

Steward

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SUMMER 2013

Lifelong Health and Wellness



Steward® Home Care's Telehealth Monitoring Providing Patients with a Sense of Security Right in the Comfort of Their Homes

If you are like many people, you find comfort in being in your own home, especially after a hospital stay or as you manage a chronic medical condition. Recovering in your home can promote a faster recovery and improve the quality of life for both patients and caregivers. At Steward Home Care, we bring the best of Steward Health Care – compassionate, exceptional quality care – directly to your home.

Among the many services Steward Home Care offers, our Telehealth Monitoring program provides an advanced daily home monitoring service for patients diagnosed with medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, which require close observation. Telehealth's compact equipment is easy to use and allows patients to measure their weight, blood pressure, heart rate, oxygen and glucose. Vitals are then sent through a phone line or WiFi connection to Steward Home Care's monitoring nurse.

"Many patients are afraid to go home and be alone after a hospital stay," says Stephanie Langton, RN, Telehealth manager for Steward Home Care. "Telehealth Monitoring provides peace of mind to our patients and their families, as a nurse is monitoring the patient daily and is communicating important information to their physician."

Daily Telehealth Monitoring offers prompt assessment of trends and abnormal readings, allowing Steward's care team to intervene early if a patient's condition worsens – and as a result, prevents trips to the emergency room and decreases in re-hospitalization. In addition, Telehealth improves physician-patient collaboration while promoting patient independence through education and awareness.



For more information about the Steward Home Care Telehealth Monitoring Program, call **888-820-1640**.

Is Memory Loss Cause for Concern?

Alzheimer's disease affects parts of the brain that control memory and language. Some 4.5 million Americans suffer from the disease, and symptoms typically begin to appear after age 60.

"Occasional forgetfulness doesn't always mean someone has Alzheimer's," says Dr. Alan Kurland, chief of Neurology for Norwood Hospital. "Blanking on someone's name or misplacing keys from time to time is normal. If it happens regularly, however, it could be cause for concern."

When to See the Doctor

Schedule an appointment with your health care provider if you experience any of these symptoms:

- Forgetting things, especially information learned recently.
- Forgetting common words and using odd words in their place.
- Asking the same questions over and over.

- Having trouble with everyday tasks.
- Becoming lost in familiar places.
- Having sudden and unexplained mood swings.
- Ignoring personal safety.
- Regularly repeating the same story, word for word.
- Struggling to solve simple math problems.
- Neglecting to bathe or change clothes.
- Misplacing items in odd places.
- Constantly checking or hoarding things of no value.

Other Reasons for Memory Loss

Still, these symptoms may be triggered by something other than Alzheimer's. Your health care provider should check for other health conditions that may cause memory problems.

No single test can identify Alzheimer's disease. Doctors arrive at a diagnosis after physical, neurological and mental health



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assessments, as well as lab tests to rule out other conditions. If the diagnosis is Alzheimer's, the symptoms will become progressively worse, but early drug treatment can sometimes delay mental decline.

"I always tell my patients that social interaction, thinking games, reading and reviewing current events with someone is just as important to keep up one's memory as any medications that are currently available," adds Kurland.



Time to Get Your Flu Vaccine

Each year, influenza leads to 200,000 hospitalizations and 36,000 deaths in this country. Because viruses are constantly changing, people need to receive a new shot or the nasal-spray vaccine

every year. September to November is the best time to get vaccinated.

An annual flu vaccine is recommended for everyone 6 months and older. If you are 65 or older or have a chronic medical condition,

you have a higher risk for complications from the flu, and it's important to protect yourself. Almost all adults can safely get the vaccine (check with your doctor first to see whether you're an exception).

MEET THE EXPERT

A Caregiver's Peace of Mind

Mary, 76, of Boston, Mass., can leave her house for a few hours knowing her husband, Patrick, 86, will be safe and in good hands. In 2011, congestive heart failure brought him to St. Elizabeth's Medical Center. Since then, he has undergone several surgeries and receives dialysis. One would assume it would be hard for someone like Patrick to receive care at home. But with the help of his wife and services of Steward Home Care, he can.

