

## THEY'RE NOT REAL DOCTORS, BUT THEY PLAY THEM ON TV

Many of us trust media portrayals of doctors more than our actual physicians. We certainly see them more often, and we don't spend hours in the waiting room and then wrangle with our insurance companies.

Try matching this list of famous TV doctors with quotations from their shows:

- 1) Perry Cox, *Scrubs*
- 2) Cliff Huxtable, *The Cosby Show*
- 3) Doug Ross, *ER*
- 4) Leonard McCoy, *Star Trek*
- 5) Douglas Howser, *Doogie Howser, M.D.*
- 6) Gregory House, *House, M.D.*
- 7) Benjamin Franklin Pierce (Hawkeye), *M\*A\*S\*H*

- a. "What would you prefer—a doctor who holds your hand while you die or one who ignores you while you get better?"
- b. "I'm a doctor, not a bricklayer."
- c. "I became a doctor for the same four reasons that everybody does—chicks, money, power, and chicks."
- d. "I'm a doctor and nothing gets in the way of that. Nothing."
- e. "You're afraid to try, because you're afraid your brain is going to explode and it's going to ooze out of your ears."
- f. "If we don't go crazy once in a while, we'll all go crazy."
- g. "They say beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Maybe if we all spent a little less time beholding—we'd all be a lot happier."

Answers:

1 (c); 2 (e); 3 (d); 4 (b); 5 (g); 6 (a); 7 (f)



## SERVICE COORDINATION NEWS

### Alcohol & Drug Abuse in Seniors

#### *Awareness Is the First Step*

As we age, the need to take more and different kinds of medications increases. Growing older means our bodies respond differently to alcohol and medications than when we were younger.

Alcohol slows down brain activity. Because alcohol affects alertness, judgment, coordination, and reaction time, drinking increases the risk of falls and accidents. Some research has shown that it takes *less* alcohol to affect older people than younger ones. Over time, heavy drinking permanently damages the brain and central nervous system, as well as the liver, heart, kidneys, and stomach. Alcohol's effects can make some medical problems hard to diagnose. For example, alcohol causes changes in the heart and blood vessels that can dull pain that might be a warning sign of a heart attack. It also can cause forgetfulness and confusion, which can seem like Alzheimer's disease.

Alcoholism is a disease that includes any of the following four symptoms:

- **Craving** – A need or urge to drink.
- **Loss of control** – Not being able to stop drinking once drinking has begun.
- **Physical dependence** – Withdrawal symptoms, such as nausea, sweating, shakiness, and anxiety after stopping drinking.
- **Tolerance** – The need to drink greater amounts of alcohol to get "high."

#### **A Safe Level of Drinking**

How do you know if you or someone you love is consuming too much alcohol? For most adults, moderate alcohol use is up to **two drinks per day for**

**men and one drink per day for women and older people.** (One drink equals one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.)

However, people taking certain over-the-counter or prescription medications and people with medical conditions that can be made worse by drinking should *never* drink.

#### **Avoiding Problems with Prescription Medications**

When used responsibly, prescription medications can measurably improve lives. But these drugs also carry the risk of dependence and addiction—and seniors are particularly vulnerable. The changing metabolisms of older people can intensify the effects of drugs and alcohol. Aging is often characterized by loss and loneliness—two conditions that increase the risk of substance abuse.

Painkillers and sedative labels warn against alcohol use, but an elderly person may forget about the warning. **Even a small amount of alcohol, in combination with certain prescription medications, can suppress breathing—with fatal results.**

**It's also essential not to combine drugs—prescription or not—without consulting your health practitioner, or to deviate from the prescribed dosage.** Caregivers can help by encouraging older adults to use pain killers and sedatives only when absolutely necessary, and to taper off as soon as they can. **It's equally important to help seniors tackle the underlying problems, and not just treat their symptoms.**

- Remind them to *always* avoid alcohol when taking painkillers or sedatives.
- Encourage them to bring all their medications to their doctor when they go for their yearly checkups, so the

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physician has a record of exactly what they're taking.

- Check medication use—prescription and over-the-counter—and be sure they understand label warnings and the dangers of drug interaction.
- Encourage them to throw out outdated prescription and over-the-counter medications.
- Know what medications the person in your care is taking, and why.

Source: *Caring.com*

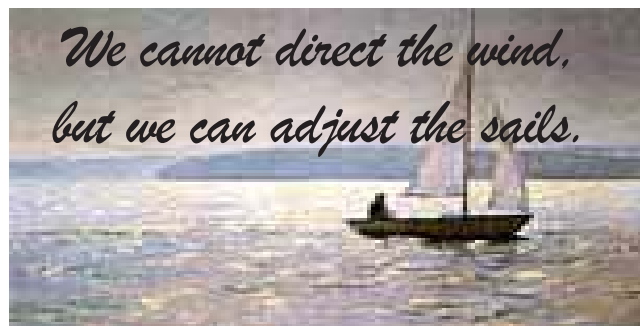
### Shopping online: the latest trends

Going to the mall? That's so 20th century.

Online shopping is the positive trend in the retail sector these days.

