

CareLINK

A Newsletter For Caregivers

**OCTOBER 2008/
NOVEMBER 2008**

A Caregivers Newsletter that is published every other month for those who care for a loved-one, no matter the health situation. Enclosed we hope you find helpful information that you can use!

CareLINK can also be found at:

<http://www.co.kenosha.wi.us/DHS/Divisions/Aging>

~Sponsored & Published By The Kenosha County Aging & Disability Resource Center~

Hepatitis and Chronic Liver Disease — When the Filter Backs Up

Located on the right side of the abdomen, just under the rib cage, the liver is our largest internal organ. It helps with digestion, blood clotting, and control of blood sugar, as well as stores vitamins and minerals. Think of the liver as a filter because its major job is to filter out poisonous (toxic) substances, like alcohol and cell waste, from the blood.

Most liver diseases do not have symptoms, but they can lead to cirrhosis (scarring) and liver failure if not treated properly. The liver can re-grow, so it can withstand injuries or abuse from an unhealthy lifestyle for many years, sometimes even decades. If found early, most liver diseases can be controlled, preventing significant liver damage. Some liver diseases are contagious, some are hereditary. It is important for the caregiver to be aware of the type of liver disease the person in their care has.

Hepatitis B is a serious liver disease caused by the hepatitis B virus (HBV). *It typically has no symptoms* and is diagnosed through a simple blood test. More than 90 percent of people infected with HBV are able to get it out of their bloodstreams and develop immunity to the disease. Those who do not clear the virus after six months are considered to have chronic hepatitis B. Approximately 15–25 percent of people chronically infected with hepatitis B will eventually die from liver disease without treatment. It is estimated that 1.25 million people have chronic hepatitis B in the United States.

The hepatitis B virus can live outside the body for up to seven days. It can be found in blood, sperm, vaginal secretion and saliva. HBV can be transmitted through:

- Direct blood-to-blood contact
- Unprotected sex
- Heavy intimate kissing
- Sharing razors, toothbrushes, earrings, needles or other personal items that may come in contact with blood or saliva.

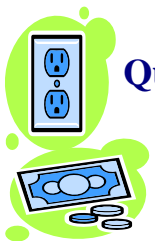
The vaccine for HBV consists of three shots given over a period of six months. Since the development of the vaccine, HBV infection has gone down significantly. Hepatitis B is not a curable disease; the primary goal of treatment is to keep the virus under control and reduce the complications like cirrhosis, liver failure and liver cancer.

Source: The Comfort of Home® for Chronic Liver Disease



Kenosha County Aging & Disability Resource Center
8600 Sheridan Road, Suite 500
Kenosha, WI 53143

When you need answers...
262-605-6646 or 1-800-472-8008
TTY (for Hearing Impaired) 262-605-6663
and, www.co.kenosha.wi.us/DHS



Q&A

Question: Is there any help available to help pay for gas and/or electric? My dad is struggling to pay his bills with the increasing costs of these utilities.

Answer: A good and timely question. October is Energy Awareness Month, and it's a great opportunity to bring attention to the energy needs of seniors. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hypothermia (below-normal body temperature) is a significant cause of preventable deaths. There are approximately 600 cold weather related deaths each year, and half of these are seniors over age 65. Every winter, some seniors succumb to hypothermia because they cannot pay their heating bills. If you cannot pay your utility bills, you may qualify for the federal **Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program**. You can use a free and confidential Web service to determine your eligibility by going to:

www.BenefitsCheckUp.org

Did You Know?

People often feel discomfort from bloating, which can cause belching. Belching can be caused by swallowed air from:

- Eating or drinking too quickly.
- Poorly fitting dentures.
- Carbonated beverages.
- Chewing gum or hard candies.
- Excessive swallowing due to nervous tension or postnasal drip.

Abdominal bloating and discomfort may be due to intestinal sensitivity or symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome. To prevent symptoms, avoid:

Broccoli	Carbonated drinks
Baked beans	Cabbage
Cauliflower	Chewing gum
Hard candy	



Source: The American College of Gastroenterology

Taking Care



Being grateful may not be a science, but it has benefits you can measure:

- Practicing gratitude regularly can increase happiness by over 25%.
- Writing in a gratitude journal for three weeks can result in better sleep quality and duration, more energy, and more time spent exercising.
- Participants who kept gratitude lists were more likely to make progress toward important personal life goals than those who didn't keep a list. You can tap into these benefits by consciously expressing gratitude in your life in one or more of these ways:
 - Jot down at least three things you are grateful for each day for 21 days.
 - Write a "gratitude letter" to someone who has influenced your life... and send it!

At least once a week share humorous observations or incidents from your own lives with a friend. Doing this helps you see more humor in your lives, which is something to be grateful for, in and of itself.

Source: Margie Ingram's Coaching Corner in The HUMOR Project's free Laughing Matters e-zine. Call 518-587-8770 or visit www.HumorProject.com/ for more info on The HUMOR Project Speakers Bureau, international humor conference, HUMORresources on-line bookstore, and life coaching.



Caregiver Websites

Today's Caregiver Magazine

www.caregiver.com

An online magazine for caregivers.

Family Caregiving 101

www.familycaregiving101.org

Provides information on resources for locating needed services.

ACCESS

www.access.wisconsin.gov

Wisconsin's internet tool for getting and managing your low or no cost health and nutrition benefits.

~Take Note~



Medicare Part D Information Sessions:

The Elderly Benefit Specialist program will be hosting many group informational sessions for seniors who are considering enrolling or changing their Medicare Prescription drug plan for next year. These sessions are throughout October and November. Please call Aging & Disability Resource Center at 262-605-6646 or 1-800-472-8008, for dates, times, locations, and to register as space is limited.



