

HEALTH

HEALTH WIRE

THE GIFT OF LOVE - PART I

By Kimberly Knight

Mother Hale is nearly ninety, and battling what doctors think is Parkinson's disease. But true to her form she remains steadfast in her role as the guardian of Hale House. Whenever she is able, Mother ambles throughout the brownstone complex, taking to the children, looking in on the new ones, inquiring about their care, and encouraging them through hugs and kisses to overcome the myriad obstacles strewn in the paths of their young lives. It is a symbiotic relationship, for they are her inspiration and for them she is the savior they didn't know how to pray for.

Take Kevin for example. Born with a heroin addiction, Kevin was first brought to Mother when he was barely one week old. He had tremors so bad he looked as if he might up and walk right out of his own skin. Mother had him placed on her bed each night, where she could "share with him the stories of her life," and caress him with her warm, ancient brown eyes. He liked this right off, and reciprocated her kindness, sometimes with giddy laughter, and sometimes with peaceful sleep. After several months, Kevin began to gain weight and exhibit the responsiveness of a normal, healthy



MOTHER & DR. LORRAINE HALE

child. If Mother Hale's love could be bottled and sold, the label would read, Love potion for Healing Abandoned or Drug-Addicted Babies.

Dr. Lorraine Hale, Mother Hale's only daughter by birth, and the Executive Director of Hale House, told this story in her column "As I Went Home Last

Night," which appears in the organization's newsletter. The story is indicative of the methods which have earned Mother Hale praise as the source of miracles, having personally presided-over the care of more than 800 children.

A MOTHER FOR LIFE
Born Clara McBride on April

Test Your Ulcer Knowledge

A nationwide survey showed nearly one third of adult Americans suffer from chronic heartburn or other ulcer-like symptoms, including a burning sensation in the throat or under the breastbone, nausea, and vomiting. But many people don't know what an ulcer is or even what causes one. Take the following quiz to determine your ulcer I.Q.

True False

- 1. Ulcers are caused by what you eat or too much stress.
- 2. Chronic heartburn is a symptom of an ulcer.
- 3. Surgery is a common treatment for ulcers.
- 4. You can get an ulcer at any age.
- 5. Ulcers are difficult and expensive to treat.
- 6. You must eat a special diet if you have an ulcer.

1. Ulcers are caused by what you eat or too much stress.

False — Neither what you eat nor too much stress has been linked solidly to ulcer disease. Recent studies show that smoking, drinking alcohol, and long-term use of aspirin or aspirin-like products pose the greatest risk.

Research indicates people who smoke heavily develop ulcers twice as often as those who don't smoke; moreover, their ulcers are less likely to heal. Also, researchers have found that smokers are more susceptible to a relapse and may have a higher risk of incurring a fatal ulcer.

As with smoking, alcohol can lead to or complicate existing gastric disease. In addition, it can hasten relapse among patients who have treated their ulcers successfully.

Other ulcer culprits are aspirin and aspirin-like drugs. When taken in large doses over an extended period of time (to relieve chronic arthritis pain, for example), these drugs can irritate the stomach and increase the chances an ulcer will develop. In fact, studies show that regular users of aspirin are more likely to develop an ulcer than those who do not take aspirin at all.

2. Chronic heartburn is a symptom of an ulcer.

True — Chronic heartburn is one of the symptoms of ulcer disease. Other symptoms include a sharp or burning pain localized in the pit of the stomach, usually striking

sometime after meals and/or at night; a burning sensation in the throat or behind the breastbone; nausea; and vomiting. If any of these symptoms are persistent, a trip to a doctor for proper diagnosis and treatment is in order.

3. Surgery is a common treatment for ulcers.

False — In 1976, nearly 155,000 operations were performed to save the lives of patients with bleeding ulcers. The following year, the first H₂-receptor antagonist, Tagamet® (cimetidine), was introduced in the United States. This drug revolutionized ulcer therapy, and by 1989 there were fewer than 15,500 ulcer-related surgeries. Tagamet effectively relieves ulcer pain, in most cases during the first night of therapy, and heals the ulcer itself, usually in four to eight weeks.

