



Mercy & Unity Hospitals *Healthy Communities*

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Summer 2002

WOMEN AND DIABETES

To the heart of the matter

MOST WOMEN lead hectic lives—they have places to go, projects to do, people to care for.

Women with diabetes may have even more to manage, such as controlling glucose levels to prevent complications like kidney, nerve and eye damage.

But diabetes can also take a major toll on the heart.

DIABETES AND HEART DISEASE

Nancy Klein checked into the emergency room at Unity Hospital with intense pain in her right side. She thought she was having a gallbladder attack. To her surprise, physicians determined she had experienced a heart attack.

Klein knows diabetes played a role in her heart attack. She was diagnosed with diabetes in September 1999.



Anne Melcher, OTR, monitors Nancy Klein during a workout in Cardiac Rehabilitation.

coronary arteries by opening a narrowed section.

In addition, Klein works out three times a week at Mercy's Cardiac Rehabilitation Center. Cardiac Rehabilitation Centers are also available at Unity Hospital in Fridley and Elk Ridge Health in Elk River. Klein wears a heart monitor while exercising. This allows a staff person to monitor her heart rate and heart rhythm, and watch for heart irregularities.

"We've got to get past the stereotype that women don't do physically strenuous exercise," says Ketty Holt, RNC, Mercy Cardiac Rehabilitation. "Women need cardiovascular-type exercise, like swimming, walking and biking."

LIFESAVING CHOICES

Men and women with diabetes are more likely to develop and die from heart disease than the general population—and women at an earlier age.

"Women with diabetes have rates of cardiovascular disease two to five times higher than other

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"I know I have diabetes and heart disease," says Klein, "and I have to watch my diet and exercise."

Klein's treatment included an angioplasty at Mercy Hospital to open two clogged arteries. Angioplasty helps more blood flow through

UPDATE

CHECK it out

LIVING WITH ALZHEIMER'S

Spend an evening learning about Alzheimer's disease. Discussion will focus on the symptoms and available treatment options, as well as what to expect and how to manage living with Alzheimer's. Information on the newest medications and their effectiveness will also be presented.

Date: Wednesday, Sept. 25

Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Location: Mercy Hospital Auditorium

Guest speakers: Allan Ingenito, MD, neurologist, Minneapolis Clinic of Neurology; Francisco Gomez, MD, neurologist, The Noran Clinic

A question-and-answer session will follow the guest speakers' presentations.

To register or for more information, call Medformation at 651-697-3333. ❖

T'AI CHI/QI GONG

Enhance your health, balance and coordination. Strengthen your mind and body. It's possible with T'ai Chi movements and Qi Gong exercise, meditation and breath regulation.

T'ai Chi and Qi Gong are available through a partnership of the Cardiac Centers of Mercy & Unity Hospitals and Mercy & Unity Hospitals Cancer Centers.

Dates: 10 sessions beginning Tuesday, Sept. 3

Time: 6:15-7:30 p.m.

Location: Mercy Hospital, Heart Center Aerobic Studio, lower level

Cost: \$50 per person

Registration is required. For more information or to register, call the Cancer Resource Center at 763-236-4040. ❖

Tony McGuire listens intently while Joan Olson plays music at Mercy Hospital.

**HEALING HARMONIES HAS POSITIVE EFFECT IN HOSPITALS**

Soothing sounds from volunteer musicians are helping to calm patients and staff at Mercy & Unity Hospitals. Musicians perform in waiting rooms, hallways or on patient care units. "The energy changes when the musicians come to the units," says Marcia Carlson, MSW, oncology outreach social worker at Mercy & Unity Hospitals. "You see patients and visitors coming out of their rooms, leaning on doorways to listen."

An enthusiastic and musically connected volunteer, Lorraine Tressel, originated the idea of Healing Harmonies. After bringing musicians to a hospital event—the American Cancer Society Daffodil Sale—she saw firsthand the positive effects of music on patients and staff. With Carlson's help, Tressel made music in the hospitals an ongoing program.

