

Health Connection

THOUGHTFUL CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Clear the air!
CPRMC offers
new hope for
chronic sinusitis

Doctor Jake
helps heal patients

**Are you
exercise savvy?**
Find out inside

**Be wise—
immunize!**

**Ready to
GO GREEN?**
Consider a
digital option!
See page 5.



**CEDAR PARK
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Mind your medicine

Smart strategies to stay well



Adults over age 65 who have adverse drug reactions account for more than 177,000 emergency room visits each year. One-third of these visits are related to three drugs: warfarin (a blood thinner), insulin (for diabetes) and digoxin (a heart medicine). Many of these reactions can be avoided with better communication between patient and physician. Follow this advice to help you avoid becoming a statistic:

- **Tell your physician about all the medicine you're taking.** That

includes prescription medications and over-the-counter drugs and supplements. Your physician will want to make sure you're not taking anything that can cause a reaction or affect a drug's potency. For example, Ginkgo biloba, garlic, ginger and ginseng can all interact with warfarin, as can medications taken for headaches and joint pain, such as aspirin and ibuprofen. Iron and calcium supplements can interfere with thyroid medication absorption.

- **Ask questions.** Don't be afraid to ask your physician to clarify a medication's purpose and common side effects. Also make sure you know when and how often you should take it and what to do if you miss a dose. Learn both the medicine's brand name and generic name and its shape, size and color.
- **Write it down.** Keep a list of all the medications you take in your wallet in case you do end up in the ER. This will allow physicians and nurses to avoid giving you medicine that could cause a dangerous interaction.
- **Take your medication as prescribed.** Don't stop your treatment because you think it's not working, you have side effects or you think your pill-taking regimen is hard to stick with. Instead, call your physician. He or she may be able to prescribe a different medicine or dosage to minimize side effects or simplify your regimen.

Also let your physician know if you've stopped taking a prescribed medicine. Otherwise, he or she may assume the drug isn't working and give you a higher dosage or different medication.

- **Go to follow-up appointments.** Some medications, such as blood thinners and drugs for diabetes, seizures and heart problems, require regular blood tests and monitoring by your physician. Regular visits are crucial to ensure you're getting a safe and effective dose.



Snap, crackle, pop!

What are your joints telling you?

Your body is a symphony of sounds—that cracking in your ankles, the popping in your knee. What causes these noises? Sometimes, it's just ligaments or tendons tightening and moving with a joint. For the most part, these sounds are normal and don't require any treatment.

But sometimes these noises can signal a more serious problem. A loud pop and locking of a joint can mean that torn cartilage, a piece of bone or something else has gotten caught between joint surfaces. Cracking and grinding may be a sign of arthritis. A loss of smooth cartilage and roughening of the joint surface is to blame for these noises.

JUST MAKING NOISE?

To find out whether your popping and cracking should be of concern, look for the following signs. See your physician if you have any of these symptoms:

- pain accompanying the popping
- swelling of the joint
- locking or sticking of the joint
- loss of motion or function

A JOINT EFFORT

The Arthritis Foundation and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons suggest following these tips to keep your joints healthy:

- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Stretch to increase your flexibility. Ask your physician to help you develop a regular stretching program.
- Stand up straight, shoulders back.
- When you lift heavy objects, use your legs instead of using your back. If you can't lift something yourself, ask for help.



- Alternate heavy activity such as housework, brisk walking or strenuous yardwork with rest periods.
- Wear protective gear, such as wrist, elbow or knee pads, if you're engaging in an activity where you could fall.
- Pay attention to your body. Pain may be a sign you're overworking your joints.
- Eat a well-balanced diet that includes plenty of calcium (1,200 mg a day for those over age 50; 1,000 mg for those ages 19 to 50).

Knuckle cracking: Bad to the bone?

