

WINTER 2007

Health Matters

BROUGHT TO YOU BY CLEVELAND REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Improve your balance and strength

Try core conditioning

Heart disease

What every woman
needs to know

10 secrets of weight-loss winners

First-aid foresight

How to handle
an emergency



CLEVELAND REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER

Preparing for outpatient surgery

Thanks to the miracle of science, surgeries that once required a hospital stay can now be done on an outpatient basis. That's good news for those who recover better in the comfort of home, but it also means that any necessary arrangements must be made before the surgery date. If you or a loved one is facing outpatient surgery, try the suggestions below to help make the experience as smooth as possible.

PLAN AHEAD

As surgery day draws closer, you'll find it helpful to have certain things taken care of. Once you know your surgery date and time, ask yourself these questions:

- **Do I need to make any changes in my house's setup?** You may have to set up a temporary bedroom on the first floor if you think you'll have difficulty climbing stairs, for instance.
- **Do I have enough food in the house?** Stock up on meals in the freezer (either homemade or store-bought) so you

won't have to worry about food preparation. Ask your doctor about dietary restrictions or recommendations.

- **Will I need help in the house?** Plan to have a friend or a family member drive you home from the hospital. It's also a good idea to have someone stay with you during the first 24 hours. After that, schedule your visitors. They'll brighten your mood but may also cut into your resting time. Be sure to limit visits based on how you feel.
- **Is there anyone I'm responsible for?** If you have baby-sitting or caretaking responsibilities, remember to make other arrangements for your recovery period.

THE DAY BEFORE

Your doctor will probably instruct you not to eat or drink within eight hours of surgery. Ask your doctor whether you should abstain from taking medication or bring a day's dosage with you to the hospital.

If you're recovering from or coming down with a cold, tell your doctor. Your surgery may be postponed until you feel healthy.

Because skin-tone changes can sometimes be a sign of postsurgery problems, don't wear any makeup the day of surgery, including eye makeup and nail polish. Also, plan to wear loose clothing to the hospital.

AFTER SURGERY

Tell your healthcare team about any discomfort, irritation or pain you feel. How long you stay at the hospital will depend on your ability to drink fluids, walk and urinate. The amount of pain you're in will also affect your discharge. Before you leave, get a written list of postoperative instructions, symptoms to monitor and in-case-of-emergency phone numbers.





A strong, stable core helps reduce your risk of injury and prevent back pain.

At the core of fitness

postures that focus on building flexibility, balance and strength.

- **Tai chi.** This Chinese ritual involves precise, relaxed exercises to increase both agility and balance.

- **Pilates.** It's the latest craze, involving the use of certain exercises to create longer and stronger muscles without the bulk.

- **Weight training.** Focus on exercises that target your core muscles. Start light and increase the intensity of your workout over time. You may want to consult with a personal trainer to develop a program tailored to your needs.

- **Stability ball.** Sometimes

Head of core conditioning? It's the "apple-a-day" way for you to ensure that your body stays strong and steady. Simply put, core conditioning is a series of exercises that target your core—the body's center of power that starts just below your shoulders and ends just below your hips. You work out to gain strength in the muscles that control your trunk and spine while improving balance, agility and flexibility. Adding core strength helps you perform daily functions like lifting grocery bags, playing with your kids and getting in and out of your car. A strong, stable core also helps reduce your risk of injury and prevent back pain.

Try these exercises to build the back, abdominal, thigh and buttock muscles associated with a strong core. Check with your physician first to be sure you're starting at a fitness level that's right for you.

- **Yoga.** This ancient practice involves stretching and holding

called a Swiss ball or a resist-a-ball, this large, rubber exercise ball is one of the best ways to actively target and stabilize your core. Start with the ball slightly deflated or secure it against a wall until you're ready to add more challenge to your balance. Choose a ball that comes with a video of basic exercises.

