

FAITH & HEALTH

(your link to wholistic health)

NOVEMBER 2006



Tinsel & Tears

Holidays and special days create difficult scenarios for the bereaved. There is so much sentimentality attached to those occasions, and the loneliness is dramatically increased when a loved one is absent. No one can tell another which day might be the most difficult – it is so personal and individual. We all attach our memories in different ways. We know of no way to make special days “easy”; over the years there have been many lessons the grieving have learned that have made these leaden times a little more gentle. Here are some holiday survival hints that have been helpful to some “experienced” griever:

- Try not to let special days “just happen” without any warning or preparation. Plan an agenda. Make lists – writing things down magically frees the mind from worrying about remembering.
- Don’t be afraid to change traditions. Our lives have been dramatically changed.
- You might want to shop from catalogs or internet sites instead of experiencing the stress of the malls.
- Give yourself the gift of rest, good nutrition and exercise. Avoid alcohol and or/medications.

Most people feel better if they can include their absent loved one in some definite and commemorative way. You may want to:

- light a special “celebration of life” candle
- visit the cemetery with holiday decorations
- give a special gift in memory of your loved one
- plant a memorial tree or flower bed
- volunteer to help a charity
- donate books to the public or church library
- create your own memorial service

Consider keeping a journal to record what helped and what hurt most during the holiday season. Next year, take it out and use it as a road map for getting through that season’s challenges. It will help you chart your progress.

Be gentle with yourself whatever the holiday season brings. Give yourself the gift of liberation from what others may “expect” and the courage to declare your own boundaries and limits with grace and dignity.

Resources: “Helping the Bereaved Celebrate the Holiday”. James Miller. ISBN1-885933-25-8 Willowgreen Publishing.
“Getting Through The Holidays When You’ve Lost a Loved One”. Darcie D. Sims CareNotes. www.carenotes.com
“Bereavement Magazine” www.bereavementmag.com

HUGS

Hugging is good medicine. It transfers energy, and gives the person hugged an emotional boost. You need four hugs a day for survival, eight for maintenance and twelve for growth. A hug makes you feel good. The skin is the largest organ we have and it needs a great deal of care. A hug can cover a lot of skin and gives the message that you care. It is also a form of communication. It can say things you don’t have words for. The nicest thing about a hug is that you usually can’t give one without getting one.



Author Unknown

December Health Observances

Safe Toys and Gifts Months

Prevent Blindness America	www.preventblindness.org
.....	www.kidshealth.org
National Handwashing Awareness Week-December 3-9
.....	www.henrythehand.com
.....	www.cdc.gov/cleanhands
World Aids Day-December 1	www.unaids.org
.....	www.fightingAIDS.org

Choosing Safe Toys

Toys are supposed to be fun and are an important part of any child's development. But it's sobering to learn that in 2002, more than 212,000 children in the United States were treated in hospital emergency rooms for toy-related injuries.

Consider these additional facts from the National SAFE KIDS Campaign:

- Falls and choking cause most toy-related deaths and injuries in children.
- Choking causes one third of all toy-related deaths – most often from balloons.
- Children 4 years old and younger account for almost half of all toy-related injuries and almost all deaths.
- Riding toys – including bicycles and scooters—cause many injuries in children.
- The most important thing you can do to ensure your child's safety is to supervise your child while he or she is playing with a toy.
- Keep toys clean. Some plastic toys can be cleaned in the dishwasher (check manufacturer's instructions.) Another option is to mix antibacterial soap or a mild dishwashing detergent and hot water in a spray bottle.
- Check the CPSC (U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission) website for the latest information about toy recalls or call their hotline at 800-638-CPSC to report a toy you think is unsafe.

F.A.W.N. (Fighting Aids With Nutrition)

F.A.W.N. began as "Ensure for Africa", and incorporated as a non-profit organization in December, 2004 with its new name. It began during a missionary journey to Africa in 2001 when Rev. Frank Julian, RN, BSN felt his heart touched. Noting the multitude of fresh graves, not from war or famine, but from the AIDS plague, Rev. Frank asked what could be done to help. The answer was "Send us a nutritional drink such as Ensure or Boost". Nutritional drinks help the AIDS infected individual gain weight, feel stronger, and live longer.

