

Complementary medical center opens in Novi

Gentle music plays softly in the background. A friendly receptionist smiles as visitors enter the spacious room. Wood and warm-toned upholstered furniture face a view of green trees and blue sky. A waterfall bubbles behind an etched glass pane of richly hued led pat- terns suspended over bamboo flooring.

Where are you? Heaven on earth? Almost.

It's the new Center for Complementary and Integrative Medicine (CIM), located at Henry Ford Medical Center in Novi.

The treatment site answers the concerns of those who turn to alternative treatments by taking the best of treatments

that complement conventional medicine and offering them in a spa-like setting at competitive prices.

Ultimately, a complete range of practitioners, including a holistic physician, a hypnotherapist, a chiropractor and a holistic nutritionist, are expected to provide services onsite. Currently, acupuncture, massage therapy and St. John neuromuscular therapy are offered and business is booming.

"We have the credentialed practitioners that people are looking for whether they are trying to stay well or receive treatment for their chronic problems or diseases," notes Denise Jacob, R.N., Ph.D., and administrative manager for CIM.

Jacob says a primary focus for CIM experts is to help patients overcome pain, headache, chronic fatigue syndrome and other conditions that don't respond well to standard medical care. But, she says, patients with treatable conditions also are welcomed to explore alternative treatments to complement their conventional medical care.

That's particularly important, says Dr. Michael Scidman, ear, nose and throat specialist and director of Complementary and Integrative Medicine at Henry Ford, since combined medical and alternative treatments have a synergistic effect.

And unlike some other alternative health care entities, the experts leading innovations at the site, like Robert Levine, the research director of the center, are adding to the body of scientifically-verified knowledge about complementary and integrative medicine.

The center's researchers currently are conducting studies on the effectiveness of St. John neuromuscular therapy on chronic headaches and the effects of grape seed extract and red wine on aging. Federal grants on studies of chronic back pain, age-related hearing loss and cancer also are being pursued.

Tapping into the desire to provide optimal healing and

well-being for all, officials brought in a Feng Shui expert to help create the soothing environment, seen in features like the columned curvilinear reception desk and the "healing rooms" of the beautifully designed space.

A store in the reception area also will be available for people to purchase significant healing arts books, music, herbs, vitamins and other health-related products. Later, space in the lower level may host classes in yoga, Feldenkrais and stress reduction. For now, at least one practitioner is thrilled to see the wide range of patients visiting the clinic.

In my practice here, I've seen people ranging from those

who want a relaxing massage to people who have strains and sprains to those who have chronic conditions like fibromyalgia," says B.J. Rau, a nationally certified therapeutic massage and bodywork expert. Rau also has specialized training in prenatal and infant massage and is a Reiki practitioner, an increasingly popular ancient energy medicine.

"Our eclectic group of practitioners really makes it ideal for patients," Rau says. "If I am working with someone, I can refer them on if I see that massage won't fix the problem."

Call (248) 380-6201 to find out more or make an appointment or visit CIM online at www.henryford.com/cim.

FDA official to lead generic drug educational session

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The Food and Drug Administration's Office of Generic Drugs director, Gary Buchler, will discuss the FDA approval process for generic drug products at an educational session for health care professionals sponsored by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. The session will be held at the Blues' Bricktown Auditorium in Detroit 6-8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 29.

Physicians, nurses, pharmacists and other health care professionals are invited to this CME/CPD (Continuing Medical Education/Continuing Pharmaceutical Education) program. Buchler, a registered pharmacist, leads the FDA's Office of Generic Drugs in the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research and directs a staff of scientists, researchers and other support staff.

Buchler, whose office launched a generic drug education program during the summer to educate consumers on the safety and effectiveness of

generic prescription drugs, will address aspects of the FDA approval process such as review, inspection and monitoring. Buchler will cover issues of concern to both health care professionals and their patients.

Joining as co-lecturer for the night will be University of Michigan associate vice president for Medical Affairs, Dr. John E. Billi. Billi is active on state health committees involved in physician practice and quality improvement, including the Michigan State Medical Society's Medical Economics Committee, the Southeast Michigan Quality Forum and the Michigan Quality Improvement Consortium.

Billi will provide a physician's perspective on using generic drugs. He will also share results of an informal survey of patient comments on generic drugs.

Dr. Thomas Simmer, Michigan Blues vice president and corporate medical director, said: "The issue of FDA standards for generic prescription drugs is particularly timely in

light of interest in Congress and state legislatures and among group insurance purchasers and consumers to find quality alternatives to expensive brand-name medications. The Michigan Blues are currently conducting a statewide awareness campaign on the safety and value generic drugs offer consumers."

