

MEDICAL BRIEFS

Remembering dad

Through its Pathfinders program, Arbor Hospice and Home Care will offer a special workshop for children ages 7-13 who have experienced the death of their fathers.

The "Toolbox: Building Connections at Father's Day" will take place 9:30 a.m. to noon Saturday, June 9, at Arbor Hospice Residence, 2366 Oak Valley Drive, Ann Arbor.

Under the guidance of therapists, kids will select one project and assemble it with real tools. At the workshop's conclusion, they will have an object they built themselves and a set of emotional "tools" to help them internalize the memories and lessons of their fathers. They'll learn that other kids have similar thoughts and feelings, and that resources are always available to help them.

The Pathfinders program ensures that children are cared for and supported every step of the way. The workshop cost is \$30 per child and \$15 for each additional sibling. A limited number of scholarships are available. For reservations and directions, call (734) 662-9999, Ext. 175. You may also register online at www.arborhospice.org

Way to fly!

Midwest Medflight, the air ambulance service affiliated with Saint Joseph Mercy Health System of Ann Arbor, took first place at Michigan's EMS Expo, a four-day event sponsored by the Michigan Association of Ambulance Services and the Michigan Association of Emergency Medical Technicians.

One of the most anticipated aspects of the conference is the team competition. Teams compete in all levels of licensure, from Medical First Responders to Advanced Life Support. Competition involved volunteer "patients" and procedure mannequins. Of the 19 teams from the state that competed in the Advanced Life Support division, Midwest Medflight took first place.

Midwest Medflight staff includes specially trained flight nurses, flight paramedics, dispatchers, mechanics and pilots. Nurses and paramedics have extensive certification and experience in critical care. Medflight pilots have over 3,000 hours of flight time experience.

Colon cancer screening

It is estimated that 135,400 Americans may be diagnosed with colorectal cancer this year, and 56,700 will die as a result. Oakwood Healthcare System, a member of the University of Michigan Cancer Center Network, offers awareness and screening programs at locations throughout Wayne County at no cost to the consumer.

The program targets people age 50 and older, and those at high risk for colorectal cancer. High risk factors include personal or family history of colon cancer, Crohn's disease, colitis and colon polyps. Free screening kits and information will be available at the following locations:

Wednesday, June 20 - Oakwood Annapolis Hospital, Wayne, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2-4 p.m.

Thursday, June 21 - Oakwood Heritage Hospital, Taylor, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2-4 p.m.

Friday, June 22 - Oakwood Healthcare Center, Canton, 9 a.m. to noon

Monday, June 25 - Oakwood Hospital & Medical Center, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2-4 p.m.

Thursday, June 28 - Oakwood Healthcare Center, Southgate, 9 a.m. to noon

This quick, clean test kit is completed at home and mailed to the Oakwood Cancer Center for evaluation. Eligible participants who return the test will be entered into a drawing for a \$200 Fairlane Town Center gift certificate. For more information or to have a test kit mailed to your home, call (800)-543-WELL.

We want your health news

There are several ways you can reach the Observer Health & Fitness staff. The Sunday section provides numerous avenues for you to offer news, information including Medical Database (upcoming calendar events), Medical Newsletters (upcoming medical news in the medical field), and Medical Briefs (medical advances, short news items from hospitals, physicians, companies).

We also welcome news items for health and fitness related stories. To submit an item to our newspaper you can call, write, fax or e-mail us.

CALL US: (734) 953-2128

WRITE US: Observer & Economic Newsletters (Sunday Database, Newsletters or Briefs)

Attn: Renee Skoglund
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Grillin' & Chillin'

Keep food safety in mind this picnic season

With outside temperatures climbing, the Wayne County Department of Public Health wants to make sure that food-borne illnesses do not spoil picnickers' warm weather fun.

"Disease-causing bacteria grow rapidly on food that is not cooked or served properly," says Steven Tackitt, Wayne County Department of Public Health's environmental health director. "Food poisoning has flu-like symptoms and can cause headaches, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach cramps and fever."

It is estimated that food-borne illnesses cause 76 million illnesses, 350,000 hospitalizations and 6,200 deaths a year in the United States. Children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with compromised immune systems are susceptible to bacterial infections.

Tackitt suggests taking these simple precautions to help reduce or eliminate your family's chances of getting a food-borne illness:

Grillin' safely

■ Don't use the same platter and utensils for raw and cooked meats and poultry.

■ Cook meat and chicken thoroughly. Use a thermometer for doneness. Red meat should be cooked at an internal temperature of 145 degrees F. It is important for hamburgers to be cooked thoroughly. Poultry should be cooked to 165 F. Properly cooked fish is opaque and flakes easily with a fork.

■ Prepare food on clean surfaces, using a diluted bleach mixture to sanitize food preparation areas (two capfuls of household bleach per gallon of water).

■ Wash hands with soap and water before and after food handling. Have handwashes on hand if there is no running water available.

Chillin' safely

■ Never thaw foods, marinate meat or leave leftovers at room temperature.

■ Have two insulated coolers with ice or frozen gel-packs. Use a cooler for water, juice and soft drinks and the other one for perishable foods. Having a separate cooler for drinks will help perishable foods in the other cooler stay cooler.

■ Refrigerate leftovers or repack leftovers in a cooler right away. Food should not be left out for more than two hours or one hour if the temperature is above 90 degrees F.

■ Keep hot food hot and cold food cold.

Tackitt adds another method for ensuring food is safe for consumption: "When in doubt, throw it out!"

Common bacteria

Bacteria that cause food-borne illnesses have big names, but they also produce some big symptoms. The Control of Communicable Disease Manual lists the following:

Campylobacter jejuni: These bacteria are the

■ 'Disease-causing bacteria grow rapidly on food that is not cooked or served properly.'

