



# The Hamaspik Gazette

News of Hamaspik Agencies and General Health

MARCH '18 • ISSUE NO. 157

## GAZETTE SURVEY

The GAZETTE asks YOU:

**HOW OFTEN A WEEK DO YOU LET YOUR KIDS HAVE CANDY?**

**A: SHABBOS ONLY; B: 3-4X; C: DAILY**

Respond to: [survey@hamaspik.org](mailto:survey@hamaspik.org)

## HEALTH STAT

FREQUENT STANDING AND EXERTION AT WORK, BY OCCUPATION

**65.7%**

FOOD PREPARATION AND SERVING RELATED

**4.6%**

COMPUTER AND MATHEMATICAL

Source: Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, CDC, January 12, 2018

## HEALTH QUOTE

**DON'T TELL THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO STOP DOING IT. TELL CONGRESS TO STOP RELYING ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR SO MUCH.**

—Expert Tim LaPira on the practice of leaving government to lobby for Big Pharma, Kaiser Health News, Jan. 25

## HEALTH TIP

**DON'T POP SO MANY VITAMINS**

Despite the endless ads and supermarket aisles, scientifically proven benefits remain low. So, get your vitamins from a healthy fresh-food diet—and stick to one multivitamin.

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## HAMASPIK NEWS

# ALBANY APPROVES TRI-COUNTY CARE

THE RECENT APPROVAL OF THE NON-PROFIT AS AN OFFICIAL CARE COORDINATION ORGANIZATION (CCO) IS MAJOR NEWS TO ANY COMMUNITY MEMBER WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY SUPPORTS



STORY ON PAGE E3 >>

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## HAMASPIK NEWS



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Hamaspik at the State of the State Address with  
State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman

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## HEALTH NEWS



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## PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

**Feds Propose  
Expanding Small  
Business Health Plans**

SEE PAGE E10 >>



## Services Provided by NYSHA AGENCIES

### OPWDD

#### COMMUNITY HABILITATION (COM HAB)

Providing: One-on-one personal aides to help individuals achieve valued outcomes by means of helping them improve their activities of daily living (ADL) skills and long-term life goals

#### HOME-BASED RESPITE

Providing: Relief for parents of individuals with special needs

#### AFTER-SCHOOL RESPITE

Providing: A respite program for after school hours and school vacations

#### DAY HAB PROGRAM

Providing: A day program for adults with disability

#### SUPPLEMENTAL DAY HAB PROGRAM

Providing: An extended day program for adults with disability

#### CAMP NESHOMAH

Providing: A day program for children with disability over summer and winter school breaks

#### INDIVIDUALIZED RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE (IRA)

Providing: A supervised residence for individuals who need out-of-home placement

#### INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Providing: Apartments and supports for individuals who can live independently

#### ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS

Providing: Home accessibility additions

#### SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SEMP)

Providing: Coaching and support for people with disabilities to get and keep suitable jobs

#### ENHANCED SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Providing: Job developing and coaching for people with any type of disability

#### COMMUNITY PRE-VOC PROGRAM

Providing: One-on-one employment preparation day program for high-functioning individuals

#### PATHWAY TO EMPLOYMENT

Providing: One-on-one employment discovery program for high-functioning individuals

#### MEDICAID SERVICE COORDINATION

Providing: An advocate for the individual to access and coordinate available benefits

#### FAMILY CARE PROGRAM

Providing: A family to care for an individual with special needs

#### INTERMEDIATE CARE FACILITY (ICF)

Providing: A facility for medically involved individuals who have developmental disability

#### INTENSIVE BEHAVIOR SERVICES (IBS)

Providing: Interventional services for people with behavioral issues and their family members

#### PLAN OF CARE SUPPORT SERVICES

Providing: Support for families of individuals with special needs

#### FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

Providing: Reimbursement for qualifying items or services not covered by Medicaid

#### PARENTAL RETREATS

Providing: Getaways and retreats for parents of individuals with disabilities

#### SELF DIRECTION

**Fiscal Intermediary (FI)** — providing: Accounting and billing for vendors supporting individuals who self-direct their own supports

**Broker** — providing: One-on-one, independent brokering of all necessary services and supports to individuals who self-direct their own supports

### DOH

#### CARE AT HOME

Providing: nursing · personal care aides · therapy · respite · medical supplies · adaptive technology · service coordination

#### EARLY INTERVENTION (EI)

Providing: Full evaluations · home-based, community-based and center-based services · parent/child groups · ongoing service coordination · therapy (PT, OT, SLP, vision, nutrition, play, etc.) · special ed · social work · family training/counseling · bilingual providers

#### NURSING HOME TRANSITION AND DIVERSION (NHTD) PROGRAM

Providing: Service Coordination · assistive technology · moving assistance · community transitional services · home/community support services · E-mods · independent living skills · positive behavioral interventions · structured day program

#### TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY PROGRAM

Providing: Service Coordination · independent living skills training · day programs · rent subsidies · medical equipment · E-mods · transportation · community transitional services · home/community support services

#### CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

Providing: Breakfast · lunch · supper · snack

#### HEALTH HOME SERVING CHILDREN (HHSC)

Providing: Intensive, comprehensive care management and family/community support services for children with chronic condition(s) and/or mental health issues at greater risk for relapse and/or lack of care

#### SENIOR DINING/SOCIAL DAY PROGRAM (SHNOIS CHAIM)

Providing: Daily onsite lunches and social/educational activities for community seniors (Orange and Rockland Counties only)

#### APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS (ABA)

Providing: Behavior modification for children with autism covered by private insurance

### LHCSA - HAMASPIKCARE

#### PERSONAL CARE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Providing: Home health aides · personal care aides · housekeepers · HCSS aides

#### COUNSELING SERVICES

Providing: Diet/nutrition counselors · social workers

#### REHABILITATION SERVICES

Providing: Physical therapy · speech therapy · occupational therapy

#### PACE-CDPAS

Providing: Personal care aides for people in need

#### SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORTS

Providing: Minor maintenance for those qualifying

#### SOCIAL MODEL

Providing: A social day program for senior patients

#### NURSING SERVICES

Providing: Skilled observation and assessment · care planning · paraprofessional supervision · clinical monitoring and coordination · medication management · physician-ordered nursing intervention and skill treatments

### HAMASPIK CHOICE

Providing: A managed long-term care plan (MLTCP) approved by New York State

### HCR

#### ACCESS TO HOME

Providing: Home modifications for people with physical disabilities

#### HOME REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Providing: Remodeling dilapidated homes for low income home owners

### NYSED

#### VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

Providing: Employment planning · job development · job placement

#### JOB COACHING

Intensive and ongoing support for individuals with physical, mental and/or developmental disabilities to become employed and to maintain employment

### NYSHA

#### ARTICLE 16 CLINIC

Providing: Physical therapy · occupational therapy · speech therapy · psychology · social work · psychiatry · nursing · nutrition

#### TRAINING SESSIONS

Providing: SCIP · CPR and first aid · orientation · MSC CORE · AMAP · annual updates · Com Hab/ Respite · Family Care · Supported employment

#### CENTRAL INTAKE

Providing: The first contact for a person or family in need of Hamaspik services

#### THE HAMASPIK GAZETTE

Providing: A bilingual monthly newspaper keeping the community up-to-date on all major news in medicine, public health, disability, hospitals, senior care, and general Hamaspik news

### OMH

#### HEALTH AND RECOVERY PLAN (HARP)

Providing: long-term social, emotional, employment, peer-support and other mental-illness recovery supports

### PUBLIC HEALTH AND POLICY NEWS

## New York City Sues Big Opioids for \$500 Million



**New York, NY** — On Jan. 23, the City of New York filed a lawsuit with the New York State Supreme Court against several major opioid painkiller manufacturers.

Defendants named in the lawsuit are Johnson & Johnson, Purdue Pharma LP, Teva Pharmaceuticals USA Inc., Cephalon Inc., Endo Health Solutions Inc., Allergan plc, Cardinal Health Inc., McKesson Corp. and AmerisourceBergen Drug Corp.

The city is seeking \$500 million from the opioid drug developers and distributors for “deceptive” marketing tactics. The city claims that these helped fuel an overdose epidemic.

The lawsuit asserts that pharmaceutical firms used direct-to-consumer advertising, support from key opinion leaders (KOLs) and other marketing strategies in an underhanded way to increase the prescribing and profitability

of their opioid products.

A similar lawsuit was filed by the State of Delaware the week prior against several of the same companies.

“More New Yorkers have died from opioid overdoses than car crashes and homicides combined in recent years,” said New York Mayor Bill de Blasio in a statement. “Big Pharma helped to fuel this epidemic by deceptively peddling these dangerous drugs and hooking millions of Americans in exchange for profit.”

