

EduCare Calendar January-February-March 2004

Seating for our EduCare programs is limited. Please pre-register by calling 923-9771 or online at www.hhc.org/educare. Classes may be cancelled due to lack of registered participants. All programs are free unless a cost is noted.

GENERAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

Walk for Wellness

Need to exercise? Like to set your own schedule? We have the program you are looking for!
What: Houston Healthcare - sponsored Walking program

Where: Sign up at Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

When: Anytime! Call 923-9771 to make an appointment to sign up and get your first fitness evaluation.

Cost: \$25 per person

Monthly evaluations including blood pressure, weight, blood sugar (if diabetic) performed by a registered nurse. Participants will also receive a walking logbook. Walking is done on your own. Incentive awards will be given after completing 100 miles, 500 miles 1000 miles, etc.

New Weight Loss Program!

Walk-A-Weigh!

Through this eight-week weight control program, participants will learn to change their eating habits and activity patterns leading to weight control. You will also learn to eat foods with less sugar, fat and sodium. Doctor's permission is required because walking is included in each class. Class size is limited.

Thursdays, January 15 - March 4

6 - 7 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

\$40 per person

Hypertension Self-Management

A comprehensive course to equip you with all the skills and knowledge you need to control your hypertension. Educational materials, blood pressure and weight screenings will be offered.

Tuesdays, January 6, February 3 & March 2

4 - 5 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Smoking Cessation

A free four-session course to help you quit smoking.

Tuesdays, January 6, 13, 20, 27 and

March 2, 9, 16, 23

6 - 7:30 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Weight Watchers

Please come and join our losing team.

Weight Watchers can help you lose weight and enjoy a healthier lifestyle. Check us out at Weightwatchers.com or call Faye Tripp at either 987-6262 or 1-800-617-0416 for more information.

Monday evenings

5 - 6 pm

Perry Hospital Medical Library

Cost: \$18 to join with a weekly member fee of \$12

Stop Smoking

Are you thinking about quitting smoking but not sure you're ready to take the plunge? Maybe hearing a little more information on ways to quit and support is just what you need. Make this an opportunity to ask questions and hear some testimonials. Come share a sandwich with us on your lunch hour.

Thursday, February 26

12 pm - 1 pm

Perry Hospital Medical Office Building

Critical Conditions:

Making Healthcare Decisions

Take advantage of this program to help you and your loved ones plan for health care decisions at the end of life.

Wednesday, February 18

2 - 3 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

SENIORCARE

Perry SeniorCare

Join us for a special program for senior adults. Each Friday includes an exercise class featuring strength and flexibility stretching, followed by a healthy lunch and guest speaker. Call 923-9771 to make a reservation.

Every Friday

10 am

Rozar Park - Perry

Cost: \$5 (includes lunch)

Every Wednesday - **Exercise Only**

9:30 am (PVO Bingo immediately follows)

Rozar Park - Perry

Every Monday - **Exercise Only**

10:00 am

Rozar Park - Perry

Warner Robins SeniorCare

Join us for a special program for senior adults. Each Thursday 'strength and flexibility stretching' exercise will be led by a certified instructor. Once a month a mini-health fair will be provided focusing on required annual checks for Senior Adults such as vision, dental and/or hearing tests.

Every Tuesday & Thursday

9 am

Houston County YMCA (Highway 96 and Moody Road) Call 922-2566.

Senior Camp 2004

It's a Luau theme this year! We will also have a Fashion Show by SteinMart. A fun and educational way to spend a couple of days! Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

March 25 & 26

Rozar Park - Perry

Blood Pressure Checks for Senior Adults

Tuesdays, January 27, February 24 & March 23

9 - 10 am

Recreation Department - Warner Robins

Wellston Senior Citizens Center

Tuesdays, January 27, February 24 & March 23

10:30 - 11:30 am

Older American Council at the Wellston Center

Warner Robins

Thursday, January 22, February 26 & March 25

8:30 - 9:30 am

Ted Wright Park - Warner Robins

Thursdays, January 15, February 19 & March 18

9 am

New Centerville City Hall

Mondays, January 19, February 16 & March 15

11 am - 12 Noon

Older American Council at Rozar Park - Perry

Older American Council at Rozar Park - Perry

Monday, January 26

7 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

PHYSICIAN FACTS

Shoulder Pain and Rotator Cuff Injuries

Can you lift your arms above your head? Having trouble combing your hair and reaching up into cabinets? Dr. William Wiley, orthopedic surgeon, will discuss the signs, symptoms, and current treatments for shoulder pain and rotator cuff injuries.

