

 NORTH OKALOOSA
MEDICAL CENTER

HealthConnection

THE MAGAZINE OF NORTH OKALOOSA MEDICAL CENTER



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program: Changing
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experience
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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.



NOMC welcomes new family practice doctor

➤ Obioma Ogbonna, M.D., is a family practice doctor who received his undergraduate degree from Tennessee State University and received his master's degree in public health from Meharry Medical College. He attended medical school at Ross University School of Medicine and completed his family practice residency at Bronx Lebanon Hospital in New York.

Dr. Ogbonna has special interests in respiratory problems, minor cuts, preventive care and the management of complex conditions like diabetes. He is a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians and the Philanthropic Human Race Foundation. ●



Visit Dr. Ogbonna!

Obioma Ogbonna, M.D., is currently accepting new patients and is located at 130 E. Redstone Ave. in Crestview. To schedule an appointment, call (850) 398-8725.

Dr. Ogbonna is a member of the medical staff at North Okaloosa Medical Center.

A message FROM OUR CEO



DAVID FULLER
Chief Executive
Officer

DEAR FRIENDS,

The hot button political issue right now is health care reform and what that means for doctors, hospitals and patients.

On March 23, 2010, President Barack Obama signed the Affordable Care Act. The law puts into place comprehensive health insurance reforms that will roll out over four years and beyond. This overview will help you know the timeline of what's changing and when.

Health care law timeline

2010: A new patient's Bill of Rights went into effect, providing a new set of guidelines that take into account the interests of the consumer as well as the insurance industry. Cost-free preventive services began for many Americans.

2011: People with Medicare received key preventive services for free and started receiving a 50 percent discount on brand-name drugs in the Medicare "donut hole."

2012: Accountable care organizations and other programs designed to aid doctors and health care providers began working together to deliver better care in a collaborative fashion.

2014: All Americans will purportedly have access to affordable health insurance options. New health insurance exchanges will allow individuals and small businesses to compare health plans on a level playing field. Middle- and low-income families will be eligible for tax credits that cover a significant portion of the cost of coverage. The Medicaid program will be expanded to cover more low-income Americans.

How we'll help

The Affordable Care Act is intended to help millions of previously uninsured people gain coverage. Our goal will continue to be to provide quality care to our patients as well as identifying opportunities to grow our medical staff both in Crestview and the surrounding communities.

Best wishes,

David W. Fuller

*Chief Executive Officer
North Okaloosa Medical Center*

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.

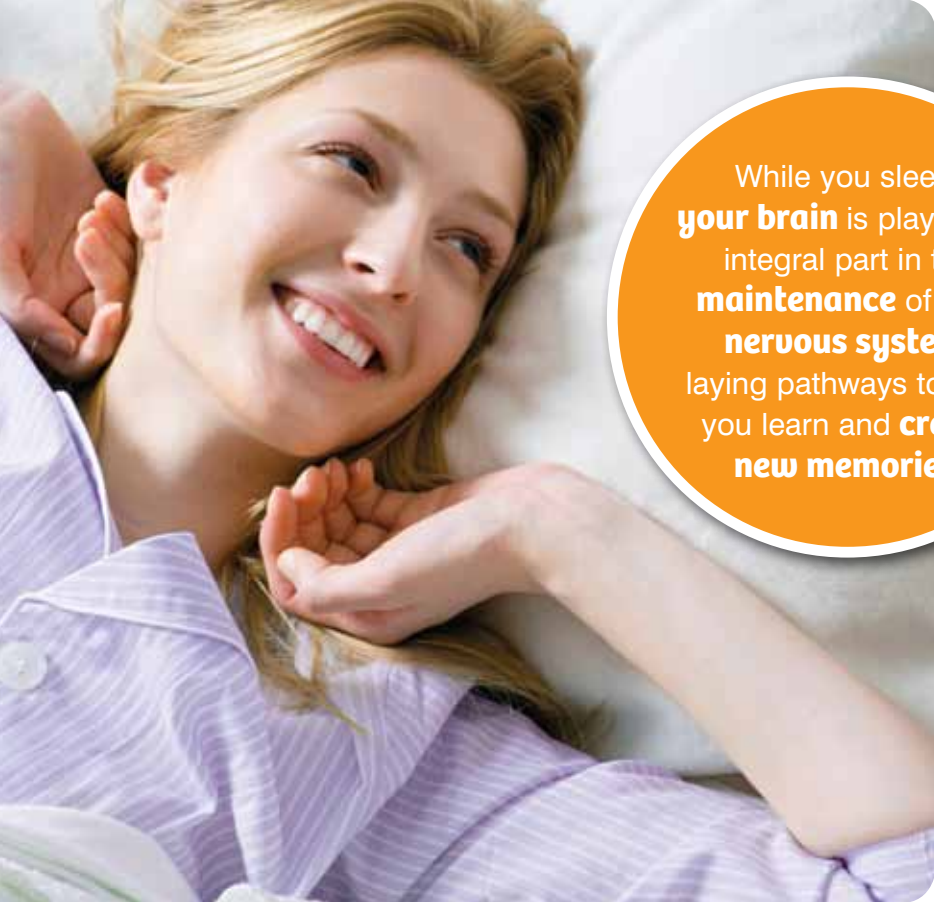
If you cut your sleep sessions short (or get less than the recommended seven to eight hours), you're interrupting these vital processes and, as you probably know, making it more difficult to remember things or concentrate. You may find it more difficult to work, drive or function in general. Hallucinations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



