

# Health Connection

A PUBLICATION OF FORREST CITY MEDICAL CENTER



**Guard  
against falls**

**Home,  
sweet home**

Is home health care  
right for you?

**Helping your  
body heal**

All about wound care

**FORREST CITY**  
MEDICAL CENTER

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

# Keep your PROSTATE HEALTHY

**S**ens. Bob Dole and John Kerry, baseball team manager Joe Torre—what do all these men have in common? They're all prostate cancer survivors.

Cancer of the prostate—a walnut-shaped gland located below the bladder—is one of the most common cancers found in men. It may be slow growing and require little or no treatment, or it may be aggressive and spread quickly to other parts of the body.

## THE PREVENTIVE APPROACH

While prostate cancer isn't completely avoidable, certain measures may help reduce your risk:

- **Stay active.** Daily exercise improves your overall health and helps keep your weight in check. Some research has shown that men who exercise regularly have a lower incidence of prostate cancer compared to men who don't.
- **Watch your weight.** A sobering fact: Men who are obese when diagnosed with prostate cancer are more likely to have advanced cases, which are more difficult to treat. But eating right and exercising can help you keep off excess pounds.
- **Talk with your physician.** Discuss any risk factors you have—being older than age 65, African-American or

obese, or having a family history of prostate cancer. Also, learn about the pros and cons of screening tests. A digital rectal exam and the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test are two ways to identify cancer cases, but they can't tell a physician about the aggressiveness of the cancer. And prostate cancer treatments can have unpleasant side effects such as impotence and incontinence.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) recently revised its prostate cancer screening guidelines, encouraging more patient involvement in decisions about screenings:

- The ACS recommends that men at high risk of prostate cancer, including men with a family history of the disease, talk with their physicians sooner—as early as age 40.
- Men who do not have prostate cancer symptoms (trouble urinating, problems with urine stream, blood in urine or semen, leg swelling, pelvic discomfort, bone pain) and who are in relatively good health and are expected to live at least 10 more years should have the screening conversation with their physicians beginning at age 50.
- Men without symptoms who aren't expected to live 10 more years because of age or poor health shouldn't be offered the screening because the risks likely outweigh the benefits.

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**Daily exercise improves your overall health and helps keep your weight in check.**  
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## What to ask your physician about prostate health

**B**e prepared to ask some key questions at your next appointment:

- What is my risk of developing prostate cancer?
- Do you recommend I be tested?
- What is my PSA level (if you've had the test)?
- Will I need more tests? If so, which ones will I need?
- What do the test results mean?
- If I have cancer, what are my treatment options, and what are the pros and cons of each?

# Mammogram confusion

## Information on new screening guidelines



**W**e've all heard that early detection of breast cancer with mammograms saves lives. So it was surprising when in 2009, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF)—an independent panel that makes recommendations about which preventive services should routinely be offered and to whom—recommended against routine mammograms for women ages 40 to 49 who weren't at increased risk for breast cancer. Traditionally, all women ages 40 and older were encouraged to get the screening.

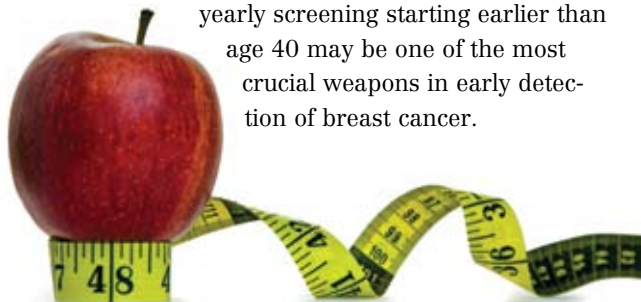
### THE FLIP SIDE

In disagreement with the USPSTF's recommendations were major professional health care organizations including the American Cancer Society. "I have tremendous difficulty in not recommending an intervention [mammography]," says Otis Brawley, M.D., chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society. "Women ages 40 and older should have a mammogram every year."

### NOW WHAT DO I DO?

Amid the confusion, you may be wondering about how to approach your own mammogram. Some words of advice: Talk with your physician.

