The name of the game is change
By Vern Call, AARP

As we grow older, time and gravity combine to change each of us. Our eyesight, hearing, and reaction time tends to diminish. We don’t see as well, we don’t hear as well, and we don’t move as quickly or as agilely as we used to. Additionally, we are more fragile than ever and we don’t heal as well or as quickly as we did when we were young.

On the other hand, as we get older we are wiser, more patient, more cautious, more courteous, more understanding and more careful. Along with the changes in our bodies, there is change going on all around us. Automobiles have changed dramatically from the “good old days.” They are more complex, more comfortable, more attractive and much more expensive. Roads too have changed. There is much more traffic, more signs and directions, and continuous construction.

It is important that older drivers keep in touch with the changes of life, especially those that affect our safety on the roads. The AARP Driver Safety Classes are offered to help each of us become better drivers and understand how the changes in our lives affect our driving. Additionally, auto insurance companies offer reductions in auto insurance premiums to those who complete the four hour classes.

For the convenience of Davis County residents, classes are offered at the following locations:

- **Syracuse:** Oct. 14 at Syracuse Community Center, 1912 West 1900 South, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call 801-614-9660 Option #1 for reservations.
- **Kaysville:** Oct. 15 at Autumn Glow Senior Activity Center, 81 East Center Street, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (half hour lunch). Call 801-544-1235 for reservations.
- **Layton:** Oct. 26 at Layton City Offices, 437 North Wasatch Drive, 8 a.m. to noon. Call 801-546-2463 for reservations.
- **Clearfield:** Oct. 27 at Heritage Senior Activity Center, 140 East Center Street, 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. Call 801-775-7065 for reservations.
- **Bountiful:** Nov. 3 at Golden Years Senior Activity Center, 726 South 100 East, 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. Call 801-295-3479 for reservations.

H1N1 flu – What seniors need to know

By Isa Katalikaua

One of the more puzzling aspects of the novel H1N1 (swine) flu outbreak is why young people seem to be more susceptible to the disease than their parents and grandparents. This is in contrast to regular seasonal flu which tends to disproportionately strike the old, not the healthy young.

Current studies indicate that the risk for H1N1 flu infection among persons age 65 or older is less than the risk for younger age groups. One possible explanation is that some adults in this age group have had previous exposure to an influenza A (H1N1) virus that is more closely related to the novel influenza A (H1N1) virus. Laboratory studies have shown that no children and very few adults younger than 60 years old have existing antibody to 2009 H1N1 flu virus.

Initially the H1N1 vaccine will be available in limited quantities. Since older people have some immunity, it is recommended that younger at-risk groups of the population receive the 2009 H1N1 vaccine when it first becomes available. Because children and young adults are more likely to gather in groups, at school and colleges, they are more vulnerable to catching all types of flu. The disease does not appear to be more severe than seasonal flu but will affect a disproportionate number of young people who will probably get it.

“We’ve recently received good news about the vaccine,” said Lewis Garrett, director of the Davis County Health Department. “The clinical trials show that only one dose of the vaccine is needed for people age 10 and above. That means we may be able to stretch Davis County’s allotment of vaccine beyond the CDC’s targeted groups and eventually open our mass vaccination clinics up to anyone desiring to be vaccinated against the novel H1N1 flu virus.”

“Those people 65 and older make up a sizable group who normally get their seasonal flu shot each year” he said. “We understand their desire to be vaccinated against H1N1 flu and we look forward to accommodating them right after we’ve taken care of the designated at-risk groups identified by CDC.”

