

## MEDICAL DATEBOOK

## ARTHRITIS SELF-HELP

The Arthritis Foundation will host a self-help course 12:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Dec. 12 at Southern Rehabilitation & Physical Therapy, 28771 West 12 Mile, Suite 103, Southfield. The three week course will meet for two hours to discuss how to talk to your doctor, nutritional habits, depression, exercise, etc. Cost is \$25 for registrant; \$5 for companion. Call (800) 968-3030 or (248) 424-9001 ext. 39.

## TOPS

Need help with holiday eating? Join a Take Off Pounds Sensibly support group. TOPS #29 meets 6 p.m. every Tuesday at Newburgh United Methodist Church, 36500 Ann Arbor Trail, Livonia. Call Marie at (734) 782-0388.

## TOYS FOR TOTS

The Michigan Chiropod Society and family chiropod Dr. Barry Hobbs are joining the U.S. Marine Corps in the 64th Toys for Tots Campaign. Please bring a new, unwrapped toy to Michigan Specific Chiropod, 7276 N. Sheldon, Canton, through Thursday, Dec. 13. Call (734) 416-2442.

## TUES, DEC. 11

**BREAST CANCER SUPPORT**  
The Marian Women's Center at St. Mary Mercy Hospital will host a breast cancer support group 7-9 p.m. The group of survivors address topics and concerns of women with breast cancer. Call (734) 655-1100.

## POSTPARTUM SUPPORT

A certified lactation specialist talks about post-partum period of adjustment. Infants welcome

10-11 a.m. in the West Addition B. Call (734) 655-1100.

## ONCOLOGY GRIEF SUPPORT

Angela Hospice of Livonia offers ongoing grief support for people who have lost a loved one. The group, which are free-of-charge and open to the community, meet at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. Call Ruth Faver, bereavement coordinator, at (734) 464-7810.

## WED, DEC. 12

## ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

The public is invited to attend the Oakwood Complimentary & Alternative Medicine Center Open House 5-7 p.m. at Oakwood Healthcare Center - North Westland, 36555 Warren, Westland. Guest will meet the physicians and staff, experience "mini-massages" and learn about yoga, acupuncture and other non-Western medical techniques.

## MON, DEC. 17

## HOLLY BLUES

Learn how to prevent the holiday blues at a special seminar offered by St. Mary Mercy Hospital, Livonia, 6-7:30 p.m. in West Addition Conference Room B. Pre-registration requested. Call (734) 655-2944.

## SAT, DEC. 22

## SANTA CLAUS

Maple Manor of Wayne, a senior retirement community, will offer free pictures with Santa Claus noon to 3 p.m. at 3999 Venoy, Wayne. Optional donations will benefit the Senior Home Chorus Program. Call (734) 727-0440.

## WED, JAN. 2

## MENOPAUSE

Join the Menopause Support Group St. Mary Hospital in Livonia 7-9 p.m. and share concerns about menopause, mid-life issues and health-related matters. The group meets in West Addition B. Call (734) 655-1100 or 1-800-494-1615 (for out-of-town callers). Jan. 3, 7-11 & 14

## STOP SMOKING

The City of Livonia will sponsor its annual "Stop Smoking" clinic conducted by Dr. Arthur Weaver 7:30-9 p.m. at the Civic Center Library, 32777 Five Mile, east of Farmington, Livonia. No set fee is charged, although donations are accepted. The smoker who is serious about quitting needs to attend all seven sessions. Call (734) 468-2540.

## JAN. 5, 12, 19, 26

## YOGA FOR MEN

Instructor Michael Rice will offer a series of four yoga classes designed for men of all levels of life experiences 2-4:30 p.m. at Namaste Yoga, 31154 Haggerty Road, Farmington Hills. This course introduces the fundamentals of yoga as an effective process for living the modern multitasking world. \$100 for all four sessions. Gift certificates available. Call (248) 788-8388.

