

ABC Home Healthcare
 233 Albion Street
 Wakefield, MA 01880
 781-245-1880
 info@abchhp.com

the ABCs of Homecare

SPRING 2011

Vol. 3 Issue 1

ABC in Action, Supporting the Community

ABC Home Healthcare Sponsors MVES *Bellyfull of Laughs* Comedy Fundraiser

ABC Home Healthcare was so happy to be this year's presenting sponsor for Mystic Valley Elder Service's *Bellyfull of Laughs* comedy fundraiser. The January 22nd sold out event raised over \$24,000! Event proceeds will support MVES' Meals on Wheels Program. This year's event featured Boston comedians Tony V and Jim Colliton.



Pictured are ABC Home Healthcare Staff and MVES' Jenny Vanasse (4th from right)

ABC is a Platinum Sponsor of Saint Patrick Parish Annual Auction

ABC Home Healthcare is honored to be a Platinum Sponsor for Saint Patrick Parish of Stoneham Annual Auction for the second year in a row. This year's event, "An Evening in the Vineyard" on March 19th features a live and silent auction, wine tasting, raffle baskets, dinner buffet from Angelo's Ristorante and more! Event proceeds will support Saint Patrick School.

continued on page 2



Greetings!

Welcome to the latest edition of the ABC's of Homecare. While March comes in like a lion, will it go out like a lamb? If you are like me, you may be looking forward to seeing some new life appear as it does each spring. Speaking of life, April is just around the corner and is National Donate Life month. Did you know that one donor can save or enhance the lives of nearly 50 people? It's something that costs the donor nothing yet impacts many. Unfortunately, on average 18 people in the U.S. die every day awaiting an organ donation. See our full story on page 5.

This issue we've focused a lot on the kidneys, how to take great care of them and what changes you might consider to keep them working well. As part of nutritional changes, consider ways to reduce salt in your diet. While it seems tough, you can learn to adjust to eating less salt. It typically takes about 6-8 weeks on a low-sodium diet to get used to it. After that, you'll actually find it harder to eat very salty foods, like potato chips. Did you know that people whose kidneys have failed are three times as likely to have heart disease and high blood pressure? We are truly all connected inside – we must care for our bodies as best we can.

In closing, we want to invite you to our upcoming caregivers workshop on Understanding Alzheimer's April 2nd at the Burlington Council on Aging. See the back cover for complete details regarding this event and how you can reserve your spot.

May you all enjoy the sights and smells of spring soon!

Jeannette Sheehan, MSRN
 Board Certified Family Nurse Practitioner
 President and CEO

Inside this issue

World Kidney Day	2	Organ Donation / Living Donor	
Kidney & Heart Healthy Tips ..	3	Programs	5
Dialysis and Caregivers.....	4	Understanding Alzheimer's	
Kidney Cancer	4	Workshop	6

ABC in Action

Continued from page 1

ABC Home Healthcare Presents at Stoneham and Reading Council on Aging

ABC's Jeannette Sheehan, MS, RN, CS, Board Certified Nurse Practitioner recently co-presented with Lisa Yarin, Community Relations Coordinator for Youville House/Youville Place of Lexington about "What Comes Next after Independent Living" at the Stoneham Council on Aging and the Reading Council on Aging.

ABC Sponsors Medford Senior Center Valentine's Day Party

On Thursday, February 10th, ABC Home Healthcare helped sponsor a Valentine's Day Party at the Medford Senior Center. Jean Marie Hennessey, ABC's Community Outreach Liaison was on hand to give out information about the agency. Over 100 people attended the event, and a great time was had by all!

Working with Challenging Families

On February 16th, Mary Crowe, Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker from Hospice of the North Shore presented the program "Yours, Mine, Ours: Working with Challenging Families." In home care we work with many types of families, some more challenging than others. Mary helped educate us on the issues that some families face and gave us some tips on how to deal with the issues that may arise. By understanding these issues, we can provide better customer service and care to our clients.

