

MAY 2008

My Health MATTERS

Providing Health Related Tips For Living Well

New Pharmacy Benefit Manager for Members

Page 2

ADHD *(part 2 of a 3 part series)*

What are the symptoms?

Page 10

Disease Management: One Member's Success Story

Page 8



Health New England How Can We Help?™

IN THIS ISSUE

SAMMY SPORTZ

PAGE 1

**STRALEY NAMED BOY SCOUT
DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN FOR 2008**

PAGE 1

CLINICAL SERVICE INTEGRATION

PAGE 2

NEW PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGER

PAGE 2

**ANSWERS TO MEMBERS' MOST
COMMON QUESTIONS**

PAGE 3

MASSACHUSETTS HEALTH QUALITY PARTNERS

PAGE 3-4

HNE - AN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE

PAGE 5

BEAT THE HEAT - EXERCISING IN THE SUMMER

PAGE 5

UNDERSTANDING ADHD

PAGE 6

CLINICAL GUIDELINES

PAGE 7

DISEASE MANAGEMENT

PAGE 8

TIME OF THE SEASONAL ALLERGIES

PAGE 8

OVEREATING AND CHEATING WITH DIABETES

PAGE 9

HEALTH MANAGEMENT CLASSES

PAGE 10

TICKS AND LYME DISEASE PREVENTION

BACK COVER

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SAMMIE SPORTZ - MY SUMMER OF SPORTS SAFETY



The latest book in the award-winning HNE Whiz Kidz series covers the topic of sports safety. *Sammie Sportz- My Summer of Sports Safety* is the story of a young girl who loves to ride bikes, run races, and play sports. But before she can do all of these things, she needs to learn how to compete safely.

According to HNE Health Programs Manager Mike Gauvin, "With summer coming and kids playing outside more, we're hoping parents and kids understand the importance of proper safety equipment. *Sammie Sportz- My Summer of Sports Safety* covers the topic in a fun and informative way."

Sammie Sportz- My Summer of Sports Safety and all of the HNE Whiz Kidz Books are available to HNE members at no charge by calling 413.233.3079. For more information on the HNE Whiz Kidz, visit their website at hnewhizkidz.com.

STRALEY NAMED BOY SCOUT DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN FOR 2008

The Pioneer Valley Council Boy Scouts of America named Peter F. Straley, President and CEO of Health New England (HNE), as its 2008 Distinguished Citizen.

While announcing the award, Michael J. Ashe Jr., Sheriff of Hamden County, cited Peter's outstanding contributions

in business and community affairs. "Peter has been a pacesetter, both as a corporate leader and as a civic leader. We are very proud that he is receiving the Distinguished Citizen Award," noted Ashe, chairman of the event.

Peter has served as President and CEO of Health New England for eleven years. He also has played an active role in local businesses and the community. Local community service has included membership on the Economic Development Council and Springfield Business Development Council; Business Friends of the Arts board member and past chair); Nominating Committee of the Springfield Museums (chair); and the Community United Way of Pioneer Valley annual campaign (past chair).



Jerrod DeJesus, Peter Straley, Xavier DeJesus, Cesar Colon

HNE TREATS THE WHOLE PERSON

Did you know that a person with heart disease may also struggle with anxiety? Or that depression can afflict a person with diabetes. It often happens that chronic physical conditions are accompanied by mental health problems.

HNE also believes in the importance of treating the whole person. That's why the clinical departments at HNE combined to make one team! Behavioral Health, Disease Management, Health Services, and Pharmacy Services are now the Clinical Services Integration team. By combining these services into one team, HNE members are getting the most comprehensive care possible.



MEMBERS TO GET A NEW RX CARD

HNE is excited to announce our new partnership with MedMetrics Health Partners, a non-profit, UMass affiliated Pharmacy Benefits Manager (PBM). You will receive a new

HNE ID card which will reflect this change that takes place on June 15. Please remember to bring this card with you when you fill your next prescription. In addition, HNE will switch to WellDyne Rx for mail-order pharmacy services and Icore Specialty Pharmacy for specialty pharmacy/injectable medications. Information about the new mail-order pharmacy will be included with your new ID card. HNE will notify members affected by the specialty Pharmacy change directly. For members of HNE with the HNE pharmacy benefit, the benefit change bulletin attached to this newsletter has the details of all the changes. Please look at these changes to see if any of your current prescriptions will be affected. If you have any questions please call Member Services at **800-310-2835**.



