

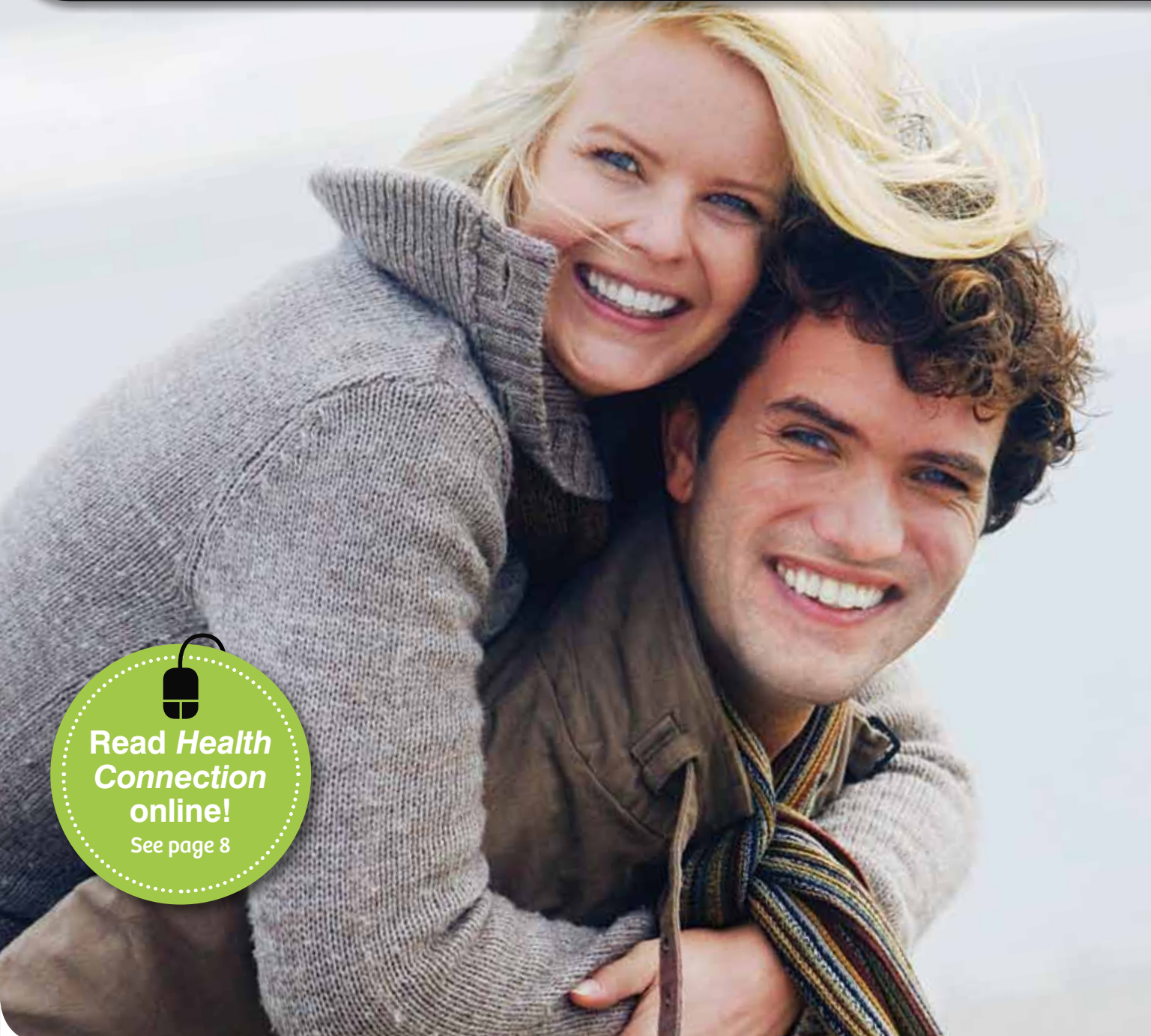


CEDAR PARK
REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER

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Health Connection

THOUGHTFUL CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY



Read *Health
Connection*
online!

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surgery for you?**

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sleep disorder?**

Healthbriefs



tip

Balance

your protein choices. Lean animal, fish and vegetable sources can help lower cholesterol.

