

HealthConnection

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT PARKWAY REGIONAL HOSPITAL

The effects of stress

BY ANDREW FREEMAN, D.O., BOARD-CERTIFIED FAMILY PRACTITIONER

➤ Stress is an unfortunate fact of life for most people: that feeling of worry, dread or nervous anticipation that accompanies the challenges we deal with on the job or in the home, during our daily commute or errands or in our dealings with family, friends or colleagues.

Studies haven't proven that stress directly causes health problems, but it contributes to behavioral and lifestyle habits that negatively affect our health. For example, stress doesn't cause high blood pressure, according to the American Heart Association, but the coping mechanisms that Americans use to deal with stress—most of them unhealthy—do. These include eating foods high in fat and sodium, which leads to being overweight, drinking excess alcohol, smoking and being too tired to be physically active.

Stress may also make you sick. Stress-related hormones affect the immune system, decreasing the body's ability to fight off colds and other respiratory infections. Research has shown that people under continual stress get colds and flu more often and heal more slowly after being injured. The continual tension in the muscles when you are stressed can lead to neck,

shoulder and low back pain—and stress can further inflame joint conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis.

Stress can worsen pre-existing conditions, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, gastroesophageal reflux disease or irritable bowel syndrome. People with asthma, who are under extreme stress, can experience more severe and frequent asthma attacks because chronic stress prompts the body to release the hormones that dilate blood vessels, intensifying the lungs' inflammatory response and constricting the airways.

Stress can also cause us to lose sleep, costing us valuable recharging time. While we sleep, the body resets various internal functions lowering blood pressure; rejuvenating muscles; restoring energy; and releasing hormones that regulate appetite, internal organ function, our immune system and tissue growth and repair. Insufficient sleep also inhibits our ability to effectively deal with the stress we encounter during the day. ●



Manage your stress

Learn how to effectively manage stress for the good of your long-term health. Visit

www.ParkwayRegionalHospital.com and choose "Health Resources" to take an interactive stress trigger assessment or simply to learn more about how stress affects the body.

Dr. Freeman is a member of the medical staff at Parkway Regional Hospital.

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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**.



A message FROM OUR CEO

DEAR NEIGHBORS,

ROB CALHOUN
Chief Executive
Officer

It's no secret that Parkway Regional Hospital's (PRH) top priority is quality care. On behalf of our board of trustees,

medical staff and employees, I'm pleased to share that in September 2012, PRH was named one of the nation's Top Performers on Key Quality Measures by The Joint Commission for the second year in a row.

This recognition is based on data reported to The Joint Commission about evidence-based clinical processes that are shown to improve care for certain conditions, including heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, surgical care, children's asthma, stroke and venous thromboembolism, as well as inpatient psychiatric services.

Out of more than 3,400 eligible accredited hospitals reporting accountability measure data to The Joint Commission, we are 1 of just 620 hospitals to earn this distinction for 2011. PRH was recognized for achieving excellence in pneumonia core measures for 2011. We are 1 of only 244 hospitals that achieved the distinction two years in a row. Last year, PRH was recognized by The Joint Commission for its achievement on pneumonia and surgical care core measures.

This honor is a direct reflection on the medical staff and employees at PRH. It's our privilege to serve local residents with quality care, close to home. We also greatly appreciate your support and your trust in PRH to care for the health needs of your family.

Sincerely,

Rob Calhoun

*Chief Executive Officer
Parkway Regional Hospital*

PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

The experienced and dedicated members of the medical staff at Parkway Regional Hospital (PRH) can help you and your family stay healthy. We'd like to introduce two of them to you.



Andrew Freeman, D.O.
Family Practice

106 W. Clay St. • Clinton
(270) 653-4041

Andrew Freeman, D.O., a board-certified family practice doctor, earned his medical degree at West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine. He served his family practice residency at Southside Hospital in Bayshore, N.Y.

