

Health Connection

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT
SCENIC MOUNTAIN MEDICAL CENTER

Visit
Healthy Woman
Online!
See page 4

Is it time
for your
colonoscopy?

Meet our
family physicians

5 super foods
for good health



SCENIC MOUNTAIN
MEDICAL CENTER

www.smmccares.com



The vein truth

How to keep your blood flowing

Normally, you don't think about them much. Your veins are just there, transporting blood to your heart from other organs and tissues on a daily basis. But when veins become visible, painful or begin affecting your health, you can't ignore them any longer.

WHEN GOOD VEINS GO BAD

Two conditions that you may encounter are:

- **Varicose veins.** When one-way valves in the veins fail to keep blood moving forward, the blood pools, causing swelling. That leaves you with bulging, twisting veins located just under the surface of the skin. While they rarely cause symptoms, varicose veins can lead to pain, blood clots and skin ulcers. You have a greater chance of developing varicose veins if you have a family history of varicose veins or are older, a woman, pregnant, overweight or obese or inactive. Varicose veins can be treated by procedures or surgery, including laser surgery, where laser light energy fades veins.
- **Deep vein thrombosis (DVT).** DVT is a blood clot that forms in a vein deep within the body, usually in the lower legs or thighs. It can cause a serious problem called pulmonary embolism, which occurs when the clot breaks free and travels to the lungs. Sitting for a long time can increase your risk of getting a blood clot, as can having

surgery and taking hormone therapy or other medications. Symptoms of DVT include pain, swelling, skin redness and warmth and tenderness over the vein. Your physician may prescribe anti-clotting medications to treat DVT.

PREVENTING PROBLEMS

You can take steps to help reduce your risk of vein problems, or help you manage if you already have them. To keep veins in their place:

- **Get moving.** Exercise can help blood move through veins.
- **Avoid sitting or standing for too long.** Don't cross your legs, and if you can, raise your legs above the level of your heart when sitting or resting. If you've had surgery, get moving as soon as possible afterward.
- **Lose weight.** This will help blood flow and take some of the pressure off your veins.
- **Toss your tight clothes.** Don't wear anything that's tight around your waist, groin or legs, as it can cut off blood flow.
- **Skip the stilettos, ladies.** Low heels can help tone calf muscles, which can get blood moving through your veins.
- **Ask your physician about compression stockings.** They can help keep blood from pooling and reduce leg swelling.
- **Get up and walk around while traveling.** If traveling by car, try to stop every hour for a walking break.

Medicine cabinet makeover

Taking stock can keep your family healthy

Is your medicine cabinet a disaster area, a catchall for old medications, unlabeled bottles and other hazards? If you answered yes, a good cleaning at least once a year is recommended.

So where do you start? First, move all your medicine out of the medicine cabinet, since it's not recommended that you store medicine in the bathroom. Bathrooms are humid places, and that humidity can make your medicines less effective, or, in extreme cases, toxic. Instead, find a cool, dry place to keep your medicines.

Next, get rid of any medication that's expired. However, don't throw it down the toilet, which poses an environmental risk. Instead, throw old drugs in the trash, taking care to mix them with kitty litter or coffee grounds to make them less attractive to children and pets.

Also, make sure to keep medication in its original container, which contains important information like when the drug expires, how much to take, possible drug interactions and who it was prescribed for. Don't leave that cotton plug in any bottles either, as it can draw moisture into the bottle.

Here are some things you may have in your cabinet that deserve a closer look:



Clean out your medicine cabinet at least once a year to keep your family healthy and safe.

SYRUP OF IPECAC. It used to be recommended to make a child throw up if he or she had swallowed poison. However, there's no evidence it works and it may actually cause other treatments to fail. Throw it out! Instead, call poison control in an emergency.

COUGH AND COLD MEDICINE. It's not recommended for kids younger than age 4. And never give a child an adult-strength medication, as it could cause a serious reaction.

ASPIRIN. It's safe for most adults, but if you have kids, be extra careful. Aspirin's been linked to a rare

condition called Reye's syndrome, which can cause brain damage and liver function problems in children and teens, especially those taking the drug to treat chickenpox or the flu. Instead, keep other pain relievers and fever reducers, like acetaminophen and ibuprofen, on hand.

UNUSED ANTIBIOTICS. Don't save them for later or give them to another person. Get rid of them.

THERMOMETERS. If they break, old mercury thermometers can expose you to toxic mercury. Use an oral thermometer for older kids; choose an axillary (under the armpit) or rectal one for younger children.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



Larry Rodgers
Chief Executive Officer

Dear neighbors,

A mission statement is defined as a brief description of an organization's fundamental purpose. It answers the question, "Why do we exist?" At Scenic Mountain Medical Center (SMMC), our mission is:

To provide compassionate, high-quality and safe patient care that exceeds the expectations of our patients, physicians, employees and volunteers and to preserve and strengthen the tradition of community service.

