

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR HEALTH FROM
THE NEBRASKA MEDICAL CENTER

advancing health

Maintain Your Brain Health

The brain needs exercise just like other parts of your body; the more you exercise it, the stronger it becomes. Engaging in lifestyle habits that promote physical health and healthy blood flow are critical to maintaining the health of your brain. See page 2 to learn more.

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Tips to Maintain Your Brain Health

As we age, most of us will find that our brain, just like the rest of our body, loses some of its mental agility. “The speed at which you process information as well as your recall ability begins to decline starting at about age 40,” says Daniel Murman, MD, neurologist at The Nebraska Medical Center. However, there are things you can do to help reduce that decline and maintain your mental sharpness.

The brain is much like the other parts of your body—if you don’t use it, you will lose it, says Dr. Murman. Participating in a variety of activities, which activates different neuronal pathways in the brain, will keep your brain functioning at its best, says Dr. Murman. Every time you repeat an activity, you strengthen brain cells and reinforce the connections between them.

Staying active mentally not only keeps those connections strong but may create new nerve cells. Engaging in lifestyle habits that promote physical health and healthy blood flow are critical to maintaining the health of your brain. A rule of thumb, says Dr. Murman, is anything that

is good for the heart is good for the brain. Physical exercise, for instance, promotes good blood flow to the brain and promotes new brain health. Eating a healthy diet also is essential. Research indicates that high cholesterol may contribute to stroke and brain cell damage. There’s also growing evidence that a diet high in fruits and vegetables, which contain antioxidants, may help promote brain health. Generally, the darker the color, the higher the antioxidant level. Evidence also points to the benefits of vitamin E found in almonds, pecans and walnuts, and omega fatty acids found in seafood like tuna, trout, salmon and halibut.

Staying active socially also appears to be good for the brain by reducing stress levels and maintaining healthy connections among brain cells. Dr. Murman recommends participating in a variety of social activities like sports, dancing, musical events and other cultural activities, which may help protect against dementia.

There are also things that can be detrimental to brain health such as excessive alcohol or drug use. Frequent and excessive use can damage memory circuits and accelerate the decline in mental aging, says Dr. Murman.

Heart disease risk factors such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, diabetes and obesity are also associated with a higher prevalence of dementia. “The evidence suggests that if these risk factors are not controlled, there is a decline in heart health as well as brain health,” says Dr. Murman. ■

healthy decisions

MEMORY DISORDERS CLINIC IS HERE TO HELP YOU

Up to 40 percent of us will experience some form of dementia as we grow older. Dementia is a mental disorder that affects our ability to think, speak, reason, remember and move. Most of us will experience a slight decline in memory that is associated with normal aging. But when memory loss interferes with the ability to perform daily activities, a more serious cause may be at the root.

Alzheimer’s disease is the most common cause of dementia accounting for 60 percent of cases. However, the disease is often misinterpreted and under recognized during its earliest stages. In addition, approximately 5 to 10 percent of people who show memory loss, confusion and other signs of dementia, are suffering from a potentially reversible illness such as metabolic problems, depression, drug intoxication, thyroid problems or vitamin deficiency.

The Memory Disorders Clinic is dedicated to diagnosing, treating and helping individuals manage their condition on a daily basis.

We Can Help!

To learn more about dementia and how our Memory Disorders Clinic can help you, go to www.NebraskaMed.com/memory.

Contact Our Experts!

If you or someone you know is experiencing significant memory loss or confusion, make an appointment with one of our neurology specialists. Call **800-922-0000**.

Research Gives New Hope for Parkinson's Disease

It is estimated that as many as 5 percent of the population will develop Parkinson's disease during their lifetime and the risk is even higher in Nebraska.

"While we don't have a cure for Parkinson's, we continue to make progress in diagnosis, treatment and slowing the progression of the illness," says John Bertoni, MD, PhD, neurologist and director of the Parkinson's Clinic at The Nebraska Medical Center. "We are continually learning more about the disease and there are many new treatments coming down the pipeline."

Parkinson's is a disease that advances slowly and affects movement, muscle control and balance. "Detecting Parkinson's early is critical to managing the symptoms and slowing early progression of the disease," says Dr. Bertoni. "People may have Parkinson's for many years before it becomes apparent." Some of the more subtle symptoms that appear to be associated with Parkinson's early on include: loss of sense of smell, thrashing in sleep, depression, loss of facial expression, excessive sleepiness during the day, constipation, shortening of one's steps and a diminishing arm swing when walking. More advanced symptoms of Parkinson's include slowness, rigidity and tremor at rest.

