

WOMEN'S healthsource

Helping
you
navigate
joint
surgery

read inside

A SPRING IN HER STEP

Outpatient joint rehab got
her back in the saddle.
See Pages 4 & 5.

WINTER 2018 HIP AND KNEE NAVIGATORS MAKE JOINT
REPLACEMENT A RELIEF | WHY YOUNG ADULTS ARE ABUSING
OPIOIDS | EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR WOMEN



Main Line Health®
Well ahead.®



Woman-to-woman emotional support

Quick: Who's the strongest and most generous person you know? Chances are, it's a woman in your life. Many women devote enormous amounts of time and energy caring for others. But caring for themselves? Not so much.

"Women tend to keep things in, and that image of the 'superwoman'—the superhero who does everything all the time and looks great and feels great while she's doing it—is supported by our society," says Elizabeth Bland, MSW, LCSW, director of the Women's Emotional Wellness Center of Main Line Health. "It's not surprising when women feel they can't ask for help because it might be seen as a weakness."

Local help is available through the Women's Emotional Wellness Center, which offers programs to help women take charge of their emotional health. The Women's Emotional Wellness Center provides outpatient behavioral health services, including psychiatric care and individual and group counseling. Those needing support beyond weekly treatment may benefit from the women's intensive outpatient program (IOP) for women ages 18 and older.

A place to grow and heal

The IOP is unique in that it provides treatment exclusively for women, by women, using a mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) curriculum. Participants meet three times weekly for group therapy with a female therapist. Women of all backgrounds and ages come

together to learn, share and grow. They explore such issues as depression and anxiety, trauma, self-esteem, emotional eating, grief and loss, and the societal pressures women face.

"We may have a woman in her 40s sitting next to a woman in her 70s sitting next to a woman in her 20s," Bland says. "They share their experiences and encourage one another. Someone says, 'I know this is hard. I felt that way.' Newer members can see the progress made by others—and that's inspirational and empowering."

Welcoming environment

Kate, whose last name is withheld to protect her privacy, participated in the IOP in 2015 when she was struggling with depression and anxiety. She had recently been hospitalized and joined the group when she was feeling isolated and unsure of whether it was the right approach for her. That changed quickly.

"I never had a great relationship with my mom, but my sister and I are close," Kate says. "I hoped that with having all those women in the group, that's what it would be like. And it was. I was not feeling well, and I didn't think anything would help. But I got to know people and made friends. It's a very powerful experience when all the women in the room are going through the same things."

Kate learned many coping skills and was so moved by her experience that

she wants other women to have the same opportunity. She's going back to school for a degree in social work and one day hopes to start a center like the Women's Emotional Wellness Center where she lives, in the Lehigh Valley.

"Now I'm ready to move forward with my life," Kate says. "The Women's Emotional Wellness Center is such a great service. It needs to be shared." ●



Reach out for help

If you think the intensive outpatient program could help you, call **1.888.227.3898** or visit mainlinehealth.org/wewc. Follow us on Facebook by searching **Main Line Health Women's Emotional Wellness Center**.



Considering HRT? Be sure to know the risks

If you're approaching menopause, you've probably heard of hormone replacement therapy (HRT). HRT can relieve bothersome symptoms like hot flashes, night sweats and vaginal dryness. What you may not know is that long-term use of HRT can also raise your risk for serious health problems, such as heart disease, stroke and breast cancer.

"HRT is not for everyone," says Patricia Ischiropoulos, MD, FACOG, an OB/GYN at Riddle Hospital, part of Main Line Health. "Physicians have to select whom they give it to very carefully."

A changing landscape

At one time, HRT seemed so promising it was almost like a wonder drug. Not only did women have an effective treatment for debilitating menopausal symptoms, early studies showed HRT might protect against heart disease and osteoporosis. Then, beginning in 2002, the picture changed dramatically.

Results from the Women's Health Initiative, a long-term study testing strategies to prevent certain conditions in postmenopausal women, were making news—and it wasn't good.

"The findings showed that not only did HRT fail to prevent heart disease, it posed serious risks to women's health," says Pallavi Rastogi, MD, a hematologist/oncologist at Paoli Hospital, part of Main Line Health.

The study included two clinical trials on hormone therapy. In the first, postmenopausal women with a uterus took estrogen-plus-progestin therapy or a

placebo. In the other, women who had a hysterectomy took estrogen only or a placebo. Both trials were stopped early because of safety concerns. Research showed that women taking HRT were at higher risk for breast cancer, heart attack, stroke and blood clots.

There were some positive findings, too. Both therapies lowered women's risk for bone fractures, and estrogen-plus-progestin therapy decreased the risk for colorectal cancer.

