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MEDICAL CENTER

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HealthConnection

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*Health
Connection
gets a fresh
look!*

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For women by women**

Healthbriefs



tip

Walking

is a great way to reduce stress while you quit smoking. It aids in increasing mood and energy levels.

> New guidelines take the air out of ballooning obesity rates

More than two-thirds of adults and one-third of children are now considered to be overweight or obese. Excess weight raises the risk of serious health issues. To reverse this trend, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) updated their Dietary Guidelines for Americans in 2010. The guidelines focus on getting people to eat healthier and exercise more, and help policymakers create nutrition programs. The USDA and HHS released more consumer-friendly advice and tools, including a new food pyramid. They offer these simple strategies to help people change their habits and their weight:

- > Eat less.
- > Watch portion sizes.
- > Fill half of your plate each meal with fruits and veggies.
- > Switch to fat-free or low-fat milk.
- > Look for lower-sodium options.
- > Drink water instead of sugary drinks.



> Act F.A.S.T. to head off a stroke

Rapid medical care can help reduce the risk of brain damage from stroke. Physicians treat patients with a clot-busting drug that can help protect the brain against permanent damage, but the drug must be given within three hours of the stroke's onset. If someone is experiencing stroke symptoms, call 911. To help you remember stroke signs and determine whether someone you know has had a stroke, think **F.A.S.T.:**

- > **FACE:** Does the face look uneven? Can the person smile?
- > **ARMS:** Can the person raise both arms and keep them there?
- > **SPEECH:** Is the person's speech slurred or strange?
- > **TIME:** Call 911 if you notice any of these signs.

> Healthy diet may boost kids' IQs

Fish isn't the only food that's good for your brain. A new study says that other healthy selections might boost kids' intelligence. The flip side may also be true: If kids eat nothing but processed food, they might lose IQ points. Published in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, the report collected information from parents on almost 4,000 children. Surveys were given when children were ages 3, 4, 7 and 8.5. The "processed" diet included foods high in fat and sugar. The "health-conscious" diet included foods such as salad, rice, pasta, fish and fruit. Those who ate a processed diet at age 3 scored slightly lower on IQ tests at age 8.5 than those who ate a health-conscious one at age 3. While the difference between the groups was small, it might be another reason to encourage picky eaters to eat a few more vegetables.



Treating an ACL injury

➤ The dreaded torn ACL, or anterior cruciate ligament, is a common injury

for athletes—especially female athletes, who may be at a disadvantage because of hormonal influences and their build—but it can happen to just about anyone.

What is an ACL tear?

Your ACL is one of four knee ligaments. It's located in the middle of your knee and prevents the top of the shin bone, or the tibia, from sliding out in front of the end of the thigh bone, or the femur, while lending stability to your knee. Most often, ACL injuries occur when you stop suddenly and change direction while running, pivoting or landing from a jump or overextending your knee. You can also injure your ACL during contact, such as receiving a blow to your knee during a sports game or any nonsport accident.

When you injure your ACL, you may hear a popping noise and feel your knee giving out. Typically, painful swelling, joint tenderness, pain while walking and the inability to fully move your knee occur. Elevating the joint above heart level, icing it and using pain relievers are recommended until the injury can be evaluated. If your physician suspects an ACL tear, he or she may order an MRI to confirm that no other parts of the knee have been injured.

Treatment

The ACL cannot be “fixed.” Often, physicians have to create a new ligament through surgery. Surgery is the most common treatment for an ACL injury, as untreated injuries may lead to further instability of the knee and the beginning of arthritis in that area.

However, what's best for you depends on the degree of injury (is it a

partial tear or a complete tear?) and your lifestyle.

For example, a sedentary 75-year-old who has suffered only an ACL injury and has no knee instability may be able to function fine without surgery. In this case, bracing the knee combined with physical therapy can help the patient get back on his or her feet.

An athlete will most likely need surgery to continue to compete in sports, as will those who've suffered injury to multiple ligaments in the knee. In these cases, the ligament is rebuilt using a tissue graft from your own tendons, such as the hamstring, or from a cadaver. Most ACL tears typically require physical rehabilitation. Overall, ACL surgery has a long-term success rate of 82 percent to 95 percent.

