

Breast cancer is focus of ambitious campaign

The American Cancer Society, Great Lakes Division is launching a statewide education campaign designed to reach women in Michigan and Indiana with potentially lifesaving breast cancer early detection information.

The program, called "Tell-A-Friend Tuesday," will take place on October 6, 1998 when an anticipated 20,000 volunteers will each make phone calls to at least five friends and family members encouraging them to get their annual mammograms in accordance with American Cancer Society breast cancer screening guidelines.

More than 100,000 women will

be reached with important breast health information in a single 24-hour period, making this the largest initiative of its kind ever conducted.

According to G. Marie Swanson, Ph.D., MPH, and American Cancer Society board member, this year's "Tell-A-Friend Tuesday" effort is being expanded from last year's pilot project held in Michigan that reached roughly 7,500 women.

"We're taking the success of last year's program and expanding it dramatically - into Indiana and other states - because it worked so well and has great potential to reach large numbers

of women with breast health information," Dr. Swanson said.

The "Tell-A-Friend Tuesday" program is based on research that shows that roughly 25 percent of all women who get mammograms do so because a friend encouraged them.

"Ninety-seven percent of women survive breast cancer when it is detected early," says Dr. Swanson, adding, "Screening - combining a physician's examination of the breast with a mammogram - is an essential component of reducing morbidity and mortality from breast cancer. We need to take advantage of the fact that women listen to other

women when it comes to getting screened."

The American Cancer Society is now recruiting women and men to serve as callers.

"It's a really simple concept," Dr. Swanson said, "and it is the perfect project for any woman or man who wants to become active in the fight against breast cancer and be part of the cancer solution."

American Cancer Society guidelines call for annual mammography, annual clinical exam and monthly breast self-exam for all women age 40 and older. Statistics show that compliance

with breast cancer screening guidelines in Indiana and Michigan is nowhere near where it needs to be. In Indiana, 61 percent of women age 50 and older were receiving annual mammograms in 1994. In Michigan, 65.2 percent of age-qualified women received mammograms in 1996.

"This clearly shows there is room for improvement," Dr. Swanson said. "We must get more women receiving regular screenings."

The American Cancer Society, with the help of "Tell-A-Friend Tuesday" and other programs, hopes to see the number of women age 40 and older receiv-

ing breast cancer screening guidelines in Indiana and Michigan increase by at least 800,000 by the year 2000.

"This won't come easy, which is why Tell-A-Friend Tuesday offers such a good opportunity. Everyone can get involved. This means businesses and the media, as well, can join in the program and create the largest single-day breast cancer education program ever," Dr. Swanson said.

The American Cancer Society provides the information and calls to all participants. More information can be obtained by calling any local American Cancer Society office, or 1-800-ACS-2345.

Dental care should begin at early age

Question: I have an infant and a toddler who still use the bottle. I'm not sure how I can prepare them for successful dental visits. When am I supposed to start brushing their teeth if they are going to fail out anyway?

Answer: A child is never too young to be taught good oral hygiene.

Wipe the infant's gums after each feeding with a gauze square to remove plaque and to massage the gums. This also conditions the baby to let you put your fingers in his or her mouth, so you can count the teeth as they erupt and can help with the switch to a toothbrush when the first primary teeth start to erupt.

The lower incisors are usually the first to erupt at somewhere between six and 10 months of age. It's helpful to allow the infant to feel the brush very early even though you are the caregiver. The brush then becomes a familiar object to the child, and the baby will even try to imitate what you are doing.

Multiple toothbrushes in all different colors help stimulate interest in brushing. There are also musical brushes available at your local baby store that are fun for infants and toddlers. The key is to start early!

There are many tooth- and gum-care products on the market geared toward infants that are safe if swallowed.

Fluoride toothpastes are recommended by the Food and Drug Administration after the age of two because too much swallowed fluoride could stain teeth permanently. This condition is called fluorosis. Therefore, it's important that your toddler learn to rinse the toothpaste from his or her mouth and

not make a habit of swallowing or eating fluoridated toothpaste. Ingesting fluoridated toothpaste can also upset your child's stomach.

The most common mistake that parents make is letting their child fall asleep with a pacifier dipped in sugar or honey, or a bottle containing milk, formula, fruit juices or sweetened liquids. If your child must be put to bed with a bottle, it's best to only fill it with water. During sleep, allowing the sweetened liquids from the bottle to pool around the child's teeth for long periods. This significantly increases your child's risk for a decay commonly known as baby bottle syndrome. Milk that is left in the mouth from constant breast-feeding throughout the night can also contribute to tooth decay.

In addition to tooth decay problems, children who are given a bottle in bed also have an increased risk for ear infections. Whether your child is breast-fed or bottle-fed, your infant can learn how to drink from a cup (even if the liquid is just water) starting at approximately six months of age. A child's first birthday is usually a good time to begin weaning off a bottle. Caregivers, parents, and pediatricians need to be informed of your baby's oral hygiene routine to insure that proper habits are followed at all times.

Check your child's teeth regularly. If you see white or stained areas on the teeth, take your child to the dentist right away. Otherwise, bring your infant to the dentist when you come for your six-month checkup. Your child can go for a ride in the dental chair and become familiar with the surroundings.

A dental visit should reinforce a positive attitude toward your child. Never scare the child by saying anything negative, never let the child know that you have anxiety about going to the dentist and never bribe your child.

Let your child go into the treat-

ment room alone if that's what your dentist prefers.

Preventive measures such as good home care, use of proper hygiene products, regular dental checkups and use of sealants when recommended, decrease the likelihood of cavities.

A child's first actual visit to the dentist should occur by age one, so that the teeth may be checked, evaluated and counted. Your dentist can also make recommendations regarding adverse habits like thumb-sucking or finger-sucking. The use of a pacifier may also be evaluated at this time, but always inform your dentist of your child's oral habits and inquire if they may cause future dental problems. It is sometimes easier on the child to come to the dentist in the morning when he or she is more cooperative and rested.

A child's first cleaning appointment with the hygienist should take place by age three. The frequency of dental visits after age three will partly depend on your child's eating habits, how clean his or her teeth are kept and whether he or she drinks fluoridated water. Children who have grown up drinking water containing fluoride have up to 50 percent fewer cavities. Should you discover that the tap water you use does not contain fluoride, ask your dentist or your child's pediatrician for a fluoride supplement.

By age three, your child should have 20 baby teeth erupted. These teeth are very important to the eruption of the permanent teeth and it is important to start flossing at this time.

The roots of each baby tooth guide the permanent teeth into the proper alignment in the mouth.

For instance, if a baby tooth is lost prematurely, a permanent tooth may erupt in the wrong place and eventually cause crowding, crooked teeth and/or the need for braces.

As the primary teeth begin to develop, your dentist may recommend x-rays to determine if any cavities are present and if the permanent teeth are developing properly. Fluoride treatments, the number one way to help prevent or slow down the formation of cavities, may also be recommended at this time.

It's very important to child that your child's first permanent molars erupt around the age of six. Sometimes parents think that these teeth are baby teeth and as a result they are overlooked until it's too late.

It's also very important for parents to consult with their dentist and hygienist regarding the use of sealants in the prevention of tooth decay.

Sealants are a clear or tooth-colored material applied to the chewing surfaces of back teeth that form an invisible barrier, reducing the risk of decay. You must still maintain proper oral hygiene habits in order to reduce the risk of decay if you have sealants.

Remember that introducing regular dental visits to a child at an early age can help the child establish proper habits and enjoy strong, healthy teeth throughout life.

Taking your child to the dentist on a regular basis can prevent serious dental disease and save time, money and your child's teeth. Preventive services such as fluoride treatments and sealants are less costly than fillings, crowns and other more complicated treatments.