The USPSTF's recommendations were just that—recommendations, not rules. Discuss your personal and family health history and how frequently you should get mammograms with your physician. And, if you're at high risk—see *Are you at risk?* at right—a yearly screening starting earlier than age 40 may be one of the most crucial weapons in early detection of breast cancer.



## Mammogram comfort

**T**ry these tips for a more comfortable mammogram, courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- Don't schedule your mammogram for the week before or during your period, which is when your breasts are likely to be tender or swollen, making mammograms less comfortable.
- Skip the deodorant, perfume and powder on the day of your mammogram. These may show up as white spots on the X-ray.
- For ease of undressing from the waist up, wear a blouse with a skirt or pants, instead of a dress.

## Are you at risk?

**A**ccording to the National Institutes of Health, breast cancer will affect one in eight women in their lifetime. Why breast cancer affects some women and not others isn't known; however, several known risk factors for the disease include:

- increasing age
- having the BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes; if your family members have had breast or ovarian cancer, talk with your physician about getting tested
- starting your period before age 12 or going through menopause after age 55
- being overweight
- using menopausal hormone therapy
- taking birth control pills
- drinking alcohol
- not having children or having your first child after age 35
- having dense breasts



Brett Kinman  
Chief Executive Officer

## Committed to the community

**T**hank you for reading *Health Connection*, one way Forrest City Medical Center (FCMC) provides you with general health information and news about your hospital. FCMC also educates and

informs our community through our Healthy Woman and Connections programs.

Healthy Woman is a free program that helps women maintain a healthy body, mind and spirit for themselves and their loved ones. Last October, FCMC welcomed Dale Smith Thomas, a nationally renowned speaker, for an evening of encouragement, inspiration and celebration. More than 150 people attended the event, which included a health and information fair. To learn about Healthy Woman, visit [www.forrestcitymedicalcenter.com](http://www.forrestcitymedicalcenter.com) or call Jennifer Carlow at (870) 261-0444.

FCMC also welcomes civic, social and other organizations through Connections. Local health issues, physician recruitment, facility improvements and other topics are covered during these events. Connections presentations can also be customized to individual organizations. To schedule a Connections presentation, call Tony Astin at (870) 261-0446.

I welcome your comments, concerns and compliments about FCMC and I wish you the best of health.

Sincerely,

*Brett Kinman*

Chief Executive Officer  
Forrest City Medical Center



# Guarding against falls

## A special note from FCMC's emergency room

**E**very year, one in three Americans ages 65 and older suffers a fall, says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Take the following steps to stay safe:

- **Be active** to maintain flexibility, strength and balance.
- **Fall-proof your home.** Remove throw rugs, clutter and anything else you can trip over. Install brighter lighting and safety features such as grab bars.
- **Dress safely** by wearing sturdy shoes with nonslip soles.
- **Take your medications as directed.** If your medicines make you tired, confused or dizzy, tell your physician.
- **Get your eyes checked** at least once a year to make sure you can see clearly.

### IF YOU FALL ...

Try to land on your backside, not your side, which can result in a hip fracture. Once down, lie still and breathe deeply. When you're ready to rise, roll onto your side and then crawl to a sturdy chair. Stand up slowly, using the chair as support. Consult your physician or call 911 in case of an emergency.

**!** Don't put off a trip to the ER!

If you need emergency care, call 911 right away. Visit [www.forrestcitymedicalcenter.com](http://www.forrestcitymedicalcenter.com) to learn more.

# Home, sweet home

Home health care may be right for you

**A**mericans are living longer and seeking more medical care solutions tailored to their needs. Home health care provided by Regional Home Care can be a viable option not just for the elderly, but also for individuals who are chronically ill, recovering from an illness or accident or have a condition that limits mobility. In most cases, home health care is a short-term solution to assist with patient rehabilitation, helping them regain and maintain independence.

## THE BENEFITS OF HOME

Home health care is popular both for patients and physicians because it promotes quality and efficiency. The care can be provided either by a single medical professional or a health care team, just like what you would receive in a hospital.

In the home setting, patients often experience quicker recoveries because they receive personalized attention and learn first-hand how to care for their conditions. Also, there's less need for transportation to physicians' appointments or the emergency room. From a practical standpoint, the risk of health complications, like infections, are lower in the home setting, since contact with other people is limited. Patients enjoy less stress and anxiety, due to the comfort and familiarity of their home.