Monday, January 26

7 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Thursday, January 29

12 noon

Perry Hospital Medical Library

Light lunch provided

Finding Relief from GERD - Gastric Reflux Disease

Dr. Fred Oni, Gastroenterology/Internal Medicine, will discuss gastric reflux disease: causes, symptoms and treatments.

Monday, February 9

7 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Heart Healthy Luncheon

Join us for our annual healthy heart luncheon with Dr. Rahil Kazi, cardiologist. Topics to be discussed include hypertension and stroke. A light lunch will be served. Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Friday, February 13

12 Noon

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

"I Thought I Was Done": Raising Your Children's Children

Times have changed. Trying to parent your children's children can be rewarding as well as frustrating, tiring and exhausting. Dr. Carol Moyses will discuss common issues and ways to cope without losing yourself. A light lunch will be served. Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Wednesday, February 25

12 noon - 1 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Diabetic Retinopathy Eye Disease

Diabetic eye disease is the leading cause of blindness. Signs, symptoms, and treatment for this diabetic long-term complication will be addressed by Dr. Matt Dixon, optometrist. A light lunch will be served. Pre-registration is required. Call 923-9771.

Wednesday, March 31

11:30 am - 1 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

HEALTH FAIRS & SCREENINGS

Belk's Galleria Mall - Mini Health Fair

Tuesday, March 2

10 am - 1 pm

Galleria Mall in Centerville

Cost: \$5 per person, covers cholesterol and glucose screenings. Blood pressure, pulse rate and oxygen saturation will be free of charge.

COMMUNITY CPR

American Heart Association CPR

Learn how to recognize a heart attack and how to perform CPR and the choking maneuver. All participants will receive the American Heart Course C Certification. Class size is limited. Pre-registration is required by calling 923-9771.

Saturdays, January 17, February 7 & March 6

9 am - 1 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Cost: \$25

Re-certification for American Heart Association CPR Course C

Is it time to renew your CPR card? With current CPR card you can re-certify for 1/2 the class time.

Saturdays, January 17, February 7 & March 6

1 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Cost: \$25

American Red Cross CPR & First Aid Course

Saturday, February 21

9 am - 4 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Cost: \$40

ACCIDENT PREVENTION

55 Alive

A comprehensive driving course designed to update drivers aged 50 and over on the knowledge and skills of driving. Upon course completion, participants are eligible for a 10% discount on auto insurance. Pre-registration is required by calling Phil Baker at (478) 922-4680.

Mondays & Tuesdays, February 9 & 10

5 - 9 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Cost: \$10

Thursdays & Fridays, January 29 & 30

1 - 5 pm

Perry Hospital Cafeteria

Cost: \$10

DIET INSTRUCTION FOR SPECIAL DIETS

Taught by Sandra Brenner, Ph.D., this class is for persons who have been prescribed a specified diet by a physician. Call 923-9771 to pre-register. Please state type of diet when registering.

Tuesdays, January 13, February 10 & March 9

9 am - 1:30 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Fridays, January 9, February 13 & March 12

11:30 am - 1 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

DIABETES MANAGEMENT

Diabetes Diet Instruction

This class, taught by Sandra Brenner, Ph.D., is for individuals with diabetes who need a diet review or people with newly diagnosed diabetes. A physician diet prescription is required.

Mondays, January 26, February 23 & March 22

6 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Thursdays, January 8, February 5 & March 4

1:30 - 4 pm

Perry Hospital Cafeteria

Fridays, January 2, 9, 16, 23 & February 6, 13, 20, 27 & March 5, 12, 19, 26

9 - 11:30 am

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Diabetes "In Control" Course

This American Diabetes Association class is taught by certified diabetes educators. The course will consist of 2 five-hour classes. Attendance to the diabetic diet class is a pre-requisite. Physician referral is required. Medicare and most insurance companies accepted. Pre-assessment is also required. For more information and to pre-register call 923-9771.

Tuesdays, January 20 & 27

4 - 9 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Tuesdays, March 16 & 23

4 - 9 pm

Perry Hospital Cafeteria

Thursdays, February 12 & 19

10 am - 3 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Diabetes Self Management - Steps To Success

After completing diabetic diet instruction and two-day education classes, a twelve-month program of reinforcement and maintaining self-control is offered. The monthly program includes, weight, blood pressure and blood sugar checks, as well as one to one nurse assessments. A diabetic related topic will also be presented.

Tuesdays, January 13, February 10 & March 9

9 - 11 am

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Tuesdays, January 20, February 17 & March 16

9 - 11 am

Perry Hospital Medical Library

Thursdays, January 15, February 19 & March 18

6 - 8 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Diabetes Exercise Program

An exercise program specifically for adults with diabetes who would like to learn more about the correct times and methods for exercising in relation to diet and medication.

