



The Hamaspik Gazette

News of NYSHA
Member Agencies
and General Health

MARCH '24 • ISSUE NO. 220



GAZETTE SURVEY

The GAZETTE asks YOU:

HAVE OR A FAMILY MEMBER EVER HAD A TORN MENISCUS (CARTILAGE KNEE CUSHION)?

A: NO; B: YES

Respond to: survey@nyshainc.org • 845-655-0667



HEALTH STAT

MEASURING MENISCUS MAYHEM

Meniscectomy (meniscus repair) is the world's most-performed orthopedic procedure

Meniscal tear incidents in U.S. pop	60 per 100,000
Meniscal tear surgeries in U.S. pop.	17 per 100,000

Source: National Center for Biotechnology Information, NIH



HEALTH TIP

MUSCLING OUT MENISCUS TEARS

Key to preventing meniscus tears is strengthening the knee-supporting muscles—so target those quadriceps (thigh front), hamstrings (thigh back), abductors (outer thigh) and adductors (inner thigh) with these workout classics: squats, leg curls, or just walking or swimming.

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REFLECTING SAFER NIGHTS ACROSS THE COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY ACTIVIST RABBI SHIA KORNBLOH, LONG A PROPONENT OF HIGH-VISIBILITY SAFETY REFLECTORS ACROSS THE VILLAGE OF KIRYAS JOEL, VISITS HAMASPIK ORANGE'S BOYS' AFTER-SCHOOL RESPITE PROGRAM



USING HIS TRADEMARK WIT AND WISDOM, RABBI KORNBLOH WALKED THE YOUNG MEN THROUGH THE BASICS OF NAVIGATING DARK STREETS THICK WITH VEHICULAR TRAFFIC—AND WHY THE REFLECTOR STRIPS ARE AN INDISPENSIBLE MUST

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HEALTH NEWS

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OPWDD SERVICES

INDIVIDUALIZED RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE (IRA)

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

INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT SERVICES (ISS)

Paid housing expenses and support for individuals who can live independently.

HOME FAMILY CARE (HFC)

Places individuals with developmental disabilities into private homes to care and support the individual.

DAY HABILITATION (DH)

A day program for adults with disabilities designed to develop skills, greater independence, community inclusion etc.

Site Based: Day Habilitation Service delivered in an OPWDD certified facility.

Without Walls: Day Habilitation Service delivered in a community-based setting.

COMMUNITY HABILITATION (CH)

Working one-on-one with individuals in their home or in the community to achieve valued outcomes by helping them develop daily living skills and achieve long-term goals.

COMMUNITY PRE VOCATIONAL

Working with individual to prepare them for paid community employment- Teaching individuals job skills and other related social skills to enhance their ability to obtain employment in the future.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SEMP)

Working with individual to support and provide them with necessary coaching so they can successfully engage in paid competitive employment.

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES (FSS)

Support for the individual's family by reimbursing them for certain qualifying items or services, otherwise not available to them.

INTENSIVE BEHAVIORAL SERVICES (IBS)

Short-term interventional services for people with behavioral issues and their family members.

RESPITE:

Home and Community-based respite services to provide a relief for the individual's caregiver and family.

At-Home: Respite services delivered in the home of the individual.

After School: Respite program provided every day after school hours.

Sundays: Respite program provided every Sunday.

Legal Holidays: Respite program provided on all legal holidays when school is not in session.

Summer Break: Full day respite program during the summer break weeks.

Respite Night Program: Respite services delivered in the evening hours to high-functioning individuals by taking them out in the community and doing recreational and stimulating activities with them.

Weekend Getaways: A weekend retreat for individuals receiving respite services.

SELF-DIRECTION

The Individual or their advocate takes direct responsibility to manage their services and self-direct their budget.

Fiscal Intermediary (FI): Assists individual or their advocate in implementing their Individual Support Agreement and to manage financial accountability and employer responsibilities.

Brokerage: Assisting individuals or their advocate in creating and managing their budget.

ARTICLE 16 CLINIC

Provides medical, diagnostic, and therapeutic services for persons with developmental disabilities. Such as: Physical therapy · occupational therapy · speech therapy · psychology · social work · psychiatry · nutrition

PARENTAL RETREATS

Providing: Getaways and retreats for parents of individuals with disabilities

EMOD, VMOD AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Individuals who are eligible and approved for OPWDD services who reside in non-certified home and community-based settings may qualify for AT, E-Mod, and V-Mod services funded through the OPWDD HCBS Waiver.

Assistive Technology : Any device, item, equipment, product, or system that is used to increase, maintain, or to improve an individual's functional capabilities and/or independence in performing activities of daily living (ADL).

E-Mods: Physical adaptations to an individual's home, like ramps, lifts and grab bars, needed to ensure his or her health, welfare and safety and to maximize independence and reduce need for institutionalization and/or more restrictive, costly living arrangements.

V-Mods: Physical adaptations to the individual's vehicle that are necessary to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the individual or that enable the individual to function with greater independence.

DOH

EARLY INTERVENTION (EI)

Provides a range of services to help young children (ages birth-3) who have a specific delay in their development.

Group Development Model (GDM): Provides Early Intervention services in a group-setting

Therapy: Provides OT, PT, SLP, Vision, Nutrition, Play, Special Education, Family Training etc. to help the child develop appropriately.

Evaluations: Provides full evaluations to assess child's skills and development.

Ongoing Service Coordination (OSC): Provides ongoing support for families of children enrolled in the Early Intervention Program.

NURSING HOME TRANSITION AND DIVERSION (NHTD)

Waiver services to help individuals who need nursing-home level of care safely remain home and avoid nursing home placement.

Service Coordination (SC): Provides coordination to the individual in gaining access to needed waiver and Medicaid State Plan services, as well as other local, state, and federally funded educational, vocational, social, and medical services.

Community Transitional Services (CTS) / Moving Assistance (MA): Provides moving assistance with packing and transporting individual's possessions and furnishings when he/she must be moved from an inadequate or unsafe housing situation to a viable environment.

Environmental Modifications (EMODS): Provides Internal and external physical adaptations to the individual's home, that are necessary to assure the health, welfare and safety of the individual and avoid institutionalization.

Vehicle Modification (VMODS): Modifications to a vehicle that is used to improve the individual's independence and access to services and supports in the community.

Assistive Technology : Provides durable medical equipment and supplies for the individual to increase their level of independence, safety, and functional limitations.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI)

Waiver services to help individuals who had a traumatic brain injury.

Service Coordination (SC): Provides coordination to the individual in gaining access to needed waiver and Medicaid State Plan services, as well as other local, state, and federally funded educational, vocational, social, and medical services.

Community Transitional Services (CTS) / Moving Assistance (MA): Provides moving assistance with packing and transporting individual's possessions and furnishings when he/she must be moved from an inadequate or unsafe housing situation to a viable environment.

Environmental Modifications (EMODS): Provides Internal and external physical adaptations to the individual's home, that are necessary to assure the health, welfare and safety of the individual and avoid institutionalization

Vehicle Modification (VMODS): Modifications to

a vehicle that is used to improve the individual's independence and access to services and supports in the community.

Assistive Technology : Provides durable medical equipment and supplies for the individual to increase their level of independence, safety, and functional limitations.

SOCIAL DAY PROGRAM

A comprehensive structured program providing functionally-impaired adults an array of services in a protective daytime setting. Each individual participant receives services in accordance with an Individualized Service Plan (ISP) based on a personalized assessment.

SENIOR DINING PROGRAM

Serves balanced nutritious meals to older New Yorkers up to five days a week in a variety of settings. Eligible to seniors age 60 and up, as well as to spouses younger than 60 and individuals with disabilities residing in eligible seniors' homes. Made possible by Orange county OFA/ NYS OFA.

HAMASPIK CHOICE

MLTCP:

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

HMO/INSURANCE

ABA

Behavior modification services for children with autism.

Social Group: ABA service delivered in a group setting.

One on One: ABA service delivered on a one-on-one basis in the child's home or community.

HAMASPIK HOMECARE

LHCSA

Licensed HomeCare Services Agency.

Home Health and Personal Care Services (HHA/PCA): Our PCA/HHA assist individuals with personal care needs, activities of daily living, and light housekeeping. They are extensively trained, screened and supervised by a RN.

NHTD/TBI Home & Community Support Services (HCSS): Our HCSS Certified Aides assist those enrolled in the NHTD or TBI Medicaid Waiver Programs with oversight and supervision, in addition to personal care services.

Nursing Services (RN): Providing skilled observation and assessment - care planning - paraprofessional supervision - clinical monitoring and coordination - medication management - physician - ordered nursing interventions and skilled treatments.

HHA/PCA Training: Free PCA/HHA training and competency testing offered for those interested in a home care career.

CDPAS/CDPAP: CONSUMER DIRECTED PERSONAL AIDE SERVICES/PROGRAM

As an alternative to traditional homecare, this program empowers the client to hire, train, and set the schedule of their personal assistants (PA). The PA's may be family members and can even live in the same home.

NYS HCR

ACCESS TO HOME

Providing home modifications for people with physical disability.

RESTORE

Providing emergency repairs for low incomes homeowners over the age of 60.

US AND NYS AGRICULTURE

CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP)

Provides federal reimbursements for the costs of nutritious meals and snacks which are served to eligible children and adults at participating daycare centers, after-school programs, or shelters.

NYSED SERVICES

ACCESS VR

Assist individuals to achieve and maintain employment and to support independent living through training, education, rehabilitation, and career development.

PATHWAY TO EMPLOYMENT

Employment planning and support services that provide assistance for individuals to obtain, maintain or advance in competitive employment or self-employment.

NYSHA

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.

MAMTAKIM

A summer camp for individuals approved for OPWDD services.

BOE

THE HAMASPIK SCHOOL

Private chartered school for kids age 5 - 10 with developmental disabilities, taking education to heart and teaching them in a way they can learn thru an individualized plan, Including ABA, OT, PT, SPL and Multi-sensory hands-on learning.

