SPRING 2006

Health Connection

BROUGHT TO YOU BY McNAIRY REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Complete care for women

Wise words from our new Ob/Gyn

Quality emergency care, close to home

Are you ready for parenthood?

We can help!

Good day, sunshine!

Greet the day with an SPF

How to spot–and stop–a stroke

MRH McNAIRY REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Good day, sunshine!

Greet the day with an SPF

You don't have to be a sun worshipper to take sun protection seriously—even limited exposure can cause damage. Skin cancer is the most common kind of cancer in the United States, affecting nearly half of all Americans who live to age 65. Although most cancers don't appear until after age 50, skin cancer results from years of accumulated sun damage. However, you can avoid sun damage and enjoy your favorite outdoor activities by taking sensible precautions and using a sunscreen that protects your skin from damaging ultraviolet rays.

THE ABCS OF SPFS

Sunscreen products are rated according to their sun protection factor (SPF)—the length of time a product will protect you from sunburn caused by ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. But sunscreens don't provide complete protection. You still need to be cautious about timing and limiting your sun exposure.

Your best bet when shopping for a sunscreen is to choose a product with an SPF of at least 15, according to the American Cancer Society. Check the label to make sure it provides "broad-spectrum" protection, which protects against UVB rays and ultraviolet A (UVA) rays. UVB rays cause sunburns that can lead to superficial skin cancers known as basal cell carcinomas and squamous cell carcinomas. They can also lead to the more deadly skin cancer, melanoma. UVA rays penetrate even more deeply into the skin, damaging connective tissue.

SAVE-YOUR-SKIN TIPS

If you'll be outside, slather on sunscreen and find a shady spot, but keep in mind that sunlight reflects off surfaces such as water, sand and pavement. Avoid the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when rays are strongest. To block sunlight, wear sunglasses, a broad-brimmed hat and clothing made from tightly woven fabric, preferably long-sleeved shirts and pants. For your sunscreen to be most effective:

- Apply about 30 minutes before going outdoors.
- Use liberally. Apply 1 ounce of sunscreen to cover all exposed areas of your body, including your neck, ears and scalp.
- Reapply every 90 minutes—more often if you sweat heavily or go swimming.
- Use even on cloudy days—UV rays can still reach you.

Harmful UV rays can pass through car windows, too, so apply sunscreen to exposed skin if you'll be driving during peak sun hours.

Make applying sunscreen a habit—like brushing your teeth—but don't rely on sunscreen for full protection against skin cancer. Be sure to examine your skin each month for unusual changes and see your dermatologist if you spot any irregularities.

"When outside, apply sunscreen liberally every 90 minutes."

Bouncing back from joint pain

With all the wear and tear we place on our joints, it's no wonder that almost 639,000 people underwent hip or knee replacement surgery in 2003, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Knees and hips, in particular, are prone to problems—largely because they play a part in almost everything we do—but shoulder, finger, ankle and elbow joints can need replacement as well.

WHY ARE JOINT REPLACEMENTS NEEDED?

Joint replacement surgery, also known as arthroplasty, becomes necessary when conditions such as arthritis destroy the cartilage that cushions and separates bones. Over time, the friction of bone against bone wears away the joint, causing it to become stiff and painful. Additionally, sports-related injuries and falls can create the need for surgery. Generally, arthroplasty becomes an option when joint pain disrupts your daily routine.

GETTING NEW PARTS

Surgeons can create a new joint, relieving your pain and providing greater freedom of movement. During the procedure, destroyed bone and tissue are removed and replaced with prosthetics, or artificial parts. The parts are made from durable metal, plastic or ceramic and can last up to 20 years.

Newer minimally invasive techniques are being performed more often, using smaller incisions—just 3 to 5 inches, compared with 6 to 12 inches in standard procedures—and reducing recovery time. Your hospital stay may be reduced to one or two days from four or three, and some patients go home the same day as surgery. However, minimally invasive surgery is not for everyone; patients who are overweight, elderly or frail or who have bone abnormalities do not make good candidates.

