

# Health Connection

THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN ARIZONA REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Preparing for  
your new baby  
WARMC offers  
classes

Hats off to our  
Employee of the  
Year!

Women: Is a  
heart attack in  
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Boost your  
bone health

Reclaim  
your energy



WESTERN ARIZONA  
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# Minimally invasive surgery

Less pain, faster recovery

**M**inimally invasive surgery (MIS) is the buzzword in healthcare right now. And with good reason.

With advancing technology and surgical techniques, patients now have the benefit of undergoing procedures that require just a few small incisions. In years past, those same procedures would have required large cuts and left equally large scars.

## HOW IT WORKS

MIS—sometimes referred to as laparoscopic surgery—mirrors the techniques of traditional surgery but decreases the patient’s surgical trauma. Because surgeons using MIS lose some visibility with smaller incisions, they have to create a larger workspace. They do this by making a small cut in the skin, then gently expanding the body cavity with a gas (such as carbon dioxide). A small camera (laparoscope) is then inserted through the incision and into the newly expanded space to help surgeons see where to operate.

While MIS isn’t suited for all types of surgery, it has been used for such procedures as appendectomies, hernia repair, gallbladder surgery, hysterectomies, brain tumors, herniated spinal discs, knee and hip replacements, sinus surgery and certain types of heart procedures.

## MINIMAL TRAUMA, MAXIMUM BENEFITS

The goal of MIS is to treat patients with the least amount of trauma. In addition to minimized scarring, this type of surgery also:

- **Minimizes bleeding.** Decreased blood loss means a decreased chance of blood transfusion.



- **Lessens pain.** Small incisions reduce trauma to the skin and underlying muscles, meaning less postoperative pain.
- **Reduces infections.** Unlike a traditional operation, where the body is wide open, tissue isn’t exposed to the air for extended periods during MIS.
- **Shortens hospital stays.** Reducing bleeding, pain and the chance for infection means you’ll get to walk out of the hospital sooner.
- **Hastens recovery.** MIS can dramatically reduce recuperation time—in some cases, by half.

## Other minimally invasive procedures

**E**ndoscopic surgery is similar to laparoscopic surgery because it also requires a small camera. However, the equipment (endoscope) passes through an existing opening such as the mouth, anus or urethra.

Robotic laparoscopic surgery uses techniques identical to laparoscopic surgery but allows surgeons to use robotic arms to perform the procedure.

Ablation targets and destroys diseases, such as kidney and prostate cancer, with high-frequency energy, leaving normal tissue nearby intact. It’s also been used to correct benign heart arrhythmias.

## WAITING TO INHALE

# Breathing problems you shouldn't ignore

**T**ake a deep breath." The command sounds easy, but for some people it's not so simple.

Being unable to breathe deeply or feeling short of breath may be a sign of a serious condition.

If you have any of the following symptoms, get them checked out by a physician:

- inability to take a deep breath
- shortness of breath without exertion
- shortness of breath after mild exertion, such as climbing a short flight of stairs
- wheezing
- tightness in the chest
- pain or discomfort when inhaling and exhaling
- a chronic cough or clearing of the throat
- difficulty breathing when you lie down
- a lack of energy
- coughing up blood or mucus

Difficulty breathing shouldn't be taken lightly. Lung disease is the number three killer in the United States. It takes on many forms, including:

- **Asthma**, a chronic disease in which the passages that

carry air in and out of your lungs become sore and swollen. Asthma is characterized by wheezing, coughing, chest tightness and trouble speaking.

- **Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)**, which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis. In COPD, your airways and air sacs lose their shape and become floppy, like a stretched-out rubber band. Coughing up mucus is often a first sign of this disease. COPD is typically caused by cigarette smoking.
- **Pneumonia**, an inflammation of the lungs, usually caused by an infection. It's normally accompanied by shortness of breath and a cough or a fever.
- **Lung cancer**, which can take years to develop. If it's diagnosed early, before it spreads, the survival rate is almost 50 percent.

Breathing difficulties can also be a sign of heart disease or a heart disorder, such as congestive heart failure, heart arrhythmia or pulmonary hypertension.

In these or any other case of breathing distress, your physician can help you find the source of the problem with a thorough physical exam.



If you're having trouble catching your breath, it's time to see your doctor.

