

Rx Briefs

Grief support

Saint Joseph Mercy Hospice (formerly Hospice of Washtenaw) will present a five-part grief recovery series on five consecutive Thursdays beginning Sept. 19. Sessions held 7-8:30 p.m. at the Senior Health Building, Elderwise Room 2414, on the campus of St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Superior Township.

The group's goals are to understand how grief affects you emotionally, spiritually and physically; learn how to deal with anger, guilt and loneliness; and to take steps to recover from grief and grow because of it.

The series is open to the public at no charge. Registration is required. Call Saint Joseph Mercy Hospice at (734) 327-3409.

Volunteers

Heartland Hospice of Southfield, which serves terminally ill patients and their families in the tri-county area, including Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, is looking for caring and dedicated individuals to train as hospice volunteers.

Volunteers provide companionship for the ill, support for the caregivers, and do administrative clerical tasks. They must be good listeners. Training classes are offered throughout the year at different times and locations. Call Mary at Heartland Hospice, (800) 770-9559.

Flu clinics

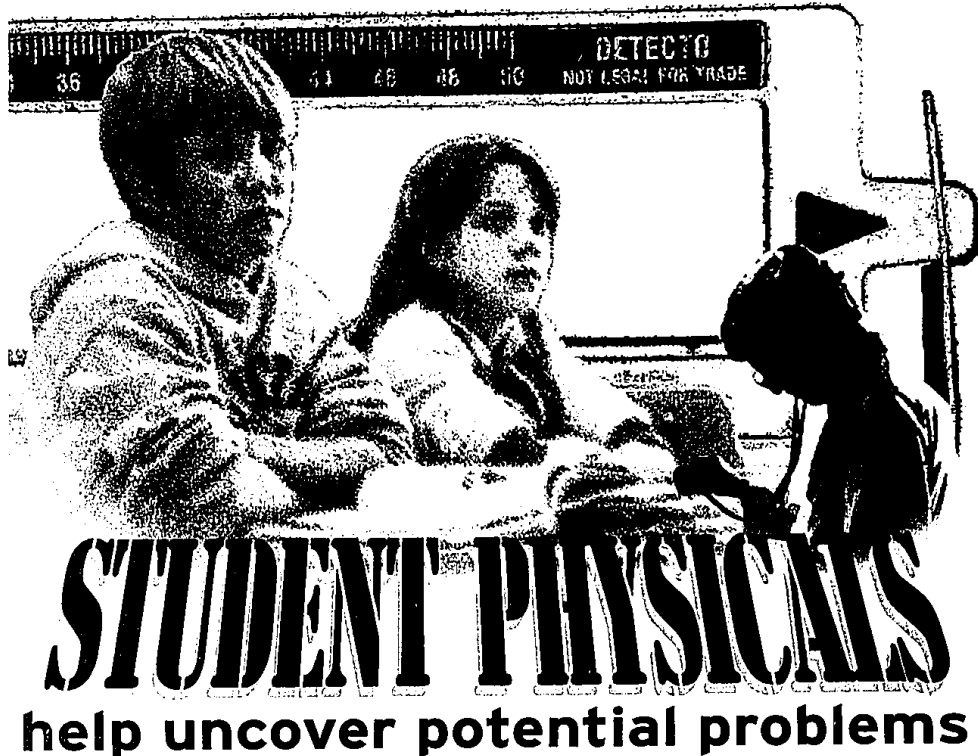
Businesses or organizations that want to help their employees remain healthy this year still have time to schedule a flu clinic at their work location. The Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) Flu-Busters have a limited number of openings for on-site clinics from mid-November through next January. The cost is \$15 per shot, with a minimum of 25 participants required. Pneumonia shots are available at \$25 per shot.

For more information or to schedule a clinic, call Kay Renny at (248) 967-8751 or visit www.vna.org. According to a study in the March 12, 2001 issue of Archives of Internal Medicine, published by the American Medical Association, vaccinating healthy, working adults could reduce average health costs by \$13.66 per person vaccinated.

Infection/heart

Doctors can help prevent bacterial endocarditis in patients with valvular heart disease by reminding them to take antibiotics before dental procedures, according to a recent report in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*. Bacterial endocarditis is an infection in the heart's inner lining or heart valves. It is caused by bacteria in the bloodstream. Most prone to the infection are people with valvular heart disease, which includes congenital heart disease, mitral valve prolapse and artificial heart valves. Taking antibiotics before procedures likely to cause bleeding — such as dental cleaning — can often prevent infection.

One way to remind doctors to access and discuss infection risk with their patients is by printing the infection risk and stating whether antibiotics are indicated on the echocardiogram report physicians receive. It is a low-cost intervention.



BY LAURA COLVIN
CORRESPONDENT

The new school year is finally under way, and parents who want to help their kids embark on a successful year may wish to make an appointment with the family physician.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends a preventive pediatric health care exam every other year for children between the ages of 6 and 11, and an annual exam for adolescents.

It's important to remember that a preventive health care visit is not the same as towing the kids in when they get the flu.

"Very often parents will say 'I've been bringing my child for sore throats and cough and colds. Why does he need a physical?'" said Dr. Laxmi Prabhu, a pediatrician at Henry Ford Health System-Westland. "So many things are picked up during a routine physical exam that get missed if they come only when they are sick."