## HOME CARE OPTIONS

Many options are available for patients interested in home health care, depending on the level of assistance needed: full, moderate or concierge care. Full care provides 24-hour

medical care, similar to the services offered in skilled nursing and rehabilitation facilities. Moderate care offers some skilled services, as well as help with activities of daily living: bathing, dressing, eating and movement, such as moving from a bed to a chair. Concierge care is simply assistance with personal errands, grooming, light house-keeping and sitter service.

## WE'RE HERE FOR YOU

Regional Home Care offers a variety of services for patients in the home setting, including skilled nursing care supervised by a registered nurse, physical and occupational therapies and certified nurse's aides for personal care. These services have the same quality standards as those provided by Forrest City Medical Center, along with the advantages of added privacy and convenience of home.

## ! Choose home care

For more information about the services provided by Regional Home Care, or for help with health care planning for a chronically ill or elderly family member who may need long-term care, call (870) 261-0159.



## HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about **high blood pressure**?

Take this quiz to find out.

- 1 **How many American adults have high blood pressure?**
  - a. one in three
  - b. one in five
  - c. one in 10
  - d. one in 20
- 2 **Most people with high blood pressure experience:**
  - a. nausea
  - b. weakness
  - c. trouble concentrating
  - d. no symptoms
- 3 **Healthy adults with no history of high blood pressure should have their blood pressure checked every:**
  - a. six months
  - b. year
  - c. two years
  - d. 10 years
- 4 **High blood pressure can increase your risk for:**
  - a. dementia
  - b. eye damage
  - c. bone loss
  - d. all of the above
- 5 **Which of the following statements is true?**
  - a. After age 65, more women than men have high blood pressure.
  - b. After age 65, more men than women have high blood pressure.
  - c. After age 65, an equal number of men and women have high blood pressure.
  - d. After age 65, the number of men and women suffering from high blood pressure is unknown.

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

# Show your heart a little love

**Y**our heart works hard for you, pumping day in and day out to supply your body with the oxygen-rich blood you need for survival. So what are you doing to nurture it? Try these five tips to ensure better heart health:

➔ **Choose good-for-you foods.** Follow a diet such as Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH). This eating plan is centered on foods low in fat, cholesterol and salt; and rich in fruits and vegetables (aim for five to 10 servings a day), whole grains and low-fat dairy products. Foods that are good for the heart also include those with high levels of omega-3 fatty acids, a type of polyunsaturated fat, found in fish such as salmon, mackerel and sardines.

➔ **Give your heart a workout.** You don't need a gym membership to keep your heart in tip-top shape. Get the recommended 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity daily by walking, jogging or biking—and remember that everyday tasks such as gardening, vacuuming and taking the stairs count toward your activity goals. Activity, along with eating healthy foods, can help you maintain a healthy weight, which is another way that you can boost heart health.

➔ **Consider aspirin therapy.** A daily aspirin can benefit many people, but not everyone, so talk with your physician first about the risks and benefits. For example, aspirin can help prevent first and second heart attacks in older women and men of all ages, but only second heart attacks in women younger than age 65. Aspirin also may prevent certain types of strokes.

➔ **Quit smoking.** Tobacco smoke contains thousands of chemicals that damage the heart and blood vessels, including nicotine, which narrows blood vessels and makes your heart work harder. Within one year of quitting, you can expect to see your heart-disease risk drop dramatically.

➔ **Get checked.** Have your blood pressure and cholesterol checked regularly. Ask your physician how frequently you should be tested based on your health history.





## CLEAN UP your health

It's easy to focus on all the bad things we breathe in the air outside, such as pollen and pollutants. But what about what's lurking inside our houses? Household dust, mold and various chemicals can make breathing difficult. Here's what might be stirring up trouble at home:

**Dust mites.** In dust around the home lie dust mites—microscopic insects that are the most common cause of dust allergies. They can also trigger asthma and flu-like symptoms.

**Combat them:** Wipe dusty surfaces with a damp cloth, and vacuum once a week. Wash bedding once a week in hot water, and cover mattresses, box springs and pillows in mite-proof covers.

