

To your HEALTH

More than a Hospital...

...Alice Hyde Medical Center is a good neighbor that provides education, outreach, and other programs designed to help you and your family stay healthy.

Virtually everyone knows that the Medical Center provides around-the-clock emergency care, performs surgeries, and delivers babies. We sometimes don't realize how the many programs and services that AHMC offers help to keep us healthy.

But, did you know...

...for the past eight years, AHMC has partnered with the Malone Central School District (MCSD) to promote better nutrition and physical activity among students. Through presentations to classes and athletic teams, changes to lunch menus, and developing school policies about wellness, the Medical Center and MCSD are working to tackle the issues of childhood obesity.

...that through its *In Touch With Health* community wellness program,

Alice Hyde offers screenings to community members and local businesses for cancer, cholesterol, glucose; a weight-loss program to promote gradual weight loss through calorie restriction, exercise and behavior change; infant care classes to empower mothers with birthing, breastfeeding, and infant CPR skills; and a Heart-to-Heart Support Group for those with, or at risk for, heart disease and their families.

...AHMC plays a key role in partnerships designed to improve quality of life and overall health? The Medical Center is a member of the Adirondack Tobacco Free Network to reduce adolescent and

adult use of tobacco through cooperative programs in prevention, cessation, advocacy, policy initiatives and community education; 7-Counties Diabetes Network to develop and support diabetes prevention and management programs; Safe Kids World Wide, a coalition of health care, community and law enforcement agencies, dedicated to preventing unintentional injury to children 14 years and under.

...on September 13, 2008, AHMC will host its tri-ennia Health Fair at the Fairgrounds. This event, which offers screenings, health information, food, and family fun, is attended by well over 2,000 community members.



Heather Collins, Dental Assistant, and Frank Fuentes, DDS, give a lesson to local students to increase awareness of proper dental hygiene, including cavity prevention, brushing techniques, and flossing.

All of our activities—from emergency care to community outreach—are designed to care for you and provide you with the help and resources you need to live a healthier life. If you are looking for education, resources, or support for a health or healthy lifestyle issue, contact AHMC's *In Touch with Health* community wellness program staff at 518-481-2247.

Our Top Priority...

...YOUR HEALTH



"I have been in and out of many hospitals and health care facilities. You rate #1. Your staff is so caring and compassionate. I so appreciate their concern"

"I had super care. The nurses, the doctors, everyone, was very friendly and they care about their patients... 100% and beyond"

"The service here is wonderful; the people are friendly, thank you for the wonderful experience"

"All the nurses were fantastic! They were very informative and helpful. Everyone did a good job"

"Keep up the wonderful job. We are so lucky to have the great people we have working at AHMC"

"The staff was very attentive, with a cheery and energetic attitude; room was kept very clean; food was very good; attention to medical needs was excellent! Thank you!"

The *ToYour Health* community newsletter was designed with you and your family in mind. As part of our mission to help keep you healthy, Alice Hyde Medical Center developed this publication to give you tips, resources, and leading edge information about ways to improve your health.

As noted on the first page of this edition of *ToYour Health*, AHMC conducts many activities and programs to help our communities improve and maintain good health. We are proud to be a partner in healthy living for our community.

One of our pinnacle events is scheduled to occur this September—our triennial Health Fair. With more than 50 exhibits and booths, this event promises to be not only fun, but informative. Save the date—September 13, 2008—and plan to join your friends and neighbors for a healthful and enjoyable day.

Don't forget to take a close look at the tips you can use in this edition—there are tips about getting your kids off the couch and becoming more physically active, helping your children prepare for spring and summer sports, determining if you are having sleep problems, distinguishing a bump from a concussion, and learning important facts about the much-discussed "superbug" called MRSA. Plus this edition offers important information about AHMC—our people, our services, and our educational programs.

Enjoy this edition of *ToYour Health*. Please let us know if there are issues and topics you'd like to see addressed in the future.

Thank you for your continued support.

John Johnson
President & CEO



Technology News...

NEW HEMODIALYSIS MACHINES

For the past decade the HDU staff and patients have had many accomplishments including consistently scoring higher than the state and national averages for quality indicators and being in the top 2.5% of dialysis units for survival rates in the nation.



Pictured, left of machine: Lorene Reynolds, HDU Nurse Manager, Mary Hiscock, HDU patient, Frank Jacobs, HDU Social Worker; right of machine: John Johnson, AHMC President / CEO, Laurie Marr, Communications & Community Affairs Leader, Alcoa Massena Operations, and Julia Race, AHMC Philanthropy Director.

The Alcoa Plant, located in Massena, and the Kinney Drugs Foundation have generously donated \$20,000 each to the Wade and Marjorie Hastings Hemodialysis Unit (HDU) to offset the cost of new hemodialysis machines.

The existing machines are more than 10-years old and replacement parts are no longer available. The Alcoa donation will help safeguard this service for all patients whose survival and quality of life depend on hemodialysis treatment. "We are very proud to be a part of AHMC's ability to provide an essential health care service in the North Country," said Laurie Marr, Communications & Community Affairs Leader, Alcoa Massena Operations.



Pictured from left, Lorene Reynolds, HDU Nurse Manager, Stacy Spaziani, Kinney Drugs Foundation Administrator, Mary Hiscock, HDU patient, Charles Owens, Kinney Drugs Foundation President, and Julia Race, AHMC Philanthropy Director.

Did you Know?

MORE THAN 60% OF THE STAFF IN THE HDU IS SPECIALTY CERTIFIED. THE UNIT HAS RECEIVED NATIONAL PATIENT RECOGNITION AWARDS, AND ENJOYS A SUCCESSFUL PATIENT DRIVEN SUPPORT GROUP.

WHAT IS DIALYSIS?

Dialysis is a process through which a person's blood is cleansed of the toxins the kidneys normally would flush out. The procedure is generally used when a person's kidneys no longer function properly as the result of congenital kidney disease, long-term diabetes, high blood pressure, or other conditions.

Today, 54 patients undergo the procedure, on average, three days a week, for four hours at the Medical Center. Most patients undergo dialysis for the duration of their lifetimes. These treatments can relieve pain, as well as prolong and improve the quality of life.

The HDU physicians and staff provide comprehensive care for patients, including End-Stage Renal Disease (Hemodialysis) treatment, dietary education, as well as emotional and financial counseling. Additionally, the staff and patients work very hard meeting the extremely strict health requirements for those patients on organ transplant lists.

Sleep Deprivation

A TAD TIRED? OR DANGEROUSLY DEPRIVED?

When you're well rested, you should feel alert without the urge to nap during the day. Yet sometimes we get so wrapped up in our busy lives, we don't allow enough time for sleep. Other times, worry or depression can keep us awake at night.

Any issue that continually robs the body of much-needed rest should be addressed. Chronic sleep deprivation can lead to irritability, which strains relationships at work and at home, as well as creates some significant medical problems.

Find out if your daytime sleepiness is cause for concern

How likely are you to fall asleep during the following situations? 0= Would never snooze, 1= Slight chance of falling asleep, 2= Moderate chance of dozing off, 3= High chance of falling asleep

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watching television | <input type="checkbox"/> Sitting inactive in a public place (i.e., movie theater, park bench) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sitting and reading | <input type="checkbox"/> Sitting and talking to someone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> As a car passenger for an hour | <input type="checkbox"/> In a car, while stopping for a few minutes in traffic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sitting quietly after lunch without alcohol | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lying down to rest in the afternoon | |

Source: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

About Your Score

Add your score together and if you scored 10 or greater, your daytime sleepiness could be the result of a sleep disorder or sleep disruptions. Consult your physician and ask about our Sleep Lab.

Alice Hyde Medical Center's experienced sleep study professionals will work closely with your health care provider to provide you with the high quality, compassionate care you deserve.

