

VIM & VIGOR

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 Community Healthcare System[®]

COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
ST. CATHERINE HOSPITAL
ST. MARY MEDICAL CENTER
www.comhs.org

Senior Class

32 ways to make the later years your best

PLUS how the show must go on for actress **Judi Dench** despite a serious eye condition

STAYING A STEP
AHEAD OF PAD

**The New Beat
on Heart Health**

BALANCING ACT





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We give the very best to our patients and *it makes all the difference.*

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The only hospital in Chicago and Northwest Indiana named among America's 100 Best for Orthopedic Surgery.



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ST. MARY Medical Center

1500 S. Lake Park Ave., Hobart, Indiana 46342

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TUNED IN TO TECHNOLOGY

Implementing healthcare advancements, making a difference in patients' lives



Today's groundbreaking advances in technology are giving our team the tools we need to help you stay healthy and give you the best possible experience when you visit us.

Outside, we've installed hybrid and electric-vehicle charging stations to help accommodate patients and visitors looking for charging options away from home (page 3).

Community Healthcare System physicians are using the latest in texting apps on their phones to help expedite your care and keep your health information safe and secure in the process (page 4).

When we need an inside look at your health, we offer state-of-the-art MRI technology at several convenient locations (page 5). Innovations in this evolving technology provide not only 3-D and 4-D digitally enhanced imaging quality, but also enable us to perform a variety of new diagnostic tests more quickly and comfortably.

At **St. Catherine Hospital**, cardiologists are using minimally invasive technology with tiny incisions and faster recovery times to improve heart health and make a difference in the lives of patients, like Griffith resident Linda Goddard (page 34).

Our cardiovascular research program offered the clinical trials that led to use of the new FDA-approved Diamondback 360[®] Coronary Orbital Atherectomy System at **St. Mary Medical Center**. See how this new technology has helped treat patients with severely blocked coronary arteries, including Geraldine Leka of Hobart (page 36).

After a fall, it took a team of experts from **Community Hospital** and specialized orientation therapy to help improve Schererville resident Susan Ramsey-Smith's balance condition (page 38).

We will keep investing in new technologies across the system so you won't have to look any further than your own neighborhood for the highest quality healthcare.

John Gorski
Chief Operating Officer
Community Healthcare System



VIM & VIGOR

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If you prefer not to receive our magazine or other health and wellness information from Community Healthcare System, please call us at 219-836-4582 or write to Community Healthcare System, 905 Ridge Road, Munster, IN 46321.

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McMURRY/TMG



Eco-friendly vehicle recharging stations have been installed across Community Healthcare System as part of a NIPSCO and South Shore Clean Cities incentive program.

GOIN' GREEN

Electric vehicle chargers installed as part of incentive program



Consumers are buying increasing numbers of environmentally friendly cars from hybrids to plug-in hybrid electric to all-electric vehicles. The hospitals of Community Healthcare System and their outpatient facilities are doing their part to make it easier for drivers of plug-in hybrid electric and all-electric vehicles to find affordable, convenient and compatible options for charging away from home. Thirteen ChargePoint® stations or electric vehicle “chargers” have been installed across the system as part of NIPSCO’s IN-Charge Around Town incentive program.

Administered by South Shore Clean Cities, the IN-Charge Around Town program provides incentives for installing public and workplace electric vehicle charging stations.

“We recognize that our employees and visitors who are drivers of

environmentally friendly vehicles need affordable, convenient and compatible options for charging,” says John Gorski, chief operating officer, Community Healthcare System. “Plug-in vehicles that are fueled by electricity alone have zero tailpipe emissions and all plug-in vehicles lessen our dependence on foreign oil.”

With the assistance of NIPSCO’s Around Town Incentives and South Shore Clean Cities’ administrative support, the hospitals of Community Healthcare System and the outpatient facilities have completed, or are in the process of, installing charging stations (that charge two vehicles at the same time) at the following locations:

- Community Hospital, 901 MacArthur Blvd. Munster, east lot & MOB lot; two stations
- Fitness Pointe®, 9950 Calumet Ave. Munster; two stations



- St. John Outpatient Centre, 9660 Wicker Ave. St. John; two stations
- Community Diagnostic Center, 10020 Donald S. Powers Drive, Munster; one station
- Schererville Outpatient Center, 7651 Harvest Drive, Schererville; one station
- St. Mary Medical Center, 1500 S. Lake Park Ave. parking lots; two stations
- Valparaiso Health Center, 3800 St. Mary Drive, Valparaiso; two stations
- St. Catherine Hospital, 4321 Fir St. East Chicago, west lot; one station

Even if you do not have a hybrid or electric vehicle, you can do your part and participate by not parking a regular gas-fueled vehicle in a charging station space when visiting the hospitals or outpatient facilities. ■

TEXTING: *Prescription for Quality Care*

*Keeping patient data
safe and secure*

BY ELISE SIMS

Physicians on staff at the hospitals of Community Healthcare System are giving two thumbs up to texting with a new app to enhance patient care.

“We recognized that we needed a safer, more efficient way to communicate than paging and phone calls to go back and forth between hand-held devices,” says Michael Gregory, information security officer. “TigerText® provides a way for us to send safe, secure patient information from physician to physician.”

As part of the pilot program, Emergency Department physicians on staff at Community Hospital along with gastroenterologists, cardiologists and other physicians also on staff at St. Catherine Hospital and St. Mary Medical Center were established as the first clinical group to use TigerTexting for patient care. This pilot group was able to communicate and make quicker decisions regarding patient data and diagnosing health conditions with fast, secure text messaging. After a few months, the

physicians provided feedback through a survey with a response that was overwhelmingly positive.

“Considering how busy my clinical shifts are on any given day, having a tool that both helps safety and improves my efficiency is a winner,” says Alan Kumar, MD, chief medical information officer.

An Application for All Devices

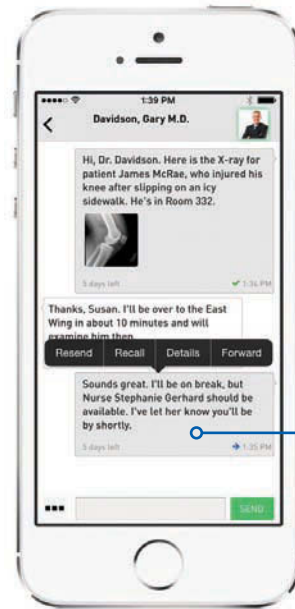
TigerText is a multi-platform, secure, real-time messaging application for the hospital system that allows text messages to be deleted from both the sender’s and receiver’s phones after a set period of time. Messages cannot be saved or copied by the recipient. TigerText does this by storing a message on the hospital system’s server—not the receiving or sending device—and deleting when predetermined conditions are met. TigerText can be used on any iPhone, iPad, Android, iPod Touch, tablet, Mac or PC.

“Whatever device the physician is using, TigerText will take on its voice

controls feature,” says Gregory. “The physicians can ‘talk’ to SIRI, an app on the iPhone, for example, and SIRI will transcribe or type out the entire text. They do not need to ‘text’ in the traditional sense of using their thumbs,” he says.

“A phone call has and always will be the preferred form of communication in transferring from one caregiver to another; however, it is also the slowest of our current means during day-to-day patient care,” Kumar explains. “Previously, for example, if a specialist needed to relay to the primary care physician, ‘I saw the patient. He needs an MRI,’ the specialist would ask the unit secretary to page the physician. The secretary would need to call the office and get the pager number, then page the physician. The physician would get the page, stop what he or she is doing, find a phone and return the call. This call is taken by the secretary, who





Messages cannot be saved or copied by the recipient and are deleted from both the sender's and receiver's phones after a set period of time.

would then need to find the specialist and put the two of them together so the conversation could take place," he says.

"Now the specialist can send a TigerText to the primary care physician: 'I saw the patient and he needs an MRI,'" Kumar says. "The physician looks at it, types OK and hits send. Think of the time saved!"

"Besides texts, we can also send EKGs, MRIs, video and images, too," Kumar says. "These images come through more clearly than faxed images."