**Mold.** Mold spores thrive in damp areas such as basements and bathrooms. Along with dust mites, mold is considered a biological pollutant and can also trigger allergies and asthma.

**Combat it:** Use ventilation fans and dehumidifiers to keep humidity at 30 percent to 50 percent. Treat moldy bathrooms, basement walls and furniture with diluted bleach or other disinfectants.

**Volatile organic compounds (VOCs):** These gases are emitted from products such as paints and cleaning supplies. Health effects range from ear, nose and throat irritation to central nervous system damage.

**Combat them:** Use chemicals only in well-ventilated areas. Consider purchasing low-VOC paint.

### Don't let the bedbugs bite!



**B**edbugs are one souvenir you don't want to take home with you from vacation. But these flat, little reddish-brown pests, which are more common in places such as hotels, may find a way into your home by hitching a ride in your suitcase. Waiting to strike, they hide out in beds, box springs, headboards and bed frames. When they do bite, they can cause red, itchy, clustered bite marks on the face, neck, arms and hands. The best way to eliminate them is with a professional exterminator.

## DOUBTING diet soda

**D**iet soda: It's sugar and calorie free, so it must not be bad for you, right? Some recent research suggests otherwise. While most of these health concerns need further investigation, now might be a good time to either limit your diet-soda intake to the occasional indulgence, or switch to water, skim milk or diluted 100-percent fruit juice. Here's why:

**Tough on teeth.** Diet soda is just as acidic as regular soda, which can damage tooth enamel and promote decay.

**Wicked to waistlines.** Some studies have found that drinking diet soda regularly may be connected to obesity and type 2 diabetes. Researchers are unsure if diet soda actually causes obesity, but one study found that those who drank three or more of the beverages daily were more likely to gain weight than those who didn't.

**Unkind to kidneys.** One major study found that women who consumed two or more artificially sweetened sodas a day doubled their risk for kidney function decline. Drinking regular soda or only one diet soda daily did not decrease kidney function more than normal. However, for those prone to kidney stones, a separate study discovered that citrus-flavored diet sodas contain high levels of a compound that may inhibit stone formation.

**Bad to the bones.** According to the National Institutes of Health, people may be replacing bone-friendly, calcium-rich milk with soda, which may lead to decreased bone mass and an increased risk of fracture.



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# Wound care

## Giving your body's healing powers a helping hand



**By Steven M. Jackson, D.O.**  
**Board-Certified General Surgeon**

**H**ave you ever watched a cut heal and marveled at your body's ability to repair itself? Healing after illness or injury is a complex process. Many chronic diseases or conditions can compromise our body's restorative capabilities. Unhealed wounds can raise the risk of additional infection and complications. For this reason, wound care is a critical part of disease management and surgical recovery.

About 5 million Americans suffer from chronic wounds that won't heal or heal slowly as a result of accidents, burns, surgery or disease. Chronic wounds are most often found among older adults, patients who are bedridden and individuals who suffer from diseases that affect the circulation and skin, such as diabetes or peripheral artery disease.

### TREATING WOUNDS

Many hospitals, including Forrest City Medical Center, have a wound care team, center or clinic, with specialists trained in advanced therapies that speed the healing process and promote or rebuild skin. Chronic wounds treated include diabetic skin sores, pressure sores, persistent skin



irritations, vessel disease wounds, surgery wound breakdown, traumatic wounds, burns, venous insufficiency, radiation injuries, spinal injury wounds and other non-healing wounds.

Treatments include transcutaneous oxygen measurement, special dressings or wraps, hyperbaric oxygen therapy and wound debridement (removal of dead tissue) or bioengineered tissue substitutes to invigorate oxygen-starved tissues and promote healing.

Once the wound is healed, follow-up care is important and should complement any treatment the patient may be receiving for the original cause of the wound.



### Need help with healing?

**Steven M. Jackson, D.O., general surgeon, is a staff member at Forrest City Medical Center. He's with East Arkansas Surgical Associates, 904 Holiday Drive, Suite 402 in Forrest City. To reach him, call (870) 633-5500. For more information about wound care, click on the "Health Resources" link at [www.forrestcitymedicalcenter.com](http://www.forrestcitymedicalcenter.com).**