

Health Connection

THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN ARIZONA
REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

**Congrats to our
Nurse of the Year!**

**Healthy Woman
still going strong**

Give your time and talent
Join our volunteer team

Dodging diabetes
How diet and exercise
can help

**Smart snacks
on the go!**



WESTERN ARIZONA
REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

www.warmc.com

Make time for your mammogram

From salons to restaurants, it seems everything in life requires an appointment or a reservation. But as you set aside time for these little luxuries, don't forget to make one important date: your yearly mammogram.

Mammograms are the most powerful tools in the early detection of breast cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends every woman 40 or older get a yearly mammogram, although more frequent testing may be required if you've had breast cancer or have a strong history of it in your family.

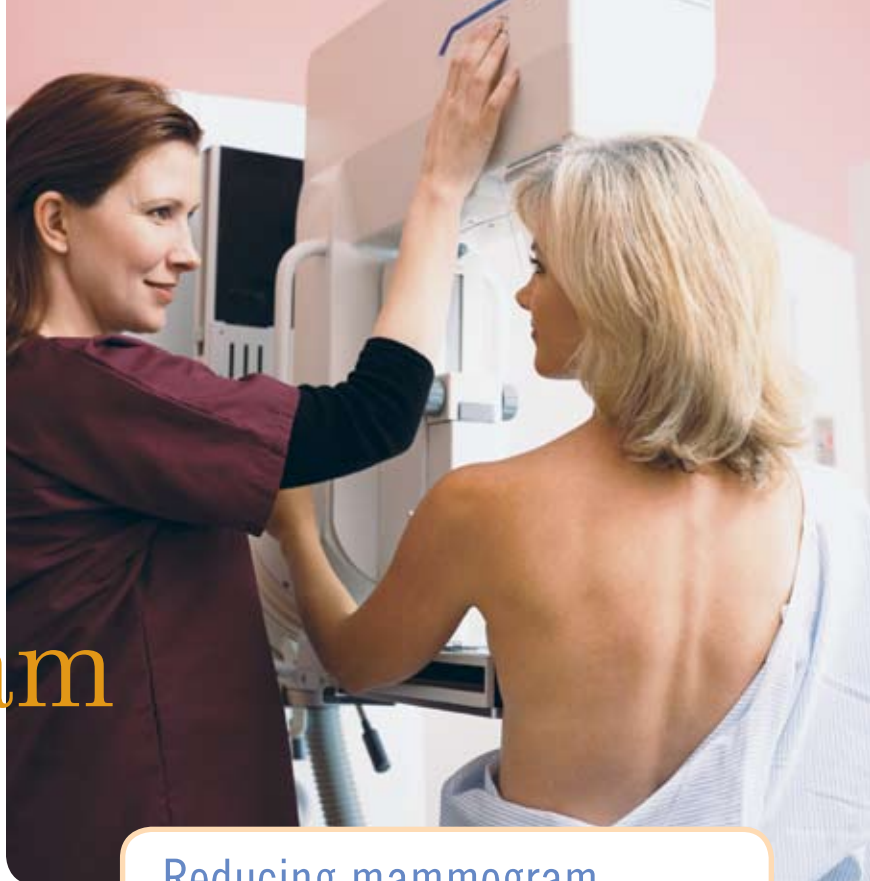
WHAT IS A MAMMOGRAM?

A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast. An image of breast tissue is produced for a radiologist to analyze. He or she looks for tumors or calcium deposits, which can signal cancer's presence.

If you're at high risk for breast cancer, your health-care provider may recommend magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) in addition to a yearly mammogram. This test uses magnets and radio waves to produce detailed images of the body. Suspicious areas found during testing may require an ultrasound, which uses sound waves to tell whether the problem area is cancerous.

GET SCREENED

Go to the same breast-screening facility every year so your radiologist can compare your current mammogram with past results. It's important for the radiologist to see whether there are any changes in your breast tissue from year to year. If you're going to a new facility, try to have your old mammograms sent there before your appointment.



Reducing mammogram discomfort

While mammograms may sometimes be uncomfortable, you can take the edge off with these steps:

- Schedule your mammogram for a few days after your period has ended when your breasts are less tender. Avoid the week before your period.
- Take a pain reliever like ibuprofen or acetaminophen an hour before your mammogram.
- Avoid caffeine for two days before your mammogram.
- Tell your healthcare provider if you have breast implants.
- Ask your X-ray technician about thin, foam pads that she can place between your breast and the machine to lessen discomfort.
- Wear a two-piece outfit since mammograms only require that you strip to your waist. This way you'll feel less exposed.

! Low-cost testing

Can't afford a mammogram? Call the American Cancer Society at **1-800-227-2345** for low-cost mammogram options near you. The National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program also offers information about free or low-cost testing for women without health insurance. Call **1-888-842-6355** or visit www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp.

