

Health Connection

THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN ARIZONA
REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER



**Meet our
Employee
of the Year**

**For all your
health care needs**

We have the right
physicians for you

**Help for
hard-to-heal
wounds**

**Expanding our
heart care**

Cardiac catheterization
at WARMC

**Be prepared for
an emergency!**

Classes available,
close to home



**WESTERN ARIZONA
REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER**

www.warmc.com

Ease your arthritis pain

More than 40 million Americans suffer from arthritis, a condition that can make every move painful. Osteoarthritis is the most common form. It occurs when cartilage, which cushions bones in your joints, breaks down and causes irritation.

Luckily, the following lifestyle changes and remedies can help you manage the pain:

• **LOSE WEIGHT.** It's pretty basic: The more excess weight you carry, the more stress on your joints. But a healthy diet of fruits, vegetables and whole grains, paired with regular exercise—at least 30 minutes a day—can help tip the scales in your favor. Cut back on saturated fats, which may increase your body's inflammatory response, adding to joint and tissue inflammation.



• **GET OFF THE COUCH.** Inactivity is a joint's worst enemy. Exercise can strengthen and protect the muscles around the joints, preventing them from stiffening and causing more pain. Walking, swimming, some yoga poses and tai chi are easy on the joints. Also beneficial are range-of-motion exercises, such as raising your arms above your head; strengthening exercises, such as weight training; and low-impact aerobic exercises, such as bike riding. Before starting an exercise program, check with your physician. If needed, ask him or her for a referral to a physical therapist who has a program for people with arthritis.

• **TAKE A PILL, IF NEEDED.** Sometimes you need medication for the pain. Over-the-counter options include non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, or NSAIDs (such as ibuprofen and naproxen), and acetaminophen (such as Tylenol). Topical creams may provide hot or cool sensations to ease pain or contain pain medication that's absorbed into the skin. Your physician may prescribe pills or cortisone injections. Any drug you take can have side effects, so discuss them with your physician before starting a regimen.



• **REST UP.** Your body needs time to heal, so aim for eight to 10 hours of sleep every night, and avoid sitting or standing in one position for too long. Skip high-impact activities such as running. You may also want to look into stress-relievers such as meditation or yoga.

• **ASK ABOUT ALTERNATIVES.** Massage, acupuncture, heating pads, ice packs and supplements such as glucosamine and chondroitin may help reduce symptoms, though studies on the supplements have been mixed. Speak with your physician before trying any home remedies. Sometimes, there simply isn't a remedy that can effectively treat the pain. In that case, surgery to replace the joint may be an option to discuss with your physician.



Life after the ER

Following your physician's orders keeps you healthy

When you're not feeling well and you're surrounded by the hustle and bustle of an emergency room (ER), it's easy to be confused by what a physician is telling you. All you can think about is going home. That's why many people are unclear about how to handle their care when they leave the hospital.

Case in point: A small University of Michigan study found that more than 75 percent of patients didn't understand their discharge instructions or what ER physicians had just told them—although 80 percent thought they did. Some of the patients weren't even sure of their diagnosis.

Unfortunately, these misunderstandings may increase the likelihood of complications once you leave the ER. In reality, the care you receive at the hospital is just one important part of the puzzle. Knowing what to do next—and following those discharge instructions closely—is critical to getting better. Here's what you need to do for the best health care results:

➔ SPEAK UP. Don't be afraid to ask questions if you're unsure of your condition, what treatments you were given, your test results or something in the discharge instructions—for example, whether a medication that's been prescribed may interact with one you're already taking. It's best to ask the ER physician caring for you,

rather than having to contact the ER later, when the physician you saw may no longer be on duty.

