

# Health Connection

THOUGHTFUL CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY



**Weigh your  
weight-loss options**  
Is surgery for you?

**Kick off a new you with  
Healthy Woman!**

**Give your baby  
a smart start**

**Protect your  
heart this  
holiday season**

**Want to  
GO GREEN?  
Consider a  
digital option!**  
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MEDICAL CENTER**

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[www.cedarparkregional.com](http://www.cedarparkregional.com)



## CHRONIC PELVIC PAIN

# Causes and cures

**W**omen who suffer from chronic pelvic pain may feel that the discomfort is something they just have to live with—a “side effect” of being female. But they don’t have to suffer. Chronic pelvic pain, or CPP, is a real medical condition. And that means it can be treated.

### WHAT CAUSES PELVIC PAIN?

You may be suffering from CPP if you’ve had recurring pain in your lower abdomen and pelvic area for at least six months. The symptoms can vary. You may feel pain all the time or it may come and go. You may have a mild, dull ache or sharp, stabbing pain. In addition, you may have abnormally painful menstrual periods (*dysmenorrhea*), low backache, pain during intercourse, pain when going to the bathroom or rectal itching and burning.

The most common causes are gynecological:

- **Endometriosis.** In this condition, tissue from the uterine lining grows on other pelvic organs. When you have your period, this tissue swells and bleeds, causing pain and scarring.
- **Pelvic inflammatory disease.** This is an infection in the uterus, fallopian tubes and ovaries.
- **Fibroids.** These are benign (noncancerous) growths in the uterine wall.

### TESTING AND TREATMENT

Your physician will evaluate your pain by taking a detailed health history and performing a physical exam. He or she may also order some diagnostic tests, such as blood tests, urologic tests, X-rays or laparoscopy (a minimally invasive procedure in which the surgeon inserts a thin lighted tube through an incision in the abdomen to view your pelvic organs).

Treatment depends on the cause of your pain and includes the following options:

- stopping ovulation with birth control pills or injections
- using pain relievers such as ibuprofen or naproxen
- performing relaxation exercises, biofeedback and physical therapy
- taking antibiotics
- getting psychological counseling
- having surgery



## Stress incontinence: Help is available

It may be embarrassing, but stress urinary incontinence is a common problem among women. It’s also highly treatable. In fact, eight in 10 women who seek treatment see an improvement or are cured.

Stress incontinence occurs when any kind of pressure is put on the bladder, such as when you sneeze, laugh, lift, cough, exercise or even rise from a chair. Childbirth and weight gain are two common causes of incontinence because these conditions stretch the pelvic floor muscles. Hormone changes during menopause, some medications and other factors can also cause incontinence.

Your physician has many treatment options, including medication, strength exercises, biofeedback and, in extreme cases, surgery. So don’t let embarrassment keep you from asking for help.

# Put out the fire

## Heartburn can raise your risk for cancer

**N**early everyone has had an occasional bout of heartburn, or acid indigestion, after a spicy meal. But if you have chronic heartburn that occurs more than twice a week, you may be suffering from a more serious condition called gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). If you think you may be suffering from GERD, don't ignore it—without treatment it may eventually lead to more serious health problems, including cancer.

### WHAT IS GERD?

Though it's commonly called heartburn, GERD is a digestive condition that has nothing to do with your heart. Food is carried from your mouth to your stomach through your esophagus tube, which is connected to the stomach by the sphincter muscle. The sphincter usually closes once food passes into the stomach, but if it doesn't close properly, digestive juices rise back up into your chest and throat. They cause the burning feeling near your heart—hence the name heartburn.

GERD can also cause a dry cough and swallowing difficulties, make asthma worse and disrupt sleep. Left untreated, it can damage the esophagus' lining and cause bleeding or ulcers.

### A MORE SERIOUS DEVELOPMENT

GERD can also result in a condition called Barrett's esophagus, in which stomach acids actually cause changes to cells in the esophagus. These damaged cells can lead to esophageal cancer.

Barrett's esophagus is diagnosed with an upper gastrointestinal endoscopy. In this outpatient procedure, the physician passes an endoscope—a small, lighted tube with a tiny camera at the end—into the throat. This lets the physician look for tissue abnormalities and take a tissue sample through the endoscope if needed.