- **BOSU ball.** Shaped like a stability ball cut in half—flat on one side, domed on the other—the BOSU ball is designed to activate and strengthen your core as you perform exercises on it. Many gyms offer BOSU ball classes, and you can also buy video and DVD workouts to use with the BOSU at home.

- **Stability equipment.** Other light equipment ranging from foam rollers, balance pads and discs and mini-trampolines (ideal for beginners) to balance and wobble boards (for the more advanced) can help you improve core strength and stability.



Jude Torchia
Chief Executive Officer

Continually caring for the community

Dear friends,

I am proud of our many accomplishments and commitment to providing quality care over this past year. From adding specialty physicians to enhancing service lines, our focus has remained the same—taking care of our community. To recap, Cleveland Regional

Medical Center:

- added nine specialty physicians in emergency medicine; pediatrics; anesthesia; radiology; neurology; psychiatry; ear, nose and throat; urology; and gastroenterology.
- renovated our medical, surgical, obstetric and pediatric departments for greater comfort.
- enhanced our diagnostic technology capabilities by adding a 16-slice computed tomography scanner that offers better detection and diagnosis.
- added a gastrointestinal video tower that gives our physicians the ability to view live images and perform minimally invasive endoscopic procedures.
- introduced this community newsletter and added resources such as Discovery Hospital to help you manage your health via the Web and bring you the latest health information available.

We're already off to a great start this year and you can expect our commitment to be just as strong. As always, we value our community and are proud to be your choice for healthcare services.

Warm regards,

JUDE TORCHIA
Chief Executive Officer
Cleveland Regional Medical Center

10 secrets of weight-loss winners

You're probably well into your New Year's resolution of getting healthy and shedding those unwanted pounds. We know it's tough to lose weight—and just as difficult to keep it off. To help, researchers suggest these 10 habits of people who have successfully kept off the weight:

1. They walk several miles a week.
2. They rely on the support of friends, neighbors and co-workers. For example, they form exercise groups for motivation.
3. They eat different healthy foods in moderation. They cook with little or no fat, and eat fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nonfat dairy products and lean entrees.
4. They limit portion sizes. They know that calories (not just fat) count.
5. They distinguish hunger from anger, loneliness and fatigue. For those emotions, they call friends or breathe deeply.
6. They examine underlying issues that may cause overeating. Counselors can help resolve such issues.
7. They don't make excuses for overeating and use a lapse as incentive to take a walk or cut portions next time.
8. They use behavioral strategies like planning meals, storing foods out of sight and linking exercise to daily habits like walking.
9. They recognize that weight management—exercising, eating nutritiously and thinking positively—lasts a lifetime.
10. They live in the present. They participate in enjoyable activities instead of waiting for the perfect shape to do the things they want to do.



HEART DISEASE: A woman's greatest health threat

Almost 250,000 American women die from coronary heart disease (CHD) each year—more than those who die from breast, cervical and ovarian cancers combined.

Yet most women still think of cancer as the greatest threat to their health and many believe that heart disease is a “man’s disease.” (On the research side, women participants make up only one-quarter of all heart-related studies.)



aren’t aware of symptoms they’re more likely to experience. In fact, one-third of women have the following symptoms, often with no chest pain:

- sudden onset of severe weakness
- stomach upset or nausea with passing weakness
- mild burning sensation in the middle of the chest that extends outward

- vague chest discomfort
- palpitations, cold sweats or paleness

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SEXES

CHD affects women differently than it does men. It tends to occur in women about 10 years later than in men. Women are also usually about 20 years older than men are when they experience more serious cardiac events such as heart attack, also known as myocardial infarction. One reason is that women have built-in hormone protection in their premenopausal years: Estrogen helps shield women from heart disease by helping to raise HDL (good) cholesterol levels and lower LDL (bad) levels. Once a woman reaches menopause, her estrogen levels drop and her CHD risk rises.

Women don’t always suffer the same heart attack symptoms as men and, therefore, they may deny they’re having a heart attack. Women take about a half-hour longer to seek help at an emergency room. Consequently, they’re also less likely than men to be admitted to the hospital for evaluation of coronary artery disease and tend to be underdiagnosed.

