

headline

Summer 2006

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GRAND LAKETM
HEALTH SYSTEM

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**It's
Worth It**

Some cancer screenings may be uncomfortable,
but they could save your life | *page 6*

The Language of Stroke Recovery

Cramming before a final exam may not be the best approach to learning, but cramming after suffering a stroke may be. In fact, more than eight in 10 stroke survivors who suffer from speech difficulty are likely to benefit from short, intense language retraining rather than prolonged therapy.

According to recent research published in *Stroke: Journal of the American Heart Association*, 85 percent of those who suffered from a language impairment known as chronic aphasia showed improved language skills

after an intense period of retraining over the course of 10 days, compared with the typical retraining period consisting of two hours of therapy a week for a year. The therapy uses language games and encourages patients to speak rather than use nonverbal strategies.

“We can’t heal our patients—actually it is far from being a cure,” says the study’s lead author Marcus Meinzer, Ph.D., of the Universität Konstanz in Germany. “But what we can do is help patients to climb small steps on the way up within a short time.”

For more information on stroke recovery or prevention, visit the American Heart Association at americanheart.org.



Comfortable in Your Own Skin

In the literal sense, no one is more “thick-skinned” than another. However, some people do seem to have a healthier outer layer than others. Here are some tips for caring for your skin.

Avoid overexposure to the sun. A

tan is often mistaken for good health, but it is actually the result of skin injury. When spending time outdoors, use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. Your skin will look better in the long run, and you’ll reduce your risk of skin cancer.

Quit smoking. Not only is the bad habit linked to cancer, heart disease and osteoporosis, it also contributes to wrinkles. How? By narrowing blood vessels and depleting the oxygen and nutrients that give skin its strength and elasticity.

Drink up. While numerous factors, including humidity and the types of soap you use, affect skin hydration, drinking enough water is essential. Experts recommend eight glasses a day.

Forgo fragrant skin care products. The fragrance added to skin care products is the ingredient most likely to cause allergic reactions. Natural ingredients can also cause irritation.

Limit bath time. Though it seems contradictory, baths actually dry out your skin by removing natural oils. Bathe only once a day, consider adding bath oils and apply a moisturizer immediately afterward.

Sources: American Academy of Dermatology, MayoClinic.com

Soothe Your Skin

For tips on how to treat skin conditions such as acne, psoriasis and eczema, visit the American Academy of Dermatology at aad.org.

DRINK UP— SAFELY

If you’re traveling abroad, follow these water-safety tips:

- ▶ Take or purchase bottled water with fully sealed caps.
- ▶ Boil water vigorously for one minute (three minutes at altitudes greater than 6,500 feet) to kill bacteria, parasites and viruses that cause diarrhea.
- ▶ Disinfect water with portable filters and/or iodine—visit cdc.gov for step-by-step instructions.
- ▶ Do not use unsafe tap water for ice or to reconstitute juice or wash produce.

