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## Knowing Your Child's Medical History

When a child is ill or injured and requires emergency care, doctors, nurses, and paramedics will have many questions about his or her medical history. And even the most organized parent might not be able to remember the details of a child's health history in a stressful situation.

That's why it's important to keep a comprehensive record of your child's health information nearby. In many cases, this information can help a medical professional make quicker diagnoses and decisions during an emergency, when each second counts.

Read the categories below to learn more, and create a complete health record for your kids. Keep one copy of the record in an accessible place at home (such as on the refrigerator), one in each car, one at each parent's workplace, and one in each parent's bag or wallet. You should also supply your child's school or day care, as well as babysitters with this list, along with the name and number of your doctor.

### Allergies

Record on your list any known allergies your child has to medications, both prescription and nonprescription. Allergic reactions to insect stings and bites and food allergies are also important to list. In addition, some kids may have latex allergies. In many cases, allergy information helps medical personnel discover a cause for problems like seizures or difficulty breathing.

### Medications

Certain medications can't be taken together, so paramedics need to know **all** medications (prescription and nonprescription) your kids take before they can

administer any drug. A child's symptoms also could be due to side effects of medications,

which is another reason it's important to report everything being taken. In addition, you need to know the doses, the dosing schedules, and when and how much of the medications were recently taken.

### Pre-existing Illnesses or Conditions

Pre-existing illnesses or conditions can have a great impact on the kinds of tests or treatments administered during an emergency. If your child has any health problem — from diabetes to epilepsy to asthma — emergency medical personnel must know. For additional protection, kids with chronic conditions should wear an identifying tag on a bracelet. This kind of immediate notification can help doctors save a child's life.

For a child with special needs, you and your doctor can fill out a form created by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP). The Emergency Information Form for Children With Special Needs can be found at either [aap.org](http://aap.org) or [acep.org](http://acep.org) and can be updated as needed.

As with any other health record you create, keep the form in an easily accessed place at home, in parents' vehicles, in parents' purses or wallets, at parents' workplaces, and with the child's belongings when traveling. The form should also be on file with your doctor, school nurse, and child-care center. It can also be filed in a repository (or database) that can be accessed by medical professionals in the event of an emergency.

*(Continued on page 4)*





# Let's Talk

Dr. Jerry Shapiro

Holiday Greetings,

This being our holiday edition I thought I would begin with good wishes for a healthy and peaceful holiday season. At this time of year

it is always a good time to take stock as to where we are and the direction we are heading.

I would also like to introduce a new service we are offering called "my dose alert." This is available not only for you, our customers, but your family as well. This applies to all whether you get your prescriptions filled with us or not, AND IT IS FREE. Very simply, once you register your medications with us we will contact you by phone, e-mail or text (your choice) to remind you to take your medication. Therefore no more forgetting. For a more complete description just stop in or give us a call.

There is not a day that goes by without a question from one of you our clients about when we will be getting the H1N1 vaccine. Unfortunately the news is not good on that front. Hopefully we will receive ours by the end of December (and I am not even sure about that). As most of you have read there is a large shortfall across the country and specifically here in the Southland. Why is this? The easy answer is that H1N1 vaccine is made exactly the same way

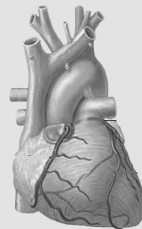
as the regular flu vaccine. It is a very archaic method, requiring fertilized eggs to grow the culture. That is why people are always asked if they have any egg allergies before getting a flu shot. The regular flu vaccine was cut back in hopes that they could increase the production of H1N1 (which is just a different strain). Unfortunately the growth of the materials needed for the vaccine was well below the same output for the regular flu strains. My advice is to just keep checking the website:([http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/docs/H1N1PODSCHEDULE\\_DATE.pdf](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/docs/H1N1PODSCHEDULE_DATE.pdf)) to see where they are giving the vaccines. If you are one of those people in the high risk groups there will be long lines but you should be able to get the vaccine. In the meantime exercise basic hygiene techniques. Wash your hands often with soap and water, try to avoid close contact with those that are sick and if you get the flu stay home and rest.

As I mentioned last month we will be counting up the change in the water jug at the front of the store on December 10th. We will add our 10% and then donate the money to those affected by the Station Fire. Hopefully this will give them a little brighter holiday season. We want to thank all of you who have dropped your change and bills into the jug.

After the first of the year we will be putting up our jug again and search for another important cause to support. Input by our customers is always welcome. In closing I would once again like to wish all of you a healthy and peaceful holiday season.