ANSWERS TO MEMBERS' MOST COMMON QUESTIONS

I AM GOING ON VACATION, WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I NEED MEDICAL CARE WHILE I AM AWAY?

HNE provides medical coverage for urgent or emergency care out of the service area. However, for HMO policies, urgent care received in other than a hospital emergency room (for example, at a walk in clinic or physician's office) must be reported. Call Member Services at **800-310-2835**.



MASSACHUSETTS HEALTH QUALITY PARTNERS PROMOTES IMPROVEMENT

The Massachusetts Health Quality Partners is a broad-based coalition of physicians, hospitals, health plans, purchasers, consumers, and government agencies working together to promote improvement in the quality of health care services in Massachusetts. MHQP was first established in 1995 by a group of Massachusetts health care leaders who identified the importance of valid, comparable measures to drive improvement. (mhqp.org/aboutus)

MHQP recently released its *Quality Insights: Clinical Quality in Primary Care* report. The report includes 19 clinical quality measures for approximately 150 medical groups (like doctors' offices) across Massachusetts*. You can review the results can be viewed at mhqp.org. A simple web tool allows you to look up the clinical quality measures on the report. You can compare the

ratings of medical groups by name or location. Medical groups on the report must have:

- Three or more physicians
- At least 30 patients eligible for any of the 19 measures reported.

If you do not see your doctor's office listed in the report, it is because these criteria were not met.

CLINICAL OUTCOME DATA INCLUDED FOR THE FIRST TIME

This year's MHQP report includes statewide "outcome" measures. These tell how well certain risk factors related to patients' chronic conditions are being managed.

MHQP's outcome measures show how important it is for doctors and patients to work in partnership on health improvement. The checklist below shows how doctors and patients with diabetes can work together to control high blood pressure.

For more information about the report contact Pat Scheer, Director of Quality Operations, at pscheer@hne.com or **413-233-3435**.

*MHQP's results are based on widely accepted standards developed by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (www.ncqa.org) to assess the quality of care delivered to members of health insurance plans nationally. MHQP analyzes and reports on performance data for patients covered by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Fallon Community Health Plan, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Health New England, and Tufts Health Plan.



WHAT YOU AND YOUR DOCTOR CAN DO TO CONTROL DIABETES

Diabetes is a serious disease. If not well controlled, diabetes can lead to death or disabilities such as vision problems, kidney failure, or amputations of the foot or leg. Diabetes can also cause problems in a woman's pregnancy.

Three out of four (73%) adults with diabetes have high blood pressure or use prescription medications to lower blood pressure to more healthy levels. **If you have diabetes and high blood pressure, you and your doctor can work together to help control your blood pressure and better manage your diabetes. Here are some things you and your doctor can discuss:**

WAYS YOUR DOCTOR CAN HELP...

- Teach you about diabetes. This includes problems that can happen if your blood pressure levels get out of control.
- Teach you ways to control blood pressure. This includes eating healthy foods and being active each day.
- Check your blood pressure at each visit.
- If needed, prescribe medications and explain what they do and how to take them
- Talk with you about diabetes problems, ways to notice them, and what to do if they occur.
- Ask you to have eye exams and other tests that check whether your diabetes is under control.
- As needed, refer you to a dietician, diabetes educator, or specialist who can help in your diabetes care.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP...

- Make a diabetes plan with your doctor. This should include which foods to eat, ways to be active, and how often to visit the doctor.
- Take all medication as your doctor prescribes. This includes medication to control blood pressure.
- Tell your doctor if you have problems with any of your medications.
- Eat the foods you are supposed to eat. A healthy diet is one of the best ways to control diabetes and high blood pressure.
- Be active each day. This can be taking walks, going to a gym, or doing other types of exercise.
- Know that health problems (such as high blood pressure) can make diabetes worse.
- Visit the doctor at least once a year. Some people with diabetes see their doctors even more often, maybe once every 3 to 4 months.
- Make sure to go to all your doctor's appointments -- even when you are feeling well.

