



Eugene Education Association

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4J BENEFITS AND WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

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CHOLESTEROL SCREENING

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that is naturally present in cell walls or membranes everywhere in the body. Your body makes enough cholesterol for its needs, which include the production of many hormones, vitamin D and the bile acids that help to digest fat. Most excess cholesterol comes from diet, but genetics may also play a factor. If you have too much cholesterol in your bloodstream, the excess may be deposited in the arteries of the heart, which could lead to heart disease.

The government recommends that all adults have their cholesterol checked once every 5 years.

The Wellness Clinic conducts blood draws for cholesterol screening the first Wednesday of each month, on a first come first served basis, from 7:00 – 8:00 AM. If you would like to take advantage of this service, come by before you have your breakfast (including your coffee!) and have a small sample of blood drawn.

Fasting (nothing to eat or drink but plain water for at least 10 – 12 hours) before a blood lipid test is essential to getting an accurate reading. On a daily basis, the normal range for lipids changes hour to hour depending on recent ingestion of food and drink – the amount of LDL (bad) cholesterol level and triglycerides can be affected by what you've recently consumed. If you aren't fasting when the blood sample is drawn, only the values for total cholesterol and HDL cholesterol will be usable.

Remember to stay well hydrated, even in the fasting state. Blood draws can be difficult on patients who are dehydrated, and drinking plain water effectively counteracts this condition.

WELLNESS CLINIC REMINDERS

The Wellness Clinic can only do blood draws for labs ordered by clinic staff or for the drop in cholesterol screening the first Wednesday of each month. They cannot do labs ordered by an outside provider. For those labs, you will need to work with your provider regarding where blood draws may be done.

Please remember there is a \$20 no-show fee for missed appointments at the Wellness Clinic. If possible, please give the clinic 24 hours notice when you need to cancel an appointment. If your appointment is less than 24 hours away, please call and cancel anyway – this may allow the clinic to schedule an appointment for another patient. The Wellness Clinic has a voicemail system, so if you realize outside of clinic hours that you must miss your appointment, you can call and leave a message.

The Wellness Clinic is open Monday through Friday, from 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM, with the last appointment slot at 5:30 PM. They close for lunch from 1:00 – 2:00 PM. The phone number for the clinic is 541-686-1427.

SPEND AN HOUR. SAVE A LIFE.

Every 23 minutes, someone in Lane County needs a blood transfusion, and one out of every ten people entering a hospital will need blood. Thirty-eight percent of the US population is eligible to donate blood, but less than 10 % do so on an annual or more frequent basis. Medical technology has provided many lifesaving discoveries over the years, but there is still no substitute for human blood.

Lane Memorial Blood Bank (LMBB) is the only

non-profit blood center in Lane County, and is solely responsible for providing blood and blood components to patients in Lane County hospitals. To meet the needs of the hospitals, LMBB must collect 75 units of blood every day.

You can give blood if you are at least 16 years old (there is no upper age limit!), weigh a minimum of 110 pounds and are in good health. The donation process takes 45 – 60 minutes. You start with the registration process, where you'll show a valid photo ID or your LMBB card and complete a health history questionnaire that includes questions about past illnesses and medications. Next is the health screening, where a nurse will review the health history questionnaire with you, check your temperature, iron level, blood pressure and pulse. If all is well, you go on to the actual donation, which takes 8 – 10 minutes. A nurse will monitor you at all times while you are in the donor chair. Once your donation is complete, you'll be asked to spend 10 – 15 minutes relaxing in the canteen while you enjoy snacks and juice.

If you are not sure if you are eligible to donate, you can find the answers to many of your questions on the LMBB website: <http://www.lmbb.org/>. If you cannot find your answers there, you can call the blood bank at 541-484-9111 and ask to speak to a nurse. You can also e-mail your question to donate@lmbb.org.

It is normal to be nervous about giving blood – almost everyone feels that way the first time. You cannot contract any disease from donating blood – all supplies used are sterile and used only once. If you need just a little more inspiration, read some of the success stories of local blood recipients on the LMBB website. Once you realize how easy donating is, you'll wonder why you waited so long.

RETIREES TURNING 62 – A REMINDER

If you are a licensed retiree receiving an early retirement stipend (a Plan A retiree – hired in 4J prior to 07/01/98), remember that your last stipend payment will be at the end of the month in which you

turn 62. Though your stipend is ending, you are still eligible to stay on the 4J insurance plan until you are Medicare eligible, and the District will continue to make a contribution towards the cost of your insurance until that time. If you use your stipend to offset the cost of your insurance, this will affect how you pay your monthly premium, but will not affect your eligibility to be covered by the 4J insurance plan.

Retirees who do not receive the early retirement stipend or District contribution to insurance (Plan B retirees – hired in 4J on or after 07/01/98) are also eligible for 4J insurance coverage on a self-pay basis until Medicare eligibility.

Whether you are a Plan A or Plan B retiree, if you cover a younger spouse/domestic partner on your plan, he/she is eligible to stay on the 4J plan (on a self-pay basis – no contribution) until Medicare eligibility.

SICK LEAVE BANK – 2ND ENROLLMENT PERIOD

The 2nd enrollment period for the Sick Leave Bank begins February 1 and runs through April 2, 2010. In order to maintain an active membership in the SLB you must donate one day every two years.

If your last donation to the SLB was in the spring of 2008 or before, you will need to donate during the upcoming enrollment period to maintain or reactivate your SLB membership. If you have never joined, you are welcome to do so during the enrollment period.

For more information about the SLB, please visit the EEA website: <http://www.eugea.org/>. From the home page pull down the Member Area menu, then slide over for Sick Leave Bank guidelines and forms. SLB membership status updates will be e-mailed to all SLB members this week. Donation forms will be e-mailed to all licensed employees at the beginning of the open enrollment period.

The information in this newsletter has been summarized. It is presented as information – not advice or counsel. In all instances, the benefits, conditions, and limitations as outlined in the 4J Master Contracts prevail over this representation. Please refer to your Benefits booklet or master contracts available at the District offices for additional information regarding your benefits plans.