



Elderly Expression

Lincoln University Cooperative Extension
Paula J. Carter Center on Minority Health & Aging

Stay Cool!

The temperatures this summer are the hottest they have been in about a decade, and it is important to take good care of yourself, and also help check on others. According to statistics from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, in recent years the highest number of deaths attributed to heat stroke have been of people age 65 years and older. In most of these *heat stroke* deaths, the person lived alone, or had other complicating medical problems. Heat kills by pushing the body beyond its limits. In extreme heat, as the temperature rises, the body's sweating mechanism fails, making it impossible to cool down. Body temperature can rise to 106 degrees in as little as 15 minutes. Some of the signs to look for include: red, hot and dry skin with no sweating; a rapid strong pulse; dizziness and confusion. If you see someone with any of these symptoms get the person cooled down as soon as you can. Use shade, a tub of cold water,

a garden hose, or wrap the person in a wet sheet...but act quickly, you may be dealing with a life or death emergency. *Heat exhaustion* is a milder form of temperature related illness that develops over several days of exposure to high temperatures. Some of the symptoms to look for include paleness, muscle cramps, nausea. The skin may be cool and moist. Breathing will be shallow, and the pulse will be fast and weak. While heat exhaustion isn't as deadly, if it isn't taken care of, it can become heat stroke. Take care of yourself, and your friends.

HEALTH ALERT

As the mercury hovers near the 100 mark, remember some simple rules:

- *Stay in a cool environment. Find air conditioning. Whether its at the movie theater, the local library, or a senior center, find a place that is cool.
- *Drink plenty of water. Stay away from sodas, caffeine or alcohol.
- *Dress in light clothing...both in color, and in material.
- *Stay out of the sun as much as you can.
- *If you are feeling well...check on your friends. The sooner heat stroke is spotted, the less damage is done.

If you, or your friends feel unusually weak, dizzy, confused, or nauseous call 911, or your doctor.

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Coordinator
Treaka Young

From the desk of Treaka Young...

This issue of the Elderly Expression is all about you. It's about what you can do to have an impact on your own life, and in some cases your friends. There are topics ranging from programs and needed services that we offer through the Paula J. Carter Center on Minority Health and Aging, or issues and changes that you need to be aware of. Our role is to help you solve your health issues by pointing you in the right direction. In the end though, it really is about you, and what you can do by yourself, for yourself.

Treaka

A Helping Hand

Alzheimer's disease is devastating to a family. Caregivers not only face the trauma of the "loss" of a loved one, but it can be hard emotionally, physically, and financially. Caring for a family



member is a 24 hour a day job. It can be exhausting, and add depression symptoms to the caregiver. The well being of the person suffering from Alzheimer's really does depend on the continued well being of the caregiver. Being able to take a break is a cherished opportunity. The Alzheimer's Association offers a Respite Care Assistance Program that provides the needed time for the caregiver to take care of themselves. There is no income requirement to participate in the program. The caregiver is responsible for the selection and arrangement of a respite provider. The Alzheimer's Association chapters may be able to provide information about local services, as well as answer any questions about the program. For more information, visit their website at:

<http://www.alz.org>. In central Missouri you can call (573) 443-8665, or visit <http://www.midmoalz.org>.



Calling All Veteran's

If you're a veteran that served in the United States military...are you aware of all the benefits that you deserve? If not, you are invited to the Missouri Veteran's Commission's Supermarket of Veteran's benefits. The "supermarkets" are being offered across the state, and are free. Veterans can get information on pensions and compensation benefits, education, employment opportunities, housing, and health screenings like the ones the Paula J. Carter Center on Minority Health and Aging offers. Far too many veterans are unaware of the benefits they have earned as they served our country. This program is a way to get that information out to Missouri's Veterans. For information on a veteran's supermarket in your area, contact the Missouri Veteran's Commission, (573) 522-1411...or visit them on the internet:

<http://www.mvc.dps.mo.gov/Supermarkets.htm>

***Never in the field of
human conflicts was
so much owed by so
many to so few.***

**Sr. Winston Churchill
British Politician**



Depression DOES Affect The Heart

Specialists at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis have discovered that there is an abnormal heart rate that may be responsible for depression effects in heart patients. It has been known for some time that depression after a heart attack increases the risk of death, but this new information about the heart rate may be helpful for future patients. If researchers are able to alleviate the symptoms of depression, and correct the defects that cause the heart rate problem, it may offer significant hope for patients with heart disease. Researchers also determined the risk of death increased over time. Depressed patients tended to be at a greater risk of dying more than 12 months after their heart attacks.



Cole County Outreach Worker, Shirmere Singleton looks on as program participants learn to use Medline Plus.

OnLine Assistance

In an effort to continue to help people help themselves, the Paula J. Carter Center on Minority Health and Aging has joined with the Inman Page Library on the Lincoln University campus to present computer training for online resources. The Library's Information Access Coordinator Lois Marshall serves as the instructor working with students on skills needed to access online

health resources, such as Medline Plus. The classes are part of the Improving Access to Healthcare for Missouri's Underserved Minority Seniors (IAHMUMS) program. Outreach Workers provide the information, arrange the health screenings, and work through Centers like the Salvation Army or even through home visits. The IAHMUMS program focuses on Callaway, Cole, Moniteau, Pemiscot Counties, and St. Louis City. Ollie Hall is the Outreach Worker for St. Louis City. Her telephone number is (314) 867-4915. Sandra Jones is the Outreach Worker for Pemiscot County (the Bootheel). Her telephone number is (573) 931-1232. Shirmire Singleton is the Cole County Outreach Worker. Her telephone number is (573) 681-5530. If you are interested in participating in health education activities, or you know of

You can use the fanciest computers to gather the numbers, but in the end you have to set a timetable and act.

