



Senior Viewpoint

gwinnettcounty senior services



"There's No Place Like Home!"

July 2013

Don't shun symptoms of shingles

Shingles is a very common, often painful, but treatable skin disease caused by a reactivation of the chickenpox virus. After you get better from chickenpox, the virus stays dormant in your body and can be reactivated by stress, certain medications, or a weakened immune system; usually later in life. Anyone who has had chickenpox can get shingles, however it is most prominent in older adults ages 60 to 80. Most people who get shingles will get better and will not get it again.

Some seniors mistake shingles for heat rash or a severe allergic reaction. However, shingles is distinctive because it affects only one side of the body.

An outbreak of shingles usually begins with a burning, itching, or tingling sensation on the back, chest, or around the rib cage or waist. Some people report feeling feverish and weak at first. Usually within 48 to 72 hours, a red, blotchy rash appears. The blisters, clustered in one specific

area, seem to arrive in waves over a period of three to five days. The blisters fill with fluid and then crust over. The burning sensation in the rash area can be accompanied by intense shooting pains. It takes two to four weeks for the blisters to heal, and they may leave scars. Some people only get a mild rash, and some do not get a rash at all.

Shingles is treated with medicines. Starting antiviral medicine right away can help your rash heal faster and be less painful. So if you think you may have shingles, see your doctor right away. Good home care also can help you feel better faster. Take care of any skin sores, and keep them clean. Take your medication as directed. If you are bothered by pain, tell your doctor. He or she may write a prescription for pain medicine or suggest an over-the-counter pain medicine.

Adapted from <http://nihseniorhealth.gov/shingles/>

GeorgiaCares — By Adrienne Noble, Information & Assistance Specialist

Hello *Senior Viewpoint* readers,

I receive many calls regarding Medicare benefits; especially from seniors who are new to Medicare. Finding your way through the maze of Medicare insurance and prescription coverage can be very confusing, but GeorgiaCares can help. GeorgiaCares is a free program of the DHS Division of Aging Services and Area Agencies on Aging. Trained counselors from GeorgiaCares can help demystify Medicare, Medicare summary notices, Medigap, Medicare Advantage plans, Medicare fraud, as well as Long-Term Care insurance. They can also help you select a prescription plan, sort through medical bills, assist with filing Medicare claims and appeals, submit Medicare fraud reports, and analyze Medicare supplement and Long-Term Care insurance policies. For additional information or assistance, please call **1.866.552.4464** or visit GeorgiaCares online at **www.mygeorgiacares.org**.



Fresh fruit crisp dessert

As we gather together for Independence Day festivities, here is a simple dessert recipe that the whole family will enjoy. This healthy dessert is crusty on top and juicy underneath; with a little yogurt on the side, it is perfect. Enjoy!

Ingredients

- 1 cup quick-cooking oats
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup light brown sugar or raw sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon seas salt
- 4 ounces butter, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 6-8 green apples, with skins and coarsely chopped (about 6 cups)
- 1 cup frozen raspberries (optional)
- ½ cup water or apple juice

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 375°F.
- Combine oats flour, sugar, cinnamon, and salt in a medium mixing bowl.
- Mix in butter by rubbing between your fingertips to form a coarse meal.
- Arrange fruit in 8 x 8 x 2-inch square baking dish. Pour in water and spread fruit with crumb mix, patting it down.
- Bake one hour or until top is brown and bubbly. Serves 6 – 8.

Reduce your risk of skin cancer

While exposure to UV radiation is a major risk factor for cancer, skin cancer can occur anywhere on the skin, not just in sun-exposed areas. The best way to reduce your risk of skin cancer is to avoid outdoor activities during midday, when the sun's rays are strongest, or to wear protective clothing such as a wide-brimmed hat, long-sleeved shirt, and pants.

Darker colored clothing is more protective against the sun than lighter colors. For example, a white t-shirt, particularly if it gets wet, provides little resistance to UV rays. In addition, wearing sunglasses that wrap around the face or have large frames is a good way to shield the delicate skin around the eyes.



When exposed to sunlight, you should always wear sunscreen and lipscreen. If possible, choose sunscreen and lipscreen labeled 'broad-spectrum' (to protect against UVA and UVB rays). Your sunscreen should have an SPF, or sun protection rating, of at least 30.

The SPF of a sunscreen is a measure of the time it takes to cause sunburn on a person wearing sunscreen compared to the time it takes to produce sunburn on a person not wearing sunscreen. This varies from person to person, so be sure to re-apply sunscreen every two to three hours.

Adapted from NIH Senior Health

Gwinnett County Senior Center Locations

Buford

2755 Sawnee Avenue
Buford, GA 30518
770.614.2527

Lawrenceville

Rhodes Jordan Park
225 Benson Street
Lawrenceville, GA 30046
678.277.0970

Norcross

5030 Georgia Belle Court
Norcross, GA 30093
770.638.5683