"Our visiting nurse comes once a week to check on him," says Mary. "Knowing that she can immediately attend to any new complication is like a security blanket for us."

Among the various services Patrick receives, one Mary has found very helpful is the nurse helping to manage the various medications he takes.

"It's a great service as managing medicine can be overwhelming," explains Mary. "She teaches us about each medication and makes a chart showing how much of the medicine he needs to take and how often."

As Patrick's sole caregiver, Mary relies on certain services to help her. A male home health aide comes three mornings to help Patrick shower while another home care aide stays with him, twice a week for four hours, allowing her some time off.

"Knowing an aide is with Patrick gives me peace of mind," says Mary. "I can go to the YMCA to swim and exercise – this revives me and is my therapy."



Lana Tsao Offers Five Tips to Help you Manage a Chronic Disease

Director of Advanced Heart Failure and Cardiac Care Unit at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center

Finding out you have a chronic disease can be an unnerving experience. But through proper disease management, you can take charge of your health and disease rather than letting the disease control you.

"I tell my patients that the key to successfully managing and lessening complications of a chronic disease is to know their numbers," says Tsao. "Know your blood pressure, cholesterol, hemoglobin A1C levels if you have diabetes, and BMI to determine if a weight loss program is needed."

Additionally, Tsao believes changing one's lifestyle aids in successfully managing a chronic disease and offers these five tips:

- 1. Exercise** – Walking 30 minutes a day, or two 15-minute walks, keeps the heart healthy, lowers blood pressure, controls diabetes and improves mood.
- 2. Manage weight and eat right** – Get your BMI under control and eat a healthy, low-salt diet filled with fruits, vegetables and omega-3 fatty acids.
- 3. Quit smoking.**
- 4. Get a good night's sleep to help manage stress** – You typically can't handle stress well if you're tired, and this can aggravate your condition. Also, if you snore or wake feeling groggy, these may be signs of sleep apnea.
- 5. Follow up and listen** – Follow up with your doctor and follow what your doctor suggests. It's also important to have routine visits with your doctor instead of meeting them in times of crisis.

For more information about Steward Home Care Services, call 888-820-1640 or visit, www.steward.org/Home-Care.

Carney Hospital | Good Samaritan Medical Center | Holy Family Hospital
Merrimack Valley Hospital | Morton Hospital | Nashoba Valley Medical Center
New England Sinai Hospital | Norwood Hospital | Quincy Medical Center
Saint Anne's Hospital | St. Elizabeth's Medical Center

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Healthy Recipe: Spinach Pesto Pasta



Combine fresh ingredients for a delicious, nutritious pasta dish.

Preparation time: 25 minutes

Number of servings: 4

Ingredients

8 ounces of fettuccine

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 garlic clove, minced

3 cups fresh spinach, stems removed

1 teaspoon black pepper

1 cup fresh basil leaves,
stems removed

½ cup chicken broth
(low-fat, low-sodium)

¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

1 15-ounce can of cannellini beans,
rinsed and drained

1 cup chopped red bell pepper

Directions

Cook pasta as directed on package. Drain and place in large bowl. In a blender, add olive oil, garlic, spinach, basil, Parmesan cheese and chicken broth. Mix well until leaves are blended. Pour sauce over pasta. Mix until pasta is well coated. Add beans and red bell pepper. Lightly toss and serve.

Nutrition Facts – Serving Size: 1/4 of recipe. Per serving: 360 calories, 6 g total fat, 2 g saturated fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 330 mg sodium, 62 g carbohydrates, 8 g dietary fiber, 4 g sugar, 16 g protein, 80 percent vitamin A, 90 percent vitamin C, 15 percent calcium, 25 percent iron.

Recipe courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Fruits & Veggies Matter.