The bottom line

If you've thought about using HRT, talk with your doctor. For some women, the benefits outweigh the risks. "The evidence now suggests that HRT is beneficial and safe for women younger than 60 who have been menopausal for less than 10 years, who are in good health and who have no co-existing medical conditions that would increase the risks," Dr. Ischiropoulos says. "If a woman is truly suffering, fits this profile and wants to try HRT, it's a good option."

Dr. Rastogi adds that women should use the lowest effective dose of HRT for the shortest time necessary. "And we encourage women to visit their doctor at least every six to 12 months to reassess their need and ensure that using HRT is still appropriate." ●

Talk with your doctor

Your OB/GYN can help you determine the right treatment to alleviate your menopause symptoms. To schedule an appointment with a specialist at Main Line Health, call **1.866.CALL.MLH (1.866.225.5654)**.

HOSPITALS RECOGNIZED FOR CRITICAL HEART ATTACK CARE

Each year in the U.S., about 250,000 people suffer a type of severe heart attack known as a STEMI, or ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction. To prevent death, it's critical to restore blood flow to the heart immediately, through either surgery or medication. Toward that goal, the American Heart Association established the Mission: Lifeline Program to reduce barriers to prompt treatment for heart attacks, beginning with the 911 call and continuing through hospital treatment.

Lankenau Medical Center and Paoli Hospital are at the forefront of providing this lifesaving treatment. As a result, they have received Mission: Lifeline Receiving Center Recognition awards for implementing quality-improvement measures for the treatment of severe heart attacks.

This is the first year Lankenau Medical Center has received the gold-level award. The hospital received the silver-level award in 2014 and 2016. Paoli Hospital received a silver-level award this year and in 2014.

February is Heart Month

Join the Go Red for Women movement and wear your red on February 2 to support the American Heart Association's National

Wear Red Day. On February 7, Main Line Health Center in Concordville will be hosting heart-health educational seminars and a health expo.

Check our full listing of heart-related events, health screenings, support groups and more at mainlinehealth.org/heartmonth.





Take the first step

If joint pain is making everyday activities a challenge, start your journey to better health. Connect with a Hip & Knee 360° navigator at 484.580.1070 or hipandknee360.com.



Hip & Knee 360° navigators: Making joint replacement a relief

Getting a hip or knee replacement involves much more than just the surgery itself. First, you may attend a hip and knee pain seminar to learn more about your symptoms. Then, before surgery, you're learning what the procedure entails. After surgery, you're focusing on your recovery. And throughout the process, you're looking for expert, reliable answers to your questions. At Main Line Health, Hip & Knee 360° is an all-inclusive approach to joint replacement. It features educational seminars, expert surgeons, program navigators, private rooms, same-day rehab and more.

A Hip & Knee 360° navigator serves as your clinical expert to guide you at every stage of the joint replacement journey. Typically, you

first meet one of our navigators at our community education classes. Once surgery is identified, you meet one-on-one and in classes. "Our patients appreciate the personal connection," says Donna Levan, PT, DPT, MEd, CSCS, Hip & Knee 360° navigator at Paoli Hospital.

Four key times to connect

You and your navigator have several opportunities to get to know each other. If your hip or knee is hurting, and you're unsure what to do, you can sign up for a free hip and knee pain seminar. You will learn about common causes of joint pain and both surgical and nonsurgical options for managing it.

If you decide to have hip or knee replacement surgery, you can take a complimentary preoperative joint replacement class taught by a Hip & Knee 360° navigator. You'll learn what to expect before, during and after a joint replacement.

"People who attend the seminar generally feel less anxious and better prepared on the day of surgery," says Sharon Register, MHA, BSN, RN, ONC, Hip & Knee 360° navigator at Bryn Mawr Hospital. For those who can't attend in person, the class is also offered online.

After surgery, while you're still in the hospital, your navigator meets with you again. "Most patients are in the hospital one or two nights, and I'm another friendly face making sure things are going well," says Levan. This is also a chance to review what will happen after leaving the hospital.

At any point when you have a question or need a guide, you can call your Hip & Knee 360° navigator. "We're here to answer questions and be a partner," says Register. "Patients like knowing they can talk to a live person—not a recording—and get the help they need." ●

MAIN LINE HEALTH HIP & KNEE 360° NAVIGATORS



Lisa O'Neill



Kimberly Hogan



Donna Levan



Sharon Register

patient spotlight

OUTPATIENT REHAB: HELPING YOU MAKE THE MOST OF JOINT REPLACEMENT

Each person who gets a hip or knee replacement has different goals for recovery. Some want to return to an active job or sport. Others simply want to be able to climb the stairs again. Whatever your goal, the outpatient rehabilitation program at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital, part of Main Line Health, can help you achieve it.

