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Hearing the future
By Jessie Grzeca, Doctor of Audiology

Mike Singletary, Leslie Nielsen, Ronald Reagan, Dr. Art Ulene, Norm Crosby, Al Unser, Huey Lewis, Buzz Aldrin ...

What do these people have in common? Not only have they had hearing loss, but they have openly discussed their hearing loss and admitted to wearing hearing aids. They have talked about the benefits improved hearing has made on their careers and their personal lives. And, even though many people believe that wearing hearing aids themselves would make them appear less competent, older or unattractive, you would be hard-pressed to attach those labels to a former NFL All-Pro and now coach, physician, engineer and astronaut, and U.S. president. Many people in all walks of life, regardless of their age, are able to lead successful lives and careers with hearing loss, but rely on the benefits of modern technology to do so. In studies, hearing aid use has been shown to improve earning power, emotional stability, family relationships and physical health, and to reduce discrimination, frustration, depression and anxiety.

Individuals with hearing loss also may go untreated because of beliefs that there is no treatment for the type of hearing loss that they have, that hearing aids do not work, or that because their physician didn't recommend a hearing test, it's not important. However, new research and technology have dispelled these myths. Hearing aid technology has drastically changed compared to 10 years ago. More people with a wider variety of hearing abilities are receiving greater benefits from these advancements. Most types of hearing loss and nearly 95 percent of sensorineural (or nerve) loss can be successfully improved with a wide range of options. Fittings are more comfortable and natural sounding, background noise can be reduced to comfortable levels, automatic adjustments eliminate the need for manual push buttons and volume controls, and digital connectivity allows wireless communication with TVs, cell phones, computers and MP3 players.

With all of these rapid changes, it is important to find the appropriate professionals to diagnose and treat hearing loss. Many people are familiar with the well-advertised franchises associated with hearing aids, but do your research carefully and beware of the “limited-time specials” that show up in your mail. Not everyone who works with hearing aids has the same level of education. Be sure to look for an audiologist – someone who has either a master’s degree or doctorate degree. That individual will have far more education and training in the diagnosis and treatment of hearing loss than a hearing instrument specialist or hearing aid dealer. If a medical problem is associated with your hearing loss, an audiologist will be better able to recognize that problem and refer you appropriately. If not, they will be well equipped to help you understand the physiological and psychological impact of hearing loss and navigate the wide array of information and misinformation.

See Hearing the future on page 5
Aurora QuickCare offers quick relief when summer vacation bites

Summertime brings sunshine, picnics, beaches and a multitude of outdoor activities. It also can bring insect bites, sunburn, poison ivy, rashes, and other unexpected bumps and bruises. Summer vacations may take you away from immediate access to your family physician and also can bring guests who packed everything but their doctor.

Aurora QuickCare gives you a fast, convenient and affordable option when medical attention is needed for summer’s minor health concerns. We are your walk-in health care resource when:

• Your doctor’s office is in Brookfield, but you get stung by a bee in Green Bay
• You discover the poison ivy rash (and itch) at 11 a.m. on a Sunday
• Your out-of-town guest develops an ear ache and their doctor is in Texas

For instances like these, when your first instinct may be to visit the emergency department, Aurora QuickCare offers you and your loved ones relief with shorter wait times and less expense.

We don’t replace routine care with your primary care provider, but just like the lingering daylight hours of summer, our extended day, evening and weekend hours are a convenient option for prompt care. The nurse practitioners and physician assistants are qualified to diagnose, assess and treat medical conditions, and write prescriptions when needed. If your condition is determined to be more serious, you will be referred to your doctor’s office, an urgent care facility or emergency department.

Whether it is an after-hours health issue or a guest’s medical concern, consider Aurora QuickCare for many other minor conditions, such as sore throat, ear infection, ear wax removal, pink eye, seasonal allergies, sinus infections, mononucleosis, minor rashes, female bladder infection, camp and sports physicals, wart removal and more. Tetanus, flu, pneumonia, meningitis and travel vaccinations are also offered, as well as screenings for TB and cholesterol.

