

THE BULLETIN

Belterra Community News

December 2011 Volume 5, Issue 12

News for the Residents of Belterra

Secret Santa GIFT PROGRAM

Secret Santa is a special holiday gift program of the Adoption Coalition of Texas helping Child Protective Services and Foster Families provide gifts and spread holiday cheer to Central Texas foster children through the generosity of community donors.

If you would like to be a Secret Santa and purchase Christmas gifts for a Central Texas foster child, please email your name, email address and contact phone number to ACTSecretSanta@gmail.com. The gift drop-off days at four Austin-area locations are Wednesday-Saturday, December 7th-10th, and caseworkers will be picking up the gifts the following week. Once you sign up to be a donor, we'll send you all the details.

Thank you for helping make the holidays brighter for Central Texas foster children! The Adoption Coalition of Texas is a partnership of nonprofit adoption agencies and Child Protective Services working together to find forever families for older children, sibling groups and children with special needs.

For more information, visit
www.adoptioncoalitiontx.org.



December 2011 HEALTH BRIEFS

ALLERGIES: KNOW YOUR TREATMENT OPTIONS

Allergies got you down? Dr. Madhu Narra, assistant professor of medicine in the section of allergy, immunology and rheumatology at Baylor College of Medicine offers some tips to help manage. Fall is the blooming season for weeds such as ragweed while spring allergies are from blooming trees and grasses. Indoor allergens such as dust mites can cause symptoms all year round. It is important to be aware of what you are allergic to so that you know when to look out for these allergens, said Narra.

Symptoms include runny and itchy eyes and nose, sneezing, congestion, drainage and cough. Some people may experience wheezing and trouble breathing.

- For mild allergies, consider over-the-counter medications like loratadine or cetirizine that usually do not cause drowsiness
- Keep your windows closed during peak pollen season. You can track pollen counts online.
- Clean pets before they enter the house so that they don't carry pollen into the home
- Do not dry clothes outside where they can pick up pollen
- Wear a mask or nasal filters when mowing the lawn to prevent allergens from getting into the nose
- If prescription medications and nasal sprays do not help much or if long-term relief from severe allergies is desired, consider getting allergy shots, which can provide long lasting relief with four to five years of treatment

WINTER WEATHER & SKIN CARE

Summer may be over, but protecting your skin should remain a priority. "Colder temperatures, wind and sunlight work together to cause irritation to your skin," said Dr. John Wolf, professor and chair of dermatology at BCM. "It is difficult to distinguish between windburn and sunburn, so it is a good idea to focus on overall skin care." Wolf suggests using extra moisturizer as well as moisturizing sun block with an SPF of 30 or higher, especially if planning a winter trip to a higher altitude where ultraviolet rays from the sun are more intense. Chapped lips and fever blisters also can be provoked by the cold, wind and sun. People who suffer from severe outbreaks of fever blisters may want to talk to their doctor to see if there are prescriptions to prevent such outbreaks Wolf says. Chapped lips are more prevalent during colder months as well, but using a lip balm with an SPF factor of 30 or even a thick coat of zinc oxide may help keep them at bay. During colder weather many people will take hot showers, sit in a sauna or even enjoy a hot tub. Wolf said this can actually increase dry and itchy skin. He suggests using moisturizer while still damp, before completely drying off.

(Continued on Page 3)

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Dripping Springs Middle School..... 512-858-3400
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December Health Briefs - (Continued from Cover Page)

TEACH KIDS TO ENJOY TREATS IN MODERATION

From Halloween to the new year, kids are tempted by pies, cakes and other treats. However, according to experts at Baylor College of Medicine, the holidays are no excuse for parents to let kids overeat and divert from their normal eating routine.

“You have to keep meals and snacks under some control no matter what day of the year it is,” said Dr. Karen Cullen, associate professor of pediatrics at the USDA/ARS Children’s Nutrition Research Center at BCM. Cullen says a good plan is to save holiday treats for snacks, and be sure that they are an appropriate portion size for that snack. Consider freezing treats to save for later use. Parents should be serve as positive role models by continuing to serve and eat regular balanced meals. In addition, they should encourage children to try fruits and veggies that are offered at holiday parties.