"Recovering from a joint replacement takes time, and having a coach can help you through the process," says Donna Merkel, PT, MS, SCS, CSCS, a board-certified sports clinical specialist in physical therapy at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital.

Avis Tsuya, 64, says outpatient rehab is helping her get back to her passion: horseback riding. An old injury and severe osteoarthritis in her right knee had made riding excruciatingly painful, so Tsuya underwent knee replacement surgery.

A week after surgery, she began working on strengthening and straightening her right leg at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital. "I could not have asked for more knowledgeable and caring physical therapists," says Tsuya. "I'm working with Donna now, and I look forward to going to rehab to see her."

Outpatient rehab services after joint replacement surgery can include:

- Physical therapy, which involves working on joint motion, strength and function as well as balance
- Aquatic therapy, which involves exercising in the buoyancy of water, to take pressure off the joints
- Work hardening, which helps people prepare for returning to physically demanding jobs

Outpatient rehab after a hip or knee replacement typically lasts four to 12 weeks. "But the path is always customized to the goals of each patient," Merkel says.



Left: Avis Tsuya gets back on her horse for the first time following knee replacement surgery. Right: Donna Merkel works with Tsuya on an exercise bike to strengthen the muscles surrounding her knees.

To schedule an appointment at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital, call 484.596.5000. Learn more about the program at mainlinehealth.org/orthorehab.



WHY WEIGHT LOSS MATTERS FOR JOINT REPLACEMENT SURGERY

What does losing weight have to do with a hip or knee replacement? A lot, it turns out. The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons says that people who are morbidly obese (with a BMI of 40 or above) have an increased risk for complications during and after joint replacement surgery.

"We advise these patients to lose weight and get into better shape before surgery, because it can directly affect how well they do," says Robert Good, MD, system chief of orthopedics at Main Line Health and a member of the Rothman Institute.

Dr. Good explains that when you're carrying extra pounds, you bear that weight on your hips and knees. Plus, the load on your knees is multiplied every time you stand up from a chair or climb the stairs.

If you are heavy, you may have already tried to lose weight many times. But there could be another way to overcome this hurdle.



"With bariatric (weight-loss) surgery, you could lose more than half your excess weight in a relatively short period," says Richard Ing, MD, medical director of bariatric surgery at Bryn Mawr Hospital, part of Main Line Health. "Patients can have joint replacement surgery within three to six months after bariatric surgery."

He adds, "Bariatric surgery can also cure type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and sleep apnea, and it reduces your future risk for cancer, heart attack or stroke." That means weight loss boosts the odds of a long, healthy life, both for you and for your new hip or knee.

Visit mainlinehealth.org/bariatrics to learn more about types of weight-loss surgery and who is a candidate. You can also view patient success stories and get a list of upcoming free information sessions around the region.

WELLNESS AND PREVENTION

Empowering You Health Fair

Participate in health screenings, health and wellness discussions, cooking demonstrations and kids' activities. Take charge of your health at this free community event! Sponsored by the Junior League of Philadelphia.

- Saturday, April 7, Lankenau Medical Center

SmokeFREE

Main Line Health's FREE six-week behavior modification program is designed to help smokers quit. Participants may be eligible for free nicotine-replacement therapy. Call 484.227.FREE to register.

- Tuesdays, February 20 through March 27, 2:00–3:30 pm
Bryn Mawr Hospital Community Health Services, 933 Haverford Road
- Wednesdays, February 21 through March 28, 6:00–7:30 pm
Lankenau Medical Center
- Wednesdays, February 28 through April 4, 6:00–7:30 pm
Ludington Library, Bryn Mawr
- Thursdays, April 5 through May 10, 6:00–7:30 pm, Riddle Hospital

Blood pressure screenings

Main Line Health regularly provides free screenings at locations across the region. Visit mainlinehealth.org/bloodpressurescreenings for the current list.

Healthy Women Program

Free health screenings for uninsured or underinsured women whose income qualifies. Screenings include mammography, pelvic exams and Pap tests. For details about eligibility and appointments, call 484.476.8554 (Lankenau) or 484.337.8712 (Bryn Mawr).

Live Healthy Seminars at Free Library of Philadelphia

Lankenau Medical Center joins with the Free Library of Philadelphia to offer Live Healthy Seminars to families at the Haddington, Wynnefield and Overbrook branches. Each seminar is nutrition-focused and highlights the Deaver Wellness Farm. Blood pressure screenings are offered for adults. For dates, visit mainlinehealth.org/freelibrary.



Registration is required for most programs unless otherwise noted. To register for an upcoming event in this calendar, call toll-free 1.888.876.8764 or visit mainlinehealth.org/events, where you'll find a complete list of classes.