World Kidney Day

On March 10th, in celebration of World Kidney Day both National Kidney Foundation's Kidney Early Evaluation Program (KEEP) and Kidney Health Risk Assessment (KHRA), programs offered free kidney health screenings around the country. These screenings are important as currently more than



26 million Americans, one in nine adults, have kidney disease according to the National Kidney Foundation. Most people don't even know they have or are at risk of Chronic Kidney Disease. Through blood and urine screening tests, they can identify individuals who are in the early stages of chronic kidney disease (CKD). It is very important to be screened for chronic kidney disease if you are older, have diabetes or have high blood pressure; or if you have a family member with CKD.

Your kidneys are one of the filtering systems within your body. On average, your kidneys filter nearly 200 quarts of blood each day! They keep you healthy by removing waste products, drugs and excess fluid from your body. These exit the body through your urine. Your kidneys also regulate blood pressure through the release of hormones; produce an active form of vitamin D keeping your bones healthy and strong; and also control the production of red blood cells.

When your kidneys are not functioning properly, waste products do not get pulled from the blood. As a result, the waste products build up and you begin to feel sick. If CKD goes undetected it can worsen, leading to kidney failure. At that point either dialysis or a kidney transplant would be required to survive. Dialysis is traditionally introduced when an individual is at the end stage of kidney failure - where 85 to 90 percent of the kidney function has been lost. Dialysis can be performed at home or at a dialysis center. Working with your physician you'll determine the best place to have dialysis. To learn more about dialysis and the impact on those around you see page 4.

More than 26 million Americans, 1 in 9 adults, have kidney disease.

- National Kidney Foundation

Know Your Risk Factors for CKD

Are you older? The older you are, the greater the risk.

Do you have diabetes? Type 2 diabetes is the #1 cause of kidney failure.

Do you have high blood pressure? Hypertension is the #2 cause of kidney failure.

Does CKD run in your family? Know your family medical history and share it with your doctor.

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you should get screened.

Top 5 Tips to Keep Both Kidney and Heart Healthy

The headbone's connected to the jawbone, the jawbone's connected to the neckbone and the kidney is connected to the heart. People whose kidneys have failed are three times as likely to have heart disease and high blood pressure; high blood pressure causes both kidney and heart disease. Here are some basic health tips that may help keep us on track to prevent both kidney and heart disease.

1. Don't smoke. The strongest modifiable risk factor for both kidney and heart disease is smoking. There is nothing you can do that is more important in the prevention of both heart and kidney disease than quit smoking. Smoking causes hardening of the arteries which causes both coronary artery disease and nephrosclerosis (hardening of the walls of the small arteries of the kidney). Smoking is also a risk factor for high blood pressure which can cause both heart and kidney disease.



2. Control your blood pressure. High blood pressure causes both kidney and heart disease. High blood pressure puts stress on the heart to cause enlargement and thickening of the heart. This ultimately leads to heart failure. High blood pressure causes damage to the blood vessels leading to the kidney filters (we call them glomeruli). You are born with 3 million filters and as you damage the blood vessels going to the filters, they stop functioning and when you get down to 300,000 filters you will need dialysis or transplant

Reduce Salt in your Diet

Eat Fresh Fruits and Vegetables: Natural foods taste great and don't have the added salt found in many processed foods.

Buy Low-Sodium / No-Salt Products: Look for these alternatives for items you stock in your pantry.

Ask for No Salt Added when ordering out.

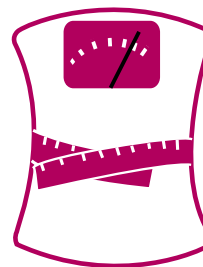
Use Herbs and Spices Instead of Salt to flavor foods when cooking

People whose kidneys have failed are three times as likely to have heart disease; high blood pressure causes both kidney and heart disease.

3. Eat a proper diet.

- Control the sodium in your diet. Decrease the total amount of sodium you consume to 2,000 mg per day (1/3 tsp).
- Take the salt shaker off the table.
- Learn to read food labels. Use the label information on food packages to help you to make the best low-sodium selections. **WARNING!** The serving size represents the typical amount eaten by an adult. So if you eat double servings you are eating double salt.
- Include high-fiber foods in your diet such as vegetables, cooked dried peas and beans (legumes), whole-grain foods, bran, cereals, pasta, rice and fresh fruit. Fiber better controls blood glucose levels, and may reduce the level of cholesterol in the blood. Foods high in fiber include natural antioxidants, which reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. The goal for everyone is to consume 25 to 35 grams of fiber per day.