› Pick cholesterol-lowering foods

When it comes to bringing down LDL (bad) cholesterol, it appears foods like soy protein, nuts and plant sterols (found naturally in plants) have the upper hand. According to a study in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, people with high cholesterol who combined such foods and incorporated them into their diets had a greater reduction in LDL cholesterol than those who followed low-saturated-fat diets that focused on high fiber and whole grains alone.

The study followed 351 people over the course of six months. Researchers found that the cholesterol levels of those who followed the low-saturated-fat diets dropped 3 percent, while those consuming the cholesterol-lowering foods saw a decrease of up to 13.8 percent. These results don't mean you should ditch a heart-healthy, low-saturated-fat diet. Instead try adding the cholesterol-lowering foods to an already heart-healthy regimen.

› New moms: 5 ways to prevent back pain

Back pain is a common complaint of new moms. Here are some tips for keeping your back in good health, courtesy of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons:

- 1 With your obstetrician's OK, try to begin exercising shortly after you have your baby (women who've had C-sections usually have to wait at least six weeks). This will help rebuild tone in your abdominal and back muscles.
- 2 When lifting your baby, don't stretch your arms. Bring him or her close to your chest before picking the child up. Bend at your knees—lifting with your legs.
- 3 Carry your child in a front pack for longer walks. Avoid carrying him or her on your hip.
- 4 Kneel on the back seat when placing your child in the car seat. Don't attempt to load the baby when standing outside the car.
- 5 Use a chair that offers back support, not a soft couch.



› Aerobic exercise key to banning belly fat

Looking to get rid of that spare tire or paunch? Then it's time to get your heart pumping. A recent study in the *American Journal of Physiology* found that aerobic activity burned 67 percent more calories than resistance training (such as weight lifting). The eight-month Duke University Medical Center study followed 196 overweight, inactive adults who either performed aerobic exercises equivalent to jogging 12 miles a week or did three sets of eight to 12 weight-lifting repetitions, three times a week. The researchers discovered that aerobic exercise greatly reduced liver fat and deep-lying abdominal fat (called visceral fat), which increases the risk of heart disease, diabetes and certain types of cancer. The aerobic activity improved insulin resistance, triglyceride levels and liver enzymes—risk factors for disease—while the resistance training didn't.

Your best bet? Aim for a balanced exercise regimen that incorporates weight training, which can improve your strength and build lean muscle, and aerobic exercise.



Facing migraines head-on

➤ You're sitting at your desk at work when you feel it coming—that throbbing pain in your head. With dread, you prepare to face the nausea that will soon follow.

What you're experiencing, most likely, is a migraine, and you're not alone—28 million Americans get them.

What's a migraine?

Simply put, migraines are severe headaches that usually come back, whether it's weekly, monthly or only every few years. They may be preceded by visual disturbances such as zigzagging lines or flashing lights; last several hours or a whole day; occur on one side of the head; trigger nausea or vomiting; and they're usually disabling.

Migraine triggers include stress, hormonal changes (such as pregnancy, menstruation and menopause), certain types of food (alcohol, aged cheeses, too much or too little caffeine, food additives such as MSG, processed meats and citrus fruits), environmental factors (bright lights, excessive heat, allergies and perfume), irregular eating and sleeping habits, smoking and certain medications.

How can I control them?

The first step to managing migraines is to take note. When did your migraine happen? What were you doing? What did you eat in the past 24 hours? How long did it last? On a scale of one to 10, how bad was your migraine?

Keeping a migraine journal and answering such questions each time you experience one can help you avoid triggers and assist your doctor in tailoring an effective treatment plan.

Some people may benefit from medications, which can either knock out pain or prevent a migraine from occurring in the first place, while others may only need lifestyle adjustments:

- **Food substitutes.** For example, if blue cheese is a trigger, choose another type of cheese.
- **Stress.** Avoid stressful situations or engage in relaxing activities, such as yoga and meditation.
- **Sleep.** Aim for six to eight hours each night.
- **Exercise.** Remain active every day with activities such as brisk walks or laps at the local indoor pool.
- **Eating.** Eat regularly scheduled meals. Skipping meals can send your blood sugar crashing.
- **Smoking.** If you smoke, quit. Also avoid secondhand smoke.
- **Medicine.** Blood pressure medications and birth control pills are two types of medications that may aggravate migraines. If you think this is happening, talk with your doctor about possible substitutions (but don't just stop taking medicine).

