

Rx briefs

Nursing shortage

Wayne State University will host "Partnerships in Nursing" - a summit addressing the nursing shortage and its implications for the community, employers and patients - beginning 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, April 29, at the McGregor Memorial Conference Center, WSU, Detroit.

Julie Sochalski of the University of Pennsylvania, a leading expert on nursing workforce issues, will be the opening presenter. A panel discussion will follow, including commentary from Robert Riney, senior vice president, Henry Ford Health System; Iris Taylor, president, Harper University Hospital; and Marianne Udo, senior vice president, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan.

Space is limited. Reservations are required by calling (313) 577-4708.

Mental health

Horizon Treatment Center in Livonia is offering a new outpatient mental health and substance abuse program. The family-oriented center, located on the corner of Middlebelt and Joy, recently earned national accreditation through the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospital Organizations.

The center, which staffs master's degree-prepared clinicians, provides a full range of mental health services, including:

- Children and adolescent assessments and counseling
- Substance abuse assessments
- Drunken driving assessments
- Assistance with emotional difficulties
- Assistance with bereavement issues
- Youth assistance
- Domestic violence counseling

To learn more about Horizon Treatment Center, call (734) 421-8272 or visit www.horizontreatment.com.

Yoga

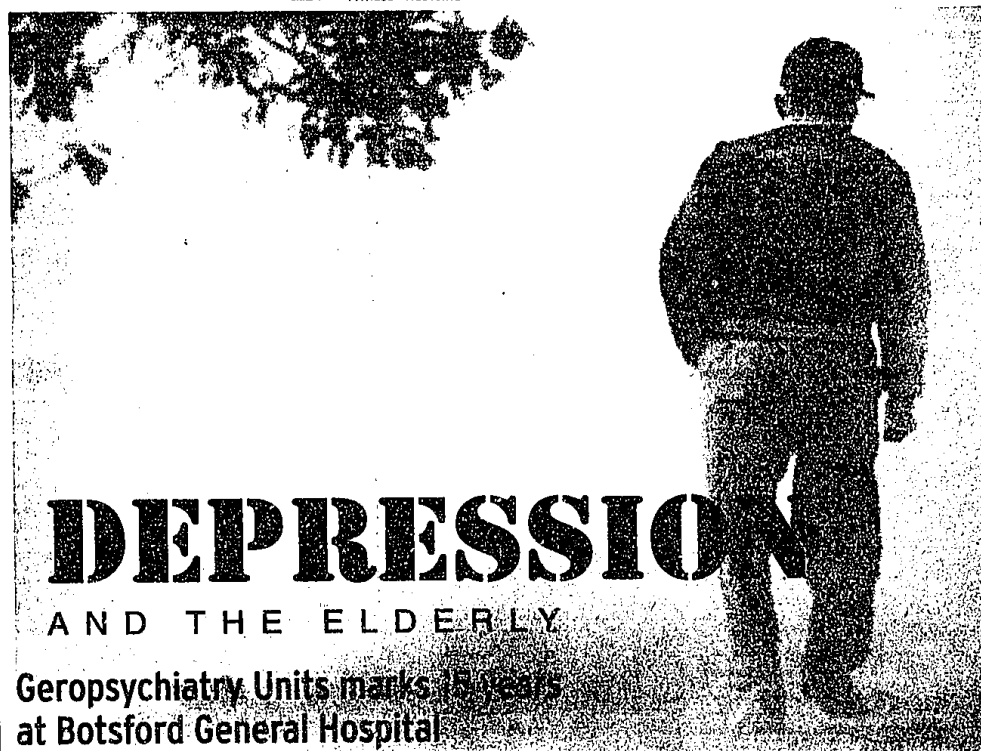
Need to improve your posture or strengthen your back? Or just meditate and relax? St. Mary Mercy Hospital will offer a Better Backs Yoga Class and a Hatha Beginning Yoga Class, both ongoing six-week sessions, starting in May.

Better Backs Yoga will be offered on Wednesdays, May 14 through June 18 and June 25 through July 30. The Hatha Beginning Yoga Class will be offered on Tuesdays, May 13 through June 17 and June 24 through July 29.

Better Backs Yoga uses specific poses to strengthen and maintain the health of the spine and back muscles. This class encourages you to refrain from moving into any pose or position that causes pain. Meditation and breathing techniques are included.

Hatha Beginning Yoga brings peace to your body and mind. It strives to increase flexibility, energy level and strength of your own pace in a noncompetitive setting.

For more information or to register, contact the St. Mary Mercy Hospital Massage Therapy Department at (734) 655-7465. St. Mary Mercy Hospital is located at 34675 Five Mile, in Livonia. For additional information, visit www.stmarymercy.org.



DEPRESSION

AND THE ELDERLY

Geropsychiatry Units marks 10 years at Botsford General Hospital

BY REEVE SKOGLUND
STAFF WRITER

Depression is not a normal part of aging, says psychiatrist Dr. Bruce Sack, clinical director of Botsford General Hospital's Geropsychiatric Program. But it can be overlooked by both family members and primary care physicians. This is because depression in the elderly often presents itself differently than it does in an adult or adolescent.

