

HEALTHNET NEWS

A newsletter for public librarians and others interested in consumer health information services

Volume XXV Number 1

Spring 2010

UPDATE

FINDING MEDICAL RESEARCH ARTICLES:



TWO WORKSHOPS FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIANS

Has a library user asked you to find “the medical research” that a recent medical news report is based on?

Where do you start your search? What search techniques are most effective? How can you find references to medical research articles published during specific time periods? Perhaps the researcher was interviewed on television recently. Will knowing her name help you find the date of the medical research article?

Librarians from the New England Region/National Network of Libraries of Medicine will present two workshops for public librarians this spring which will help you learn techniques for searching the National Library of Medicine’s PubMed database, an international source of citations to more than 17 million medical research articles from the Medline database.

PubMed Basics, an introductory workshop for public librarians about searching for medical research articles using PubMed will be presented Tuesday, May 11. The instructor will be Michelle Eberle, Consumer Health Coordinator for the New England Region/National Network of Libraries of Medicine.

Pubmed Update, a more advanced workshop about PubMed, will be presented Tuesday, June 8. This workshop will include additional searching techniques and updates about new PubMed features. The instructor will be Lauri Kolakoski Fennell, Outreach Coordinator for the New England Region/National Network of Libraries of Medicine.

Both workshops will be hosted by Healthnet at the Middletown Library Service Center from 10 a.m. to noon, with coffee available at 9:45 a.m. Directions to the Middletown Library Service Center are at <http://www.cslib.org/facmlsc.htm>

Contact Healthnet at richetelle@nso.uchc.edu if you need any special accommodations because of a disability.

Registration for the free workshops is required. To register, send an email to richetelle@nso.uchc.edu Include the following in your email message: Name of the workshop(s); your name; name and town of your library; work or home telephone number; email address.



Healthnet: Connecticut Consumer Health Information Network
Lyman Maynard Stowe Library ♦ University of Connecticut Health Center
PO Box 4003 ♦ Farmington CT 06034-4003
Telephone: 860/679-4055 ♦ email : richetelle@nso.uchc.edu
<http://library.uchc.edu/departm/hnet>

NETNEWS

HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH NATURAL DISASTERS,,,,,

If you are asked for recommendations for online resources about helping children--and adults-- cope with the traumatic news about the earthquakes in Haiti, Chile, and other natural disasters around the world, here are some suggestions....

“Talking to Kids About World Natural Disasters”

http://www.aboutourkids.org/articles/talking_kids_about_world_natural_disasters

Advice from a child psychologist at the New York Child Study Center

“Managing your distress about the earthquake from afar”

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/disaster/index.aspx>

An article from the website of the American Psychological Association, national professional association of psychologists

“Talking to Children about Earthquakes and other Natural Disasters”

<http://www.aacap.org/cs/DisasterTrauma.ResourceCenter>

Resources from the online Disaster Resource Center of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

“The Tragedy in Haiti: Helping Children Cope: Tips for Parents and Caregivers.”

http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/Haitian_Earthquake%20Parents%20_FINAL.pdf

Ideas for helping all children and adolescents as well as those in the U.S. whose families have been personally impacted by the Haitian earthquake. From the website of the National Association of School Psychologists



HEALTH CARE REFORM BASICS

Among the many commentaries and summaries of the Health Care Reform Law (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) in news articles and on organization websites (including details from the federal government at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/health-care-meeting/reform-means-you>), the following are helpful in providing an overview of the basic provisions.

The Kaiser Family Foundation website includes a concise table which provides a “Summary of New Health Care Reform Law” at <http://www.kff.org/healthreform/upload/8061.pdf> . The table includes details on the obligations the new law will require of individuals and employers as well information about subsidies to individuals and employers, tax changes, and expansion of public programs. A year-by-year “Health Reform Implementation Timeline,” at <http://www.kff.org/healthreform/8060.cfm> describes upcoming changes to Medicare, Medicaid, long-term care, prescription drug coverage, quality improvement, health care related taxes, and prevention and wellness incentives.

Consumers’ Union, publishers of Consumers’ Report magazine, summarizes provisions of the Health Care Reform Law from the viewpoint of the health consumer at <http://tinyurl.com/y9lmkkq> . In brief paragraphs, the webpage describes “Immediate benefits this year” and “More benefits phased-in through 2014.”



FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

The following titles are recommended to public libraries and other libraries providing consumer health information services. They are not part of the UConn Health Center Library collection.

The First Year: Autism Spectrum Disorders. An Essential Guide for the Newly Diagnosed Child. Nancy D. Wiseman. Da Capo Press, 2009. (ISBN 978-1-60094-065-1 paperback) \$16. 95.

