

# Vial of Life provides vital life-saving tool

Many of you already know about the Vital Information Program. But to those of you who are not aware of this program I would like to explain it.

The Vital Information Program, also known as the Vial of Life concept, is in effect in many counties around Michigan.

Most accidents and sudden illnesses occur in the home. That fact of life gave birth to the Vial of Life concept. Older people can prepare for these emergencies to prevent loss of time in an emergency situation.

This program simply involves taping a plastic cylinder or vial which holds emergency medical information to the inside of an older person's refrigerator. The refrigerator was chosen because it is fireproof and is easily accessible.

The older person and his or her family know the location of this information and keep it updated. Updating involves keeping the list of medications and other information current.

Rescue personnel in most counties in Michigan know about the Vital Information Program and the location of the vial.

The program is very successful and there is no charge for the vial, available through area senior citizen centers.

Dear Jo: I am taking a new medication that is helping me so much. There is a problem with this drug. It causes my mouth to be dry most of the time. Between meals I drink water and find that chewing gum is helpful. What else would you suggest I do?

— T.M.

Dear T.M.: Part of the aging process is a decrease in the secretion of saliva. This is a slow process and not too noticeable. Many



gerontology

A. Jolayne Farrell

drugs have the side effect of a dry mouth.

But many people feel that the benefits of the drug far outweigh some of the minor side effects such as you have.

Taking additional water between meals and chewing gum are fine. At meals you can manage better with food that is served moist, such as meat with broth or gravy, vegetables in cream sauce and salads served with additional dressing.

Sips of water while you are eating can be helpful. Avoid very dry foods such as crackers and cheese. Since the saliva not only lubricates the mouth but also acts as cleaner, good oral hygiene at this time is important.

Dear Jo: I am a diabetic and have been so for years. Lately my feet have been a problem. Would you recommend that I see a foot doctor?

— Mrs. Breck

Dear Mrs. Breck: A foot doctor, or podiatrist, can help you, particularly because of your age and diabetic condition. Actually, for good preventative foot care a diabetic should see a podiatrist once a month.

## Cable meeting set in county

The Metro Detroit Committee for Children's Television will hold an informational meeting on cable television at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday Oct. 29 in the First Presbyterian Church, 1669 W. Maple, Birmingham.

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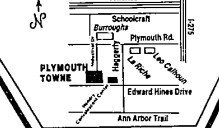
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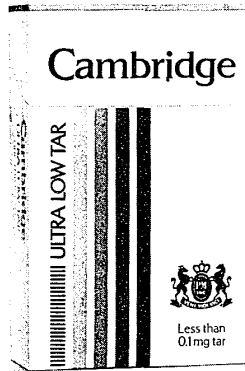
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