

ICF  
Offers  
TLC / 3

Medicare,  
Retirement  
and You / 4



YHP's Member  
Advisory  
Committee / 7

# yale health care

NEWS FROM THE YALE HEALTH PLAN

VOL. II NO. 5 SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 1999



## Childhood Obesity is a Family Matter

LINDA BELL, MS, RD, CD-N

YHP Nutritionist

**W**hen you go to your child's school, does it seem that there are more overweight children than you remember from your own school days? You're not imagining it. While the health of US children has generally improved over the past three decades as evidenced by lower rates of infant mortality and a decline in nutritional deficiency diseases like rickets, the number of overweight children has more than doubled during the past decade. Estimates on the percentage of children who are obese range from 10 %-25%. Four out of ten children have high cholesterol levels, and many teenagers have fatty deposits in their coronary arteries.

There appear to be many factors contributing to this problem including: too much time spent in sedentary activities (American children average 24 hours a week in front of the television); too little exercise; and too much calorically dense food. There can also be a genetic component to obesity, although not all children in overweight families will become overweight. Family behaviors regarding diet

*continued on page 2*

## Conference to Address Range of Gender-Related Health Issues

ELLEN BUDRIS, RN, MSN

Office of Health Promotion and Education

RHEA HIRSHMAN

Contributing Writer

**W**hen Professor Henry Higgins asked in *My Fair Lady*, "Why can't a woman be more like a man?" he was not thinking about differences between men's and women's cardiovascular systems, or differences in the way the two genders metabolize drugs, respond to changes in diet, or heal from injury. But those considerations are among the many to be addressed in October at the Second Yale Conference on

*continued on page 5*

### C A L E N D A R

**Mondays**  
Weight Watchers  
at Work

**Tuesdays**  
Blood Pressure  
Screenings

**Wednesdays**  
Early Pregnancy  
Classes

FOR MORE, TURN  
TO CALENDAR  
LISTINGS ON  
PAGE 8

## CHILDHOOD OBESITY

continued from page 1

and exercise patterns also affect body weight, so it is important to make sure that our actions are promoting a healthy lifestyle. Some children do have medical problems, such as endocrine disorders, that could cause weight gain, so be sure to consult with your clinician about any concerns you have.

Keep in mind that extreme restrictions on food intake don't work for children any better than for adults. Becoming overweight usually happens gradually, and a gradual approach should be taken toward weight reduction and maintenance. When you see a health care professional, don't expect prescriptions for medications or easy fixes. Instead, expect recommendations about a family-centered approach to helping your child. Make sure you let an overweight child know that they are loved regardless of their weight. Build self esteem, and avoid linking feelings of self-worth to body image issues. It is also important to talk to your children about weight, allowing them to share their feelings. Overweight children need support, encouragement, and acceptance from parents and others close to them.

Below are some suggestions for improving food choices and exercise habits.

### *Making healthy food choices:*

- Schedule regular mealtimes together. Without scheduled mealtimes, children may end up eating high fat or sugary snacks. While continuous snacking can lead to overeating, carefully planned snacks can improve your child's nutritional intake.
- Plan and prepare meals together. Take your children with you to the grocery store; encourage them to select a new fruit or vegetable for the family to try. Compliment them on their willingness to try new foods.
- Avoid eating meals in front of the television, as this will prompt children to want a snack every time they sit down to watch.
- Avoid using food to punish or reward. This sets your child up for emotional

## Important telephone numbers

<b>Urgent Care</b>	432-0123
<i>Open 24 hrs/day, seven days per week</i>	
<b>Toll Free Information Pharmacy</b>	1-877-YHP-CARE 432-0246 432-0033
<i>Hours of operation</i>	
Monday–Friday	7:30 AM–6:30 PM
Saturday	8:30 AM–3:30 PM
<b>Patient Representative</b>	432-0109
<b>Medicare/Retiree Coordinator</b>	432-8134
<b>Outpatient Referrals/Claims</b>	432-0250
<b>Inpatient Care Facility</b>	432-0001

# in touch

ties with food that will be hard to overcome.

- Use the food pyramid to plan balanced meals of moderate caloric density. Include at least one fruit and/or vegetable with every meal. After the age of two, children can be given lower fat dairy foods. Limit the amount of fast foods and the amount of fried foods that your family consumes.
- Be drink-savvy. Sodas and other sweetened drinks are like liquid candy. Limit these in your child's diet and make sure that you encourage your child to drink water when thirsty.

### *Increasing activity:*

- Take a family walk together after dinner. Schedule fitness into family vacations with activities like swimming, skiing, skating, walking tours, or hiking.
- Be a role model by taking an interest in your own fitness. Provide opportunities for your children to experience a variety of activities, like karate, dance, organized sports, swimming, and biking, and let them choose what they like best. Try taking lessons with your child.
- Reduce the amount of time you and your family spend in sedentary activities, like watching television or playing video games.





# from the desk of

**paul genecin, m.d.**  
director, yale university health services

**D**uring open enrollment every fall, Yale offers its faculty and staff a choice of several health plans. During its 27 years, YHP has been the clear choice for a large majority of the Yale community. I believe the reason for our success is members' appreciation of our care, convenience and cost.

By "care," I am referring to clinical quality as well as to the atmosphere of caring. I am proud to lead an organization that offers its members a wide choice of recognized clinical experts with faculty appointments at the Yale Schools of Medicine and Nursing. This expertise is combined with years of clinical experience and devotion to the Yale community. In addition, our outstanding consulting physicians from the Yale School of Medicine and our affiliation with Yale-New Haven

Hospital have contributed to our members' high level of satisfaction. I am equally proud of YHP's ability to deliver responsive and personalized care. Our nonprofit status and clinician-run administration ensure that our highest priority is to provide you with the finest health care available.

Convenience is important to all of us. Most of us are too busy to divide our health care among multiple offices and handle the paperwork involved in referrals and claims. YHP is designed to allow our members to visit clinics in a single location, with related services like radiology, pharmacy and physical therapy in the same building. Our patients have minimal paperwork and very few claims to submit for reimbursement. And they benefit from the fact that all their clinicians have access to a

unified medical record.

The cost of health care includes many factors, only one of which is the premium. It is equally important to consider out-of-pocket expenses such as co-payments, deductibles, maximums and exclusions. Here again, YHP offers excellent benefits at low premiums, at the lowest total cost.