"If you suspect you or a loved one has Parkinson's, see

your family doctor," suggests Dr. Bertoni. "Follow up with a neurologist and movement disorder specialist if symptoms continue to progress to determine a definitive diagnosis and appropriate treatment."

Combinations of several therapies are usually most effective at controlling the disease, says Dr. Bertoni. First-line treatments may include: medication, occupational therapy, speech therapy, nutrition counseling, support groups and regular exercise that helps maintain balance, flexibility and physical health.

"Individuals who take an active role in their own care, who exercise regularly, stay engaged, and participate in support groups, do the best in managing the disease and living a relatively healthy, active and quality life," says Dr. Bertoni.

While a definitive cause for Parkinson's has not been found, a combination of factors may play a role, notes Dr. Bertoni. These include aging, having an inherited gene and exposure to environmental triggers such as pesticides, which may explain Nebraska's higher prevalence of the disease. Males, individuals with personalities that take less risk and those with higher education levels also appear to have a higher prevalence of the disease. ■

Deep Brain Stimulation Provides Relief for Symptoms

A procedure that's been performed at The Nebraska Medical Center for more than 10 years is providing significant improvement in quality of life to Parkinson's patients with severe symptoms who no longer get relief from medical therapy.

New study results show that the procedure, called deep brain stimulation, can provide significant relief to patients with advanced Parkinson's compared with traditional medications therapy.

"After five to 10 years of medical therapy, most people begin to suffer from the side effects of medications and medications may start losing their effectiveness," says Kenneth Follett, MD, a neurosurgeon at The Nebraska Medical Center and one of the leaders of the study. "The change in these patients after the surgery is really striking. Study results show this procedure doubles the amount of functional time these people have each day."

Patients need to be evaluated by a movement disorder specialist to determine the exact diagnosis and most effective treatment, says Diego Torres, MD, a movement disorder specialist at The Nebraska Medical Center. Dr. Torres will perform a comprehensive physical exam that includes an analysis of cognitive function, response to medications and severity of side effects to ensure a proper diagnosis.

Learn About the Procedure

Deep brain stimulation can provide significant relief to patients with Parkinson's disease. To learn more, go to www.NebraskaMed.com/DBS.

The Movement Disorders Clinic Can Help

The Movement Disorders Clinic at The Nebraska Medical Center is dedicated to diagnosing and treating movement disorders. While there is no cure for these diseases, if diagnosed and treated appropriately, in many cases, their symptoms can be effectively managed for years with the use of medications and/or surgery. To learn more, visit the Movement Disorders Clinic at www.NebraskaMed.com/movement.

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Call Our 24-Hour Call Center.

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- Physician referral
- Class registration

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COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIRS

Fall into Good Health

Saturday, Sept. 19
7 a.m. to noon

The Nebraska Medical Center
Clarkson Hospital Tower,
Lower Storz Pavilion
42nd and Dewey Avenue

Take advantage of this free health fair!
Participate in free health screenings including:
blood pressure checks, glucose screening, health education booths, wellness panel blood profile including fasting cholesterol check, and PSA blood test.
Blood tests available for a fee.
Preregistration for blood tests is required.
Space is limited. To register today, call 800-922-0000.



Making Healthy Happen

Saturday, Oct. 10
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Village Pointe,
175th and Burke Street

There's something for everyone!
Free cancer screenings, car seat checks, ambulance tours, CPR demos, ADHD education, medspa demos, physician presentations and drawings for free prizes.

For more information or to register for screenings, please call 800-922-0000.

Sponsored by The Nebraska Medical Center UNMC Physicians and Children's Hospital and Medical Center.



health & wellness club

The Nebraska Medical Center's Health & Wellness Club is a free club open to all individuals age 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. For more information or to join the Health & Wellness Club, please call 800-922-0000 or check us out online at www.NebraskaMed.com/club.

MONTHLY HEALTH SEMINARS

Held the second Tuesday of each month in the Storz Pavilion, Rooms 1 and 2. Lunch served at noon; speaker begins at 12:15 p.m. Event is free. Reservations required. Space is limited. Please call 800-922-0000 for fall seminar topics and to register.

WALKING CLUBS

Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo Walking Club

Enjoy a morning walk through Henry Doorly Zoo. Club meets every Friday morning; current Zoo membership required.

