

# SeniorCircle plus

NEWS AND HEALTH INFORMATION FOR SENIORS

WINTER 2005

## Take Back Control

**Don't let pain stop you from enjoying life**

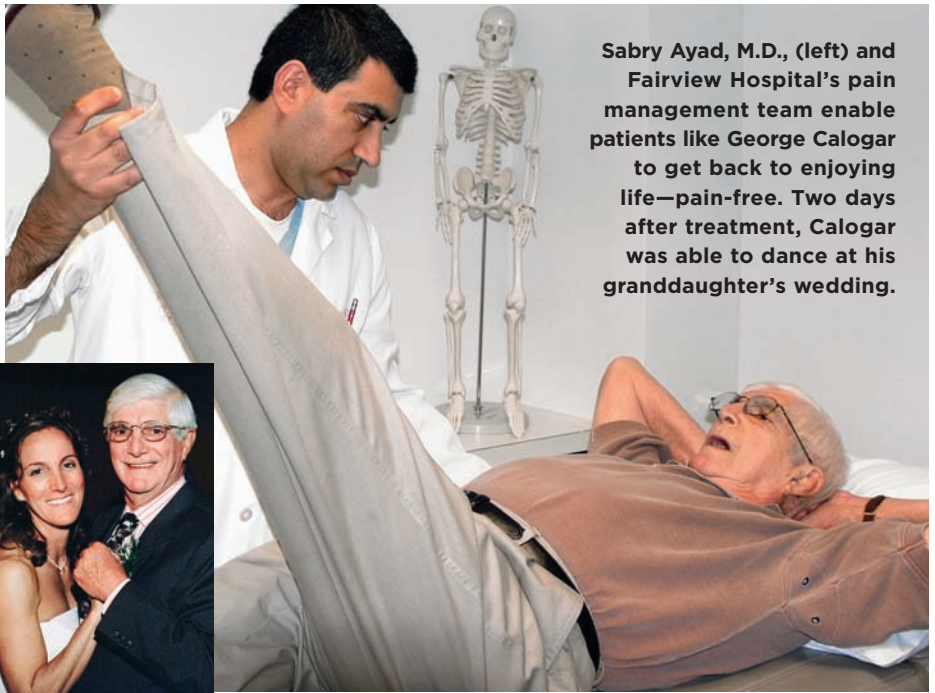
It was a Thursday morning, and George Calogar had a big problem. He desperately wanted to dance with his granddaughter at her wedding that Saturday. However, in addition to coping with a chronic back condition for years, he had just reinjured his back and was in excruciating pain. Fortunately, Calogar went to the Pain Management Center at Fairview Hospital. There, under local anesthesia, he had an interventional caudal block procedure that gave him immediate relief.

### The Pain Management Approach

Calogar's experience came as no surprise to Sabry Ayad, M.D., chairman of Fairview's Anesthesiology Department. "We provide state-of-the-art pain management treatment through a multidisciplinary approach and have a full-time interventional pain management specialist on staff."

### Treatment Options

There are basically two types of pain: acute and chronic. "Acute pain can occur after surgery, and chronic pain results from back injuries, cancer and disabling diseases. To decrease or prevent post-surgery pain, we use pre-emptive



Sabry Ayad, M.D., (left) and Fairview Hospital's pain management team enable patients like George Calogar to get back to enjoying life—pain-free. Two days after treatment, Calogar was able to dance at his granddaughter's wedding.

analgesia administered as either an oral medication or a regional anesthetic block, whereby we inject medication directly around the nerve supply where the surgery will be performed. This procedure blocks pain so patients don't need powerful narcotics, with all their associated side effects, during or after their surgery," Dr. Ayad says.

The center offers numerous options to treat chronic pain, including:

- on-site referral for physical and occupational therapy.
- physical and rehabilitation medicine.

- transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) units, which deliver a safe, low dose of electrical current to the designated body area to counter pain.
- spinal cord stimulation, in which electrodes are embedded under the skin near the spinal cord and set at a level that provides relief.
- intrathecal pain pumps for patients experiencing pain, including cancer patients, where small but more effective doses of pain medication are administered directly inside the spinal canal with much fewer side effects. •

If you would like relief from pain, call the Fairview Hospital Pain Management Center at 216/476-7331.



# Reduce Your Risk for Diabetes

**M**ore than 18 percent of people age 60 and older have type 2 diabetes. And while age is a risk factor, it's not the only one. Fortunately, a number of other risk factors are controllable. Here's what you can do to protect yourself from diabetes:

**Lose weight.** Being overweight is closely associated with diabetes. Just a 5 percent to 10 percent reduction in weight can greatly reduce your risk.