KINDERVILLE

A summer camp for individuals approved for OPWDD services.

OMH

SIPUK, ARTICLE 31 CLINIC

Mental Health-licensed behavioral health, Article 31 Clinic, servicing all ages.

OMH/DOH

ADULT HEALTH HOME CARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Intensive, comprehensive care management for Adults with chronic condition(s) and/or mental health issues at greater risk for relapse and/or lack of care.

CHILDREN HEALTH HOME CARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Intensive, comprehensive care management for children ages 0-21 with chronic condition(s) and/or mental health issues at greater risk for relapse and/or lack of care

ADULT HCBS SERVICES

Behavioral Health Home and Community-Based Services for eligible adults over the age of twenty one.

Community Psychiatric Support and Treatment: Support and treatment to achieve functional improvement and stability, while working to attain the personal goals in a community setting.

Family Support and Training: Family training and support to engage the family in the treatment planning process and provide them with emotional and informational support to enhance their skills to assist in the recovery.

Psychosocial Rehabilitation: Assists with rehabilitating functional deficits and interpersonal or environmental hardships associated with the behavioral health condition.

Empowerment Services-Peer Support: Peer-delivered services designed to promote skills for coping with and managing behavioral health symptoms, while utilizing recovery-oriented principles.

Habilitation: Assist to acquire and improve skills such as: communication, self-care, socialization, mobility, etc. to successfully reside in home and community-based setting.

Intensive Supported Employment: Assists to obtain and keep competitive employment.

Prevocational Services: Prepares for employment, developing strengths and soft skills that contribute to employability.

Transitional Employment: Strengthens the work record and skills toward the goal of achieving assisted or unassisted competitive employment.

Ongoing Supported Employment: Ongoing follow-along support when holding down a job.

CHILDREN HCBS SERVICES

Behavioral Health Home and Community-Based Services for eligible children from birth to twenty one.

Prevocational Services: Designed to prepare a youth (age 14 or older) to engage in paid work, volunteer work, or career exploration. Prevocational Services are not job-specific, but rather are geared toward facilitating success in any work environment.

Caregiver Family Support and Services : Teaches skills to caregiver/family's that will enhance their ability to care for the child/youth in the home and/or community.

Community Self Advocacy Training and Support: Provides family and caregivers with techniques and information not generally available so that they can better respond to the needs of the Individual related to their disabilities.

Community Habilitation: Provides assistance with learning social skills, daily living and health related duties by working with the individual on goal-oriented tasks.

Supported Employment: Designed to prepare youth with disabilities (age 14 or older) to engage in paid work.

Planned Respite: Provides short-term relief for the individual's family/caregiver while supporting the individual's mental health, substance use and/or health care goals.

Day Habilitation: Provides assistance with learning social and daily living skills in a certified agency setting.

► TRI-COUNTY CARE NEWS

For Young Man Needing New Housing, Tri-County Care Manager Brings it Home

After State CRO Listing, Individual Placed at Hamaspik Rockland's Wannamaker Briderheim Men's Residence

Last month's *Gazette* told the story of the Care Manager at Tri-County Care whose efforts succeeded in getting an individual onto New York State's Certified Residential Opportunity (CRO) list.

Just getting an individual on that list is a critical first step in accessing any available residential housing for people with disabilities—and a story in its own right.

But the story didn't end there.

Shortly after securing that CRO spot, the Care Manager finished the job he started—finding a newly-opened bed at an Individualized Residential Alternative (IRA) in Rockland County.

That IRA, the Wannamaker Briderheim, is one of the several group homes run across greater Monsey by Hamaspik of Rockland County.

The placement is especially significant because the individual had originally resided with his Family Care providers in the Orange County village

of Kiryas Joel. Because he'd lived there pretty much his entire life, he had gone to school there, too—specifically, at the Kiryas Joel Union Free School District system created decades ago to serve the special-needs population.

Because unbroken schooling continuity, and retention of familiarity, is vital for any student, and certainly for one with special needs, the Care Manager saw to it that young man remained a student in his Kiryas Joel school.

But to do so, the gentleman had to be successively registered as a resident in Rockland County, student in the County's East Ramapo Central School District, recipient of the District's Committee for Special Education (CSE) services, and finally, a student requiring transportation to the Orange County school best suited for him and his educational needs. All combined, that multi-front process usually takes months; the Care Manager pulled it

all off in less than four weeks. "It was teamwork," he tells the *Gazette*—"The K.J. School District, East Ramapo and Hamaspik all working together."

★

"He loves the place!" says Mr. Joel Horowitz, Manager of Wannamaker, asked by the *Gazette* how he's adjusting to his new home.

By way of background, Mr. Horowitz points out that in the home he's coming from, the young man—a verbal, high-function 16-year-old teenager—was the youngest.

Being the junior member of a Family Care family, having been taken in as a small child, all of his older siblings had long since grown up, gotten married and moved out of the house. That fact left him in an apartment filled with little more than memories of an active household now a thing of the past.

So now, Mr. Horowitz explains,

the young man—by contrast—is going from a home filled with empty bedrooms to one crackling with fellow "siblings": his energetic "brothers" who are his housemates at Wannamaker.

"He's the right candidate—the perfect match," he says, commenting on how well the young man has acclimated and fit in at Wannamaker. "He's very strong-minded," he continues, noting that he's not embarrassed to express his thoughts, feelings and opinions.

In fact, the manager elaborates, the thing that the young man likes most about now residing at Wannamaker is that "he has friends" at home. "They love each other, they play together, and they sing at the Shabbos meals together," Mr. Horowitz proudly reports.

At the end of the day, the gentleman ended up living at Wannamaker, with his former caregivers resting assured their beloved charge was now in good hands. ★

► HEALTH NEWS

The Gender Gap in Consumer Medicine is Real

Report says women spend 20 percent more per year on out-of-pocket health than men

New York, New York — The "pink tax," in which products and services marketed to women cost more than similar products and services aimed at men, is a familiar phenomenon to many.

But it shouldn't apply to annual check-ups and cancer screenings.

However, leading global accounting firm Deloitte recently found that it actually does.

The fact that the way benefits are currently designed "puts a disproportionate cost on women, above and beyond maternity, was the thing that really surprised us," said Kulleni Gebreyes, a physician who runs Deloitte's health care practice and also serves as the company's U.S. chief health equity officer.

Women of all ages pay a total of \$15.4 billion more than men on annual out-of-pocket medical expenses, according to a recent new report from Deloitte. In 2021, that meant that women paid about 20 percent more than men—of which only two percent of which could be accounted for by maternity care.



PRESCRIPTION FOR HIGHER COSTS: DELOITTE RESEARCH CONFIRMS THAT HEALTH EXPENSES DO COST MORE FOR WOMEN—BY ABOUT 20 PERCENT—THAN THE SAME ITEMS FOR MEN

The Deloitte analysis found that despite seeking more health care treatments than men, women have

lower actuarial values, meaning that insurance covers less of their health claims than it does for men.

Researchers at Deloitte first looked at a sample of more than 16 million people aged 19-64 with employer-sponsored health insurance. They analyzed the costs for payers' total medical services from 2017-2022 as if each received the average single-person medical benefit design. They found that women spend more money on services far beyond maternity and childbirth care. Radiology, laboratory, mental health, emergency care, office visits, and physical or occupational therapy were key areas where women paid more than men.

Men are twice as likely as women to wait more than two years between visits to a health care professional, according to the report. Yet when they do go, they need fewer services. ★

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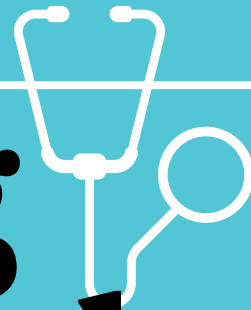
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Happening in Health Today



GENES LINKED TO RAYNAUD'S DISEASE FOUND

London, England — Raynaud's disease can cause fingers and toes to go cold and numb because of the constriction of tiny blood vessels under the skin. The condition is triggered by cold temperatures or stress, causing the skin to turn white or blue, then red.

But now, scientists at the Precision Healthcare University Research Institute, a division of Queen Mary University in London, have discovered two genes that may trigger the condition.

Combing through UK Biobank data on over 440,000 people, researchers found over 5,000 Raynaud's cases—and, among them, two distinct gene variants pointing to two distinct mechanisms. One variant affects how blood vessels narrow and the other affects how



OUT OF THE GENETIC FREEZER: TWO GENES HAVE NOW BEEN LINKED BY RESEARCH TO THE TINY-BLOOD-VESSEL-CONSTRICTING, FINGER-FREEZING CONDITION OF RAYNAUD'S

blood vessels relax.

Raynaud's affects two to five percent of the population, more often women—commonly teenagers and twenty-somethings. It is primarily

treated with lifestyle changes or drugs called calcium channel blockers.

The study was published in *Nature Communications*. ★

TINY ROBOT SUCCESSFULLY MANEUVERED THROUGH LIVING LUNG TISSUE

Chapel Hill, North Carolina — A “lung robot” developed by the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill can autonomously maneuver the intricacies of the lung while avoiding important lung structures, UNC researchers now say.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States.

Some tumors are extremely small and hide deep within lung tissue, making it difficult for surgeons to reach them. To address this challenge, UNC-Chapel Hill and Vanderbilt University researchers have been working on an extremely bendy but sturdy robot capable of traversing lung tissue.

In a new paper published in *Science Robotics*, UNC researchers showed that their robot can autonomously go from “Point A” to “Point B” while avoiding important structures, such as tiny airways and blood vessels, in a living laboratory model.

The development of the autonomous steerable needle robot blended UNC

medicine, computer science, and engineering expertise.

YET ANOTHER STUDY LINKS HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE WITH LESS DEPRESSION—BUT HELPS EXPLAINS WHY: BIGGER BRAINS

Cambridge, England — The stereotypically “healthy lifestyle” of moderate (or no) alcohol consumption, healthy diet, and regular physical activity, good sleep and frequent socializing is long known—scientifically—for less depression.

