



Message from the President

With the arrival of fall, so comes the flu season! Please remember to get your annual influenza or flu shot. Now is the perfect time for everyone older than six months to receive this protective vaccine. The flu vaccine is safe. However, individuals who are allergic to eggs, have had a reaction to a flu vaccine in the past that required medical attention, or have had a history of Guillain-Barré syndrome, should consult with their physicians.

Beth Israel's Karpas Health Information Center will be offering free seasonal flu vaccines at Phillips Ambulatory Care Center, 10 Union Square East, Dr. Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman Conference Center, 2nd floor. Please see Karpas Calendar insert for complete schedule. Call 212.420.4247 to register and for more information.

Once you have made that essential appointment, enjoy another issue of *Healthy Neighbors!* You can see how Beth Israel Medical Center is reaching out to and providing services for members of the LGBT community, patients interested in bloodless surgery, those who seek treatment for hernias, and anyone interested in living a life of wellness and health.

Remember, "We are always here to help!"

Harris M. Nagler, MD, FACS
President, Beth Israel Medical Center

HealthBytes.

Visit Beth Israel's brand-new blog for health and wellness information from our doctors, nurses and other health care professionals. Topics range from surgery, yoga and high blood pressure to dietary supplements, heart health and how to get your kids to take their medication. Check out Health Bytes at www.HealthBytesNYC.com.

Bloodless Surgery for Joint Replacement

Medical experts say that patients who receive blood transfusions have more complications and infections and an increased length of stay in the hospital. "Choosing a bloodless approach to surgery makes good medical sense for nearly everyone," explains **Steven F. Harwin, MD**, Chief of Total Hip and Knee Replacement at Beth Israel.

More patients are opting for transfusion-free surgery simply to avoid complications like transfusion reactions, allergy and the remote chance of disease transmission. For some patients, like Jehovah's Witnesses, their religious beliefs will not allow accepting blood for any reason. Diana Hector (shown below with Dr. Harwin) is a Jehovah's Witness and Dr. Harwin's patient. "Dr. Harwin replaced my hip in 2005. I turned to him again a few months ago to replace my knee because I knew he had the expertise and would respect my beliefs," she says.



The Blood Management and Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Program at Beth Israel coordinates bloodless health care throughout the institution, encouraging pharmaceuticals, procedures and technologies to avoid the use of transfused blood and its components. "Experts estimate that 40 percent of transfusions nationwide are unnecessary," says **Sandra Gilmore**, Director of the program.

Dr. Harwin uses a number of techniques to conserve blood, including boosting iron in the patient's blood before surgery, using anesthetics that help lower blood pressure, and meticulous operative techniques. Dr. Harwin doesn't rely on arbitrary trigger levels for postoperative transfusions. "If a patient's hemoglobin level drops and there are no symptoms, we don't automatically transfuse," he explains.

Orthopedics at Beth Israel is one of several specialties that engages in bloodless options. "Our international reputation for excellence attracts people from all over the world who have an interest in blood management," says Ms. Gilmore.

With six kids, 13 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren, Ms. Hector is happy to be among the thousands of Dr. Harwin's patients who have had successful—and bloodless—total hip and knee replacements. ●



For more information on **The Blood Management and Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Program**, please call 212.420.2430 or visit http://www.chpnyc.org/services/BI_BloodlessMedicine.