

HEALTH MATTERS

Alzheimer's Disease is a Serious Issue

Early diagnosis is so important

BY LARRY LUCAS

Growing old gracefully is easier said than done — the mirror can betray the fact that we may feel 10 years younger on the inside. But with the laugh lines comes the wisdom and the ability to look back fondly on a life well-lived. We dream about our golden years as a time to be with our families and enjoy our favorite pastimes, like golfing or gardening. But for the more than 5 million people living with Alzheimer's disease and their families, the reality is far different.

According to the National Institutes of Health, Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia



among older people — and I believe it. Every day it seems I hear about another person who is experiencing the impact of Alzheimer's. It is a condition that gets worse over time, and it is fatal. Just last year my own mother-in-law died from the disease.

Alzheimer's destroys brain cells, causing problems with memory, thinking and behavior severe enough to affect work, lifelong hobbies or social life, according to the Alzheimer's Association. To put it simply, Alzheimer's disease isn't about forgetting an acquaintance's name; it's forgetting your wife's name.

Alzheimer's disease is a particularly serious issue for the African American community. A recent article in the Houston Chronicle reports that Alzheimer's occurs among

blacks at a much higher rate than among whites — from 14 percent to 100 percent higher. According to the Alzheimer's Association, some of the possible reasons are that African American's have higher rates of blood pressure and diabetes, all risk factors for Alzheimer's.

It's important to recognize the difference between normal age-related memory changes and possible warning signs of Alzheimer's disease. Some symptoms to look for include memory loss, difficulty performing tasks, problems with language, abstract thinking or loss of initiative, according to the Alzheimer's Association.

If you think you or a loved one are experiencing symptoms of Alzheimer's related dementia, it's very important to seek medical advice. An early diagnosis is so important because it eliminates uncertainty

and also gives you a better chance at benefiting from treatment.

There is life after diagnosis, in the early stages. Plan now for the future; your family can honor your wishes when it becomes too difficult to live independently. To help maintain your or a loved one's independence, the Alzheimer's Association recommends you take certain steps, like get help with daily tasks, use memory aids like labels and lists, stay active and take your medicines as prescribed.

Just over 10 years ago, there were no treatments for Alzheimer's disease. Today, however, because of advances in pharmaceutical research, there are medicines available to treat this cruel disease and help slow its symptoms.

Larry Lucas is a vice president for Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America.

HEALTH WATCH

Winter Depression -- Wednesday, Nov. 28, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., this free seminar discusses the cause and effect of seasonal affective disorder with a look at the healing power of light. Call 503-256-4000 to register.

Maternity Water Workout -- Helping new moms regain muscle tone, strength, and flexibility, all in the support and freedom of the water. Call 503-256-4000 for more information.

CPR-Initial Course for Healthcare Providers -- Wednesday, Dec. 12, from 6-11 p.m., this course is for participants completing the course will receive a certification card for healthcare professionals; \$60 fee, to register call 503-335-3500.

Newborn Care -- Tuesday, Dec. 18, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., learn what to expect and how to care for your new baby; \$45 fee per couple, to register call 503-256-4000.

Active Living Every Day -- Beginning, Tuesday, Jan. 15, the "evidence-based" national 20-week program changing America's outlook on physical activity (not an exercise class) will spark a new way of thinking; to register contact 503-241-0359.

Nutritional Seminars -- New Seasons Market is presenting a series of nutritional seminars at various store locations along with a nutritional help line. For information, email aksthenutritionist@newseasonsmarket.com.

Surgical Treatment of Epilepsy -- Monday, Nov. 19, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., medical experts will be discussing various types of epilepsy surgeries and the criteria for surgery candidates at a free seminar. For details, call 503-216-7128.

Maternity Orientation -- Thursdays, Nov. 29, Dec. 6, Dec. 20, this free class will help to familiarize expectant parents with the Maternity Unit and answer any question they may have; for more information call 503-574-6595.

Parenting Classes -- Newborns don't come with instruction manuals but parents and parents-to-be can learn about a variety of topics from pain and childbirth to breastfeeding to infant CPR and much more. For a schedule of events, call 503-574-6595 or visit: providence.org/classes.

Vegetarian Starter Kit -- Healthy vegetarian eating made easier with informational resources, samples, coupons and delicious recipes. Kits are \$7.50 each (includes shipping). To order, call 503-256-4000.

Siblings and Birth -- Monday, Dec. 3, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., this workshop prepares big brothers and sisters (ages 3-7) for the new baby; contact 503-256-4000 to register.

Cardiac-Rehab Exercise Classes -- A medically supervised exercise program for people dealing with heart conditions. For more information, call 503-251-6260.

Senior Aerobics -- A low-impact workout geared specifically toward seniors. Call 503-449-0783 for current schedule.

Osteoporosis Screening -- An ultrasound bone density screening with personalized education; fee \$30. To schedule an appointment, call 503-261-6611.

Leg Alert Screening -- Check for peripheral arterial disease with this safe, simple screening using ankle and arm blood pressure. The fee is \$40. To schedule an appointment, call 503-251-6137.

Cancer Resource Center -- Providence St. Vincent Medical Center and the American Red Cross have joined forces to create the first in-hospital resource center providing books, printed material, computer access for individuals and families dealing with cancer. The center is open Mon-Thurs, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

State Prescription Drug Program Fills Gap

Serves people without any insurance benefit

BY HELEN A. STACYE AND D'NORGIA PRICE

Everyone knows prescription drug costs are out of control and are one of the key drivers in overall health care costs. Thankfully, there's a new state program that can help — it's the Oregon Prescription Drug Program.

