

Healthy Transitions™

WINTER 2005-2006 A HEALTHCARE RESOURCE FOR OUR FRIENDS WHO ARE 55-PLUS



Men and Osteoporosis

Preventive Measures, Identification and Treatment Help Men Maintain Physical Independence

William Harwood, a 78-year-old Evanston-resident, was training as a competitive springboard diver and felt perfectly healthy when a routine screening showed his bones had become dangerously weak. He was referred by a physician to Beatrice Edwards, MD, medical director of the Bone Health and Osteoporosis Center at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and assistant professor of Medicine at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine.

While osteoporosis is most common in women, between 20 and 25 percent of older men are diagnosed with the disease. There are certain risk factors for this bone-weakening disease, but it can happen to anyone and sometimes there are no symptoms.

Knowing about preventive measures, screening and treatment for osteoporosis can allow men to gain control of their physical independence and continue to be active as they age. Osteoporosis can be particularly dangerous for men. Dr. Edwards notes that after sustaining a

hip fracture, men with osteoporosis can have more medical complications and present a higher mortality rate.

Risk factors for osteoporosis include a family history of the disease; prolonged steroid use, as in the treatment of Crohn's disease or chronic bronchitis from smoking; having broken a bone in the past and heavy alcohol use. Lowered testosterone levels, which about one-third of men experience as they age and which result from prostate cancer treatments, also can contribute.

Many men have not considered the possibility that they might develop osteoporosis and therefore have not taken the preventive measures often taken by women. Mr. Harwood notes that for most of his life, he did not know that men, too, needed calcium supplements. "I always felt milk was for kids and I didn't eat cheese because I was always trying to stay thin," he says.

As it turns out, osteoporosis affects almost 2 million men in the United States and easily can be screened and treated. Dr. Edwards stresses that simply taking vitamin D and calcium supplements on a daily



Osteoporosis treatment has allowed William Harwood to remain active and win a springboard diving medal.

basis can reduce men's risk of fractures by 30 percent.

A simple screening bone mass measurement can indicate whether more extensive screening is needed. Dr. Edwards recommends that men with a bone density screening measure or T-score of minus 1 should consult with a physician and seek a bone density test. If further testing reveals a problem, lifestyle

changes and medications can help halt or even reverse bone loss.

Drugs currently used to treat osteoporosis include bisphosphonates such as alendronate (Fosamax®), risedronate (Actonel®) and ibandronate (Boniva®) and anabolics such as teriparatide (Forteo®). Lifting weights or doing weight-bearing exercise like walking, running or aerobics can help strengthen bones. Practicing Tai Chi or any other activity that improves balance can help prevent broken bones from falls, as can home safety evaluations and hip protectors. For Mr. Harwood, a combination of medication, calcium and vitamin D supplements and increased consumption of low-fat dairy products has resulted in improved bone strength. More importantly, he can continue his training in diving without risk of fractures.

Men should ask their physicians about testing for osteoporosis or call Northwestern Memorial's Bone Health and Osteoporosis Center at 312-695-1880 for an appointment. M

Evaluation Is Key to Treatment of Memory Loss

When Richard Wojcicki first consulted physicians about his short-term memory problems, they told him his symptoms were typical for a 75-year-old man. It was not until a family friend recommended the Neurobehavior and Memory Health Clinic at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, also part of Northwestern University's Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer's Disease Center, that Mr. Wojcicki was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in its early stages.

Having witnessed the change in friends diagnosed after the disease had progressed, Mr. Wojcicki, now 78, says discovering the clinic nearly two years

ago was "the best thing that could have happened to me." He says talking to others with his condition has been helpful.

Evaluating the extent of memory loss or dementia symptoms is only one of the services offered, but it is key to the diagnosis and in helping those experiencing memory loss or dementia.

"Cognitive impairment is not a sign of normal aging. Memory loss is not a sign of normal aging and potentially can be reversible," says Darby

Morhardt, MSW, ACSW, LCSW, clinical social worker, research assistant professor and director of education at the Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer's Disease Center.

"It's important that an in-depth evaluation take place to make sure reversible conditions are treated and that symptoms of memory loss and changes in thinking are not just written off as normal aging," says Morhardt. "Unfortunately, that is all too common."