If you experience symptoms such as a sudden headache (like a thunderclap) or a headache accompanied by other symptoms, such as fever, a stiff neck or trouble speaking, seek immediate medical attention, as these can indicate more serious conditions. ●

If you experience symptoms such as a sudden headache or a headache accompanied by other symptoms, seek medical attention.



Keep

a journal to track your migraines and help you learn more about what triggers them.





A message FROM OUR CEO

TIM P. ADAMS
Chief Executive
Officer

DEAR FRIENDS,

Last month, Cedar Park Regional Medical Center (CPRMC) celebrated its fourth birthday. It's gratifying to see our accomplishments and how far we've

come as an organization.

2011 was a year of growth. We began our first inpatient expansion project in maternity services and we've focused on decreasing the wait times in the emergency room (ER) with the implementation of the 30-Minutes-or-Less ER Service Pledge. We've enhanced our surgical capabilities with the addition of the da Vinci Si platform, which provides robotic precision for our multispecialty robotic surgeries. CPRMC also added two outpatient facilities, the Cedar Park Regional Wound Care Center on Whitestone Blvd. and the Cedar Park Regional Imaging Center on Discovery Blvd.

This year, we'll continue to grow with the completion of our Level II neonatal intensive care unit and additional labor/delivery/recovery rooms in the spring.

It's been exciting to make these improvements to meet our community's needs. We're dedicated to being the area's preferred provider for employees to work, doctors to practice medicine and patients to receive care.

Sincerely,

Tim P. Adams

*Chief Executive Officer
Cedar Park Regional Medical Center*



The skinny on weight-loss surgery

It not only helps shed pounds, but also provides health benefits

Many of us have been on some type of diet in our lives. Some of us have spent our entire lives trying the latest fad diets, each time ending up right back where we started. And 90 percent of diets fail in the long run.

More than 72 million Americans are obese or severely overweight. Each year, obesity causes at least 112,000 deaths in the United States. It's associated with numerous health problems: asthma, birth defects, cancer, degenerative joint disease, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), heart failure, high cholesterol, hypertension, gallstones, liver disease, miscarriages, sleep apnea and type 2 diabetes.

There are many options for weight loss. If you're more than 100 pounds over your ideal weight, you may benefit from weight-loss surgery, also known as bariatric surgery. Once thought of as primarily a cosmetic procedure, it can offer lifesaving health benefits. It's estimated that in 2008, approximately 220,000 people in the United States had weight-loss surgery. ●



Save the date!

Jump Start Your Weight Loss
Presented by Nicole Basa, M.D.,
bariatric surgeon

When: Jan. 26, 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Where: Cedar Park Regional Medical Center
Call: (512) 528-7119 for reservations
or information

Choosing a primary care provider

BY ANN HATHCOCK, D.O., BOARD-CERTIFIED FAMILY MEDICINE DOCTOR

When it comes to maintaining good health, it takes a village—a multidisciplinary team of experts—to provide comprehensive health care. It's not unusual for your preventive care regimen to include regular visits to more than one doctor: a family doctor, an obstetrician or gynecologist and any specialist involved in treating chronic conditions.

It's important to have one team leader quarterbacking your health care. This person is your primary care provider (PCP) and he or she plans your care.

What is a PCP?

Your PCP is your main health care provider for non-emergency care. He or she performs routine tests that are needed at various stages throughout your life to monitor your health and diagnose and treat medical problems. Your PCP can refer you to a specialist if necessary. A PCP serves as the chief facilitator for other doctors involved in your care, making sure that all the components—from treatments to prescribed medications—work together effectively.

A PCP is typically a family practitioner or an internist, although some obstetricians may function as a PCP for their patients. A family practitioner is a generalist who can treat children and adults of all ages. An internist is a doctor who's completed a residency in internal medicine and is trained to care for adults of all ages as well as treat many different medical problems.

The advantage of having a PCP over using a walk-in clinic or urgent care center for routine health maintenance is continuity. An ongoing relationship with a single medical professional who has in-depth

knowledge about you is of utmost importance to your health.

