

health matters

MEN:
Don't miss our
FREE prostate
cancer screening.
See page 8!



**Medical Center
of Plano**

Centered on your health.

S U M M E R 2 0 0 8

ADVANCED, MINIMALLY INVASIVE HEART CARE BENEFITS PATIENTS

When it comes to care and treatment of heart-related problems, choosing the right healthcare facility is critical. That's why Medical Center of Plano created HEARTLINK™—a program that offers state-of-the-art technology, minimally invasive procedures and highly trained physicians and staff. Patients in the heart program can rest assured they are in quality hands.

"HEARTLINK offers the latest advances to both diagnose and treat heart disease," explains Michele Hamilton, R.N., Director of Cardiovascular Services. "It's amazing where technology has taken us and where it is going. Medical Center of Plano continues to invest in the newest equipment which directly benefits the patient."

ACCURATE TESTING SAVES LIVES

Cutting-edge, minimally invasive diagnostic tests help Medical Center of Plano pinpoint cardiovascular problems so they can be treated as early as possible. Some of these tests include:

■ 64-SLICE COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY

(CT) SCANS that provide detailed, 3D imaging of the heart as it beats. It helps doctors diagnose blockages. The scan, which is performed on an outpatient basis, replaces more invasive testing.

■ **DIGITAL ECHOCARDIOGRAMS**, which are technologically-advanced ultrasounds that allow doctors to look at the heart's chambers. The 15-minute test can

help diagnose problems like congestive heart failure. Images are stored digitally, allowing for easier viewing and sharing.

LESS INVASIVE PROCEDURES

OFFER BIG BENEFITS

Medical Center of Plano treats the full gamut of heart-related problems. And in every case, they look for the least invasive technique that will provide the same superior results with less pain, quicker recovery, and shorter hospital stays.

"Medical Center of Plano is on the forefront of new techniques in cardiac surgery," explains Greg Messner, M.D., cardiovascular surgeon. "The program's commitment to excellence propels us to continually ask if we are following best practices and make what we're already doing even better."

The following advanced, minimally invasive procedures provide shorter recovery times and optimal outcomes for patients:

■ **AORTIC STENT GRAFTING.** This procedure can repair aortic aneurysms and

replace its more invasive cousin: open surgery. It's performed through a catheter threaded through tiny incisions to the aneurysm. A mesh stent is then inflated, securing the aorta walls.

■ **CAROTID STENTING.** The use of carotid stenting can prevent a fatal stroke by treating a carotid artery blocked by plaque. Your doctor may recommend that you have a stent inserted as an alternative to surgical removal of the plaque. In this procedure, a vascular doctor first performs an angioplasty to flatten the plaque and open the artery, then inserts a slender, metal-mesh tube—call a stent—which expands inside your carotid artery to increase blood flow in areas blocked by plaque.

■ **OFF-PUMP BYPASS SURGERY.** This procedure eliminates the use of the heart-lung machine. The surgery is performed on a beating heart versus the traditional approach of using a heart-lung machine along with medications to stop the heart so the bypass can be performed on a motionless heart. ■



Talk to your doctor to see if one of these procedures is right for you. If you'd like to learn more about the many services offered by HEARTLINK™, call 972.519.1307.

SAUCY ADVICE FOR PORK LOVERS

Cooks know how much a tasty marinade can boost the flavor of a meat dish. Now scientists think marinades might help reduce the amount of unhealthy compounds formed in meat during cooking. These cholesterol oxidation products (COPs) may raise the risk for cancer and other diseases. One study looked at marinating one type of meat, pork, in soy sauce or a sugar-based sauce. Both marinades seem to equally cut the amount of COPs formed during cooking.



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BABY & ME EXPO

**Saturday, August 16,
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
The Shops at Willow Bend,
Grand Court (Food Court
Entrance), 6121 W. Park Blvd.
at North Dallas Tollway, Plano**

Whether you're planning a family, expecting a baby, or already enjoying the challenges of parenting, Baby & Me Expo is just for you! Don't miss this unique event that's all about babies and toddlers, and the families who love them!

Sponsored by Women'sLink™ Baby & Me at Medical Center of Plano, you'll learn about the newest trends in baby care and baby products, get the latest on pregnancy and childbirth, and enjoy fashion presentations for kids and moms-to-be! There will be fun activities for the kids, prize giveaways, and more! You'll also have a chance to learn infant CPR and attend seminars on issues important to you.

