

SeniorCircle plus

NEWS AND HEALTH INFORMATION FOR SENIORS

FALL 2005

Time May Not Heal All Wounds

Lutheran Hospital opens Wound Healing Center

Lutheran Hospital's new Wound Healing Center offers specialized wound care for patients suffering from diabetic ulcers, pressure ulcers, infections, compromised skin grafts and flaps, as well as slow-healing wounds.

The Center's staff is skilled in the latest therapeutic methods of wound management. Patient treatment includes state-of-the-art technology and, in some cases, patients are treated in one of the center's two hyperbaric oxygen (HBO) chambers.

Healing from the Inside Out

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is specialized treatment that works by surrounding the patient with 100 percent oxygen at higher than normal atmospheric pressure. This increases the amount of oxygen in the patient's blood and, in the case of wounds, enables red blood



Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is an effective treatment option for healing stubborn wounds.

cells to pass more easily through the patient's blood into the wound to heal it from the inside out.

Relaxing on a bed encased within a large clear plastic shell, patients undergoing hyperbaric therapy can watch television and converse with others outside the chamber through a speaker system. The only physical sensation patients may feel is slight pressure in their eardrums, similar to a passenger's experience when an airplane lands.

Relief for Many Conditions

While diabetic foot wounds respond well to this type of treatment, HBO can also be used to

treat patients suffering from uncommon ailments such as cyanide poisoning, gangrene, carbon monoxide poisoning, brown recluse spider bites and the "bends," or decompression sickness.

Medicare/Medicaid, HMOs and other private insurance plans cover most treatments.

If you have a wound that won't heal or if you would like additional information about Lutheran Hospital's new Wound Healing Center, call 216/363-2316. •



Need a physician? Call the Medline physician referral line at 216/363-2300 or 866/733-6363.

Mending a Broken Heart

Debunking the myths about cardiac rehabilitation

If you've suffered a heart attack or have a heart condition, you don't have to face returning to normal life alone. With the help of a rehabilitation specialist, cardiac rehabilitation will enable you to develop healthy habits, strengthen your heart and help you get back to living again.

In fact, cardiac rehabilitation is the safest course to recovery for heart patients. Yet, only a third of those who have heart attacks enter a formal rehab program—even though the exercise and support in these centers could extend life and improve its quality for most patients.

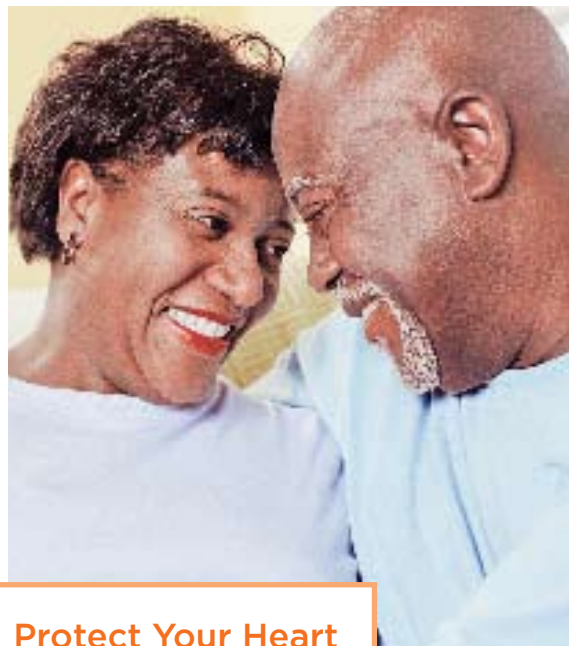
Here are some of the myths that keep many people out of rehab.

Myth 1 • "I'm not in good enough shape."

You don't have to get in better shape before beginning a rehab program. Experts will create an individualized program to help you get in better shape—no matter what shape you're in.

Myth 2 • Exercise is dangerous.

Actually, a supervised rehabilitation facility is one of the safest places you can be. If you experience chest discomfort or heart rhythm abnormalities, professionals are on hand to provide immediate assistance.



Protect Your Heart

For more information about cardiac rehabilitation, call your local Cleveland Clinic Health System hospital.

Myth 3 • Rehab is only for heart attack survivors.

On the contrary—just about anyone with heart disease can benefit from cardiac rehab programs.

Myth 4 • Cardiac rehabilitation is just exercise.

Not true—cardiac rehab focuses on all the risk factors for the progression of heart disease. Participants usually receive counseling from a dietitian, assistance with smoking cessation, instruction on stress management, and help with coping with depression, which affects up to 20 percent of patients after a heart attack.

Myth 5 • Cardiac rehab is a "guy thing," usually for the young.