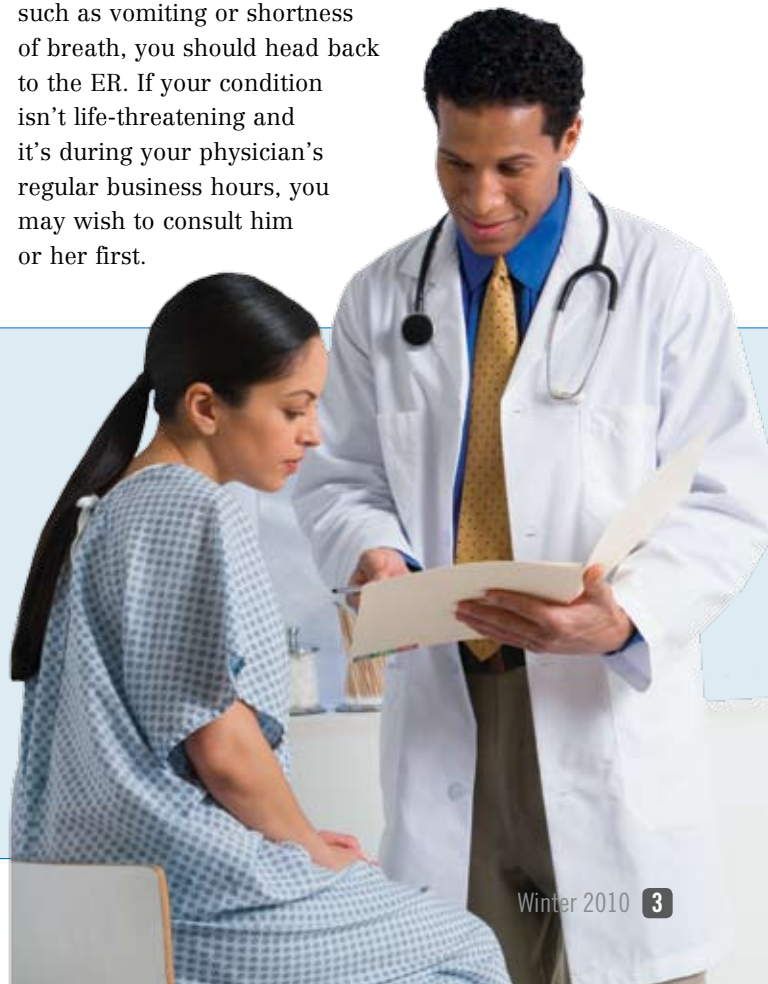
➔ FOLLOW ALL MEDICATION DOSAGES. Thoroughly read your discharge instructions. They should spell out what medications have been prescribed, what they treat and how often—and when—to take them.

➔ FOLLOW UP WITH YOUR FAMILY PHYSICIAN OR A SPECIALIST. You'll especially need to do this if you've received stitches or a cast. Your discharge instructions will tell you when to go. Double-check with your physician to make sure information about your ER visit, including test results, has been sent to his or her office before your appointment.

➔ KNOW WHEN YOU SHOULD RETURN TO THE ER. If your condition worsens or you're noticing new symptoms, such as vomiting or shortness of breath, you should head back to the ER. If your condition isn't life-threatening and it's during your physician's regular business hours, you may wish to consult him or her first.

How did we do?

When you check in to the ER, admitting personnel will ask you if it's OK to follow up with you once you're back home. If you agree to it, we'll try to call you within 24 hours of your discharge, asking you six questions about your visit. At that time, if you don't understand your discharge instructions or have any questions about your treatment, a nurse will call you back. This process, called Discharge Callback Administrator, or DCA, helps us improve the way we care for our patients and ensure that you're on the road to recovery.





Barry Schneider
Chief Executive Officer

Dear neighbors,

Happy New Year! As we enter 2010, we can reflect on the successes Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) enjoyed over the past year, including opening Fox Creek Urgent Care, a second catheterization lab and a

wound care center and recruiting new physicians.

WE'RE HERE TO SERVE YOU

It's our mission to become your health care provider of choice. We strive each and every day to provide the best possible care to those we serve.

In this issue, you'll learn more about our wound care center, our new catheterization lab and the area's newest physicians. We'll also introduce you to our Employee of the Year, Allen Stoeckel.