He brings 26 years of experience and will see patients at the Clinton Family Care Clinic. He is board certified by the American Osteopathic Association's Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists. Dr. Freeman is a member of the medical staff at Parkway Regional Hospital. To schedule an appointment with Dr. Freeman at Clinton Family Care Clinic, please call (270) 653-4041. Or, for more information about Clinton Family Care Clinic, visit www.ClintonFamilyCareClinic.com.



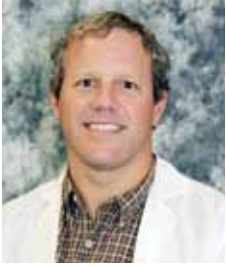
Daisy Benigno, M.D.
Family Practice

2003 S. 7th St. • Hickman
(270) 236-3202

Daisy Benigno, M.D., a board-certified family medicine doctor, earned her medical degree at Cebu Institute of Medicine in the Philippines. She served both a family medicine residency and a geriatric medicine fellowship at Louisiana State University Health Science Center in Lafayette, La. Dr. Benigno is a member of the medical staff at Parkway Regional Hospital.

Dr. Benigno brings more than 25 years of medical experience. She treats patients of all ages and has a special love for geriatric medicine. For an appointment with Dr. Benigno, please call Hickman Family Clinic at (270) 236-3202. Or, for more information about Hickman Family Clinic, visit www.HickmanFamilyClinic.com.

For a list of doctors by specialty, visit us at www.ParkwayRegionalHospital.com.



Weighty concerns: Obesity's impact on the joints

BY MARTY FULBRIGHT, M.D.
BOARD-CERTIFIED ORTHOPEDIC SURGEON

➤ The country's obesity epidemic has given rise to major health problems, including osteoarthritis, or degenerative joint disease. Osteoarthritis affects 27 million people in the United States and is a leading cause of disability among adults, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Once associated primarily with the elderly, joint problems are being diagnosed more and more among young adults in their 20s and early 30s. Between 1971 and 2002, the proportion of arthritis cases that were related to obesity increased sixfold from 3 percent to 18 percent of arthritis patients, according to researchers. Today, 31 percent of obese adults suffer from osteoarthritis, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. An obese individual has a greater chance of developing osteoarthritis than a person who maintains a healthy body weight.

Osteoarthritis affects primarily the weight-bearing joints: the hips, knees, spine and feet. Excess weight can strain and damage the joints, causing pain and stiffness. Health experts estimate that for every 10 pounds of excess body weight, the force of impact on the hips and knees increases 30 to 60 pounds with each step. In the long run, being overweight or obese can lead to breakdown of the cartilage in the joints that provides cushioning and support and promotes smooth movement.

Symptoms

The most common symptom of osteoarthritis is pain in the affected joint with repetitive use (during exercise, going up stairs or simply bending or moving the joint). Other symptoms include swelling, warmth and creaking of the affected joint(s). Pain and stiffness can also occur after sitting still for a long time. In severe cases, the com-

plete loss of the cartilage and resulting friction between bones causes pain even with limited movement or during periods of rest.

Relief

Early diagnosis and treatment can slow its progression, relieve pain and restore function. A healthy diet, regular exercise and over-the-counter medication, such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), can help with joint pain and mobility. Research has found that weight loss of just 11 pounds can reduce the risk of knee osteoarthritis by 50 percent.

People of normal weight with healthy joints should engage in bone- and muscle-strengthening exercises such as walking, running or jogging; aerobic exercise; weight machines or weightlifting.

For overweight individuals with pain or mobility problems, low-impact activities such as swimming, yoga or walking are good choices. For severe joint pain or problems, surgery may improve joint function and relieve pain. ●

Dr. Fulbright is a member of the medical staff at Parkway Regional Hospital and is board certified by the American Board of Medical Specialties.



www.ParkwayOrthoandSpine.com

Parkway Orthopedics and Spine has launched its new website, www.ParkwayOrthoandSpine.com, to help make it easy for patients to learn more about orthopedic services that are available locally. Patients can learn about Dr. Fulbright's background and education, get directions to the office and print out new patient forms from home.