Enjoy your summer vacation knowing that Aurora QuickCare can handle any unexpected “bugs” you or guests may encounter.

Most visits are covered by insurance, Medicare and Medicaid.

For more information or to find an Aurora QuickCare near you, call 877-784-2502 or visit www.Aurora.org/QuickCare.

Used medical equipment donations needed

The Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation department at Aurora Sinai Medical Center is accepting gently used durable medical equipment to help our patients that have limited or no resources.

Donated equipment is checked over for safety, and helps patients with deficits in mobility, and to better participate in everyday activities of daily living.

We are in need of:

• Canes (great need)
• Crutches (great need)
• Walkers (great need)
• Wheelchairs
• Commodes
• Tub/shower benches

If you or someone you know has equipment to donate, you may drop the equipment off at the Aurora Sinai Rehabilitation department on the fourth floor, Monday–Friday between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. If you have questions about this program or would like to support an equipment drive (Boy Scouts, schools, etc.), please call 414-219-5241.

To find an Aurora Rehabilitation Center donation site near you, please call 877-732-6332. Donations are tax deductible.
Beyond the Welcome to Medicare exam

New annual wellness visits

Most of you may already be familiar with the Welcome to Medicare physical exam, a service offered by Medicare for many years now. This comprehensive physical exam, which is only available to you within the first 12 months of your Medicare Part B enrollment, helps you and your doctor develop a personalized plan to prevent disease, improve your health and help you stay well.

As of Jan. 1, 2011, Medicare expanded its coverage as follows:
• During your first 12 months of Medicare Part B coverage, you qualify for the Welcome to Medicare exam — this hasn’t changed.

Now, after 12 months in Medicare Part B or one year after your Welcome to Medicare exam, you are eligible for an annual wellness visit.
• You are eligible for this annual wellness visit once every 12 months.

Annual wellness visits include a prevention plan based on your current health and risk factors. There are no copays or deductibles that apply for these exams.**

Any doctor who accepts Medicare assignment can provide this exam.

See Welcome to Medicare exam on page 8

A restful night’s sleep is an important part of a healthy lifestyle

Chronic sleep problems affect up to 40 percent of the adult population. However, many individuals are unaware that they have a sleep disorder. They grow accustomed to the fatigue or attribute their symptoms to natural aging. Common sleep-related problems include:

• Obstructive sleep apnea
• Insomnia
• Narcolepsy
• Restless leg syndrome
• Rapid eye movement (REM) behavior disorder
• Drivers’ safety issues
• Teeth grinding (bruxism)

“It is important for people to recognize the symptoms of sleep disorders and understand how sleep patterns can affect their overall health,” recommended Mary Meyer, Aurora Health Care’s regional manager of Sleep Medicine Services.

Some symptoms can be physically identified during sleep, including snoring, breathing pattern interruptions, nightmares, night terrors or sleepwalking. Other signs of a sleep disorder are reflected in how we function while we are awake. Fatigue, irritability, excessive tiredness, memory loss, lack of concentration, morning headaches, depression and anxiety all can indicate sleep-related problems.

“When left untreated, chronic sleep issues can affect your physical and mental health, and can lead to serious health problems,” explained Mary. “Cardiac complications, stroke, high blood pressure, a weakened immune system, impotence, driving accidents and even death have been associated with sleep disorders.”

Aurora Sleep Medicine Center specializes in comprehensive evaluation, diagnostic and treatment services, and follow-up care for the entire range of sleep-related problems. Diagnostic assessments range from a complete medical history and physical exam to overnight sleep studies that detect interruptions in sleep patterns.

Following diagnosis, sleep medicine specialists work with each individual to determine treatment options that best meet their specific needs.

“Lifestyle and risk-factor modifications, such as weight loss, limited caffeine consumption and exercise, help many patients improve the quality of their sleep,” said Mary. “For others, emotional counseling and stress management techniques are used to deal with underlying factors that may be affecting sleep.”

