

Caregiver Headlines

STEPS TO HELP AVOID GETTING OR SPREADING FLU GERMS

Healthy habits can help prevent the flu and other illnesses. Many illnesses are contagious. The germs that make people sick can pass easily from person to person.

Together we can help protect our families, communities and country. Listed below are some steps to take to avoid spreading germs:



Washing your hands often can help prevent you from getting sick and spreading germs to others.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- How to avoid medication mistakes
- New Gear & Gadgets
- Some lighting tips for seniors

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS	2
AVOID MISTAKES: READ THAT LABEL	2
BOOK REVIEW	3
LIBRARY RESOURCE HOURS	3
LIGHTING TIPS	4
CAREGIVER RESOURCE MEETINGS	5
ANNOUNCEMENTS	6

- ◆ **Wash your hands often and well.** Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands. Keep an alcohol-based hand sanitizer handy for times when soap and water aren't available.
- ◆ **Cover coughs and sneezes.** Use a tissue. (Use your upper sleeve if you don't have a tissue-not your hands.) Put the used tissue in a waste basket. Then wash your hands well. Stay at least 3 feet away from others if you're coughing and sneezing-or if they are.
- ◆ **If you get sick, act responsibly.** If you think you might have caught a flu virus, call your doctor, a clinic or local flu hotline. Find out:

1. If you should stay home and for how long
2. How to protect others for example, by staying in a separate room
3. How to treat symptoms or if you should go in for testing or treatment.

- ◆ **Get a flu shot.** The yearly shot helps prevent the seasonal flu.
- ◆ **Thoroughly cook meat, poultry and eggs.** And carefully clean any surface including hands and utensils after contact with raw products.

Keep up these simple healthy practices such as washing your hands often and covering a cough or sneeze this winter and throughout the year. Remind others to do the same. It helps everyone stay well!

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR CAREGIVERS

1. I will take quality time for myself away from my care receiver to pursue and nurture some of my interests.
2. I will acknowledge that I have limits and by doing so will not feel guilty about what I cannot do.
3. I will take proactive steps to reduce my stress level by only trying to control those things I have control over and let go of things beyond my control.
4. I will practice daily self-care by eating properly, getting adequate sleep and working in some physical activity each day.
5. I will share the care with other family members and friends by asking for help on a regular basis.
6. I refuse to feel guilty because I can't "do it all."
7. I will strive to understand my feelings and emotions and work to turn negative emotion or discouragement into positive action.
8. I will get professional help from a doctor, counselor or religious advisor when I need it.

—Source: *Chicago Caregiver* Nov/Dec 2006



Happy 2007!

READ THAT LABEL

According to a new report, around 1.5 million Americans every year suffer from non-patient drug errors in hospitals, nursing homes and doctor's offices. In hospitals alone, there's a daily average of one medication error per patient. Michael Cohen, president of the Institute for Safe Medication Practices and co-author of the study, offers patients and caregivers the following advice:

- ◆ Before leaving your doctor's office, know the name of each new medication, how to take it, the side effects and potential adverse effects, and why it's being taken.
- ◆ Find doctors who prescribe by computer, which can alert doctors to possible drug interaction concerns and take into account a patient's personal data (allergies, for example) to help screen out drugs and doses that might cause adverse effects.
- ◆ Talk to your pharmacist before leaving the pharmacy with a new prescription. Obtain important info about the medication and make sure the information from the pharmacist matches what the doctor said.
- ◆ Share important clinical data (allergies, chronic diseases etc.) in confidence with your pharmacist. He or she can serve as an important double-check to make sure nothing is overlooked regarding you or your care receiver.
- ◆ Maintain an up-to-date list of all medications, nonprescription drugs, herbal remedies, vitamins, etc. It is critically important that caregivers have this information about their care receivers before treatment begins. Patients often overlook the importance of having this kind of list or do not consider certain items important enough to include.

—Source: *Caring Today* Nov/Dec 2006

BOOK REVIEW OF THE MONTH



MS is a progressive disease with symptoms that are different for each person.

Facing the Cognitive Challenges of Multiple Sclerosis is written by Jeffrey N. Gingold. Jeffrey is an advocate regarding cognitive disability and has been a federal and state volunteer lobbyist on behalf of the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

This book is a courageous personal account of one man's struggle with the disease. It was written for the silent majority of people with MS who must deal with cognitive symptoms which often go unrecognized and are hard for others to understand.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society estimates that over 400,000 people in the United States have been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, and there are millions more worldwide. Facing the Cognitive Challenges of Multiple Sclerosis brings this hidden disability into the open.