Deleted After Viewing

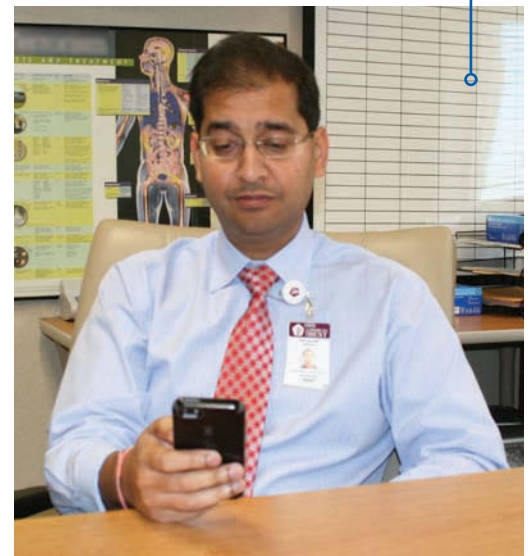
"TigerText is secure in that communication occurs between the two people who need to be involved in the patient's case," says Gregory. "You eliminate the other people from the conversation who may casually hear the information about the patient. You eliminate the 'middle men' and then the message is deleted from the phone after it has been viewed."

In the future, the healthcare system will be utilizing TigerPage. TigerPage, which works within the existing TigerTextPRO application, functions like a conventional pager but incorporates other features like the ability to leave voice messages, message transcription and one-click call back capability directly from physicians' smartphones.

"TigerText secured messaging and paging will allow our caregivers the ability to communicate through a HIPAA-compliant framework," says Gary Weiner, vice president of Information Technology, Community Healthcare System. "Today, text messages and pages may get lost or are never received if the device is offline or out of range. TigerText will ensure that every text is sent and received and confirms if it is read by the recipient. These features will enhance patient care, improve communication and allow for a more agile information environment," he says.

The next step will be to bring other clinical staff leadership onboard, including the hospitals' chief nursing officers, to determine best-use scenarios, Kumar says.

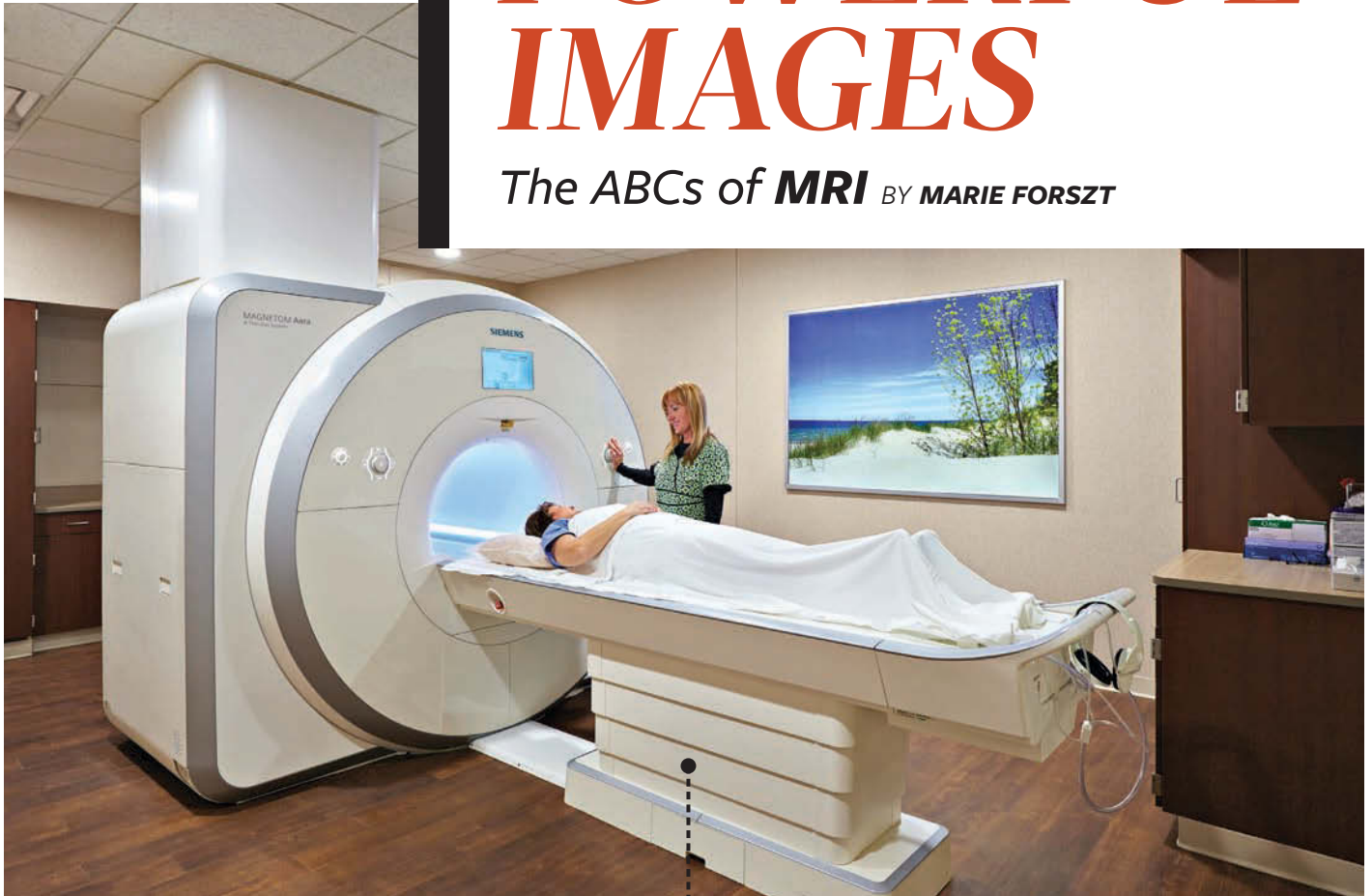
"Moving forward, we are going to make sure that whatever we do to communicate is measured, well-thought out, in the best interest of our patients' safety and ensures quality care," he says. ■



Chief Medical Information Officer Alan Kumar, MD, helped to establish the pilot group of specialists who used secure text messaging to make quicker decisions regarding patient data and diagnosing health conditions.

POWERFUL IMAGES

The ABCs of **MRI** BY MARIE FORSZT



Sometimes when you have an injury or don't feel well, your physician will order tests to gather additional information to better diagnose your condition. Isn't it amazing to have the power to see inside your body to find out what's going on?

At the hospitals of Community Healthcare System, healthcare professionals use the most advanced imaging technology to view parts of the body not visible to the naked eye. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is a method of testing that uses radio waves and a strong magnet to capture images of organs and tissues beneath the skin. These images are clearer and more detailed than basic X-rays, and can help physicians detect and diagnose diseases in their earliest stages.

Fellowship-trained radiologists, who are on-site around the clock at Community Hospital, St. Catherine Hospital and St. Mary Medical Center, read the imaging studies. Results are usually available to the ordering physician in less than one hour through our electronic health information system. This assists physicians in diagnosing

At the Valparaiso Health Center of St. Mary Medical Center, the Siemens Magnetom MRI provides patients with a relaxing experience while taking highly detailed images of the inside of the body.

conditions more quickly and gives anxious patients the answers they need.

Your doctor may order an MRI when diseases, cancers or tumors of your internal organs are suspected, or to monitor how well your body is healing after a major surgery. An MRI scan is particularly useful for photographing brain or spine deterioration, which can become a concern as a patient ages.

There are two types of scans: traditional MRI scans and high field open MRI scans. Traditional scanners work by sliding the patient's body through a doughnut-shaped magnetic tube. Today's traditional MRIs feature wider openings, shorter bores and faster technology, making the experience significantly more comfortable for patients than ever before.

Physicians also have the option of choosing an open MRI test to provide care for patients who have difficulty lying down in the scanner for any length of time. These devices are open on three sides and are three times larger than a



St. Catherine Hospital's Hitachi Oasis High Field Open MRI system features an extra wide opening offering another option for patient imaging.

traditional MRI machine. Some scanners also have a feature where patients are able to customize their experience by choosing from a variety of soothing sounds and visual projections displayed on the walls of the room. This feature helps to put patients at ease and makes the time pass more quickly.

The hospitals of Community Healthcare System offer both traditional and open MRI options to accommodate a variety of patients' needs.

