

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Healthbeat

Study: Eye drops can slash blacks' chance of developing glaucoma

MIAMI (AP) — Black Americans who are at risk for glaucoma could cut their chance of developing the disease in half by using special eye drops, according to a study published last week.

Blacks are nearly three times more likely than whites to suffer from glaucoma, which can cause a gradual, irreversible loss of vision. But previous studies, which showed the drops to be effective, failed to draw conclusions specific to blacks.

Dr. Richard Parrish, a University of Miami researcher who contributed to the study published in the journal Archives of Ophthalmology, said the research indicates that even people who are at high-risk for the disease can be helped by preventive measures.

More than 1,600 people at risk for glaucoma participated in the seven-year study at 22 centers around the country, including the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute at the University of Miami.

Roughly 8 percent of the black patients given eye drops developed signs of glaucoma during the study, about half the rate of those who were not treated with drops. Among patients of other races, signs of the disease appeared in 4 percent of those treated with drops, and 11 percent of those not treated.

The study should help settle a debate over when to prescribe eye drops to patients at risk for glaucoma, researchers said.

Arcury wins national award

Thomas Arcury, Ph.D., of Winston-Salem, has been named "Outstanding Rural Health Researcher" by the National Rural Health Association (NRHA). The organization recognizes five rural health leaders each year.

"Each year we are impressed and amazed by the hard work and unremitting enthusiasm of so many of those who work in and for rural health care," said NRHA President D. David Sniff. "The recipients of these awards represent the best of the best, and we could not be more proud of their accomplishments. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts."

Arcury is a professor and research director of family and community medicine at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center. His research on green tobacco sickness is part of a 10-year research program to improve the health of migrant and seasonal farm workers. He has also investigated pesticide exposure and safety, food insecurity and hunger, occupational eye injuries, occupational skin disease, and stress and mental health.

He earned his master's and doctoral degrees in anthropology from the University of Kentucky. He completed a fellowship at the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

B&N to host BestHealth Day

All Triad residents interested in improving their health are invited to attend BestHealth Day at Barnes & Noble on Saturday, June 26, from 9 a.m. until 11 p.m.

All BestHealth members will receive 20 percent off all purchases during the day. Staff members from the BestHealth program will be on hand to offer information, answer questions and enroll people in the membership program, which is open to adults aged 18 and older. Lifetime membership in BestHealth costs \$15 per person or \$25 per couple.

Activities will include:

- 10 a.m. — Express Workout demonstration with YMCA fitness instructor Lypette Hendrick.
- 11 a.m. — Cooking demonstration with Kathie Cooper and Lynn Campbell of Wake Forest Baptist's Diabetes Care Center
- Noon — Barnes & Noble Café nutritious beverage tasting and demonstration.
- 2 p.m. — Music Red Dot demonstration.
- 4 p.m. — Children's story time with Little Theatre actress Patricia Oldis. A craft activity for children 10 and younger will be provided.
- 5 p.m. — Dr. Linda Nielsen, author of "Embracing Your Father: How to Build the Relationship You've Always Wanted with Your Dad." Healthy hors d'oeuvres will be provided compliments of Whole Foods Market.
- 7 p.m. — Gardening lecture with Toby Bost, N.C. Cooperative Extension Service, master gardener and author of "N.C. Gardener's Guide."

Health seminars, cooking classes, screenings and fitness opportunities are available monthly at the BestHealth store in Hanes Mall and other locations throughout Forsyth County. Also offered is BestHealth Kids, a free program for ages 12 and younger.

No registration is required to participate in BestHealth Day at Barnes & Noble.

Temperament, hypertension linked

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — Young adults who keep a cool head under stress may be less likely to develop high blood pressure as they age, U.S. researchers have said.

A study of 4,000 young adults showed that those who stressed out the least while playing a difficult video game and taking other tests were less likely to develop high blood pressure in their 40s.

In 1985 researchers began studying 5,115 men and women, ages 18 to 30, and re-examined them at regular intervals.

At the second-year examination, 4,202 of the volunteers who had normal blood pressure of 140/90 or below took stress tests.

After 13 years of follow-up, 353 of the participants developed high blood pressure, they found.

High blood pressure eventually affects up to 90 percent of Americans as they become elderly and is a leading cause of heart attack, stroke and heart failure.

Women urged to be involved in men's health

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

MIAMI — Testimonials from celebrity survivors, life-saving advice and an appeal to women were highlights of the recently held launch of "Set the Date," a prostate cancer awareness campaign led by Anheuser-Busch Inc.

