

Health Connection

THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN ARIZONA
REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER



**Get 'hip' to
replacement
surgery**

**A special
mammogram
offer for you**

**On the horizon at
Healthy Woman**

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to control your weight**

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to get more exercise**



WESTERN ARIZONA
REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

SURGERY 101:

A manual for peace of mind

Did you take your Girl Scout or Boy Scout oath seriously as a child? If so, to this day you're probably sure to pack what you need before a hike: a map, compass, first-aid kit, water and healthy snacks. You ask what the terrain is and where the trail ends so you can get home on schedule.

When it comes to surgery, studies have shown that this same "be prepared" principle can ease pre-op anxiety, reduce your hospital stay and speed recovery.

If you're about to undergo surgery, ask your doctor to describe the procedure completely. Knowing what to expect can defuse stress and help you approach surgery day with a calm head.

Here are some other ways you can make the time before, during and after surgery run more smoothly:

BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE

- Follow your physician's instructions about refraining from smoking, eating and drinking before the procedure.
- Ask your physician about taking aspirin or other anti-inflammatory drugs before surgery. Because they're blood thinners, these medications may cause excessive blood loss.
- Tell your doctor which prescription and over-the-counter drugs you take. This goes for vitamins and herbs, too, as certain herbal remedies, such as St. John's wort and kava, may extend the effects of anesthesia or create other complications.
- You won't be allowed to drive after the procedure, so make reliable transportation arrangements.
- Organize your home. Make sure you have groceries or frozen meals on hand. If climbing stairs will be a problem, make sleeping arrangements downstairs.

- Practice relaxation techniques such as meditation or yoga. These will help calm you and speed post-op healing.

DURING YOUR HOSPITAL STAY

Your cozy robe or a favorite photo will warm your surroundings and soothe you. Having family and friends visit will bolster you, but don't be afraid to set limits: You'll need some time to rest and recuperate without interruptions.

HOME AGAIN

A little help from friends can be useful. If worries about housework or bills are nagging at you, ask someone to take care of these chores. In the meantime, the relaxation methods you used before surgery can help you feel better now, too. Imagine yourself in the near future doing something you enjoy, such as taking an invigorating hike.



PROTECTING AGAINST FEMALE CANCERS

What every woman should know

Gynecologic cancer is the fourth most common type of cancer in women. Here's a rundown of the gynecologic cancers and facts that can help reduce your risk:

UTERINE CANCER

Uterine cancer—also known as endometrial cancer—is the most common type of reproductive cancer that strikes American women and occurs most often after menopause. Symptoms include unusual vaginal discharge, pelvic pain, pain during intercourse, unexplained weight change and difficult or painful urination.

Obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes and tamoxifen or hormone replacement therapy use may increase risk.

OVARIAN CANCER

Ovarian cancer is the deadliest cancer and often shows no obvious signs until late in its development. But when caught early, most cases can be successfully treated.

Symptoms include abdominal discomfort or pain, nausea, diarrhea, constipation, frequent urination, appetite loss, feelings of fullness, weight change with no known reason and abnormal vaginal bleeding.

An important risk factor is a family history of ovarian cancer. Fertility drugs, hormone replacement therapy, increasing age, infertility, having had no children and a family history of breast cancer may also increase risk.

CERVICAL CANCER

Thanks to Pap tests, deaths from cervical cancer are decreasing. Common symptoms are abnormal bleeding and bloody or discolored vaginal discharge.

The sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV) causes most cervical cancers. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently approved a vaccine that protects against HPV. A federal panel recommends females ages 11 to 26 receive the vaccine.

Other risk factors linked to cervical cancer can be avoided, such as smoking and poor diet.

CANCERS OF THE VAGINA, VULVA AND FALLOPIAN TUBES

These cancers tend to be rare. Women should alert their

doctors to symptoms that include unusual bleeding or discharge, persistent itching of the vulva, pain in the pelvic region, difficult or painful urination, unusual pain or pressure in the abdomen, pain during intercourse and a lump or sore on the vulva that won't heal.

