

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR HEALTH FROM
THE NEBRASKA MEDICAL CENTER

advancing health

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SERIOUS MEDICINE. EXTRAORDINARY CARE.

New Diabetes Center Provides One-Stop Care for Diabetes Patients

Diabetes is one of the fastest growing diseases in the country. Approximately one-quarter of the population is living with pre-diabetes or full-blown diabetes and most of them don't know it. What's more, diabetes puts these individuals at increased risk for heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, blindness and cancer.

The Nebraska Medical Center recently opened a new Diabetes Center—the only one of its kind in the region dedicated to providing comprehensive care for diabetes patients. The Diabetes Center combines clinical care, education and research aimed at finding better ways to prevent and treat diabetes.

As a “one-stop shop” for diabetes, the center provides counseling and treatment, screens for complications of the disease, and teaches patients how to prevent and manage these complications.

“Diabetes is often associated with serious complications that require specialty care,” says James. T. Lane, MD, endocrinologist and medical director of The Nebraska Medical Center Diabetes Center. “Our new Diabetes Center makes it as convenient as possible for diabetes patients to receive the care they need.” Located on the campus of The Nebraska Medical Center, patients have convenient access to a full range of specialists, depending on their need. Some specialists hold regularly scheduled clinics at the Diabetes Center. The center also offers foot and nail care services.

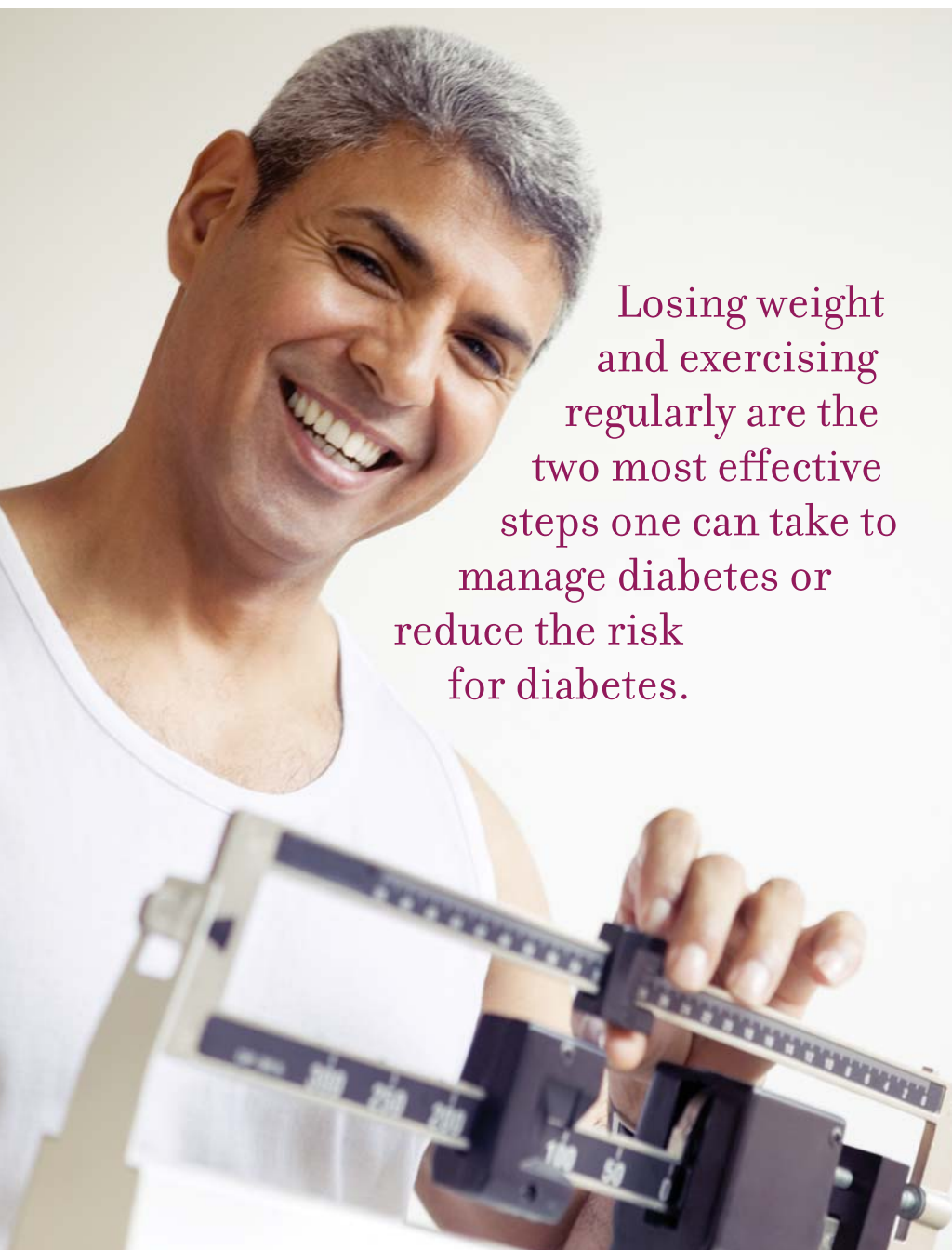
Losing weight and exercising regularly are the two most effective steps one can take to manage diabetes or reduce the risk for diabetes. Dietitians and exercise physiologists are available to prescribe diet and exercise programs for patients, to monitor their programs and to track their progress.

