

## Pharmacy Moving Towards “Preferred” Medications



Deciding which medications should be stocked in the YUHS Pharmacy is an ongoing process. These medications are collectively known as the “formulary.” Changes in the formulary occur for many reasons, including having new drugs coming on the market, old drugs going off the market, and drugs going off patent (and therefore allowing for the production of generic versions). Our internal Pharmacy and Therapeutics committee, which consists of pharmacists and clinicians, is constantly reviewing drug-related information in order to assure that the formulary contains the most effective and beneficial medications for YHP members.

Recently, we have focused on selecting “preferred” drugs in certain categories and in working with clinicians to switch patients to these medica-

tions. In all cases, the preferred drug is clinically equivalent to or superior to the patient’s previous medication, has been approved for dispensing by the patient’s clinician, and is often more cost-effective. In all cases, patients will be informed, either in person at the Pharmacy or by letter, about any medication changes.

In addition, remember the Pharmacy automatically fills prescriptions with an equivalent generic medication when available. According to Pharmacy director Donna Gayman, RPh, “Many commonly used medications will be going off patent this year and generics will become available at a substantially reduced price. We always let the patient know when we change to a generic.”

Members who have any questions about these changes are welcome to call the Pharmacy at 203-432-0033.

## Information

### PNEUMOVAX NOTE

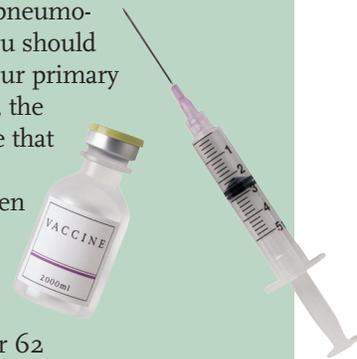
Wondering whether you should get the pneumovax vaccine, which protects against pneumonia? While you should check with your primary care clinician, the guidelines are that the vaccine should be taken by those in these categories:

- anyone over 62
- adults with diabetes or with chronic heart, lung, liver or kidney disease
- adults with compromised immune systems due to long term steroid or chemotherapy treatments

The vaccine is available at the walk-in clinics held in the YUHS Immunization Department on the 4th floor. Hours are 8:30 am to 4:30 pm every weekday except Tuesday.

### FLU SHOTS FOR ALL

Flu shots are available at no cost to the Yale community through the YUHS Office of Health Promotion and Education on the 4th floor at 17 Hillhouse Avenue. The vaccine is available on a walk-in basis on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 am–4:30 pm. For more information, please call 203-432-0093 or the flu clinic hotline at 203-432-4094.



*continued on back cover*

# healthy ideas



## THINK ZINC?

Adequate zinc is necessary for proper functioning of the immune system, and some studies have shown that zinc lozenges can reduce the duration of cold symptoms if taken when symptoms first appear. The benefits of zinc therapy appeared greatest when it was started within 24 hours of the onset of cold symptoms.

One problem with these lozenges is that many people find the taste unpleasant, and some experience nausea. If you decide to try them the next time you get the sniffles, take no more than 12 a day (one lozenge about every 2 hours); children should take no more than 6 daily. Also, note that “more” is not necessarily “better,” as oversupplementation of zinc may impair the immune system. Research has shown that less than 50 mg

a day is safe but larger amounts over long periods may have unwanted effects such as interference with copper metabolism and lowering the levels of good cholesterol in the blood (HDL) and raising bad cholesterol (LDL). A zinc supplement should provide between 15-30 mg per day, or for children 10 mg per day. The following are good food sources of zinc: oysters (richest source), red meats, poultry, shrimp, crab, and other shellfish. Other good, though less easily absorbed sources, include legumes (especially lima beans, black-eyed peas, pinto beans, soybeans, peanuts), whole grains, miso, tofu, brewer’s yeast, cooked greens, mushrooms, green beans, and pumpkin seeds.

