

Health Connection

A PUBLICATION OF WOODLAND HEIGHTS
MEDICAL CENTER

A daily dose of safety

Take care with
your prescriptions

Enhanced services at The Diagnostic Center

Help for sinus sufferers at WHMC

Be wise— immunize!



WOODLAND HEIGHTS
MEDICAL CENTER

www.woodlandheights.net

Mind your medicine

Smart strategies to stay well



Adults over age 65 who have adverse drug reactions account for more than 177,000 emergency room visits each year. One-third of these visits are related to three drugs: warfarin (a blood thinner), insulin (for diabetes) and digoxin (a heart medicine). Many of these reactions can be avoided with better communication between patient and physician. Follow this advice to help you avoid becoming a statistic:

- **Tell your physician about all the medicine you're taking.** That

includes prescription medications and over-the-counter drugs and supplements. Your physician will want to make sure you're not taking anything that can cause a reaction or affect a drug's potency. For example, Ginkgo biloba, garlic, ginger and ginseng can all interact with warfarin, as can medications taken for headaches and joint pain, such as aspirin and ibuprofen. Iron and calcium supplements can interfere with thyroid medication absorption.

- **Ask questions.** Don't be afraid to ask your physician to clarify a medication's purpose and common side effects. Also make sure you know when and how often you should take it and what to do if you miss a dose. Learn both the medicine's brand name and generic name and its shape, size and color.
- **Write it down.** Keep a list of all the medications you take in your wallet in case you do end up in the ER. This will allow physicians and nurses to avoid giving you medicine that could cause a dangerous interaction.
- **Take your medication as prescribed.** Don't stop your treatment because you think it's not working, you have side effects or you think your pill-taking regimen is hard to stick with. Instead, call your physician. He or she may be able to prescribe a different medicine or dosage to minimize side effects or simplify your regimen.

Also let your physician know if you've stopped taking a prescribed medicine. Otherwise, he or she may assume the drug isn't working and give you a higher dosage or different medication.

- **Go to follow-up appointments.** Some medications, such as blood thinners and drugs for diabetes, seizures and heart problems, require regular blood tests and monitoring by your physician. Regular visits are crucial to ensure you're getting a safe and effective dose.



Snap, crackle, pop!

What are your joints telling you?

Your body is a symphony of sounds—that cracking in your ankles, the popping in your knee. What causes these noises? Sometimes, it's just ligaments or tendons tightening and moving with a joint. For the most part, these sounds are normal and don't require any treatment.

But sometimes these noises can signal a more serious problem. A loud pop and locking of a joint can mean that torn cartilage, a piece of bone or something else has gotten caught between joint surfaces. Cracking and grinding may be a sign of arthritis. A loss of smooth cartilage and roughening of the joint surface is to blame for these noises.

JUST MAKING NOISE?

To find out whether your popping and cracking should be of concern, look for the following signs. See your physician if you have any of these symptoms:

- pain accompanying the popping
- swelling of the joint
- locking or sticking of the joint
- loss of motion or function

A JOINT EFFORT

The Arthritis Foundation and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons suggest following these tips to keep your joints healthy:

- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Stretch to increase your flexibility. Ask your physician to help you develop a regular stretching program.
- Stand up straight, shoulders back.
- When you lift heavy objects, use your legs instead of using your back. If you can't lift something yourself, ask for help.



- Alternate heavy activity such as housework, brisk walking or strenuous yardwork with rest periods.
- Wear protective gear, such as wrist, elbow or knee pads, if you're engaging in an activity where you could fall.
- Pay attention to your body. Pain may be a sign you're overworking your joints.
- Eat a well-balanced diet that includes plenty of calcium (1,200 mg a day for those over age 50; 1,000 mg for those ages 19 to 50).

Knuckle cracking: Bad to the bone?

Some people just can't resist cracking their knuckles. The cracking sound you hear is the "popping" of air bubbles when the joint is pushed or pulled a certain way. Knuckle cracking can certainly be annoying to others, but does it really make your knuckles larger? That old wives' tale hasn't been proven, but this is still a habit you should try to break, as studies point to possible soft-tissue damage in joints, a weak grip and hand swelling as a result of repeated cracking.



Dear neighbors,



Lance Jones
Chief Executive
Officer

Since 1918, Woodland Heights Medical Center (WHMC) has been committed to providing our patients and the communities we serve with comprehensive, personalized health-care. However, what makes WHMC truly special is the award-winning care that patients receive from our experienced and dedicated team of physicians, nurses and clinicians.

RECOGNIZED FOR STROKE CARE

The American Heart Association awarded WHMC the Bronze Award for stroke as part of its Get With The Guidelines Program. This achievement was recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* in July 2008.

DEDICATED TO EXCELLENCE

WHMC was also ranked among the top 5 percent of America's hospitals for overall clinical excellence with patient-satisfaction marks from the most recent Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems survey. Last year, our nurses were also recognized by the American Nurses Credentialing Center in the Pathway to Excellence program. We earned these accolades because of our dedicated team of caregivers and staff, and we're committed to maintaining this standard of care.

