

YALE HEALTH CARE

news from Yale Health
fall 2014

Childhood Illnesses
Managing Care
Flu Clinics



MEDICATION REMINDERS
FOOT CARE
STRETCHING ADVICE



What's a Parent To Do?

Pediatric advice on childhood illnesses

IT'S THE END OF A LONG DAY. The dishes are done, the lunches are packed and it's finally time to relax for a few minutes before bed. And then you hear a cough coming from your child's room. You go in to check it out, bend down to kiss their forehead, and notice they feel a little warm.

Then the wheels start turning.

Should I keep them home from school or daycare? Who is going to stay home with them?

And, of course, do they need to see the doctor?

PARENTS CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE

*Dr. Christopher DeSanto
checks a child's ears
during an appointment in
the Pediatric Department.*

PARENTS CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

“Being a parent is one of the best gifts in the world and one of the hardest jobs in the world,” said Cheryl Carden, RN, assistant manager of the Pediatric Department. “Childhood illnesses are a part of growing up. Most can be cared for easily, but we don’t expect parents to differentiate what’s okay and what’s not. That’s why we’re here and we want families to use us for these questions.”

Pediatric triage nurses are available by phone Monday–Friday from 7:30 am–5:00 pm. Calling first is an important step to getting information and advice on your child’s illness as quickly as possible. You should plan to communicate to the nurse your child’s symptoms, how long they have persisted, along with latest temperature readings if a fever is present. This information will assist the nurse in making the best decision for your child.

“So much of pediatric triage is education about homecare,” Carden said. “Many childhood illnesses can be treated with homecare and the triage nurses are here to guide you through that. Part of their goal is

to assess who should be seen in the office and who can be safely cared for at home.”

There are not always set rules as to when to keep your child home from school or daycare, which makes speaking with a triage nurse about their symptoms so important, Carden said.

Many childhood illnesses can be treated with homecare and the triage nurses are here to guide you through that.

Cheryl Carden, RN

When it comes to a fever, it’s not just about the number that shows up on the thermometer. It’s the number combined with how your child is acting.

“It’s never just one thing. It’s the whole picture,” she said. “What we’re looking for is if they’re moving in the right direction or the wrong direction. Are they drinking fluids? Are they going to the bathroom? It’s really about how they’re acting.”

Viral illnesses such as the common cold usually last about a week. As long as your child is behaving normally and breathing

comfortably they can typically attend school or daycare. If your child’s symptoms are worsening or not improving such as more frequent coughing, any labored breathing, or a persistently high fever, you should contact the Pediatric Department for advice.

“You know your child better than anyone and you know when something isn’t quite right,” Carden said. “We’re here for any questions. There is nothing too small.”

While your child’s overall symptoms and behavior are most important, there are some numbers you should keep in mind.

For instance, if your baby is under 3 months old and has a fever of 100.4 F you should contact the Pediatric Department right away.

“I don’t want parents to ever feel they can’t call us,” Carden said. “We have nurses with years of experience and lots of knowledge who can help guide them through these childhood years. Bringing up children is a challenge and nothing can prepare you for it. Every parent goes through these things. We’re here to help guide them through this foreign territory.”

SCHOOL OR HOME?

The following is a general list of situations in which you should **keep your child home** from school or daycare and call the office:

- + **fever of over 100.4 F (under 3 months)**
- + **fever of over 104 F (any age)**
- + **uncontrolled/severe cough**
- + **labored breathing**
- + **persistent vomiting and/or diarrhea**
- + **severe sore throat**
- + **significant or spreading rash**
- + **persistent or severe earache**
- + **persistent or severe headache**
- + **significant eye redness and/or discharge**

The following situations probably **do not require staying home** from school or daycare:

- + **mild cough or runny nose**
- + **minor sore throat**
- + **minor stomachache**

Children generally can return to school when they are free of signs of illness. If you have any questions about keeping your child home from school, when they can be sent back, or how best to treat symptoms, please contact the Pediatric Department at 203-432-0206.



Each of us
can improve
our own
health and
help make
the best use
of healthcare
resources.

FROM THE DESK OF MICHAEL RIGSBY, MD

Directly or indirectly, we all pay for health care.