Baby & Me Expo also gives you an opportunity to learn about Women'sLink™ Baby & Me at Medical Center of Plano, where true care and compassion combine with leading-edge technologies and world-class medical expertise to offer the best in pre- and postnatal care for both moms and babies.

 **women'sLINK™ baby&me**



WOMEN CAN FIGHT CANCER

According to a recent survey by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), nearly two-thirds of women believe that if no one in their family has cancer, they are unlikely to develop the disease themselves. Unfortunately this misconception is leading to a great deal of inaction. For example, 29% of women have not had a Pap test or mammogram in the past year, with 18% saying they did not think the tests were necessary.

CANCER DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE

The truth is most cancers occur in people with no family history of the disease. That's why no matter what, all women should have cancer screenings as recommended by their doctors.

According to ACOG, all women 18 and older—and all sexually active females younger than 18—should have an annual gynecologic exam, including a pelvic exam. In addition, women should schedule screenings for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer.

RECOMMENDED SCREENINGS

Cancer screenings are so important because early detection of cancer increases the chances of successful treatment. ACOG recommends the following cancer screenings:

- **BREAST CANCER:** Do a breast self-exam once a month and have a doctor examine your breasts once a year. Mammograms are recommended every one to two years for women in their 40s and annually for women age 50 and older.
- **CERVICAL CANCER:** The Pap test is used to help detect cervical cancer. Sexually active women 21 to 29 years of age should have a Pap test once a year. So should women younger than 21 who've been sexually active for at least three years. Women older than 30 who have had three or more normal Pap tests can be screened every two to three years.



■ **COLORECTAL CANCER:** If precancerous polyps—or growths—are found and removed, colon cancer can be stopped before it even begins. Colonoscopy, in which a doctor uses a camera attached to a flexible tube to examine the colon, is the preferred screening tool for detecting and removing polyps. ACOG recently instituted new guidelines recommending that women age 50 and older have a colonoscopy every 10 years.

Of course, these are general guidelines for normal-risk women. Women who have a family history, or other risk factors for certain types of cancer, should always follow the advice of their doctors. ■



Read our **FREE** guide on breast cancer by visiting www.medicalcenterofplano.com. Click on "Health Resources" and go to "Guide to Breast Cancer."

MIDDLE-AGED WOMEN HAVE DOUBLE THE RISK FOR STROKE

If you're a woman, it's never too early to start thinking about stroke prevention. That's because stroke can strike women of all ages. Middle-aged women are especially vulnerable. Research shows that women ages 45 to 54 are more than twice as likely to suffer a stroke as men of the same age. The increased risk may have something to do with the rapid rise in women's blood pressure and cholesterol levels at midlife. Watching your weight, eating right, and getting regular exercise can help lower your stroke risk, no matter what your age.

Medical Center of Plano—a Primary Stroke Center—offers a Stroke Support Group that meets the second Thursday of each month in the IRU Gym. This support group is designed for patients, families, and friends of those who have experienced a stroke. New topics are addressed each month. If you are interested in attending or have questions, call **214.473.7717**.



SPOT THE WARNING SIGNS OF TYPE 2 DIABETES

During pregnancy, some women get gestational diabetes. It's most common in African-Americans, Hispanic Americans, American Indians, some Asian-Americans, and people with a family history of diabetes. Gestational diabetes usually goes away after the baby is born. However, the mother has a 20 to 50% chance of developing type 2 diabetes in the five to 10 years after delivery.