It is an essential resource not only for individuals coping with multiple sclerosis, but also for their families, caregivers, physicians, and therapists.

If you are interested in reading Facing the Cognitive Challenges of Multiple Sclerosis it is available by calling the Caregiver Advisor at 1-888-560-8805.

LIBRARY RESOURCE HOURS

Fayette County: Evans Public Library

215 Fifth Street

Vandalia

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Next Visit: January 2

Marion County: Bryan-Bennett Library

217 West Main Street

Salem

1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Next Visit: Cancelled

Effingham County: Helen Matthes Library

100 Market Avenue

Effingham

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Next Visit: January 4

Clay County: Flora Public Library

216 North Main

Flora

1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Next Visit: January 23

Jefferson County: CE Brehm Memorial Library

100 South Seventh

Mt. Vernon

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Next Visit: January 9

GEAR & GADGETS

Bigger is Better

The lighted Big Button TV Universal Remote is ideal for those with vision or dexterity problems. It controls most TVs, VCRs, cable boxes, satellite dishes and DVD players. This unit can be programmed to record TV programs in the future. The remote has a lighted keypad and uses 2 AA batteries (not included). It costs \$24.95 and can be ordered at www.independentliving.com or call (800) 537-2118.

Picture Perfect

This amplified phone uses pre-programmed buttons and colorful photo frames to store favorite pictures for easy recollection of faces and easy dialing access. Great for those with trouble remembering numbers. Press a picture to connect with family, doctors or others. Includes visual ring indicator, volume amplification and hearing-aid compatible handset. The phone costs \$47.99 and can be ordered at www.dynamic-living.com or call (888) 940-0605.

LIGHTING TIPS FOR THE OVER 60 GROUP

Here are some ways to deal with lighting problems:

Use indirect lighting for overall room lighting. Directing light to bounce off the ceiling and walls helps eliminate glare problems.

Use lamps with shades to provide additional lighting for reading, sewing or other activities. Generally, task lighting should be two or three times brighter than overall room lighting.

Lighting for reading and other tasks should come from the side or over the shoulder. If placed to the side, the light should be directed to the task and away from the eyes.

Increase light bulb wattage indoors or move lamps closer to the task to increase illumination.

Use shades, blinds or drapes to block glare and excessive light from nearby windows when reading or doing close work.

Make sure hallways and stairs are well lighted.

Highlight the edges of stairs with dark carpeting or paint. This is especially important for single steps, which can easily be missed by older eyes.

Carry a small flashlight when outdoors at night.

Order an anti-reflective coating for clear eyeglass lenses. It can help with indoor glare or, when driving, with headlight glare.

Wear sunglasses outdoors on bright, cloudy days as well as sunny ones. This makes outdoor daytime seeing more comfortable and helps the eyes to adapt more easily and quickly to nighttime or indoor lighting level, when the sunglasses are removed.

Remember to get a thorough yearly eye exam and tell your optometrist at that time if you are experiencing any problems with lighting or glare.

—Source: American Optometric Association VisionFax

CAREGIVER RESOURCE MEETINGS

Fayette County & Surrounding Area

January 2
February 6
March 6
3:00-4:00 p.m.

First United Methodist Church
127 N. Fourth Street
Vandalia
Meets in the Library

Jefferson County & Surrounding Area

January 9
February 13
March 13
3:00-4:00 p.m.

Addus Adult Day Center
108 N. Third Street
Mt. Vernon
Meets in the North Room

Effingham County & Surrounding Area

January 15
February 19
March 19
3:30-4:30 p.m.

Heartland Human Services
1200 N. Fourth Street
Effingham
Meets in Room 119

Marion County & Surrounding Area

January 16
February 20
March 20
4:00-5:00 p.m.

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
512 W. Main Street
Salem
Meets in Church Basement

“The most wasted of all days is one without laughter.” —e.e. cummings

*Heartland Human
Services*

1200 North Fourth Street
PO Box 1047
Effingham, IL 62401

Phone: 888-560-8805

Fax: 217-342-6716

E-mail: lwarner@heartlandhs.org



ANNOUNCEMENTS

All Caregiver Resource Meetings Resume in January

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.HEARTLANDHS.ORG