While women may be aware of the classic signs of an attack, such as chest pain radiating down the left arm and difficulty breathing, they

WHAT’S A WOMAN TO DO?

Both women and men can improve their heart health by getting back to basics:

- Don’t smoke. Women who smoke risk having a heart attack 19 years earlier than nonsmokers.
- Maintain a healthy body weight.
- Eat a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet and limit your salt intake.
- Lower high cholesterol.
- Control high blood pressure.
- Keep diabetes under control. Women with diabetes are two to three times more likely to have heart attacks.
- Limit alcohol use.
- Exercise regularly.



Need a doctor?

Our cardiologists can help you stay healthy. Call Nabil Ahmad, M.D., at (281) 593-2899, G. V. Prasad, M.D., at (281) 593-8354 or Michael Siropaides, M.D., at (281) 593-2145.

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about **menopause**?

Take this quiz to find out.

1 The average age when women in the United States reach menopause is:

- a. 51
- b. 55
- c. 48
- d. 64

2 The single biggest risk factor for osteoporosis, or brittle bone disease, is menopause. All of the following are signs that you may have osteoporosis except which one?

- a. height loss
- b. tooth loss
- c. joint pain
- d. backaches

3 One of the few reasons you should consider using hormone therapy is to:

- a. prevent ovarian cancer
- b. relieve severe menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes
- c. protect against heart disease
- d. lower your risk of breast cancer

4 The transitional period of two to 10 years before menopause, characterized by hormone fluctuations that can cause menopausal symptoms, is called:

- a. premature menopause
- b. premenopause
- c. perimenopause
- d. postmenopause

5 Of the following remedies, which is the only one approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to relieve hot flashes?

- a. soy
- b. black cohosh
- c. phytoestrogens
- d. hormone therapy

Take control!

7 steps to healthy blood pressure and cholesterol

Heat disease and stroke kill millions of Americans each year. Unless you take steps to control your blood pressure and cholesterol levels, you may be at risk for these diseases. Get on the road to better health today with these seven simple steps:

- 1 Take a walk.** Exercise helps control your blood pressure and improves your cholesterol. Choose activities you enjoy and strive for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most days of the week.
- 2 Manage your weight.** Reducing your weight by just 10 pounds may help lower your blood pressure and reduce bad cholesterol. Since dropping pounds may be easier when working with a group, ask your healthcare provider to refer you to experts, groups or classes that can help.
- 3 Toss the cigarettes.** Smoking causes blood vessels to narrow and blood pressure to rise. It also makes it easier for cholesterol-rich plaque to stick to artery walls. A smoking cessation class can offer extra support.
- 4 Eat well.** Enjoy vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans and legumes, along with moderate amounts of lean protein and healthy fats like those in salmon and olive oil. Avoid foods high in saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, sugar and trans fatty acids.
- 5 Try soy.** A recent study shows that two servings a day of uncooked soy protein—found in tofu, soy milk or soy powder—lowers cholesterol levels by as much as 9 percent.
- 6 Limit your liquor.** Women should consume no more than one drink a day and men no more than two drinks a day.
- 7 Get screened.** Routinely checking your blood pressure and cholesterol levels keeps you on top of your cardiovascular disease risks. If your blood pressure's high, ask your doctor about buying a blood pressure monitor for home use.





First-aid foresight

Would you know what to do?

Sooner or later, we all face a medical problem that calls for immediate first aid and clear thinking. Knowing what to do next is a health skill everyone needs.

Bleeding. Apply pressure to the wound with a thick, clean cloth and raise the wound above the heart. If bleeding is severe or isn't controlled in five minutes or if the wound is very dirty, longer than an inch or gaping, get immediate medical care.

Puncture wounds. Don't self-treat deep puncture wounds since they can result in deep-tissue injury or infection.

