

# HEALTH MATTERS

## HEALTH WATCH

### Adventist Medical Center Support Groups

Adventist at 10123 SE Market St. offers a wide assortment of support and educational programs throughout the month:

- **Bereavement Support Group** meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., to learn more call 503-251-6192 ext 5670.
- **Better Breathers**, COPD and asthma educational support meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month in the Patio Room, from 1:15 p.m. to 2:45 p.m., for more information call 503-251-6830.
- **Cancer Support Group** meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., please call 503-251-6305 for more information.
- **Chronic Pain Support Group** meets the 1st Wednesday at 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and the 3rd Wednesday of each month, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Call 503-256-4000 for more information.
- **Heart Talk Support Group** meets on the 2nd Monday of each month, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The Sept. 10th meeting features special motivational guest speaker Jeff Hardesty, and author of 'Make Mine a Triple ... Bypass That Is.' Call 503-251-6260 for more information.
- **Smoke-Free Support Group** meets Mondays, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., call 503-256-4000 for more information.

### Diabetes Self-Management

Wednesday, Sept. 5, Adventist Medical Center, 10123 SE Market St., will provide classes teaching self-care techniques for living with diabetes. Contact 503-261-6003 for more information.

### Prepared Childbirth

Sunday, Sept. 9, from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Adventist Medical Center, 10123 SE Market St., will offer the accelerated one-day class to prepare new parents for labor and delivery. Pre-registration is required; cost is \$85 per couple (lunch included), to register call 503-256-4000.

### Becoming Smoke-Free, Staying Smoke-Free

Mondays, Sept. 10 and Sept. 17, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., Adventist Medical Center, 10123 SE Market St., will provide practical guidance and ongoing support to break free of nicotine addiction. Cost is \$30 for 2 sessions, to register call 503-256-4000.

### Managing Menopause: How to Transition with Grace,

Tuesday, Sept. 11, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Providence St. Vincent Medical, 9205 SW Barnes Rd., provides discussions on the latest research on menopause and managing the symptoms. Contact 503-574-6595 for more information.

### Role of Natural Medicine in Cancer Treatment

Thursday, Sept. 20, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Providence St. Vincent Medical, 9205 SW Barnes Rd., teaching safe and scientifically natural therapies that may help to remain cancer free. Contact 503-574-6595 for more information.

### Breast Feeding Classes

Thursday, Sept. 13, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Adventist Medical Center, 10123 SE Market St., provides expectant parents the opportunity to learn the benefits of breast feeding. Cost \$30 per couple, to register call 503-256-4000.

### Comprehensive Wellness Screening

Thursday, Sept. 20, Legacy Good Samaritan Hospital, 1015 NW 22 Ave., will offer an extensive heart and stroke screening package aimed at staying healthy through early detection. Pre-registration is required; screening cost \$175. For more detailed information and registration, contact 503-335-3500.

## Robin Roberts: Prognosis 'Quite Good'

### Thankful for early detection

(AP) -- Robin Roberts' prognosis is "quite good."

"The cancer is out of my body, and I'm healing from the surgery," the "Good Morning America" co-host told The Associated Press in a telephone interview Thursday. "Hopefully, the plan now is to keep it out."

She announced on ABC's morning show July 31 that she had been diagnosed with breast cancer and underwent surgery Aug. 3.

The 46-year-old Roberts said doctors will wait several weeks for her to heal before having her undergo more treatment, which may mean chemotherapy. Roberts said she did not want to be specific about her treatment until she is certain what it will be.

"The prognosis is quite good," she said. "I did find it in the early stages. I am very confident and they (doctors) are very confident that it is going to be fine. The road getting there is going to be a little bumpier than I anticipated and they anticipated. I am better off than so many people who find it so late and that is



Robin Roberts on her return to ABC's 'Good Morning America' in New York.

why I am grateful and that again is why my battle cry is early detection."

Roberts, who grew up in Pass Christian, Miss., said her mother "was fussing at me" for returning to work less than two weeks after her surgery.

She added that not every person who undergoes the surgery can make the decision to return that quickly to work.

"When it comes to cancer it is personal. It's not one size fits all. You have to do what is right for

you," she said.

Since being diagnosed with the disease, Roberts said it felt like her life was moving at "90 mph." After the surgery, the former sportscaster described the weeks between the next step in treatment as "halftime."

## Tainted Toothpaste and Counterfeit Drugs

### The dangers of drug importation

BY PETER J. PITTS

Counterfeit Colgate toothpaste containing diethylene glycol, a poisonous chemical used in antifreeze, recently turned up in discount grocery stores all over the East Coast.

This dangerous chemical has long been used by chemical companies in China as a substitute for more expensive glycerin, an ingredient necessary for toothpaste, soap, and other cosmetics and drugs.

Previously only a problem in the

developing world, the toxin now threatens U.S. consumers. If even toothpaste is susceptible to contamination by unregulated foreign companies, imagine the potential for disaster in something as lucrative as fake drugs.

Several members of Congress have introduced legislation to allow the importation of pharmaceuticals from abroad, promising that imports will be closely scrutinized and only permitted from certain countries.

But the reality is not so simple. Drugs purchased from "safe" countries may well have originated from other countries where there are ample opportunities for counterfeiters to enter the legitimate supply chain.

Indeed, the World Health Orga-

nization estimates that up to 10 percent of globally traded drugs are counterfeit. Most originate in Asia and Latin America, where technology is making production cheaper and safety regulations are poorly enforced -- perfect conditions for manufacturing and distributing fake drugs.

Making matters even more worrisome, penalties for counterfeiters are relatively slight. In South America, selling cocaine will land a person in jail for 15 years, but making and selling fake medicine gets the perpetrator six months. These small risks -- especially when combined with the potential financial rewards -- have contributed to the rapid growth of counterfeiting.

By 2010, it's estimated that global counterfeit drug sales will total

\$75 billion.

According to the federal Joint Terrorism Task Force, terrorists have also proven adept at exploiting weakened chains of pharmaceutical custody in North America. In a recent report, the task force revealed that a terrorist ring with ties to Hezbollah has been importing counterfeit drugs into the U.S. through Canada.

Congress has a responsibility to protect Americans from overseas threats, not expose them to those hazards. Unfortunately, Congress seems not to have learned from America's recent ordeal with tainted toothpaste.

Peter J. Pitts is president of the Center for Medicine in the Public Interest and a former Associate Commissioner of the FDA.

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