**Eat right.** Maintain a well-balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Don't deprive yourself of your favorite treats; just enjoy them in moderation.

**Exercise.** Get moving 30 minutes a day, five days a week. Try walking briskly around the block or climbing the stairs several times.

**Get screened.** It may be seven to 10 years before you notice the symptoms of type 2 diabetes, but that doesn't mean it's not there. Have your blood glucose levels checked regularly, at least every three years, or more often if you're at high risk.

*Source: American Diabetes Association* ●

## Schedule your blood

glucose test with your physician, or visit [cchs.net](http://cchs.net) and click on "Health Programs & Screenings" for a list of free diabetes screenings and diabetes education programs offered at your local Cleveland Clinic hospital.

# Home Sweet Home

**M**oving a loved one to a nursing home can be a difficult decision, not to mention stressful when searching for the right facility.

Here are some things to consider when looking for a nursing home:

**Medical needs.** Ask your loved one's doctor to recommend a facility that would be best suited for his or her needs. Consider what types of services are offered and what the staff-to-patient ratio is.

**Location.** Choose a facility that is centrally located so that family and friends can make frequent visits.

**Atmosphere.** Visit the home several times, both planned and unannounced, to get a feel for its culture. Ask yourself: Are the residents treated well? Are appealing activities available? Is the food appetizing?



**Cost.** Ask what the costs are and get the numbers in writing. Consider how much of the costs, if any, will be paid by Medicare or Medicaid and whether the remaining portion is affordable.

**Asking the right questions can help you find the perfect home for your loved one. Visit [medicare.gov/nursing/overview.asp](http://medicare.gov/nursing/overview.asp) for a nursing home checklist to help you compare facilities in your area.** ●

## Need a Physician?

Use the numbers below to help you find a physician.

### The Cleveland Clinic

The Appointment Center:  
216/444-2273 or  
800/223-2272, ext. 42273

### Euclid, Hillcrest, Huron and South Pointe Hospitals

Medline Physician Referral:  
440/312-4533 or  
800/621-0004

### Fairview, Lakewood and Lutheran Hospitals

Medline Physician Referral:  
216/363-2300 or toll-free  
866/733-6363

### Marymount Hospital

MED-MATCH Physician Referral: 216/581-WELL (9355)

For an online listing of Cleveland Clinic Health System physicians, go to [cchspo/phys\\_dir](http://cchspo/phys_dir).

# Finding Dr. Right

**Don't trust your health to just anyone**

It's OK to look in the phone book for a restaurant or a mechanic, but when it comes to your health, not just any doctor will do. Since your physician will be entrusted with your health and will listen to your most intimate problems, finding the right one is crucial to your well-being.

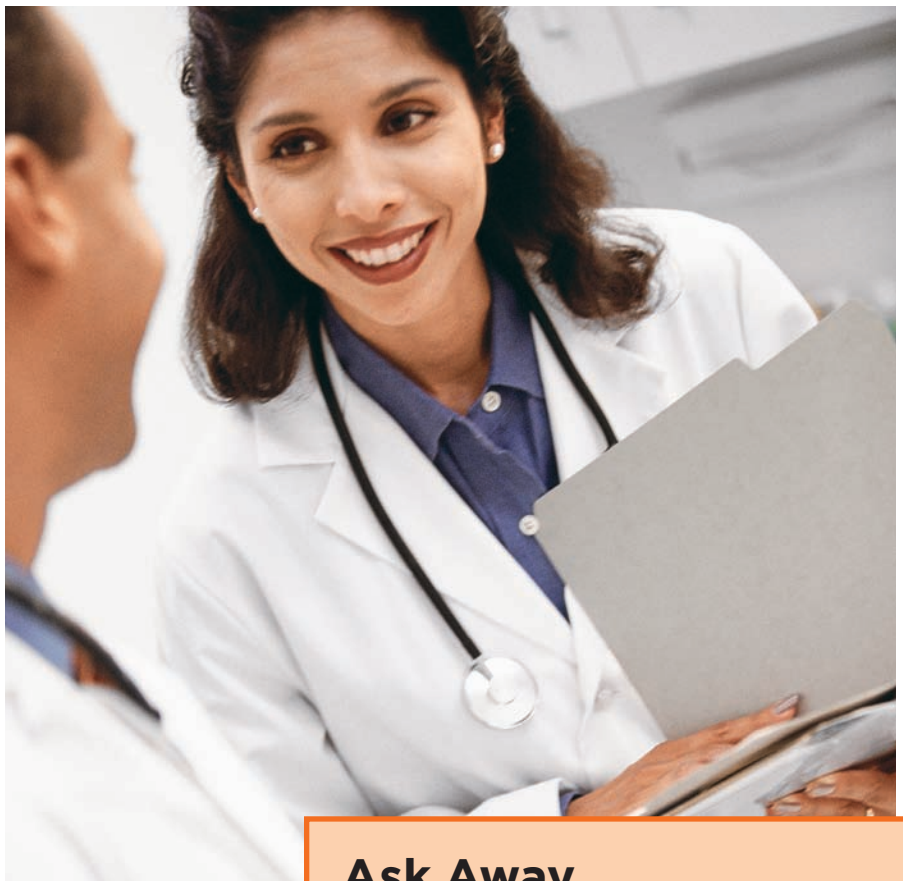
First things first: Start searching for a physician while you're healthy. That way, if you become ill, you won't be pressured to find someone quickly with whom you may not feel comfortable.

