

# Health & Science

## New Awareness Campaign Targets The African American Diabetes Epidemic

Dr. David Satcher, U.S. Surgeon General, launched a new awareness campaign encouraging the 2.2 million African Americans with diabetes to control their blood sugar levels. The Control Your Diabetes For Life campaign, developed by the National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP), encourages family members and friends to support those who have the disease. Dr. Gary Dennis, president of the National Medical Association, was also present to give his organization's support to the campaign.

"Diabetes is an epidemic within the African American community. The number of African Americans diagnosed with diabetes has tripled over the past 30 years," said Dr. Satcher. "The National Diabetes Education Program's campaign is a key strategy of the President's Initiative on Race, which is designed to improve the health status of America's racial and ethnic populations, including African Americans."

Dr. Satcher called on all African Americans with diabetes to work with their health care providers to manage their disease. "Research shows that aggressive treatment with diet, regular physical activity, and diabetes medicines can prevent or delay much of the illness and death from diabetes," he said.

"African Americans experience higher and more devastating rates of diabetes complications including eye disease, kidney failure, amputations, and premature deaths than Caucasians. The death rates for people with diabetes are 27% higher for blacks compared with whites," said Dr. Marcus Wilson, National Medical Director of the Mutual of Omaha Company. "It is crucial that we treat this disease as an epidemic and inform everyone about the long-term benefits of controlling diabetes."

Dr. Dennis also challenged African Americans with diabetes to control their disease. "Keep your blood sugar under control by sticking with your treatment program. Watch what you eat, make time for regular physical activity, and take diabetes medicines as prescribed. Also, keep track of your blood sugar numbers," he said. He added, "I've seen first hand how controlling blood sugar levels can make a big difference. When people with diabetes control their disease they feel better, they have more energy, and ultimately, they enjoy a better quality of life."

More diabetes information is available for people with diabetes and healthcare providers by calling 1-800-438-5383 or visiting the NDEP web sites at <http://ndep.nih.gov> or <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/>.

## Local Businesses Suffer from Bad Vibes

In spite of the Beach Boys song, all vibrations are not good vibrations.

Tasks such as driving trucks, operating forklifts, tractors or heavy machinery can cause whole-body vibration and increase the risk for lower back problems. In fact, research shows that nearly 7 million U.S. workers are at risk of being exposed to the negative effects of whole-body vibration, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. In industries such as construction, forestry, agriculture, transportation, warehousing and manufacturing, high levels of vibration are a real threat for causing spinal column problems and lower back pain. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics claims that disability due to lower back pain is the most prevalent and costly work-related problem for many industries.

Now Liberty Northwest, the region's largest private workers' compensation provider, offers new

technology to help reduce workers' exposure to whole-body vibration. Developed by the safety and health research team of its parent company, Liberty Mutual, Liberty Northwest's portable field evaluation meter collects data on the multi-axis vibration of specific job tasks. This data is compared to standards set by the American National Standards Institute and International Standards Organization for safe levels of whole-body vibration exposure. If measurement results exceed the recommended level, Liberty Northwest makes suggestions on how to reduce vibration levels. This innovative technology is available only through Liberty Mutual and Liberty Northwest.

"Identifying the exposure is half the battle," said Debra Corbin, CIH, Liberty Northwest Industrial Hygiene Manager. "By pinpointing vibration levels and sources, we have a better chance of reducing risks before they become a problem for workers and

companies."

According to Liberty Northwest's loss prevention experts, the field meter is a big step in helping companies determine how much vibration is contributing to the onset of lower back pain. It also measures the vibration risk associated with combined daily tasks, such as making deliveries and then operating a forklift. The evaluation takes measurements from both vehicles, combines the results and determines what the employee's typical daily exposure is to vibration. In evaluating lower back disabilities, other risk factors include activities such as materials handling, jumping down from a tractor cab or vehicle, and health considerations such as posture and previous injuries.

Whole-body vibration evaluations are available for Liberty Northwest customers in Oregon, Idaho, and Montana that meet certain criteria for potential risks. Evaluations also are available on a fee-for-service



basis to companies that are not currently insured through Liberty Northwest. For more information about whole-body vibration evaluations, contact the Loss Prevention Department, 503-736-7100.

## New Advancements in Fertility Seminar, Monday, September 28th

New advancements in fertility make parenthood a wonderful reality for many couples. On Monday, September 28 from 7-10 pm, at the Portland Hilton, Geoffrey Sher, M.D., of

the Sher-Brody Institute, an internationally recognized expert in the field of infertility and the originator of several major medical breakthroughs that have increased IVF birth rates,

will host a free seminar on IVF and other fertility enhancing procedures.

Attendees will receive an autographed copy of Dr. Sher's acclaimed book, "In Vitro Ferti-

zation: The A.R.T. of Making Babies."

Interested parties can make their reservations by calling 800-780-7437.

Walk-ins are also welcome.

## Advocates Sought to Serve Long Term Care Residents

Volunteer advocates and investigators are needed to serve as ombudsmen for residents of nursing homes, residential care facilities, assisted living facilities and adult foster care homes. The Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsmen will train the volunteers on the aging process, communication skills, problem-solving skills, investigation and other

ombudsmen skills. The orientation will begin Tuesday, October 13 in Oregon City.

As Certified Ombudsmen, the volunteers work to improve the quality of residents' lives, by identifying and investigating complaints and concerns on behalf of the residents, then working with the facilities to make changes. The typical problems ombudsmen ad-

dress cover a broad range, and often include resident care; residents' rights, such as privacy, respect and dignity; and quality of life concerns such as appropriate activities and meals. "The volunteers have a real impact on the lives of residents, successfully resolving 90% of the complaints," says Kathy Walter, Volunteer Recruitment Supervisor. "Ombudsmen find a great

deal of person accomplishment in their work."