To this end, SMMC has been working with the Studer Group, an international firm that partners with health care organizations to "create great places for patients to receive care by first creating a great place for employees to work and physicians to practice medicine." We're weaving proven tools into our own

customer-service initiative, Community Cares, to help us better identify and meet our patients' needs. We're also recognizing and rewarding team members whose service exceeds your expectations.

WE'RE LISTENING!

We want your feedback about the service we provide at SMMC. Our research company will be conducting a community perception survey later this fall to help us identify what's most important about SMMC to you, our customers.

My family and I thank you for extending us such a warm welcome to Big Spring. We're glad to be here in beautiful West Texas!

Warm regards,

LARRY RODGERS
Chief Executive Officer
Scenic Mountain Medical Center

HEALTHY WOMAN
has moved ONLINE



Connect now
to communicate
with friends,
neighbors and
other women
like you - in a
whole new way!

Visit Healthy Woman Online!

Healthy Woman Online is a free resource to empower women ages 25-65 to make informed health and well-being decisions. Join today to:

- be the first to learn about and sign up for events
- connect with other Healthy Woman members
- receive information about your health, relationships and life issues

To confirm that you want to remain or to become a member of the Healthy Woman program, you must sign up at

www.smmccares.com

FOR QUESTIONS, E-MAIL US AT HEALTHY_WOMAN@CHS.NET

Colonoscopy offers peace of mind



Ladd Hoffman, M.D.
General Surgeon



John Lang, M.D.
General Surgeon

More than 143,000 new cases of colorectal cancer—the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States—are expected to be diagnosed this year. “Since prevention and early detection are key, it’s important to get a colonoscopy,” says John Lang, M.D., Scenic Mountain Medical Center (SMMC) board-certified general surgeon.

A colonoscopy helps your physician determine whether you have colorectal cancer by detecting abnormalities such as inflamed tissue, irregular growths and ulcers. “A colonoscopy can also detect causes of bowel habit changes and help evaluate symptoms like abdominal pain and rectal bleeding,” says SMMC general surgeon Ladd Hoffman, M.D.

Although usually painless, colonoscopies sometimes cause anxiety in patients. All patients undergoing colonoscopy at SMMC are sedated so that they sleep through the entire procedure, minimizing any discomfort.

FACT VS. FICTION

Here’s the truth behind five colon cancer myths from the American Cancer Society (ACS):

Myth 1: Colorectal cancer is a man’s disease.

Truth: Colorectal cancer is just as common among women as men.

Myth 2: Colon cancer can’t be prevented.

Truth: In many cases, colon cancer starts with a small polyp. If the polyp is found early, physicians can remove the abnormal growth and stop colon cancer before it begins.

Myth 3: African-Americans aren’t at risk for colon cancer.

Truth: African-American men and women are diagnosed with and die from colorectal cancer at higher rates than any other racial or ethnic group.



Myth 4: Age isn’t a factor in developing colon cancer.

Truth: More than 90 percent of people diagnosed with colon cancer are ages 50 and older. The ACS recommends testing beginning at age 50.

Myth 5: It’s better not to get tested for colon cancer because it’s fatal regardless.

Truth: Colon cancer is treatable. If the cancer is found early, the five-year survival rate is 90 percent.

EARLY DETECTION IS KEY!

Getting screened for colorectal cancer is a key step in maintaining your health. If you have questions about colonoscopy, contact your physician. When scheduling an appointment, talk with your physician about having the procedure done close to home at SMMC.

! Don’t delay!

Scenic Mountain Medical Center can provide you with a wide range of services. Ask your physician if it’s time for your colonoscopy. Visit www.smmccares.com/colonoscopy to learn more.

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

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

Take this quiz to find out.



CURB YOUR CHOLESTEROL

Every year, more than a million Americans have heart attacks, and about 500,000 die from heart disease. One of the major risk factors for such heart trouble is high cholesterol. This fatlike substance builds up in your arteries and slows or blocks blood flow to the heart.

Some experts recommend that you start cholesterol testing by age 20; others say to start at age 35. Using a simple blood test called a lipoprotein profile, your physician can determine if your cholesterol levels are too high. Here's what's considered healthy:

>**Total cholesterol:** less than 200 mg/dL

>**LDL (bad) cholesterol:** less than 100 mg/dL is optimal; 100 to 129 mg/dL is near optimal/above optimal

>**HDL (good) cholesterol:** 60 mg/dL or higher may protect the heart; less than 40 mg/dL for men (less than 50 for women) puts you at a greater risk for heart problems

>**Triglycerides (another type of blood fat):** less than 150 mg/dL

WORK ON IT

Are your levels higher than they should be? You can often make a big impact on your cholesterol by making a few small changes:

- **Cut back on saturated fat and cholesterol.** The American Heart Association recommends that you keep your saturated fat consumption to less than 7 percent of your total daily calories. So if you consume about 2,000 calories a day, no more than 140 of them should come from saturated fat, or about 16 grams a day. Avoid trans fats and stock up on fruits, vegetables, whole grains and foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids (salmon, walnuts, almonds).

