

KEEPING
SENIORS
INFORMED,
INVOLVED,
IN CHARGE.

Connections

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Medicare Open Enrollment

Your health needs change from year to year as do your health and drug plan benefits and costs. That's why it's important to evaluate your Medicare choices every year during open enrollment. It's the one time of year when ALL people with Medicare can see the new benefits Medicare has to offer and make changes to their coverage.

Medicare has new benefits available for all people with Medicare – whether you choose

Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage plan – including lower prescription costs, wellness visits and preventive care. Take advantage of open enrollment and you may be able to save money, get better coverage or both.

This year, open enrollment begins October 15 and ends December 7. This provides extra time to review and make changes to your coverage. You will need to make your changes

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November Connections Luncheon

Painful Knees

Sponsored by Aegis of Bellevue, Bothell, Issaquah, Kirkland, Redmond

The knee joint endures more stress than any joint in the body, and knee pain is one of the most common complaints by people of all ages. The pain can result from an injury or a medical condition including arthritis. James Bruckner, MD, Overlake orthopedic surgeon, will discuss the conditions that affect the knee and provide a comprehensive view of treatment options.

Wednesday, November 9

Noon to 2 p.m.

Overlake Park Presbyterian Church, Fellowship Hall

1836 – 156th Avenue NE, Bellevue, WA

*For Connections members only. Free parking.
Reservations required; see RSVP card on the back cover of this newsletter.*

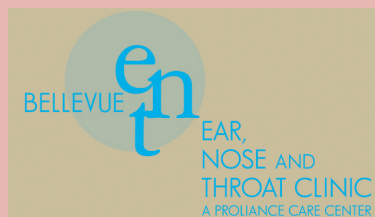
Flu shots are available through Walgreens pharmacy in the Overlake Medical Tower beginning at 11:30 a.m. Please indicate on your RSVP card if you'd like to receive a vaccination. There is no out-of-pocket expense if you bring your Medicare card (Part B).

Support for this issue has
generously been provided by:



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Sonja Potter
Senior Care Auxiliary



Overlake Hospital Medical Center
1035 116th Avenue NE
Bellevue, WA 98004
425-688-5000

www.overlakehospital.org/seniorcare

Overlake Hospital Medical Center is a nonprofit, non-tax-supported hospital providing advanced medicine to the Puget Sound region. The Connections Newsletter is published six times per year by Overlake's Senior Care/Connections Department. It is distributed free of charge to Connections members.

If you would like to be removed from this newsletter mailing, have an address change, would like to receive an electronic copy, or know someone who would like to become a member, please contact Senior Care at 425-688-5800 or e-mail seniorcare@overlakehospital.org.

For an electronic copy of the newsletter visit www.overlakehospital.org/Connections.



Charlene Raunio, Newsletter Editor
425-688-5806

CONNECTIONS

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for next year's Medicare coverage by December 7 so that Medicare has enough time to process your choices. Your coverage will begin without interruption on January 1.

Take the time to review and compare. Realize, however, that you don't have to do it alone. Medicare is available to help.

- Visit www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan to compare your current coverage with

other plans in your area and to enroll in a new plan if you want to make a change.

- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to find out more about your coverage options. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- Review the Medicare & You 2012 handbook that those with Medicare

If you...

...currently take specific prescription drugs.

...want extra protection for high prescription drug costs.

...want your drug expenses to be balanced throughout the year.

...use a lot of generic prescriptions.

...don't have many drug costs now, but want coverage for peace of mind and to avoid future penalties.

...like the extra benefits and lower costs that you might get by getting your health care and prescription drug coverage from one plan and are willing to accept the plan's restrictions on what doctors, hospitals, and other medical providers you can use.

You might want to...

...look at drug plans that have included your drugs on their formularies, then compare costs.

...look for plans that offer coverage in the coverage gap, and then check with those plans to be sure your drugs would be covered during the gap. (These plans may charge a higher monthly premium.)

...look at plans with low deductibles.

...look at plans with tiers that charge you nothing or low copayments for generic prescriptions.

...look for plans with low monthly premiums for drug coverage. If you need prescriptions in the future, all plans still must cover most drugs used by people with Medicare.

...look for Medicare Advantage Plans with prescription drug coverage.

receive by mail in September.

- Contact the Washington Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) for one-on-one help. Visit <http://www.insurance.wa.gov/shiba/index.shtml> or call 1-800-562-6900.
- Call Overlake Senior Care at 425-688-5800 to sign-up to meet with a SHIBA volunteer in the office for in-person help.

