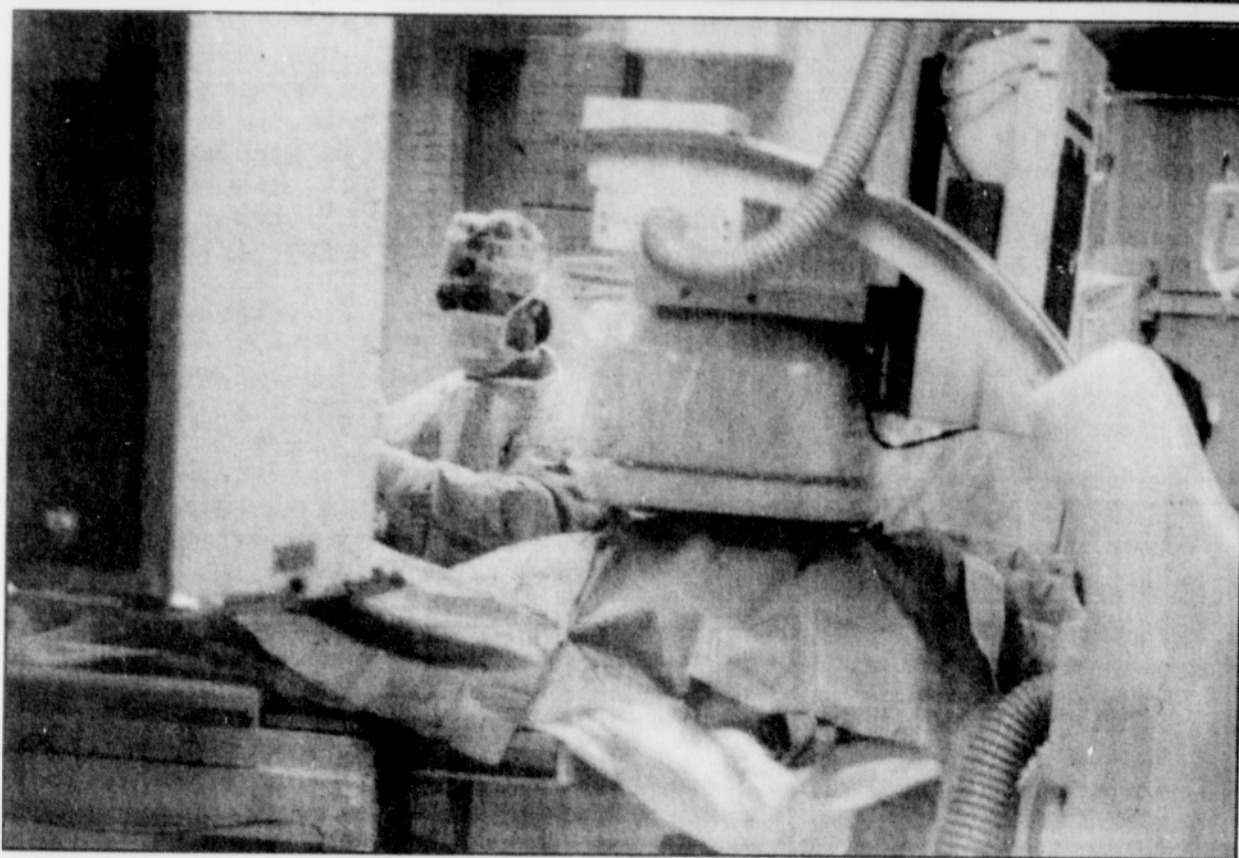


HEALTH



OHSU Makes Progress On Stroke Treatment

Physicians at Oregon Health Sciences University use an apparatus to evaluate patients with symptoms of stroke. The hospital is testing a new treatment for stroke, a leading cause of death and disability.

If You Think You're Ready To Have A Baby... Think Ahead!

If you think you're ready to have a baby...Think Ahead! That's the message being highlighted by the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation during January, Birth Defects prevention month.

"Just as you plan other important life events, it's important to Think Ahead and prepare for pregnancy. There are a few simple things every woman can do prior to pregnancy to help make sure her baby has a healthy start in life," says Dr. Richard Lowensohn, Chairman of The Health Professional Advisory Committee for the Lewis and Clark Chapter.

According to the March of Dimes, women who are preparing to have a baby should see a health care provider before becoming pregnant; eat a balanced diet; stop smoking, drinking alcohol and taking nonpre-

scription drugs; and consume at least 0.4 milligrams of the B Vitamin folic acid every day.

Folic acid can reduce the chance of having a baby born with serious birth defects of the brain and spine called neural tube defects -- which are among the most common birth defects in the United States. "Thinking Ahead about folic acid is especially important since one-half of all pregnancies are unplanned and many women don't know they're pregnant until several weeks after conception," says Lowensohn. "Getting the urgent message to every woman of childbearing age about consuming folic acid is of major concern to the March of Dimes, because folic acid is needed very early, before a woman knows she is pregnant.

"Today, most women do not

schedule a pre-pregnancy planning visit with a health care provider. The March of Dimes recommends that such visits become a standard component of maternity care, along with prenatal, labor and delivery and postpartum care.