Women may be at risk for vaginal and vulvar cancers if they've had genital warts, chronic vulvar irritations, abnormal Pap tests or intercourse at an early age or with many partners. Women who smoke or whose mothers took DES (diethylstilbestrol) when they were pregnant may also be at risk. Risk factors for tubal cancer are unknown, but it tends to strike women after menopause.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Regular screenings and an annual pelvic exam can detect and even prevent some gynecologic cancers. Keep your doctor informed of any risk factors, especially family history, that you may have.





David Selman
Chief Executive Officer

Dear neighbors,

For the last 22 years, Western Arizona Regional Medical Center has been area residents' choice for quality healthcare. We've strived to bring you new services, a quality medical staff, a strong team of healthcare professionals and a hometown hospital you can depend on.

With the opening of the area's largest Emergency Department, we know this positive addition will be beneficial long term. The new 24-bed department features electronic bedside registration, fast-track beds, trauma suites and a children's play area.

A patient tower will also be added that houses 20 intensive-care beds and an additional floor for future expansion of the hospital.

We wish you continued good health in the new year and look forward to serving you and your family for years to come.

Sincerely,

DAVID SELMAN
Chief Executive Officer
Western Arizona Regional Medical Center

A special mammogram offer

More than 212,000 new cases of breast cancer will be diagnosed in the United States this year, according to the American Cancer Society. Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) would like to help lower that number by offering a special every woman just can't miss.

In recognition of the importance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, WARMC's Outpatient Center is offering \$60 screening mammograms to women with no prior history of breast disease, through December 29. A \$25 fee will be billed separately from the radiologist. A physician's order is required.

"This is a great deal," says Cindy Black, WARMC Imaging Center supervisor. "It's so important that every woman over age 35 have a yearly mammogram and remember to do their monthly self exam."



Get screened today!

For more information about the \$60 screening mammogram, call (928) 763-8889.

On the horizon at Healthy Woman

As Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) will begin another great year of its Healthy Woman program, new monthly topics and events are on the horizon.

A free community resource, Healthy Woman was created to empower women with the knowledge and confidence to make informed healthcare decisions for themselves and their loved ones.

"We're so excited to continue this great program in our communities," says Sarah Morga, of the WARMC marketing department. "Last year, we had more than 500 women enroll and are anxious for more to get involved."

Join our monthly meetings! **HEALTHY WOMAN**
A WESTERN ARIZONA REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER RESOURCE

Come to Healthy Woman's upcoming monthly meetings, held at the Bullhead Area Chamber of Commerce (topics to be determined):
Thurs., Jan. 25, 6 p.m. • Thurs., Feb. 22, 6 p.m. • Thurs., March 22, 6 p.m.
For more information or to join Healthy Woman, call (928) 763-0222.

MEET OUR NEWEST DOCTORS

The experienced, dedicated physicians of Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) can help you and your family stay healthy. WARMC is proud to welcome three new physicians to our team.



VICKIE TIPPETT, M.D.
Board-Certified
Obstetrician/Gynecologist

Colorado River Women's Center
2724 Silver Creek Road
Bullhead City
(928) 704-8904

Vickie Tippett, M.D., a specialist in obstetrics and gynecology, joined the WARMC medical staff in August after being displaced by Hurricane Katrina. "My house had over eight feet of water in it," Dr. Tippett says. "I decided to relocate and am very happy with my choice here in the tri-state area."

She received her medical degree from the University of California, Los Angeles and completed her residency and internship at the Tulane School of Medicine in New Orleans, La.



MARSHA E. BROOKS-CANDELA, M.D.
Board-Certified
Obstetrician/Gynecologist

Colorado River Women's Center
2724 Silver Creek Road
Bullhead City
(928) 704-8904

Specializing in obstetrics and gynecology, Marsha E. Brooks-Candela, M.D., joined the medical staff at WARMC after working 16 years in Cheshire, Conn. "My family and I wanted to move somewhere warm and I think this is definitely it," she says.

Dr. Brooks-Candela received her medical degree and completed her residency and internship training at the State University of New York at Buffalo in Buffalo, N.Y. She's married and has two children.