"Both MRI systems offer an unprecedented combination of clinical excellence and patient satisfaction," says John Gorski, chief operating officer, Community Healthcare System. "Our physicians have the advantage of using the latest in imaging technology for high-quality diagnostics."

These incredible diagnostic technologies provide Community Healthcare System physicians the "X-ray vision" they need to do what they do best: save lives. ■

SCHEDULE AN MRI

The hospitals of Community Healthcare System offer traditional and open MRI services at these convenient locations:

TRADITIONAL MRI LOCATIONS

► Community Hospital Outpatient Centre

7651 Harvest Drive
Schererville
Scheduling: **219-836-4599**

► Community Hospital

901 MacArthur Blvd.
Munster
Scheduling: **219-836-4599**

► Hessville Family Care Center

3432 169th St.
Hammond
Scheduling: **219-844-9060**

► St. Mary Medical Center

1500 S. Lake Park Ave.
Hobart
Scheduling: **219-947-6436**

► Valparaiso Health Center

3800 St. Mary Drive
Valparaiso
Scheduling: **219-947-6436**

► Women's Diagnostic Center (Breast MRI)

300 W. 61st Ave.
Hobart
Scheduling: **219-947-6436**

► Center for Imaging and Radiation Oncology

300 W. 61st Ave.
Hobart
Scheduling: **219-947-6436**

OPEN MRI LOCATIONS

► Community Diagnostic Center

10020 Donald S. Powers Drive
Munster
Scheduling: **219-836-4599**

► Community Hospital Outpatient Centre

9660 Wicker Ave
St. John
Scheduling: **219-836-4599**

► St. Catherine Hospital

4321 Fir St.
East Chicago
Scheduling: **219-392-7321**

A physician order is required for MRI testing. Call and make your appointment today!



Representatives from Community Healthcare System's Patient Financial Services department have been recognized for their outstanding success rate with accurate patient registrations. Patient registrations that are more accurate from the beginning result in fewer denials and claim delays with insurance companies—a win-win situation for all.

MORE THAN JUST A SMILING FACE

Patient registration earns recognition for quality and performance BY **MARY FETSCH**

More than just smiling faces behind a counter, registration representatives at the hospitals of Community Healthcare System are on the front line of acquiring data that makes the billing process more accurate, timely and less of a worry for patients.

Recently, Relay Health, an IT Health software company, recognized the hospitals' Patient Financial Services department for its outstanding success rate with accurate patient registrations. The

company featured the hospitals in a case study detailing the best practices that have resulted in accuracy scores consistently above 99.6 percent. Patient registrations that are more accurate at the front end result in fewer denials and rejected claims in the long run, as well as fewer claim delays with insurance companies.

"With the advent of electronic medical records, the registration process has become more complicated," says Karen Schneider, regional director of Patient

Financial Services. "We looked for a technical solution to help us achieve 'clean claims'—acquiring complete and accurate documentation that would be verified from the beginning."

Schneider and her team implemented a program called AhiQA to assist with streamlining the registration and verification process. The program offers immediate feedback to staff and provides notices within 72 hours to fix any errors or warning messages before they work their way into the system.

"Accurate registration means a smoother experience for our patients and quicker payment of claims," adds Schneider. "Patient registration is so vital to providing the best customer service in so many aspects. Our staff does an excellent job in obtaining detailed information that is used by every department in the hospital. I am proud they have been recognized for their positively high standards and consistent results." ■

The Aging Issue

AGE IS JUST A NUMBER

Past your prime? There is no such thing, according to these individuals who achieved greatness well beyond middle age

65

Laura Ingalls Wilder **published the first book** in her *Little House* series in 1932.

69

In 1981, Ronald Reagan **became president of the United States**, 16 days shy of his 70th birthday.

70

Benjamin Franklin **signed the Declaration of Independence** in 1776.

72

Swedish shooter Oscar Swahn **took silver at the 1920 Olympics**, making him the oldest Olympic medal winner.

77

While serving as a United States senator, John Glenn **embarked on his second space flight** in 1998.

82

In his seventh decade of acting, Christopher Plummer **captured his first Academy Award** in 2012.

92

In 2011, Gladys Burrill became the **oldest female marathon finisher** after running her first marathon at 86.

The golden years are full of golden opportunities, and it's never too late to make a change for the better. Read on for more proof that your happiest years may be yet to come. →

THE LONG VIEW

Despite a serious eye condition, actress **JUDI DENCH** is determined to do what she loves at age 80 and beyond *BY AMY SAUNDERS*



JUDI DENCH never read the script for *Philomena*, the film that earned her an Academy Award nomination in 2013. She couldn't see the words.

Macular degeneration, an incurable disease that results in the loss of central vision, requires that Dench memorize lines by listening to friends and co-stars read aloud. These days, as daylight fades into darkness, she struggles even to distinguish the face of a companion across the dinner table.

But Dame Dench isn't just known for playing commanding women, from queens of England to James Bond's boss. She's equally determined in her off-screen life. After turning 80 in December, she insists on acting for as long as she can. "I suppose I could always be wheeled onstage if necessary," she told *The Guardian*. She bristles at the oft-asked question, when is it time to stop?

"It's the rudest word in my dictionary, *retire*," she told *The Hollywood Reporter* last year. "And *old* is another one. I don't allow that in my house." >

Hollywood Debut at 61

After all, at the age when many might be counting down to retirement, Dench was only beginning her movie career.

In 1995, when she made her Hollywood debut in the James Bond film *GoldenEye*, the native of York, England, had been acting onstage for nearly four decades, tackling some of Shakespeare's greatest roles: Juliet, Ophelia, Lady Macbeth, Cleopatra.

Dench hadn't aspired to be on-screen, preferring the interactivity and improvisation of the stage. And she was told early in her career that she wasn't cut out for the camera—she had “every single thing wrong” with her face, she recalled in an interview with *The Guardian*.

But at 61, Dench took on the role of M, which she would reprise for six more Bond movies. An actress unknown to most Americans, who hadn't visited the United States in nearly 40 years, was on the verge of quite the second act.

Between 1997 and 2001, Dench received four Academy Award nominations, collecting a win in 1998 for playing Queen Elizabeth I in *Shakespeare in Love*. She now has seven Oscar nominations to her name, more than any other 60-plus actor in history, according to imdb.com.

The Action of Acting

Dench hasn't allowed herself to slow down. Thanks to a nearly nonstop filming schedule, she has amassed more than 40 film and TV credits in the past two decades. This March, she stars in *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel 2*, a sequel to the 2011 comedy about British retirees moving to India.

She paused only in 2001, when her husband of 30 years, actor Michael Williams, died of lung cancer. Even then, Dench chose to push on through her grief, beginning her work on *The Shipping News* within weeks. “It's the best thing I could have done,” she told *The Times* of London.

In focusing on her career, Dench has also challenged herself physically. In 2013, she had knee replacement surgery less than six weeks before the premiere of *Philomena*. “I said to my surgeon, ‘On Oct. 16, I will walk up a red carpet unaided,’ and so I did,” she told Britain's *Daily Mirror*. “You set your mind to a goal and go for it.”

American Geriatrics Society President Wayne McCormick, MD, sees multiple health benefits in Dench's pursuits. “She's basically exercising her mind every time she's rehearsing for a play, and she's exercising her body by acting—both of which are very important for healthy aging,” he says. “Staying socially active is another very important part. ... I imagine that she's almost never working by herself.”

Following a similar regimen hardly requires Academy Award-winning ambition. Completing a crossword puzzle gives the mind a workout, while walking even 15 minutes each day has

10 THINGS YOU (PROBABLY) DON'T KNOW ABOUT JUDI DENCH

1 She beat out Laurence Olivier for greatest stage actor ever. That's according to readers of the arts publication *The Stage*, who in 2010 voted to bestow the honor.

2 Acting is part of the family business. Dench's father was a physician for a theater company, and her mother served as wardrobe mistress. Her late husband and brother were actors, as is her daughter.

3 Her Highness thinks highly of her. Dench, appointed a Dame in 1988, was in 2005 named by Queen Elizabeth II a Companion of Honour—a recognition given to only 47 Brits at a time.