FACTS:

- 1 IN 7 South Africans are infected with the AIDS virus
- 40% of the people of Botswana have AIDS
- 6,000 die daily
- 14,000,000 are now orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa

Rev. Julian's group has sent 15 shipments to Africa since 2001. This represents 32 tons of nutritional drink assisting and strengthening the AIDS victims. They are sharing their story with the media, educating the community, and spreading the word on how anyone can help. They are available to speak to your group, send you information or set up a display. Please contact Rev. Frank Julian, RN, BSN at 313-590-2043 or go to www.fightingAIDS.org.

WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN!

Keeping your hands clean is one of the best ways to keep from getting sick and spreading illnesses.

Cleaning your hands gets rid of germs you pick up from other people...from the surfaces you touch...and from the animals you come in contact with.

When to Wash

- Before eating
- Before, during, and after handling or preparing food
- After contact with blood or body fluids
- After changing a diaper
- After you use the bathroom
- After handling animals, their toys, leashes, or waste
- After touching something that could be contaminated (such as a trash can, cleaning cloth)
- Before dressing a wound, giving medicine or inserting contact lenses
- More often when someone in your home is sick

How to Wash

- Wet your hands and apply liquid, bar, or powder soap
- Rub hands together vigorously to make a lather and scrub all surfaces Continue for 20 seconds! It takes that long for the soap and scrubbing action to dislodge and remove stubborn germs. Need a timer? Imagine singing "Happy Birthday" all the way through-twice!
- Rinse hands well
- Dry hands with paper or air dryer
- If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet

Remember: If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based wipe or hand gel!

Don't forget-we have a "Handwashing Light Kit" available for use from our resource centers! Call your Parish Nurse Coordinator to reserve it.

Source: www.cdc.gov/cleanhands

January Health Observances

National Glaucoma Awareness Month ... www.aao.org/eyemd
 www.nei.nih.gov
 www.glaucomaweb.org
 Thyroid Awareness Month www.aace.com

Glaucoma: How Much Do You Know?

Fifty million Americans are at risk for vision loss from glaucoma, a leading cause of blindness in the United States.

Are you one of them? To determine how high your Eye-Q is, answer the following questions about glaucoma.

1. Glaucoma is more common in African Americans than in Caucasians. True or False
2. Glaucoma tends to run in families. True or False
3. A person can have glaucoma and not know it. True or False
4. People over age 60 are more likely to get glaucoma. True or False
5. Eye pain is often a symptom of glaucoma. True or False
6. Glaucoma can be controlled. True or False
7. Glaucoma is caused by increased eye pressure. True or False
8. Vision lost from glaucoma can be restored. True or False
9. A complete glaucoma exam consists only of measuring eye pressure. True or false.
10. People at risk for glaucoma should have an eye examination through dilated pupils by an ophthalmologist. True or False

Answers on page 4:



THYROID DISEASE

- The thyroid gland is the small, butterfly-shaped gland found just below the Adam's apple
- The thyroid gland produces hormones that influence essentially every organ, tissue and cell in the body. In short, if the thyroid doesn't work properly, neither do you
- If left untreated, thyroid disease can cause elevated cholesterol levels and subsequent heart disease, infertility, muscle weakness, osteoporosis, and, in extreme cases, coma or death
- 27 millions Americans (80% women) have overactive (hyperthyroidism) or underactive (hypothyroidism) thyroid glands but more than half remain undiagnosed
- Fifteen to 20 percent of people with diabetes and their siblings or parents are likely to develop thyroid disease (compared to 4.5 percent of the general population)

Common Symptoms of Hyperthyroidism

- Heat intolerance, sweating
- Weight loss
- Alterations in appetite
- Frequent bowel movements
- Changes in vision
- Fatigue and muscle weakness
- Menstrual disturbance
- Impaired fertility
- Mental disturbances
- Sleep disturbances
- Tremors
- Thyroid enlargement

Common Symptoms of Hypothyroidism

- Fatigue
- Forgetfulness
- Depression
- Heavy menses
- Dry, coarse hair
- Mood swings
- Weight gain
- Hoarse voice

For further information and treatment, you should contact an endocrinologist or see your family physician.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

West Side Parish Nurse Network/Detroit Parish Nurse Network – “God With Us”, “Expanding “Interfaithness” in the Practice of Parish Nursing.