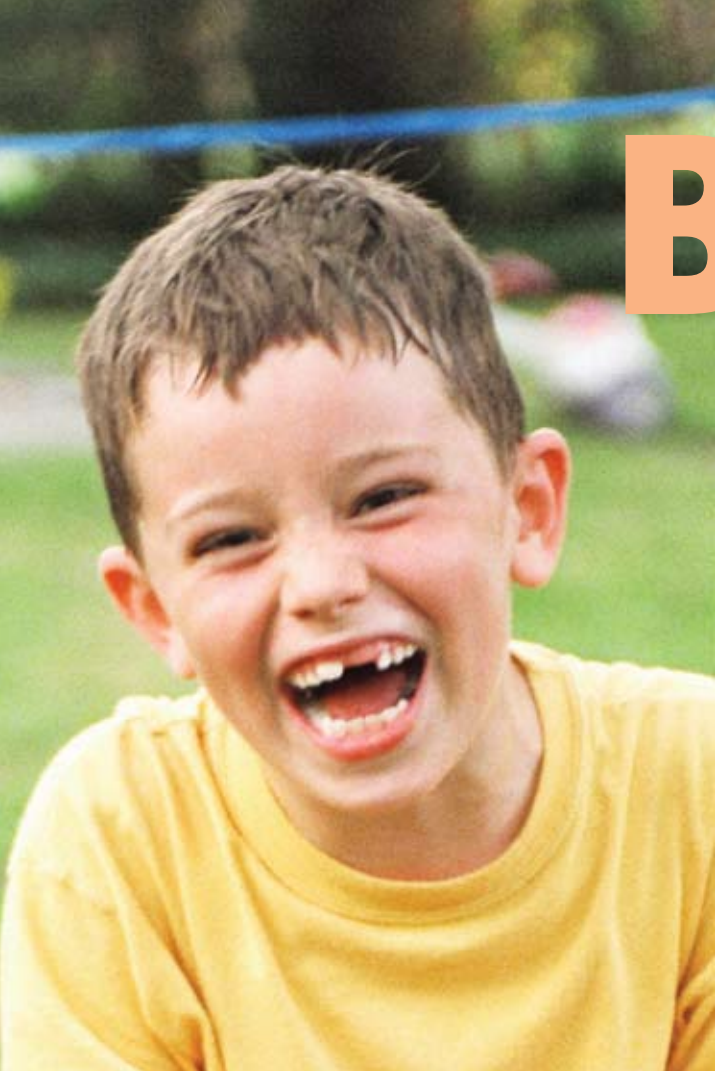


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Cover photography: Ken Easley



Breathe Better

What you need to know about asthma

the quality of life for individuals and their families.

The common symptoms of asthma include: shortness of breath, wheezing, tightness in the chest, coughing at night or after physical activity, or a cough that lasts more than one week. Waking at night

with symptoms is a key sign of uncontrolled asthma.

“In response to the growing asthma problem, Joint Township Hospital has developed an asthma management program through the Asthma Education Clinic,” says Hilgefert. “The program is important for improving the quality of life for those with asthma by teaching them appropriate management techniques.

The goal of our program is to improve access to and the quality of asthma healthcare services as well as awareness among patients, their families and the general public.”

The Asthma Education Clinic at Joint Township District Memorial Hospital offers a variety of educational classes as part of the asthma management program, including:

- ▶ Asthma Awareness classes. These are offered the first Tuesday of every month; each class covers basic information that all asthmatics and their caregivers should know. Preregistration is not required and the cost is

free. Classes begin at 6:30 p.m. in conference room #1 at Joint Township District Memorial Hospital and typically last an hour to an hour and a half. If you have not had any previous asthma education or training, this program is highly recommended.

- ▶ Individualized sessions. These include one-on-one counseling that will work toward an individualized asthma action plan. This class is recommended for those asthmatics who are having a difficult time controlling their disease. If you experience asthma symptoms or use your quick-relief inhaler more than twice a week, your asthma may not be well controlled.
- ▶ Asthma Awareness classes for area schools. An asthma educator will travel to your school to present information to classes, coaches and teacher in-services. This is a free class and offered as part of our community wellness program. ■

The National Center for Health Statistics estimates that 20.3 million adults and 6.3 million children age 19 and younger have asthma. Make no mistake—asthma is a common health problem in the United States, affecting both children and adults.

It is the No. 1 chronic condition causing children to miss school and the third highest-ranked cause of pediatric hospitalization in the United States. The typical asthmatic child misses a full week of school each year.

“The Medical Community has come to realize that asthma really is prevalent in our country and is becoming more so all the time,” says Stacey Hilgefert, registered respiratory therapist at Joint Township District Memorial Hospital.

Asthma places a heavy burden on our healthcare system by way of medical expenses. Asthma-related healthcare costs are estimated at more than \$14 billion annually by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. In addition, asthma reduces productivity and seriously affects

THE CLINIC

For additional information on the Asthma Education Clinic at Joint Township District Memorial Hospital, please contact Stacey Hilgefert, RRT, at (419) 394-3335 or toll-free 877-564-6897, ext. 2004.



Steve Taylor/Getty Images

Broccoli and Lemon Sauce

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 6 bunches broccoli, cut into florets with 3-inch stems | 1 Tbsp. grated lemon peel |
| 1 c. reduced-fat mayonnaise | 1/3 c. lemon juice |
| 3 c. plain nonfat yogurt | 2 tsp. white horseradish |
| | 2 tsp. hot Chinese mustard |

Steam broccoli over boiling water until crisp-tender. Immediately plunge broccoli into ice water to stop the cooking and keep its color bright green.

Drain well and chill.

To make lemon sauce, combine remaining ingredients and chill.

Serve broccoli on a platter with bowls of lemon sauce for dipping.

Makes: 25 appetizers

Nutrition information per serving: Calories, 69; Fat, 3 g; Saturated fat, .5 g; Cholesterol, 3 mg; Sodium, 105 mg; Carbohydrates, 8 g; Protein, 4 g; Fiber, 3 g

Recipe from the Arizona Heart Institute Foundation Cookbook. To purchase this book, call (602) 266-2200 and ask for the Arizona Heart Foundation.