Excellent care, convenience and low total cost all make YHP the clear choice for the Yale community. As always, I hope you will contact me with comments or suggestions. For general information and advice about selecting a plan to best meet your needs, call one of our Member Services representatives at (203) 432-0246, or visit us at our web site [www.yale.edu/uhs](http://www.yale.edu/uhs). We look forward to hearing from you.

## ICF Offers TLC

RHEA HIRSHMAN

Contributing Writer

**G**rateful patients have sent flowers, donated art work, and enrolled the staff in the Fruit of the Month Club. YHP members who have spent time in Yale University Health Services, (YUHS) Inpatient Care Facility (ICF) recognize that they receive more than good medical care – whether they are undergraduates with the flu, expectant mothers who need bed-rest to avoid a premature delivery, or older members recovering from joint replacement surgery.

Six months after YUHS opened its doors in 1971, the college infirmary on Prospect

Street moved down to the YUHS building and became the ICF. During those years the mission has remained the same: to provide, according to Lawrence Solomon, MD, the ICF's medical director, "...a full range of services no different than what you would receive on a regular hospital floor – almost anything short of surgery and high-tech intensive care."

The ICF, a fully-licensed 23-bed facility, has a physician on site around the clock and a high nurse-to-patient ratio (about 1 to 4). Supported by in-house radiology, pharmacy and physical therapy services, the ICF admits patients transferred from the hospital for continued care after surgery or serious illness. Patients anticipating surgery may be admitted to the ICF for pre-surgical preparation, and individuals who have had one-day surgery may come to the ICF after their surgery



Lawrence Solomon, MD, ICF Medical Director and Sharon Remillard, RN, MSN, ICF's Director of Nursing

for an overnight stay if needed. Solomon notes: "Our members get additional inpatient time here." Sharon Remillard, RN, MSN, the ICF's director of nursing, adds: "With hospitals discharging people more quickly, this facility allows them to be in better shape physically and emotionally when they are sent home."

In addition to being transferred from the hospital, members may be admitted to the ICF directly from any YHP clinic or from the Urgent Care Department for

continued on page 5



## MEDICARE, RETIREMENT AND YOU

The retirement process involves many variables. The information below is meant as an overview. Please contact the offices mentioned for more details.

# questions, answers

By answering your questions, this column will help you get the most out of your YHP membership.

Send your questions to:  
Member Services Q & A,  
Yale Health Plan,  
17 Hillhouse Ave.,  
P.O. Box 208237  
New Haven, CT  
06520-8237.

We'll get them answered by someone "in the know."

**Q. What happens to my YHP coverage when I retire from Yale?**

A. If you or your enrolled family members are under 65 when retiring from Yale, and are eligible for retiree benefits, coverage with Yale Health Plan may continue until the end of the month prior to the month you or your enrolled family members turn 65. Once the individual reaches 65 and becomes eligible for Medicare, regular membership in YHP will terminate and the person has the option to enter the Medicare Participants' Program at YHP.

**Q. What is the Medicare Participants' Program?**

A. You may continue to see your primary care clinician and to receive routine immunizations as well as services in Urgent Care, Radiology, Ophthalmology, and the Laboratory; YHP will bill Medicare and any other insurance for the visits. The Travel Clinic, Pharmacy and Contact Lens services are available on a fee-for-service basis. Medicare participants are welcome to attend programs offered by the Office of Health Promotion.

**Q. What other services are provided on the Medicare Participants' Program?**

A. The Medicare/Retiree Coordinator at YHP (203-432-8134) can help with matters such as providing names of specialists, coordinating visiting nurse or home health services, and advising on transportation, Meals on Wheels, energy assistance, and moving to an assisted living facility.

She also assists with billing issues and the prescription reimbursement process.

**Q. Whom should I contact to make arrangements for retirement?**

A. Make an appointment with the University Benefits Office (203-432-5550) a few months before retirement, and contact Social Security (1-800-772-1213) about three months before your 65th birthday to make arrangements to begin Social Security and Medicare. A month before your 65th birthday, make another appointment with the Benefits Office to make arrangements for a Medicare supplement, for which there are a number of options. It is very important that this be done on time.

**Q. Is coverage for my dependents affected by my retirement?**

A. Retirees who have dependents (spouses, partners, children) on their plan at the time of retirement may make arrangements for continued coverage. Discuss these issues with the Benefits Office.

**Q. What do I do if I am 65 and still working?**

A. YHP members who are 65 or over and still working should contact Social Security (1-800-772-1213) to request Medicare A only. Advise them that you are not yet retiring but you would like to be enrolled in Medicare A. There is no premium involved. Medicare A has added benefits that may be useful, such as home health care after a stay in the hospital.

You should also contact the Medicare/Retiree Coordinator about coordinating YHP coverage with your Medicare options.

**Q. Where can I get more information?**

A. The Medicare/Retiree Coordinator meets with YHP Medicare participants shortly after they are moved to that category. The Benefits Office can provide you with information specific to your situation. A booklet is available from Member Services (203-432-0246) or the Benefits Office, and from the Medicare/Retiree Coordinator.

## WOMEN'S HEALTH CONFERENCE

*continued from page 1*



Women's Health and Fitness, jointly sponsored by Yale Health Plan and Yale-New Haven Hospital (see box).

Understanding the impact of gender on physiology, research design and evaluation, disease mechanisms, and treatment options and outcomes, is an important current trend in medicine. According to the Washington-based Society for Women's Health Research, gender differences have been found in many areas. For instance:

- Diet and exercise have different consequences for women and men. Women need exercise in addition to caloric reduction to lose weight, while men can generally lose weight and maintain appropriate cholesterol levels with just dietary changes.
- After menopause women lose more bone than men do as they age, which is why 80 percent of people with osteoporosis are women.
- Some common pain medications are more effective in relieving pain in women than in men.
- Women generally have stronger immune systems than men but, at

the same time, are more subject to autoimmune diseases such as lupus and multiple sclerosis.

- Women are more likely than men to have a second heart attack within a year of their first attack.
- Diastolic hypertension (the diastolic, the lower of the two blood pressure numbers, reflects resting blood pressure) correlates with higher mortality from coronary artery disease in men than in women. Gender differences need to be considered when testing and treating for high blood pressure.
- During unprotected sex with an infected partner, women are twice as likely as men to contract a sexually transmitted infection.
- Women wake up from anesthesia more quickly than men.