Lee Iacocca
American Businessman

Medline Plus is a good online resource for your health questions. It is easy to use, and easy to understand. Give it a try:

<http://medlineplus.gov/>

a senior group that would be interested, please call the Outreach Workers nearest you. The IAHMUMS program is free to all participants.

Changes In Prescription Drug Plans May Affect You

Starting January 1, 2006 -



Medicare will soon be offering insurance coverage for prescription drugs through Medicare prescription drug plans. Insurance companies and other private companies will work with Medicare to offer these plans. These plans will help you save money on your prescription drug costs.

Medical practice has come to rely more and more on new drug therapies to treat chronic conditions and out-of-pocket spending on drugs has increased dramatically. In order to get this prescription coverage, you must choose and enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan that meets your needs. Here's how you can get ready to take advantage of this new option.

If you don't use a lot of prescription drugs now, you still should consider joining. As we age, most people need prescription drugs to stay healthy. For most people, joining now means you will pay a lower monthly premium than if you wait to join until later.

When can I get more information?

Detailed information about Medicare prescription drug plans in your area will be available in the fall of 2005. Throughout 2005, Medicare will provide general information to help you get ready, including how to choose and join a plan that meets your needs. **In the fall of 2005,**

- *you will get the "Medicare & You 2006" handbook in the mail. It will list the Medicare prescription drug plans available in your area.
- * you will be able to get free personalized information at www.medicare.gov on the web, or by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to help you choose the plan that meets your needs.
- * you can get free personalized counseling from your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), and other local and community-based organizations.

Call 1-800-MEDICARE to get the telephone number of the SHIP nearest you.
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Sweet News!

Remember the old saying “if it tastes good, it must be bad for you”?

Well, it may not be quite as true with the results of a new study. Italian researchers have found that dark chocolate may actually lower blood pressure. The benefit could stem from the natural antioxidants found in chocolate. High blood pressure continues to be one of the countries biggest health threats, so while the news is “sweet”, the study was small and the findings need to be confirmed. Not all kinds of chocolate were found to be beneficial.



Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get.

Forrest Gump
(Tom Hanks)

White chocolate doesn't contain the same antioxidants the dark chocolate does, and milk chocolate contains much smaller amounts. Milk chocolate wasn't a part of the test. Even though the participants were given the taste treat, they still needed to watch their calorie intake.

Remember, before you rush out to stock up on chocolate, this is a small study, with uncertain results. Always check with your doctor before your make any changes to your diet...no matter how good it sounds.

Some Handy Resources For You!

Missouri Veteran's Comm. 1-573-522-1411 www.veterans.org

Medicare 1-800-633-4227 www.medicare.gov

Paula J. Carter Center - 1-573-681-5530

Mo Dept. of Health/Sr. Services 1-573-751-6400 www.dhss.mo.gov

Alzheimer's Assoc www.alz.org Medline Plus: www.medlineplus.gov

Mid-Missouri Alzheimer's Assoc. 1-800-693-8665 www.midmoalz.org



The Paula J. Carter Center on Minority Health and Aging, a service offered through Lincoln University Cooperative Extension, was established to help make life better for all Missourians.

Our Mission is to provide leadership in addressing the health, social, and psychological needs of Missouri's minority, disabled and elderly populations. The Center offers education, research, policy analysis, and the use of technology as strategic tools to meet this goal.

We have information concerning arthritis, cancer, diabetes, healthy eating, heart disease, and many other topics. This information focuses on specific health concerns of people who are African American, Asian/Pacific Islander American, Hispanic/Latino American, or Native American.



Some material is available in Spanish.

We would be happy to talk with you and
send you information



6 Warning Signs for Men

Men of all ages are often the first to dismiss an illness, or injury...but here are 6 health threats they should keep an eye on. If you're concerned...see your doctor.

1. **Nosebleed:** While a nosebleed can be minor, if there is no specific reason for it, it could be a sign of high blood pressure.
2. **Sore knees:** As we age, we all get aches and pains, if the ache lasts longer than 2 hours, it could be an early sign of osteoarthritis.
3. **Sore Throat:** Up to 40 percent of adults automatically take an antibiotic for a sore throat, but it is also an indicator of strep throat.
4. **Blister:** A blister can sometimes be blamed on new shoes, but a blister between the toes could be a medical emergency in the making. Remember, even athlete's foot is still an infection.
5. **Pimple:** While the pimple is a common sign of adolescence, they may be dismissed as aggravating, but it could be an early warning sign of cancer.
6. **Leg Pain:** Like sore knees, it's easy to write this off as "growing older", but it could be a sign for issues ranging from arthritis to heart trouble.

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The newsletter is also available online at the website



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Lincoln University of Missouri, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Dr. Steven Meredith, Interim 1890 Administrator, Cooperative Extension. Distributed in furtherance of Food and Agriculture Act, 1977 PL 95-113 Section 1444 and 1445, as amended by PL 97-98. December 22, 1981. Publications are distributed without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion or handicap.

Lincoln University is an 1890 land-grant institution and is part of the Missouri state system of higher education. Founded in 1866 by enlisted men and officers of the 62nd and 65th Colored Infantries, Lincoln University has expanded its mission to embrace the needs of a broader population reflecting varied social, economic, educational, and cultural backgrounds. This is the unique purpose that Lincoln University fulfills in higher education.

This publication is funded by:

