

HNE TO SPONSOR CONCERT HONORING WOMEN



Throughout musical history, women composers traditionally have been under-represented. It is especially fitting, then, that during March, National Women's History Month, the Community Music School of Springfield will pay tribute to the accomplishments of women composers. The organization's 17th Annual Celebrate Women in Music Concert, sponsored this year by HNE, will take place on Sunday afternoon, **March 26, at 3 p.m. in the magnificent Old First Church, Court Square, Springfield.**

The 90-minute program features selections exclusively by women composers

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MEMBERMATTERS

PROVIDING HEALTH RELATED NEWS FOR HNE MEMBERS

Where Is Your Health Information?

Like most people, you probably see different health care providers for different conditions. You see your primary care physician for most things, but you also may see your gynecologist once a year, your allergist in the spring and summer, and so on. Unless all of these providers are in the same office, they each have a separate medical record for you. As a result, all of your health care providers may not have the same or complete health information about you. This can cause confusion for both you and them.

PERSONAL HEALTH RECORD. With your own complete and portable personal health record, you can play a more active role in your health care. You can share the same information with all the health care providers you see. It helps you and the health care provider make informed decisions about your health care.

HOW CAN WE HELP? HNE has designed a form for you to use. The HNE Personal Health Record is a convenient way for you to document health information. There is a form for adults and one for children and adolescents. Fill one out for yourself and each person in your family, then keep it with your important papers. Better still, make sure a copy is available to you at all times. Most importantly, bring it with you to every health care visit.

As an added benefit, your HNE Personal Health Record can:

- ❖ Provide information about your health if you are unable to communicate.



- ❖ Serve as a resource to emergency care providers.
- ❖ Help you, your family members, and other care givers keep track of the details about your personal health.

ASK THREE! Also, the HNE Personal Health Record reminds you to ask three important questions at every health care visit:

"QUESTIONS FOR EVERY DOCTOR'S VISIT THAT WILL HELP ME UNDERSTAND MY HEALTH"

1. What is my main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?

Request a FREE copy of the HNE Personal Health Record by calling HNE Members Services at 800.310.2835. You also can download a copy of the HNE Personal Health Record at www.hne.com. *

The HNE Personal Health Record was developed by HNE nurses: Alres Dinnal, RN, MEEd; Debbie Liptak, RN, CCM; and Carol Morrison, RN, BSN.

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APRIL 2006



Primary Care Providers (PCPs) joining HNE

FAMILY PRACTICE

Mary M. Bartley, MD

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South Hadley, MA 01075
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Berkshire Osteopathic Health
2 Park Street
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413.772.3748

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20 Elm Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201
413.442.1019

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Connecticut River Internists
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Samina Ahmed, MD

PCPs leaving HNE

Mamata M. Alwarshetty, MD

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Howard E. Gold, MD

Louis B. Grace, MD

Consuelo A. LeBlanc, MD

Wen Yee Lee, MD

Lydia A. Thorp, MD

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Kevin M. Snow, DO

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Change in group name

Alicia C. Skarimbas, MD

Susan Thompson, MD
Barrington Family Medicine

Beth L. Brown, MD

David P. Norton, MD

Jeanette M. Tokarz, MD
Quabbin Pediatrics

No longer practicing as a PCP

Howard N. Baker, MD

Bruce H. Renfrew, MD

Rebecca Rosenstein, MD

Angela Martagon Villamil, MD

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and largely performed by women artists. Performers include members of the Community Music School of Springfield's faculty, as well as several guest musicians. The program features orchestral and vocal pieces by both new and familiar 20th Century American composers. Many of the works are chamber music trios and quartets. Composers include Katherine Hoover, Valerie Coleman, Kate Sullivan, Cherise D'Leiter, and Amy Beach, among others.

Longtime faculty member Mary Ellen Miller, herself a celebrated clarinetist and educator, has organized this wonderful annual event since 1990. The Community Music School's women faculty members conceived of the concert as a way to honor Ruth Kemper, a virtuoso violinist and mentor to the School's Executive Director and Founder, Eric Bachrach.

The public is warmly encouraged to attend the concert **free of charge**. Voluntary donations are welcome. A reception will follow the performance. For additional information, please contact the Community Music School of Springfield at 413.732.8428. *

Health Education Classes & Notices

HNE wants to keep you healthy! Find what interests you and take advantage of our educational and self-help programs. Preregistration is required for most classes. For more information visit www.hne.com and click on "Healthy Directions."

HNE is excited to announce—

NEW IN 2006:

Disease Management Grocery Store Tours

In small groups, you will have the unique experience of walking through each food section at Big Y Supermarkets with a licensed registered dietitian who will review food labels. You will learn carbohydrate counting, and how to identify sodium, fat, and cholesterol content of food. The focus is on making better food choices that are affordable, following the diet plan for your health condition, and enjoying your meals. So whether you need to follow a diabetic meal plan, limit sodium and salt intake to lower blood pressure, or decrease dietary cholesterol and fat intake to lower blood cholesterol, the Disease Management Grocery Store Tour will help you! Those who have attended describe it as an "interactive and eye-opening" experience. To register call HNE at 800.842.4464, ext. 3553.

Adult Asthma Education

A certified asthma education nurse teaches this workshop. To register, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3030

NEW!! HNE's Virtual Asthma Class on DVD

For more information or to order a copy, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3030.

Diabetes Education and Meal Planning

A certified diabetes educator/nurse and a dietitian/nutritionist teach this workshop. To register, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3030.

NEW!! HNE's Virtual Diabetes Class on DVD

For more information or to order a copy, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3030.

Living Well Grocery Store Tours

HNE offers this exciting program to all HNE members. As a participant, you will have the opportunity to walk through the grocery store with a registered dietitian. You will learn how to read food labels; count carbohydrates; determine portion sizes, fat, sodium, and cholesterol content; and much more! Space is limited. For more information, dates, or to register, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3031.

HNE's Virtual Grocery Store Tour

An informative guide to help you read food labels; determine portion sizes, fat, sodium, and cholesterol content; and much more. Use at your own pace in the comfort of your home. Available on VHS-video or CD-ROM format and free of charge to HNE members. For more information or to order a copy, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3031.

Smoking Cessation

HNE provides reimbursement of up to \$50 to attend a smoking cessation program for HNE members who have asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and/or who are pregnant. For more information, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3553.

Area hospitals also offer instruction, education, and support groups on a wide range of topics. For more information, please contact the individual hospitals directly.

Baystate Medical Center

baystatehealth.com
800.377.HEALTH (4325)

Berkshire Medical Center

berkshirehealthsystems.com
413.447.2000

Cooley Dickinson Hospital

cooley-dickinson.org
413.582.2400

Fairview Hospital

berkshirehealthsystems.com
413.528.0790

Franklin Medical Center

baystatehealth.com/fmc
800.377.HEALTH (4325)

Holyoke Medical Center

holyokehealth.com
413.534.2500

Mary Lane Hospital

baystatehealth.com/mlh
800.377.HEALTH (4325)

Mercy Medical Center

mercycares.com
413.748.9000

Noble Hospital

noblehospital.org
413.568.2811

North Adams Regional Hospital

nbhealth.org
413.663.3701

Introducing!

HNEDirect Member Module

We are excited to introduce HNEDirect, your personal online connection to HNE! With HNEDirect, you can view important information about your benefits, conduct membership transactions, or contact us directly. We've designed HNEDirect with both ease of use and security in mind. You can save time and effort by using HNEDirect whenever and wherever you want—rather than spending time on the phone. What's more, you can be assured of our commitment to protect the privacy and confidentiality of your personal information.

After a quick registration for the secure online system, you will have access to interact with HNE on many levels. You also can sign up for Level 2 security, which allows you to view Claims and Referral information and to share information with other members on your policy. (Viewing information for others on your health plan requires members over the age of 18 to grant access to you.)

We are always looking for ways to improve, and we will keep you posted about additions to HNEDirect as they become available. For more information, or to create your account and get started, please visit www.hne.com. *

In this column, we will explore risk factors for certain health problems and feature people who have identified their health risks and taken steps to lower them.

Colon Cancer Prevention and Screening

Colorectal cancer, known as colon cancer, is a leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, second only to lung cancer. There are colon cancer risks you can control and risks you cannot control. But once you know the risks for the disease, you will understand where you can take steps to lower your risk or even prevent colon cancer.

To prevent most cancers, including colon cancer, you should be screened regularly. Talk to your doctor about when you should

be tested and the best method for you. Dr. Mary A. Simmonds, national volunteer president of the American Cancer Society says, “Colon cancer testing can actually prevent the disease from occurring. We could see a huge improvement in colon cancer prevention and survival if all people 50 and older, plus those at increased risk, would talk with their doctors and get tested.”

The chart below lists the most common risk factors and steps you can take to lower your risk of colorectal cancer. ✨

| RISK FACTOR | LOWER YOUR RISK |
|--|---|
| Family history: Parent, sibling, or child who has colon cancer | Learn your family history and identify members who may have had this disease. Talk to your doctor about your level of risk and be conscientious about getting screened. |
| Chronic inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) such as Crohn’s or ulcerative colitis | Have a colon cancer screening test 8 to 12 years after your first diagnosis. |
| Diet mostly from animal sources | Limit red meat and saturated fat. Eat food from plant sources such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, and whole-grain products. |
| Sedentary lifestyle | Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity most days of the week. |
| Obesity | Achieve and maintain a healthy body weight by reducing calories and increasing physical activity. |
| Smoking | Quit smoking. Ask for support from your family, friends, co-workers, and your doctor. |
| Heavy alcohol use | Men should drink no more than 2 drinks per day; no more than 1 drink per day for women. Pregnant women should never drink alcohol. |

For more information: American Cancer Society, www.acs.org

In My Own Words



Name: Marie Smith

Age: 58

Health risk:

Colorectal cancer

The death of my father from colorectal cancer was devastating. He had seemed so fit and healthy until he began having symptoms. Sadly, because his cancer was not diagnosed early enough, he died 10 months after he got sick. Only then did I learn that my paternal grandmother also had died of colon cancer. When I told my doctor about my father’s illness, she explained that I was at increased risk for developing the disease because of my family history.

To lower my risks:

- ✦ I have a colonoscopy every 5 years. Luckily, a possibly precancerous polyp was found and removed during my first colonoscopy.
- ✦ I eat more fiber. I really prefer whole-grain bread and brown rice now, and I occasionally take a fiber supplement. I also enjoy lots of fruits and veggies and try to eat less red meat and saturated fat.
- ✦ I understand the importance of physical activity. I either go to the gym or walk my dog, nearly every day.
- ✦ I take NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) for arthritis, and some studies suggest these drugs help lower colon cancer risk in some people.

Because my siblings also are at high risk for colon cancer, I remind them to get screened for colorectal cancer, and I encourage—or nag—they to quit smoking as well! ✨

Wellness Coach

Herbert Lindsay



Get Ready for Your First 5K Event

Herbert Lindsay is an athlete and educator with a keen interest in outdoor aerobic fitness and recreational activities. As a coach, consultant, speaker, trainer, and mentor, he helps people connect with natural attractions that teach, heal, promote personal growth, and enhance quality of life.

Sooner or later, most recreational runners think about entering an organized race. If you're ready for your first taste of a formal running event, a 5 kilometer (5K) format may be a good choice. A 5K course is only a little over 3 miles long, so with the proper preparation and a little discipline, you'll be able to run this event safely and comfortably. Here are some tips to help you get ready physically and mentally, help you avoid injury, and bring your fitness level to a point where you can relax and enjoy the experience.

★ **Ask yourself a few questions.** What is my general fitness level now? Is my body accustomed to the on-foot movement and shock absorption required of sustained running? Will my current level of aerobic and cardiovascular fitness support vigorous physical activity? Do I have my doctor's approval to engage in this level of exercise? Do I have the proper footwear?

★ **Find your starting point.** Jog or run over a measured mile distance and have some-

one time you, or time yourself. (Perhaps your current fitness level allows only walking, and that's OK.) This will serve as a point of comparison as your training progresses.

★ **Work up gradually.** A common mistake when starting a running program is to start out running too far or too fast. This sets you up for overuse injuries, and nothing will take away your motivation faster than trying to run with pain. Increase your running time slowly until you can run the distance without stopping before introducing faster paced running. Once base running fitness is achieved, you can begin to introduce speed work. This statement might sound simple, but it is true: To be able to run faster, you will need to practice running faster. One way to do this is by using utility poles along your running route as markers. For example, set your goal on easing into an accelerated pace to the first pole—just 300 feet away—then jog the distance between the

next two poles to recover. Then challenge yourself to begin another acceleration. Then gradually increase the distance of the “pole running” to 2 1/2 miles, passing more poles at a faster pace and fewer poles for recovery. As you add more poles to your acceleration phase, you'll become more comfortable running a faster pace. Keep a record of your pole running workouts to help you set goals for gradually increasing the level of challenge. Making yourself go fast while sustaining and increasing the distance will help you prove to yourself what you *can* do.

★ **Get with the program.** Working along with others adds motivation, encourages social contacts, and gives you an easy way to gauge your improvement. In addition, running with faster-paced partners later in your training will give you an added challenge. It's generally safer and more effective in the long run to have a structured, supervised program to help you get ready for your first 5K event. ✨

Carbs and Proteins for Performance



The main energy source for our bodies and brains is carbohydrates. You can find carbohydrates in sugars, starches, and fibers—grain products (whole grains are best), fruits, vegetables—and many dairy products. To perform at your best for athletic events, 50 to 60 percent of your total daily calories should come from complex carbohydrates. Avoid simple sugars like the ones in sweets and soft drinks—they can cause energy-draining hypoglycemia.

Protein is the building block of our muscles, skin, bones, and hair. It also helps repair muscles broken down by overuse or other stresses. You should consume enough protein to help muscles recover properly from your workouts, but most Americans already get sufficient protein by eating a balanced diet. In fact, consuming protein supplements is risky because it may increase calcium loss and place an added burden on your kidneys. You do not need extra protein to improve athletic performance or to build muscle—only strength training and exercise can change muscles that way. ✨

For more information: International Food Information Council, IFIC.org

Evaluating Web Resources

It's estimated that about 62 percent of Internet users search for health information. Although some sites provide valuable, accurate information, others have information that is misleading and unreliable. The National Cancer Institute and the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine suggest you ask these questions when you visit a new site to help you evaluate the information you find there.

Take Your Medicine

Unfortunately, some people do not fill their original prescriptions or fail to continue their medications according to the directions. Others ignore or alter their medication instructions or cannot identify their own medications. If you don't take your medications properly, they won't have the effect your doctor intended. You could have a recurrence of the disease, or you could suffer complicating side effects or an overdose. Here are some useful guidelines:

- Talk with your doctor and pharmacist so you understand the instructions for taking your medication.
- Always know the name of each medication and understand why you take it. Make a written list.
- Report unexpected side effects to your doctor immediately.
- Do not stop taking your medication without consulting your doctor first.
- Use reminders such as pill boxes, calendars, or alarm clocks to help you take your pills in the proper dosage. Your pharmacist may provide special dispensers for pills to help you take them properly.