The conference will give participants a chance to explore some of these areas as well as other recent areas of research into women's health, such as: the connection between diet, exercise and osteoporosis; the relationship between exercise and the immune system; the uses of exercise during pregnancy and after breast cancer surgery; the possibility of relief from menopausal symptoms through acupuncture; myths and facts about eating disorders; and the latest information on gynecological screening tests. With keynote addresses by nationally-known professionals, and workshops lead by experts in fields including gynecology, obstetrics, exercise physiology, psychology, and nutrition – plus time for socializing – the conference will have a lot to offer both the lay person and those who work in health care.

The Second Yale Conference on Women's Health & Fitness, of which Yale Health Plan is a sponsor, will be held October 21 to 23, 1999 at the Omni Hotel at Yale in New Haven, CT. One and two-day registrations are available, with a reduced rate for full time students and YHP members, and a professional rate for those who want to obtain CEUs.

Questions about registration should be directed to Yale University Conference

Services at 1-877-717-7776. Questions about the conference and speakers should be directed to Women's Education Life Learning at Yale-New Haven Hospital at (203) 688-WELL. Information is also available from the Yale University Health Services Health Promotion Department at (203) 432-1826. Visit the conference web site at [www.info.med.yale.edu/ynhh/well](http://www.info.med.yale.edu/ynhh/well).

## ICF OFFERS TLC

*continued from page 3*

further evaluation, diagnosis or treatment for a range of common medical problems. All care in the ICF is coordinated by the appropriate primary care physician. YHP's integrated medical records mean that any services received through the ICF will be indicated on patients' charts, easily available to their clinicians. The ICF staff handles about a thousand admissions each year, with an average length of stay of three days.

"And every one of these people is an individual," notes Mary Jane Kennedy, who retired as director of nursing and continues to serve as the licensed administrator for the ICF. "So we allow ourselves the luxury of being flexible."

That flexibility means welcoming families to participate in patients' care. It means admitting a student who, because of a cast, cannot get around in his dorm or get to meals; he can recuperate in the ICF and go to class in the van. Solomon points out, "While someone is in here, they remain a functional part of the university as much as their health permits, with access to computers, to their colleagues, their professors. We want to help them keep their lives as normal as possible."

This philosophy extends to the myriad outpatient services available through the ICF. Remillard says, "We try to maximize independence. For instance, a member who needs an intravenous antibiotic can come here before work, come here again at lunchtime, after work, in the evening – getting treated while staying on the job." Kennedy remembers a blind diabetic student. "He could give himself injections, but we were his eyes. He came in three times a day to have his blood sugar read."

Solomon adds, "People who need skilled services don't always need to be hospitalized. We have the staff and the flexibility to provide those services without admitting them."

"We bring people in here to take good care of them," says Remillard. "And then we do everything we can to help them take good care of themselves when they leave."

# information



## Websites to Visit

Below are some useful websites on topics related to recent articles in *yale health care*.

<http://www.thriveonline.com/shape/weight/kids/causes.html>

<http://www.kidsweight.com/>

[http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic\\_text/health/overweight-kid/helpchld.htm](http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/health/overweight-kid/helpchld.htm)

## yale health care

published by Yale Health Plan

17 Hillhouse Avenue  
New Haven, CT 06520-8237

(203) 432-0246

URL: [www.yale.edu/uhs](http://www.yale.edu/uhs)

email: [member.services@yale.edu](mailto:member.services@yale.edu)

Paul Genecin, MD  
Director

Robert DeBernardo, MD  
Medical Editor

Noreen Slater  
Communications Coordinator

### Editorial Board

Linda Bell, MS, RD  
Nutritionist

Ellen Budris, RN, MSN  
Health Promotion Specialist

Nancy Creel  
Manager, Member Services

Carol Goldberg, Psy.D.  
Psychologist

Chris Kielt  
Deputy Director, Operations

Joann Knudson, MD  
Chief, Ob/Gyn

Elise Low  
Member Representative

Carol Morrison, MD  
Chief, Pediatrics

Rhea Hirshman  
Editor

Maura Gianakos  
Graphic Design

Jim Anderson  
Photos

## BOOK REVIEW



Reading for more information about children's nutrition

### IF YOUR CHILD IS OVERWEIGHT: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

by Susan M. Kosharek.

*The American Dietetic Association, 1993.*

To order, call the ADA at 1-800-877-1600

This pamphlet offers practical advice for parents of overweight children. Provides recommendations for ways to modify the family's activity level and approach to meals and snacks.

### HELPING YOUR CHILD LOSE WEIGHT THE HEALTHY WAY

by Judith Levine and Linda Bine.

*Carol Publishing Group, 1996.*

Written in a friendly, upbeat style, this book offers practical steps that can be easily adapted to fit any family to help a child grow out of his or her extra weight, while building lifelong, healthy attitudes about food and fitness.

### HOW TO GET YOUR KID TO EAT...BUT NOT TOO MUCH

by Ellyn Satter.

*Bull Publishing Company, 1987.*

Written by a dietitian who is also a social worker, this book deals with issues related to feeding children from infancy through adolescence.

### THE YALE GUIDE TO CHILDREN'S NUTRITION

William Tamborlane, editor

*Yale University, 1997.*

This book provides the latest scientific knowledge about nutrition for children as well as recipes from the chefs of the James Beard Foundation.

## HEALTH FAIRS

YHP health fairs will present information on services including travel services; wellness programs and health education; free flu shots and blood pressure screenings; refreshments; raffles and giveaway items.

### 155 Whitney

Monday, 10/25/99 12 noon - 2:00 pm

### Harkness Dormitory Lounge

Friday, 10/29/99 12 noon to 4:00 pm

### Hall of Graduate Studies

McDougal Center

Monday, 11/8/99 12 noon to 4:00 pm

### SOM

Friday, 11/12/99 12 noon - 3:00 pm

### Kline Biology Tower

Monday, 11/15/99 12 noon - 2:00 pm

## COME SEE THE PHARMACY

The new pharmacy arrangement improves traffic flow with separate lines for prescription drop-off and pick-up, while the new computer system provides faster service, more complete checking of your medical records, and easier-to-read medication labels. Thanks to our members for having patiently tolerated the noise and dust associated with the renovation process.