(Dr. David Banda is a general dentist in Bloomfield Hills. He graduated from the University of Michigan and is a member of the American Dental Association, the Michigan Dental Association and the Oakland County Dental Society. His "Ask the Dentist" column will appear every other week on the Health & Fitness page. Send questions or comments for Dr. Banda in care of staff writer Chris Mayer at The Observer & Eccentric, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009.)

OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC HEALTHY LIVING

New appointee

Douglas L. Mayers, M.D., has been appointed head of the Division of Infectious Disease at Henry Ford Hospital.

Dr. Mayers, a resident of Orchard Lake, will be responsible for coordinating a broad-based infectious disease program that includes consultative and inpatient services, travel medicine, and a National Institutes of Health-funded HIV research unit. His clinical interests include antiviral drugs and drug resistance.

Dr. Mayers, who received his undergraduate degree from Penn State University and a medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania, comes to Henry Ford after serving as Director of the Viral and Rickettsial Disease Program at the Naval Medical Research Institute and principal investigator for antiretroviral drug studies at the National Naval Medical Center in Baltimore, Md.

CareFirst

CareFirst, based in Bloomfield Hills, and MedMax are teaming up to provide a free seminar next month in Troy. The seminar will be conducted at the Troy MedMax store (740 John R. Road) from 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m. The featured topics will include medication interactions (people are encouraged to bring all their medications), the safe and convenient use of medical equipment, ways in which medical equipment can be paid for, and helpful nutritional practices.

Liquid refreshments will be provided. Call CareFirst at (248) 745-9700 for additional information.

Providence Hospital

Providence Hospital is currently conducting "The Prostate Cancer Series," a program providing educational information and support to patients with prostate cancer.

The series takes place the last Thursday of each month from 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m. at the Franklin Raquet Club, located at 29350 Northwestern Highway in Southfield.

On July 30, Dr. Dana Ohi, a University of Michigan Associate Professor of Surgery and Urology, will discuss "Vigilance/Impotence and Prostate Cancer."

In addition, Dr. J.B. Smith will present "Your Prostate and PSA, What Every Man Should Know" on Aug. 27.

For reservations, contact Diane Thompson at (248) 424-3994.

Providence Hospital offers a support group to help parents, family members and friends cope with the loss of an infant because of miscarriage, stillbirth or newborn death. The group meets from 7 p.m.-9 p.m. on the third Monday of each month in the Doctor's Dining Room in the DePaul Center of Providence Hospital, located at 16100 W. Nine Mile Road.

The group is led by a chaplain, social worker and a nurse. Discussions include understanding grief, pregnancy after a loss, coping with guilt, and how men and women grieve differently.

Those who need to speak with someone about grief and loss may call Providence Hospital's Share Line at (248) 424-5342 or (248) 424-3209. A trained professional will return the call within 24 hours.

Walsh honored

Marianna Walsh of Bloomfield Hills was one of six Detroit Medical Center volunteers recently honored for years of exemplary service and dedication.

The volunteers - Walsh of Bloomfield Hills, Jim Weeks of Warren and Darrell Mainor, Ed Grabner, Gregory Williams and Phyllis Smith all of Detroit - were deemed "Volunteers of the Year" for work at their respective DMC hospitals. They received their awards at a recent luncheon in Grosse Pointe; Walsh volunteered at Children's Hospital of Michigan.

The role of nutrition

Dr. Martin Tamler, a specialist in the area of fibromyalgia, will present "The Role of Nutrition in Proper Health Maintenance" on Tuesday, July 28 in Livonia.

Scheduled for 7 p.m.-9 p.m. at the Livonia Civic Center Library auditorium, there is no fee or registration required to attend.

The library is located at 32777 Five Mile Road, between Farmington Road and Hubbard. Call Sharon Ostalecki at (248) 344-1063 for additional information.