Diabetes is growing at an alarming rate in this country, with the greatest increases being seen among adoles-

cents and young adults. In the past, most type 2 diabetes cases did not develop until about age 40. However, today the disease is appearing in patients at much younger ages. Dr. Lane says he hopes the center will help educate the community about this growing epidemic and provide interventions to reduce its incidence.

Early intervention can help prevent or delay the onset of diabetes in individuals with pre-diabetes, meaning one's blood sugar level is higher than normal, but not high enough to meet the diagnosis of diabetes. For those with full-blown diabetes, careful management can help curtail the onset of complications. The center also has an acute care component and can see current patients with acute diabetes complications in a timely manner as opposed to going to the emergency room.

All individuals older than age 45 should be screened every three years if blood glucose values continue to be normal. High-risk individuals, including those of African-American, Latino, Hispanic, American Indian, Asian and Pacific Island descent, should receive annual screenings before the age of 45, as well as individuals with hypertension, obesity, high triglycerides, a family history of diabetes or a history of gestational diabetes. ■



Losing weight
and exercising
regularly are the
two most effective
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reduce the risk
for diabetes.

FREE BROCHURE

Healthy eating can help keep your blood glucose in your target range. To order our FREE brochure, *What I Need to Know About Eating and Diabetes*, call **800-922-0000**. Hurry! Supplies are limited.



Gallstone Surgery Made Easier

The treatment of gallstones just got easier, thanks to a procedure performed only at The Nebraska Medical Center. People who develop large gallstones in their bile ducts and who may have required open surgery in the past can now have their stones removed in an hour-long outpatient procedure that requires no incisions.

Using a system called SpyGlass Direct Visualization, doctors at The Nebraska Medical Center place a small, flexible, lighted tube through an endoscope down a patient's throat into the bile ducts. Doctors then use sound waves to break the gallstones into small pieces in a technique called lithotripsy. The stones can then be removed through the endoscope.

"Before SpyGlass, oftentimes surgery that required opening the ducts through an incision in the stomach was the only option for these people," says Ed Schafer, MD, gastroenterologist at The Nebraska Medical Center. These patients often required five to seven recovery days in the hospital. Patients can go home the same day after undergoing the SpyGlass procedure.

Many individuals who develop gallstones have no symptoms and require no treatment, says Dr. Schafer. However, for those who do, common symptoms include gas and bloating as well as chronic indigestion or pain in the middle or upper right abdomen one to two hours after eating.

"When gallstones migrate and block bile

ducts, they can cause severe pain and infection and should be removed," says Dr. Schafer. "Complications from gallstones can be serious, and even fatal, if left untreated." Bile duct obstruction occurs when gallstones escape the gallbladder and enter the duct leading from the liver and gallbladder to the small intestine. Gallstones also may block the duct leading to the pancreas and block this duct, a condition called pancreatitis.

A bile duct obstruction can cause yellowing of your skin and the whites of your eyes, clay-colored stools, fever, abdominal pain and dark urine. Seek emergency care if you should develop symptoms of bile duct obstruction, says Dr. Schafer.

Individuals at greatest risk of developing gallstones include middle-aged women who have had babies and are overweight, American Indians, Mexican-Americans and people who have experienced rapid weight loss with a very low calorie diet. Your risk of developing gallstones also increases with age, especially after age 60. ■

Health Assessment Tools Confused about your cholesterol? Want to know whether you're getting enough sleep? Think you know all there is to know about skin cancer or heart disease? Take our health quizzes and assessments to test your knowledge. Go to www.NebraskaMed.com.



Women's Health & Wellness Conference *Successful Nutrition for Life*

Friday, Oct. 24
Mid-America Center
Council Bluffs, Iowa

Cost: \$49; includes breakfast and lunch.
Nursing credit is an additional \$30 for 5.8 contact hours for Nebraska nurses and 7 contact hours for Iowa nurses.

Learn everything you need to know to practice good nutrition for life, including topics on understanding organic foods versus natural, fresh and frozen foods, the importance of vitamin D, superfoods, fad diets, age-appropriate supplements, nutritional eating for menopause and beyond, how to live with food allergies and food sensitivities, and how metabolism affects your diet.

Registration Deadline: Friday, Oct. 17
(No refunds after Oct. 17.)

To register or for more information, call
800-922-0000.

We Are Here for You 24 Hours a Day, 7 Days a Week

The Nebraska Medical Center allows you access to free health information whenever you need it and features:

- Access 7 days a week, 24 hours a day
- Bilingual options
- Physician referral
- Class or seminar registration
- A "call-me-back-later" feature through our website, www.NebraskaMed.com.

800-922-0000

Join the Club!

The Nebraska Medical Center's Health and Wellness Club is a **FREE** club open to all individuals ages 50 and older. Club members enjoy occasional discounts, fitness programs, health education and screenings, social activities and a calendar of local programs to help you live a healthier lifestyle.

Joining the Club Is Easy!

For more information or to join the Health and Wellness Club, please call **800-922-0000** or e-mail us at healthandwellness@nebraskamed.com.

Vascular Screening

Vascular screenings are not covered by many insurance plans. The Vascular Center offers these screenings for only \$50. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call **800-922-0000**, or visit us online at www.nebraskamed.com/services/vascular.

A Matter of Balance

Have you limited some of your activities because of concerns about falls? This nine-week course is sponsored by the Weigel Williamson Center for Vision Rehabilitation. Please call **800-922-0000**.