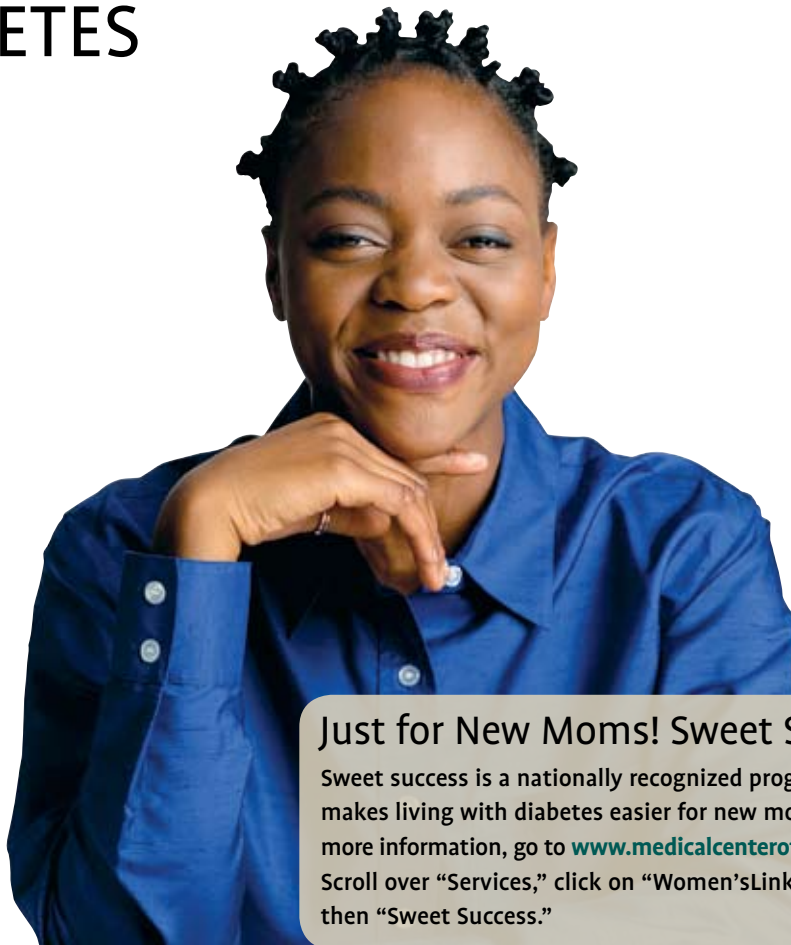
Of the 15.7 million Americans with diabetes, more than half are women. The vast majority of these women have type 2 diabetes, which usually develops after age 40. It's most common in minorities and people who are overweight or inactive.

THE LOWDOWN ON WARNING SIGNS

Having type 2 diabetes means you have high blood sugar. Think you might have it? Some of the most common signs are:

- Feeling tired
- Having an upset stomach
- Urinating frequently
- Being unusually thirsty
- Losing weight
- Having sores that are slow to heal
- Getting a lot of infections
- Experiencing blurry vision

If you're concerned about type 2 diabetes, talk with your doctor. This condition can be serious, so don't ignore the possible signs. Type 2 diabetes raises the risk for heart disease—even more for women than for men. In addition, women with the



Just for New Moms! Sweet Success

Sweet success is a nationally recognized program that makes living with diabetes easier for new moms. For more information, go to www.medicalcenterofplano.com. Scroll over "Services," click on "Women'sLink," and then "Sweet Success."

disorder are more likely to become blind than their male counterparts.

If you do develop type 2 diabetes, maintaining healthy habits can help you avoid some of the possible complications of this disease. These include strokes, heart attacks, and kidney disease. So, keep your body at its best. Eat right, exercise regularly, and take whatever medicine you need to control your blood sugar.

BE ON GUARD FOR PRE-DIABETES

Pre-diabetes is a serious condition. Having pre-diabetes puts you at risk of actually getting diabetes. But here's what you can do to stay healthy.

Pre-diabetes is similar to diabetes in that both occur when you have trouble breaking down sugars in food. Too much sugar in your blood stresses your body, including your heart.

Many people have this serious problem but don't know it. If you have pre-diabetes, you must take action right away. If you don't, your body will suffer now and later in life.

■ **Know the risks.** Having a family member with diabetes, being overweight, or having high blood pressure may put you at risk. If you have any of these risks, call your doctor.

■ **Practice good health habits.** Maintaining a healthy weight, exercising every day, and eating a healthy diet can help prevent diabetes. ■

Healthy Living with Diabetes and Legs for Life

Saturday, September 20, 9 a.m. to noon, Medical Center of Plano Atrium
Join us for the 11th Annual Diabetes Health Fair and Legs for Life PAD Screening presented by the Center for Lifestyle Enhancement and HEARTLINK™ Center. Visit with our outstanding team of health and nutrition experts, take advantage of FREE health screenings, and get the latest information on testing, supplies, and lifestyle-management techniques. Door prizes and refreshments!

