



Solihull Heart Support Group

Heart Line News

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Autumn 2009

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Would you like your newsletter by E Mail?

The Committee would like to know how many members would be interested in receiving their quarterly Heart Line News by e mail. If sufficient numbers are interested it would help to cut the costs of stationary and distribution.

If you would like an e mailed copy please e mail the secretary on secretary@solihullheartsupport.org.uk to let him know. In the meantime the newsletter will be uploaded onto our website for the benefit of anyone using the internet. Hard copies will still come out to you all by post unless e mail is requested.

FOR FITNESS

Fancy some gentle exercise?

If our exercise classes leave you energised and wanting a little more gentle exercise in your week, **Step into Solihull** may be just the thing for you. Co-ordinated by Solihull Council, it aims to help residents aged 50 and over to get active and keep fit.

Previously we've promoted their Striders and Strollers walks but if you feel ready for something a little more challenging, why not try the **monthly discovery walks**. On 16 September the venue is Hatton locks and St Michaels church, Budbrooke, 21 October is a stroll around Moseley, 18 November they explore The Redditch Needle Forge museum and adjacent Cistercian abbey ruins, and on 16 December it's the turn of Malvern & Brueton parks. Joining is easy, just register as a member with the secretary on 01676 532 443 who will send out an information pack and monthly letter about the next walk. Walks start at 10.15 for 10.30 and finish by 13.30/14.00. The cost is £1 a walk, extra if there is an entrance fee.

Or if you fancy something new to try, **Tai chi** is held at Tudor Grange on Fridays between 12.30 and 13.30 and 13.30 -14.30 for only £2.25 a session. Suitable for both men and women, the slow, stretching movements are also relaxing to perform.

(I come away from my Tai Chi classes feeling very gently stretched and nicely relaxed. The Editor).

Information about all Step into Solihull activities is on the Council's web site at www.solihull.gov.uk/activities or available through Jagjit Lidher on 0121 704 8075.

TO FEEL GOOD

Sleep well...

Research suggests a strong link between lack of sleep and hardening of the arteries, a precursor to heart disease. Calcified arteries were found in nearly a third of people who slept fewer than five hours a night. According to the American Medical Association study, this dropped to around one in ten for those who slept an extra hour. CT scans carried out on the subject five years apart, coupled with sleep diaries and movement

Autumn meetings

7.15 to 9.00 pm, at the SIMTR Conference Centre (Spire Parkway Hospital, 1A Damson Parkway, Solihull).

- Sept 30 Dr Jonathan Panting, Cardiac consultant, Solihull Hospital
Oct 28 J.Lidher "Step in Solihull", a talk on the guided walks in Solihull
Nov 25 Donna Stokes, BHF

If you have any raffle prizes or books for our 'as new' book stall please bring them with you.

Ideas please

Our secretary Jean Meeson is working up a great programme of both medical and general interest talks for our 2009/10 season, such as the Fire Service on fire prevention and the Council's Step into Solihull programme. If you know of any interesting speakers you would like her to invite, please let her or any committee member have their name and contact details.

sensitive wristbands worn at night, showed that calcification appeared to be linked with lack of sleep, with the risk being lowest for those who regularly slept more than seven hours each night. Although this single study does not prove that short sleep leads to coronary artery disease, the researchers concluded that it is safe to recommend at least six hours of sleep a night.

Source: Spring Care 2009, CSHC

A book recommendation to help you to sleep well

If you do find it hard to get to sleep, or to get back to sleep during the night, you might like to try Paul McKenna's new book 'I can make you SLEEP'. In it he explains his simple techniques to help you to improve your sleeping pattern. What's more, it comes with a CD which you can listen to when you go to bed and want to get easily off to sleep. *(Recommended to me by someone who said he never manages to stay awake to hear the end of the CD it works for me too, so well that I rarely now need to use it. The Editor)*

And to inspire you...

*'If you do what you always did, you will get what you always got'.
Kenneth W Jenkins*

Wet Warwick Wander July 29th

A very gallant band of 15 members met outside the Tourist Office in Warwick on a very wet Wednesday evening. After a discussion with the blue ribbon guide we all decided that the rain had slowed to a drizzle and would shortly stop so we would continue with the proposed walk and then adjourn to one of the many nearby restaurants. We started off in good spirits with an excellent guide and proceeded to the bottom of one of Warwick's many hills whereupon the heavens opened and we rushed for cover underneath one of the towns arches – right in the path of a sudden flash "stream". Shortly afterwards we abandoned the "wade" and went home to wring out our clothes and ponder on our "barbecue" summer !!!!

GROUP MEETING REPORTS

April 2009: Boots Pharmacy

We were pleased to welcome the pharmacist (Mina) from Boots, Solihull together with trainee pharmacist Lindsay. Mina explained some of the services that a Boots pharmacist could offer – of particular interest was the Medicine Use Review where a patient could sit down quietly with the pharmacist and look at all the medicines prescribed, discuss how they were being used, any possible side effects, how they interacted together and also whether any of the prescribed drugs were not being used and the reasons why. Mina said that often patients just stopped using certain drugs because they didn't think they were doing them any good but were worried about telling their doctor so just accepted the prescription and then stockpiled the drugs. As well as being wasteful it means that the doctor is not reviewing the treatment as they assume that it is progressing satisfactorily, often it is easier to talk about this to a pharmacist as they have more time to sit and explain just why drugs may be being prescribed. The pharmacist can also arrange for an automatic prescription service where they liaise with your surgery on your behalf for repeat prescriptions and order only what is actually needed. Between them Mina and Lindsay discussed the main types of drugs available for cardiac conditions and high blood pressure and also how and when to take them e.g. always sit down to take a GTN spray, take beta blockers in the morning, diuretics before 2pm and statins either at night or in the morning. They went on to discuss current recommended Cholesterol levels (below for cardiac patients) before spending the final 30 minutes answering questions from the audience. I think that we all learned something and it was good to hear how pro-active our local pharmacies are.