Healing Harmonies has recruited more than 30 amateur and professional musicians, including individuals and musical groups, who contribute their time and talent. Joan Olson, pianist, tries to pick background music that has "a message or uplifting sound." Olson was organist at Anoka United Methodist Church for 30 years. Now that she has retired, Healing Harmonies is a creative outlet for her musical ability. One day, when Olson was playing at Mercy Hospital, Tony McGuire, shown above with Olson, was visiting a friend. "I'd been sitting in my friend's room all day," says McGuire, "and I had to get out for awhile. This was just great; I needed it."

Volunteer musicians may call Lorraine Tressel at 763-712-7403 for more information. ❖

LEGS FOR LIFE SCREENINGS

Do you frequently rub your legs to relieve pain? Or do you sit down often and put your legs up because it hurts to walk?

Leg pain can be a symptom of peripheral vascular disease (PVD). This circulatory condition is caused by blocked blood vessels in the legs. Mercy & Unity Hospitals are sponsoring Legs for Life screenings for PVD to help evaluate your risk. The screening includes a questionnaire, a clinical exam and education.

Mercy Hospital

Thursday, Sept. 19

8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Classrooms A and B

Cost: \$5

Free parking is available at both sites. For more information or to register, call Medformation at 651-697-3333. ❖

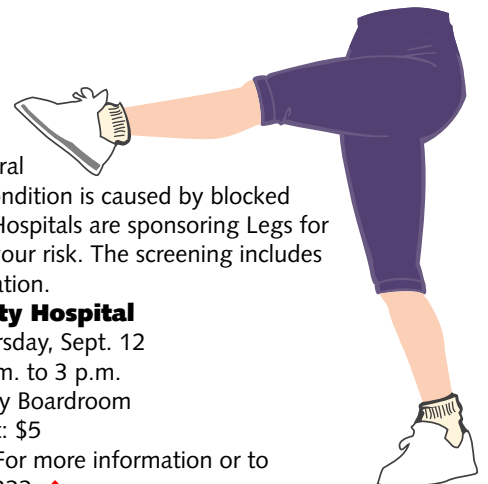
Unity Hospital

Thursday, Sept. 12

8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Unity Boardroom

Cost: \$5



Rx for safe and effective medication

MANY OF US leave the doctor's office, prescription in hand, hoping that relief is just a swallow away. But between the scrawl on the prescription pad and the first pill we take, there are plenty of opportunities for mix-ups and the ineffective or even unsafe use of drugs.

Physicians and pharmacists are concerned, too, and have created systems and databases to minimize errors and confusion. For example, hospitals that are part of Allina Hospitals & Clinics have systems that can cross-check new prescriptions against the patient's lab data and a nationally supported database of drug interactions. One of the Allina Community Pharmacy locations is using a system called ScriptPro—a fill machine that uses bar code technology to ensure patient safety. Also, to prevent problems with sound-alike drug names, nurses and physicians specify the illness along with the name of the drug they prescribe.

TIPS FOR TAKING MEDICATIONS

While these measures are important, you can take steps to make sure that your medications are safe by following these tips:

Ask questions. Ask if you should take the medication with food, how often you should take it and at what time of day. Your doctor or pharmacist can tell you everything you need



to know about your prescription.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist about every drug you are taking, including over-the-counter and herbal remedies. Herbal preparations have active ingredients that can cause side effects or negative interactions with certain prescription drugs.

Go to the same pharmacy consistently. “It is a good idea to develop a relationship with a pharmacist who can answer your questions and check for interactions,” says Pat Oberembt, RPh, MBA, director of Allina Community Pharmacies. “We use a national database to check your new prescriptions for known interactions with other medications you have previously filled at one of our pharmacies.”

Read the data information sheet that comes with your prescription. “You should take the time to read this detailed information to make sure that the drug you are taking is for the illness or medical problem that you have,” says Oberembt. Also, when you pick up your prescription, confirm with the pharmacist that the medication is designed to treat your condition.

Store medications properly.

Keep them in the original containers and read labels carefully.