Prediabetes

Prediabetes is a wake-up call that you're on the path to diabetes. But it's not too late to turn things around. Led by Virginia Goldschmidt, diabetes education coordinator, and Joan Diorio, medical nutrition therapist.

- March 27, 10:00–11:00 am
Bryn Mawr Hospital Community Health Services, 933 Haverford Road
- March 27, 2:00–3:00 pm
Main Line Health Center in Newtown Square

Caring for aging parents

Get tips on caregiving and planning ahead, led by Gloria Recchi, Main Line Health HomeCare & Hospice.

- March 21, 6:30–7:30 pm
Main Line Health Center in Newtown Square

CHILDBIRTH AND CHILD CARE

We're here to help you prepare for your newest addition with a variety of classes.

Preparing for childbirth series and one-day classes

Preparation for labor and delivery is offered in this Lamaze-type class. A tour of the hospital maternity unit is included in the one-day class and three-week series but not in the two-week accelerated series. Schedule this class at approximately

eight months of pregnancy. Class size is limited; please enroll early.

Prenatal breastfeeding

Learn the steps to successful breastfeeding. Partners encouraged to attend.

Baby and you series

This class increases new parents' confidence in caring for their babies. Class includes a visit from a Main Line Health pediatrician. Please enroll early.

Preparing for multiples

For those expecting multiples, learn about birth and postpartum.

Advanced comfort measures

Beyond breathing and relaxation.

Sibling preparation

For 3- to 10-year-old siblings to learn about becoming a big sister or brother.

Keeping baby safe

Creating a safe and healthy environment.

The happiest baby

Learn ways to calm a crying baby.

Grandparents as sitters

Designed for grandparents caring for their grandchildren ages newborn to 6 years. This course

covers safety, child care equipment, CPR and choking. Held at Riddle Hospital.

- March 24, 8:30 am

DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Diabetes and You

This daytime and evening program held at Riddle Hospital is designed to help you gain better management of diabetes. Cost is covered by most insurance companies. To register, call 484.227.3769.

At 12:30 pm:

- January 10, 17 and 24
- February 14, 21 and 28
- March 7, 14 and 21
- April 4, 11 and 18

At 6:00 pm:

- January 9, 16 and 24
- February 13, 20 and 28
- March 6, 13 and 28
- April 3, 10 and 25

Look good, feel better

Women being treated for cancer are invited to this free program. Get information on makeup, wigs, head wraps and more! Each participant will receive a personal beauty kit to take home. Registration required; call 1.800.227.2345.

- April 16, 11:00 am–1:00 pm
Riddle Hospital

- March 19, 10:00 am–12:00 pm
Bryn Mawr Hospital Community Health Services, 933 Haverford Road

Free wig program

This program is for female cancer patients preparing to undergo or currently undergoing chemotherapy or radiation treatment. Call 484.337.5215 to schedule an appointment.

FOR OLDER ADULTS

Stretch your limits

This exercise program for adults older than 55 includes strength training with elastic tubing and dumbbells and balance training and stretching with modified yoga and chair tai chi. Fee: \$5/class; pay as you go. Class is held year-round. Call Michelle Geer, Bryn Mawr Hospital Community Health Services, for details at 484.337.5206.

A Matter of Balance

This eight-week, evidence-based program provides strategies to reduce the risk of falling and remain active and independent. Registration required. For Paoli Hospital, call 484.565.8328 or email eckenrodell@mlhs.org; for other locations, call 1.888.876.8764.

- Mondays, February 26 through April 16, 1:30–3:30 pm, Paoli Hospital
- Mondays, March 12 through April 30, 12:30–2:30 pm, Main Line Health Center in Newtown Square
- Thursdays, March 1 through April 19, 1:30–3:30 pm, Paoli Hospital
- Tuesdays, April 3 through May 22, 2:00–4:00 pm, Lankenau Medical Center
- Thursdays, May 3 through June 21, 1:30–3:30 pm, Paoli Hospital

Healthy steps for older adults

Evidence-based fall-prevention program that assesses and discusses fall risks. Two-day program; you must attend both sessions.

At Paoli Hospital

- January 22 and 23, 9:00 am–12:30 pm
- February 12 and 13, 9:00 am–12:30 pm

At Bryn Mawr Hospital Community Health Services, 933 Haverford Road

- March 22 and 23, 12:30–4:00 pm
- April 16 and 18, 1:00–4:30 pm

Mature driving AARP

This driver safety program addresses the challenges of drivers older than 55. We offer both the full and renewal courses. For the renewal course, you must bring proof that you have attended the full course. Fee: \$15/person AARP members; \$20/person nonmembers. All courses begin at 9:00 am.

- Full course: January 11 and 12, April 18 and 19, May 16 and 17 (must attend both days)
- Renewal course: February 19, March 20, April 11

Locations at both Bryn Mawr and Riddle hospitals; call for details.

