



Information  
Insight

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**Q:** I am thrilled to be a grandmother and love my grandchildren and my children but sometimes I really don’t know what my role is in my relationship with them. What do you advise?

**A:** There is nothing like the relationship between a grandparent and grandchild. The “skip generation” relationship often relieves both grandparent and grandchild of power struggles that exist between parent and child and allows for a blooming of unconditional love. But the role of grandparent can also be stressful and produce anxiety. Because family life taps our deepest emotions, one’s relationship with grandchildren can be both exhilarating and exhausting.

Grandparents often report marveling at the wonder of childhood which they can enjoy and appreciate without the accompanying fatigue that comes with parenting. Yet grandparenting is not always fun. It is difficult when young children cling to their parents rather than run to your arms. It is disturbing when teenage grandchildren do not return phone calls or send thank you notes after receiving presents. Sometimes one feels jealous of the other set of grandparents. If you visit from out of town, there are often trying days by the end of the visit when everyone wants their space and needs to return to their normal lives. These conflicts and the conflicting emotions that accompany the relationship are normal. It is worthwhile to talk about differences with your children. Let your children know the pleasure that their child gives you. And remember, regardless of how responsible you feel towards your extended family, your role need not be to discipline the children.

Tradition becomes part of the legacy that you give your grandchildren. Spend time with them in an age appropriate way, seeking their interests. Let them know that you are available for them, engage them in play, and listen to stories about their friends and adventures. If you do not live nearby, ask for pictures and talk to them on the telephone. As they age, communicate with them via e-mail or learn to text message them.

Once our children have children of their own, our relationship with them changes. We can and should continue to nurture our children and be a comfort and support to them. We need to understand that parenting is stressful and our job may be to encourage and reassure them. At the same time we must respect their role as parent. They may want to raise their children differently than we raised our own children. That is their right and they must be allowed the space to make decisions about childrearing and may not want too much advice from us.

Just as important, adult children must respect their parents’ time and availability. Parents can ask too much of grandparents, expecting them to watch the children regularly so they can work or have a night off. Some grandparents offer to drive carpools or be available after school and suddenly find that they have become the nanny rather than the adored grandparent. Again, it is best to discuss these issues openly or to seek help from an intermediary like a counselor or social worker so that all parties get their opinions heard.

Remember that as a grandparent, you are a role model, and as such, are the bearers of the family history and values. At the same time, they are your future. Tell them that they are smart and lovable. Tell them that they have a great future. Both you and your grandchildren need to believe that.

**Web Sites:**  
[www.AARP.org/families/grandparents](http://www.AARP.org/families/grandparents)  
(AARP Foundation Grandparent Information Center)  
[www.grandparents.com](http://www.grandparents.com)

**Books:**  
*The Essential Grandparent: A Guide to Making a Difference*, Dr. Lillian Carson  
*The Long Distance Grandmother: How to Stay Close to Distant Grandchildren*, Selma Wasserman



Snapshots  
from the 2008  
Active Senior Fair

Clockwise from top left:  
*Marianne Binetti of the Great Gardening Show discussed ways to garden with less work and less water.*  
*Wrinkles of Washington, a song and dance troupe, was back performing by popular demand.*  
*DiRe Dentistry, one of the 2008 sponsors.*  
*Bill Perry of Just Putt’n Around, LLC explains the new golf putter to fair-goers.*  
*Barbara Kaner models fashions from Coldwater Creek of Bellevue Square in the fashion show.*

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Support for this issue has generously been provided by:

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Senior Care Auxiliary

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Connections

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Promoting Wellness of Your Body,  
Mind, and Spirit

**H**ow would you like to have your own personal health coach? If you have health concerns and would like to improve your physical or emotional health but don’t know how to get started, we can help you achieve your health goals through Project Enhance.

The Project Enhance Program, once known as Senior Wellness Project, was started over a decade ago and is offered in a variety of settings all over the country. We are pleased to make this available to you through Overlake’s Senior Care.

Project Enhance is a health promotion program that includes a health assessment, personal guidance to improve your identified health issues, and ongoing support to help you meet your goals. Maybe you’ve thought about improving your diet, losing weight, getting more exercise, being more socially active or taking up a hobby. We all have a multitude of reasons for not taking action, but research shows that with a little help we can overcome these barriers.

Through Project Enhance, a Registered Nurse will act as your personal health coach. The coaching takes place in the Senior Care office and can include coaching in physical activity, chronic disease self-management, social activity, loss, nutrition, and depression.