An Overview

Enrollment Period: October 15 to December 7

Changes you can make during Open Enrollment for Medicare Advantage AND Medicare Prescription Drug coverage:

- Change from a Medicare Advantage Plan back to Original Medicare.
- Switch from one Medicare Advantage Plan to another Medicare Advantage Plan.
- Switch from a Medicare Advantage Plan that doesn't offer drug coverage to a Medicare Advantage Plan that offers drug coverage.
- Switch from a Medicare Advantage Plan that offers drug coverage to a Medicare Advantage Plan that doesn't offer drug coverage.

- Join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan.
- Switch from one Medicare Prescription Drug Plan to another Medicare Prescription Drug Plan.
- Drop your Medicare prescription drug coverage completely.

Enrollment Period: January 1 to February 14

- If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan, you can leave your plan and switch to Original Medicare.
- If you switch to Original Medicare during this period, you will have until February 14 to also join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan to add drug coverage. Your coverage will begin the first day of the month after the plan gets your enrollment form.

Note: During this period, you can't do the following:

- Switch from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan.
- Switch from one Medicare Advantage Plan to another.
- Switch from one Medicare Prescription Drug Plan to another.
- Join, switch, or drop a Medicare Medical Savings Account Plan.

Estate Planning Reminders

This fall is an excellent time to focus on your estate plan. If you were among those who attended Overlake's Senior Connections luncheon this past May, you're already aware that new federal gift and estate tax rules took effect on January 1, 2011. These changes offer opportunities both for the future and the near term.

The upside of the new rules is that very few people stand to owe any tax when they transfer assets to family members and other individuals, whether during life or upon death. The downside is that the changes are only expected to be temporary. Moreover, Washington residents must continue to take into account our state's \$2 million estate tax threshold, and we may be seeing changes in income tax laws as soon as the end of the year.

Estate planning is also about providing for your own physical and financial well-being during your lifetime. In this regard, general and healthcare power of attorney arrangements can go a long way toward ensuring your interests will be protected, no matter what lies ahead.

As you develop or revise your estate plan, think about charitable giving opportunities. They can be an important element of a person's overall plan. Bequests and other charitable gifts can offer tax advantages while leaving a lasting impact on the causes you care about most. Of course, you should be sure to work closely with your lawyer and other advisors. If you'd like to learn more about the benefits of a legacy gift for Overlake, please contact Julie Sun at 425-688-5452 or Julie.Sun@overlakehospital.org.

SAVE the DATE

Overlake invites you to our 4th annual


Eastside Vitality

COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR

Join us for a day of free health screenings, seminars by medical experts, interactive displays and an opportunity to talk to Overlake physicians.

Saturday, January 21, 2012 | 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Overlake's Bellevue Campus

Watch for details at www.overlakehospital.org/EastsideVitality.

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Medical excellence every day™

Q: & A:

I was recently diagnosed with diabetes. My friends have given me a lot of conflicting advice. What should I do to stay as healthy as possible and manage my diabetes?

You are fortunate to have friends who want to help. The large amount of information also available through the media and the internet can contribute to the confusion.

Managing diabetes does not have to be difficult. Healthy living principles are the same for diabetics as everyone else. Make healthy food choices, be physically active and take medications as prescribed by your healthcare provider.

An important component of managing diabetes is maintaining your blood sugar levels within the recommended goals set by the American Diabetes Association. Blood sugar level goals are:

- less than 130 before breakfast
- less than 180 one to two hours after starting a meal

In order to monitor your levels, it is important to check blood sugar regularly at home. If you are not currently doing that, ask your doctor for a prescription for a blood glucose monitor and testing strips. Most insurance policies will cover the costs.

Blood sugar is affected by diet, exercise and blood glucose-lowering medication. An excellent way to help manage blood sugar levels is to engage in regular physical activity. Be sure to choose something you enjoy and ask a friend to join you, so you'll stay motivated.

To maintain a healthy diet and to control blood sugars, it is most important to pay attention to your intake of all carbohydrates.

Carbohydrates are made up of:

- starches
- sugars, both natural and artificial

While some people believe that fiber raises blood sugar levels, this is not the case.

Natural sugar is found in fruit, juice, honey, milk and sugar. Starches are found in anything that is made with



flour (bread, pasta, crackers, cake, cookies, etc.), rice and other grains, starchy vegetables (peas, corn, potatoes, winter squash, etc.) and legumes (dried peas and beans).

