



## **A Message from the Board of Directors:**

Dear Members,

The A-AWA Board of Directors would like to express our sincere appreciation regarding the wonderful team efforts and projects underway by A-AWA members, volunteers, and our beloved Afghan Community. As you read this edition of our Newsletter you will see the evidence of what can be accomplished with focus on teamwork and common goals. Many lessons have been learned and applied with great success. There is so much more to do! So please read on and together we can create momentum and excitement for the wonderful possibilities still waiting for us to discover and achieve TOGETHER!

## **A-AWA's Community Outreach Committee Update:**

The Senior Social Circle (launched in September 2010) offered programs in November 2010 and January 2011. Participants have enjoyed mingling, sharing new ideas, fun activities, and of course, delicious homemade Afghan refreshments. Participants especially enjoyed the presentation offered by professional Chiropractic Katie Plichta from Fairfax Hospital. She was excellent and focused on exercises that participants were able to learn and practice. It was a great experience for everyone! The events were enjoyed by up to 25 participants including many new faces interested to volunteer as well as some of the most dedicated A-AWA members. The plan is to continue meeting once a month for now. Some ideas for future presentations are:

- Introduction to Yoga
- Basic Yoga Exercises
- Causes and Remedies to Back Pain
- Healthy Eyes
- Benefits of Exercise, etc.

In addition:

A-AWA is pleased to announce the new 'Afghan Women's Support Group' that has been formed side by side with our 'Senior's Social Circle'. This new group accommodates all of the younger participants who would like to attend our gatherings. These two groups will enhance A-AWA's efforts to create programs that can bring together different age groups in the community and allow them to discuss and find solutions to some of the intergenerational challenges faced by our Afghan Community. For example, allowing middle age participants as well as youth to learn more from our Afghan seniors. We can all experience the joy and benefit of spending time with our Seniors and enjoy activities with them. Our Seniors will also enjoy and benefit from spending time with younger generations. This will help to narrow the gap some families might have between grandparents, children, and grandchildren. A-AWA will also try to organize a separate Afghan Youth Support Group in the near future.

I would like to personally thank each of the participants, volunteers, and A-AWA members for their time, interest, and support! Special thanks to Mariam Rusta, Malal Nezam, Nooria Faryar, Raihana Noorzad, Shahla Ahmadi, Arian Misdaq, and Homaira Behsudi for their encouragement and continual support to find and transport senior participants. The spirit of team work is the key to our success so far.

We are looking forward to hearing more from our beloved Afghan Community as well as benefitting from their increased involvement and support.

Peace.

Nillab Pazhwak  
Board Member  
Community Outreach Committee  
A-AWA  
703-303-1435

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Our hearts go out to the people of Japan in the wake of this horrific natural disaster  
We extend our deepest sympathies to those who have lost loved ones in this disaster.

We hop

e A-AWA's small monetary contribution can help in this relief process.

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## Welcome New A-AWA Members

We encourage our current members to help increase awareness and recruit their family and friends into our community. For information regarding membership, please contact Raihana Noorzad, RN. at [rainoorzad@yahoo.com](mailto:rainoorzad@yahoo.com).

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### Tribute Gifts:

Honor a colleague, family member, or friend while supporting the work of your Organization. A-AWA gratefully receives gifts in memory or honor of family members, colleagues and friends. We acknowledge the following donors for their tribute gifts received from January 1 through August, 2010.

DONORS	IN HONOR OF:
<i>Mrs. Amina Bahrami</i>	
<i>Homaira Behsudi, MD.</i>	



## MEDICAL CORNER

Homaira Behsudi, MD., MPH.

### Dyspepsia (Indigestion)

#### What is dyspepsia?

Dyspepsia (dis-PEP-se-ah) is another name for indigestion. It can cause bloating, or make you feel full too early when you eat. It may also cause acid reflux (a burning pain that moves up from your stomach into your chest), nausea, or vomiting.

## What causes it?

Dyspepsia can be caused by many things. However, in many people the cause is unknown. This is called functional dyspepsia.