Choosing the right doctor for you

As you begin your search for a PCP, consider the following tips from the National Institutes of Health:

- Does the doctor participate in your insurance plan?
- Is the doctor accepting new patients?
- Is the practice located in an area that's close to your home or work? Are the office hours convenient?
- What's most important to you in a good PCP? General health and wellness?
- Experience in the treatment of certain chronic diseases?
- Do you feel more comfortable with a male or a female doctor? A younger or older doctor?
- Does the doctor use a conservative or aggressive approach to medical treatment?
- Does he or she ask about your preferences regarding specific types of medical treatments? ●



Better health is just a click away

For help in choosing a doctor in Cedar Park and the surrounding communities, visit www.CedarParkRegional.com and click on the "Find a Physician" link.

Make an appointment!

Ann Hathcock, D.O., has practiced family medicine for more than 25 years. She's a member of Cedar Park Physician Associates with Angela Akin, D.O., and Mark Stoeckel, M.D., at 200 Buttercup Creek Blvd. in Cedar Park. She provides medical care for the entire family, including preventive health and the treatment of chronic diseases. Call **(512) 249-1400** to make an appointment.

HealthWise QUIZ

How much do you know about dementia?

> TAKE THIS QUIZ TO FIND OUT.

- 1 The most common type of dementia is:**
 - a. Alzheimer's disease
 - b. Lewy body disease
 - c. vascular dementia
 - d. none of the above
- 2 Which of the following conditions can cause or mimic the symptoms of dementia?:**
 - a. Lyme disease
 - b. thyroid problems
 - c. low blood sugar
 - d. all of the above
- 3 According to the Alzheimer's Association, the risk of developing Alzheimer's after age 85 is about:**
 - a. 10 percent
 - b. 25 percent
 - c. 50 percent
 - d. 75 percent
- 4 One known risk factor for dementia is:**
 - a. getting too much vitamin D
 - b. having diabetes
 - c. regularly using a cell phone
 - d. exposure to everyday sources of aluminum
- 5 While there's no surefire way to prevent dementia, experts recommend which of the following measures to possibly lower your risk of developing it?:**
 - a. taking high doses of vitamin C
 - b. lowering your blood pressure
 - c. keeping up to date on vaccinations
 - d. both (b) and (c)

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

A dangerous trio

Sorting out stroke, heart attack and cardiac arrest

> What do stroke, heart attack and cardiac arrest have in common? They're all possible complications of heart and blood vessel diseases that affect millions of Americans.

Read on to learn more about each of these conditions and their unique causes and symptoms.

Heart attack

When fatty deposits called plaque build up in the arteries, it can narrow them or cause a blood clot to form. When this occurs, blood flow to the heart is blocked, damaging heart muscle.

> **Symptoms:** Signs of a heart attack vary, but may include: tightness, a feeling of heaviness, pressure or a squeezing sensation in the chest; indigestion; anxiety; fainting; dizziness; nausea or vomiting; irregular heartbeats; shortness of breath; and sweating. Women may also experience less common symptoms, such as fatigue. Silent heart attacks, where no symptoms are present, can also occur.

Stroke

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel leading to the brain becomes blocked (usually by a clot) or ruptures. This deprives the brain of oxygenated blood, causing parts of the brain to die.

> **Symptoms:** Stroke symptoms come on suddenly and include: numbness or weakness in the

face, arm or leg (particularly on one side of the body); confusion; speech and comprehension problems; vision difficulties; problems walking; and severe headache with no known cause.

Cardiac arrest

Sudden cardiac arrest is a condition in which the heart abruptly stops beating without warning, depriving the body of oxygenated blood. If not treated immediately (with CPR and a defibrillator), a person in cardiac arrest usually dies within minutes. Heart attacks can sometimes trigger cardiac arrest.

> **Symptoms:** Cardiac arrest symptoms include sudden collapse, lack of pulse, no breathing and loss of consciousness.

If you or a loved one experiences symptoms of any of the conditions listed, call 911 or seek immediate medical help. ●



Breaking cabin fever

Five ways to beat the indoor blues

Rainy days, snowy days, bitterly cold days—whatever's going on outside can test the patience of adults and kids alike who are trapped inside.

While it's tempting to flip on the TV or let your children play video games, neither of these keeps them physically active or their brains engaged. Try these healthier boredom busters instead:

1 Create family time. Bond with your children over a board game or plan a family outing to places you may not visit in nicer weather, such as a museum.