Garden Walkers at Lauritzen Gardens

Walkers meet every Tuesday morning from April through October. Garden membership required or daily admission fee for nonmembers.

Third Thursday Art Encounters Club

Enjoy docent-guided tours of Joslyn's permanent collection and special exhibitions on the third Thursday of each month beginning at 10:30 a.m. Free to Joslyn and Health & Wellness Club members; otherwise regular admission price applies. No reservations required. Fall exhibits include: *The Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection: Fifty Works for Fifty States* runs Sept. 26 to Jan. 3; *Robert Sabuda: Travels in Time and Space* runs Oct. 12 to Jan. 10.

Tai Chi Exercise Class

Great for improving balance and reducing your fall risk! Appropriate for all ages and fitness levels. Please call 800-922-0000 for class times and locations.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Studies show those who volunteer are happier and healthier. The Nebraska Medical Center has many volunteer opportunities. Application and minimum time commitment required. Please call 800-922-0000 for more information.

Choose to Lose Weight Management

Includes four individual sessions and six group sessions that focus on adopting a healthy eating pattern by setting realistic goals, behavior modification, label reading, recipe modification tips and tracking calories. Fall session begins Oct. 12 for 10 Mondays from noon to 1 p.m. For more information or to register, call 800-922-0000.



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

Facts You Should Know About the Prostate Screening Test

Despite recent media attention that may cause you to think otherwise, prostate screening is still one of man's most important tools to reduce mortality due to prostate cancer.

A recent study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* on prostate screening has cast uncertainty as to its effectiveness; however, radiation oncologist and prostate cancer specialist, Charles Enke, MD, at The Nebraska Medical Center, says the study is potentially flawed and in no way should deter men from seeking the screening.

"We've seen a significant decrease in the death rate due to prostate cancer in the last 15 years," says Dr. Enke, "and this is due to the impact of the PSA screening test as well as advancements in treatment. The five-year survival for a person who is diagnosed with prostate cancer today is 99 percent."

Prostate cancer is the number one non-skin cancer in U.S. men and shares the number two spot with colorectal cancer in terms of cancer mortality. Most men ages 70 and older will eventually develop prostate cancer, but because some forms of prostate cancer are slow-growing, many will never die from the disease. As a result, the American Cancer Society recommends that all men age 50 and older with a life expectancy of at least 10 years discuss with their physician the benefits of getting a PSA and digital rectal exam screening to determine if screening is in their best interest.

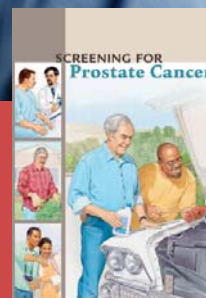
High-risk individuals, which include African-American males and men with a first-degree relative who have been diagnosed with prostate cancer at age 65 or younger, should begin screening at age 45. Prostate cancer usually doesn't produce symptoms in its early stages.

The Nebraska Medical Center has been a leader in employing advanced radiation therapy technology for the



Free Brochure

Learn about the PSA test, the prostate gland and how to reduce your risk for prostate cancer. Supplies are limited. Call **800-922-0000** today!



treatment of prostate cancer. In addition to using intensity modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) to achieve higher, more effective doses of radiation therapy with fewer side effects, the medical center also is one of a few select centers to employ one of the most advanced prostate targeting technologies called the Calypso 4D Localization System. Calypso provides

rapid and accurate targeting of the prostate gland as well as the ability to detect and correct prostate movement in real time as daily treatment is delivered.

Radiation therapy is proving to be effective in treating men who relapse following surgery and for prevention of relapse in men who have a high risk of recurrence following prostatectomy. ■

! Make an Appointment for a Prostate Screening!

If you are a male age 50 or older, you should discuss the benefits of getting a prostate screening with your physician. To make an appointment with one of our doctors, call **800-922-0000**.

Is a Mammogram on Your Calendar?

The outlook for breast cancer is better today than ever before. During the past 20 years, breast cancer has become less of a death threat to being a more chronic condition.

"More women are living with breast cancer today than ever before in our history," says oncologist Beth Reed, MD, one of the region's leading experts on breast cancer. Dr. Reed attributes this trend to better screening and detection methods, improved chemotherapy and surgical techniques and targeted therapies.

"Breast cancer today is a very curable disease," says Dr. Reed. "The overall survival rate is in the 80 percent range depending on when you are diagnosed and what kind of cancer you have."