Blood Pressure Screenings on the Go

Free Heart Check Kiosks are available at these locations:

- Oak View Mall, upper level near Dillard's
- Westroads Mall, second level near Dick's Sporting Goods



health & wellness club

MONTHLY HEALTH SEMINARS

Storz Pavilion, Rooms 1 and 2.
Lunch served at noon; speaker begins at 12:15 p.m. Event is free. Reservations required; call **402-559-4197**.

Managing Depression and Anxiety

Tuesday, Oct. 28
Jai Sookram, PhD, psychologist

Maintain the Brain

Tuesday, Nov. 18
Rosalie Shepherd, Alzheimer's Association

WALKING CLUBS

Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo Walking Club

Enjoy a morning walk through Henry Doorly Zoo. Club meets Friday mornings; zoo membership required. Call **402-738-2007** for more information, or e-mail promotions@omahazoo.com.

Garden Walkers at Lauritzen Gardens

Tuesday mornings from April through October, join us for a walk through the botanical gardens. Garden membership required or daily admission fee for non-members. For information, call **402-346-4002, ext. 217**.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS AT JOSLYN ART MUSEUM

Free admission with presentation of your Health & Wellness Club membership card. For more information, contact the museum at **402-342-3300**.

Third Thursday Art Encounters Club

Enjoy docent-guided tours of Joslyn's permanent collection and special exhibitions. Fall exhibits: *Steve Joy, Uncreated Light*, runs through Oct. 5, and *Mexican Revolutionary Muralist Diego Rivera*, Oct. 25 to Jan. 18.

Visualizing Literature: Book Club for Art Lovers

A series of quarterly moderated book discussions exploring connections between the literary and visual arts.

UNMC CENTER FOR HEALTHY LIVING

Health & Wellness Club members are eligible to join the UNMC Center for Healthy Living fitness center located at 39th and Jones. Please call **402-559-5254** for more information.

Vigor, Tone, and Mightier Bone

Instructor-led strength-training, flexibility and endurance class meets Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 to 11 a.m. at UNMC Center for Healthy Living. Please call **402-559-5254** to register.

Tai Chi Exercise Class

Tuesdays at Bloomfield Forum, 9804 Nicholas St. Please contact Angie at **402-551-3483** for class information and session fee.

H&W Club Bowling League

Tuesdays, 9 a.m.
Westlane Bowling Alley, 151 North 72nd St. **Fee: \$5.75**; covers three games and shoe rental. Reservations not required.

Blood Pressure Check and Nail-Trimming Clinics

Monthly blood pressure checks and nail trimming clinics at Bloomfield Forum, 9804 Nicholas St., **402-390-9991** and Sunridge Village, 13410 Blondo St., **402-496-0116**. Please call to schedule an appointment. **Fee: \$15**.



Interested in becoming a Health & Wellness Club member? Please call **800-922-0000**.

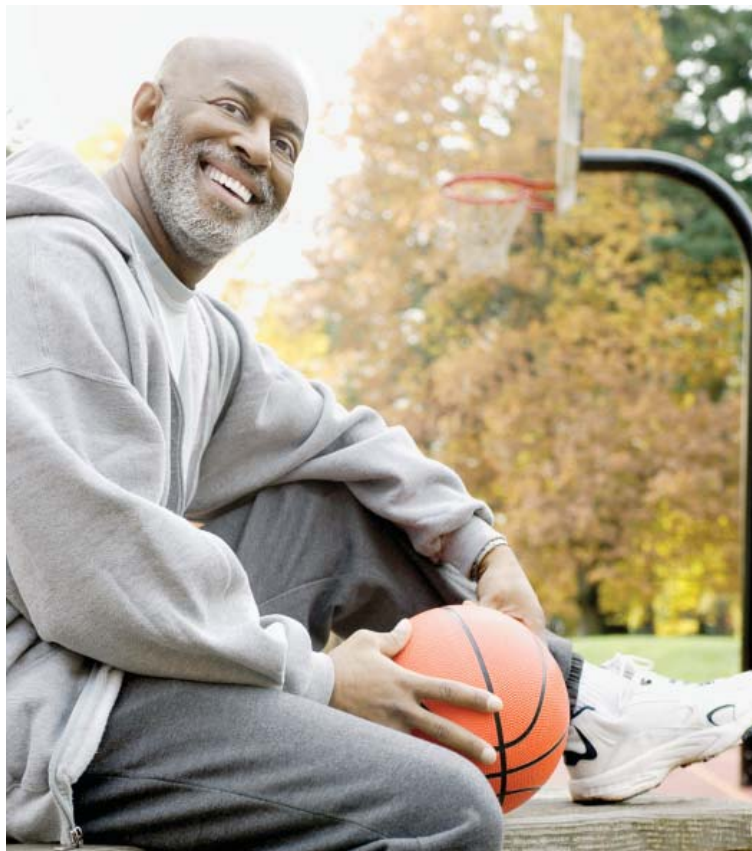
New Advancements in Hip and Knee Replacement Surgery

Arthritis, trauma to the joints and old age—they all can contribute to wear and tear on the hip and knee joints that may result in pain and eventually, disability. Today an increasing number of people are seeking relief and a better quality of life by undergoing hip or knee replacement surgery.

“People used to think they had to live with the pain, but now they don’t have to with improvements in joint replacement surgical techniques,” says Mark Goebel, MD, orthopedic surgeon at The Nebraska Medical Center. “We used to restrict joint replacements to individuals ages 65 and older, but with more durable materials, now it’s possible to perform the surgery on people in their late 40s and 50s.”