2 Let your children's imagination run wild. Check your closets and discount stores to put together a trunk of clothes for dress-up; build a fort using sheets and furniture; or create a craft

box by adding items such as paper, crayons, glue, glitter, string, beads and buttons.

3 Keep your children active. Make an obstacle course in your living room with couch cushions and laundry baskets. Or, try classic childhood games such as Duck, Duck, Goose. Old-time favorites like Simon Says and the hokeypokey are great ways to teach toddlers about following commands and different parts of the body.

4 Get in touch with nature. Have a set of binoculars? Help your children spot the many different types of birds or other wildlife in your backyard.

5 Get them involved. Planning a big vacation? Lay out travel materials and let your children help plan the itinerary. ●



Reclaim your colon

The right food can keep things running smoothly

Do you have a happy colon? If you're regularly battling constipation or diarrhea, chances are the answer is no. But there are foods that can help get you back on "tract."

Yogurt

Yogurt contains "good bacteria" called probiotics, which some research suggests may curb diarrhea and tackle the symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

It's also a good source of calcium, which, along with vitamin D, may protect against colon polyps and colon cancer.



Veggies, whole grains and legumes

These are all sources of insoluble fiber, which can ease or prevent constipation by bulking up and softening your stool. On the flip side, fiber can add substance to loose stool, relieving diarrhea, and may ease IBS symptoms. Fiber may reduce the risk of diverticular disease, a condition that causes small pouches in the colon.

Don't forget that legumes, potatoes, brown rice and whole grains are also good sources of vitamin B-6, which some research has shown may help prevent colon cancer in women.



Low-fat foods

Eating a lot of fat—especially saturated fats from red meat and foods such as hot dogs—can increase your colon cancer risk.

Increasing low-fat or nonfat dairy and vegetable intake are great additions to your diet. Reduce the fat by making other substitutions: lean poultry, pork or fish instead of red meat; frozen fruit instead of ice cream; or tub margarine instead of stick margarine or butter. Since not all margarines are created equal (some can be worse than butter), it's important to check the nutrition label for the amount of saturated and trans fats. ●



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Diagnosing sleep difficulties

BY DAVID RODRIGUEZ, DIRECTOR, CEDAR PARK REGIONAL SLEEP CENTER

Lack of sleep impacts our mental alertness, mood, ability to focus during the day and our long-term health. Experts say chronic sleep disorders affect more than 40 million Americans.

Getting enough sleep is an essential part of keeping the body healthy and avoiding chronic disease. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), insufficient sleep contributes to the development of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity and depression. The most common sleep disorders include:

- insomnia: difficulty falling and remaining asleep
- sleep apnea: the interruption of breathing during sleep
- restless legs syndrome: aches and pains in the legs that make it difficult to fall asleep
- narcolepsy: excessive daytime sleepiness that sometimes results in sudden and unpredictable episodes of sleep during the day

Who's at risk?

Sleep problems can affect anyone. However, certain conditions or risk factors may make getting a good night's sleep more difficult:

- a neck circumference of 17 inches or more for men; 16 inches or more for women
- having large tonsils or tongue, or a small jaw bone

- a family history of sleep apnea, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), nasal obstruction due to allergies, sinus problems or a deviated septum

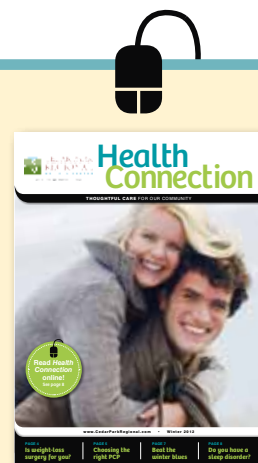
Men are more likely to suffer from sleep apnea; however, women have two to three times the risk of insomnia, according to the National Sleep Foundation.

If you're having trouble falling or staying asleep, or experiencing daytime drowsiness, a sleep study can diagnose disorders and help with treatment. It's performed in a controlled environment and is supervised by medical professionals trained in sleep disorders. ●



Goodbye, sleepless nights

If you or your partner have symptoms of a sleep disorder, talk with your doctor about participating in a sleep study. Call the Cedar Park Regional Sleep Center at (512) 528-7000, for an appointment. To learn more about sleep disorders, visit www.CedarParkRegional.com and click on "Health Resources" and "Interactive Tools."



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