Watch your back

Get relief from pain

Has back pain got you down for the count? In many cases, back pain goes away on its own. But if you're experiencing numbness or tingling, pain that's resistant to medications and rest or pain following a fall or an injury, see your healthcare provider. You could be facing a more serious back problem.

PAIN RELIEF

Most back ailments don't require surgery, so an operation is rarely the first line of defense. As a start, your healthcare provider may recommend hot or cold compresses, specific exercises to reduce pain, medication or pain-relief injections. He or she may also suggest complementary treatments such as massage; acupuncture; and transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS), which sends electrical impulses to nerves.

If your pain can't be quelled with conservative treatments, you may be a candidate for surgery. The pain's cause and the extent of damage will dictate what procedure may work. Some options include:

- a laminectomy/discectomy, which removes a herniated disc through an incision a few inches long
- spinal fusion, which joins two or more vertebrae with bone grafts, screws and rods to stabilize the spine
- vertebroplasty, which involves injecting a cement-like mixture into the damaged vertebrae to relieve pain and stabilize the spine
- disc replacement, which replaces the damaged disc with an artificial one

Only you and your healthcare provider can determine the right treatment for your condition. If you're experiencing persistent back pain, talk with him or her today to help get you on the road to a pain-free tomorrow.

5 steps to a healthier back

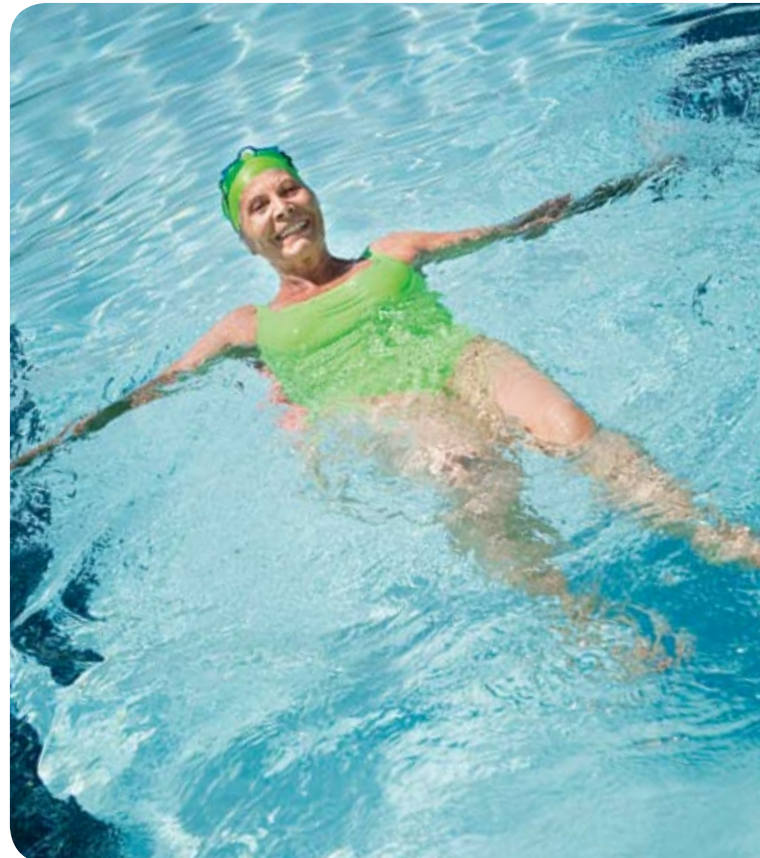
1. Exercise. Low-impact aerobic activities such as walking and swimming can increase back strength without strain. Ask your healthcare provider about exercises that can condition back muscles.

2. Quit smoking. Lighting up reduces oxygen levels in your spinal tissue, which can slow down an ailing back's healing process.

3. Maintain a healthy weight. Excess weight can strain your back muscles. Eat a healthful diet of fruits, vegetables and whole grains and make sure to include plenty of calcium and vitamin D, which help to build bone strength.

4. Practice perfect posture. If you're standing for long periods, rest one foot on a stool, alternating feet, to take the weight off your lower back. While sitting, make sure your chair supports your lower back. Place your feet flat on the floor.

5. Lift with care. Keep your back straight and bend only your knees as you reach down to lift an object. Hold the object close to your body and straighten your knees to stand.



Dear neighbors,



Barry Schneider
Chief Executive Officer

I'm delighted to join the team at Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) and look forward to building on the solid foundation that WARMC already has in place. Over the past 20 years, WARMC has made great strides in recruiting talented physicians and a compassionate staff and upgrading and expanding our facilities and technology.

KEEPING YOU UPDATED

In this issue, you'll read about our caring volunteers and our Healthy Woman anniversary celebration.