It's tempting, of course, but a parent is not supposed to compare her child's behavior and development with the development patterns of children in the neighborhood and with the behavior and skills of her siblings. However, when you notice dramatic differences in your child's behavior as a young child and even regression in your child's communication skills and attention, it's difficult not to be very concerned.

Author Nancy D. Wiseman began to have serious concerns about her daughter's growth when she was one year old. Her lack of eye contact, regression in vocalizing, constant pacing in her crib, disinterest in activities in her surroundings, and limited vocabulary seemed to be red flags for a delay in expected development. Ms. Wiseman's concerns were verified when her daughter was diagnosed with autism at twenty-one months.

A follow-up to the author's 2006 book, **Could it be autism? A parent's guide to the first signs and next steps** (Broadway Books), Ms. Wiseman's parent guide about navigating the first year after the diagnosis of autism, is an organized, clearly written, practical, and valuable resource. Based on her personal experience when her young daughter's symptoms led to her diagnosis of autism, the book provides clear guidelines by month (and by week during the first month), to effective steps a parent needs to follow in order to secure a diagnosis and then skilled, comprehensive treatment for her child.

Despite its chronological arrangement, the book is not intended to recommend strict adherence to a schedule of actions after diagnosis. It encourages parents to follow a timetable that is appropriate for them. The author recommends that parents assemble a "team of specialists." One specialist is not sufficient because autism affects many aspects of a child's functioning.

The Guide emphasizes the importance of a rapid evaluation so that the child can begin therapy at a crucial, early age, the need to recruit family and friends to assist with the many assignments involved with the process of helping a child with autism, and the importance of setting priorities for tasks. Ms. Wiseman says that parents need to begin by "getting down to business." She states that "doing something is better than doing nothing."

An experienced director of marketing communications for a technology company, Ms. Wiseman found it necessary to use all her professional skills to find and organize skilled treatment for her daughter.

The expertise she developed encouraged her to become founder and president of First Signs, Inc. a national nonprofit organization that focuses on informing parents and health professionals about "early signs of autism."

The author's daughter, now in her early teens, has made remarkable progress. An avid reader and skilled figure skater who has many friends, she has developed greatly since her initial diagnosis. Her story may not be a realistic outcome for the children of many parents reading this book.

Additional resources about autism spectrum disorders are available on the Healthnet website in the "Pervasive Developmental Disorders" section of the Mental Health Resources Subject Guide at <http://uchc.libguides.com/content.php?pid=78575>

Feeding Baby Green. The Earth-Friendly Program for Healthy, Safe Nutrition During Pregnancy, Childhood, and Beyond. Alan Greene, M.D. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishing, 2009. 296 p. (ISBN 978-0-470-42524-4).

Parents eager to provide their babies with healthy nutrition throughout their childhood will need to begin very early. According to pediatrician Dr. Alan Greene, they ought to start providing “safe, wholesome, nutritious foods” to their youngsters before they are born.

Dr. Greene’s book helps parents, beginning with pregnancy, offer nutritious food to their children while they consider the “health of the planet” as well.

Dr. Greene’s journey to his advocacy of an earth-friendly, nutritious approach to childhood eating has been a long one. As a child he ate processed baby food and fast-food, dominated by salt, sugar, and additives and, early in parenting, fed these foods to his young children.

Dr. Greene’s “earth-friendly program” offers practical suggestions for feeding nutritious food in appropriate amounts to young children. His book discourages parents from feeding children mass-produced baby food in jars. He helps parents to encourage children to “enjoy..healthy foods” as they grow. His book provides specifics on spices, food quantities, safe fish, foods to avoid feeding young children, ways to encourage children to choose fruits and vegetables, and even includes some recipes. Dr. Greene emphasizes that this approach influences a child’s lifelong health.

Feeding Baby Green.. is a follow-up to his 2007 book, **Raising Baby Green. The Earth-Friendly Guide to Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Baby Care.** described in the Spring 2008 Healthnet News at <http://library.uchc.edu/departm/hnet/Spring08.pdf>

Johns Hopkins Patients’ Guide to Breast Cancer. Lillie D. Shockney. Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2010. (ISBN 0-7637-7426-X paperback) \$9. 95.

This is a concise and relatively short book.

As a nurse with extensive experience treating breast cancer patients at the Johns Hopkins Medical Center, author and breast cancer survivor Lillie D. Shockney understood that a brief, focused, comprehensive guide to breast cancer treatment, its side effects and risks, was all that a newly diagnosed patient could cope with. The initial shock and confusion that often confront a breast cancer patient meant that the patient could initially absorb only a limited amount of information about the challenges she was about to face.

Johns Hopkins Patients’ Guide to Breast Cancer is one of a series of brief paperback books explaining specific types of cancer. This Patients’ Guide is focused on helping those who are facing the “overwhelming” experience of “receiving a diagnosis of breast cancer.”