Monday, Dec. 11, 2006, “Baha’i”, Noon to 2 p.m. Health Care Partners, 18000 W. 9 Mile Road, Southfield. Central location-easy access from I-696. Plentiful safe, free parking! Lunch provided, \$4, R.S.V.P, Kathleen Ruth, 313-510-2614 or e-mail DPNN2005@ameritech.net. 1.2 CEU through U of D Mercy.

“Rekindle the Spirit of Caring: Professional & Personal Stress Relief for Nurses in a Rapidly Changing World” – A Holistic Approach Offered by St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center, 23333 Schoolcraft, Detroit, 313-535-9563. A one day seminar on **Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2006-** 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and again on **Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2006-** 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Conference fee: \$70. Nurses 7.2 contact hours through Michigan Nurses Association.

National Donor Sabbath, Nov. 10-12, 2006. Place orders for FREE Gift of Life Michigan Organ, Tissue & Eye Donor Registry brochures, full color bulletin inserts, sermon notes, ribbon bookmarks and pre-written articles for your bulletins from Cathy Warren, 248-366-7301 or mmcc589@sbcglobal.net.

Welcome

Glad to add our newest clustered health ministry that includes St. Catherine and St. Joseph Catholic Churches and Our Lady of Guadalupe Mission, all in Port Huron.

Please join us in extending a warm welcome to our newest Parish Nurse Partnership church, Metropolitan Community Church led by **Francis (Nick) Hill**.

Please add Nick and his church to your prayer list as they come together to develop their health ministries.

What’s New?

Congratulations to *Charmagne Johnson*, Parish Nurse Coordinator, for being selected to travel to San Diego, California on November 1 - 3 to represent St. John Health Community Health for the HealthCare Service Excellence Conference for Custom Learning Systems Group Ltd. Charmagne continues to serve Community Health as a Service Excellence Advisor Ambassador.

Effective Spring 2007, the “Bigger than Ourselves” quarterly newsletter will be available only on the DPNN website www.detroitparishnursenetwork.org. You must contact them to continue your “snail-mail” copy! Call 313-510-2614 or dpnn2005@ameritech.net.

WHO’S RESPONSIBLE?

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Glaucoma...continued

Answers:

1. True In a study funded by the National Eye Institute, researchers at The Johns Hopkins University report that glaucoma is three to four times more likely to occur in African Americans than in Caucasians. In addition, glaucoma is six times more likely to cause blindness in African Americans.

2. True Although glaucoma tends to run in families, a hereditary basis has not been established. If someone in your immediate family has glaucoma, you should have your eyes examined through dilated pupils at least every two years.

3. True The early stages of open-angle glaucoma, the most common form, usually have no warning signs. However, as the disease progresses, a person with glaucoma may notice his /her side vision gradually failing

4. True Everyone over age 60 has an increased risk for glaucoma.

5. False People with glaucoma usually do not experience pain from the disease.

6. True Although glaucoma cannot be cured, it usually can be controlled by eyedrops or pills, conventional surgery, or laser surgery. Sometimes eye care professionals will recommend a combination of surgery and medication.

7. True In glaucoma, for reasons still not completely understood, fluid drains too slowly out of the eye. As the fluid builds up, the pressure inside the eye rises. Unless this pressure is controlled, it may cause damage to the optic nerve and other parts of the eye and loss of vision.

8. False Vision loss from glaucoma is permanent. However, with early detection and treatment, the progression of visual loss can be slowed, or halted, and the risk of blindness reduced.

9. False A measurement of eye pressure by tonometry, though an important part of a comprehensive eye exam, is by itself not sufficient for the detection of glaucoma.

10. True An eye examination through dilated pupils is the best way to diagnose glaucoma. Individuals at increased risk for the disease should have their eyes examined through dilated pupils at least every two years by an ophthalmologist. When indicated, a visual field test should also be performed.

Source: www.nei.nih.gov/health/glaucoma_quiz/index.asp