Problems that impede learning are a prime example. According to Prabhu, children usually begin showing symptoms of difficulties such as ADHD, oppositional disorder, or learning disabilities sometime between kindergarten and second grade.

A complete physical is essential to correctly diagnose and treat the problem before the child falls behind in school.

SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE

Vaccines have eliminated or greatly reduced many of the debilitating and often fatal diseases that were once considered a normal part of childhood. Making sure your children are properly immunized is a fundamental part of keeping them healthy. Immunization schedule for school age children:

4-6 years
DTaP booster (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis)
MMR booster (measles, mumps, rubella)
IPV booster (inactivated poliovirus)

11-12 years
Td booster (tetanus, diphtheria)
Recommended if it has been at least 5 years since the last dose. Subsequent Td boosters recommended every 10 years.

A preadolescent immunization assessment should be completed at age 11 or 12. MMR booster, hepatitis B and varicella (chicken pox) vaccines should be administered if not given earlier. Additional vaccines are available for at-risk populations. Check with your physician.

17-18 years
Meningococcal vaccine may be recommended for college students living in dormitories. Check with your physician.

But some behaviors can be mistakenly quickly labeled as ADHD when the child may actually have a correctable physiological problem.

"Quite frequently I see children who are tired and irritable in the class," said Prabhu. "The mother brings him in because he is not doing well in school,

and we find out that the child is not getting enough oxygen at night because of excessive snoring."

CHECK VISION, HEARING

Vision and hearing problems can also look like a more serious difficulty.

If children can't see what's on the board or hear what the teacher is saying, they're more likely to act out.

Physicians routinely test vision and hearing during a preventive exam, and keep an eye on all aspects of physical development. They check the spine for scoliosis, monitor blood pressure and document growth.

A child's growth-height, weight and BMI (body mass index)—are plotted on a graph and monitored to make sure growth occurs along the same curve over the years. A significant change in either direction could indicate a problem.

"We're seeing a lot of obesity now," said Prabhu. "Overweight kids can have iron deficiency anemia proper nutrition. And, the more overweight you become, and that causes type II diabetes. We see it increasing in young children every day."

But childhood obesity can be prevented or combated when physicians are able to provide parents with the anticipatory guidance that is an essential part of

PLEASE SEE PHYSICALS, C5

Diabetes walk gets a boost from local residents

BY RENÉE SKOGLUND
STAFF WRITER

Amy Scheff of Westland and Mike Albus of Plymouth make quite a pair when it comes to helping find a cure for juvenile diabetes, now termed Type 1 diabetes.

Scheff is a loyal shopper at Albus' grocery store, Mike's Marketplace on Ann Arbor Road in Livonia, claiming he sells the tastiest potato salad and sandwich spread. Mike, in turn, is a business man with a soft heart, especially when it comes to raising money for a good cause.

Backed by Scheff's enthusiasm, his customers' generosity and his staff's hard work, Albus has raised \$1,034 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. To publicize the Southeast Chapter of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International 20th annual "Walk to Cure Diabetes" on Sunday, Sept. 15, he has plastered his store's walls since Aug. 3 with paper "sneakers" purchased for a \$1 a shoe by his customers.

"I think he's got pure humanity," said Scheff, 46, who has dealt with diabetes since age 9 and now wears an infusion pump to regulate her dosage of insulin.

"This has nothing to do with me," countered Albus. "It's about the customers. All I do is okay this. I want to thank the people of Livonia for their generosity. There was hardly a person who said no to this."

Scheff plans to don a pair of walking shoes herself come Sept. 16. "Walk to Cure Diabetes" is scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to noon at both the General Motors Tech Center in Warren and Domino's Farm in Ann Arbor. The foundation hopes to raise over \$1.2 million



Amy Scheff of Westland and her dog, Baxter, are enthusiastic fundraisers for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

for research to find a cure for diabetes and its complications.

"This is my sixth walk that I've gone crazy on," said Scheff, a recall specialist at the Ford Motor Company's customer service division facilities in Livonia. "I do a huge fund-raiser at Ford ... huge."

Scheff already has raised over \$4,000, not counting

the money from Mike's Marketplace. And she's creative in her efforts.

At work, she started the Recognition and Appreciation Card Day. When an employee wants to say something nice about another employee, Scheff types the message up on a brightly colored card stock and delivers it for a small donation to the JDRF.

She also places letters asking for donations in her neighbors' mailboxes. The letters include a picture of Scheff and her faithful canine, Baxter, a mishmash of standard poodle, doberman and Irish wolfhound.

"The dog always get them," she said, totally unapologetic for the play.

However, fund-raising is hard work, said Scheff. "But if you don't ask you won't get any money ... It's like a second job, but it's my way of hoping that in the future there will be a cure for diabetes."

But if Scheff is ever tempted to complain, all she has to do is think about the children with diabetes.

"It's the kids," she said. "I want it over for them. One time, a little girl wanted to know if I would cure diabetes on the day of the walk."

Albus has ended his paper sneaker campaign, but if you stop by his store — which used to be called Stan's, after his father, who began a grocery business in Detroit in 1946 — he'll gladly accept donations for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and forward the money to Scheff.

Then again, Scheff is always shopping at Mike's Marketplace. The prices are good, and she knows Albus has a soft heart for a good cause.

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