Senior entertainment

Fun and informative evening for the over-60 crowd. Light snacks served. Held 5:00–6:30 pm at Paoli Hospital. Fee: \$5/person.

- March 21: Ross Kershey, a local historian, will speak on Abraham Lincoln.
- May 24: Ross Kershey will speak on Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Senior Suppers

An evening of dinner, conversation and a healthy living seminar for the over-60 crowd. Fee: \$7/person.

At Paoli Hospital, 5:00–7:00 pm:

- January 9: Trauma program overview
 - February 12: Cardiac and stroke
 - March 14: Vision
 - April 24: Infectious disease
- At Riddle Hospital, 4:30 pm:
- January 24: Senior vaccination update
 - February 28: Heart disease, blood pressure and stroke
 - March 21: Fighting cancer with a knife and fork
 - April 25: GI issues

CPR AND FIRST AID

Held at Riddle Hospital. CPR classes for health care providers also offered; call for details.

Basic first aid class

This Emergency Care and Safety Institute course covers basic first aid including bleeds, burns and fractures for adults, children and infants. Participants receive a two-year certification upon completion. Fee: \$40.

- March 17, 9:00 am

CPR heartsaver AED

This American Heart Association course teaches CPR and AED use in adults and children, relief of choking in adults and children, and CPR and choking in infants. Participants receive an American Heart Association certification valid for two years. Fee: \$65.

- February 26 and 27, 6:30 pm
- April 14, 9:00 am

Safe sitter babysitting

An intensive one-day training program for boys and girls ages 11 through 14. The purpose is to increase the ability of adolescents to care for younger children and prevent avoidable injuries while babysitting.

- March 29, 9:00 am

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Held at Main Line Health Center at Exton Square.

Sleep disorders

What are they, and what's new in treatment? Led by Michael Montanye, lead sleep technician, Paoli Hospital.

- January 8, 6:30–7:30 pm

Fighting heart disease with a fork and spoon

Led by Gretchen Skwer, registered dietitian.

- January 23, 6:30–7:30 pm

Back and neck pain seminar

Learn some simple steps you can take to lessen the likelihood of back and neck injury. Program covers body mechanics, anatomy, posture and treatment options. Led by Donna Levan, orthopedic program manager, Paoli Hospital.

- February 12, 6:30–7:30 pm

Taking care of your heart

Learn the latest research on treatment of heart disease of stroke. Led by Donald Ferrari, DO, cardiologist, Paoli Hospital.

- February 20, 6:30–7:30 pm

Prediabetes

This diagnosis is a wakeup call that you are on a path to diabetes. But it's not too late to turn things around. Learn what you can do! Led by Joan DiOrio, Main Line Health Diabetes Program.

- February 27, 6:30–7:30 pm

Digestive and gastrointestinal disorders

Learn about the various diseases, treatments and prevention of GI issues. Led by Julia Sharp, RN.

- March 13, 6:30–7:30 pm

Diabetes 101

Learn the symptoms, causes, treatments and tests for type 2 diabetes. Led by Joan DiOrio, Main Line Health Diabetes Program.

- March 27, 6:30–7:30 pm

Feeding your family fast and healthy

Making healthy meals at home can be fast and delicious. Led by Gretchen Skwer, registered dietitian.

- April 18, 6:30–7:30 pm

Fall prevention: Risks, tips and options

Keep the spring in your step! Reduce your fear of falling and learn fall-prevention strategies. Led by Donna Levan, orthopaedic program manager, Paoli Hospital.

- April 13, 6:30–7:30 pm

A new treatment option for narrowed arteries

If you have peripheral artery disease (PAD), you may be interested in a new treatment option for this painful condition. Bryn Mawr Hospital is the first hospital in the area to offer a procedure called lithoplasty specifically for PAD.

PAD causes a narrowing in the arteries—primarily in the legs but also in vessels elsewhere in the body—due to a buildup of calcium and plaque inside the artery walls. This blocks blood flow and can cause pain, cramping and tiredness in the legs and hips, sometimes limiting the ability to get around. People with PAD have a higher risk for heart disease, heart attack and stroke.

The most common treatment for PAD is balloon angioplasty, in which a balloon is inflated in the narrowed artery to expand it, helping to increase blood flow.

“While balloon angioplasty alone works well for some people with PAD, it’s not as effective in those with a more serious

buildup of hardened calcium deposits,” says Sarang Mangalmurti, MD, an interventional cardiologist at Bryn Mawr Hospital, part of Main Line Health’s Lankenau Heart Institute. “Those people often require repeat procedures or surgery.”