Some people just can't resist cracking their knuckles. The cracking sound you hear is the "popping" of air bubbles when the joint is pushed or pulled a certain way. Knuckle cracking can certainly be annoying to others, but does it really make your knuckles larger? That old wives' tale hasn't been proven, but this is still a habit you should try to break, as studies point to possible soft-tissue damage in joints, a weak grip and hand swelling as a result of repeated cracking.



Dogtor Jake is in the house!

New pet therapy offers heartwarming relief

It's said that dogs are man's best friends, and nowhere is that more true than at Cedar Park Regional Medical Center (CPRMC). We're proud to offer pet therapy through our Dogtor Jake's Pet Therapy Program. An all-volunteer program, Dogtor Jake's goal is to support healing through pet therapy, which provides special emotional and social support for people hospitalized for acute or chronic illness.

Pet therapy offers these patient benefits:

- **An outward focus.** Animals can help patients focus on their environment rather than thinking and talking about their conditions. Patients can watch and talk to and about the animals.
- **An emotional release.** It can be physically and emotionally exhausting to be ill. Hospital patients are in unfamiliar surroundings and undergo uncomfortable tests and procedures. This may make them close themselves off from friends and family. Animals can open a channel of emotionally safe, nonthreatening communication for patients.
- **A nurturing experience.** Patients need all the caring they can get. Psychologically, when a person nurtures an animal, he or she fulfills a personal need for that feeling.
- **Unconditional acceptance.** Animals have a way of accepting without qualification. They don't care how a person looks or what they say, which patients need. An animal's acceptance is nonjudgmental, forgiving and uncomplicated; they accept patients just the way they are.
- **Distraction and entertainment.** Studies show the presence of animals brightens the atmosphere and increases amusement, laughter and play. These positive distractions may help decrease feelings of isolation or alienation.
- **Physical contact.** Touch is important to nourish our minds and spirits. In hospitals, where touch can be painful or invasive, an animal's touch is

safe, nonthreatening and pleasant. Having an animal to hold and hug can make a world of difference.

- **Physiological benefits.** Many people are able to relax when animals are present. Tests show patients experience a dramatic decrease in heart rate and blood pressure.

All CPRMC Pet Therapy owner-dog teams complete rigorous screening and testing. Through team visits, these duos bring the healing power of our canine friends to those in need. CPRMC is proud to offer this new service to our patients and our community.

Jake and Maryann Orosz, CPRMC's first pet-partner team, can help you heal.



! Heal with paw-fect therapy

Let the healing begin! To learn more about pet therapy at CPRMC, call (512) 528-7100.

Healthy Woman kickoff a resounding success!



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

One word—wow! November 13 was an incredible evening and a phenomenal kickoff to our Healthy Woman program. We welcomed more than 800 (mostly women and a few brave men) attendees and more than 35 partners who supported the program. Our keynote speaker, Jody Conradt, from the University of Texas Women's Basketball fame, spoke about the spirit of teamwork, camaraderie and her key ingredient to life—passion.

Women today are superheroes, taking care of children, their spouses, aging parents, work and home responsibilities. The list goes on—yet women end up spending the least amount of time on the person who matters most ... themselves! The kickoff was an event planned especially for them, and they truly had a chance to relax and enjoy it.

THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

Many thanks to our partners who helped ensure the Healthy Woman kickoff was a memorable beginning to an empowering and life-changing program:

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API Productions • Austin Regional Clinic • Butterfly Nutrition • Crave Catering • HeartSync Wellness Center • Ilios Lighting • Ladies Workout Express • Live Oak Chiropractic • Lone Star Dermatology • Puryear Photography • Smith Barney • Sullivan Physical Therapy • Vino 100

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Healthy Woman Florist of the Year

Bloomin' Across Texas

Until next time,

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

INTERESTED IN GOING GREEN?

Tell us at www.cedarparkregional.com/survey

Thank you for the positive feedback about *Health Connection*. We're pleased to bring you important medical information to keep you and your family 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.

SHOULD WE GO GREEN?