"Whether a woman is considering becoming pregnant or not, it's good idea for her to see her gynecologist every year, eat a balanced diet, exercise regularly, stop smoking and lower her alcohol consumption," says Lowensohn.

The Think Ahead campaign was developed as a result of recommendations made by the nation's leading organizations concerned with maternal and infant health. In the report "Toward Improving the Outcome of Pregnancy (TIOP): the 90s and Beyond," 27 national organizations cit-

ed pre-pregnancy awareness as an important factor in improving the outcome of pregnancy.

Through Think Ahead, the March of Dimes seeks to motivate couples to prepare for their pregnancies and give their baby the best possibility of a healthy start in life.

Call the Lewis and Clark Chapter of the March of Dimes at 503/222-9434 for more information about preparing for your pregnancy.

The March of Dimes is a national voluntary health agency whose mission is to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects and infant mortality. Through its Campaign for Healthier Babies, the March of Dimes funds programs of research, community services, education and advocacy.

AIDS: The Good News Is Research

AIDS is the seventh leading killer of African Americans. More than 88,000 African Americans are currently living with AIDS. In the 1990s, the number of AIDS cases diagnosed among African American women has been 14 times higher than the rate for white American women, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Obviously, this disease is a major concern to the African American community. There is no question that the best way to beat AIDS is through prevention and education and community leaders have a vital role to play here.

The good news is that, although AIDS is still a terrible and fatal disease, new medicines are helping AIDS patients live longer and better lives. People diagnosed with AIDS in 1991 have nearly twice the survival time as those diagnosed in 1984, according to the National Institutes of Health. And America's pharmaceutical research companies are working hard to add to the arsenal of weapons against AIDS.

In the past year alone, five new medicines have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for AIDS and AIDS-related conditions. This increases to 26 the total number of AIDS medicines available. Four of these medicines attack the virus directly, and the remain-

der are used to treat opportunistic infections and other complications that AIDS patients are susceptible to. Physicians have found that when a single drug does not work, two or three administered at the same time, in sequence or alternately, are often effective.

Just 10 years ago, when the AIDS patient was identified, no effective medicines existed to treat it. Patients usually only had a year or two left to live. Now the lifespan of a person with the HIV virus is often 10 years or more after infection has occurred.

Researchers have developed some tremendously important drugs in the decade since the discovery of the HIV virus. There is still no cure and no vaccine, but ongoing research holds out hope for both. There are currently 107 drugs in development for AIDS and 81 pharmaceutical research companies are searching for a cure.

Many researchers are going back to basics to find answers to some fundamental questions about this virus: How does it destroy the immune-system cells? How does the body change as the disease progresses? As researchers learn more about this terrible disease, the odds increase that more effective drugs - and perhaps a preventive vaccine or cure - will be found.

Classes Offered For Better Health

Several classes open to the public are being offered in north Portland this winter through Kaiser Permanente. For registration information, call Kaiser Permanente's Health Education Department at (503) 286-6816.

Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to serious health problems. Kaiser Permanente offers several classes where you can learn self-care skills to control your diabetes.

The three session "Diabetes: Basic Education" will be held next week from 9 a.m. to noon on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at Kaiser Permanente's Education and Conference Center, 3704 N. Interstate Ave. Cost is \$15 for Kaiser members and \$75 for the general public. A spouse or other support person is encouraged to attend at no extra charge.

Parenting Skills, Ages 5 to 12 is for people wishing to improve their parenting abilities. The eight session seminar will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesdays at Kaiser's North Interstate Services Building, 7201 N. Interstate Ave. Cost is \$75 for Kaiser member couples and \$140 for the general public.

Parenting the Toddler and Preschooler teaches parents of 1 to 4-year-olds how to nurture and enjoy their growing child. The class includes group sessions on child development, positive discipline, building self-esteem and encouraging responsible behavior.

The eight sessions of the class will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Wednesdays through March 15 at the Education and Conference Center location. Cost is \$75 for Kaiser member couples and \$140 for the general public.

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DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION

COMMISSION MEETING

Date: January 18, 1995
Place: Portland Building
1120 SW 5th Avenue
Second Floor
Time: 6:00 p.m.

Commission meetings are open to the public. A complete agenda is available at PDC or by calling 823-3200. Citizens with disabilities may call 823-3232 or TDD 823-6868 for assistance at least 48 hours in advance.

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North Portland

Northminster Presbyterian:
2823 N. Portland Blvd. Fellowship Hall,
Tues. 7:00 p.m.

University of Portland:
5000 N. Willamette Blvd., Columbia Hall
(Enter from Portsmouth), Wed. 4:45 p.m.

Northwest Portland
ESCO: 2141 N. W. 25th Avenue
(25th & Vaughn), Lab Bldg., 2nd Floor,
Auditorium, Thurs. 12:00 Noon

Northeast Portland

Tillamook Park Bldg.: 2108 N. E. 41st
Ave., Mon-7:00 p.m.; Tues-7:00 p.m.;
Wed-9:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.; Thurs-
7:00 p.m.; Fri-9:30 a.m.

Temple Baptist Church:
1319 N. 7th, Fireside Room, Tues. 12:00
Noon

Call Collect - Weekdays 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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