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1720 Big Lake Road, Cloquet, MN 55720

Going Back to School During Swine Flu Season

Learning about the swine flu virus was scary enough this past spring, when it made headlines for the first time. Summer has given the nation a bit of a reprieve in terms of new cases diagnosed, but health experts say that the virus is poised for an aggressive comeback in the fall, just when children will be settling back into their school routines. And despite hundreds of schools nationwide shutting their doors as a precautionary measure when the virus first surfaced, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) is hoping to minimize school closings this fall by recommending that schools stay open unless a significant number of students or faculty fall ill. How can you keep your

child safe from the swine flu in this back-to-school season?

»**Err on the side of caution.** If your child seems under the weather, be safe and keep him home. That means not only no school, but no extracurricular activities either. If someone in your home is sick with swine flu, it's important to keep everyone home for a few days to minimize the spread of the disease.

»**Practice good hygiene.** Teach your child to cover her nose and mouth with a tissue when she sneezes or coughs, or cough and sneeze into the crook of her arm if no tissue is available. Hand washing is a must several times a day, especially after coughing or sneezing.

Keep hands away from eyes, noses, and mouths.

»**Keep germs at bay.** Wipe down computer keyboards and mice, as well as desk surfaces and chairs, with antibacterial solution. This is particularly important if your children share work spaces. Consider separating children who spend a lot of time in close proximity to each other—for instance, move desks apart or have one child bunk in another room for a few weeks.

»**Have a backup plan.** If the worst happens and you or your children contract swine flu, be ready. Have several days' worth of supplies stockpiled in the house, and stay in contact with your pediatrician.

Source: QualityHealth.com

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Persons not eligible for smoking cessation sessions and Nicotine Replacement Therapies at MNAW or CAIR can access QUITPLAN Services at St. Mary's QUITPLAN Center (218-786-2677).

QUITPLAN Helpline:
1-888-354-PLAN

Available to any Minnesota smoker, the QUITPLAN Helpline offers free professional telephone counseling to help you quit.

www.quitplan.com: The quitplan website offers free membership, helpful quitting tools and a chance to connect online with thousands of others

HDL: GOOD FOR HEARTS AND MINDS?

We've known for years that a healthy level of HDL (good cholesterol) benefits the heart. Now researchers report that HDL could also be important in preventing memory loss and dementia later in life. In one large study, participants with low HDL (blood levels less than 40mg/dl) had a 27 to 53 percent increased risk of memory loss compared to those in the high HDL (60mg/dl plus) group.

Source: Top Health, September 2009

Avoiding Diabetic Eye Complications

It's true: diabetes causes eye problems and may lead to blindness. Yes, people with diabetes have a higher risk of blindness than people without diabetes. To keep on top of this risk, if you are diabetic, make sure to have your yearly diabetic eye exam. That way, if you do develop a problem, you can detect it early and begin treatment as soon as possible.

Diabetic Retinopathy

The longer you've had diabetes, the more likely you are to have retinopathy. Diabetic retinopathy is a general term for all disorders of the

retina caused by diabetes. Almost everyone with type 1 diabetes, and most people with type 2 diabetes, will eventually develop retinopathy.

Several factors influence whether you get retinopathy. These include your blood sugar control, your blood pressure levels, how long you have had diabetes, and your genes. People who keep their blood sugar levels closer to normal are less likely to have retinopathy or to have milder forms.

Huge strides have been made in the treatment of diabetic retinopathy. The sooner retinopathy is diag-

nosed, the more likely treatment will be successful. The best results occur when sight is still normal.

What You Can Do

If you have diabetes, your retina can be badly damaged before you notice any change in vision. For this reason, the American Diabetes Association (ADA) recommends you have your eyes examined regularly by an eye care professional. In addition to these eye exams, remember to continue regular appointments with your primary care manager as well.

Source: TriWest Healthcare Alliance

8 Super Foods for Diabetics

You're probably aware of some of the bounty that has gained the nickname of "diabetic food" such as whole grains, fish and vegetables. But some pack more of a punch when it comes to fighting your disease. Add these eight super diabetic foods to your diet today.

1. Beans. Beans are loaded with dietary fiber; high-fiber foods break down more slowly in the bloodstream and help to stabilize your blood sugar. Beans are also very filling, so you're likely to eat less and reduce your overall calorie intake. Black, lima and pinto beans are the best choices, advises the American Diabetes Association. Recent research also shows that white kidney beans contain an enzyme that slows the breakdown of carbohydrate into sugar and promotes weight loss.

2. Cinnamon. This spice is everything

nice when it comes to fighting diabetes and is a tasty diabetic food. It increases your body's sensitivity to insulin so that glucose can enter cells. Just half a teaspoon of cinnamon lowers blood sugar levels significantly, so add some to your baking, tea, lemonade and sauces.

3. Fatty fish. Seafood such as salmon, trout, herring, albacore tuna and mackerel are packed with omega-3 fatty acids. These essential fatty acids help to lower triglycerides and bad cholesterol levels, which are often high in people who have diabetes.

4. Figs. These fruits are packed with fiber, so they do a great job at helping to control your blood sugar levels. Studies suggest that fig leaf supplements can also lower blood sugar levels, which boosts this fruit's reputation as a super diabetic food.

5. Green leafy vegetables. Veggies such as kale, spinach and Swiss chard may not win taste contests, but they're definitely on the diabetic food list. They're packed with magnesium and potassium. Magnesium helps to control blood sugar levels, and potassium helps to regulate blood pressure.

6. Green tea. According to the U of Maryland Medical Center, this antioxidant-rich beverage has been used traditionally to control blood sugar. Studies also indicate that green tea may help prevent type 1 diabetes and slow down the rate of progression once you have it. Green tea extract powder may also lower A1c levels if you have prediabetes.

7. Potatoes. Potato peel is packed with fiber so keep the skin on when you're cooking them to aid diabetes management.

8. Soy. This favorite with vegetarians and vegans is quickly becoming a favorite diabetic food. Soy protein and soy nuts can improve insulin sensitivity, and lower bad cholesterol. Soy nuts have the biggest impact, possibly because they provide soy protein, polyunsaturated fats and a greater amount of isoflavones.

Source: QualityHealth.com

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