

HEALTH MATTERS



For Your Health

Fighting Alzheimer's

BY LARRY LUCAS

The word "retirement" typically conjures images of days filled with golf, reading, family time and vacationing. I'm lucky to have my health to allow me to enjoy these types of leisure activities today, but I also recognize that as our bodies age, so do our minds.

While it's expected that you may forget the name of your high school class president, forgetting how to complete simple tasks like tying your golf shoes is a frightening prospect. Unfortunately, it's one that faces millions of Americans, including the aging Baby Boomer generation, the first of which turns 65 next year.

Already, 5.1 million Americans suffer from dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, which is the most common form of dementia among seniors. Alzheimer's begins by destroying brain cells and causing problems with memory, thinking and behavior severe enough to affect work, lifelong hobbies or social life. It is a condition that worsens over time

and is ultimately fatal. The number of Alzheimer's patients will only rise with the aging Baby Boomer generation; in fact, an estimated 13.5 million Americans are expected to be living with Alzheimer's by 2015.

A recent report from the Alzheimer's Association found that the African-American community is twice as likely as its white counterparts to develop Alzheimer's — potentially because we have a higher rate of vascular disease than others, which is a suspected risk factor for Alzheimer's.

In addition, minorities' cases of Alzheimer's typically go undiagnosed far longer than those of white patients, allowing the disease to worsen without the help of available treatments to slow its progression. This is why it's important to know the warning signs of Alzheimer's and to visit your doctor for regular checkups.

As with other age-related diseases, early detection is key, and being aware of the symptoms is essential for fighting Alzheimer's. Early warning signs

include severe memory loss, difficulty completing previously easy tasks, regularly misplacing things, confusing familiar places and drastic changes in mood or personality.

If you or a family member is experiencing Alzheimer's-related symptoms, be sure to see your doctor immediately. Early diagnosis will provide the best chance to receive the most effective treatments.

The good news is studies have shown that by doing simple mental exercises, such as crossword puzzles, reading the newspaper and keeping a journal, you can offset the disease's affect on the brain. There are also steps you can take around the house to help maintain your independence.

The Alzheimer's Association suggests using memory aids like labels and reminder notes, staying active and making home safety improvements.

It is possible to live with Alzheimer's if simple adjustments are made, medicines are taken as prescribed and we take care of our bodies. The golden years are to be savored — not forgotten.

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

HEALTH WATCH

Tenderfoot Care -- Treat your feet with a soak, nail trim, buffing and massage from a licensed nurse at one of six clinics or at your home. Call 503-251-6303 for more information.

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.

Families with Mental Illness -- A free, 12-week course for people whose family members live with mental illness is offered at Emanuel Hospital, Mt. Hood Medical Center and Providence Medical Center. The course has been described as "life-changing" by former participants. Registration is required by calling 503-203-3326.

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

Better Breathers -- An asthma educational support group meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month from 1:15 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. at Adventist Medical Center. For information, call 503-251-6830.

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.

Lead Poisoning Prevention -- Learn how to protect your family from lead poisoning. Ideal for folks in live in older homes with children or pregnant women. Qualified participants receive a free kit of safety and testing supplies. Call 503-284-6827.

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.

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

Stroke Alert Screening -- Check your carotid arteries with a painless ultrasound to assess your risk. Fee \$40. To schedule a screening, call 503-251-6137.

Empowerment through Relaxation -- Free informal meditation classes that address breathing techniques, some gentle ancient African yoga poses and mental balancing techniques -- People have left these classes joyful and with a peaceful view of their lives. Call Dr. Marcelitte Failla at 503-228-6140.

Powerful Tools For Caregivers -- 6-week educational series designed to help family caregivers take care of themselves while caring for relatives or friends with chronic illness. Class size is limited, and registration is required. Call 503-413-8018.