The NYC lawsuit is only the latest in what is likely to snowball into an avalanche of litigation against opioid drug makers. The CDC estimates that prescription opioid overdoses claimed 46 American lives every day in 2016; public health officials say the crisis is not abating. ★

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● ► **DISABILITY NEWS**

# NYSHA-Affiliated Non-Profit Leading Expanded Community Disability Services

## Tri-County Care to Incorporate Agencies' Staff in State Shift to "Conflict-Free" Independence



This Jan. 12, history put its stamp on NYSHA (New York State Hamaspik Association) yet again, as the New York State Department of Health (DOH) and Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) officially approved Tri-County Care as a CCO/HH.

The approval of the start-up non-profit as an official *Care Coordination Organization/Health Home* (CCO/HH) is major news to any community member with developmental disability getting non-profit services.

That's because the Medicaid Service Coordinators (MSCs) at those worthy non-

profits are being shifted by the OPWDD into "Conflict-Free" independent non-profits called CCOs.

The Tri-County Care CCO was created by NYSHA as part of its proactive and preemptive approach to universal community needs.

The CCO concept is two-fold:

One is to allow MSCs to advocate and obtain the best and most suitable services and supports for the people they serve—free of any bias towards their own employers and the services and supports that they may provide.

The other is to redefine and expand the very MSC job itself.

Under a partnership with the New York State Dept. of Health (DOH), the OPWDD will be providing individuals not just with disability services but also with medical services.

Under this new partnership, MSCs newly transitioned to CCOs—and renamed *Care Coordinators*—will be coordinating

not just disability services but also medical services. There, they will be providing people with disabilities with proactive and preventative medical providers and referrals, ensuring better health and fewer unnecessary hospitalizations.

Additionally, working together with the person supported and his or her family, the Care Coordinator (formerly known as the MSC) will be developing a *Life Plan*, the most comprehensive service plan developed to date. The Plan will include the person's interests, goals, and community integration, as well as their holistic health.

With Tri-County Care now officially green-lighted to provide Care Coordination, the new CCO is perfectly positioned to embrace the MSC teams at Hamaspik and other disability nonprofits.

The OPWDD is now requiring that all MSCs transition from their current employers to the independent CCOs.

A limited handful of such organizations—now including Tri-County Care—have been approved for operation across New York State as the July 2018 deadline for MSC transition to CCOs approaches.

"Tri-County Care is looking forward to a smooth transition," said NYSHA Executive Director Meyer Wertheimer. "We're looking forward to empowering affiliated agencies and all their MSCs and MSC Supervisors to maintain and enhance their noble individual-MSA relationships."

"We are excited to be part of this new endeavor," said Tri-County Care Executive Director David Mizrahi. "We are looking forward to providing Care Coordination so that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have access to coordinated and comprehensive services and supports, enabling them to lead the meaningful lives of their choosing right in their own communities." ★

● ► **HEALTH NEWS**

## Delta Cracks Down on Flying Animals

**Atlanta, GA** - If you need to travel with a dog or other animal due to a medically documented disability, it will be harder for you and your special pet to get on a Delta flight come March 2018.

In response to a growing number of mid-flight incidents involving untrained pets, Delta Air Lines now says that it will implement a new policy for travelers flying with service or support animals starting March 1.

According to the airline, there has been an 84-percent increase in reported animal incidents on its flights since 2016. Delta says that most of them involved dogs that were not properly trained.

Under the new policy, travelers with a service or support animal must provide proof of health or vaccination at least 48 hours before their flight. Also, passengers with emotional support or psychiatric service animals will need to supply a doctor's note and sign a document attesting that their animal can behave.

Delta said travelers bring around 700 service or support animals on its planes each day. Besides dogs, customers have sought to bring turkeys, snakes, spiders and other creatures aboard, the airline said.

Meanwhile, American Airlines said it is also considering similar additional requirements for travelers with service or support animals. United Airlines said it is likewise reviewing its existing support animal policy. ★

**>> KEEPING AN AIRLINE FLYING:** DELTA'S COMPLEX BORDERING THE HARTSFIELD-JACKSON ATLANTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT HAS SERVED AS THE AIRLINE'S HEADQUARTERS SINCE 1941, WHEN THE COMPANY RELOCATED ITS CORPORATE OFFICES FROM MONROE, LOUISIANA. BESIDES HOSTING DELTA'S HQ, HARTSFIELD-JACKSON IS ALSO THE HOME OF DELTA TECH OPS, THE AIRLINE'S PRIMARY MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND OVERHAUL (MRO) ARM.



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# Happening in Health Today

## TECHNOLOGY FINDS POSSIBLE CAUSE OF ANCIENT EPIDEMIC

**Oaxaca, Mexico** — Researchers with the Munich, Germany-based Max Planck Institute used new DNA screening software called the Metagenome analyzer Alignment Tool (MALT) to possibly solve an ancient medical mystery, CNN and others reported.

In the 1500s, an epidemic called “cocoliztli” killed 80 percent of the native population in large areas of Guatemala, Mexico, and other Central American countries. Records from the time describe symptoms matching those

of typhoid fever.

Typhoid is caused by the *Salmonella enterica Paratyphi C* bacteria. And using MALT, which scans for the presence of any known bacteria, not a target bacterium, researchers found DNA traces of *Salmonella enterica Paratyphi C* at the ancient Mexican resting place of some victims.

While researchers cannot conclusively say that cocoliztli was indeed typhoid, it would make sense, given that European explorers of the “New World” at the time frequently carried diseases to which they were immune, then infecting defenseless natives.

The research was published Jan. 15 in the journal *Nature*.

In related news, a careful study of the spread patterns of the Black Death, Europe’s 1347-1351 bubonic plague epidemic that killed millions, now concludes that the plague was spread by humans, not by rats as commonly believed. That study was published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*.

## SMARTWATCH MEASURES BLOOD PRESSURE

**Las Vegas, NV** — If an innovative new

device by health and robotics tech giant Omron gets FDA approval, taking your blood pressure could soon be as easy as telling the time.

The Omron HeartGuide, a functioning blood pressure cuff built into a stylish digital wristwatch, measures the wearer’s blood pressure with the press of a button.

The HeartGuide also comes with a slew of standard modern features, including a fitness



**KEEPING IT UNDER WRAPS: THE OMRON HEARTGUIDE IS THE WORLD’S FIRST BLOOD PRESSURE WRISTWATCH**

tracker and accompanying smartphone app. The HeartGuide, which was rolled out at the CES 2018 consumer technology show in Las Vegas this Jan. 9-12, is expected to be FDA-approved by year’s end. It will retail for about \$350.

Bulky wrist-affixed blood pressure monitors and devices, including several by Omron, have already been on the market for several years.

## STUDY: MARRIED PEOPLE HAVE LOWER DEATH RISK

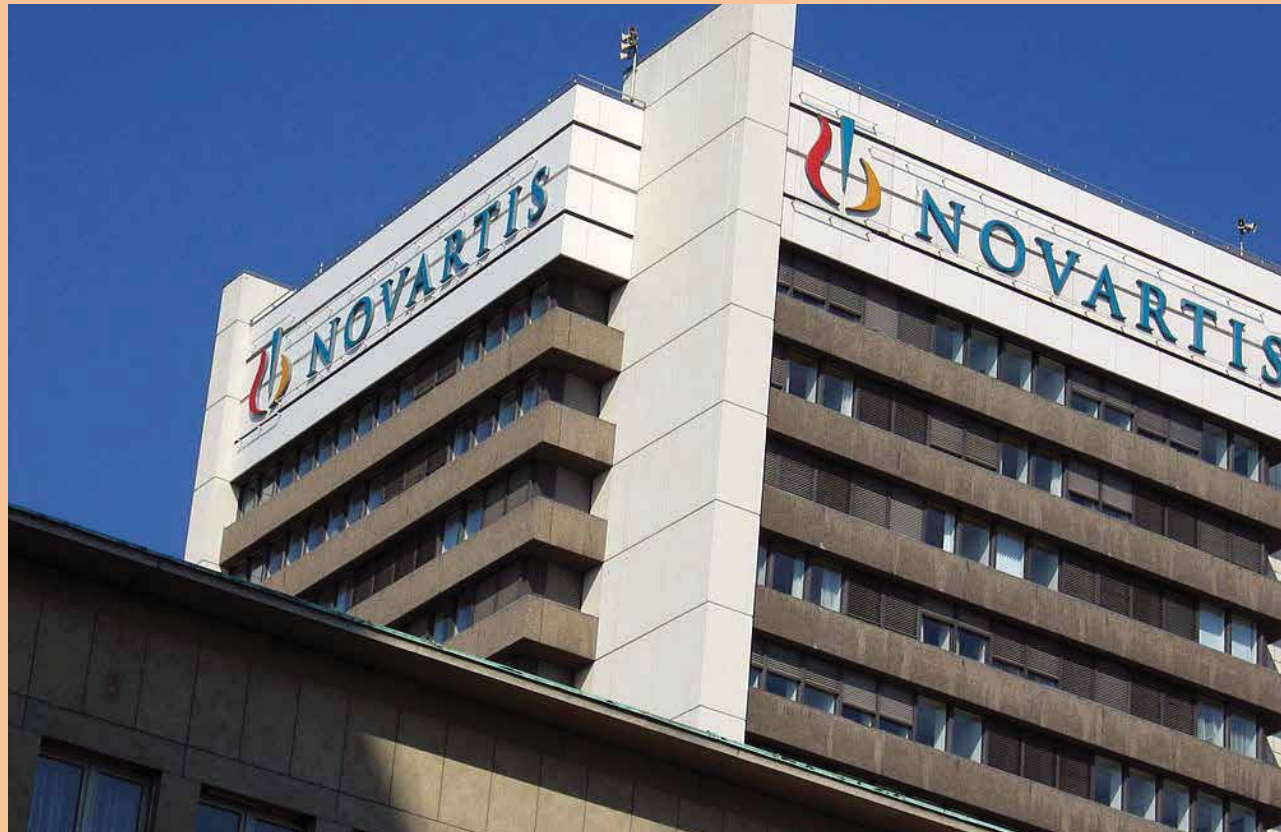
**Atlanta, GA** — An Emory University study suggests that married heart patients have lower risk of death than unmarried ones.

