease—what it is, how it is treated, and healthful choices that may help prevent it. We will conclude by studying diabetes and arthritis. We will learn the major types of these diseases and look at some of the treatment options for each.

Some questions your teen will answer as we study these topics include: *What types of noncommunicable diseases are there? What are allergies and how are they treated? What is asthma? How can people who have asthma manage their condition? What is cancer? What are some causes of cancer? How is cancer treated? How can I reduce my risk of developing cancer? What are the different types of heart disease? How is heart disease treated? What can I do to reduce my risk of developing heart disease? What is diabetes? What is arthritis? How are diabetes and arthritis treated?*

Our approach to the topic of noncommunicable diseases will be to learn the facts about diseases and how healthful behaviors can help prevent or lessen their effects.

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your teen:

- Low-fat, high-fiber foods reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease. Together, make a list of low-fat, high-fiber foods to buy the next time you go to the grocery store.
- Look through the telephone book for organizations or agencies in your community that help people cope with noncommunicable diseases. Such organizations include the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, and the American Diabetes Association. Encourage your teen to contact one of the organizations for information that your family can use.
- Discuss with your teen the health history of your family as it relates to noncommunicable diseases. For example, is there a history of heart disease, a particular type of cancer, asthma, or allergies? Discuss what you and your teen can do to minimize your chances of getting these diseases.

Please engage in any other activities that you think will encourage your teen to develop a greater understanding of noncommunicable diseases. Thank you for supporting our classroom work. As always, do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher