

# Lifetime Health eNews

BUFFALO

OCTOBER 2011

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## Highest Rating Given to All Lifetime Practices

All 12 of Lifetime Health Medical Group's medical practices in Buffalo and Rochester have now received recognition as Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Homes from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCOA). Four of Lifetime Health's practices received the distinction in March, and the remaining eight have now achieved the national agency's highest designation. Only 437 practice sites in New York State were recognized as Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Homes as of August 2011, according to NCOA. Practices undergo a voluntary recognition process by NCOA to demonstrate they have the ability to provide patient-centered services consistent with the medical home model.

Essentially, the Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) reflects the approach that Lifetime Health Medical Group takes to patient care. Patient-centered means you are the most important member of your health care team and take an active role in your care and treatment. And, as your "medical home," we are the base of operations for keeping you healthy.



## Flu Shot Sessions at Lifetime Health

It's that time of year again when patients of all ages should be vaccinated against seasonal flu. Sessions begin October 1 at Lifetime Health Medical Group practices. Parents or guardians of children under the age of 3 should schedule an appointment for a flu shot with the child's pediatrician.

Session schedules and practice phone numbers are available on our website at [www.lifetimehealth.org/PatientInfo/FluInfo](http://www.lifetimehealth.org/PatientInfo/FluInfo). Check the calendar on this page for a time and location most convenient to you. Please note practice names are abbreviated, and each calendar includes a key. You may also call **716/656-4059** for more information.

## October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The National Cancer Institute estimates there were more than 230,000 new cases of breast cancer among women in 2011, and more than 2,000 breast cancer cases in men. Lifetime Health Medical Group physicians recommend men and women perform routine breast self-exams and discuss any changes in your breast tissue with your health care team. Women should schedule regular mammograms starting at age 40, or earlier if advised by your physician.

If you or someone you love is due for a mammogram, schedule an appointment today.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is a fitting time to dispel some **myths** surrounding the disease:

- **Finding a lump in your breast means you have breast cancer:** Eight out of 10 breast lumps turn out to be benign. However, it is important see your doctor if there are any changes in your breast tissue, including a lump, and schedule regular mammograms beginning at age 40.
- **Men do not get breast cancer:** While the percent of men who contract breast cancer is smaller than that of women, men can and do get breast cancer.
- **A mammogram can cause breast cancer to spread:** It is not possible for a mammogram to cause cancer to spread. Discuss any concerns you may have about a mammogram with your doctor or health care team.
- **Having a family history of breast cancer means you will get it:** As a precaution, doctors usually recommend women with a family history of breast cancer begin regular mammogram screenings at age 35. However, most women who have breast cancer have no family history.
- **Antiperspirants and deodorants cause breast cancer:** According to the National Cancer Institute (NCI), there has not been a link found between the use of underarm antiperspirants or deodorants and the development of breast cancer.

Schedule a mammogram at a Lifetime practice in October and receive a free gift! (while supplies last)



## Like Your Medical Team? Tell a Friend

Your Lifetime Health medical team enjoys the opportunity to work with you to help you meet your health goals. If you value the work they do in keeping you healthy, please tell others. Lifetime Health Medical Group physicians are accepting new patients and would appreciate the opportunity to meet friends, family and coworkers of our existing patients.

## Attention Medicare Patients: Enrollment is Earlier This Year

The fall Open Enrollment Period for Medicare is earlier this year. If you have Medicare and are looking to change your Medicare health or prescription drug coverage for 2012, you have between October 15 and December 7 to do so, unless there are special circumstances. These include if you have permanently moved out of your plan's service area or if you qualify for extra help paying for prescription medication, among others. On January 1, 2012, new coverage begins for those who switch or join a plan.

For new subscribers, Medicare covers all the costs for a one-time, comprehensive "Welcome to Medicare" preventive visit during the first 12 months of coverage. To take advantage of this opportunity, call your doctor once you have enrolled with Medicare and let us know you are scheduling a "Welcome to Medicare exam."

After the first 12 months, Medicare covers an annual "Wellness Visit" at no cost to you. This "wellness" visit gives you the opportunity to review your current health and risk factors and develop or update a personal prevention plan with your primary care provider or a member of his or her team. The exam is fully covered by Medicare once every 12 months. Check with your health plan to see if you are eligible.

Simply call your physician's office to schedule your appointment, and be sure to let us know that you are scheduling a "Medicare wellness exam."

The wellness visit is not a physical exam or a time to address new or ongoing problems. We will reschedule the wellness visit if any other issues require attention on that day.



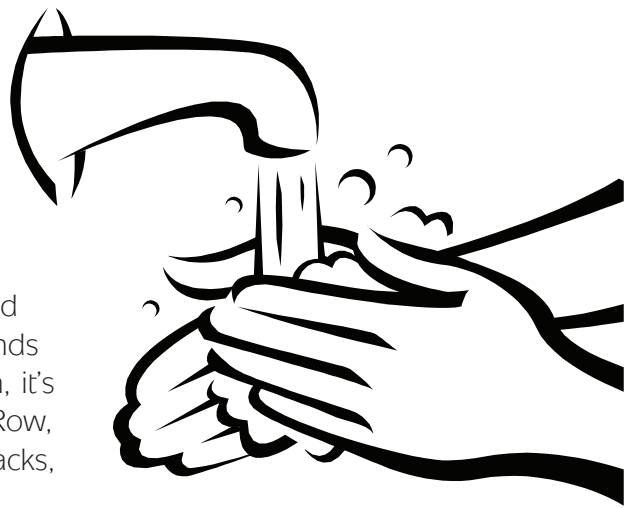
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## Hand Washing is Among Best Preventive Measures

One of the best ways to defend yourself and others against illness is frequent hand washing. It's impossible to avoid coming in contact with germs. However, washing your hands frequently – and correctly – can help limit those bacteria, viruses and other harmful microbes from entering your body through your nose or mouth. While it seems like a simple thing, hand washing is something not everyone takes enough time to do correctly. For effective hand washing, thoroughly wet your hands with running water, apply soap (liquid or bar works the same), lather well and continue to rub your hands together vigorously for at least 30 seconds. To teach children, it's useful to tell them to wash hands for as long as it takes to sing "Row, row, row your boat." Make sure to clean all surfaces: palms, backs, between fingers and under the nails. Rinse well and dry.



Soap and water work best for frequent washing and it's not necessary to use antibacterial soap. It's no more effective at killing germs than regular soap and may actually lead to the development of bacteria that are harder to kill in the future. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers (those that don't require water) are a good alternative when you can't get to soap and water. It's important to look at the active ingredients on the label to make sure it is at least 62 percent alcohol. Many sanitizers packaged for kids or in travel-friendly bottles have a nice smell and packaging but don't contain enough alcohol. Apply enough of the sanitizer to wet your hands completely. Rub your hands together vigorously, covering all surfaces, until they're dry.

While antimicrobial wipes or towelettes are not as effective as the alcohol-based sanitizers, they are another good option when you can't get to a sink and don't have liquid sanitizer with you.

In addition to washing your hands before preparing food or eating, also wash them when you've returned home from a public place, are about to treat a wound, come into contact with a sick person, feed someone or give medicine. Wash your hands after preparing raw foods such as meat, poultry or eggs; touching or cleaning up after an animal or touching the animal's toys or bedding; using a tissue; handling garbage or something that can be contaminated with germs or waste (diapers, raw food); using the bathroom; or whenever they look dirty.

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