Prior to your first meeting you will be mailed a questionnaire that you are asked to complete and bring with you to the first meeting with the program nurse. Your answers on the questionnaire will be entered into a secure and confidential computer program to help organize and prioritize your responses. Then you and the nurse will discuss ways to approach your health concerns. Before leaving, a health action plan will be developed. The nurse will act as your coach, touching base by phone and scheduling monthly or bimonthly follow-up visits. Most participants remain in the program for six to 12 months.

Enrolling in the program is easy. There are no tests to take and no hoops to jump through and the program is FREE. If you are interested in more information about Project Enhance or have any questions contact Lynn Shapley, RN, Project Enhance Coordinator at 425-688-5802.

*“I really liked my visits with the nurse. She listened to my struggles and encouraged me to move forward.”*



The “Highs” and “Lows” of Cholesterol

Submitted by:  
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Cholesterol is the stuff for brain power, cellular function, skin condition and “heart attacks.” How could something so vital be so lethal? Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that is found in all cells of the body. With the exception of brain cells, every body cell has the ability to make it. Your body needs some cholesterol to work the right way and it uses large quantities every day.

However, too much cholesterol in the blood, or high blood cholesterol, can be serious. Blood is watery, and cholesterol is fatty. Just like oil and water, the two do not mix. To travel in the bloodstream, cholesterol is carried in little packages known as lipoproteins. Two kinds of lipoproteins course throughout your body – low density lipoproteins (LDL) and high-density lipoproteins (HDL). It is important to have healthy levels of both.

LDL is the “bad or lousy” cholesterol and high LDL cholesterol leads to buildup known as plaque. HDL is known as the “good” cholesterol that helps keep cholesterol from building up in arteries. Research indicates that higher HDL levels will lower your chance of having heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke.

People with high blood cholesterol have a greater chance of having heart disease. High blood cholesterol on its own does not cause symptoms; so many people are unaware that their cholesterol level is too high. Over time, plaque can buildup and cause narrowing of the arteries, called atherosclerosis or hardening of the arteries. Narrowing of your coronary arteries due to plaque can stop or slow down the flow of blood to your heart causing a heart attack.

Some plaques have a thin covering and burst (rupture), releasing fat and cholesterol into the bloodstream. The release of fat and cholesterol may cause your blood to clot. A clot can block the flow of blood. This blockage can cause angina or a heart attack. Lowering your cholesterol level decreases your chance for having a plaque burst and cause a heart attack.

What Causes High Blood Cholesterol?

A variety of things can affect the cholesterol levels in your blood. Some of these things you can control and others you cannot.

You can control:

- **What you eat.**  
Saturated fat raises your LDL cholesterol level more than anything else in your diet. Trans fatty acids (trans fats) are made when vegetable oil is hydrogenated to harden it. Trans fats also raise cholesterol levels and are found in foods that come from animal sources like egg yolks, meat, and cheese.
- **Your weight.**  
Being overweight tends to increase LDL.
- **Your activity.**  
Lack of regular exercise can lead to weight gain, which could raise your LDL cholesterol level.

You cannot control:

- **Heredity.**  
High blood cholesterol can run in families.
- **Age and sex.**  
As women and men get older, their LDL cholesterol levels rise. Younger women have lower LDL cholesterol levels than men, but after age 55, women have higher levels than men.

Ways to lower your cholesterol:

1. Therapeutic Lifestyle Change (TLC)

TLC includes a cholesterol-lowering diet (called the TLC Diet), physical activity and weight management.

The TLC Diet recommends:

- Limiting the amount of saturated fat and cholesterol you eat.
- Eating only enough calories to achieve or maintain a healthy weight.
- Increasing the soluble fiber in your diet. For example, oatmeal, kidney beans, and apples are good sources of soluble fiber.
- Adding cholesterol-lowering food, such as margarines that contain plant sterol or stanol esters that lower cholesterol for some people.

Physical activity and weight management

Losing weight if you are overweight can help lower LDL. And regular physical activity is recommended for everyone. It can help raise HDL levels and lower LDL levels.

2. Drug treatments used together with TLC treatment.

There are five major types of cholesterol-lowering medicines are Statins, Bile Acid Sequestrants, Nicotinic Acid, Ezetimibe, and Fibrates.

Be aware of your cholesterol numbers and work with your doctor to make sure you are in healthy ranges. It is important that everyone age 20 and older get their cholesterol checked at least every five years.



