



A gift for Mother's Day

Allow us to share in the celebration of spring and Mother's Day with a small gift – a simple gift of poetry called The Mother's Prayer. Noted American poet Robert Frost said:

"Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found words."

Emotions prove to be powerful when we think of babies, children, mothers, grandmothers, and families. The words in the prayer capture the emotions in a strong yet simple fashion.

The message of the prayer rings sweet and simple. Our hope is that you will enjoy and share it with all of the wonderful and important women in your life.

Mother's Prayer

Let me hold my children close these years when they are mine.

And give me grace to let them go their separate ways in time.

Make me grateful every day for lovely things that come my way.

Keep clear my eyes that I may see the riches that have come to me.

To request copies of the "Mother's Prayer" that are 8x10" and suitable for framing, call 863-294-7020.

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**Winter Haven
Hospital**

REGENCY CENTER
FOR WOMEN & INFANTS

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Women's Health Horizons
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This newsletter is produced by the Regency Center for Women and Infants, which is owned and operated by Winter Haven Hospital, Lance Anastasio, President.

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16th Annual

Women's Health

A benefit for the Winter Haven Hospital
Regency Center for Women & Infants

Fair





Regency hosts 16th annual Women's Health Fair

Over 250 ladies enjoyed the day at the Women's Health Fair which took place at the Regency Center for Women and Infants. The day is devoted to women and their health and wellness. "I wait for it all year. I have come every year since it started," shares Jean, who says she almost missed it this year because it was earlier in the year. "This is my sixteenth year," she explains, "and I love having one stop for so many important tests."

Blood chemistry profiles were completed for 151 women, with over one third of them showing elevated cholesterol levels. Nurses from the Bostick Heart Center were on hand to give advice on heart-smart recipes, exercise, and heart healthy living. Healthy snack samples, prepared by the hospital's nutrition staff, beautifully filled a food demonstration table. The luncheon fashion show took place in the dining room transformed into a brilliant garden with daisies atop orange and yellow centerpieces. The dining room was decorated by the Winter Haven Gardenia Garden Club. This year for the first time, fashions were modeled by men as well as women.

Is it possible that the words "relaxed, efficient, quick, organized, friendly" could be used when over 70 pap smears were completed in four hours? That such an accomplishment is possible stemmed from the attitude of outstanding physicians, staff, and volunteers who went out of their way to make women feel welcome and appreciated.

Many women took advantage of free screenings, as well, including skin cancer and foot screening. 59 ladies visited the podiatrist for a foot check, and 82 were screened for skin cancer by the dermatologist and nurse practitioner. Of those screenings, about 20% revealed suspicious findings with need for follow-up.

"I found out about my high blood pressure here last year," says an unlikely under-forty-year-old. "I had no idea that it could be high at my age."

"I take my health a lot more serious now."

Mission accomplished.



Research Corner

Ginkgo ineffective against high blood pressure

This study looked at the effects of the herb ginkgo biloba in over 3,000 older women and men. Participants, who averaged 79 years old, took either 120 mg of ginkgo or placebo twice a day. No differences in blood pressure were found after a follow-up of 6 years. The researchers suggest that further studies look at a younger population and assess other measures of vascular health.

American Journal of Hypertension (2/10)

Women who eat foods with high glycemic index may be at greater risk of heart disease

Eating high Glycemic carbohydrates that quickly affect blood glucose levels, may increase the risk of heart disease in women, but not men. High carb diets increase the levels of blood glucose and of harmful blood fats known as triglycerides while reducing levels of good HDL cholesterol. Not all carbohydrates have the same effect on blood glucose. This study followed 15,000 men and over 32,000 women. The one-fourth of women who ate the most carbs overall had nearly twice the risk of heart disease as the one-fourth who ate the least. And, a higher intake of high-glycemic foods was significantly associated with a greater risk of heart disease. The carbohydrate intake was not associated with heart disease in men. This is an important finding for women and emphasizes this as a potentially significant risk factor.

Archives of Internal Medicine (4/10)

'Fingerprinting' breast cancer cells

Researchers at the University of Arkansas are building a collection of synthetic antibodies that can detect proteins secreted by breast cancer cells. Their work can help the process of developing a simple blood test for early detection of breast cancer. The goal is to achieve early detection with a simple blood test. They hope their work will improve the current procedures being explored which are tedious and expensive. According to the CDC, 200,000 women are diagnosed each year with breast cancer, and 40,000 die. The researchers believe that it is possible in this generation to see a simple blood test that could detect breast cancer at very early stages and save thousands of lives.

University of Arkansas (2/10)

Walking associated with lower stroke risk

In a nearly 12 year study, women who walked two or more hours per week had a significantly (30%) lower risk of stroke than women who didn't walk. Women who walked at a brisk pace (3 mph or faster) had a 37% lower risk of any type of stroke. Researchers did not find a link between vigorous activity and reduced stroke risk. In studies with men, the relation between walking and stroke has been inconsistent. Current exercise recommendations include 150 minutes of moderate intensity per week or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity or a combination of both.