Finally, ask family members to help you if you have trouble managing your medications on your own. *



- **Who runs the site?** The person or organization responsible for the site and the information should be identified clearly.
- **Who pays for the site?** The source of funding can influence the content of a site and the manner in which it is presented. Does it sell advertising? Is it sponsored by a company that is trying to sell its product?
- **What is the purpose of the site?** To evaluate the trustworthiness of a Web site, click on the link called "About This Site." In general, you'll find the purpose of the site stated clearly there.
- **Where does the information come from?** Many sites post information collected from other Web sites or sources. The original source should be stated clearly.
- **What is the basis of the information?** Medical facts and figures should have references, and opinions or advice should be identified clearly.
- **How is the information selected?** Is there an editorial board? Who reviews the material?
- **Is the information current?** The most recent update or review date should be posted clearly.
- **How does the Web site choose links to other sites?** Some medical Web sites do not link to other sites, some link to any site that pays for a link, and others link only to sites that have met certain criteria.
- **What information does the site collect, and why?** Do not join or sign up for anything if you do not understand the privacy policy and how your information will be used.
- **How does the site manage interaction with visitors?** There should be a "contact us" link you can use if you want to offer feedback or if you have problems with or questions about the site. *

For more information: National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, www.nccam.nih.gov or the Federal Trade Commission, www.ftc.gov

What can I do for wheezing?

Asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia, emphysema, certain heart conditions, drugs, chronic lung disease, allergies, smoking, or airborne irritants—all can cause irritation and swelling in the lining of the airways, restricting the air passing through. When that happens, you hear wheezing: the coarse, whistling sound coming from your chest when you breathe out (exhale). *

Symptoms/Signs

- ❖ Low-pitched or musical-sounding noise from the chest (not the throat) with every breath (exhaling).
- ❖ Asthma: shortness of breath; coughing that worsens at night or with exertion or cold air; tightness in the chest.
- ❖ Bronchitis: cold symptoms; coughing that produces green, yellow, or gray mucus; mild chest pain or fever.
- ❖ Smoking-related respiratory problems: shortness of breath; chronic coughing that produces thick mucus; limited lung capacity.
- ❖ Generalized allergic reaction: shortness of breath, tightness in the chest, or wheezing.
- ❖ In children with no previous history of asthma: Suspect a foreign object has been inhaled if there is sudden wheezing and shortness of breath.

Get Emergency Care Right Away If:

- ❖ You become lightheaded or have difficulty breathing.
- ❖ You suspect a foreign body in the airway.
- ❖ You have symptoms of a generalized allergic reaction, including restricted breathing.

Talk to Your Doctor If:

- ❖ Mucus coughed up is streaked with blood.
- ❖ A cough persists for more than 2 weeks.
- ❖ Wheezing persists for more than 2 weeks or is accompanied by a persistent fever.
- ❖ You are experiencing wheezing for the first time.

If physician referral is not recommended at this time, **Try HomeCare™:**

MEDICATION

- ❖ With bronchitis, allergies, or colds, try a decongestant containing pseudoephedrine to relieve congestion. (Nonviral bronchitis sometimes requires prescription antibiotics.)
 - ❖ Avoid aspirin or ibuprofen; take acetaminophen instead.*
- *Because of the risk of Reye's syndrome, aspirin should not be given to or used by children or teenagers who have or are suspected of having flu, chicken pox, or any viral syndrome. Use acetaminophen.*

FLUIDS

- ❖ Drink lots of fluids to keep mucus thin.

ACTIVITY

- ❖ With asthma, consult your doctor about how to remain active without triggering an attack. Otherwise, exercise normally unless exertion makes wheezing worse.
- ❖ With bronchitis, limit your activity.

NUTRITION

- ❖ Avoid food triggers that may cause an allergic reaction.

