



# COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERSHIP FOCUS

FALL 2011

HEALTH NEWS & INFORMATION FOR OUR MEMBERS

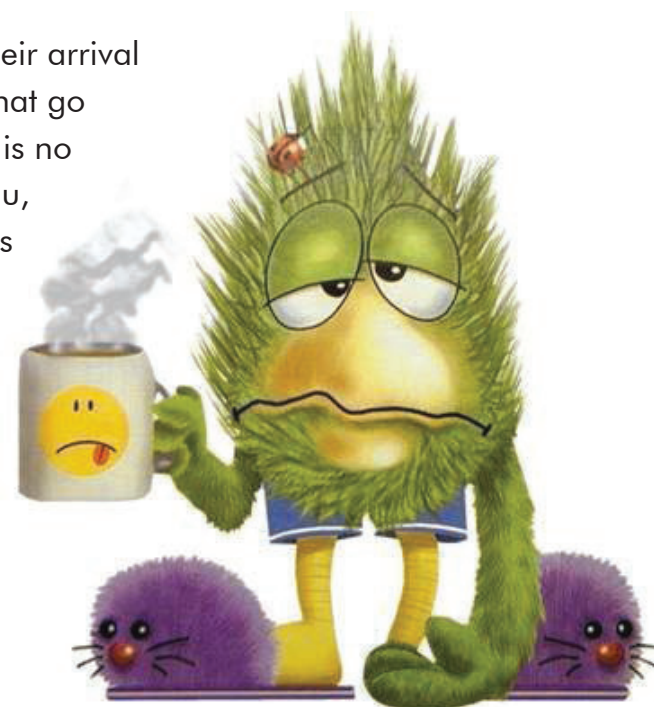
## IN THIS ISSUE

- pg **2** How to Prepare for Cold & Flu Season
  - Keep Vaccinations Up to Date
  - Memory Loss: What's Normal. What's Not.
- pg **4** Arthritis: A Pain in the Joint!
- pg **5** • Five Major Types of Arthritis  
• Chronic Disease Workshop
- pg **6** Understanding Mammograms
- pg **7** CHP Teams Using New Quality Measurement Tool
- pg **8** • Advance Directives  
• Member Council Gives Input on Member Services

## How to Prepare for *Cold & Flu Season*

The winter months will soon be here, and with their arrival come sore throats, coughs, and nasal congestion that go along with the cold and flu season. Although there is no guaranteed way to prevent catching a cold or the flu, there are steps you can take to reduce your chances of getting sick.

- 1. Know the difference between a cold and the flu.** A cold can last two or three weeks — most people are better within seven to ten days. On the other hand, without proper care or attention, a flu virus can lead to bronchitis or pneumonia, each of which can cause permanent health damage (see chart on next page for more information)...



See **How to Prepare for Cold & Flu Season** page 2

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# How to Prepare for *Cold & Flu Season*

Cont'd from page 1

2. **Wash your hands.** Frequent washing with warm water and ordinary soap for ten seconds is one of the simplest and most effective ways to avoid catching a cold or flu. Use antibacterial, alcohol-based foams and gels when you don't have access to soap and water.
3. **Disinfect your home regularly.** Spray the surfaces in your bathroom and kitchen with a mild solution of two to five percent bleach in water to kill viruses and bacteria.
4. **Get a flu vaccination if you're in a high-risk population.** This includes:
  - people living in long-term facilities and group homes
  - adults over the age of 65
  - adults and children with chronic diseases such as diabetes, asthma, emphysema, and kidney disease
  - pregnant women who will be in the second or third trimester of their pregnancy during the flu season
  - people with weakened immune systems, such as HIV-positive individuals or cancer patients who are undergoing chemotherapy
  - health care providers
5. **Prepare yourself before the flu season hits.** Flu vaccines are made with a killed virus that cannot give

you the flu! Vaccines are not 100% effective, so you may still get a less severe case of the flu after receiving the vaccine. The vaccine takes about two weeks to become fully effective in your body. Talk to your CHP Interdisciplinary Team about how and where you can get your flu shot.

6. **Stay hydrated.** Dehydration can weaken your immune system. Make sure you drink plenty of water. When the body is properly hydrated, it flushes out toxins and waste efficiently. If the wastes are not removed from the body, the immune system does not function at its best level.
7. **Eat a well-balanced diet.** It's essential to building a healthy immune system, and it provides sources of energy and nutrition. Taking a daily multivitamin, especially when you're fatigued or stressed, also helps ensure that you will receive an adequate dose of minerals and vitamins.
8. **Get plenty of rest.** On average, humans require seven to eight hours of sleep every night. Lack of sleep can lower the immune system's ability to react when needed. Without sufficient sleep, the immune system is hard-pressed to keep up with its nightly repair work and creates an opening for opportunistic diseases.

