

The Healthy Advantage



HEARTLAND REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER

A PUBLICATION OF HEARTLAND REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER



Fighting off
feeling faint
See page 4

www.HeartlandRegional.com • Winter 2013

PAGE 3

**7 steps to
better sleep**

PAGE 5

**Common GI
problems**

PAGE 6

**Life after
stroke**

PAGE 7

**Guilt-free
goodies**

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**.



That **dizzy** feeling

Feeling off-balance may indicate a health condition

BY SHIREESHA SANGINENI, M.D.
FAMILY MEDICINE



Stop feeling faint

If you experience vertigo or feelings of faintness, call Dr. Sangineni at Heartland Family Medicine at **(618) 998-7155**. Her office is located at 3331 W. DeYoung, Suite 308, Marion, IL 62959, inside Heartland Regional's Medical Office Building. Dr. Sangineni is a member of the medical staff at Heartland Regional.

Other dizzy sensations

More difficult-to-describe “dizzy” sensations may be caused by:

- allergies
- anemia, or low iron level
- a cold or the flu
- deep or rapid breathing (hyperventilation)
- an ear infection or inner ear disorder
- fatigue
- low blood sugar
- medications, especially blood pressure-lowering medications
- stress or anxiety
- the use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs
- vomiting, diarrhea, fever and other illnesses that cause dehydration



People use the word “dizzy” to describe a variety of feelings or sensations. The way you describe your dizziness to your doctor will provide valuable clues as to the underlying cause and will help with treatment.

Vertigo

Vertigo feels as though your surroundings are moving when there is no actual movement. You may feel as though you’re tilting, spinning or falling. With severe vertigo, you may feel very nauseous.

Common causes of vertigo include:

- **acoustic neuroma**—a noncancerous growth on the vestibular nerve, which connects the inner ear to your brain; symptoms can include progressive hearing loss and ringing or swishing on one side accompanied by dizziness or imbalance
- **benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV)**—intense, brief episodes of vertigo immediately following a change in the position of your head, such as when you turn over in bed or sit up in the morning
- **inflammation in the inner ear**—can cause a sudden onset of intense, constant vertigo that may persist for several days along with nausea, vomiting and trouble with balance
- **Meniere’s disease**—involves a buildup of fluid in the inner ear and is characterized by sudden episodes of vertigo lasting as long as several hours, accompanied by fluctuating hearing loss, ringing in the ear and a feeling of fullness in the affected ear.

Rarely, vertigo can be a symptom of a more serious neurological problem. The good news is that vertigo generally doesn’t last more than a couple of weeks.

Feeling of faintness

Dizziness can also be described as a feeling that you may faint or you feel

lightheaded but don’t lose consciousness. Causes may include:

- **drop in blood pressure**—which can occur after sitting up or standing too quickly, or could be a medication side effect
- **inadequate output of blood from the heart**—caused by various diseases of the heart muscle, an abnormal heart rhythm or a decrease in blood volume which may cause inadequate blood flow from the heart

When to see your doctor

If you have unexplained fainting, a doctor should evaluate you immediately. If your dizziness is accompanied by chest pain, a change in heart rate or a severe headache, call 911 or have someone take you immediately to the nearest emergency room. ●





Don't ignore digestive troubles

BY QING YU, M.D.
GASTROENTEROLOGY

Each year, more than 40 percent of older adults have one or more symptoms of digestive disorders, including indigestion, lethargy, constipation or diarrhea, abdominal pain or gas, according to research from Johns Hopkins Medicine. Many factors, such as diet, disease and stress, can disrupt digestive system functioning. Some common problems include:

> **Heartburn**, also known as indigestion or acid reflux, is the backup of stomach acid into the esophagus characterized by a burning pain in the chest. It typically occurs after overeating and is often worse when lying down.

> **Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)**, a more serious form of reflux, is sometimes heralded by a dry cough or trouble swallowing. Left untreated, GERD can develop into a more serious condition called Barrett's esophagus, which increases the risk of esophageal cancer.

> **Lactose intolerance** is a deficiency of an enzyme in the small intestine that helps you digest lactose in milk products.

> **Irritable bowel syndrome** is one of the most common digestive disorders. Symptoms include cramping, bloating, constipation and diarrhea. Diet or medications can be helpful to control the symptoms.

> **Peptic ulcers** usually occur in the stomach or small intestine lining. Also called a gastric ulcer when it occurs in the stomach, it's caused by bacterial infection or

regular use of medications such as aspirin and ibuprofen.

> **Celiac disease**, a hereditary autoimmune disorder also known as gluten intolerance, is the inability to digest gluten, a protein found in wheat, rye or barley. People with celiac disease must eat a gluten-free diet.

> **Ulcerative colitis**, an inflammatory bowel disease, causes sores in the lining of the colon and rectum, which then turn into ulcers. The colon empties frequently, often resulting in blood in the diarrhea.

> **Crohn's disease**, a chronic inflammatory bowel disease, causes inflammation or blockage of the small intestine, mouth, esophagus, stomach, colon or rectum.

When the digestive system doesn't function properly, patients may need to see a gastroenterologist-hepatologist for further evaluation. ●

“ Many factors, such as diet, disease and stress, can disrupt digestive system functioning. ”



Stay healthy!

Qing Yu, M.D., specializes in digestive and liver diseases. He's accepting new patients at his office, located at Heartland Gastroenterology, 3331 W. DeYoung, Suite 302, Marion, IL 62959. Call (618) 998-7007 for an appointment. Dr. Yu is a member of the medical staff at Heartland Regional.

To learn more about this topic, visit www.HeartlandRegional.com, choose "Health Resources" and then search "Digestive Disorders."

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). ●



The Healthy Advantage is published as a community service of Heartland Regional Medical Center. There is no fee to subscribe.

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.

Copyright © 2013 Heartland Regional Medical Center

WINTER 2013



www.HeartlandRegional.com

70HRM



Parag Madhani, MD; Victor Mwansa, MD, DIM (Lond.), MRCP (UK); M.T. Joseph, MD, FACC, FACP, FCCP; Peyman Soltani, MD, FACC; Frank Bleyer, MD, FACC.

YOUR HEART. OUR LIFE'S WORK.

Your heart beats 100,000 times every day, 36,500,000 times every year, and because your heart works so hard, we do too. At River to River Heart Group, thousands of patients have entrusted their hearts to these skilled physicians — and for good reason. Together, these cardiologists have devoted more than 75 years to caring for hearts and improving the quality of life for their patients. They treat all types of heart problems from the most common to the more complex, showing their commitment to advancing cardiac care in our community.



NOW SEEING PATIENTS AT OUR ANNA CLINIC

Located at Union County Hospital in the Specialist Clinic • 517 North Main Street, Anna, IL 62906

FOR AN APPOINTMENT OR TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR CARDIAC CARE SERVICES, CALL 618-998-7600 OR 618-833-4511.