

SeniorCircleplus

NEWS AND HEALTH INFORMATION FOR SENIORS

SUMMER 2003



Euclid
Hillcrest
Huron
South Pointe

Help is a button push away

It seemed like any another morning. Juanita Howe got out of bed and began walking toward a chair in her bedroom. Suddenly, the right side of her body went numb, and she fell onto the chair. Panicked, she realized she couldn't move her right arm or leg, and she couldn't begin to reach the telephone. Then she remembered the little button hanging around her neck.

"Thank heavens I had that connection to Lifeline," says Howe, 86. "When I pushed



Kathryn Howe and her mother-in-law Juanita Howe, a Senior Circle Plus member, know the benefit of Lifeline.

the button, someone immediately answered and asked if I needed help. I told them I thought I was having a stroke, and I asked to talk with my daughter-in-law, Kathryn. Lifeline contacted Kathryn at work, and I was able to talk to her until a neighbor arrived. Soon after, EMS arrived and took me to the hospital."



Lifeline is a personal response service that is provided 24 hours a day, every day of the year. If an individual needs help, he or she simply pushes a button, which is worn as a lightweight, waterproof pendant or wristband. Within seconds,

a trained professional answers the call and arranges assistance—whether it is a helping hand from a neighbor or an ambulance.

"My mother-in-law would have been in big trouble without

Lifeline," says Howe, an Eastlake resident. "Subscribing to the service is like buying insurance. You may never need it, but if you do, it's worth every penny. It was a lifesaver."

After staying at Hillcrest Hospital for a couple days, Juanita Howe went to Euclid Hospital's Rehabilitation Center. "Their therapy is so good there," she says. "They had me up and walking the next day." Her daughter-in-law adds, "The staff is very compassionate and attentive. They really take time with their patients. We highly recommend it."

Juanita Howe had been visiting family when she had the stroke. She looks forward to returning to Florida, where she lives independently in a ranch home, drives, crochets, and looks after a 90-year-old neighbor. She has three sons, five grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. "When she returns to Florida, we'll make sure she has Lifeline there," her daughter-in-law says.

NEED LIFELINE?

On discharge from any Cleveland Clinic Health System hospital, patients are offered free installation and one free month of Lifeline service. Senior Circle members receive an on-going discount. One month of Lifeline is \$35. Senior Circle members pay \$32.50. For more information on Lifeline, call (440) 446-8830.

Win a \$100 Target gift certificate! See inside.



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Independence and peace of mind

**Assessing the options that
are right for you as you age**

It's a common dilemma: An elderly person is living alone, and family and friends are concerned about safety. Sell the house. You really shouldn't be living alone any more. What if you fell?

As the elderly struggle to retain independence, conflicts can ensue. But there's a peaceful and reassuring alternative. It's the geriatric assessment program (GAP), a service offered by Euclid Hospital that deals specifically with this issue.

This unique program helps elderly persons and their families cope with and adjust to physical and mental changes that often accompany the aging process. A team of geriatric health specialists, including an internal medicine physician specializing in geriatrics, an advanced practice nurse, and a social worker, provides help.

"Many people fear that coming to a program like this is the first step toward a nursing home, but that's definitely not the case," says Marianne Presutto, a certified nurse practitioner specializing in geriatrics. "GAP's goal is to give people quality in

their lives. We look at many different options for living arrangements, and we work with families to come up with the best possible solution."

During a patient's first visit, the assessment team performs a complete evaluation, which may include a functional assessment, physical examination, and laboratory tests, as needed. A social worker also meets with family members to discuss their concerns. The second visit includes a review of the initial evaluation and discussion of a plan of care. Based on this plan, the team may make referrals to additional services or community resources.



**Marianne Presutto,
certified nurse
practitioner of geriatrics**



"It's a very beneficial program," says Donna Dietz, who used the program a couple of years ago for her mother, who is now deceased. "It's staffed by caring, very professional people who provide a lot of emotional support and help in making difficult decisions. I would highly recommend the program to other people."

**For more information on
GAP, or to make an appointment,
call (216) 692-8876.**

Forgetfulness or Alzheimer's? Learn the difference

When is memory loss more than just forgetfulness? Find out by attending a special educational series co-sponsored by Euclid Hospital's geriatric assessment program and the Alzheimer's Association.

Called "Understanding Memory Loss," the sessions are held from 6 to 7:15 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the Waltz Auditorium at Euclid Hospital. The series is free and open to the public. **For further information, call Marianne Presutto at (216) 692-8876.**