9. **Stock your medicine cabinet with a supply of single-system drugs such as cough suppressants, pain relievers, and antihistamines.** Cold symptoms tend to appear in sequence, not all at once, so multi-symptom formulas often give you too much or not enough medicine for any given symptom.

10. **If you've got a cold, don't ask your doctor to prescribe antibiotics.** They do not kill cold viruses and can lead to resistant strains of bacteria. Prevention is still the best approach to combat the cold virus.

SYMPTOMS .....	COLD .....	FLU .....
<b>Fever</b>	Rare	Usual; High (100°F); can be higher especially in young children; lasts 3-4 days
<b>Headache</b>	Rare	Common
<b>General Aches/Pains</b>	Slight	Usual, often severe
<b>Fatigue/Weakness</b>	Sometimes	Usual, can last 2-3 days
<b>Extreme Exhaustion</b>	Never	Usual, at beginning of illness
<b>Stuffy Nose</b>	Common	Sometimes
<b>Sneezing</b>	Usual	Sometimes
<b>Sore Throat</b>	Common	Sometimes
<b>Chest Discomfort/Cough</b>	Mild to moderate; hacking cough	Common, can become severe



## KEEP ALL YOUR VACCINATIONS UP TO DATE

A yearly flu vaccine can help you stay healthy during flu season as well as prevent serious complications from the flu. You should also consider asking your doctor about other vaccines including:

- Pneumonia vaccine - While a pneumonia vaccine is usually administered in a one-time dose, you may need a five-year booster shot if you are having complications from diabetes or are age 65 or older.
- Tetanus - Stay up to date with your tetanus shot and its 10-year boosters.
- Hepatitis B vaccine - Ask your doctor about the hepatitis B vaccine if your lifestyle is causing you to be at risk of contracting this serious disease
- Other vaccines - Depending on your individual circumstances, your doctor may recommend other vaccines such as Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR), and Varicella (Chickenpox)

November is Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

# MEMORY LOSS

## WHAT'S NORMAL? WHAT'S NOT?

It's common to occasionally forget where you put your keys, where you parked your car, or the name of an old classmate. As a person ages, it may take longer to retrieve memories. Though not all older adults experience memory changes, these are a normal part of aging. This type of memory problem is more inconvenient than serious.

We remember things by association. Our brains receive information through our senses: touch, sight, smell, and hearing.

We will retain the information if we concentrate, rehearse, and use our imaginations to make an association between the new information and something we already know. For instance, "Roy G. Biv" helps many people remember the colors of the rainbow — red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.

Sometimes the challenge is not in remembering but in retrieving information from the millions of items we've already stored. As we age it may take longer to find the information we retained ten years ago, but it's still there.

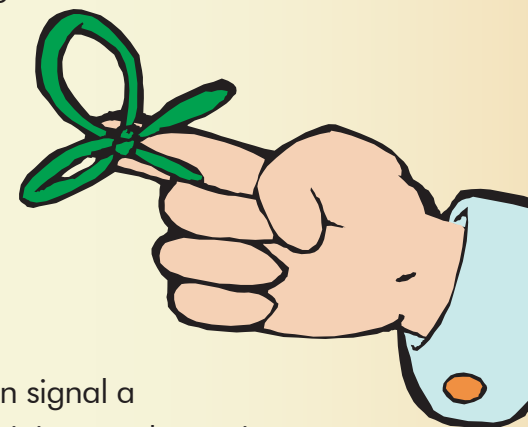
Memory loss that begins suddenly or significantly interferes with the ability to function in daily life may indicate a more serious problem. Some memory problems are not part of normal aging.

- Forgetting how to do things you've done many times before
- Forgetting the names of familiar people
- Getting lost in your own town
- Having trouble learning new things or solving simple math problems
- Repeating stories within the same conversation
- Having trouble making choices or handling money
- Not being able to keep track of what happens each day

Experiencing one or more these concerns on a regular basis can signal a more serious problem such as medication interaction, depression, injury, or dementia.

One form of dementia is Alzheimer's disease, a progressive brain disorder that robs a person of their memory as nerve cells that normally receive, retain, and restore information break down and die. The disease begins slowly with one of the first symptoms being mild forgetfulness. This makes diagnosis challenging since most people experience mild forgetfulness due to age or stress.