OLDER ADULTS CAN FIGHT FRAILTY THROUGH RESISTANCE WEIGHT TRAINING

Imagine not being able to stand up because you can’t carry your own body weight. To prevent this, incorporate resistance weight training into your routine, said an expert at Baylor College of Medicine. “As we age, we slowly start to lose lean muscle mass, and resistance weight training is the only way to slow this down,” said Dr. Robert Roush, associate professor of medicine - geriatrics at BCM. “It’s never too late to start.” Resistance weight training can consist of weight lifting, using weight machines or any other exercise activity that creates some sort of resistance. This should go along with a regular cardiovascular exercise plan, said Roush, who is also with the Huffington Center on Aging at BCM.

Always check with a qualified health care provider before starting any exercise routine. Try to find a gym with senior benefits or share a personal trainer with friends to learn proper technique. If a gym is not an option, try using stretch bands and dumbbells at home. Activities such as swimming, climbing stairs and walking at an incline can also provide resistance. Regardless of whether one goes to a health club or exercises at home, the key is to follow recommended regimens and proper technique.

- Kids Stuff- Section for Kids with news, puzzles, games and more!

You lean over to whisper something to your friend and you can tell by the look on your friend's face that something is up. Could it be your breath? Maybe you shouldn't have put extra onions on your hamburger at lunch. What's a kid with smelly breath to do?

The good news is that bad breath happens to everyone once in a while. Let's find out how to detect it, prevent it, and even treat it.



WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

Bad breath is the common name for the medical condition known as halitosis (say: hal-uh-toe-sis). Many different things can cause halitosis - from not brushing your teeth to certain medical conditions. Sometimes, a person's bad breath can blow you away — and he or she may not realize there's a problem. There are tactful (nice) ways of letting someone know about bad breath. You could offer mints or sugarless gum without having to say anything.

If you need to tell a friend he or she has bad breath, you could say that you understand foods can cause bad breath because you've had it before yourself. By letting someone know that bad breath isn't something unusual, you'll make the person feel more comfortable

(Continued on Page 4)

JUST IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON!

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Karen F. Moss, LMT

announces her collaboration with *"Divine Serenity" Massage Studio*

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Kids Stuff - (Continued from Page 3)

and less embarrassed about accepting your piece of chewing gum. If you suspect your own breath is foul, ask someone who will give you an honest answer without making fun of you. (Just don't ask your brother or sister — they just might tell you your breath stinks even when it doesn't!) Although everyone gets bad breath sometimes, if you have bad breath a lot, you may need to visit your dentist or doctor.

WHAT CAUSES BAD BREATH?

HERE ARE 3 COMMON CAUSES OF BAD BREATH:

- foods and drinks, such as garlic, onions, cheese, orange juice, and soda
- poor dental hygiene (say: hi-jeen), meaning you don't brush and floss as you should
- smoking and other tobacco use

Poor oral hygiene leads to bad breath because when you leave food particles in your mouth, these pieces of food can rot and start to smell. The food particles may begin to collect bacteria, which can be smelly, too. Plus, by not brushing your teeth regularly, plaque (a sticky, colorless film) builds up on your teeth. Plaque is a great place for bacteria to live and yet another reason why breath can turn foul.

PREVENTING SMELLY BREATH

So what's a kid to do? Don't smoke or use tobacco products, of course. And take care of your mouth by brushing your teeth at least twice a day and flossing once a day. Brush your tongue, too, because bacteria can grow there. Flossing once a day helps get rid of particles wedged between your teeth. Also, visit your dentist twice a year for regular checkups and cleanings. Not only will you get a thorough cleaning, the dentist will look around your mouth for any potential problems, including those that can affect breath. For example, gum disease, also known as periodontal (say: per-ee-uh-don-tul) disease, can cause bad breath and damage your teeth.