See Restful night’s sleep on page 7
See the difference

As we get older, certain natural changes also occur in our eyes, making it more difficult to see over time. Tasks that used to be easy, such as focusing on small objects, distinguishing between colors or adjusting to light quickly, can become increasingly more challenging. Below are some easy adjustments that can make life just a little easier.

- **Add general overhead lighting** especially in areas such as the kitchen, bathroom or stairways.
- **Use a task light** (a direct gooseneck type lamp without a shade) placed on the side of you that allows you to focus the rays directly on the paper of project instead of in your eyes.

- **Reduce glare** by covering shiny surfaces, using anti-glare bulbs or closing blinds during the day.
- **Allow extra time to adjust** to changes in light. Try putting your sunglasses on a couple of minutes prior to going outdoors and leave them on several minutes after coming indoors.
- **Use contrast** (opposite colors) to allow items to stand out against their background. For example, pour your coffee in to a white cup or place black tape on the edge of white steps.

In addition to these normal changes that occur as you age, some eye changes may signal something more serious, making regular eye exams very important. Macular degeneration is an example of one of these eye diseases that affects the center part of vision, making activities such as reading, writing or watching television difficult. Other causes of vision loss include glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, cataracts and stroke.

Aurora West Allis Medical Center and Aurora Sinai Medical Center now offer therapy services to individuals who struggle with these eye diseases. The goal of therapy is to help people maintain independence with the above activities through the use of various high-powered magnifiers, adaptive equipment, special lighting or education in the use of non-visual strategies.

**Low vision therapy is offered at the following Aurora Rehabilitation Center locations:**

Aurora Sinai Medical Center
945 N. 12th Street, 4th Floor
Milwaukee
414-219-5241

Aurora West Allis Medical Center
8901 W. Lincoln Avenue, West Allis
414-328-6630

It's time for an eye exam at Aurora Vision Center

You’ve heard it before. You only have one pair of eyes, and they deserve the very best you can give them. Aurora Vision Center provides comprehensive optometry, ophthalmology and optical services. If you already have an eye exam prescription, take that to any Aurora Vision Center for help in making the right choice from their large selection of basic to high-fashion eyewear.

Visit one of the 13 Aurora Vision Center locations and receive $50 off a complete pair of eyeglasses (see coupon at right). For the nearest Aurora Vision Center location, call 866-986-2777 or visit www.Aurora.org/VisionCenter.
Economic security initiative for older adults

If you or someone you know is struggling financially during these difficult times, Aurora Family Service can help. Aurora Family Service was awarded a grant from the National Council on Aging to participate in the Economic Security Initiative to help older adults reach a measure of economic security.

The program aims to help adults age 55 years and older, who meet specific low-income requirements, navigate through the many community programs by doing a comprehensive assessment to match them to available programs and organizations within the community.

Aurora Family Service assists with financial services such as money management, representative payee, credit counseling, debt management, foreclosure counseling and a property tax program.

When appropriate, a client may receive referrals to other services available in Milwaukee, such as:

- **Public benefits**: FoodShare, Medicaid enrollment, eligibility counseling and energy assistance
- **Housing services**: Foreclosure counseling, home repair, homeowner options and renters assistance
- **Legal services**: Debt and loss pension service, eviction prevention, end-of-life decisions, assistance with Social Security benefits
- **Employment**: Training, skill assessment, employment/volunteer placement
- **Aging network services**: Home and community-based services, nutrition programs
- **Health care access**: Insurance counseling and disease prevention
- **Tax service**: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, homestead, tax counseling

Aurora Family Service provides economic case management and is equipped to offer a comprehensive review of a person’s economic situation. They also help eligible adults understand the full range of options available and will follow up to ensure needs are serviced through referrals and available programs.

Data from this project will determine if a holistic economic casework approach can significantly improve older adults’ economic situations.

To participate or for more information, contact Karen Jackson, Economic Security Initiative coordinator, at 414-345-4437.

