



WestCAP WORDS

WESTERN COLORADO AIDS PROJECT

805 Main Street, Grand Junction, CO 81501
(970) 243-2437 or 1-800-765-8594

August-September 2008

“There are endless possibilities in every present moment...”

Important Numbers:

WestCAP:

(970) 243-2437
1-800-765-8594

website:

www.westcap.info

ADAP program:

1-866-499-2879

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information Service:

1-800-448-0440

CDC National Hotline:

800-342-2437 (English);
800-344-SIDA (en español);
800-243-7889 (for people who have a hearing impairment)

Western Colorado HIV Specialty Care Clinic:

Lucy Graham: 255-1735, or
toll-free @ 866/448-8383

Office Hours

are
Monday-Friday,
8:30 AM-5:00 PM.



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HIV/AIDS: THE STATEWIDE CULTURE

In the last few years, there seems to have been a shift with respect to a collaborative and statewide approach to care and treatment and prevention efforts. “Collaboration”, “reorganization,” and “restructuring” seem to be buzz words in response to legislation proposals and decisions around HIV/AIDS funding. Granted, these conversations have been happening with local providers, community agencies, and even among the statewide AIDS Service Organizations for quite some time, but it seems that others have caught the “bug” and are moving in a standardized, collaborative effort as well.

And it is no surprise. For years Ryan White care and treatment has been flat-funded or insignificantly increased over the last decade. This year’s U.S. Senate proposal suggests Ryan White care and treatment will be flat-funded again, with the exception of the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP). This is even in light of the fact that the cases of reported HIV in the state of Colorado alone has increased by 15% over the last five years (*Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment*). HIV/AIDS prevention funding has been significantly cut year after year, and it is not only at the state level. Last year Congress unexpectedly cut funding for the Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC) HIV prevention programs by 3.5 million. This national decrease in funding trickles down to the state level and affects prevention efforts in local communities. It is difficult to do the work necessary to reach the 25% (1 out of 4) (*Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment*) people living with HIV who have not been tested and do not know their status when funding has been reduced at such a level. It is no surprise agencies are looking for partners to work together, to create effective programs to address local community concerns.

It is also no surprise that now this is happening on a statewide level. Over the last two years, the five CAPs have been working together to discuss better ways to serve people living with HIV. There is creative discussion on all levels of the agencies on how to collaborate in a time when current Ryan White funding is not enough to serve the increase in case loads and the increase in infection rates. Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment also realizes the benefit of working together to create a more efficient system to address HIV/AIDS concerns. They are currently going through a restructuring of committees to achieve better communication between groups who are working towards the same goal.

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So, the shift to a collaborative approach continues and it is gaining momentum. Now is the time to jump onto this train and see where it takes us. Now is the time to get involved and be an active part in this process and be a voice for your community at the local and the state level. I welcome your phone calls to talk about these changes in more detail! Let's talk over coffee about how you can get involved! It will be my treat!

Mary Beth Luedtke, Executive Director

CASE MANAGEMENT TIDBITS

- Watch the Mail! The WestCAP annual survey will be going out to clients at the end of July. As always, we have incentives. Please complete the survey and return it as soon as possible. Thank you in advance!
- Notice: WestCAP Case Managers do NOT have caller ID. *Please* leave your name and number so we can return your call promptly.
- Volunteer needed: The Western Colorado Regional Advisory Council on AIDS needs a secretary. Please contact Randalee if you are interested.

"Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little." – Edmund Burke

—Martha Monroe, Senior Case Manager

Online HIV/AIDS Resources

www.HIVATIS.org – HIV information

www.childrenshospitalden.org – Children's Hospital

www.thebody.com – HIV/AIDS information and articles

<http://kidshealth.org> – information for parents and kids about a variety of health problems.

www.aclu.org – articles on HIV/AIDS

www.thelambdalegal.org – HIV/AIDS legal information

www.statehealthfacts.org – information on HIV and AIDS

www.cdc.gov – information about HIV and AIDS

www.cdph.state.co.us – information on HIV/AIDS

www.hiv.morefocus.com – HIV/AIDS information, online support groups, and information on clinical trials and testing sites.

www.aidsinfo.nih.gov – AIDS clinical trial information service

www.redcross.org/services/hss/hivaids - American Red Cross, African American HIV/AIDS Program.

www.immunet.org/atn - AIDS treatment news

www.aidsaction.org – AIDS action

www.ctv.es – VIH y SIDA

www.aegis.com – HIV/AIDS information

—Randalee Gates, Client Services Advisor

Disclosing Your Status

One concern often faced by people living with HIV/AIDS is disclosure of status, whether it is to medical providers, family and friends, past and present partners, your employer, or other professionals (landlords, etc). The idea of telling someone your status is scary. Here are some simple steps to consider when disclosing.

When it comes to your medical providers it is just a good idea to tell them. Not telling may be putting your health at risk. Medical providers, unaware of health conditions, could potentially overlook early signs of an illness. HIPPA,

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confidentiality rules, and other government regulations limit what providers may disclose. Health providers often ask about other illnesses or if you have anything else to report. This is a good time to tell your provider if you have HIV. Unless they know they cannot fully help you. Ultimately, it is a good rule of thumb to tell your primary care physician, dentist, any medical specialist, eye doctor, and even a therapist.