## REMINDER: OUTPATIENT MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

Please note that treatment, when deemed medically necessary, is reimbursed up to 30 visits a year at a rate of \$40/visit with 150 lifetime visits after an annual \$100 deductible. Members can self refer to any of the following mental health professionals licensed in Connecticut; reimbursement is available for the services of professionals in these categories: psychiatrist (MD); clinical psychologist; clinical social worker; psychiatric clinical nurse specialist; alcohol/drug counselor. Please call the Claims Office at 203-432-0250 with any questions.

**FLU SHOTS** will be available at no cost to YHP members and Medicare participants from 8:30 am to 12 noon and 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm on the following dates (Wednesdays and Thursdays): October 20, 21, 27, 28; November 3, 4, 10, 11, 17, 18 Location: the YHP Immunization Department on the 1st floor of YHP. For more information, call the department at 203-432-0093.

## Meet YHP's Member Advisory Committee

In monthly meetings of the Member Advisory Committee (MAC), YHP members gather with top-level YHP administrators – the people who have the ability to make changes – to air member concerns as well as to obtain information that they can then bring back to their constituencies. The MAC is made up of representatives from around the university, who are selected by their groups.

Check for your representative and feel free to contact them about any general thoughts or recommendations you have. Please remember that if you have had a problem with a specific department, you should contact that department's clinical manager and that if you have questions about membership or benefits you should contact Member Services (203-432-0246).

### YALE HEALTH PLAN MEMBER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP LIST 99/00

#### Yale College Council

*Mailan Cao – oo*

#### Yale College Faculty

*Professor William Hallo*

#### Graduate Student Assembly

*Ellen S. Funayama – oo*

#### Graduate & Professional Student Senate

TBA

#### Local 34

*Kathryn Potter*

*c/o Federation of University Employees-Local 34*

#### Graduate and Professional School Faculty

*Professor Barbara J. Safriet*

#### Yale University Women's Organization

*Mary-Jo Warren*

#### Local 35

*Addie Delfranco*

#### Library Staff

*Jane Gillis – Chair*

#### Management & Professional

*Carole DeVore – vice-chair*

#### Retiree

*Geraldine Frei*

#### Yale Health Plan Staff

*Paul Genecin, MD, Director*

*Chris Kiel, Deputy Director*

*Nancy Creel, Manager, Member Services*

*Vicki Eisler, Patient Representative*

## TEACH SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

Teach your children to be safe pedestrians as they walk to and from the school bus.

- Have them carry everything in a backpack or school bag so that they won't drop things along the way.
- Have them wear bright, contrasting colors so they will be more easily seen.
- Make sure they leave home on time so they can walk to the bus stop. Running can be dangerous.
- Go to the bus stop with a young child and have older children walk in groups. Groups are easier for drivers to see.
- Don't let pets or preschool children go to the bus stop without supervision. They can be in danger near traffic.
- Walk on the sidewalk. If you must walk in the street, walk single file, face traffic and stay close to the edge of the road.
- Remind children to look to the right as they step off the bus. Drivers sometimes try to sneak by buses on the right.
- Teach them to secure drawstrings and other objects that might catch in the handrail or door of the bus.
- Give your child a note or follow school procedures if you would like them to get off at a stop other than the assigned one. Drivers aren't allowed to let a child off at another stop without written permission.
- If you meet your child at the bus stop, wait on the bus stop side, not across the street. Children can be so excited at seeing you that they dash across the street.



# healthy ideas

## FOCUS ON FOLIC ACID

The Food and Drug Administration recently decided to require U.S. food manufacturers to fortify certain grain products with folic acid. Folic acid, or folate, reduces the risk of neural tube birth defects such as spina bifida when consumed in adequate amounts before and during early pregnancy.



Because over half of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned and because these defects occur in the developing fetus before most women know they are pregnant, it is important that all women of child-bearing age consume 400 micrograms (.4 mg) of folic acid daily.



Most women aged 19-50 are estimated to have a daily folic acid intake of only .2 mg. Boosting women's folic acid intake to .4 mg per daily

could cut the incidence of neural tube defects in this country by as much as half. In addition to fortified grain products, folic acid can be obtained from other foods and/or a good multivitamin. Although fortifying foods with folic acid is designed primarily to prevent birth defects, more folic acid may also decrease risk of cardiovascular disease.

Good natural sources of folic acid: leafy dark green vegetables; legumes (dried beans and peas); citrus fruits and juices; most berries.

## DETECT SMOKE, SAVE LIVES

Smoke detectors save lives. Check them monthly to ensure they are working properly. If yours are battery-powered, replace the batteries at least twice a year. Remind yourself by changing the batteries at the same time that you move your clock every spring and fall to mark the switches between Standard Time and Daylight Savings Time.

# calendar

## ONGOING WELLNESS PROGRAMS

**Early Pregnancy Class**  
Held in room 405 on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 10:30–11:30 for YHP members. To register, call the Ob/Gyn Department at 203-432-0222 or stop by the appointment desk. We encourage you to bring a supportive person.

**Weight Watchers at Work**  
Mondays, 12:15–1:00 in room 405. You can join any time. For information, call 203-432-1892.

**Blood Pressure Screenings**  
Tuesdays from 10:00–11:00 in room 406. Open to the Yale community free of charge, by referral or on a walk-in basis. For info, call 203-432-6853.

**Health Risk Assessments**  
Health risk assessment questionnaires are offered to the entire Yale community free of charge on the first Wednesday and Thursday of the month from 2:00–3:00 in room 406. For more information, call 203-432-6853.

**Post-partum Reunion Classes**  
Held on the 3rd Friday of each month in room 405 from 10:00–11:30. Please bring your new babies to this great support network for all new moms! Conducted by Wendy Madore, RNC. Call the Obstetrics/Gynecology Department (203-432-0222) to register.

**Adult CPR Classes**  
Adult CPR classes are held monthly. For information, call 203-432-1892.

**Yale Health Plan Cancer Support Group**  
Life Options is a support group for adult YHP members who have been diagnosed with cancer, regardless of type of cancer or stage of disease. The group meets weekly with a facilitator. There are three 15-week programs each year. Group members can enroll in consecutive series of meetings. Funded partially by the Edith S. Hallo Fund and by a small weekly fee charged to each participant. To enroll or for more information, contact the facilitator, Mona Felts, MSW, at 203-432-0290.