We understand that improving your family's health care is a top concern to you, and please know it's also our primary focus. We're here for you 365 days a year.

Our ultimate goal is for WARMC to be a great place for employees to work, physicians to practice medicine and patients to receive care.

Thank you for your continued support of WARMC.

Sincerely,

BARRY SCHNEIDER
Chief Executive Officer
Western Arizona Regional Medical Center



Hyperbaric oxygen therapy increases the amount of oxygen in the patient's blood, allowing wounds to heal from the inside out.

When time can't heal all wounds

Do you have a wound that won't heal? The new Fox Creek Advanced Wound Care Center can help you get back to doing what you enjoy. The wound care center offers advances in treatment and hyperbaric oxygen therapy for wounds due to age, diabetes, pressure ulcers, poor circulation and other conditions.

"We're excited to offer the community a wound care center that offers not only advanced technology but two hyperbaric oxygen chambers, which decreases healing time on most wounds," says Joanne Kimball, chief nursing officer at Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC).

Fox Creek Advanced Wound Care Center, a part of WARMC, is open to the public, and a physician is on-site at all times.

If traditional treatment hasn't healed your wound after 30 days, there's a good chance we can help.

! Start healing!

Fox Creek Advanced Wound Care Center is located at 2500 Canyon Road, Building C, Unit 3 (conveniently located on the Bullhead Parkway) in Bullhead City. Call (928) 444-1454, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or ask your physician to refer you.

Healing hearts

WARMC opens second cath lab

If you think you may be having a heart attack, time is critical. Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) knows the importance of time in an emergency and is proud to announce the addition of a second catheterization lab.

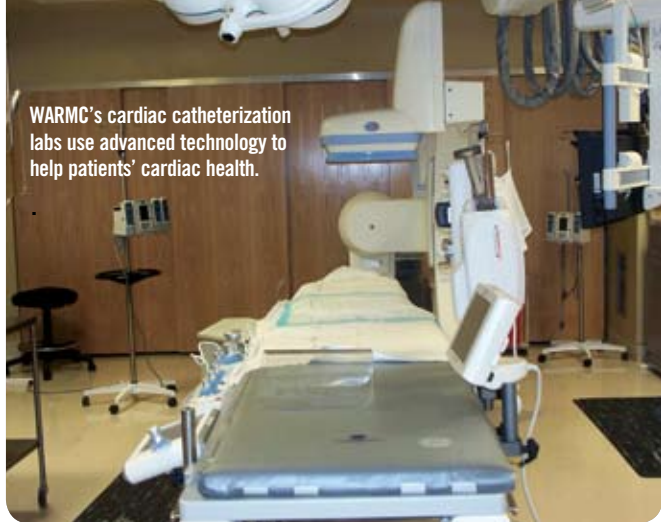
“We have the skilled professionals and advanced technology to accurately and efficiently diagnose and treat acute chest pain,” says Cathy Graham, director of cardiovascular services at WARMC.

STEP BY STEP

The treatment process is simple. A patient experiencing cardiac distress enters WARMC through the emergency room (ER) and is evaluated by the specially trained and accredited medical staff. He or she is then connected to an EKG monitor.

After an initial diagnosis, other hospital departments, including the catheterization lab and cardiac care unit, are contacted to complete the patient’s treatment plan. Low-risk

WARMC’s cardiac catheterization labs use advanced technology to help patients’ cardiac health.



patients receive treatment and subsequent care in the ER.

The new \$3 million addition allows for procedures to be completed sooner as two procedures can be done simultaneously. “Along with the second cath lab, we also have two holding areas that allow the staff to prepare the patient before the procedure, which reduces delay time,” says Graham.

! Keep your heart healthy!

February is American Heart Month. So don’t delay, get your heart checked today! For more information about WARMC or to find a cardiologist, call (928) 763-0222 or visit www.warmc.com and click on “Find a Physician.”



! Register today!