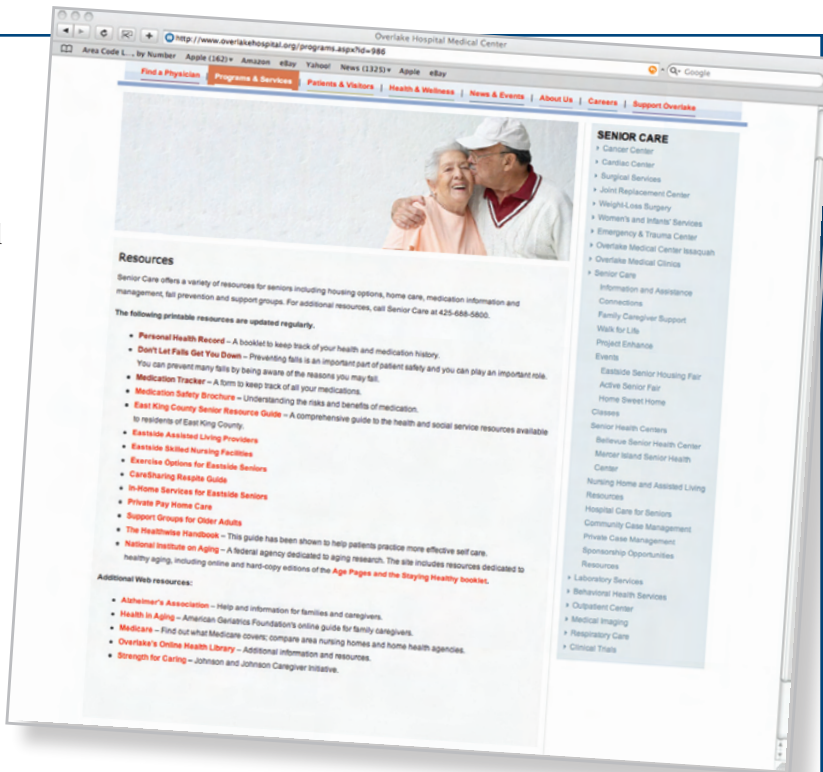
Welcome Aboard!

We are pleased to announce Lynn Shapley, RN joined the Senior Care team in early April as the Nurse/Social Worker. Before joining Senior Care, Lynn worked for a private case management company supporting older adults and developing plans of care. She also had her own company selling long term care insurance, and has managed several primary care clinics for Group Health and Providence. In her free time she is an avid bridge player and practices yoga. We are pleased to have Lynn’s expertise and experience as part of our team.

Resources Now Easily Accessible

Many of Senior Care’s resource guides and educational brochures can now be found on the hospital Web site at [www.overlakehospital.org/resources](http://www.overlakehospital.org/resources). The following guides can easily be printed for your own use.

- **Personal Health Record**  
Booklet to keep track of your health and medication history.
- **Fall Prevention Guide**  
Preventing falls is an important part of patient safety and you can play an important role. You can prevent many falls by being aware of the reasons you may fall.
- **Medication Tracker**  
A form to keep track of all your medications.
- **Medication Safety Brochure**  
Understanding the risks and benefits of medication.
- **East King County Senior Resource Guide**  
Comprehensive guide of health and social services available to residents of East King County.
- **Eastside Assisted Living Providers List**
- **Eastside Skilled Nursing Facilities List**
- **Exercise Options for Eastside Seniors**
- **CareSharing Respite Guide**
- **In-Home Resources Guide**



- **Private Pay Home Care Resource List**
- **Support Groups for Older Adults List**

Links to additional Web sites:

- **National Institute on Aging**  
A federal agency dedicated to information on aging and research.
- **Online Health Library**  
Additional information and resources.

To find these guides and resources go to [www.overlakehospital.org/resources](http://www.overlakehospital.org/resources), or call 425-688-5800 to have them sent to you.



Charlene Raunio, Newsletter Editor  
425-688-5806  
Debbie Anderson, Connections Director

Connections Newsletter is published six times per year by Senior Care/Connections at Overlake Hospital Medical Center, 1035 116th Avenue NE, Bellevue, WA 98004. It is distributed free of charge to Connections members. Overlake Hospital Medical Center is a nonprofit, non tax-supported hospital providing advanced medicine to the Puget Sound region.

If you would like to be removed from this newsletter mailing, have an address change, or know someone who would like to become a member, please contact Senior Care at 425-688-5800.

