

# DeaconessCares

A PUBLICATION OF DEACONESS HOSPITAL



Celebrate  
Healthy  
Woman's 5<sup>th</sup>  
anniversary!

See page 4

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PAGE 3

**7 steps to  
better sleep**

PAGE 6

**Life after  
stroke**

PAGE 7

**Vitamins for kids:  
Needed or not?**

PAGE 8

**Breathe better  
with COPD**

# 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**.



## A message FROM OUR CEO

### DEAR FRIENDS,

**CATHY HIBBS**  
Chief Executive  
Officer

Welcome to the winter issue of *Deaconess Cares*. We provide this quarterly magazine to keep you informed

of the many positive changes here at Deaconess Hospital, including new medical care and technology, doctors joining our staff and events regarding issues and concerns that may affect you and your family's health.

At Deaconess Hospital, it's our ongoing commitment to provide quality healthcare to the residents we serve. We're excited to announce Deaconess Outpatient Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation, which opened in fall 2012. The comprehensive range of services offered through this program supports patients recovering from heart and lung issues and helps them get back to enjoying life as soon as possible. You can read more about one of the most common respiratory diseases, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and treatment options on page 8.

I invite you to join us for our upcoming Healthy Woman Anniversary on April 11. This program is part of our goal to keep women in our community both connected and informed. This event is a special evening of celebration and I hope to see you there. Details about the event are on the right side of this page.

Thank you for your continued support of Deaconess Hospital, and we wish you well in this new year.

Best Wishes,

## Cathy Hibbs

Chief Executive Officer  
Deaconess Hospital



# Healthy Woman anniversary celebration!

➤ 2013 marks the fifth anniversary of Deaconess Hospital's Healthy Woman program. Our celebration will include a health expo with a variety of exhibitors offering health screenings and information. The main event will feature a guest speaker, dinner, musical entertainment and door prizes.

**When:** Thursday, April 11, 5 to 8 p.m.

**Where:** Marriot Hotel, 3233 N.W. Expressway, Oklahoma City

**Cost:** \$20 per guest (includes dinner)



### Join us on April 11!

Registration is now open. To purchase tickets, call (405) 604-4444 or visit [www.DeaconessOKC.com/HealthyWoman](http://www.DeaconessOKC.com/HealthyWoman).

HEALTHY WOMAN  
A DEACONESS HOSPITAL RESOURCE

# Diagnosing sleep disorders

Sweet dreams can lead to good health

BY ELWOOD F. WILLIAMS JR., M.D., INTERNAL MEDICINE



Lack of sleep is a widespread problem in America, affecting not only our mental alertness, mood and ability to focus during the day but also our long-term health. Chronic, long-term sleep disorders affect more than 40 million Americans, according to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

Stress-related insomnia, sleep disorders, lifestyle habits and the failure to establish and maintain a regular routine all inhibit sleep. Getting enough sleep is an essential part of keeping the body healthy and avoiding chronic disease. Getting a good night's sleep is especially difficult if you suffer from a sleep disorder.

The most common sleep disorders include:

- **Insomnia:** difficulty falling and remaining asleep
- **Narcolepsy:** excessive daytime sleepiness that sometimes results in "sleep attacks," sudden and unpredictable episodes of sleep during the day
- **Restless legs syndrome:** aches and pains in the legs that make it difficult to fall asleep and remain asleep
- **Sleep apnea:** the interruption of breathing during sleep

## Who's at risk?

Sleep problems can affect anyone at any age. However, certain conditions or risk factors may make getting a good night's sleep more difficult:

- a family history of sleep apnea
- a large neck circumference (17 inches or more for men; 16 inches or more for women)
- gastroesophageal reflux disease

- large tonsils or tongue, or a small jaw bone
- middle age (age 40 and older)
- nasal obstruction due to allergies, sinus problems or a deviated septum

## Diagnosing sleep disturbances

If you're having trouble falling or staying asleep, or you're experiencing daytime drowsiness, a sleep study can diagnose potential disorders and help with treatment. A sleep study is performed in a controlled environment while you sleep and is supervised by medical professionals trained in sleep disorders. Your body is observed and monitored to see what occurs during sleep, from snoring to halted breathing.

## Treatment

If you have a sleep disorder, it's important to seek diagnosis and treatment. Treatment may be as simple as lifestyle changes, such as losing weight, quitting smoking or taking certain medications.

Other treatment options may include surgery or the use of medical devices to help you breathe easier and sleep better. A continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) device is commonly prescribed for people with moderate to severe sleep apnea. Other helpful devices are a humidifier in the bedroom or special pillows to promote proper sleeping positions. ●



## Having trouble sleeping?

To schedule an appointment, call **(405) 604-4237**. If you or your partner experiences sleep disorder symptoms, talk with your doctor about participating in a sleep study. To learn more, visit [www.DeaconessOKC.com/Sleep](http://www.DeaconessOKC.com/Sleep).

*Dr. Williams is a member of the medical staff at Deaconess Hospital.*

## 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)



## 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. ●

# 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). ●



Deaconess Cares is published as a community service of Deaconess Hospital.

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

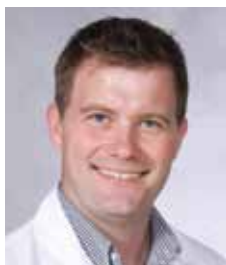
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# Breathe easy

## Living with COPD

BY KEVIN S. O'NEAL, D.O., PULMONOLOGIST

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is one of the most commonly overlooked health threats because the symptoms are often dismissed or attributed to other health conditions until the disease is at an advanced stage. Smoking causes 80 to 90 percent of COPD cases. COPD can also be caused by air pollution (including secondhand smoke), asthma and respiratory infections.

The two main forms of COPD are emphysema, the destruction of the airways in the lungs, which leads to decreased oxygen absorption; and chronic bronchitis, the inflammation of the lungs' airways and buildup of mucus that causes breathing obstruction. The decreased ability of the lungs to absorb and use oxygen causes arteries in the lungs to narrow. This means that the heart has to work even harder to push blood through the smaller vessels, and can lead to pulmonary hypertension and possibly heart failure.

Additional types of COPD include asthma and emphysema related to occupational exposures or genetic predisposition, such as alpha-1 deficiency.

Common symptoms of COPD include:

- a cough with mucus
- fatigue

- frequent respiratory infections
- shortness of breath that worsens with mild activity
- wheezing

### Diagnosis

COPD can be diagnosed with a lung test, known as a pulmonary function test or spirometry. This test measures the amount of airway obstruction in the lungs by calculating the force and volume of air that a patient exhales over time.

A blood test, a chest X-ray, electrocardiogram or computed tomography (CT) scan can suggest the diagnosis, but pulmonary function tests are needed to be certain.

### Treatment

COPD can be treated in several ways, from medication to supplemental oxygen to respiratory therapy. Deaconess Outpatient Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation is a hospital-based program that combines education and exercise classes, and it can help COPD patients improve lung function and reduce symptoms. Services are offered based on your doctor's orders. Talk to your doctor today if you think this service may be valuable to you. ●



### Can't catch your breath?

To make an appointment with Dr. O'Neal at Deaconess Outpatient Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation, call **(405) 604-4194**.

*Dr. O'Neal is a member of the medical staff at Deaconess Hospital.*