Currently there is no known cure for Alzheimer's disease. However, researchers continue to develop and test drug treatment options that may slow the progression in the early or middle stages of Alzheimer's. In addition, medications that reduce symptoms, such as sleeplessness, anxiety, depression, and wandering, have been produced to alleviate some of the stress associated with the disease.



# You bend, twist, or stretch..

## ARTHRITIS: A PAIN IN

When pain and stiffness in your joints keep you from normal activity, you may be suffering from arthritis.

Literally arthritis means inflammation in the joint, but the generic term refers to over 100 different types of rheumatic conditions that cause pain, inflammation, and stiffness in the muscles, joints, and tendons.

Arthritis, one of America's most prevalent chronic health problems, is the leading cause of disability in adults and affects nearly one in three individuals.

While there are no cures for many types of arthritis, there are ways to be more active and to improve or maintain a person's quality of life. Daily exercise, a willingness to practice moderation in everyday activities, and learning to rest as needed will help people remain active. A comprehensive approach to arthritis care may also include medication. Whatever approach is taken, however, should involve guidance from a physician.

Although age, gender, and genetic makeup may predispose someone to certain types of arthritis, there are some factors that can be controlled.

**Play it safe.** Consider low-impact activities like walking or swimming that burn calories without stressing the joints. Starting slowly, doing warm-up exercises and paying attention to the signals your body is giving will allow you to gradually build strength and flexibility without overtaxing stiff joints. Daily stretching, in particular, helps reduce stiffness and helps keep joints and muscles flexible.

**Eat, drink, and be healthy!** Eat a balanced diet rich in calcium to keep bones strong. Extra-virgin olive oil also benefits levels of organic compounds in the body that mimic the effects of anti-inflammatory medications like aspirin and ibuprofen.

**Lose some weight.** Excess weight adds more stress on the joints. Losing just a few pounds may reduce joint pain and help prevent some forms of arthritis by 50 percent.

### **Don't push through the pain.**

Inflamed joints hurt. Pain is a signal that something is wrong. Working an inflamed joint can actually cause more damage to the cartilage and bone. Use an anti-inflammatory medication to reduce the inflammation and prevent more damage.

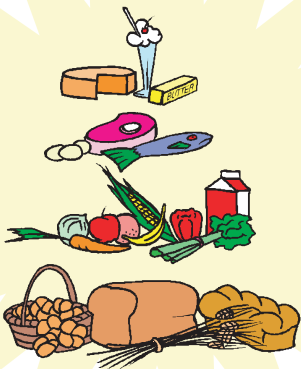
The recommended initial treatment for osteoarthritis is acetaminophen (Tylenol®). Other over-the-counter medications may also be used; however, prolonged use of any medication should be monitored by a physician.

**Relax.** Stress can cause muscle tension, joint pain, and fatigue. Drain away stress with a warm bath or a massage. Stiff, painful joints cause tension and stiffness in surrounding muscles. Relaxation therapy reduces tension and eases pain. Learning to relax your body can help you get to sleep more quickly and help you feel more in control of your life.

Exercise and relaxation can reduce your arthritis pain. There are steps you can take to help you feel better, be more active, and give you a sense of control over your lifestyle.

Arthritis symptoms can develop suddenly or slowly. If you have pain, stiffness, or swelling in or around a joint for more than two weeks, it's time to see a doctor.

Source: Health Connection-Ministry Health Care



# . and it hurts. THE JOINT!

## The Five Major Types of Arthritis

1

The most common type arthritis is **Osteoarthritis**, and is often referred to as “wear and tear” arthritis. This degenerative joint disease destroys cartilage, the flexible pads that cushion bones as they move on each other. Osteoarthritis is typically diagnosed in people over the age of 40. While there is no known cure for osteoarthritis, treatment may include physical therapy, weight control, use of medications, and, in severe cases, total joint replacement.

2

**Rheumatoid Arthritis** is an inflammatory disease which usually attacks membranes in bone joints, but it can also affect other organs. More common in women, rheumatoid arthritis can begin at any age and is associated with fatigue and prolonged stiffness after rest. Currently, there is no cure, but medications, surgery, and physical therapy can help reduce pain and disability.

3

**Gout** shows itself as an excruciatingly painful, red, hot, and swollen joint. More common in men, gout is often triggered by common medications and foods such as sardines, gravies, certain meats, and legumes. It results from the overproduction and deposit of uric acid crystals in tissues and fluids within the body.

