

# LIFE + HEALTH

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2009

WEDNESDAY IN LIFE + NEIGHBORS  
**BATH CO. MAN HAS  
NURTURED  
27 EAGLE SCOUTS**



# GERMS AT THE GYM

**MORE THAN JUST THE  
H1N1 VIRUS COULD BE  
LURKING, BUT YOU CAN  
TAKE PRECAUTIONS**

By Wina Sturgeon  
Adventure Sports Weekly

The big media scare story of the moment is the swine flu. People are using tissues to turn doorknobs and staying away from crowds. A lot more hand washing is going on.

But can you get the swine flu from your gym? The answer is yes. Just as in the office or at the mall, if you are infected and touch your mouth or nose, then touch a surface, the next person to touch it might catch the bug.

Think about that nasty dumbbell that's been gripped by who knows how many sweaty hands. Imagine how often the pin for a machine-weight stack has been pinched between someone's thumb and forefinger; the same two digits that they used to catch a cough or wipe a nose.

You might avoid touching doorknobs with your bare hands, but what about the contaminated pull-down bar on the lat machine? Worse, the gym is a place where people sweat a lot and breathe hard. One infected person in a crowded aerobics class can do a lot of damage.

Even if you have already received the H1N1 flu vaccine, the flu is not the only contagious illness going around. In this late transition season, between the dreags of autumn and the cold weather of winter, everyone is more susceptible to a cold or other virus.

Jim Kelsey, spokesman for the Central Kentucky YMCA, said all branches have made extra hand sanitizer available, and signs have been posted to remind people that flu season is here. There has been no noticeable dip in attendance because of the flu, he said.

And just as gyms are taking precautions, gym-goers should, too.

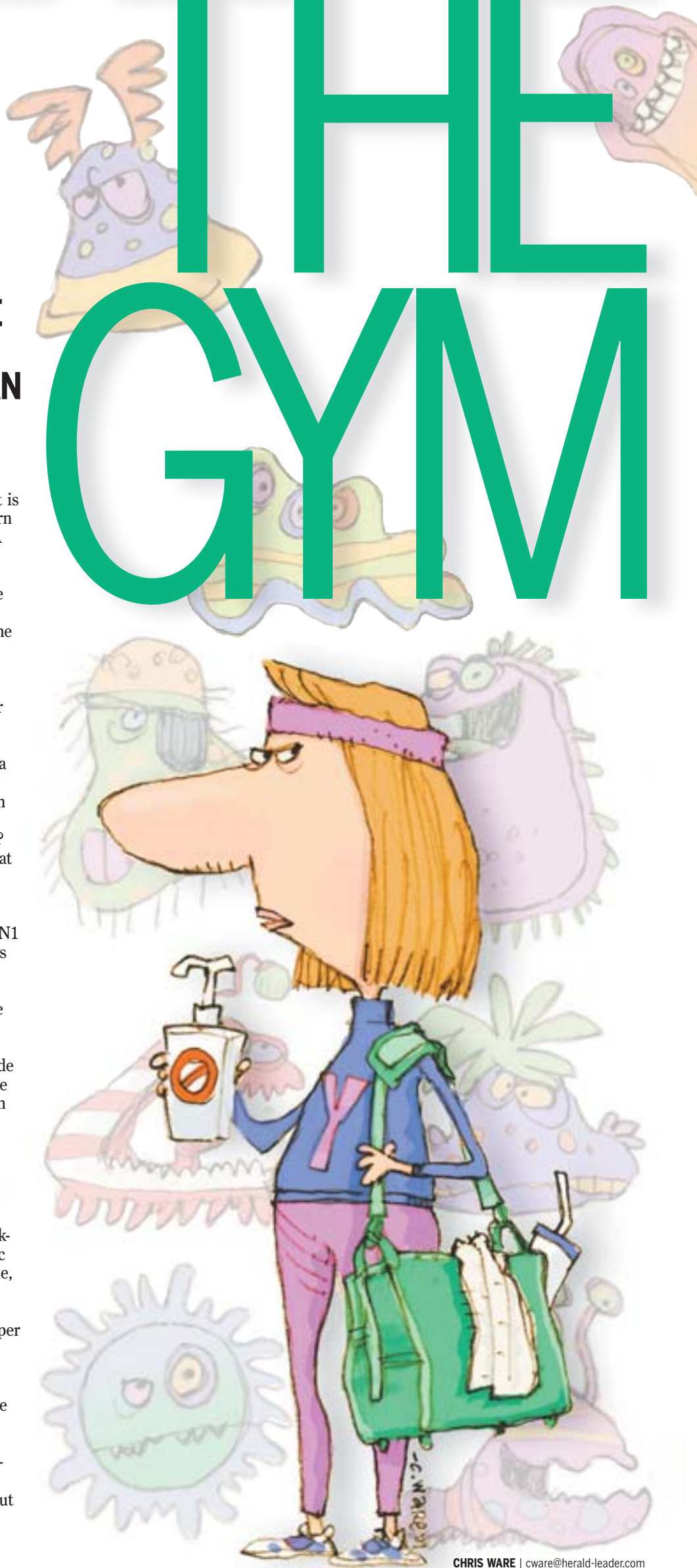
Here's one suggestion: Mix a solution of half isopropyl alcohol (rubbing alcohol) and water in a spray bottle. Put it in a small backpack with a roll of paper towels and a plastic bag. Before using any free weight or machine, spray the surface you will be touching with a good shot of the alcohol mixture. Wait at least 30 seconds, then wipe it dry with a paper towel. Put the used towel in the plastic bag.

