



LHI Houston

FALL 2009

NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Rainbow Health Fair

LHI's next health fair is November 7, 2009, and will offer more services than ever to the community. In addition to mammograms, pap tests, cholesterol screening and other health screenings, we'll have health care providers speaking about women's health issues and an attorney speaking about advance directives and durable powers of attorney, and much more. Come have fun, see our vendors, get screened for your health, and listen to professionals to get lots of good, free info.

The Rainbow Health Fair is held at Legacy Community Health Services, 215 Westheimer. Legacy will have an employee at the fair to meet with women and discuss eligibility for ongoing treatment with a primary care physician. We are excited that Montrose Counseling Center also will be at the health fair discussing their programs and eligibility for their mental health care programs.

To schedule a mammogram or pap test, email info@lhihouston.org or call (713) 426-3356. Leave your name, phone number and email address (if calling, speak slowly and say your phone number twice). Contact us right away because available slots are going fast.

See enclosed Health Fair flyer for more info.

Our bodies, built
to last a lifetime



Photo, courtesy OutSmart

Kiki Neumann:
"It's because of LHI that
I'm still here, being my
smart-ass, witty self!"

LHI's life saving work through
its health fairs is featured in the
June '09 Pride issue of OutSmart.

LHI

has a New Home!

We've moved into the
Montrose Community Center:

Our new address is:

LHI

401 Branard St # 105
Houston, TX 77006-5015
(713) 426-3356

LHI Houston Mission Statement

Our mission is to
promote women's health in the
L G B T Community

To accomplish this, we will:

- Provide education and healthy resources to our community
- Establish government and private agency liaisons to initiate and support funding of programs to promote health and wellness
- Form partnerships with health care providers willing to ensure that women in our community have access to sensitive and responsible health care.

Tips to Prevent Swine Flu

Flu is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people

What can I do to stay healthy?

- Get proper rest, nutrition, and exercise
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or upper arm, not your hand.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners or wipes are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Viruses spread this way.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick, government health officials recommend that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others.

Symptoms of swine flu in humans:

- Fever
- Lethargy
- Lack of appetite
- Coughing
- Some people report runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Excerpted from Emory University, Swine Flu Prevention Information
www.emory.edu/flu

CDC says Swine Flu Vaccine Safe in Early Trials- Swine Flu More Likely to Affect **Young** People

US health officials recently said they are on track to have a vaccine for H1N1 swine flu by fall. Early indications from the first part of clinical trials indicate the vaccine is safe. For the most recent information, see: <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/health/6585173.html>

Unlike other influenza viruses, the H1N1 disproportionately affects younger people. Seventy-five percent of the hospitalizations are in those under age 49, and 60% of deaths are in those under 49.

"The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends pregnant women; children and young adults from 6 months to 24 years, as well as persons aged 25 to 64 who have medical conditions that put them at high risk for flu-related complications be vaccinated. Health care workers and people who care for or live with infants should also be vaccinated," the Center says.

However, influenza vaccines are not like others, such as polio and measles vaccines, which are 95% effective. While protection varies with the flu vaccine, the protection level in young adults is 70 to 80%, so even if you have the flu vaccine, it's still important to wash hands, cover coughs and stay home if you are sick.

Excerpted from 8/21/09 CDC press briefing. www.cdc.gov

Tip of the Month

Should people with broken bones avoid ibuprofen (Advil & generic) until they heal? Yes-and the same applies to other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications (NASIDs), including Alieve and the prescription drugs Celebrix and Indocin. Those medications may thwart healing by blocking the enzymes and inflammatory responses that help broken bones rebuild themselves.

Excerpted from Consumer Reports on Health, April 2009

LHI's Valentine's Celebration of Love

Save the date

February 13, 2010

Renaissance Hotel

Featuring Last Comic Standing's
New Yorker Michele Balan
check Michele out at www.comicbalan.com

An evening of Dinner, Dancing and Laughter

Graphic Design by:



Lewis Cuellar Jr.

