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Help is Needed!
If you have any suggestions for articles for the quarterly ANGEL Network newsletter, contact Linda Stevens-Butts at 330-452-6906 or email stevensL7@aol.com. Articles for the next newsletter are due by July 1, 2013.

E-Newsletter Available
Want to receive the ANGEL newsletter electronically? Submit your email address to becky.bondoni@cantonmercy.org. Help us conserve our natural resources and reduce printing and mailing costs.

May is Arthritis Awareness Month

It is estimated that 50 million U.S. adults (about one in five) report doctor-diagnosed arthritis. That number will continue to grow with the large number of adults reaching the age of 65 in the next few years. The number is expected to grow to more than 67 million by the year 2030.

By definition, arthritis means “joint inflammation,” and it’s used to describe more than 100 different diseases and conditions that affect joints, the tissues that surround joints, and other connective tissue.

In addition to affecting strength and flexibility, arthritis also limits both manual and joint dexterity. As a result, people with arthritis often find it challenging to perform day-to-day activities associated with independent living. For example, someone with arthritis in the hip is likely to experience discomfort when sitting up in bed, twisting and turning to get in or out of a vehicle, and even while resting. If arthritis affects someone’s wrists and joints in the hands, everything from turning on the shower and holding a bar of soap to drying off with a towel and getting dressed can be difficult and painful.

Often people don’t realize that most everything we do on a daily basis involves our joints. Everything from holding a phone, squeezing a toothpaste tube, brushing teeth, holding a utensil or pen, lifting a bag of groceries, making a meal, opening a pill bottle, driving a car, and more can be challenging.

Get the Facts
If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with arthritis, it is important to learn more about the disease and its potential impact.

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May is Arthritis Awareness Month (continued from page 1)

Myth #1: Arthritis is just minor aches and pains associated with getting older.

Fact: Arthritis is actually a complex family of musculoskeletal disorders consisting of more than 100 different diseases or conditions that can affect people of all ages, races and genders. Arthritis can take many forms, but three of the common diseases that make up arthritis are:

- Osteoarthritis (OA), the most common form of arthritis, is a progressive degenerative joint disease characterized by the breakdown of joint cartilage associated with risk factors, such as overweight/obesity, history of joint injury and age.

- Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA), a systemic disease characterized by the inflammation of the membranes lining the joint, which causes pain, stiffness, warmth, swelling and sometimes severe joint damage.

- Juvenile Arthritis (JA) is an umbrella term used to describe the many autoimmune and inflammatory conditions that can develop in children ages 16 and younger.

Myth #2: Arthritis is not a serious health problem.

Fact: Arthritis places a growing burden on the health care and economic systems in this country. Each year, people with arthritis account for 44 million outpatient visits and 992,100 hospitalizations. Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in the United States.

Myth #3: People with arthritis should avoid exercising.

Fact: Exercise is a valuable tool in the fight against arthritis. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, there is strong evidence indicating that both endurance and resistance types of exercise provide considerable disease-specific benefits for people with osteoarthritis (OA) and rheumatic conditions. A growing body of research indicates that exercise, weight management and the avoidance of joint injury can go a long way in helping to prevent OA.

Myth #4: Not much can be done for arthritis.

Fact: Relief is available and new treatments are in the pipeline. The Arthritis Foundation helps people who already have arthritis to live better with arthritis by:

- Helping understand treatment options.

- Showing how to manage pain.

- Telling Congress that more needs to be done for people with arthritis.

Resource: www.arthritis.org
Westfall Awarded “Best Mixed Media” In Lilly Oncology On Canvas National Art Competition

Jane Westfall, R.N., OCN, clinical trials coordinator with Mercy Cancer Center, learned about Lilly Oncology On CanvasSM: Expressions of a Cancer Journey art competition from a pharmaceutical representative who worked with Mercy staff to host the art exhibition at Mercy Cancer Center last year. She lost her mother and a close friend to breast cancer and, through her profession, has been touched by many more cancer patients as she shares in their journey.

Inspired, she went home and wrote a haiku poem.

Salt invisible
In teardrops, so too are my Guardian Angels.