Prevention

It's not easy to prevent an ACL injury, but you can do your part to reduce the chance that one will occur by:

- warming up properly before a physical activity
- engaging in strength training, such as using weight machines, to gain muscle strength
- asking a trainer to teach you how to land on the balls of your feet if you participate in sports that involve jumping and landing ●



tip

Warming

up properly before physical activity may help prevent ACL injuries.



A message FROM OUR CEO

JIM RESENDEZ
Chief Executive Officer

.....
off the hottest summer on record, both in terms of the weather outside and our physician recruitment activity. Please join me in welcoming the following physicians to our medical staff.

› **Michael Heinrich, M.D., anesthesia/pain management specialist**

Dr. Heinrich started in early June as the medical director overseeing anesthesia in our surgical services department. In addition to anesthesia, Dr. Heinrich also brings extensive experience in pain management—a much-needed medical specialty for our local community.

› **Naveed Zafar, M.D., general surgeon, Atascosa Surgical Associates**

Dr. Zafar joined Isela Vasquez, M.D., at Atascosa Surgical Associates in July after finishing his clinical fellowship with Texas Endosurgery Institute in San Antonio. Prior to his fellowship, Dr. Zafar completed his surgical residency at St. Francis Medical Center in Trenton, N.J., and his surgical internship at New York Hospital in Queens, N.Y.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Welcome to the fall issue of *Health Connection*, South Texas Regional Medical Center's (STRMC) community health newsletter. We're just coming

› **Robert MacArthur, M.D., orthopedic surgeon**

We're pleased to announce Dr. MacArthur started an orthopedic practice in the local area beginning in September. This critical medical specialty is essential for our community, and Dr. MacArthur brings a wealth of diagnostic and surgical experience that matches his unwavering commitment to overall patient care.

Also, to meet the diverse needs of the ever-changing population of women in the local area, STRMC has partnered with Gina Campbell, A.N.P., to open South Texas Women's Care. Please turn to the back page to learn more about the exciting services offered by this innovative program.

On behalf of our entire board of directors, medical staff and STRMC employees, we thank you for your continued patronage of our hospital and the inpatient and outpatient services we provide (for more information about outpatient services, turn to page 5). We're honored to be of service to you and your family and, as always, please feel free to let us know if there's anything we can do for you. I can be reached at **(830) 769-3515**.

Best wishes,

Jim Resendez

*Chief Executive Officer
South Texas Regional Medical Center*



Enjoy the benefits!

If you're not a Healthy Woman member yet, join today. Membership is free and the benefits can last a lifetime. Go to www.STRMC.com/HealthyWoman or call **(830) 769-3515**.



Healthy Woman is working to keep up with you—

So you can keep up with us!

› **We know women have busy schedules and it's not always easy to keep up with friends and family, let alone health**

information and community programs. So how can women keep up with hospital happenings and Healthy Woman events? It's easier than ever!

Check out the new Healthy Woman section of our hospital website. We have a new e-mail program to keep women even more up to date. And, when registering for upcoming Healthy Woman events, you'll get confirmation of your attendance by e-mail. You can even register your friends as guests! ●



Meeting the community's needs

➤ **South Texas Regional Medical Center (STRMC) is proud of the inpatient services we provide to our friends and neighbors on our 25-acre campus dedicated to patient care. But, would it surprise you to know that the overwhelming majority of the visits to our facilities are outpatient?**

By the numbers

STRMC provided 176,000 outpatient services to the residents of Atascosa and surrounding counties in the past year. When you do the math, it comes to more than 480 procedures a day. The majority of services are in the lab (105,000 procedures), which operates 24 hours a day.

Just across from the lab is medical imaging, which includes X-ray, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computerized axial tomography (CAT) scan, nuclear medicine, ultrasound and an impressive digital mammography unit that rivals any big-city imaging center. Our imaging team provides 12,000 services to the community annually.

STRMC also offers outpatient cardiovascular services in the Heart & Lung Center. From cardiac stress tests to electrocardiograms, STRMC cardiologists have ample tools to diagnose and treat heart disease. In all, roughly 6,300 outpatient cardiovascular services are provided at STRMC annually, which includes cardiac catheterization and cardiac rehabilitation.

Just east of the hospital campus are the STRMC Wound Care and Hyperbaric Center and the Outpatient Physical Rehabilitation Center. The Wound Care and Hyperbaric Center uses advanced technology to provide comprehensive care and management for patients with difficult-to-heal wounds. One of our advanced



therapies is hyperbaric oxygen therapy, in which patients receive 100 percent oxygen at double the atmospheric pressure to foster wound healing. Other surgical procedures provided at the center include nonsurgical skin grafting, negative pressure therapy and intravenous therapy for patients, which—when combined with hyperbaric treatment—account for roughly 6,700 procedures a year.

The Outpatient Physical Rehabilitation Center annually provides 33,000 physical, occupational and speech therapy services. Physical therapists focus on rebuilding muscle groups, while occupational therapists work with patients' fine motor skills that may have been impacted by a stroke or a disease affecting the nervous system. Speech therapy is also available for patients who need to improve clarity or articulation due to stroke or other nerve disorders.

This is just a small snapshot of the outpatient procedures STRMC delivers on a daily basis. Every procedure on every patient is delivered with the same care and compassion you've come to expect from your hometown hospital. ●



Choose STRMC!

To learn more about our outpatient services, visit www.STRMC.com or call our main office line at **(830) 769-3515**.

Can heart attacks be 'silent'?

➤ **You're undergoing a routine heart test when your physician drops a bombshell:**

"You've had a heart attack."

These are words you didn't expect to hear, because you didn't know you'd ever had one. But that's the trouble with what experts call "silent heart attacks."

While they don't produce the telltale warning signs of heart trouble, they still damage your heart and the rest of your body.

Silence isn't golden

A heart attack occurs when an artery that supplies oxygen-rich blood to the heart becomes blocked. Besides chest pain and shortness of breath, some people experience nausea, extreme fatigue, discomfort in their extremities and sweating.

People who experience a silent heart attack—studies put the number of Americans who do at almost 200,000 a year—either have no symptoms or symptoms

so mild that they're not recognized as a heart attack. These people are more likely to be women and those who have conditions such as heart failure and diabetes. Silent heart attacks also tend to accompany a condition called silent ischemia—or a painless chronic shortage of blood and oxygen to the heart because of artery plaque.

The longer you don't receive treatment, the more likely it is that serious, irreversible damage is being done to heart muscle, which reduces its ability to pump and can greatly increase your risk of death down the road.

Some silent heart attacks may be picked up on an electrocardiogram (ECG) during a routine physician visit because the damage done to heart muscle produces a different "wave."

Breaking through the silence

Risk factors such as smoking, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity and a sedentary lifestyle increase your risk for trouble. Your best bet to prevent a heart attack is to follow a heart-healthy lifestyle:

- Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, fish and fat-free or low-fat dairy products; limit saturated fats, cholesterol and sodium.
- Work out regularly.
- Quit smoking.
- Manage your diabetes.
- Take any medications used to treat high cholesterol or blood pressure as prescribed. ●

HealthWise QUIZ

How much do you know about colon cancer?

➤ TAKE THIS QUIZ TO FIND OUT.

- 1 **Which of the following is known to raise your risk of colon cancer?**
 - a. exercising too much
 - b. being under the age of 50
 - c. being obese
 - d. being of Asian descent
- 2 **How often should healthy individuals ages 50 or older at average risk of colon cancer get a colonoscopy?**
 - a. once every three years
 - b. once every five years
 - c. once every seven years
 - d. once every 10 years
- 3 **A possible symptom of colon cancer is:**
 - a. narrower stools
 - b. fatigue
 - c. rectal bleeding
 - d. all of the above
- 4 **Although more research is needed, which of the following supplements may possibly help reduce the risk of colon cancer?**
 - a. folic acid
 - b. green tea
 - c. vitamin A
 - d. vitamin C
- 5 **A true statement about colon cancer is:**
 - a. It's the leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States.
 - b. It usually arises from growths called polyps.
 - c. Blood tests can be used to detect colon cancer.
 - d. all of the above

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



Dangerous dishes

Keep your child safe from culinary choking hazards

➤ **Each year, more than 10,000 children younger than age 14 end up in the emergency room after choking on food.** That's because children lack the larger molars, stronger chewing ability and wider airways of older children and adults.