4. You can get an ulcer at any age.

True — There are two types of ulcers, duodenal and gastric, and either can strike anyone at any age. The most common type is the duodenal ulcer, which occurs slightly more often in people 30 to 50 years old. Less common are gastric ulcers. The majority of people with this type of ulcer are older than 45 years. However, people older than 60 seem to be at twice the risk of developing gastric ulcers than other age groups. Experts believe the reason for this increase is the chronic use of aspirin and aspirin-like drugs taken to con-

trol arthritis pain, from which many individuals in this age group suffer.

5. Ulcers are difficult and expensive to treat.

False — For the most part, ulcers are managed easily with drugs such as Tagamet, and drug therapy is far less expensive than hospitalization and surgery, which may result if ulcers are not treated adequately. Of the various drugs now available for healing ulcers, Tagamet is the least expensive, thus providing the best value for patients, since no other drug has proven more effective.

6. You must eat a special diet if you have an ulcer.

False — Before the introduction of H₂-receptor antagonists, doctors thought a strict diet was beneficial in treating ulcer patients. Therapy meant either the bland "Sippy" diet and/or taking extremely large doses of sodium bicarbonate powder or magnesium powder, precursors to today's antacids.

The "Sippy" diet — named for the physician who invented it — consisted of "feedings" of a milk and cream mixture every hour of the day. At mealtime, the patient was able to eat only three ounces of creamed cereal. Patients sometimes stayed on this diet for the rest of their lives. But, thanks to drugs such as Tagamet that can safely and effectively heal most ulcers, special diets are no longer required. In fact, research shows that diet has little effect on causing or healing ulcers.

Scoring

If you correctly answered all six ... Go to the head of the class — you know your ulcers!

If you correctly answered 4-5 ... Pat yourself on the back — you know more about ulcers than the general population.

If you correctly answered 3 or less ... You're not alone — ulcer myths die hard.

If you would like more information about ulcers, ask your physician or pharmacist, or write for a free copy of the "Do I Have An Ulcer?" brochure, 625 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2400, Chicago, IL 60611.

CPR WORKSHOP

The Chuck Minker Sports Complex (Stewart/Mojave Sports Center), will offer a CPR workshop, 1:30 p.m., Saturday, February 13. The 90-minute seminar, taught by CPR Plus, is designed for teens and adults. The cost is \$12, which includes certification. Registration takes place at the Complex, 275 N. Mojave Rd., through the day of the event. This seminar is sponsored by the City of Las Vegas. Call 229-6563.

mother's name and address. "Go to my mother," she told the woman. "She will help you care for the baby until you get yourself together." With that, the Hale House Center for the Promotion of Human Potential was begun.

Founded officially as a not-for-profit organization in 1975,

Hale House now has five facilities, serving babies born with drug additions and those with the HIV virus, as well as teenage mothers, children at risk, and mothers who have HIV/AIDS and who want to care for their own children.

To be continued next week...

AFRICAN AMERICAN GIRLS DEVELOP HEART DISEASE

According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's Growth and Health Study, African American girls, as young as age 9, are two to four times more likely, than white girls, to develop heart disease as adults.

According to Dr. John A. Morrison, one of the researchers conducting the study, the key difference appears to be in the level of body fat carried by both groups, as well as in the amounts of calories (particularly fat calories) consumed, and the amounts of energy expended by both groups. The study of 2,379 healthy girls began when they were age 9 or 10 (they are now ages 15 or 16) and will continue until they are 18 and 19. For study updates or more information contact: Dr. John A. Morrison, Children's Medical Center, Cincinnati, OH, 513/559-4200 OR Eva Obarzanek, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, Bethesda, MD, 301-496-2465.

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