Screening and early detection is a critical component to achieving positive outcomes. Statistics show that mammography reduces cancer deaths by 20 to 35 percent in women ages 50 to 69 and by about 20 percent in women in their 40s. Other techniques such as ultrasound and MRI are helping physicians narrow the gap in detecting tumors that might be missed by mammography.

Women also have an array of treatment options that can be customized to meet their individual needs and cancer type. For instance, targeted therapies used in combination with traditional treatments are helping improve outcomes.

SCHEDULE YOUR MAMMOGRAM TODAY!

Women do not need a referral from their doctor to schedule a mammogram, but they will need to have a physician to whom the screening can be sent. Schedule a screening at several convenient locations including Clarkson West Medical Center at 144th and West Center and The Nebraska Medical Center at 42nd and Dewey Avenue. To make an appointment, please call **800-922-0000**.





Surgery Can Raise **Quality of Life** for

Is Anti-Reflux Surgery for You?

To learn more about anti-reflux surgery and whether this may be an option for you, visit www.NebraskaMed.com/reflux.

Most of us have experienced an occasional episode of acid reflux and have found relief with an over-the-counter antacid. However, for millions of Americans, reflux is more than just a nuisance and, in some cases, requires medical attention to prevent long-term complications.

Without effective management of the disease, reflux can cause a variety of complications including severe inflammation of the esophagus, asthma, chronic, persistent cough, choking episodes at night, chest pain, difficulty or pain when swallowing, chronic sore throat and laryngitis, says Dmitry Oleynikov, MD, laparoscopic surgeon and esophageal specialist at The Nebraska Medical Center. Severe acid reflux can also lead to something more serious such as a tumor of the esophagus or Barrett's esophagus, a precursor to esophageal cancer and a common result of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), says Dr. Oleynikov. Approximately 10 to 20 percent of patients with long-standing reflux will develop Barrett's esophagus.

Doctors at The Nebraska Medical Center have perfected a minimally invasive, laparoscopic anti-reflux surgery, also called Nissen fundoplication, to relieve the symptoms of reflux. "The procedure is highly effective and provides lifelong relief in more than 90 percent of patients," says Dr. Oleynikov. It

can also stop the progression of Barrett's disease and, in some cases, may reverse the progression of cancer.

Using laparoscopic instruments that require only five small incisions, the surgeon re-creates an improved valve to prevent the escape of acids from the stomach into the esophagus. The surgery typically requires a 24- to 48-hour hospital stay. Most patients are able to return to work within a week after the surgery and perform more strenuous work in about two weeks.

The key to the procedure's success is having it performed by an experienced surgeon. When it is performed by a skilled and experienced surgeon, its success is extremely high and complication rates are very low, says Dr. Oleynikov.

Up to 50 percent of patients whose symptoms are severe enough to require surgery, have experienced a hiatal hernia. In this condition, the hiatus—the opening of the esophagus where food empties into the stomach—sometimes becomes weakened or enlarged, allowing acidic digestive juices to pass up into the esophagus. Part of the stomach may also slip up or pass (herniate) through the hiatus and into the chest.

"If left untreated, hiatal hernias can cause the blood supply to the stomach to be cut off and can be fatal," says Dr. Oleynikov, who has perfected a

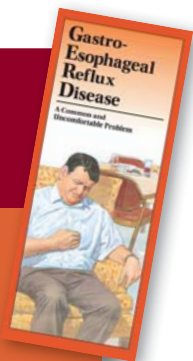


Reflux Sufferers

minimally invasive procedure to reverse the condition. The technique, performed in combination with Nissen fundoplication, involves moving the herniated area of the stomach back into the abdominal cavity and tightening the esophageal hiatus. Then, the diaphragm is firmly attached and a meshlike device is used to reinforce the area to prevent recurrence. "If performed properly, the recurrence rate is less than 5 percent over five years," says Dr. Oleynikov. ■

Order a Free GERD Brochure

Order our FREE booklet, *Gastroesophageal Disease: A Common and Uncomfortable Problem*, to learn more about GERD and the various approaches to help relieve symptoms. Supplies are limited. Call 800-922-0000 today!



q & a...

My mother has chronic pain and has gotten little or no relief from her physician. What else can she do?

