



The Beacon

The Newsletter of
Med-Cert, Inc.
Volume 1
Issue 5
October 2002

Med-Cert Medical Management Resources

"Guiding your way to better health management"

Have a Happy AND Safe Halloween

Halloween is a cherished tradition but the excitement of the night can cause children to forget to be careful. There is no real "trick" to making Halloween a real treat for the entire family. The major dangers are not from witches or spirits but rather from falls and pedestrian/car crashes. Many communities officially designate a "Beggars' Night" and assign specific hours for trick-or-treat activities.

Parent's Checklist

- Make sure that an adult or an older responsible youth will be supervising the outing for children under age 12.
- Plan and discuss the route trick-or-treaters intend to follow. Know the names of older children's companions.
- Instruct your children to travel only in familiar areas and along an established route.
- Teach your children to stop only at houses or apartment buildings that are well lit and **never** to enter a stranger's home.
- Establish a return time.
- Tell your youngsters not to eat any treat until they return home.
- Review all appropriate trick-or-treat safety precautions, including pedestrian/traffic safety rules.
- Pin a slip of paper with the child's name, address, and phone number inside a pocket in case the youngster is separated from the group.

Did you Know...



that many packaged foods hide a hefty helping of salt.

To keep your sodium intake down, check the label on packaged foods such as soups, frozen entrees, and canned meats or vegetables. Making sure you get no more than 800 milligrams of sodium per meal will help you to stay below the recommended daily limit of 2,400 milligrams.

Med-Cert provides:

Utilization Management, Maternity Management, Large Case and Wellness Disease Management, Transplant Coordination and Stop Loss Assessments

For information on any of our services, please call 866-261-5657 (toll free).

We are on the Internet. Visit us at:

www.medcertinc.com

November is American Diabetes Month

What is diabetes?

Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose, or sugar, for our bodies to use for energy. The pancreas, an organ that lies near the stomach, makes a hormone called insulin to help glucose get into the cells of our bodies. When you have diabetes, your body either does not make enough insulin or cannot use its own insulin as well as it should. This causes sugars to build up in your blood.

Diabetes can cause serious health complications including heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, and lower-extremity amputations.

What are the symptoms of diabetes?

People who think they might have diabetes must visit a physician for diagnosis. They might have SOME or NONE of the following symptoms:

- Frequent urination
- Excessive thirst
- Unexplained weight loss
- Extreme hunger
- Sudden vision changes
- Tingling or numbness in hands or feet
- Feeling very tired much of the time
- Very dry skin
- Sores that are slow to heal
- More infections than usual.

What are the types and risk factors of diabetes?

Type 1 diabetes - previously called insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM) or juvenile-onset diabetes may account for 5% to 10% of all diagnosed cases of diabetes. Risk factors are less well defined for type 1 diabetes than for type 2 diabetes, but autoimmune, genetic, and environmental factors are involved in the development of this type of diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes - previously called non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (NIDDM) or adult-onset diabetes may account for about 90% to 95% of all diagnosed cases of

diabetes. Risk factors for type 2 diabetes include older age, obesity, family history of diabetes, prior history of gestational diabetes, impaired glucose tolerance, physical inactivity, and race/ethnicity. Gestational diabetes - develops in 2% to 5% of all pregnancies but usually disappears when a pregnancy is over. Women who have had gestational diabetes have an increased risk for later developing type 2 diabetes.

What is the treatment for diabetes?

Management strategies should be planned along with a qualified health care team. Diabetes knowledge, treatment, and prevention strategies advance daily. Treatment is aimed at keeping blood glucose near normal levels at all times. Training in self-management is integral to the treatment of diabetes. Treatment must be individualized and must address medical, psychosocial, and lifestyle issues.

For more information on Diabetes, contact the National Diabetes Education Program at 1-800-438-5383 or on the Internet at www.cdc.gov/diabetes/projects/ndeps.htm

NATIONAL OBSERVANCES

October

Auto Battery Safety Month
Celiac Sprue Awareness Month
Domestic Violence Awareness Month
Family Health Month
Health Literacy Month
Healthy Lung Month
National Brain Injury Awareness Month
National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
National Dental Hygiene Month
National Family Sexuality Education Month
National Liver Awareness Month
National Lupus Awareness Month
National Physical Therapy Month
National Spina Bifida Awareness Month
National Spinal Health Month
Rett Syndrome Awareness Month
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness Month
Talk About Prescriptions Month

November

American Diabetes Month
Diabetic Eye Disease Month
National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month
National Epilepsy Month
National Hospice Month
National Marrow Awareness Month

December

National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month
Safe Toys and Gifts Month



LEAF IT ALONE

To get more nutrition from your lettuce leaves, leave them

be.

Studies revealed that in some lettuce varieties, such as endive and iceberg, whole lettuce leaves tend to retain more of their nutrition compared to leaves that have been shredded and exposed to light. Shred your lettuce at the last minute and store the extra in a dark part of the refrigerator. Also, choose whole leaves at salad bars.

Benefit: Eating a diverse diet that includes five servings of vegetables per day can make your RealAge as much as 4 years younger.



NO SKIPPERS

If you think that skipping breakfast puts you on the fast track to losing weight, you may be in for a long haul. A recent review of the eating habits of successful dieters revealed that most of the people who were successful at maintaining their weight loss made breakfast a regular part of their mornings. Eating breakfast can help keep your hunger in check so that you do not overeat later in the day.

Benefit: Eating breakfast can make your RealAge as much as 1.1 years younger.

Protect Yourself from the Flu, Especially if You Have Asthma

People with asthma should get a flu shot this October, during **Healthy Lung Month**, to help prevent asthma attacks during flu season. Although the flu poses a major health risk to people with asthma, only about 10% of people with asthma currently get a flu shot. Recent research conducted found that influenza vaccines are safe

for children and adults with asthma. The study found that people with asthma did not have any higher rates of side effects for the 14 days after receiving the influenza vaccine compared with those who received a placebo, or inactive shot.

If every adult and child with asthma receives a flu shot, millions of asthma attacks, many of which could be severe and result in hospitalization can be prevented.

The American Lung Association estimates that if all adults with asthma received the influenza vaccine, then approximately 52,000 hospitalizations would be prevented, at a cost savings of \$502 million, that's after taking into account the cost of the vaccine (\$10 each). If all children with asthma received the influenza vaccine, approximately 138,500 hospitalizations would be prevented. At an average cost of about \$4,000 per hospital stay for a child with asthma, vaccinating all children with asthma would save approximately \$560 million, after the cost of the vaccine is taken into account.

Recipe Corner



Twice Baked Potatoes

Nonstick cooking spray
1 1/2 cups fat free milk
1/3 cup Cream of Mushroom Soup & Gravy Mix
4 cups thinly sliced potatoes
1 cup thinly sliced onion
Paprika

Preheat oven to 375°F. Spray 2-quart casserole with nonstick cooking spray. Blend milk into soup base. Layer 1/3 of potatoes, onion and soup mixture in prepared casserole. Repeat layers two more times. Sprinkle with paprika and cover. Bake for 1 hour. Uncover and bake 15 minutes longer or until potatoes are tender.



This newsletter is brought to you courtesy of Med-Cert, Inc. Our sources for this edition were the American Lung Association, Real Age - Health Tools and

Tips for Living Younger and the National Health
Observances web sites.