Take pills whole unless your doctor or pharmacist tells you it is OK to split or crush them.

Use all of the medication prescribed unless your doctor tells you it is OK to stop early.

Don't pressure your doctor for a medication. Even without knowing what the drug is designed to treat, some consumers pressure their doctors for medications that they see advertised.

For more information about prescription drug safety, visit www.medformation.com and click on the Pharmacy tab. ❖

New online pharmacy

You can now order your prescriptions online at www.medformation.com. Simply click on the Pharmacy tab and follow the instructions to order a new prescription, transfer a prescription or renew a prescription. Your order will be mailed to you by Allina Community Pharmacies with no mailing charge.



**THE GENETIC
COMPONENT**

Heredity's impact on your health

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, the word “gene” was not yet a part of the English language, and the role of chromosomes in heredity was not understood. But even 100 years ago, while they did not understand how or why, people did understand that certain diseases “ran in families.”

Today we have more factual information about how some diseases or the risk for those diseases is passed down through generations of families. We know that all the cells in a person’s body contain two copies of every gene, one inherited from the mother and one from the father. All of the properties and functions of a cell are directed by genes, which are sequences of DNA, arranged on chromosomes. Genes represent the “program” for the cell.

GENETIC TESTING

Oncology is one area of health care that has embraced the importance of genetics. Increasingly, oncology programs are not only treating cancer, but are also identifying people at high risk for cancer. Genetic testing is a medical technology that can be used in a number of ways to aid in this effort.

CANCER AS AN INHERITED DISEASE

Cancer is a disease in which cells grow in an abnormal or unregulated manner. This abnormal growth pattern is caused by changes or mutations in the genes that regulate cell growth. Mutations in genes can be inherited or they can be acquired over a lifetime.

Inherited forms of breast cancer account for 5 percent to 10 percent of all breast cancer cases.

The two most common genes associated with an inherited predisposition to breast cancer are BRCA1 and BRCA2. Both of these genes can be associated with family histories of cancer, especially breast cancer in women younger than 50. BRCA1 is associated with breast and ovarian cancer in women, a slight increase of prostate cancer in men and a slight increase of colon cancer in both men and women. BRCA2 is associated with breast cancer, some increase in ovarian cancer, male breast cancer and pancreatic cancer. Genes that can predispose an individual to developing cancer may be passed down from the maternal or paternal side of the family. Genetic

Meet Sarah Griffin, genetic counselor,

Sarah Griffin is happy to be a part of a historic beginning for Mercy & Unity Hospitals, as she becomes the first on-site genetic counselor. This summer she has helped set up a genetic counseling program within oncology, where she counsels patients with family histories of genetic conditions.

Located at Unity Hospital in Fridley, Griffin brings to the position a longtime love of genetics coupled with the desire to help others.

Griffin did her undergraduate work in biology at Duke University and received a master’s degree from the Genetic Counseling Program at the University of Minnesota. Genetic counselors are members of a

health care team that provide information and support to families that may be at risk for a variety of inherited conditions. They identify families at risk, investigate the condition present in the family, interpret information about the condition, analyze inheritance patterns and risks of recurrence, and review available options with the family. Griffin emphasizes that family history is important and should not be ignored. Sometimes her counseling is a wake-up call to patients who have ignored a family history of hereditary conditions.

Griffin’s interaction with patients can involve as many as three counseling sessions. Her first contact with patients, however, is typically by phone. During this initial phone conversation, she gathers as much information as possible about the

testing can identify individuals and families that have a mutation in BRCA1 or BRCA2 through a blood test. In a laboratory, the DNA of the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes can be studied to determine if a mutation exists in either of the genes that would cause a predisposition to cancer.

There are other genes in addition to BRCA1 and BRCA2 that predispose a person to cancer. Some of these genes are responsible for a small percentage of hereditary colon cancer cases. These genes can be subjected to testing as well.

There are both benefits and burdens associated with genetic testing.