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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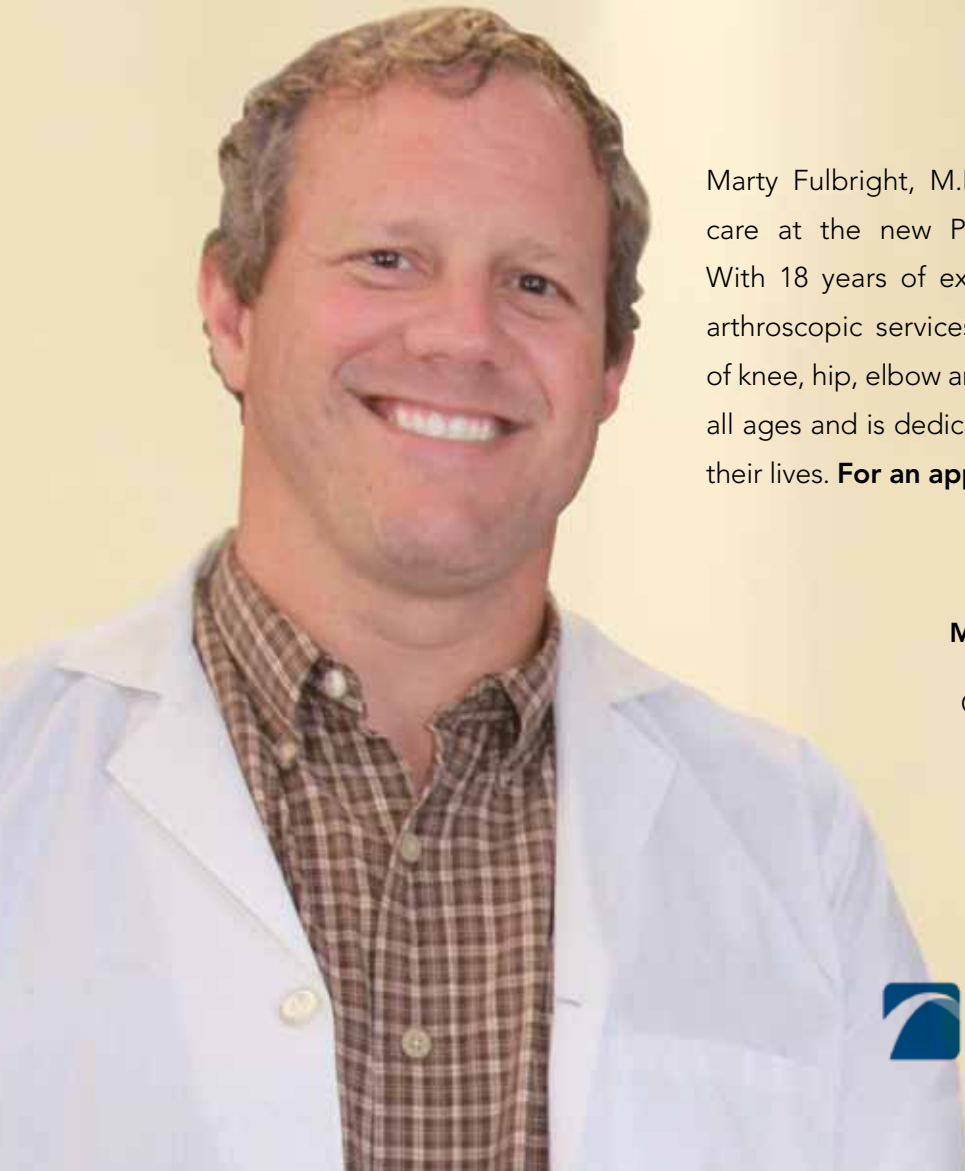
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70PRH

He will care for you right down to your bones.



Marty Fulbright, M.D., offers a full range of orthopedic care at the new Parkway Orthopedics & Spine clinic. With 18 years of experience, Dr. Fulbright specializes in arthroscopic services, fracture care and the replacement of knee, hip, elbow and shoulder joints. He treats patients of all ages and is dedicated to making a positive difference in their lives. **For an appointment, call 270-472-8120.**

Marty Fulbright, M.D.
Board-Certified
Orthopedic Surgeon