WARMC is your hometown hospital, and we look forward to meeting the healthcare needs of our community now and in the future. We take pride in serving you and your family and are here for you 365 days a year.

Thank you for the confidence and trust you've placed in us to meet your healthcare needs.

Sincerely,

BARRY SCHNEIDER
Chief Executive Officer
Western Arizona Regional Medical Center



CONGRATULATIONS to our Patient Choice winner



Scott Ewing, R.N.

Compassionate, attentive and cheerful are just some of the words that patient Roger Swanson used when describing Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) nurse Scott Ewing, R.N.

Ewing was recently named Patient Choice Nurse of the Year. Patients were encouraged to write in about a nurse who made a difference in their care while at WARMC. "Scott went above and beyond the call of duty during my four-week stay," Swanson says. "He answered every question my wife and I had, joked with me and made it the most comfortable stay it could possibly be."

Ewing has been a nurse at WARMC for three and a half years. "I'm speechless; this is a great honor," says Ewing. "Roger was a great patient, and I would be happy to be his nurse again any day."

Ewing was awarded a plaque, \$500 and a feature in a newspaper ad.

"If I ever have to be admitted again, I hope I'm in the caring hands of Scott; he's a shining star," Swanson says. "He's one of the reasons I talk so highly of WARMC and the great care I received there."

! Find a physician!

Having a trusted physician is a key step to staying healthy. Visit www.warmc.com to find the right physician for you.

Three years and going strong!

Healthy Woman celebrates anniversary

After celebrating three strong years of success, Western Arizona Regional Medical Center's (WARMC) Healthy Woman program continues to benefit women of the tri-state area. The program brings women ages 24 to 54 together by empowering them with the knowledge and confidence to make informed healthcare decisions.

A FUN CELEBRATION

The sold-out event brought more than 300 women together to improve their mind, body and spirit with a health fair and presentation by national motivational speaker Suzie Humphreys. The health fair included access to gyms, medical staff members and discussions about topics like beauty, general health, cholesterol, blood pressure and glucose testing, as well as support groups.

Thanks to these partners for helping to make this program a success:

A toast to Healthy Woman



Denise Cornell and her daughter, Lauren, enjoy the Tea Party at WARMC.

Ladies of all ages toasted to high tea during Healthy Woman's recent **Girl's Tea Party**. Held at the Preferred Outlets at Laughlin, the event brought mothers,

daughters, granddaughters and girlfriends together for fashion and fun!

The ladies enjoyed pictures with their loved ones, lunch and a fashion show with clothes from the mall. "This was a great event for all ladies, even the little ones," says Sarah Morga, marketing director. "Everyone enjoyed dressing up and having a girl's day out."



Top: Healthy Woman advisory council members Hali Rogers, Cindy Wolff and Diane Blythe hand out T-shirts at the third anniversary celebration.
Above: Laura West and Linda Kearns of Contours Express give out healthy, low-fat muffins to Healthy Woman members at the health fair.

- Mad Dog Fitness
- Preferred Outlets at Laughlin
- Wal-Mart
- Bullhead Health Club
- State Farm–Paul Bull Agency
- Contours Express
- News West Publishing
- Curves
- Murphy Broadcasting
- Colorado River Women's Council
- WARMC Auxiliary

"The third anniversary celebration was a huge success. We now have more than 1,000 members in our program," says Sarah Morga, marketing director at WARMC. "At the end of the event, each lady walked out with a big smile on her face."

Free seminars are presented monthly on a wide range of topics, and Healthy Woman members are notified of events through e-mail and local media coverage. "We welcome every woman in our communities to be a part of this great program," Morga says. "It's a great night out once a month with other local women."

! Empower yourself!

Start benefiting from all Healthy Woman has to offer. To join WARMC's Healthy Woman program, call (928) 763-0222 or visit www.warmc.com.

HEALTHY WOMAN
A WESTERN ARIZONA REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER RESOURCE

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about headaches?

Take this quiz to find out.

- 1** What is the most common type of headache?
 - a. sinus
 - b. migraine
 - c. cluster
 - d. tension

- 2** Which statement about caffeine is true?
 - a. It can only worsen headaches and should always be avoided.
 - b. It is a common ingredient in headache medications and makes them more effective.
 - c. Science has not proven caffeine to be an effective headache treatment.
 - d. none of the above

- 3** About how many Americans suffer from chronic headaches?
 - a. 15 million
 - b. 25 million
 - c. 35 million
 - d. 45 million

- 4** Which of the following tests can best help your healthcare provider evaluate your headaches?
 - a. MRI
 - b. EKG
 - c. sonogram
 - d. bone scan

- 5** What can you do to reduce headache occurrence?
 - a. drink at least 600 mg of caffeine a day
 - b. work harder to take your mind off your headache
 - c. exercise regularly
 - d. skip breakfast

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



Dodge diabetes with exercise and diet

The diabetes prevention equation seems simple enough: *healthy eating + regular exercise = a reduced diabetes risk*. Incorporating the equation into your everyday life? Not so simple. But here are some ideas to get you on the right path.

