

Health Connection

THE MAGAZINE OF HILL REGIONAL HOSPITAL

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Early detection
is key**

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Online!**
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Hill Regional Hospital

Hillsboro, Texas

www.HillRegionalHospital.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.



Jan McClure
Chief Executive Officer

Dear friends,

We're so pleased with the construction of our new multimillion-dollar medical-surgical unit and the investment we're able to make in the community. The 22,000-square-foot addition will include a new 31-bed patient room unit with

all private rooms and private baths. The project also includes a waiting room, family consult rooms, conference rooms and other support offices. Our employees, medical staff and board of trustees are excited about this addition, as it offers more convenience and comfort for our patients and their care.

GROWING FOR YOU

Other expansions of Hill Regional Hospital over the past few years have included:

- **1998:** Medical office building in Hillsboro
- **2000:** Emergency department
- **2001:** Medical office building in Whitney
- **2002:** Surgical department with outpatient surgery unit
- **2005:** Medical office building in Hillsboro

We're proud of these accomplishments and look forward to the continued growth of our hospital and its services.

Our team will work diligently to minimize inconveniences during the time of construction. Please pardon our dust and be sure to watch for directional signage that may temporarily relocate services and patient/visitor parking. Thank you for your patience during this time.

Sincerely,

JAN MCCLURE
Chief Executive Officer
Hill Regional Hospital

We have the time

Hourly rounding enhances patient care

At Hill Regional Hospital (HRH), our goal is to provide advanced care and ensure that we're doing everything we can to meet your needs. To reach this goal, we've implemented another industry best practice and proactive approach to patient care: hourly rounding. By making hourly rounds, we hope to anticipate our patients' needs and meet them in a timely manner. Further, we're dedicated to actively monitoring patients' well-being on an hourly basis so that their families and friends can help them focus on recovery.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

During your stay at HRH, one of our caregivers will visit you regularly every hour between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m., and every two hours between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. When a caregiver enters your room for hourly rounding, he or she will:

- check on you and your well-being
- monitor your comfort and pain level
- help you move and change positions
- assist with bathroom trips
- assist with your bedside needs

! Experience HRH

Visit HRH at www.HillRegionalHospital.com for more information about our services.



Women: Don't become a statistic!



Thao Truong, M.D.
Board-certified family
medicine physician

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in the United States, aside from skin cancer. At Hill Regional Hospital (HRH), we take that statistic very seriously, beginning with the American Cancer Society's (ACS) recommendation for annual mammograms for women ages 40 and older. "Women ages 40 to 49 should talk to their primary care physicians to see whether

beginning mammography is appropriate for them," says Thao Truong, M.D., board-certified family medicine physician with Hill Regional Medical Group.

Most everyone has a mother, sister, relative or friend who's had a brush with breast cancer. Regular breast exams and mammograms are the first line of defense for breast health. The earlier the diagnosis, the faster treatment can begin and the higher the survival rate. A leading tool in breast diagnosis is mammography.

The ACS estimates that about 207,000 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed in U.S. women in 2010. About 40,000 women are expected to die from the disease in 2010 alone. Today, about 2.5 million breast cancer survivors live in the United States.

HRH encourages women by sending reminder cards for their next appointment. "I understand that women don't look forward to the inconvenience of a mammogram, but the importance outweighs the inconvenience," says Wanda Hall, R.T. (R)(M), lead mammographer.

NEW ADVANCED SERVICE

In the coming weeks, HRH is looking to make the experience a lot more convenient by offering digital mammograms to our community.

While the test feels almost identical to conventional screening from the patient's perspective, digital mammography has several benefits:

- **Lower patient dose.** Digital mammography delivers a 30 percent to 40 percent lower radiation dose compared to screen-film and computed radiography mammography.
- **Enhanced patient care.** Since technologists don't have to leave the exam room to process films, patients have uninterrupted care. Additionally, digital mammography enhances images of dense breast tissue.
- **Clear pictures.** Digital images are reviewed on high-resolution monitors for optimal viewing. Radiologists can zoom in and magnify areas of interest.
- **Quick transmission.** Because digital mammography images are electronic, they can be transmitted quickly across a secure computer network.

"We're excited to add this advanced system to our department and continue to provide quality care to women in our communities," says Donna Rogers, R.T. (R)(M), director of radiology. "This system will enhance the quality care we provide."



Make time for your mammogram

Stay healthy and up to date on your screenings. Make an appointment with Dr. Truong at (254) 582-8006.



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.HillRegionalHospital.com

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

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.



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70HRH

Volunteers lend a helping hand



Marvin Schulz

Hill Regional Hospital (HRH) is privileged to have 45 active volunteers/auxiliary members who serve the hospital. In 2009, they provided more than 7,000 hours of service to the hospital and its patients. They work in valuable roles behind the scenes and on the front lines with patients, families and medical staff. The volunteers/auxiliary members are vital to HRH's

team, but more important, they're part of our family.

And there's another benefit to volunteers. A family member of volunteer Marvin Schulz tells this story about how he felt about being a volunteer. One day at a family gathering, Schulz told his children how he appreciated them being there for him when his wife passed away. But, he went on to say that he attributed volunteering at HRH with saving his life—it gave him purpose to get up, get moving and get over his own loss.

Schulz is happy that his volunteering gives him an opportunity for exercise as well as interaction with many people on a weekly basis. As much as Schulz says he's fortunate to have his volunteering opportunity, HRH is grateful that he's on the team.

"HRH considers the volunteers/auxiliary one of the most important parts of our team," says Jan McClure, HRH chief executive officer. "Daily, they help in countless ways, giving unselfishly of themselves and their time."



The volunteers/auxiliary team at HRH work behind the scenes and on the front lines with patients, families and medical staff. They are important members of the HRH team!

The HRH auxiliary operates the gift shop in the lobby. These sales, combined with other fundraisers, allow the auxiliary to donate equipment and award scholarships. Gifts to the hospital include wheelchairs, CPR dolls for training purposes, car safety seats and computers. The auxiliary's scholarship program awards students who want to become licensed vocational nurses or registered nurses.



Make a difference!

If you're interested in becoming a volunteer or working with the auxiliary, call (254) 580-8888 (volunteers) or (254) 580-8985 (auxiliary).