Anheuser-Busch has partnered with 100 Black Men of America Inc., the National Council of Negro Women Inc. and the Institute for the Advancement of Multicultural and Minority Medicine to create "Set the Date." The two-year initiative asks African-American women to urge the men in their lives to get tested for prostate cancer. To combat the crisis of prostate cancer in the African-American community, "Set the

Date" will include testing at African-American events and conventions across the nation, as well as a public service campaign.

Billy Davis Jr. and his wife, Marilyn McCoo, formerly of the singing group The Fifth Dimension, were among the celebrities who shared their personal testimonies on the importance of scheduling annual prostate exams. McCoo urged women to "be a nag" when it comes to making sure the men in their lives not only make a doctor's appointment, but also in keeping the appointment. Davis also shared that without the support of his wife, his faith and early testing, he would not have survived to tell his story.



See Prostate on C4 Singers Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis Jr. have been married for years.



A Sudanese mother cries as she cradles her sleeping child.

Group aids African women, children

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

STAMFORD, Conn. — On June 13, AmeriCares airlifted 30,000 pounds of additional life-saving medicines and hospital supplies to help alleviate the ongoing health crisis in refugee camps on the Chad/Sudan border. An AmeriCares relief team is stationed in the Chadian capital of N'djamena, where relief workers will board smaller planes to reach refugees in Bahai and Cariari.

The airlift follows a large

AmeriCares air shipment of emergency relief supplies to Chad on May 15. The aid was delivered to AmeriCares' partner, the International Rescue Committee, which has established mobile health care clinics and drug distribution protocols that are helping save the lives of those driven to this desolate location.

The cargo includes 140,000 treatments of water purification supplies, remedies for diarrhea and cholera, IV fluids and other essential drugs and relief provi-

sions.

"The aid will help an estimated 25,000 people who live in appalling conditions and face severe shortages of food, water, insufficient sanitation and access to essential medicines. Many suffer from acute malnutrition, diarrhea and other water borne diseases.

Terrorized Sudanese, mostly women and children, continue to overwhelm the border camps in their efforts to seek safe haven from violent militia attacks in neighboring Darfur, Sudan.

Moreover, the heavy rainy season has also begun, impeding what rudimentary roads existed, and severely obstructing relief supplies from reaching those most in need.

Nearly 200,000 Sudanese have crossed the border into Chad and another 1 million have been forced from their homes and are internally displaced within Sudan. UN officials estimate more than 2 million people are affected by the violence that

See AmeriCares on C4

AMA adopts new plan to fight obesity

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

CHICAGO — The American Medical Association (AMA) moved forward in its fight against obesity, adopting several new policies to help combat the nation's growing problem with obesity and unhealthy eating. The policies address a number of issues, including the role of racial and ethnic disparities in obesity.

While obesity is a problem throughout American society — with 31 percent of U.S. adults 20 and older considered obese — racial and ethnic minorities are particularly at risk for obesity and its health complications. A recent study found that 46 percent of African-American women are obese, compared with about 24 percent of white women.

New AMA policy recognizes that racial and ethnic disparities exist in the

prevalence of obesity and diet-related diseases such as coronary heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes. To combat these disparities, the AMA will now recommend that:

- Physicians use culturally responsive care to improve the treatment and management of obesity and diet-related diseases in minority populations.
- Cultural and socioeconomic considerations should be included in nutritional and dietary research and guidelines in order to treat overweight and obese patients.

- Culturally effective guidelines that include ethnic food staples and multicultural symbols to depict serving sizes should be included in the revised Dietary Guidelines for Americans and Food Guide Pyramid.
- "Physicians play an important role in



Davis



Devlin

Officials: Hot car could become a child's coffin

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

In hot weather a parked car can rapidly become a child's coffin. That's why state Public Health officials are urging parents and other care-givers to not leave children in cars.

"Deaths of children who are left in cars in the summer heat are tragedies that unfortunately are repeated summer after summer in North Carolina," said State Health Director Dr. Leah Devlin. "It is critical that parents and care-takers of children realize that the temperatures inside a car can heat up very quickly and that a child left in a car is at great risk for heat-related death.

"No one should ever leave

a child in a parked car — not even for a few minutes."

On a warm, sunny day, even at temperatures as mild as 60 degrees, a closed vehicle can heat up to dangerous

levels in a matter of minutes. During the summer months, the temperature inside a parked car can reach more than 120 degrees in as little as 10 minutes. Direct sunlight and a dark colored car further speed the process.

Heat exhaustion can occur at temperatures above 90 degrees and heat stroke can occur when temperatures rise above 105 degrees. If not treated immediately, heat exhaustion can lead to heat

See Coffin on C4

See AMA on C4