The study reviewed four years of data on over 6,000 patients with several heart conditions.

It also determined that being married seems to lower the risk of death due to any reason, not just cardiovascular illness.

Increased social support among married patients, as well as decreased stress and depression, and better adherence to medication regimens and healthy lifestyle choices, may explain the findings, researchers say.

The study ran Dec. 20 in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*. ★



## BLOCKBUSTER PSORIASIS DRUG COSENTYX KEEPS WINNING

**Basel, Switzerland** — Data from a maker-sponsored new study released Jan. 15 show that psoriasis drug Cosentyx does better than nearest competitor Stelara. Cosentyx is made by Swiss company Novartis AG. Stelara is produced by New Jersey-based rival Johnson & Johnson.

Since its Jan. 2015 FDA approval for plaque psoriasis, Cosentyx was also approved for *ankylosing spondylitis* and

*psoriatic arthritis*, two other serious conditions, becoming a blockbuster drug—and far outpacing Stelara, which was first approved in 2009.

Cosentyx is among the first of a new class of drugs called *interleukin (IL) inhibitors*. These drugs reduce symptoms of several diseases by targeting the genetic mechanisms that are their cause.

With their robust medical success also producing robust financial success, interleukin inhibitors have become a hot

item to Big Pharma over the last decade. Besides Cosentyx and Stelara, the FDA has also approved competing drugs Taltz (made by Lilly), Siliq (Valeant) and Tremfya (J&J) for plaque psoriasis.

But while Novartis reports hopes of reaching \$3 billion in Cosentyx sales in 2018, J&J is comparing Cosentyx to Tremfya, its newest IL inhibitor, in a large new study due out later this year.

Regardless of who loses, people with psoriasis—a skin disorder causing flaking, crusting and rash—stand to win. ★

# The Autism Update

News and developments from the world of research and advocacy

## MODIFIED ALZHEIMER'S DRUG MAY TREAT SOME FORMS OF AUTISM

**La Jolla, CA** — A fusion of two existing drugs alleviates autism-like features in a mouse model of the condition, according to a new study.

The fusion drug, called NitroSynapsin, boosts social interest and alleviates some repetitive behaviors in mice missing one copy of the autism candidate gene MEF2C.

The drug appears to work by tamping down overactive brain signaling; a signaling imbalance that leads to excess neuronal activity may be a unifying feature of autism.

"We have a decent chance of treating many different forms of autism," says lead researcher Stuart Lipton, co-director of the Neuroscience Translational Center at the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California.

It's too soon to say whether the drug is safe and effective in people with these conditions, but the results are promising, experts say.

## BILINGUAL KIDS WITH AUTISM MAY DO BETTER

**Montreal, Canada** — In the first study of its kind, scientists have shown that bilingual children on the autism spectrum can switch mental gears more easily than those only speaking one language.

The comparison study by McGill University researchers builds on growing evidence to

suggest that bilingualism enhances *executive function*, or a set of cognitive processes including attentional control, inhibiting behavior, and working memory.

The improvement in executive function is believed to happen because using two languages means that a person has to switch between mental modes smoothly and quickly. Over time, with practice, this switching of linguistic systems may limber up overall cognitive performance.

The study was published in the journal *Child Development*.

## LITTLE CHANGE IN PROPORTION OF U.S. KIDS WITH AUTISM

**Iowa City, IA** — A Jan. 2 study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* suggests that the proportion of U.S. children with autism may be leveling off after steadily climbing for two decades.

As of 2016, according to the report, approximately 2.8 percent of U.S. children from 3 to 17 years old had autism spectrum disorder (ASD). While that's up slightly from about 2.2 percent in 2014, the difference is too small to rule out the possibility that it was due to chance, University of Iowa researchers say.

The study also found differences based on race and ethnicity: 1.8 percent of Hispanic children had autism, compared with 2.8

percent of white kids and 2.5 percent of black youth.

## PRESCHOOLERS WITH DISABILITIES INORDINATELY SUSPENDED: REPORT

**Washington, D.C.** — According to a new report by the Center for American Progress, children ages three to five who have disabilities are significantly more likely to be suspended or expelled from preschool or child care programs.

While that demographic represents just 13 percent of the nation's preschoolers, the report says they account for 75 percent of all suspensions and expulsions.

Those figures come from an analysis of the 2016 federal National Survey of Children's Health.

According to the report, kids ages three to five with behavioral problems were 43 times likelier to be suspended or expelled than their typically-developing peers. What's more, the odds were ten times greater for those with autism and 7.5 times higher for children with developmental delays.

The findings come as the U.S. Department of Education is reportedly considering doing away with previous federal guidance designed to prevent children with disabilities and those from minority groups from being disproportionately suspended or expelled.

## YOUNG CHICAGOANS WITH ASD BENEFIT FROM IMPROV CLASSES

**Chicago, IL** — An amusing report in the *Chicago Tribune* detailed the stage adventures of students at Improv for Autism, a program that provides improvisational theater classes specifically for youths with autism spectrum disorder.

Improv for Autism is an offering of The Second City, an autism services non-profit.

Leaders at The Second City say the fundamentals of improv comedy help improve communication skills, which are often a challenge for those with autism.

"We know (improv) changes people's lives," said Kelly Leonard, The Second City's executive director of insights and applied improvisation. "We've seen it over and over again."

Some psychologists say they've seen therapeutic benefits of improv for some of the challenges associated with autism, the *Tribune* reported. They continue to study the effects of improv on the brain and say the gains go beyond entertainment and could open a door to a new area of mental health treatment.

A related program is Vanderbilt University's SENSE Theatre, which studies how improv compares to traditional treatments for autism.

For people with autism, experts say, improv offers communication skills practice—including talking to people, looking them in the eye, and listening and relating to others. ★



## COMPANY PATENTS AUTISM DIAGNOSIS METHOD

**Burlington, NC** — National blood testing laboratory LabCorp has received a U.S. patent on a method for diagnosing autism spectrum disorders.

The method involves conducting a test on the patient's tissue or body sample to identify variant sequences in the subject's genetic code, which may signify "the presence or an increased risk of developing autism spectrum disorders."

Testing can be done on children, according to the patent. The method is stated to aid in the diagnosis of five autism spectrum disorders: autistic disorder, Asperger's disorder, childhood disintegrative disorder, Rett's disorder and nonspecific pervasive developmental disorders.

Currently, diagnosis of autism spectrum disorders is based almost entirely on behavioral observation. According to the patent, misdiagnosis occurs frequently and, as such, definitive diagnostic testing is needed to identify these disorders.

The original patent was filed in March 2014. LabCorp was assigned the divisional patent this past December. ★





# Happenings around Hamaspik

## The Results of Advocacy



**A GROWING SMILE:** FORSHAY IRA RESIDENT ELIEZER "LAZER" FRIEDRICH, HERE WITH A THERAPEUTIC VISIT COORDINATED BY HIS MSC, SAYS IT ALL WITHOUT A WORD

## All Fired Up at Day Hab



**ROLL ON:** THIS PHOTO OF OVEN-READY MATZOS AT AN ACTIVE ROCKLAND COUNTY BAKERY WAS SNAPPED BY A DAY HAB STAFF MEMBER AT THEIR RECENT VISIT

## South 9th Staff Push Professional Care in Pulling Tooth-Pulling Shift

Getting up really early for some people is like pulling teeth.