We pledge to provide our patients a comprehensive system of healthcare through compassionate, efficient, responsive and courteous service every day, and we look forward to serving you over the next 91 years.

Best regards,

LANCE JONES
Chief Executive Officer
Woodland Heights Medical Center

PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

We'd like to introduce you to one of the experienced physicians at Woodland Heights Medical Center.



EDWARD SHARRER, D.P.M.
Podiatrist

300 N. John Redditt Drive,
Suite 4
Lufkin
(936) 632-5252

Woodland Heights Medical Center is pleased to welcome Edward Sharrer, D.P.M., to its talented team of podiatrists. He specializes in foot treatment and surgery and will be serving patients in Lufkin, Livingston, Hemphill and Trinity. Dr. Sharrer is a graduate of Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. He attended medical school at Barry University in Miami, Fla., and completed his residency at Kennedy Memorial Hospital in Stratford, N.J. Dr. Sharrer is accepting new patients.

Sinus sufferers find relief at WHMC



Sinusitis affects 37 million people each year. In fact, chronic sinusitis is more common than arthritis or high blood pressure. Usually preceded by a cold, allergy attack or irritation from environmental pollutants, sinusitis typically runs its course in a few days. Symptoms include:

- facial pain, pressure, congestion or fullness
- nasal congestion, obstruction or blockage
- discolored nasal discharge
- fever
- loss of smell
- headache
- fatigue

If your symptoms persist, you may have a bacterial infection or acute sinusitis. If you develop sinusitis frequently or it lasts three months or longer, you may have chronic sinusitis.

OLD HEADACHE, NEW SOLUTION

A new medical technology designed to open blocked sinuses is available at Woodland Heights Medical Center (WHMC). Balloon sinuplasty, an advanced technique in sinusitis care, is performed by Brian Humphreys, M.D., the only specialist in the area trained to perform the minimally invasive procedure. The catheter-based technology is specifically designed to navigate the sinuses and is FDA approved.

“Balloon sinuplasty is a quantum leap in the treatment of sinusitis,” says Dr. Humphreys, an ear, nose and throat

specialist. He trained in the new technique at Stanford University and attended additional courses at Harvard University.

RELIEVING THE PRESSURE

An alternative to sinus surgery, balloon sinuplasty is done using an endoscopic balloon technique. “It’s similar to balloon angioplasty for the heart,” Dr. Humphreys says.

A flexible device is placed into the sinus passage through the nostril. Then a balloon is gently inflated to open the blocked airway. The balloon is deflated and removed. This procedure can be done in each of a patient’s six sinuses.

“Because we don’t remove bone and tissue in this procedure,” Dr. Humphreys says, “it may alleviate the uncomfortable nasal packing, reduce bleeding and allow for faster recovery.”

The technology may be used with other medical therapies and surgical techniques, and it doesn’t limit future treatment options if a patient has progressive disease, he adds.



◀ Brian Humphreys, M.D., performs the minimally invasive balloon sinuplasty procedure at WHMC.

! Get relief today!

Balloon sinuplasty is a new tool in sinusitis treatment. Ask your family physician about it, or call (936) 699-3141 to make an appointment with Brian Humphreys, M.D., and find out if you’re a candidate for the procedure. Dr. Humphreys’ office is at 121 Gaslight Medical Parkway.

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

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

Take this quiz to find out.

1 To lose one pound, you need to burn how many calories?

- a. 500
- b. 1,500
- c. 2,500
- d. 3,500

2 A good way to measure the intensity of an exercise is to keep track of your:

- a. heart rate
- b. blood pressure
- c. sweat levels
- d. thirst intensity

3 Exercise can:

- a. reduce depression
- b. help manage type 2 diabetes
- c. boost good HDL cholesterol
- d. all of the above

4 The *minimum* amount of time you should be active every day is:

- a. 15 minutes
- b. 20 minutes
- c. 30 minutes
- d. there is no minimum

5 Which of the following exercises will *not* help you build stronger bones?

- a. running
- b. swimming
- c. lifting weights
- d. dancing

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

The kidney-heart connection

If you think kidney disease only affects your kidneys, think again. Though researchers can't fully explain the link, kidney disease is an independent risk factor for heart disease and greatly increases the risk of dying from heart problems. In fact, heart disease is the most common cause of death for the more than 20 million Americans with chronic kidney disease.

WHO GETS KIDNEY DISEASE?

Kidney disease is often called a "silent killer" because many people don't even know they have it until it reaches an advanced stage. Risk factors include being obese; smoking; and having high blood pressure, diabetes or a family history of kidney disease. Ask your physician about testing if you're at risk. If he or she suspects you may have chronic kidney disease, blood and urine samples can diagnose it.

