

## HEALTH

## For Your Health

BY LARRY  
LUCAS

When life begins, a person is born completely dependent on others for his or her well-being. As we age, the relationship between child and parent becomes more balanced. And as life goes on, we become aware that our elders also have needs, and our roles slowly reverse.

Being a caregiver to a parent can be both emotionally and physically trying. Yet as Thanksgiving Day nears, we also reflect on how grateful we are to have our loved ones in our lives. Serving as a caregiver for a family member can also be incredibly rewarding, and for many, it is the ultimate expression of gratitude.

November celebrates "National Family Caregivers Month," a time to recognize the enduring efforts of

families, partners, friends and neighbors to sustain and improve the quality of life for others.

The AARP Public Policy Institute estimates that the nation's 65 million unpaid caregivers not only comprise the foundation of the nation's long-term care system, but also critically impact the U.S. economy with a contribution valued at about \$350 billion.

Being a caregiver is a tough role to fill. It can feel like you're "on call" around the clock — without any of the financial benefits that most health care professionals receive.

## Caregiving is Tough Role to Fill

As a result, caregivers have higher stress levels than average Americans, especially if they're caring for someone afflicted by a particularly difficult condition such as dementia or Alzheimer's disease — both of which are more likely to affect those in the African-American community.

It's easy to put your own health on the backburner when you're continuously fixated on the well-being of another. But it's important to make your health a top priority. Thankfully, there are groups across the country dedicated to helping caregivers cope with their admirable but arduous roles. The Family Caregiver Alliance suggests incorporating exercise into your daily routine, scheduling regular check-

ups with your doctors and participating in pleasant, nurturing activities.

This November, do what you can to ensure that your loved ones are receiving the care they need. Make sure those who are eligible are taking advantage of Medicare's Open Enrollment Period, which ends Dec. 7. Medicare plans change from year to year, so examining seniors' options for the upcoming year is important in guaranteeing they select the plan best suited to meet their unique health needs.

Medicare counselors are available to help answer questions about Medicare Part D coverage. Give them a call at 1-800-MEDI-

CARE, or visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) for more information.

Patients not eligible for Medicare can turn to the Partnership for Prescription Assistance (PPA), a nationwide effort sponsored by America's pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies that has helped connect nearly 7 million uninsured and financially-struggling Americans to programs that provide prescription medicines for free or at low cost. For more information call 1-888-4PPA-NOW or visit [www.pparx.org](http://www.pparx.org).

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

## HEALTH WATCH

**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](http://providence.org/classes).

**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.

**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.

**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 infor-

mation, call 503-261-6611.

**Bereavement Support Groups** -- Free, safe confidential group meetings for those who have experienced the death of a loved one offered on various nights and locations. For information and registration, call 503-215-4622.