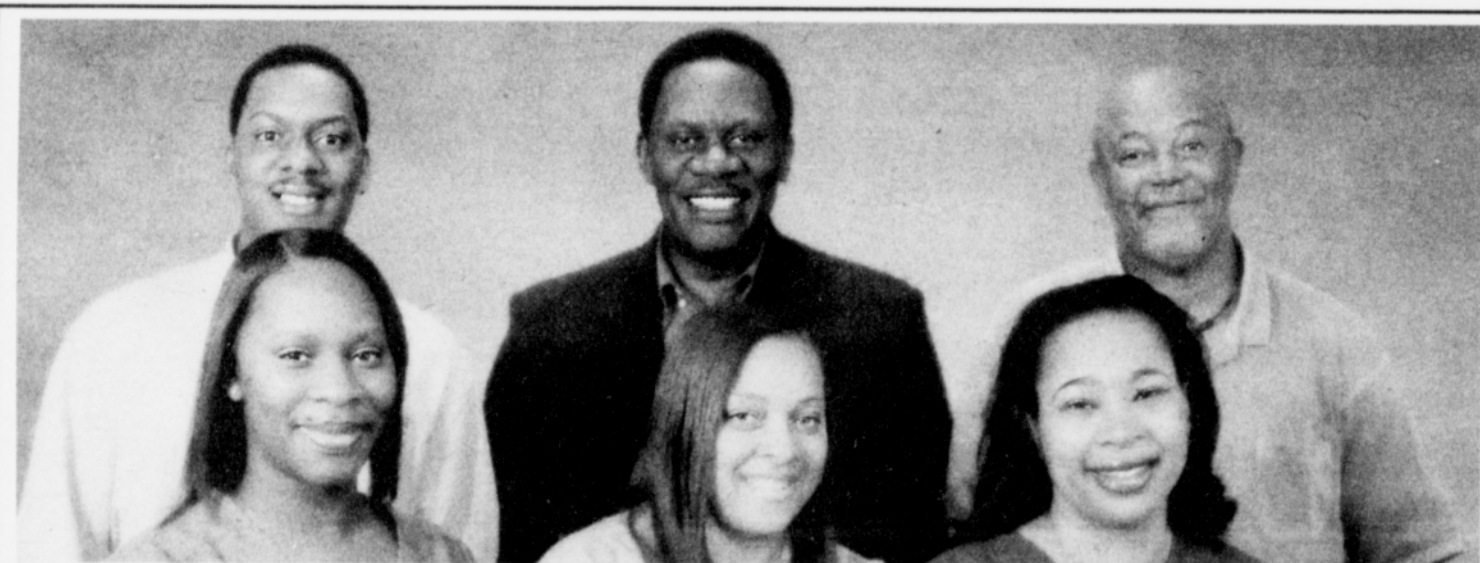
Leg Alert Screening -- Check for peripheral arterial disease with this safe, simple screening using ankle and arm blood pressure. The fee is \$40. To schedule an appointment, call 503-251-6137.

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

Heart Talk Support Group -- Meets on the second Monday of each month; from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, call 503-251-6260.

Family Caregiver Support Group -- This topic-oriented group offers a safe place to discuss the stresses, challenges and rewards of providing care to an older relative or friend. Meets the first Thursday of each month at 3 p.m. at Legacy Good Samaritan Hospital. Chronic Pain Support Group -- Meets the first Wednesday at 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and the third Wednesday of each month, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. For more information, call 503-256-4000.

Cholesterol Profiles -- Get the resources to help you keep an eye on your cholesterol and other indicators of heart health. Educational material provided. For more information, call 503-261-6611.



Dr. Billy R. Flowers (above center) and his skilled staff are ready to help those in need.

THE SPINA COLUMN™

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

Thank you: A Happy and healthy
New Year to our great patients.

Now is the season to reflect on the events of the past year and look ahead to all the New Year has to offer. This past year has certainly been a happy one for all of us. We've had so many kind and wonderful patients.

To all of you, "thank you." We appreciate your courtesy and your zeal to share with friends how Chiropractic's natural healing has helped you. It is really exciting to have more and more people aware of the healing power of nature.

Only nature creates and only nature can truly heal.

We look forward to continue serving those of you who've made the natural selection: Chiropractic. The only major health science whose only side effects are improved health and greater sense of

well-being. If you ever have any questions about your health or about any of our many services, we'll always be happy to help.

Again, we wish you a Happy Holiday and continued health through-out the coming New Year.

Flowers' Chiropractic Office

2124 N.E. Hancock Street, Portland Oregon 97212

Phone: (503) 287-5504