St.Vincent's Medical Center

ST. VINCENT'S HEALTH SERVICES

ASCENSION HEALTH

Member NewYork-Presbyterian Healthcare System
Affiliate, Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons

Winter 2006

HEALTH TALK

YOUR SOURCE FOR HEALTH INFORMATION FROM ST. VINCENT'S

WOMEN Heart UPBEATS

Welcome *Upbeats* readers! See page 3 for Women at Heart information.

St. Vincent's **Heart Program** Honored

Spot **Prescription-Drug** Abuse

Medicare Part D: The Basics

Wellness Guide/ **Calendar**

Straight Talk from Our **Physicians**

www.**stvincents**.org • 1-877-255-SVHS (7847) • callcenter@svhs-ct.org

Recipe

Banana-Nut Bread

1 C	mashed ripe bananas
⅓ C	low-fat buttermilk
½ C	packed brown sugar
¼ C	margarine
1	egg
2 C	sifted all-purpose flour
1 t	baking powder
½ t	baking soda
½ t	salt
½ C	chopped pecans

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Lightly oil a 9 x 5-inch loaf pan.

2. Stir together mashed bananas and buttermilk; set aside.

3. Cream brown sugar and margarine together until light. Beat in egg. Add banana mixture; beat well.

4. Sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; add all at once to liquid ingredients. Stir until well blended.

5. Stir in nuts and turn into the prepared pan.

6. Bake for about 50 to 55 minutes. Cool 5 minutes in pan.

Serving size: ½-inch slice

Call into "Health Talk" on Monday nights at 7:05 p.m. on WICC Radio 600 AM.
Your host Frank Scifo, M.D., will discuss the latest news and developments with healthcare experts and take your call.

Finding At-Risk Arteries—Before They Cause Symptoms

The science of screening for heart disease has advanced in recent years, thanks to computed tomography or CT scans. These tests can detect heart disease—before it causes any symptoms, says Jose Missri, M.D., Chairman, Department of Cardiovascular Medicine.

CT scans are noninvasive tests that provide images of structures inside the body, says Kevin Dickey, M.D., Chairman of Radiology at St. Vincent's. They also have a special role in heart care. Cardiac CT scans look for calcium in the arteries. This is a sign of atherosclerosis, or plaque buildup.

WHAT THE TESTS UNCOVER

If the CT scan finds calcium in your arteries, it could mean that you are at risk for having a heart attack or dying from heart problems. This is true even if you don't have any symptoms.

But if the CT scan does not find any calcium, this suggests that you probably have only minimal plaque in your arteries. This means you have a low risk for heart attack in the next two to five years.

WHO MIGHT NEED A HEART CT

Although a CT scan is noninvasive, it does have some risks, including exposure to radiation that is somewhat greater than that of an ordinary X-ray.

Cardiac CT isn't for everyone. Ask your doctor if it's right for you. ✷

For referral to a St. Vincent's cardiologist or to learn more about the many screening and prevention programs available at St. Vincent's, call St. Vincent's toll-free Care Line at 1-877-255-SVHS (7847).

TALKING DIET!

Need some help in weight management, cardiac, diabetic meal planning or another specialized therapeutic diet? Call Janell Graunstadt, R.D., the new Outpatient Dietitian and Nutrition Educator at St. Vincent's Medical Center.

The Nutrition Counseling service includes one-to-one dietary counseling for weight loss and management, heart disease, cancer, diabetes, gastrointestinal, pregnancy, and disease prevention. To schedule an appointment, call **203-576-5930**.

More than half of U.S. citizens are overweight or obese. Our free brochure "Could You Be Overeating—and Not Even Know It?" highlights common reasons why people tend to eat more than they need, such as eating too fast and snacking while watching TV. To receive your copy, please call St. Vincent's toll-free Care Line at **1-877-255-SVHS** (**7847**).

St. Vincent's Heart Program Receives National Recognition

St. Vincent's Medical Center has been ranked among the top 5 percent of hospitals nationally for coronary interventional procedures, and among the best hospitals in Connecticut for overall cardiac care, cardiology, and coronary interventional procedures, according to a 2006 study released by HealthGrades, the nation's leading provider of independent hospital ratings.

FIVE-STAR RATING FROM HEALTHGRADES

St. Vincent's received the study's five-star rating for coronary interventional procedures, the treatment of heart attack, and the treatment of atrial fibrillation for 2006.