But now, researchers at the University of Cambridge looked the UK Biobank, a biomedical database and research resource, to even better understand the relationship between these factors and depression.

The researchers examined data on almost 290,000 people—of whom 13,000 had depression—from a nine-year period. They looked at a combination of factors including lifestyle, genetics, brain structure and immune and metabolic systems to further identify any underlying mechanisms.

But they also looked at MRI brain

scans for just under 33,000 participants, finding that those with healthier lifestyles had a number of key brain regions with larger volumes.

STUDY FINDS OLD DEPRESSION/ MIGRAINE DRUG REDUCES SYMPTOMS OF IBS

Leeds, England — The well-established depression/migraine drug *amitriptyline* has now been shown in a placebo trial to also work for irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

Researchers at the University of Leeds conducted a placebo trial on over 460 IBS patients across England. Participants were randomly given amitriptyline or a placebo.

Compared to those taking a placebo, participants in the amitriptyline group reported a bigger improvement in their symptom scores after six months. They were almost twice as likely as those taking a placebo to report an overall improvement in IBS symptoms.

About one in 20 people worldwide live with the abdominal pain and bowel issues that define IBS, a chronic condition currently with no cure.

Amitriptyline is believed to work by improving the sometimes-inappropriate signaling between the brain and body parts involved in IBS.

The findings were published recently in *The Lancet*.

DONOR IMMUNE CELLS MAY REDUCE RECIPIENTS' REJECTION OF TRANSPLANTED ORGANS

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania —

Immune systems rejecting donated organs has long been a problem with organ donations—with recipients often needing to take immunosuppressant drugs for life. But now, a small study may point to a way around that problem.

Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine found that infusing recipients with donors' immune cells *before* getting their organs may allow recipients to reduce their immunosuppressant drugs—or even ultimately be weaned off them altogether.

A week before getting donated liver tissue, doctors gave 13 transplant patients specific immune cells from their donors called *regulatory dendritic cells*—priming their immune systems to better tolerate the donated tissue.

One year later, patients showed signs of modified immune responses to donor livers—suggesting eventual lowering or even elimination of immunosuppressants.

NEW AI PROGRAM DETECTS MELANOMA AT 100-PERCENT RATE

Birmingham, England — Here's something *not* to be worried about when it comes to artificial intelligence (AI): a recent run of AI software on detecting melanoma (a kind of skin cancer) scored a 100-percent success rate.

An AI program that scans skin samples for signs of melanoma has been under development by the University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust for several years now.

The first iteration of the program was tested in 2021, at which point it only detected just under 86 percent of melanomas. But with extensive training on melanoma data, the program “learned” how to better detect the serious condition—leading to a 100-percent detection rate among 59 human-verified cases.

According to researchers, the current version of the software has saved over 1,000 face-to-face consultations in the secondary care setting between April 2022 and January 2023—freeing up more time for patients that need urgent attention. ★

בס"ד

☎ ... Caller @ 7:30 PM

“

No one knows my secret. People think we run a smooth ship.

If only they knew. I am sure no one in my קהילה is experiencing as much hopelessness and pain as I do. No one will understand me.

WHERE DO I BEGIN?

**INTEGRATED
HEALTH
IS THE ANSWER.**

A dedicated Care-Manager will help you navigate the murky waters and connect you with the right resources.

FREE FOR ELIGIBLE MEDICAID MEMBERS.

INTRODUCING



INTEGRATED
HEALTH

A Hamaspiik initiative.
Available to mainstream Medicaid members, 21+ years, with chronic medical or behavioral conditions.

MEDICAL BEHAVIORAL PSYCHIATRIC ADDICTIONS

UPSTATE 845-503-0444
Intake@IntegratedHealthRC.org
www.IntegratedHealthRC.org

BROOKLYN 718-387-8400 ext 13
intake@hamaspiikkings.org

● ► HAMASPIK NEWS

Hamaspik of Orange County's After-School Respite Program Colors Daily Activities with Spectrum of Enriching Programming

Popular Community Activist Shia Kornbluh, Kiryas Joel's 'King of Pedestrian Reflectors,' Leads Exciting Presentation in Ongoing Series of Appearances at Respite



CLASS OF HIS OWN: MR. KORNBLOH HOLDS FORTH COURT TO A RAPT HAMASPIK AUDIENCE



A REFLECTION OF HEAVEN: WEARING SAFETY GEAR DURING FAITH-BASED MORNING PRAYERS

Once upon a time, a man in a glow-in-the-dark bekeshe stood at the head of a classroom.

But this wasn't any ordinary classroom. Nor was it an ordinary man, ordinary bekeshe (the traditional long black Chasidic men's coat), or ordinary presentation.

Rabbi Shia Kornbluh is a well-known community activist in the Village of Kiryas Joel—among other things, for the cause of wearing safety reflectors at night. As such, Rabbi Kornbluh has made it part of his life's work to popularize and otherwise distribute the glow-in-the-dark safety straps, which are affixed around waists or over shoulders with Velcro endings, to as many people in his community as possible. When he's not distributing reflectors, he's disbursing food or even housewares to those in need, the *Gazette* learns—and that's on top of his day job as a special-ed teacher.

So with the goal of Hamaspik in

general, and Hamaspik's After-School Respite program in particular (like its group homes and other programs) to blend individuals with special needs into the community as much as possible, the Hamaspik of Orange County Boys After-School Respite (ASR) Program—led by capable and creative ASR Manager Moshe Ber Schwartz—brought in Rabbi Kornbluh to do an exciting and interactive presentation on the critical importance of pedestrian visibility and safety at night by means of wearing the high-visibility reflective straps.

"He's always giving them out," admirably comments Mr. Schwartz. "He's well-known in Monroe."

As so, one fine recent Sunday, Rabbi Kornbluh found himself in a classroom on the premises of Hamaspik Orange's Boys ASR program, putting on a presentation on why it's so important to wear reflectors when you leave the house and walk about the streets of



SHEDDING SOME LIGHT: A DEMONSTRATION

Kiryas Joel—or anywhere, for that matter—when it's dark outside.

For a good hour, Rabbi Kornbluh, childhood education veteran that he is, put on a good show, and quite literally.

In his witty and wise style, Rabbi Kornbluh arrived decked out in a formal bekeshe, the elegant long black coat worn by Chasidim on Shabbos and Jewish holidays. Only, this one quite literally glowed and shone, with its cuffs and collar lined with reflective strips that made it quite literally glow in the dark when Mr. Schwartz, interacting with him, turned out the lights.

With the individuals looking on and listening intently, Rabbi Kornbluh gently explained why personal safety and protection is a mitzvah—and how that mitzvah includes doing things that help prevent harm, including reducing the likelihood of vehicle-based accidents involving unseen pedestrians.

Rabbi Kornbluh broke it down respectfully and elementarily, using both his own coat and several reflector strips he had brought along as interactive exhibits. He conveyed to his audience how wearing the reflectors is vitally important, in a way that the boys and young men could not only comprehend, but also internalize and appreciate.

Making it even more fun, Rabbi Kornbluh had one volunteer step to the front of the classroom and wrap a reflector around his waist, illustrating to his peers what proper usage of the safety item looks like. With a spontaneous song bursting from his lips, Rabbi Kornbluh clapped along as the volunteer, microphone in hand, took to singing along. Respite Director Schwartz, standing by, smiled along as the rest of the individuals exulted in the moment, the light of comprehension shining in their young eyes.

But the exciting education event is just part of a bigger picture, Mr. Schwartz explains.

The Respite Program is a perpetual beehive of therapeutic stimulation, the Director goes on, with plenty of planned interactive activities awaiting the boys each school-day afternoon (or Sunday) when they get off their bus.

Of late, of note, is the integration of Rabbi Kornbluh into that bigger picture.

A childhood specialist in his own right, Rabbi Kornbluh brings to the Respite table not just education in his chosen avocation of nighttime visibility safety but also childhood experiential education as a whole, and all conveyed not just by an experienced teacher but by one who's worked with children with special needs for years, too.

As such, Rabbi Kornbluh is now appearing at Respite every second week, putting on one-man shows with his irrepressible singing, performing and wit.

"He brings fresh energy" to Respite, testifies Mr. Schwartz.

And if the smiles on their Respite "students'" faces are any indicator, Rabbi Kornbluh and Mr. Schwartz are quite the teachers. ★

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● ► HAMASPIK NEWS | HAPPENINGS AROUND HAMASPIK



Flying High



BANANAS FOR NEW HORIZONS (L-R): A FRUITY FLYING MACHINE; PAPER PLANES ABOUND



THE SIGNS ARE EVERYWHERE: AT EVERY WOMEN'S DAY PROGRAM ACROSS HAMASPIK OF ROCKLAND COUNTY, A POSTER BOARD LIKE THIS ONE IS PROMINENTLY DISPLAYED FOR ALL

Shabbos with a Sparkle

Winter Shabbosim are often dark and cold. This can be hard for any child, even harder for those with special needs.

Hamaspik scheduled action-packed Shabbatonim for several groups. The kids enjoyed Shabbos with beloved counselors while their families could focus more on other family members and get much-needed respite.

PLAYHOUSE

The jam-packed, fun-filled program of Playhouse's Shabboson followed this year's theme: "Traveling with the Cat in the Hat."

On Friday, the children enjoyed farm activities, including traveling on a tractor, snow activities with a snowmobile, and racing for Shabbos with racing cars. They even had time to enjoy the pool on Friday afternoon.

Special entertainer guests included Macaroni the Clown with a thrilling magic show and LED dancing with Chany Ross.

On Sunday, the children decorated a kit with a luggage tag, creating an adorable souvenir.

ACHIEVERS

Achievers' theme was "Spread the Warmth," and every girl received a cap and a shawl in the hot pink theme color.

The girls were split into three groups and the programs custom-designed for each level.

On Friday, they enjoyed plaster painting and learned a new Achievers song. Over Shabbos, they prepared for and conducted a performance and enjoyed dancing with Raizy Pavlov.