Activities include:

- Screenings: Peripheral arterial disease (PAD); blood glucose; foot check; stability and fall prevention; vision
- Exhibits on the latest insulin pumps, home glucose-monitoring supplies, and medications
- The latest information from our dietitians on the importance of meal planning. Healthy eating is the foundation of your diabetes treatment plan. To make an appointment for a PAD screening, call 972.612.6500, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

RECIPE: GREEK-STYLE GARBANZO SALAD

This easy-to-make salad is full of flavor—but not cholesterol.

| | |
|--|--|
| garbanzo beans | 1½ c. cooked (½ c. dry) or 1 can (15 oz.), drained |
| red onion | ½ c., thinly sliced |
| tomato | ½ c., diced |
| green bell pepper | ½ c., chopped |
| rice vinegar or apple cider vinegar | 3 tbsp. |
| lemon juice | 2 tbsp. |
| olive oil | 2 tsp. |
| garlic | 2 tbsp., minced |
| fresh parsley | 2 tbsp., chopped |
| salt and pepper | to taste |

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Let marinate at room temperature several hours, then refrigerate.

Number of servings: 5

PER SERVING

| | |
|--------------------|-------|
| Calories | 130 |
| Total fat..... | 4 g |
| Saturated fat..... | 1 g |
| Cholesterol..... | 0 mg |
| Sodium..... | 65 mg |

SOURCE: www.5aday.gov



H2U HEALTH BREAK

Join us on the first Tuesday of each month for dessert and coffee as experts discuss a variety of healthy-living topics. Meetings are held in the Community Classroom on the first floor of the Medical Office Building 3, Suite 170, at 4001 West 15th St., on the west end of the Coit Street Skybridge. FREE! For reservations, call **972.519.1275**.

Tuesday, July 1, 12:30 p.m.

“ALL THE BETTER TO SEE YOU WITH— EYE HEALTH”

Presented by Susan Swanson, M.D., ophthalmologist

Learn about common eye diseases in mature adults such as cataracts, glaucoma, and other conditions of the aging eye.

Tuesday, August 5, 12:30 p.m.

“LESSONS FROM THE ER”

Presented by Brennan Bryant, R.N., Director of Emergency Services

Do you have everything you need in your home first aid kit? Do you know what to do in a real health emergency? Join us for this informative lesson on what to do when accidents and injuries occur.

Tuesday, September 2, 12:30 p.m.

“NEURO NEWS—SEIZURES IN MATURE ADULTS”

Presented by Kay Nguyen, M.D., neurologist
Did you know seizures in adults become more prevalent after age 60? Learn about the causes and treatments of this neurological health concern.



MEMORY LANE: STIMULATE YOUR BRAIN

THE MORE YOU STIMULATE YOUR BRAIN, THE MORE LIKELY YOU ARE TO AVOID MENTAL DECLINE AS YOU GET OLDER.

As we grow older, we may experience forgetting a new acquaintance's name or the title of the film we saw last week. These minor memory glitches are normal.

LOSING BRAIN CELLS STARTS EARLY

Brain chemistry starts to change in our 20s, and we begin losing brain cells, which has an increasing impact on memory recall as we age. While memory lapses may not signify Alzheimer's disease, they are nevertheless exasperating.

HOW TO STAY SHARP

Clinical trials are under way that may provide specific recommendations to prevent memory loss. In the meantime, there are encouraging recent discoveries and some heartening news: Many of the same lifestyle guidelines to prevent heart disease appear to protect against cognitive decline, too.

Here are some recommendations that may enhance what scientists call our cognitive vitality:

- **Eat your vegetables.** A diet rich in green leafy vegetables may prevent cognitive decline in older adults. Foods that are beneficial for your heart also may promote brain health. Eating a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol and high in antioxidants—especially dark-skinned fruits and vegetables—and vitamins E, C, B12, and folate. Salmon, tuna, and other fish that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids also may protect brain function.
- **Be active.** Exercise increases blood flow in the body, including the brain. One study demonstrated that regular



exercise significantly delayed the onset of dementia and Alzheimer's disease in people older than age 65. Exercise may even help stimulate the production of new brain cells.

- **Get adequate sleep.** Regardless of age, sleep deprivation profoundly affects memory, mood, and concentration. Older adults need seven to nine hours every night.
- **Challenge your brain with lifelong learning.** The more ways you stimulate your brain, the less of it you'll lose. Mental challenges can help keep brain cells strong, build more connections between them, and may generate new nerve cells. You also can help maintain brain function, including memory, by reading, taking classes, learning a language, and doing crosswords or similar cognitive puzzles. Participating in social activities also are beneficial and can keep your brain agile while enriching your life. ■

INCONTINENCE: SIMPLE STEPS TO STAYING DRY

Urinary incontinence is the loss of bladder control or the leakage of urine. Anyone can suffer from this condition, but it is more prevalent in women. Common forms of incontinence include:

- **Stress incontinence**, when coughing, laughing, sneezing, or heavy lifting causes leakage
- **Urge incontinence**, an inability to hold urine long enough to reach a toilet

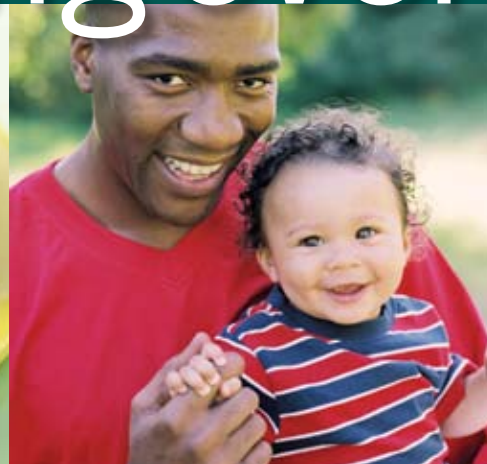
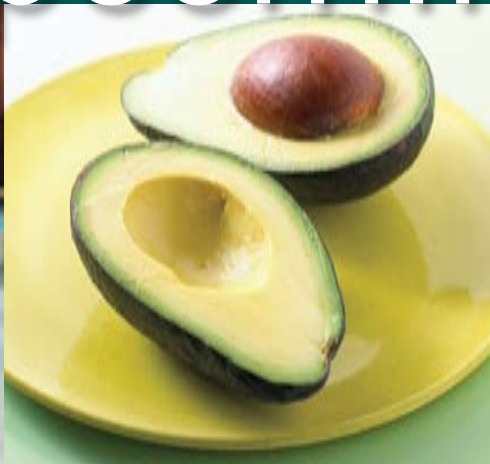
Some sufferers need medicine for this condition, and a small percentage require surgery. But for most people, simpler measures will provide relief. These include the following techniques:

- **Pelvic muscle exercises**—called Kegel exercises—can strengthen key muscles. In addition, a technique called

biofeedback can train you to tell if you're exercising the right muscles.

- **Some foods and drinks** can make it harder to control urine. Try limiting—or avoiding—alcoholic beverages and foods and beverages containing caffeine.
- **Bladder training**—following a schedule for urination—can decrease the leakage of urine.
- **If you're overweight**, losing weight may take pressure off the bladder.
- **Dryness aids** include absorbent underclothing and disposable pads.
- **For women**, a small device called a pessary may help. It is inserted into the vagina to help support the bladder and prevent leakage.

upcoming events



DIABETES PROGRAMS

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP SWEET 'N' SENSIBLE

Third Thursday of the month, 7 to 8 p.m.
Building II, Surgery Center of Plano
First Floor Waiting Room

- **July 17: "Eye Care and Diabetes."**
Susan Swanson, M.D., will discuss the importance of eye care in preventing complications from diabetes.
- **August 21: "Living Well with Diabetes."**
Let's talk about your questions and the issues you are dealing with in managing your diabetes.
- **Saturday, September 20: "Diabetes Health Fair and Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) screening."**
Join us for our annual Diabetes Health Fair and PAD screening. Please note that this health fair is on Saturday and there will be no regularly scheduled Thursday evening meeting for this month.



EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS

Reservations required. Call 972.519.1209.

NEW MOMS' TEA

- **Sunday, August 24, 2 p.m.,
Second Floor Classrooms**
Join pediatrician Sara Gondol, M.D., to celebrate motherhood with tea! Get together with other new moms for discussions and advice on breast-feeding, fitness, baby food, baby massage, sex, hormones, and other topics.

NEW BABY DAY CAMP FOR BIG BROTHERS AND SISTERS

- **Saturday, July 26 or September 27,
9 a.m. to noon, Second Floor Classrooms**
Designed for children age 4 and older, this fun "day at camp" helps siblings prepare for the arrival of a new baby. The hospital is transformed into a camping and hiking area for kids to explore.

TEDDY BEAR CAMP

- **Saturday, August 9, 10 to 11 a.m.,
Second Floor Classrooms**
Designed for expectant siblings ages 2 and 3, toddlers bring their teddy bear and listen to a story, learn what new babies can do, and learn to hold them with parents' assistance. They'll also explore the labor and delivery area.