"Quality patient care and patient safety are our top priorities," says Susan L. Davis, R.N., Ed.D., St. Vincent's President/CEO. "Recognition from an objective, independent source such as HealthGrades validates the efforts our physicians, nurses, and staff deliver to the people of southwestern Connecticut every day."

NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED PROGRAM

Jose Missri, M.D., Chairman of the Department of Cardiovascular Medicine and Medical Director of St. Vincent's Regional Heart & Vascular Center, says that St. Vincent's continues to earn national recognition because of "the quality of our cardiologists and an innovative program that includes constant advances in diagnostics, therapeutics, and prevention."

St. Vincent's emerged as a regional heart center in the 1980s, when its angioplasty program became one of the busiest and most successful in New England. Based on the success of its angioplasty and open-heart surgery programs, St. Vincent's was twice named a "Top 100" heart hospital. ✷

Jeffrey Berman, M.D.; Robert Jumper, M.D., Cardiology Associates of Fairfield County, PC; Robert Sackstein, M.D., Cardiac Associates of Southern Connecticut, PC; Jose Missri, M.D., Chairman, Department of Cardiovascular Medicine; Raphael Squitieri, M.D., cardiovascular surgeon; and Kathleen Harper, D.O., PriMed Cardiology Physicians, accept plaques on behalf of their cardiology groups who played a significant role in St. Vincent's achievement.

BENEFITS OF WOMEN AT HEART MEMBERSHIP

Join Today!

The benefits of joining Women at Heart include:

- discount on cardiovascular screenings
- educational seminars and lectures on cardiac issues for women
- access to online resources and health education
- access to our "Just Ask Alice" nurse
- nutritional counseling
- cardiac rehabilitation
- stress reduction counseling
- individualized exercise and fitness assessment.

To join, call St. Vincent's toll-free, Care Line at **1-877-255-SVHS** (**7847**), visit **www.stvincents.org**, or fill out the coupon on the back page.

State-of-the-Art Women's Imaging Center Now Open

Digital mammograms and other diagnostic services are now available at St. Vincent's, thanks to a grant from Swim Across the Sound. The new Women's Imaging Center provides:

- easy access and a one-stop approach to such services as digital mammography and ultrasound.
- secondary testing, referrals, and a coordinated approach to care.
- highly qualified staff and board-certified radiologists, who are available 24 hours a day.

The Center is the proud home of a new, state-of-the-art LUNAR® bone densitometer. In just 30 seconds, this highly sensitive densitometer identifies bone loss at a much earlier stage, comparing your results to your own age group and to a young, normal female. The test is completely painless and provides your risk score in just minutes.

The Center is located just off the Main Lobby. Evening appointments are available. For information, call **203-576-5500**.

WOMEN'S Imaging CENTER

Wellness Guide/Calendar

For complete information on all listings, visit St. Vincent's website at **www.stvincents.org** and for information, registration, or referral, call St. Vincent's toll-free Care Line at **1-877-255-SVHS** (**7847**).

CANCER SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Call Oncology Case Manager Teresa Money-McLaughlin, R.N., M.S.N., A.O.C.N., 203-576-6158, unless otherwise indicated. Made possible through St. Vincent's Swim Across the Sound.

Cancer Lecture Series

Hear medical experts speak on cancer topics. To learn about upcoming lectures, call St. Vincent's toll-free Care Line at **1-877-255-SVHS** (**7847**).

Breast Cancer Support Group

Sponsored by St. Vincent's and Y-ME of CT Breast Cancer Support Organization.
Dates: Jan. 3, Jan. 17, Feb. 7, Feb. 21, March 7, March 21, April 4, and April 18.
Time: 5:30 to 7 p.m.

Breast Cancer & Wellness Program

Program addressing post-surgery issues such as Lymphedema, scar management, range of motion, chemotherapy and radiation side effects, exercise, and wellness.
Date: Feb. 7, April 4
Time: 4 to 5:30 p.m.
Location: St. Vincent's Hawley Conf. Ctr. III

Breast Cancer "We Share" Support Program

Links women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer to breast cancer survivors for support and information.

Cancer Support Group/ Cancer Lecture Series

Dates: Jan. 10, Jan. 24, Feb. 14, Feb. 28, March 14, March 28, and April 11.
Time: 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Location: St. Vincent's Level 3 North

Family Support Group

For adult patients, family members, and friends who are coping with a diagnosis of leukemia, lymphoma, myeloma, and Hodgkin's disease. Co-sponsored by The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.
Dates: Jan. 3, Feb. 7, March 7, and April 4.
Time: 4 to 5:30 p.m.
Location: St. Vincent's, Level 3 South Conference Room

"Look Good, Feel Better" for Female Cancer Patients

Co-sponsored by the American Cancer Society for female cancer patients. Two-hour program designed to help women look and feel their best during treatment.
Dates: Jan. 30, March 27.
Time: 1 to 3 p.m.