Garrett reminds everyone there are simple yet proven actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand cleaner if soap and water are not available. Be sure to wash your hands after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes. Germs spread this way.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, or cough and sneeze into your elbow. Dispose of tissues in no-touch trash receptacles.
- Keep frequently touched common surfaces clean, such as telephones and doorknobs.
- Don’t spread the flu! Stay home. If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle through rest, diet, exercise, and relaxation.
- Get vaccinated against seasonal flu. As always, a vaccine is available to protect against seasonal influenza. Vaccinations are currently available throughout the community. See the schedule included in this issue of Senior Scoop.
A Miracle

By Janice Dixon

A miracle tiptoed in
As silently as summer’s
dusk,
No shouts of “hallelujah!”
No fanfare, clangs or deaf-
ening
Light made clear its way
Soft it was, with a touch
that left
No fingerprints to linger.
Fragile it was, as a summer
friend,
Quietly with footsteps like
a smile it came
And healed with life itself
One small sweet fevered
child.

A miracle tiptoed out
And shook great appled
trees with gustiness
And gave a life.
No one saw it come or go.
But He-who-manufactures
miracles
Watched and waited.
Waited for the promises
whispered on a
Fright-filled night.
Watched for vows like a
computer songs
To race with gossip speed.
A miracle, soft, fragile,
quiet,
Lay panting in a great
white sterile bed,
And pale with thick-
slimed tongue,
While forgotten fears
whispered a
Million heartbeats past
Praised penicillin, MRIs
and three M.D.s
A miracle groped for
promises still unkept
To race the weeping wind.
And cried to that small
sweet child
Where once it hovered.
A promise kept would
give it strength
To rise again and soar.
But He-who-manufactures-
miracles
Felt something die.

Davis County Health Depart-
ment’s Family Caregiver Support Pro-
gram continues with the
remainder of its ten-week
series of classes for indi-
viduals caring for family
members who are older or
frail. These classes are free
to the public and are
offered each week at two
locations. Individuals may
attend at anytime during
the series.

Presenters will discuss
various topics such as
home safety, tips for com-
municating with people
with dementia, resources
for caregivers, cardiac
health, questions to ask
regarding advance direc-
tives, how to design the life
of a caregiver, and being
prepared and organized.

The Tuesday classes
begin at 1 p.m. at the Cen-
terville Library (45 South
400 West, Centerville).
Each Thursday class is a
repeat of the Tuesday class
and they start at 1 p.m. at
the Heritage Senior Activi-
ty Center (140 East Center
Street, Clearfield). No reg-
istration is required.

For more information,
please contact Megan For-
bush at (801) 451-3506.

Davis County Health Depart-
ment’s Senior Ser-
vices thanks the following
agencies for helping to
sponsor these classes:

- Kayscreek Therapies and
  Rocky Mountain Care
- Caregiver Support Network
- Personal Care By Design
- Nordell Peterson, Kayscreek Therapies and Rocky Mountain Care
- CJ Benson and Denise Cook, SDHH
- Denell Bredsguard, Vista Care
- Julia Cole, Caregiver Support Network
- Kari Larson, Personal Care By Design

Robyn Walton

Rowe & Walton PC

475 West 750 South

Bountiful, Utah

(801) 298-3919

Open: Mon., Wed., Fri.,
8 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
& 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

For information or questions please contact:
Linda Freer 801-451-3533
Move it. Use it. Start now.

United States Bone and Joint Decade (usbjd.org)

D rinking milk and eating lots of fruit and vegetables are good for your health. That’s always been good advice. But to really make a better future, you need to keep moving – whether through walking, physical training, or sports activities. All of these help add bone mass – an important means to ensure your body will move easily throughout the years ahead. Exercise also helps reduce stress, leading to a healthier future.

As you age, your body will show wear and tear. But you can help by building strong bones when you are young and maintaining them as an adult. Eating the right food, and exercise, will keep your bones strong and joints flexible.

Move it. Use it. Start now. Arms, legs, lungs. Like a well-oiled machine, your body will respond and reduce your chances of having bone or joint problems in the future.

Sometimes, despite your best efforts, your body lets you down. Healthcare professionals can work with you to diagnose and treat you with therapy, medicine, or surgery. They can help you learn to reuse muscles or joints and prevent future injury. They can help you use your body more efficiently. You can help yourself in other ways, too. Take charge of your health. Be a knowledgeable patient.