Managing your carbohydrate intake will make a significant difference on your blood sugar control. An easy way to manage intake is to use the “plate method” to select portion sizes and ensure you do not eat more carbohydrates than you need. Take a 10” plate and imagine it is divided into sections. Fill one fourth of the plate with a starch listed above, one fourth with a protein (i.e.: fish, chicken, lean beef/pork) and the other half with non-starchy vegetables such as broccoli, green beans, asparagus, carrots, etc. Add a glass of milk on the side.

To get a more personalized meal plan, consider seeing a registered dietitian. Getting individual attention and advice can make a big difference in your management of diabetes.

Most clinics, including Overlake Diabetes Services, 425-688-5700 (option 5) require a physician referral to schedule an appointment. Talk to your doctor to receive a referral to meet one-on-one with a registered dietitian.

Senior Care Community Classes

Unless otherwise indicated, these classes are held at City University, 150 – 120th Ave. NE, Building F, Bellevue

Advance registration is required; call 425-688-5800.

A Matter of Balance

Have you or a family member cut down on a favorite activity or turned down a chance to go out with friends or family because you were concerned about falling? The fear of falling can be just as dangerous as falling itself. Often people who develop a fear of falling begin to limit their activities, which can result in physical weakness, making the risk of falling greater. This leads to isolation and depression. A Matter of Balance can help improve your quality of life and help you remain independent. The class is designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase activity levels. Participants learn to set realistic goals to increase activity, make changes to reduce fall risks, and learn simple exercises to increase strength and balance.

Date: Tuesdays and Thursdays, November 1 to 29, or
Mondays and Wednesdays, November 28 to December 21

Time: 10 a.m. to noon

Cost: FREE Complimentary lunch provided after first session

Location: The Bellettini
1115 – 108th Avenue NE, Bellevue **NEW LOCATION!**

(Seated) Yoga to Maintain Balance

This breath-oriented practice will help increase your circulation, release tense muscles and strengthen core muscles. Relearn to move each muscle and joint to keep them flexible and strong. Yoga is done in a seated position on a chair with exercises adapted to each individual's abilities.

Date: Tuesdays, November 1 to 22; or November 29 to December 20.

Time: 12:30 to 1:45 p.m.

OR

Date: Thursdays, November 3 to December 1; or December 8 to 22.

Time: 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Cost: \$44 for four-week session

North Bellevue Community Center

Call 425-452-7681 and mention the class number.

4063 148th Ave. NE, Bellevue.

Monday, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Advanced registration is required.

Cost: \$7 for Bellevue residents

\$8 for non-residents

Diabetic Foot Care – Is It Important?

Proper foot care is important as all people age but is especially critical for people with diabetes. Loss of nerve function and decreased blood flow can increase the chances of reoccurring infections. An Overlake podiatrist will review precautions, as well as provide tips for preventing and treating problems.

Date: Monday, November 28

Class #: 59412

Bellevue YMCA

Call 425-746-9900

14230 Bel-Red Rd., Bellevue.

Wednesday, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

No registration is required.

Cost: \$5 for non-YMCA members

Age-Related Macular Degeneration

Older eyes are at greater risk for macular degeneration – a serious condition that is the leading cause of blindness in people over 50. Learn early signs and how to detect the disease as well as the treatment options available.

Date: November 9

Redmond Senior Center

Call 425-556-2314

8703 160th Ave. NE, Redmond.

Wednesday, 10:15 to 11:30 a.m.

Advanced registration is required.

Cost: FREE

Living Wills: Does Your Family Know Your Wishes?

It is important to plan ahead to make sure everyone understands what your wishes are. This class will cover how to develop your own advance directive for healthcare using a workbook covering living wills, durable power of attorney and value statements.

Date: November 16



Overlake's Sonja Potter Senior Care Auxiliary

2011 Annual Wreath and Poinsettia Sale

*Celebrate the holiday season by decorating your home
and office with beautiful poinsettias and wreaths.
All proceeds benefit Overlake Senior Care.*

ORDER TODAY



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Medical excellence every day™

FOUNDATION & AUXILIARIES

- Order deadline: Friday, November 11
- Pickup: Monday, December 5
- For order forms or information, call 425-688-5529
- E-mail: auxiliaries@overlakehospital.org
- Download form here: www.overlakehospital.org/poinsettiasale



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Living Healthy *with* Diabetes

Saturday, November 5 | 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Overlake's PACCAR Education Center
1035 116th Ave NE, Bellevue

FREE Parking | No Entrance Fee | No Registration

Lectures

How Physical Activity Mitigates Damage from Diabetes and Prevents/Delays Complications

Sai Mannem, MD
Overlake Medical Clinics Downtown Bellevue
9 to 10 a.m.