- **Get active.** Engage in physical activity for at least 30 minutes daily.

- **Lose weight.** Being active and revamping your diet can help. Dropping even 5 to 10 pounds can lower cholesterol.

- **Quit smoking.**

- **Follow your physician's advice.** That includes taking medication, if needed.

1 Which of the following is not a symptom of type 2 diabetes?

- a. fatigue
- b. increased hunger
- c. difficulty urinating
- d. slow wound healing

2 Having diabetes can increase your chances of developing:

- a. glaucoma
- b. digestive problems
- c. gingivitis
- d. all of the above

3 Your physician may diagnose you with diabetes by performing a:

- a. thyroid test
- b. glucose test
- c. complete blood count
- d. none of the above

4 According to the National Institutes of Health, what percentage of people with type 2 diabetes are overweight?

- a. 60
- b. 70
- c. 80
- d. 90

5 Which of these statements about diabetes is true?

- a. You don't have to avoid sweets and chocolate.
- b. You'll eventually develop it if you're overweight.
- c. It makes you more likely to get colds or other illnesses.
- d. Eating too much sugar can cause it.

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

Flu, flu, go away!

It's fall again, and with the changing of the seasons often comes the dreaded flu. Recently, the seasonal flu has been upstaged somewhat by H1N1. Both strains are serious, may lead to complications such as pneumonia and bronchitis and can result in hospitalization and even death.

You can't always keep flu out of your home, but you can certainly reduce the risk of getting infected. Try these tips from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- **Get vaccinated.** This year, the seasonal flu vaccine comprises three strains of flu including H1N1. It's especially important for pregnant women; young children; people older than 65; people who have chronic health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease or lung disease; and others at high risk for complications.
- **Play defense.** Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue out; wash

your hands often (use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available); keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth; avoid close contact with sick people; and stay away from crowds during a flu outbreak. Stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone.

- **Take your medicine.** If you get sick, your physician may recommend an antiviral drug to make the symptoms milder, shorten the time you're sick and prevent complications.



5 must-eat foods

Despite what you might read on the Internet, there's no magic food to prevent disease or cure you of all your ills. However, certain foods are high in antioxidants, vitamins and minerals and, when combined with an overall healthy diet, may help you maintain good health. Consider adding these good, and good-for-you, foods to your diet:

1 Blueberries. Blueberries have plenty of fiber and vitamins A and C, and they may improve short-term memory. Add them to cereal or yogurt for a tart kick.



2 Sardines. Those little fish canned in oil pack a powerful nutrient punch, supplying plenty of protein, calcium and heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids and vitamins B12 and D. Try them in sandwiches, salads or sauces.

3 Almonds. Thanks to good fats, vitamin E and fiber, almonds are exceptionally good for your heart. Grab a small handful daily or sprinkle them on a salad.



4 Red beans. They're high in potassium, iron and magnesium (not to mention low in fat and an excellent source of protein), and may play a role in preventing heart disease and some forms of cancer. Try adding them to stews instead of meat.

5 Sweet potatoes. That orange color is due to loads of beta carotene, which may help slow the aging process. Sweet potatoes also provide vitamins B6, C and E; folate; and potassium. Try them baked or sliced into wedges for another take on french fries.

Health Connection is published as a community service of Scenic Mountain 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.

Copyright © 2010 Scenic Mountain Medical Center

FALL 2010



www.smmccares.com

705MM

When it comes to finding a primary care physician,
we've got you covered.



From a simple stomachache to something more serious,
you need a doctor you can trust.

Fortunately, the physicians on the medical staff at
Scenic Mountain Medical Center are here to help.

To schedule an appointment with any of these physicians,
please see their contact info.



Melencio Juan, M.D.
Family Medical Center
2301 S. Gregg Street
Big Spring, Texas 79720
432-267-5531



Susan Roberts, D.O.
Family Medical Center
2301 S. Gregg Street
Big Spring, Texas 79720
432-267-5531



Cynthia Rutledge, D.O.
Family Medical Center
2301 S. Gregg Street
Big Spring, Texas 79720
432-267-5531



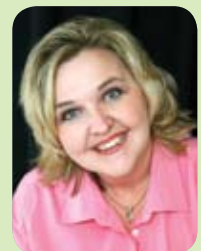
Scott Barclay, D.O.
Cornerstone Family &
Sports Medicine
1501 W. 11th Place,
2nd Floor
Big Spring, Texas 79720
432-264-6361



HEALTHY WOMAN
A SCENIC MOUNTAIN MEDICAL CENTER RESOURCE

Celebrating two tremendous years!

*"Wild about
Healthy Woman"*



**Featuring author
and comedienne
Lisa Smartt**