*The Office of Health Promotion and Education is investigating member interest in a diabetes support group. If you are interested, please call Ellen Budris at 203-432-7601.*

## yale health care

Yale Health Plan  
Member Services  
17 Hillhouse Avenue  
P.O. Box 208237  
New Haven, CT 06520-8237

FIRST CLASS  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
New Haven, CT  
Permit No. 526

## CHILDHOOD OBESITY

continued from page 1

and exercise patterns also affect body weight, so it is important to make sure that our actions are promoting a healthy lifestyle. Some children do have medical problems, such as endocrine disorders, that could cause weight gain, so be sure to consult with your clinician about any concerns you have.

Keep in mind that extreme restrictions on food intake don't work for children any better than for adults. Becoming overweight usually happens gradually, and a gradual approach should be taken toward weight reduction and maintenance. When you see a health care professional, don't expect prescriptions for medications or easy fixes. Instead, expect recommendations about a family-centered approach to helping your child. Make sure you let an overweight child know that they are loved regardless of their weight. Build self esteem, and avoid linking feelings of self-worth to body image issues. It is also important to talk to your children about weight, allowing them to share their feelings. Overweight children need support, encouragement, and acceptance from parents and others close to them.

Below are some suggestions for improving food choices and exercise habits.

### *Making healthy food choices:*

- Schedule regular mealtimes together. Without scheduled mealtimes, children may end up eating high fat or sugary snacks. While continuous snacking can lead to overeating, carefully planned snacks can improve your child's nutritional intake.
- Plan and prepare meals together. Take your children with you to the grocery store; encourage them to select a new fruit or vegetable for the family to try. Compliment them on their willingness to try new foods.
- Avoid eating meals in front of the television, as this will prompt children to want a snack every time they sit down to watch.
- Avoid using food to punish or reward. This sets your child up for emotional

## Important telephone numbers

<b>Urgent Care</b>	432-0123
<i>Open 24 hrs/day, seven days per week</i>	
<b>Toll Free Information Pharmacy</b>	1-877-YHP-CARE 432-0246 432-0033
<i>Hours of operation</i>	
Monday–Friday	7:30 AM–6:30 PM
Saturday	8:30 AM–3:30 PM
<b>Patient Representative</b>	432-0109
<b>Medicare/Retiree Coordinator</b>	432-8134
<b>Outpatient Referrals/Claims</b>	432-0250
<b>Inpatient Care Facility</b>	432-0001

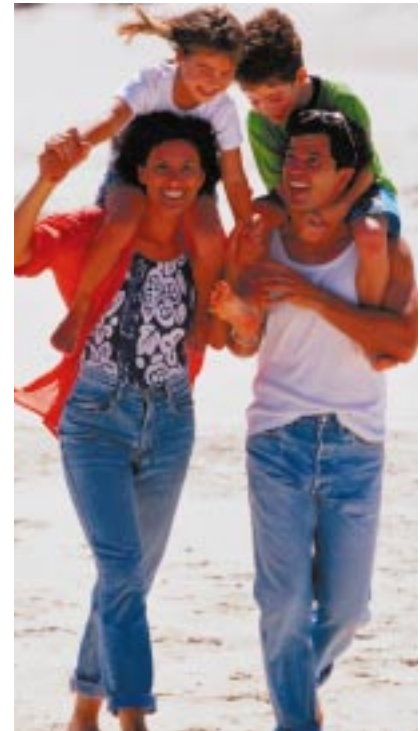
# in touch

ties with food that will be hard to overcome.

- Use the food pyramid to plan balanced meals of moderate caloric density. Include at least one fruit and/or vegetable with every meal. After the age of two, children can be given lower fat dairy foods. Limit the amount of fast foods and the amount of fried foods that your family consumes.
- Be drink-savvy. Sodas and other sweetened drinks are like liquid candy. Limit these in your child's diet and make sure that you encourage your child to drink water when thirsty.

### *Increasing activity:*

- Take a family walk together after dinner. Schedule fitness into family vacations with activities like swimming, skiing, skating, walking tours, or hiking.
- Be a role model by taking an interest in your own fitness. Provide opportunities for your children to experience a variety of activities, like karate, dance, organized sports, swimming, and biking, and let them choose what they like best. Try taking lessons with your child.
- Reduce the amount of time you and your family spend in sedentary activities, like watching television or playing video games.





# from the desk of

**paul genecin, m.d.**  
director, yale university health services

**D**uring open enrollment every fall, Yale offers its faculty and staff a choice of several health plans. During its 27 years, YHP has been the clear choice for a large majority of the Yale community. I believe the reason for our success is members' appreciation of our care, convenience and cost.

By "care," I am referring to clinical quality as well as to the atmosphere of caring. I am proud to lead an organization that offers its members a wide choice of recognized clinical experts with faculty appointments at the Yale Schools of Medicine and Nursing. This expertise is combined with years of clinical experience and devotion to the Yale community. In addition, our outstanding consulting physicians from the Yale School of Medicine and our affiliation with Yale-New Haven

Hospital have contributed to our members' high level of satisfaction. I am equally proud of YHP's ability to deliver responsive and personalized care. Our nonprofit status and clinician-run administration ensure that our highest priority is to provide you with the finest health care available.

Convenience is important to all of us. Most of us are too busy to divide our health care among multiple offices and handle the paperwork involved in referrals and claims. YHP is designed to allow our members to visit clinics in a single location, with related services like radiology, pharmacy and physical therapy in the same building. Our patients have minimal paperwork and very few claims to submit for reimbursement. And they benefit from the fact that all their clinicians have access to a

unified medical record.

The cost of health care includes many factors, only one of which is the premium. It is equally important to consider out-of-pocket expenses such as co-payments, deductibles, maximums and exclusions. Here again, YHP offers excellent benefits at low premiums, at the lowest total cost.

Excellent care, convenience and low total cost all make YHP the clear choice for the Yale community. As always, I hope you will contact me with comments or suggestions. For general information and advice about selecting a plan to best meet your needs, call one of our Member Services representatives at (203) 432-0246, or visit us at our web site [www.yale.edu/uhs](http://www.yale.edu/uhs). We look forward to hearing from you.

