

HealthNotes

YOUR HEALTHCARE PARTNER



COLD MEDICINES: DO YOU NEED THEM?

If you or your child has a cold, using an over-the-counter cough and cold medicine may not be the best strategy.

Safety Risks for Children

In children younger than 2, using cough and cold medicines may be especially risky. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported a few rare cases of infants dying from misuse of these medicines.

Because of these risks, guidelines published in the journal *Chest* do not recommend over-the-counter cough medicines for young children. The American Academy of Pediatrics has a

similar stance. It does not support the use of codeine or dextromethorphan, the most common over-the-counter cough medicine, for kids.

For adults, the story is the same. The guidelines published in *Chest* don't back cough and cold medicines because there's little proof that such medicines actually work. One exception is traditional antihistamine-decongestant medicines, which might offer some cough relief.

Other Strategies to Sink Colds

So what can you do if a cold comes your way? Focus on making yourself more

comfortable for a few days while the cold makes its way through your system. Here's how:

- To clear a stuffy nose, try saline nose drops. A humidifier also can help moisten and drain the nose.
- If you have a sore throat, gargle with some warm salt water or suck on a lozenge.
- Take a pain reliever, such as acetaminophen, if you have a headache or fever. Aspirin is OK for adults but not kids, because it is linked to a rare illness called Reye's syndrome. ■

The herb echinacea, or coneflower, was not effective in preventing, or treating, a common cold in a study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Flu Shots Available Soon at OMC

The flu is highly contagious. But, that doesn't mean you have to get it. Flu vaccines will soon be available at OMC and are recommended for:

- adults age 50 and older
- adults and children age 5 and older who are chronically ill with, for example, lung disease or diabetes
- women who are pregnant or will be pregnant during flu season
- people with weakened immune systems
- children ages 6 to 59 months
- those in close contact with children ages 0 to 59 months.

Flu shots are also recommended for children at high risk, healthcare workers, and family members of those at high risk for flu complications. If you are allergic to eggs, talk with your healthcare provider first.

A flu shot is 70 to 90% effective in young adults, less so in the elderly. If you catch the flu virus, talk with your healthcare provider about antiviral medications. Taken within 48 hours of the first symptoms, they can minimize discomfort.

To schedule a flu vaccination, contact OMC's Pediatrics Department at 507.292.7188 or Family Medicine Department at 507.292.7183.

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OMC VOLUNTEERS SHARE THE ART OF GIVING

Tricia Schilling knows what a kind word or soothing presence can mean to people during difficult times. As a licensed graduate social worker at Olmsted Medical Center, Schilling believes that addressing emotional and spiritual needs can promote health and healing.

This is one of the reasons she started the Volunteer Spirituality Care Program at OMC in 2001. Under Schilling's direction, 23 volunteers of various religious denominations comfort those seeking spiritual support. "They are excellent listeners who care about people," says Schilling of the volunteers. "They really understand our mission to help others, and they're an incredible complement to the care provided by OMC staff."



Stacy Sikes, an OMC volunteer chaplain, in the hospital's chapel. Sikes is one of 24 chaplains who have served patients' spiritual needs since 2001.

SHOWING DEDICATION AND CARING

At OMC, volunteers log hundreds of hours each year at the hospital and behind the scenes. They do everything from serving muffins and coffee to anxious families with loved ones in surgery to serving on boards to provide critical leadership for the medical center. But, no matter the job, the work of each volunteer directly supports the values and vision of OMC, according to Stacey Vanden Heuvel, director of the OMC Regional Foundation. "When people donate their time and talent, they are giving something

of themselves," says Vanden Heuvel. "Their dedication and commitment help to free up our medical staff to concentrate on providing excellent patient care. Their devotion also reflects what this medical center is about: meeting the needs of others with sensitivity and compassion."