4. Maintain a healthy body weight. Lose weight if you are overweight. Limit your total daily calories, follow a low-fat diet and exercise regularly to achieve or maintain your ideal body weight. Keeping in mind that as we age, a decrease in our physical abilities leads to a decrease in our metabolic rate (amount



of energy used in a given period), which in turn contributes to weight gain. What may not decrease of course is our appetite. By combining the proper amount of exercise and weight training, every one of all ages can maintain a healthy body weight.

5. Have your physician test you for both heart and kidney disease. It turns out that heart disease is a risk factor for kidney disease and kidney disease is a known risk factor for heart disease. Hence, if you know you have one, you should have yourself tested for the other.

To learn more about Chronic Kidney Disease risk factors, prevention and treatment, visit www.kidney.org.

The Impact of Dialysis on Family and Caregivers

When Chronic Kidney Disease reaches 85-90 percent, kidney function is lost and a person must replace the function of the kidneys with dialysis or a transplant. Their health care provider determines the type of dialysis a person undergoes. It may take place at home or at a hospital or clinic depending. Whether dialysis is done at home, at a hospital or clinic, it impacts the lives of both the patient and the caregiver(s).

Dialysis at a Hospital or Clinic

When dialysis is performed outside of the home, a caregiver must work to ensure a schedule for the patient, and their own scheduled duties are covered. Alternative transportation plans must sometimes be made as necessary to get to the dialysis facility. Planning and coordinating can be stressful for all involved.

Dialysis at Home

In its design, hemodialysis is said to be something that can be performed fairly independently. However, research shows that caregivers often take on part, if not all of the associated responsibility. This can be very overwhelming. There is a learning process for everyone involved on the set up and breakdown of home equipment. Also understanding what to do in the event of an emergency. While it's reported that once the adjustment

period to home dialysis has past it can be the right decision for some.

Since the change in duties within a household may evolve into a complete role reversal it can dramatically change the dynamics of a relationship.

Relationship Dynamics

Some of the duties that were originally performed by the individual undergoing treatment are taken on by the caregiver, which can change the dynamics of a relationship. Sometimes there may be a complete role reversal within a family. All family situations are different, but the fact remains that it is very important to allow the patient to retain some level of independence.

Regardless of where dialysis is performed it can be overwhelming for caregivers. It's important that the patient and caregiver meet with healthcare providers to understand what will work best for their situation. Don't underestimate the value of counseling services and/or support groups, which can provide an outlet for the caregiver.

Kidney Cancer: What You Should Know

Last year, more than 1.3 million new cancers were diagnosed in the United States. According to the American Cancer Society, more than 50,000 of these individuals were diagnosed with kidney cancer. But there is hope, more than 200,000 people are kidney cancer survivors. (Kidney Cancer Association)

There is currently no screening designed specifically for kidney cancer. Many instances are detected during procedures for other diseases or conditions.

In the early stages of kidney cancer, a person may not experience any symptoms of the disease. As the tumor grows, it is more common for symptoms to appear.

Symptoms may include:

- blood in the urine
- a pain in the side that does not go away
- a lump in your abdomen
- unexplained weight loss
- loss of appetite

If you have any of these symptoms, see your health-care provider. While these symptoms are not a defini-

tive sign of the disease, you may have other health issues that are causing them. Only a doctor can make an accurate diagnosis and address the problem.

Screening for kidney cancer may involve blood and urine tests, imaging tests which give a visual representation of the area in question, or a biopsy where a sample of the kidney tissue is removed for further testing.

Treatment for kidney cancer depends on a person's age, their overall health and how advanced the cancer is. It might include surgery, radiation, chemotherapy or biologic therapy. Biologic therapy boosts your body's own ability to fight cancer.

Organ Donation: It Costs Nothing to Save Many

According to Donate Life New England, there are more than 103,000 people on the transplant list currently, and every 12 minutes – a new person is added. Sadly, every day, 18 people die waiting for an organ or tissue transplant. We all have the opportunity to give life to many others when we die through organ donation.