Prostate Screening

203-576-5521
FREE screenings to all men age 50 and those older than age 40 who are either African-American or at risk due to family history.

Prostate Cancer Support Group

Guest speakers, Q & A, and group discussion. Facilitator: psychologist Mark Edinberg, Ph.D. 6 month series.
Third Tuesday, 4:30 to 6 p.m.
Jan. 17: "Hot Flashes" with Leslie Blatt, APRN
Feb. 21: "Prostate Cancer & Chemotherapy" with Hervey Weitzman, M.D.
Other dates: March 21, April 18, May 16, and June 20.

CARDIAC

Healthy Hearts Support Group

203-576-5012
First Wednesday of every month from September to June at 7 p.m. in St. Vincent's Hawley Conference Center. Open to all cardiac patients and family members.

Post & Save FOR QUICK REFERENCE

St. Vincent's Wellness Booth/ Screenings

1-877-255-SVHS (**7847**)
Tuesdays and Wednesdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Westfield Shoppingtown—Trumbull, the lower level in front of Macy's.
Tuesdays: FREE blood pressure check, Wednesdays: Cholesterol/HDL/ ratio/glucose—$18; fasting lipid panel—$25

WOMEN AT HEART

• Women at Heart Speaker Series
7 p.m. in St. Vincent's Hawley Conference Center. Refreshments served.
Jan. 18: "Nutrition for a Healthy Heart" with nutrition educator Janell Graunstadt, R.D.
Feb. 15: "Complementary Medicine in Cardiology" with cardiologist Kathleen Harper, D.O.
March 15: "Stress Reduction Workshop" with Marilyn Faber, R.N.

• Cardiovascular Screening Just for Women: $99
Call St. Vincent's toll-free Care Line at **1-877-255-SVHS** (**7847**).

• Stress Reduction Classes
Call for information.

ST. VINCENT'S COLLEGE

St. Vincent's College Open House

Learn about healthcare degree and certificate programs. Call **203-576-5235** to register. April 1, 9 to 11 a.m., St. Vincent's College.

LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Nutrition Counseling Service

203-576-5930
Includes one-to-one dietary counseling for weight loss and management, heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Better Breathing Club
203-576-5091
For those with breathing problems.
First Wednesday of every month at 1:30 p.m. at St. Vincent's. Co-sponsored by the American Lung Association.

Grief and Healing Seminar and Support Group Series
203-576-5110
For people experiencing grief following the death of a loved one. Eight weeks. Note: Individual appointments available.
Seminar Date: Call for dates.
Time: 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Grief: "We Care" Perinatal Support Group
203-576-5110
For those who have lost a child prior to, or at, birth.
Third Wednesday of the month in Ambulatory Infusion Center.

Myasthenia Gravis Support Group
203-929-7627 or
mschustek@sbcglobal.net
Third Sunday of the month. 2 to 4 p.m.

MATERNITY/NEWBORN CLASSES

Call Family Birthing Center at 203-576-5310 or e-mail greid@svhs-ct.org unless otherwise indicated

Baby Care Class
Baby care basics including bathing, diapering, feeding, sleeping, and safety.
Second Wednesday of the month, 7 to 9 p.m.

Breast-Feeding Preparation Class
First Saturday, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Third Tuesday, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Breast-Feeding Support Groups
Free. Share solutions to problems after the birth of your baby.

Breast Pump Rental and Breast-Feeding Supplies Store
Get the supplies and help you need.

Cesarean Birth Class
For couples who know in advance the birth will be by cesarean section.

Childbirth Preparation Classes
Prepare for labor and delivery; breathing and relaxation techniques; medication options; and more.
One-day class on Saturday.
Noon to 6:30 p.m.
Two-class series: First two Mondays.
6 to 9 p.m.

Expectant Parent (Prenatal) Tours
Tour of the Family Birthing Center featuring state-of-the-art nursery. Video on labor and delivery; discussion.

Infant/Child CPR
Learn how to protect infants and children in the event of an injury.

Sibling at Birth Program
To prepare children age 4 and older to witness the birth of a sibling. By appt.