How Diabetes Affects Your Eyes

Allen Hu, MD
Retina Consultants of Seattle
10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Hot Nutrition Topics: Moving Through the Maze

Carrie Tollefson, RD, CD
Overlake Outpatient Diabetes Services
12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

Exhibits

Vendors will showcase products and services geared toward individuals with diabetes. Flu shots are available onsite, through Walgreens pharmacy in the Overlake Medical Tower.

Free Health Screenings

Cholesterol (no fasting required), blood pressure, hearing, foot and vision screenings as well as stroke-risk assessments.

Light snacks and beverages provided.
For more information, call 425-688-5485 or visit
www.overlakehospital.org/diabetesfair

So Talk About it!

Submitted by:

Patrick Mathiasen, MD

Patrick.Mathiasen@overlakehospital.org

We all deal with losses, big and small. As we grow older, the losses accumulate. When we think of loss, we often think of the loss of a loved one. But we also experience smaller losses that affect us deeply:



To talk to a counselor or therapist directly contact:

Overlake Behavioral Health

Bellevue, 425-688-5460

Eastside Compassionate Friends

Kirkland, 206-325-0357

Evergreen Grief and Bereavement Services

Kirkland, 425-899-1077

Grief and Life Transitions Counseling

Seattle, 206-362-9094

The Healing Center

Seattle, 206-523-1206

reduced physical abilities, changes in relationships, retirement from our life's work, and sometimes changes in our intellectual abilities and cherished memories.

As a psychiatrist, I am often asked how to cope with these changes that are a natural part of aging. A good place to start is to realize that there is no such thing as 'normal'. We are all unique individuals, and along with this come unique ways of dealing with pain and the losses we experience. Perhaps a better way to look at loss is through the lens of what keeps us functioning and what does not. Are we able to talk about our losses, and the pain and fears that accompany them? Or do we shut down and retreat into the silence of our pain – closing ourselves away in our homes and rooms?

This is often what I look for in the patients whom I see in my work. Do they maintain connections with those who care for them? Or, do they isolate

themselves? It is often isolation that is the soil in which dysfunctional grief grows, until it overwhelms us. And by the same token, it is those around us who can help pull us up out of this pain.

The first step is to TALK ABOUT IT. And 'it' may not be as clear as a sense of sadness or depression. It may be fear, anxiety or obsessive worries. It may be a loss of sleep and appetite. It may be physical symptoms, aches and pains of all kinds. Many of you grew up into adulthood with the message that it was not okay to talk about anything that might be considered a weakness. You had to be strong and march on through life regardless of the obstacles in your path. So, when you encounter loss, it is hard to identify the exact problem, much less talk about it.

But talking is the best way to move forward. So talk about it! Express your worries and concerns. Not necessarily with a therapist, or a psychiatrist. Talk with someone you are close to, a family member, friend or co-worker. The most important thing is to get it out in the open. Find people who can help direct you toward professional help, if necessary. And if there is no one in your immediate circle you can reach out to, consider talking to a counselor or therapist directly.

A good rule of thumb is this: If your emotional pain and suffering interferes with your life and ability to function for prolonged periods of time, you may benefit from professional help. A brief period of counseling that allows you to share your thoughts and ideas with a trained and understanding professional, could be enough. Some people may benefit from more extended periods of therapy. Possibly a combination of medications and therapy are what is needed.

Isolation and silence intensify our grief. Remember to reach out to others.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

November Luncheon RSVP

To reserve your place at the November luncheon, please fill out this form and send it along with your check to: *Connections, Overlake Hospital Medical Center*. Payment must be received with reservation.

To request a map, call 425-688-5800.

November Luncheon Reservation Form

☐ *Yes!* I/We would like to make reservations to attend *Painful Knees* on Wednesday, November 9.

Number of people attending at **\$12 each**: _____. Total enclosed: \$ _____.
(Please make checks payable to Overlake Hospital Medical Center.)

Name(s)

Phone Number

☐ When I attend the luncheon I would like to receive a flu shot.

Mail by *Wednesday, November 2* to:

Senior Care/Connections
Overlake Hospital Medical Center
1035 116th Ave. NE
Bellevue, WA 98004