

Valley Hospital

ROCKWOOD HEALTH SYSTEM

HealthConnection

THE MAGAZINE OF VALLEY HOSPITAL



Valley
Hospital
named Top
Performer

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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**.



From us TO YOU

DEAR NEIGHBORS,

DENNIS BARTS
Chief Executive
Officer

In this issue of *Health Connection*, you'll read about an award recently given to

..... Valley Hospital. Our hospital was named a Top Performer on Key Quality Measures for surgical care and pneumonia by The Joint Commission.

This recognition is further evidence that Valley Hospital takes the delivery of high quality patient care seriously. Our doctors, nurses and other clinicians are committed to delivering care proven to get or keep you well.

One practice that we embrace to promote quality care is hourly rounding. We make a commitment that nursing staff will check on you at least once every hour. These visits go beyond just stepping in the room to say hello, however. Hourly rounding visits focus on a specific set of checks for your safety and well-being, including assessing your pain level, checking your position in the bed, making sure all of your belongings are reachable and accommodating your need to use to the restroom.

Hourly rounding helps us proactively anticipate a patient's needs so that the need to use the call button is minimized. Hourly rounding is also designed to improve clinical outcomes by reducing the risk of patients falling when getting out of bed to use the restroom or get personal belongings without assistance, and reducing bed sores by checking a patient's position often.

It is dedication to practices such as hourly rounding that have helped Valley Hospital earn many quality distinctions in the past few years. I hope that honors such as these will further your trust in Valley Hospital as the best place to get care in the Spokane area.

Sincerely,

Dennis Barts

Chief Executive Officer
Valley Hospital

PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

The experienced and dedicated medical staff of Valley Hospital can keep you and your loved ones well.



Byron Humble, D.O.
Orthopedic Surgeon

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1415 N. Houk Road, Suite D
Spokane Valley, WA 99216
(509) 755-5560

Byron Humble, D.O., is an orthopedic surgeon who performs surgeries on joints, fractures and sports-related injuries at Valley Hospital. He attended medical school at the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine, Kirksville, Mo. After that, he completed an internship in surgery and a residency in orthopedic surgery, both at the Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Portsmouth, Va.

Dr. Humble has an undergraduate degree from Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, and is board certified as a diplomate and fellow of the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery. He is also a member of the Society of Military Orthopedic Surgeons.

Dr. Humble has been an independent member of the medical staff at Valley Hospital since 2011. His office phone number is **(509) 755-5560**.

For a list of doctors by specialty, visit us at www.SpokaneValleyHospital.com/physicians.



Valley Hospital again recognized as Top Performer on Key Quality Measures

Valley Hospital was recently named one of the nation's Top Performers on Key Quality Measures by The Joint Commission, the leading accreditor of healthcare organizations in America. The hospital was recognized for exemplary performance in using evidence-based clinical processes that are shown to improve care for certain conditions, including children's asthma, heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, stroke and surgical care. Valley Hospital was recognized for its achievement in surgical care and pneumonia.

Valley Hospital is 1 of only 620 hospitals in the United States, and 1 of only 6 hospitals in Washington state, recognized for attaining and sustaining excellence. The list of Top Performers represents 18 percent of more than 3,400 eligible accredited hospitals reporting data to The Joint Commission. This is the second year in a row that Valley Hospital is being recognized as a Top Performer. Only 244 hospitals in the United States achieved the distinction two years in a row.

Valley Hospital met two performance

thresholds to earn this honor. First, the hospital achieved performance of 95 percent or above on the composite score that includes all the accountability measures reported to The Joint Commission. Second, the hospital met or exceeded a 95 percent performance target for each and every accountability measure. A 95 percent score means a hospital provided an evidence-based practice 95 times out of 100 opportunities to provide it.

Each accountability measure represents an evidence-based practice—for example, giving aspirin at arrival for heart attack patients, giving antibiotics one hour before surgery and providing a home management plan for children with asthma.

"We understand that what matters most to patients at Valley Hospital is safe, effective care. That's why Valley Hospital has made a commitment to accreditation and to positive patient outcomes through evidence-based processes. Valley Hospital is proud to be named to the list of The Joint Commission's Top Performers on Key Quality Measures," says Dennis Barts, chief executive officer of Valley Hospital. ●



Want to learn more?

Interested in knowing how your local hospitals stack up on quality and patient satisfaction measurements? Visit the Joint Commission's website, www.QualityCheck.org, or the Department of Health and Human Services website, www.HospitalCompare.HHS.gov, to see profiles and ratings of area hospitals.

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). ●



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70VHM

A place for kids

The family care unit at Valley Hospital

➤ We understand that when you have a sick or injured child, it's an emotionally trying time. The goal of Valley Hospital's family care unit is to help your child, and your entire family, feel comfortable and supported during your hospital stay.

Why choose Valley Hospital for your child's care?

- **We're family oriented.** Our team of caring, compassionate and experienced nurses is focused on providing personalized care for your family.

- **We provide comfort and convenience.** We know parents don't want to leave their child's side when he or she is in the hospital. We welcome adults to remain in the hospital with their child.

- **We have a full team of dedicated pediatric hospitalists** available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Trust the pediatric team at Valley Hospital

When your child needs emergency care, trust the pediatric team at Valley Hospital. Visit www.SpokaneValleyHospital.com to learn more.

Full time pediatric hospitalist coverage

Pediatric hospitalists are doctors who specialize in only caring for hospitalized children. Hospitalists maintain ongoing communication with your child's regular doctor throughout treatment, and transfer care back when your child is discharged from the hospital.

Our pediatric hospitalist team specializes in the kinds of medical conditions that need to be treated in the hospital. Because hospitalists are highly accessible to the pediatric nursing staff, they can often help speed your child's recovery and shorten his or her hospital stay since they can follow up on tests and adjust treatment plans throughout the day. ●

Drs. Cook, Messick, LoCascio and Sanborn are members of the medical staff at Valley Hospital.

MEET OUR PEDIATRIC HOSPITALIST TEAM



Jill Cook, M.D.

Dr. Cook graduated magna cum laude, with a distinction in community service, from the Saint

Louis University School of Medicine. She completed her pediatrics residency at Seattle Children's Hospital.



Petra Messick, M.D.

Originally from the Netherlands, Dr. Messick graduated from medical

school at the University of Amsterdam. She completed her pediatric residency at the University of Utah.



Elizabeth LoCascio, M.D.

Dr. LoCascio received her medical degree from the Brody School of Medicine in Greenville, N.C., where she also completed a residency in internal medicine and pediatrics.



Melanie Sanborn, M.D.

Dr. Sanborn completed her internship and residency in pediatrics at the University of Florida, Jacksonville.