4 She can sing, too. In 1968, Dench played the lead in the original London production of *Cabaret*. More recently, she sang a number in the 2009 film *Nine*.

5 She initially wanted to be a set designer. At the Central School of Speech and Drama, Dench later changed her course of study to acting.

6 After attending a Quaker boarding school at 14, she adopted the religion. “I think it informs everything I do,” she told the U.K.'s Channel 4 News.

7 She co-owned a racehorse, Smokey Oakey. Last year Dench gifted her beloved horse, upon his retirement, to an equestrian

center that hosts a riding program for disabled children.

8 You can hear her voice at Epcot ... Since 2008, Dench's voice has narrated the ride inside Spaceship Earth, the famous “golf ball” at Disney World.

9 ... and in cartoons about dancing mice. For the children's TV series *Angelina Ballerina*, Dench lent her voice to Miss Lilly, the ballet instructor who teaches Angelina—voiced by Finty Williams, Dench's daughter.

10 She has made needlepoint gifts for co-stars. But not in a grandmotherly way: The foul phrases she stitched aren't suitable for print.

Judi Dench and Steve Coogan in the 2013 film *Philomena*.



been shown to prolong a healthy life, McCormick says.

He encourages patients to incorporate activity into daily routines. Instead of brewing coffee at home, for example, walk to a shop to buy a cup and strike up a conversation. “Whatever you can do to make healthy behaviors into habitual behaviors is going to be positive,” he says.

Dench has said that she loves quizzes and trivia for the same reason she loves acting: the opportunity to learn. Every role, she has said, presents a challenge that must be overcome.

“I never want to stop,” she told *The Guardian*. “I need to learn every day.”

Optimistic Aging

Dench hates to be reminded that she’s 80—nearly twice the age she feels. “I am about 43, a tall, willowy, blond 43-year-old with long legs,” she joked to the *Daily Mirror* last year.

She doesn’t elaborate about how difficult it must be to memorize lines she can’t read, connect with co-stars she can’t see. She often remarks that she’d rather listen to the script anyway.

“It is much better having the story told to you, because ultimately that’s what the job is, telling an audience the story,” she told the *Daily Mirror*.

Dench embodies the attitude associated with a long, healthy life, says Hilary Tindle, MD, an internist and the author of *Up: How Positive Outlook Can Transform Our Health and Aging*.

In an eight-year study of nearly 100,000 women, Tindle and her colleagues found that optimists had a 30 percent lower risk for death from heart disease compared with pessimists. The optimists—generally, people who expect a positive future—also were less likely to have diabetes, high blood pressure, depression and obesity.

Optimism doesn’t mean denying or ignoring problems, but embracing the idea that life can be changed—a skill, Tindle says, that can be learned.

“Positive people, in the true sense of the word, learn to acknowledge the adversity that’s around them,” she says. “They just shift their attention to the good things that are happening.”

For her part, Dench acknowledged to *The Hollywood Reporter* that living with macular degeneration—unable to enjoy reading, painting or sewing as she used to—is “very, very difficult.”

“But these are all of the negatives,” she said. “I don’t want to really think about all that. What I can do, I do.” ■

FREE SENIOR FITNESS

While SilverSneakers® is the name of this dynamic senior fitness group, any color gym shoe will do. The Cardiac Rehabilitation department of St. Catherine Hospital is part of a national program that helps older adults take greater control of their health by encouraging physical activity and offering social activity at no cost.

“We had everything in place for this type of program and were thrilled when we learned we were eligible to offer our patients such an exciting opportunity,” says Fran Clark, RN, manager of the Cardiac Rehabilitation program.

SilverSneakers is available in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico at about 10,000 fitness and wellness centers. Through a unique agreement, SilverSneakers members also have access to all of these sites across the country.

In a study of more than 9,000 SilverSneakers members, 14 percent reported having diabetes. Forty-one percent of diabetic members reported having improved health after one or more years of participation and 46 percent reported improved body weight.

Other research has shown SilverSneakers participants utilize preventive care more often, are admitted to the hospital less often and have lower overall healthcare costs.

CALL



Get Moving!

Join the nation’s leading fully funded Medicare exercise program designed especially for senior citizens. For more information on how to get started with the SilverSneakers program at St. Catherine Hospital’s Cardiac Rehabilitation Center, call 219-392-7086.

THE BIG STORY



PHOTO BY GETTY/JOSHUA BLAKE



YOU: PART 2



Life is full of surprises, and they don't stop when you're on the other side of 50. Here's what you can expect from your second act *BY* **BOB PAYNE**

FINDING JOY

Older people tend to enjoy the present instead of worrying about the future.



HAPPY DAYS

➔ Older people, studies show, are more content than younger folks

Remember teenager Richie Cunningham and his greaser friend, The Fonz, in the 1970s sitcom *Happy Days*? Life seemed so innocent: the jukebox, the milkshakes, the varsity jackets. Well, no need to get too nostalgic, because for people moving past 50, the happiest days may be still ahead.

PHOTO BY GETTY/DALY AND NEWTON

“Study after study is showing that older people are happier than the middle-aged, and happier still than younger people,” says Laura Carstensen, PhD, a professor of psychology and public policy at Stanford University, where she is the founding director of the Stanford Center on Longevity.

The Paradox of Aging

At 21, a serious car accident landed Carstensen in a hospital room with three elderly women who were showing the ill effects of being unable to care for themselves. This first inkling of what it was like to be old set her on a career that examined aging. Along the way, she discovered something called the paradox of aging—that older people often have a better sense of well-being than everyone else.

From her work, Carstensen and her colleagues developed a theory as to why that might be. Socioemotional selectivity means that as you grow older, and recognize that you are getting closer to the end, you focus on what matters now instead of the long-term goals that occupy younger people.

“As a result, older people find life less stressful, they worry less about the small stuff, they don’t get as angry, they don’t linger over negative feelings as much, they are better at reconciliation, and although they can be sad, they are better at accepting it,” Carstensen says.

The Secret: Fewer, Closer Relationships

A primary way older people demonstrate their focus on the now is by replacing a larger number of casual relationships with fewer, closer ones. They winnow out the people they used to think they had to tolerate, whether they liked them or not—people, perhaps, who could benefit them careerwise or socially. And with decreasing pressure to make every decision with an eye to the long term, they develop a more positive outlook.

HEART OF OUR HOSPITALS

Whether welcoming patients and visitors to the hospitals of Community Healthcare System or working behind the scenes, volunteers have many opportunities to meet new people. They keep active while providing important services and experiencing the personal satisfaction that comes from helping others.

At Community Hospital, St. Catherine Hospital and St. Mary Medical Center, volunteers and their unique talents are carefully matched with innovative work opportunities to extend the system’s mission of providing quality healthcare to the Northwest Indiana community.

“Volunteering has many benefits,” says Elizabeth Yee, vice president of Clinical Ancillary Services. “While our volunteers help support the hospitals, it also brings personal satisfaction to the person giving their time and talents. Volunteers put in thousands of hours contributing to our mission and values.”

The golden years, of course, are not all golden, and happiness does not continue to grow into extreme old age. As people pass 70 or so, and illness, infirmity, and, for some, loss of social status and declining bank accounts begin to take their toll, the happiness curve levels off and then heads down.


“But it never gets back to the level of younger people,” Carstensen says.

In fact, she says in her book, *A Long Bright Future: Happiness, Health, and Financial Security In an Age of Increased Longevity*, that “despite being flush with youthful vigor and opportunity, twenty-somethings are the most depressed and stressed out of any age group.”

Happy Elders = Happy Society

As advances in science and technology continue to increase life expectancy and the age of the population (by 2030, the U.S. will have more people over 65 than under 15), one intriguing aspect of the happiness of older people is the effect it could have on society as a whole.

What if, as Carstensen suggests, that to help solve problems facing us on a national or even global scale, our

WEBSITE 

Act of Kindness

Just a few hours of your time and talent each week can make a big difference to a healthcare organization. Contact the hospitals of Community Healthcare System at www.comhs.org and click on the Ways to Give tab for more information.

society makes use of an ever-increasing segment of the population—one with a lifetime of experience and knowledge, that doesn’t anger easily, doesn’t stress over the small stuff, and is good at reconciliation?