## TUES, JAN. 8

## BREAST CANCER

St. Mary Hospital in Livonia will host the Breast Cancer Support Group 7-9 p.m. in West Addition B. Call (734) 655-1100 or 1-800-494-1615 (for out-of-town callers).

## POSTPARTUM

St. Mary Hospital will host the Mother-Baby Postpartum Support group 10-11 a.m. in West Addition B. Mothers and babies are encouraged to attend this group as a certified lactation consultant will discuss the post-partum period of adjustment. Call (734) 655-1100 or 1-800-494-1615 (for out-of-town callers).

## WED, JAN. 16

## DYSLEXIA AND MATH

W.H. Weidlich, director of the Michigan Dyslexia Institute, will discuss the structure of story problems and strategies for solutions 7-9 p.m. at the Michigan Dyslexia Institute - Detroit Metro Center, 30230 Orchard Lake Road, Suite 130, Farmington Hills. Materials available for sale. Call (248) 737-0044.

## JAN. 16 &amp; 23

## ALZHEIMER'S

St. Mary Hospital in Livonia will present a free, two-part workshop on Alzheimer's Disease covering solutions and behaviors to home and residential care 7-9 p.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 16 and 23, in the Auditorium. For more information or to register, call

(734) 655-8940.

## WED, FEB. 6

## MENOPAUSE

Join the Menopause Support Group St. Mary Hospital in Livonia 7-9 p.m. and share concerns about menopause, mid-life issues and health-related matters. The group meets in West Addition B. Call (734) 655-1100 or 1-800-494-1615 (for out-of-town callers).

## TUES, FEB. 12

## BREAST CANCER

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## Service provides relief to seniors affected by drop in HMO coverage

More than 538,000 seniors in the United States are scrambling to find new doctors or new coverage because their health plans terminated their Medicare Managed-care services, according to a Nonrenewal Report issued by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for the year 2002.

Among the hardest hit are seniors in California (84,000), Florida (69,000), Pennsylvania (55,000), New Jersey (63,000), Texas (46,000), and Michigan (31,000) who will be losing coverage in the coming year. Even those with continuing coverage face substantial premium hikes and dwindling drug benefits.

Particularly hard hit will be those with chronic illnesses such as respiratory disease.

## Limited reimbursement

Though all seniors 65 and older are covered by Medicare, those enrolled in managed-care programs agree to see doctors within a limited network and receive additional benefits, such as preventative care and prescription drug coverage.

The current coverage crisis stems from rising delivery costs and limited government reimbursement, as doctors and hospitals increasingly balk at seeing

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**WEAKNESS IN THE ARMS IN ARTHRITIS**

If you have arthritis in your arms, and you note that you are experiencing difficulty doing packages, groceries, grandchildren, and opening doors, you have reason to be concerned. People with arthritis lose developing muscle condition - called polymyositis - that only adds to their woes and bring on the need for more medicine, including high doses of steroids.

Fortunately, there is only a remote chance you have this additional condition. The usual reason for weakness of the arms in arthritis, is loss of mechanical advantage. The hand, wrist, elbow, and shoulder joints work together as levers. The biceps, and wrist extensor and flexor muscles anchor in a way that makes it possible to move the joints in efficient ways. If you have arthritis, particularly rheumatoid arthritis, the joints lose their ability to move with the leverage nature intended.

As a result, you feel both pain and weakness. Pain occurs because muscles strain to perform daily tasks such as putting on clothes and boots. Also, you find you can no longer lift objects or carry suitcases as you once did. You interpret this loss of carrying capacity as weakness. Really, your arms are doing their best given that their ability is under control as there is no way to resolve prior damage. Fortunately, you don't become progressively weaker until you reach the point of being crippled. In time, your muscles, joints, and understanding of your capacity merge into a practical relationship. You learn what you can carry and what you should not.

Accommodation is a matter of experience, not more medicine.

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