

Postpartum from page 1C

After the birth of her second child, Cedar also took Prozac in combination with progesterone, a natural hormone that is produced during the middle of a woman's reproductive cycle.

A reproductive endocrinologist at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak suggested she take the hormone after her progesterone level tested low. The specialist at Beaumont regularly treats women with premenstrual syndrome (PMS) — those suffering from anxiety rather than the more common symptoms seen advertised on television commercials such as irritability, bloating and headaches.

"People with low levels of progesterone are more likely to have miscarriages and suffer from PPD," said Cedar. "It was inter-

esting for me to see these two tied together."

Cedar has had two miscarriages.

"My life has totally changed," Cedar said. "Most mothers will tell you that anyway, but having postpartum depression has caused me so much introspection. I think I know more about my psychological makeup than I ever cared to know."

Cedar occasionally attends the support group with O'Donohue, though her youngest child is now 2 and the symptoms of PPD are long gone. However, she said talking about her experiences helps others deal with PPD and gives new mothers hope that the ill feelings and emotional trials are only temporary.

Father changes, just sits around



RENEE MAHLER

Q. My mother and father are in their 80s. They live in their own home and until recently have been very active. Suddenly, my father has changed. He doesn't want to go anywhere or see anybody and he spends a lot of time just sitting in the living room. He doesn't even watch television. The family is concerned, but my father claims he feels well and that nothing is wrong.

- An "empty" feeling, ongoing sadness and anxiety.
- Tiredness, lack of energy.
- Loss of interest or pleasure in ordinary activities, including sex.
- Sleep problems, including very early morning waking.
- Problems with eating and weight (gain or loss).
- A great deal of crying.
- Aches and pains that won't go away.
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering or making decisions.
- Feeling that the future looks grim; feeling guilty, helpless or worthless.
- Irritability.
- Thoughts of death or suicide; a suicide attempt.

havoc. So many emotions surface and often a person makes serious errors in judgment, especially when it comes to finances.

A very informative booklet entitled "Protecting Your Assets While Grieving" is published by Batesville Management Services. Not surprisingly, this pamphlet is available at many funeral homes. According to the publication, the first and perhaps most important thing to do during a mourning period is not to make any quick financial decisions.

To protect oneself during this vulnerable time it would be wise not to sell a home, pay off a mortgage, borrow or lend money, purchase expensive items or listen to anyone who means well but should not be giving financial advice at this time. It is not a good time to make investments, either.

pared in case you need it.

A. Once you begin receiving Social Security retirement benefits you will automatically be enrolled in the Medicare program. You and your wife should receive your Medicare cards, in the mail, several months before your 65th birthdays.

Q. My aunt and uncle both have trouble with their eyes. They live alone and are unable to do many things they enjoyed before their eyesight became bad. Do you have any information on things that are specifically made for people with bad eyesight?

A. There is a catalog of products for people of all ages with poor or low vision. Write to: Lighthouse Low Vision Products, 36-02 Northern Blvd., Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

Renee Mahler is a gerontologist and the director of communications and admission at a Rochester Hills nursing facility. She is a former member of the Michigan State Commission on Services to the Aging.

To leave a message for Mahler, call 953-2047, Ext. 1869, from a touch-tone phone. Send your questions to her at the Observer & Eccentric, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009.

Swim from page 1C

"It was a big event when we had a swim meet. All the kids and families would come to cheer us on. There would be about 100 people there watching and cheering."

Two weekends ago, even more fans gathered — about 1,200 — for the annual event at the Southfield Civic Center pool. It was the year-end swim meet for the Northwest Swim League,

comprised of 16 local clubs from the Birmingham, Rochester, Farmington and Southfield area. The league is divided into two divisions, class A and B.

All day Saturday, the swimmers participated in preliminary qualifying events, such as the breaststroke, free style stroke or individual medley. The top 12 swimmers then competed in the final event Sunday.

A. There is a possibility that your father is suffering from depression. Unfortunately, depression in older adults is frequently undiagnosed and goes untreated. The disease is often hard to recognize but it is treatable regardless of the person's age. Sometimes depression can also be due to the side effects of certain drugs older people may use for high blood pressure or heart disease.

The National Institute on Aging has published a list of the most common signs of depression. They advise that if several of these symptoms last longer than two weeks a physician should be consulted.

Depression can be a very serious disease. However, it is the most treatable of all mental illnesses and no one is ever too old to be helped.

Q. My father recently died and I think my mother has lost her common sense. She wants to sell everything, buy an RV and travel all over the country. It would be very funny if I didn't think this was a serious problem. My brother and I are trying to calm her down but we are having a difficult time getting through to her.

A. Losing a loved one can cause

International Institute wants gifts for auction

The International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit begins its 75th anniversary celebration with the eighth-annual International Auction on Sunday, Sept. 12.

Tax-deductible donations of merchandise, services and gift certificates are being accepted to be auctioned at this special event presented by the Friends of the International Institute.

Hospital plans study program

William Beaumont Hospital's Clinics of Preventive and Nutritional Medicine are seeking volunteers with high blood pressure for research studies.

Volunteers over age 18 with a diastolic pressure of 95 or above are needed for studies of blood pressure medications.

Both male and female volunteers are needed for the studies. Female participants must be of non-childbearing potential.

For more information or to volunteer call the clinics at 646-6500.

Resource center offers information on health

The Advantage 55 Health Center has been opened at William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, to help older adults and their families have easy access to information on the concerns of older adults.

The center is a resource library

containing brochures, books and videos designed to address the medical and social concerns of senior citizens.

A variety of topics contained in the center's collection include health maintenance, caregiving,

housing, legal and financial information (including Medicare coverage) and local community resources available to assist older adults.

To complement the service provided by the center, staff members and volunteers from Beaumont's Department of Older Adult Services are available for consulting on such issues as caring for an aging relative, making decisions about living arrangements and choosing an insurance to supplement Medicare.

Consultations, brochures and video screenings at the center are provided free of charge to the general public.

"The new Advantage 55 Health

Information Center and consultation services are an extension of Beaumont's Senior Resource telephone line," said Gail Chelchowski, program coordinator for Beaumont's Department of Older Adult Services. "Callers and other people who require more detailed information can drop by the center to get all of the answers they need."

The Health Information Center is on the first floor of the Beaumont, Royal Oak Medical Office Building, just steps away from visitor parking. The center is open 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. For more information call Beaumont's Senior Resource Line at 1-800-328-2241.

Safety course aids family

A one-session course offered by William Beaumont Hospital is designed to give parents the skills and knowledge to respond quickly and confidently to choking and other emergency situations involving their child.

Next session of Infant/Child CPR is scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 17, at the Beaumont Medical Building, 6900 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. Cost is \$17 per person. To register call 1-800-633-7377.

The course, for parents or grandparents of infants and young children, teaches basic techniques of cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the Heimlich

maneuver for choking. Home safety, including tips for childproofing your home, also are covered.

Participants are certified by the American Heart Association after they successfully complete the course.

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