

To Your Health!

By Judy Hargis, P.A., and Audeen Wagner



SWINE FLU

We're hearing news every day about Swine Flu – or H1N1 (“swine flu” and “H1N1” seem to be used interchangeably). We're all concerned about what will happen this fall and winter with this new flu threatening us.

Heidi Brown, Vernonia's School Nurse, suggests websites such as the CDC for accurate and helpful information based on scientific study and latest guidelines. Admittedly, it is a guessing game as to exactly what will transpire, in terms of numbers and severity. They do use the word “pandemic” though, which suggests that it is world-wide in scope and is quickly spread from “human to human.” Before school started, Heidi attended a county-wide meeting with other school nurses to discuss the H1N1 virus, and she will be working with the schools, and sharing new information.

The CDC reports that the symptoms of H1N1 are very similar to those of the flu that we see every year: fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, chills and fatigue. Many people who have been infected with the new H1N1 virus also have diarrhea and vomiting. Keep in mind that in the vast majority of cases, it is expected that most people infected with H1N1 will get well without medical care. If you are infected with Swine Flu, you may be sick for a week or more; during this time it is important for you to avoid contact with others as much as possible for 24 hours after the fever is gone. And, seek medical care if symptoms worsen – for more severe infections, there are antiviral prescription medications available. (We are cautioned NOT to use aspirin or aspirin-containing products in patients under 18 years, due to the risk of Reye's Syndrome, instead use Tylenol, Advil or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.)

Prevention: Be very careful with personal hygiene. Most important is to wash your hands often, using thorough hand-washing techniques. This is not just rinsing your hands under the faucet – use hot water and soap, and continue washing for 15 seconds or longer. (If soap and water are not readily available, use one of the many alcohol-based hand cleaners, such as Purell, available at many supermarkets and all pharmacies.) And make sure to cover any cough or sneeze: use a tissue and discard it immediately, and wash your hands afterwards. (A good tip from Heidi: If a tissue or handkerchief is not available, sneeze or cough into your sleeve – the cloth in your sleeve will help prevent the virus from spreading.) All this may sound pretty nitpicky, but it is the first thing any health professional tells you – “wash often and cover your cough.” It is the first line of defense in contacting the disease and/or spreading it.

Vaccine? Reports vary, but, says Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, “it will likely be Thanksgiving before a significant number of Americans who get the swine flu vaccine are protected.” Clinical trials are underway now, and it is expected that the first 50 million doses will be available by mid-October. People in the high risk group – school children, pregnant women, and people of any age with chronic medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease – will likely be first in line to receive the vaccine.

What's happening locally? The Vernonia School District has sent a letter to every school family stressing the school's concern and activities in facing the issue of a potential outbreak of this flu in local schools. Dating back to last year, the school staff has stepped up its efforts to sanitize all surfaces in all buildings, and will continue to do so on a daily basis; and teachers and staff will continue to oversee careful hand-washing several times a day. The letter outlines CDC suggestions for families caring for family members with Swine

Please see page 22

What do you know about water?

Did you know that water makes up about 70 percent of the human body? Water plays a vital role in physical health:

- Water is an important part of regulating body temperature; it helps cool you down when you need it most. When your body heats up, water in the surrounding tissue absorbs the heat, which is released through perspiration.

- Water helps dissolve chemical compounds in the body, and many chemical reactions occur in water in our body. Water also moves waste products and toxins from the body.

- Water helps lubricate the eyes, mouth, nose, knees and other joints.

Most people can meet their daily hydration needs by letting thirst be their guide. However, it is important to note that the thirst signal is not always reli-

able. Infants, the elderly, and those who are ill may need to be offered water often. Not getting enough water leads to progressively uncomfortable sensations; loss of appetite, slowed movement, crankiness and fatigue, nausea, headaches, increased heartbeat, dizziness, and difficulty speaking. Dehydration can be fatal.

Drink water when you feel thirsty. Drink more when you are more active and when the weather is warmer. To help fit fluids in: keep water available and in sight; eat plenty of fruits and vegetables throughout the day; and watch alcohol and beverages with high amounts of caffeine, such as coffee and some energy drinks – they can contribute to dehydration.

Source: Anne Hoisington. OSU Extension Food and Nutrition, Senior Instructor

Free presentation on sweeteners

A 90-minute Evening Chat on Sweeteners will be held on Thursday, September 24, starting at 6:00 p.m. at the Tuality Health Education Center, 334 SE 8th Ave., Hillsboro.

The world of sweeteners has grown significantly in the past few years. Are they safe? How

much is too much? How about just using sugar? What about high fructose corn syrup? Learn the pros and cons of the various sweeteners (even sample some) at this free presentation.

Please call 503-681-1700 if you plan to attend.

September is Nat'l Recovery Month

As part of September's National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, the Oregon Department of Human Services calls on friends, family and community members to educate themselves and support those with addiction problems and those in recovery from addictions.

“Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski has issued a proclamation recognizing September as Recovery Month here in Oregon,” says Karen Wheeler, the addictions policy manager at DHS. “Now is the time to celebrate and educate. Addiction is a chronic, relapsing condition requiring life-long management but treatment works and recovery is possible.”

In Oregon, nearly 260,000 adults and adolescents are in need of critical services to battle alcohol and drug addictions. Recovery Month is part of a national effort to raise awareness about the benefits of treatment, praise treatment providers for

their work, reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with addiction and promote the message that with treatment, recovery is possible.

The 2009 theme, “Join the Voices for Recovery: Together We Learn, Together We Heal,” emphasizes the need to use all resources to educate people about the disease of addiction, seek help and heal. This is the 20th anniversary of National Recovery Month.

Patty Katz, a former addict, says, “I lost my child, my family, my health and my freedom to drugs and alcohol. Some said there was no hope for me, but with the help of some very caring people I found my way back, got treatment and saved my life. If I can do it anyone can.”

If you would like to locate alcohol or other drug treatment providers visit: www.oregon.gov/DHS/addiction/publications/provider-directory.pdf



VERNONIA INN

Enjoy a quiet weekend with us.

FULL SIZE, IN ROOM HOT TUBS


Queen Beds • Private Bath • Separate Entrance
Cable TV • Phones • Handicapped Access
• Commercial Rates

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL

1-800-354-9494 / 503-429-4006

Gift Certificates Available

900 MADISON AVE., VERNONIA, OR 97064
Just one block off scenic Nehalem River Hwy. (Oregon 47)



Terry's Gym

A COMPLETE
CO-ED GYM
FACILITY

(503) 429-0501
16720 Noakes Rd Vernonia, OR