

Quote of the Month

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire."

W.B. Yeats

Pharmacy News**January 2012****Healthcare Dollar Study: 5% of Utilizers Consume 50% of Healthcare Costs**

According to a new study released on January 11 by the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), a mere 1% of Americans accounted for 22% of healthcare costs in 2009. Thus, each individual in that 1% group consumed about \$90,000 healthcare dollars. The report also noted that the top 5% of healthcare utilizers consumed 50% of healthcare costs: approximately \$36,000 for each individual. Including the top 10% of healthcare utilizers, accounted for almost two-thirds of all healthcare costs. Overall, according to the report, Americans spent \$1.26 trillion on healthcare in 2009.

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Introducing the 4D Discount Drug Card

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New Blood Thinner Linked to Higher Heart Attack Risk

But benefits of Pradaxa still outweigh risks for those with atrial fibrillation, experts say. The anticoagulant Pradaxa (dabigatran) is associated with a small increase in the risk of heart attack, a new review finds. Researchers from the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio looked at seven trials involving Pradaxa that included more than 30,000 patients. This process, called a meta-analysis, uses data from published clinical trials to tease out a pattern that might not show up in a single study. The researchers found Pradaxa was associated with an increased risk of heart attack or acute coronary syndrome (heart attack or angina), compared with two other commonly used blood thinners, warfarin (Coumadin, Jantoven) and enoxaparin (Lovenox).

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Nicotine Patch May Help Improve Memory, Study Finds

Nicotine may help tune up the brains of seniors suffering from mild memory loss, a new study shows. Researchers found that seniors suffering from mild cognitive impairment, or MCI, could boost their memories with a nicotine patch, according to the study published in Neurology. The patches also led to improvements in attention and mental processing. But these effects weren't as strong as the impact on memory, said study co-author Dr. Paul Newhouse, a professor of psychiatry and director of the Center for Cognitive Medicine at Vanderbilt Medical Center. "The take-home message for this is that nicotine may be helpful in those with early signs of memory loss," Newhouse said.

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Statins Cost 4 Times More in U.S. Than in U.K.

There is now some data behind complaints that prescription drugs cost more in the United States than in other industrialized nations. A study in the current issue of Pharmacotherapy found that the cost for drugs used to lower cholesterol is more than 400% higher in the United States than in the United Kingdom. The findings on the costs of statins are the first direct comparisons of prescription drug costs between the 2 countries. The study was done by the Boston University School of Medicine, Boston Collaborative Drug Surveillance Program.

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Schneiderman Prescription Drug Database Bill Gets Bipartisan Support

Attorney General Eric Schneiderman announced this morning bipartisan and law enforcement support—including from his former AG race foe—for his "I-STOP" bill that would create an online, real-time database to make it easier to track the dispensing of prescription drugs. The bill would require a centralized database that would store information on when certain drugs, like oxycodone, are prescribed and dispensed. It would allow doctors and pharmacists to check the online information to avoid doling out drugs to addicts who get prescriptions from multiple sources. It would also help shut down prescription drug trafficking, Schneiderman said.

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DEA Federally Controls Carisoprodol as a Schedule IV Substance, Establishes Regulatory Timeline

DEA's placement of carisoprodol in schedule IV subjects manufacturers, distributors, dispensers such as pharmacies and physicians, importers, exporters, and anyone in possession of the drug to the applicable provisions of the CSA and its implementing regulations, including administrative, civil and criminal sanctions.

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New App Adds Incentives to Go to the Gym

If a bulging waistline isn't enough of a motivator to go to the gym, a new iPhone app adds a financial incentive to provide that extra nudge. After providing a credit card, GymPact's users make a commitment for the number of times each week they will go to the gym, along with the financial penalty they will incur if they don't. At the end of the week, the company charges users who did not meet their goals. The money collected is distributed to users who kept their commitments. People who committed to more days get a bigger portion of the pooled money.

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FDA Drug Safety Communication:

Addition of another concentration of liquid acetaminophen marketed for infants

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is informing the public that an additional concentration of liquid acetaminophen marketed for "infants" (160 mg/5 mL) is now available at local stores. Until now, liquid acetaminophen marketed for infants was only available in 80 mg/0.8 mL or 80 mg/mL concentrations. This change in the concentration will affect the amount of liquid given to an infant, and should be especially noted if someone is accustomed to using the 80 mg /0.8 mL or 80 mg/mL concentrations of liquid acetaminophen.

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Airports Increase Nutritious Options, survey finds

Detroit's Metropolitan Wayne County Airport, which ranked last in the first survey, was No. 1 this year. It's the third-consecutive year that Detroit came out on top, with every one of its eateries offering at least one healthy bite. The survey considers healthy meals to be those that are vegetarian, cholesterol-free and low in fat.

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India Reports New Strain of 'Totally Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis'

Indian doctors have reported the country's first cases of "totally drug-resistant tuberculosis," a long-feared and virtually untreatable form of the killer lung disease. It's not the first time highly resistant cases like this have been seen. Since 2003, patients have been documented in Italy and Iran. It has mostly been limited to impoverished areas, and has not spread widely. But experts believe there could be many undocumented cases.