Advancements in the design and quality of materials used in joint replacements have resulted in improved range of motion and wear life that may extend up to 20 years. Also, a more aggressive rehabilitation approach has individuals putting full weight on the joint the day following surgery and walking up to a mile within four weeks after a knee replacement or a hip replacement. “We’ve found that more aggressive rehabilitation not only results in improved overall function and range of motion, but in fewer post-surgery complications such as stiffness and blood clot formation,” says Dr. Goebel.

New developments in partial knee replacement surgery are making this procedure an effective option as opposed to a total replacement for younger individuals who want to wait before having a full replacement. “Recent improvements to the materials used in this procedure have increased the wear rate and life of the prosthesis and makes the new knee feel very close to a normal knee,” says Dr. Goebel. “Recovery for partial knee replacements is even sooner than for total replacement knee surgery, with patients usually regaining full motion within three to four weeks after surgery.”



Dr. Goebel says he makes about a 5- to 6-inch incision depending on the size of the hip or knee, which is smaller than the 10-inch incision used in the past. Minimally invasive procedures, where smaller incisions make it difficult to see the joint, have become less popular with surgeons due to increased misalignment of the prosthesis resulting in an accelerated wear rate, Dr. Goebel elaborates.

“Knee and hip replacement surgery can dramatically improve quality of life,” says Dr. Goebel. “Many patients experience an incredible amount of pain resulting in loss of sleep and depression as well as weight gain due to inactivity. After recovery from surgery, the majority of patients report 95 to 98 percent pain relief, and most can return to former activities like walking, swimming, bicycling, golf and light tennis.” ■

UPDATE

the latest medical research

Cryptogenic Stroke and PFO Study

Have you or someone you know recently suffered a stroke? Adults ages 19 to 60 who have had a stroke in the past 180 days and have a common heart defect (patent foramen ovale, or PFO) are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to find out whether implanting an investigational device to repair the PFO during a nonsurgical procedure is better than standard medical treatment in preventing future strokes. To learn more about the study, call The Nebraska Medical Center at **800-922-0000**. To learn more about PFO closure, go to www.amplatzer.com.

Coronary Artery Study

Do you have coronary artery disease? Adults 19 years or older who have had a heart attack are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to determine whether having an implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) improves survival in people with coronary artery disease who might not already be eligible for an ICD. Study participants will be seen every six months during their scheduled cardiology appointments; implantation of ICD for participants randomized to receive the device. Please call The Nebraska Medical Center at **800-922-0000** to learn more.



For more information about orthopedic conditions, visit us online at www.NebraskaMed.com.



Top 10 Questions to Determine Your Risk for

Breast cancer is one of the most common types of cancer among American women, striking one of every eight women by age 70. Despite its increasing prevalence, the mortality for breast cancer has slowly dipped during the past five years.

One of the primary reasons, says James Edney, MD, surgical oncologist at The Nebraska Medical Center, is improved and widespread use of mammography screening, which can detect breast cancer in its earliest stages. Answer these questions to help you determine your risk for breast cancer and the changes you can make to help minimize your risk.

Do you have a sister or mother who has had breast cancer?

Your risk for breast cancer rises if you've had a sister or mother with breast cancer. Your risk doubles if your sister or mother had premenopausal breast cancer.

Have you given birth?

If you have never had a complete pregnancy, your risk for breast cancer increases significantly. Deferring pregnancy beyond the age of 30 also bumps up your risk.

Are you overweight?

It is believed that fat cells have a higher level of circulating estrogen, which can fuel the growth of cancer in some women.

Are you older than age 50?

Your risk for breast cancer increases as you age. The average age for developing breast cancer is 56 years old.

At what age did your menstrual cycle begin and end?

Women with prolonged menstrual cycles have an increased risk for breast cancer. That includes women who began their cycles before age 12 and/or women whose cycles continued late into their 50s. Doctors believe that the longer you menstruate, the longer your body is exposed to estrogen, which can stimulate cancer growth for some types of breast cancer.

What is your race?

The risk for breast cancer tends to be higher among Caucasian women than women of color. The reason why is not clear, but it may have to do with lifestyle and diet.

Have you had any breast biopsies showing lobular carcinoma in situ or ductal carcinoma in situ? Both of these precancerous conditions are considered precursors to breast cancer. It is

Schedule Your Mammogram

Women do not need a referral from their doctor to schedule a screening mammogram, but they must have a physician the screening can be sent to. We have several convenient locations, including Clarkson West Medical Center at 144th and Center Road. For location information and to schedule an appointment, please call **800-922-0000**.



Breast Cancer

important to have these treated or they are likely to evolve into breast cancer.

Do you drink alcohol?

Your risk increases with the amount of alcohol consumed. Alcohol becomes a more significant risk factor if you consume three or more drinks a day.

Do you carry the gene mutations BRCA1 or BRCA2?

The gene mutation BRCA1 increases your risk of developing breast cancer by age 70 to 82 percent and BRCA2 increases your risk by 44 percent. Women who have a strong family history of breast cancer in a first-degree relative or more than one second- or third-degree relative, may want to consider genetic testing for the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes.

Have you had past radiation to the chest?

If you have received past radiation therapy to the chest to treat conditions such as Hodgkin's disease, your risk for breast cancer rises. ■

q & a...

I often get dark circles under my eyes. What causes them, and what can I do to get rid of them?