### When cough drops don't do the trick

**A** chronic cough—one that lasts more than three weeks—may be your body's way of telling you a problem exists. Your cough could be the result of:

- allergies, particularly postnasal drip, which often triggers coughing
- asthma
- heartburn, where acid from your stomach backs up into your throat
- medicines, including beta-blockers for high blood pressure, migraines and glaucoma and ACE inhibitors



Lee Christenson  
Chief Executive Officer

## Dear neighbors,

**H**appy New Year! We're excited to bring you another year of *Health Connection*.

### SUCCESSES IN 2007

As we enter 2008, we can reflect on our successes over the past year, including opening the area's largest emergency department and intensive care unit, a Spine and

Joint Center and the Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) Surgery Center, as well as acquiring open magnetic resonance imaging technology.

This year, we plan to continue recruiting new physicians and open a second catheterization lab.

### THIS ISSUE

In this issue, we introduce you to our Employee of the Year, Raelene Barrett, C.N.A., and Laughlin's newest internal medicine physician, Anthony Irvibogbe, M.D. You'll also learn about the Childbirth Education Class we offer.

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

Thank you for your continued support of WARMC.

Sincerely,

LEE CHRISTENSON  
Chief Executive Officer  
Western Arizona Regional Medical Center

## MEET OUR NEW PHYSICIAN

In 2008, Western Arizona Regional Medical Center expects to have several new physicians join our advanced medical staff. We're pleased to welcome our newest physician.



**ANTHONY IRVIBOGBE, M.D.**  
Internal Medicine

3650 Sand Point Circle, #106  
Laughlin  
(702) 299-0046

**R**esidents of Laughlin have a new neighbor, Anthony Irvibogbe, M.D. The internist

received his medical degree from the University of Benin in Nigeria and completed his residency at Woodland Medical Center and Mental Health in Brooklyn, N.Y.

"My family and I are very excited to be part of the Laughlin community," says Dr. Irvibogbe. "The people of Laughlin all have a warm spirit, and I'm glad I can be one of their doctors."

Dr. Irvibogbe is married and has one young son. When he isn't working, he enjoys meeting new people, listening to music and playing soccer.



### Fast fact

**W**hile it's best to get vaccinated in the fall, a flu shot in January can still keep you healthy, especially during flu's peak in February. Flu season can even last until May. Talk to your health-care provider today.

# Preparing for your new baby

## WARMC offers Childbirth Education Class

**E**xpecting a new bundle of joy can be an exciting time in your life. It's good to know that Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) is here for you and your family long before the big day. WARMC now offers a Childbirth Education Class to help prepare you for your new baby.

### WHAT TO EXPECT

Expectant parents will learn about labor and delivery, medications, breastfeeding and newborn care. "I always encourage the significant other or coach to come to the class, too," says Kim Baird, WARMC obstetrics nurse and course instructor. "This class really helps new parents get a better understanding of what they can expect."

The class takes place on the first Saturday of each month from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Building 2, directly across the street from the hospital. A \$5 fee per new mother covers a manual. Expectant parents are encouraged to sign up for the class one month before their due date.



**!** Sign up today!

**F**or more information or to register, call Kim Baird at (928) 763-0676.

## Hats off to our Employee of the Year!



Raelene Barrett, C.N.A.  
WARMC Employee of the Year

**W**estern Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC) has truly become a home away from home for Raelene Barrett, C.N.A. The 2007 Employee of the Year has worked as a certified nursing assistant at WARMC for 17 years.

"I love my job and the patients I work with," says Barrett. Her responsibilities include taking care of patients, assisting the nurses and filling in as unit clerk.

"Raelene provides quality care to her patients and their families," says Cindy Garrison, WARMC medical unit director. "She's nice, caring and loved by her patients. Raelene is a great team player and is always willing to help when needed in any capacity."

When Barrett isn't busy at work, she enjoys barbecues with her family, watching movies, traveling, crocheting, sewing and embroidery.

## HEALTHWISE QUIZ

### How much do you know about **sleep disorders**?

Take this quiz to find out.

1

**Lack of sleep may put you at a higher risk for:**

- a. type 2 diabetes
- b. low blood pressure
- c. asthma
- d. gastric ulcers

2

**Which of the following changes in your sleep routine may be a result of an underlying heart problem?**

- a. waking up during the night to urinate
- b. waking up during the night due to shortness of breath
- c. not being able to fall asleep
- d. both a and b

3

**Restoring your body with sleep has been shown to:**

- a. improve skin tone
- b. improve red blood-cell count
- c. reduce eye strain
- d. improve reaction time and attention span

4

**Women diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea often experience these symptoms:**

- a. snoring loudly with periods of gasping or snorting
- b. waking up with a sore throat
- c. waking up with a headache
- d. all of the above

5

**The most common treatment for sleep apnea is:**

- a. antihistamine medication
- b. surgery
- c. a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) mask worn at night
- d. analgesic medication

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

## WOMEN: Is a heart attack in your future?

**A** heart attack may seem to come out of the blue. Yet your personal risk factors and lifestyle habits may hold clues to your heart's health and what your odds are of suffering from a heart attack.

### LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

High blood pressure (140/90 mm Hg and above) and high blood cholesterol (240 mg/dL and above) are significant clues that you may be developing heart blockages in the form of plaque. Being postmenopausal and having diabetes or rheumatoid arthritis can also increase heart attack risk.

Talk with your healthcare provider about what risk factors are significant for you. He or she can help you control your blood pressure and cholesterol levels and may also recommend testing for metabolic syndrome. Recent research shows this condition may be useful for detecting signs of heart disease in women who might appear healthy. The signs of metabolic syndrome include a waist size greater than 35 inches, higher-than-normal levels of triglycerides and glucose, and insufficient levels of HDL, or good cholesterol.

Also, be aware of what a heart attack might feel like for a woman, as some symptoms can differ from those of men. Chest pain or pressure; nausea; vomiting; indigestion; cold sweat; shortness of breath; light-headedness; fatigue; or discomfort in the arms, back, neck, jaw or stomach are all possible signs.

### GO HEART SMART

- Aim for a normal weight.
- Exercise for 30 minutes every day.
- Quit smoking and avoid secondhand smoke.
- Avoid foods high in saturated or trans fat and curb refined carbohydrates—cookies, white bread, sweet drinks—sometimes referred to as “high-glycemic-index” foods.

# Bone-afide steps to a strong family framework

**B**ones are vital to protecting our organs, anchoring our muscles and supporting our bodies. The best ways to build strong bones in ourselves and our children—while reducing the risk of brittle bones later in life—is through adequate calcium consumption and regular physical activity.

Getting adequate amounts of calcium and vitamin D (necessary for calcium absorption) is essential throughout life, particularly during the peak bone-building years from ages 9 to 18. The amount of calcium\* you need is largely determined by age:

- Birth to 6 months: 210 milligrams (mg)
- 6 months to 1 year: 270 mg
- 1 to 3 years: 500 mg
- 4 to 8 years: 800 mg
- 9 to 18 years: 1,300 mg
- 19 to 50 years: 1,000 mg
- 50+ years: 1,200 mg
- Pregnant or lactating women: 1,000–1,300 mg

Good sources of calcium for the entire family include

dairy products (low-fat or non-fat milk, cheese and yogurt), dark green leafy vegetables (broccoli and bok choy), nuts (almonds) and calcium-fortified foods (orange juice, cereal, bread, soy beverages and tofu products). If you can't get enough calcium from your diet, consider taking a calcium supplement.

Physical activity is a must for all ages to build and maintain sturdy bones. The best exercises for bones are weight bearing: jumping rope, walking, jogging, climbing stairs, aerobic dancing, skateboarding and playing soccer. How much exercise do you need for maximum bone strength? Kids should get at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity daily, and adults at least 30 minutes.

*\*Source: National Academy of Sciences*



## Eat smart for energy

**T**he busy lifestyles many of us lead would slow to a crawl without a dependable source of energy. We get much of that energy from the foods and beverages we consume. That's why it's more important than ever to eat healthy foods that not only keep our bodies charged but our weight and cholesterol down.

What are the healthiest, fuel-packed foods? Good

energy foods include those rich in:

- **complex carbohydrates**, such as whole-grain breads, pasta and rice; potatoes; and legumes
- **iron**, including beef, raisins, kidney beans, pumpkin seeds and spinach

- **B vitamins**, such as fortified cereal, fish, whole grains, legumes, leafy green vegetables and milk

Active people also need constant fluids to avoid dehydration, which can cause fatigue. Drink plenty of water (you can jazz it up with lemon or lime), low-fat or fat-free milk, or vegetable or tomato juice. Steer clear of caffeine and alcohol, which can dehydrate the body, and sugary drinks.

Be careful not to overeat. It can cause fatigue, especially if you eat foods high in sugar and fat. And skipping breakfast will leave you worn out by 10 or 11 a.m. Instead, start with a low-fat, high-fiber breakfast and then refuel every three to four hours.

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Without the proper foods and fluids, your body won't have the fuel it needs for energy.

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# Quality healthcare close to home

**W**hen you need healthcare close to home, trust Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (WARMC), the premier healthcare provider serving tri-state area residents and visitors since 1984. WARMC is located at 2735 Silver Creek Road in Bullhead City.

## WARMC | (928) 763-2273

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- Medical records ..... (928) 763-0211
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Western Arizona Regional Medical Center  
2735 Silver Creek Road  
Bullhead City, AZ 86442

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