4

**Lupus**, an autoimmune disease, is usually diagnosed in women when they are between the ages of 15 and 40. The disease leads to widespread inflammation and tissue damage of major organs. Along with pain and swelling in joints, people suffering from lupus may also experience fatigue, skin rashes, and fevers.

5

**Fibromyalgia** is usually characterized by muscular pain and fatigue. The actual cause of fibromyalgia is unknown but may be related to genetics and physical or emotional stressors. Diagnosis is difficult because the symptoms of fibromyalgia are similar to other diseases and there are no reliable tests.

## Chronic Disease Self-Management Workshop

Arthritis is just one of many chronic conditions that can affect an individual.

In an effort to assist our members who are dealing with chronic conditions, CHP is collaborating with the Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) in Eau Claire and St. Croix counties to offer a free Chronic Disease Self-Management Workshop program for CHP members. Sessions are held once a week for six weeks and are facilitated by representatives from the county’s ADRC staff and various volunteer facilitators.

Subjects covered in each structured two and a half hour session include: 1) techniques to deal with problems such as frustration, fatigue, pain, and isolation; 2) appropriate exercise for maintaining and improving strength, flexibility, and endurance; 3) appropriate use of medications; 4) communicating effectively with family, friends, and health professionals; 5) nutrition, and; 6) how to evaluate new treatments.

Each participant in the workshop receives a copy of a course companion book titled, *Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions*, along with an audio relaxation recording.

Classes are highly participative, and while not considered to be a “support group,” the expectation is that mutual support and success help build the participants’ confidence in their ability to manage their health and maintain active and fulfilling lives.

There is no participation fee. If you are interested in attending an upcoming workshop series or would like more information, please feel free to discuss this with your CHP interdisciplinary care team.

# Understanding Mammograms

Every woman wants to know what she can do to lower her risk of breast cancer. Some of the factors associated with breast cancer — being a woman, your age, and your genetics, for example — can't be changed. Other factors such as maintaining a healthy weight, exercising, smoking cigarettes, and eating nutritious food, can be changed by making choices. By choosing the healthiest lifestyle options possible, you can empower yourself and make sure your breast cancer risk is as low as possible. As with most any form of cancer, catching the disease early is key.



## TAKE THE STEP! HAVE A MAMMOGRAM.

There is no excuse for not taking this simple step that could save your life! If you won't do it for yourself, do it for the people who love you.

**Early detection saves lives.** The five-year survival rate for all women diagnosed with breast cancer is 90%, but when it is caught before it spreads, the rate jumps to 98%.

**Get checked.** Breast cancer is detected in its earliest stages by routinely checking your breasts for symptoms. This should be done through breast self-exams, which should be performed monthly by all women age 20 or older; clinical breast exams performed by a healthcare provider who checks your breasts and underarms at least once every three years, but preferably annually; and mammograms.

**Why mammograms?** Mammograms are able to detect much smaller tumors than manual breast exams, and that early detection can help save your life.

**What to expect during a mammogram.** The procedure itself generally takes about 15 minutes. You'll be undressed from the waist up. Each breast will be compressed between two plates and X-ray images will be taken: one from top and bottom and one side to side. The pressure may be uncomfortable so consider taking an over-the-counter pain pill an hour before. If it gets too painful, tell the technician.

## A MAMMOGRAM IN SIX EASY STEPS

- 1. Select a certified facility.** Your doctor may refer you to a facility, or you may choose one convenient for you.
- 2. Go when it's most comfortable.** Try to schedule your mammogram for when your breasts are less sensitive. If you are still menstruating, this would most likely be the week after your period.
- 3. Gather information.** You'll be asked lots of questions, including:
  - Personal history of breast cancer
  - Family history of breast cancer
  - Current breast problems
  - Past breast surgery
  - Date(s) of past mammogram(s)
  - Name and address of your doctor and any facility where you've had a mammogram before
- 4. Know what to expect.** Mammograms are less intimidating if you know what to expect. Undressed from the waist up, you'll stand in front of a machine and the technologist will place your breasts on a platform for pictures. Your breasts will be placed between plates.
- 5. Be prepared.** Wear a shirt you can take off easily. Don't use deodorants, antiperspirants, perfumes, powders, or lotions as they can show up as areas of concern on the mammogram. If you've had mammograms at other facilities, try to bring those X-rays with you.
- 6. Get your results.** You should have your results within two weeks. Ask how and when you will get them before you leave your appointment. If you haven't received them in two weeks, contact your doctor or the facility.