Kristie Hayes, MD, dermatologist

Waking up with dark circles under your eyes is usually a short-term problem that may be minimized with over-the-counter products. Contrary to popular belief, dark circles under the eyes are not caused by lack of sleep but are usually a result of nasal congestion. Nasal congestion causes the veins that normally drain from your eyes into your nose to become dilated and darker.

Swelling of the eyelids during sleep also may cause dark circles. When lying down for long periods, gravity can cause fluid to pool in your lower eyelids. This can make it appear that you have shadows under your eyes. Other causes of dark circles include chronic skin conditions, such as atopic eczema. It also appears to have a familial link.

Several over-the-counter products may help reduce under-eye circles. These include skin creams that contain vitamin C or K, alpha hydroxy acid and kinetin. More severe or chronic dark circles may require bleaching agents or laser therapy if treating the underlying cause does not provide relief.



There are so many over-the-counter weight-loss pills on the market today. Do they really work?

Brenda Bishop, medical nutrition therapist

Approach the use of over-the-counter weight-loss pills very cautiously. Many have not been proven safe and effective, and many can be hazardous to your health. Unlike prescription drugs, over-the-counter dietary supplements and weight-loss aids are not regulated very closely by the Food and Drug Administration. Many contain numerous ingredients that may include a combination of herbs, vitamins, minerals, botanicals as well as caffeine or laxatives. Each person may react differently to these. In addition, taking these with other medications may cause life-threatening interactions. A popular newcomer to the diet pill market and the only one approved by the FDA is Alli™—a reduced-strength over-the-counter version of orlistat, a prescription weight-loss medication for adults ages 18 and older. Alli, which promotes weight loss by reducing absorption of fat by the intestines, can cause side effects such as diarrhea and gas with oily spotting. It is intended to be used with a reduced-calorie, low-fat diet and exercise. However, the most effective method for long-term weight loss is to adopt a healthy diet that includes low-calorie, low-fat food choices and to exercise regularly.

Need a PHYSICIAN REFERRAL?

Call us at **800-922-0000** or visit
www.NebraskaMed.com.



Head Injuries: When to Seek Medical Attention



ONE OF AMERICA'S BEST HOSPITALS

The Nebraska Medical Center has been named one of America's best hospitals in *U.S. News & World Report's* 2008 publication of America's Best Hospitals for two services, cancer and neurology/neurosurgery.

Out of 5,453 hospitals across the country considered, only the top 170 medical centers were selected for the 2008 America's Best Hospitals report. To learn more about the extraordinary care at The Nebraska Medical Center, visit us online at www.NebraskaMed.com.

Fall sports are now in full swing. As parents, we want our children to have fun and develop new athletic skills, but we also need to ensure our children stay safe. Physical sports, like football, hockey and even soccer, can expose your child to serious head injuries. A fall or injury to the head can result in concussion and needs special attention.

"A concussion is a trauma-induced alteration of mental status that may or may not cause a loss of conscious-

ness and may produce symptoms such as confusion, dizziness or amnesia," says Peter Lennarson, MD, neurosurgeon at The Nebraska Medical Center.

Immediate signs of a concussion include: confusion, blank stare, slurred speech, stumbling, sleepiness or ringing in the ears. In some cases, symptoms linger for several days. Rest is the only way to resolve a mild concussion. While most symptoms of a concussion resolve on their own,

warning signs of a potentially more serious head injury include persistent or worsening headache, nausea, vomiting, decreased alertness, seizures or weakness. A child should not return to sports-related activities until symptoms have completely cleared, stresses Dr. Lennarson, or brain damage could result.

How severe a concussion is, and whether prior concussions have occurred, dictates how soon your son or daughter should return to a sport, says Dr. Lennarson. Suffering a prior concussion increases one's risk of having a more significant brain injury with a subsequent concussion. Repeated concussions within a short time frame can be detrimental to a child's neurological health and can cause permanent brain injury.

A Grade 1 concussion is associated with transient confusion, with no loss of consciousness, and resolves within 15 minutes. A child may return to sports-related activities as soon as all symptoms have resolved. If your child has experienced multiple prior concussions, your child should sit out for at least a week. A Grade 2

concussion also is associated with transient confusion, but symptoms last more than 15 minutes. Your child should sit out for a week and even two weeks if multiple prior concussions have occurred. A Grade 3 concussion involves any loss of consciousness and should be followed by rest for a week to several weeks depending on how long your child was unconscious and if there have been prior concussions. "Anyone who has experienced a Grade 2 or 3 concussion should seek medical attention," says Dr. Lennarson.

Sometimes symptoms of a concussion may not appear until hours or days later. Other symptoms that may signal the need for medical attention include worsening symptoms, like headache, decreased level of consciousness, difficulty arousing from sleep, nausea and vomiting and dizziness as well as mood and cognitive disturbances, sensitivity to light and noise, and sleep disturbances.

If you have any concerns after your child has suffered trauma to the head, Dr. Lennarson suggests seeking medical attention. ■



For more information about the neurosurgery department, visit us online at www.NebraskaMed.com.

Testing Tool for Brain Increases Neurology Capabilities

The Nebraska Medical Center recently elevated its capabilities to diagnose and treat neurological conditions when it became one of about a dozen clinical sites in the country to add a magnetoencephalograph (MEG) scanner to its arsenal of neurological diagnostic tools.