P 979.487.3606

W lqcreations.com

Lesbians face unique challenges with their health.

Lesbians should be aware that they face special challenges that can cause poorer physical and mental health than the general population. It's important to seek early medical screening and counseling.

• Visit the gynecologist regularly:

Many neglect to see a physician because they do not require birth control, which motivates most women to see a gynecologist when they become sexually active.

As a result, many lesbians are not regularly screened with pap smears, making it difficult to detect cervical cancer at early stages. In addition, studies have shown risk factors for developing ovarian cancer are higher in lesbians than heterosexual women, which can also be detected by gynecologists.

• Maintain mental health/seek help:

Research also shows depression and generalized anxiety disorder are more likely to appear among lesbian and bisexual women than heterosexual women. In addition, a population-based study by the National Alcohol Research Center found that lesbians and bisexual women have a higher likelihood of reporting problems with alcohol. Recent research seems to indicate that drinking rates among the lesbian population have been declining. However, drinking remains particularly high among lesbian youth and older lesbians.

Excerpted from

www.womenshealth.gov/FAQ/lesbian-health.cfm#4

LHI is funded by the following

Thanks go to our generous donors:

Kindred Spirits Foundation
Hollyfield Foundation
John S. Kellett Foundation
Houston Black Tie Dinner
Charles Armstrong Investments
Houston Pride Band
Texas Gay Rodeo Association

Women's Heart Attack Symptoms Different from Men's

A recent National Institutes of Health (NIH) study, titled "Women's Early Warning Symptoms of AMI," is one of the first to investigate women's experience with heart attacks, and how this experience differs from men's. Recognition of symptoms that provide an early indication of heart attack, either imminently or in the near future, is critical to forestalling or preventing the disease.

Women often experience physical symptoms as long as a month before experiencing heart attacks. Among the 515 women studied, 95% said they knew their symptoms were new or different a month or more before experiencing their heart attack. The symptoms most commonly reported were unusual fatigue (70.6%), sleep disturbance (47.8%), and shortness of breath (42.1%).

Surprisingly, fewer than 30% reported having chest pain or discomfort prior to their heart attacks, with 43% reporting no chest pain at all during any phase of the attack. Most doctors, however, continue to consider chest pain as the most important heart attack symptom in both women and men.

Women's symptoms not as predictable

According to Patricia A. Grady, PhD, RN, Director of the NINR, "Increasingly, it is evident that women's symptoms are not as predictable as men's. This study offers hope that both women and clinicians will realize the wide range of symptoms that can indicate heart attack. It is important not to miss the earliest possible opportunity to prevent or ease AMI, which is the number one cause of death in both women and men."

The women's major symptoms prior to their heart attack included:

- Unusual fatigue – 70%
- Shortness of breath – 42%
- Indigestion – 39%
- Anxiety – 35%

Major symptoms during the heart attack include:

- Shortness of breath – 58%
- Weakness – 55%
- Unusual fatigue – 43%
- Cold sweat – 39%
- Dizziness – 39%

Excerpted from

<http://usgovinfo.about.com/cs/healthmedical/a/womensami.htm>

The LHI newsletter is published as a public service to empower the LGBT community on health issues.

LHI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Smart ways to cope with rising health care costs

Consumer Reports recently proposed several ways to save on health care.

IF YOU HAVE A JOB WITH BENEFITS

If you have a job with health care benefits, make the most of what you have.

- Learn the rules. Ask your employee-benefits office for an up-to-date copy of your summary plan description and read it to make sure you understand the rules. Then follow them to make sure your care is covered. If you have to designate a primary care physician, choose one. If you need pre-authorization, get it.
- Fund a flexible spending account (FSA). You can put money from your paycheck in this account every year, tax-free, and you can spend it on a long list of health expenses, including deductibles, co-pays, co-insurance (not premium contributions), over-the-counter drugs and medical supplies, dental care and eyeglasses and contact lenses. If there's money left in the account at the end of the year, you'll lose it, so don't put in more than you're sure you'll spend.