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. ●

HealthWise QUIZ

How much do you know about medication management?

➤ TAKE THIS QUIZ TO FIND OUT.

- 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)

Health care with a personal touch



LEE THIGPEN, M.D.
Internist



STEVEN DONCHEY, M.D.
Internist

Hospitalists enhance care at NOMC

In traditional health care, office-based doctors visit hospitalized patients before or after office hours. This requires them to carefully balance inpatient and office patient needs. Now, primary care doctors can care for office patients while relying on hospitalists to provide immediate attention to their hospitalized patients if necessary.

How hospitalists work

North Okaloosa Medical Center (NOMC) hospitalists are board certified in internal medicine, and they help manage care, improve outcomes and enhance efficiency. After a patient is admitted to the hospital, the primary care doctor informs the hospitalist about the

patient's condition, medical history and treatment. The hospitalist then serves as an extension of the primary care doctor and attends to the patient's every medical need during his or her stay. The hospitalist orders tests, prescribes medications and monitors results. The hospitalist frequently communicates with the patient's primary care doctor; provides patient consultation; promptly answers patient inquiries; and serves as a present, familiar voice for the hospitalized patient's family. When a patient is discharged, the hospitalist forwards a written report to the primary care doctor.

Patients and their doctors will receive improved efficiency and quality of care as a result of the NOMC hospitalist program, which also helps minimize hospital stays, improve communication and enhance overall care.

The hospitalist program gives referring doctors assurance that their patients receive quality hospital care and a smooth transition back to their office practices. NOMC is proud to have board-certified internists Lee Thigpen, M.D., and Steven Donchey, M.D., as members of our hospitalist team. ●

NOMC hospitalists are board-certified in internal medicine, and they help manage care, improve outcomes and enhance efficiency.



24/7 care for you

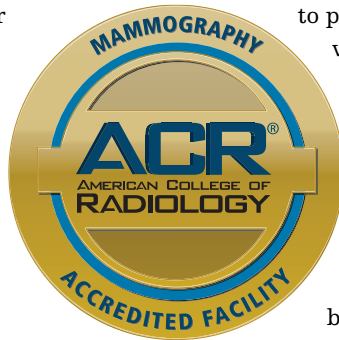
To learn more about the services provided at NOMC, visit us at www.NorthOkaloosa.com and choose "Services."



Don't delay your mammogram

➤ One in eight women will have breast cancer in her lifetime, according to the American Cancer Society (ACS). Timely treatment of breast cancer in its early stages can result in better outcomes. North Okaloosa Medical Center (NOMC) is committed to improving women's health, and the diagnostic imaging services department's mammography services play a significant role in this commitment.

NOMC's diagnostic imaging services department is led by a board-certified radiologist and staffed with registered technologists. NOMC's mammography services facility is accredited by the American College of Radiology and offers digital mammography screening and diagnosis, breast ultrasound and stereotactic mobile breast biopsy. Digital mammograms usually take less time than traditional



mammograms and require fewer callbacks for repeat exams. Digital images tend to provide doctors with better visibility and are helpful for women with implants or known abnormalities. While the ACS recommends that women get yearly mammograms starting at age 40, younger women should have their breasts examined at least every three years as part of a regular health exam with their doctors. ●



Get screened today

Call (850) 682-2475 for more information or to schedule your digital mammogram.

Prepare for your mammogram

Follow these simple steps to improve your mammography experience:

Keep your doctor informed

Talk with your doctor about any new issues or potential problems: a lump, pain, tenderness or other symptoms. If you've had a previous mammogram by another doctor, obtain a copy—that way, your new doctor and the radiologist have a baseline from which to compare your current images.