The answer, she said, at a TEDxWomen talk she gave in 2011, is that we could have a better society “than we have ever known.”

And wouldn’t that make *everybody* happy? ■

BLUEPRINT FOR A SECOND ACT



You really can turn back the clock on your health, even in middle age

It seems like a no-brainer, doesn't it? Eat your veggies, watch your weight, exercise regularly and don't smoke, and you likely will have fewer health problems and live longer.

But who spends an entire lifetime following that path? Not baby boomers, it turns out. Although they are living longer, the generation born in 1946 through 1964 (the first of them turned 65 in 2011) is less healthy than their parents were at the same stage in life.

Boomer Lifestyle: Not What You Think

According to a study in the journal *JAMA Internal Medicine*, baby boomers, compared with the previous generation, exercised significantly less, were more obese, did more of what was categorized as "moderate drinking" and had higher rates of chronic disease and disability.

"It's ironic, because boomers think of themselves as living a more healthy lifestyle, but we don't see it among patients," says study co-author Dana E. King, MD, chairman of the West

Virginia University Department of Family Medicine.

King says less than 10 percent of middle-aged Americans follow healthy lifestyle patterns that include exercise, eating plenty of fruits and vegetables, maintaining a healthy weight and not smoking.

Small Changes, Big Differences

There is good news, though. The study shows that boomers are smoking less than their parents did and are less likely to suffer from emphysema or have a heart attack. And another study King co-authored found that adapting healthy lifestyle habits in middle age can have a tremendous impact in a short time.

"What we discovered is that you can turn back the clock, and you can do it at any age; it's never too late to start," King says.

The study, which appeared in the *American Journal of Medicine*, found that just four years after middle-aged people adapted four specific healthy lifestyle habits, the risk of cardiovascular disease was reduced by 35 percent and mortality by 40 percent. And the benefits didn't depend on gender, age, race, socioeconomic status or a history of high cholesterol levels, diabetes or heart disease.

Of course, breaking the habits of a lifetime, even when you know they are bad for you, is no easy thing. In part, that's because habits can be triggered by external cues you are not even aware of. For instance, when you turn on the TV, habit might tell you it's time for a snack, whether you're hungry or not.

With the exception of giving up smoking, the changes King and his fellow researchers monitored were modest. Along with not smoking, newly adopted habits included eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily, exercising a minimum of 2½ hours a week and maintaining a body mass index of 18.5 to 30. Yet six years later, only 8.4 percent of the study subjects had maintained the habits.

Adopting an exercise routine and other lifestyle changes can reduce your risk of heart disease.



TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH

Your doctor, your loved ones and *Vim & Vigor* advise you to get regular health screenings. You can decrease your risk for heart disease and cancer—and it may make the difference between life and death.

The hospitals of Community Healthcare System offer many free and low-cost screenings that can help you get a more accurate reading of your overall health.

There are free blood pressure checks, glucose screenings, diabetes screenings and skin cancer screenings at a location near you. Below are other tests that are offered for a nominal fee:

- Peripheral arterial disease (PAD) screenings (\$10/person)
- A blood profile (cholesterol, HDL, LDL, triglycerides or glucose) for \$5/test or \$20/panel
- A coronary health appraisal including cholesterol, hemoglobin A1C, blood pressure, body mass index and a Heart Health Profile, \$30.

WEBSITE



Take Care

For upcoming screenings, health fairs and educational programs available through Community Healthcare System refer to the Take Care calendar mailed with this issue or visit www.comhs.org. Then call to register at **219-836-3477**.

Never Too Late

“It may be some people don’t change because they believe that by middle age the damage has been done and there is nothing they can do to fix it, and it may be that the public health message isn’t reaching those who most need to hear it,” King says.

The “turning back the clock” study showed that people less likely to adopt a healthy lifestyle in middle age included men, African-Americans, people with lower incomes, and individuals with a history of hypertension or diabetes.

So, if you are a baby boomer in any of those groups, or if you haven’t been eating your vegetables, taking your walks, watching your weight, or staying away from the smokes, consider yourself messaged. ■

THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM: GUILT

➔ 5 ways to overcome the self-reproach almost universal among Alzheimer's caregivers

There's nothing easy about dealing with Alzheimer's. But if you are a home caregiver, one of the biggest challenges is the guilt you will almost certainly feel.

A unique aspect of caring for Alzheimer's patients, says dementia care expert Peter Rabins, MD, a geriatric psychiatrist and the author of *The 36-Hour Day: A Family Guide to Caring for People Who Have Alzheimer Disease, Related Dementias, and Memory Loss*, is that at some point almost all caregivers become frustrated, even angry, which leads to the guilt.

GUILT FIX NO. 1: **Be the Decider**

"Caring for Alzheimer's patients can force the caregiver to make decisions, about driving, cooking and finances,

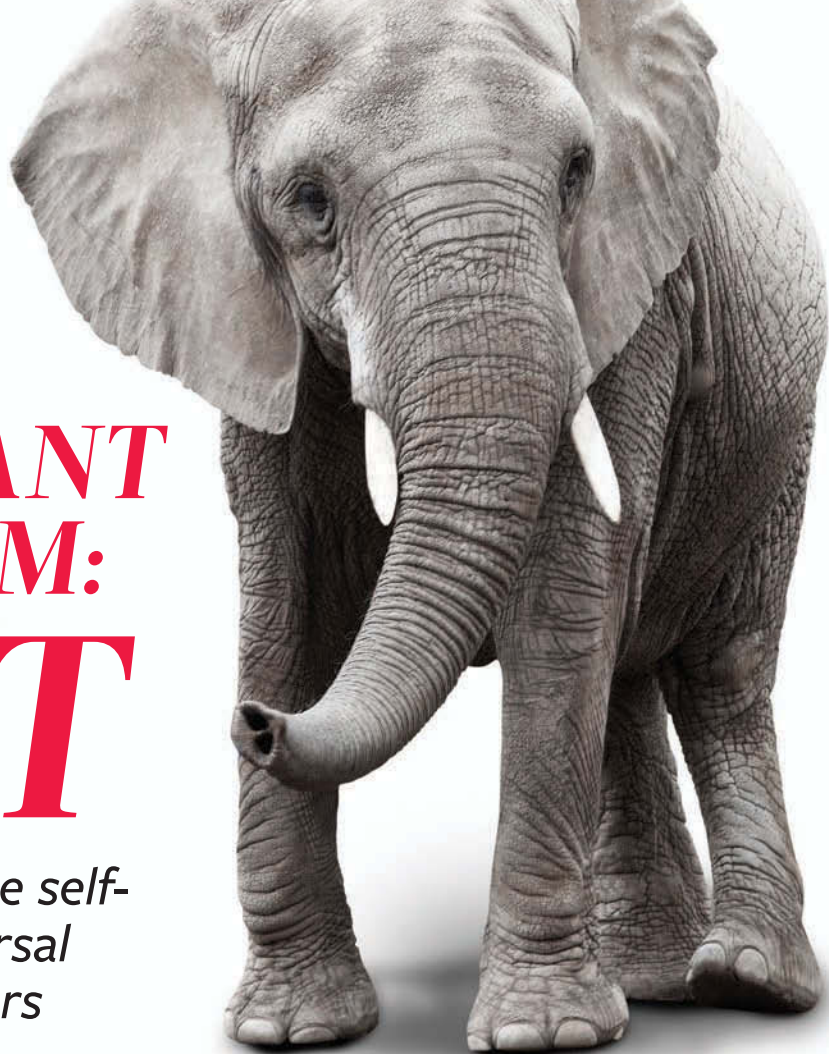
for example, that the person with the illness would have made for themselves were they well," Rabins says. "This is often upsetting for the person with the illness and induces guilt in the caregiver."

What a caregiver must realize, he says, is that those sometimes-difficult substitute decisions, if they protect the person with the illness and others from harm, are the right decisions.

GUILT FIX NO. 2: **Lower Expectations**

A key to avoiding frustration and anger, Rabins says, is to accept that changes in behavior, as difficult as they may be to deal with, especially when they involve the loss of social skills and social graces, are caused by the disease, and are not the person's fault.

