



HudsonAlpha partners with city to promote better health

Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle announces community-wide initiative

According to national statistics, Alabama residents rank among the fattest citizens in the U.S. "Huntsville can no longer afford to ignore the impact that obesity has had on our quality of life and health," said Mayor Tommy Battle at a late January press conference. Taking a cue from HudsonAlpha, Mayor Battle, institute leadership, Huntsville Hospital, Star Super Market, Fleet Feet, Sterling Health, *The Huntsville Times*, Regions and The Links Inc. gathered in McMillian Park to kick-off Healthy Huntsville 2012, a program to change the way Huntsville citizens eat and exercise in order to reduce rising rates of obesity and diabetes.

With this year's HudsonAlpha spring benefit and Biotech 201 program focusing on diabetes and obesity, and the knowledge that more than 30 percent of Alabamians are considered obese, Carter Wells, director of external affairs at HudsonAlpha, approached Battle with the idea to create a master calendar of activities from across the community that would highlight nutrition, exercise and a healthier way of living.

"There is real strength in numbers," noted Wells. "The institute is addressing human health through research, the city is promoting healthier living to employees and citizens to benefit both individuals and a better bottom line on health care costs, and numerous other organizations have the well being of our community's citizens at heart." Healthy Huntsville brings everyone together to reach out, reinforce and strengthen the collective resolve to get healthy.

The Healthy Huntsville 2012 initiative focuses on the core concepts of nutrition and exercise to encourage local residents to embrace healthy lifestyles. The team's new website, healthyhuntsville2012.com, provides a one-stop location to find upcoming walks and runs, nutrition and fitness tips, parks and trail maps, healthy recipes, coupon clipping guides and more. The initiative features the Double Helix Dash, a 5K run/walk at HudsonAlpha's McMillian Park on April 10, followed by the Mayor's Bike Ride in May.

Directly related to obesity is the rising rate of type 2 diabetes. According to the Centers for Disease Control, type 2 diabetes accounts for more than 90 percent of diabetes cases and is typically associated with lifestyle decisions. "Healthy food choices, physical activity and weight loss are steps toward controlling and even preventing type 2 diabetes," noted Neil

"As fast as the rates of obesity and type 2 diabetes are rising, it is frightening to think what the next 15 years will look like if we don't make some serious changes in the way we diet and exercise."
-David Spillers,
CEO Huntsville Hospital



Lamb, Ph.D., director of educational outreach for HudsonAlpha. Scientists at HudsonAlpha are researching both obesity and diabetes—type 2 diabetes, as well as juvenile diabetes—toward helping patients live healthier, happier lives.

Lamb presented the first Healthy Huntsville seminar, enlightening attendees about research on both type 1 and type 2 diabetes, and obesity. Lamb also addressed current and potential therapies. Attendee Bill Quinn was enthusiastic in his praise of the presentation. "It was both informative and entertaining for an audience with widely ranging backgrounds. I saw a gastroenterologist, an internist, and then there was my wife who is an attorney and I'm an engineer. Dr. Lamb was able to speak to all of us."

The Healthy Huntsville kickoff was timed to coincide with the beginning of the state's Scale Back program. Scale Back Alabama is a 10-week weight loss program using a team concept to get people to lose weight. HudsonAlpha has a dozen four-person teams joining the effort.



Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle announces the Healthy Huntsville 2012 initiative at McMillian Park. Representatives from The Links, a Healthy Huntsville partner, listen as he addresses the community.



Scan the QR code for more information.