Senior oral health is still important

By American Dental Hygienists’ Association (ADHA.org)

A lmost 250 million people or about 40 percent of the adult population in Europe, USA, and Japan are estimated to suffer from some form of edentulousness, or loss of natural teeth. Incidence of tooth loss generally increases with age. While the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) reports the prevalence of both partial and total tooth loss in seniors has decreased from the early 1970s, seniors over age 65 have lost an average of 13 teeth (including wisdom teeth) and 26 percent of seniors over age 65 have no remaining teeth.

Whether caring for natural teeth or dentures, seniors face a range of special oral concerns, including root decay and periodontal disease. You can keep your smile healthy by following a routine of proper oral care and making regular visits to your registered dental hygienist and dentist.

If you have arthritis or limited use of your hands, try adapting the toothbrush for easy use. Insert the handle into a rubber ball or sponge hair curler; or glue the toothbrush handle into a bicycle grip. Toothbrush handles can be lengthened with a piece of wood or plastic such as a ruler, ice cream bar stick, or tongue depressor.

For people who have dexterity problems and cannot use a manual toothbrush, an electric toothbrush may be easier to use and increase effectiveness. Numerous studies confirm that electric toothbrushes are excellent plaque removing devices and are extremely effective in stimulating gums. Dental floss holders are also available. Among other benefits, daily brushing and flossing protect older smiles from two common problems of getting older: Root decay — a condition that affects older adults if a great amount of root surfaces are exposed — and tooth decay caused by the weakening or chipping of older fillings.

Denture care and cleaning: Dentures – full or partial – should be brushed daily with a soft toothbrush or denture cleaning brush, using a commercially prepared denture powder or paste, hand soap, or baking soda. Toxic or abrasive household cleaners should never be used. Dentures should be brushed inside and outside, and rinsed with cool water. Remaining natural teeth and gums, especially those teeth supporting a partial denture, also should be brushed.

When not in use, dentures should be covered with water or a denture cleaning solution to prevent drying.

Seasonal flu vaccine, anyone?

Betty Gelinas, a licensed practical nurse with the Davis County Health Department, provides a seasonal flu shot for a willing recipient during one of the many clinics for seniors held throughout the county. Seasonal flu vaccine is still available at the county health department’s two Immunization Clinics: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at the Clearfield clinic (801) 773-8834; Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Woods Cross clinic (801) 298-3919.

Senior Scoop by Supplement to the Davis Clipper • October 8, 2009
October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM). Since the program began in 1985, mammography rates have more than doubled for women age 50 and older since there are still women who do not take advantage of early detection at all and others who do not get screening mammograms and clinical breast exams at regular intervals:

- Women age 65 and older are less likely to get mammograms than younger women, even though breast cancer risk increases with age.
- Hispanic women have fewer mammograms than Caucasian women and African American women.
- Women below poverty level are less likely than women at higher incomes to have had a mammogram within the past two years.
- Mammography use has increased for all groups except American Indians and Alaska Natives.

By the American Academy of Ophthalmology

Experts say “If all women age 40 and older took advantage of early detection methods – mammography plus clinical breast exam – breast cancer death rates would drop much further, up to 30 percent.”

“The key to mammography screening is that it be done routinely – once is not enough.”

For more information about NBCAM, please visit www.nbcam.org. For additional information, please call one of the following toll-free numbers: American Cancer Society, (800) 227-2345, National Cancer Institute (NCI), (800) 4-CANCER, Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization, (800) 221-2141.

The truths about cataracts

By the American Academy of Ophthalmology

Did you know that 20.5 million Americans age 40 and older have cataracts, one of the most curable causes of vision loss? And more than half of all Americans develop cataracts by age 80. There are a lot of myths regarding cataracts. Let’s put some of those to rest and give a reminder that if you have cataracts you don’t have to live with the vision loss it causes.