## ICF Offers TLC

RHEA HIRSHMAN

*Contributing Writer*

**G**rateful patients have sent flowers, donated art work, and enrolled the staff in the Fruit of the Month Club. YHP members who have spent time in Yale University Health Services, (YUHS) Inpatient Care Facility (ICF) recognize that they receive more than good medical care – whether they are undergraduates with the flu, expectant mothers who need bed-rest to avoid a premature delivery, or older members recovering from joint replacement surgery.

Six months after YUHS opened its doors in 1971, the college infirmary on Prospect

Street moved down to the YUHS building and became the ICF. During those years the mission has remained the same: to provide, according to Lawrence Solomon, MD, the ICF's medical director, "...a full range of services no different than what you would receive on a regular hospital floor – almost anything short of surgery and high-tech intensive care."

The ICF, a fully-licensed 23-bed facility, has a physician on site around the clock and a high nurse-to-patient ratio (about 1 to 4). Supported by in-house radiology, pharmacy and physical therapy services, the ICF admits patients transferred from the hospital for continued care after surgery or serious illness. Patients anticipating surgery may be admitted to the ICF for pre-surgical preparation, and individuals who have had one-day surgery may come to the ICF after their surgery



*Lawrence Solomon, MD, ICF Medical Director and Sharon Remillard, RN, MSN, ICF's Director of Nursing*

for an overnight stay if needed. Solomon notes: "Our members get additional inpatient time here." Sharon Remillard, RN, MSN, the ICF's director of nursing, adds: "With hospitals discharging people more quickly, this facility allows them to be in better shape physically and emotionally when they are sent home."

In addition to being transferred from the hospital, members may be admitted to the ICF directly from any YHP clinic or from the Urgent Care Department for

*continued on page 5*



## MEDICARE, RETIREMENT AND YOU

The retirement process involves many variables. The information below is meant as an overview. Please contact the offices mentioned for more details.

# questions, answers

By answering your questions, this column will help you get the most out of your YHP membership.

Send your questions to:  
Member Services Q & A,  
Yale Health Plan,  
17 Hillhouse Ave.,  
P.O. Box 208237  
New Haven, CT  
06520-8237.

We'll get them answered by someone "in the know."

**Q. What happens to my YHP coverage when I retire from Yale?**

A. If you or your enrolled family members are under 65 when retiring from Yale, and are eligible for retiree benefits, coverage with Yale Health Plan may continue until the end of the month prior to the month you or your enrolled family members turn 65. Once the individual reaches 65 and becomes eligible for Medicare, regular membership in YHP will terminate and the person has the option to enter the Medicare Participants' Program at YHP.

**Q. What is the Medicare Participants' Program?**

A. You may continue to see your primary care clinician and to receive routine immunizations as well as services in Urgent Care, Radiology, Ophthalmology, and the Laboratory; YHP will bill Medicare and any other insurance for the visits. The Travel Clinic, Pharmacy and Contact Lens services are available on a fee-for-service basis. Medicare participants are welcome to attend programs offered by the Office of Health Promotion.

**Q. What other services are provided on the Medicare Participants' Program?**

A. The Medicare/Retiree Coordinator at YHP (203-432-8134) can help with matters such as providing names of specialists, coordinating visiting nurse or home health services, and advising on transportation, Meals on Wheels, energy assistance, and moving to an assisted living facility.

She also assists with billing issues and the prescription reimbursement process.

**Q. Whom should I contact to make arrangements for retirement?**

A. Make an appointment with the University Benefits Office (203-432-5550) a few months before retirement, and contact Social Security (1-800-772-1213) about three months before your 65th birthday to make arrangements to begin Social Security and Medicare. A month before your 65th birthday, make another appointment with the Benefits Office to make arrangements for a Medicare supplement, for which there are a number of options. It is very important that this be done on time.

**Q. Is coverage for my dependents affected by my retirement?**

A. Retirees who have dependents (spouses, partners, children) on their plan at the time of retirement may make arrangements for continued coverage. Discuss these issues with the Benefits Office.

**Q. What do I do if I am 65 and still working?**

A. YHP members who are 65 or over and still working should contact Social Security (1-800-772-1213) to request Medicare A only. Advise them that you are not yet retiring but you would like to be enrolled in Medicare A. There is no premium involved. Medicare A has added benefits that may be useful, such as home health care after a stay in the hospital.

You should also contact the Medicare/Retiree Coordinator about coordinating YHP coverage with your Medicare options.

**Q. Where can I get more information?**

A. The Medicare/Retiree Coordinator meets with YHP Medicare participants shortly after they are moved to that category. The Benefits Office can provide you with information specific to your situation. A booklet is available from Member Services (203-432-0246) or the Benefits Office, and from the Medicare/Retiree Coordinator.

## WOMEN'S HEALTH CONFERENCE

*continued from page 1*



Women's Health and Fitness, jointly sponsored by Yale Health Plan and Yale-New Haven Hospital (see box).

Understanding the impact of gender on physiology, research design and evaluation, disease mechanisms, and treatment options and outcomes, is an important current trend in medicine. According to the Washington-based Society for Women's Health Research, gender differences have been found in many areas. For instance:

- Diet and exercise have different consequences for women and men. Women need exercise in addition to caloric reduction to lose weight, while men can generally lose weight and maintain appropriate cholesterol levels with just dietary changes.
- After menopause women lose more bone than men do as they age, which is why 80 percent of people with osteoporosis are women.
- Some common pain medications are more effective in relieving pain in women than in men.
- Women generally have stronger immune systems than men but, at

the same time, are more subject to autoimmune diseases such as lupus and multiple sclerosis.

- Women are more likely than men to have a second heart attack within a year of their first attack.
- Diastolic hypertension (the diastolic, the lower of the two blood pressure numbers, reflects resting blood pressure) correlates with higher mortality from coronary artery disease in men than in women. Gender differences need to be considered when testing and treating for high blood pressure.
- During unprotected sex with an infected partner, women are twice as likely as men to contract a sexually transmitted infection.
- Women wake up from anesthesia more quickly than men.

The conference will give participants a chance to explore some of these areas as well as other recent areas of research into women's health, such as: the connection between diet, exercise and osteoporosis; the relationship between exercise and the immune system; the uses of exercise during pregnancy and after breast cancer surgery; the possibility of relief from menopausal symptoms through acupuncture; myths and facts about eating disorders; and the latest information on gynecological screening tests. With keynote addresses by nationally-known professionals, and workshops lead by experts in fields including gynecology, obstetrics, exercise physiology, psychology, and nutrition – plus time for socializing – the conference will have a lot to offer both the lay person and those who work in health care.