Hearing the future from page 1

related to hearing aids in order to find the treatment that best fits you as an individual. At Aurora BayCare Medical Center in Green Bay, we hold doctorate degrees in audiology, along with years of experience working in the Green Bay area. We take the time to get to know each of our patients and their specific needs, concerns and preferences. We will work with you or your family member to achieve the best outcome possible by combining the latest technology from multiple manufacturers with exceptional customer service and knowledge.

If you or someone you know show signs of hearing loss, see an audiologist to find out for sure. You may be missing out on the joy and freedom that improved hearing can provide. The process may be easier than you expect, and the outcome may give you more confidence and comfort than imagined with restored hearing.

For more information or to schedule an appointment with Jessie Grzeca, AuD, call the Aurora BayCare Medical Center Audiology department at 920-288-8230. To inquire about an audiologist in your area, please call 866-938-0035.

**Aurora Freedom+ discount offered**

Aurora Freedom+ cardholders receive a 5% discount on hearing aids at select audiology centers. Call 888-537-3336 for a location nearest you.

Discounts cannot be used or combined with insurance, Medicare, Medicaid or other government programs, or in combination with any other discounts or sales. Be sure to show your Aurora Freedom+ card at the time of purchase.
Get the full benefit of your medications – safely!

All medications have benefits. Unfortunately, they also come with risks, and in the worst-case scenario, medication error can lead to serious health problems and even death. Staying informed and conscientious can help keep you safe and promote the effectiveness of your medications.

Staying safe at home

• Make a list of all prescription and over-the-counter medications that you use, and keep it updated. The list should contain the name of each medication, the name of the doctor who prescribed it, the reason it was prescribed, the dosage amount and the time(s) each day that you take it. This document also should include any allergies you may have. Keep one copy of the list in your medicine cabinet and another copy in your wallet or purse.

• Keep medications in their original containers and store them properly.

• Check with your doctor before ordering any prescription medication off the Internet.

• Don’t take your medication in the dark. Read the label each time you take the medication and follow dosage instructions carefully. This also is an opportunity for you to check the amount of medication you have left so that you can plan ahead for refills.

• Do not chew, crush or break capsules or tablets unless instructed to do so. With liquid medication, use only the measuring device that came with it. Many household utensils are not accurate.

Tips for the doctor’s office, hospital or pharmacy

• Bring all of your medications (in their original containers) with you to any doctor appointment, hospital or pharmacy visit. The physician, pharmacist and staff can review what medications you are currently taking and address possible side effects, allergies, adverse reactions and drug interactions that may impact your overall health.

• If your doctor prescribes a new medication, ask for a complete explanation and make sure you understand how to take the medicine before you start using it. Suggested questions for your doctor or pharmacist:
  – What is the name of the medicine and why am I taking it?
  – Define the dosage: Does 4 times a day mean 4 times within 24 hours or 4 times during the daytime?
  – Are there any special storage instructions for this medication?
  – Should I take the medication with or without food, and is there anything I should not eat or drink with this medicine?
  – What should I do if I miss a dose?
  – Are there any side effects?

• Make sure you can open the container.

• Look at each medication before you take it. If it does not look like what you usually take, check with your doctor or pharmacist.

• In the hospital setting, make sure the staff checks your hospital identification bracelet before giving you any medication. This helps prevent you from getting someone else’s medications.

• Before leaving the hospital, have the doctor, nurse or pharmacist discuss each medication with you and a family member, and update your medications list.

• Review your medication list with your health care provider at least once a year.

For many people, medications are a necessity for maintaining or restoring their health. However, without proper management, these same medications have the power to harm. Taking an active role in your own medication management can help you minimize the risk of complications and allows you to take advantage of the maximum benefits they offer.

For a list of Aurora Pharmacy locations near you, please call 888-973-8999 or visit www.AuroraPharmacy.org.
The truth about chiropractic
By Paul C. Maurer, DC

“But, I have arthritis, so I don’t think you can help me.”
“I’m afraid to get ‘cracked’.”
“I’ve heard chiropractic hurts!”

As a chiropractor, I have heard the above phrases many times. Enough so that it is appropriate to dispel the myths one by one.