While a few local hospitals have carved out a small number of beds for elderly patients from their adult psychiatric inpatient units, Botsford has maintained a dedicated unit for geropsychiatric patients for the past 15 years. The 25-bed unit has gained a reputation in the health-care community as being able to successfully treat patients 55 years or older who exhibit a complicated interplay of physical and psychological problems related to aging.

"It is easier to treat frail elderly people who are suffering from combinations of emotional and physical ill effects in an environment designed to meet their needs. Older adults have special needs," said Sandra Plumer, the unit's director since it was founded.

"And, their caregivers should be very knowledgeable about medication interactions and the physical ailments of the elderly," she adds. "Our physicians are board-certified in geriatric psychiatry and consult as a team with other medical specialists of Botsford's staff to stabilize the patient's condition."

The unit's staff works hard to provide a warm and supportive environment for the patients, said Sack. "We evaluate everything in a patient's life to determine the cause of the behavioral and mental changes. We also screen for things like incompatible medications, a sadly common problem for older adults with multiple medical conditions."



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

It takes a team to treat geropsychiatric patients of Botsford. Pictured: program director Sandy Plumer, MSW, MA, therapist Dawn Bilsany, MSW, therapist John Robertson, MA, nurse manager Ofelia Argentea, RN MS BSN, Javira Yartzak, OTR, clinical intake coordinator Arbi Papaghanian, MSW ACSW, Dr. Theodore Rusa, DO, Deana Hamady, MSW CSW, medical director Dr. Bruce Sack, MD.

RECOGNIZING SYMPTOMS

In general, a person may be predisposed to depression because of a family or personal history of the condition, or exposure to acute psycho-social stress. He or she may exhibit a depressed mood, crying spells, or feelings of hopelessness and helplessness.

Symptoms of depression in the elderly often are more difficult to detect. They may include paranoia or signs of "dementia syndrome of depression," once called "pseudodementia," said Sack.

"Motivation plays a role. They (elderly patients) may perform poorly on psychological tests one day and do well another day... Older people can have a typical 'masked' depression. They don't complain of being depressed. They don't recognize it."

The elderly may also exhibit a form of hypochondria.

believing they have a medical illness but presenting no clinical signs. They remedy this condition through alcohol abuse, pain killers and various hypnotic drugs. Sack, said Plumer, elderly patients often use over-the-counter medication because they cannot afford a doctor.

Then there's the perception of social prejudice. "The elderly still have a huge stigma about mental illness and depression," said Dr. Theodore Rusa, a psychiatrist and the Botsford program's associate clinical director.

The somatic - or physical - symptoms exhibited by Rusa and Sack's patients include cardiac and gastrointestinal problems, and laxative abuse (constipation can be a symptom of depression). In addition, some patients may have multiple referrals from different

PLEASE SEE DEPRESSION, C6

It's Race for the Cure registration time

It's a scene that occurs in more than 100 cities nationwide. It's down, on a weekend morning. Runners start to gather, race numbers get pinned on thousands of women. Several men walk by in pink T-shirts, thanking loved ones for being there, proud to be there themselves. These are breast cancer survivors being honored at the Komen Detroit Race for the Cure.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of celebrating survivors and remembering lost loved ones at the Komen Race for the Cure Series, the world's largest series of 5K runs/fitness walks. For 20 years, the Komen Race Series has been a celebration of life, hope and honor, giving a voice to millions of women and men who no longer want to suffer in silence and

allowing survivors a powerful means to demonstrate to the world that breast cancer can be beaten.

"In the early '80s when the Komen Foundation started the Race for the Cure series, breast cancer wasn't a subject discussed openly as it is today," said Maureen Meldrum, race co-chairwoman.

"There was a need among these women battling this disease and their families to express themselves and seek out others who had similar experiences. The Komen Detroit Race for the Cure is not simply a fund-raising event, it celebrates breast cancer survivorship and honors those who have lost their battle with the disease."

It's time again to lace up your athletic shoes and join the fight against breast

cancer. The 12th Annual Komen Detroit Race for the Cure, presented locally by the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute, will be held Saturday, June 21, at Comerica Park in Detroit. Jennifer M. Granholm, governor of Michigan, is the honorary race chairwoman. Mayor Kwame M. Kilpatrick and Carita Kilpatrick are honorary race co-chairman and co-chairwoman.

This year's event includes:

- 6:30-9:30 a.m. - packet pickup
- 7 a.m. - Shop for the Cure and sponsor booths open
- 7-9 a.m. - survivor breakfast
- 8 a.m. - survivor/memorial ceremony
- 8:30 a.m. - warmup
- 9 a.m. - 5K run for women and

men, 5K co-ed walk, one-mile walk.

- 10:30 a.m. - awards ceremony

Entry fees are: adults 18 and over: \$20 by May 30, \$25 by June 15 and \$30 thereafter; youths 6-17 and seniors 65 and older: \$10 by May 30, \$15 thereafter; children 5 and under free, but must be registered.

Online and manual registration is now available. Participants may register online at www.karmanos.org/mccfortheracedetroit/ or call (800) KARMANOS (527-6266) 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. weekdays.

PLEASE SEE RACE, C6