With hip or knee replacement surgery, expect to use a walker, crutches or a cane initially after the procedure. As you recuperate, a physical therapist will help you perform exercises to strengthen the joint, guiding your movements so you don't accidentally dislocate the replacement. Barring the unforeseen, you should be walking unassisted two to six weeks later. And though grueling workouts like 10-mile runs may still be too tough for artificial hips or knees, make plans to resume long-lost activities like dancing or strolling on the beach within six months.

Do you need joint replacement surgery?

Your overall health and age and the condition of your joints will help you and your healthcare provider decide whether you're suitable for joint replacement. If you can answer yes to any of the following questions, you may want to consider surgery.

- **Are you still in pain even after losing excess weight?**
- **Does your pain keep you awake nights?**
- **Does your pain interfere with your ability to earn a living?**
- **Has your quality of life suffered because of your pain—your ability to travel, perform household chores or visit with friends or family?**
- **Have you exhausted all other options, including anti-inflammatory drugs to relieve joint pain, walking with a cane, power-walking or swimming instead of jogging?**

Complete care for women

Wise words from our new Ob/Gyn

By J. Daniel Baxter, M.D.

I've lived in Selmer for over a year, and I love it. It reminds me of where I grew up in northwest Oklahoma. My family and I are always discovering new ways to enjoy Tennessee.

IDENTITY CRISIS

Since I've been here, I have a recurring—and surprising—conversation with local residents. When I introduce myself, all women past a certain age say, "Well, I won't be seeing you because I'm through with having babies!" Mistakenly, they believe that's all an obstetrician/gynecologist (Ob/Gyn) does. In fact, we care for women throughout their lives in many ways.

Part of this misconception is reflected in a debate among Ob/Gyns. Since the recognition of obstetrics/gynecology as a separate specialty, we've struggled with the question as to whether we're primary-care physicians or specialists. There are excellent arguments on both sides, but the correct answer is, we're both.

PROVIDING CARE FOR EVERY WOMAN

A routine gynecological examination is an important part of women's care. (We now recommend that under certain conditions, the "annual" doesn't need to be a yearly event.) In addition to a Pap test, the exam should include a general physical, a review of personal and family history, a discussion of problems and concerns and arrangement of appropriate laboratory and other studies.

Women should see an Ob/Gyn regularly by age 18 or at the onset of sexual activity, and whenever there's a gynecological problem such as menstrual irregularity, cramping, pelvic pain and mood swings that can accompany hormonal cycles. However, many women visit an Ob/Gyn for the first time when they get pregnant. For others, needing advice about birth control or treatment for a problem motivates them to make their first appointment.

J. Daniel Baxter, M.D.
Obstetrician/Gynecologist

As a woman moves beyond childbearing years, Ob/Gyns advise on the changes she experiences. The biggest milestone for mature women is menopause. Often, questions arise concerning drops in hormone production. The recent controversy over hormone replacement therapy shows how important it is for patients to consult with a physician who keeps up with the latest research. Also, during this stage of life, there's a greater need for laboratory and mammogram surveillance and appropriate osteoporosis evaluation. Additionally, Ob/Gyns perform surgery such as hysterectomies; however, surgery is a last resort since most conditions can be managed without it.

Your visit to the Ob/Gyn should be a reassuring experience. Even if you're "through having babies" and don't have obvious problems, see your Ob/Gyn regularly. We have your best interests at heart.

Make an appointment today!

Call Dr. Baxter at (731) 645-3221.

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Dear friends,

Pamela W. Roberts, CEO

Springtime brings out our industrious side. From washing windows to cleaning out the garage, we're inspired to make things right again. We should place the same emphasis on our good health.

Statistics show that one in eight Americans is over age 65. As Americans live longer, the question is: During these additional years, will people live well or live with serious, disabling conditions that make them dependent on others? Many factors influence life expectancy and quality, including genetics, environment and lifestyle. Sufficient and timely access to medical care, including preventive and emergency services, can also reduce premature death as well as enhance quality of life.