“But I have arthritis, so I don’t think you can help me.”

Chiropractors treat patients with arthritis on a daily basis and spinal arthritic conditions have long been a staple in their offices. So, can chiropractic cure arthritis? The answer would be a resounding “no.” But chiropractic care can lessen the pain involved with the “wear and tear” that many of us encounter. Chiropractic’s hands-on treatment can increase mobility of the spinal joints that have been affected by arthritic changes and lessen the pain, stiffness and soreness so common to those battling the condition.

Arthritic changes also may irritate the surrounding nerve tissues (i.e., sciatica, stenosis, “pinched nerve”), and in many instances, conservative chiropractic treatment can be provided to reduce or eliminate a decidedly unwanted painful condition.

“I’m afraid to get ‘cracked.’”

Some forms of chiropractic treatment do indeed involve “adjusting” or “manipulating” spinal joints, resulting in the movement of some joint fluid, which releases sound. But when to use those procedures is left to both the practitioner and patient as to when that may be appropriate. There are also other treatment options. Many cases of spinal arthritis respond to lower-force techniques including mobilization (stretching) or distraction (a form of decompression) techniques that are essentially painless and extremely tolerable.

A skilled Aurora Health Care chiropractor will use the most appropriate and safe techniques to best provide both emotional and physical comfort for the patient.

“I’ve heard chiropractic hurts!”

In a nutshell – no, it doesn’t. While swollen and painful joints are very sensitive, Aurora chiropractors accommodate the treatment plans to limit the sensation of pain. At worst, a mild post-treatment soreness is possible as the arthritic area is treated. Aurora chiropractors are sensitive to the condition and will work together with the patient in order to achieve the best outcome. When chiropractic care is applied appropriately, most patients are surprised at the lack of discomfort that results. Patient tolerance is assessed at each visit and a treatment plan is adopted accordingly for you as an individual.

Arthritis is a difficult situation for many of us as the years progress, but there is an answer beyond pain medication and inactivity.

Paul Maurer is a Doctor of Chiropractic at the Aurora Health Center in Greenfield. To make an appointment or to learn more, please call 414-421-8400. Or, to find an Aurora Health Care chiropractor near you, please call 414-454-6703.

Restful night’s sleep from page 3

Further support is available from the Good Night’s Sleep Clinic of the Aurora Visiting Nurse Association of Wisconsin. These clinics are specifically designed to help clients with their CPAP and BiPAP therapy. “A therapist meets one-on-one with patients to troubleshoot and personalize their therapy needs, including help with mask fittings, equipment checks and assistance with comfort issues.” They also offer a retail shop, which carries CPAP machines and supplies.

Aurora’s 11 sleep centers provide patients with easy access to leading technology and patient-centered care right in their own community.

For more information about how your sleep patterns may be affecting your overall health and well-being, or to find the location of an Aurora Sleep Medicine Center near you, visit www.Aurora.org/Sleep.
What should I bring to the wellness visit?

- Medical records, including immunization records
- Family health history (This information will help you and your doctor better understand what screenings you should have and what to watch for in the future.)
- All medications you take, including over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and supplements

What should I expect during this wellness visit?

During your visit, your provider will:
- Record and evaluate your medical and family history, current health conditions and prescriptions
- Check your blood pressure, vision, weight and height to get a baseline for your care
- Make sure you’re up-to-date with preventive screenings and services, such as cancer screenings and shots
- Order further tests, depending on your general health and medical history

Following the exam, your doctor will give you a personalized plan that will include any screenings and preventive services you need.

Don’t delay!

Call and schedule your Medicare wellness visit today.

**Although no copays or deductibles apply to the Annual Wellness Visit, if you and your provider discuss chronic health problems, such as diabetes or high blood pressure, there may be additional charges.**

For more detailed information, visit www.medicare.gov/navigation/manage-your-health/preventive-services/medicare-physical-exam.aspx or call Medicare at 800-633-4227.

Reference
Welcome to Medicare Physical Exam.