

## HEALTH

## Bold Medical Reality

A local high school program at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center is raising awareness with kids about what it takes to save a life, to encourage healthy lifestyles and to show the teamwork involved in open heart surgery.

During a recent program, world-renowned cardiac surgeon, Dr. Albert Starr, wore a head camera as he performed the surgery in the operating room, which enabled nearly 125 high school students to watch the procedure from the hospital's Southern Auditorium.

"Heart Watch" was launched at Providence St. Vincent in 1995.

Aloha High School student Abdirahman Hussein (right) and Beaverton Careers Program teacher Matt Bayha get a dose of medical reality while observing open heart surgery as part of "Heart Watch."



## Health Plan Coverage Threatened

As many as 19,510 Oregon adults covered by the Oregon Health Plan's Standard benefit package will lose coverage at month's end if the premium billing office doesn't receive their March payment by Friday, April 25.

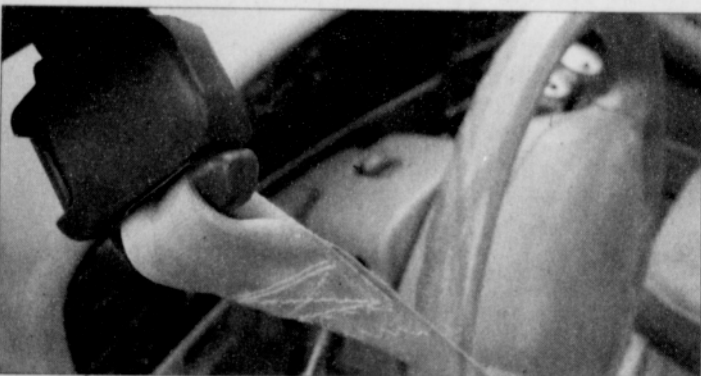
The Standard benefit package covers nearly 100,000 working poor adults who earn too much to qualify for traditional Medicaid, but less than the federal

poverty level.

Since Feb. 1, clients enrolled under the Standard benefit package have been expected to pay premiums by the 25th of the month following the coverage month or lose coverage for six months. Unaffected are more than 300,000 Oregonians who qualify for the Health Plan's Plus benefit package because of age, disability, preg-

nancy or receipt of public assistance, and who are not required to pay premiums.

The Standard plan, patterned more after commercial insurance plans, differs from the Plus plan by requiring higher co-payments for medical services, requiring premium payments and offering reduced benefits.



*This is extremely heartening and will quickly result in fewer deaths to our citizens.*

—Jefferey Runge, administrator for the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration

## Seat Belt Safety Numbers on the Rise

Buckling up means fewer blacks will die in car accidents

(AP)—Blacks, who for years have lagged behind in seat belt use, now practice buckling up at the same rate as the rest of the population, according to a report being released by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration.

Blacks were using seat belts about 77 percent of the time in NHTSA's latest roadside survey, an increase from about seven in 10 who used seat belts in a 2000 survey.

Overall, the U.S. population buck-

led up 75 percent of the time.

NHTSA Administrator Jeffrey Runge released the data at a highway safety conference in Chicago on Monday. Runge said the increase results from years of work in the black community.

"This is extremely heartening and will quickly result in fewer deaths to our citizens," Runge said.

In 2000, researchers said at least 125 lives would be saved and 2,500 injuries prevented each year if blacks were buckling up at the same rate as whites.

In its latest report, NHTSA also found that the gender gap is closing, but that females still buckle up more often than males. About eight

in 10 females used seat belts in the 2002 survey, while about seven in 10 males were wearing them.

NHTSA found that seat belt use was rising in rural areas, to 73 percent. That was a gain of 5 percentage points from 2000.

NHTSA surveyed drivers during a 20-day period beginning June 3, 2002. Observers collected data on 37,900 vehicles at 1,100 intersections throughout the nation. They observed 37,900 drivers and 11,600 passengers, including 38,100 whites, 6,000 blacks and 5,400 other individuals.