Malinda Collins, RN

Respiratory Therapist

Fletcher Allen Health Care

Neurology Unit,

Sandra Mertz, RN

Director of Cardiopulmonary Services

AHMC SLEEP DISORDERS LABORATORY

Our state-of-the-art Sleep Disorders Laboratory staff is helping people to sleep better. The Lab, equipped with the latest diagnostic tools available in sleep medicine, assists health care providers in the diagnosis and treatment of patients suffering from chronic sleep disorders, such as Sleep Apnea, Insomnia, Sleep Walking, and Restless Leg Syndrome. Patients sleep in one of two comfortable, private rooms while a highly trained Registered Nurse monitors sleep patterns, brain waves, breathing, heart activity, and body movements.

DESIGNED WITH YOU IN MIND

In an effort to provide the most comfortable experience possible, we equipped each room with a queen size bed, flat screen television, a leather recliner, and a personal bathroom.

ON YOUR WAY TO A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Our digital video and audio system is unique to the North Country. The system allows the sleep technician to instantly pinpoint a patient's sleeping position, noise, or movement in conjunction with a breathing irregularity.

A Neurologist, a leader in the field of sleep medicine at Fletcher Allen Health Care in Burlington, Vermont, scores and interprets the results of your sleep test—the results are sent to your health care provider to determine the most beneficial treatment plan for you.



Is it a Bump...

OR A CONCUSSION?

Sometimes a bruise to the head is just a bruise — and sometimes it is a concussion. Any time you experience a head injury, check with your doctor for medical advice, recommended care, and directions regarding regular medications you are taking.

What symptoms indicate an emergency?

If you experience a concussion as a result of a blow to the head, you might lose consciousness for a brief time, develop a headache, or feel dazed or confused. Symptoms can be almost immediate or delayed for days or even weeks.

What are the symptoms of a concussion?

If your headache gets worse, you feel weak or experience numbness, vomit repeatedly, or have coordination problems, call your doctor or go to the emergency room. Other serious signs include an inability to stay awake or be awakened, pupils that dilate unevenly, convulsions or seizures, slurred speech, or increased agitation. Children can experience any of the symptoms in addition to an inability to be consoled, continual crying, and refusal to eat or nurse.

Source: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

WHEN YOU AREN'T SURE...

If you aren't sure whether you or a family member is suffering from a concussion or simply a bump, call or visit the Alice Hyde Medical Center Emergency Department. Open 24/7/365, the AHMC physicians and health care professionals are there to help you with all life's emergencies.

For non life-threatening medical emergencies - those that don't require immediate attention - you can also visit the AHMC In-House clinic, which is open 7 days a week from 1:00 - 9:00 p.m.

TIME FOR A HEALTH UPGRADE?

Healthy meals require healthy ingredients. When you head to the supermarket, make sure to read nutrition labels as you shop, and pay attention to serving sizes and the number of servings per container. Compare similar products and choose the product with the fewest calories. Shop for low-fat items and fill your kitchen cupboards and refrigerator with a supply of lower-calorie basics like these:

GRAINS

- Whole-grain sandwich breads, bagels, pita bread, English muffins
- Soft corn tortillas, low-fat flour tortillas
- Low-fat, low-sodium crackers
- Plain cereal, dry or cooked
- Brown rice, whole-grain pasta

MEAT

- White-meat chicken or turkey (remove skin)
- Fish and shellfish (no batter)
- Beef: round, sirloin, chuck arm, loin, and extra-lean ground beef
- Pork: leg, shoulder, tenderloin

DAIRY

- Fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, cheese, and cottage cheese
- Light or diet margarine
- Eggs or egg substitute

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Fresh, frozen, or canned fruits in light syrup or juice
- Fresh, frozen, or no-salt-added canned vegetables

CONDIMENTS

- Low-fat or nonfat salad dressings
- Mustard and ketchup
- Jam, jelly, and honey
- Herbs and spices
- Salsa

Source: The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI)



MRSA - Myths & Facts

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE SUPER BUG

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT INFECTION CONTROL GUIDELINES TO PREVENT INFECTIONS AND MRSA GO TO WWW.CDC.GOV/NCIDOD/DHQ



What are Staph Infections & MRSA?