BOOT CAMP FOR NEW DADS

- **Wednesday, July 23, August 6, or September 10, 7 p.m., Second Floor Classrooms**
An OB/GYN and a pediatrician will share their expertise to illustrate the magic and challenges of fatherhood. Topics include our own fathers as role models, care of new moms and babies, returning to intimacy, and more.

SAFE SITTER® BABYSITTING CLASS

- **Saturday, July 12 or September 6, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Second Floor Classrooms**
Boys and girls ages 11 to 13 learn safe child care techniques, behavior management skills, and appropriate responses to medical emergencies. Includes instruction in infant and child CPR. Cost: \$55.

MENSTRUATION: THE CYCLE BEGINS

- **Wednesday, June 25, 7 p.m.,
Second Floor Classrooms**
If your daughter is approaching puberty, you have an important task ahead. Mothers and daughters together will learn about the biological, medical, and practical aspects of menstruation from an OB/GYN.

DAD'S ADVENTURE DAYS

- **Saturdays, July 12, August 9,
September 13, 11 a.m. to noon**
Enjoy special field trips designed to create strong relationships between new dads and their babies. Learn the how-tos of traveling around the Metroplex and sharing new sights and sounds with your baby.

PRENATAL YOGA SERIES

- **Every Monday, 6 to 7:15 p.m.,
Community Classroom, \$10 per class,
or six classes for \$50**
Pregnancy is a special time requiring a new awareness of your body. Yoga helps keep your body safely fit through gentle toning. Registered yoga instructor (and mother) Maitri Smiththisier, will teach breathing exercises and body movement tools to help with labor and relaxation. She also will show how yoga can help nurture yourself and your baby.

GRANDPARENT ADVENTURES

Call 972.519.1209 for more information and reservations!



GRANDPARENTING ADVENTURES

- **Sunday, July 13, 2 p.m.,
Northhaven Nursery**
Bring your grandchildren to enjoy the beauty of summer plants and flowers and learn what makes them grow! Take a plant with you to nurture and watch grow.

GRANDPARENTING 101: CARING FOR KIDS TODAY

- **Thursday, July 17, 7 p.m.,
Second Floor Classrooms**
This FREE class helps bring grandparents up-to-date on changes in baby care. Learn the latest safety techniques and ways to develop a special relationship with your grandchildren.

SMART BREAKFAST IDEAS FOR CHILDREN

Eating a good breakfast can sharpen a child's memory, boost vocabulary skills, and improve school test scores. Children who eat breakfast also learn better, are more alert in school, and are more likely to participate in activities during the day.

MENU TIPS

A healthy breakfast menu can be simple and easy to prepare. Children who eat just one cup of whole-grain cereal with skim milk and a glass of fruit juice take in many of the nutrients they need for the day.

For the most balanced meal, make sure breakfast includes these groups from the USDA Food Guide Pyramid:

- Two servings from the bread, cereal, rice, and pasta food group
- One serving from the fruit group
- One serving from the dairy group

Good food choices include yogurt, English muffins, an omelet with vegetables, or whole-grain waffles. Some breakfast ideas that are fun and still pack a hearty nutritious punch are:

- Fruit kabobs to dip in yogurt

- Peanut butter and jelly spread on a tortilla

- Cereal cookies
- Berry or banana milk shake
- Fruit-sweetened muffin

Easy-to-eat choices such as a granola bar or slice of reheated pizza can still help children avoid skipping breakfast and keep their energy levels up.

GETTING READY

If it's hard to get your children to eat anything on busy school mornings, preparation is the answer.

- Get clothes ready and have homework finished the night before.
- Set the table the night before with plates, bowls, silverware, and food items that don't need to be refrigerated. In the morning add milk and fruit to cereal, or toast a slice of whole wheat bread for a quick and healthy breakfast.
- Have as many members of the family as possible sit at the breakfast table together.



- Turn off the television or radio.
 - Offer children a variety of healthy foods and let them choose.
 - Don't discuss anything upsetting at the table—keep conversation positive.
- Breakfast is a habit that may need to be learned slowly. The more parents struggle with their children about a meal, the more determined the children will be to do their own thing. ■

KEEPING KIDS ACTIVE WHEN SCHOOL IS OUT

Summer. Time for camp, catching bugs, water parks ... and weight gain? A new study suggests that for the youngest students, summer months may be worse than the school year when it comes to preventing obesity.

CHARTING WEIGHT CHANGES

About 5,400 children from 310 schools were tracked during kindergarten, first grade, and the summer in between. Their body mass index—a measure of

their weight and height, compared with other kids their age—increased faster and at a more uneven rate during the summer.