PREVENTION

- ❖ Don't smoke, avoid respiratory irritants and allergens.
- ❖ Avoid foods or drugs to which you have an allergy.
- ❖ Treat colds and the flu quickly and effectively.
- ❖ Reduce and manage stress.
- ❖ Humidify and/or use a portable air filter in your bedroom for bronchitis.

This article is intended to increase awareness of health and medical care issues. None of the information in this text is intended to be a substitute for appropriate physician diagnosis and medical care.

NEXT ISSUE: HOME CARE™ FOR MUSCLE PULLS AND STRAINS

Good Questions!



It's important to be involved in decisions affecting your care. When you and your doctor work together to manage your health problems, you'll feel more satisfied and confident with your care. Asking the right questions will help you understand your condition.

Q. I am concerned about breast cancer. What should I ask my doctor?

A. The following questions will help you talk with your doctor:

- ➔ What is my level of risk for breast cancer?
- ➔ How often should I have mammograms?
- ➔ Should I do breast self-examinations at home?
- ➔ What else can I do to lower my risk of breast cancer?

If you have been diagnosed with breast cancer, ask:

- ➔ What kind of diagnostic tests are best for me? What are the risks?
- ➔ What type of cancer do I have. How advanced (what stage) is it?
- ➔ What are my treatment options?
- ➔ Who can help me decide on a treatment plan? *

ADHD

Online tools for parents, educators, clinicians, and kids at HNE.com

At HNE, we are committed to helping you get the best possible care and service. That means providing you with access not only to affordable care, but also to useful resources including information and tools to help you with the challenges that can be part of raising a family.

There is a lot of information on the Internet about Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)—so much that it's hard to know where to start. To help get you started and to provide ongoing support, HNE has posted two programs on the HNE Web site. The first, the School Psychiatry Program, was developed by physicians at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH). The second, the MADI Resource Center, also is affiliated with MGH.

Both programs are available online at www.hne.com. (Click on "For Members," then follow the Healthy Directions prompt to the Mental Health programs.) They offer a wealth of information—reading material, screening tools, and access to support groups for ADHD, as well as other mental health conditions that families face. The School Psychiatry Program provides access to resources not only for parents, educators, and clinicians, but for children as well. *



New Faces at HNE/ Las Caras Nuevas de HNE

HNE welcomes Yvonne J. Diaz and Cristina Fox, our new Bi-

lingual Member Services Representatives. Yvonne and Cristina both are fluent in Spanish. Combined, they bring more than 20 years of customer service and health care experience to HNE. Cristina earned a Bachelor of Science in Health Psychology with a minor in Business from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Sciences. Yvonne currently is working on her Bachelor of Arts in Business Management with a minor in International Business from Bay Path College. She will be graduating in May 2006.

HNE da la bienvenida a Yvonne J. Diaz y Cristina Fox, nuestras Representantes Bilingüe del Departamento de Servicios para Miembros. Yvonne y Cristina ambas hablan el español. Combinado, ellas traen más de 20 años de la experiencia de servicio de atención al cliente y asistencia médica a HNE. Cristina ganó su licenciatura en Ciencias en la Psicología de la Salud con un menor en el Negocio. Ella se graduó del Colegio Massachusetts de Farmacia y Ciencias Aliadas de Salud. Yvonne trabaja actualmente en su licenciatura en Filosofía y Letras en la dirección empresarial con un menor en el Negocio Internacional del Colegio Bay Path. Ella estará graduándose en el 2006 de Mayo.

How can we help? ¿Cómo te podemos ayudar? *

MEMBERMATTERS

PROVIDING HEALTH RELATED NEWS FOR HNE MEMBERS

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How can we help you?

For information on your plan:

- Call Member Services at 413.787.4004 or 800.310.2835
- Visit us in person at: One Monarch Place, Springfield, MA.

For questions or comments on *Member Matters*:

- Contact Joe Kane, jkane@hne.com, 413.787.4000 Ext. 3229

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