Unless, of course, you're the amazing Hamaspik crew at the South 9th Shvesterheim—who were on the job at 5:15 a.m. this past January 12 to transport a resident to her wisdom tooth extraction surgery appointment.

The individual in question, a worthy young lady with high maintenance needs, was shortly driven to Staten Island, where they met up with South 9th's staff nurse to stand by as an unremarkable oral procedure was successfully performed.

But in contrast to what entered and exited the patient's mouth, what came out of

the surgical team's mouths post-surgery was anything but unremarkable.

The hospital's professionals, from the surgeon on down, were filled with praise for the "unbelievable" hygiene that the patient presented, reports Home Manager Mrs. Cziment.

Indeed, according to Mrs. Cziment, members of the OR team were heard commenting that they didn't remember ever seeing a person with disability displaying that level of care.

At the end of the day, Mrs. Cziment's opinion captures it best: It's that sort of feedback that makes being a caregiver all worth it. ★

## On Eve of Looming Change, Ranks of MSC Staff Growing Across Hamaspik

With the massive Tri-County Care project under the auspices of NYSHA now becoming a reality, the timing actually could not be better.

With Tri-County Care to become one of only six Care Coordination Organizations/Health Homes (CCO/HHs) across New York State, the vaunted Medicaid Service Coordinator (MSC)—the veritable axis of all things support-related at disability non-profits like Hamaspik—will become the *Care Coordinator*, shifting to the independent CCO/HHs to better serve people.

Still, the loyal, dependable Medicaid Service Coordinator (MSC) has long been a pillar at Hamaspik. Indeed, more than a few Hamaspik MSCs have been with the agency for decades. And while some have left over the years, mostly for family reasons, some of those have returned.

And all the while, the sum total of

individuals reached and supported by the authoritative brand of Hamaspik continues to grow—with the concurrent sum total of MSCs across all Hamaspik agencies—Kings, Orange and Rockland—also continuing to grow.

Most recently, Hamaspik of Kings County took on new MSCs Ms. Malky Bochner, Ms. Tzivia Leifer and Ms. Brenda Ely. Hamaspik of Rockland County, for its part, now boasts new MSCs Shlomo Knobloch and Mrs. Miri Weiss among its ranks. And Hamaspik of Orange County newly hired Ms. Alty Melamed to round out its veteran MSC team.

While MSCs may be shortly transitioning to Care Coordinators and becoming independent employees (see "Tri-County Care" cover story), the professionalism that is Hamaspik's hallmark will always stay—and will only increase. ★

## A Very Early Passover Start for Rockland County Women's Day Hab

It wasn't even a month after Chanukah. And as you read this, it's just about two months to the involved holiday.

But on January 9, the Women's Division of the Hamaspik of Rockland County Day Habilitation Program got an early start on Passover—by paying an exciting community outing to an active matzah bakery.

Given the mass demand for the crunchy, bumpy, flat and round wheat crackers otherwise known as matzah, commercial community matzah bakeries get (dough-) rolling around Chanukah time—and the several serving Rockland County are no different.

But besides being beehives of extreme precision, what with the absolutely inflexible rules governing the matzah-making process, matzah bakeries are also perennial magnets for involved community members of all ages, too.

Adults wishing to add that personal touch to their matzah will commonly join matzah-baking crews, or form groups of their own crews, to go home with sacred flatbreads of their own, and quite literally made by hand. And kids—particularly schoolkids—have always thrilled to the clockwork-like human machinery.

And now, those community members also include Hamaspik's Day Hab. ★



► HAMASPIK NEWS | HAPPENINGS AROUND HAMASPIK

# A Local Community Business Gives Back To Local Community

If a children's storybook were ever written about the Acres Briderheim, it would probably include something like this:

"The people who lived at Acres always made the people of the village feel very happy. So one fine day, the people of the village decided to make the people at Acres feel very happy right back!"

Well, we're pleased to report that for Hamaspik of Orange County's Acres Briderheim (and, as Managers will tell you, every other Hamaspik group home), that's

no fairytale.

Acres' residents are involved neighbors and integrated community members, thanks to the endless support of devoted Managers Mr. and Mrs. Lipa Laufer and staff. And recently, local small business Bubby's Blintzes said as much by presenting "the boys" with a platter of their edible specialty.

People thrive on attention, any mental-health professional will tell you—and at Acres, they positively ate it up. ★

# Floor by Floor, Building a Tower of Bonding and Love

## Hamaspik Community Visits Ignite Spirits

Mendy Klein is as devoted a father as he is a Direct Support Professional (DSP) at Hamaspik of Orange County's Day Habilitation (Day Hab) Program.

That's why he frequently can be found at Columbia Children's Hospital, at the bedside of his little daughter recovering from a serious condition.

But this story begins earlier.

It was in mid-October, during one of the child's repeat hospitalizations, that Mr. Klein was most upliftingly surprised by the unexpected visit of a contingent of "Day Habbers" and fellow staff.

The group filled the patient's bed area on the 9th-floor ICU, and shortly filled the air with inspiring singing and music courtesy of another DSP who also plays the guitar.

Parents and family members of other patients were drawn to the music, and an impromptu *kumzitz* singalong unfolded. Emotions ran high and tears flowed as the group of loved ones forged an instant bond around their shared pain and equally-shared faith and hope.

Mr. Klein and another father, he of an ailing boy, formed a particularly strong friendship out of that experience.

But two months and numerous hospital encounters later brought grim news. Mr. Klein's friend was now sitting shivah at his Brooklyn home, mourning for his son.

The Hamaspik staffer didn't have to be told what to do.

It was thus a day or so later that a bereaved father, sitting in the depths of despair, looked up from his shivah chair to behold Mendy Klein and much of the Hamaspik of Orange County Men's Day Hab triumphantly marching in.

The gentlemen met each other's eyes. They locked hearts. An ever-slight smile cracked the father's stone countenance. And almost involuntarily, a song came to his lips, lifting him from his anguish.

The man and his Hamaspik friends now sang for everything that kept them connected.

For acceptance.

For faith.

For joy.

For that simply absolute conviction that life is good and that tomorrow's a better day.

"It was personally a big *chizuk* [inspiration—ed.] for me," Mendy Klein simply states.

When the gentlemen of Hamaspik left that grounding experience, all felt uplifted.

Shortly rolling through the streets of lower Manhattan en route to upstate, the Hamaspik van passed Ground Zero and then the Freedom Tower, where the impromptu shot to the right was snapped.

Coming from a friend's personal ground zero and going past a tower of victory, the symbolism couldn't have been more perfect. ★

## Delivering the Goods



A FEAST OF HAPPINESS: VOLVY, A RESIDENT AT HAMASPIK OF ORANGE COUNTY'S ACRES BRIDERHEIM IRA, IS THRILLED BY A LOCAL BAKERY'S KIND GIFT OF INCLUSION

## The Music of the Soul



KEYS TO THE HEART: A MUSICALLY GIFTED INDIVIDUAL PRACTICES MAKING MUSIC BEFORE HEADING OUT TO VISIT A COMMUNITY RESIDENCES FOR REVERED SENIORS



SOUL: (TOP LEFT) HAMASPIK BENEFICIARIES HEAD IN TO A SENIOR HOME TO SING; (LEFT), VISITING A SENIOR RECOVERING AT HOME; PASSING THE FREEDOM TOWER



● ► HAMASPIK NEWS

# Taking It to the Top: Hamaspik Meets, Greets Public Servants, Allies at State of the State Address

## *Friends of Hamaspik's Mission Hail from Across Albany's Diverse Political Spectrum*

A sizable contingent of Hamaspik leaders were officially invited to Albany this past Jan. 3 by the office of Gov. Andrew Cuomo, to attend his annual State of the State Address.

The yearly speech, like its federal State of the Union counterpart by the U.S. President, presents the Chief Executive's positive vision for the political entity he heads.

As such, the Hamaspik top brass joined other public servants and private-sector activists from across the Empire State. Working in concert with public servants, elected representatives and other officials is part and parcel of Hamaspik's grassroots efforts—and for those in public service, State of the State attendance is a can't-miss.

Hamaspik's contingent was led by Meyer Wertheimer, founder of Hamaspik and current Executive Director of NYSHA (New York State Hamaspik Association).

