

**Now available on our website:**

## **NEW TOOLS for Childhood Obesity Management**

Over the past several years, a series of PPRG studies have focused on childhood obesity prevention and management. While there is no "easy" practice-based fix to this complex problem, one product of recent PPRG work is tools that can be used to guide management of overweight children. These tools were developed in partnership with clinicians at Lawndale Christian Health Center (who provided insight into a primary care vision for management of overweight children), volunteer efforts of medical student Alisha Hudson, funding from CLOCC (Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children), and leadership efforts of Adolfo Ariza, MD. PPRG clinicians and clinicians in the CLOCC Clinician Practice Work Group met twice to review drafts and suggest changes.

These tools are now on the PPRG web site ([www.childrenMRC/pprg/resources](http://www.childrenMRC/pprg/resources)). We welcome your comments/feedback on the information posted:

1. Algorithms for management decisions related to identifying and managing overweight children
2. Algorithms for use in management decisions related to identification of co-morbidities of obesity
3. Forms for practice management of overweight children, including:
  - a. Parent/patient surveys to track progress at each visit
  - b. New and follow up patient charting forms
4. Parent handouts (in Spanish and English) on obesity counseling topics

### **Updates on Current Projects:**

#### **Enhancing Tenacity, Teamwork, and Tools (TTT) project**

The Health Indicators Analyzer software (HIA) has been developed and tested over the past several years by the PPRG. The HIA aids clinicians in growth evaluation, blood pressure interpretation, and health behavior assessment and counseling. It can produce individualized handouts for parents with a child's nutritional status interpretation, growth charts, and behavioral recommendations.

The HIA has been tested at 4 practices. We have recently received funding from the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation (through an award to Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children) to 1) improve the HIA software design to enhance its utility across various practice settings and 2) provide training in

obesity management/prevention and establish the HIA at 8 more practices. This project, titled *Enhancing Tenacity, Teamwork, and Tools (TTT) in Pediatric Practice to Prevent and Manage Childhood Obesity*, is led by Adolfo Ariza, MD. Four participating sites will receive installation and training on the use of the desktop longitudinal version of the HIA, and the remaining 4 will receive the longitudinal HIA handheld computer version.

As part of the TTT project, PPRG is also working to establish teams at practices to develop and apply systems to address childhood obesity tailored for their sites. Another component of the program focuses on training on motivational interviewing techniques for clinicians to improve their counseling skills for health behavior change. This project will run through 2007.

#### **Mono and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome in Adolescents**

Teens aged 13-18 who have recently experienced acute infectious mononucleosis are still needed for a study that is determining how quickly teens recover and identifying factors associated with delayed recovery. The study is led by Renee Taylor, PhD, University of Illinois at Chicago (phone 312-996-3412, email [rtaylor@uic.edu](mailto:rtaylor@uic.edu)) and Ben Katz, MD, Children's Memorial Hospital (phone 773- 880-4187, email [bkatz@northwestern.edu](mailto:bkatz@northwestern.edu)).

Approximately 350 teens have been recruited for the study. We anticipate enrollment into the study will end by September 2006. Teens with mono in the past 6 months are eligible. For more information on participation, contact the Recovery from Mono investigators at 312-996-3412 or email them at [mono@uic.edu](mailto:mono@uic.edu)

#### **Healthy Families Promote Healthy Children**

Five PPRG practices are participating in the *Healthy Families Promote Healthy Children (HFPHC)* study, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and led by Helen Binns, MD, MPH. *HFPHC* is in its second year. This study continues the series of PPRG studies that focus on tobacco. *HFPHC* aims to foster the identification of tobacco use among pregnant women and parents and to encourage counseling on tobacco prevention and cessation.

All 5 practices have completed their baseline assessments, which include observations of well child visits of children aged 0-6 years and exit surveys from parents and pregnant women. Interventions are ongoing and post-intervention data collection has begun.

## **Parents and Children Together: Studying the Origins of Healthy, Happy Children**

Oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) is the most common psychiatric problem among young children; a diagnosis of depression that meets DSM IV diagnostic criteria is uncommon in preschoolers but depressive symptoms are not. The implications of ODD, depression, and their comorbidity are far from trivial; ODD is a problem in itself and a precursor to conduct disorder; depression is significant in itself and a precursor to adolescent suicide; and a precursor to drug abuse that has proven difficult to treat. While studies of the early origins of ODD exist, relatively few have examined onset of depressive symptoms in young children, and even fewer have examined the development of ODD/depression.

This study is examining a series of variables including family (conflict, stressors), maternal (depression), child (temperament, school academic competence, social skills problems, attentional problems), and interactions (mother-child interaction, temperament). These variables have received empirical support as precursors to the development of ODD and depression.

We now anticipate enrolling 800 children, recruited from the early childhood programs of the Chicago public schools and PPRG practices, and having 692 complete all 3 waves of data collection. Participating children are 4 years of age at study onset. The project is a five-year study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health and led by John Lavigne, PhD. Twenty-one pediatric practices are currently serving as recruitment sites and we plan to continue recruitment for this study through 2006. If your Cook County office is interested in participating, please contact Sherry Lyons at 312-573-7798 or [slyons@childrensmemorial.org](mailto:slyons@childrensmemorial.org)

## **Improving Medication Use for ADHD in Primary Care**

Because few children with psychiatric conditions are treated in the tertiary mental health system, improving the mental health treatment of children seen in primary care is essential. Treating ADHD in the primary care sector is particularly appropriate.

This study, being conducted in middle class and inner city practices, examines whether the use of stimulant medication by community pediatricians, can be improved to approximate that

recommended in treatment guidelines, thus improving the care of their patients. It is one of the first to attempt to alter practice procedures to conform to existing guidelines for stimulant management for ADHD, and is the first to apply specific algorithms to ADHD management in primary care. It tests an intervention of moderate intensity to help pediatricians use stimulant medications more effectively, while providing support needed to allow the practices to maintain improved management after training ends.

The project is a five-year study led by John Lavigne, PhD and funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. Twenty-four pediatric practices are participating in the study. Patient recruitment will continue another 14 months, with patients followed for a year. Nearly 400 children in study practices have been screened, with about 150 starting treatment. Project staff members can be reached at 1-800-747-8631.

## **PPRG Summer Students 2006**

We would like to thank our Summer Students for all of their hard work and dedication. At this time we would like to acknowledge them and their research. Cristina Garcia, medical student at Northwestern University, who is conducting a study at an inner-city practice evaluating the healthcare utilization according to the medical complexity and demographics, and evaluating obesity patterns in early life; Andrea Cabello, medical student at Northwestern University, and Whitney Ajibade, undergraduate volunteer from Princeton University, who are researching on the topic of parental perceptions of growth information received during well child visits; Joanna Wiecezrek, a medical student at Northwestern University, Katherine Welch, medical student at Medical College of Wisconsin, and Eric Binns, undergraduate volunteer at Arizona State who are carrying out research in examining patient and clinic outcomes of the Nutrition Evaluation Clinic at Children's Memorial Hospital.

## **Recent Publications**

Dilley KJ, Martin LA, Sullivan C, Seshadri R, Binns HJ, for the PPRG. Identification of Overweight Status is Associated with Higher Rates of Screening for Comorbidities of Overweight in Pediatric Primary Care Practice. *Pediatrics* (in press).

This paper presents data from the medical record reviews conducted at the 13 practices that participated in the Healthy Families, Healthy Children study. Data were gathered during Dr. Dilley's CMH fellowship.

**From all of us at CHR:**

**Have a fun and safe summer! Keep hydrated and don't forget daily sun block.**

