

HealthMatters

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT LAKE WALES MEDICAL CENTER



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LWMC
doctors
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Healthbriefs

> Butter and margarine go head to head



You see them next to each other in the grocery store, but which one do you choose? And, more importantly, which type of fat is better for your heart? The decision is in: Most margarine choices are a healthier option than butter, according to the Mayo Clinic.

Because margarine is made from vegetable oils, it doesn't contain dietary cholesterol and it's higher in polyunsaturated and monounsaturated, or "good," fats, which, when substituted for saturated fats, help reduce low-density lipoprotein (LDL), or "bad" cholesterol. On the other hand, butter contains high levels of saturated fat and cholesterol because it's made from animal fat.

Buyers beware, though: Choose your margarine carefully. Solid margarine—which comes in stick form—isn't a good choice because it contains trans fat. Instead, choose soft or liquid margarine and check labels for the spread with the lowest calories, the least amount of saturated fat and no trans fat.



Are you at risk?

Have you been checked for high cholesterol? Make an appointment with your doctor to discuss your risk factors and ways you can lower your risk.

> Long commutes take toll on the heart

Do you have a long ride to and from work? Well, here's another drawback to the aggravation you may feel being trapped in your car: According to a study in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, which looked at almost 4,300 Texas city workers, the longer you're behind the wheel during your commute, the worse your heart health. Waistlines expanded, exercise routines disappeared, and with these bad habits came higher blood pressure and excess pounds.

Even for those who did exercise, these heart disease risk factors didn't disappear, which means there's probably something to the commute itself that's harming hearts. Researchers hypothesize it could be that long-distance drivers are burning fewer calories overall and stress could be taking a toll. Researchers suggest finding other ways to add activity to your day, so don't hesitate to bring a pair of walking shoes to work and hit the sidewalks during your lunch break.



> Could it be a pinched nerve?

Pinched nerves, which occur when too much pressure is applied to a nerve by surrounding tissues, such as bones, cartilage or muscles, can be painful and irritating. Understanding if you're at an increased risk of one day experiencing a pinched nerve is the best way to help prevent it. Here are five risk factors:

- 1 Posture.** Proper posture decreases the pressure to your spine and nerves.
- 2 Bone spurs.** Conditions like osteoarthritis can cause you to develop bone spurs. They can stiffen the spine and narrow the space where your nerves travel.
- 3 Overuse.** Activities that involve extensive use of your hands, wrists and shoulders can increase your risk of a pinched nerve.
- 4 Obesity.** Having excess weight adds more pressure from muscles and body tissue onto your nerves.
- 5 Pregnancy.** Weight gain from pregnancy can swell your nerve passages and pinch your nerves.



Sleep and your brain

For optimal health, get your shut-eye

➤ Sleep is a time for you to rest and, hopefully, get refreshed and ready to face the new day. For your brain, sleep is a time for work.

During those blissful hours of shut-eye, your brain is playing an integral part in the maintenance of your nervous system, laying pathways to help you learn and create new memories. Some experts also think that sleep affords our brains the opportunity to rest hardworking neurons before they have a chance to malfunction. In addition, connections between neurons that aren't frequently used may finally get a chance to exercise during sleep as a way of preventing their deterioration.

If you cut your sleep sessions short (or get less than the recommended seven to eight hours), you're interrupting these vital processes and, as you probably know, making it more difficult to remember things or concentrate. You may find it more difficult to work, drive or function in general. Hallucinations and mood swings may also develop in more severe cases of sleep deprivation.

Some very preliminary research also seems to suggest that poor sleep habits may age your brain and contribute to cognitive health problems such as dementia, but more research is needed. On other, more definitive health fronts, lack of sleep has been linked to heart disease, obesity and diabetes.

Here's to good sleep

Struggling to get that elusive sleep can be frustrating, but a good night's sleep isn't just a dream. To keep your brain in tip-top shape:

➤ **Schedule bedtime.** Going to sleep at the same time every night can help program your body into a healthy cycle.

➤ **Exercise regularly.** A good workout—if not timed too close to bedtime, or about five to six hours before you go to bed—can help you achieve a deeper sleep.

➤ **Skip the cigarettes, nicotine and alcohol,** all of which can negatively affect your quality of sleep.