Schedule strategically

Schedule your mammogram for the week immediately following your period, when your breasts are the least tender.

Dress for success

Wear a two-piece outfit to easily undress from the waist up for your screening. Don't wear deodorant, antiperspirant, powder or lotion under your arms or on your breasts.

Remember—everyone's breasts are different

Everyone's breast composition is different, and some have more fatty or connective tissue than others. Dense breast tissue or breast implants may make it more difficult for mammogram rays to penetrate, so your doctor may order multiple views to make sure no changes in breast tissue are missed.

Be proactive

Ask when your results will be available and how the information will be communicated. Don't assume that your results are normal if you don't hear back from your doctor.

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 eating 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). ●



Be kind to your kidneys

Help prevent kidney disease

➤ You may not think about them often, but tucked away underneath your rib cage, on each side of your spine, your kidneys labor away, filtering about 200 quarts of blood daily to rid it of waste and excess water to make urine. Your kidneys also release hormones that, among other functions, help regulate blood pressure and calcium, and trigger red blood cell production.

Damage to the kidneys can impair their filtering ability and may lead to what's called kidney disease or chronic kidney disease, and ultimately kidney failure. The most common culprits in kidney damage are high blood pressure and diabetes. People with kidney disease are also more likely to develop heart disease.

Unfortunately, early kidney disease doesn't have any symptoms. When it's advanced, a person may have to urinate more or less often, feel tired, lose his or her appetite or vomit, experience swollen hands or feet, feel itchy or numb, have difficulty concentrating or feel sleepy, have darkened skin or have muscle cramps.

The lack of early warning signs is exactly why prevention is so important.

Keeping kidney disease at bay

To help prevent kidney disease, keep these suggestions in mind:

- If you have diabetes, monitor your blood glucose level closely and work to keep it within your doctor's recommended range.
- If you have high blood pressure, be sure to have regular checkups and ask your doctor about home monitoring. You may need to take blood pressure medication to



The most common culprits in **kidney damage** are **high blood pressure and diabetes**. People with kidney disease are also more **likely to develop heart disease**.

keep it below 130/80 mm Hg.

- If signs of kidney damage are already present, ask your doctor about taking medication to prevent further damage. Regular testing for the presence of protein in your urine and creatinine in your blood can tell your doctor how well your kidneys are functioning.
- Follow a healthy eating plan—a low-fat diet full of fruits and vegetables and whole grains. If you already have kidney disease, you may need to limit your protein intake.
- Quit smoking.
- Use care when taking painkillers such as ibuprofen, naproxen and high-dose aspirin. Long-term use can cause kidney damage.
- Seek medical attention right away if you have symptoms of a bladder infection (for example, cloudy urine, burning when urinating, constant urge to go to the bathroom, fever). Left untreated, infections can result in kidney damage. ●



Talk with your doctor

Make an appointment with your doctor if you are experiencing any symptoms of kidney disease.

NOMC awarded an “A” for patient safety



Compare our scores

To see North Okaloosa Medical Center's scores as they compare nationally and locally, visit www.HospitalSafetyScore.org, which also provides information on how the public can protect themselves and loved ones during a hospital stay.

> The Leapfrog Group, an independent national nonprofit organization, honored North Okaloosa Medical Center (NOMC) with an “A” Hospital Safety ScoreSM. The Hospital Safety Score was calculated under the guidance of The Leapfrog Group's nine-member Blue Ribbon expert panel using publicly available data on patient injuries, medical and medication errors and infections.

The Hospital Safety Score uses 26 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to produce a single score representing a hospital's overall capacity to keep patients safe from infections, injuries, and medical and medication errors. Hospitals were assigned an A, B, C, D or F for their safety.

“Our focus is and continues to be on providing our patients with a safe envi-

ronment while providing satisfying experiences,” says David Fuller, chief executive officer of NOMC. “We're extremely proud to be one of the few hospitals in the area who received an 'A' score in safety. As the industry pace continues to quicken, our top-of-mind awareness will always be on safety.”

“It's The Leapfrog Group's goal to give patients the information they need and deserve before even entering a hospital,” says Leah Binder, president and chief executive officer of The Leapfrog Group. “We congratulate the hospitals that earned an 'A' and we look forward to the day when all hospitals in the United States will earn the highest scores for putting patient safety first.” ●

About The Leapfrog Group

The Leapfrog Group (www.LeapFrogGroup.org) is a national organization using the collective leverage of large purchasers of health care to initiate breakthrough improvements in the safety, quality and affordability of health care for Americans. The Leapfrog Group was founded in November 2000 with support from the Business Roundtable and national funders, and is now independently operated with support from its purchaser and other members.