## MIX AND MATCH WITH CARE

With the coming of the cold weather, we spend more time in confined spaces, where we are more likely to come into contact with colds and other viruses. If you take self-help cold remedies, including herbal items, be careful about mixing them with prescription medications. Always ask your pharmacist about the potential for interactions between pre-

scription and over-the-counter medications. Read the inserts which come with your medication to learn about drug interactions which may make the drugs less effective, cause unexpected side effects or even cause health problems. For instance: Decongestants will help your runny nose but may also affect your blood pressure, whether you are on blood pressure medication or not. Many over the counter cold medications already contain high doses of ibuprofen or acetaminophen, so be very careful if you take either of them while also taking combination cough syrups. You may end up taking amounts which exceed the recommended daily dose.

Useful websites on this topic:

<http://www.fda.gov/cder/consumerinfo/druginteractions.htm>

Provides examples of drugs you should not take together without clinician approval and of drug interaction warnings with common conditions (such as lactose intolerance).

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/herbalmedicine.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/herbalmedicine.html)

Search for articles on herbal medicine.

[www.med.yale.edu](http://www.med.yale.edu)

Go to “healthlink,” to view the guide which contains information on interaction between common prescribed and over-the-counter medications.

## YHP Staff

### NEW CHIEF FOR OB/GYN



DAVID M. ROTH, M.D. has been named as the new chief of YUHS’s Obstetrics and Gynecology Department. Educated at Princeton,

he received his medical degree from Cornell University Medical College, trained as a resident at New York Hospital and then joined the medical faculty at Cornell. Prior to his arrival at YUHS this past August, Roth was chief of Ob/Gyn at Westchester Medical Group. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Obstetrics and Gynecology and brings to YUHS broad experience in both clinical practice and administration. Outside of his medical practice, he is busy with his family and “finding time for sailing, bicycling and tennis.”



NANCY BANACK, RPT, a certified hand specialist has joined the YUHS Physical Therapy Department as the primary resource for hand therapy services. She has worked with patients recovering from surgery, suffering from trauma and experiencing neurological problems, with an area of concentration in outpatient orthopedics. Educated at Southern Connecticut State University and Quinnipiac University, Banack has worked with both children and adults in a variety of settings. She practiced for six years at Yale New Haven Hospital prior to coming to YUHS.



MARK THERIAULT, PHARM.D., a 2001 graduate of the University of Connecticut’s doctoral program in pharmacy, came to YUHS in July as the newest member of the Pharmacy

staff. His particular interest is in patient education and he has worked with patients in ambulatory settings, focusing on diabetes, asthma and anti-coagulation management.

### ELLA GIBSON RETIRES

Ella Gibson retired this summer after nearly 45 years of service at Yale, the last 24 of them at YUHS. A shift coordinator for the ISS department—responsible for monitoring computers and overseeing computer operators—she was one of the cadre of behind-the-scenes individuals whose work was essential to the smooth day-to-day functioning of this medical facility. When she received the 1999 Director’s Award for outstanding service, Gibson was cited for being “...the backbone of the ISS Department, holding together the daily processing of YHP data, seamlessly...with acute attention to detail” and “unflappably capable in an environment of constant change.”



# from the desk of

## PAUL GENECIN, MD

DIRECTOR, YALE UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES

We conceived *yale health care* as a vehicle for providing the latest health information and for sharing good news about our many services and programs. Our features have reflected the optimism that distinguishes the atmosphere of YUHS from much of the generally gloomy climate that has pervaded the health care industry over the past decade or more.

But then came September 11. The nation groped in confusion after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and the crash in Pennsylvania of a hijacked jet. We faced the reality of a war in central Asia while a new concern arose: biological terrorism. Now we cannot read a newspaper, look at the television or listen to the radio without confronting news about dreadful infections. We are fortunate to have a free press and ready access to information. Yet the sheer volume can be overwhelming and the news media present interview after interview with experts and pundits. Many of them provide needed perspective, but others fan the flames of anxiety by speculating about every imaginable worst case scenario.

In a world that seems to have gone crazy, how can reasonable people take sensible precautions? As director of YUHS, I am fortunate to work with exceptional people within my own health plan, within Yale University, and at the local, state and national levels. All are committed and trained to respond to health emergencies. And I want to offer reassurance. Terrorist attacks on

our community are very unlikely and at the same time, our level of preparedness is excellent.