### GETTING RELIEF

If you suffer from heartburn more than twice a week, see your physician. He or she may recommend lifestyle changes (*see "Don't go for the burn," below*) as well as over-the-counter or prescription drugs such as:

- antacids (brand names include Mylanta, Maalox, Alka-Seltzer, Rolaids)
- H2 blockers (Tagamet, Pepcid, Zantac)
- proton pump inhibitors (Nexium, Prilosec, Prevacid)

Some of these drugs can also help improve Barrett's esophagus. In rare circumstances, your physician may recommend surgery to repair the sphincter.

### Don't go for the burn

**O**ne key to soothing heartburn is to avoid the triggers that can lead to discomfort.

In general, the following lifestyle changes can help most people put out the fire:

- If you smoke, stop.
- Avoid foods and beverages that worsen symptoms, such as citrus fruits, chocolate, fried foods, tomato-based foods, spicy foods and drinks with caffeine or alcohol.
- Lose excess weight.
- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Wear loose-fitting clothes.
- Avoid lying down for three hours after a meal.



## CPRMC: Proud home of Tiny Toes



David G. Klein, M.D.  
Chief Executive Officer

Dear parents-to-be,

**B**ecoming a new parent is an exciting time. Your baby will be here before you know it, and there's a lot to learn to get ready. I'm proud to announce that Cedar Park Regional Medical Center (CPRMC) offers a new, free program called Tiny Toes that provides

invaluable information focused on the health and wellness of mom and baby. And signing up is easy! Simply visit [www.cedarparkregional.com](http://www.cedarparkregional.com) to get started.

Tiny Toes is designed to get you off on the right foot and help make your childbirth experience one of the most wonderful moments of your life. Parents who deliver at CPRMC can expect many benefits, including:

- **A skilled and experienced staff.** We take pride in our team's experience in helping you bring your little one into the world.
- **A tour of our obstetrics unit.** We encourage you to schedule a tour, meet with our staff and ask questions. Call (512) 528-7312 today.
- **The well-known book "What to Expect When You're Expecting."**

This book is filled with helpful information about your changing body, your developing baby and how to enjoy pregnancy and childbirth.



Our expansive Labor & Delivery Suites provide a comfortable environment for patients and their families during this special time.

- **Online health information.** Visit [www.cedarparkregional.com](http://www.cedarparkregional.com) and click on "Health Resources" to access a wealth of current information about pregnancy and childbirth.
- **Birthing classes.** Call (512) 215-4799 or go to [www.babyouchildbirth.com](http://www.babyouchildbirth.com) for topics, times, cost and dates.

### WHEN IT'S TIME TO DELIVER

When your new bundle of joy decides it's time to arrive, you'll be welcomed to one of our beautiful and spacious Labor & Delivery Suites. Here you'll find the comforts of home with wood floors, redwood armoires, a matching baby bassinet, a comfortable sleeper for daddy, special mommy comforts that include a plush robe and slippers, gourmet room service, tubs to relax in and a comfy rocker/recliner for cuddling your new baby. In addition, rooms offer Sirius Satellite Radio, iPod docking stations and the TIGRnet patient entertainment system that offers bedside access to the Internet, e-mail, games, TV, movies, music, educational videos and more!

### CHOOSE THE RIGHT PHYSICIAN

To find a physician who delivers at CPRMC, visit [www.cedarparkregional.com](http://www.cedarparkregional.com) and click on "Find a Physician." Search by specialty and name and easily find a physician close to your home or workplace.

At CPRMC, we look forward to being your family's healthcare partner!

Regards,

DAVID G. KLEIN, M.D.  
Chief Executive Officer  
Cedar Park Regional Medical Center

*tiny toes*  
A TIP-TOP OB CLUB

# Celebrate your body, mind and spirit as a Healthy Woman!

**W**omen make between 80 percent and 90 percent of all healthcare decisions, often balancing careers, primary and secondary families, issues with parents and civic work. Cedar Park Regional Medical Center's (CPRMC) free Healthy Woman program was created by women for women to improve their emotional, physical and spiritual well-being. Healthy Woman empowers women with the knowledge and confidence to make informed health and well-being decisions for themselves and their loved ones.