Session attendees will receive Continuing Medical Education or Continuing Pharmacy Education credits that are required to maintain professional licensure. The Michigan Blues' program is an accredited provider of continuing education by the Michigan State Medical Society, the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education, the Academy of General Dentistry and the Michigan Nurses Association.

For more information about the Oct. 29 CME/CPD program, "The FDA Process for Approving Generic Medications," please call the Department of Health Care Education Hotline at (800) 921-8980, Virginia Hosbach at (313) 225-0777, or register on-line at www.bcbsm.com/providers/cme.shtml.

Almonds fight cholesterol

Almonds significantly lowered bad cholesterol levels in a study of people with high cholesterol reported in an August issue of *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*.

Canadian researchers conducted the study, funded by The Almond Board of California and the Canadian government, to determine whether almonds can help reduce heart disease risk by lowering high cholesterol and at what consumption level.

Some previous research has suggested that nut consumption reduces the risk of coronary heart disease. Because previous research has suggested that eating more nuts increases calories, nuts generally are not recommended for people who need to restrict calories.

Twenty-seven patients with high cholesterol (15 men and 12 postmenopausal women, average age 64) completed the three-phase study. Their average total cholesterol level was 260 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) at baseline.

Three one-month diets were undertaken. For one month each participant ate a full dose of almonds (average 74 grams), which represented

a little less than one quarter of their total daily caloric intake. For one month they took a half dose of almonds (average 37 grams), described as a "handful" of almonds. In the last month, they ate a low-saturated fat, whole-wheat muffin as a daily snack.

The muffin snack served as the control diet because it had about the same amount of calories, protein and saturated and polyunsaturated fats, explains lead author Dr. David J. A. Jenkins, director at the Clinical Nutrition and Risk Factor Modification Center, St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto.

Researchers measured cholesterol levels, blood pressure and weight in the subjects. They found that patients reduced their low-density (LDL or "bad" cholesterol) an average 4.4 percent with the half portion of almonds and 9.4 percent with the full portion.

"We were quite impressed," says Jenkins. "If you look at the ratio of LDL to HDL (high-density lipoprotein, the "good" cholesterol), the reduction was 7.8 percent for the half dose and 12 percent for the full dose by the fourth

week. That ratio is very important in assessing cardiovascular risk."

The patients' cholesterol levels did not significantly drop after the muffin phase.

Jenkins says that practitioners should encourage patients to eat almonds as part of a healthy balanced diet as long as they are natural or "dry roasted" without added oils or salts.

Nuts do not have cholesterol and are a good source of protein, according to the American Heart Association. However, the association stressed that the potential benefits of nuts may be negated if they are added rather than substituted for other foods in the diet. While nuts and seeds tend to be very high in fat and calories, most of the fat is polyunsaturated or monounsaturated (e.g. almonds, pecans, walnuts).

Participants in this study were carefully counseled on how to use nuts in place of other foods in the diet.

Nuts, including almonds, walnuts, pecans, peanuts, macadamia and pistachios, have been shown to lower blood cholesterol, says Jenkins.

Arbor Hospice holiday gift sale will benefit Camp BraveHeart

Last summer Arbor Hospice began a new venture in its continuing mission to provide counseling and grief therapy for children and their families. For one special summer weekend, children can share their heartache, learn new coping skills for life's changes, and learn that it is still possible to have fun.

The Gift Closet at Arbor Hospice is dedicating the proceeds of this year's Annual Holiday Sale to Camp BraveHeart.

Two energetic Ann Arborites, Sue Walter and Jean DiGiuseppe, began the Gift Closet four years ago.

Because of their talent at finding unusual and affordable gifts, people were drawn to the tiny shop (4 feet X 7 feet), which now expands two or three times a year for additional holiday, spring and specialty sales.


Since 1998 Walter and DiGiuseppe have grossed more than \$160,000. One hundred percent of the Gift Closet proceeds are given to Arbor Hospice.

This year's Holiday Sale will be held 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Nov. 7-9 from at the Arbor Hospice Residence, 2366 Oak Valley Drive, Ann

Arbor.

The Gift Closet has developed a reputation for small, thoughtful and well-priced gifts, and this year is no exception. This sale will feature personalized ornaments and children's toys, hostess gifts, twig and evergreen wreaths, pillows, tree skirts, lighted garlands, angels, candles, soft sculpture toys, holiday dishes and delicious cake mixes that can be sampled.

For more information about the sale, call Adrienne Malley at (734) 662-2620. For information about Camp BraveHeart, call Jackie Gatliff at (734) 662-5999.



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