In some cases of dyspepsia, your stomach may not be emptying properly, or you may have acid buildup. Sometimes you can get dyspepsia from taking over-the-counter pain medicines, such as ibuprofen (one brand: Motrin) or aspirin. Some people get ulcers in their stomach or intestines from bacteria called *Helicobacter pylori*. Infection from this bacteria can cause indigestion.

Sometimes dyspepsia can be a sign of something serious, such as gallstones. In rare cases, it may be a sign of stomach cancer. Other signs of serious disease include unplanned weight loss, anemia (a blood problem), loss of appetite, trouble swallowing, frequent vomiting, and indigestion symptoms that begin after 55 years of age. Talk to your doctor if you have these symptoms. H.Pylori is a very common cause of indigestion among Afghan Community.

## What Should I Know About *Helicobacter pylori* Infections?

### What is *Helicobacter pylori*?

*Helicobacter pylori* (say: hel-lick-o-back-ter pie-lor-ee) are bacteria that can live in stomach acid. In many people, infection does not cause any symptoms. In some people, it can hurt the stomach lining, leading to gastritis (inflammation) and ulcers. Most patients with gastritis or an ulcer have pain or burning in the upper abdomen (the area above the belly button). In some people, infection with *H. pylori* leads to stomach cancer.

### How is *H. pylori* infection diagnosed?

A blood test is an easy way to find out if you have an *H. pylori* infection. You might also get a breath test or a stool test for *H. pylori*. Most often, these tests are used after treatment to find out if the infection is all gone.

### Why should I be treated for *H. pylori* infection?

If the *H. pylori* germs are killed, your stomach ulcer or gastritis can be cured. Many people take antacids or other medicines for a long time before they get treated for *H. pylori* infection. After being treated for this infection, they don't need to take as much medicine for their stomach.

If you have gastritis that causes pain but you don't have an ulcer, treatment for *H. pylori* infection may not ease your pain.

### How is *H. pylori* infection treated?

Treatment includes a combination of antibiotics and acid-reducing medicines. You should take these medicines for at least 10 to 14 days. The most effective combinations include at least two antibiotics plus the acid reducers. The acid-reducing medicines help relieve pain and help the antibiotics work better.

### What can I do to help the treatment work?

- **Take all of the prescribed medicine.** Your treatment might not work for you if (1) the bacteria resists the antibiotics or (2) you don't take all of the medicine. It is very important to take your medicines for the full 10 to 14 days, as prescribed by your doctor. The first try at getting rid of *H. pylori* infection is usually the most successful, so it is important to do it right.
- **Avoid things that can increase stomach acid.** Increased stomach acid can keep your medicines from working right. You should not take medicines that increase stomach acid, like aspirin, ibuprofen (brand name: Advil), or naproxen (brand name: Aleve). Stay away from cigarettes, alcohol, caffeine, spicy foods, and coffee or tea (regular or decaffeinated).
- **Follow up with your doctor.** See your doctor after you finish your medicines. You may get a breath test or the stool test to make sure the infection is gone.

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### MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!

Thanks to your support! Without you, we would not have been able to pursue A-AWA's cloth drive this year.

Your support allowed the organization to distribute brand new and gently used winter coats to Afghan Children in Afghanistan. We thank each and every one of you for volunteering your time and effort. Thanks to our Afghan Community in the US for their generosity. Special thanks to Mr. Omar for helping us deliver the packages through their private company at no charge! Their contact person in Jalalabad delivered the packages directly to A-AWA's contact person (Ms. Amiri) in Kabul. We also thank the Greater Washington Goodwill for their commitment to making our 2010 coat drive so successful. As we continue to grow as a non-profit organization, partnership with our sponsors is vital to the success of this organization.

We would like to extend a huge thank you to Mrs. Malal Nezam and her entire team of volunteers for their hard work and dedication. Heartfelt appreciations to Ms. Amiri for her support and the hard work she volunteered receiving, sorting, and distributing the clothes inside Afghanistan. Many thanks to all the families who donated for A-AWA's 2010 Winter Coat Drive making this year's drive a huge success!