## INTERACTIVE RESOURCES

CPRMC celebrates women and is proud to offer an array of free seminars, health fairs, educational programs and interactive events that focus on women. Monthly Healthy Woman presentations will cover physical and emotional health, financial well-being and spiritual development. Medical topics include information about heart disease, diabetes, breast cancer, menopause, nutrition, osteoporosis, stress management and life-balance issues.

We've also planned some fun events to teach women about wellness in other parts of their lives, with topics like self-defense training and things women "auto" know about car maintenance and safety. A women's advisory council has been selected to help the hospital identify areas of interest that are important to women in our community.

## THE GENDER GAP

"An abundance of research shows a woman's body isn't simply a smaller version of a man's," says David G. Klein, M.D., chief executive officer at CPRMC. "This research is increasingly important both in recognizing and treating women's illnesses and diseases." In the area of heart disease alone, significant differences exist. Women's symptoms generally aren't the same as men's. The American Heart Association says that every year since 1984, more American women than men have died of cardiovascular disease. Recent surveys show that most women don't know it's one of the top killers of women.

"We want the women in our community to understand those differences," says Dr. Klein, "and be able to make informed decisions about their healthcare and that of their families."



## Kick off good health!

**D**on't miss our exciting Healthy Woman kickoff on Thursday, November 13, from 5 to 9 p.m. at Rouse High School. Look forward to a health and vendor fair, buffet dinner, door prizes and more! Featured speaker Jody Conradt, retired University of Texas women's basketball coach, will share "The Spirit of Teamwork: Leaving Your Footprint." A dynamic leader, Conradt



Jody Conradt  
Featured Speaker

was the second woman ever inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. Tickets are \$15 each or \$100 for a table of eight and can be purchased from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the front information desk of CPRMC or the Frost Bank on Pecan Park. They're also available at *It's a Grind* coffee house in Cedar Park from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. each day. Call (512) 528-7100 or visit [www.cedarparkregional.com](http://www.cedarparkregional.com) for more information.

## HEALTHWISE QUIZ

### How much do you know about stroke?

Take this quiz to find out.

**1** A stroke occurs when blood flow is interrupted to your:

- a. heart
- b. lungs
- c. brain
- d. kidneys

**2** Someone in the United States has a stroke:

- a. every 45 seconds
- b. every 4 minutes
- c. every 45 minutes
- d. every 4 hours

**3** Which of the following are major risk factors for stroke?

- a. smoking
- b. high blood pressure
- c. high cholesterol
- d. all of the above

**4** Which of the following is usually not a symptom of stroke?

- a. sudden numbness, weakness or paralysis of your face, arm or leg—usually on one side of your body
- b. sudden difficulty speaking or understanding speech
- c. sudden blurred, double or decreased vision
- d. sudden shortness of breath

**5** How quickly must clot-busting drugs be given after the onset of a stroke to be effective?

- a. within 1 hour
- b. within 2 hours
- c. within 3 hours
- d. within 4 hours

ANSWERS: 1. C; 2. A; 3. D; 4. D; 5. C



## Holiday health alert PROTECT YOUR HEART

The holidays are supposed to be a happy time of year. But for many people, they can end up being a particularly *unhealthy* time of year. Heavy meals, excessive alcohol, smoking, stress—they all can take a toll. Your heart is especially vulnerable. But knowing which dangers lurk can help you take control of your heart health this season.

### STRESS INDUCERS

Three main triggers tend to cause holiday stress, says the Mayo Clinic:

- 1. Relationships.** Family tensions often increase during the holidays. What's more, those facing the holidays away from loved ones may feel lonely or sad.
- 2. Finances.** Spending too much on gifts, travel, food and entertainment can increase stress.
- 3. Physical health.** All that shopping, socializing, cooking, eating and drinking can be exhausting, especially for those already suffering from an illness.

### STRESS REDUCERS

To avoid holiday stress and health problems:

- Exercise and get enough sleep. Both fight off stress and fatigue.
- Watch what you eat. Go ahead and have your favorite holiday treats, but do so in moderation.
- Find time for yourself—do things *you* like to do.
- Seek help. If the holidays overwhelm you with sadness, anxiety or physical problems, talk with your physician. You may be suffering from depression, which needs to be treated.