If you're interested in a free digital magazine and discontinuing the print publication, visit www.cedarparkregional.com/survey today to let us know!



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HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about **exercise**?

Take this quiz to find out.

1 To lose one pound, you need to burn how many calories?

- a. 500
- b. 1,500
- c. 2,500
- d. 3,500

2 A good way to measure the intensity of an exercise is to keep track of your:

- a. heart rate
- b. blood pressure
- c. sweat levels
- d. thirst intensity

3 Exercise can:

- a. reduce depression
- b. help manage type 2 diabetes
- c. boost good HDL cholesterol
- d. all of the above

4 The *minimum* amount of time you should be active every day is:

- a. 15 minutes
- b. 20 minutes
- c. 30 minutes
- d. there is no minimum

5 Which of the following exercises will *not* help you build stronger bones?

- a. running
- b. swimming
- c. lifting weights
- d. dancing

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

The kidney-heart connection

If you think kidney disease only affects your kidneys, think again. Though researchers can't fully explain the link, kidney disease is an independent risk factor for heart disease and greatly increases the risk of dying from heart problems. In fact, heart disease is the most common cause of death for the more than 20 million Americans with chronic kidney disease.

WHO GETS KIDNEY DISEASE?

Kidney disease is often called a "silent killer" because many people don't even know they have it until it reaches an advanced stage. Risk factors include being obese; smoking; and having high blood pressure, diabetes or a family history of kidney disease. Ask your physician about testing if you're at risk. If he or she suspects you may have chronic kidney disease, blood and urine samples can diagnose it.

KEEP YOUR KIDNEYS HEALTHY

If you already have kidney disease, early treatment can help keep it from getting worse. But the best method of attack is to prevent the problem in the first place. Take these steps to minimize your risk:

- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Eat healthful foods and be active every day.
- **Quit smoking.** Besides the damage it can do to your heart, smoking can interfere with medicine for high blood pressure.
- **Get your blood pressure level to 120/80 mm Hg or lower.**

Start by slashing salt from your diet and getting more potassium (found in bananas, apricots and broccoli). If changing your diet doesn't help, discuss medications with your physician.

- **Control your blood sugar if you have diabetes.** Dietary changes and medication may be needed.



'Brake' for breakfast



You wouldn't take off for a road trip with no fuel in your car, so it doesn't make much sense to send your body out for the day with nothing to run on. Your tank needs breakfast.

Studies have shown that those who eat this most important meal of the day are less tired and irritable, have better concentration and are more likely to maintain a healthy weight. Not a bacon-and-eggs person? No problem. Try these

out-of-the-cereal-box suggestions from the American Dietetic Association:

- one cup of vanilla low-fat yogurt topped with whole-grain cereal and berries
- leftover veggie pizza with a piece of fruit and a glass of milk
- whole-grain toast topped with a little peanut butter and apple slices
- whole-grain waffles or pancakes topped with fresh banana
- a super-fast smoothie, made from frozen fruit and yogurt, whipped up in a blender
- a breakfast wrap (try low-sodium deli turkey, low-fat cheese and spinach in a tortilla)
- oatmeal sprinkled with cinnamon and walnuts

Ready, aim, vaccinate!

Vaccines aren't just for babies. If your child hasn't been to the pediatrician in a while, he or she may have missed some important shots. And don't forget that adults need vaccines, too! Talk

with your pediatrician about your child's specific needs and whether he or she is at high risk. And ask your own physician about *your* needs. Use this handy chart as your guide.

