

## West Oak Lane NORC

# News You Can Use

## Activities for Older Adults at the West Oak Lane NORC!

The West Oak Lane NORC sponsored a well attended “Lunch and Learn” on Friday, August 14. Over 75 older adults came to the West Oak Lane Senior Center to learn about the ins-and-outs of Medicare and ways to reduce insurance fraud, a significant problem that increases everyone’s healthcare costs.

The West Oak Lane NORC continues its monthly “Lunch and Learn” series on Friday, September 18, with an open discussion with a physician about preventing and managing diabetes. These monthly programs are open to older adults who are either members of the West Oak Lane Senior Center or who reside in the zip codes 19126 and 19138. Anyone outside of these zip codes can contact the West Oak Lane NORC to be placed on a waiting list should space become available.

The West Oak Lane

NORC is a free, community-based program providing problem-solving, advocacy, and general support and information to older adults at the West Oak Lane Resource Center, a walk-in center located at 6812 Ogontz Avenue (former home of Big Jim’s BBQ). The NORC is also able to provide phone support or home visits, depending on zip code, to those who have difficulty accessing the walk-in center.

The NORC staff’s confidential services include, among other things, helping local seniors determine whether they qualify for any utility, property tax, insurance, or home repair assistance programs—they will even assist you in the application process. The staff also offers advice and support in other areas, and locates services that many area seniors need.

In addition to the “Lunch and Learn” series, the NORC offers other oppor-

tunities for the community to gather and learn together throughout the year. These include an annual health and resource fair, in partnership with the West Oak Lane Senior Center, that brings together experts from various health and wellness agencies and offers entertainment from the center’s line dancers, choir, and others. The NORC also offers specialized, small-group training classes in home repair and weatherization at the Cheltenham Home Depot.

The Home Depot program, in particular, is a prime example of the NORC’s mission. “NORC” stands for “Naturally Occurring Retirement Community”—a community where people have lived much of their lives in the same home or neighborhood. When possible, the NORC aims to support older adults in their expressed desire to remain at home as they age by providing a spectrum of services.



*Let us help you get connected!*

The West Oak Lane NORC Initiative, in operation since August, 2007, benefits from the support of many local organizations, including Albert Einstein Healthcare Network and the Strategic Alliance for the Elderly (SAFE). The program’s funders include Ogontz Avenue Revitalization Corporation (OARC) and the Green Tree Community Health Foundation. For more information about this free service, please contact Sara, Theresa, or Stephanie at 215-924-4815.



**The West Oak Lane NORC is pleased to welcome Stephanie Ranzazzo, MSS, MLSP, as our new Social Worker. Stephanie recently received dual Master's degrees from Bryn Mawr College. She comes to us with previous social work experience, including two years with Center in the Park, a well regarded Senior Center in Northwest Philadelphia.**

## You Know Your Own Body Best!

Visiting your doctor at his or her office is an important part of your medical care, and one that should be utilized whenever you feel it is needed. If a new health concern arises, sometimes seeing your doctor face to face is the only way to fully address the problem. Talking over the phone may not give your doctor the full picture of how healthy you really are. Here are some symptoms that warrant a visit to your doctor (adapted from *How to Save Your Own Life* by Marie Savard, M.D.):

- \*Loss of Appetite and Unintended Weight Loss
- \*Severe Headaches
- \*Redness in the White of the Eye

- \*Persistent Cough
- \*Shortness of Breath
- \*Chest Pains
- \*Persistent Abdominal Cramps or Pain
- \*Rectal Bleeding
- \*Vaginal Bleeding after Menopause
- \*Pain, Lump, Thickening or Any Change in Breast Tissue
- \*Frequent Episodes of Dizziness
- \*Sudden Weakness of Numbness of One Side of Your Body
- \*Confusion or Change in Mental Status
- \*Numbness or Pain in Feet and Legs When Walking on Inclines
- \*Jaundice

- \*Changing Mole or Dark Spot on the Skin
- \*Profuse Sweating
- \*Insomnia

Sometimes we do not see the doctor because we are busy, we think the problem might go away by itself, it is inconvenient, or the doctor tells us a visit is not necessary. However, you need to have the courage to visit your doctor and ask questions when you feel something may not be right. Do not feel that you are being pushy or paranoid – it is better to be safe than sorry!

*Andrew Shen*

Drexel University College of Medicine  
Bridging the Gaps Unitarian Universalist House Outreach Intern.



*"I undress already to save us both some time."*

## House Talk from West Oak Lane CDC

Recently, there has been a lot of talk about all the foreclosures that have been occurring across the country. Foreclosures have been a significant problem right here in the West Oak Lane area. Homeowners that may be experiencing mortgage delinquency and facing the threat of foreclosure must be aware that there are several opportunities available to assist them in saving their homes from foreclosure. There is help available to get homeowners back on track with affordable monthly mortgage payments.

### Here are some important tips:

-Be mindful of all communications from the mortgage company. Open and **read** all mail from your mortgage

company and respond to their calls. Not responding to their efforts to contact you will only make the problem worse.