How quickly the patient is treated can make a significant difference with any type of emergency, from cardiac to orthopedic. Many physicians will tell you a good or bad outcome depends on what happens during "The Golden Hour," the first 60 minutes after a medical emergency. Residents of McNairy County have immediate access to vital healthcare through McNairy Regional Hospital's emergency department. We have excellent emergency facilities with highly trained physicians—close to home.

McNairy Regional is right here providing quality care for you and your loved ones. Be proud of our community's hospital by showing your support, not just when you need us but at other times as well. Be an advocate. Tell your friends and neighbors about the emergency room at our hospital. Volunteer and join other local residents who volunteer several hours each week. Support the many programs we provide from Senior Circle to Breastfeeding Classes. As much as McNairy Regional is a part of the community, you and your family are a part of the hospital. **We're so proud of you; we want you to be proud of us.**

Speaking of being proud, we're very proud of our Dietary Services Director, Mrs. Donna Pickle. Donna was recently named Group IV Non-Clinical Director of the Year. Join me in congratulating Donna on her accomplishment. She always goes the extra mile, whether it's catering an event or serving our patients and guests.

We encourage you to strive for good health; but if you need us, we'll do everything we can to help you feel better.

Regards,

PAMELA W. ROBERTS, CEO
McNairy Regional Hospital

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

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

Take this quiz to find out how much you know about attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

1 Which of the following is *not* a symptom of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder?

a. hyperactivity
b. obsession
c. impulsivity
d. inattention

2 ADHD is thought to be caused by:

a. poor parenting
b. a genetic disorder
c. rheumatic fever
d. all of the above

3 Other disorders may accompany ADHD in as many as one in three cases. These include:

a. Tourette's syndrome
b. learning disabilities
c. bipolar disorder
d. all of the above

4 Most children who have ADHD begin to show signs and symptoms of the disorder between ages:

a. 1 and 2 years
b. 4 and 6 years
c. 9 and 12 years
d. 13 and 15 years

5 Adults can also suffer from ADHD. To be diagnosed with the disorder, a person must:

a. have shown symptoms of ADHD in childhood
b. have suffered from a serious illness as a child
c. have trouble holding down a job
d. be a reckless driver

ANSWERS: 1. B; 2. B; 3. D; 4. B; 5. A

STROKE SMARTS

How to spot a stroke

A stroke is similar to a lightning strike—it can happen suddenly and without warning. However, there are sometimes warning signs that lightning is imminent, such as storm clouds, rain and thunder.

Warning signs can signal a stroke, too. If you spot them and act quickly, you may prevent severe disability or death. If you or someone around you show any of these symptoms, seek emergency medical treatment immediately:

- sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- sudden, severe headache with no known cause

These signs point to a stroke in progress. Blood and oxygen are not getting to a part of the brain as a result of a burst blood vessel or a blood clot, and that portion of the brain begins to die. Speedy medical care may minimize brain damage.

RISK FACTORS

Lifestyle factors and other health conditions that weaken blood vessels or contribute to blood clots increase your risk for stroke. You can control or treat some of them, such as high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, carotid or other artery disease, abnormal heart rhythm, transient ischemic attacks (mini-strokes), certain blood disorders, sickle cell disease, high blood cholesterol, high triglycerides, physical inactivity, obesity and substance abuse.

Factors you can't change include increasing age, gender (more men suffer strokes), family history, race (African-Americans face greater risk) and having had a prior stroke or heart attack. Talk to your doctor about ways to reduce your risk for stroke and be prepared to act quickly if warning signs appear.