The American Academy of Pediatrics in 2010 recommended that hot dogs—one of the most common food choking hazards in children—carry a choking hazard warning on packaging, and that the hot dogs themselves be redesigned to make them less likely to get stuck in young throats.

But hot dogs aren't the only concern. Other choking hazards include peanuts, sausages, whole grapes, chewing gum, hard candy, whole cherry tomatoes, popcorn, tough meat, large pieces of raw fruits and vegetables and chips. You

can reduce the threat of injury or death by following these tips:

- Keep an eye on your child as he or she eats.
- Make sure your child is sitting up straight.
- Cut food into no more than ½-inch pieces.
- Teach children to chew and swallow properly.
- Cook vegetables until they're soft or grate them.
- Be on the lookout for stuffed cheeks—a sign your child is storing large quantities of food in his or her mouth and not swallowing. ●



In case of emergency

It's always a good idea to be prepared in case of a choking emergency. Visit www.redcross.org/www-files/Documents/pdf/Preparedness/ConsciousChokingPoster_EN.pdf to print out a chart that shows you what to do if an adult, child or infant is choking.

The truth about cereal

Is your breakfast bowl a dietary disaster?

➤ **Just how healthy are the cereals you and your child eat?** Sure, the box promises plenty of whole grains and fiber, but that might not be the reality.

Cereal can be a tasty and fast way to get your day started healthfully. But you need to look carefully at the nutrition label when making your purchase. First, carefully note the serving size; otherwise, you may be eating double the calories shown. Then, look for other key information:

➤ **Sugar.** Excess sugar is a major source of extra calories in the American diet. It also promotes tooth decay and may raise triglyceride levels—a type of blood fat—which can boost heart disease risk. Opt for cereal with 5 grams or less of sugar per serving. Skip cereals that list sugar at the top of the ingredients list or that contain many types of added sugar, such as high-fructose corn syrup.

➤ **Calories.** To avoid calorie overload, choose cereals with 120 calories or less per serving. Just remember, some cereals can be slightly higher in calories and still be healthy.



➤ **Fiber.** Ideally, you should purchase cereal that has at least 5 grams of fiber per serving, but be sure there are no less than 3 grams per serving. Why? This important nutrient may help lower your cholesterol and reduce your risk of heart disease, diabetes and some types of cancer. Make sure you're using fat-free or low-fat milk instead of whole milk or you could be canceling out those healthy benefits!

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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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For women by women

South Texas Women's Care is here for you

➤ **For the past six years, South Texas Regional Medical Center**

(STRMC) has offered the Healthy Woman online program to empower women with the knowledge and confidence to make informed health care and well-being decisions for themselves and their loved ones. Women make the majority of the health care decisions for family members and themselves.

STRMC is proud to announce the opening of South Texas Women's Care, a program for women offered by women, located at 1240 W. Oaklawn Road, Suite 121. This location is just east of the main hospital campus in the same facility that houses the Outpatient Physical Rehabilitation Center and the STRMC Wound Care and Hyperbaric Center as well as other specialty physician practices.

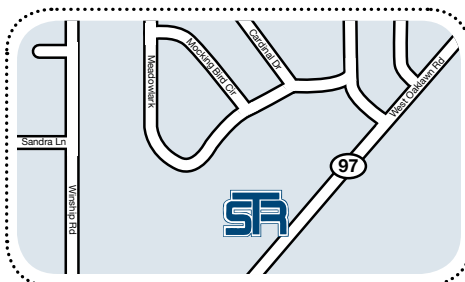
Staffing South Texas Women's Care is Gina Campbell, A.N.P., an adult nurse practitioner, in collaboration with Walter L. Chesshir, M.D., from Lone Star Medicine. The practice provides well-women services, annual physicals, gynecologic exams and a host of other services



GINA CAMPBELL, A.N.P., MEETS THE HEALTH CARE NEEDS OF AREA WOMEN, WHILE ALSO PROVIDING EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE ON HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES.

dedicated to the women of Atascosa and surrounding counties.

In addition to meeting the health care needs of women, Campbell also provides education and guidance on nutrition, healthy living and making positive lifestyle choices that impact health. All services cater to the specialized needs of women. ●



 South Texas
Women's Care



Need an appointment?

It's easy! Just call
(830) 569-8147. To
 learn more about
 STRMC's services, visit
www.STRMC.com.