-If you are going to be late or think you may be late making a payment, contact the mortgage company and discuss the problem with them. They can often offer help before it becomes a larger problem.

-You may find it difficult to discuss your problem with the mortgage company on your own. If so, contact a HUD-Certified Housing Counseling Agency, like West Oak Lane CDC, right away. By doing so, you can receive assistance at NO CHARGE. There is help available, but often it is essential that you seek and apply for assistance within a

limited period of time.

-Be very careful when seeking help with a foreclosure problem. There are those out there that may offer you assistance, take your money and in the end, do nothing at all to assist you. In fact, once they get your money, they often disappear.

When faced with foreclosure and the possibility of losing your home, it can often be embarrassing, stressful and you may experience a feeling of shame. However, doing nothing at all and eventually losing your home will certainly exacerbate those feelings. Remember, services at West Oak Lane CDC's Housing Counseling Agency and other HUD-Certified counseling agencies, are free and confidential.



*You can get help with your mortgage issues! Don't delay!*

*Tom Stafford,  
Director of Housing  
Counseling*

West Oak Lane CDC  
7300 Ogontz Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19138  
215-224-0880

*Creating and Maintaining  
Homeownership is  
our Mission*

## Center in the Park Presents Jazz Concert

Center in the Park will present Music from the Heart, a jazz concert produced by Warren Oree, on Saturday, September 19.

The event will feature The Universal African Drum and Dance ensemble,

The Arpeggio Jazz Ensemble and Sherry Wilson Butler. It will take place at 6:30pm in the Loeb Auditorium at Germantown Friends School, Green Street and Schoolhouse Lane, Philadelphia. For tickets and information, email

Nicole Bradford or call 215-848-7722 or visit the Center's website: [www.centerinthepark.org](http://www.centerinthepark.org)

September is Grandparents Month, a perfect opportunity to treat an older adult loved one to a gift of music from the heart!



*Don't miss this special musical event!*

# All About Diabetes

Diabetes is a disease in which the body does not produce or properly use insulin. Insulin is a hormone that is needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy needed for daily life. The cause of diabetes continues to be a mystery, although both genetics and environmental factors such as obesity and lack of exercise appear to play roles.

There are 23.6 million children and adults in the United States, or 7.8% of the population, who have diabetes. While an estimated 17.9 million have been diagnosed with diabetes, unfortunately, 5.7 million people (or nearly one quarter) are unaware that they have the disease.

In order to determine whether or not a patient has pre-diabetes or diabetes, health care providers conduct a Fasting Plasma Glucose Test (FPG) or an Oral Glucose Tolerance Test (OGTT). Either test can be used to diagnose pre-diabetes or diabetes. The American Diabetes Association recommends

the FPG because it is easier, faster, and less expensive to perform.

With the FPG test, a fasting blood glucose level between 100 and 125 mg/dl signals pre-diabetes. A person with a fasting blood glucose level of 126 mg/dl or higher has diabetes.

In the OGTT test, a person's blood glucose level is measured after a fast and two hours after drinking a glucose-rich beverage. If the two-hour blood glucose level is between 140 and 199 mg/dl, the person tested has pre-diabetes. If the two-hour blood glucose level is at 200 mg/dl or higher, the person tested has diabetes.

## Diabetes Statistics:

**Total:** 23.6 million children and adults -- 8.0% of the population -- have diabetes.

**Diagnosed:** 17.9 million people

**Undiagnosed:** 5.7 million people

**Pre-diabetes:** 5.7 million people

1.6 million new cases of diabetes were diagnosed in people aged 20 years

or older in 2007.

## Total prevalence of diabetes:

**Under 20 years of age:** 186,300, or 0.22% of all people in this age group have diabetes. About one in every 400 to 600 children and adolescents has type 1 diabetes.

Two (2) million adolescents (or 1 in 6 overweight adolescents) aged 12-19 have pre-diabetes.

Although type 2 diabetes can occur in youth, the nationally representative data that would be needed to monitor diabetes trends in youth by type are not available. Clinically-based reports and regional studies suggest that type 2 diabetes, although still rare, is being diagnosed more frequently in children and adolescents, particularly in American Indians, African Americans, and Hispanic/Latino Americans.

**Age 20 years or older:** 23.5 million, or 10.7% of all people in this age group have diabetes.

**Age 60 years or older:** 12.2 million, or 23.1% of all people in this age

group have diabetes.

**Men:** 12.0 million, or 11.2% of all men aged 20 years or older have diabetes although nearly one third of them do not know it.

**Women:** 11.5 million, or 10.2% of all women aged 20 years or older have diabetes although nearly one quarter of them do not know it. The prevalence of diabetes is at least 2 to 4 times higher among non-Hispanic Black, Hispanic/Latino American, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander women than among non-Hispanic white women.

**Non-Hispanic Whites:** 14.9 million, or 9.8% of all non-Hispanic whites aged 20 years or older have diabetes.

**Non-Hispanic Blacks:** 3.7 million, or 14.7% of all non-Hispanic blacks aged 20 years or older have diabetes.

For more information, please contact the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383).