Sibling Class and Tour
For children of expectant mothers, accompanied by one or both parents. Video and tour of Family Birthing Center included.

SENIORS

Geriatric Assessment Program
203-576-5710
Comprehensive health assessment of older adults by a physician, social worker, and nurse with recommendations for treatment/care.

Health Insurance/Medicare Info
1-877-255-SVHS (7847)
Free individual information session about Medicare and related insurance; assistance with appeals. No appointment necessary.
10 a.m. to noon. First Wednesday at St. Vincent's Wellness Booth in Westfield Shoppingtown—Trumbull; other Wednesdays at Medical Center.

Stroke Survivors and Caregivers Support Group
203-576-5361
Third Wednesday of the month. 6:30 p.m. in Level "C" Seton Rm. Call speech pathologist Joy Moeller.
Jan. 18: Attorney Linda Eliovson "Elder Law"

Joint Replacement Surgery Information Sessions
For people interested in learning more about Total Hip and Total Knee replacement and St. Vincent's Joint Camp team approach. Presentation focuses on surgery options, post-anesthesia care, stay in orthopedic unit, and post-discharge expectations. Pre- and post-operative exercises demonstrated. Family members welcome. Call Orthopedic Physician Assistant Gail Fulco at **203-576-6429**.
Date: Call for dates.
Time: 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Location: St. Vincent's Level 3 ETC Room

BARIATRICS SEMINARS

Learn about your options for weight loss surgery. Registration at 6:30 p.m. To reserve a seat, please call toll-free at **1-877-255-SVHS (7847)**.
Jan. 10, St. Vincent's Medical Center
Jan. 17, Fairfield Library
Feb. 14, St. Vincent's Medical Center
Feb. 28, Trumbull Library
March 8, Orange-Case Memorial Library
March 14, St. Vincent's Medical Center
March 21, Newtown Library

LISTEN & LEARN

Free seminar series that brings St. Vincent's physicians to your community to discuss health and wellness topics. The talks will be held from 4 to 5 p.m. at the the Shelton Community Center Multi-Purpose Room.
March 16: "Colon Cancer"
April 20: "Sleep Apnea"
May 18: "Joint Replacement"
Call toll-free Care Line at **1-877-255-SVHS (7847)** for more information.

President's End-of-Year Report

Susan L. Davis, R.N., Ed.D.
President/Chief Executive Officer

As 2005 comes to a close, St. Vincent's Health Services ends an exceptional chapter in its long history.

This was the year that **St. Vincent's Medical Center** added more new construction and medical technology than any other time since the replacement hospital was dedicated in 1976.

An entire patient area was transformed into a new Critical Care Center with space age equipment, more personal space and comfort facilities for patients and families, large cheerful rooms with six foot windows and work areas for staff and physicians which help in the care of our patients. Communication was enhanced in this beautiful new architecture with digital computers throughout the units and paperless reporting that physicians can read in their offices to help manage the care of their patients.

Shortly after opening the Critical Care Center, St. Vincent's Medical Center also introduced its new state-of-the-art Operating Suite. Based on the same architectural design concepts used in the critical care areas, the Operating Suite offers patients and families greater privacy and conveniences while offering the surgeons and staff more space and equipment to care for patients.

New diagnostic equipment was introduced in the form of PET/CT scanner and two new high-speed CT scanners, which can scan the entire body in a matter of seconds with more precise clarity and definition. We added a new Interventional Room in Radiology to help diagnose and treat vascular disease and our Cardiology Services expanded to include 3-D ultrasound for enhanced cardiac images, a new nuclear diagnostic camera and an Electrophysiology Lab used to map the "electrical system" of the heart and treat irregular heartbeats. Our Operating Suite added a new navigation system to help doctors navigate around delicate areas of the brain without harming healthy tissue. All of this equipment will improve care and outcomes for our patients.

During 2005, we dedicated the new Regina Cozza Center for Women's Cardiac Services, enabling St. Vincent's to take a leadership role in providing information and screening services for women's cardiac disease. This Center will care for women using proven research that focuses on their special cardiac needs. New cardiac equipment using computers, ultrasound and CAT scans will help in the diagnosis of early cardiac disease.

We know that our patients are concerned about quality outcomes and patient safety. We share those concerns, and in 2005 a number of multidisciplinary front-line staff worked together as teams to implement best practices and change processes. The changes these teams made significantly improved the care and safety of our patients in Maternity, Critical Care, Medicine and Surgery.

