

## MEDICAL BRIEFS

### Senior Health Day

Senior Health Services of Saint Joseph Mercy Health System (SJMHS) of Ann Arbor will present a Senior Health Day 9-11:30 a.m. Tuesday, May 7, at Saint Joseph Mercy Health Stop, located in Briarwood Mall just off I-94 at the State Street exit in An Arbor.

"Depression or Mood Change - Do you Know the Difference?" will feature Dr. Alan Denzig, medical director of Senior Health Services at SJMHS. Denzig will discuss why so many people over the age of 65 are depressed, the difference between depression and sadness, and when feeling blue becomes something more serious.

Senior Health Day will begin at 9 a.m. with a short discussion on the benefits of exercise by Mary Vasilavik, RN followed by Dr. Denzig's presentation from 10-11:30 a.m. There will be samples of healthy food plus free gifts and a prize drawing.

For more information about Senior Health Day, please call (734) 827-3777.

### Red-hot success!

Botsford General Hospital's recent thermometer exchange program was a success. Over the last few weeks, the hospital removed 600 mercury-filled thermometers from local households.

Mercury is a toxic substance that can harm both humans and wildlife. Botsford's program gave members of the community a chance to exchange a mercury-filled thermometer for a safer digital one at no cost. While the program has ended, Botsford administration and staff are proud they helped make our shared environment a safer place for all.

Very small amounts of mercury can do significant damage. One gram of mercury (about the size of a dime) per year is enough to contaminate all the fish in a lake with a surface area of 20 acres. Significant exposure, whether brief or extended, can produce major effects the human central nervous system, kidneys, skin and lungs.

### Beaumont women studies

Doctors at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak are recruiting women to test an experimental oral medication to determine its effectiveness in reducing the number of stress incontinence episodes. The investigational drug is being tested in women with stress urinary incontinence (SUI) and mixed urinary incontinence (MUI). SUI is the involuntary loss of urine as well as a strong urge to urinate. Participants will be compensated for their participation. Call (248) 551-0642.

Postmenopausal women with an increased risk of developing breast cancer can take part in a national research study at Beaumont Hospital that will compare the effectiveness of two drugs in preventing breast cancer. Volunteers will take either tamoxifen, a drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to reduce the incidence of breast cancer in women at increased risk; or raloxifene, which is approved by the FDA for treating osteoporosis and has shown promise in reducing a woman's chance of getting breast cancer. Call (248) 551-7695.

### Making connections

There are several ways you can reach the Observer Health & Fitness staff. The Sunday section provides numerous venues for you to offer newsworthy information including Medical Databook (upcoming calendar events), Medical Newsweek (appointments/new hires in the medical field), and Medical Briefs (medical advances, short news items from hospitals, physicians, companies). We also welcome newsworthy ideas for health and fitness related stories.

To submit an item to our newspaper you can call, write, fax or e-mail us.

**CALL:**  
(248) 901-2576

**WRITE:**  
Observer & Eccentric Newspapers  
(Specify Databook, Newsweek or Briefs)  
Attn: Susan Steinnmueller  
805 East Maple  
Birmingham, MI 48009

**FAX:**  
(248) 644-1314

**E-MAIL:**  
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# Pumping iron is ageless



**Benefits can be life-changing for seniors**

## Senior strength training programs

BY NICOLE STAFFORD  
STAFF WRITER  
nstafford@oc.homecomm.net

**Mature Minglers Senior Center** (Recreation and Community Services Division of the Bloomfield Hills Schools District), 7273 Wing Lake Road, Bloomfield Township, (248) 932-6235:

■ Offers three, one-hour classes using pneumatic weight-training machines. Each class is limited to 10 participants and meets twice a week for six weeks at a cost of \$68.

■ Physician's note required for participation.

■ In May, supervised "open hours" sessions begin on Tuesdays and Thursdays for seniors who have completed a class. Cost for two weekly sessions is \$46 per month.