Snack Savvy

Although you might think of snacking as a dieting don't, mini-meals can stave off hunger, prevent overeating and even fight disease. Here are a few healthy snacks to chew on:

Almonds: Rich in vitamin E, these nuts protect cells from damage and have proven beneficial in reducing the risk of heart disease and Alzheimer's disease in some people.

Carrots: Loaded with beta carotene, Bugs Bunny's favorite snack is also associated with a decreased risk of cancer, heart disease and cataracts.

Apples: In all its forms, this fruit is rich in the flavonoid quercetin, which has been linked to a lower risk of lung cancer.

Cranberries: Not only does this tart treat contribute to a healthy bladder, it may lower cholesterol and protect against cancer and gum disease.

Tomatoes: Loaded with lycopene, tomatoes may protect against heart disease

and ovarian, prostate and breast cancers. If you can't stomach eating them plain, try lightly peppering a slice and placing it atop a wheat cracker.

Source: American Dietetic Association



One for the Road

Too busy to prepare a midday snack? Add some of the following quick combinations to your weekly grocery run:

- ▶ nuts and dried fruit
- ▶ baked chips with salsa
- ▶ whole-grain cereal mixed with yogurt
- ▶ low-fat cheese and whole-grain crackers
- ▶ pita bread and hummus
- ▶ apple or pear slices and peanut butter

Source: American Dietetic Association



BE SENSIBLE ABOUT SNACKING

To learn more about snacking and for healthy snack recipes, order the "Snacks—Homemade for Health" brochure by visiting the American Institute for Cancer Research Web site at aicr.org.

Dying with Dignity

It's a matter of choice—yours

Nine out of 10 Americans say that if they had six months or less to live, they would want to spend that time receiving care in their homes. If you were diagnosed with a terminal illness or had a serious accident and death was imminent, would your end-of-life wishes be carried out?

What Are My Choices?

Here's a look at two specific options, hospice and palliative care. Both focus on a setting that includes coordinated care among physicians, nurses, social workers, clergy, trained volunteers and other healthcare professionals, but differ in location, timing, payment and eligibility for services.

Hospice

Comfort rather than cure is the goal of hospice. Care is overseen by a team of hospice professionals through referral from a primary care physician. It is generally provided in the home and relies on a family caregiver as well as visiting hospice nurse, though 24-hour care may be provided in a nursing home or hospice facility. You must be considered terminally ill or have less than six months to live to be eligible for hospice. Most insurance programs, including Medicare, cover hospice expenses, though policy limits exist. A co-payment may be required for respite care and prescription drugs. Medicare does not cover room and board if hospice services are provided in a skilled nursing facility. Medicaid in 43 states and the District of Columbia provide hospice coverage.

Palliative Care

Comfort as well as life-prolonging treatment are provided at any time and stage of an illness or life-altering event, mostly by a palliative care team. Care is typically given at the facility where a patient first receives treatment, such as a hospital, extended care facility or nursing home, but may also be available in an outpatient setting or home. Most private insurance programs cover palliative care and will bill items separately as with any inpatient hospital service. Outpatient services, such as prescriptions, are billed separately. Medicare does not cover palliative care in the hospital, outside of hospice, if that's all a patient requires.

Your Requests in Writing

The two most common advance directives—a legally binding way to

communicate your end-of-life decisions—include a living will and a medical power of attorney.

Living Will

A type of advance directive in which you indicate the kind of medical care you want—or do not want. This document goes into effect when you lose the capacity to make or communicate decisions for yourself. Most states require a witness for a living will.

Medical Power of Attorney

A type of advance directive that allows you to appoint a person to make medical decisions for you. Depending on the laws in your state, the person you appoint may be called your healthcare representative, surrogate, attorney-in-fact or proxy. This document covers healthcare matters only. ■



Start a Dialogue

The biggest hurdle in end-of-life issues is talking about it, says **Deb McKee**, vice president of Patient Care Services at Joint Township District Memorial Hospital. "A discussion about death is something we deny as long as possible, but in our industry the first thing we hear is, 'I wish I had known about [their wishes] sooner.'" Information on Advance Directives can be obtained by contacting the Hospital's patient representative at **(419) 394-3335, ext. 2102**.

Get Over It

Don't be apprehensive, these cancer screenings could save your life

Rebecca Dickenschiedt had her first screening for skin cancer at 22 years old. Yes, it was uncomfortable: A team of physicians with magnifying glasses scrutinized every inch of her naked body. But when your mother dies of malignant melanoma at 58, as Dickenschiedt's did, there's no room for modesty—or delays.