In addition, a Medical Center-wide team worked with the Emergency Department staff to improve patient flow. The Emergency Department is our front door, and we are committed to improving both the services and wait times for those that need our service.

St. Vincent's Medical Center Foundation enjoyed a successful year and was able to support a number of initiatives such as the new Women's Imaging Center which is having a very positive impact in getting women access to mammography screening regardless of their ability to pay. The Foundation, through its generous benefactors, was able to open the Regina Cozza Center for treatment of women's heart disease. Benefactors also funded a new residential center for severely disabled and autistic children who are in hospitals in other states because there is no way to treat them here.

The St. Vincent's Medical Center Foundation and Auxiliary funded a new Mammotome table

to care for breast cancer patients, and the Auxiliary donated $178,000 to support patients. The Foundation's Swim Across the Sound helped more than 20,000 people during 2005 through various programs and services they make available.

Our other subsidiaries also had a great year. **Hall-Brooke Behavioral Health Center** moved the out-patient center to Norwalk and is adding another 16 beds to meet the behavioral health needs of children in Southern Connecticut. Hall-Brooke is now the largest inpatient facility for children in this region. Seton Academy also expanded services to better meet the special needs of children in Fairfield County.

St. Vincent's College admitted its largest class this fall. More than 400 students began studies in nursing, radiology, cardiovascular tech and general studies. A new addition to the College opened on Main Street in Bridgeport earlier this year with additional space to meet the needs of a rapidly growing student body.

The **St. Vincent's Special Needs Center** has added a new residential site for children with special needs who have had to leave our state because care could not be provided. The Special Needs Center hopes to add several new sites in southern Connecticut to meet the needs of these children and is trying to fund them at $1 million each.

Today, more than 2,700 employees make up the work force of St. Vincent's Health Services. They are joined by more than 500 highly trained and dedicated physicians. Our various volunteer members number nearly 1,000 and our affinity groups, such as Club 50, have grown in excess of 25,000 members. Our Auxiliary includes several hundred members, and we treated well over 100,000 patients during the past year.

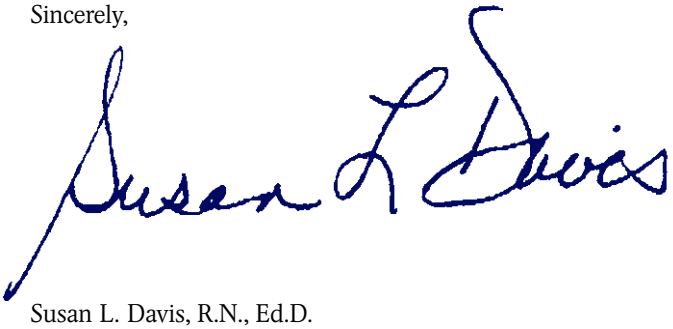
St. Vincent's has become a critical economic engine to support the community with many jobs and also with purchases, contracting and a variety of significant business relationships. We are also the safety net for the uninsured and the underserved. In 2006, the Medical Center's **Family Health Center** and our **Outreach Services,** along with **Hall-Brooke**, provided care and service to our community. Charity care services were the highest in the System's history.

What has not changed at St. Vincent's is the rich tradition of the Daughters of Charity, the Founders of our Hospital, as well as Ascension Health, the faith-based system of which we are a member. As a faith-based Health System, we believe that people of all faiths should be supported in a holistic manner, based on emotional, spiritual and physical care. Our pastoral care services represent members of many faiths who support our patients and their families when they need help facing challenging healthcare issues.

At St. Vincent's, we know what a privilege it is to have the trust and confidence of our patients and their families. We do not take this for granted, and on behalf of all who are part of the St. Vincent's family, we promise to continue to improve care, patient safety and service to the community. Your trust is appreciated and valued.

We thank you for your support and wish each of you health, peace and happiness throughout the New Year.

Sincerely,



Susan L. Davis, R.N., Ed.D.
President/Chief Executive Officer

HALL-BROOKE LAUNCHES FREE LECTURE SERIES

Come out for the new Hall-Brooke Community Lecture Series beginning in February:

- Teens and Addiction—What You Should Know, Feb. 15, 7 to 8 p.m.
- ABCs of ADHD (Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), March 15, 7 to 8 p.m.
- How to "De-Stress" Your High-Achieving Super Kids, April 19, 7 to 8 p.m.

All events take place in the Community Room at Hall-Brooke Behavioral Health Services, 47 Long Lots Road, Westport. To register or learn more, call Whitney Wasserman at **203-221-8885**.

