

Health Notes

By Audeen Wagner



Free Blood Pressure Checkups

Providence Family Medicine-Vernonia is embarking on a new community-wide program of free blood pressure checks. These will be done at the Senior Center starting November 21, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. One of the clinic staff will be on hand to administer the checkups.

This program is for adults of any age; if you already know you have hypertension, you might want to take advantage of this service. Even if you haven't had your blood pressure checked for awhile, it's worthwhile getting a check just to know how you are doing. And, it's free. No appointment needed.

Schedule:

- Friday, November 21, from 10:30 to 11:30.
- Friday, December 12, 10:30-11:30
- Friday, January 9
- Friday, January 23.

The clinic will monitor how many out there are participating, then will decide on the exact timing of the sessions. The number of people taking advantage of this service will determine whether this "blood pressure clinic" will be offered for an hour, or just a half-hour each time. It will definitely be held twice monthly, starting in January.

It doesn't take much time to do a BP check, and it might be either an important early-warning sign, or a quick reassurance that your blood system is working right. Bring along any related questions you might have about your blood pressure readings.

Mammovan Schedule for December: Wednesday, December 10. Call the Clinic (503.429.9191) for an appointment.

Vision van brings vision care to local communities

Pacific University's College of Optometry has a new way to provide eye and vision care to citizens throughout local communities: The College has acquired a full-service mobile eye and vision care van.

"The customized Isuzu NPR turbo diesel box van, which contains a fully equipped mobile eye clinic, brings the exam room to the doorsteps of patients with limited mobility and allows us to expand our outreach services," said Kenneth Eakland, associate dean for clinical programs at Pacific's College of Optometry. "We can take this van to areas where, for a variety of reasons, individuals may not be able to get to a more traditional clinic."

"Pacific offers the only mobile vision care program we are

aware of in our area," said Steven Fletcher, director of advancement for the College. "We can now provide vision screenings and full-service care, which might include comprehensive vision examinations and diagnostic testing, at retirement centers, correctional institutions, and migrant labor camps."

The van's purchase was partially financed by a \$30,518 grant from the Northwest Health Foundation. Gifts from private donors provided funds and medical equipment.

"It is important for all individuals to receive proper eye care, and we are delighted that we can now bring eye care to people who can't get to our College clinics," said Eakland, who designed and oversaw the van's

conversion from a utility vehicle into a fully functional mobile vision clinic.

To learn more about the mobile vision clinic, or any of Pacific's College of Optometry clinics in the Portland Metropolitan area, call 503-352-2753.

Pacific's College of Optometry is the only institution in the Pacific Northwest providing the Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) degree and one of 18 such institutions in North America. The College is home to approximately 350 students who come from every state in the nation and several foreign countries to receive their professional education. The College affiliated with Pacific University in 1945.

Nutritional needs change with age

Getting the proper nutrients becomes more of a challenge as we age because more nutrients are needed. As people age they expend fewer calories in physical activity. Even the most active aging body gradually loses lean muscle tissue, and less muscle means a lower calorie requirement.

The key is packing more vitamins and minerals into fewer calories. Here are some of the nutrients needed in larger amounts as we age:

Calcium keeps the bones and teeth strong and also helps regulate blood pressure, which tends to rise with age. Older body's ability to absorb calcium declines with age.

After age 50 the goal is 1,200 milligrams every day. Good food sources include low-fat dairy products like milk and yogurt, canned salmon and sardines with the bones, calcium fortified orange juice, broccoli, kale and beans.

Folate helps reduce blood levels of homocysteine, which is associated with increased risk for heart disease. Folate is also necessary for red blood cell formation and protein synthesis and may help brain function.

The recommended amount for all adults is 400 micrograms. Good sources include beans, green vegetables, fortified grain foods like bread, cereal, pasta and rice.

Riboflavin helps keep oral tissues and skin healthy. It is also needed for normal eye health and lets enzymes release energy from food.

Women need 1.1 milligrams

and men need 1.3 milligrams daily. Food sources include milk, dark green vegetables, meat, whole-or enriched-grain foods.

Vitamin B-6 may help maintain brain function and is essential for formation of antibodies. Additional Vitamin B-6 is needed due to age-related changes in metabolism.

The recommended amount is 1.3 milligrams up to age 50; 1.5 milligrams for women older than 50 and 1.7 milligrams for men older than 50. Good food sources include baked potatoes with the skin, bananas, chicken, beef, canned tuna, and whole-grain foods.

Vitamin B-12 is necessary for mental dexterity, balance and muscular function. It may also prevent heart disease.

The recommended amount of Vitamin B-12 is 2.4 milligrams throughout adulthood. Adults over 50 should take a supplement with B-12 or regularly eat B-12 fortified cereal.

Vitamin D is needed to absorb and metabolize calcium. As we age, the skin loses ability to synthesize Vitamin D from sunlight.

The recommended amount is 200 International Units daily through age 50; 400 units from 51 to 70; and 600 units for people older than 70. Food sources include fortified milk, some fortified cereals (check the label); and fatty fish including salmon, sardines, herring and mackerel.

Source: Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter, October 2003

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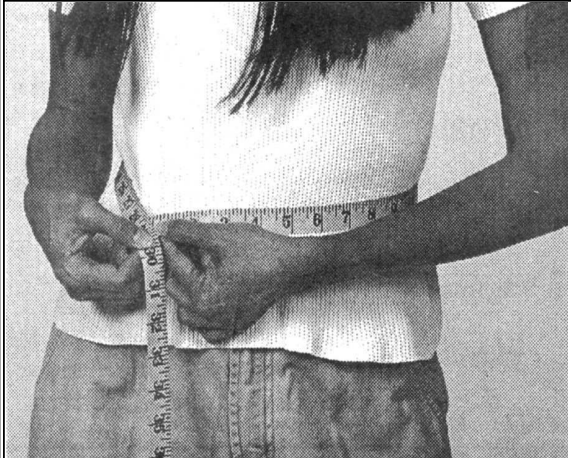
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