Despite the suddenness of this diagnosis, author and nurse Lillie D. Shockney assures newly diagnosed readers that in nearly all cases “you have time to make good decisions.”

Designed as a practical book, this Guide is intended to help formulate a “plan of action so that you [will] become a breast cancer survivor.”

It includes questions to ask oncologists about their experience when selecting a team of physicians to treat you , recommendations for gathering medical records and understanding pathology reports, and questions to ask a breast cancer surgeon at your initial visit.

In addition to information about breast cancer surgery and other treatment options and their side effects, the book offers many realistic, detailed suggestions related to setting up appointments, communicating with the team of oncology physicians and support staff, finances and insurance, and discussing anticipated needs with bosses, co-workers and family. The Guide provides newly diagnosed patients with valuable information that is often learned only through experience.

Everything Changes: The Insider's Guide to Cancer in Your 20s and 30s. Kairol Rosenthal. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2009. (ISBN 978-0-470-29402-4 paperback) \$16. 95.

Do you know a young adult in their 20s or 30s who has experienced cancer? Maybe not... although, according to the National Cancer Institute, “adolescents and young adults, aged 15 to 39 years old, are much more likely to be diagnosed with cancer than children under the age of 15. Each year almost 70,000 adolescents and young adults are diagnosed with cancer in the United States.”(<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/aya/types>)

Author Kairol Rosenthal is a self-proclaimed “expert” on cancer. Unfortunately, her expertise was gained through personal experience. An apparently healthy dance choreographer and aspiring writer, she was diagnosed with stage II thyroid cancer at age 27. Her challenges were financial as well as medical. She was earning a modest income and had minimal health insurance.

For adults in their 20s and 30s, this is a diagnosis often missed in its early stages, because, as a young woman explained, “I was so young, everyone’s operating under the assumption that I’m healthy.” (page 87)

In an effort to determine if her tough, challenging, isolating encounter as a cancer patient was shared by other young adults with this disease, Ms. Rosenthal began a journey across the country to interview twenty-five other young adult cancer patients who responded to her requests for information about their experiences.

Written with frank language and attitude, the book offers unique, honest insights into the reality of experiencing cancer as a young adult. It presents the experiences of men and women with very different lifestyles, caught unawares by cancer. Their stories and quotations illustrate concerns specific to this age group... about finances, insurance, fertility, sexuality, and relationships.

Some yearn for “a sense of normalcy and for somebody to say, ‘How’s it going today?’ Not ‘How’s your cancer?’” (p. 89). In reality, one young man states, “These were not beautiful moments.”(page 90).

The book is a helpful source of organizations and resources, as well as questions to ask of a physician. Ms. Rosenthal’s website and blog at <http://everythingchangesbook.com/> provide additional information.

Your High-Risk Pregnancy. A Practical and Supportive Guide. Diana Raab with Errol Norwitz. Alameda, Hunter House Inc., 2009. 348 p. (ISBN 978-0-89793-520-3 paperback).

It has been twenty-five years since the first edition of this book, then entitled **Getting Pregnant and Staying Pregnant: Overcoming Infertility and High-Risk Pregnancy**, was published. Since then, treatments for high-risk pregnancies have changed greatly and the number of high-risk pregnancies has increased. Approximately “15 to 20 per cent of women” experience some type of pregnancy difficulty. This edition focuses exclusively on high-risk pregnancies.

High-risk factors may be ones that were present before pregnancy (e.g. diabetes, age of mother, kidney disease, liver disease, sickle cell anemia, asthma, depression) or factors that arise during the pregnancy (e.g. molar pregnancy, hypertension, in vitro fertilization, gallstones, infections).

This information guide for prospective parents was co-written by a nurse, who gave birth to three children (now healthy young adults) after high-risk pregnancies, and an obstetrician and gynecologist at Yale-New Haven Hospital. Ms. Raab’s focus is to help readers experiencing high-risk pregnancies to be “hopeful and optimistic about her outcome.” In the book’s forward, Yale University School of Medicine professor Dr. Errol R. Norwitz reassures prospective parents that “high-risk [pregnancy] is not synonymous with a bad outcome.”

Since Ms. Raab’s career has veered from nursing to writing, she includes questions at the end of each chapter to encourage readers who wish to keep a journal chronicling their pregnancy experience.

Enhanced by line drawings, the clearly written text discusses interpretation of test results, medications dangerous to a fetus, nutrition recommendations, potentially harmful herbs, sexuality during pregnancy, airplane travel, vaccinations, genetics and possible birth defects, screening and diagnostic tests, bed rest, coping with pregnancy loss, labor, delivery and postpartum experiences, and cesarean births.