# CHP Teams Using New Quality Measurement Tool

This past spring the Quality Management Department at Community Health Partnership (CHP) designed a member self-reporting rating scale, which helps to determine whether members are supported with their outcomes.

The rating scale, called an “Outcome Impact Scale,” is designed to be a subjective outcome measurement tool. It gives members the opportunity to provide their opinion on how well a service they receive is supporting their outcome(s). The rating, in turn, helps the member’s interdisciplinary team determine if a change in services needs to be made in order to better support the member’s outcome.

The Outcome Impact Scale is a five-point rating scale printed on card stock

for the member to read. Using this scale, a 1 rating means that the member does not feel the service supports their outcome(s) and a 5 rating means that the member feels exceptionally supported with their outcome(s). Face illustrations are included on the scale to help members interpret the meaning of the ratings (see illustration).

The Outcome Impact Scale is being used to gather outcome ratings for each member who receives one or more services in any of the following categories: residential, vocational/day center, transportation, or supportive home care/personal care.






CHP’s interdisciplinary teams started using the Outcome Impact Scales this past July. Members who receive services in any of the categories noted above

are being asked at quarterly member visits to rate how well the service is supporting their outcome(s). (Since not all members receive these services, some individuals may not be asked to participate in this assessment project.)

Rating services based on categories allows the Quality Management Department to analyze the data based solely on the service and not on the provider as CHP’s focus is to provide the right service, in the right amount, in the right place, and at the right time.

At this time it is too early to report results as not all members have had a chance to complete their ratings. However, preliminary results are showing that members are feeling very supported in all four categories.

## OUTCOME IMPACT SCALE

1	2	3	4	5
Not Supported	Slightly Supported	Moderately Supported	Very Supported	Exceptionally Supported
				

# Important 2012 Member Materials

Very soon Partnership Program members will receive an envelope from CHP containing the 2012 Annual Notice of Changes (ANOC), the 2012 Summary of Benefits, and 2012 Formulary. The ANOC provides a short summary of the Partnership Program changes for 2012. The Summary of Benefits gives a brief description of the benefits offered in the Partnership Program but does not give complete details on the services we cover. The Formulary contains a list of covered drugs selected by CHP and a team of health care professionals. These drugs are the prescription therapies believed to be a necessary part of a quality treatment program.



In December CHP will mail the 2012 Evidence of Coverage (EOC), Low Income Subsidy (LIS) Rider, and 2012 Pharmacy Directory to Partnership Program members. The EOC is a booklet that includes details about Wisconsin Medicaid and Medicare health and long-term care services, prescription drug coverage, as well as complete information about the services covered through our Partnership Program. The Pharmacy Directory lists the Partnership Program's network of contracted pharmacies plus basic information about how to fill prescriptions.

In the first quarter of 2012, a complete 2012 Provider Directory will be mailed to Partnership Program members. The Provider Directory contains Partnership Health Plan's network of contracted doctors, clinics, hospitals and other providers that offer health care services.

Community Family Care members will receive an envelope containing the 2012 Member Handbook and a complete 2012 Provider Directory in December. The Member Handbook gives details about Family Care benefits. The Provider Directory contains our network of contracted long-term care providers who provide services.

Please keep these documents in a convenient place so you can refer to them anytime you have questions about your plan. Remember you can contact your Team or Customer Service regarding any questions or concerns you have about the information contained in these documents by calling 715-838-2900 or 1-800-482-1814.

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## Member Advisory Council Provides Input Related to Delivery of Member Services

As part of their overall care team, Community Health Partnership and Community Family Care members share and have a major responsibility in the decision-making process to help achieve the best overall treatment and support.

A key voice in maintaining that environment is the Member Advisory Council. The Member Advisory Council consists of members from Community Health Partnership and Community

Family Care. The council meets every other month to discuss issues, concerns, and provide feedback on services. Council members are also presented updates on programs and departments within Community Health Partnership, Inc.

The Member Advisory Council is interested in hearing your issues, concerns, and feedback on services. If you are interested in membership on the council, please contact the council's facilitator, TJ Atkins, the Member Rights Advocate, at 715-838-2773.

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FOCUS is a quarterly publication of Community Health Partnership, Inc. It is intended to provide health information and highlight matters and concerns related to Community Health Partnership's services. Information provided is not intended to be medical advice, a tool for self-diagnosis, or a substitute for care by a health care provider.

*Comments and suggestions can be submitted to: Community Health Partnership, Marketing & Communications, 2240 EastRidge Center, Eau Claire, WI 54701 or 715-838-2900, toll free 1-800-842-1814.*