AHAVAS GOLDA

Ahavas Golda enjoyed a jam-packed Shabbaton, which included simultaneous programs for the three subprograms: the Ahavas Golda group, Lev Chaya, and Ahava Elite.

They headed to the location on Thursday and enjoyed two jam-packed days of fun.

On Friday, there was swimming, "Step It Up" with the Ahavas Golda video, Fun 'n Fit glow-in-the-dark dancing, and a pre-Shabbos baking session. Over Shabbos, they enjoyed special guest Rebbee Hill and Shabbos day performances by the various groups.

An incredible time was had by all! ★

At Hamaspik Rockland's Day Programs for Women and Girls, "The Sky's the Limit"

This year's theme for daily activities and projects is heavenly

You can't go wrong when "the sky's the limit."

It's true when speaking figuratively—and even true when you're speaking literally about "The Sky's the Limit," this year's theme for Hamaspik of Rockland County's Day programs for women and girls.

"The Sky's the Limit" means that many of the daily activities and projects performed by the individuals attending those Day Programs have something to do with the sky.

At three Day-program locations visited by the *Gazette*, activities going on since the year's start reflected the theme, with said activities changing every month.

For example, one month this year thus far was astronomy, the ancient-modern science of studying the heavens beyond. It had individuals fashioning hand-decorated personal wallets or purses festooned with delightful little glue-on planets, shining stars, whizzing

spacecraft, impressive telescopes or even fluffy clouds.

Another month was themed with airplanes, as the individuals constructed arts-and-crafts airplanes and took trips to local or regional municipal airports to see real single-engine propeller aircraft taking to the sky. They also formed adorable and irresistible edible "airplanes" out of food items.

Another "Sky's the Limit" theme revolves around meteorology: Thunder and lightning, wind, rain and snow. For that last item alone, the women made arts-and-crafts snowflakes; each, like the real thing, with its own unique pattern.

At each location, a large and prominent decorated bulletin board proudly broadcasts the theme "The Sky's the Limit" to one and all, proclaiming to visitor and regular alike that the programs this year are going places. ★

● ► HAMASPIK NEWS | HAPPENINGS AROUND HAMASPIK

Getting All Lit Up With That Inner Fire

In Symbolism-Filled Extracurricular Activity, Hamaspiik Orange Men's Day Hab Visits Candle-Making Plant

In their faith community, light, fire and candles have a long-running place of deep spiritual symbolism. So it's no surprise that recently, the gentlemen of Hamaspiik of Orange County's Men's Day Habilitation (Day Hab) Program paid a visit to a candle factory.

The soul, focus of so much Chasidic philosophy, is repeatedly symbolized by the humble flame, and the candle that harbors it, prioritizing soul over body—meaning, the inside over the outside.

If that sounds a lot like the mission of the New York State OPWDD), where each individual is a world of inner thoughts, feelings and worth regardless of outer disabilities, that's no coincidence.

But there's more: In Hamaspiik's home community, from synagogue to home, candles are part of everyday life. Multiply all that by thousands and you get a world of spirituality, where

faith is captured in wax and broadcast to surroundings by the controlled combustion known as fire.

Now take all that background information and come along with Hamaspiik of Orange County's Men's Day Hab as they visit Ner Shava Candles, Inc., a community-owned business in upstate Mountainville.

First warmly greeted by the owner of Ner Shava (which translates simply to "Beeswax Candles"), they took in the retail area and its numerous items, then the mechanized factory behind it. Walking from machine to machine, the gentlemen saw the entire process of transforming beeswax (and paraffin) into the packaged candles they're all familiar with.

Upon leaving, besides receiving gift candles of their own, they each went home carrying a wordless message in their hearts: *Each of you is a glowing flame in your own right.* ★

Carrying the Torch



WAXING INTERESTED: THE GENTLEMEN SEE UP-FRONT HOW A COMMUNITY'S CANDLES ARE MANUFACTURED, GETTING AN INSIDER VIEW ON A UBIQUITIOUS CULTURAL STAPLE



GLOWING: HAVING TOURED THE CANDELMaking FACTORY FROM END TO END, THE GENTLEMEN GLADLY PREPARE TO LEAVE WITH THE FAMILIAR FINISHED PRODUCTS IN HAND

Milestones With Those Matterring Most

Catherine Briderheim Residents Celebrates Birthdays with Separate, Joint Parties With Closest Family Members

Two of the residents of Hamaspiik of Orange County's Catherine Briderheim group home recently had reason to celebrate: it was their birthdays!

With such celebrations regularly convened by the staff of that residence, parties were in order as residents Motty and Shlomy respectively turned 30 and 20.

A private party was held for Motty at the Fireside restaurant in Monsey, where a married sister and her own family celebrated with him. Motty also loves live performances—so Manager Yermie Tessler arranged for the Epic Team, a community group of popular singers and dancers, to surprise Motty. In a private area, four Epic performers regaled Motty with singing and dancing to long remember. In contrast to the notorious institutions of old, Motty went home knowing that he mattered a lot to more than a few.

For his part, Shlomy celebrated his 20th birthday the very next night in the

place he now calls home: the Catherine Briderheim.

There, Shlomy's parents, siblings and several nieces and nephews converged on the suburban house for the unscripted fun and games that is a family birthday party. Shlomy was especially thrilled to see a recently-engaged brother.

But with each Hamaspiik home being a family, staff and especially residents, the whole Catherine family was welcome to participate in Shlomy's party, enjoying the cake, goodies and crowd.

With a grand balloon display highlighted by a giant "20" and "30," both young men felt wholly included and embraced, their existence affirmed and their lives valued—especially since that display had been graciously and professionally created by a local neighbor, making a huge statement that stayed at the residence for a long while. ★

Party Times



GEARING UP: SHLOMY (L) SHOPS WITH STAFF FOR HIS GIFT; THE TWO BIRTHDAY BOYS POSE FOR SHLOMY'S GRAND BIRTHDAY BASH IN THE CATHERINE BRIDERHEIM'S DINING ROOM (R)



LIFE TIMES 20: THE GLORIOUS GIFT OF EXISTENCE, MULTIPLIED TWENTY-FOLD, IS EXPRESSED BY THIS RIOT OF FESTIVE TABLETOP DECOR AWAITING A MINI-RIOT OF ADORING FAMILY

The Autism Update

News and developments from the world of research and advocacy

INFLAMMATION DAMAGES KEY DEVELOPMENTAL CELLS IN CHILDREN'S BRAINS, STUDY FINDS

Baltimore, Maryland — In another clue as to what might cause autism, scientists at the University of Maryland School of Medicine have found that inflammation in children's brains affects specific brain cells that are critical for healthy development.

The researchers specifically looked at the brain's *cerebellum*, which controls body movement and balance (among other things).

They found that inflammation specifically affects the cerebellum's *Purkinje* and *Golgi* neurons (brain cells). Purkinje neurons link the cerebellum with the brain parts controlling cognition and emotions. Golgi neurons help cerebellum neurons connect with each other.

The research suggests that inflammation damage to those neurons could thus affect a child's development in the areas of cognition, emotion and movement—all symptoms commonly associated with autism (as well as schizophrenia).

'LIFESPAN' DOWN SYNDROME MEDICAL CLINIC OPENS IN FLORIDA

Orlando, Florida — According to the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS), over 5,000 children are born with Down syndrome in the U.S. each year.

The condition is also known for increased risk of various health conditions, including heart defects—making rare the doctors who specialize in treating people with Down syndrome across their lifespans.

That fact makes the SMILE with Stella Tremonti Down Syndrome Clinic, which recently opened in tourism-heavy Orlando, Florida, all the more unique. The clinic is geared toward treating patients with Down syndrome from diagnosis throughout adulthood—a first for the U.S. Southeast—granting people with the genetic condition treatment for their entire life.

"It can be overwhelming when you have a child with Down syndrome, with a lot of information thrown at you all at once," said Clinic founder and award-winning guitarist Mark Tremonti. "We want[ed] to develop something that will be... a one-stop shop."

DISABILITY-CENTERED COFFEE-SHOP CHAIN PROMPTS COMMUNITY DEBATE

Columbia, South Carolina — Bitty and Beau's is a coffee-shop chain with 19 franchises across 12 states and Washington, D.C. Founded in 2016 by Ben and Amy Wright, proud parents of two children with Down syndrome, it bills itself as "a human rights movement disguised as a coffee shop" that primarily hires people with disabilities.

Now, the opening of the newest Bitty and Beau's in Columbia, South Carolina reignited a long-simmering disability community debate.

The Wrights and their supporters argue that any job is better than no job for those like their beloved son and daughter, a demographic with a rough 80-percent unemployment rate—especially when Bitty and Beau's corporate policy rejects the subminimum wage for workers with disabilities still legal in many states.

But some disability activists see the chain's mission as caricaturization, arguing for full mainstream employment, not a limited chain showcasing.

U.S. DEPT. OF EDUCATION TO AWARD \$35 MILLION IN SPECIAL-ED GRANTS

Washington, D.C. — According to official federal statistics, some 45 percent of U.S. public schools were short-staffed as of last year's school-year start—with special education teachers constituting the greatest vacancy. The same statistics also indicate that 42 U.S. states remain short on special-ed teachers.

To help counter the ongoing special-ed shortage, the federal U.S. Dept. of Education is now offering states a total of \$35 million in grants to bolster special education nationwide.

Specifically, the funding will be earmarked towards hiring special education teachers and administrators, related services providers, and Early Intervention (EI) programs.

The funding will also fund scholarships for special-ed teacher education, and also help create a new national center to support school administrators and EI programs in supporting students with disabilities.

AUTISM, OTHER NEURO-DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS LINKED TO THREE GENES

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — Scientists at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) have been able to pinpoint how three novel genes contribute to neurodevelopmental disorders.

Using multiple techniques, including phenotyping, genomic sequencing and modeling in both human stem cells and cells from fruit flies, researchers were able to map the genetic architecture of three genes associated with neurodevelopmental

disorders. They particularly focused on developmental delay, intellectual disability and autism.