Outward bound

10 play-safe tips for your kids

What's one of the best things to say to your child? Go outside and play! Close supervision, proper protective gear and these simple precautions will help your kids safely enjoy the great outdoors:

1. Apply a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 every day—even on cloudy days—and reapply every 90 minutes, especially after swimming or sweating.
2. Outfit kids with brimmed hats and don't forget the sunglasses.
3. Keep babies under age 6 months out of direct sunlight and in the shade.
4. Avoid using swimming aids such as "floaties." They don't substitute for a life vest and can give kids a false sense of security.
5. When kids are swimming, keep a portable phone and rescue equipment like a shepherd's hook and life preserver nearby.
6. Supervise kids at all times near water and stay within arm's length of babies and toddlers. If you have to step away even for a moment, get everyone out of the pool area and take little ones with you.
7. Insist kids wear proper protective equipment, especially a helmet, wrist guards and knee and elbow pads when bicycle riding, skateboarding and in-line skating.
8. Teach kids to bike skillfully. Enroll your children in a class to practice basic skills, such as balance and braking, on a smooth surface away from traffic.
9. Visit playgrounds that have soft surfaces like wood mulch or chips, shredded rubber tires or sand to lessen the impact of falls. Avoid play equipment on asphalt, concrete, packed dirt and grass.
10. Don't let kids wear helmets, necklaces, backpacks, scarves or clothing with drawstrings while on playgrounds.

Fire up the grill!

But read these food-safety tips first

For many people, summertime fare means fresh, fast, no-fuss meals cooked outdoors. However, warm temperatures can set the stage for a nasty bout of food poisoning. Take these precautions to make sure your meals are safe:

- **Defrost thoroughly.** Place frozen foods in the refrigerator for safe thawing. If meats are out too long, bacteria can produce illness-causing toxins that remain active even during cooking.
- **Marinate right.** Keep foods refrigerated while marinating.
- **Transport safely.** When traveling, use an insulated cooler with enough ice or cold packs to maintain a temperature of at least 40° F. Wait until you're ready to leave to pack refrigerated foods in the cooler. Then place it in the coolest part of the car—not the trunk. When you arrive at your destination, move the cooler into the shade, avoid opening it frequently and replenish ice as needed.
- **Bring extra plates and tools.** Use one platter and spatula, tongs and sauce brush for raw foods and a different platter and utensils for cooked foods. Don't use a fork to turn meats since puncturing can introduce surface bacteria into the meat.
- **Keep clean.** Bring paper towels and disposable wipes or a sanitizing gel for convenient hand washing and surface cleanup.
- **Prepare the grill.** Light the coals and allow the cooking surface to heat up to kill microorganisms before putting on the food.

Is it done?

Use an instant-read meat thermometer to test meat's doneness. Grill precooked meats such as hot dogs to 165° F until steaming hot. Refer to the chart at right to determine when cooked meat is safe to eat.

Meat product	Safe temperature
poultry	180° F
pork	160° F
beef, ground	160° F
beef, steaks or roasts	145° F
veal	145° F
lamb	145° F

Are you prepared for parenthood?

We can help you get ready

McNairy Regional Hospital is expanding the services offered by the Special Additions Maternity unit. A series of classes called Preparing for Parenthood: Are You Ready? is now available to all expecting families in our tri-county area. All classes are currently free and include:

CHILDBIRTH PREPARATION

In this class you'll discuss the process of labor and birth, learn coping strategies, tour the maternity unit and talk with other expectant parents. Choose a one-day class that meets Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or a four-part series that meets once a week from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

BABY CARE WORKSHOP

This one-time, two-and-a-half hour workshop covers infant sleep/awake cycles, newborn temperament and senses, the first hours after birth, bathing, diapering, umbilical cord care, dressing and comforting a crying baby.

BREASTFEEDING YOUR BABY

This is a one-time, two-and-a-half hour class. It focuses on getting started, the first feeding, arousing a sleeping baby, positioning, proper latching techniques, knowing when the baby is satisfied, establishing a good milk supply and how to tell when breastfeeding is working.

Lactation information services are also now available. An International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) is on staff to meet new mothers' needs. IBCLCs are highly skilled lactation professionals who address concerns such as breast pain, poor latching, sucking difficulties, slow infant weight gain, a mother's or baby's illness, premature babies and mothers returning to work or school. For class dates, visit our Web site: **www.mcnairyregionalhospital.com.** For dates and other information or to register, call **(731) 646-0242.** Women should begin their classes no later than 32 weeks into their pregnancy.

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