As Chair of the OMC Board of Trustees, Ken Brown leads a volunteer group that oversees OMC's general operations and how OMC meets community needs. Steering the organization financially and helping OMC with community outreach activities are just some of their responsibilities. "This is all about helping to make the community a better place to live," says Brown. "By being an OMC volunteer and helping to ensure that people who need it have access to quality healthcare, I really feel I'm making a difference in people's lives."

VOLUNTEERS OFFER TIME AND MONEY

As Co-President of the OMC Auxiliary, Lois Olson helps direct an organization that in 2006 donated 4,340 hours of service and more than \$20,000 to OMC's hospital. "Auxiliary volunteers sew baby quilts, conduct bake sales, and purchase equipment for the hospital," says Olson. Furnishings for the chapel and cafeteria, portable blood pressure monitors, televisions and videocassette recorders, and a safety system for the BirthCenter are just some of the items purchased with funds raised by the auxiliary.

"We get a lot of joy and satisfaction from helping in whatever way we can," says Olson. "Volunteering even a small amount of time each week can help a lot of people and accomplish great things." ■

Become a Volunteer

Volunteers are needed at OMC to help greet visitors, work in the gift shop, staff the coffee cart, and sew for the BirthCenter and medical/surgical unit. Call 507.292.7202 to learn about these and other ways you can help OMC deliver exceptional healthcare.

OMC Employees Give Back to the Community

Nearly 400 OMC employees recently completed a pilot survey about their community involvement and personal volunteer time. The results of the survey are impressive.

- More than 65% of employees who participated in the survey indicated that they are currently involved in volunteer work for a not-for-profit or other community-based program.
- Of those who do volunteer, 71% say that they volunteer during their personal time only and 28% say they also volunteer on behalf of OMC as part of their employment.
- The most popular service areas that OMC employees support through volunteer work include:
 - Education for children pre-K through grade 12
 - Programs promoting fitness, healthy lifestyles, and safety for youth and children
 - Human service organizations
- Of the 194 survey respondents who estimated the number of hours they volunteer per month, the total was 2,098. That's an average of nearly 11 hours per person per month.

OMC commends all its employees who volunteer!



CHRONIC FATIGUE: MYSTERIOUS BUT VERY REAL

Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) means more than just being tired—it often disables sufferers to the point that they can't take part in everyday activities.

For many with CFS, just making it out of bed takes effort. This fatigue persists for months or even years, despite getting plenty of rest and sleep. Work, physical activity, or mental tasks can leave sufferers exhausted for days or weeks.

CAUSE REMAINS UNKNOWN

CFS is found most frequently in adult women, but men and children also can develop it. Although researchers have not found a specific cause for the disease, studies identify differences in the brain and immune and nervous system of those who have it. New research indicates genes also may play a role.

SYMPTOMS ARE WIDE-RANGING

CFS can occur suddenly, or it may come

on gradually over a period of weeks or months. While the main symptom is extreme tiredness, others include:

- sore throat
- tender areas in the neck or armpits
- muscle and joint pain
- headaches
- trouble sleeping
- exhaustion from exercise that lasts more than 24 hours
- loss of memory or concentration.

There's no cure for CFS, but doctors can treat some of the symptoms. In some people the disease gradually goes away—for others it's a lifelong problem. See your doctor if you are frequently too tired to fully take part in normal activities. Such fatigue may be a sign of CFS or another illness. ■

Rochester Sertoma 700 Club Gives Largest Gift Ever to OMC

The \$18,000 gift to OMC's Audiology Department will upgrade OMC's universal newborn hearing screening system. OMC was the second hospital in Minnesota to start a universal newborn hearing screening program, which permits early detection of infant hearing loss (the most common birth defect).

The new equipment will maintain high screening accuracy while saving more than 180 hours of screening time per year, or an estimated 30 minutes per day.

Infants whose hearing loss is detected and helped prior to 6 months of age maintain speech and language developmental milestones with their peers. Early intervention helps reduce spending for special education and other detection/intervention aids.