Chris Criscuolo, MD, pain specialist

Many people suffer for years with chronic pain because they haven't received the right treatment or they've been led to believe it is not treatable. Advances in medications and new therapies in the last 10 years are providing relief for many types of pain that may have been considered untreatable in the past. The Nebraska Medical Center's Pain Clinic is the most comprehensive pain clinic in the region and is dedicated to treating all types of pain. While we may not be able to provide 100 percent relief, we can help bring pain down to levels that allow individuals to be more active and improve their quality of life. Getting help early is an important factor in providing the most effective pain relief. The longer you wait to seek treatment, the more difficult it becomes to treat pain. Our Pain Clinic uses a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach to pain management that attacks pain on many fronts and uses cutting-edge techniques and therapies. We look at the whole person and manage all aspects of his or her care from medications, physical therapy and acupuncture, to comfort care and working with the primary care doctor to find the best solutions.



I strained my back. How do I know if I should see a doctor or not?

Kevin Garvin, MD, orthopedic surgeon

Back pain is the leading cause of disability for individuals younger than age 45. The problem is, many people don't know what to do or what not to do when back pain strikes. With proper rest and therapy, most individuals are back to their normal routines within three weeks and 90 percent of patients will be free of pain within three months. If this is a first-time episode, most times you can self-treat. However, if the pain has not subsided within three weeks or if lower back pain is accompanied by other symptoms such as pain shooting down the leg, night sweats, diarrhea, constipation or fatigue, you should see your primary care doctor.

While it is advisable to alter your activity level, you should not lie in bed all day. Light activity actually promotes healing. Slow down, do some stretching and walking and avoid activities like weight lifting, bending or anything that aggravates the pain. You can also do strengthening exercises to help build your abdominal muscles, which will help support your spine. Take ibuprofen to reduce swelling and inflammation and ice the area for the first 72 hours. Use a cold pack several times a day for up to 20 minutes a session. After several days, try a heating pad to help loosen tight muscles and increase blood flow. If you experience a second episode, see a physical therapist to learn specific stretching and strengthening exercises to support your spine.

Need a physician referral?
Call us at **800-922-0000** or visit
www.NebraskaMed.com.



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- ✓ Prostate Health brochure
- ✓ GERD brochure
- ✓ *Good Health, Great Food* Cookbook



Free Health E-Newsletter!

Sign up to receive our monthly e-newsletter packed with the latest health information as well as updates about upcoming health events and screenings. Register today at www.NebraskaMed.com/enews.



Eating Healthy on a Budget

Even if today's economy is putting a damper on your grocery budget, it doesn't have to deter you from making healthy food decisions. "You can shop healthy on a budget with a little more food preparation and advance planning," says Brenda Bishop, medical nutritionist at The Nebraska Medical Center.

Shopping budgets and healthy meal plans typically go awry when we steer toward prepackaged and prepared foods, notes Bishop. Not only are these more expensive, but they generally pack more fat, calories and sodium.

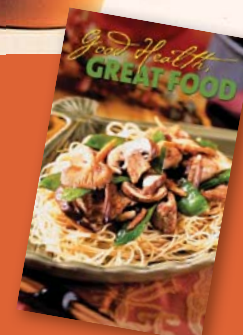
To keep your groceries lean as well as your budget, Bishop provides the following advice:

- Buy fruits and vegetables when they are in season and on sale and buy enough for a week's supply. Buy them in various stages of ripening so they will last through the week.
- Save money by stocking up on your favorite fruits and vegetables when they are on sale and freezing them in freezer-safe containers. Before freezing vegetables, blanch them (scald in boiling water or steam for a short period of time.) This helps preserve their flavor, color and texture.
- When your favorite fruits and vegetables are off season, buy frozen or canned versions instead.
- Buy whole fruits and vegetables rather than those pre-cut and sliced. You will pay two to four times more for the convenience. For example, buy a 2-pound bag of unpeeled carrots and peel and slice them yourself rather than a pound of baby carrots.



FREE Cookbook!

Looking for a new recipe to try this fall? Prepare heart-healthy recipes at home with the help of this **FREE** cookbook. To order a copy, call 800-922-0000. Hurry! Supplies are limited!



- When buying canned vegetables, select the unsalted version or rinse in tap water before cooking.
- When buying frozen fruits, select the type packed in natural juices rather than those packed with extra sugar and sauces.
- Consider growing some of your own vegetables and herbs, some of which can be grown easily in an outdoor garden or a pot inside.
- If you need the convenience of prepackaged foods, be sure to read the nutritional label and wait to buy these items when they are on sale. ■

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