The Second Yale Conference on Women's Health & Fitness, of which Yale Health Plan is a sponsor, will be held October 21 to 23, 1999 at the Omni Hotel at Yale in New Haven, CT. One and two-day registrations are available, with a reduced rate for full time students and YHP members, and a professional rate for those who want to obtain CEUs.

Questions about registration should be directed to Yale University Conference

Services at 1-877-717-7776. Questions about the conference and speakers should be directed to Women's Education Life Learning at Yale-New Haven Hospital at (203) 688-WELL. Information is also available from the Yale University Health Services Health Promotion Department at (203) 432-1826. Visit the conference web site at [www.info.med.yale.edu/ynhh/well](http://www.info.med.yale.edu/ynhh/well).

## ICF OFFERS TLC

*continued from page 3*

further evaluation, diagnosis or treatment for a range of common medical problems. All care in the ICF is coordinated by the appropriate primary care physician. YHP's integrated medical records mean that any services received through the ICF will be indicated on patients' charts, easily available to their clinicians. The ICF staff handles about a thousand admissions each year, with an average length of stay of three days.

"And every one of these people is an individual," notes Mary Jane Kennedy, who retired as director of nursing and continues to serve as the licensed administrator for the ICF. "So we allow ourselves the luxury of being flexible."

That flexibility means welcoming families to participate in patients' care. It means admitting a student who, because of a cast, cannot get around in his dorm or get to meals; he can recuperate in the ICF and go to class in the van. Solomon points out, "While someone is in here, they remain a functional part of the university as much as their health permits, with access to computers, to their colleagues, their professors. We want to help them keep their lives as normal as possible."

This philosophy extends to the myriad outpatient services available through the ICF. Remillard says, "We try to maximize independence. For instance, a member who needs an intravenous antibiotic can come here before work, come here again at lunchtime, after work, in the evening – getting treated while staying on the job." Kennedy remembers a blind diabetic student. "He could give himself injections, but we were his eyes. He came in three times a day to have his blood sugar read."

Solomon adds, "People who need skilled services don't always need to be hospitalized. We have the staff and the flexibility to provide those services without admitting them."

"We bring people in here to take good care of them," says Remillard. "And then we do everything we can to help them take good care of themselves when they leave."

# information



## Websites to Visit

Below are some useful websites on topics related to recent articles in *yale health care*.

<http://www.thriveonline.com/shape/weight/kids/causes.html>

<http://www.kidsweight.com/>

[http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic\\_text/health/overweight-kid/helpchld.htm](http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/health/overweight-kid/helpchld.htm)

## yale health care

published by Yale Health Plan

17 Hillhouse Avenue  
New Haven, CT 06520-8237  
(203) 432-0246  
URL: [www.yale.edu/uhs](http://www.yale.edu/uhs)  
email: [member.services@yale.edu](mailto:member.services@yale.edu)

Paul Genecin, MD  
Director

Robert DeBernardo, MD  
Medical Editor

Noreen Slater  
Communications Coordinator

### Editorial Board

Linda Bell, MS, RD  
Nutritionist

Ellen Budris, RN, MSN  
Health Promotion Specialist

Nancy Creel  
Manager, Member Services

Carol Goldberg, Psy.D.  
Psychologist

Chris Kielt  
Deputy Director, Operations

Joann Knudson, MD  
Chief, Ob/Gyn

Elise Low  
Member Representative

Carol Morrison, MD  
Chief, Pediatrics

Rhea Hirshman  
Editor

Maura Gianakos  
Graphic Design

Jim Anderson  
Photos

## BOOK REVIEW



Reading for more information about children's nutrition

### IF YOUR CHILD IS OVERWEIGHT: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

by Susan M. Kosharek.

*The American Dietetic Association, 1993.*  
To order, call the ADA at 1-800-877-1600

This pamphlet offers practical advice for parents of overweight children. Provides recommendations for ways to modify the family's activity level and approach to meals and snacks.

### HELPING YOUR CHILD LOSE WEIGHT THE HEALTHY WAY

by Judith Levine and Linda Bine.  
*Carol Publishing Group, 1996.*

Written in a friendly, upbeat style, this book offers practical steps that can be easily adapted to fit any family to help a child grow out of his or her extra weight, while building lifelong, healthy attitudes about food and fitness.

### HOW TO GET YOUR KID TO EAT...BUT NOT TOO MUCH

by Ellyn Satter.  
*Bull Publishing Company, 1987.*

Written by a dietitian who is also a social worker, this book deals with issues related to feeding children from infancy through adolescence.

### THE YALE GUIDE TO CHILDREN'S NUTRITION

William Tamborlane, editor  
*Yale University, 1997.*

This book provides the latest scientific knowledge about nutrition for children as well as recipes from the chefs of the James Beard Foundation.

## HEALTH FAIRS

YHP health fairs will present information on services including travel services; wellness programs and health education; free flu shots and blood pressure screenings; refreshments; raffles and giveaway items.

### 155 Whitney

Monday, 10/25/99 12 noon - 2:00 pm

### Harkness Dormitory Lounge

Friday, 10/29/99 12 noon to 4:00 pm

### Hall of Graduate Studies

McDougal Center

Monday, 11/8/99 12 noon to 4:00 pm

### SOM

Friday, 11/12/99 12 noon - 3:00 pm

### Kline Biology Tower

Monday, 11/15/99 12 noon - 2:00 pm

## COME SEE THE PHARMACY

The new pharmacy arrangement improves traffic flow with separate lines for prescription drop-off and pick-up, while the new computer system provides faster service, more complete checking of your medical records, and easier-to-read medication labels. Thanks to our members for having patiently tolerated the noise and dust associated with the renovation process.

## REMINDER: OUTPATIENT MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

Please note that treatment, when deemed medically necessary, is reimbursed up to 30 visits a year at a rate of \$40/visit with 150 lifetime visits after an annual \$100 deductible. Members can self refer to any of the following mental health professionals licensed in Connecticut; reimbursement is available for the services of professionals in these categories: psychiatrist (MD); clinical psychologist; clinical social worker; psychiatric clinical nurse specialist; alcohol/drug counselor. Please call the Claims Office at 203-432-0250 with any questions.