A cataract is the clouding of the eye’s normally clear lens, blocking the passage of light needed for vision. They form slowly and cause no pain. Some stay small and hardly affect vision, but if the cataract does grow and begins to affect your vision, it can usually be removed with surgery. Cataracts are a significant cause of blindness in some parts of the world; however, technological advances and the availability of new procedures in the United States mean that for most Americans, cataracts don’t lead to vision loss.

Cataract surgery is the most frequently performed surgical procedure in the United States, with more than 1.6 million procedures performed each year. Cataract surgery is usually covered by medical insurance, including Medicare. Cataract surgery is usually done as an outpatient procedure under local anesthesia. In this procedure, the Eye M.D. makes a tiny incision through which he or she removes the cloudy lens and replaces it with a permanent artificial lens. Lasers are not currently used to remove cataracts. But they are sometimes used after cataract surgery to remove a film that can grow on the lens implant.

If you think you may have a cataract you don’t have to live with it. You can talk to your eye doctor, also called Ophthalmologists, about your options. There are no medications or exercises that will prevent the formation or progression of cataracts or make a cataract disappear. Nutritional or vitamin supplements have been shown to be beneficial in populations with nutritional deficits, but due to the inconsistent results reported in clinical trials, recommendations cannot be made at this time. Although it is very safe and effective, cataract surgery is surgery and you need to carefully decide if it is right for you. If the cataract does not interfere with your life, you may decide surgery is not warranted. Talk to your eye doctor if cataracts are interfering with your lifestyle.

For more information, visit www.aao.org/aaoesite/eyemd/cataract.cfm.

Hear Our Voice: Residents’ Rights Week going on now

Across the country, residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities along with family members, ombudsmen, citizen advocates, facility staff, and others will honor the individual rights of long-term care residents by celebrating Residents’ Rights Week October 4-10, 2009. Designated by NCCNHR – The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care – the week highlights the importance of listening to residents who live in our country’s nursing homes, assisted living, and board and care facilities.

“This year’s theme, Hear Our Voice, emphasizes the fundamental rights of all long-term residents to be treated with the appropriate care they deserve and need to maintain quality of life,” said Sarah F. Wells, Executive Director of NCCNHR. “Residents will be treated with dignity and respect of their full individuality; staff and residents will enjoy relationships that enhance their day to day lives; and the long-term care facility will operate more effectively with its day to day activities being based on and developed with consumer involvement when facilities care about their residents.”

Many people care about residents – family members, citizen advocates, ombudsmen, facility staff, and other visitors. This care can be truly individualized and focused on each person’s needs and preferences.

In 1978 the Nursing Home Reform Law that was passed guarantees nursing home residents their individual rights, including but not limited to: individualized care, respect, dignity, the right to visitation, the right to privacy, the right to complain, and the right to make independent choices. Residents who have made their home in other types of facilities, assisted living, and adult care homes maintain their rights as U.S. Citizens. Residents’ Rights Week raises awareness about these rights and pays tribute to the unique contributions of long-term residents.

The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program has worked tirelessly for over 30 years to promote residents’ rights daily. More than 8,000 volunteers and 1,000 paid staff are advocates for residents in all 50 states plus the District of Columbia, Guam, and Puerto Rico. Authorized under the Older Americans’ Act and administered by the Administration on Aging, the program also provides information on how to find a facility, conducts community education sessions, and supports residents, their families and the public with one-on-one consultation regarding long-term care.

To contact Davis County’s ombudsman call 801-451-3231 or e-mail Kim Cannon at kcannon@daviscountytah.gov.

“Residents’ Rights Week is an excellent opportunity to reaffirm our collective commitment to residents’ rights and to honor long-term care residents. We strongly encourage the community to participate in Residents’ Rights Week activities and to visit residents who continue to be important to our communities and society,” Wells said.

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