"Diagnosis is important," agrees Nancy Johnson, PhD, a neuropsychologist on the medical staff at Northwestern Memorial, director of data core at the Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer's Disease Center and assistant professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at

Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine. She says that medications now available for patients with memory disorders can improve overall symptoms and offer greater independence.

The Northwestern Memorial clinic includes a team of behavioral neurologists, psychiatrists, neuropsychologists and social workers who specialize in dementia and memory loss. They offer patients a complete evaluation and follow-up care along with medication management. The

clinic also specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of non-Alzheimer's forms of dementia, including primary progressive aphasia, which involves a decline in one or more language functions and dementia of the frontal and temporal lobes of the brain that control speech and personality.

Patients also can participate in clinical research trials and be a part of education and counseling programs. Current clinical studies include an investigation of how genetics may impact late onset of Alzheimer's disease and tests of medication effectiveness to slow the progression of Alzheimer's symptoms, including monitoring the usefulness of a cholesterol-lowering substance, taking vitamins and using an anti-seizure medication. There also are support programs for family members and patient caregivers.

Mr. Wojcicki says that getting involved with support services offered by the clinic has helped him meet other people also living with memory disorders. "It's uplifting to be around people who understand and are going through the same thing," he says. M

To schedule an appointment at the Neurobehavior and Memory Health Clinic, call the clinical coordinator at 312-695-9627. For information on clinical research trials, call the clinical research coordinator at 312-695-2343 or visit www.brain.northwestern.edu.



Evaluation and treatment of memory loss and dementia are two services offered at the clinic.

See the Calendar of Events on the back of this page.

Healthy Transitions Winter 2005-2006 Calendar of Events

Learn about a variety of topics from renowned caregivers at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. To register or obtain information for any of these events, call the Health Resources and Physician Referral Service at 312-926-8400, Monday through Thursday between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Friday between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. or Saturday between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m.



Health Education

What Every Women Should Know about Her Heart

Presented by: Marla A. Mendelson, MD
Monday, February 20; noon to 1 p.m.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in women. Join Marla A. Mendelson, MD, director of the Women's Cardiology program of the Bluhm Cardiovascular Institute of Northwestern Memorial Hospital and assistant professor of Medicine and Pediatrics at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine, to learn about gender-specific risk factors for coronary artery disease. This lecture will teach you how to incorporate heart healthy habits into your daily routine. The latest scientific findings also will be discussed to help dispel myths about heart disease.

The Power of Diet and Exercise for Good Health

Presented by: Debbie Ognar, MS, RD, LDN
Thursday, March 2; 11 a.m. to noon

Six of the 10 leading causes of death can be attributed to nutrition and physical inactivity. Debbie Ognar, MS, RD, LDN at Northwestern Memorial's Wellness Institute, will discuss key nutritional and exercise strategies that can help prevent and treat chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes.

Hearing Loss: Facts and Treatments

Presented by: Pamela Fiebig, MA, CCC-A and Alan Micco, MD

Wednesday, March 8; 11 a.m. to noon

Many people mistakenly assume that hearing loss is a normal part of the aging process. Pamela Fiebig, MA, CCC-A, director of clinical services for the Clinical Hearing Science program at Northwestern University and Alan Micco, MD, otolaryngologist on the medical staff at Northwestern Memorial and assistant professor of Otolaryngology at the Feinberg School, will discuss types and causes of hearing loss as well as the components of a hearing evaluation. Treatments, including the latest advancements in hearing aids and cochlear implants also will be discussed.

Maintaining a Healthy Bladder

Presented by: Kim Wilschek, RN and Missy Lavender
Monday, March 13; 11 a.m. to noon

People often are embarrassed to discuss bladder issues, resulting in misconceptions about how aging affects bladder function. Kim Wilschek, RN, manager of Northwestern Memorial's Alberto-Culver Women's Health Center and Missy Lavender, executive director of the Women's Health Foundation, will discuss issues related to pelvic health and urinary incontinence in women. Lifestyle management strategies, such as activity, diet and exercise will be discussed and information on the new Total Control™ Wellness Program will be highlighted.

Health Resource

Healthy Transitions Medical Information Card

In the event of an emergency, the Healthy Transitions Medical Information Card provides emergency personnel with around-the-clock access to your secured personal medical information. The card provides authorized personnel access to data including medical conditions, allergies, medications, emergency contact numbers, surgical history and a one-page electrocardiogram. A new card and replacements cards are provided at no cost. For an application, call Health Resources at 312-926-8400.