Every day, 18 people die waiting for an organ or tissue transplant.

That is exactly what happened in 2008 to 20-year old Melrose resident Laura Linehan who died while awaiting a liver transplant. Since then, her mother Ann has advocated to increase awareness about organ donation travelling New England and sharing her story. Inspired by Laura's story, Rep. Katherine Clark, D-Melrose filed "Laura's Law," in 2009 to establish a state organ donation registration fund. The bill was passed in 2010 officially titled "An Act Establishing an Organ and Tissue Donor Registration Fund."

Thanks in part to Laura's Law, Massachusetts makes it easy to verify and update your current Organ & Tissue Donor status online. Just go to www.massdot.state.ma.us/rmv and click on the Enroll as Organ & Tissue Donor link in the main window. You can also go to www.DonateLifeNewEngland.org and register. It only takes a few minutes and can truly save someone's life.



People of all ages may be eligible to donate organs and tissue. One donor can save or enhance the lives of as many as 50 people! It costs nothing to donate and can save so many.

If you would like more information about organ and tissue donation and transplantation, please call the New England Organ Bank at (800) 446-6362. You can also visit the website of the United Network for Organ Sharing at www.unos.org. This site contains up-to-date statistical information, and links to government agencies and other transplant-related organizations.

Living Donor Program

Living donation takes place when a living person donates an organ (or part of an organ) for transplant to another person. While it is common for a family member to be a donor, it can also be a friend, or even a stranger! The most common organ donated by a living donor is the kidney, though parts of other organs are now being transplanted from living donors including lung, liver and pancreas.

Two years ago Christine Sheehan, ABC Marketing and Promotions Manager had the opportunity to see her Aunt, in her sixties, agree to be the living donor of a kidney to her sister. What an incredible gift! The transplant was a success and both women are doing great today.

While not all of us may have the opportunity to donate a kidney,

some of us may be able to donate blood or bone marrow which can help save lives every day.

For more information about blood donations, call the American Red Cross at (800) GIVE LIVE or visit www.redcross.org. To learn more about bone marrow or blood stem cell donation, contact the National Marrow Donor Program at (800) MARROW2 or online at www.marrow.org

Free Caregiver's Workshop: Understanding Alzheimer's

ABC Home Healthcare is pleased to be a member of the Metro North Alzheimer's Partnership. On Saturday, April 2, 2011, the Metro North Alzheimer's Partnership, in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Association, MA/NH Chapter will sponsor a free caregiver's workshop open to the public about "Understanding and Coping with Alzheimer's Disease" at the Burlington Council on Aging, 61 Center Street, Burlington, MA. Doors will open at 8:30 a.m. with refreshments available. Presentations will run from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Guest speakers will include Beverly L. Moore, RN, CS, President of Stilmee Alzheimer Coaching Services and Dr. Robert Stern, PhD., Director, Boston University Alzheimer's Disease Center Clinical Core. An ABC Home Healthcare representative, as well as many local health care professionals will be available with resources and information for interested attendees. Free on-site respite care, with pre registration required by March 30th will be provided courtesy of Cooperative Elder Services. Pre-registration is recommended to attend the event, but not mandatory as walk-ins are welcome as space permits.

For more information visit our website at ABCHHP.com/caregiverworkshop.

About the Alzheimer's Association: The Alzheimer's Association is dedicated to providing care and support for those affected by the disease, as well as advancing research into causes, treatments and cures. With headquarters in Wauwatosa, WI, and regional offices in Raynham, Springfield, and Worcester, MA and Bedford and Lebanon, NH, the Massachusetts/New Hampshire Chapter provides programs and services such as support groups, professional training, educational programs, care consultation and a 24/7 Helpline at 1.800.272.3900. For more information visit www.alz.org/MANH.



ABC Home Healthcare • Committed to Life at Home • www.abchhp.com



233 Albion Street • Wakefield, MA 01880 • (781) 245-1880

**We want to hear from you.
Is there a topic you want
to know more about?
Call or email us.
Your topic may be a
feature in our next
ABCs of Homecare!**