KEEP YOUR KIDNEYS HEALTHY

If you already have kidney disease, early treatment can help keep it from getting worse. But the best method of attack is to prevent the problem in the first place. Take these steps to minimize your risk:

- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Eat healthful foods and be active every day.
- **Quit smoking.** Besides the damage it can do to your heart, smoking can interfere with medicine for high blood pressure.
- **Get your blood pressure level to 120/80 mm Hg or lower.**

Start by slashing salt from your diet and getting more potassium (found in bananas, apricots and broccoli). If changing your diet doesn't help, discuss medications with your physician.

- **Control your blood sugar if you have diabetes.** Dietary changes and medication may be needed.



'Brake' for breakfast



You wouldn't take off for a road trip with no fuel in your car, so it doesn't make much sense to send your body out for the day with nothing to run on. Your tank needs breakfast.

Studies have shown that those who eat this most important meal of the day are less tired and irritable, have better concentration and are more likely to maintain a healthy weight. Not a bacon-and-eggs person? No problem. Try these

out-of-the-cereal-box suggestions from the American Dietetic Association:

- one cup of vanilla low-fat yogurt topped with whole-grain cereal and berries
- leftover veggie pizza with a piece of fruit and a glass of milk
- whole-grain toast topped with a little peanut butter and apple slices
- whole-grain waffles or pancakes topped with fresh banana
- a super-fast smoothie, made from frozen fruit and yogurt, whipped up in a blender
- a breakfast wrap (try low-sodium deli turkey, low-fat cheese and spinach in a tortilla)
- oatmeal sprinkled with cinnamon and walnuts

Ready, aim, vaccinate!

Vaccines aren't just for babies. If your child hasn't been to the pediatrician in a while, he or she may have missed some important shots. And don't forget that adults need vaccines, too! Talk

with your pediatrician about your child's specific needs and whether he or she is at high risk. And ask your own physician about *your* needs. Use this handy chart as your guide.

IMMUNIZATION	BIRTH TO AGE 6	AGES 7-18	AGES 19+
Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTap, Td/Tdap)	4 doses by 18 months; final dose at age 6	Kids need a booster at ages 11-12. For teens, ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	Get a Td booster every 10 years. If you're under age 65 and haven't been vaccinated with Tdap before, you need a single dose.
Haemophilus influenzae type b	4 doses by age 15 months		
Hepatitis A	2 doses between 12 and 23 months	High-risk kids and adults need a vaccination.	
Hepatitis B	3 doses within first 18 months of life	Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	High-risk adults should be immunized.
Human papillomavirus (HPV)		3 doses are recommended for girls ages 11-12, or later if a young woman isn't up to date. Ask your physician about the pros and cons of vaccination.	
Inactivated polio virus	3 doses by 18 months	Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	
Influenza	Yearly, for kids ages 6 months to 19 years		Anyone <i>can</i> get vaccinated; high-risk adults and those over age 50 <i>should</i> be.
Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)	1 dose at 12-15 months; another at ages 4-6	Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	If you haven't had this vaccine, you need it. High-risk adults need a second dose. If you were born before 1957, you're considered immune to measles and mumps.
Meningococcal (meningitis)	Ask your pediatrician if your child is high risk.	It's recommended for kids ages 11-12; otherwise, ask your pediatrician if your child is at high risk.	It's a must for high-risk groups.
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	4 doses of pneumococcal conjugate by 15 months	High-risk kids and adults need the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine. Adults should get vaccinated at age 65; some older adults may need a booster.	
Rotavirus	3 doses by 6 months		
Varicella (chicken pox)	1 dose at 12-15 months; another at ages 4-6	Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	If you aren't up to date and never had the chicken pox, speak with your physician.
Zoster (shingles)			Get it once, at age 60 or older.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Diagnostic Center at Woodland Heights

Enhanced services *and* better results

The Diagnostic Center at Woodland Heights, an extension of Woodland Heights Medical Center's (WHMC) radiology department, offers a pleasant, relaxing atmosphere with convenient parking and curbside service.

MORE SERVICES

Preregistration for inpatient and outpatient services is done at The Diagnostic Center. Expanded services include electrocardiography, computed tomography scanning, ultrasound, bone density screening, mammography, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and general radiography and fluoroscopy, as well as general lab services.

The Diagnostic Center also has the only high-field 0.7 open MRI in the area. The Hitachi Altaire system, offering advanced imaging in an open, anxiety-reducing environment, performs rapid scans that reduce total exam time. Used with WHMC's 1.5T MRI, we've increased the number of available appointments, which reduces scheduling wait times while providing advanced imaging for every situation.

A NEW DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR WOMEN

The Diagnostic Center also offers mammography services with GE DMR+ equipment that offers enhanced image quality. In November, we added stereotactic breast biopsy services, which are done in an outpatient environment. Patients undergoing this new procedure don't need sedation and there's no recovery time.

Same-day reports for digital testing are also available to physicians.



! Make an appointment today!

Take advantage of advanced technology at The Diagnostic Center at Woodland Heights. To schedule an appointment, call (936) 637-8514.

Located at 125 Gaslight Medical Parkway, the center is open 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

www.woodlandheights.net



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