IF YOU'VE LOST YOUR JOB

Here are steps to take, arranged from the best option to the worst:

- See if your partner's employer has domestic partnership benefits. Some employers have these benefits, but don't publicize it. If they do, the loss of a job means you can join immediately, without waiting for the next open-enrollment period.
- Sign up for COBRA if you can afford it. The Consolidate Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 gives you the right to remain on the health plan you had at your old job. With the recent passage of the economic stimulus bill, a subsidy of 65% of COBRA premiums will be funded for those laid off between Sept 1, 2008, and Dec 31, 2009. The subsidy lasts for 9 months.
- Check out CHIP, Medicaid, and the VA. CHIP, the Children's Health Insurance Program, is available in every state. If you are eligible for subsidized COBRA and CHIP, you can save by putting children on CHIP and adults on COBRA.

Medicaid is for families with incomes at or near the poverty line. To find out about Texas' programs, go to www.benefits.gov and enter Texas.

Veterans may qualify for free or reduced-price treatment at Veterans Affairs Hospital and clinics. Those who were injured or disabled in combat are given priority.

- Buy insurance of your own. This should be your last resort. Individual insurance is more expensive than group insurance, tends to offer fewer benefits, and you can be charged more if you have pre-existing conditions.

IF YOU RECEIVE MEDICARE

The nonprofit Medicare Rights Center operates www.medicareinteractive.org, an answer-filled web site.

You should:

- Understand Medicare Advantages and Trade-offs. Many private Medicare plans have richer benefits than public Medicare, partly because the government gives the insurance companies who offer them extra incentives. Some plans don't charge additional premiums. But there are trade-offs. If you need costly treatments, you could end up spending a lot on co-insurance and co-pays. You'll also give up the almost unlimited choice of providers available with public Medicare.

- Find out whether you are entitled to government help. If your income meets certain guidelines, you might qualify for help to pay all or part of your Medicare costs, including your Part D drug plan. To find out about Texas' program, go to www.shiptalk.org.

How to save a bundle on prescription drugs

- Enlist your doctor's help. Ask your regular physician if you can eliminate or reduce the dosage of your medications. Discuss whether you could switch some of your prescriptions to generic or split larger-dose pills.
 - Look for CR Best Buy drugs. Go to ConsumerReportsHealth.org and click on Best Buy Drugs to see if you could save money by switching to a lower-cost drug to treat your health condition.
 - Shop around. Include not only pharmacies, but also discount and department stores. Costco, Kmart, Target and Wal-Mart all sell generics at low prices. Check out mail-order and web sites, such as DestinationRX.com.
 - Buy in bulk. If you take any medicine long-term, use your health plan's mail-order prescription service. You can usually get a 90 day supply of pills for only 2 co-payments.
 - Pick your Medicare drug coverage carefully. Use Medicare's Prescription Drug Plan Finder tool at www.medicare.gov to figure out which plan works best for the medicine you take. Re-evaluate your plan every year at open-enrollment time, as the plan's list of preferred drugs may have changed.
 - Sign up for patient-assistance programs. Most pharmaceutical companies offer brand-name drugs free or at reduced prices to those who meet financial guidelines. Go to www.needymeds.org or www.rxassist.org to find out whether your medications qualify.
- From www.ConsumerReportsHealth.org, June 2009

Watch for superbug infections

Many people still fail to recognize how dangerous MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) infections are and how prevalent they have become. More people will die in the US this year from MRSA infections than from the swine flu or AIDS.

MRSA bacteria are found worldwide. They begin as a skin infection, can spread to almost any other organ in the body, and are resistant to several different antibiotics.

MRSA infections can start out looking like small red bumps in the skin, spider bites, boils, abscesses, sties or pus-filled blisters. People become infected with MRSA from personal contact with someone who is infected or contact between broken skin and objects, such as door handles, infected by an MRSA-infected person.