MAY 2009, AGM

The AGM was completed speedily, as usual, with all the officers unanimously returned for another year. Our treasurer, David Laband has indicated that he would like to retire from this post next year and he would be happy for someone to shadow him and learn the procedures from him. Any volunteers please contact either David, Mike Parsons or Mike Lines.

Our guest speaker for this evening had travelled from Buckinghamshire to be with us. Robert Hall is the chief executive of the Cardiomyopathy Association and explained that cardiomyopathy is a condition affecting the heart muscle which affects 1 in 500 people and can lead to sudden death in 1 – 2% of sufferers. The aim of the association is to give information and to support sufferers, it was formed as a charity in 1989 by Carolyn Biro- herself a sufferer. Robert explained that there are 3 main types of cardiomyopathy, it is not curable but the symptoms can be reduced / relieved and cardiac function improved. It is usually genetic with only one parent needed to carry the defective gene. When the condition is first identified the family history will be checked especially any history of collapse from unknown causes and an assessment of risk will be made. Every patient is different so early diagnosis is important so that speedy treatment can be given. Damage to the heart muscle can cause arrhythmia, a common treatment is an implantable defibrillator – this costs about £20,000 each but does allow the patient to lead a normal life. The Association trains key contacts (50 around the country), is gradually setting up regional support groups, and runs National Conferences focusing on specific aspects of cardiomyopathy which are free to medical students and at a reduced rate for consultants. They have also funded 4 nurses for regional clinics and a consultant for 2 years. A comparatively recent innovation has been the launch of a telemedicine centre allowing on-line consultation via TV screens for patients a long distance from consultants. The Association receives no funding from Central government. Robert was an excellent speaker who opened our eyes to a heart condition which is now more often recognized as the cause of sudden death syndrome. We appreciate him travelling such a distance to speak to us.

JUNE 2009, Neighbourhood Policing

Inspector Phil Radbourne, the Neighbourhood Policing Manager for South Solihull, brought some of his team with him namely Annie Masters and Liz Quiney from Neighbourhood Watch, Cherie from Solihull Housing and Lorraine Doran from Road Safety. Phil explained that his area covers Solihull Centre, Silhill, St. Alphege, Eimdon and Lyndon and encompasses 300+ police officers. Neighbourhood Support Teams provide 24 hour emergency response and Neighbourhood Policing teams are responsible for general policing and anti-social behaviour. Staffing in the south area is divided between each of the sub-areas to give better coverage. Crime is now at an all-time low and is meeting the targets set by the government. Police surgeries are held regularly and from these the top three items of concern are targeted for action for the month and reported on the West Midlands Police website. We can check on progress by clicking onto the "my neighbourhood.info" link which will then show the exact crime statistics for your area together with pictures of your local police and the dates of the police surgeries. The police and the local authority now work very closely together to ensure a full service is carried out. The Partnership office covers Neighbourhood Watch under the management of Celia Davies. Neighbourhood Inspectors work for the council and undertake the role of Highway inspectors – checking major roads every month and minor roads every 2-3 months for pot-holes, waste bins, markings, safety signs etc. They enforce the Highways Act 1980, New Roads and Street Works Act and work on community engagement. The Housing Office officials work to solve anti-social behaviour within Solihull by means of 3 teams dealing with everything from drug use, abuse, intimidation to graffiti and monitoring ASBO's. The Road Safety officer trains school children in road safety including kerbcraft and cycling proficiency. There is only 1 road safety officer who relies on volunteers to help cover all the schools – she is always eager to welcome new volunteers onto the team and is especially hoping to recruit more older volunteers e.g. grandparents. This was a very full session with the members asking questions throughout, it showed just how much is being done in the borough which we do not always know about.

Thank you to Trish Lines for the write ups.

MEMBER'S CONTRIBUTION

Poem for Pensioners

A row of bottles on my shelf
Caused me to analyse myself
One yellow pill I have to pop
Goes to my heart so it won't stop
A little white one that I take
Goes to my hands so they won't shake
The blue ones that I use a lot
Tell me that I'm happy when I'm not
The purple pill goes to my brain
And tells me that I have no pain
The capsules tell me not to wheeze
Or cough or choke or even sneeze
The red ones, smallest of them all
Go to my blood so I won't fall
The orange ones, very big and bright
Prevent my leg cramps in the night
Such an array of brilliant pills
Helping to cure all kinds of ills
But what I'd really like to know
Is what tells each one where to go!

Thank you to Beryl Moore for forwarding this

Charity Fun Run/Walk/Jog 13/09/09

Blythe Valley Business Park, Junct. 4 M42 start at 11.30 am for a 5 Km and 10Km fun run. Children's mini fun run at 11.00am www.blythevalleypark.com for entry sponsorship form. Telephone 0121 701 5580 for details.