HewasaccompaniedbyHamaspikChoice Executive Director Yoel Bernath, newly-appointed of Tri-County Care Executive Director David Mizrahi, HamaspikCare Executive Director Asher Katz, Hamaspik of Kings County Executive Director Hershel Wertheimer, Hamaspik of Orange County Moses Wertheimer, Hamaspik of Kings County Executive Director Joel Freund, and Rockland County Legislator and Hamaspik Public Relations Director Aron Wieder.

The group had the honor and pleasure of catching up with a number of notables.

These included Lieutenant Gov. Kathy Hochul, longtime Hamaspik friend and State Sen. Simcha Felder, State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, and State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie.

Likewise did the Hamaspik contingent meet with Senate Democratic Conference Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, and Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez.

Gov. Cuomo's address furthered his significant record of advocating for New Yorkers with disabilities. The current Executive Budget includes \$191 million in state and federal funding, an increase of \$170 million, to support efforts towards paying a living wage for low-wage disability workers.

The Hamaspik leaders went home knowing that they have friends in Albany who share their mission. ★



**A FRIENDLY FACE:** HAMASPIK FRIEND AND STATE SEN. SIMCHA FELDER (D-17TH DIST.)



**COMPTROLLER CENTRAL:** THE HAMASPIK CONTINGENT WITH NEW YORK STATE COMPTROLLER THOMAS DINAPOLI



**IN THE HOUSE:** WITH STATE ASSEMBLY SPEAKER CARL E. HEASTIE (D-83RD DIST.)...



...AND STATE SEN. MAJORITY LEADER JOHN J. FLANAGAN (R-2ND DIST.)



► HAMASPIK NEWS

# From Seven Springs to 38th, a High Performance Diet at HamaspiK's Shvesterheims



**PUTTING IT ALL ON THE TABLE:** SEVEN SPRINGS' DINING ROOM, SHOWN HERE READY FOR A NUTRITIONALLY NOURISHING AND SPIRITUALLY SATISFYING SHABBOS MEAL

Walk into the kitchen at HamaspiK of Orange County's Seven Springs Shvesterheim, and you just may think you've stumbled upon a catalog showroom.

Ditto for the dining room at the 38th St. Shvesterheim, a HamaspiK group home in deepest Brooklyn.

But unlike showroom samples, the engine's far more impressive here than that gleaming hood.

Besides hewing to rigorous residential programs based on the safety rules and regulations of the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), both Individualized Residential Alternatives (IRAs) boast equally meticulous and painstaking nutritional programs.

Kitchens and pantries are fully stocked and accessible per the OPWDD's person-centered ethos—meaning, that residents can, and do, choose what they wish to eat, when they wish to eat it, the same as anyone else would.

Of course, staff members are fully trained on guiding residents to making healthy choices at each juncture—synthesizing their decision-making independence with all safety and oversight needs.

It's a fine line between protecting individuals from unhealthy or even dangerous decisions and granting them full rein to act as they wish—especially when many of them are on restricted diets that bar them from foodstuffs above

a certain consistency or which contain specific allergens.

But walk that fine line HamaspiK staffers do, and they walk it well.

Mealtimes at Seven Springs are a study in synchronicity, with every resident's culinary preference literally catered to by capable house cook Mrs. Grossberg.

Besides requiring various levels of consistency (such as pureed only) in their edibles to eliminate choking hazards, various individuals also require diets that contain—or don't contain—certain ingredients due to allergies or other concerns, necessitating quite a bit of culinary creativity on Mrs. Grossberg's part.

And this past January 10, Seven Springs got its chance to show off its culinary chops, too, what with OPWDD surveyors sitting in on dinnertime. They spent time with individuals personally and veritably marveling, as staff later described it, over staff's calm discharge of duties—all served up with ample sides of great food served just like residents like it.

But what's true for Seven Springs is true for its sister Shvesterheims, too.

From HamaspiK of Rockland County's Fosse Shvesterheim all the way down to HamaspiK of Kings County's South 9th Shvesterheim and 38th St. Shvesterheim, a diet of high performance is always cooking.

Because at HamaspiK's group homes, residential diet plans aren't the only things that are high-performance. ★

CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT?

## HAMASPIK EI PROGRAM

CAN HELP!

Our Services:

Birth- 3 Yrs

- **Evaluations**
- Ongoing Service Coordination
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech / Feeding Therapy
- Special Instruction

EI Class

- Individual Goals
- Music therapy
- Yiddish, English, Hebrew
- Warm & loving atmosphere
- Lunch and transportation provided
- Constant collaboration with family and therapist

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

845.503.0209

mschik@hamaspikrockland.org

The Early Intervention program is contracted and publicly funded by the NYSDOH and RCDOH 845-364-2032. The EI services are provided at no out of pocket costs to parents.



# Public Health And Policy News

## OPIOIDS, DRUG COMPETITION NAMED BY FDA AS TOP 2018 POLICY GOALS

**Washington, D.C.** — On Jan. 11, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released its list of top policy priorities for 2018. On that list are plans to focus on reducing opioid misuse and promoting drug competition.

The agency also said it wants to strengthen its scientific workforce and use nutrition to

reduce the burden of disease in 2018.

## KENTUCKY NODDED AS FIRST MEDICAID WORK-REQUIREMENT STATE

**Lexington, KY** — In mid-January, Kentucky became the first U.S. state to get federal approval to impose work requirements as a condition for getting coverage by Medicaid, the federal healthcare program for the poor.

In the coming weeks, adult beneficiaries in Kentucky ages 19 to 64 will be required to complete 80 hours per month of community engagement activities, such as employment, education, job skills training, and community service to maintain their Medicaid eligibility.

In a Jan. 12 letter sent to Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin, Medicaid director Brian Neale of the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) wrote that “Your substantial work will help inform future state demonstrations seeking to draw on Kentucky’s novel approaches to Medicaid reform.”

Bevin originally submitted the waiver request to the CMS in August 2016. Nine other states—Arizona, Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Maine, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Utah and Wisconsin—have also applied for the Section 1115 waivers.

However, a *Health Affairs* analysis found that 11 million Medicaid enrollees would be at risk of losing coverage if the work requirement spreads nationwide.



**NO BREXIT BACKLASH: BIG PHARMA CEOS SAY THAT BRITAIN’S ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE WILL HAVE NOT LONG-TERM EFFECT ON THEIR INDUSTRY**

## FEDS PROPOSE EXPANDING SMALL BUSINESS HEALTH PLANS

**Washington, D.C.** — On January 4th, the U.S. Dept. of Labor (DOL) released a proposed rule that would ease requirements for the formation of Small Business Health Plans, also known as Association Health Plans (AHPs).

The proposed rule would modify the definitions of “employer” and “employee” under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) to make it easier for multiple employers to form a single AHP and purchase coverage in the large group market.

The proposed rule includes protections against discrimination based on health status, medical condition, medical history, and disability—but would allow AHPs to vary premiums based on “non-health factors,” including age and principal location of business.

## BIOTECH CEOS UNFAZED BY BREXIT

**San Francisco, CA** — Despite the uncertainty brought by the U.K.’s exit from the European Union, which include a relocation

of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) from London to Amsterdam, biotech and pharma companies are mostly shrugging off the looming Brexit.

Leaders speaking at the J.P. Morgan Healthcare Conference, an industry roundtable held mid-January in San Francisco, all essentially chalked up the change to cost of doing business, and said that they’d be continuing doing business as usual.

The EMA’s headquarters relocation will displace nearly 900 regular staff at the agency.

## CDC DROPS THE BOMB TO FOCUS ON FLU

**Atlanta, GA** — A planning mid-January briefing at CDC headquarters on public-health response to a nuclear attack was and quietly replaced with a briefing on the ongoing robust flu season.

In an earlier announcement for the nuclear briefing, the CDC said nuclear detonation is unlikely but that if an event were to occur, professionals must understand how response efforts are unique.

But on Jan. 12, the CDC changed the event’s topic to severe influenza due to the spike in flu cases around the country. (Hospital emergency rooms and doctor offices across the country have been swamped with cases of the flu—so get your flu shot! It’s not too late.) The session offered the latest information on how to reduce the spread of seasonal flu and how to adjust to spot shortages of antiviral drugs.

## A.M. BEST: HEALTH INSURANCE INDUSTRY “STABLE”

**Washington, D.C.** — Ratings agency A.M. Best has revised its outlook for the health insurance industry from “negative” to “stable” for 2018.

The agency said the reason for the change is that health insurers have adapted to the pressures of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). In response, they have improved earnings and risk-adjusted capitalization levels, according to its new report, *Market Segment Outlook: U.S. Health*.