AT THE WHEEL

The Tran-sit Simulator, donated by the St. Vincent's Auxiliary, allows patients recovering from joint replacement surgery and stroke to practice the motions of getting in and out of the car. For information on the "Joint Camp" approach to hip and knee replacement surgery, call Gail Fulco at **203-576-6429**.

St. Vincent's Auxiliary President Pam Conrad, R.N., takes the new Acute Rehab vehicle for a test drive while St. Vincent's orthopedic surgeons Mark Wilchinsky, M.D.; Patrick Carolan, M.D.; and Joel Malin, M.D., look on.

Spot the Signs of Prescription-Drug Abuse

About 6.2 million Americans abused prescription medicines in 2002. In fact, more people in this country are abusing prescription medications than cocaine.

INCREASING PROBLEM

Government agencies are taking steps to combat the growing problem of prescription-drug abuse. More and more states are monitoring prescriptions. Plus, computer technology is now tracking down "pill mills"—Internet pharmacies that illegally sell medications.

Taken correctly, prescription drugs are safe. But when they're abused, they can become dangerous as well as addictive, says Thomas Smith, M.D., Medical Director of Hall-Brooke Behavioral Health Services and Chairperson of St. Vincent's Department of Psychiatry. And people may not even realize they're abusing them. To abuse prescription drugs means to take them too often, in too high a dose or when they're not needed.

Painkillers and tranquilizers are the most commonly abused prescription medicines. Stimulants, used for sleeping disorders and hyperactivity, also are frequently misused.

Taking prescription drugs for an energy boost or to calm down could lead to problems. So could using a pain reliever as a way to feel better mentally and emotionally, rather than for physical pain.

SIGNS OF TROUBLE

Worried that a friend or family member might be abusing prescription drugs? Warning signs could include:

- forgetfulness
- frequently missing work or school
- being more moody than usual
- paranoia
- loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities. ✷

If you think a loved one has such a problem, discuss it calmly without blaming her or him. If you need help, call St. Vincent's Hall-Brooke Behavioral Health Services, which offers substance abuse treatment and a wide range of inpatient and outpatient programs at 1-800-543-3669.

Medicare Part D: The Basics

You may have heard about a new section of Medicare called "Part D." It's important to learn about Part D because its introduction marks the first time Medicare will offer optional prescription drug coverage to all individuals who are entitled to or enrolled in Medicare benefits under Part A and Part B.

Medicare Part D is the name of the prescription drug benefit established by the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA). Coverage will be available to everyone with Medicare, regardless of his or her income or whether he or she is enrolled in Medicare or a Medicare Advantage plan. It also provides help with brand-name and generic drugs. Plus, seniors can get their medications and the valuable savings that go with them at their community pharmacy, where it's convenient for them.

HOW WILL PART D WORK?

Based on the list of drugs—or a drug formulary—health plans will give their Medicare recipients a list of drugs that will be covered. This formulary will be approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which is the federal agency responsible for administering Medicare. This formulary can then guide doctors as they choose prescriptions that will be effective, safe and economical for their Medicare patients.

Enrollment began on Nov. 15 and runs through May 15, 2006. Coverage begins Jan. 1, 2006.

Currently, health plans can enroll their Medicare recipients. But Part D is voluntary, so recipients will be given the choice of whether or not they want to enroll, usually by means of a form that they can fill out and submit to their health plan. Although enrollment is voluntary, seniors will pay less if they enroll on time.

QUESTIONS ABOUT MEDICARE?

You'll find more information about Part D on the Web at **www.medicare.gov**. If you don't have a computer, a library or senior center may help you find what you need. Or call toll free **1-800-MEDICARE** (**1-800-633-4227**).

You can also stop in from 10 a.m. to noon at the St. Vincent's Wellness Booth for a free individual information session about Medicare and related insurance by Gerd Weindling, St. Vincent's Medicare Counselor. No appointment is necessary for the first Wednesday at St. Vincent's Wellness Booth in Westfield Shoppingtown in Trumbull; other Wednesdays at St. Vincent's. ✷

Gerd Weindling
St. Vincent's Medicare Counselor

BRIDGEPORT MAYOR'S DIABETES AWARENESS INITIATIVE

Take advantage of Bridgeport Mayor John Fabrizi's city-wide initiative to reach out to Bridgeport residents living with diabetes! The program is committed to heightening awareness, improving the quality of life and offering support to better manage the symptoms, while reducing the medical and personal costs associated with the disease. Those who enroll in the project will benefit from these services:

- Invitation to four education sessions on nutrition, exercise and monitoring
- Blood tests to monitor your diabetes
- City-wide coaching sessions to offer support and information
- Monthly newsletters

It is estimated that 40,000 people in Bridgeport suffer from diabetes and as many as 13,000 may be unaware of it or lack treatment. To register for the Mayor's Diabetes Awareness Initiative, call St. Vincent's Care Line at **1-877-255-SVHS** (**7847**) and your enrollment packet will be mailed to you.