"You've got to have realistic expectations," he says. "You've got to accept



that what a loved one could do yesterday they may not be able to do today, and what they can do today they may not be able to do tomorrow.”

GUILT FIX NO. 3: **It's OK to Lie**

A common source of guilt is lying in order to calm a person with Alzheimer's. For example, a caregiver might say that a mother is away for the weekend and will be back on Monday, when she died many years ago.

“If the person with dementia is clearly unable to understand the ‘truth,’ and that is distressing them, then I believe ‘lying’ is justifiable, if other approaches fail,” Rabins says.

Other approaches, he says, might include discussion, redirection or distraction, such as asking the person to name his mother's best quality.

GUILT FIX NO. 4: **It's Not OK to Argue**

Strategies should not, however, include arguing. “Argument implies there is a reasoned discussion. But if a person has lost that ability due to dementia, then it is not a useful approach,” Rabins says.

Caring for a friend or family member with Alzheimer's is, for most people, an act of love. But as the disease progresses, the ways that love is recognized, appreciated and expressed are altered, he says. Many patients, for example, develop significant impairment in language, which makes them unable to understand verbally what is being communicated.

“Touch, tone of voice, and facial expression (and) body language become alternate ways to let a person know they are loved,” Rabins says.



GUILT FIX NO. 5: Give Nursing Homes a Chance

For many families, the previous four issues pale next to the question of when is the right time for a person with Alzheimer's to go into a nursing home.

“It is an incredibly hard decision for many people, and there is no one indicator as to when the time is right,” Rabins says.

He has observed that families usually wait longer to make the decision than they should. There comes a time, he says, when physical impairment or needs that can't be met by a home caregiver make the move necessary.

A positive note, though, is that people with Alzheimer's often do a little better when they go into a long-term care facility because they are getting physical care they couldn't receive at home. Also, relieved of the responsibility for day-to-day physical care, loved ones often find they are better able to provide the personal, loving interaction that is so important, too.

For anyone newly faced with caring for a family member or friend with Alzheimer's, all of this can seem overwhelming. Just remember, Rabins says: Make every decision an act of love, and it will probably be a good one. ■

MEMORY CARE

Everyone has memory lapses – forgetting someone's name or where a wallet was set down – but if the lapses become routine and interfere with you or your loved one's daily activities, it may be time to seek help. Hartsfield Village Memory Support Residence in Munster may offer the solution that many seniors and their families seek when facing the challenges of dementia or dementia-related conditions.

Hartsfield Village offers Memory Support residents dementia-specific programming to meet their daily needs as well as to stimulate brain activity. Staff share a collective dedication to assisting residents and their families with daily challenges. Residents enjoy amenities designed to enrich daily life, including spacious private rooms, 24-hour nursing staff and recreational activities. Each resident has a care team that includes nursing staff, a program specialist, dining room steward and housekeeper.

CALL



Forgetful?

Hartsfield Village Continuing Care Retirement Community is a designated Memory Screening Center for the Alzheimer's Foundation of America. Screenings are free—appointments are necessary. Call **219-934-0750, ext. 200**; ask for Jill.

GOING
THROU

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GH

Our joints endure a lifetime of bending, twisting and rotating. Here's how to keep them in top shape

BY **KIMBERLY OLSON**

Without your joints, you wouldn't be able to walk, stand or sit. And you certainly couldn't tackle complex tasks like buttoning a shirt, texting or busting out a killer dance move at your granddaughter's wedding. More than 200 joints connect your bones, and despite their usefulness, they're easy to take for granted—that is, until they get stiff or achy.

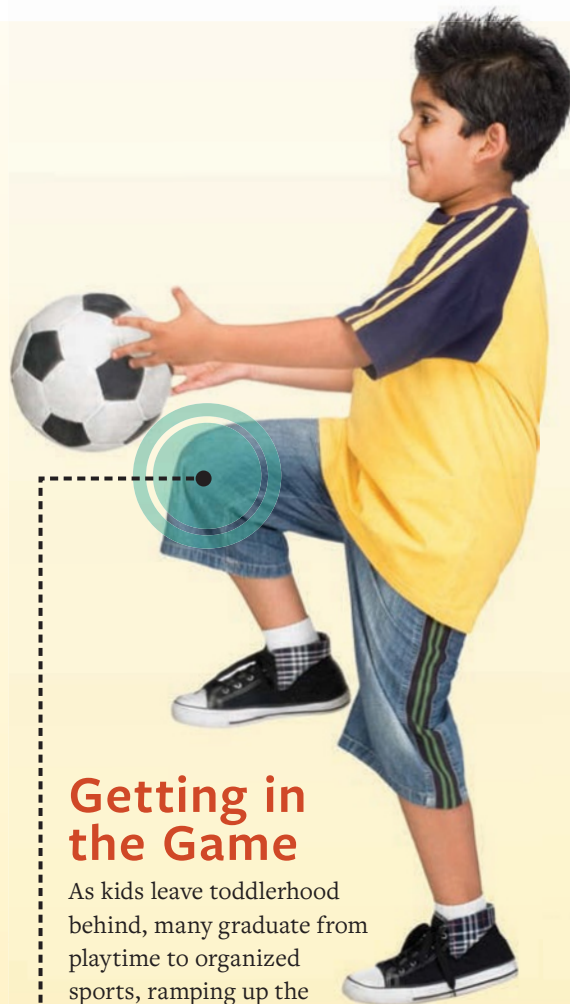
As you journey through life, the pressure you put on your hardworking joints adds up. But that's hardly an excuse to plop on the couch and throw your feet up. "Joints are happiest when they're moved a lot," says Karen M. Sutton, MD, a sports medicine physician and fellow of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. So staying active—without overdoing it—is the best strategy for keeping your joints gliding smoothly.

OMS



Limber Beginnings

It's hard to imagine not having joints, but that's how we begin. An embryo's legs are solid and unbending. Then, at eight to 12 weeks, those legs start to indent, gradually forming the knee and hip joints. Fetal joints go through some pretty awkward positions in the womb—and bend even more as the baby travels through the birth canal—so infants have the sort of flexibility that would put a Cirque du Soleil performer to shame. That mobility stays with them through their toddler years.



Getting in the Game

As kids leave toddlerhood behind, many graduate from playtime to organized sports, ramping up the impact on their joints.

During their growth spurt, which will continue through their teens, their joints are the healthiest they'll ever be. But that doesn't mean the younger set is invincible, even if they are dashing around the house in a superhero cape. At both ends of their long bones, kids have growth plates—areas of growing cartilage—that are vulnerable to fractures. Pint-sized soccer, basketball and volleyball players may develop a painful bump below the knee, called Osgood-Schlatter disease. Growth-plate injuries are also common in football, gymnastics, biking and skateboarding.

► **WHAT YOU CAN DO:** “We encourage children to be active, but playing the same sport year-round puts the joints at increased risk of injury,” Sutton says. “So if they play one sport for two to three seasons, they should play a different sport the other seasons.”

Teen Knees

In adolescence, the growth plates become solid bone. But now, the ligaments—bands of tissue that connect bones—become the weak link. “We each have two menisci [cushiony cartilage pads] in our knee joints, and they start to lose blood supply around age 18, increasing the risk of injury,” Sutton says. Because of girls’ wider hips, the thighbone takes a sharper angle from knee to hip, making the knees especially vulnerable. It may not be fair, but female athletes in jumping or pivoting sports like basketball are up to 10 times more likely than males to tear their anterior cruciate ligament (ACL), a major knee component.

► **WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Teens who are physically active reap the rewards—a boost in the blood supply to their joints and greater joint lubrication. Teenage athletes should also condition their muscles for better joint stability. “As girls move into puberty, the muscle mass around their joints doesn’t keep up with their growth as well as it does in boys, so even if they’re playing soccer 20 hours a week, we encourage them to put in some extra time to do strength and conditioning training for injury prevention,” Sutton says.



PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

STRATEGIES FOR JOYFUL JOINTS

Your joints, like any hardware, get worn with use. But developing a few healthy habits can help safeguard them.

