

HEALTH MATTERS

Lupus Worse for Black Men

A recent lupus study by researchers at Emory University in Atlanta has found stark differences in the disease between African-American men and women. Though the disease is far more common in African-American women, the study found African-American men had more severe symptoms and were more prone to have heart and kidney complications of lupus.

Previous research has found that Lupus affects two to three times as many African Americans as Caucasians. Sam Lim, an assistant professor at Emory and principal investigator of the study, says there is a big picture in understanding how lupus affects different groups of people. "The differences in the disease may be clues as to how lupus works and what makes people susceptible," he said.

Lupus has been called the "great imitator" because there are so many symptoms associated with the disease that it is often misdiagnosed.

Lim says people who suspect they may have the disease need to educate themselves about it--especially if they belong to a high-risk group--and discuss their symptoms with their physicians.

Ouch! Groundbreaking Vaccine Stings

(AP) --The groundbreaking vaccine that prevents cervical cancer in girls is gaining a reputation as the most painful of childhood shots, health experts say. As Austin Powers would say: "Ouch, baby. Very ouch."

Health officials have touted the Gardasil vaccine as an important new protection against a cancer-causing sexually transmitted virus. In recent months, they've also noted reports of pain and fainting from the shot.

"This vaccine stings a lot," said Patsy Stinchfield, an infectious disease expert at Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota, speaking at a recent meeting of vaccination experts in Atlanta.



Lauren Fant, 18, winces as she has her third and final application of the HPV vaccine administered by a nurse in Marietta, Ga. (AP photo)

It sure does, said 18-year-old Lauren Fant. She said other shots tend to hurt only at the moment of the needle stick, and not after the vaccine plunges in.

"It burns," said the college freshman from Marietta, Ga.

The pain is short-lived, girls say; many react with little more than a grimace. But some teens say it's uncomfortable driving with or sleeping on the injected arm for up to a day after getting the shot.

Gardasil is the first vaccine approved specifically to target the human papilloma virus, or HPV, which causes cervical and vaginal cancer. The Food and Drug Administration approved it for girls ages 9 to 26.

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New Medicines for Treating Breast Cancer

BY LARRY LUCAS

The word hope can inspire a range of feelings. But to someone facing cancer, as I have, hope is a lifeline to a better tomorrow, a breakthrough treatment, a cure.

In the African-American community, the hope to win the fight against breast cancer is particularly profound. Our community is disproportionately affected by a variety of cancers, including breast cancer. African-American women are 28 percent more likely to die from breast cancer than white women.

There are a variety of complex factors that contribute to this health disparity. One is that African-American women are more likely to be diagnosed later with more ad-



vanced cancer -- which is much more difficult to treat. That's why it's so critical that women be vigilant about doing monthly self-examinations and getting regular mammograms as directed by their physicians.

These steps help detect any irregularities earlier and can make a life-or-death difference.

More than ever before, medicines also have the power to provide hope to cancer patients. Until recently, killing cancer cells without harming healthy cells in the body has proven to be extraordinarily difficult. But that's changing. Right now, researchers are creating new "smart" medicines that ignore healthy cells and go straight to the cancer. In addition, companies are working on medicines to

improve the quality of life for people undergoing cancer treatment.

But, just knowing about the treatments available to you isn't enough. If you are diagnosed, it's very important to follow through with the treatments prescribed by your doctor. Columbia University Medical Center researchers found that African-American women with early stage breast cancer are less likely to finish chemotherapy treatment, contributing to lower survival rates.

There are likely a variety of factors for why patients might not take their medicines as prescribed; cost may be one of them.

For those who need help affording their prescription medicines, there are programs that can help. The Partnership for Prescription Assistance (1-888-4PPA-NOW or www.pparx.org), a national program

sponsored by America's pharmaceutical research companies, provides a single point of access to 475 patient-assistance programs. More than 2,500 brand-name and generic prescription medicines are available through the participating programs. So far, the program has already helped more than 4.3 million people in need nationwide.