Tuesdays and Thursdays

Between the hours of 8 am and 4 pm

Health Connections

Call 923-1731 for more information and program fees.



923-9771

www.hhc.org

PARISH HEALTH PROGRAM

Sponsored by Houston Healthcare, this program provides resources for churches to promote a healthy lifestyle. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer nurse for your church, please call EduCare at 923-9771.

ASTHMATICARE

Asthma education is recognized as a vital part of asthma management. Asthmaticare can help you take charge of your asthma. For more information on this free program, call Vicki Alexander, RN, FNP-C at EduCare, 923-9771, Bill Gutman, RRT, at 922-4281 at Houston Medical Center or Cindy Marshall, RRT, at 988-1688 at Perry Hospital.

COOKING CLASSES

15 Minute Meals

Don't have time to spend in the kitchen preparing meals? Need to eat and run? Sandra Brenner, RD, PhD, will demonstrate how to prepare delicious, healthy meals in 15 minutes. Tasting and recipes available. Must pre-register to attend. Call 923-9771.

Thursday, February 5

11:30 - 1 pm

Health Connections

\$5 per person

EDUCATION/SUPPORT GROUPS

Alzheimer's Support Group

For families, caregivers and friends dealing with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders. Sponsored by the Alzheimer's Association - Central Georgia Chapter.

Tuesdays, January 27, February 24 & March 23

7 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Arthritis Support & Education

Wednesdays, January 21, February 18 & March 17

10 am

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Breast Cancer Support & Education

Mondays, January 19, February 16 & March 15

7 pm

Health Connections

Cardiac Support & Education

In recognition of Heart Month, Sandra Brenner, RD, PhD, will be the guest speaker. She will discuss heart healthy eating. Must pre-register for lunch. Call 923-9771

Monday, February 23

12 noon

Health Connections

Compassionate Friends (For anyone dealing with the loss of a child.)

Thursdays, January 22, February 26 & March 25

7 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

MOMS - Moms Of Multiples

Tuesdays, January 20 and February 17

7 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center

Multiple Sclerosis Support Group



The Medical Liability Crisis Facing Georgia...

The Need for Civil Justice Reform

Hospitals, physicians and nursing homes throughout our state are drowning under the weight of skyrocketing premiums for medical liability insurance. Each year, Georgia hospitals are faced with annual premium increases ranging anywhere from 50 percent to 400 percent while Georgia physicians are experiencing on average 20 percent increases per year. As for any other business, these types of rate increases are simply not sustainable over the long haul. In order to pay these premiums, Georgia health care providers are being forced to make some very tough decisions. Many hospitals are laying off employees and reducing their service offerings. Physicians are not only reducing the amount of service offered, many are increasingly reluctant to be on-call to respond to emergencies based in large part on liability concerns.

Why is this happening in Georgia? Simply, the cost of liability insurance is soaring due to the rising number of "mega verdicts" in Georgia. Since 1995, while the number of medical malpractice cases won against health care providers has remained steady, jury awards have doubled, forcing some insurance carriers into bankruptcy and others to quit selling medical liability coverage.

Consequently, for Georgia hospitals, the average cost to insure one hospital bed rose from \$3,500 in 1999 to almost \$10,000 in 2002. And, if that hospital has a nursing home, the cost to insure a bed is \$15,379. In rural Georgia, where the local community hospital is often that area's largest employer, hospitals are being driven to the brink of closure with each annual premium increase. Last year, the American Medical Association placed Georgia as one of only 12 states in the country in the "crisis" category for professional liability.

That's why health care providers and business are asking Georgia legislators to do in the upcoming legislative session what lawmakers in Florida, Mississippi, Texas and other states have already done: Pass meaningful civil justice reform that will reign in rising insurance premiums, preserve jobs and maintain health care access for every Georgian. To do so, we need to:

- Strengthen the expert witness requirements so that experts must have practiced or taught in the same specialty as the professional being sued.
- Abolish joint and several liability so that the defendant is only responsible for damages in proportion to his/her degree of fault.

- Establish comparative negligence so that defendants cannot be held liable where the plaintiff is found to be 50 percent or more responsible for the injury and requiring that awards be reduced by the percentages the plaintiff is found at fault.
- Eliminate double recovery by changing the collateral source rule so that the judge can reduce the award to the extent damages have already been paid or will be paid in the future by other sources (such as health insurance).
- Prohibit plaintiffs from collecting non-economic damages for actions arising from emergency care provided during the first 24 hours in an emergency room. This will help hospitals and physicians continue to provide emergency room services.
- Increase the discount rate from five percent to 10 percent in determining future damages. Current law requires that future earnings be adjusted by five percent for inflation. By increasing the percentages to 10 percent and extending this discount to all damages, liability costs lowered to more accurately track inflation.
- Eliminate venue shopping, a practice commonly used by trial lawyers in which cases are moved to a venue where higher jury awards are more common.