A.M. Best said that multiple payer product lines remain profitable, including the robust employer-based market, Medicaid and Medicare Advantage. ★



**BLUEGRASS STATE, BLUE-COLLAR WORK: WITH FEDERAL APPROVAL THIS JANUARY, GOV. MATT BEVIN’S PUSH TO LINK MEDICAID BENEFITS WITH MINIMUM WORK REQUIREMENT. EXPERTS SAY THE MOVE PUTS ENROLLEES AT RISK OF LOSING COVERAGE**



Status Report

# Happening In Hospitals Today



## COLORADO HOSPITALS NOW MUST POST COMMON PROCEDURE PRICES

**Denver, CO** — Under a state law that took effect this January 1, Colorado hospitals must now post self-pay prices for the most common procedures and treatments, said a report in the *Denver Business Journal*.

The law is meant to improve healthcare price transparency, according to the *Journal*.

Under the new law, hospitals must provide pricing information for the 50 most used diagnosis-related group codes and 25 most-used procedural technology billing codes. Doctors' offices and providers must also provide prices for their 15 most common procedures.

The new law is part of an ongoing movement to offer better pricing transparency.

However, the law only required the posted prices for uninsured patients—making it useful only to the seven percent of Coloradans who don't have insurance and would need to pay the full bill without any help from insurance. Different bills, and often vastly different, are charged to patients who do have insurance.

## NYU LANGONE HEALTH PLANS LAB UPGRADE

**New York, NY** — *Crain's Health Pulse* reports that New York City's very own NYU Langone hospital, recently reflagged NYU Langone Health, is seeking state approval to renovate and update its Clinical Core Lab to create a "flexible, open laboratory" that can more efficiently process the 3 million tests it conducts each year.

The \$42 million project, encompassing 28,817 square feet, will locate various lab functions in the same place in order to "reduce testing time and reduce the transfer of specimens through public corridors," according to the certificate-of-need application to the state.

Langone Health's proposed upgrade comes on the heels of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center's recently completed lab move and makeover, which cost \$159 million.

## METROHEALTH TO BUILD 'HOSPITAL IN A PARK'

**Cleveland, OH** — The Cleveland-based



### PARK IT HERE: METROHEALTH'S PLAN

MetroHealth company recently unveiled plans to build a new 12-story 'hospital in a park' on a 52-acre site that would include 25 acres of green space.

The transformation plan for the site, which also will include a six- to eight-acre park, is part of a national trend to build hospitals campuses

that are environmentally friendly and which are more integrated into surrounding communities—all while hospitals continue their simultaneous trend of cutting back on in-patient beds and treating more patients at outpatient facilities.

## IPHONE DEBUTS APP FOR PERSONAL MEDICAL RECORDS

**Cupertino, CA** — The future is here, yet again.

Apple, Inc.'s common iPhone personal digital assistant (PDA) device has now taken another major leap forward with the Jan. 24 release of iOS 11.3, the newest version of the iPhone's operating system.

Existing iPhones come with an app called Health. In iOS 11.3 system, the Health Records section of that app "brings together hospitals, clinics and the existing Health apps," according to Apple, "so users can view their available data from disparate medical sources.

Leading national hospital systems participating in the project behind the app upgrade include Johns Hopkins Medicine, Cedars-Sinai, Dignity Health, Geisinger and MedStar Health.

In short, for viewing all your major personal health records (PHRs) on your iPhone, there's now an app for that.

The news is the culmination of the work around Apple's PHR company Glimpse, which it bought in 2016.

## SURGE IN DOS COULD EASE SHORTAGE OF MDS

**Chicago, IL** — A mid-January report by the American Osteopathic Association shows an 85 percent increase in osteopathic medical students since 2007—meaning that about one of every four medical students attends an osteopathic medicine college.

The report comes as the United States faces a shortage of licensed MDs. According to the American Association of Medical Colleges, the shortage of physicians will range from 61,700 to 94,700 by Year 2025.

## HOSPITAL CLOSURES STILL SPIKING IN NON-ACA STATES

**Denver, CO** — A study published recently in *Health Affairs* documents the direct effect that Medicaid expansion—or non-expansion—had on the hospital industries in expansion and non-expansion states.

States that expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) saw hospital closures decline, according to the University of Colorado study, while states that rejected the ACA's Medicaid expansion suffered a significant increase in hospital closures.

Using data covering almost a decade, researchers found that hospitals in Medicaid expansion states were 84 percent less likely to shutter than facilities in non-expansion states. Rural hospitals were particularly vulnerable to closure.

The study's findings are particularly relevant amid the current policy debate in Washington. Despite last year's failures to repeal the Affordable Care Act, pressure remains to undo its Medicaid expansion, which allowed states to extend eligibility to people with incomes up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level.

The 32 states that enacted the expansion, including New York, have added millions of Americans to Medicaid rolls, improving access to health care but increasing costs. ★



**A HEALTHY PROFILE:** NYU LANGONE HEALTH, SEEN HERE ALONG THE EAST RIVER, HAS CONSISTENTLY IMPROVED NYC'S HORIZONS



# In the Know

## ALL ABOUT... CROUP

Information sources:  
Mayo Clinic, WebMD,  
MedlinePlus, U.S. Centers  
for Disease Control and  
Prevention (CDC)



### INTRODUCTION

Croup (rhymes with “troop”) is an infection of the upper airway that constricts breathing and causes its characteristic barking cough. Croup typically occurs in younger children.

But as scary as it may sound—parents whose children have had croup will tell you that its cough *sounds* scary—croup rarely is scary. Most cases can be treated at home—with no harm done.

The cough and other symptoms of croup are the result of inflammation around the vocal cords, windpipe and bronchial tubes. When a cough forces air through this narrowed passage, the swollen vocal cords produce a noise similar to a seal barking. Likewise, taking a breath with croup often produces a high-pitched whistling sound.

### SYMPTOMS

Croup often begins as a typical cold.

If there is enough inflammation and coughing, a child will develop a loud barking cough. This often is worse at night, and is further aggravated by crying and coughing, as well as anxiety and agitation, setting up a cycle of worsening symptoms.

Fever and hoarse voice are common, too. The child’s breathing may be noisy or labored.

Because children have small airways, they are most susceptible to having more marked symptoms with croup, particularly children younger than three years old.

Symptoms of croup usually last for three to five days.

#### When to see a doctor

As mentioned, the overwhelming majority of cases of croup, most of which are in children (but sometimes teens or adults, too), are harmless and go away on their own.

But you should see your pediatrician if your child:

- Makes noisy, high-pitched breathing sounds upon inhaling and exhaling
- Has a fever along with ordinary croup



**AS SCARY AS IT MAY BE—PARENTS WHOSE CHILDREN HAVE HAD CROUP WILL TELL YOU THAT ITS COUGH *SOUNDS* SCARY—CROUP RARELY IS SCARY. MOST CASES CAN BE TREATED AT HOME—WITH NO HARM DONE.**



symptoms

- Has symptoms for more than seven days
- Has severe coughing spells
- Breathes at a faster rate than usual

Get immediate medical attention if a child:

- Begins drooling or has difficulty swallowing
- Struggles to breathe
- Develops blue or grayish skin around the nose, mouth or fingernails

Approximately five percent of children who need the emergency room for croup will also need hospitalization.

### CAUSES

Croup is usually caused by a virus infection, most often a parainfluenza virus. (*Parainfluenza* is a group of four viruses that cause different infections in the upper or lower respiratory areas, with symptoms like those of the common cold—commonly leading to misdiagnosis.)

The infecting virus that causes croup is usually contracted by breathing infected respiratory droplets that were coughed or sneezed into the air by others. Virus particles in these droplets may also survive on toys and other surfaces. If a child touches a contaminated surface and then touches the eyes, nose or mouth, an infection may follow.

#### Risk factors

People most at risk of developing croup

are children between the ages of six months and three years. The peak incidence of the condition is around 24 months of age.

#### Complications

As mentioned, most cases of croup are mild. In a small percentage of cases, the airway swells enough to interfere with breathing.

### DIAGNOSIS

Croup is typically diagnosed by the doctor observing the child’s breathing, listening to his or her chest with a stethoscope and examining the child’s throat. Sometimes X-rays or other tests are used to rule out other possible illnesses.

### TREATMENT

The overwhelming majority of cases of croup can be treated at home. However, croup can be scary, especially if it lands a child in the doctor’s office. Comforting the child and keeping him or her calm are important, because crying and agitation can worsen airway obstruction. Hold the child, sing lullabies or read quiet stories. Offer a favorite blanket or toy. Speak in a soothing voice.

If the child’s symptoms persist beyond three to five days or worsen, his or her doctor may prescribe a type of steroid called *glucocorticoid* to reduce inflammation in the airway. Benefits will usually be felt within six



hours. A glucocorticoid called Dexamethasone is usually recommended because of its long-lasting effects (up to 72 hours). Epinephrine, which is administered in more severe cases, is also effective in reducing airway inflammation. It's fast-acting, but its effects wear off quickly; a child given epinephrine will be have to be observed for a period of time.