The new lithoplasty system combines balloon angioplasty with sonic pressure waves, a new technology designed to break up hardened blockages in the artery without damaging other tissue.

“This is a real breakthrough for treating complex cases of PAD,” says Dr. Mangalmurti. “It offers our patients with severe PAD the potential to not have surgery.”

“From the moment I met Dr. Mangalmurti, I felt confident in him,” says patient Karyn Kress. “My procedure went smoothly and I received excellent care from the staff at Bryn Mawr. I was home and moving more comfortably within a few days. The pain I’d been experiencing due to PAD has subsided thanks to this

procedure, which is truly a miracle.”

On behalf of Lankenau Heart Institute, Bryn Mawr Hospital is serving as the lead site to have lithoplasty and will continue to participate in trials evaluating best-practice usage and the effectiveness of this technology. The trial is being led by William Gray, MD, system chief of the Division of Cardiovascular Disease at Main Line Health and president of the Lankenau Heart Institute.

“We’re thrilled to be the first in the region to offer this technology,” says Dr. Gray. ●

Expert care for PAD

Your heart is in good hands with Lankenau Heart Institute. Visit mainlinehealth.org/heart to meet our cardiologists, hear from real patients and learn more about conditions such as PAD. To find a cardiologist, call 1.866.CALL.MLH.



Recognizing thyroid disease as we age

If you’re an older adult, you may consider fatigue, weight gain and mental foggy to be inevitable signs of aging. But for many women, these subtle symptoms may point to a thyroid problem. Thyroid disease is common, and the risk increases with age. Underactive thyroid, or hypothyroidism, is five times more common in women than men and is seen in up to 15 percent of women older than age 65.

“The thyroid gland produces hormones that affect how our bodies use energy. This impacts all major functions, from metabolism and digestion to heart rate, mental clarity and more,” explains Carmel Fratianni, MD, endocrinologist with Riddle Hospital, part of Main Line Health. “As endocrinologists, we have to look at the whole patient, since untreated thyroid disease can affect every organ system in the body.”

Recognizing the symptoms

Symptoms of hypothyroidism can include:

- Heavy menstrual periods or infertility
- Depression
- Fatigue
- Joint aches
- Hair loss
- Dry skin
- Constipation
- Feeling cold

“Patients may have low heart rates, low sodium levels, anemia and even high

cholesterol levels,” says Dr. Fratianni. “Some patients can continue to have symptoms of hypothyroidism even when they’re taking thyroid medicine, especially if they are also taking calcium, iron or acid-blocking medications, which can block the absorption of thyroid pills. So it’s important to review your entire list of medications and supplements with your doctor.”

Symptoms of an overactive thyroid, or hyperthyroidism, can include weight loss and a racing heartbeat. Older adults with hyperthyroidism typically have fewer symptoms than younger adults, although the risk to their health is greater. Too much thyroid hormone can cause bone loss, osteoporosis and irregular heartbeats such as atrial fibrillation.

Diagnosing older adults

Diagnosing thyroid disease in older adults can be challenging since the symptoms can mimic many other conditions. In addition, determining normal levels of thyroid hormone for adults in their 80s or 90s is controversial. “In fact, up to one-third of patients older than age 65 may be over-treated for their thyroid condition,” says Dr. Fratianni. “That’s why treatment needs to be individualized after looking at the whole patient. If you suspect you have a thyroid problem, the first step is to talk with your doctor.” ●

THYROID HEALTH MATTERS DURING PREGNANCY

Do you know the health of your thyroid? If you’re pregnant or thinking about growing your family, now is the time to find out.

“Routine screening for thyroid disease during pregnancy is not currently recommended. But if you have a family history of thyroid disease or are experiencing symptoms such as unexplained weight fluctuation, heat or cold intolerance, or hair loss, talk with your doctor,” says Nicole Swank, DO, an OB/GYN with Lankenau Medical Center, part of Main Line Health.

It’s important to make sure you have a healthy thyroid before getting pregnant. Untreated thyroid disease can cause fertility problems, difficulty breastfeeding and, in some cases, problems with the fetus.

If you’re expecting a baby and have a thyroid problem, work closely with your doctor to keep your thyroid hormone levels in check. Pregnancy can alter how much medication you need.

“The good news is that thyroid problems can be effectively treated,” says Dr. Swank. “With proper diagnosis and care, most thyroid disease will not negatively affect your pregnancy.”



FROM OUR FARM TO YOUR TABLE

At Lankenau Medical Center, we recognize how nutrition affects health. In collaboration with Greener Partners, we’re one of only a few hospitals nationwide to take the progressive step of maintaining a year-round organic farm on campus. The Delema G. Deaver Wellness Farm includes more than 24 gardens, a greenhouse and educational areas, and distributes produce to both patients and neighborhood residents. Try a taste of good health with this simple, fresh recipe.