BENEFITS

- Uncertainty regarding cancer risk may be dissipated (in cases of either positive or negative results).
- Actions, such as surgery or chemoprevention, can be taken to decrease risk.
- Surveillance can be increased for both the patient and at-risk relatives.

- People with an identified mutation have the option to participate in clinical trials to advance the knowledge of genetic disease.

BURDENS

■ There may be changes in relationships with family members—these can be caused by the choice of whether or not to have testing as well as the results of genetic testing.

- Some family members may experience anxiety and depression.
- Testing and counseling may be a financial burden.
- There may be insurance implications, including premium adjustments or denial of coverage.
- Decisions will need to be made about surveillance and treatment.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT GENETIC COUNSELING AT MERCY & UNITY HOSPITALS, CALL 763-236-4645.

GENETIC COUNSELING DEALS WITH HUMAN IMPACT

Genetic counselors are trained professionals whose work includes:

- Risk assessment (family history, verification using medical records, estimation of the likelihood of a mutation).

- Explanation of basic genetics.
- Counseling to ensure an informed choice on a genetic testing decision.
- Coordination of genetic testing.
- Post-test counseling (explanation of results and implications, explanation of possible actions, facilitation of decision making).
- Referral to an appropriate provider.

The impact of test results, either positive or negative, is not always recognized until a person receives the results. And because we share our genes with our relatives, genetic tests affect more than just the person being tested; they affect an entire family. Genetic counselors can help individuals and families cope with the emotional, psychological, medical and social consequences of a genetic condition.

AVAILABILITY

Genetic counseling and testing is available through most metro hospitals. If there is no genetic counselor on staff, most hospitals have access to this service through outside practices. Insurance coverage for genetic testing is discussed during the initial counseling session. ❖

Mercy & Unity Hospitals

patient and the patient's family history of cancer. "Sometimes it's like putting together a jigsaw puzzle," says Griffin. "It may be necessary to obtain medical records of relatives to confirm a diagnosis." Griffin discusses with patients what they hope to gain from genetic counseling. Some patients are concerned about their own risk for cancer based on a family history, while others may be seeking information that may help younger family members and subsequent generations.

Griffin emphasizes that genetic testing is not always the end result of counseling. The result could be increased observation and increased

screenings. "The goal is not for all patients to have genetic testing, but to educate, and give the patient options," says Griffin. One of her goals in counseling is for people to walk away feeling more in control of their own health care. "We know that cancer does not usually run in families," says Griffin. "But for some, there is a genetic risk factor that is passed down from generation to generation. Our ultimate goal is to help members of these families prevent cancer in themselves and in their children."

If you would like more information about genetic counseling at Mercy & Unity Hospitals, call 763-236-4645.



Sarah Griffin, genetic counselor, Mercy & Unity Hospitals

Mercy & Unity Hospitals

To register or for more information, call Medformation at 651-697-3333.

PATIENT PARTNER

One-to-one visits for people newly diagnosed with cancer and their families.

PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT

Support for prostate cancer patients and spouses. Meets the fourth Tuesday of every month at Human Service Center in Blaine.

RENEWING LIFE

Eight-week educational and support series for individuals with a life-threatening disease and their loved ones. Meets twice a year at Mercy or Unity.

DIABETES

ADULT DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the second and fourth Thursday of every month.

DIABETES CARE EDUCATION CLASSES*

GRIEF

Grief support groups meet at the same time so family members can come together, participate in separate groups, and go home together.

ADULT GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Helps those 18 and older. Includes separate groups for pregnancy and infant loss; death of a spouse, child or parent; and death by suicide or violence.

CHILDREN'S GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

For children 6 to 12 who have experienced the death of someone close to them.

PREGNANCY AND INFANT LOSS SUPPORT GROUPS

Support groups for anyone who has experienced a loss, including ectopic miscarriage, stillborn and SIDS.

PRESCHOOL GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

For children 3 to 5. Through play, preschoolers learn to cope with the reality of death.

TEEN GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

For teens 13 to 18 who have experienced the death of someone close to them.

HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

The auxiliaries of Mercy & Unity Hospitals offer free blood pressure screenings at Mercy on the first Wednesday of every month, 1-5 p.m., in the hallway outside the hospital's cafeteria; and at Unity on the last Thursday of every month, 1:30-5 p.m., in the hospital's main lobby.

GENTLE YOGA*

Located at the Coon Rapids YMCA.

CONTINUING GENTLE YOGA

For those who have completed Gentle Yoga and are ready to move on. Located at the Coon Rapids YMCA.

HEART/STROKE SCREENING*

Participants complete a heart or stroke questionnaire, have their blood pressure checked and have a blood screen for total cholesterol, HDL, LDL, triglycerides and glucose. Health counseling is available.

SUPERVISED AND MONITORED EXERCISE PROGRAMS*

Exercise and lifestyle modification programs that require physician referral.

T'AI CHI CHIH*

Promotes relaxation and refreshes the mind through gentle movement. Located at the Coon Rapids YMCA.

THE SOLUTION PROGRAM*

Twelve-week weight-management program based on behavior, nutrition and exercise. Held at community YMCAs.

BRAIN INJURY AND STROKE

BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the second Tuesday of every month, 6-7:30 p.m.

STROKE SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the first Thursday of every month, October through June, 6:30-8 p.m.

CANCER

CANCER RESOURCE CENTER

A place to find multimedia informational resources on cancer, programs and individualized support.

Call 763-236-4040 (Unity) or 763-236-6060 (Mercy).

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the first Monday of every month at Unity and the third Monday of every month at Mercy. Both 7-9 p.m.

CANCER AND THE FAMILY

Five-week group with sessions for children ages 4 to 12, teenagers 13 to 18 and adult family members. Meets three times a year at Mercy & Unity and North Memorial.

LIVING WITH CANCER

Weekly group for people with cancer and loved ones. Meets at Mercy on Tuesdays, 7-8:30 p.m.

LIVING BEYOND LIMITS

Specialized 12-session group for breast cancer patients with advanced disease. Scheduled twice a year.

LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER

Help for dealing with self-esteem and side effects of cancer through demonstrations in the use of wigs, hats and makeup. Meets monthly at Mercy or Unity.

If you do not find the program or class you're looking for in this listing, call Medformation for information about offerings at other Allina hospitals, or visit www.Medformation.com. Programs with a fee are noted with an asterisk*.



HEART

CARDIAC CLUB

For cardiac patients and the community.

CARDIAC EDUCATION CLASSES:

Low-Sodium Strategies
Heart Healthy Nutrition*
Risk Factor Evaluation
Benefits of Exercise
Stress and Relaxation
Medication Information
Life Changes

CPR COURSE FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS*

Teaches cardiopulmonary resuscitation and relief of foreign-body airway obstruction. Participants choose one—rescuer adult course, or adult, child and infant course portions.

MENDED HEARTS

Former cardiac patients visit and provide support to cardiac patients and their families.

PREGNANCY, BIRTH AND PARENTING

ACTIVE PARENTING AND ACTIVE PARENTING OF TEENS

These six-session classes are for parents of 2- to 12-year-olds and 12- to 17-year-olds.

ALL ABOUT BABIES*

Helps expectant parents, grandparents or adoptive parents learn to care for a newborn.

BIRTH AND PARENTING PREPARATION*

BREASTFEEDING PREPARATION*

BREASTFEEDING: RETURNING TO WORK*

CELEBRATING FAMILIES

Tell your birth story, hear how others have adjusted to their newborn and learn basic infant safety (choking and infant CPR).

CESAREAN BIRTH* CHANGING SHAPES™: PREGNANCY FITNESS* EXPECTING MULTIPLES* HEALTHY PREGNANCY* INFANT MASSAGE* INFANT AND CHILD CPR*

Two-hour class to learn resuscitation methods for infants and children younger than 8.

LAMAZE BIRTH PREPARATION*

Preparation for childbirth, including help with relaxation and breathing. Cesarean birth, postpartum care and parenting are also discussed.