IMMUNIZATION	BIRTH TO AGE 6	AGES 7-18	AGES 19+
Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTap, Td/Tdap)	4 doses by 18 months; final dose at age 6	Kids need a booster at ages 11-12. For teens, ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	Get a Td booster every 10 years. If you're under age 65 and haven't been vaccinated with Tdap before, you need a single dose.
Haemophilus influenzae type b	4 doses by age 15 months		
Hepatitis A	2 doses between 12 and 23 months	High-risk kids and adults need a vaccination.	
Hepatitis B	3 doses within first 18 months of life	Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	High-risk adults should be immunized.
Human papillomavirus (HPV)		3 doses are recommended for girls ages 11-12, or later if a young woman isn't up to date. Ask your physician about the pros and cons of vaccination.	
Inactivated polio virus	3 doses by 18 months	Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	
Influenza	Yearly, for kids ages 6 months to 19 years		Anyone <i>can</i> get vaccinated; high-risk adults and those over age 50 <i>should</i> be.
Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)	1 dose at 12-15 months; another at ages 4-6	Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	If you haven't had this vaccine, you need it. High-risk adults need a second dose. If you were born before 1957, you're considered immune to measles and mumps.
Meningococcal (meningitis)	Ask your pediatrician if your child is high risk.	It's recommended for kids ages 11-12; otherwise, ask your pediatrician if your child is at high risk.	It's a must for high-risk groups.
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	4 doses of pneumococcal conjugate by 15 months	High-risk kids and adults need the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine. Adults should get vaccinated at age 65; some older adults may need a booster.	
Rotavirus	3 doses by 6 months		
Varicella (chicken pox)	1 dose at 12-15 months; another at ages 4-6	Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	If you aren't up to date and never had the chicken pox, speak with your physician.
Zoster (shingles)			Get it once, at age 60 or older.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Relief for chronic sinusitis

CPRMC offers new hope for patients

Michael Sutcliffe was a man looking for relief. He'd suffered with chronic sinusitis (infection of the sinus cavity lining) for years. "I tried everything," he says, "but no matter what medicine I took, it didn't get any better. I had headaches and chronic sinus infections and I always felt stuffed up. And I'm a firefighter, so it was a real hassle. Fortunately, Dr. Briggs suggested a new procedure that completely changed all that."

The most common treatments for chronic sinusitis are medical and pharmaceutical therapies and/or conventional sinus surgery. These therapies are often successful, but for more than 20 percent of patients, conventional sinus surgery is their next hope for relief. However, conventional sinus surgery is a major operation that may require bone and tissue removal to open blocked sinuses. For this or other clinical or personal reasons, about 900,000 patients who might benefit from surgery opt to just live with their sinus conditions. The good news? Physicians now have a new way to take away the pain and suffering of chronic sinusitis.

HOW IT WORKS

Ear, nose and throat specialists Russell Briggs, M.D., and Karen Stierman, M.D., are using a new technique called the Acclarent Stratus MicroFlow Spacer at Cedar Park Regional Medical Center (CPRMC). Drs. Briggs and Stierman are guided by computed tomography scans and use an advanced system to place the catheter directly into the sinuses, avoiding sensitive areas. Then the physicians insert a plastic drug-delivery system that has tiny holes. They inject liquid steroids that deliver the drug and decrease swelling.



"It's an easier procedure for patients and is incredibly effective," says Dr. Briggs. The device is removed in the office after two weeks. Traditional surgery in the ethmoid sinuses (that separate the brain from the nasal cavity) involves tissue removal, resulting in pain and potential scarring.

Sutcliffe is already enjoying breathing easier and his headaches are now gone. "I'm enjoying a much better quality of life," he says. "I didn't realize just how difficult it was to breathe until I had this new procedure, and now my sinuses are wide open. No more headaches, no more continuous sinus infections, no more feeling like I'm all stopped up."

The MicroFlow Spacer is new to the market, and CPRMC is one of the few facilities in the United States offering it. Drs. Briggs and Stierman are among only 50 physicians in the country using this technique and the only two in Travis/Williamson Counties.

! Take a deep breath!

CPRMC's team is here for you and your family and is dedicated to your good health. To be evaluated for this exciting sinusitis procedure, call the office of Russell Briggs, M.D., and Karen Stierman, M.D., at (512) 328-7722.

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