Women need cardiac rehab just as much as men—even though about 20 percent fewer women enroll. And, in older age, research suggests that if exercise is safe, it can improve endurance and physical functioning. ●

Numbers to Know

1.5 million

Number of Americans who suffer from a heart attack each year

11.5

Average number of years of life lost prematurely because of a heart attack

500,000

Number of Americans who will have a recurrent heart attack this year

52

Percentage cardiac rehabilitation increases a heart attack patient's chances of survival by at least three years following a heart attack

Sources: American Heart Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn.; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute



Now What?

Finding hope in an osteoporosis diagnosis

You've just found out you have osteoporosis. What do you do? First of all, don't panic. Yes, your bones are weak—but your determination to strengthen them doesn't have to be. In fact, you have many tools at your disposal. Try these tips from the National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF) to get started.

- With your doctor's approval, engage in regular weight-bearing exercise such as walking.
- Make sure to loosen up your muscles by stretching.
- Make sure you get your recommended daily amounts of calcium and vitamin D. For adults over age 50, the NOF recommends 1,200 mg

of calcium and between 400 and 800 IU of vitamin D daily.

- Take steps to fall-proof your home, such as making sure stair rails are secure, ensuring rugs are anchored and smooth, and installing grab bars and non-skid tape in the tub and shower.
- Talk with your doctor about medication. From drugs that slow bone loss to drugs that increase the rate of new bone formation, several medications are available that can strengthen bones and reduce the risk of fracture.

For additional bone-building advice, or for information about osteoporosis, visit nof.org.

Eat Up

Spice up mealtime with five simple solutions

Trouble chewing and loss of appetite are just two of the many reasons seniors might not be eating well, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. To make mealtime palatable once again, try incorporating these tips into your next meal:

Can't chew? Look for substitutions. Instead of fresh fruit, try fruit juice and soft, canned fruits, such as applesauce, peaches and pears.

Can't get to a grocery store? See if your local supermarket delivers, or check with a community group for volunteer help.

Don't feel like cooking? Keep canned or frozen fish, meat, fruits,

vegetables, dinners and soups on hand for a quick yet nutritious meal.

Trying a new food? Look for foods with labels that reveal something healthy about the food, such as "cholesterol-free" and "a good source of fiber."

Have no appetite? If meals taste bland because of medications or taste problems, add flavor with spices, herbs and lemon juice. Or make mealtime a social time by dining with family and friends.



For nutrition fact sheets, grocery shopping advice, tips of the day and more, visit the American Dietetic Association's Web site, eatright.org.

Sources: U.S. Food and Drug Administration; National Institute on Aging

Tai Chi for Seniors. Improve concentration, balance, range of motion and more. Class starts Oct. 18 and is limited to eight, so register early. Call the Fairview Hospital Wellness Center at **440/356-0670**.

When You Gotta Go, You Gotta Go!

There's help for incontinence

Female urinary incontinence is not just a nuisance; it can affect your quality of life.

"Incontinence becomes more common as you age," according to Habibeh Gitiforooz, M.D., a Lakewood Hospital gynecologist with a special interest in incontinence. "In fact, incontinence is the number-one reason seniors end up in nursing homes.

"It's much better and easier to treat incontinence earlier, before other health problems, such as heart conditions and arthritis, occur with age. Left untreated, incontinence can even lead to kidney damage," she says. "There have been tremendous advances in successful incontinence treatment, done on an outpatient basis, during the past few years."

Offering a Solution

Before treatment, the cause and type of incontinence must be diagnosed,

which is done through a thorough physical examination and a series of special tests.

"Causes include diabetes, neuromuscular disorders, obesity and pelvic support problems, and loss of collagen as a natural occurrence of aging. Incontinence also can be a side effect of medications and injuries due to childbirth," Dr. Gitiforooz explains.



Habibeh Gitiforooz, M.D., a gynecologist at Lakewood Hospital.

Treatment options include behavioral therapy through bladder retraining, medications to control muscle spasms to help prevent leakage, devices to support the pelvic floor and outpatient surgical procedures.

The bottom line is that incontinence is a common problem, and it's important you discuss it with your doctor. Relief is available. To schedule an appointment with Dr. Gitiforooz, call **216/529-2932**. ●

Mammogram Screenings Offered

Fairview Hospital is offering mammogram screenings on Oct. 28 to women over age 55. If needed, transportation will be provided by the Rocky River Senior Center to Fairview Hospital's Columbia Road facility just north of I-90. Participants will receive a free breakfast or lunch and a \$10 phone card. For reservations, call **216/476-2763**.

Any woman receiving a screening mammogram at one of Fairview Hospital's facilities has the option to have her mammogram scanned by our new computer-aided detection (CAD) imaging system. CAD helps detect 15 percent more breast cancers at an earlier stage. After your screening mammogram is complete, our Cleveland Clinic radiologists will use the CAD imaging system to help evaluate your mammogram. It adds another set of eyes to check for suspicious areas.

Learn more about the benefits of CAD at www.fairviewhospital.org/bhc.