Staphylococcus aureus (staph) is a germ that often lives in the noses and on the skin of healthy people and spreads from person to person on contaminated hands, skin, and objects. Most infections caused by staph are skin infections, but staph can also cause more serious infections such as blood and joint infections, and pneumonia.

Some staph called MRSA has been featured in the news and on television programs a great deal recently. MRSA stands for Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus. This type of bacteria causes infections that are resistant to treatment with usual antibiotics.

MRSA—a little known germ with a big name—has captured the attention of news media throughout the nation. The recent news about the number of individuals infected with or at risk of developing a staph infection—or the more serious Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) infection—in local communities has created concern among schools, parents, community organizations, and other places where people congregate. Because the majority of invasive MRSA infections occur in hospitals and other health care settings, health care providers have decades of experience in combating these and other germs.

MRSA occurs most frequently among patients who undergo invasive medical procedures or who have weakened immune systems and are being treated in hospitals and health care facilities such as nursing homes, ambulatory surgery centers, and dialysis centers. MRSA in health care settings may cause serious and potentially life threatening infections.

MRSA can also involve people in the community at large, generally as skin infections that may look like insect bites, pimples or boils and can be swollen, painful and have draining pus. These skin infections often occur in otherwise healthy people.

Antibiotics: USE THEM WISELY



Antibiotics are great at fighting bacteria, but they have little effect on the viruses that cause colds, flu, most sore throats, and bronchitis. In fact, taking them when they are not needed increases your risk of getting an antibiotic-resistant infection at a later date.

Use antibiotics properly:

- **Be sure to take antibiotics as instructed by your doctor. Continue the entire course of treatment even if you feel better. If you stop treatment too soon, some bacteria may survive and reinfect you.**
- **Do not take an antibiotic for a viral infection like a cold, a cough, or the flu.**
- **Do not demand antibiotics when a doctor says they are not needed. They will not help treat your infection.**
- **Do not skip doses.**
- **Do not save antibiotics for the next time you are sick.**
- **Do not take antibiotics prescribed for someone else. The antibiotic may not be appropriate for your illness. Taking the wrong medicine may delay correct treatment and allow bacteria to multiply.**

These steps are intended to prevent antibiotic resistance, which has been called one of the world's most pressing public health problems.

When antibiotics fail to work, the consequences are longer-lasting illnesses, more doctor visits or extended hospital stays, and the need for more expensive and possibly toxic medications. Some resistant infections can cause death. Use your antibiotics responsibly.

Source: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

How is MRSA Spread in Health Care Settings?

Patients who already have MRSA infection or who carry the bacteria on their bodies but do not have symptoms (colonized) are the most common sources of transmission. The main mode of transmission to other patients is through human hands. Hands may become contaminated with MRSA bacteria by contact with infected or colonized patients. If appropriate hand hygiene such as washing with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer is not performed, the bacteria can be spread when the health care worker or visitor touches other patients.

What Factors are Associated with Increased Risk for Community-Associated Staph or MRSA Infections?

Factors that have been associated with the spread of MRSA skin infections include: close skin-to-skin contact, openings in the skin such as cuts or abrasions, contaminated items and surfaces, crowded living conditions, and poor hygiene.

What are Hospitals and Other Health Care Providers Doing to Prevent or Control MRSA?

The good news is that MRSA is preventable. The first step to prevent MRSA is to prevent health care infections in general. Infection control guidelines produced by CDC and the Healthcare Infection Control and Prevention Advisory Committee (HICPAC) are central to the prevention and control of health care infections and ultimately, MRSA in health care settings.

Are Staph and MRSA Infections Treatable?

Yes. Most staph and MRSA infections are treatable with antibiotics. However, many staph skin infections may be treated by draining the abscess or boil and may not

require antibiotics. Drainage of skin boils or abscesses should only be done by a health care provider. If after visiting your doctor the infection is not getting better after a few days, contact him/her again. If other people you know or live with get the same infection tell them to go to their doctor.