You also can use antibacterial wipes or a bleach solution. A mix of 3 tablespoons of bleach to one quart of water in a spray bottle can be used to disinfect hard non-porous surfaces.

Kevin Hall, spokesman for the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department, said a bleach solution is probably more effective, but it does have an odor.

At the end of your workout, throw away

See GERMS, B3



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## Do your part to help fight diabetes

Help those at risk  
make better choices



**MERLENE  
DAVIS**  
HERALD-LEADER  
COLUMNIST

This is American Diabetes Month, designated to heighten our awareness of a disease that is occurring more and more often, especially with Kentuckians.

Some 400,000 of us either have been diagnosed with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes or we have indicators that say we are well on our way to having it. We know so many relatives or friends who are diabetic that we've become rather cavalier about the risks of the disease.

That's not good.

There are two main forms of diabetes. Type 1 — formerly called juvenile diabetes — occurs when the pancreas produces little or no insulin, a hormone that allows sugar or glucose to enter cells to produce energy. Insulin lowers the amount of glucose in the bloodstream. There is no cure for Type 1, but it can be managed.

Type 2 — formerly called adult-onset diabetes — is the most common form of the disease. It occurs when the body resists the effects of insulin or fails to produce enough. Nobody knows why that happens, but it has been linked to genetics, obesity and a sedentary lifestyle.

That doesn't mean everyone who eats and sits too much will be diabetic, but that lifestyle can increase your chances of developing it.

A healthy diet and exercise would go a long way toward decreasing the incidents of Type 2 diabetes, said Dr. Kristina Humphries, an endocrinologist with Borders and Associates in Lexington, "but that takes a lot of hard work to get where you need to be."

There is no magic pill to turn things around. "We need a lot of help from the person," she said.

If that is the case, then I have a few friends who aren't doing their part.

They eat everything that isn't tied down and exercise little or not at all. A couple of them have a slew of other medical issues to contend with.

What can friends and family members do to wake them up?

"Be supportive and try to help them make better choices,"

See DAVIS, B2



### Are you a frugal family?

The economy is ailing and it's almost Christmas. Many families are feeling the financial pinch. How are you and your family adjusting your holiday spending? Do you have a new strategy to stretch your family dollar?

Or do you have a great holiday tradition that costs little or no money?

Share your ideas and tips with Mary Meehan. E-mail her at mmeehan1@herald-leader.com or call her at (859) 231-3261. Please include your name, a daytime phone number and the city where you live.

## UK professor helps develop test to detect ovarian cancer

By Mary Meehan

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After four years of research, a new test will help identify cancer in women with ovarian cysts before surgery.

Until the OVA1 blood test was created, a precise diagnosis before surgery wasn't possible, said Dr. Frederick R. Ueland, associate professor of gynecologic oncology at the University of Kentucky College of Medicine and a principal investigator on

the research project.

Because of that, about a third of patients with ovarian cancer ended up not having surgery by an ovarian cancer specialist. That's a problem, he said, because aggressive surgery is the key to successful treatment of ovarian cancer.

OVA1 should be available to the public by the end of the year, said Wendy Bost, spokesman for Quest Diagnostics, which will distribute the test. It was

approved by the FDA earlier this fall after being tested at 27 sites, including UK.

The OVA1 test measures the levels of five well-established biomarkers and combines the results into a single numerical score. It can be used in any woman older than 18 who has an ovarian adnexal mass for which surgery is planned, but who has not yet been referred to an oncologist.

Ovarian cancer is the leading

cause of death from gynecologic cancers in the United States and the fifth-leading cause of cancer deaths in women, according to statistics cited by UK.

An estimated 21,600 new cases of ovarian cancer will be diagnosed in the United States in 2009, and about 14,600 women are likely to die of the disease.

Reach Mary Meehan at (859) 231-3261.