Stroke: Journal of the A.H.A. (4/10)



The important vitamin you may be lacking

For years, we have heard that if we got a few minutes of daily sun exposure and drank our fortified milk, our Vitamin D needs would be covered. Recent information shows that many people are getting insufficient amounts of Vitamin D, putting them at risk for health problems.

If you spend a lot of time indoors, have dark skin, are older, or severely overweight, you're more likely to be Vitamin D deficient. Even if you spend a lot of time outdoors but wisely cover up with sunscreen, you also keep this vitamin from reaching your skin and being used by the body.

We know that having low levels of Vitamin D has been linked to lower bone density and bone fractures. Now, Vitamin D deficiency may also contribute to other ailments. These risks include heart disease, several cancers including breast cancer in younger women, liver disease, autoimmune disease, and diabetes.

A quirk about this Vitamin is that it is nearly impossible to eat the amount of the nutrient you need. And getting it from the sun can be hard to control safely. So, taking Vitamin D in supplement form is the most reliable way to get what's needed.

Many experts now believe that the daily level of Vitamin D originally set (400 IU for Adults) was set too low. The Institute of Medicine is reviewing whether the daily Vitamin D amount for adults should be raised to 1,000 IU. The American Academy of Pediatrics has already recommended raising the levels for infants and children to 400 IU.

The best advice is to talk to your health care provider about your specific needs and whether you should have your Vitamin D level checked by a simple blood test.



Preventative HIV screenings covered by Medicare expansion

Addressing a growing issue in elder health care, the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has begun covering Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection screenings for Medicare beneficiaries who are at increased risk for the infection. Medicare will cover the HIV test once every 12 months. There is no cost for the test itself, but individuals generally have to pay 20 percent to the Medicare-approved amount for the doctor's visit.

The National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project recently showed that a majority of older adults regard sexuality as an important part of life and many are sexually active, including 53 percent among respondents age 65-74 and 26 percent among respondents age 75-85. However, only 38 percent of men and 22 percent of women in the study reported having discussed sex with a physician since age 50, meaning considerable high-risk behavior may go unrecognized.

“Every adult should know their HIV status,” said Dr. Howard K. Koh, assistant secretary for health with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. “This decision by Medicare should help promote screening and save lives.”

AIDS is diagnosed when an HIV-infected person's immune system becomes severely compromised or a person becomes ill with an HIV-related infection. Of the more than 1 million individuals estimated to be infected with HIV, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has estimated that about a quarter of them don't realize they are infected. CMS adds that more than half of new HIV infections are estimated to be sexually transmitted from infected individuals who are unaware of their HIV status.

Without treatment, AIDS is likely to develop within eight to 10 years. While there is currently no cure for HIV, screening can help identify infected patients so they can receive medical treatment that could help delay the onset of AIDS for years.

More information about Medicare's new HIV screening benefit is available by calling Medicare toll-free at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).



Chronic dry eye: What women should know

If you've been rubbing your eyes more often, using eye drops more than mascara, and giving up contact lenses in favor of glasses, you may have dry eye syndrome. The condition affects an estimated 3.2 million American women over age 50.

When you have chronic dry eye, you either don't produce enough tears, have poor quality tears, or have excessive tear evaporation. These problems cause the eyes to feel dry or irritated, to sting or burn, and sometimes to over-tear.

In women who wear contacts, there can be pain and redness in the eye, heavy eyelids, or blurred vision. Women suffer from dry eye much more often than men, and this is thought to be related to hormones. As women age, their production of testosterone drops. This can cause the lacrimal gland, which produces tears, to become inflamed.

Other things that can cause dry eye or make it worse are:

- Dry indoor air
- Contact lenses
- Car air conditioning vents aimed at your face
- Allergies
- Medications including some for high blood pressure, antidepressants, antihistamines, decongestants, muscle relaxants, and heart medications.

The early symptoms of chronic dry eye usually include eye redness, burning, stinging, and a gritty sensation in the eye. Your ophthalmologist or optometrist can diagnose dry eye during an eye exam. It's important to share information on all medications being taken.

The primary treatments for dry eye include over-the-counter eye drops, a non-surgical procedure called punctal plugging, or prescription eye medication. There is no cure for chronic dry eye, but you can help prevent evaporation of tears by avoiding anything that can cause dryness like wind and low humidity. Also remember to blink, because this helps spread your own tears more evenly. Placing

a humidifier inside the home and wearing wrap around sun glasses outside may also help. Stay away from cigarette smoke as this can be very bothersome.

And pay attention to diet since certain food and drinks can dehydrate your body – and your eyes. Chocolate, colas, coffee, and tea all contain caffeine, which robs your body of moisture. And, of course, remember to drink plenty of water every day.



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