## Risk-Free Heart Tests

*A number of quick, noninvasive tests can help evaluate your heart health without causing unnecessary risks...*



**Echocardiogram** uses ultrasound to measure the heart's size, motion and function. This test uses no X-rays and is harmless.

**Ankle-brachial index test** measures a person's blood pressure in the ankle and the arm. This test helps identify blocked arteries in the legs—a marker for arterial blockage elsewhere in the body.

**Carotid ultrasound** uses ultrasound to measure the thickness of the wall of the carotid (neck) artery, which may predict blockage in your coronary arteries.

**Standard lipid (blood fats) panel** includes total cholesterol...LDL "bad" cholesterol...HDL "good" cholesterol...and triglycerides (a type of blood fat). Blood tests that measure the number of "bad" apolipo-protein-B

particles (the higher the number, the higher the heart attack risk)...and levels of lipoprotein-A (a particularly dangerous type of LDL cholesterol) are also indicators of heart attack risk.

These tests will help your doctor decide whether you need medication, such as cholesterol-lowering statin drugs, to lower your heart attack risk.

In addition, you should follow healthful lifestyle recommendations. An overwhelming body of evidence shows that the best overall treatment plan for preventing heart disease includes eating a Mediterranean diet (focusing on fruits and vegetables, healthful fats, such as olive oil, and fish)...performing 30 minutes of exercise, such as walking, at least five days a week...practicing stress-reduction techniques, such as meditation or yoga...giving up cigarettes if you're a smoker...and taking medication, if required, to control blood lipid and blood pressure levels.

Following these steps can lower your heart attack risk by more than 80%—and may allow you to avoid the potential risks of heart scans, stenting or bypass surgery.



## Hints from JoAnn

**Flexible vacuum.** To get something out of a heat register or under the fridge add an empty paper towel roll or empty gift-wrap roll to your vacuum. It can be bent or flattened to get in narrow openings.

**Reducing Static Cling.** Pin a small safety pin to the seam of your slip and you will not have a clingy skirt or dress. Same thing works with slacks that cling when wearing panty hose. Place pin in seam of slacks and -- ta da! -- static is gone.

**Measuring Cups.** Before you pour sticky substances into a measuring cup, fill with hot water. Dump out the hot water, but don't dry cup. Next, add your ingredient, such as peanut butter, and watch how easily it comes right out.

**Foggy Windshield?** Hate foggy windshields? Buy a chalkboard eraser and keep it in the glove box of your car. When the windows fog, rub with the eraser! Works better than a cloth!

### Replacing Carpet?

Tear out old carpet yourself to save money when replacing it. Carpet installation should be left to a



professional—but removal of old carpet is not difficult. An installer will charge \$3 to \$5 per square yard to pull out the old carpet—so taking it out of a 12-by-15-foot room yourself, which takes about an hour, will save you \$60 to \$100. Grab the edge of the carpet with pliers, and pull to remove.

**Reopening envelope.** If you seal an envelope and then realize you forgot to include something inside, just place your sealed envelope in the freezer for an hour or two. Voila! It unseals easily.

**Conditioner.** Use your hair conditioner to shave your legs. It's cheaper than shaving cream and leaves your legs really smooth. It's also a great way to use up the conditioner you bought but didn't like when you tried it in your hair...

**Goodbye Fruit Flies.** To get rid of pesky fruit flies, take a small glass, fill it 1/2" with Apple Cider Vinegar and 2 drops of dishwashing liquid, mix well. You will find those flies drawn to the cup and gone forever!

**Get Rid of Ants.** Put small piles of cornmeal where you see ants. They eat it, take it "home," can't digest it so it kills them. It may take a week or so, especially if it rains, but it works & you don't have the worry about pets or small children being harmed!

### Computer—Upgrade or Buy?

Should you upgrade a computer... or 'purchase a new one? In general, upgrading a single component, such as the graphics card or hard drive, is quicker and cheaper than buying a new PC,



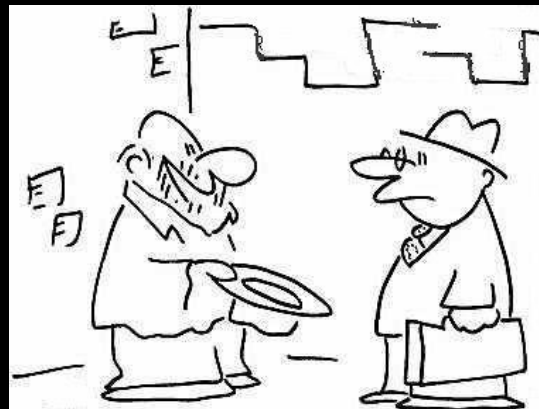
setting it up on your network, removing and reinstalling all your data and reconfiguring your programs. But if you are looking for a complete overhaul—a new processor, more memory and a new graphics card and hard drive—then a new PC may be the better choice. Rule of thumb: If you are thinking of replacing three parts that have a combined cost of \$400 or more, instead put the money toward a new system.