What Should I Do...

IF I HAVE A STAPH SKIN INFECTION?

- **Cover your wound.** Keep wounds that are draining or have pus covered with clean, dry bandages. Pus from infected wounds can contain staph. So keeping the infection covered will help prevent the spread to others. Bandages or tape can be thrown away with the regular trash.
- **Wash your hands.** You, your family, and others in close contact should wash their hands often with soap and warm water. You can use an alcohol hand gel when soap and water are not available. This is especially important to do after changing the bandage or touching the infected wound.
- **Do not share personal items** such as towels, washcloths, razors, clothing, or uniforms that may have had contact with the infected wound or bandage. Wash soiled sheets, towels, and clothes with water and laundry detergent. Dry clothes in a hot dryer, rather than air-drying. This also helps kill bacteria in clothes.

Can I Get a Staph or MRSA Infection at my Health Club?

In the outbreaks of MRSA, the environment has not played a significant role in the transmission of MRSA. MRSA is transmitted most frequently by direct skin-to-skin contact. You can protect yourself from infections by practicing good hygiene (e.g., keeping your hands clean by washing with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand rub and showering after working out); covering any open skin area such as abrasions or cuts with a clean dry bandage; avoiding sharing personal items

PREVENTION *Staph Skin Infections...*

- Keep your hands clean by washing well with soap and water or using an alcohol hand gel.
- Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a bandage until healed.
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as towels or razors.
- Report suspicious skin inflammation to your health care provider.
- Use antibiotics responsibly

such as towels or razors; using a barrier (e.g., clothing or a towel) between your skin and shared equipment; and wiping surfaces of equipment before and after use.

Source: Adapted from information by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

COMBATING MRSA REQUIRES VIGILANCE BY US ALL.

Swing into Spring!

GOLFING TIPS TO KEEP YOU ON COURSE



It's been a few months since your last golf outing. You're at the first tee, working out the kinks of your rusty golf swing. What better training, you think, than getting out there and playing? Think again: golf isn't a contact sport — but it puts significant demands on your body. Consider these tips to lower your risk of injury:

- **Warm up** - Before you practice your swing or play a round, walk or jog for a few minutes and try a few gentle stretches.
- **Start slowly** - Work up to your desired level of activity instead of practicing your swing for hours.
- **Strengthen your muscles** - The stronger your muscles are, the greater your club speed will be and you will be less prone to injury.
- **Focus on flexibility** - Regular stretching can improve your range of motion and lead to a more fluid golf swing.
- **Choose proper footwear** - If you've had a leg or foot injury — such as ligament or cartilage damage — wear tennis shoes or golf shoes with short cleats. Long cleats dig into the sod and hold your feet planted as you swing, which may strain your knees or ankles.
- **Use proper posture** - Avoid hunching over the ball, which may contribute to neck and back strain.
- **Stabilize your lower back** - Keep your pelvis as level as possible throughout your swing.
- **Don't overswing** - If you swing the club too hard or too fast, you may lose control of the club and hurt yourself. Relax and take a nice, easy swing at the ball.

While golfing, watch for symptoms of dehydration, heat exhaustion and heatstroke. Red flags might include a headache, dizziness, nausea, rapid heartbeat, irritability or confusion. Drink plenty of water, and cut your game short if necessary. Call it quits at the first sign of threatening skies or lightning.

Source: Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER).

LET'S GET MOVING!

The best way to help kids stay fit, build strong bones and muscles, sleep better, handle stress, and improve their mood and outlook is proper nutrition, and physical activity. Below is a list of things you can do—even if you have little time or money to spend.*

*According to *Helping Kids Become More Active*, an article by Jaime L. Hebert (August 28, 2006)



- ♦ **Make physical activity a part of your routine** - Getting 3 or more ten minute blocks of exercise is an easy way to get the recommended thirty minutes or more of activity each day.
- ♦ **Buy gifts for your children that encourage them to be active** - A baseball glove, a lawn game, a gift certificate to a sporting goods store, etc.
- ♦ **Get your children involved in an organized sport or activity** - Dancing, soccer, football, martial arts, and swimming are just a few of the possibilities.
- ♦ **Low cost/no cost ideas** - Walking the dog, playing tag or hide-and-go-seek, and jumping rope are all low cost/no cost ideas.
- ♦ **Reward good behavior with fun activities instead of food or TV** - Canoeing, gardening, a trail ride on horseback, or a nature walk could be good rewards. The hidden benefit? Your kids will get to spend more time with you, too!