"This is the most advanced testing tool for brain function that is known to man," says Sanjay Singh, MD, epileptologist and director of the Nebraska Epilepsy Center. "This new technology will give us the opportunity to study the brain and learn more about how it functions than ever possible before."

The MEG scanner is expected to have a significant impact on physicians' ability to diagnose and treat conditions related to the fields of neurology and neurosurgery. It also will be an invaluable tool in the research of psychiatric disorders. The MEG—a neurophysiological technique that measures magnetic fields generated by the brain's neuronal activity—can detect brain activity in much greater detail and with greater sensitivity and accuracy than previous testing methods. For instance, if a person moved a finger, the MEG would allow doctors to see what part of the brain told the finger to move, notes Dr. Singh.

This kind of view into the brain will provide doctors with the ability to identify where the brain is malfunctioning with increased precision; it will provide neurosurgeons greater precision when operating and make surgery safer; and it will allow



psychiatrists a better understanding of how the brain functions in people with mental disorders.

The MEG will provide more precision in locating highly sensitive and functional areas of the brain that control primary motor and sensory functions such as speech, movement, sensation, hearing and eyesight in relation to tumors and surrounding structures. "This will provide us with important information in our

pre-operative evaluation to help make operations safer for patients who require surgery in or near these sensitive areas of the brain," says Michele Aizenberg, MD, neurosurgeon at The Nebraska Medical Center.

"MEG will provide real-time pictures of the brain's activity that have not been available until now," says Deepak Madhavan, MD, epileptologist at The Nebraska Medical Center. In relation to epilepsy, it will provide a much more detailed anatomical picture of the brain, allowing physicians to pinpoint with greater accuracy the source of patients' epileptic seizures resulting in better outcomes, he says.

"From a neurological standpoint alone, the implications of having a MEG here at the medical center are immense," says Pierre Fayad, MD, chairman of the Department of Neurological Sciences. The tool is expected to lead to advancements in treatment for patients with Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's and dementia. ■

FREE BROCHURE

What should you do if heart attack or stroke occurs? To order our FREE brochure, *Women, Heart Disease and Stroke*, call 800-922-0000.



Stroke Is a Women's Disease Too

Like heart disease, stroke often has been regarded as a disease that affects men. Now we know differently. Stroke is a women's disease too.

"Women are equally affected by stroke as men," says Pierre Fayad, MD, neurologist and director of the Stroke Center at The Nebraska Medical Center. "In the past, we thought women got fewer strokes, but now we know that isn't true. Instead they tend to develop strokes about 10 years later in life than men do."

This delayed onset may contribute to the reason why stroke results in more serious outcomes in women. For instance, women become more disabled by stroke and are more likely to die from stroke than men.

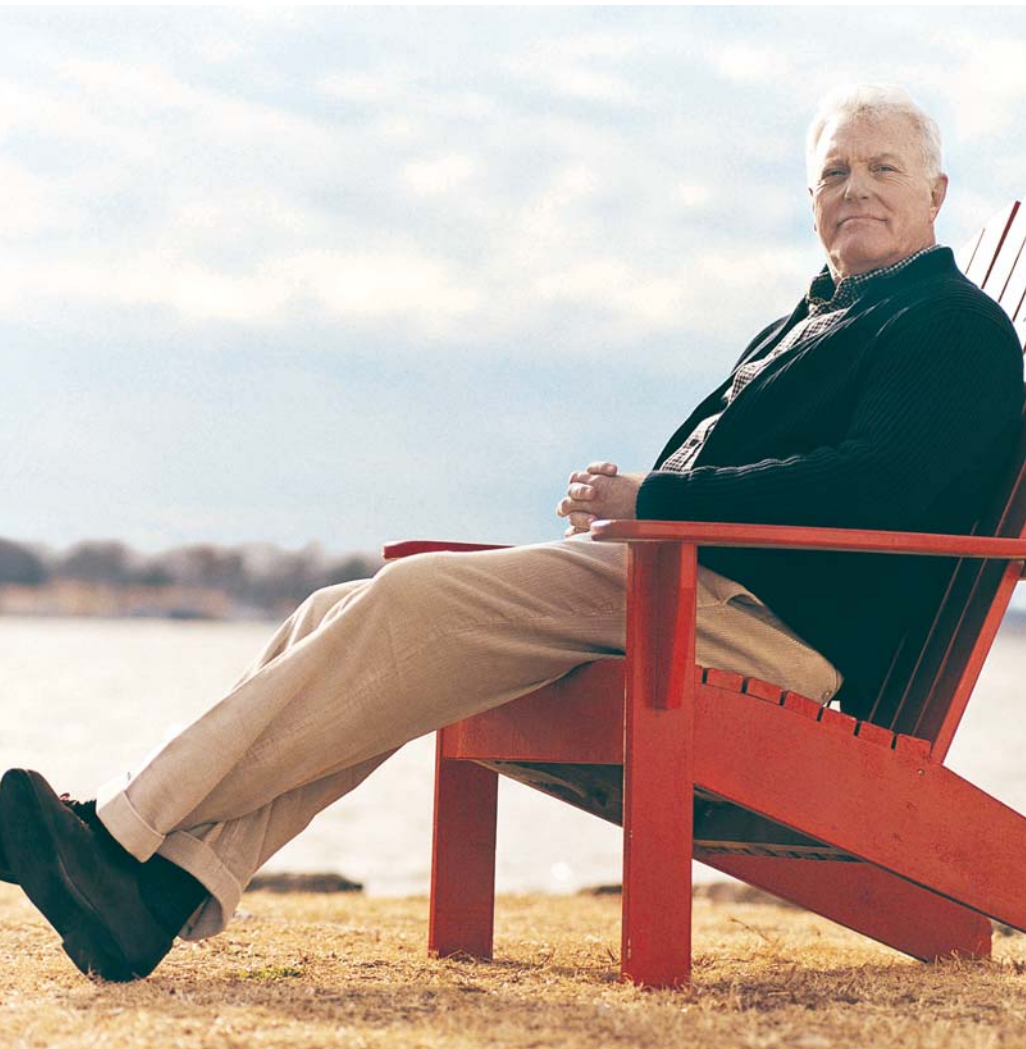
To help reduce their risk for stroke, women should consider the following preventive actions, says Dr. Fayad. First, women should avoid the use of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) as demonstrated by numerous studies. Results of the 2007 Nurses Health Study revealed an increased risk for stroke in certain groups of women who use HRT five years or more. This includes younger women, women nearing menopause and women 10 years after menopause.

