

ON THE ROAD TO WELLNESS

North Dakota Disability Health Project

Promoting the health
and wellness of people
with disabilities

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Issue 28

April is National Limb Loss Awareness Month

Are you at risk?

Every day 507 Americans lose a limb, often related to vascular diseases, but 60 percent are preventable. A national nonprofit agency, the Amputee Coalition, is on a mission to increase awareness about limb loss prevention and about individuals living with limb loss.

“Limb loss is not uncommon and, sadly, becoming less uncommon every day,” said Kendra Calhoun, Amputee Coalition president and CEO. “More than 2 million Americans live with limb loss and that number grows by 185,000 each year. Our goals for Limb Loss Awareness Month are to heighten public awareness about limb loss and increase people’s understanding of prevention – especially those most at risk.” The Amputee Coalition is sponsoring a nationwide awareness campaign with April as Limb Loss Awareness Month and offering an online risk assessment for limb loss.

“Many people are unaware of the causes of amputation and often see limb loss in just a few categories: the wounded warrior or the accomplished athlete,” added Calhoun. “The fact is, limb loss affects every generation, from young to old and people from all walks of life. Those at greatest risk are people who have diabetes or a vascular impairment such as peripheral arterial disease. Cancer is also a cause of limb loss, but traumatic limb loss can happen to anyone – from lawnmower and farm equipment accidents to motorcycle and car accidents.”

Across the United State during the month of April, amputee support groups, veterans, prosthetics, rehabilitation centers and those with limb loss will be participating in a number of activities in their local areas to raise awareness.

Statistics

- Diabetes and vascular disease are the leading causes of limb loss (54%). Other causes of limb loss include trauma (45%) and cancer (less than 2%).
- 60% of limb loss is preventable.
- In 2008, hospital charges associated with having a limb amputated totaled more than \$7.2 billion in healthcare costs.
- Nearly 60% of the amputation procedures performed in 2008 were paid for by Medicaid and Medicare, totaling more than \$5.2 billion in healthcare costs.
- 600 children lose a limb due to lawnmower accidents each year.
- 75 %of pediatric amputations are due to trauma; accidents with power tools and machinery account for the highest incidents.



To receive this newsletter by email or in an alternative format, call 800-233-1737.

Limb Loss Awareness Month designates a specific time to:

- Provide support for individuals within the limb loss community.
- Raise public awareness about limb loss education; provide education and prevention information to both the limb loss community and the rest of the population.
- Provide an opportunity for individuals to discuss quality of life and other issues they face with the public, legislators and the media.
- Recognize the contributions of military veteran amputees.

As part of Limb Loss Awareness Month, the Amputee Coalition urges people to go to the Limb Loss Awareness Month Web site to take the Limb Loss Risk Test. Learn your probability for limb loss by taking this quick and easy online test.

Get Your Limb Loss Risk Assessment at amputee-coalition.org/risk

About the Amputee Coalition of America

The Amputee Coalition, based in Knoxville, Tennessee, is a national nonprofit organization whose mission is “to reach out to and empower people affected by limb loss to achieve their full potential through education, support and advocacy, and to promote limb loss prevention.” For more information about limb loss , or to attend the national conference in Kansas City, Missouri in June 2011, please visit the Amputee Coalition Web site at www.amputee-coalition.org or call (888)267-5669.

The information in this fact sheet is shared with the expressed consent of the Amputee Coalition.

The following facilities in North Dakota, through their ACA membership, are willing to share in the ACA mission:

- Hanger Prosthetics & Orthotics in Fargo, ND, 1-877-442-6437
- Sanford HealthCare Accessories in Fargo, ND, (701)234-1399

The Special Needs Resource Project (SNRP) can also help to locate services. This project offers monthly newsletters, resource lists and basic information (contact information available in Additional Resources).

If you cannot identify a support group in your area, please contact ACA 888-267-5669, ext. 8132, for assistance.

Sources:

- *National Limb Loss Awareness Month Raises THE Question: Are you at Risk?* Amputee Coalition. <http://www.amputee-coalition.org>

Additional Resources:

- Amputee National Conference. Amputee Coalition. <http://www.amputee-coalition.org/conference>
- Hanger Prosthetics & Orthotics. <http://www.hanger.com/PatientCareCenters>
- Special Needs Resource Project (SNRP). <http://www.snrproject.com/Resource/Links/>

The ND Disability Health Project can provide technical assistance to assist with health promotion, staff training and education, and disability awareness. Contact us at 800.233.1737 or visit our website at

www.ndcpd.org/health



**North Dakota
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Vision:

All people in ND have access to information and services they need to maintain good health and wellness. There are no health disparities between people with and without disabilities that are based solely on the presence of a disability.

Pay It Forward.....

Pass this information on to others who may find it helpful.