■ Membership in Mature Minglers is required and available to residents living in the Bloomfield Hills Schools District, Bloomfield Township, West Bloomfield Township, The City of Bloomfield Hills and the City of Orchard Lake. Membership costs \$20 annually.

**TRACC Botsford Center for Health Improvement** (Botsford General Hospital, Farmington Hills), 39750 Grand River, Novi, (248) 473-6600:

■ Offers fitness programs targeting specific patient needs. Several incorporate strength training, including Bones in Motion, Weight on the Run, New Chronic Disease Exercise, MS Strength and Endurance, and Parkinson's Exercise Program.

■ All programs meet three days a week for one hour for 8-12 weeks. Classes are limited to four or six participants and range in price. Classes listed above cost \$150-250.

■ All programs are offered by appointment only.

**Optimal Aging** (William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak), at the Beaumont Rehabilitation and Health Center, 746 Purdy, Birmingham, (248) 258-3190:

■ Offers fitness program with an emphasis on strength training for men and women age 65 and above. Program meets three days a week for one hour. Strength training is done with

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strength training helps older adults remain independent longer.

### Balance and daily living

"One of the most important things for that particular age group is strengthening the leg muscles, which prevents falling," says Shelley Rubinstein, a fitness instructor at the Mature Minglers Senior Center in Bloomfield Township, which offers pneumatic weight machine classes to older adults.

Strength training aids balance, which can prevent the falls that often require seniors to live in nursing homes and other facilities. "And their goal is to not end up in that nursing home, to live independently and with quality as long as they can," says Rubinstein, an American Senior Fitness Association instructor with certification in both group and

Please see SENIORS, C8



STAFF PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER

**Supervision required:** Above, Shelley Rubinstein, fitness instructor at Mature Minglers Senior Center in Bloomfield Township, helps Lillian Mitchell of Beverly Hills with her technique and form on a weight machine. At top, Seniors John Conti (left to right), Dorothy Benjamin, Beverly Pintar and Don Foehr work to increase strength and muscle mass on the pneumatic weight equipment at the center.

# Encourage kids to drink milk

BY SAMANTHA CRITCHELL  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

It's almost second nature for parents to give their babies breast milk or formula and eventually milk. But as children get older and stronger - mentally and physically - nutrition becomes a battle that some parents aren't willing to fight.

Until a certain point parents mostly have control over what their children eat, but once those kids hit a certain decision-making stage, moms and dads find themselves at the table with kids who don't want to drink milk.

This has led to a "calcium crisis," says Rachel Johnson, a professor of nutrition and associate dean at the University of Vermont.

Nine out of 10 teen-age girls and seven out of 10 boys are not getting the daily recommended amount of calcium, says Johnson.

According to the National Academy of Sciences, 9-to-18-year-olds need the most calcium, 1,300 milligrams per day, which roughly equals four servings of milk. Young children, aged 1-3, are encouraged to have 600 milligram and adults over 50 should have 1,200 milligrams.

"I don't know how else to say this; Kids should drink milk with their meals," says Johnson.

"The best way to do this is role modeling. When moms drink milk, their kids will, too," she adds. "And the moms could use it, too."

(Adults over 50 are the group with the second-highest recommended calcium levels.) Modeling works better than cajoling, rewarding or punishing children over food, Johnson explains.

Children develop food preferences over time. If milk is offered often enough and parents are drinking it, she says, children eventually will give in.

The same goes for school. Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., is urging the federal government to promote putting milk vending machines in school hallways.

He cites a successful "vendi-milk" program in Buffalo, N.Y.-area schools as proof that students will make healthier eating choices.

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■ 'I don't know how else to say this: Kids should drink milk with their meals. The best way to do this is role modeling.' When moms drink milk, their kids will, too. And the moms could use it, too.

**Rachel Johnson**  
Professor of nutrition and associate dean at the University of Vermont