For others in your life there are a couple of steps to think about. First, who are you going to tell and why do you want them to know? Do you want their support? Is the other person at risk for infection? Second, is there a threat to yourself or others if you were to tell? This could be physical, mental, or emotional harm. If safety is a concern then it is not always a good idea to tell. Third, create a plan; decide when, where, and how you are going to tell the person. Think of any concerns you may have and how you are going to solve them. How will you stay safe? Try practicing the conversation through role play. Have someone you trust, such as your case manager, therapist, family member, or friend, go through the conversation with you.

It is important to inform sex and drug partners of your status, so they can get tested themselves. You can follow the same steps as the ones listed above or contact the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), for discreet and confidential notification and testing of partners. The CDPHE contact person for western Colorado is Karen Reed, at (970) 248-7146.

Remember, it is your choice to disclose. Please consider your safety and health. If you choose to disclose and need help please feel free to contact your case manager. Help is available.

Crystal Luce, Client Services Advisor

DINNER & A MOVIE

Shrimp Scampi

Are you having friends over for dinner? This is an easy and delicious recipe that most people love. It would be ready in about 40 minutes. You could serve it with a green salad and French bread.

Ingredients:

- 1 (16 ounce) package angel hair pasta
- 1/2 cup butter
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup minced onion
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 dash Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1 pound peeled and deveined medium shrimp
- 1/2 cup Asiago cheese, diced
- 1 large avocado—peeled, pitted, and diced

Directions:

1. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the angel hair pasta, and cook until al dente, 2 to 3 minutes; drain.
2. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Stir in the garlic, onion, parsley, salt, pepper, Worcestershire sauce, and lemon juice. Once the mixture begins to bubble, increase the heat to medium-high, and stir in the shrimp. Cook and stir until the shrimp turn pink, and are no longer transparent in the center, about 5 minutes.
3. Serve the scampi over a bed of angel hair pasta, and sprinkle with Asiago cheese and avocado to serve.

—Jenny Vargas, Client Services Advisor

“Bella”

“Bella” is an inspirational movie focused on family. It was written by Seam Wolfington and directed by Alejandro Gomez Monteverde. This movie teaches the importance of family ties, friendship, and caring for others. It demonstrates that in any moment the course of your life can change unexpectedly. The movie is about a soccer player, Jose, who now works as a chef in his brother’s restaurant. His life was changed by a mistake he made that ended his gifted soccer career. Jose is friends with an unmarried waitress, Nina, who is pregnant but does not want to be pregnant. Jose is drawn to help the troubled woman and by spending time with her something he had lost becomes awake again.

—Jenny Vargas

PREVENTION

The past year has been a disappointing one in the search for an HIV vaccine. The most promising candidate, a Merck vaccine trial, was canceled in September of 2007; in February of 2008, during the annual American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) conference, AAAS President David Baltimore declared that scientists are no closer to developing an HIV vaccine than the community was 20 years ago.

In fact, some scientists are discussing the possibility that a safe and effective vaccine may never be developed due to the extent the disease weakens the immune system. In April of 2008, a survey was conducted by the London-based newspaper Independent, of 35 leading HIV/AIDS scientists in the U.S. Of those surveyed, two-thirds said that a vaccine would not be developed within the next decade and “a substantial minority” indicated they felt an HIV vaccine would never be found.

One of the main reasons for the widespread discouragement in the scientific community is the discontinued Merck trial. On September 18, 2007, the Data Safety Monitoring Board concluded that the vaccine was ineffective, both at preventing HIV infection and in reducing viral loads in those who became infected. The vaccine was premised upon the theory that because HIV-positive people have stronger T-cell responses to help fight the virus, a vaccine that mimics a T-cell response may be able to contain the HIV virus. Further, trial data indicated that some vaccine recipients were in fact at a higher risk of acquiring HIV than those who were given a placebo. Another main conclusion of the trial was that the animal model used to test HIV vaccines on monkeys before they are given to humans is not effective.

However, despite these developments, to quote the 2008 AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition (AVAC) Report title, “The Search Must Continue.” On May 19, 2008, HIV Vaccine Awareness Day, Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), issued a statement supporting a renewed commitment to finding a HIV vaccine. “Historically, it has taken decades to find effective vaccines to combat infectious diseases.” Further, although treatment for infected individuals has made great strides, treatment alone will not end the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

In the Independent survey mentioned above, only a few scientists who participated believe that it is time to stop vaccine research, as an HIV vaccine is “too important to ever give up on.” Dr. Alan Bernstein, the executive director of the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise, wrote in May 2008 in the journal Science that “the development of new drugs and new vaccines always takes time and is never a straight line, and is always marked by failures.”

In Dr. Baltimore’s statement at the AAAS conference, he stated that as we move forward in researching and developing an HIV vaccine, “the community needs to begin thinking about vaccine development in a very different way.” Dr. Bernstein has stated that future vaccine research will focus on early-stage, basic HIV study. The examination of the initial response of the body to HIV infection will inform research on other pathogens.

The next planned NIAID-sponsored HIV vaccine trial, PAVE100, was to begin in January of this year. This trial vaccine not only simulates a T-cell response but also HIV antigens. However, on July 18, 2008, Dr. Fauci announced that this trial was canceled until additional research is conducted. It is important to keep in mind despite this setback that we must all remain committed to the larger goal of ending the HIV/AIDS pandemic, a goal in which a vaccine plays a crucial part.

—Rabeeha Ghaffar, Resource & Prevention Director

WestCAP would like to say



And a BIG



to



Once again, we say THANK YOU to the town of Telluride for your incredible contribution to WestCAP!!!

TAB funds will be used to “Care” for, give “Hope” to people living with HIV, while creating “Awareness” for all people living in western Colorado!