**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.

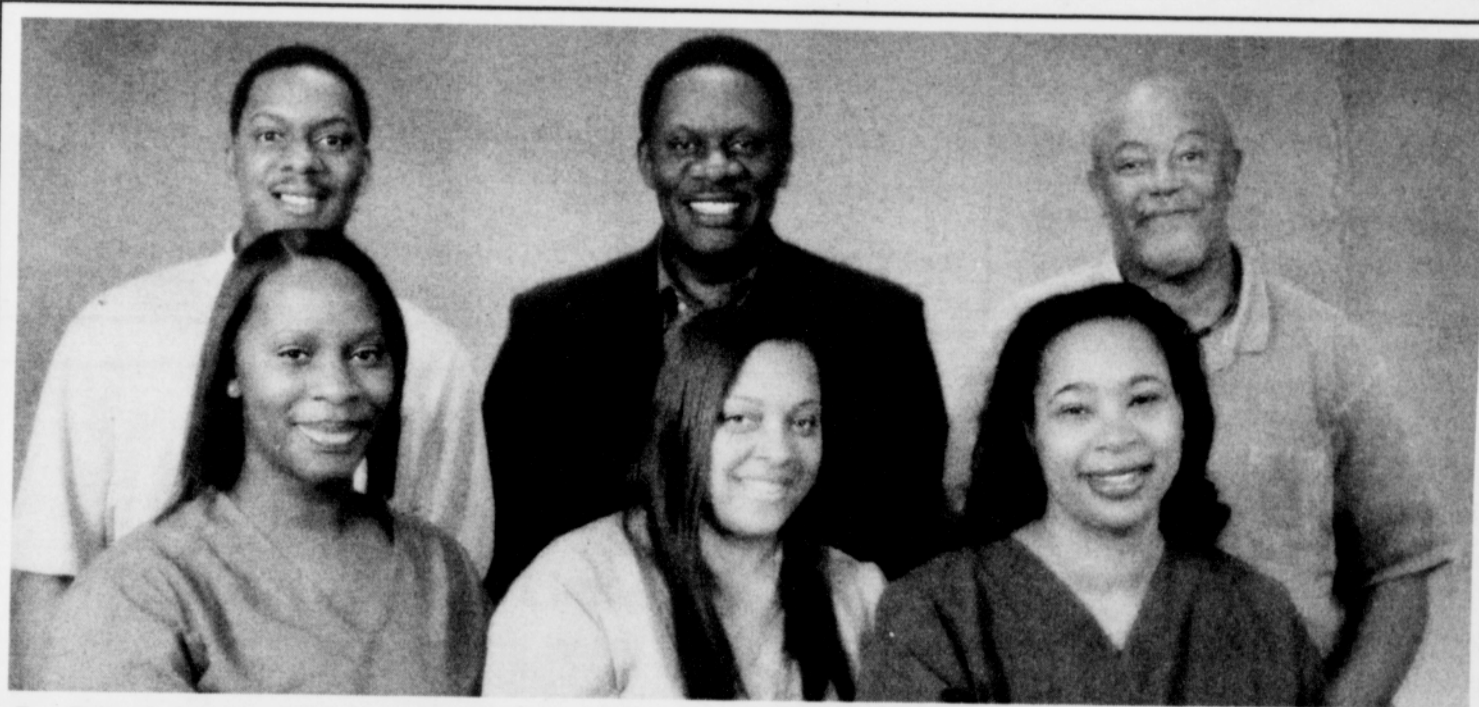
**Senior Aerobics** -- A low-impact workout geared specifically toward seniors. Call 503-449-0783 for current schedule.

**Mind Body Health Class** -- Learn and practice techniques to help you improve your mood, health and wellbeing, including effective ways to manage difficult emotions and chronic stress or illness. Registration is \$70 for Kaiser Permanent members and \$95 for nonmembers. Call 503-286-6816.

**Red Cross Certification** -- The Oregon Trail Chapter Red Cross now offers credits to help professionals maintain licensing or certification. For a cumulative list, visit [pdxinfo.net](http://pdxinfo.net).

**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.

**Weight Loss Help** -- Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) meetings are held every Wednesday from 8:45 to 10 a.m. at the Hollywood Senior Center, 1820 N.E. 40th Ave. Anyone interested is invited to visit and learn more. For details, call 503-287-0731.



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.

### Part 8. CONSTIPATION:

#### The backing up of body's sewage system.

**Q:** Nothing has ever really helped my constipation. What can Chiropractic possibly do?

**A:** As a natural form of healing, there is much a Chiropractic and the improved lifestyle we recommend can do to remove the immediate distress and long term health hazards of constipation. But before we begin, you should understand that constipation takes two approaches. The first is the tight, sometimes painful feeling in the lower back area. The second and more insidious type is what we call "hidden constipation." This is when we seemingly

move our bowels regularly, but never completely eliminate everything in our colon (large intestine). This causes the colon to back up and spread toxic poisons throughout the body. This can lead to everything from sinusitis to allergies to arthritis.

Chiropractic can help to alleviate this problem by gently turning nerves back on in the colon and small intestine. It is not uncommon for a patient

to have two, three or even four bowel movements after the first adjustments on his or her spine. A man with FBSS (failed back surgical syndrome) went home and had 12 bowel movements that night. And he claimed he wasn't even constipated! Whatever questions you might have about health and healing, you'll find that Chiropractic is often the answer. Call us for an appointment today.

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