LIGHTEN THE LOAD If you’re over your ideal weight, slimming down can make every step that much gentler. “Every 1 pound you take off of your body is actually 4 pounds (of pressure) off your knees, as you’re doing your daily activities,” says Karen M. Sutton, MD, a sports medicine physician and a fellow of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

KEEP MOVING Getting regular activity increases your range of motion and reduces inflammatory markers in your blood, like c-reactive protein, which signal unhealthy changes. “It’s important to get some extra movement, even if it’s just walking,” Sutton says. “Instead of having somebody bring the paper in for you, you walk to get the paper. If you’re going out for dinner, park a few blocks away and walk there. Over time, that helps increase the flexibility and lubricating factors of the joint, which in turn protects the cartilage.”

STAY STRONG Strengthening the muscles around the joints is important—building your quadriceps and hamstrings, for example, helps stabilize your knees. “I equate the joint to a growing sapling, with support strings to hold it straight,” Sutton says. “The muscles are like those support strings.”

But don’t stop there. Research shows that it’s also important to develop your overall strength, which includes working your core, glutes and posterior muscles. “Maybe you’re stretching on a Bosu ball, so you have to hold your ankle and your core still,” Sutton suggests. “Or you’re doing pushups with your feet on an exercise ball. Anything that adds a little balance training is good for the joints.”

EAT SMART A growing body of research shows that a diet high in fruit, vegetables, grains and beans can prevent arthritis or alleviate its symptoms.

MIND YOUR POSTURE Slumping puts stress on the spinal and shoulder joints and can damage them, so get into the practice of sitting and standing up straight. You’ll look better, too!

Grown-up Joints

By our 20th birthday, our joints have seen plenty of action. We've taken about 35 million steps, the equivalent of crossing the United States six times. In our 20s and beyond, the blood supply to the joints drops further, and we continue to lose joint-lubricating synovial fluid.

In our 30s, our shock-absorbing cartilage starts to wear down. The cartilage under the patella (kneecap), for example, pays the price of years of squatting, bending, and walking up and down stairs. "When we start out, the cartilage is like a beautiful ice rink surface before the Olympics," Sutton says. "But as we play sports and get into our 20s to 40s, a few pee-wee teams have played on the rink, and then professional hockey teams like the Bruins are playing on it. So it wears out with age."

► **WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Keep moving! It might be tempting to be sedentary during the week and then transform into a weekend warrior—but that's asking for trouble. Regular strength and conditioning training keeps the joints healthiest. In case of knee pain, a therapy called viscosupplementation—medication that's injected into the knee—can protect cartilage and provide relief.

Staying Fluid After 40

Into our 40s and 50s, the first few steps in the morning may be a bit stiff. And while osteoarthritis often makes an appearance now, a healthy lifestyle can go a long way toward quelling it. As metabolism gets sluggish—particularly for women, who are undergoing hormonal shifts—it's important to be vigilant about staving off excess pounds that put more pressure on the joints.

► **WHAT YOU CAN DO:** "If you watch what you're eating, are at a good weight and do lower-impact exercises to keep the joints moving without putting a lot of force on them, you can help prevent or at least delay the onset of arthritis," Sutton says. If you do develop arthritis, take heart: Modern therapies may allow you to participate in activities that wouldn't have been possible just 25 years ago.

Watch Your Back

The spine consists of 26 bones that reach from the base of the skull to the pelvis. As we enter our 50s, the spinal column tends to narrow and put pressure on nerves in a condition called spinal stenosis, which causes back pain or numbness in the legs or buttocks.

► **WHAT YOU CAN DO:** If symptoms are mild, therapies like acupuncture, physical therapy or steroid injections can provide relief and get you back in the swing of things. For more severe cases, your doctor might recommend surgery. Many patients can benefit from minimally invasive procedures performed through tiny incisions.



PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Shoulder to Shoulder

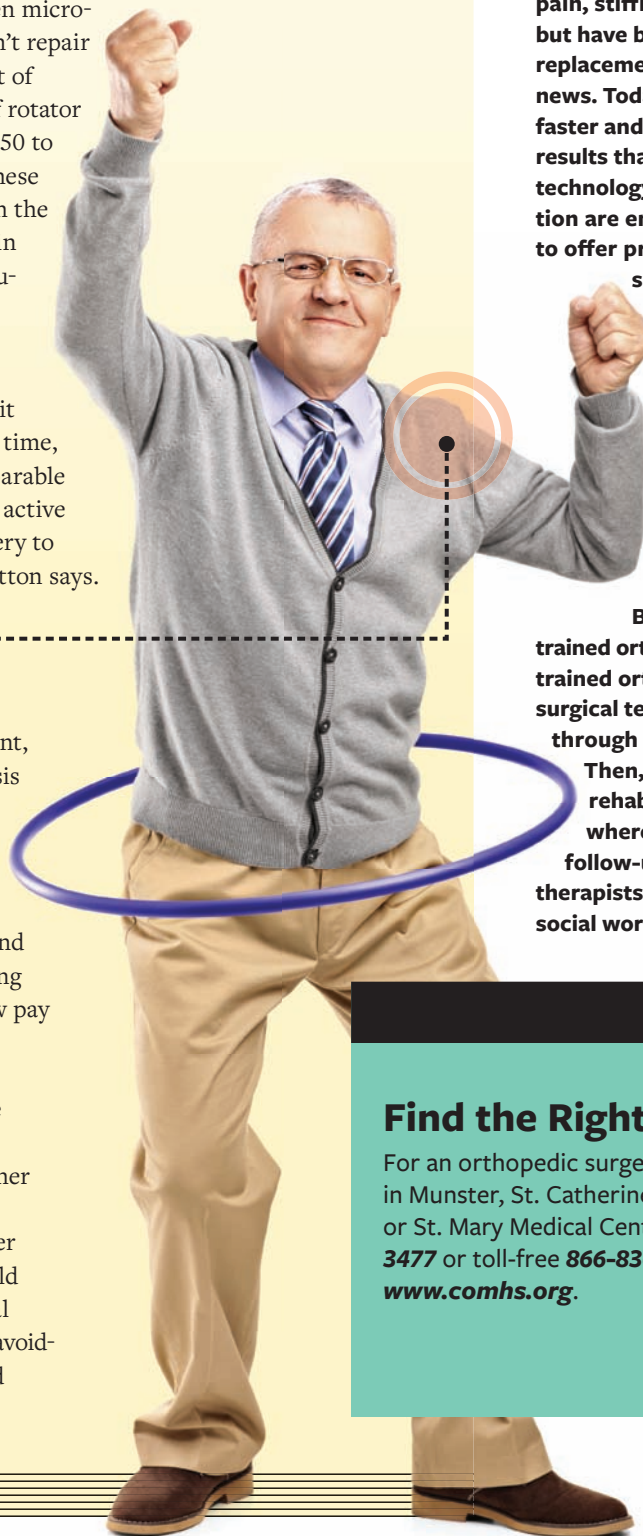
Entering the senior years, tears in the rotator cuff—the group of muscles and tendons around the shoulder joint—become common. The rotator cuff gets less blood supply as you age, so when even microscopic injuries happen, the tissue can't repair itself as it once did. About 30 percent of people in their 60s have some sort of rotator cuff tear, and that number shoots to 50 to 60 percent for people in their 80s. These injuries, which might go unnoticed in the early stages, are especially common in factory workers and anyone who regularly pulls down with their arms.

► **WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Regular shoulder exercises can help prevent rotator cuff tears. If a tear happens, it may start out small and worsen over time, occasionally developing into an irreparable problem. "For somebody who has an active lifestyle, we would recommend surgery to decrease the rate of progression," Sutton says.

Senior Strength

As you start thinking about retirement, it's important to stave off osteoporosis (bone loss), which can set the scene for fractures around the joint. Two million broken bones a year in the U.S. are related to osteoporosis. Years of exercise, proper nutrition, and habits like avoiding smoking and going light on alcohol and caffeine will now pay big dividends.

► **WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Continue weight-bearing activities and muscle strengthening. Your doctor can give you advice about your diet and whether you might benefit from calcium and vitamin D supplements. Women older than 65 and men older than 70 should get a bone-density scan, the National Osteoporosis Foundation says. Keep avoiding smoking and limiting alcohol and caffeine consumption. ■



MOVE IT, MOVE IT

If you've been suffering with joint pain, stiffness and limited mobility, but have been on the fence about joint replacement surgery; we have good news. Today's patients are recovering faster and experiencing better long-term results than ever before. Innovations in technology and advanced instrumentation are enabling orthopedic surgeons to offer procedures with less pain and smaller incisions and return patients to activities faster.