Here's how it adds up, as compiled by the shopping Web site Coupon Sherpa:

- 63 percent of online shoppers are female; mothers are the fastest-growing demographic group.
- Americans spent more than \$115 billion online in 2008; some forecasters say online shopping will hit almost \$330 billion in 2010, or about 13 percent of total retail sales.
- U.S. consumers aren't the world's most prolific online shoppers. South Koreans are, with 99 percent of Internet users in that country making online purchases. Germany, the United Kingdom, and Japan run a close second, with the United States at No. 8.
- The most popular online product? Books, followed by clothing, videos and games, airline tickets, and electronic equipment.
- 60 percent of consumers confine their shopping to a single site. The most popular shopping site is Amazon.com.



### Keep America Beautiful Month

Since 1968, the amount of litter in America has decreased by 61 percent. But litter remains a problem, costing our nation at least \$11.5 billion per year in direct costs, including cleanup and prevention programs, along with indirect costs such as decreased property values and health issues. Do your part by keeping your neighborhood clean of litter. For ideas, go to the Keep America Beautiful Web site, at [www.kab.org](http://www.kab.org)

### APRIL 2010

#### Birthstone for April

One of the most popular gems throughout history, diamonds are the birthstone for this month, and these stones are linked to love, eternity and strength. This has contributed towards diamonds being the most popular gems of all time when it comes to romance, such as engagement rings and wedding bands.



Diamonds are very strong and hardwearing, making them the perfect birthstone to wear on a daily basis. You can enjoy many different cuts of this stone, and the fiery, glamorous sparkle given off by diamonds is positively captivating.

#### April Birth Flower

The April birth flower is the daisy. Daisies are associated with innocence. The gerbera daisy has large colorful blooms, which has made it a favorite with flower lovers. There is a legend that a nymph wanting to escape unwanted attention, transformed herself into the daisy. Ever after this the April birth flower has the flower meaning of implicit and modesty. An alternate birth flower for April is the sweet pea.



### How to respond when the fever strikes

*"Fever in the morning . . . fever all through the night . . ."* The hit Peggy Lee song turns love into a fever with a catchy tune. But if you or a loved one is suffering from an actual fever, how much should you worry?

Chances are you'll be fine. A fever is defined as a body temperature above the so-called "normal" 98.6 degrees (or 37 degrees Celsius). But your temperature can fluctuate by a degree through the typical day. Physicians don't consider a fever medically significant until it reaches 100.4 degrees (38 C). A fever of 104 or higher (40 C) calls for immediate treatment or medical attention.

Fever is most often caused by an infection. Diseases like the flu, the common cold, strep throat, gastroenteritis, and others can produce a fever, as can such medical conditions as lupus, arthritis, and some cancers. In addition, antibiotics and other drugs (including narcotics and antihistamines) can cause fevers due to adverse reactions or withdrawal.

Most fevers can be treated with acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or aspirin (though children and teens shouldn't take aspirin due to the risk of Reye syndrome). Fluids are important to prevent dehydration, because a fever can increase perspiration and lead to excessive loss of fluid.

Fevers are more dangerous in children. Children below the age of three months should be seen by a physician if they have a temperature of 100.4 (38 C) or higher. Anyone with a history of heart disease, diabetes, cancer, or other serious medical conditions should promptly seek care from a medical provider should a fever strike.

Beyond that, be on the lookout for symptoms such as headache, neck stiffness, shortness of breath, convulsions, or seizures, which can indicate more serious problems.

**Service Coordination** is a service of the Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. under the direction of the Ohio Department of Aging. The **Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.** serves Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton Counties. For assistance from the Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc., please call 1-800-582-7277.

For information on **Ohio Medicaid** programs or to report suspected Medicaid fraud, you may call the Ohio Medicaid Consumer Hotline: 1-800-324-8680 or 614-466-6742.

The **Ombudsman** program can handle your concerns about areas such as elder abuse, client care, consumer rights, etc. For more information, call 1-800-582-7277.

*"Services provided on a non-discriminatory basis."*



### April is . . .

**1 - 30 Alcohol Awareness Month**  
SAMHSA's Health Information Network  
P.O. Box 2345  
Rockville, MD 20847-2345  
(877) 726-4727 English/Spanish  
(240) 221-4292 Fax  
[shin@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:shin@samhsa.hhs.gov)  
[ncadi.samhsa.gov/seasonal/aprilalcohol/](http://ncadi.samhsa.gov/seasonal/aprilalcohol/)

**1 - 30 Irritable Bowel Syndrome Awareness Month**  
International Foundation for Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders  
P.O. Box 170864  
Milwaukee, WI 53217-8076  
(888) 964-2001  
(414) 964-1799  
(414) 964-7176 Fax  
[iffgd@iffgd.org](mailto:iffgd@iffgd.org)  
[www.aboutibs.org/site/about-ibs/april-ibs-awareness-month](http://www.aboutibs.org/site/about-ibs/april-ibs-awareness-month)  
Materials available  
Contact: Nancy Norton

**1 - 30 National Cancer Control Month**  
American Cancer Society  
250 Williams Street NW  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
(800) ACS-2345 (227-2345)  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)  
Materials available  
Contact: National Office