We’re Number One (29)!

According to US News and World Report’s 2009 Best Hospitals of America evaluation, our Neurosciences departments (Neurosurgery and Neurology) have been recognized as the best in the state of Michigan, and 29th overall in the nation. This position places us ahead of similar programs at prestigious institutions such as Yale, the University of Southern California, and Vanderbilt. The department has steadily climbed in the rankings since 2006, where it was listed 37th.

The epilepsy surgical section is one aspect of the department that was put in a spotlight for its tremendous work and expertise. Being generally regarded as one of the best surgical units specializing in this area, it is a prime example of Dr. Guthikonda’s belief in the positive aspects of sub-speciality.

Additionally, the Comprehensive Epilepsy Program associated with our departments has received a Level Four designation from the National Association of Epilepsy Centers. Representing exceptional quality in all facets of epilepsy treatment, this recognition further displays the high level of skill and determination shown by everyone in the department.

So let’s all take a minute to congratulate each other for all of our hard work paying off. Let’s keep working our way up the list, and keep providing the great care we always show each and every one of our patients.
The annual Halloween costume contest is coming up on Friday, October 30th. There will be lunch provided for everyone in costume, and a prize for the costume judged as the best. See you there!

**Swine Flu II: The Return of H1N1**

**Flu Season This Fall Could Be Scarier Than Any Hollywood Thriller**

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, novel H1N1, or swine flu, is expected to make a surge back into the American populace this fall. Aside from getting seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccinations, some other useful practices to help prevent the spread of influenza are:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you sneeze or cough. Make sure to put the tissue in the garbage when you are done using it.
- Right after you get done with that coughing and sneezing, make sure to wash your hands with soap and water. The use of an alcohol-based hand cleaner can also be helpful.
- Whenever possible, try not to touch your mouth, nose, or eyes. This can help in the prevention of spreading germs.
- If you must come in close contact with an ill person, wear a face mask to help prevent the spread of virus and infection.
- Take a minute and clean your computer and phone, and nearby doorknobs and light switches with disinfecting wipes on a regular basis; the department will supply these, see Deb.

These may seem like some common sense tips, but surprisingly, they are not followed by many people during periods of illness. With the potential of novel H1N1 this fall, this lackluster behavior could end up equalling a big problem. By taking just a few minutes a day to practice these steps of prevention, a potentially drastic outbreak of influenza could be reduced in magnitude and severity.

Another great step to take, as previously mentioned, is to obtain seasonal and H1N1 vaccinations this autumn. However, it’s important to take into account who should and shouldn’t receive vaccination.

**Those who should get a seasonal vaccination:**
- Children aged 6 months up to their 19th birthday.
- Pregnant women.
- People 50 years of age and older.
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions.
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including health care workers, household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu, and household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated).

**Those who should not receive a seasonal vaccination:**
- Someone with a severe allergy to chicken eggs.
- Someone who has had a severe allergic reaction to influenza vaccination in the past.
- Someone who has developed Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) within 6 weeks of getting an influenza vaccine.
- Children less than 6 months old.
- People who already have a severe to mild fever should wait until recovery to obtain vaccination.

Regarding H1N1 vaccination, the list of people who should receive vaccination are:

- Pregnant women.
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age.
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel.
- All people aged 6 months to 24 years of age, and those from 25-64 that have higher risk for complications from influenza.

More facts about the flu vaccine can be found at: http://www.cdc.gov/FLU/protect/keyfacts.htm

Additionally, information on UPG providing seasonal influenza vaccinations will be coming soon.

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**Brain Food for the Month**

**Interesting Halloween Tidbits**

- A common belief is that you see a spider on Halloween, a loved one is watching over you.
- The ancient Celts were the first to wear masks and costumes on Halloween, hoping they would trick the roaming spirits from believing they were human.
- Halloween is the second most successful holiday commercially, with people spending over $2.5 billion on candy, costumes, decorations, and parties.
What’s on Your Mind?
Two Frightfully Wonderful Lunches at the DIA

Because of the fact that both turned in their completed and correct crosswords at almost the same time, both Dr. Sandra Narayanan and Tomeka Barnes were awarded the prize of lunch at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Plans were set, and although it wasn’t possible for everyone to go in one group, each of our winners made the stroll over to the DIA one afternoon. Once there, they enjoyed a great meal, while being surrounded by some beautiful art.

The trip was especially nice for Dr. Narayanan, who recently moved to the area. This was her first opportunity to visit the DIA, and she expressed that she was very impressed with the varying collections of art displayed. She is hoping to make a return trip soon to explore this cultural gem further.

Let’s take a chance to congratulate both Dr. Narayanan and Tomeka again for their great work on completing the crossword. And let’s look forward to finding out who will be the winner in this month’s ghoulishly difficult contest....will the prize won be a trick or a treat?

Is Stress at Work a Horror? Try Some of These Ideas.

Exercise. Stress produces cortisol, a hormone that increases energy and memory function unless in excess, when it creates negative status effects. As little as thirty minutes of exercise can help decrease this excess.

Avoid the news. Don’t get rid of all your televisions, but take some time to enjoy the quiet sans the news. How many times can or do you want to hear about the economy? Continuously pummeling yourself with bad news isn’t a great idea.

Get out of the office. Just thirty minutes a day can do wonders for your stress levels and allows you the chance to re-calibrate.

Eat A LOT of candy. Just kidding.

Get a full night’s sleep. You hear it all the time, but eight hours a night is key to recharge for the next day. Try going to bed a little earlier if you find you are sluggish and stressed at the office.

Did you know?
On average, our physicians and clinic staff see:

38 patients a day
150 patients a week
550 patients a month
6600 patients a year

Wow, that’s a lot of patients!
Good job doctors & clinic staff!

We are working on the webpage!
The wheels have been set in motion to update our departmental website. Brandon has been asked to head this project, but it isn’t something he can complete on his own.

In the near future, Brandon may need to talk to you about aspects of our department we want to showcase on the website. He also welcomes any suggestions or comments you have about the website at bjparker@med.wayne.edu.

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Approximately 1 in 8 women in the United States have the chance of developing breast cancer, and it takes a life roughly every 13 minutes. During breast cancer awareness month, we should all take a minute to do whatever we can to aid the fight against this terrible disease.