# INTERESTED IN GOING GREEN?

Then consider the digital option!



**T**hank you for the positive feedback after our first issue of *Health Connection* this summer. We're pleased to bring you important medical information so that you and your family can stay healthy.

In our efforts to be environmentally conscious, we're considering offering this publication in a digital format.

With an interactive digital magazine, you'll receive an e-mail each quarter inviting you to view the latest issue of *Health Connection* so you can easily stay updated on the latest hospital news and health information to stay on the road to wellness. Visit [www.cedarpark.com/survey](http://www.cedarpark.com/survey) if you'd like to go green!



## ! Ready to go green?

If you're interested in a free digital magazine and discontinuing the print publication, let us know by visiting [www.cedarpark.com/survey](http://www.cedarpark.com/survey) today!

## When the ER should be your only option

**H**ow do you know when to treat a medical problem yourself, go to the emergency room (ER) or wait it out? For the following three situations, knowing how to react can mean the difference between life and death.

**Chest pain.** Chest pain that often comes with certain activities and then goes away easily is called stable angina. More than likely, if you've had this kind of angina for some time, you know how to treat it yourself.

Angina that comes on unpredictably or changes over time is called unstable angina. It may be the first sign of a heart attack. Get emergency treatment.

**Asthma attack.** Your asthma action plan tells you how to react to an asthma attack. But sometimes, even when you follow your plan, the attack may become severe. Go to the ER if:

- Your asthma medicine doesn't help.



- You feel a little better after taking your medicine, but serious symptoms come back quickly.
  - Your lips and fingernails are bluish or grayish.
  - You have trouble talking or walking.
- Insect bite.** Bug bites usually cause mild reactions—some swelling, minor pain, itching—that go away in a day or two. You can treat them with an ice pack for the pain and an antihistamine to reduce swelling.

A severe reaction, however, can be life threatening. If you notice difficulty breathing, swelling of the lips or throat, dizziness, con-

fusion, a rapid heartbeat or nausea, cramps and vomiting, get to the ER.

In an emergency, don't drive yourself to the ER. Have someone drive you or, better yet, call for emergency medical assistance. The equipment and expertise on an ambulance can give you lifesaving first aid on the spot.



# Lose weight, feel great!

## Is bariatric surgery for you?



Alan Abando, M.D.  
Bariatric & General Surgeon



Nicole Basa, M.D.  
Bariatric & General Surgeon

**M**ost of us have been on some type of diet in our lives. Some of us have spent our entire lives trying the latest, each time ending up right back where we started—or even worse. And 90 percent of diets fail in the long run. At Cedar Park Regional Medical Center (CPRMC), we're here to help our patients change their lives through medically supervised weight loss. Experienced in gastric bypass and sleeve gastrectomy, our comprehensive bariatric program's medical staff can help you gain confidence and knowledge as you discover a whole new you!

If you're more than 100 pounds over your ideal weight, you may benefit from weight-loss surgery. After most laparoscopic surgeries (minimally invasive procedures), patients are typically discharged from the hospital in two to three days.

To determine whether surgery is right for you, we offer a comprehensive program that includes a medical workup, education about your options, counseling about diet and nutrition and the support necessary to turn your decision into a life-changing event.

### Deciding on weight-loss surgery

If you answer yes to any of the following questions, it may be time to consider weight-loss surgery:

- Are you more than 100 pounds over your ideal weight?
- Do you become short of breath bending over to pick up your shoes?
- Do you prick your finger twice a day hoping each time you won't have to go on insulin?
- When you're playing golf, do your knees want to head back to the clubhouse on the second hole?
- Does your snoring rattle the whole house?

**! Be inspired to lose weight!**

**C**ome to a free weight-loss surgery seminar to learn more and get answers to all your questions. To register, call (512) 260-3444 today.

[www.cedarparkregional.com](http://www.cedarparkregional.com)

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# Health Connection

*Health Connection* is published as a community service of Cedar Park Regional Medical Center. There is no fee to subscribe.

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