Conference

Women's Health: Midlife Transitions with an Eye to the Future

Saturday, March 18; registration 8 to 9 a.m.; program 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Morning Keynote Lecture

Menopause and Postmenopausal Healthcare Issues: Achieving a Healthy Transition
9 to 10 a.m.

Presented by: Patricia F. Katz, MD, obstetrician and gynecologist on the medical staff at Northwestern Memorial and clinical instructor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Feinberg School.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

The Pickle in the Sandwich: Feeling Squeezed at Midlife

10 to 11 a.m.

Presented by: Michele Wolff, MSMFT, staff therapist and program director, Midlife and Beyond Program for Maturing Adults at the Family Institute at Northwestern University and Karen Krefman, LMFT, staff therapist and associate vice president of Strategy and Planning at the Family Institute at Northwestern University.

or

Bone Health: The Power of Staying Strong and Vital

10 to 11 a.m.

Presented by: Beatrice Edwards, MD, medical director of the Bone Health and Osteoporosis Center at Northwestern Memorial and assistant professor of Medicine at the Feinberg School.

and

Caring for Your Older Parent: Caring for Yourself

11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Presented by: Darby Morhardt, MSW, ACSW, LCSW, clinical social worker, research assistant professor and director of education for the Northwestern Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer's Disease Center and Michele Wolff, MSMFT, staff therapist and program director, Midlife and Beyond Program for Maturing Adults at the Family Institute at Northwestern University.

or

The Power of Memory

11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Presented by: Nancy A. Johnson, PhD, a neuropsychologist at Northwestern Memorial, director of data core at the Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer's Disease Center and assistant professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Feinberg School.

To register and obtain location information for all events, call 312-926-8400.

Maximize Your Gift Giving

As the end of the year approaches and you begin to think about your traditional gift giving, consider the tax benefits of gifts, donations and charitable gift annuities.

Income Tax Exemption: Individuals may give up to \$11,000 to another individual each year, without any tax consequences to the donor or the recipient. A married couple can elect to combine their annual gift exemptions and present up to \$22,000 annually to each recipient.

Income Tax Deduction: Individuals who itemize their taxes and make a gift to a non-profit institution may receive a charitable income tax deduction. Normally, the amount deductible is limited to a percentage of the donor's adjusted gross income, which is 50 percent for gifts of cash and 30 percent for gifts of property or securities. If a gift exceeds the donor's limitation for the year the balance can be carried over for up to five

subsequent years. However, the Katrina Relief Act of 2005 includes a temporary suspension of the 50 percent limitation for gifts of cash made to a public charity, not including private foundations, donor advised funds or support organizations, between August 25 and December 31, 2005.

Fixed, Regular Payments: Individuals who are interested in contributing to Northwestern Memorial Hospital, but would like to retain a fixed source of income, might consider creating a charitable gift annuity. The donor receives a fixed income for life in exchange for a contribution. The minimum amount for a gift annuity at Northwestern Memorial is \$10,000. Gift annuity payments also may be deferred until a designated future time when the donor may need the income. A charitable gift annuity is partly a gift and partly an investment in an annuity contract, so a donor who itemizes his/her tax return may be entitled to a charitable income tax deduction for the gift portion of the annuity. Donors also can establish a gift annuity for the benefit of relatives or friends. Donors benefit from

the charitable tax deduction while the friend or relative receives annuity payments for life.

Sharing Personal Items: Consider making a tax-deductible gift of personal property to Hidden Treasures, Northwestern Memorial's resale shop. Jewelry, men's and women's designer clothing or small household items are perfect items to consider. Keep an inventory of the property donated along with a copy of the receipt you receive for your donation for tax purposes. IRS requires a qualified appraisal for any tax-deductible contributions of property worth more than \$5,000. Call Hidden Treasures at 312-943-7761 to learn more.

We encourage you to seek professional tax and legal advice when considering how these options may apply to you.

To learn more about gift-giving options and if you are interested in giving to Northwestern Memorial, please call Julie Captain, director of Planned Giving with Northwestern Memorial Foundation at 312-926-2490.

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This publication is not intended to replace the advice of your personal physician.
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Northwestern Memorial Hospital is a community of caregivers who welcome, respect and serve with dignity all people without regard to race, color, gender, national origin, religion, disability, age, veteran status or sexual orientation.