Volunteers also may choose to join the Resident Associate Program, which focuses on visiting isolated or lonely residents.

For information about the program or to learn how to get involved, contact Kathy Walter at 1-800-522-2602.

## Deadly E. Coli Subject of Study by Legacy Emanuel Children's Hospital and Health System Research Department

Legacy Emanuel Children's Hospital is actively screening pediatric patients for E. coli to test a drug designed to prevent kidney damage in children with the disease. The hospital is one of fourteen sites in the U.S. chosen by the drug's developer, Synsorb Biotech, Inc. of Calgary, to test the medication. The principal investigator for the trial at Legacy is Scott Lindquist, MD, MPH. Local family practice and pediatric physicians have been notified of the re-

search and asked to contact Dr. Lindquist about suspected cases of the disease in children 6 months to 15 years old.

Since beginning the phase III clinical trial in July, Legacy Research and Legacy Emanuel Children's hospital have enrolled one 4 year old child in the study and hope to enroll another ten over the next six months. Phase III clinical trials are blind tests in which fifty percent of the patients will be given the medication, the other half

receive a placebo. Researchers are blind to which patient received the medication, call Synsorb Pk. Synsorb Pk, is also being tested in Canada, Argentina and Japan.

E. coli 0157:H7 is virulent strain of the bacteria E. coli found in contaminated meat, vegetables, dairy products and ground water. Symptoms include severe intestinal pain and bloody diarrhea. It can cause Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS), one of the disease's most serious and

potentially fatal complications. E. coli is a leading cause of both acute and chronic renal insufficiency in children and is recognized as one of the fastest growing foodborne infectious diseases in the world.

Close to 100 Oregonians are diagnosed with the disease each year and according to the Center for Disease Control and Infection, E. coli is responsible for an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 infections each year in the United States.

## Little Chapel Of The Chimes On Killingsworth To Host National Teleconference On Children's Grief

Helping communities better understand children's grief issues will be the focus of a live via-satellite teleconference October 13 at Portland Adventist Hospital. Hosted by Little Chapel of the Chimes on Killingsworth, the **Communities in Crisis: When a Parent Dies, Supporting the Children** teleconference will feature Martin Luther King III and an international panel of experts who will discuss the issues children face following the loss of a parent.

"Grieving children have been neglected for far too long," said Dr. Kiti Freier, associate professor psychology and pediatrics at Loma Linda University and Children's Hospital, who will participate as a panelist. "Children do grieve, and we as adults need to understand how to appropriately support them. This teleconference will raise awareness of children's grief."

According to Freier, two of the factors which complicate children's grief experiences are their ongoing developmental process and their lack of advanced verbal skills to communicate their grief.

"The teleconference will equip caregivers with the tools and resources they need to help a child's grieving process, which is unique to each child," said Freier.

Little Chapel of the Chimes on Killingsworth is one of the more than 500 organizations in the U.S. and Canada hosting the **Communities in Crisis** teleconference broadcast from Southern California. The event is sponsored nationally by Service Corporation International (SCI), the world's leading funeral service organization, in conjunction with Loma Linda University Children's Hospital.

"This conference is especially designed for clergy, educators/school personnel, psychologist, social workers, community groups, law enforcement officers, as well as other community leaders and caregivers who work with and care about our children," said David McDonald, manager of Little Chapel of the Chimes on Killingsworth. "We all live in Portland, Oregon together, and we know we must continue to work together to help our children."

During the teleconference, viewers will be able to participate by telephone with comments and questions for an international panel of experts, including:

\*Dr. Kiti Freier, an associate professor of psychology and pediatrics at Loma Linda University and Children's Hospital.

\*Dr. Donna Schuurman, the execu-

tive director of The Dougy Center in Portland, Oregon, the first center in the United States designed for grieving children.

\*Danny Mize, the executive director of the Kids' Place, a center for grieving children in the Oklahoma City area. With 17 years of experience in dealing with grief issues, Mize has also served as a minister of Christian education for churches in Oklahoma and Texas.

In addition to the panelists, Dr. William J. Worden, an internationally respected author, lecturer, and researcher on children and grief, will speak via recorded video. Worden is also codirector of the Harvard Child Bereavement Study and author of **Children & Grief: When a Parent Dies**.

After the national program's conclusion, David McDonald will moderate a one-hour workshop featuring a local panel of caregivers and community leaders.

The teleconference is free of charge for all who attend. It will be held from 8:30 am to 12:40 pm in the Portland Adventist Hospital Amphitheater C lower level. (The general public is also invited to attend.) Participants are asked to arrive by 8:15 am. Continuing Education Credits will also be offered for a variety of professions. For more

information or a reservation, contact Little Chapel of the Chimes at 283-1976.



## When a Parent Dies: Supporting the Children

A free "Communities in Crisis" Teleconference. Join our national panel of experts featuring keynote speaker Martin Luther King III and panel members as they discuss issues such as: How will the children cope? How are their lives forever changed? How can you make a difference?

October 13, 1998

Time: 8:30 A.M.

At:

Portland Adventist hospital 10123 S.E. Market Portland, Or 97216 Amphitheater C (lower level)

Hosted by:

Little Chapel of the Chimes on Killingsworth

For Reservations, contact:

Little Chapel of the Chimes

283-1976

There is no charge, but space is limited.

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