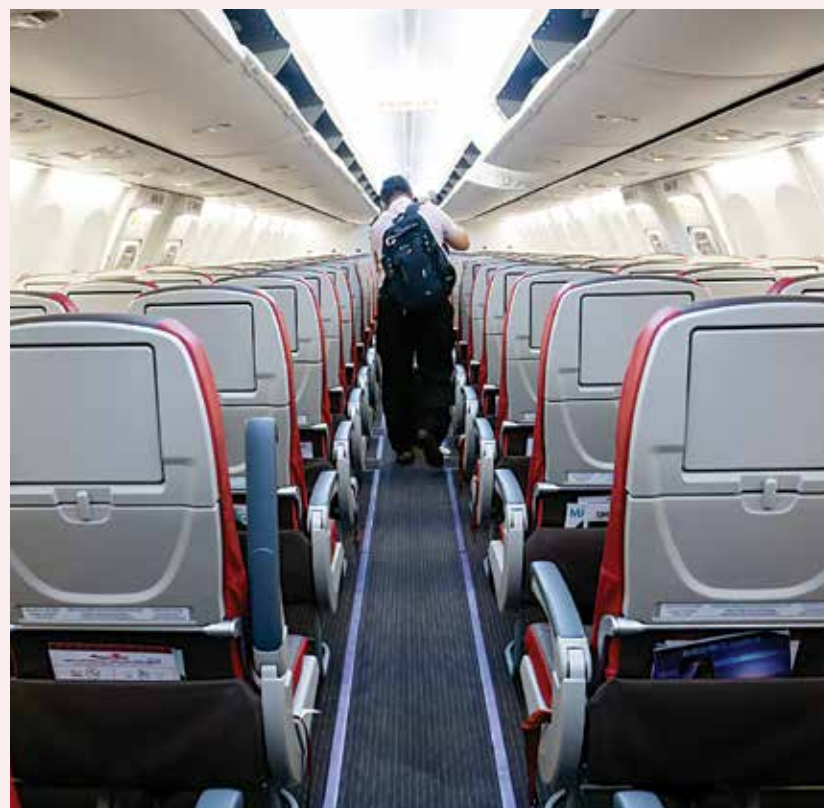
Neurodevelopmental disorders encompass a wide range of conditions, including autism, intellectual disability, and developmental delay.

Over the past two decades, researchers have identified over 1,500 genes associated with autism.

However, only about one-third of affected individuals get a gene-based diagnosis.

The intricate network of the genes, and how their malfunctions lead to disorders, has remained largely unknown. ★

FEDERAL RULE REQUIRES NEW ONE-AISLE COMMERCIAL PLANES TO OFFER ACCESSIBLE RESTROOMS



ACCESSIBILITY PATHWAY: FUTURE ONE-AISLE PLANES WILL REQUIRE AT LEAST ONE ACCESSIBLE RESTROOM FOR PASSENGERS USING WHEELCHAIRS, NOW SAYS THE DOT

Washington, D.C. — For years now, travelers using wheelchairs have spoken. And finally, it seems, the Dept. of Transportation (DOT) has listened.

Under a new rule recently issued by that federal agency, newly-built commercial aircraft that feature one aisle will be required to include at least one restroom that can accommodate a traveler using a wheelchair—including ample floor space in which maneuver a chair, and wall-mounted grab bars for personal

positioning.

But because the rule doesn't apply to existing airplanes, the first passenger jets to offer accessible restrooms will be brand-new ones, which will only be hitting the current market in at least ten years from today.

The new rule, announced by Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, will also have United Airlines take "industry-leading actions to help people locate flights where their wheelchairs can be safely stored and transported." ★

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Sea Life in the Mainstream?! That's Rich!

Shaarei Binah fish-tank pro Mr. Rich Moon guides Hamaspiik Rockland yeshivah program at Conn.'s Maritime Aquarium

This report should be pretty straightforward: The students of Shaarei Binah, Hamaspiik of Rockland County's yeshivah day program, visited the Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk in Norwalk, Connecticut. There, they enjoyed a full day marveling at the many freshwater and seawater tanks, pools and realistic river, swamp and marsh environments filled with aquatic creatures, as well as the complex's diverse and colorful collection of land animals and birds. They ate lunch, had a great time, and went home.

A back story here is that the trip was in fact an incentive for one student who had completed his most recent academic objective—resulting in an outing of his choice. That young man, enjoying seeing live animals as he does (and the more exotic, the better), had actually wanted to visit one of the Tri-State Area's several world-class zoos (the Bronx Zoo, in fact). But given



RIGHT IN THE MAINSTREAM: AS STUDENT SHAYA (L) SNAPS AWAY, MR. RICH MOON (C-LEFT) INTRODUCES THE GENTLEMEN TO YET ANOTHER IRIDESCENT DISPLAY OF WATERY WONDERS

the winter weather and the outdoor nature of most zoos (like the Bronx Zoo), Shaarei Binah Director Mr. Chezky Szabovitz replaced the zoo

idea with a visit to an aquarium, what with its dry, warm interior hallways protected from wintry elements and blustery conditions (not to mention its wide assortment of live animals), but without the exposure to the cold, wind, rain and snow.

But here's the real story.

Shaarei Binah's day program consists not just of daily academic study and intellectual stimulation, but also a comprehensive life-skill curriculum that includes cooking, cleaning and, yes, even taking care of their very own pet fish.

Over a year ago, Shaarei Binah got a fish tank on its well-kept premises in Spring Valley. Not being fish-tank experts knowing how to properly care for live fish or the watery enclosures in which they thrive, Mr. Szabovitz found a vendor who dispenses fish-tank care professionally. Please meet Mr. Rich Moon.

Founder and proprietor of Rockland Aquarium Services, based in the Monsey-adjacent Bardonia, Mr. Moon has been tending to privately-owned freshwater and saltwater fish tanks of all sizes in the region for well over three decades. So one fine day, Mr. Moon came down to Shaarei Binah to give its students instruction on how to care for and maintain the little fish tank that had been set up in their facility. The *Gazette* even wrote an article about the fish tank and Mr. Moon's involvement at the time.

That tank, and Mr. Moon's meticulous ministrations, endures to this day. Mr. Moon, as previously reported in the *Gazette*, doesn't just maintain their tank (as in, as he put it, "when I leave, I want it to be spotless"), but also maintains and progressively expands their maintenance skills and responsibilities for the tank. "The guys are into it," he told the *Gazette* then. "Each time I come, I give advice."

"Oh, absolutely!" he declared, asked for previous disability experience. He lists having worked at state houses and private-sector residences for people with severe physical disabilities.

But anyways, he proceeds to explain what he teaches in his bi-weekly lessons: "I explain what's going on, what we're doing and why we're doing it," he says. In fact, he adds, "I'm coming back this week to clean the tanks and change the decorations." (He rotates the decorative items on the bottom of the tank regularly so that the one out of the water can be cleaned.)

So, being the fish-tank and sea life expert that he is, Mr. Moon was now reached out to again by Mr. Szabovitz for his recommendation on the greater region's best indoor aquarium.

Director Szabovitz sought a venue that Shaarei Binah's students could not only visit but which also boasted the features and exhibits that would best suit their special needs in general and their individual personalities in particular. "Mr. Rich," as he is affectionately known to Director Szabovitz and his Shaarei Binah boys, recommended the Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk in Norwalk, Connecticut.

That facility, a 50-min, 40-mile hop up the 287 and 95 highways from Monsey, was one that Mr. Rich was quite familiar with. And thus, not only did he recommend the Norwalk venue—but then even volunteered to come along with Shaarei Binah on their trip to be their guide.

Mr. Szabovitz gladly took Rich Moon up on both suggestions.

With it being their first time there, it was especially good that they had a guide—and not just a guide that knew the Aquarium but its unique visitors

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●► HAMASPIK NEWS

Sea Life

<< CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

as well. “He was more than happy to join!” reports Mr. Szabovitz. “He was really nice! He helped out with the boys for everything.”

Thus, in a textbook display of community integration, Shaarei Binah visited the Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk accompanied by a friend of their community in general and their program and its participants in particular.

For several hours, Mr. Rich led his Shaarei Binah entourage about the stimulating facility on foot. Perambulating throughout the facility, a collection of imposing converted brick buildings on Norwalk’s history industrial waterfront, their unofficial but authoritatively knowledgeable guide showed them striped bass, flatclaw hermit crabs, lion’s mane jellyfish, giant Pacific octopuses, North American river otters, harbor seals, lined seahorses, loggerhead sea turtles, sand tiger sharks, and cownose rays housed in giant naturalistic water-filled settings.

They particularly liked viewing those tanks through the small round subsurface windows that dotted the walls of the facility.

The Shaarei Binah bunch also



NOW YOU “SEA” IT: THE MARITIME AQUARIUM IS GREAT FOR VISITORS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

enjoyed the Aquarium’s zoo-like collection of land animals, including American bullfrogs, South American poison dart frogs, Brazilian blue and gold macaws, African meerkats, prehensile-tailed porcupines, striped skunks, and Geoffroy’s tamarins.

At the conclusion of their pedestrian walkthrough, they even got to feed some sting rays—purchasing small fish and holding them out on outstretched palms so that the lively critters could approach and snatch the food right out of their hands.

Not only did Rich Moon guide the Shaarei Binah students around the entire facility, taking them to the exhibits most suited for them and

pointing out what they could and could not touch, he even joined them for lunch—making sure that the yeshivah had brought only kosher sandwiches so that he could eat with them. “He’s a very respectful guy,” attests Mr. Szabovitz. “He didn’t want to eat non-kosher next to the boys.”

So, what did they like the most about the trip?

“Everything!” the young men practically shouted as the *Gazette* spoke to them by phone. However, pressed further, beloved student Yaakov said he enjoyed seeing the live salmon, as well as the sharks. He also liked getting his hands (well, fingers) on the starfish in the “touch tank,” where friendly



THAT SPECIAL TOUCH: AT THE TOUCH TANK

Aquarium staff patiently remind visitors to use only one finger per hand to feel the delicate creatures. Shaya, another beloved yeshivah student, voted for the ethereal jellyfish and the colorful blue lobsters.

