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NEWSLETTER INFO

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Interested in submitting an article? You can do so by emailing <u>riverparkonbrazos@peelinc.com</u>. All news must be received by the 9th of the month prior to the issue. So if you are involved with a school group, scouts, sports etc - please submit your articles for the Riverpark on the Brazos newsletter. Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, special celebrations and military service are also welcome.

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HEALTH BRIEFS - DECEMBER 2011

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 BaylornCollege 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

(Continued on Page 4)



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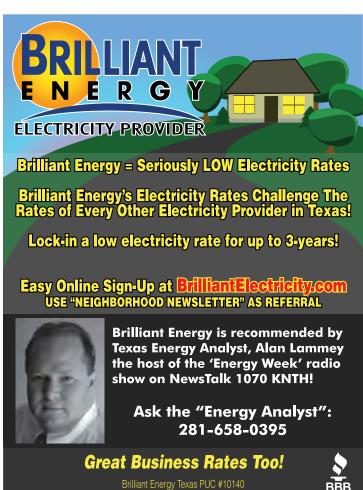
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(Continued from Page 3)

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.

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.

WASHYOUR 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 factholds 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 CANYOU 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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For more information, please contact Stephanie Berka, Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter at Adoption Coalition of Texas 512-450-8750 or stephanieberka@adopttexas.org



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