Dealing with Challenging Behavior & Personality Disorder:

A free interactive training dealing with people who have mental health or personality disorders. Bob Eisenbart, RN Consultant will teach new ways of handling aggressive behaviors and understanding the dynamics of these interventions.

Date/Time: Thursday, October 23rd, 8am -11am OR 11am -1 pm.

Location: Kenosha County Job Center, 8600 Sheridan Rd., Room N 2, Kenosha, WI

Call the Aging & Disability Resource Center to register, 262-605-6646 or 1-800-472-8008.



National Family Caregiver Teleclass:

A free telephone conference to teach family caregivers how to improve their communication with healthcare professionals. For this two part class you will call a toll free phone number, and for the family members that wish to follow on the computer there will be a corresponding power point presentation that can be accessed by internet.

Dates/Times: Thursdays, November 6th & 13th from 3pm - 4pm.

To register or for more information call 1-800-896-3650.



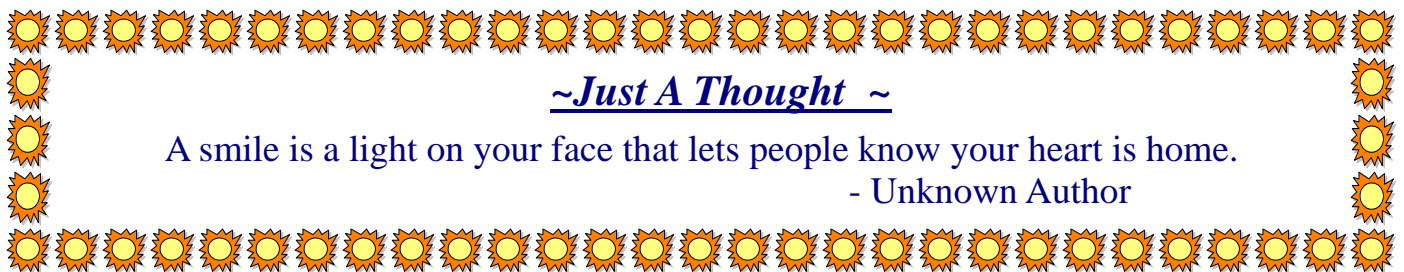
Medicare Part D & the Elderly Benefit Specialist Program:

The Bristol Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group is hosting this free workshop so you can learn about Medicare Part D & the Elderly Benefit Specialist programs. Free respite is also available if you register by November 10th.

Date/Time: November 17th, 7pm - 8:30pm.

Location: Westosha Community Center, 19200 93rd Street (Hwy C.), Bristol, WI

To register for workshop and respite, if needed, please call Kathy Hinks at 262-605-6667.



~Just A Thought ~

A smile is a light on your face that lets people know your heart is home.

- Unknown Author



Local Support Groups

Alzheimer’s Caregiver Support Groups –

*Respite is provided during each meeting below. Please register 1 wk. prior for respite.

When: 2nd Tuesday of each month
Time: 7:00pm-8:30pm
Where: Kenosha Area Family & Aging
7730 Sheridan Road, Kenosha
Contact: Jennifer Swartz - 262-658-3508 ext. 106

AND/OR

When: 3rd Monday of each month
Time: 7:00pm – 8:30pm
Where: Westosha Community Center
Hwy. C, Bristol, WI 53104
Contact: Kathy Hinks - 262-605-6646



Amputee Support Group -

When: Next Meeting is Nov.11th;
meets 2nd Tuesday of every other month.

Time: 7:00pm
Where: Kenosha YMCA—Callahan Branch,
7101 53rd Street, Kenosha, WI 53140
Contact: For information or to register, call
Reichert & Kelsey at 262-654-4300.

Cardiac Support Group –

When: 4th Tuesday of each month
Time: 10:00am
Where: United Hospital – Kenosha Campus
2nd Floor – Cardiac Rehab Classroom
6308 8th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53143
Contact: Sally Berzinski - 656-2245

Cancer Support Group –

When: 3rd Thursday of each month
Time: 12:00pm
Where: United Hospital – St. Catherine’s Campus
Joseph F. Andrea Regional Cancer Center
9555 76th Street, Pleasant Prairie
Contact: Krin Kramer - 262-577-8543

Diabetes Support Group –

When: 1st Tues. every month
Time: 6:30pm - 7:30pm
Where: United Hospital - KMH Campus
Community Education Room
Contact: Marian Hinder - 652-7124

Epilepsy Support Group –

When: 2nd Thursday of each month.
Time: 6:00pm - 7:30pm
Where: YMCA—Callahan Family Branch
7101 53rd Street, Kenosha, WI 53144
Contact: Ericka Werve—262-995-0016

MS Support Group –

When: 1st Thursday of each month
Time: 6:30pm
Where: St. Mary’s Lutheran Church
2001 80th Street, Kenosha, WI 53143
Contact: Alice Schwalbe – 262-496-8592.

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) Support Group –

When: 2nd & 4th Thursday of each month
Time: 6:00pm
Where: St. Paul’s Lutheran Church
39th Avenue & 88th Street, Kenosha, WI 53143
**Use East Entrance.
Contact: 262-652-3606; leave a message.

Young Onset Parkinson’s Support Group -

When: 2nd Wednesday of each month
Time: 7:00pm - 8:30pm
Where: Aurora Medical Center
1st Floor Family Room
10400 75th Street, Kenosha, WI 53142
Contact: 1-800-499-5736 for more information.

