

## Beginning a Congregational Health Ministry? Take Small Steps

After attending the parish nurse training, were you filled with wonderful hopes about your health ministry? Most of us feel full of ideas but going back to our churches and implementing those ideas became a challenge.

As a baby, we had to learn to take small steps, stumble, and sometimes even fall before being able to walk. Just as a baby has to take small steps, so do we, when establishing a health ministry within our church.

One area to begin your ministry is to provide silent messages in the restrooms, kitchen, fellowship area, and bulletin boards of the church. These can speak to monthly health emphases topics as follows:

- Monthly health emphases
  - Flu season
  - Cardiovascular health
  - Diabetes
  - Hand washing
  - Breast/Prostate health
  - Arthritis awareness
  - Injury/accident prevention
  - Disaster emergency items

Flyers and health education information can be located at the following Web sites:

- ADPH.org
- Americanheart.org
- Alz.org
- Cancer.org
- Epilepsyfoundation.org
- NOF.org
- CDC.gov
- NCA.org
- Rheumatology.org
- Diabetes.org
- Nimh.nih.gov
- Americanstroke.org

This strategy places the health education message before the church with little effort. These contacts can lead to increased awareness and inclination toward good health by the congregation.

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