Visit www.mbqp.org for more information and links to resources on controlling high blood pressure and other preventive care and chronic disease topics.

HNE - AN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE

HNE has created a series of educational brochures to help keep you informed and up-to-date on the latest health and industry news. We have an ever-changing library of topics to choose from.

You can find the information contained in the brochures at hne.com/healthydirections. To request a copy, please call Maria Garrity in our Health Promotions department at 413-233-3391 or, stop by in person!

HNE is committed to the health and well-being of our members and the communities we serve.

CURRENT TOPICS AVAILABLE

- Breast Wellness
- ABCs of Sun Safety
- Understanding ADHD
- Asthma Control
- Blood Pressure
- High Cholesterol*
- Control Stress
- Signs of Depression
- Diabetes Control*
- Eat Healthier Every Day
- Facts about Menopause
- Flu Survival Tips
- Great Golf Stretches
- Healthy Approaches Plus
- Heart Attack & Stroke
- HNE's Helpful Web Tools
- Osteoporosis*
- Physically Active
- Quitting Smoking*
- General Health Care
- Emergency Room Use
- Medical Emergencies
- How to Choose a Primary Care Physician (PCP)
- Health Insurance 101 (Understanding the Basics)
- MA Health Care Reform
- Individual Health Insurance Coverage - What does it mean to you?*
- Employer Health Insurance Coverage - What does it mean to you?

* Available in Spanish

BEAT THE HEAT

EXERCISING IN THE SUMMER MONTHS

Michael Gauvin, HNE's Health Programs Manager

The long hot days of summer are almost here. To stay on top of your game you need to take a few precautions to ward off the effects of heat when you are exercising outside.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Eat lightly two to four hours before exercising.
- Drink lots of fluids, before, during, and after exercise.
- Consume 8-10 ounces of water, 10-20 minutes before beginning your exercise.
- Wear sunscreen.
- Avoid cotton t-shirts, which become soaked and prevent evaporation. Try lightweight breathable fabrics, such as Coolmax®
- Dress lightly and wear light colored clothes.



(Continued on next page)

UNDERSTANDING ADHD

Lukey Nuthman, HNE Behavioral Health Manager

This is part 2 of the HNE Behavioral Health Department's three-part series on ADHD. Part 1 was published in the first quarter issue of My Health Matters. You also can get this information in a brochure, at hne.com or by calling HNE Member Services.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF ADHD?

Children with ADHD may show one or more behavior symptoms (See chart). The symptoms are classified as different types of ADHD.

INATTENTIVE ONLY:

Children with this type of ADHD are not overly active or disruptive. As a result, their symptoms are easy to miss. Girls with ADHD most often have this form.

HYPERACTIVE/IMPULSIVE:

Children with this type of ADHD show hyperactive and impulsive behavior, but are able to pay attention.

COMBINED INATTENTIVE/ HYPERACTIVE/IMPULSIVE:

Children with this type of ADHD show all three symptoms. This is the most common type of ADHD.

In our next My Health Matters, we'll talk about understanding your own child's behavior.

ADHD SYMPTOMS					
Symptom	Behaviors				
INATTENTION	• Difficulty paying attention	• Unorganized	• Easily distracted	• Careless	• Forgetful
HYPERACTIVITY	• Is in constant motion	• Cannot stay seated	• Talks too much	• Cannot play quietly	• Fidgets • Squirms
IMPULSIVITY	• Acts and speaks without thinking	• Has trouble taking turns	• Cannot wait for things	• Interrupts others	



BEAT THE HEAT (continued)

- Avoid midday exercising.
- Take it easy.
- Stop exercising if you feel dizzy, weak or/and sick.

ABOUT FLUIDS:

- Drink 8-10 glasses of fluids daily (eight ounces per glass).
- Drink before, during (every 10-15 minutes), and after exercise.
- Avoid items which contain caffeine (e.g., coffee, tea and soft drinks) or alcohol (e.g., beer, wine, etc.). These beverages can increase urine production and fluid loss.

HEAT EXHAUSTION SIGNS

- Heavy sweating
- Paleness
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fainting

WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK YOU MAY HAVE HEAT EXHAUSTION:

- Cooling measures that may be effective include the following:
- Stop exercising!
 - Drink cool, nonalcoholic, non caffeinated beverages.
 - Rest
 - Cool shower, bath, or sponge bath.
 - An air-conditioned environment.