Westfall then weaved her haiku poem into pointillism – a technique of painting in which small, distinct dots are applied in patterns to form an image. She says the poem is meant to subliminally appear in the tear down a woman’s cheek. “It represents the fact that we don’t always realize our guardian angels are with us,” Westfall says.

Westfall’s art was chosen as a Lilly Oncology On Canvas winner in the “Best Mixed Media by a Family Member, Friend or Caregiver” category. As part of her award, she received a $1,000 donation in her name to the cancer-charity of her choice. She chose Mercy Cancer Center as the recipient of the monetary donation because of her strong belief in the great work of her co-workers and physicians to care for individuals with cancer throughout their entire journey. Westfall’s piece is a part of the Lilly Oncology On Canvas exhibition touring cancer centers, hospitals and patient advocacy events nationwide. Her piece will also be featured in the 2012 Lilly Oncology On Canvas art book.

To read more about her story, visit cantonmercy.org/mission.

Surviving is Thriving

Mercy Medical Center offered breast cancer survivors an afternoon and evening of relaxation, education and dinner at the third annual Beyond Surviving is Thriving event held March 18 at Glenmoor Country Club and Spa. Over 100 guests attended. Survivors chose one free spa service, such as a facial, massage, pedicure or manicure, and educational classes to attend.

Due to last year’s popularity, Mercy once again offered Partners in Survival, an interactive program for men focused on the range of emotions they feel after their spouse’s cancer diagnosis, during treatment and post-cancer. This class was led by Marc Heyison, founder of Men Against Breast Cancer.

The evening concluded with dinner in the chapel and entertainment from the Jackson High School jazz ensemble. Beyond Surviving is Thriving is supported in part by Susan G. Komen for the Cure Northeast Ohio Chapter.
Did You Know?

Beware of Health Scams

You see ads everywhere these days – “Smart Drugs” for long life or “Arthritis Aches and Pains Disappear Like Magic!” or even statements claiming, “This treatment cured my cancer in one week.” It’s easy to understand the appeal of these promises. But there is still plenty of truth to the old saying, “If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!”

Health scams and the marketing of unproven cures have been around for many years. Today, there are more ways than ever to sell these untested products. In addition to TV, radio, magazines, newspapers, infomercials, mail, telemarketing and even word-of-mouth, these products are now offered over the Internet – with websites describing miracle cures and emails telling stories of overnight magic. Sadly, older people are often the target of such scams.

The problem is serious. Untested remedies may be harmful. They may get in the way of medicines prescribed by your doctor. They may also waste money. And, sometimes, using these products keeps people from getting the medical treatment they may need.

False Hopes

Why do people fall for these sales pitches? Unproven remedies promise false hope. They offer cures that appear to be painless or quick. At best, these treatments are worthless. At worst, they are dangerous. Health scams prey on people who are frightened or in pain. Living with a chronic health problem is hard. It’s easy to see why people might fall for a false promise of a quick and painless cure. The best way for scientists to find out if a treatment works is through a clinical trial.

These scams usually target diseases that have no cures, like diabetes, arthritis, and Alzheimer’s disease. You may see ads for:

- Anti-aging medications. Our culture places great value on staying young, but aging is normal. Despite claims about pills or treatments that lead to endless youth, no treatments have been proven to slow or reverse the aging process. Eating a healthy diet, getting regular exercise, and not smoking are proven ways to help prevent some of the diseases that occur with age. In other words, making healthy lifestyle choices offers you the best chance of aging well.

- Arthritis remedies. Unproven arthritis remedies can be easy to fall for because symptoms of arthritis tend to come and go. You may believe the remedy you are using is making you feel better when, in fact, it is just the normal ebb and flow of your symptoms. You may see claims that so-called treatments with magnets, copper bracelets, chemicals, special diets, radiation, and other products cure arthritis. This is highly unlikely. Ads where people say they have been cured do not prove that a product works. Some of these products could hurt you, aren’t likely to help, and are often costly. There is no cure for most forms of arthritis. Rest, exercise, heat, and some drugs help many people control their symptoms. Don’t trust ads where people say they have been cured. This kind of statement probably doesn’t tell the whole story. If you are thinking about any new treatment, such as diet, a device, or another arthritis product, talk with your doctor first.
• Cancer cures. Scam artists prey on a fear of cancer. They promote treatments with no proven value – for example, a diet dangerously low in protein or drugs such as laetrile. Remember, there is no one treatment that cures all types of cancer. By using unproven methods, people with cancer may lose valuable time and the chance to benefit from a proven, effective treatment. This delay may lessen the chance of controlling or curing disease.