**FLU SHOTS** will be available at no cost to YHP members and Medicare participants from 8:30 am to 12 noon and 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm on the following dates (Wednesdays and Thursdays): October 20, 21, 27, 28; November 3, 4, 10, 11, 17, 18 Location: the YHP Immunization Department on the 1st floor of YHP. For more information, call the department at 203-432-0093.

## Meet YHP's Member Advisory Committee

In monthly meetings of the Member Advisory Committee (MAC), YHP members gather with top-level YHP administrators – the people who have the ability to make changes – to air member concerns as well as to obtain information that they can then bring back to their constituencies. The MAC is made up of representatives from around the university, who are selected by their groups.

Check for your representative and feel free to contact them about any general thoughts or recommendations you have. Please remember that if you have had a problem with a specific department, you should contact that department's clinical manager and that if you have questions about membership or benefits you should contact Member Services (203-432-0246).

### YALE HEALTH PLAN MEMBER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP LIST 99/00

#### Yale College Council

*Mailan Cao – 00*

#### Yale College Faculty

*Professor William Hallo*

#### Graduate Student Assembly

*Ellen S. Funayama – 00*

#### Graduate & Professional Student Senate

TBA

#### Local 34

*Kathryn Potter*

*c/o Federation of University Employees-Local 34*

#### Graduate and Professional School Faculty

*Professor Barbara J. Safriet*

#### Yale University Women's Organization

*Mary-Jo Warren*

#### Local 35

*Addie DeFranco*

#### Library Staff

*Jane Gillis – Chair*

#### Management & Professional

*Carole DeVore – vice-chair*

#### Retiree

*Geraldine Frei*

#### Yale Health Plan Staff

*Paul Genecin, MD, Director*

*Chris Kiel, Deputy Director*

*Nancy Creel, Manager, Member Services*

*Vicki Eisler, Patient Representative*

## TEACH SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

Teach your children to be safe pedestrians as they walk to and from the school bus.

- Have them carry everything in a backpack or school bag so that they won't drop things along the way.
- Have them wear bright, contrasting colors so they will be more easily seen.
- Make sure they leave home on time so they can walk to the bus stop. Running can be dangerous.
- Go to the bus stop with a young child and have older children walk in groups. Groups are easier for drivers to see.
- Don't let pets or preschool children go to the bus stop without supervision. They can be in danger near traffic.
- Walk on the sidewalk. If you must walk in the street, walk single file, face traffic and stay close to the edge of the road.
- Remind children to look to the right as they step off the bus. Drivers sometimes try to sneak by buses on the right.
- Teach them to secure drawstrings and other objects that might catch in the handrail or door of the bus.
- Give your child a note or follow school procedures if you would like them to get off at a stop other than the assigned one. Drivers aren't allowed to let a child off at another stop without written permission.
- If you meet your child at the bus stop, wait on the bus stop side, not across the street. Children can be so excited at seeing you that they dash across the street.



# healthy ideas

## FOCUS ON FOLIC ACID

The Food and Drug Administration recently decided to require U.S. food manufacturers to fortify certain grain products with folic acid. Folic acid, or folate, reduces the risk of neural tube birth defects such as spina bifida when consumed in adequate amounts before and during early pregnancy.



Because over half of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned and because these defects occur in the developing fetus before most women know they are pregnant, it is important that all women of child-bearing age consume 400 micrograms (.4 mg) of folic acid daily.

Most women aged 19-50 are estimated to have a daily folic acid intake of only .2 mg. Boosting women's folic acid intake to .4 mg per daily



could cut the incidence of neural tube defects in this country by as much as half. In addition to fortified grain products, folic acid can be obtained from other foods and/or a good multivitamin. Although fortifying foods with folic acid is designed primarily to prevent birth defects, more folic acid may also decrease risk of cardiovascular disease.

Good natural sources of folic acid: leafy dark green vegetables; legumes (dried beans and peas); citrus fruits and juices; most berries.

## DETECT SMOKE, SAVE LIVES

Smoke detectors save lives. Check them monthly to ensure they are working properly. If yours are battery-powered, replace the batteries at least twice a year. Remind yourself by changing the batteries at the same time that you move your clock every spring and fall to mark the switches between Standard Time and Daylight Savings Time.

# calendar

## ONGOING WELLNESS PROGRAMS

**Early Pregnancy Class**  
Held in room 405 on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 10:30–11:30 for YHP members. To register, call the Ob/Gyn Department at 203-432-0222 or stop by the appointment desk. We encourage you to bring a supportive person.

**Weight Watchers at Work**  
Mondays, 12:15–1:00 in room 405. You can join any time. For information, call 203-432-1892.

**Blood Pressure Screenings**  
Tuesdays from 10:00–11:00 in room 406. Open to the Yale community free of charge, by referral or on a walk-in basis. For info, call 203-432-6853.

**Health Risk Assessments**  
Health risk assessment questionnaires are offered to the entire Yale community free of charge on the first Wednesday and Thursday of the month from 2:00–3:00 in room 406. For more information, call 203-432-6853.

**Post-partum Reunion Classes**  
Held on the 3rd Friday of each month in room 405 from 10:00–11:30. Please bring your new babies to this great support network for all new moms! Conducted by Wendy Madore, RNC. Call the Obstetrics/Gynecology Department (203-432-0222) to register.

**Adult CPR Classes**  
Adult CPR classes are held monthly. For information, call 203-432-1892.

**Yale Health Plan Cancer Support Group**  
Life Options is a support group for adult YHP members who have been diagnosed with cancer, regardless of type of cancer or stage of disease. The group meets weekly with a facilitator. There are three 15-week programs each year. Group members can enroll in consecutive series of meetings. Funded partially by the Edith S. Hallo Fund and by a small weekly fee charged to each participant. To enroll or for more information, contact the facilitator, Mona Felts, MSW, at 203-432-0290.

*The Office of Health Promotion and Education is investigating member interest in a diabetes support group. If you are interested, please call Ellen Budris at 203-432-7601.*

## yale health care

Yale Health Plan  
Member Services  
17 Hillhouse Avenue  
P.O. Box 208237  
New Haven, CT 06520-8237

FIRST CLASS  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
New Haven, CT  
Permit No. 526