OPDP became a reality for any uninsured Oregonian of any age after a ballot measure campaign last fall. The 2007 Legislature also passed a measure signed by Gov. Ted Kulongoski to open up the program even further to employer groups and individuals of all ages who may be "underinsured" or lacking full Rx coverage. Seniors with Medicare Part D also qualify and OPDP can help them if they fall in the "donut hole."

So basically you're eligible for OPDP if you're an Oregonian who's lacking full prescription drug coverage. In the greater Portland area

alone, more than 218,000 people are estimated to be without any prescription drug coverage at all. That's just not right and can be easily helped with OPDP.

The program is simple and smart. It works using the Costco model of bulk purchasing (the more people who can join, the more everyone can save), allowing the state to directly negotiate much lower prices with drug companies and pharmacies.

The FREE program is very easy to sign up for and takes only minutes to apply. All you have to do is call 800-913-4146 toll-free or visit www.opdp.org for more information or to sign up over the phone or online.

Participants receive a wallet card within a week or two for use at most Oregon chain and independent pharmacies to receive savings of up to 60 percent on prescription drugs. To date,

the average savings is \$28 per prescription! Generics will receive the greatest savings.

In addition to helping our fellow Oregonians access more affordable medications, the Oregon Prescription Drug Program also helps control rising overall health care for everyone with its focus on preventive care, helping avert more expensive emergency room or other treatments.

OPDP just makes sense and helps create a better, healthier Oregon.

Advocates for the program encourage people to sign up if you need help paying for prescription drugs and pass the word on to your family, friends, and neighbors.

Helen A. Stacye is a senior advocate and a volunteer with AARP Oregon living in north-east Portland. D'Norgia Price is director of senior programs for the Urban League of Portland.

Fall & Winter Special

Boanerges Group

We are a locally owned and operated company with experience and highly qualified employees providing exceptional construction services in Oregon and Washington

- Carpentry services
- Concrete
- Painting
- Plumbing & Mechanical
- Residential & Commercial Services
- General home maintenance

Call today for estimate or consultation

Insured, Bonded, Licensed and Minority Certified
CCB: 159587-OR
BOANEG*934/JT-WA

Sharon Maxwell-Hendricks
General Manager

Tel: 503-281-0224
Fax: 503-284-4419
Email: shamaxhend@acninc.net
4134 N Vancouver Ave, Suite 400E, Portland, OR 97217

THE SPINA COLUMN™

An ongoing series of questions and answers about America's natural healing profession.

Dr. Billy R. Flowers

Part 33. Osteoporosis and Bone Loss Reversal

Q: I have osteoporosis and now my back has a more "rounded" look. What is this?

A: You might have started to develop a "dowager's hump" or an abnormal outward curving of the vertebrae of the upper back. Bones become brittle with osteoporosis and the upper vertebrae can collapse on each other, causing a rounded appearance.

To help stop and even reverse bone loss:

- Develop good body mechanics through exercises to improve your posture.
- Eat a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D. Your doctor might prescribe a medication to help prevent further bone loss.

- Exercise regularly to help strengthen bones. Talk with a doctor to learn exercises you can safely perform.
- Consult a chiropractor if the curvature of your upper back causes pain or discomfort.

Flowers' Chiropractic Office
2124 N.E. Hancock Street, Portland Oregon 97212
Phone: (503) 287-5504

The Portland Observer Established 1970
USPS 959-680
4747 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Portland, OR 97211

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, PUBLISHER: Charles H. Washington
EDITOR: Michael Leighton
DISTRIBUTION MANAGER: Mark Washington
CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Paul Neufeldt
ADVERTISING: Kathy Linder
OFFICE MANAGER: Sharon Sperry
REPORTER: Raymond Rendleman

The Portland Observer welcomes freelance submissions. Manuscripts and photographs should be clearly labeled and will be returned if accompanied by a self addressed envelope. All created design display ads become the sole property of the newspaper and cannot be used in other publications or personal usage without the written consent of the general manager, unless the client has purchased the composition of such ad. © 1996 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT PERMISSION IS PROHIBITED. The Portland Observer-Oregon's Oldest Multicultural Publication is a member of the National Newspaper Association-Founded in 1885, and The National Advertising Representative: Amalgamated Publishers, Inc. New York, NY, and The West Coast Black Publishers Association

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Portland Observer, PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208

CALL 503-288-0033 FAX 503-288-0015
news@portlandobserver.com ads@portlandobserver.com
subscription@portlandobserver.com

State Farm®
Providing Insurance and Financial Services

Home Office, Bloomington, Illinois 61710

Michael E Harper Agent

We moved to our new location at:
9713 S.W. Capitol, Portland, OR
503-221-3050
Fax 503-227-8757

Wailing for the Warriors

"A Special Prayer Revival for Evangelist Pichon-Smith & Other Deploying Soldiers"

Fellowship M.B.C.

4009 North Missouri Avenue, Portland OR 97227
Pastor J. Pack, IV, PhD, Div.
Wednesday, November 28, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

GUEST SPEAKER
Evangelist Melanie Pichon-Smith,
Dominion and Power Ministry, Harvey, LA

For more information visit www.forgivenmps.com
Dial 503-975-5469 OR 504-296-4339

Please come out and help us cover the awesome Woman of God, her Family, and the Forgiven Team! If Evangelist Pichon-Smith has been a blessing to you; now is your chance to come out and share with her!

Dentures Worth Smiling About!

- Professional Services
- Affordable Prices
- Payment Plans: OAC
- Over 20 years experience
- Full & Partial Dentures
- Natural Appearance
- Full Service Lab
- Accepting Oregon Health Plan

Melanie Block, L.D.
DENTURIST
503-230-0207
1020 NE 2nd Ave., Suite 205
Off MLK on NE Multnomah
Free parking