- Allow for periodic payments of large awards for future damages.
- Clarify the law regarding apparent agency to ensure hospitals are not held liable for the acts of non-employed medical staff members.
- Place a reasonable limit on non-economic (pain and suffering) damages.

We urge you to become informed about this issue by visiting www.justiceforgeorgia.org, the web site of a coalition of hospitals, physicians, businesses and community leaders working for reform. You'll find detailed information about the issues and how to get involved. With a push of a button you can contact your state legislators and communicate the urgency of action in the upcoming 2004 session.

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Getting You Back to Work Safely & Quickly

Recovering from an injury or accident can be long and difficult. Physical therapy plays an important role in an individual's return to their previous level of function whether at work or normal everyday routine. The staff of **Houston's Occupational Health and Wellness Center** and **Houston Lake Rehab** work together to bring individuals the best care possible in an environment that promotes safety and wellness.

"Because **Houston Lake Rehab** and **Occupational Health and Wellness** are located within the same facility, we are able to see the employee quicker and begin the rehab process faster," states **Geoff Aulds**, Director of Rehab Services for **Houston Healthcare**.

"Communication between the patient, physician and therapist is also increased due to the fact that our Occupational Medicine physician, Dr. Frank Stagg, is on-site and readily available to coordinate rehab and check on the patient's condition."

Physical therapists **Claire Reynes** and **Neal Newhouse** evaluate the patient and work with the physician to determine the best course of treatment. During the evaluation, the therapist checks the patients' pain level, tenderness, range of motion, strength, neurological deficits and conducts other tests to

get an overall picture of what is going on inside the body. One of the main responsibilities of the physical therapist is to discuss with the patient his occupation and the type of work he does, because this will assist in making sure the program is tailored to meet the demands of the job. Physical therapist assistant **Kelly Stevens** works with the therapist in

there is potential for continual aggravation of the injury. "Take for instance a runner who pulls a hamstring; if he tries to run before the muscle is healed, odds are the muscle will be reinjured. The same applies to lower back injuries. If the back is not physically strong enough to do the lifting the job requires, there is potential for aggravation," **Aulds** explains.



delivering the plan of care.

Modalities such as ultrasound, electrical stimulation, heat and ice can be used to decrease pain, inflammation, spasms and other ailments. The most important aspect is exercising. Once an area is injured there will be a decrease in strength. If strength is not restored,

A large component of education on both proper body mechanics and prevention is included during the rehab treatment. No matter how strong the back is, if the employee refuses to take care of himself with poor body mechanics, then back failure is almost certain. "An important aspect in proper body

mechanics is the therapy and exercises done at home. The patient has to take ownership of the injury," says **Aulds**.

"Our recommendation is for patients to continue some type of exercise routine once therapy is over. **Houston Lake Rehab** offers a wellness program for our patients who have completed physical therapy. The client may use our facilities during business hours for a monthly fee," **Aulds** says. "This is well liked by our patients because the staff is already familiar with their status and they feel comfortable around us. However, for those looking for a more advanced program we can refer them to other local exercise facilities."

Being able to return to the normal level of activity and regular job responsibilities is always the goal. However, due to the specific injury, this may not be possible as quickly as desired. Every effort is made to keep the patient at work, possibly with job restrictions that might result in a light duty assignment. Whether it is post injury rehab, ergonomic assessment or an onsite stretching program, our goal is to help you return to work and everyday activities as soon as possible. For more information, call **988-1853**.

Guarding Against GERD

Nearly half the American adult population experiences occasional heartburn. Most find relief by taking a spoonful of liquid or chewing a tablet from the medicine cabinet and swearing off garlic, spicy food and caffeine. But for one in every 100 older Americans, heartburn is a daily ailment, marked by difficulty swallowing, stomach pain, sore throat, chronic cough, nausea, hoarseness, weight loss and abdominal distress. The heartburn symptoms of acid reflux disease usually occur two or more days per week for at least three months.

Left untreated, this condition, termed gastroesophageal reflux disease or GERD, can irritate the esophagus and back of the throat with stomach acid that backs up or refluxes into the throat. The symptoms can vary, but patients typically describe a burning pain in the chest that can radiate to the back of the throat. Some can experience a bitter or acid taste in the back of the throat.