Day and evening classes are available. Classes cost \$35, which includes materials and the cost of the card. To register, call (928) 704-7180.

To learn more about education classes at WARMC, visit www.warmc.com or call (928) 704-7180.

Be emergency ready

Being prepared for emergencies is crucial at home, school, work and in your community. Through the American Red Cross, Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) offers Basic Life Support to help you prepare for emergencies. The class is designed to give you the confidence to respond in an emergency situation with skills that can save a life.

Certified instructors teach Basic Life Support, and students can expect to learn about CPR, choking response and automated external defibrillators. The classes can be tailored to the needs of specific groups and individuals. Whether you work with children, want training for employees, are a professional rescuer or simply want to know how to help someone in an emergency, WARMC is here to help.

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

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

Take this quiz to find out.

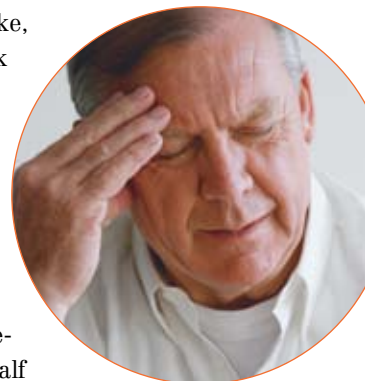
- 1** What percentage of American adults are overweight or obese?
 - a. 25
 - b. 33
 - c. 50
 - d. 66
- 2** Which of the following has not been linked to obesity?
 - a. hyperthyroidism
 - b. cancer
 - c. gallbladder disease
 - d. infertility
- 3** Obese children have a higher risk of:
 - a. asthma
 - b. early puberty
 - c. skin infections
 - d. all of the above
- 4** One problem with body mass index (BMI)—a calculation that assesses obesity—is that:
 - a. It doesn't take height into account.
 - b. It doesn't measure muscle, so a muscular person can have a high BMI.
 - c. It doesn't factor in age.
 - d. none of the above
- 5** How much excess weight do you usually have to be carrying to be considered for weight-loss surgery?
 - a. 30 pounds for women, 50 for men
 - b. 50 pounds for women, 70 for men
 - c. 80 pounds for women, 100 for men
 - d. There's no minimum weight requirement for weight-loss surgery.

ANSWERS: 1. (d), 2. (a), 3. (d), 4. (b), 5. (c)

{ MINI-STROKES }

Heed the warning

It may not be a full-blown stroke, but a transient ischemic attack (TIA)—also called a mini-stroke—is your warning that one could be just around the corner. TIAs produce symptoms similar to strokes, but they usually only last a few minutes and don't cause damage. About a third of people who have TIAs will subsequently have a stroke, and about half of them will have it within a year.



INSIDE A TIA

A TIA occurs when a blood clot briefly blocks an artery, cutting off part of the brain's blood supply. Like a stroke, symptoms arise without warning. They include:

- sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg—usually on one side of the body
- sudden confusion, speech problems or trouble comprehending
- sudden problems walking, dizziness and loss of balance or coordination
- sudden severe headaches
- sudden vision problems such as loss of sight in one eye

If you suffer any of these symptoms, call an ambulance or have a friend take you to the ER right away. Physicians usually have to make a diagnosis based on your medical history.

IS A TIA IN YOUR FUTURE?

You're at higher risk for a TIA if you:

- have a family history of TIA or stroke
- are 55 years or older
- are a man
- are African-American

Those are things you can't control, but you can help change other risk factors:

- blood pressure 140/85 mm Hg or higher
- high cholesterol
- heart disease, carotid artery disease and peripheral artery disease
- obesity
- cigarette smoking
- heavy drinking
- physical inactivity
- diabetes
- a high-fat, high-sodium diet

Sending out an SOS:

Texting can be bad for your health

It's not uncommon to see people crossing busy streets or even driving with their cell phone or BlackBerry® in hand, dashing off a quick message. Texting shifts your focus away from the task at hand and can be downright dangerous.