The difference between school time and summertime was especially large in children who were already overweight, as well as in African-American and Hispanic children.

Researchers think children may eat more during the summer, when the days are less structured. Also, physical education during the school year may help kids burn extra calories.

WARM-WEATHER WORKOUTS

Just like adults, kids need to balance the calories they eat with the calories they burn to prevent extra pounds. That means healthy eating and an hour of physical activity on

all or most days of the week.

Luckily, summer's sunshine offers the chance to get out and get moving. Try these tips to stave off summer weight gain in your children:

- Plan active vacations. For example, take a trip to the mountains and hike or ski. Or, bike around a new city.
- Limit screen time—including TV and video games—to two hours a day or less.
- Encourage your little ones to get outside and play. Hopscotch, swimming, tag, and hide-and-go-seek all count as exercise.
- If she's interested, sign your child up for a summer sports league. She might enjoy soccer or softball.
- Walk with your family instead of driving to visit friends or run errands in the neighborhood.



COMPREHENSIVE MOTHER/BABY CARE OFFERS PEACE OF MIND

Expecting a baby is an exciting time. But it also can be an anxious one. Although most births occur without any problems, it's natural to be concerned about the health of your baby. That's especially true if you have a high-risk pregnancy. To meet the needs of expectant mothers and newborns—including those with serious medical complications—Medical Center of Plano offers the most comprehensive mother/baby care in the area.

"It's all about our babies, that's what we believe. Everything we do is to provide the right environment and care to bring them into the world safely," explains Janet Kirksey, R.N., Director of Women's Services for Medical Center of Plano. "Our high-risk services for both mother and baby are available 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week. It's peace of mind."

ANTEPARTUM SUITES

There are 15 state-of-the-art antepartum suites to care for women with high-risk pregnancies who need special attention. Women in the antepartum unit often-times need close monitoring and care to prevent premature labor. Some stay as long as 12 weeks before delivery.

Kenneth Trimmer, M.D., a maternal-

fetal medicine specialist, works with many of these women. "If one of my patients needs hospitalization during pregnancy, I send them to Medical Center of Plano. The technology and services are exceptional," explains Dr. Trimmer. "In addition, if a baby comes early, Medical Center of Plano has the capability to care for the infant right there."

NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (NICU)

The hospital boasts a Level III NICU—one of only a few in the area. The unit is equipped with the expertise and state-of-the-art facilities to care for the babies in the greatest need. This includes premature babies, as well as babies born with special needs.

The NICU provides 24-hour care by a neonatologist—a highly specialized pediatrician—and dedicated nursing staff. The unit also works with a number of pediatric subspecialists to treat newborns with special needs. They include a pediatric cardiologist, gastroenterologist, general surgeon, and more.

"This level of NICU is a very important consideration to mothers. It means that if something unexpected happens during delivery, mother and baby can stay together.

Before this unit was created, babies born with complex medical needs had to be transferred out of the area," says Kirksey.

24-HOUR HOSPITALIST

Medical Center of Plano is the only area hospital to have a board-certified Ob/Gyn on staff at all times. Called a hospitalist, this doctor provides expert care to women when their doctor can't be there.

"We consider every labor a high-risk labor," explains Wayne Farley, M.D., OB/GYN hospitalist. "Most doctors can't stay with one patient throughout their entire labor. And although rare, problems can occur quickly during even normal labors. When this happens, we're there."

In addition, hospitalists care for patients who may not have a doctor, such as someone visiting from out-of-town. They also help treat patients who come to the emergency room with OB/GYN prob-



lems. "we act as an extension of every OB/GYN physician on staff at the hospital," says Dr. Farley.

ROUND-THE-CLOCK PREPARATION

"Babies often come on their own schedules—not always when it's convenient," explains Kirksey. "That's why we offer these services, as well as a 24-hour anesthesiologist and delivery teams that attend each birth. We are prepared." ■

Thinking about having your baby at Medical Center of Plano? To arrange a tour or to receive additional information, call 972.519.1356.

Spirit of
Women

HOSPITAL NETWORK

Health is Action™

All events meet at 6:30 p.m. in the Auditorium, Building 3, Suite 315, northwest corner of Coit and 15th streets, unless otherwise noted. For reservations, call 214.473.7317.

IS IT HOT? OR IS IT ME?