According to **Dr. Fred Oni**, a gastroenterologist on the medical staffs of **Houston Medical Center** and **Perry Hospital**, some GERD

patients have a weak sphincter, the flap at the bottom of the throat, that does not seal tightly enough to contain stomach acid. In some cases, GERD can lead to more serious disorders. "Longstanding, severe GERD can lead to changes in the esophagus that can result in difficulty swallowing. Long-term reflux can result in Barrett's esophagus, a chronic inflammation of the throat lining which can develop into cancer of the esophagus," he explains.

What causes GERD?

Common dietary and lifestyle factors can contribute to GERD. Persons who are most at risk of having GERD are individuals who are obese, smoke, drink alcohol, have a history of hiatal hernia or have scleroderma, a rare disease in which a person's immune system begins to destroy normal, healthy tissues especially the esophagus and digestive tract. Women who are pregnant frequently complain of GERD. Foods such as chocolate, onions, peppermint, coffee, spicy foods, citrus products, tomato products and fatty foods can worsen the condition.

Certain medications may also increase abnormal reflux of stomach acid and juices into the esophagus. Some medications, especially theophylline, used to treat asthma and emphysema, along with some heart and blood pressure medications, anticholinergic medications used to treat Parkinson's disease and muscle spasms and certain hormones such as progesterone found in oral contraceptives may relax the lower esophageal sphincter thereby increasing reflux and heartburn.

How is it treated?

According to **Dr. Oni**, GERD can be managed quite well. "In fact, 80 to 90 percent of patients enjoy long-lasting relief from the misery of GERD. In most cases, a routine exam along with some lifestyle changes, such as diet changes and exercise, and a course of antacids will take care of the problem," he says. "With more severe cases of GERD, however, further diagnostic testing may be required along with stronger prescription medications and possible surgery."



Houston Healthcare Diabetes Program Receives National Recognition

The Diabetes Management Program at **Houston Healthcare** has received Certification of Recognition from the American Diabetes Association for meeting National Standards for an educational program.

Houston Healthcare's program initially was awarded Education Recognition in September 2000. Recognized programs are required to reapply for this recognition every three years. This requirement is in place to insure the on-going quality and successful outcomes of the education program.

Three of the **Houston Healthcare** staff have achieved the rank of Certified Diabetes Educator. The program staff works closely with the patient's personal physician to ensure that each patient receives

individual attention which improves their health and increases their knowledge. The program also includes an Advisory Board which includes representatives from **Houston Medical Center, Perry Hospital, Robins Air Force Base** and the community.

"In order to meet the increasing volume of outpatients enrolling in our program, our three certified diabetes educators as well as our entire Community Education staff are involved in our Diabetes Education program," says **Beth Jones, RNC, CDE**, Director of Community Education and Services for **Houston Healthcare**. "Our number of participants has doubled in the last year. We are pleased to be able to work with diabetic patients in partnership with their

physicians to help manage their diabetes."

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) Education Recognition program has grown to become the leading quality assurance mechanism for diabetes self-management education programs across the country. The recognition program is based on the National Standards for Diabetes Education that were developed by the national Diabetes Advisory Board and endorsed by the diabetes community. Programs that achieve



this recognition have a staff of knowledgeable health professionals who can provide state-of-the-art education about diabetes self-management for participants.

EDUCARE
A SERVICE OF HOUSTON HEALTHCARE

Women's HealthWatch
A Service of Houston Healthcare

Women & Heart Disease

Cardiovascular disease claims more women's lives than the next seven causes of death combined — more than 500,000 women's lives a year. Cardiovascular disease often can be prevented, so understanding these serious health threats can make a lifesaving difference. We invite you to be empowered — educate yourself and your family with important information you'll receive by attending. Pre-register by calling 923-9771.

*Tuesday, February 10
10 am
Perry Hospital Medical Library*

*Tuesday, March 9
10 am
Houston Medical Women's Center Classroom*

Massage Therapy

Perry Hospital offers massage therapy services including deep muscle massage, prenatal massage and Swedish-style therapeutic massage by a certified therapeutic massage therapist. Half-hour and full-hour appointments available. Gift certificates also available. Call 988-1626 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Childbirth Education

The Women's Center at Houston Medical offers a series of childbirth education classes. The cost is covered by many insurance plans, including Medicaid. Other classes offered include Breastfeeding, Early Pregnancy, Big Brother/Big Sister Sibling, and Infant Safety and CPR. For more information and to pre-register call 923-9771.

For more information or to pre-register, please call 478-923-9771 or visit www.hhc.org/educare.