CARROT AND BEET SALAD



FRESH FROM THE FARM

INGREDIENTS

For the salad:

- 1 pound carrots, washed and peeled
- 1 pound beets, washed and peeled
- 1/2 cup pumpkin seeds, toasted

For the dressing:

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1–2 teaspoons maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Fresh herbs, cook’s choice, to taste

DIRECTIONS

Shred carrots and beets using a food processor or grater. Add pumpkin seeds. To make the dressing, whisk together olive oil, vinegar, maple syrup, mustard, salt, pepper and herbs. Pour over vegetables and stir. Salad will keep in refrigerator for three days. Makes 8–10 servings.

Source: Delema G. Deaver Wellness Farm

The top 3 health risks in men—and how to avoid them



Think of your four closest male friends or family members. Now, think of this: Statistically, one of them will die of heart disease. Another will die of cancer. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, these two health problems account for nearly half of deaths among men.

The good news: Certain types of exercise can help prevent these health threats. Here's how.

1. To ward off heart disease: Move in short spurts all day. "Aerobic exercise, such as walking or biking, strengthens your heart and lowers

your blood pressure," says Graham Vigliotta, DO, an internal medicine physician with Main Line Health in Audubon. The American Heart Association recommends at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity five days a week. But you don't have to do it all at once. In one study, three 10-minute walks were as effective as one 30-minute walk at lowering blood pressure.

2. To guard against cancer: Exercise as much as you can. Exercise may help prevent certain types of cancer. You should get at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise spread throughout the week, suggests the American Cancer

Society. Logging 300 minutes of activity per week probably provides additional cancer protection. If that's too much, just try to do what you can. Every additional 15 minutes of activity a day decreases your risk of dying of cancer by one percent, according to a study in the *Lancet*.

3. To prevent falls: Balance train. Unintentional injuries, such as falls, are the third most common cause of death among men. Exercise programs that include balance training could prevent up to 42 percent of falls, studies show. Consider trying tai chi, a martial art that helps improve balance and coordination. ●

WHY YOUNG ADULTS ARE ABUSING OPIOIDS

The opioid abuse crisis is in the headlines daily, and young people aren't immune. In one study, among respondents ages 18 to 24, 61.2 percent said they'd tried pain medications to reduce anxiety or stress.

Opioids work by interrupting pain signals to the brain and producing a pleasurable effect. They include drugs derived from the poppy plant, such as morphine and codeine, as well as those manufactured synthetically such as OxyContin, Vicodin and Percocet. Heroin is also generally referred to as an opioid.

Jessica Cirillo, MA, CRPS, who provides clinical outreach and education about addiction on behalf of Mirmont Treatment Center, explains that many young people self-medicate. "Many kids don't have healthy coping skills, so when they're overwhelmed and introduced to a substance that gives them instant relief, they're more likely to get hooked."

Imagine a teenager finds a half-used bottle of Percocet that her father's doctor prescribed for back pain. She tries it. The opioid

releases immediate feel-good hormones, and she wants more, so she asks around. Prescription drugs "on the street" could be a locker or two away at school.

Soon she needs a higher dosage to get the same effect. She progresses to stronger Percocet—about \$30 per pill on the street—and is now focused on finding money to feed the habit. Finally, someone introduces her to heroin. For \$10 a bag, she'll get a much greater effect.

Unfortunately, says Cirillo, addiction still has shame and judgment associated with it. That's why education is critical. Parents need to talk with their kids and understand the stressors they face. It also helps to model healthy relaxing behaviors such as getting regular exercise.

Mirmont Treatment Center offers hope and help to people of all ages struggling with addiction. Visit mainlinehealth.org/mirmont or call 1.800.846.4656.

For inflammatory bowel disease, seek expert care

Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) can develop at any stage of life, although most cases are diagnosed before age 30. No matter when it surfaces, this lifelong condition has no cure and requires care from experienced specialists.

"It's difficult for people to learn they have a chronic disease. They need reassurance from experts who can offer the newest, most innovative treatments," says Patricia Wong, MD, a gastroenterologist at Lankenau Medical Center. "Thanks to ongoing research during the last decade, huge progress has been made in the therapies we now offer for managing IBD symptoms."

There are two types of IBD: Crohn's disease, which can affect any part of the digestive tract from the esophagus to the rectum, and ulcerative colitis, which mainly involves the colon and rectum. While the exact cause of IBD remains unknown, research indicates a genetic component. When a person inherits an IBD gene, bacteria or viruses in the environment can enter the gastrointestinal system and trigger an abnormal response from the immune system. This causes a flare-up of uncomfortable IBD symptoms, including diarrhea, abdominal pain and fever.