➤ **Relax.** Read a book or soak in a nice, warm bath before going to sleep.

➤ **Avoid staying in bed if you can't sleep.** Find another low-key activity to do until you feel sleepy.

➤ **Keep your room cool, but not too cool.** Extreme temperatures that make you uncomfortable will keep you from getting sleep.

➤ **Wake with the sun.** It helps reset your body's internal clock. ●

While you sleep, **your brain** is playing an integral part in the **maintenance** of your **nervous system**, laying pathways to help you learn and **create new memories.**





Don't be sore

What to do when wounds won't heal



Sores on your body can be frightening—especially when they don't go away. Persistent wounds that don't heal can

result from a variety of causes such as illness, burns or pressure. The most typical include diabetic skin sores, pressure sores, vessel disease wounds, surgical incisions, spinal injury wounds and chemical wounds.

Careful attention limits infection

Chronic sores can become seriously infected. These openings in the skin allow in foreign pathogens, further damaging the deeper layers of skin and underlying tissue. This can limit blood flow and slow the body's healing process. Preventing infection is the key to rapid and successful recovery.

Treatment varies depending on the type and severity of the wound. The most important steps are to remove necrotic tissue to minimize the risk of infection, relieve pressure and dress the wound.

It's important to seek medical attention if you have a wound that won't heal. Most patients who seek help from a wound care program find their sores heal in a few months. However, changing dressings and monitoring progress are only part of the plan. Other common treatments include applying growth factors (natural substances applied topically to stimulate

healing) and high-pressure (hyperbaric) oxygen treatment. Nutrition counseling and antibiotic treatment may also be part of the care plan. Your doctor can recommend the treatment that's best for you.

When to call the doctor

A fresh wound needs immediate medical attention if:

- it's jagged
- it's on your face
- the area around it feels numb
- the edges gape open
- it contains dirt that won't come out
- it's tender or inflamed
- a thick, creamy, grayish fluid is draining from it
- you have a temperature higher than 101 F
- red streaks appear near the wound
- it's very deep and you haven't had a tetanus shot in five or more years
- blood continues to leak through your bandage after you've applied direct, firm pressure for 10 minutes ●

We can help you heal

The services available at The Wound Healing Center at Lake Wales Medical Center include:

- > removal of dead or damaged tissue (debridement)
- > vacuum-assisted closure (wound vac)
- > preparation and application of skin substitutes
- > specially chosen dressings and wraps
- > platelet growth technologies
- > foot care procedures
- > incision and drainage procedures
- > skin biopsy
- > grafts
- > hyperbaric oxygen therapy



Learn more!

To learn more about our wound care services, call **(863) 679-1986** or visit **www.LakeWalesMedicalCenter.com** and click on "Services," and "Wound Care."

PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

The experienced and dedicated medical staff of Lake Wales Medical Center (LWMC) can keep you and your family well.



Christopher Meyer, M.D., FACS

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Florida Vein Care Center

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Christopher Meyer, M.D., FACS, a member of the LWMC medical staff, graduated from the University of Notre Dame and completed his medical degree and surgical training in Cincinnati, Ohio. He is board certified and a Fellow in the American College of Surgeons. Dr. Meyer practiced in the Orlando area for five years before coming to Lake Wales in 2009.



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Snehal Patel, M.D., FACS, a member of the LWMC medical staff, graduated from the Saba University School of Medicine and completed his residency in general surgery at Good Samaritan Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio. He is board certified and a Fellow in the American College of Surgeons. Dr. Patel formerly practiced in the Orlando area and came to Lake Wales in 2009.



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E. Moshe Izsak, M.D., FAGC, board certified in gastroenterology and internal medicine, is a member of the LWMC medical staff. He graduated from medical school at the University of Toronto and worked for the University of Mississippi's University Medical Center as assistant professor of medicine and staff gastroenterologist. He then operated a private practice in Lakeland for 27 years before coming to Lake Wales. Dr. Izsak also is a volunteer doctor at Lakeland Volunteers in Medicine.