• Monday, July 14

Vanessa Woolridge, M.D., OB/GYN, will discuss how hormones can affect the heat that you feel this summer. Gain an understanding of the reasons for "hot flashes" and how to minimize them. Henry Gentry, owner of Henry's Homemade Ice Cream, will share his new summer flavors and explain the differences between ice cream, custards, sorbets, and sherbets.

WE'LL SING IN THE SUNSHINE

• Monday, August 11

Join us for a Healthy Happy Hour and a summer concert with popcorn, lemonade, and iced tea! Jennifer Stalkup, M.D., will educate us about skin cancers, especially those that are related to our aging skin and sun exposure. Learn how to protect your skin from the dangerous rays of the sun.



A LADY'S LEGS

• Monday, September 8, Stein Mart, 1701 Preston Road, Suite A, Plano

Join us for an evening of education and fun as we learn more about our legs. Do your legs ache? Greg Messner, M.D., will discuss peripheral arterial disease and the importance of screening for this condition. Joan Long, Stein Mart Agenda Consultant, will present a fashion show of the perfect leg and footwear for fall.

Medical Center of Plano is a proud member of the national Spirit of Women Hospital network, ascribing to the highest standards of excellence in women's health outreach and care.

PUTTING PATIENTS FIRST: A FOCUS ON SAFETY

At Medical Center of Plano, patients are top priority. And that means ensuring the safety and quality of their care. As a Joint Commission-accredited hospital, Medical Center of Plano has adopted the National Patient Safety Goals. These goals are considered the nation's "best practices" in improving patient safety. However, Medical Center of Plano's efforts don't stop there.

"We see the National Patient Safety Goals as the minimum. Our goals are much broader," explains Bob Curran, Ph.D., Director of Quality Services for Medical Center of Plano. "When it comes to patient safety, we like to think of ourselves as overachievers."

Dr. Curran leads the quality and safety efforts at the hospital, raising employee awareness of safety measures.

"No one comes to work intending to put a patient at risk," he says. "But nationwide, medical errors are more prevalent than breast cancer, traffic accidents, and AIDS combined. We're doing

everything we can to minimize problems that can lead to these errors."

HOSPITAL INITIATIVES BOOST SAFETY

Patient safety training is an integral part of orientation for all new hospital employees. In addition, Medical Center of Plano has many initiatives in place to increase patient safety. Some include:

■ **"NEAR MISS" PROGRAM.** All employees are encouraged to report "near misses"—situations where medical errors could have occurred but didn't. This information helps the hospital explore and fix potential problems. It also creates a safe environment where everyone can help to promote safety.

■ **EVENT ANALYSIS TEAM.** A team of staff from across the hospital investigate any safety mistakes that occur. Instead of focusing on blame, they dig into factors that may have contributed to the problem, such as processes that led to a breakdown in communication.

■ **"GOT CAUGHT" CAMPAIGN.** "Got

Caught" is a friendly competition that raises awareness of safety compliance. The campaign focuses on one safety measure each month—such as proper hand washing. Employees give cards with the featured safety measure to others they "catch" doing it well. Those who "get caught" the most receive a reward.

■ **RAPID RESPONSE TEAM.** If a hospital staff member is unsure of a medical situation or needs help, they can call the Rapid Response Team. This team is specially trained to quickly review the situation and take action. Recently, the hospital extended access to the team to patients and their families as well.

SAFETY IS A TWO-WAY STREET

"If a patient or patient's family feels there's a problem with their medical situation, it needs to be addressed right away," explains Dr. Curran.

The Rapid Response Team initiative is an example of how the hospital empowers patients to be an active part



of their own care. "We want patients to participate—to ask questions and raise concerns," Dr. Curran says. "The more patients are involved, the better care we provide." ■

To get your **FREE** copy of The Joint Commission's patient safety brochure, e-mail mcpl.information@hcahealthcare.com.

ARE YOU AT RISK FOR PROSTATE CANCER? FREE SCREENING OFFERED!

Saturday, September 13, 9 to 11 a.m., Medical Center of Plano.
Please use the North Registration Entrance.

Here's an offer that could literally save your life! Physicians will conduct **FREE** examinations for prostate cancer, the most common cancer among men.

You are eligible if you are 45 or older. African-American men and those with a family history of prostate cancer are eligible at the age of 40. The screening consists of a digital rectal examination and a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test. Combined, these two tests can detect prostate cancer at an early stage when it is most curable. Appointments are not required.



health matters

Mary Jo Dean
Vice President, Marketing

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