To prevent MRSA infection, treat and cover any skin breaks with antiseptic cream and a Band-Aid, wash your hands, and wash clothes that come in contact with MRSA patients. MRSA can be treated with certain specific antibiotics, although in the last few years, a new strain of MRSA has evolved called VRSA that is resistant to even the strongest of antibiotics. For now, get to a physician if you notice any suspicious skin infections.

From http://www.medicinenet.com/mrsa_infection/article.htm

Houston Women's Group

Where each woman defines her own feminism

Sundays, 10:45 am

**In the Sojourner Truth Room, 3rd floor
First Universalist Unitarian Church**

5200 Fannin

Come join us any Sunday

(not a church group, only meets in a church)

Get a Harris County Hospital District Gold Card

Go to:

www.hchdonline.com/patient/onecard/goldcard.htm

G-BLTSCommUnity News

To subscribe, email:
Kayvctxl@aol.com

News from the community and world GLBT community
Kay Van Cleave

FEMNET

A feminist online network

email: FEMNET-owner@yahoo.com

Another Way to Build Community
Deborah Bell, your list Diva

Join Carol Wyatt's Social Notes

Stay informed with what's happening
in the community

go to website to sign up:

www.socialnoteshouston.com

Check out PRIDE HOUSTON's website and get involved

www.pridehouston.org

Houston Buyer's Club

a non-profit organization

Discount prices on your
nutritional supplements

3224 Yoakum
713 520 5228

Save The Date!



ASSISTHERS

2009

Decadent

Dessert

and more...

Sunday, Oct. 11th 2009

(National Coming Out Day)

South Beach

810 Pacific Street

4 - 8 pm

Tickets \$25.00 in advance

Buy Tickets Online www.assisthers.org

Contact Chair Becky Earle assisthersorg@gmail.com



Benefits AssistHers, Bering Support Network,
Houston Buyers Club, & Lesbian Health Initiative-Houston



Kindred Spirits Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization.

KindredSpiritsHouston.org

Kindred Spirits Foundation, Inc.
invites you to sing along with

The Judy Garland Christmas Special

Return to 1963

when CBS first aired this ultra-campy, black and white
television special featuring Judy at her Judy-est.

With Nancy Ford
and special guests

Light Hors D'oeuvres
Holiday Raffle

In-N-Out | **SUNDAY** | **Dec. 6, 2009**
1527 N. Shepherd Dr. | **6 P.M.**

Doors OPEN Suggested
at 5p.m. donation: **\$20**





Rainbow Health Fair

For Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual & Transgender Women

Saturday
Nov. 7, 2009

Legacy Clinic
215 Westheimer

8:15am - 2:00pm

FREE Tests & Services

Attorney
Durable Medical
Power of Attorney
Advance Directive
(Living Will)

Meet with
Legacy Clinic,
Montrose
Counseling Center
provider for
ongoing help

Mammograms
Cholesterol Checks
Blood Pressure
Glucose Checks
Pap Tests

To Schedule a Mammogram or Pap test:

Call: 713.426.3356

or

Email: info@lhihouston.org

With your name, contact phone number, or email, and date of birth.

Pap & Mammogram tests will be offered in limited numbers, so call/email soon to schedule.

For those we can't schedule for Nov. 7th, LHI will offer certificates for free Well Women Exams at Legacy Clinic during regular clinic hours. If you can't get an appointment Nov. 7th and need a certificate, come to the Health Fair and ask for one.

Special Instructions:

For most accurate blood tests, do not eat before blood testing
(Diabetics- Use common sense regarding eating)

Please do not wear perfume or deodorant at the clinic if getting a mammogram on Nov. 7th

LHI Houston, Inc.
P O Box 130158
Houston, TX 77219-0158



Larry Criscione
Charles Botts Memorial Library
2025 W. 11th Street
Houston, TX 77008