

All about Animals

Dear Doctor,
What is pyometritis? What can you do for it? Can our 10-year-old cat get over it?

B.H., Lincoln Park

Dear B.H.,
Pyometritis is an infection of the uterus with an accumulation of pus. It is a very serious medical problem that can often only be resolved by a total hysterectomy (the surgical removal of the uterus) and intensive pre- and post-surgical care. A 10-year-old cat could survive the condition if the disease is diagnosed in time for proper treatment and there are no complications. Please take your cat back to her veterinarian right away. The longer you wait, the less likely is her recovery.

FOR KIDS

Cats really don't have nine lives like you've often heard, but they do seem to be able to live through dangers that might kill another animal. For instance, they can walk very easily on narrow places without falling off, and if they do jump from a fairly high spot, they almost always land on their feet, unharmed.

Dear Doctor,

We had a dog that died from distemper two months ago. What precautions should we take before we get another puppy?

L.S., Wayne

Dear L.S.,

The virus that causes canine distemper is a moderately resistant one. After two months it would most likely be gone from your home, but a few precautions must be taken. Disinfect any areas that were used by your previous pet with a viracidal disinfectant and dispose of all of his bedding, toys, collars, etc. Secondly, and most importantly, arrange to have your new puppy vaccinated against distemper at least seven to 10 days before bringing him home and be sure to get his entire vaccination series just as his doctor schedules. Don't miss his yearly boosters either, when he's grown up. Distemper can strike a dog of any age if they are not protected.

Wayne County nursing home will be shut

Wayne County's Walter P. Reuther Long-Term Care Facility in Westland will close on June 30, unless the state decides to provide permanent funding for the facility which currently runs an annual \$3.5 million deficit.

A gerontologist has been appointed to help direct the transfer of patients to other facilities, beginning June 12. The county will begin sending written notices of the proposed closing to all patients and their families, guardians or closest friends as soon as they can be prepared.

The county, which faces an \$8-\$12 million deficit for the second year in a row, has been trying to close Reuther since last fall.

Federal Judge Ralph Freeman ruled last week that the county had the right to close the facility and had met previous court-ordered guidelines for transfer of patients. A November 1977 lawsuit, filed on behalf of patients, had sought to keep the facility open on a permanent basis.

The judge also appointed a nationally-respected gerontologist, Leon A. Pastalan, to help insure a safe patient transfer. Pastalan is director of research for the Institute of Gerontology at the University of Michigan.

Freeman said that Pastalan would act as "overseeing gerontologist," whose duties would include training the staff involved in the transfer process, directing physical and psychological exams for all patients before they are moved, and overseeing the actual transfer of patients, including visits to the new nursing homes prior to actual departure (if the patients are physically able to do so).

The Board of Commissioners approved a supplemental appropriation of \$386,000 for continued operation of the facility through July 2. The county received a special one-time-only state grant of \$1.75 million to pay the phase-out costs.



No handicap here

Michael Powell has had 15 operations on his right leg in 3½ years following a motorcycle accident. But the Canton resident doesn't let crutches keep him from playing springtime's greatest unorganized

sport—Frisbee flipping. He makes a fancy flip at right while using his crutches to keep his balance. (Staff photo by Gary Caskey)

OU health plan: prevention

A new fringe benefit for Oakland University employees may pay far more in lifelong dividends than a stock-option plan.

Under a new preventive health program administered by Fred Stransky, assistant professor in the department of physical education and athletics, and Dr. Joseph Arends, any administrative-professional employee can receive a complete diagnostic physical aimed at stopping chronic diseases such as high blood pressure before they start.

The diagnosis begins with a complete medical history and examination and doesn't end until the team recommends a specific diet and exercise

plan to help avoid illness.

The medical history covers all facets contributing to a person's health: previous illness, diet, and lifestyle. The examination includes tests to determine high blood pressure, the percentage of fat stored in each person's body, cholesterol and blood sugar levels, a lung test to detect early signs of emphysema or bronchitis, and a stress test which monitors blood pressure and heart rate under increasing work loads.

Stransky is an enthusiastic proponent of the physical and mental benefits of regular exercise. He believes a regular exercise like jogging can help relieve job-related stress, which often

contributes to poor health.

"Nearly all of our participants admit to some sort of stress, either job-related or personal," he says. "Jogging can be a tremendous release for stress. Those involved in a regular program can tell you that after running the feeling is almost euphoric and that feeling lasts for several hours."

Stransky's enthusiasm was contagious enough to interest his mother-in-law in a running program and together they plan to enter the Boston Marathon next year.

More than 90 per cent of OU employees eligible have agreed to participate in the program and tests will probably continue for several months.

Senate to consider tax break for elderly

Legislation to increase property tax credits for senior citizens and handicapped persons is pending before the state senate.

The legislation would reduce taxes for eligible persons. It would exempt seniors with household incomes of \$10,000 or less from property taxes.

Eligible persons with incomes of less than \$10,000 could claim credit for up

to \$1,200 of property taxes paid. For eligible persons paying rent, the credit would be based on 17 per cent of rental payments.

The bill, sponsored by state Sen. Jack Faxon (D-Detroit), also provides increased property tax credit—or credit based on rent—for seniors and handicapped persons with incomes between \$10,000 and \$13,000.

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