Whether or not you have a family history of cancer, keeping up with screenings can improve your chances for a longer, healthier life. "When detected early, cancer is much more effectively treated, and the cure rate is much higher," says Michael Josey, M.D., a family practice physician at the Celina Medical Center, an affiliate of Grand Lake Health System.

Here's what you can expect when being screened for these common cancers.

BREAST CANCER

Screening: Clinical breast exam

Who and when: Women, annually beginning in their early 20s

What's involved: Your healthcare practitioner will examine your breasts and underarms for lumps or abnormalities.

Discomfort: If breasts are tender during the exam, it may cause mild discomfort. But the procedure lasts only a few minutes.

Screening: Mammogram

Who and when: Women, annually beginning at age 40

What's involved: Often performed in radiology offices, mammograms involve compressing the breast between two plastic plates to spread tissue apart, allowing for a clearer image.

Discomfort: Mammograms can cause discomfort, but not as much as most women imagine, and it should only last several seconds.

CERVICAL CANCER

Screening: Pap test

Who and when: Women, every one to two years, depending on the type of test used, beginning no later than age 21

What's involved: A speculum is inserted into the vagina and the cervix is lightly swabbed for a testing sample of cells.

Discomfort: While insertion of the speculum can cause brief discomfort, being relaxed often lessens the pain.

PROSTATE CANCER

Screening: Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test

Who and when: Men, annually beginning at age 50

What's involved: The PSA is a simple blood test.

Discomfort: Brief sting during the blood draw

Screening: Digital rectal examination

Who and when: Men, annually beginning at age 50

STICK TO IT

Regular screenings are essential in the fight against cancer. For a detailed list of cancer-detection guidelines, visit the American Cancer Society at cancer.org.





Ease Your Mind

Relaxing before an invasive screening such as a colonoscopy may require a little help.

Michael Josey, M.D., a family practice physician at the Celina Medical Center, an affiliate of Grand Lake Health System, offers a few tips:

- ▶ **Talk to your doctor.** “A good healthcare provider will talk through the procedure with you until you relax,” he says.
- ▶ **Talk to friends.** Those who have had the procedure can dispel your fears.
- ▶ **Bring a friend or family member.** “Obviously they won’t come into the testing room, but knowing that person is right outside helps,” Josey says.
- ▶ **Read up.** Josey recommends the American Cancer Society ([cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org)), the National Cancer Institute ([cancer.gov](https://www.cancer.gov)) and the Colon Cancer Alliance ([ccalliance.org](https://www.ccalliance.org)) as top sources for information.

Finally, keep in mind that patients undergoing an invasive procedure are sedated.

“After that point, you simply won’t feel much of anything,” he says.

Ken Easley

What’s involved: Your healthcare practitioner inserts a gloved, lubricated finger into the rectum to feel for any irregular areas in the prostate.

Discomfort: This test will cause some discomfort, but it lasts only one to two minutes and should not be painful.

COLORECTAL CANCER

Screenings: Five different testing schedules are recommended. Talk to your doctor about what’s right for you.

- ▶ Yearly fecal occult blood test (FOBT) or fecal immunochemical test (FIT)
- ▶ Flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years
- ▶ Yearly FOBT or FIT plus flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years
- ▶ Double-contrast barium enema every five years
- ▶ Colonoscopy every 10 years

Who and when: Men and women beginning at age 50

What’s involved: Both the FOBT and FIT are noninvasive tests that can be performed at home with disposable test kits. Sigmoidoscopy and colonoscopy both take 10 to 30 minutes and involve inserting a thin, flexible scope into the rectum that allows your doctor to see your colon. During the 30- to 45-minute double-contrast barium enema, a tube is inserted into the anus, and the colon is filled with barium sulfate and air before X-rays are taken.

Discomfort: Some discomfort is associated with flexible sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy and double-contrast barium enema, but sedatives may be used.

SKIN CANCER

Screening: Skin examination

Who and when: Men and women, annually. Talk to your doctor about what age examinations should begin.

What’s involved: Your physician will inspect your entire body for lesions.

Discomfort: There is no physical discomfort associated with this screening, but your modesty may be challenged.

Those with a family history of cancer should discuss earlier testing with their doctor. After all, some momentary discomfort is minor compared to the implications of cancer, Josey says. ■

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Karen Eilerman, RN *Mary Beth Mielke, RN* *Nita Niekamp, RN*

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To learn more about the Cardiac Center at Joint Township Hospital, call us at 419-394-3335 or visit online at www.grandlakehealth.org/cardiaccenter.

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