• Memory aids. Many people worry about losing their memory as they age. They may wrongly believe false promises that unproven treatments can keep or improve their memory. So-called smart pills, removal of amalgam dental fillings, and certain brain retraining exercises are some examples of untested approaches.

• Dietary supplements. Americans spend billions of dollars each year on dietary supplements. These supplements are sold over-the-counter and include vitamins and minerals, amino acids, herbs, and enzymes. Most dietary supplements do not undergo government testing or review before they are put on the market. While some vitamins may be helpful, supplements may be bad for people taking certain medicines or with some medical conditions. By wary of claims that a supplement can shrink tumors, solve impotence, or cure Alzheimer’s disease. Talk to your doctor before starting any supplement.

• Health insurance. Some companies target people who are unable to get health insurance. They offer coverage that promises more than it intends to deliver. When you think about buying health insurance, remember to find out if the company and agent are licensed in your State.

How Can You Protect Yourself From Health Scams?

Be wary. Question what you see or hear in ads or on the Internet. Newspapers, magazines, radio, and TV stations do not always check to make sure the claims in their ads are true. Find out about a product before you buy. Don’t let a salesperson talk you into making a snap decision. Check with your health care provider first.

Look for red flags in ads or promotional material that:

• Promise a quick or painless cure.
• Claim the product is made from a special, secret, or ancient formula.
• Offer products and services only by mail or from one company.
• Use statements or unproven case histories from so-called satisfied patients.
• Claim to be a cure for a wide range of ailments.
• Claim to cure a disease (such as arthritis or Alzheimer’s disease) that hasn’t been cured by medical science.
• Promise a no-risk, money-back guarantee.
• Offer an additional free gift or a larger amount of the product as a special promotion.
• Require advance payment and claim there is a limited supply of the product.

Two federal government agencies work to protect you from health scams. The Federal Trade Commission can help you spot fraud. The Food and Drug Administration protects the public by assuring the safety of prescription drugs, biological products, medical devices food, cosmetics, and radiation-emitting products. If you have questions about a product, talk to your doctor. Getting the facts about health care products can help protect you from health scams.

The ANGEL Network mission is to reduce the number of deaths within the African American female population by offering early detection programs, access to screening, and empowering African American women on breast health practices so that they will take an active part in their own health care.

All women are at risk for breast cancer.

But statistics show that although there is a lower incidence of breast cancer in African American women, there is a much higher mortality rate as compared to women of other races.

What is an ANGEL?

• One Voice At A Time – Women raising awareness in our community about the ANGEL Network and Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation and Northeast Ohio Race for the Cure.

• Certified breast health advocates provide education and guidelines on good breast health to women of all ages, but especially those 40 and older.

• ANGELS are breast health advocates teaching instructional breast exams to fellow women.

• ANGELS help women navigate the health care system so they have easy access to mammograms, breast exams and pelvic exams.

• ANGELS identify fellow women who need breast exams, mammograms, transportation and sometimes just a comforting and understanding ear.

• ANGELS help with the ANGEL education booth at health fairs and community events.

Upcoming Events & Dates to Remember

Please mark your calendars!

2013 ANGEL Network Meeting Dates:
Mercy Hall Auditorium
May 20, 2013 • 5:30 pm
August 19, 2013 • 5:30 pm
November 18, 2013 • 5:30 pm

Relay for Life, Canton
May 17 & 18
GlenOak High School

Race for the Cure, Akron/Canton
July 28, 2013
Firestone Stadium and Firestone Country Club and Golf Course

Susan G. Komen – 3 day Walk, Cleveland
August 2 – 4, 2013

Faith in Pink October 5, 2013
Watch for further details