Philanthropy Update

AHMC THANKS ALL WHO HAVE GENEROUSLY DONATED

We offer our sincere thanks to the following people for their tremendous generosity. In 2007, they contributed \$197,000 to Alice Hyde Medical Center.

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Key Bank
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*AHMC employee

In Touch with Health

Community Wellness Programs

AL-ANON

Date: every Sunday
Time: 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Meeting Place: AHMC Main Floor Conference Room

ALCOHOLICS' ANONYMOUS

Saturday meetings: 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Sunday meetings: 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.
Meeting Place: AHMC Main Floor Conference Room

ALZHEIMERS SUPPORT GROUP

Contact: 518-483-4502
Date: first Wednesday of every month
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Meeting Place: North Country Home Services

ARTHRITIS SELF-HELP 6-WEEK COURSE

Contact: Debbie Warren
Phone: 518-481-2247
Date: Call for dates/times

BABYSITTER SAFETY COURSE

Contact: Debbie Warren
Phone: 518-481-2247
Date: Call for dates/times (offered in Spring & Fall)

CANCER PATIENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Support services are available by request
Contact: Amy O'Connor
Phone: 518-481-2880

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION CLASSES

Contact: Debbie Merrick
Phone: 518-481-2244
Date: every Monday
Time: 7:00 – 9:30 p.m.
Meeting Place: AHMC Education Classroom

DIABETES EDUCATION 6-WEEK COURSE MANAGING YOUR DIABETES

Contact: Hallie Garland/Anne Slocum
Phone: 483-3000 ext. 280
Date: Call for dates & to pre-register
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Meeting Place: AHMC New Cafeteria Conference Room

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

Date: third Monday of every month
Time: 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Meeting Place: AHMC New Cafeteria Conference Room

EYE ON THE COMMUNITY RADIO PROGRAM

Date: first Sunday and last Saturday of every month
Time: Saturday, 7:00 – 7:30 a.m. – WICY 1490 AM
Radio; Sunday 6:00 – 6:30 a.m. – Wild Country 96.5 FM
Radio, 94.7 Hits FM Radio

HEART-TO-HEART SUPPORT GROUP

Support services are available by request
Contact: Sandy Mertz
Phone: 518-481-2319

HOSPICE BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

Contact: Tammy Crinklaw
Phone: 483-3200
Date: Call for dates/times
Meeting Place: Throughout Franklin County

KIDNEY DISEASE AND DIALYSIS SUPPORT GROUP

Date: Second Thursday of every month
Time: 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Meeting Place: AHMC Main Floor Conference Room

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SUPPORT GROUP

Date: first Wednesday of March, June, Sept., & Dec.
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Meeting Place: AHMC Main Floor Conference Room

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

Date: every Saturday
Time: 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Meeting Place: AHMC Main Floor Conference Room

ORGAN DONOR/RECIPIENT SUPPORT GROUP

Contact: Debbie Warren
Phone: 518-481-2247
Date: first Monday of every March, June, Sept., & Dec.
Time: 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Meeting Place: AHMC Main Floor Conference Room

SMALL SOULS SUPPORT

Contact: Family Maternity Center
Phone: 481-2244
Meeting Place: Group meets upon request
A bereavement support group for parents or family
dealing with fetal or neo-natal death

SMOKING CESSATION SUPPORT SERVICES

Contact: Danielle Laravia, North Country Tobacco
Cessation Center
Phone: 518-481-1592

WEIGHT WATCHERS

Date: every Tuesday night
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Meeting Place: AHMC Cafeteria



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