And if they could go back to see just one thing, asked Mr. Szabovitz, what would that one thing be? Shaya called out: “*Niflaos haBorei* [the wonders of the Creator—ed.]!”

“They have a connection to fish,” notes the devoted Director, “because they have their own fish tank.”

And on this trip, in an instant-classic example of disability mainstreaming, they even had the maintenance instructor for their fish tank. ★

●► HEALTH NEWS

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Halted for Some Patients by Stem Cell Treatments

Self-Cell Transplants can Bring Relief and Even Remission

Uppsala, Sweden — Two-thirds of 174 people with multiple sclerosis (MS) had no evidence of the disease’s activity a decade after receiving transplants of their own stem cells, finds a new study.

For those patients, that meant no symptom relapses, no worsening disability and no signs of new damage in brain tissue. In fact, over half saw improvements afterward.

The findings were published in the *Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery & Psychiatry*.

Experts said the study bolsters evidence that stem cell transplantation is a good option for some people with the autoimmune disease, in which the body attacks its own nervous system.

The neurological disorder is caused by a misguided immune system attack on nerve fibers in the spine and brain. It leads to symptoms like

vision problems, muscle weakness, numbness and difficulty with balance and coordination.

The vast majority of people with MS initially have what’s called *relapsing-remitting* MS, which means symptoms

flare for a time and then ease. Most people, though, eventually transition to a progressive form of the disease, and their disability worsens over time.

A stem cell transplant basically reboots a faulty immune system. It

involves removing stem cells from a patient’s own blood, then using powerful chemotherapy drugs to knock down the existing immune system. After that, the stored stem cells are infused back into the patient, and the immune system rebuilds itself over time.

“We do know that this treatment works and it can be performed safely,” said co-author Dr. Joachim Burman, a neurologist at Uppsala University Hospital in Sweden, where the treatments were performed.

However, the stem cell transplants are not for everyone. They are ideal for younger patients who have had the disease less than ten years and aren’t responding to traditional MS drugs. People with “highly active” MS, including flare-ups despite medication, also stand to benefit most. ★



UP FOR MS PATIENTS: STEM CELLS APPARENTLY ELIMINATED MS AT UPPSALA UNIVERSITY

Public Health and Policy News

THE BOTTOM LINE FROM A TOP EXEC ON HEALTHCARE COSTS

Los Angeles, California — For private insurance prices to come down, hospital prices must come down. For hospital prices to come down, hospital income must go up.

And for that to happen, several things across the healthcare industry must happen first.

Thomas M. Priselac, healthcare innovation activist and CEO of top California hospital Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, recently penned an editorial laying those things out in *Health Affairs*, a leading public-policy outlet.

According to Priselac, “Addressing the shortcomings... will require an unprecedented level of cooperation and commitment to change among all stakeholders,” including these three items:

1. Providers must commit to develop new care models and other efficiency initiatives.
2. Government/commercial insurers must commit to reducing complexity and regulations.
3. Providers/payers must agree on payment models to promote high-quality, efficient care.

U.S. HEALTH GROUP NOW RECOMMENDS PRENATAL BLOOD-PRESSURE CHECKS

Washington, D.C. — Any woman expecting to become a mother should have their blood pressure checked at each prenatal visit, according to a new recommendation by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force.

The new guidelines suggest that all women undergo the routine checks from earliest gestation through due date and delivery—even if they have no history of any hypertensive disorder.

The new guideline is meant to help prevent or sooner identify any complications that may arise later.

“The Task Force continues to find that measuring blood pressure at each prenatal visit is an effective way to screen for hypertensive disorders of pregnancy,” Esa Davis, MD, a member of the task force said in the release.

Because these conditions can cause serious health issues, screening is an important way to keep women and their babies healthy, the Task Force now believes.

WOMEN LESS LIKELY THAN MEN TO GET CPR IN PUBLIC: STUDY

Barcelona, Spain — New research has found that women are less likely than men to receive cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in public places.

The research was presented at the European Emergency Medicine Congress that took place in Barcelona, Spain.

For their conclusions, researchers analyzed 39,391 patient records of



NO (HIGH BLOOD) PRESSURE: MOTHERS-TO-BE SHOULD GET CHECKED, SAYS TASK FORCE cardiac arrest outside of the hospital in Canada and the U.S. between 2005 and 2015.

They found that in general, women were less likely to be given CPR (52 percent) compared to men (55 percent). In public settings, women were even less likely to be given CPR (61 percent) compared to men (68 percent).

But curiously, in private settings, the reverse was true: Men were about nine percent less likely than women to be given CPR with every ten-year increase in age.

The study also found that in 54 percent of cases, CPR was performed by bystanders.

TECH AND HEALTHCARE GROWING IN THE BIG APPLE, SAYS ALBANY REPORT

Albany, New York — Growing employment across the five boroughs of New York City, especially in the outer boroughs, is being driven by healthcare, business services, social services, and technology, according to a new report by New York State.

“The strong employment trends have helped boost personal income and sales tax collections,” said report by the New York State Comptroller’s Office, “making it easier for the city to afford new services and to balance the budget.”

Of the 87,200 new citywide jobs in the report, healthcare accounts for some 40 percent of them, driven by home care services. Additionally, over the past five



PUBLIC GENDER BIAS: WOMEN NEEDING CPR IN PUBLIC SLIGHTLY LESS LIKELY THAN MEN (52 TO 55%) TO BE HELPED BY BYSTANDERS—BUT OLDER MEN ALSO LESS LIKELY TO BE HELPED

years, the city’s tech sector employment increased by 33.6 percent to reach a record of 172,570 jobs.

In 2019, New York City also added 12,300 social assistance workers, with the bulk of them providing care for the elderly and people with disabilities.

RESPONDING TO NATIONAL NURSE SHORTAGE, MORE STATES TAPPING FAMILY MEMBERS

Washington, D.C. — Since October 2022, the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has been allowing states to offer home health services for children with medically complex conditions. Its goal is to increase support for families of children with serious medical conditions like cerebral palsy or cystic fibrosis.

But with the national shortage of registered nurses (RNs) an ongoing national problem, some states have been increasingly turning to the intuitively-natural best solution of using immediate family members to provide at-home care for such children.

For example, Florida’s Home Health Aide for Medically Fragile Children program allows family caregivers to be reimbursed by Medicaid for care provided to certain individuals under 21. New Jersey ratified similar legislation. Other states with similar programs include Arizona, Colorado, California, Indiana, New Hampshire and Pennsylvania.

TEN MILLION HYPERTENSION DEATHS A YEAR PREVENTABLE, SAYS WHO REPORT

Geneva, Switzerland — In its first report of its kind, the World Health Organization (WHO) now says that some 10.8 million deaths occur around the world each year due to high blood pressure—and that such mortality is “avoidable.”

According to the U.N. global health watchdog, hypertension affects one in three adults worldwide, though most people with the condition don’t receive adequate treatment and are unaware they even have it.

The report says that from 1990 to 2019, the number of people with hypertension around the world doubled to 1.3 billion.

If countries scale up efforts to effectively treat hypertension, 76 million deaths could be prevented by 2050, in addition to 12 million strokes and 79 million heart attacks, according to WHO estimates.

The report also lays out recommendations to treat hypertension, noting low-cost generic medications are widely available. ★

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In the Know

Chances are you're more likely to have heard the other word by which this condition is known: *nits*. But as it turns out, "nits" just refers to the eggs of head lice. And *head lice*, as is known by any *Gazette* readers who ever attended a school, or whose children did, are those pesky tiny insects that sometimes infest children's scalps. (In other parts of the U.S. outside New York and other big cities, head lice are sometimes called "cooties.")

Now, you may not want to become a mysteriously powerful nit checker yourself. But here's everything you need to know about head lice so that you can properly diagnose and treat your children and be... in the know.

SUMMARY

The American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) helpfully informs us that the medical name for head lice, of course, is *pediculus humanus capitis*. (Right? I mean, what else would it be?)

However, contrary to common misconception (or is that "myth-conception"?), "having head lice does not mean you are dirty," the AAD notes. "The lice do not care whether the person has squeaky-clean hair or dirty hair. The lice are looking for human blood, which they need to survive"; they get that blood by taking tiny and unfelt bites out of the scalp (the skin covering the head).

Head-lice infestations are especially common in schools. According to the AAD, it is believed that about six to 12 million children between three and 12 years of age get head lice each year.

Head lice do not carry or spread any disease.

Still, head lice can make the scalp extremely itchy—and if one scratches a lot, it can cause sores on the scalp

“

HAVING HEAD LICE DOES NOT MEAN YOU ARE DIRTY. LICE DO NOT CARE WHETHER THE PERSON HAS SQUEAKY-CLEAN OR DIRTY HAIR.

”

that may lead to an infection. In fact, some people lose sleep because their itching gets so intense.

Most people can get rid of head lice with treatment at home. A dermatologist should be seen if and when cases do not respond to treatment or if the scalp is infected due to excessive scratching.

DEFINITION

Your average full-grown *pediculus humanus capitis* bug, a.k.a. a head louse (the singular form of the plural *lice*), is about the size of a small sesame seed or small grain of rice. They have six tiny legs toward the front of their body. They're also brown, tan or yellow in color.

They infest the scalp, primarily by laying their sticky eggs on the hair. These tiny eggs typically look like flakes of dandruff. But instead of flaking off the scalp, they stay in place.

Head lice can live up to 30 days on a human scalp. The eggs can live for over two weeks.

Head lice spread easily, particularly among school children ages three to 11 years. Head lice are also more common in close, overcrowded

living conditions.

Unlike body lice, head lice never carry or spread diseases.

Again, *having head lice does not mean the person has poor hygiene or low social status!* In fact, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) does not recommend keeping children with head lice home from school, as rates of transmission are very low. Typically, once a case of head lice is detected, children have *already* had it for at least one month—so the AAP recommends that children should remain in class, with simple avoidance of head-to-head contact with other children a sufficient preventive measure.