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"Thank you for the job offer, sir,  
but I'd hate to give up being  
an independent contractor."

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### Hospitalizations and Operations

List the dates your child has been hospitalized, the reasons for hospitalization, treatments received, and the types of operations he or she has undergone. This information may help during and following an emergency situation.

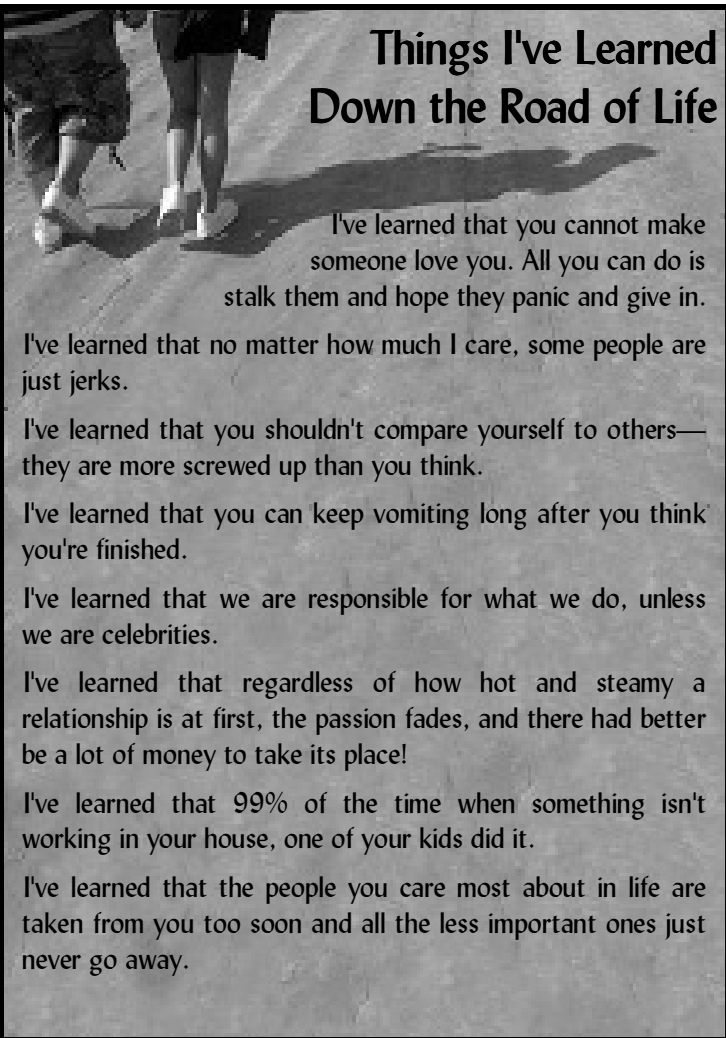
### Immunizations

Keeping an updated record of all your kids' immunizations is important. If you need help remembering or compiling all the information, the staff at your doctor's office can assist you. Be sure to include information about any reactions a child may have had following an immunization, such as seizures, high fever, or severe discomfort.

### Height and Weight

When calculating medication doses, it can be helpful for doctors to know the approximate height and weight of the child. (But you'll need to change this information periodically, since kids often grow quickly.)

It's relatively easy to compile a written medical history, and it could mean saving critical minutes — when they count most!



## Things I've Learned Down the Road of Life

I've learned that you cannot make someone love you. All you can do is stalk them and hope they panic and give in.

I've learned that no matter how much I care, some people are just jerks.

I've learned that you shouldn't compare yourself to others—they are more screwed up than you think.

I've learned that you can keep vomiting long after you think you're finished.

I've learned that we are responsible for what we do, unless we are celebrities.

I've learned that regardless of how hot and steamy a relationship is at first, the passion fades, and there had better be a lot of money to take its place!

I've learned that 99% of the time when something isn't working in your house, one of your kids did it.

I've learned that the people you care most about in life are taken from you too soon and all the less important ones just never go away.

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