EXERCISE

- Try to get at least 30 minutes of moderate activity on most or all days. This includes aerobic activity like brisk walks, dancing, swimming or biking, as well as strength-training exercises with free weights and weight machines.
- Vary your exercise routine so you don't get bored. Bring a buddy to keep you company.
- Walk instead of driving when you can, take the stairs instead of the elevator or do some gardening.

DIET

- Substitute traditional white rice and noodles with brown rice and whole-wheat pasta to get your fiber fill.
- Limit fat to less than 30 percent of your daily calories by opting for lean meat cuts that end in "loin," filling up on fruits and veggies and going for low-fat dairy such as skim milk and nonfat yogurts and cheeses.
- Sip low- or no-calorie drinks such as water and diet drinks.
- Eat fish twice a week.

Germ warfare

Keep kids healthy in five easy steps

Although it's not possible to keep your children entirely germ free, you can take some preventive measures to minimize exposure to sickness-causing invaders:

1 Teach your children how to properly wash their hands. Show them how to use soap and warm water and vigorously rub their hands together for 15 to 20 seconds, or about the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice, making sure to get in between fingers and under nails. Stress the importance of hand washing before eating and after such activities as recess, going to the bathroom, sneezing or coughing. If your children are older, give them alcohol-based sanitizer for when water isn't available.



2 Keep your children's vaccinations up to date. Review your children's vaccination schedules with your pediatrician at each visit.

3 Tell kids not to share personal items, such as a straw or towels.

4 Remind your children not to touch their noses, eyes or mouths, so germs can't be spread easily.

5 Stop your kids from being "germ-spreaders." Show them how to cover sneezes and coughs with a tissue or the crook of an arm. If a child is vomiting, has diarrhea or has a fever, don't send him or her to school.



ROAD TRIP

Healthy snacking on the go

You have hours to go before you arrive at your vacation destination, and you've got some hungry kids on your hands. While you may be tempted to fall back on the convenient—but not so healthy—potato chips for them to munch on, try these healthy snacks instead:

• **Go au naturale.** Fruits such as bananas, grapes and apples are easy to eat and, except for a little washing, require no preparation. Unsweetened applesauce and fruit cups (packed in natural juice, not syrup) are also good fill-in snacks.

- **Dress up veggies.** For example, make celery sticks more appetizing by spreading peanut butter down the middle and sprinkling on some raisins.
- **Break out the breakfast cereals.** Fill a small resealable bag with whole-grain cereal.
- **Pack in the pop.** Before you leave, air-pop some popcorn, then top it off with a little Parmesan cheese or garlic powder.
- **Take to the trail.** Mix a little low-fat granola with nuts like almonds or peanuts, then toss in some raisins or cranberries for the perfect trail mix.

Sharing time, sharing smiles

Volunteer at WARMC and inspire!

They're the first friendly faces you see when you walk through the doors of Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC). More than 95 Auxiliary members working in almost every area of the hospital bring smiles and soothing words to comfort patients and family members.

IMPORTANT ROLES

"Volunteers are a critical part of our hospital," says Chief Executive Officer Barry Schneider. "We sincerely appreciate all they do for us."

In 2007, our members volunteered more than 20,000 hours at WARMC. For their hard work and dedication, the women and men were recently treated to a special honorary lunch. Raffle prizes and service hour pins were distributed.

! Make a difference!

If you or someone you know has a big heart and would like to make a difference in our community, call Pat Bowles at (928) 763-2273.



"This is the least we could do for them," says Sarah Morga, marketing director at WARMC. "They truly help make WARMC the hospital it is today."

Volunteer jobs range from working the front desk or gift shop, filing and helping nurses to working in the workshop sewing, knitting and crocheting. Volunteers choose their own hours and days and bring their unique talents to WARMC.



Above left: WARMC volunteers enjoy a special lunch in their honor.



Above right: Volunteer Terri Frear shows off the tote bag she won during a raffle at a recent volunteer appreciation luncheon.

www.warmc.com

70WAR



Western Arizona Regional Medical Center
2735 Silver Creek Road
Bullhead City, AZ 86442

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Lebanon Junction, KY
Permit 19

SUMMER 2008

Health Connection

Health Connection is published as a community service of Western Arizona Regional Medical Center. There is no fee to subscribe.

The information contained in this publication is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice. If you have medical concerns, please consult your healthcare provider.

Copyright © 2008 Western Arizona Regional Medical Center