BERTRAM A. LEWIS JR., M.D., Ph.D.
Board-Certified Urologist

Empire Urology Associates
2755 Silver Creek Road, Suite #133
Bullhead City
(928) 704-8905

Highly qualified urologist Bertram A. Lewis Jr., M.D., Ph.D., joined the WARMC medical staff after almost two years in Cary, N.C. "I feel honored to serve our fine community and look forward to getting to know my patients," he says.

Dr. Lewis earned his Ph.D. in biomedical engineering and, in 1997, an M.D. from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Md. He completed his residency and internship at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, N.C. He enjoys reading, playing the piano and spending time with his family.

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about arthritis?

Test your knowledge and learn more about arthritis.

1

What does the word arthritis mean?

- a. Sore joint
- b. Joint irritation
- c. Joint inflammation
- d. Rigid joint

2

Which of the following statements about arthritis is true?

- a. Using artificial sweeteners like Equal and Nutrasweet that contain aspartame increases your risk of developing arthritis.
- b. Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in Americans over age 15.
- c. Arthritis is more prevalent in women than in men.
- d. Most people with arthritis will need minor surgery to lessen the pain.

3

Osteoarthritis is caused by the breakdown/loss of _____ in the joints.

- a. bursa
- b. cartilage
- c. air
- d. synovial fluid

4

How is rheumatoid arthritis different from other forms of arthritis?

- a. It occurs in joints on both sides of the body.
- b. Doctors recommend people with it sleep on a waterbed to alleviate pressure on joints.
- c. Pain is felt only early in the morning or late at night.
- d. It occurs when crystals build up in the joints.

5

Older adults aren't the only ones affected by arthritis; it can affect any age group. How many children are estimated to have arthritis?

- a. 35,000
- b. 150,000
- c. 300,000
- d. 500,000

ANSWERS: 1. C, 2. B, 3. B, 4. A, 5. C

8

easy ways to get more exercise

Fitting exercise into your schedule doesn't have

to involve a large bank account or even a lot of time.

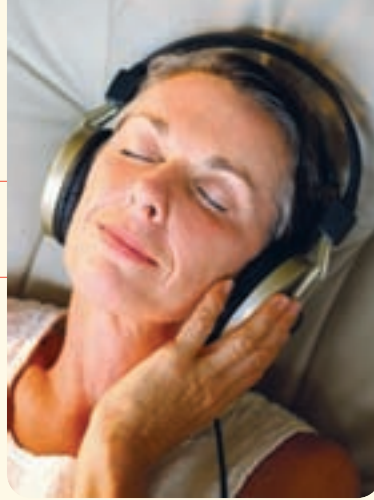
The following list of ways to make

physical activity a habit was created for even the busiest people.

- 1 **Take the stairs instead of the elevator.** This alternative burns calories and tones muscles.
- 2 **Avoid the phone.** At work, walk down the hallway instead of using the telephone or e-mail to communicate with a co-worker.
- 3 **Walk instead of drive.** It may not be the speediest mode of transportation, but it's effective when you want to visit a neighbor down the street, take your child to a nearby park or pick up a few items at the corner market.
- 4 **Walk during lunch.** Take a friend for company or listen to a book on tape to make your walk mentally as well as physically productive.
- 5 **Clean the house.** You'll have to do more than load the dishwasher to get your heart pumping, but a vigorous cleaning that takes two to three hours may be just what the doctor ordered.
- 6 **Ride your bike.** It's quicker than walking, cheaper than driving and it burns calories.
- 7 **Break activity down into small time increments.** If you don't have the time or energy for 30 minutes of continuous exercise, spread it out. Start with 10 minutes of activity, then do it again and again—for a total of 30 minutes.
- 8 **Vary your activities.** Boredom is one of the biggest commitment killers, so find several activities you enjoy and pick and choose depending on the weather and your mood.



Banish caregiver burnout



If you're caring for someone who depends on you, you need to be healthy and energetic. Yet the sheer amount of time and thought involved in providing care may mean you've put yourself at the bottom of your priority list—making you ripe for stress and burnout. Try these steps to protect your health:

1 Get regular medical checkups. Tell your doctor about your caregiving commitment—he or she may suggest resources to make your life easier.

2 Get plenty of rest. Sleep deprivation contributes to depression. Have a family member pinch-hit (or hire a respite worker) so you can get to bed at a reasonable hour or sneak in a nap.