NEW BROTHER/NEW SISTER*

One-session class designed to help children older than 3 understand what it is like to have a new brother or sister.

NEW PARENT CONNECTION

Support group for parents with babies up to 4 months old. Meets weekly. Co-sponsored by Early Childhood Family Education.

PREGNANCY AFTER A LOSS

Offers both a class and a support group for expectant parents who have experienced the loss of a previous baby.

REFRESHER BIRTH AND PARENTING PREPARATION*

For those who have given birth within the last five years. Fee includes New Brother/New Sister class.

TEEN PREGNANCY*

VAGINAL BIRTH AFTER CESAREAN (VBAC)*

RESPIRATORY

BREATH OF MERCY

Support group for patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Meets at Mercy the fourth Wednesday of every month, 1-3 p.m.

F.A.N. CLUB

Support group for patients with COPD. Meets at Unity the third Wednesday of every month, 1-3 p.m.

LUNG POWER*

An education and exercise program for patients with COPD and their families.

RESPIRATORY SCREENING*

Complete a pulse oximetry test and a breathing screening to determine how much oxygen is carried by the blood and if there are any breathing impairments. Respiratory counseling is available.

SAFETY

CHILD SAFETY

For parent and/or caregiver groups, this presentation covers home, auto and toy safety issues.

EN C.A.R.E.

Emergency Nurses Cancel Alcohol Related Emergencies (EN C.A.R.E.) is an alcohol awareness program. Free to local schools and parent and civic organizations.

THINK FIRST

Head and spinal cord injury prevention program for presentation in the classroom in grades 1 through 3 and 7 through 9.

TOBACCO CESSATION PROGRAMS*

FREEDOM FROM SMOKING

QUITTING ON YOUR OWN

OTHER

ARTHRITIS AND FIBROMYALGIA INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE SUPPORT GROUP

UNITED OSTOMY ASSOCIATION SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the first Monday of each month, October through May, at Mercy Hospital.

WEIGHT INTERVENTION/GASTRIC BYPASS SURGERY MEETING

For people who are 100 pounds or more overweight, who have been unsuccessful losing weight by other means and want to learn more about surgical intervention. A support group is also available for those considering gastric bypass surgery or those who have already had it.

Note: Several of our educational offerings, programs and support groups are offered in cooperation with local and national societies and associations, including the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the American Lung Association, the Minnesota Chapter of Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America, the National Head Injury Foundation and the North Suburban Branch of the Twin Cities Diabetes Association.

To the heart of the matter

—Continued from Page 1

women,” says Brenda Link, Wellness Program supervisor, The Cardiac Centers of Mercy & Unity Hospitals. As a result, “it is especially important for women with diabetes to eliminate other risk factors, such as smoking, high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity and lack of exercise, because diabetes already places them at a high risk of heart disease.”

**WOMEN NEED
CARDIOVASCULAR-
TYPE EXERCISE. TRY
SWIMMING, WALKING
OR BIKING TO GET A
WORKOUT.**

Compared to people without diabetes, women with the disease tend to have lower levels of HDL (good) cholesterol, and higher levels of fats in their blood. That combination can result in LDL (bad) cholesterol that easily packs into artery-clogging plaque. While glucose control is a key part of diabetes management, blood pressure, cholesterol and triglyceride control are vital in heart disease prevention. ❖



Diabetes screening and education

Men and women with diabetes are more likely to develop and die from heart disease than the general population. If you or someone you know is at risk for diabetes, take advantage of screenings at Mercy & Unity Hospitals.

MERCY HOSPITAL

Screening

Saturday, Nov. 9, 7-11 a.m.
Heart Conference Rooms

Education programs

Tuesday, Nov. 26
1-3 p.m., Auditorium
6-8 p.m., Auditorium

UNITY HOSPITAL

Screening

Saturday, Nov. 2, 7-11 a.m.
Boardroom

Education programs

Tuesday, Nov. 12
1-3 p.m., Classroom B
6-8 p.m., Boardroom

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