One of our community's greatest leaders, Martin Luther King, Jr., once said, "We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope." As we remember those who have won and lost the battle against breast cancer, may we also preserve that infinite hope for a new treatment that helps save a life, ushering in a cure to cancer forever.

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

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HEALTH WATCH

Breastfeeding Preparation -- Thursday, Jan. 10, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., this class is prepare expectant parents on the strategies and techniques of breastfeeding; \$42 fee per couple. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Groovin' a New Weight: Women Only -- Thursdays, Jan. 24 to March 13, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Women will work on food, weight and body issues with a dietitian and fitness specialist in a fun, motivating environment. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Smoke-Free Support Group -- meets Mondays, 7 to 8 p.m. For more information, call 503-256-4000.

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.

Diabetes and Foot Care -- Friday, Jan. 18, at 2 p.m., the Summerplace Assisted Living Center, 15727 N.E. Russell St., will host the informational free class.

Becoming Smoke-Free, Staying Smoke-Free -- Mondays, Jan. 28 and Feb. 4, from 6 to 8 p.m., gain freedom from nicotine addiction through practical guidance and ongoing support; \$40 fee. To register, call 503-256-4000.

Managing Chronic Hepatitis C -- Third Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m., the informative session led by a registered nurse to help manage side effects of medications and dosage preparations and administration; doctors referral required to register call 503-251-6313.

Free Body Basics -- This physician-recommended class is appropriate for all ages and health conditions. Plan to attend this one-session class and learn the simple guidelines for safe exercises, including stretching. Call 503-256-4000 to register.

For Big Brothers & Big Sister-To-Be -- Saturday, Jan. 19, from 10 to 11 a.m., special sibling class for children ages 3 to 6 helping to prepare for their role as an older sibling; \$20 fee (2 adults, 1 child). To register, call 503-574-6595.

Birthing Naturally -- Beginning Tuesday, Feb. 5, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., this six-week series prepares new parents-to-be to experience as natural a birth experience as possible. To register, call 503-256-4000.

Newborn Care -- Saturday, Jan. 19, from noon to 5 p.m., expectant parents will learn tips and techniques for caring for their newborn; \$45 fee per couple. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Welcome to Medicare -- Make informed Medicare choices, attend the free class to explain Medicare options, Jan. 17, and Feb. 21, from 7 to 9 p.m., at the Bruning Center in Gresham, 1484 N.W. Civic Dr. For registration information, call 503-491-7572.

Mammography Screening -- Early detection is a key factor in the prevention of breast cancer. Call 503-251-6137 to schedule your high-tech, soft-touch mammogram.

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 and more for individuals and families dealing with cancer. The center is open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Softball Program		Regular Sign-ups	Baseball Program	
Level	Ages	\$64/T-Ball, \$74 All other levels	Level	Ages
Minor	7 - 9	This fee includes the pepperoni fund raiser.	T-Ball	5 - 6
Major	10 - 12	Sell one bag of pepperoni and get \$24 off fee.	Farm	7 - 8
Junior	13 - 14	Each bag contains 24 sticks	Minor	7 - 9
Questions contact:		Peninsula Park Community Center	Major	10 - 12
Mark Washington ~		700 N Portland Blvd	Junior	13 - 14
503-997-9720		February 2	Questions contact:	
markw@portlandobserver.com		February 9, and February 16	Jjay Lincoln ~	
Items to bring to sign-ups:		9:00 am to 1:00 pm	503-823-3692	
Birth Certificate		February 21	jlincoln@ci.portland.or.us	
Proof of Address		6:30 pm to 8:30 pm	Registration forms can be picked up Mon-Fri,	
Doctor/Insurance Information			9am-5pm at the Portland Observer, 4747 NE Martin	
Player Fee			Luther King Jr Blvd.	

Little League Baseball, Incorporated does not limit participation in its activities on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, gender, sexual preference or religious preference.