If left uncontrolled, IBD can cause chronic inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract, which increases the risk for colon cancer.

The good news is that new medications and surgical procedures are revolutionizing IBD treatment. For example, the use of anti-inflammatories, immunosuppressants and biologics enables doctors to target specific sections of the gastrointestinal system where IBD manifests.

"IBD affects each person differently," says Dr. Wong. "Not only does it involve the gastrointestinal system to varying degrees, it can also impact the eyes, skin, joints and other areas of the body. That's why treatment requires a customized, multidisciplinary approach."

Whether a person has a mild or severe case, forming an ongoing relationship with a gastroenterologist is key.

"If you suffer from Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, get the support and care you need," says Dr. Wong. "With the right treatment, you can control symptoms and enjoy a healthy life." ●

Find out more

To learn more about IBD and services offered at Main Line Health, visit mainlinehealth.org/gastro or call 1.866.CALL.MLH.



PALLIATIVE CARE FOCUSES ON THE WHOLE PERSON

When you think of intensive care, a tea party may not come to mind. But just such an event was held for Mary Coldwell, a patient in palliative care at Bryn Mawr Hospital.

"Our granddaughters wanted a tea party with their 'Mom-Mom,' and my son suggested having it at the hospital," recalls Bob Coldwell, Mary's husband. The palliative team agreed that it sounded like a perfect way to lift Mary's spirits. "What really blew me away was that they took time to talk with the kids before and after to make sure it was a good thing for them, too," Bob says.

Palliative care recognizes that serious illness isn't just a medical condition. It's a deeply personal experience and patients can benefit greatly from a "whole person" approach. While palliative care focuses on managing pain to make patients as comfortable as possible, the specially trained team also offers emotional support and helps patients and their loved ones as they make care choices.

Unlike hospice care, palliative care is for any stage of a serious illness. Patients can receive medical treatments at the same time.

"Palliative care is another layer of support for patients and their families," explains Karl Ahlswede, MD, FACS, medical director of palliative care at Main Line Health. "It's about making life as good as it can be for that person."

Palliative care is offered at all five Main Line Health hospitals. To learn more about what it includes, visit mainlinehealth.org/palliativecare.

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Take care when you're the caregiver



Caring for a loved one with ongoing health needs can be deeply satisfying, but it can also be stressful. Caregiving can take away from the time you have for yourself, your job and your relationships. "As a result, caregivers are at risk for depression, anxiety, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart attacks, obesity and chronic pain," says Eugene J. Ferguson, MD, an internal medicine doctor with Main Line Health in Downingtown.

Here are some ways to care for your own physical and emotional health while you're caring for someone else:

Ask for help. Call on family members and friends. Take advantage of services such as home health care, meal delivery and transportation services. Use that time to exercise, make a healthy meal or simply relax. In one study, caregivers who took a little time off to do something they enjoyed had healthier blood pressure levels.

Make your own wellness a priority. Many caregivers skip preventive health care checks like dental exams and mammograms. "It's essential to keep up with medical appointments and with healthy living at home," notes Dr. Ferguson. "Exercise is very important. If you can't do 30 minutes of continuous activity, try fitting in three 10-minute bursts of exercise a day. You'll have more energy and lower your odds for serious health problems."

Tend to your feelings and relationships. You may feel sad, angry, lonely or guilty. Talking with a trusted friend, family member or counselor, or joining a support group, can help. If you're married, do what you can to stay close with your spouse, too. ●

Support for you

Main Line Health offers a variety of caregiver support groups. Visit mainlinehealth.org/caregiver or call 1.888.876.8764.

AFIB: A HEART PROBLEM MORE COMMON THAN THOUGHT

More people may have atrial fibrillation (AFib), a type of irregular heartbeat, than doctors have previously realized. That's according to a study co-authored by Peter R. Kowey, MD, a cardiologist at Main Line Health's Lankenau Heart Institute.

In the study, 385 undiagnosed at-risk patients were fitted with implantable recording devices. After two years, 33 percent of participants were found to have AFib. The results are significant because the symptoms of AFib are often silent or minor. And having AFib increases the risk of having a stroke. In the U.S., about 795,000 people each year have a stroke, of which about 130,000 die. Survivors are often permanently disabled.

"I'm beginning to think of AFib as an epidemic," says Dr. Kowey. "Our population is aging and has many of the risk factors for the disease."

Some risk factors include age, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity and sleep apnea. But the good news is that AFib can be managed with medication. "This is one area where we can have a major impact on the health of a large number of people: diagnosing and treating AFib to reduce the incidence of stroke," Dr. Kowey says.

If you have symptoms of AFib or are already diagnosed, you may have questions. Connect with a Lankenau Heart Institute specialist close to you by calling 1.866.CALL.MLH.