Living Well with Chronic Conditions



CLINICAL GUIDELINES

Clinical guidelines help healthcare providers and you make decisions about appropriate health care for specific circumstances. They can reduce variation in care and treatment. HNE adopts guidelines that are relevant to our members' needs. We also distribute the guidelines to your healthcare providers.

The guidelines are listed below and can be viewed on our website, hne.com. Click on **For Members**, then click on **Medical Guidelines**.

DEPRESSION

Management of Major Depressive Disorder in Primary Care (American Medical Association)

ATTENTION DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

Diagnosis and Evaluation of the Child with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (American Academy of Pediatrics)

Treatment of the School-Aged Child with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (American Academy of Pediatrics)

PREVENTIVE CARE

Adult and Pediatric Preventive Care Recommendations (Massachusetts Health Quality Partners)

PERINATAL

Perinatal Care Recommendations (Massachusetts Health Quality Partners)

OBSTETRIC CARE

Scope of Services for Uncomplicated Obstetric Care (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists)

ASTHMA

Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma (National Institutes of Health)

DIABETES

Massachusetts Guidelines for Adult Diabetes Care (Massachusetts Department of Public Health)

HIGH BLOOD CHOLESTEROL

Third Report of the National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP) Expert Panel on Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Blood Cholesterol in Adults (National Institutes of Health)

HYPERTENSION

The Seventh Report of the Joint National Committee on Prevention, Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Blood Pressure (National Institutes of Health)

DISEASE MANAGEMENT

A SUCCESS STORY

Mary Weidensaul, HNE Member



My two primary breast cancer diagnoses were a shock. The first occurred at age forty and the second at forty-three. I didn't smoke or drink alcohol. I got exercise, ate well, and I'd never been overweight. I questioned

why this had happened to me. Of course, there is no answer to that question.

I educated myself about the disease. Many of the known risk factors didn't apply to me. I needed to accept that I'd done nothing wrong. I also had to accept that a recurrence wasn't

statistically likely. While feeling that I shouldn't have gotten this disease at all, I had to believe and hope that I wouldn't have a recurrence.

My primary care physician, surgeon, and oncologist were extremely helpful beyond their roles as my medical team. I was also supported by family and friends.

Eventually, I joined a general cancer support group. It gave me a perspective that I couldn't have gained in any other way. We learned a great deal and gathered strength as we supported each other. I was reluctant to attend at first, but it changed my life forever. I met many people, made friends, helped and was helped, all because of cancer.

TIME OF THE SEASONAL ALLERGIES

As the name suggests, a seasonal allergy affects a person at a particular time of year. Spring is a prominent time for allergies to pollen.

There is no escape to the pesky pollens. They are so light that air currents can carry them for hundreds of miles. Ragweed pollen, for example, has been collected 400 miles out to sea and 2 miles high in the air.

There are measures you can take to minimize your exposure to seasonal allergens.

- Close your doors and windows when pollen counts are high.
- Don't hang laundry outside, pollen sticks to fabric.
- Vacuum carpets weekly.
- Use air conditioning in your home and car; it cleans, cools, and dries the air.

- Avoid outdoor activity in the early morning when the pollen count is highest.
- Use a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter in your bedroom and keep windows closed at night.
- If symptoms are severe and not well controlled, delegate lawn mowing, weed pulling, and other gardening chores as this stirs up pollen and molds. If you do, wear a dust mask.
- Think twice about letting your pet sleep on your bed or couch—pollen clings to pet fur.

When self-care measures aren't enough, you may want to see your health care provider to help determine if you have seasonal allergies. Talk with your doctor to find out the best option for you.



OVEREATING AND CHEATING WITH DIABETES

Everyone has overeaten or cheated on their diabetes meal plan at some time. When it is an occasional “treat” amidst a lifestyle of healthy eating, overeating and cheating are no problem, within reason, of course.

CONTINUALLY EATING LARGE QUANTITIES OF FOOD OR EATING THE WRONG FOODS CAN BE VERY DAMAGING TO YOUR BODY. When you overeat or cheat every day, it can lead to a steady rise in blood sugar, extremes in ranges of blood sugars, high blood cholesterol, and an increase in blood pressure. This increases your risk of developing complications of diabetes (heart disease, loss of vision, kidney damage...to name a few).