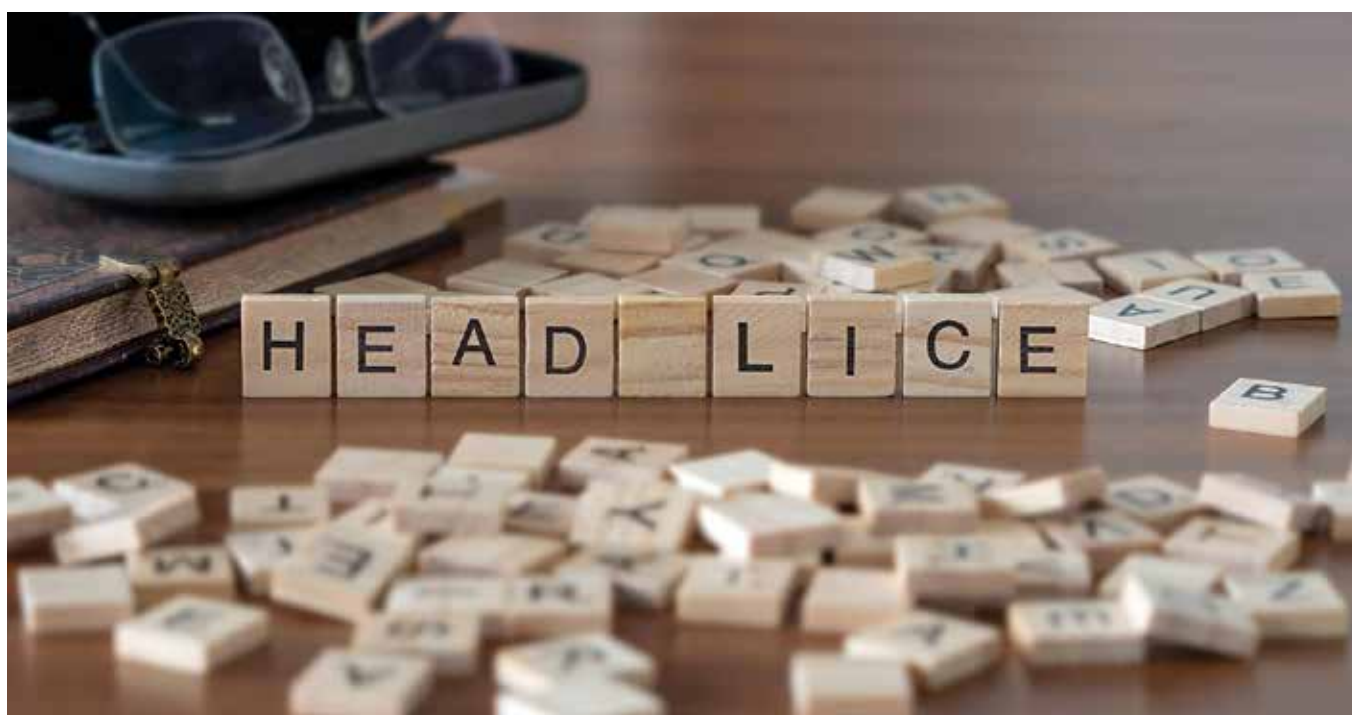
SYMPTOMS

Itchy scalp

As mentioned, the primary symptom of head lice is an itchy scalp. However, on the one hand, the AAD notes that dandruff and eczema also can make the scalp itchy—while on the other hand, the presence of head lice does not necessarily make the scalp itchy. In fact, it usually takes about 30 days after lice arrive for a scalp to start itching.

ALL ABOUT... HEAD LICE

Sources: the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Mount Sinai Health System



Head-scratching

The next most-common symptom is head-scratching—with some patients scratching the scalp so much that the scalp, and sometimes even the back of the neck, becomes red and irritated.

Crawling sensation

Thirdly, and less commonly, some people with head-lice infestations can actually feel something—in this case, the tiny head lice—crawling on the hair or scalp.

Seeing bugs and/or eggs

Next on the list is seeing bugs: plain-and-simple visual confirmation of the insects in the hair and/or on the scalp. Head lice, for your information, are about the size of sesame seeds and are commonly the color of light brown.

Following that is finding the nits, or eggs, of head lice in the hair. (Again, that's where we generally need someone with that experienced eye to spot them.) Nits are about the size of the head of a pin (and thus not exactly easy to find). They can also be the color yellow, brown or tan, which further tends to camouflage them in hair that's of those general hues (and further making them harder to find). Nits also secrete a certain natural "glue" that binds them to the hair. Finally, nits that have already hatched will leave behind clear shells (which will still be stuck to hair).

Other symptoms

Other symptoms include swollen lymph nodes in the neck, and the common eye infection known as pink eye (conjunctivitis).

CAUSE

So, how does a person get head lice? Well, the most common way is simply head-to-head contact—meaning, when two people literally put their heads together so that their hair is touching. And if one has head lice, the bugs can simply crawl from one head to the other.

While head lice cannot fly or jump, they can move quickly, which enables them to survive and spread fairly quickly.

Additionally, head lice can also crawl from a person's head onto combs, hats, towels, pillows or other objects that touch the person's head. And once there, they can crawl from those places back onto another person's head. (That's why not sharing such items among friends and family members can help prevent spread of head lice, especially when one family member has a confirmed case of head lice.)

It is true that girls get more head lice?

Girls seem more likely than boys to get head lice, reports the AAD. "This may be because girls tend to have more frequent head-to-head contact than do boys," the AAD writes. "You'll often see girls in head-to-head contact at school, on the playground, at camp, or at a slumber party."

Still, anyone can get head lice. In the United States, children in preschool and elementary school are most likely to get head lice. Children can then spread the lice to their parents, caretakers, and others in their households.

DIAGNOSIS AND DETECTION

It is important that at the beginning of the school year children should be checked and educated about head lice so that head lice does not spread throughout the school throughout the year.

What's important to point out about this system is that it checks for *nits*—not full-grown head lice. Meaning, the system catches the lice *before* they hatch out of their eggs to make themselves at home on their hosts' heads, and then grow and spread. This keeps head lice in our community to a quite-manageable minimum.

However, if you want to check your child(ren) for head lice and/or nits at home, here's everything you'll need to know about how to do it.

What you'll need

1. Bright light
2. Fine-tooth comb or lice comb

What you'll do

Find head lice with these three steps:

1. Wet the person's hair: it may be easier to see any lice when hair is wet. Also, wet hair helps prevent lice from scurrying away.
2. Seat the to-be-inspected person under the bright light.
3. Part the hair into several small sections; then, comb each section outward slowly, starting at the scalp.

What to look for

Nits are likelier than full-grown adult insects to be spotted simply because they are glued to the hair and therefore don't move about. Adult lice look like light-brown tiny sesame seeds and often move quickly. Nits are yellow, brown, or tan objects that look like tiny seeds and appear to be cemented to individual hairs close to the scalp. If an egg has hatched, the seed-like object will be clear.

Look behind the ears and around

the nape of the neck especially closely, because those are likelier places to find lice and nits.

When looking closely at the scalp and hair, it is important to know that kids—and adults—can have all kinds of stuff in their hair. Besides nits, you may also find sand, dirt, lint, or dandruff. All of these comb out easily. By contrast, nits seem cemented to the hair and very difficult to remove.

HOME TREATMENT

There are several products that you can get—without a prescription—at your local drug or grocery store that will equip you to get rid of head lice and their nits right at home. However, the AAD offers the following

5. Eight to 12 hours later

Look at the hair eight to 12 hours after treatment. If the lice seem as active as they were before the treatment, the shampoo may not be working—do not treat again! Consult your dermatologist. A different lice medicine may be necessary.

6. 24 hours later

If the medicine seems to be working, you'll next wait two days to wash your hair. This lets the medicated product continue to work. After that, continue to comb through the hair daily with the lice comb. Doing this for two to three weeks helps to ensure that you get rid of the lice.

7. Seven to nine days later

Re-treat if and as recommended on



CHILDREN SHOULD BE CHECKED FOR NITS AT EACH YEAR'S SCHOOL START... THIS SYSTEM CATCHES LICE BEFORE THEY HATCH AND SPREAD.



dermatological tips for using these products:

1. No shower or bath

Lice shampoos are meant to touch the scalp only—not any other skin! That's why you'll apply it to the head of the fully dressed person who is leaning over a sink. That way, you can rinse it off without requiring a shower or bath.

2. Lather and let sit

The lice shampoo has to stay in the hair for a few minutes to do its lice-and-nit-killing work—so lather it in and let it sit for a bit before rinsing it all out. *Of course, carefully read and follow all directions!* For example, never use more than directed.

3. Use just one shampoo

Using two head-lice shampoos or such products can be harmful; stick to one—unless your dermatologist tells you which ones can be combined.

4. Use the lice comb

The shampoo will come with a specialized comb whose teeth are closer together than the teeth on a regular comb—making it easier to remove the lice and their nits. Remove whatever lice and nits you can.

the package. Re-treatment is generally recommended with all products you can buy without a prescription. Retreatment is usually done seven to nine days after the first treatment. The lice shampoos often are more successful at killing the adult lice than the nits, so re-treatment helps to kill any surviving lice that hatched after the first treatment. No approved treatment for head lice can kill all the eggs during the first treatment. After applying the second treatment, comb through the hair with the lice comb. Wait two days to wash the hair. Continue to comb through the hair with the lice comb once a day. Do this for two weeks, checking for lice and nits.

PROGNOSIS

Two treatments (spaced seven to nine days apart) often get rid of head lice. If your child or someone else in your family still has head lice after a few weeks, it means that the treatments did not work or the person got lice again. Make an appointment to see a dermatologist for help getting rid of the head lice. With proper treatment, it is possible to get rid of head lice. ★



Status Report

Happening In Hospitals Today



SOARING SKYLINE, DROPPING FATALITIES: HOUSTON METHODIST IS RELATIVELY SEPSIS-FREE

TEXAS HOSPITAL SCORES RARE REDUCTION IN INFECTION-RELATED DEATHS AFTER DECADE-PLUS OF WORK

Houston, Texas — According to the CDC, one out of every three hospital deaths are due to sepsis, the body's rapid shutdown due to out-of-control infection. The CDC also says that nearly 270,000 Americans die yearly due to sepsis.