A message FROM OUR CEO



DEAR FRIENDS,

When Lake Wales Medical Center's (LWMC) Hospitality Director Brian Stone visited a patient's room

SCOTT SMITH
Chief Executive Officer

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recently, he asked if the housekeeper had introduced herself when she had come to clean the room earlier. The patient's family member responded, "I don't remember.

I was too busy being impressed that she came in here and called my mother by her name."

With 2013 well under way, we at LWMC continue to focus on providing excellent quality care in an atmosphere that makes our patients glad they chose us for their health care needs.

From the minute you walk in the door, we want you—our patients and visitors—to have "wow" experiences here. Our friendly staff take time to explain to you what's happening and why, and to let you know how long certain procedures will take. Our doctors focus on explaining clearly what's happening with your care and answering your questions. Our nurses and clinical staff round on patients every hour to make sure all your questions are answered and that we're doing everything we can to meet your needs. We explain to patients the medications they're being given and why as well as the potential side effects they may have. And, as I've shared earlier, even our support staff is involved in helping you have a good experience. We don't treat patients as numbers: Our patients are real people, and we strive to provide quality care. We look forward to serving your health care needs!

Best regards,

Scott Smith

*Chief Executive Officer
Lake Wales Medical Center*

HealthWise QUIZ

How much do you know about medication management?

> TAKE THIS QUIZ TO FIND OUT.



Coping with stroke

> You didn't see it coming, but few people who have a stroke do. And as you may know by now, surviving a stroke is only half the battle. How do you cope with a life that's forever changed?

First off, know that there are many people facing the same situation as you. Almost 800,000 people have strokes every year. Some may recover with only minor residual effects, while others are left with permanent disabilities. Learning to cope with your individual situation is critical to recovery. Here are some strategies that may help:

> **Recognize the emotions.** You'll likely go through a range of emotions, from sadness about things you may no longer be able to do, to anger about why this happened to you, to frustration with the difficulty of communicating with loved ones. All of these are normal feelings. If you're experiencing extended periods of sadness, have lost interest in

life or have thoughts of suicide, seek help immediately because these are symptoms of depression. If you're a caregiver of someone with stroke, learn to recognize the signs.

> **Work with the new you.**

Recuperating will take time and a lot of hard work, and you may not totally get back to where you were before. Set small goals for yourself and celebrate as you reach them. And don't be afraid to rest. Remain active. You may not be moving the way you used to, but don't feel embarrassed by having to use a cane or wheelchair. You need to get out, even if only for a short time. If your loved one has had a stroke, encourage him or her to meet up with friends or engage in enjoyable activities, if he or she is up to it.

> **Ask for help.** Don't be afraid to reach out to friends and family to assist with errands or just stop by for a visit. ●

1 According to the FDA (U.S. Food and Drug Administration), splitting pills:

- a. is safe for all medications
- b. can affect the way a medication is absorbed
- c. should never be done unless the pills are approved for splitting and you have your doctor's OK
- d. both b and c

2 Which tip is not recommended for storing medication?

- a. Store it in a cool, dry place.
- b. Keep it in the original container.
- c. Keep the cotton plug in the bottle.
- d. none of the above

3 When talking with your doctor, you should let him or her know you take:

- a. vitamins
- b. over-the-counter medicines
- c. herbal supplements
- d. all of the above

4 Which of the following drugs can interact with St. John's wort?

- a. blood thinners
- b. antidepressants
- c. pain medications (narcotics)
- d. all of the above

5 When ordering medication online, you should only purchase from a website that:

- a. has an FDA seal of approval
- b. is accredited by the Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites (VIPPS) program
- c. is based in Canada
- d. has testimonials

Answers: 1. (d) 2. (c) 3. (d) 4. (d) 5. (b)

Just desserts

Satisfying a sweet tooth—without the guilt

➤ You make it through dinner, keeping your promise to limit the calories and fat. But then comes the course that almost always gets you to cave: dessert.

Though it can be a calorie and fat trap, you don't have to skimp on the meal's finale. Instead, you need to find a way to satisfy that sweet tooth without guilt. And that's where nature's sweetest low-fat, low-calorie offering—fruit!—comes in:

➤ **Apple of your eye:** Slice up some apples and sprinkle with a little bit of cinnamon, then bake.

➤ **Layer:** Alternate layers of nonfat yogurt with fresh fruit in a parfait glass.