(Healthy Living spotlights Oakland County-related health and medical news and information. To submit items for consideration, write to staff writer Chris Mayer at: Healthy Living, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Or fax: 248-644-1314.)

Take proper precautions to avoid skin cancer

People who work outdoors need to take proper precautions to protect against skin cancer, according to one of the Detroit area's most prominent plastic surgeons.

Dr. Michelle Hardaway, a Southfield-based plastic surgeon, says many people who work outdoors - landscapers, construction workers and roofers are leading examples - don't reflect on overexposure to the sun and the potential damage it can do.

"They just don't think about it," Dr. Hardaway said, "and of course young people seem to ignore the risks for good looking tans."

Hardaway also cautions that people pay attention to warning signs like changes in existing moles, lesions or the development of new moles. "Changes in the size of moles or discolorations should be checked out immediately with a doctor."

Hardaway adds that skin cancer generally develops decades after overexposure to the sun. She recommends the following safety precautions:

- Wear hats with large brims.
- Cover exposed skin areas.
- Use sun block with ratings of 15 and over.
- Do not sunbathe for long periods and stay in the shade.

"We see too many cases of skin cancer which could have been avoided easily," Hardaway said.

You can have your cake and eat it, too, with help of baking innovations

Whether as a midnight snack or an after-dinner dessert, most people find cookies, cakes and muffins hard to resist. But these foods can be dangerous for those of us watching our waistlines. However, all foods can be a part of just about every one's diet as long they are consumed in moderation.

No one needs to deprive themselves of their favorite foods all the time. If you have a craving, allow yourself a small portion of the food and watch what you eat for the rest of the day. If you deny yourself that craving, you'll likely end up raiding the refrigerator and doing even more damage to your favorite treats.

One of the ways you can control how much fat is in the recipe. Thanks to recent baking innovations you can have your cake (in moderation) and eat it too!

In most baking, fat plays a major role adding richness, flavor and tenderness to cookies, cakes, quick breads and muffins. But there are

alternatives that can be used in homebaked recipes which provide some of the fat-like characteristics without actually adding fat.

Fruit purees such as prune or banana, and nonfat dairy products like nonfat yogurt or sour cream are excellent substitutions for fat in baking. And by revising your recipes to include fruit purees instead of butter, margarine or oil, you'll be adding a slight boost of vitamins, minerals and fiber while drastically reducing the fat content.

But how does it taste, you may ask? This is the ultimate test and you may have to do a little experimenting, but for the most part baked goods made with natural fat substitutes have comparable flavor to their full-fat counterparts.

For example, a traditional brownie may contain seven grams of fat per serving. By using fruit puree in place of the margarine or butter, the fat is reduced to less than two grams of fat per serving. Much less fat and lots of flavor!

Not all fruit purees are equal. Some fruits taste better in certain recipes than others do. For example, prune puree provides a rich flavor and moist, tender texture. Prunes enhance certain flavors in recipes such as chocolate, cinnamon and orange and therefore may be best

used in brownies, chocolate cakes, etc.

Banana purees, on the other hand, may be better suited for cookies, muffins and sweet breads. They have a sweeter flavor but also add moisture to recipes.

In addition to using fruit purees and nonfat dairy products, replacing whole eggs with egg whites or egg substitute trims the fat from your favorite recipes even more. Dropping one egg yolk will save you about five grams of fat!

So there are ways of making your cake and eating it, too. But despite the reduction in fat, there are still calories to consider when you bite into that slice. Be aware of what you are eating and allot for these special treats every once in a while.

I read every one of your letters and I love your comments! Please keep writing me with any questions, inspirational stories or suggestions for upcoming articles to: "Talk to the Mirror," Weight Watchers Corporate Communications, P.O. Box 9072, Farmington Hills, MI 48334-2974.

For more information on Weight Watchers, call 1-888-3FLORINE.

(Florine Mark is an appointee to the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and the Michigan Fitness Foundation.)



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