Get moving, mama!

➤ You're tired and easily winded these days, and probably the last thing on your mind is exercising. Sure, there are more hurdles to conquer now as your body adapts to pregnancy, but there are many benefits of being a mother-to-be who works out.

For starters, it can keep your weight gain in check. It can also help alleviate those aches and pains related to pregnancy and temper constipation and swelling. Exercising also reduces your risk of gestational diabetes, improves your mood and sleep, may shorten labor, increases your energy level and helps you recover more quickly from pregnancy.

So what are you waiting for? It's time to get started!

Exercise safely

When choosing to exercise while pregnant, it's important to get the OK from your doctor. Some conditions, such as preterm labor, may make it more difficult for you to exercise safely. Pregnant women should also avoid working out in hot conditions, certain yoga poses (such as those that have you lie flat on the back later in pregnancy), contact sports, high-impact sports and activities that increase your risk of a fall (such as skiing or horseback riding).

Your best bets

So what can a pregnant woman do? Plenty! Why not try these?

- **Swimming** provides a great cardiovascular workout without beating up your joints. It also has the bonus of keeping you cool while you exercise.
- **Walking** is a simple—and free—way to keep moving.
- **Cycling** can give you a great workout while taking the stress off of your joints, but it can present a fall risk. Consider exercising on a stationary bike instead.
- **Stair-climbing machines** can really help you raise your heart rate; just make sure to hold onto side rails!



Warning signs

Make sure you drink plenty of water when you exercise and discontinue your activity if you feel unwell. Call your doctor if you experience:

- breathing problems
- chest pain
- contractions
- dizziness
- headache
- loss of amniotic fluid
- loss of fetal movement
- pain or swelling in the legs
- vaginal bleeding
- weak muscles

- **Aerobics** provides a great workout for the heart. If you've never taken an aerobics class or you're feeling a little more unsteady on your feet these days, take a class specifically geared for pregnant women.
- **Running or jogging** can keep you in good form, especially if you've previously incorporated this exercise into your routine. If you're just starting to run or jog, make sure to talk with your doctor.
Remember, unlike when you may exercise to lose weight, your workout goal when you're pregnant is not to shed pounds, but rather to stay active and maintain optimal weight gain during this special time in your life. ●

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The information contained in this publication is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice. If you have medical concerns, please consult your health care provider.

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NOMC honors 'outstanding' chief nursing officer

It's a privilege to announce that Nina Perez, chief nursing officer (CNO) of North Okaloosa Medical Center (NOMC), has been honored with an Outstanding Achievement Award by Community Health Systems (CHS), one of the nation's leading operators of general acute-care hospitals. The Outstanding Achievement Award recognizes hospital leaders who have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to quality health care and operational excellence.

An accomplished career

Perez has more than 30 years of progressive clinical and management experience. She started as CNO with NOMC in May 2004 and has been a part of the CHS's CNO Advisory Council since 2006. The CNO Advisory Council includes nurse leaders from across the country who work together to share best practices and to address topics that affect patient care, nurse recruitment and retention, and regulatory compliance.

Under Perez's leadership, many notable accomplishments were achieved in 2011 at NOMC. She was instrumental in the opening of the new intensive care unit that increased the unit's bed size capacity from

eight beds to 16. Along with the opening of a new Step Down Unit, which replaced the previous Progressive Care Unit, she helped increase the unit size from nine beds to 28 beds. She then led the implementation of an interventional cardiology program, which provides lifesaving cardiac intervention within the 90-minute door-to-balloon standard of care.

Quality nursing staff

Perez and her nurse leaders achieved an HCAHPS (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) Nurse Leader Rounding score of 91 percent in the second quarter of 2012—continuing to demonstrate, as stated by our customers, the outstanding patient-focused care that they deliver by checking on their patients each hour. Lastly, under her leadership, the first steps in the implementation of facility-wide electronic medical records were successfully rolled out.

"I'm delighted to receive this award and share the honor with the nursing staff at NOMC," says Perez. "We're committed to the health and well-being of our patients. I'm proud to be a part of this commitment, which is demonstrated through the actions and attitudes of our nursing team." ●



NINA PEREZ
Chief Nursing Officer



Learn about our services

North Okaloosa Medical Center treats patients at all stages of life with a range of services, including emergency, cardiology, imaging and women's services. For more information, please visit www.NorthOkaloosa.com.