For rare cases of severe croup, the child may need to spend time in a hospital. In even rarer instances, a temporary breathing tube may need to be placed in the child's windpipe.

Lifestyle and home remedies

Croup often runs its course within three to five days. In the meantime, keep the child comfortable with a few simple measures:

Stay calm. Comfort or distract him or her—cuddle, read a book or play a quiet game. Because crying makes breathing more difficult, the goal here is to prevent or limit crying.

Moisten the air. Although there's no evidence of benefit from this practice, many parents believe that humid air helps a child's breathing. You can use a humidifier or sit with the child in a bathroom filled with steam generated by running hot water from the shower.

Hold the child in a comfortable upright position. Hold the child on your lap, or place him or her in a favorite chair or infant seat. Sitting upright may make breathing easier

Offer fluids. For babies, water, milk or formula is fine. For older children, soup or frozen fruit pops may be soothing.

Encourage rest. Sleep can help the child's immune system fight off the infection.

Try a fever reducer. If the child has a fever, over-the-counter medicines like acetaminophen (Tylenol, others), may help.

Skip the cold medicines. Over-the-counter (OTC) cold preparations aren't recommended for children younger than age two. Plus, nonprescription cough medicines won't help croup.

The child's cough may improve during the day, but don't be surprised if it returns at night.

**Dr. Axe**  
FOOD & MEDICINE

# CROUP COUGH BY THE NUMBERS

Croup affects about 3% of children a year

Croup accounts for 5% of emergency admissions to hospital in children under 6 years of age in North America

The peak incidence of croup occurs around 24 months or 2 years of age

Croup symptoms resolve in most children within 48 hours

75% of croup infections are caused by human parainfluenza virus

Symptoms are often worse at night

Croup infections occur predominantly in late autumn and winter but can occur during any season

There is consensus that antibiotics do not improve symptoms in croup of any severity, as croup is typically caused by a virus

Croup is extremely rare in adults

“THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF CASES OF CROUP CAN BE TREATED AT HOME. HOWEVER, CROUP CAN BE SCARY, ESPECIALLY IF IT LANDS A CHILD AT THE DOCTOR.”

Parents may want to sleep near the child or even in the same room so that they can take quick action if symptoms worsen.

**PREVENTION**

Frequent hand-washing is the most important. Also keep children away from anyone who's sick, and encourage your child to cough or sneeze into his or her elbow.

To stave off more-serious infections, keep your child's vaccinations current. The diphtheria and Haemophilus influenza type b vaccines offer protection against the rarest but most dangerous upper airway infections. There isn't a vaccine yet that protects against parainfluenza viruses.

At the end of the day, preventing croup is simple: Just do what you do to prevent colds, flu and other infections. ★

*The Gazette thanks Eliezer Gurkov, PAC, for critically reviewing this article.*

**Disclaimer:** The medical information provided here does not substitute the advice of a medical professional. When in doubt, consult your pediatrician.

● ► **HAMASPIK NEWS**

## Color, Life and Hope: Hamaspik Opens Kids' Vital Daily Support Program in Brooklyn

*After-School Respite Blends Stimulation, Therapy and Fun—and Gives Parents a Break*

The room is clean and filled with color. Though museum-like and tidy, it positively brims with an energy you can just feel waiting to burst forth.

A rainbow of cubicles lines one wall. A huge bulletin board dominates another. An oversized activity table fills the room's center. Supply closets stand at attention in the corners.

It may be midday now. But in a few short hours, this pristine little space will be pulsating with color, life and hope as kids with disabilities play, learn and grow within its four walls.

Welcome to the world of After-School

Respite (ASR)—a permanently popular program provided for years now by the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD).

And that world, long made accessible to local communities by Hamaspik in upstate Orange and Rockland Counties, has now planted its newest colony in the heart of Brooklyn: 293 Division Ave., Hamaspik of Kings County's neighborhood office.

Working with community partners like Hamaspik, the OPWDD has brought the program to the very grassroots for decades.

After-School Respite allows children with disabilities to spend their Sundays and school-day afternoons in stimulating, therapeutic settings—all while their parents enjoy that much-needed regular respite from the rigors of special-needs parenting.

Hamaspik of Orange County's ASR sees its boys and girls delivered by bus to the agency's central hub in Kiryas Joel every school day and Sunday. Excitedly bouncing in, they're greeted warmly by the program's trained staff for a full afternoon program consisting of structured therapeutic activities and games,

free play time, healthy snacks and, of course, any homework that needs to get done.

A similar scene is repeated daily in Monsey, where Hamaspik of Rockland County has been operating its own After-School Respite program at two dedicated facilities.

And in October 2017, after years of growing community demand and a resulting rigorous application process, Hamaspik opened an ASR program to serve the Brooklyn community. And the result has been spectacular.

“Just seeing the kids so happy says it all,” says Mrs. Pessy Oberlander, whose daughter is in the program. Despite the program following the little girl's full school day, Mrs. Oberlander reports that her daughter comes home each day “full of energy.”

And thanks to the newest Hamaspik program on the block, what's true for Mrs. Oberlander is true for dozens of other grateful parents, too. ★



HEALTH NEWS

# For More Targeted Cancer Treatment, MIT Researcher Experimenting with Origami

## Ancient Paper-folding Art Inspires Modern Approach to Precision Drug Delivery

Cambridge, MA — Katerina Mantzavinou, a Ph.D. student in the Harvard-MIT Program in Health Sciences and Technology and researcher at the Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research at MIT, is researching releasing cancer-killing drugs inside the abdomen using origami.

Today's standard treatment for patients with advanced ovarian cancer includes using an injection device to administer powerful

chemotherapy drugs through the stomach wall and into the stomach.

But besides the resulting high pain and required repeat sessions, a primary problem of the procedure is that the drugs destroy healthy tissue along with cancerous tissue. A less invasive and more precisely placed procedure or device would help minimize that problem.

After considering a medication-laced spaghetti-like string delivered into the

stomach, Mantzavinou hit upon origami, the ancient art of folding large pieces of papers into intricate—and small—shapes. Origami is known for its detailed paper animals and objects.

Using a mold made by a 3-D printer, Mantzavinou manufactured a piece of origami paper made of silicone, a material that is biocompatible, or tolerated by the body with no side effects. She used a V-shaped origami

ribbing pattern to allow the sheet to be folded down into a thin rod.

Mantzavinou's idea is to saturate the silicone origami with liquid chemo and then surgically insert it into the patient, where it will unfold, release its medication, and then slowly dissolve.

The researcher believes that the "origami approach" will ideally prove more efficient and more effective for advanced ovarian cancer treatment than today's prolonged and painful protocols.

And if the MIT health technology student's idea ultimately works, a better way of getting chemotherapy drugs right to where they need to be will quite literally be unfolding. ★

HEALTHY EATING



## Spaghetti Squash!

EASY | YIELDS: 8-10 SERVINGS

PREP TIME: 0:45 | COOKING: :40



### Spaghetti Squash

FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAIN INGREDIENT FOR SEVERAL DISHES!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 spaghetti squash

DIRECTIONS:

- Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees
- Slice spaghetti squash in half lengthwise
- Scoop out seeds with spoon (set seeds aside)
- Place both halves on baking pan cut-side down
- Bake at 400 for 40 min
- Flip to cool
- Make spaghetti strands by scraping insides of squash with fork
- You now have vegetable spaghetti to replace regular spaghetti!

**NOTE:** Use this prep for all the recipes here.

CHEF'S TIP:

Roast the seeds set aside earlier by first rinsing and drying them, then placing on a baking sheet, sprinkling some salt, and drizzling 1 tsp oil on top. Roast in oven at 300 for 20-25 minutes, stirring every few minutes.

BENEFITS:

Spaghetti squash is known for the vegetable spaghetti you can make from it, plus its low calories—and high nutrition! Spaghetti squash is free of saturated fats and cholesterol but rich in antioxidants, dietary fiber, minerals and vitamins—making it commonly recommended by dieticians for cholesterol-control and weight-loss programs.