OMC Now a Yellow Fever Vaccination Center

The Minnesota Department of Health recently named Olmsted Medical Center as a primary point-of-contact for international travelers requiring the Yellow Fever vaccination. Yellow fever is a mosquito-borne viral disease occurring only in Africa and South America. One dose of vaccination grants 10 years of immunity and can be administered to children older than nine months. As a Yellow Fever Vaccination Center, OMC assumes greater responsibility for the immunization and health education of international travelers. **If you are traveling abroad and need a yellow fever vaccination, call OMC's Immunization Clinic at 507.292.7183.**

Save the Date!

Olmsted Medical Center Plastic Surgery Department presents the annual **Fall Solutions Event**

Tuesday, October 23 at 6 PM
Somersby Golf Club
Byron, Minnesota

Join Olmsted Medical Center plastic surgeon Srdan Babovic, MD, and the OMC Plastic Surgery Department at Fall Solutions, a free seminar on a new and exciting noninvasive facelift. The event will showcase the "No Strings Attached Liquid Lift," one of the newest and least invasive products of its kind.

Come and hear firsthand experience from an actual Liquid Lift patient regarding this fabulous technique.

Reserve your seat by Friday, October 12. **Call 507.529.6740 for more details!**



THE NEWEST WAYS TO FIGHT CHILDHOOD ILLNESS

**Getting poked with needles
is probably not your child's
idea of a good time.**

**But keeping up-to-date on
immunizations protects her
from many dangerous diseases.**

New diseases and the development of new vaccines lead the U.S. government to regularly revise its immunization guidelines. The latest updates, released in early 2007, include the following:

■ For the first time, the schedule is split by age group. One chart covers children up to age 6 years and the second is for children and teens ages 7 to 18. A special catch-up schedule also is provided for kids who have missed shots.

■ Rotavirus is a common cause of vomiting and diarrhea. Almost all nonvaccinated children are infected with this virus by age 5. This vaccine is taken as a pill rather than given as a shot. Children should get three doses at ages 2, 4, and 6 months.

■ All children ages 6 months to 5 years should get an influenza shot. Mild cases of the flu cause fever, sore throat, and fatigue.

However, this disease kills about 36,000 Americans each year.

■ Previous guidelines recommended a shot against varicella, or chickenpox, between ages 12 and 15 months. Now, a second dose also should be given at ages 4 to 6 years.

■ The new human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine protects against a virus that causes genital warts and cervical cancer. It is recommended that girls be vaccinated for HPV between the ages of 11 and 12 years. Providers may be able to give the vaccination to girls as young as 9. ■

QUICK TIP

For the complete new immunization guidelines, visit www.cdc.gov/nip/recs/child-schedule.htm, e-mail NIPINFO@cdc.gov, or call 800.CDC.INFO. Or, contact OMC's Pediatrics Department at **507.292.7188**.

Recipe: SPANISH BAKED FISH

Here's a savory and nutritious meal that's sure to put smiles on the faces of you and your entire family. Consider adding a fresh fruit salad and one cup steamed brown rice to make a complete, balanced meal.

- 1 lb perch fillets, fresh or frozen
- 1 c. tomato sauce
- ½ c. onions, sliced
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- 2 tsp. chili powder
- 1 tsp. dried oregano flakes
- ⅛ tsp. ground cumin

1. Thaw frozen fish as specified on package directions.
2. Preheat oven to 350°. Lightly grease a baking dish.
3. Divide fish into four pieces. Arrange them in baking dish.
4. Mix together the other ingredients and pour over fish.
5. Bake until fish can flake easily with a fork, about 10 to 20 minutes.

Yield: 4 servings
Serving size: 3 ounces
Each serving provides:
Calories: 135
Total fat: 1 g
Saturated fat: trace amount
Cholesterol: 104 mg
Sodium: 448 mg

*Source: United States Department of Agriculture;
Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion*

OMC Regional Foundation
210 Ninth Street SE
Rochester, MN 55904

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HealthNotes

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Foundation Director

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