*Information courtesy of the American Diabetes Association*

## Don't Miss our Upcoming Lunch and Learns!

*We hope you can join us for our next two Lunch and Learns:*

*Diabetes Prevention and Management*

*with Dr. Carol Otte*

*Friday, September 18, 2009*

*11:30 a.m.—1 p.m.*

*Community Concerns*

*with Officer Ron Jackson, 35th Police District*

*Friday, October 16, 2009*

*11:30 a.m.—1 p.m.*

*Please contact the West Oak Lane NORC at 215-924-4815 to register.*

*Early registration will guarantee your spot and your free lunch.*



*Please note: registration a week in advance is required. These sessions are open to adults 60+ in 19138 and 19126, and others should space permit.*

## Prevent & Manage Congestive Heart Failure

If you have congestive heart failure, you're not alone. About 5.0 million Americans are living with it today. In fact, it's one of the most common reasons people 65 and older go into the hospital. It can take years for heart failure to develop. So if you don't yet have it but are at risk for it, you should make lifestyle changes now to prevent it!

### Does your heart stop?

When you have heart failure, it doesn't mean that your heart has stopped beating. It means that your heart isn't pumping blood as it should. The heart

keeps working, but the body's need for blood and oxygen isn't being met.

### What can happen?

- Heart does not pump enough blood.
- Blood backs up in veins.
- Fluid builds up, causing swelling in feet, ankles and legs. This is called "edema."
- Body holds too much fluid.
- Fluid builds up in lungs, called "pulmonary congestion."
- Body does not get enough blood, food and oxygen.

### What are the signs?

- Shortness of breath,

especially when lying down

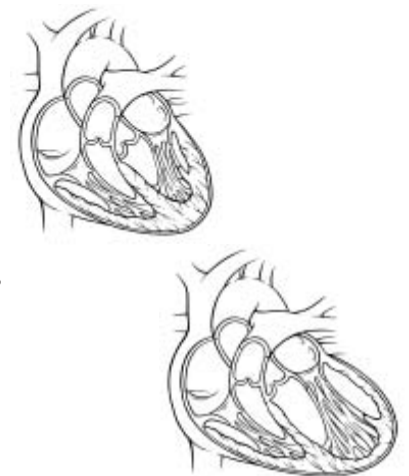
- Tired, run-down feeling
- Swelling in feet, ankles and legs
- Weight gain from fluid buildup
- Confusion or inability to think clearly

### What can I do?

- Follow your doctor's advice.
- Take your medicine the way you should.
- Weigh daily to check for increased fluid.
- Eat a healthful diet that's low in salt and saturated fat.

### How can I learn more?

1. Talk to your doctor, nurse or other healthcare professionals.



*The top diagram shows a normal heart; the lower one shows an enlarged heart, which is a frequent result of heart failure.*

2. Call 1-800-AHA-USA1 (1-800-242-8721).

**Knowledge is power, so Learn and Live!**

*Information provided by the American Heart Association*

West Oak Lane NORC

6812 Ogontz Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19138  
Phone: 215-924-4815  
Fax: 215-924-4816



*The West Oak Lane NORC Initiative opened its doors in August, 2007. Its mission is to connect older adults with the resources that they need to remain in the community as they age. A non-profit program with free services available to area residents, the West Oak Lane NORC is funded by Ogontz Avenue Revitalization Corporation (OARC) and the Green Tree Community Health Foundation.*

*The NORC began through the Strategic Alliance for the Elderly (SAFE), a partnership in Northwest Philadelphia that came to fruition in 2004. SAFE strives to strengthen the community's capacity to meet the needs of older adults by sharing knowledge, pooling resources, and pursuing collaborative opportunities that improve service delivery and enable older adults to make informed choices and enjoy greater access to health and social services, while remaining a vital part of the neighborhoods in which they live.*

**We're on the Web!**  
[www.einstein.edu/norc](http://www.einstein.edu/norc)

- SAFE MEMBERS:**
- Albert Einstein Healthcare Network*
  - Belmont Behavioral Health Center in the Park*
  - Jaisohn Center*
  - Neighborhood Interfaith Movement*
  - Ogontz Avenue Revitalization Corp.*
  - Philadelphia Corporation for Aging*
  - Stapeley in Germantown*
  - Unitarian Universalist House Outreach*
  - The VNA of Greater Philadelphia*
  - West Oak Lane Senior Center*

Newsletter Editor: Sara Popkin




 **Don't miss our next home repair class at the Home Depot. Details are below:** 

 **Minor Electrical Repair**   
**Tuesday, September 29, 2009**  
**10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**  
**Cheltenham Home Depot**   
**Cost: FREE!** 

 **All participants receive a 10% discount from the Home Depot on that day!** 

 **Space is limited—Pre-registration is REQUIRED**   
**RSVP by Friday, September 25—Register early to guarantee your spot!** 

 **If you are age 60 and over and would like to participate in this free session at the Cheltenham Home Depot, please call us at the West Oak Lane NORC office: 215-924-4815. We will give you specific class location information when you call. We hope to see you there!** 