Americans pay for healthcare services in several ways. Programs like Medicare and Medicaid are funded largely through payroll taxes, and we all feel that impact. Those who have to purchase insurance on their own or who go uninsured and risk financial calamity for a serious illness are all too aware of the cost of keeping healthy. **But those of us who are fortunate enough to have generous employer-provided insurance options – like Yale Health – often don't fully appreciate how healthcare costs affect us individually.**

Princeton economist, Uwe Reinhardt, suggested in a *New York Times* article on July 2, 2014, that employer funding of health insurance is something of an illusion, in that the cost of providing this benefit negatively impacts wage and salary growth. Whether or not you agree, it's pretty clear that every dollar Yale spends on the healthcare benefit is a dollar that doesn't go toward the University's core academic mission. In a very concrete way, the high fringe benefit costs directly impact hiring, program development, research funding, and investments in growth. So directly or indirectly, we do all feel the burden of rising healthcare costs.

Yale is not alone in this regard. **Every employer struggles with healthcare costs that often rise by double-digit percentages year-over-year.** As a result, many employers have increased cost-sharing in the form of more co-pays, deductibles, and higher premium contributions. Others have offered reduced coverage or high-deductible options.

If you buy the notion that we're already sharing in the burden of healthcare costs, then the question becomes not so much one of how the costs are shared as how we can "bend the cost curve" and lower overall healthcare expenditures. Yale Health already provides great value to the University in that we offer a very rich benefit at a significantly lower cost than the Aetna-administered alternative plan. But we can, collectively, do even more.

This issue of the newsletter touches on the importance of taking charge of your own health. Each of us, by adopting healthy lifestyles, using prevention services, and becoming active partners in managing chronic disease conditions can improve our own health and help make the best use of healthcare resources. We must also become aware of the services that don't add value such as unnecessary antibiotics, the insistence on brand-name drugs, the over-use of emergency rooms, among others.

But Yale Health must also purchase healthcare services – especially hospital and specialty care – in the larger marketplace. We have recently entered into a groundbreaking agreement with the specialists of Yale Medical Group to provide specialty care services in an exclusive arrangement that benefits both Yale Health and Yale Medical Group in a risk-sharing arrangement.

As consumers, we should also be aware of the ways our current healthcare system contributes to the high cost of care. Hospitals and emergency rooms costs, for instance, are driven up by the cost of providing care to the uninsured and those who do not have access to preventive services. Supporting policies that strengthen the primary care infrastructure and decrease the number of uninsured benefit all of us by lowering these costs.

We live in a time of great change with regard to health care. By becoming more engaged and more aware of the way that each of us, directly or indirectly, share in the burden of higher healthcare costs, we can all contribute to making the system work better for everyone.

Michael Riggsby MD MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Managing Your Care

A healthy lifestyle begins with you

HEALTH CARE IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING. One of the biggest changes to your health care isn't what happens in your clinician's office. It is what happens at home.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 7 of the 10 leading causes of death in the United States are from chronic disease and approximately 50 percent of the US population is living with chronic disease. Self-management is an important part of managing chronic disease. This approach acknowledges the central role that you play in managing your own health.



Care Manager Jennifer Brackett, APRN

Jennifer Brackett, APRN, Care Management, said the emphasis on self-management has partially come from the fact that lifestyle issues such as smoking, physical activity, weight management, and diet play such an important role in the development and progression of chronic disease. Self-management is more than just providing education. It is making sure that you have the information you

need, understanding your role and your modifiable risk factors, and then developing an action plan together which includes setting realistic goals.

"The concept behind self-management is to give patients the tools that they need to make healthy lifestyle changes and then coaching them along the way," said Brackett. "You have to meet people where they are. Lifestyle change is hard and just having the information is not enough. The coach approach to lifestyle change is one where we acknowledge that the patient has what they need to make a change and it's just helping them figure out what they are willing to do. In some instances, it's just one small change such as cutting out sweetened beverages. It's very individualized. I try to determine where patients are with their understanding of their illness and then look closer at their lifestyle patterns to see where we might best focus our efforts."

Brackett has been meeting Yale Health members for Preventive Health Consultations for several months. It is a program that arose out of an outreach collaboration project with Being Well at Yale, the university-wide wellness initiative, as well as group education classes on topics such as diabetes prevention that Brackett has been leading at Yale Health.

"We work to figure out what you're doing now and what goals you want to meet," Brackett said. "We may talk about diet and I can provide some suggestions about changes to make or how you can prepare foods differently. Sometimes it's just a case of needing support. There is a lot of follow-up and communication by e-mail or phone."

Ensuring you have the proper resources at your disposal is one of the biggest keys

to a successful self-management plan, Brackett said. She can help suggest online or paper resources and tracking tools for things such as diet and exercise, menu planning, and healthy recipes.

"Most people have some basic understanding of their issue and just need some guidance," Brackett said. "Others aren't quite sure what the issue really is and need help identifying their barriers. Some just need some reinforcement and some need that accountability of having someone else involved."