Steven Tackitt

Environmental Health Director,

Wayne County Department Public Health

most common cause of diarrhea. Sources: Raw and undercooked meat, poultry, raw milk and untreated water. Symptoms: Fever, headache and muscle pain followed by diarrhea (sometimes bloody), abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting. Incubation period: Two to three days; may last two to 10 days.

Salmonella: This group of organisms is the second most common cause of food-borne illness.

Sources: Raw and undercooked poultry and meat, raw milk and dairy products, seafood, fruits and vegetables, improper handling of food. Symptoms: Stomach pain, diarrhea, nausea, chills, fever and headache. Incubation period: Six to 72 hours; may last several days to several weeks.

Listeria monocytogenes: This organism causes

teriosis, a serious disease for pregnant women, newborns and adults with a weakened immune system. Sources: Soil, water, raw milk, soft cheese and improperly processed ice cream; raw and undercooked meat, poultry and seafood; and raw leafy vegetables. Symptoms: Fever, chills, headache, backache, sometimes abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Incubation period: Three to 70 days; may later develop more serious illness in at-risk patients (meningitis or spontaneous abortion in pregnant women).

E. coli O157:H7: This bacterium can produce a deadly toxin. Sources: Meat, undercooked or raw hamburger, raw milk, unpasteurized apple juice or cider, uncooked fruits and vegetables, contaminated water, or person-to-person contact. Symptoms: Diarrhea or bloody diarrhea, abdominal cramps, nausea and malaise. Symptoms may last about a week in adults to three weeks in children. Incubation period: Two to eight days.

Please see GRILLING, D5

Lower the cancer risk of outdoor grilling

Just in time for this year's grilling season debut, a new brochure from the American Institute of Cancer Research (AICR), *Facts About Grilling*, tells how to minimize the health risks associated with grilling. Research has shown that the backyard grilling of meat, poultry and fish possible raises the risk of stomach, breast and colorectal cancers.

High-temperature cooking methods such as grilling and broiling cause "meat" meats" like red meat, poultry and fish to produce compounds called heterocyclic amines (HCAs) that are known to be carcinogenic. Another class of carcinogens, called polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), are formed when fat, from meat, poultry or fish drips onto hot coals or charcoal. These potent carcinogens are deposited back onto food by the smoke and flames that blacken meat.

For these reasons, AICR has long recommended avoiding charred food and consuming grilled and broiled meat, poultry and fish only occasionally. The new *Facts About Grilling* brochure, however, incorporates recent research on the effects of various cooking methods upon cancer risk. This important new knowledge means that grilling can be a few simple precautions - assume a place in healthy, cancer-preventive diets.

Melanie Polk, R.D., director of nutrition at AICR, says there is no need to avoid meats and poultry completely. "Meats and poultry are the major sources of protein, iron, zinc, and B vitamins, and they also contain healthy fats, fiber, and antioxidants," she says. "When the seasonings, oils, and herbs are used, the risk of cancer is substantially lower risk."

Recommendations

1. Grill veggies instead. Research has shown that muscle meats like beef, chicken and fish pose the largest risk of cancer-promoting HCAs when grilled.

2. Marinating meats before grilling may significantly reduce the amount of HCAs produced - in studies, by as much as 92 percent to 99 percent.

3. Trim the fat. Choose lean, well-trimmed meats to grill, which will cause less fat to drip onto the coals (and hence fewer flame-ups).

4. Pre-cook meat, fish and poultry in the oven or microwave, then briefly grill for flavor.

5. Keep meat portions small so they need only spend a brief time on the grill.

6. Avoid letting the juices drip into the flames or coals, which causes smoke and flare-ups. Use long-handled spatula to turn food, and cover the grill with punctured aluminum foil.

7. Flip frequently. Recent research has shown that cooking hamburger patties at lower temperature and turning them often helps prevent the formation of HCAs.

8. Remove all charred or burnt portions of food before eating.

Helpful marinades

Polk stresses, "It is still possible to enjoy barbecued meats. Marinating meats before grilling can significantly reduce the amount of carcinogen that might otherwise form."

Marinades aren't sure exactly how marinades act to reduce the formation of carcinogens. There is evidence, however, that marinades may act as a barrier or that their protective powers may lie in their ingredients. Acidic ingredients, like vinegar or citrus juices, or herbs, spices and oils all seem to contribute to the prevention of HCA formation.

About one-half cup of marinade is needed for every pound of food, although large pieces may need more to adequately cover the food's surface.

Total immersion is not necessary, but the food should be turned occasionally, so that all surfaces will be in contact with the marinade long enough to benefit. Use a non-metal container or a sturdy, resealable plastic bag to hold the marinating food.

To receive a free copy of *The Facts About Grilling*, call (800) 843-8114, Ext. 06, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

CLASSIC MARINADE

1/2 cup rice or white wine vinegar
1 Tbsp. canola oil
1/4 cup finely chopped onion
1 small bay leaf
2 sprigs fresh (or 1/2 tsp. dried) rosemary, thyme, or oregano
2 cloves garlic, finely minced
1/2 tsp. freshly ground pepper

In a bowl, combine all ingredients until well blended. Add food to be grilled and turn several times until all sides are coated. Cover and refrigerate at least 30 minutes, occasionally turning food so marinade is evenly distributed. Drain and discard marinade. Thread skewers with vegetables, meat or tofu. Grill, turning often to prevent charring.

Note: It is best to make separate skewers for meat and vegetables, since cooking times will vary. If desired, make additional marinade for basting. Do not baste with used marinade.