If you're concerned about bad breath, tell your doctor or dentist. But don't be surprised if he or she leans in and take a big whiff! Smell is one way doctors and dentists can help figure out what's causing the problem. The way a person's breath smells can be a clue to what's wrong. For instance, if someone has uncontrolled diabetes, his or her breath might smell like acetone (the same stuff that's in nail polish remover).

If you have bad breath all the time and the reason can't be determined by your dentist, he or she may refer you to a doctor to make sure there is no other medical condition that could be causing it. Sometimes sinus problems, and rarely liver or kidney problems, can cause bad breath. Usually, there's a less complicated reason for a kid's bad breath — like what you had for lunch. So keep up with your brushing and flossing and you should be breathing easy — and odor free!

*Reviewed by: Lisa A. Goss, RDH, BS,
and Charlie J. Inga, DDS*

Date reviewed: September 2007

COATS FOR KIDS

As a recipient of a gift, have you ever turned around to immediately give a gift back to the giver? Many who have received coats for their children and grandchildren at the annual Coats For Kids distribution day have returned the same day to volunteer. They gave their gifts right back to the community, a circle of service truly indicative of a successful program.

Coats for Kids is a program in its 25th year that provides warm winter coats each December to disadvantaged children and teenagers in Central Texas through a community-wide collection and distribution process. Each year, The Junior League of Austin, Jack Brown Cleaners, KASE 101 and KVUE partner with the community to ensure the children of Central Texas stay warm. On average, 30,000 coats are distributed per year with the help of over 2,600 community volunteers.

So how can you participate? Donate a new or gently-used coat to your nearest Jack Brown Cleaners, organize a coat drive through many outlets in your community (schools, places of worship, offices, neighborhoods), volunteer during sorting days or distribution days or spread the word.

FACTS

- Distribution Day: Saturday, December 10th from 8AM - 3PM
- Distribution Site: Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Road
- Community Coat Drive: Monday, November 14th through Wednesday, December 7th. Please drop your coats off at any local Jack Brown Cleaners.
- School & Business Coat Drive Competition: Monday, November 14th through Friday, November 30th. Please drop your coats off at any local Jack Brown Cleaners. To register, go to the JLA website: www.jlaustin.org/coats.
- Volunteer: Please join us to help sort coats December 6 - December 9 and/or to distribute coats to children on December 10. Register at www.jlaustin.org/coats.

*Find all details about Coats For Kids at
<http://www.jlaustin.org/coats>*

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WASH YOUR HANDS

REDUCING SPREAD OF DISEASE WHILE AT HOME & WORK

By: Concentra Urgent Care

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say that nearly 90,000 patients die in U.S. hospitals each year due to a preventable disease—many could be avoided if everyone properly washed their hands. From germs on office equipment to sick colleagues who decided to come into work anyway, people face the same dangers in the workplace. The same simple fact holds true: Washing your hands regularly is an effective way to prevent yourself from catching or spreading a preventable disease or illness.

WHEN TO WASH YOUR HANDS

The CDC recommends washing your hands every time you:

- Prepare or eat food
- Use the restroom

- Tend to someone who is sick; both before and after
- Blow your nose, cough, or sneeze
- Handle garbage
- Treat a cut or wound
- Change diaper or clean up after children
- Handle an animal or animal waste

HAND WASHING BASICS

The CDC has issued specific guidelines about effective hand washing:

- Wet hands with water
- Use plain bar or liquid soap
- Create a lather by vigorously rubbing hands together for 15-20 seconds—about the amount of time it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” twice
- Be sure to wash palms, back of hands,

fingers, and nails (clean nails by gently scratching nails down your opposing soapy palm)

- Rinse off soap under a stream of water

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO?

- Focus on hand washing in the lunch and/or break room
- Be careful when using sponges and dish towels. These are ideal sites for bacterial growth. Always wash your hands after using these items.
- Maintain a clean work area; regularly clean any office equipment, especially shared items such as phones and keyboards.
- Remind your colleagues of the importance of hand washing, particularly when you witness someone neglecting to wash his or her hands.®



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