The error margin for the survey was plus or minus 4 percentage points for blacks and plus or minus 3 percentage points for whites.

## Oregon Tobacco Use Declines

New data from the Oregon Dept. of Human Services shows Oregonians outpacing the national average in reducing tobacco use.

Since 1996, overall cigarette consumption is down by almost 30 percent, a far steeper reduction than the rest of the nation.

The statistics show that young males are chewing tobacco considerably less and pregnant

women are also smoking less.

State officials are attributing the declines to a comprehensive tobacco prevention and education program.

"This translates into tremendous savings for Oregon," said DHS administrator Jean Thorne. "The program's current success results in savings of almost \$40 million a year in direct medical

costs. And about \$10 million of these savings are in Oregon Health Plan costs."

Mel A. Kohn, M.D., state epidemiologist, added that the current reduction in smoking among pregnant women alone results in 57 fewer low birth weight babies annually and saves more than \$1 million every year in neonatal medical costs.

## Moore Street Tackles Asthma

The Moore Street Salvation Army is raising awareness about the health consequences of asthma in the local community.

Asthma is a frequent reason for pediatric physician office visits and is one of the leading causes of school absenteeism. In north and northeast Portland, the asthma rate is 14.6 percent of the local population, the highest in the state.

In response to these alarming sta-

tistics, the Environmental Justice Action Group and Environmental Protection Agency are hosting a neighborhood forum and asthma swim at the Moore Street Community Center, 5325 N. Williams, on Tuesday, May 6 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The event is meant to raise awareness about indoor and outdoor pollutants that trigger asthma.

For more information or to join the forum or swim, call 503-283-6397.

if even bright things get you down.



join our DEPRESSION research study

Have you or someone you care about been experiencing some or all of the following symptoms for at least a few months?

- Hopelessness
- Sadness
- Loss of interest in daily activities
- Difficulty concentrating

If so, participants between the ages of 18 to 64 may qualify for a research study of an investigational drug for the treatment of DEPRESSION.

All office visits and medical evaluations related to this study will be provided to qualified participants at no charge.

To get more information about taking part in this study call:



## REACH

Racial & Ethnic Approaches to Community Health  
A program of the African American Health Coalition, Inc.  
Sponsored by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

## Wellness Within REACH: Mind, Body, and Soul Activity Calendar

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<b>Matt Dishman</b> 77 NE Knott	Strength Training 8-9am and 2-3pm Brown		Strength Training 8-9am and 2-3pm Brown		Strength Training 8-9am and 2-3pm Brown	African Dance 10:00-11:00am Addo
<b>Salvation Army</b> 5325 N Williams.		Water Aerobics 2:00 - 3:00pm Hampton	Tai Chi 6:30 - 7:30pm Lyles Begins 4/16/03	Water Aerobics 2:00 - 3:00pm Hampton		
<b>Nature's</b> 3535 NE 15th.		Yoga 7:30-8:30 pm O'Rourke		Yoga 7:45-8:45 pm O'Rourke		Body Conditioning 9:30-10:30am Nickerson
<b>Peninsula Park.</b> 700 N Portland		Walking Group 6:00-7:00 pm Nickerson (Meet inside the Lloyd Center in front of Sears )		Walking Group 6:00-7:00 pm Nickerson (Meet inside the Lloyd Center in front of Sears )		Walking Group 12:30 pm Nickerson
<b>Mallory Avenue</b> Christian Church (Gym) 126 NE Alberta	Aerobics 6:30-7:30pm Nickerson		Aerobics 6:30-7:30pm Nickerson		Aerobics 6:30-7:30pm Nickerson	
<b>Highland United</b> Church of Christ 4635 NE 9th Ave.	Aerobics 6:00-7:00am Pierce	Aerobics 6:00-7:00pm Keller	Aerobics 6:00-7:00am Pierce	Aerobics 6:00-7:00pm Keller		

\*\*Must be 21 or older to participate. Please check with AAHC before showing up to the first class 503-413-1850. Please receive approval from your doctor before beginning exercise class.

All classes are free of charge!



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