3 Eat a nutritious diet. A poor diet can lead to malnutrition and fatigue. Regular, well-balanced meals boost energy. Ask family members to help with shopping and meal preparation.

4 Get regular exercise. Moderate exercise combats stress, increases energy and provides a mental-health break.

5 Manage stress. Meditate or learn relaxation techniques. Share your feelings with friends and family members. Ask your doctor for advice or referral to a counselor.

6 Ask for help. Don't try to be a superhero! Ask family

members to help pick up prescriptions, do laundry or drive to doctors' appointments. Ask your doctor about local resources like transportation to medical checkups, home-delivered meals, respite care or adult day-care services.

7 Schedule time for yourself. Schedule time to enjoy your hobbies. Spend time with friends. Try a change of scenery—take a short drive or see a play or concert.

8 Be realistic and flexible. Accept that your loved one's illness may change from week to week. Be flexible as you plan for the future. Acknowledge the many good things you've done and don't be hard on yourself for not being able to do everything on your own.

Real-world strategies to control your weight



Visit the diet and nutrition section of any bookstore and you'll be amazed by the number of books offering the latest miracle diet. Low carb, no carb, high protein, low calorie—but do any work?

Fad diets tend to be tough to stick with. Even worse, people often feel deprived and pile unwanted pounds back on once they're off the diets.

The best way to take off fat is slowly and steadily. That means a weight loss of no more than one to two

pounds a week. Many fad diets drastically reduce your food intake and put your body into "starvation" mode, slowing your metabolism to conserve calories. That's the

exact opposite of what you want. Similarly, restricting certain foods—such as carbohydrates—can lead to cravings that will derail your efforts.

THE TRIED AND TRUE

The following are real-life tips to help you look and feel your best:

- **Rebalance your diet.** If your diet is heavy on foods like crackers, bagels, white rice, low-fiber cereal and pasta, substitute them with whole grains like brown rice, multi-grain breads and pasta enriched with soy. To feel satisfied longer, combine carbs with protein.

- **Count calories.** Simply put, to lose weight you have to ingest fewer calories than you expend.

- **Spread out meals.** Eating small amounts throughout the day boosts your metabolism. Aim for three equal-sized meals, plus nutritious snacks in between.

- **Ditch self-denial.** Instead of avoiding any one food group, make wise choices. Whole-wheat crackers with peanut butter are a smarter snack than a bag of chips.

- **Emphasize weight training.** Add strength training to your exercise program. Resistance exercises build muscle, which burns more calories by increasing your metabolism.

Get 'hip' to replacement surgery

Longer life spans, obesity, genetics and increasingly active lifestyles are a few factors prompting hips, knees and backs to wear out—resulting in pain and increased demand for spinal reconstruction and hip and knee replacement.

To help pain sufferers, orthopedic surgeon Robert Lock, D.O., and neurosurgeon Isaac Thapedi, M.D., have teamed up to open the Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) Joint and Spine Center. “We’re very excited to bring the center to our communities,” Dr. Lock says. “Joint replacement is on the rise and this is a much needed specialization in our area.”

All surgeries will be performed at WARMC and patients will recover in the private center, located on the first floor of the hospital. “The rooms have been remodeled and a new physical rehabilitation gym has been added to the main floor just for patients of the center,” says David Selman, chief executive officer at WARMC.

During their time in the center, patients will wear their own comfortable workout clothes and undergo rehabilitation with other recovering patients. “It’s proven that patients experience a quicker recovery time if they go through rehab together,” says Lisa Alexander, director of rehabilitation at WARMC. “The gym is great and patients have really benefited from it.”

Make an appointment!

For more information about the Joint and Spine Center, call (928) 704-8842. Dr. Lock and Dr. Thapedi are currently accepting new patients. Please call to make an appointment.



ISAAC THAPEDI, M.D.
Tri-State NeuroSpine Institute
1514 Goldrush Road, Suite 239-C
Bullhead City
(928) 704-0464



ROBERT LOCK, D.O.
Tri-State Orthopedics
2000 Highway 95, Suite 200
Bullhead City
(928) 758-1175

70WAR



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

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FALL 2006

Health Connection

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