FREE WIRELESS INTERNET AT ST. VINCENT'S

St. Vincent's is now offering free wireless Internet service.

The new St. Vincent's Public wireless network allows patients, family members and visitors to log on to the Internet at no cost, using their own laptop, from anywhere in the Medical Center, including patient rooms.

A user with a laptop equipped with a wireless card can run Windows XP, select "Wireless Network Connections" and highlight "SVMCPUBLIC" in order to log onto the Internet. The program is made possible through the St. Vincent's Foundation.

WELCOME NEIGHBOR!

If you've just moved into town, we want to welcome you to the area and invite you to join the St. Vincent's family. We hope that *Health Talk* will answer some of your healthcare questions. If you have additional questions or need help finding a physician, call St. Vincent's toll-free Care Line at **1-877-255-SVHS** (**7847**).

New St. Vincent's Sleep Lab Helps Patients in Search of a Few Good Zs

Do You Have a Sleep Disorder?

There are more than 200 types of sleep disorders that can be diagnosed. Here are some symptoms that could indicate you have one:

- During the night, you snore loudly, then suddenly wake up, gasping for air.
- You experience sleepless nights.
- After sleeping all night, you still feel tired during the day.
- You fall asleep while performing routine activities.
- Sometimes while you're sleeping, you have an uncomfortable feeling in your legs and have to move them to get some relief.

Having trouble sleeping? You're not alone. Some 70 million Americans have sleeping disorders like insomnia, teeth-grinding and apnea—when you stop breathing and suddenly wake up. It's possible to have a sleep disorder and not know it.

The good news is that the new St. Vincent's Sleep Center can help diagnose and treat sleep problems in a comfortable, convenient and state-of-the-art sleep lab.

Sleeping disorders are linked to many health problems, such as obesity and diabetes. If you suspect you have a sleep disorder, talk to your doctor about getting a referral to a specialist.

Sleep studies usually require six hours, with the patient staying throughout the night and leaving in the morning. The new four-bedroom St. Vincent's Sleep Center is located at 2720 Main Street in Bridgeport, one block below the Medical Center. For more information, call St. Vincent's toll-free Care Line at **1-877-255-SVHS** (**7847**) or visit **www.stvincents.org**. ✷

More than 100 million Americans regularly fail to get a good night's sleep. Our free brochure "Rest Assured: Your Personal Sleep Log" offers a sleep log for readers to track lifestyle and environmental factors that affect sleep patterns. To receive your copy, please call St. Vincent's toll-free Care Line at 1-877-255-SVHS (7847).

Advances in Sinus Surgery Come to St. Vincent's

A new CT Scan Image System, which gives Ear, Nose and Throat surgeons a tool to make sinus surgery safer and more precise, is benefiting patients at St. Vincent's Medical Center, says Richard Levin, M.D., Chief of the Division of Otolaryngology, St. Vincent's Medical Center.

Ongoing sinus problems can be a source of pain and infection for millions of Americans.

"The system's ability to provide the surgeon with a CT scan of the sinus in effect gives us a highly detailed 3-D map to guide us through the procedure," says Dr. Levin. "The localization or mapping is very useful when critical landmarks are missing or altered due to previous surgery or the erosive and distorting effects of sinus disease. With the combination of real-time video and CT scanning technology, the new system enables the surgeon to see microsurgical instruments move through the sinus passages."

What makes the surgery safer and far more precise than traditional ENT procedures is the system's ability to provide the surgeon with a CT scan of the sinus, which becomes a highly detailed 3-D map overlay for the live endoscopic video during the procedure. For further information, call St. Vincent's toll-free Care Line at **1-877-255-SVHS** (**7847**). ✷

Mapping Out the Sinuses—St. Vincent's Ear, Nose and Throat specialist Richard Levin, M.D., and Nurse Manager Sue Carter, R.N., show off the new "stealth sinus" system that makes sinus surgery safer and more accurate.