To begin your search for Dr. Right, ask family and friends for recommendations. If you're new to the area, ask your previous doctor for a referral or consult your new neighbors. A local pharmacist may be able to help, too—she may be able to offer you good insight into a doctor's bedside manner and care philosophy.

Once you find some doctors you'd like to consider, follow these tips from the AARP for choosing the one that's best for you:

**Get approval.** There's nothing worse than finding the perfect doctor and then discovering he's not included on your insurance plan's provider list. Eliminate any doctors that don't accept your coverage.

**Availability.** Find out which doctors are accepting new patients. Ask about their availability. How



far in advance must you schedule an appointment?

### **Vital statistics.**

How convenient is the doctor's office? Consider the location, hours, parking availability and if it accommodates any special needs you may have.

### **Ask the board.**

Contact your state health department or the medical review board to determine if there have been any complaints filed against the doctor. If there have been, you'll want to learn the details of the complaints.

**Talk to the doc.** Schedule an appointment to interview the physician in person or over the phone. This will allow you to ask specific questions about his practice and techniques,

## Ask Away

Even the best doctors can't read minds. That's why it's important for you to ask questions about your health. To get started, try these:

- What is my condition? What's the cause?
- Do I need tests? Why?
- What are the possible treatments? How effective are they?
- Will I need to go on medication? What are the side effects?

If you have difficulty understanding your doctor, take a friend or family member to the appointment with you. For additional tips on communicating with your physician, visit [aarp.org](http://aarp.org) and click on "Health and Wellness," then "Checkups and Prevention."

and help you decide whether or not you'd like to become a patient.

While choosing the right doctor is important to your health, don't stress over the decision. If you decide you're not comfortable with your choice, feel free to look for a different physician. Just remember to keep your medical history up to date and have your records transferred with you. ●

**Get Screened Today!** Free PSA and DRE screenings for prostate cancer are available at Lutheran Hospital. Call **440/891-6500** for details.

## Prostate Problems?

**A**ccording to the American Cancer Society, prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer in American men, affecting one out of every six men. But there's good news. While reports of diagnosed cases have risen rapidly in recent years, mortality rates are declining, which may be due in large part to increased screening.

Risk factors for prostate cancer include:

- increasing age.
- family history.
- a diet high in saturated fat.
- a sedentary lifestyle.
- smoking.
- exposure to heavy metals.
- race, especially African Americans.

According to Kalish Kedia, M.D., chief of Urology at Lutheran Hospital, "Annual prostate screening and early detection allows for more effective—and more successful—treatment, which means a much better chance for recovery." ●



**Kalish Kedia, M.D.**

## Coronary Care at Lakewood Hospital

**C**hances are you or someone you know will need treatment for coronary artery disease. Lakewood Hospital has discovered that congestive heart failure is the No. 1 reason for its admissions of individuals over age 65.

In response to this growing need, Lakewood Hospital just completed a \$3 million renovation and expansion project to create a 2,800-square-foot state-of-the-art facility for coronary care.

"This new facility enables us to provide better cardiac care to our patients through improved imaging

technology and services," says Marcello Mellino, M.D., medical director of the hospital's Heart Center.

The new equipment makes Lakewood Hospital's catheterization lab among the newest and



**Marcello Mellino, M.D., and patient.**

most comprehensive facilities of its kind in the area, according to Mark Valentine, vice president of Cardiac Services for Fairview, Lakewood and Lutheran Hospitals. "We have once again demonstrated our ongoing commitment to our patients by providing the highest-quality care possible for heart conditions," he says.

For a complete list of cardiac services, ranging from diagnostic procedures to bypass surgery, or to schedule a consultation with a cardiologist at the Lakewood Hospital Heart Center, call **216/529-7284**. ●