Postmenopausal women should take a baby aspirin daily which can reduce the risk of ischemic stroke by as much as 24 percent. Statins can reduce the risk for stroke by about 20 percent and high blood pressure medications can lower risk by 25 to 50 percent. In addition, women who have atrial fibrillation can reduce their risk for stroke by 80 percent if they take anticoagulants (blood thinners). Individuals found to have narrowing of the carotid arteries may be candidates for carotid endarterectomy surgery or stenting of the carotid artery, a less invasive procedure to open up the occlusion for high risk surgery candidates. Both have been shown to increase blood flow to the brain by 80 percent.



For more information about neurological conditions, visit us online at www.NebraskaMed.com.

Leg Cramps Can Signal More Serious Health Problems



Do you or someone you know experience cramps, weakness or numbness in the legs while walking? Do the symptoms go away with rest? These seemingly benign symptoms could be an early warning sign of peripheral artery disease (PAD), a condition that involves clogged arteries in the legs.

“This is an underdiagnosed and undertreated condition,” says Haysam Akkad, MD, cardiologist at The

Nebraska Medical Center. “Because it is more common in older adults, it is often attributed to arthritis, getting old or other conditions,” says Dr. Akkad. “Patients need to be their own advocates. If you are experiencing leg weakness and are not getting an adequate answer as to why, ask to be screened for PAD.”

Early symptoms of PAD include leg pain and heaviness or weakness in the calves, thighs or buttocks during

walking or other exercise. After five to 10 minutes of rest, the pain generally goes away. Individuals with more advanced stages of the disease will experience pain in the legs or toes at rest and may develop ulcers on their legs or feet.

Your risk for PAD increases after age 40. People with heart disease or a family history of heart disease or diabetes are more likely to develop PAD. In addition, African-Americans are three times more likely to develop PAD as whites. Other risk factors include smoking, high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

Screenings should be performed on individuals who complain of leg pain, anyone who is age 55 and older and has diabetes, smokes tobacco, has a family history of PAD and any male older than age 65 who has ever smoked or has a family history of PAD.

Having PAD also is a strong indicator that you may have significant narrowing within the arteries of the heart, says Jason Johannung, MD, vascular surgeon at The Nebraska Medical Center. If you are diagnosed with PAD, you also should be screened for occlusions in your heart and neck.

“Untreated PAD can have serious complications,” says Dr. Johannung. The most serious of these include limb loss, stroke and death. An estimated 1 percent of adults older than age 50 will lose a limb due to this disease.

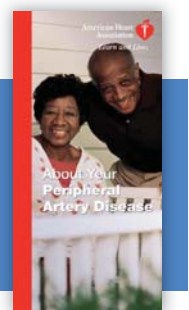
Treatment for PAD involves surgical techniques to open the occluded arteries. The Nebraska Medical Center offers the latest minimally invasive and open surgical techniques to provide patients with the fullest range of options that can be tailored to best suit their needs.

The advantages of performing minimally invasive procedures over open surgery include: the procedure can be repeated, if needed; the patient avoids potential complications of general anesthesia; the patient experiences less systemic stress; and the procedure may result in fewer serious complications.

“We are one of the few centers that are able to treat lower arterial disease with a variety of minimally invasive approaches that result in minimal morbidity, provide excellent outcomes and can dramatically affect a patient’s activity level as well as quality of life,” says Dr. Johannung. ■

FREE BROCHURE

To receive a comprehensive brochure on PAD symptoms and treatments, please call **800-922-0000. Hurry! Supplies are limited.**



Search our Health Assessment Tools to take a heart disease quiz. Visit www.NebraskaMed.com.

Prehypertension Increases Risk for Heart Disease

The next time you're told your blood pressure is a little high—don't dismiss it. People with prehypertension are at much higher risk for heart attack and heart disease.

"Almost all patients who develop prehypertension see it advance to high blood pressure within six months to a year," says Haysam Akkad, MD, cardiologist at The Nebraska Medical Center.

Researchers have found that people with prehypertension are more than three times more likely to suffer a heart attack and 1.7 times more likely to have heart disease than a person with normal blood pressure. If we could eliminate prehypertension, a potential 47 percent of all heart attacks could be prevented, say researchers. Prehypertension also increases your risk for stroke, heart failure and kidney failure.

Normal blood pressure is anything lower than 120/80 millimeters of mer-



cury (mm Hg). Prehypertension is considered 120/80 to 139/89. High blood pressure or hypertension is blood pressure 140/90 mm Hg or higher.

