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○ SPRING

○ 2015

Peace of Mind

PRACTICAL TOOLS TO DEAL WITH LIFE EVENTS

A Note About Medicaid: In Harris and other select counties, “dual eligibles” — people with Medicare and Medicaid who are enrolled in certain Medicare plans — are being sent letters detailing “new” plans in which they will be enrolled sometime between 1 March and 1 August 2015. Enrollments will become effective based on residential zip codes. Contact Andrea Hoxie for more information.

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On a Personal Note-I

Because of a series of “life events” I have been away and out of touch for several months. The first upheaval started when I arrived home from my normal Wednesday evening church activities on August 6, 2014, and found water cascading down the walls and out of the ceiling of my bathroom. The tenant in the unit above me had left her bathroom faucet open while the community’s water was shut off for routine maintenance. She was not at home when the water was turned on at 3:00 o’clock that afternoon, nor when I arrived home around 9:00 o’clock that evening. As a result of the water damage and the August heat, I was forced to move out of my home pending the demolition of my bathroom and mold remediation. This is a good time to remind all that mold coverage is not a standard component of homeowner’s insurance and must be added. If one lives in Houston, it should not be considered an option.

Special Election Period for ACA

Have you filed your 2014 Income Tax Return? Were you assessed a penalty for not having health insurance? If you have not enrolled in health insurance for 2015 there is still an opportunity to do so. The penalty for not having health insurance in 2014 was on \$95. The penalty be more than triple that for those who qualify for health insurance and do not enroll this year. From 15 March through 30 April there is a Special Enrollment Period to determine 1) if you

qualify for help paying insurance premiums and 2) enroll in a plan. If your income is too low to qualify and you are not eligible for Medicaid, be sure to complete the appropriate exemption form so that you will not be assessed a penalty. Take the time to know where you stand. If you qualify, your monthly premium could be as low as \$0 depending on your income and household size. Call today for more information. 713.626.4690



Usually when one thinks of long term care, one thinks it is just for “seniors.” Not so! The need for long term care has no age limit! An accident or illness in early adulthood can require help with activities of daily living over long periods of time. This writer once needed long term care for 18 months — at the age of 42! (Okay, that’s not so young, but still . . .) Access to long term care coverage has changed over the years. It can be standalone coverage or part of a life insurance policy. Better to think of it now than later. The good news is that the younger one is when acquired, the less expensive it is. Now is always a good time to talk about Long Term Care coverage.

Did You Get Yours?

If you have not done so, now is a good time to request a family health portrait or family tree graphic today. Supplies are limited. Either of these will help you plot the medical history of your family and give health care providers an indicator of what could go wrong. This is a proactive means of taking better care now! Contact:

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On a Personal Note-II

After the mold remediation was concluded I hired a contractor to rebuild the bathroom, taking the opportunity to make some modifications. The bathroom contractor, on November 5, after receiving an emergency call, left the bathroom valves, bathtub faucet and kitchen faucet open before leaving. Again, the water was turned on around 3:00 o'clock, and with no one there, my home flooded. The good news is that the Condo Community's plumber was still on the premises and he gained entry to my unit and turned off the water. Fortunately, my homeowner's insurance company acted quickly and the water damage was



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Night Owls Run Higher Risk of Health Problems

That's the conclusion of a new study that included more than 1,600 people in South Korea, aged 47 to 59, who provided information about their sleep habits and underwent tests to assess their health. Regardless of lifestyle, people who stayed up late faced a higher risk of developing health problems like diabetes or reduced muscle mass than those who were early risers. This could be caused by night owls' tendency to have poorer sleep quality and to engage in unhealthy behaviors like smoking, late-night eating and a sedentary lifestyle. Of the 1,600 people in the study, 95 were night owls, 480 were early risers and the remainder fell somewhere in the middle. Even though they tended to be younger, night owls had higher levels of body fat and fats in the blood than early risers. Night owls were also more likely to have sarcopenia, a condition where the body gradually loses muscle mass, the findings showed. Men who were night owls were more likely to have diabetes or sarcopenia than those who were early risers, the investigators found. Compared to women who were early risers, women who were night owls tended to have more belly fat and a higher risk of metabolic syndrome -- a collection of health conditions that increase the risk of diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Considering that many younger people are night owls, the risk associated with this type of sleep habit is an important health issue that needs to be addressed. — Source: Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism.

..... repaired long before the contractor's insurance company even assigned a claims adjuster. When he showed up the week of Christmas (!) all he could do was review the repairs that had been made.

Before the need arises, set aside some time to review your homeowner's/renter's policies to understand what coverage you have and what you might need to add. If you do not have a "P&C" agent, we will help you find one.

Don't Get Hoodwinked!

When you hear about credit life insurance, it's easy to confuse it with a standard life insurance policy. But consumers need to understand that credit life insurance, which is designed to pay off the balance of a loan in the event of death, isn't really life insurance. And it is more expensive because it is a guaranteed issue product. The amount it pays declines over the life of the note for the product purchased. One might be better off with a traditional life insurance policy with sufficient face value to cover not only final expenses, but debts and other concerns.

So . . . how much insurance do you really need? A simple formula is DIME: an amount sufficient to cover **D**ebts, **I**ncome (for a certain period), **M**ortgage payoff, and **E**xpenses from illness and disposition of remains. Of course, if children are involved, more coverage is needed. Consider getting a large term insurance for their childhood years and permanent whole life coverage for later. Some term policies have a "return of premium" rider so that when they expire, all of the premium that has been paid is returned to the insured if still living.

For more information about determining how much and what kind of life insurance is appropriate for your situation, contact us.