EASY | YIELDS: 8-10 SERVINGS

PREP TIME: 0:45 | COOKING: :15 | READY IN: 1:00



### Squash Spaghetti with Vegetables

YOUR HEART WILL ENJOY THIS HEART-HEALTHY SIDE DISH AS MUCH AS YOU WILL!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 spaghetti squash
- 1 onion - diced
- 2 cloves garlic - chopped
- 1 red pepper - cubed
- 1 green pepper - cubed
- 1 tomato - cubed
- 1 zucchini - cubed
- Oil for sautéing
- Salt to taste
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder

DIRECTIONS:

- Make spaghetti strands as instructed
- Pour oil into medium saucepan
- Sauté onions on low-medium flame for 5 minutes, or until golden
- Add diced tomato, peppers, and zucchini; sauté for another 10 minutes or until tender
- Mix sautéed vegetables into spaghetti strands
- Season with salt, pepper, and garlic powder

EASY | YIELDS: 12 SERVINGS

PREP TIME: 0:50 | COOKING: 1:00 | READY IN: 1:15



### Sweet Spaghetti Squash Kugel

SWEET NOODLE KUGEL OUT? NO PROBLEM! GO WITH THIS GREAT SUBSTITUTE!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large (3lb) spaghetti squash
- 3 eggs
- 1 tbsp vanilla sugar
- 2 apples shredded
- 1/4 cup oil
- 1/4 cup honey
- Dash cinnamon
- 1/2 cup ground almonds

TOPPING (OPTIONAL)

- 1/2 cup ground almonds
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp sugar

DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 350
- Make spaghetti strands as instructed
- Mix all ingredients together in large bowl
- Pour mixture into a 9x13 baking pan.
- Mix topping ingredients together in medium bowl
- Sprinkle topping mix over kugel mix in pan
- Bake uncovered at 350 for 1 hour

SERVE WARM OR COOL





# The Senior Care Gazette

News from  
the World of  
HamaspikCare  
and Senior  
Health

## Chicago ER Prog. Cuts Unneeded Geriatric Admits by 33 Percent

**Chicago, IL** — A 2013-launched program focusing on seniors visiting ERs reduced the number of seniors admitted to the hospital, according to a study of the program in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

Chicago's Northwestern Memorial Hospital's emergency department cut its geriatrics admissions by 33 percent, according to the study of its Geriatric Emergency Department Innovations (GEDI) program.

The program, in operation weekdays 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. each day, uses a dedicated nurse to first evaluate if seniors in the ER are program candidates.

If they are, the patients they are moved to a quiet floor that features rooms with non-glare, nonslip floors, doors and televisions and windows. The nurses will then meet with the patient to determine what home needs they may have.

"We wanted to ensure that we weren't just discharging older patients from the emergency department only to be hospitalized again relatively quickly after something preventable like a fall," study co-author Scott Dresden, M.D. told *Northwestern Now*. "With this program, we have created an otherwise nonexistent safety net for this vulnerable population."

The program also uses a pharmacist and social worker to help seniors go home with those needs met.

Dresden also said that other hospitals can easily adopt the program because there is no need to build a separate space. ★



**MEETING SENIORS' REAL NEEDS:** A NURSE ASSISTS A SENIOR AT AN EMERGENCY ROOM. A RECENT STUDY FINDS THAT THE 'GEDI' PROGRAM HELPS KEEP SENIORS OUT OF THE HOSPITAL BY ADDRESSING THEIR NEEDS OUTSIDE OF THE HOSPITAL

## Protecting cells' 'powerhouse' may fuel new Alzheimer's treatment

**Tempe, AZ** — An interesting study by Arizona State University looks into the earliest origins of Alzheimer's in the body.

The study finds indications that the process eventually leading to Alzheimer's may begin inside the body's cells themselves.

Alzheimer's today is generally believed to be caused by a buildup of toxic proteins in the brain that progressively disrupt its memory and function.

However, while most people with Alzheimer's have significant buildups of these *beta amyloid* proteins in their brains, many people with significant buildups of *beta amyloid* proteins in their brains do not have Alzheimer's.

In the current study, researchers now suggest that injury to *mitochondria*—the tiny powerhouses inside each cell that provide them with energy—triggers events that occur early in Alzheimer's disease, well before any symptoms appear.

The research also suggests that protecting cells' mitochondria from damage by *oligomeric amyloid beta*, a highly toxic protein, could possibly one day treat or even prevent Alzheimer's. ★

## Former Senior-health Official Rejoins HHS as Secretary

Washington, D.C. — On Jan. 24, a former government official on issues of senior health rejoined the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS)—this time as its newly-confirmed Secretary.

Alex M. Azar, 50, an Ivy League-trained attorney and former pharmaceutical lobbyist, was confirmed after a U.S. Senate hearing to serve as the 24th leader of the HHS—which, at an average annual of \$1 trillion, has a budget larger than the military.

During his hearings, Azar had said that value-based payment models are the future for Medicare.

"We must harness the power of Medicare to shift the focus in our healthcare system from paying for procedures and sickness to paying for health and outcomes," he said during the hearings—allowing the government to leverage "what is best in our programs and in the private, competitive marketplace."

Mr. Azar served as the United States Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services from 2005 to 2007, during which he oversaw senior health-related programs.

Secretary Alex M. Azar is widely described as steady, knowledgeable and willing to hear both sides. ★



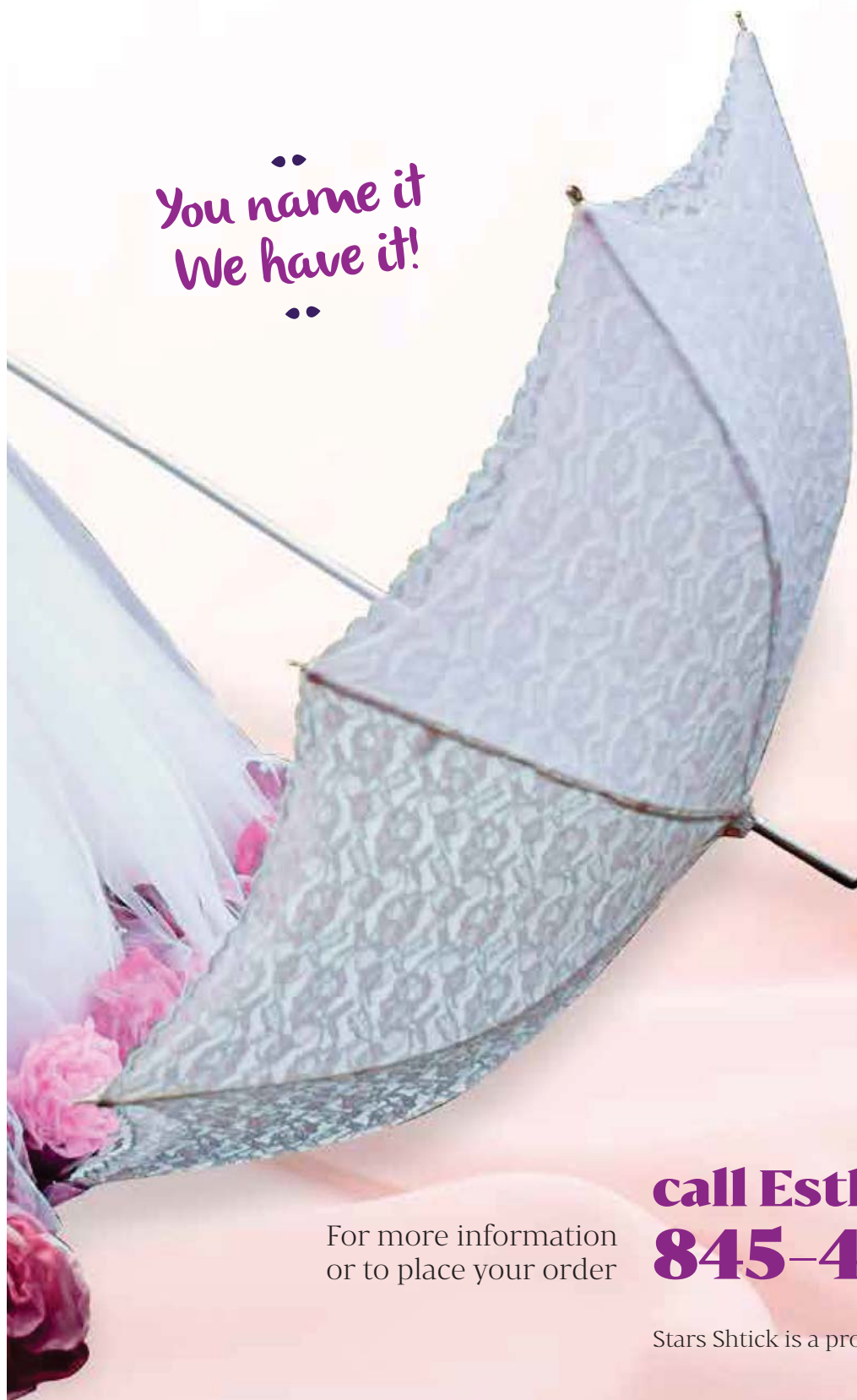
**PROGRESS CONTINUES:** PRESIDENT THEODORE "TEDDY" ROOSEVELT AT TEMPE NORMAL SCHOOL, NOW ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY, MARCH 20, 1911



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