Periodically, we send communications to friends and neighbors in our health care community that describe the health care services and products we offer. If you would prefer not to receive communications like this from our organization in the future, please call 425-467-3548.

Support Groups

Caring for a loved one is a difficult job. It is well documented that if family members want to continue providing care, they cope better with support and information as they navigate the twists, turns, and responsibilities. Come meet and talk with others who are dealing with similar issues. Two support groups are offered to help meet the needs of caregivers.

**Family Caregiver Support Group – Bellevue**  
**Day and Time:** Thursdays, July 10, 24, August 14 or 28; 3 to 4:30 p.m.  
**Location:** Bellevue Senior Health Center  
1750 – 112th Ave. NE, Suite A-101, Bellevue  
**Cost:** FREE  
For questions, call Regina Bennett, MSW, 425-688-5807.

**Caregiver Support Group – Mercer Island**  
**Day and Time:** Tuesdays, July 8 or August 12; 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.  
**Location:** Mercer Island Senior Center  
7707 SE. 27th Street, Suite 110, Mercer Island  
**Cost:** FREE  
For questions, call Karin Miller, MSW, 425-688-5637.

Overlake Hospital Community Classes

**Advance registration is required; call the Yoga Barn at 425-427-0038 for class availability, evaluation and registration.**  
**Cost: \$50**

Walk For Life

Join this ongoing walking program to exercise safely and effectively. Meet friends and benefit from expert staff who are on site for information, advice and monitoring. No registration required; for information call 425-688-5800.

**Date:** Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday  
**Time:** 8 to 9:30 a.m.  
**Place:** Bellevue Square, enter at Skybridge 4  
**Cost:** FREE

Introduction to Therapeutic Seniors Yoga

Come and rejuvenate your body with gentle yoga. This five-week series is adapted to our mature students who are new or relatively new to Therapeutic Senior Yoga. The classes build gradually with lots of individual attention to help stretch and strengthen your body while learning basic poses, breathing and relaxation techniques. This is an excellent way to keep both mind and body, healthy and strong.

**Date:** Tuesdays, July 1 to 29  
**Time:** 2:30 to 3:45 p.m.  
**Location:** The Yoga Barn, 660 Gilman Blvd, # C-6, Issaquah

Managing Care at Home

A question-and-answer session with an Overlake Senior Care Social Worker to familiarize yourself with resources available to manage care in the home.  
**Date:** Call to schedule day and time  
**Location:** Overlake Hospital Senior Care  
1120 - 112th Ave NE, Bellevue, Suite 100

**Cost:** FREE  
Registration required, please call 425-688-5800.

Don’t Make Me Laugh – Managing Incontinence

Incontinence can have profound affects on quality of life, but many people are reluctant to talk about it. The good news is that about 80 percent of people with urinary incontinence can be cured or symptoms improved. Urogynecologist Elizabeth Miller, MD will discuss the types of incontinence, and how treatments vary with individual lifestyle and personal preferences.

**Date:** Wednesday, July 30  
**Time:** 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
**Cost:** FREE  
**Location:** Bellevue Community College - North Campus  
Registration required, call 425-688-5259.

Therapeutic Senior Yoga

This five-week series is for previous students to the Therapeutic Senior Yoga classes. The breath-oriented practice will help to increase circulation, release tense muscles, tone and renew energy.

**Date:** Tuesdays, July 1 to 29  
**Time:** 1 to 2:15 p.m.  
**OR**  
**Date:** Wednesdays, July 2 to 30  
**Time:** 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. or 1:30 to 2:45 p.m.

**Location:** The Yoga Barn, 660 Gilman Blvd, # C-6, Issaquah

**OR**  
**Date:** Thursdays, July 3 to 31  
**Time:** 10:45 to noon  
**Location:** The Yoga Barn, Fall City

Look Good...Feel Better

Cancer can rob a woman of her energy, appetite and strength. *Look Good...Feel Better* is a free program in partnership with the American Cancer Society that teaches beauty techniques to women cancer patients in active treatment to help them combat the appearance-related side effects of cancer treatment. Each participant will receive a free copy of “It’s not about the Hair” by Debra Jarvis and free make up kit (value \$300).

**Date:** Monday, July 14  
**Time:** 1 to 3 p.m.  
**Location:** Overlake Hospital Conference Room E  
**Cost:** FREE  
Registration required. Call 800-395-LOOK (5665).