While no hard numbers exist, the American College of Emergency Physicians has reported an anecdotal rise in serious and fatal injuries involving texting—especially among teens and young adults. That includes face, chin, mouth and eye injuries for those who trip and fall while texting, and fatal trauma stemming from car accidents. Texting has also been linked to medical phenomena like “BlackBerry thumb” and “teen texting tendonitis”—catchphrases for conditions that result from the repetitive thumb motions of texting. These conditions can cause pain and numbness in the thumbs and joints of the hand.

BE TEXT SAVVY

Steer clear of texting troubles by following a few guidelines:

- Avoid texting while doing things like walking and driving. Turn your phone off to avoid temptation.
- On the road, pull over if you need to text immediately.
- Set a good example behind the wheel: Don't engage in distracting behavior in front of your kids.

- Contact your cell-phone provider if you're worried about your child's texting habits. Some companies now offer services that ban texting at certain times of the day.



A healthy lunch is in the bag!

Every day at noon, workers around the country run to the corner deli for a sandwich, hit a local eatery with co-workers or order in. But if you're watching your waistline—or your wallet—packing your own lunch is a smarter solution. A homemade lunch is more nutritious and economical, as long as you pack it correctly. The recipe for a healthy lunch includes:

- **PROTEIN** Try lean turkey, ham, roast beef, tuna or a bean-based entree, such as hummus or a black bean burrito.
- **GOOD GRAINS** Pack whole-wheat pasta salad and sandwiches made on multigrain bread.
- **FRUITS AND VEGGIES** The deeper the color of the vegetable or fruit, the more vitamins and minerals it contains. Slice up baby carrots, peppers, broccoli, apples, blueberries and oranges.



- **CALCIUM** Slip fat-free yogurt, cottage cheese or string cheese into your bag.
- **H₂O** Water has no calories, so it's a perfect choice, but if you need a little more flavor, try adding a squeeze of lemon, lime or orange. Watch out for fruit juices, energy drinks and sodas, which are loaded with sugar.
- **FLAVOR APPEAL** Switch it up a bit by adding interesting items, like walnuts in a salad or horseradish spread on a roast beef sandwich.
- **MINIMAL SODIUM** Thinking of one of those “healthy” frozen meals? Watch out for sodium. Total daily intake for a healthy individual shouldn't exceed 2,300 milligrams (mg), and some frozen meals can contain a big portion of your day's allotment. Follow the FDA's recommendation for a healthy frozen meal by choosing one that has 480 mg of sodium or less per serving.

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 health care provider.

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WINTER 2010



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MEET OUR NEWEST PHYSICIANS

In 2010, Western Arizona Regional Medical Center expects to add new physicians to our medical staff. We're pleased to welcome our newest physicians to Bullhead City.



ELENA ANDREWS, M.D.
Family Medicine
Fox Creek Urgent Care
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Congratulations to our Employee of the Year!



Allen Stoeckel
2009 Employee
of the Year

Shopping at a mall may not be one of Allen Stoeckel's favorite things to do, but purchasing items to better patient care at Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) is. The 2009 Employee of the Year has worked as a buyer in materials management for 16 years.

ABOUT ALLEN STOECKEL

Stoeckel's responsibilities include purchasing items to make sure employees have what they need to perform their job effectively. "I buy the smallest items like Band-Aids to the biggest items like a piece of equipment," says Stoeckel. "I love my job. I help fellow employees help others."

Stoeckel also participates on the Employee Activity Team and the Disaster Drill Team. He's been key in helping purchase items for WARMC's disaster trailer, as well as participating in numerous disaster drills and community functions. "Allen's a great team player, great role model for other employees in the hospital and a great advocate in the community," says Barry Schneider, WARMC chief executive officer.

When Stoeckel isn't busy at work, he enjoys spending time with his family, playing softball and volleyball and watching NASCAR.

! Visit our Web site!

To learn more about employment at WARMC, visit www.warmc.com and click on "Job Opportunities."