Burns. Run cool water over minor burns, immerse in cold water or wrap the burned area in a cold, wet cloth for about 10 minutes or until pain subsides. Apply an antibiotic ointment and cover with a bandage. Call your doctor if blisters form.

Poisoning. Before doing anything, call the National Poison Control Hotline at 1-800-222-1222. Induce vomiting only if instructed.

Shock. Shock may cause cold, clammy skin; weakness; confusion; a rapid heartbeat; or deep, shallow or irregular breathing. Keep the victim warm and lying down on his or her back until help arrives. Don't give the victim anything to drink.

Electrical injuries. Do not touch someone who has just been electrocuted—the current may pass through you. While waiting for help to arrive, try to turn off the source of electricity.

Sprains and strains. To treat sprains and strains, follow the RICE method: rest, ice, compression and elevation. Apply ice packs or cold-water compresses to relieve swelling. Wrap the injury in an elastic bandage and keep it elevated above the heart.

Broken bones. Quickly call for emergency assistance. It's best not to move the person or attempt to straighten a broken bone.

Dine the Greek way

Although many of their meals consist of 40 percent fat, residents of the Greek isle of Crete who eat a traditional diet live longer than most other ethnic groups. In fact, Greeks who haven't succumbed to Western-style meals are 20 percent less likely to die of coronary artery disease and about 30 percent less likely to die of cancer than Americans are.

These stats make nutritionists take note, and what they've found is that the traditional Greek diet is one of the healthiest eating styles you can choose. The diet focuses on:

- vegetables, fruits, fish, grains, beans, nuts and legumes like chickpeas
- olive oil as the sole source of added fat
- only a few weekly servings of poultry, eggs and sweets
- daily, small to moderate amounts of cheese and yogurt
- red meats saved for special occasions only

What's more, the Greek diet is tasty—a sign that you don't have to give up good food to stay healthy.

BEWARE OF TROJAN HORSES

But be cautious: Some Greek foods found in the United States don't fit the heart-healthy profile of traditional



Greek cuisine. The nonprofit Center for Science in the Public Interest analyzed typical restaurant-size portions of some popular Greek meals. What they found could stop your heart. For example, spanakopita (spinach pie in phyllo dough) has 410 calories and 24 grams of fat, beef or lamb gyro (sandwich) has 760 calories and 20 grams of fat and moussaka (a meat and eggplant casserole) has 830 calories and 48 grams of fat!

PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

The experienced, dedicated doctors of Cleveland Regional Medical Center can help you keep your family healthy. We'd like to spotlight two of them here.



TRACI L. VAUGHN, M.D.
Board-Certified in Otolaryngology

Dr. Vaughn is a board-certified otolaryngologist who specializes in treating the majority of disorders of the head and neck. She treats ear, nose and throat disorders, including hearing loss, upper respiratory

infections, speech delay, voice disorders, obstructive sleep apnea and environmental allergies.

Dr. Vaughn also has extensive experience in complex surgical therapies for disorders of the head and neck, including neck and facial injuries, thyroid and parathyroid lesions, conductive hearing loss, congenital neck masses, nasal obstruction, skin lesions, chronic sinusitis and head and neck tumors.

Dr. Vaughn is accepting both adult and pediatric patients. Her office is located at 107 South Bonham Street in Cleveland. Call **(281) 432-4603** to make an appointment.



CORDELL O. NWOKEJI, M.D.
General Urology

Introducing Premier Urology's new urologist, Dr. Nwokeji (last name pronounced "wokage"). Dr. Nwokeji is a qualified, experienced urologist who practices general urology, including laparoscopy, urological

cancer, kidney stones/disease, urinary problems, enlarged prostate and prostate disease, testicular disease, erectile dysfunction and vasectomy. Premier Urology specializes in providing care with skill, compassion, dignity and respect.

Dr. Nwokeji is accepting new patients at Premier Urology, located at 107 South Bonham Street in Cleveland. Call **(281) 432-4600** to schedule an appointment.

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WINTER 2007

Health Matters

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