During the first few months of meeting with Yale Health members for Preventive Health Consultations, Brackett said she has seen a wide variety of people looking to improve their health. With appointments

Are you ready to make a change?

Your Preventive Health Consultation may include:

- + Risk assessment/risk reduction
- + Making healthy food choices
- + Stress management
- + Smoking cessation
- + Blood pressure management
- + Medication review and teaching
- + Lifestyle coaching
- + Cholesterol management
- + Weight management
- + Increasing your physical activity
- + Diabetes prevention and management

To schedule an appointment call
203-432-0093 or 203-436-5791

Lifestyle change is hard and just having the information is not enough.

Jennifer Brackett, APRN

lasting roughly 45 minutes, Brackett said she has the luxury of time in determining how best to help patients to better manage their care.

While no referral is needed to make an appointment for a Preventive Health Consultation, many of the people who have already met with Brackett were referred by their primary care clinician and range from patients needing help managing stress or quitting smoking to patients with chronic conditions such as diabetes or hypertension.

“This might be one of the most important things for patients with chronic conditions to get involved in,” Brackett said. “Just deciding to take your medication every day is a big deal. Taking the extra time to make sure you understand the importance of everything you are supposed to be doing will really help you in the long run.”

“The approach to managing chronic disease has changed,” she said. “There are still people who want to be told what to do and then either they will do it or they won’t, but I think many people are looking to play a more active role in their health. We certainly know that their outcomes and their levels of satisfaction tend to be much better when they do.”

To schedule a Preventive Health Consultation, call 203-432-0093 or 203-436-5791.

Briefs



Flu Schedule

ADULT CLINICS The following flu clinics are available to Yale University employees, students, and Yale Health members.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
WEDNESDAY, OCT. 1	10 AM – 3 PM	Yale Health Center (Senior and high risk only)
THURSDAY, OCT. 9	10 AM – 3 PM	Med School, Harkness Lounge
TUESDAY, OCT. 14	10 AM – 3 PM	Yale Health Center
FRIDAY, OCT. 17	10 AM – 3 PM	West Campus
THURSDAY, OCT. 23	1 PM – 6 PM	Yale Health Center
MONDAY, OCT. 27	10 AM – 3 PM	Med School, Harkness Lounge
WEDNESDAY, OCT. 29	10 AM – 3 PM	Woolsey Hall, President’s Room
WEDNESDAY, NOV. 12	10 AM – 3 PM	Med School, Harkness Lounge
FRIDAY, NOV. 14	10 AM – 3 PM	Yale Health Center
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 3	1 PM – 6 PM	Yale Health Center

FAMILY CLINICS The following flu clinics are only available to children 6 months and older who are Yale Health members **and their parents** who are Yale University employees or Yale Health members. Children under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. No registration is necessary.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
WEDNESDAY, OCT. 15	4:30 PM – 7 PM	Yale Health Center Pediatric Department
SATURDAY, OCT. 25	9 AM – 1 PM	Yale Health Center Pediatric Department
WEDNESDAY, NOV. 5	4:30 PM – 7 PM	Yale Health Center Pediatric Department

PEDIATRIC CLINICS Registration for pediatric flu clinics for children under the age of 18 is available at yalehealth.yale.edu/flu. Pediatric clinics are available to Yale Health pediatric patients only.

Children under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

- + **Remember** to wear clothes that allow you to easily reveal your upper arm.
- + **Remember** to bring your Yale University ID badge.

New Clinicians Join Yale Health



Roland M. Jermyn, MD
ACUTE CARE

Roland Jermyn has joined Acute Care as the department's team chief after spending the past year as an attending emergency physician at Yale-New Haven Hospital. Previously, he had served in the same role at Bridgeport Hospital for four years.

Jermyn earned his undergraduate degree at Colgate University in 1996 and his medical degree from the University of Maryland School of Medicine in 2005.

He completed his residency in emergency medicine at Yale-New Haven Hospital. Jermyn was also chief resident of emergency medicine at Yale-New Haven Hospital.

He is a diplomat on the American Board of Emergency Medicine and was honored by the University of Maryland School of Medicine with the I. Earl Pass Memorial Award for Exceptional Proficiency in Internal Medicine.



Amanda Brei, APRN
OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY

Amanda Brei has recently transitioned from Yale Health's Care Management Department to the Obstetrics & Gynecology Department.

Brei received her BA in psychology from Columbia University in 2004 and her MSN from Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions in 2007.

She is an adult nurse practitioner whose training and professional experience has focused on health care for women. The majority of her master's level training took place at Women's Health Associates at Massachusetts General Hospital, where she also worked as a triage nurse.