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Google Helps Emergency Room Docs to Predict Flu Trends

Google, the search-engine giant, may be able to help doctors anticipate when they'll get a surge in the number of patients they see with flu symptoms. That's the new finding from a team of doctors, based in Baltimore, who relied on Google Flu Trends, a service that tracks the number of flu-related Internet searches by folks like you and me. In an article this month in the journal Clinical Infectious Diseases, those doctors, led by Dr. Richard Rothman, an emergency medicine physician at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine describe how data from Google Flu Trends stacked up against conventional systems to track the spread of flu.

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Slightly Fewer Americans Were Obese In 2011, Report Finds

A new Gallup report shows that obesity in America has declined (albeit slightly) between 2010 and 2011 -- from 26.6 percent to 26.1 percent. The shift is likely caused by more Americans reporting that they were of normal weight in 2011 (going from 35.4 percent in 2010 to 36.1 percent in 2011), according to the report.

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January Health Awareness**Recommit to Health for Cervical Health Awareness Month**

Cervical Health Awareness Month

January is viewed as a time for a renewed commitment to oneself. This is a great time for women to spotlight their needs, especially after a busy year and holiday season spent focusing on others. January is Cervical Health Awareness Month and gives every woman the opportunity

National Birth Defects Prevention Month

to spend some time reflecting on not only her cervical health, but also her overall wellness. Cervical cancer is a topic that doesn't always get the attention it deserves.

National Glaucoma Awareness Month

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National Radon Action Month

Exclusive Interview with Laura Bush

Thyroid Awareness Month

We recently spoke with Bush about the couple's commitment to combating Africa's high cervical cancer rate with their \$75 million Pink Ribbon Red Ribbon initiative.

[Click here for the full list of January Health](#)

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[Awareness Topics](#)

The People's Clinic, "What We Should All Know About Cervical Cancer."

Did you know that, According to the American Cancer Society, cervical cancer will be diagnosed in about 12,000 women in the United States this year, and approximately 4,100 women will die from it? African-American women develop cervical cancer more often than white women and are twice as likely to die from it. Proper screening and medical management can protect the women we love - our mothers, daughters, sisters, grandmothers, and friends.

What is cervical cancer, and what causes it?

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Preventing Birth Defects

Not all birth defects are preventable, but a woman can drastically increase her chances of having a healthy full-term infant through the proper prenatal care. According to Dr. Sereena Coombes, of Glens Falls Obstetrics & Gynecology Center, most defects happen in the very beginning stages of pregnancy, often before a woman even realizes she's pregnant.

"Pregnancy planning is really the very best way to prevent birth defects. When a pregnancy is planned, women can begin taking the right vitamins and avoid certain drugs and medications that can be potentially harmful. The development that happens in the first few weeks and months are very important, so knowing what to do ahead of time can make a huge difference," Coombes said.

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HEALTH- January: Glaucoma Awareness Month

This January is Glaucoma Awareness Month and the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Eye Care America want to remind people that knowing your risks for glaucoma can save your sight. Glaucoma remains a leading cause of preventable blindness because it often goes undetected, with about half of the three million Americans who have the disease being unaware of it. This group of eye disorders is characterized by damage to the optic nerve, the pressure-sensitive cable of over one million nerve cells. The optic nerve sends visual information from the eye to the brain. Optic nerve damage occurs with elevation of eye pressure. Fortunately, early detection and treatment can help preserve sight.

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Glaucoma Known as 'Sneaky' Disease

Regular eye exams only way to prevent vision loss. Darlene Fisher, 57, of Madison went to see her eye doctor for a regular exam several years ago, and abnormal results were detected. The pressure in her eyes was elevated. She was told to come back in three weeks to get them rechecked. "I scared me it's not getting any better. We need to do something about it," Fisher recalls. The diagnosis was glaucoma. "Scared said to death," says the fifth-grade teacher. "I thought I was going to go blind and all kinds of stuff." Her experience emphasizes the importance of getting regular eye exams to detect what ophthalmologists refer to as a silent disease.

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Radon Action Month: Is Radon seeping into your home?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has officially designated January 2012 to be National Radon Action Month. Radon is a naturally-occurring, radioactive gas that seeps out of the ground and can enter homes and other buildings. Since radon is invisible and odorless, the only way to know if a home has dangerous levels of the gas is to conduct a radon test. Radon problems have been found in every county in the United States so the Surgeon General is recommending that all homes be tested. Further, EPA estimates that radon is responsible for more than 21,000 lung cancer deaths per year in the United States. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. after smoking and the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. Since radon does not have an odor and is invisible, people tend to downplay the health effects and ignore the possibility that there might be a silent killer within the walls of their home, according to health officials.

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January is Thyroid Awareness Month

January means different things to different people -- a new calendar year, a new college semester, resolutions to be kept, goals to achieve. It also happens to be Thyroid Awareness Month. Why devote an entire month toward this gland that most of us never consider at all? Well, the truth is that 59 million of us in this country have some kind of thyroid dysfunction, and most of those 59 million don't even realize it. So it's very important to understand what the thyroid does, what can go wrong with it, and the signs for which to watch.

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