Your heart disease risk doubles every time the top reading, or systolic pressure, rises 20 points, and for each 10-point increase greater than 80 for the diastolic, or bottom number. For instance, an increase from 120 to 140, doubles your risk; a rise from 140 to 160 doubles your risk again.

"Prehypertension should be taken more seriously and treated aggressively," says Dr. Akkad. "Individuals with prehypertension should be put on a plan to lower their blood pressure

Blood Pressure Screenings on the Go

Monitor your blood pressure without a trip to the doctor's office at the **FREE** Heart Check Kiosks, sponsored by The Nebraska Medical Center, at Oak View and Westroads Malls. See more details on page 4.

through lifestyle modifications and monitored closely. Their blood pressure should be checked every two months. If after six months the blood pressure is still high, they should be started on blood pressure-lowering medications."

Losing weight followed by exercise are two of the primary lifestyle modifications people can make to lower their blood pressure, says Dr. Akkad. Other changes include quitting smoking, lowering cholesterol, modifying the diet, reducing salt intake and limiting alcohol use. Certain chronic conditions, such as sleep apnea, high cholesterol and diabetes, may increase your risk

for high blood pressure. Medications such as birth control pills, cold remedies, decongestants, over-the-counter pain relievers and some prescription drugs also may cause your blood pressure to rise.

In the United States, nearly one in three adults has high blood pressure. However, most people with high blood pressure have no signs or symptoms and nearly one-third of these people live with the condition for years without knowing it. Some people will experience headaches, dizziness or nosebleeds, but these symptoms typically don't occur until high blood pressure has reached life-threatening levels. ■

High Blood Pressure: What Exercise Has to Do with It

When it comes to high blood pressure, being overweight and lack of exercise are our biggest enemies. They also can play a key role in getting blood pressure down.

"Regular exercise combined with a healthy diet are the most important things you can do to lower high blood pressure," says Daniel Mathers, MD, cardiologist at The Nebraska Medical Center. Depending on how much you exercise, you can lower systolic blood pressure (the top number) 10 to 20 points. Combine that with diet and you

can drop it another 10 points. "We used to think that high blood pressure was less important as we got older," says Dr. Mathers. "However, now we know that the older you are, the more important it is to get it down."

For exercise to be effective, you must perform aerobic exercise that gets your heart rate up to 60 to 70 percent of your predicted maximum for one hour a day, says Dr. Mathers. To determine your maximum heart rate, subtract your age from 220. Then multiply this by 70 percent.

"Aerobic exercise causes your blood vessels to open up and your muscles to manufacture the good cholesterol," says Dr. Mathers. "It also helps draw fat out of the arteries." To get the best results, exercise needs to occur in 20 to 30 minute increments and it should be strenuous enough to get your heart beating faster. While any exercise is good for you, activities like casual walking, gardening, playing golf and weight lifting will not provide the benefits you need to lower blood pressure, he says.

The National Institute for Health recommends that a healthy individual maintain a blood pressure below 120/80. "However, the more risk factors you have, the lower your blood pressure goals will be," says Dr. Mathers. Work with your physician to determine your risk factors and your ideal blood pressure goal, recommends Dr. Mathers. To determine your risk of developing heart attack or stroke during the next 10 years, go online and search for "Framingham Risk Assessment" and take the test.



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Tailgating Tips for Food Safety

As sports fans prepare their favorite game-day munchies, taking heed of a few food safety tips can help keep food-borne illnesses at bay. Contamination can occur when foods are improperly handled, inadequately cooked or poorly stored.

"People tend to leave their food out too long when it comes to tailgating and outdoor celebrations," says Nessie Ferguson, medical nutritionist at The Nebraska Medical Center. "The key to preventing bacterial growth is to keep your foods cooled below 40 degrees or warmed above 140 degrees." Ferguson suggests keeping a refrigerator thermometer in your cooler to monitor the temperature.

As you dish up your party snacks, remember that food should not sit out for more than two hours. When temperatures soar above 90 degrees, that window is reduced to one hour. Throw away any uneaten food rather than repacking it into your cooler, recommends Ferguson. Ferguson offers these additional tips to keep your tailgating parties food-safe:

- Serve food in smaller containers and refill as needed.
- When packing foods, store raw meats in a cooler separate from other foods to prevent cross-contamination.
- Pack hot foods in insulated containers to help retain heat.
- When possible, avoid fruit and vegetable salads that tend to contain ingredients that promote bacteria growth.



- Change serving utensils throughout the day.
- Offer a hand-washing station with warm water and soap. If a hand-washing station is not possible, keep antiseptic wipes handy—a better choice than a sanitizer.
- Avoid serving food that is raw, undercooked or milk-based, such as sushi, raw fish, undercooked meats and soft cheeses.

If your tailgating plans include grilling, you'll want to follow these safe-grilling tips:

- Use a thermometer to make sure you cook meats to the proper temperatures.
- Throw away unused marinades that have been mixed with raw meats.
- Use a different set of plates and utensils for serving meats than you did for grilling them.

Food poisoning symptoms can develop within a few hours to 24 hours after eating contaminated food.

How severe your symptoms are may depend upon the type of organism in the food, the degree of exposure to the organism and your age and health.

Food poisoning symptoms include nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Usually, symptoms are mild and get better without treatment. If symptoms last more than two days, Ferguson recommends seeking medical attention. ■

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