WHAT IS YOUR OVEREATING OR CHEATING PATTERN?

Know the pattern you follow when you cheat. Do you have high-sugar treats often? Do you eat large portion sizes every day? Once you figure out your overeating or cheating pattern, it is time to take action.

TIPS TO DECREASE OVEREATING & CHEATING

- Slowly chew and consciously enjoy every bite of food at every meal and snack.
- Know your daily carb allowance. (The healthcare provider who prescribed your diabetes medicine can tell you this.)
- Know the number of total carbohydrates in everything you eat. (Find this on food labels.)
- Eat breakfast every day.
- Do not go long periods of time without eating.
- Plan ahead and bring healthy snacks with you for the entire time you will be away from home.
- Choose non-starchy and low-carb snacks (celery sticks, baby carrots, ginger snap cookies)
- Take just the serving size from a snack container or bag and put away the rest. Read the food label for the serving size.

- Eat lean meats such as chicken, turkey and fish most often, and reserve red meats for special occasions.
- Fill half your dinner plate with non-starchy veggies (asparagus, broccoli, cabbage, peppers, greens, tomatoes, summer squash, and zucchini).



- Eat larger portion sizes of healthy food items.
- Eat smaller portion sizes of “not-so-healthy” food items.
- If you eat a treat, decrease the portion size of another food item to balance it.
- If you have overeaten or cheated, do not look back with regret. Move forward and do better next time.
- Work with a Registered Dietitian or Certified Diabetes Educator to design an individualized healthy eating plan. Ask your healthcare provider to recommend someone or call HNE.
- If you need to lose weight, do so the “slow and steady” way by losing 1/2 to 2 pounds each week. Weight loss improves blood sugar control, and may decrease your need for diabetes medicine.

You do not have to be perfect at all times. The goal is to make healthy food choices most of the time. This leaves room for those times when you have a small dessert for a special occasion or a little extra serving of a favorite food, and savor every bite!



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HOW TO PREVENT TICKS AND LYME DISEASE:

Melissa Rusin, RN, HNE Case Manager

With the summer months upon us, it's unfortunately time to think about ticks. May, June, and July is when deer ticks, ticks that transmit Lyme disease (blacklegged), are most active.

Lyme disease can occur if you are bitten by an infected tick. Most people who have had a tick bite do not get Lyme disease. It is important to remove ticks as soon as you notice them. Infected ticks usually don't spread Lyme disease until they have been attached for at least 36 -48 hours.

One sure sign of Lyme disease is a round, red rash that spreads at the site of a tick bite. It looks like a bull's-eye and occurs at the site of the tick bite within 1-4 weeks. If there is no rash, it is harder to diagnose. The symptoms mimic many other diseases and conditions, like flu and arthritis. People in the early stages of Lyme disease may feel very tired and have headaches, sore muscles and joints, and a fever.

The treatment of choice for early stage Lyme disease is a 21 day course of oral antibiotics. This usually kills the bacteria and prevents

later symptoms. Early diagnosis and treatment is key because people who get treated early recover completely.

PRECAUTIONS TO MINIMIZE YOUR CHANCES OF A TICK BITE:

- Avoid areas with lots of ticks. Ticks like wooded, bushy areas with high grass and lots of leaf litter.
- Use insect repellent with 20%-30% DEET on adult skin and clothing to prevent tick bites.
- Wear long pants, sleeves, and socks to keep ticks off your skin.
- Check skin and clothes every day and remove ticks before going indoors.
- Walk in the center of trails to avoid contact with overgrown brush.
- Remove brush around homes and at the edges of lawns.
- Place wood chips or gravel between lawns and wooded areas to restrict tick migration to recreational areas.
- Keep playground equipment, decks, and patios away from yard edges and trees.
- Since deer can carry ticks that transmit Lyme disease, discourage deer from entering your yard.

Dogs, cats, and horses can also become infected with Lyme disease, but cannot pass the illness to humans. Infected ticks may fall off the animals and then bite and infect humans. Animals develop symptoms similar to those seen in humans, including fever, and swollen, painful joints.