The primary role of clinicians working on the front lines is quick recognition and reporting of medical conditions resulting from terrorism or other emergencies. Many are concerned that these agents, such as plague, small pox and anthrax, are so rare that today's clinicians know about them only from textbooks. In fact, clinicians throughout the country, and specifically at YUHS, are now extremely well versed in these diseases and prepared to act in the unlikely event of an outbreak.

In addition, clinicians do not act alone. At Yale, we have capable colleagues in the University Police Department, the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, Yale School of Medicine and elsewhere. Within New Haven, we collaborate with the Department of Health and the law enforcement community. We are in close contact with the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for clinical and public health updates. These partnerships ensure that we can work as a team to maintain the health of our community.

It also is important for us to remember that, while we are just as susceptible as ever to colds, coughs, skin rashes and other benign ailments, the agents of biological terrorism are highly unlikely to affect us. Common sense measures (eating a healthful diet, getting regular exercise, obtaining a flu shot, taking care when driving) even in difficult

times will go a long way towards keeping us healthy. At YUHS, we are ready to address the concerns of all our members. Take care of yourself and feel free to contact us with any questions.

### yale health care

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### TAX HINT

Many of our members request end-of-year printouts about their prescription medications to use for tax purposes and flexible benefits options. Here are some points to keep in mind:

- Please plan ahead. Printouts cannot be provided on the spot, but we are happy to take requests and mail printouts to you.
- To make a request, you must fill out tax insurance summary request and medical records release forms. You can mail us the completed forms, leave them in the prescription drop box, or drop them off in person at the Pharmacy. Forms are available at the Pharmacy or on the YUHS web site through the Pharmacy link. On the medical records release form, make sure to check the "prescription request" box.
- Please note that you cannot make this request for another member except in the case of a minor child, when the parent or legal guardian can sign.

### PARK THE CAR

Our parking lot at 17 Hillhouse Avenue has been renovated and expanded to include the area formerly located at 88 Trumbull Street, significantly enhancing the parking facilities available to our members. Additional patient parking is also available in Lot 37 across from YUHS near the corner of Hillhouse Avenue and Trumbull Street.

## Important telephone numbers

<b>Urgent Care</b>	432-0123
<i>Open 24 hrs/day, seven days per week</i>	
<b>Toll Free</b>	1-877-YHP-CARE
<b>Information</b>	432-0246
<b>Pharmacy</b>	432-0033
<i>Hours of operation</i>	
Monday–Wednesday, Friday	7:30 AM–6:30 PM
Thursday	8:30 AM–6:30 PM
Saturday	8:30 AM–3:30 PM
<b>Patient Representative</b>	432-0109
<b>Medicare/Retiree Coordinator</b>	432-8134
<b>Outpatient Referrals/Claims</b>	432-0250
<b>Inpatient Care Facility</b>	432-0001

# in touch

### HOLIDAY RECESS HOURS

<b>PRIMARY CARE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS</b>	<b>PHARMACY</b>
December 26, 27, 28 (8:30 am–5:00 pm)	December 24 (8:30 am–2:00 pm)
December 31 (8:30 am–12:30 pm)	December 26, 27, 28 (7:30 am–6:30 pm)
	December 31 (8:30 am–3:30 pm)
<b>LABORATORY</b>	<b>SPECIALTY DEPARTMENTS</b>
December 26, 27, 28 (8:30 am–5:00 pm)	Call each specialty department for its holiday schedule.
December 31 (8:30 am–12:30 pm)	
<b>RADIOLOGY</b>	<b>URGENT CARE</b>
December 24 (9:00 am–1:00 pm)	Care for urgent problems is available after hours, week-ends and holidays in the Urgent Care Department.
December 26, 27, 28 (8:30 am–5:00 pm)	
December 31 (9:00 am–1:00 pm)	

*Because of our recent 12-page special 30th anniversary edition, this issue of **yale health care** has been shortened. We will return to our regular 8-page format in January.*

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