Question & Answer

straight talk from our physicians

Edward Paraiso, M.D.,

Urologist

QUESTION: Is calcium linked to kidney stones?

ANSWER: In the past, a diet rich in calcium and some other nutrients was not recommended for people who tended to form stones.

But today, experts agree that eating the recommended amount of calcium through food sources is safe. In fact, not getting enough calcium increases the risk of kidney stones.

How much calcium should you have in your diet? Unless your doctor recommends otherwise, experts generally suggest a middle-of-the-road approach. Here are recommendations from the National Institutes of Health:

- Most men and women should get 1,000 milligrams of calcium a day.
- Women age 51 and older who don't take estrogen need 1,500 milligrams a day.
- Men age 65 and older should take 1,500 milligrams a day.

Michele Ranno, M.D.

Primary Care Physician

QUESTION: How can I fight the flu this season?

ANSWER: The flu strikes 20 to 26 percent of all Americans. When the flu does strike, comfort yourself:

- Drink a lot of fluids, such as water, juice, and soup. Avoid alcohol and caffeine.
- Try over-the-counter (OTC) medicines to soothe muscle aches, a sore throat, congestion, sneezing, and a runny nose.
- Use a humidifier to clear a stuffy nose.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Gargle with salt water to relieve a sore throat.

You should call your doctor if, after feeling better, you have symptoms of a more serious problem, such as a fever higher than 102 degrees Fahrenheit, shaking, chills, or chest pain.

Daniel Kocinsky, M.D.

Primary Care Physician

QUESTION: How can I be better prepared for an emergency?

ANSWER: If someone collapsed and stopped breathing right in front of you, would you know what to do? You would if you were trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

For someone whose heartbeat or breathing has stopped, CPR can buy precious minutes. No matter what the cause—heart attack, stroke, blood loss, choking, drowning, drug overdose, carbon monoxide poisoning, or electrocution—the result can be brain damage or even death if CPR is not performed within a few minutes.

Glen Reznikoff, M.D.

St. Vincent's Oncologist

QUESTION: Does genetics play a role in colon cancer?

ANSWER: Colorectal cancer—or cancer of the colon or rectum—is second only to lung cancer as the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the U.S.

Family history can affect your risk. You may be more likely to develop colon cancer if you have any of these risk factors:

- a history of polyps, or benign growths, that occur in the colon and rectum.
- a family history of colorectal cancer or polyps, especially before the age of 60.
- a personal history of ovarian, uterine, or breast cancer.

Experts advise that those with a higher risk for colon cancer should consider earlier or more frequent screenings. Talk to your doctor about what's right for you. Fortunately, this type of cancer can be treated successfully if it is found early.

Looking for a physician? We can help.

Call us at **1-877-255-SVHS (7847)** or visit us on the Web at **www.stvincents.org**

John Kemp, a former Easter Seals Poster child and nationally known disabilities advocate, speaks with James Roach, M.D., chairperson of St. Vincent's Special Needs Services, and Lisa Framularo, Immediate Past-Chairperson, at the recent 50th anniversary celebration.

Celebrating 50 Years of Excellence

The Special Needs Center annually provides educational, therapeutic, daily skills training, residential, and family support services to 400 children and adults with multiple developmental disabilities and special healthcare needs. Its programs include Feroleto Children's Development Center in Trumbull, Changing Images Adult Services in Stratford and Norwalk, and group homes in six Fairfield County communities. To learn more about St. Vincent's Special Needs Services, call **203-375-6400** or e-mail **feroleto.child.dev@snet.net**. ✷

WINTER BLAHS?

If that cold or flu is getting you down, or your back is sore from shoveling snow, drop into the St. Vincent's Immediate Health Care Center nearest you. Walk-ins are open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturdays and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays.

Bridgeport: 4600 Main Street,
203-371-4445
Fairfield: 1055 Post Road,
203-259-3440
Monroe: 401 Monroe Turnpike,
203-268-2501
Shelton: 15 Armstrong Drive,
203-929-1109

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- ☐ **Free brochure listing 34 Swim Across the Sound cancer prevention programs**

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❸ **CALL** St. Vincent's toll-free Care Line at: 1-877-255-SVHS (7847)
❹ **E-MAIL** us at: callcenter@svhs-ct.org

HEALTH TALK WINTER 2006

Just Ask Alice!

Got a health question? Want to join St. Vincent's membership programs? Just Ask Alice. Call 1-877-255-SVHS (7847).

St. Vincent's Medical Center

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