But here's some good news: The Global Sepsis Alliance hailed Houston's Houston Methodist Hospital as the only hospital on the planet to have actually reduced patient death rates due to sepsis—and to have done so drastically.

Starting in 2008, Houston Methodist has deployed a hospital-wide sepsis-reduction program, consisting of sepsis teams from emergency room (ER) through regular floors to intensive care units (ICU). Some 15 years later, Methodist has reduced its sepsis death rate to 6 percent, saving nearly 2,500 lives and around \$50-plus million dollars.

NEWEST "LEFT-BEFORE-BEING-SEEN" ER NUMBERS FOR EACH STATE RELEASED BY CMS

Bethesda, Maryland — So, about two percent of patients waiting to be seen in U.S. emergency rooms leave before being seen. At least that was the statistical case in 2019 and 2020, according to the federal U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

For Year 2021, according to the most recent data available from CMS, that number went up to three percent. While

just one percentage point, that's still a lot of people nationwide.

What's more, according to the newest CMS data, the State of Hawaii saw the least amount of patients leaving its hospitals' ERs (one percent).

New York State ranked fairly decently at 29th place, along with 20 other states from Alabama to West Virginia with a three-percent leave rate.

Massachusetts, Maryland, New Mexico and Rhode Island rounded out the bottom of the list with five percent each, while Delaware saw the most (six percent).

RISK OF VENTILATOR-ASSOCIATED PNEUMONIA LOWER WHEN INHALED ANTIBIOTICS USED

Tours, France — Hospital ventilators, the machines used to help patients breathe, work medical wonders, but are also infamous breeding grounds for infectious bacteria, especially pneumonia.

Patients on ventilators who contract infections due to the machines are commonly administered antibiotics via injection.

But now, a study in France on a small group of patients on ventilators found that those given antibiotics via inhaled mists or sprays had were less likely to develop bacterial pneumonia than patients on ventilators not getting the inhaled antibiotics.

A short course of an inhaled antibiotic helped prevent the incidence of ventilator-associated pneumonia in the intensive care unit (ICU), a randomized trial in France showed. Some 22 percent of the non-treated patients ultimately contracted bacterial pneumonia, while only 15 percent of the inhaled-antibiotic group did.

TOP U.S. CARDIOLOGY HOSPITALS AS RANKED BY WEBMD

New York, New York — Leading patient health information website WebMD and leading healthcare-professional information website Medscape joined forces to rank the country's best cardiology hospitals—based on preferences by patients and providers alike.

Thirteen U.S. hospitals garnered the joint effort's "WebMD Elite Choice" awards for being the top cardiology centers in their regions. The awards, based on surveys, honored hospitals for performance of common cardiac procedures like angioplasty, coronary bypass, and pacemaker placement. They

are: Banner Health (Phoenix); Cleveland Clinic; Duke Health (Durham, N.C.); Houston Methodist; Johns Hopkins Medicine (Baltimore); Mass General Brigham (Somerville, Mass.); Mayo Clinic (Rochester, Minn.); Northwestern Medicine (Chicago); Ochsner Health System (New Orleans); Penn Medicine (Philadelphia); Tampa General Hospital; UCHHealth (Aurora, Colo.); and UW Medicine (Seattle).

FEW RURAL HOSPITALS GO 'EMERGENCY ONLY'—BUT THAT MAY CHANGE

Chapel Hill, North Carolina — According to data compiled by the University of North Carolina's Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, 100 rural hospitals across the U.S. have completely shut down since 2005, with another 95 facilities no longer providing inpatient services.

What's more, 37 of those rural hospital closures have occurred since 2020.

To help address concerns that rural and critical access hospital closures are reducing access to care for people in rural areas, the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) established the *rural emergency hospital* designation, a new Medicare provider type for facilities that basically do not operate anything but an emergency room.

Only 16 hospitals have converted to rural emergency hospitals since the new designation was activated Jan. 2023—but more may follow suit as rural hospitals continue to be challenged by staffing shortages and rising costs.

CALIF. HOSPITAL FINED AFTER MRI MACHINE INJURES NURSE

Redwood City, California — People entering rooms containing magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machines are warned to not enter with any metallic object on, or near, their persons.

Here's why: A nurse at the Kaiser Permanente hospital in the Northern California suburb of Redwood City was seriously injured after an MRI machine pulled her, via a metal-framed bed, several feet, leaving her with injuries requiring hospitalization for several days.

The MRI machine, which contains powerful magnets, is powerful enough to fling a wheelchair across a room.

The nurse was in a prep area outside the MRI room with a patient in a metal-framed bed. Typically, the door between the prep area and the MRI room is closed. But the door was open, and as the nurse got closer to the door with the bed, they were suddenly pulled toward the machine, pinning her between machine and bed.

The state fined Kaiser \$18,000 for not having a plan to make sure the door stayed closed. ★



BREATH OF RELIEF: INHALED ANTIBIOTICS SAVE VENTILATED PATIENTS, FINDS A FRENCH STUDY



The Senior Care Gazette

News from
the World of
Hamaspik
HomeCare and
Senior Health

Preventing Threats to Senior Health and Life in Cold-Weather Season

Hamaspik HomeCare Takes Proactive Precautions to Protect Safety, Security and Wellbeing of Client Population

“For patients who need electricity before snowstorms, we always make sure they are called, to make sure they have generators or that they will be relocating,” says Rena Milgram, RN, Hamaspik HomeCare Director of Nursing Services. “We try to prepare them.”

Come the cold winter months—a subject of current interest due to the significant rain, snow and low temperatures we’ve been having in New York thus far—the health, safety and wellbeing of seniors are of paramount priority.

That’s certainly the case at Hamaspik HomeCare.

People most at risk for winter-related health threats are those 65 and up, people with significant medical or mental-health conditions, and/or people with physical mobility

disabilities—in short, the average Hamaspik HomeCare client. And the greatest risk, of course, is prolonged exposure to cold—a condition known as *hypothermia* which, if not intercepted and counteracted in a timely fashion, can be life-threatening.

Thus, before each major storm, Hamaspik HomeCare will personally contact its seniors. This is especially important because while somewhere around ten percent actually do have backup generators for their homes, that means that a sizable chunk of those privately-residing seniors do not. (Those who reside in senior centers or apartment buildings where laws require them to have backup electricity will fortunately not have that problem, notes Mrs. Milgram.)

Hypothermia, or low body temperature, presents with shivering,

exhaustion, confusion, memory loss, fumbling hands, slurred speech or drowsiness. A medical emergency, it’s first treated by covering and warming the body with dry blankets in a warm room, and then transportation to an ER, where warm IV fluids may be administered.

That’s why Hamaspik HomeCare staff are trained to observe and report on immediate home environmental safety upon each visit to a client, Mrs. Milgram states—meaning that should an agency home health aide (HHA), nurse or other staffer encounter a home where interior temperatures are low, staff will adjust the thermostat as needed and inspect windows, doors and insulation for proper sealing. Any emergency will trigger an immediate ambulance call.

Other threats to seniors come

winter include the unfortunately all-too-common slips and falls on snow and ice—and, also all too often, the overexertion resulting in heart attack caused by trying to shovel the snow. Seniors attempting to clear those front steps or driveways should wear warm layers, and stretch, before stepping out—and, most importantly, avoid overexertion with two simple steps: shoveling relatively tiny amounts of snow at a time, and taking frequent breaks while doing so.

Conversely, notes the nursing director, winter—when approached judiciously—can actually be a good time to get out. “If it’s below 32 degrees, obviously we want them to stay indoors,” she notes. But otherwise, “we encourage people to bundle up and get 20 minutes of fresh air!” ★

Surveys of Aging Caregivers Associates Olive Oil Consumption with Less Dementia

Two regular long-term surveys of doctors and other professional medical caregivers, begun in the year 1990 and continued for close to 30 years, have now found a rather flavorful association: Survey participants who reported consuming at least one tablespoon a day of olive oil at the start of the surveys were recently found to have 28-percent less cases of dementia at the current state of the study.

The roughly 90,000 U.S. doctors participating in the study were an average age of 56 when the studies started in 1990. Over the next 28 years, 4,749 of them had, unfortunately, passed away due to dementia. Researchers found that among those who had not passed away, daily consumption of olive oil was a notable variable—which was not present among those who had.

The study suggests that people seeking to retain mental acuity along with natural aging might want to consider adding daily consumption of

olive oil to their diets—with input from their doctors and/or nutritionists; the pros and cons of olive oil are still debated by various experts.

Regarding the surveys at hand, the data only shows correlation, not causation—no scientific proof has yet been presented that demonstrates that olive oil protects the aging brain.

According to current science, olive oil is known to contain omega-3 fatty acids, in turn known to provide anti-inflammatory benefits. Inflammation is believed to be involved in the dementia process, which may explain any possible causation link between regular olive-oil consumption and long-term lack of dementia.

Additionally, unrelated studies have linked the Mediterranean diet—noted primarily for its heavy olive-oil content—to better memory and thinking skills in older adults, and hence less dementia.

“Even when accounting for diet quality, we saw this association,”

said researcher Anne-Julie Tessier, a postdoctoral fellow at the Harvard School of Public Health, in an interview with outlet *HealthDay News*.

Specifically, she noted, olive oil contains an array of plant compounds called *polyphenols*, which boast both

anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.

The research can’t explain the “why” or “how,” said Dr. Tessier. But, she added, it’s also a reasonable move for people to exchange their margarine for olive oil.

Past studies have also suggested that a diet rich in olive oil can reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke, possibly by helping to improve blood pressure, cholesterol, blood vessel function and more. ★

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