A book about fertility options: **Planning Parenthood. Strategies for Success in Fertility Assistance, Adoption, and Surrogacy.** was described in the Summer 2009 Healthnet Newsletter at <http://library.uchc.edu/departm/hnet/summer09.pdf>

Caring for Your Baby and Young Child. Birth to Age 5. Steven P. Shelov and Tanya Altmann, editors. American Academy of Pediatrics, 2009. (ISBN 978-0-553-38630-1 paperback).



The American Academy of Pediatrics, national professional association of pediatricians, has published a new, fifth edition of its classic guide to parenting babies and children through age five.

The parenting guide is detailed (diapering techniques, developmental milestones) and reassuring. It includes information about safety concerns, basic care, common health problems, and emotional development. The new edition offers chapters that discuss sleep, food allergies, probiotics and prebiotics, immunizations and vaccine safety, as well as exercise and obesity.

Additional parenting information is available on Healthnet's Subject Guide entitled "Your Child: A Health Resource Guide," at <http://uchc.libguides.com/content.php?pid=67331&sid=497342>

When Things Get Crazy With Your Teen. The Why, the How, and What To Do Now. Michael Bradley. New York, McGraw-Hill, 2009. 268 p. (ISBN 978-0-07-154571-6).

What happened to that sweet, smiling eight-year-old son of yours? Why does your teenage daughter no longer want to be just like Mom as she did when she was younger?

Teenage years are challenging to children growing into young adults...and to their parents. Many parents are astounded by their youngsters' sudden reversal of behavior. Defiance, alcohol use, poor grades...these are behaviors many despairing parents are unprepared for.

In this helpful parenting guide, adolescent psychologist Michael Bradley wastes no time philosophizing about the sometimes strange behavior of teenagers. Nor does he advise parents to ignore rude, bizarre behavior as they hope this disturbing stage of development will soon pass.

Instead, he provides a practical "manual" for parents with brief, two to three page chapters about how to deal with difficult behaviors such as lying, cursing, outbursts of rage, alcohol use, refusal to follow rules, cheating at school, over or under eating, and drastic mood swings.

His book is actually a response to the outburst of an exasperated parent at a lecture he presented, who said, "That theory stuff is fine, ...But what should I do about this *tonight...when I get home?*" According to Dr. Bradley, this book offers "little theory and lots of advice—practical, specific, and well-researched advice."

The suggestions for the "do's, the don'ts, the whys, and hows" of dealing with difficult teenage behaviors are intended as immediate, triage responses to specific situations, not as long term solutions. They often relate to "issues of power and control" between teenagers and their parents.

Dr. Bradley identifies times to sidestep arguments (“Walk away if you’re too angry to keep cool. Conflicts over appearance and dress are really conflicts that are “all about identity.”) and times to take a stand (“Don’t ever, ever, ever give in to stop his disrespect or badgering. You’ll soon be negotiating with a terrorist.”) He provides insight into teenage logic (“..total freedom feels like rejection to her”) and many specific techniques to survive your child’s teenage years.

How Patients Should Think. 10 Questions To Ask Your Doctor About Drugs, Tests, and Treatment. Ray Moynihan and Melissa Sweet. New York, Pegasus Books, 2009. 234 p. (ISBN 978-1-60598-047-8).

When a medical crisis arises or a family member is diagnosed with a serious disease or medical condition, many of us are anxious to make sure that everything medically possible is done quickly to help treat the patient.

Australian medical writers Ray Moynihan and Melissa Sweet offer specific suggestions to help patients and family members slow down and focus on discovering the most appropriate diagnostic tests and procedures.

Their guidelines are in the form of ten open-ended questions that patients should ask their doctors in order to learn about recommended, current methods of treatment. The book also includes a number of additional “tough questions” to ask your doctor when she advises specific tests, medications, or other treatments.

A clearly-written guide, this book is designed to encourage patients to become more assertive and informed and to “develop a healthy skepticism” before making medical decisions. Among the ten questions patients are encouraged to ask, in order to help weigh the risks and benefits of recommended treatments, are: “Do I really need that test? Do I really have that disorder? Do I really need to be screened? What are my [treatment] options? How well does that treatment work? What are the side effects?”

The ten general questions are followed by more specific ones to help learn about options other than surgery, probability of side effects, possible harms and benefits of screening tests, research evidence supporting the treatment, back-up plans at the hospital during surgery, and ways the patient can help maximize recovery.

Each chapter has extensive, very readable, background information related to the concerns of the chapter’s question. Chapter-by-chapter notes at the end of the book refer to books and medical journal articles that support conclusions in the book. The information is enhanced by relevant news stories and case histories.



*Healthnet News is written by Alberta L. Richetelle and Judith Kronick.
If you have questions about anything in the newsletter or about Healthnet services for Connecticut public libraries,
please call 860/679-4055; e-mail address: richetelle@nso.uchc.edu*

© 2010 University of Connecticut Health Center. All rights reserved.

ISSN: 1526-8624