She spent over three years working as a nurse practitioner at Planned Parenthood of New York City, providing gynecologic care and family planning services to a diverse population of women.

She has extensive clinical experience in a wide range of women's health issues, sexual health, and family planning services.

She is certified as an adult nurse practitioner through the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

Briefs



Register for MyChart

MyChart offers you personalized and secure online access to portions of your medical records. It enables you to securely use the Internet to help manage and receive information about your health.

How to get an access code:

- + A code will be printed on your "After Visit Summary" at each clinical appointment at Yale Health.
- + Staff at any Yale Health clinical reception area can e-mail you an activation code upon check-in.
- + Member Services staff can e-mail you an activation code once you provide photo identification.



Call First

When the unexpected happens, call your primary care department to speak with a nurse before walking in to Acute Care. After hours, weekends, and holidays, call Acute Care directly at 203-432-0123. For life-threatening emergencies, immediately call 911.

PHARMACY

How can I remember to take my medications?

⊕ One of the most common ways people remember to take their medications is by using a pill box. These work well as long as you know the medication you are putting in the pill box because once they are out of their prescription bottle they are not labeled and it is easy to confuse medications.

You can also use sticky notes in an easily visible space or set an alarm clock to remember to take certain medications at specific times.

If you want to use technology to help you remember, there are smart phone apps available that will send you an alert when it is time to take your medication. You will need to know all of your medications in order to set up the app.

Creating a daily ritual or adding taking your medication to part of a daily routine such as brushing your teeth or before making your morning coffee may be helpful.

You may also have trouble remembering if you have missed a dose of your medication. In this case, you should contact your pharmacist for advice. If your pharmacist is unavailable, you should take your next dose of medication as scheduled.



Martha Asarisi, RPh
Pharmacy

FITNESS

When and how should I stretch?

⊕ Stretching before and after physical activity is important to maintain muscle length and flexibility.

You should warm up your muscles prior to your activity in a motion similar to the activity itself. If you are going to run, you may want to run in place. If you are going to be bending backwards, you want to start to work into that motion. Stretching prior to activity should last in the 5 to 10 second range per muscle.

Following the activity, you want to stretch to let your muscles cool down and gain some length and the stretching should last closer to 15 to 30 seconds per muscle.

Stretching should feel a bit uncomfortable, but you should be able to hold a stretch without much difficulty or pain. The point of stretching is to relax your muscles and gain length and it should not be painful.

There are times when you may feel muscle tightness while stretching, but it may be that muscle is meant to be tight. If you are experiencing pain while stretching, you should consult your primary care clinician.



Aaron Clark, DPT
Physical Therapy

Making the Rounds

HEALTH AND WELLNESS INFORMATION
FROM YALE HEALTH'S CLINICAL STAFF

HOME CARE

What should I know about foot care?

⊕ The first step in proper foot care is washing and inspecting your feet daily. You should make sure there are no blisters, cuts, sores or boils on your feet or in between your toes.

If you do find a cut or sore in an open area of your feet, you should apply Bacitracin and a band aid to help prevent infection. If you notice the cut or sore is getting worse, you should contact your primary care clinician.

Finding the proper footwear is also important when it comes to foot care. **Shoes should be comfortable and offer a lot of support to your feet.** They should not be too loose or too tight. If you see redness on your foot when you remove your shoes, they are not fitting properly.

You should always wear protective covering on your feet. **Walking barefoot, even at the beach, could lead to cuts and infections.**

Proper foot care is especially important if you have diabetes as you are more susceptible to foot infections and injuries and need to pay special attention to the way you care for your feet. If you are diabetic and have sensation in your feet, you should cut your toenails straight across and never in the corners.



If you have lost sensation in your feet, you should contact a medical professional to discuss toenail care.

Vanessa Jefferson, APRN, CDE
Internal Medicine



For more on these topics, listen to the complete healthcasts on yalehealth.yale.edu/healthcasts.

Yale Health Center
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New Haven, CT 06511

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KEEP IN MIND

Pharmacy Academic Hours

The Pharmacy has resumed academic hours effective
Tuesday, September 2nd.

MONDAY	8:00 AM – 6:30 PM
TUESDAY	8:00 AM – 7:00 PM
WEDNESDAY	8:00 AM – 7:00 PM
THURSDAY	8:30 AM – 6:30 PM
FRIDAY	8:00 AM – 6:30 PM
SATURDAY	8:30 AM – 3:30 PM

Published by Yale Health
55 Lock Street
New Haven, CT 06511
203 432 0246
yalehealth.yale.edu
EMAIL member.services@yale.edu

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