➤ **Get your calcium, too:** Keep low-fat

or nonfat fruit yogurt on hand for an afternoon pick-me-up.

➤ **The grill isn't only for meat:** Slice up peaches, bananas and pineapples and give them a little heat, which will bring out their natural sweetness.

➤ **Try an even quicker sweet fix:**

Pop open some canned fruit (canned in its own juice or water—no heavy syrup!) and enjoy.

➤ **Think heavenly:** Not all cakes are created equal.

Angel food cake is a healthy option that's made even better with the addition of some fresh fruit or fruit puree on top.

➤ **Make your own icy treat:** Freeze grapes and bananas for an ice cream alternative. Choose wisely: If your dessert options are limited to a restaurant menu, look for a fruit salad or sorbet, sherbet or meringues and skip the chocolate lava cake.

➤ **Get creative:** OK, so you really want to make that brownie recipe. You can still cut down on the sugar intake by substituting equal amounts of unsweetened applesauce, or cutting the amount of sugar in half. ●



'V' is for vitamin

Do your kids need vitamin supplements?

➤ Growing up, health sources touted that getting all your vitamins and minerals was your ticket to a life spent big and strong. Today, parents have a multitude of vitamin choices to help their children get all those necessary

nutrients. But does your child really need them?

It's a question with no easy answer, experts say. Research has only seemed to make things more confusing for parents. A recent study led by the National Institutes of Health found that children who could have benefited the most from vitamins often weren't getting them, and those children who didn't need them were taking them. The study also found that some children—whether their parents supplemented their diet with vitamins or not—were deficient in the nutrients vitamin D and calcium while many took in too much iron and vitamin A, leading researchers

to hypothesize that those pills may not be a good match for today's childhood diets.

What should you do?

The general recommendation from the American Academy of Pediatrics is that supplements are rarely needed in children ages 5 to 10 because most children can get all the vitamins and minerals they need through diet alone. But for children who may have more erratic or poor eating habits, or follow a certain diet (for example, vegetarian without dairy), a supplement may be necessary.

Start by talking with your pediatrician about your child's habits to see if a supplement might be beneficial. Your pediatrician might have other suggestions about how your child can meet nutritional goals (for example, finding alternative food sources that your child enjoys). ●



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When every minute counts

Count on Lake Wales Medical Center

When a health emergency occurs and you find yourself in the local emergency room (ER), one of your top questions is likely to be, "How soon will I be seen?"

Respecting the importance of prompt service, Lake Wales Medical Center (LWMC) offers a 30-Minutes-or-Less ER Service Pledge. The doctors and staff work diligently to have each ER patient initially seen by a clinical professional—a doctor, a physician assistant or a nurse practitioner—within 30 minutes of arrival.

Efficient, compassionate care

"We understand when you're not feeling well, you don't want to spend hours in an ER lobby waiting to see a doctor," says LWMC's Chief Executive Officer Scott Smith. "The ER service

initiative is about providing prompt and compassionate care and, most important, it's part of our ongoing hospitalwide quality improvement processes." Patients are

tracked from the time

they register to the time they're initially seen by a clinical professional. "Since LWMC launched the ER Service Pledge in August, it's been well received by patients," says John Conboy, M.D., emergency department medical director and an independent member of the medical staff. "ER wait times have averaged 26 minutes." The average wait time for the prior week is listed on www.LakeWalesMedicalCenter.com.

"Although the goal is to initially see every patient within 30 minutes, the most critical health emergencies always will receive top priority," Dr. Conboy says. "While we're committed to prompt and appropriate care for ER patients, the service pledge shouldn't be misinterpreted as an effort to rush patients through the ER."

The ER's service enhancements also include a callback process. "Within three days of a patient's discharge from the ER, we try to reach them by phone to find out if they have questions about their discharge instructions," says Brittany Carson, R.N., director of emergency services. "It's also an opportunity to learn ways we can continue to improve our service and to hear about staff members who provided excellent service." ●



JOHN CONBOY, M.D.
 Medical Director,
 Emergency Department



BRITTANY CARSON, R.N.
 Director of Emergency Services



See how we're doing!

Visit www.LakeWalesMedicalCenter.com to view the average ER wait time for the prior week.