Community Hospital in Munster, St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago and St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart actively promote education (pre- and post-operative teaching) as an important part of their joint replacement care.

Board-certified and fellowship-trained orthopedic physicians, specially-trained orthopedic nursing staff and surgical technicians support our patients through the entire surgery process.

Then, most patients go through rehabilitation right at the hospital where they receive education and follow-up from certified physical therapists, occupational therapists and social workers.

CALL



Find the Right Surgeon

For an orthopedic surgeon at Community Hospital in Munster, St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago or St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart, call **219-836-3477** or toll-free **866-836-3477** or visit our web site **www.comhs.org**.




YOUR LAST CHAPTER:

EXPRESSING

END-OF-LIFE

WISHES

A photograph of a row of books on a white shelf. A hand is reaching from the bottom left towards the spines of the books. The books have various colored covers: green, red, and dark blue. The text is centered on the white pages of one of the books.

*It's
something
that no
one wants
to think
about, but
everyone
needs to:
the end*

BY **COLLEEN
RINGER**

You've seen it played out in movies—siblings squabbling over end-of-life decisions for their parent, a family bickering about what to do after one of their own has been in a serious accident. Unfortunately, those scenes aren't only reserved for the big screen. What would happen to you if you couldn't speak for yourself? In those moments, decisions about your future may fall to the people who rush to your bedside. Make their job easier and ensure your wishes are respected by leaving them a road map, says Virginia Morris, author of *How to Care for Aging Parents*. The best way to do that? Advance directives. Here's how to get your affairs in order.

Q What is an advance directive? Is that like a living will?

Advance directives are legal documents that outline end-of-life requests, and a living will is a type of advance directive. In a living will, you clarify the types of life-prolonging medical treatments you would or wouldn't want, such as artificial feeding, resuscitation and mechanical breathing, if, for example, you were in a coma.

There are two other types of advance directives: a medical power of attorney (your healthcare proxy), in which you choose who will make your healthcare decisions for you if you can't; and an optional do-not-resuscitate (DNR) order, in which you can request that

CPR not be performed if your heart stops or if you stop breathing. Completing all three documents—or two if you do want to be resuscitated—covers the bases.

Q Sounds confusing. Where do I start?

Begin by completing a living will. "Ask yourself what your goals are," Morris says. "To live as many days as possible, no matter what? Think about what's valuable to you and what's intolerable in terms of quality of life." You won't be able to cover every situation, but consider, for instance, under what circumstances and for how long you would want to be on a ventilator. The same goes for artificial nutrition and

hydration, meaning nutrients and fluids are given through an IV or a stomach tube. Put all of these things into your living will.

Next, think long and hard about whom you want to designate as your healthcare proxy. "It's not necessarily the first person you think of—it might not be your spouse or sibling," Morris says. "You want someone who will step in and say, 'Why are we doing this? I don't think this is what she wanted.'"

Q Is there a form I can fill out?

Yes, each state has specific advance directive documents. If you spend time in more than one state, complete forms for both. You can search online for your state's forms or go to your local library. Although some states require that the forms be notarized, you won't need a lawyer. Give a copy to your healthcare proxy and to your doctor—and keep the originals somewhere safe, but not in a safe deposit box where they might be hard for others to get to in an emergency.

Q I'm done now, right?

Technically, yes, but you shouldn't stop there. "If you're just signing the document and that's it, it's almost like you did nothing," Morris says. "What you need to do is have conversations with people, especially your

healthcare proxy, about what you want and don't want. When your loved one is standing there and a doctor is saying we can do this or that, their instincts will kick in and they'll say yes—even if it's not what you would have wanted."

Start this tough conversation as early as possible—ideally, when it's theoretical and not when you're in the hospital. Then, when you're in a tough situation, you can pick up the discussion where you left off.

Q What if a medical breakthrough changes the game?

Whether it's because a groundbreaking treatment has been discovered or you've simply changed your views, you can redo your advance directives at any time (be sure to destroy the old copies). But this is also why it's important to have a healthcare proxy. This person can make decisions based on the situation and how he or she knows you feel about life, pain, suffering and death. ■

GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

Once you've made your end-of-life choices, you will need to think about how your estate will be handled and divided between your loved ones. You may also want to consider giving back to the place that cared for you—your local hospital. One of the ways you can do this is through a planned gift, which means, including your local hospital in your will or naming it as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy. Donations to Community Hospital, St. Catherine Hospital and/or St. Mary Medical Center are 100% tax-deductible and may be directed to a specific purpose or without restriction. Gifts may be made to honor a special occasion or individual.

WEBSITE



To Future Health

Your gift to Community Healthcare System will support all three hospitals and the services they provide to their patients. For more information on ways to give, visit www.comhs.org.

10

THE QUICK LIST TAKEAWAYS FOR LIFE AFTER 50

1 In the United States, seniors 65 and older will outnumber children 15 and younger by 2030.

2 Focus on the present and on fewer, closer relationships, and you'll likely grow happier as you age.



4 Only 10 percent of middle-aged Americans regularly exercise, follow a nutritious diet, maintain a healthy weight and refrain from smoking.

7 You really can turn back the clock: Four years after middle-aged people adopted healthy lifestyle changes, their risk of mortality dropped 40 percent.



8

Stay slim. For every pound you lose, you take 4 pounds of pressure off your knees.



Healthy habits don't have to be complicated. Walk to a shop for your morning coffee instead of making a cup at home.

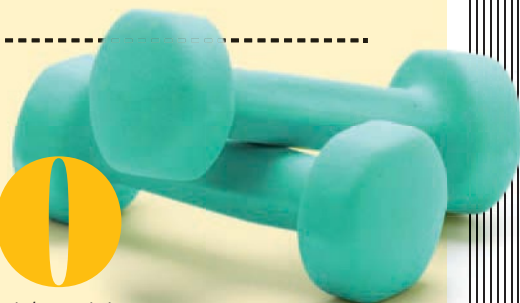
5 Look on the bright side: The risk of death from heart disease is 30 percent lower for optimists than for pessimists.

9 Alzheimer's caregivers, remember that difficult decisions help protect your loved one from harm.

6 Write a living will and choose a medical power of attorney now to help your loved ones understand your wishes later.

10

Add weight training to your exercise routine. In the U.S., 2 million broken bones are related to osteoporosis annually.



➔ **WANT MORE HEALTHY IDEAS?** Check out our summer issue, focusing on building a healthy mind.



**Neurosurgeon
Wayel
Kaakaji, MD**



NEUROSURGERY QUESTIONS

Wayel Kaakaji, MD, answers pressing questions involving the nervous system

Neurosurgeons work with the entire nervous system that starts in your brain, runs through your spine and branches out to all areas of your body. Neurosurgeons help diagnose and treat disorders of the nervous system affecting the whole body: the spine, brain, hands, legs, arms and face.

Q What are the most common reasons people need to see a neurosurgeon?

People are referred to a neurosurgeon to diagnose and treat conditions such as brain tumors, traumatic brain injuries, pituitary tumors, epilepsy, movement disorders (Parkinson's disease and essential tremor) and spinal conditions,

including pinched nerves and sciatica. Finding the right neurosurgeon to partner with can impact your recovery and quality of life.

Q What are some of the newest advancements in neurosurgery that you offer patients?

New technologies and techniques are allowing us to perform surgery with the least invasive procedure called minimally invasive surgery, offering patients shorter recovery times and better pain control. These techniques use special instruments to create the tiniest incisions. Sophisticated 3-D imaging technology is used to visualize inside your spine or brain. This adds an extra layer of safety and accuracy.

Q What's new at your practice, Community Care Network—Community Spine and Neurosurgery Institute?

The Movement Disorder/DBS program at Community Hospital is offering hope in the form of new treatment options that extend beyond medication management for neurological disorders, such as Parkinson's disease, essential tremor and dystonia.

Q What advice can you offer patients?

Many times patients are unaware of their treatment options or they are afraid to pursue those options. It takes courage to look into the mirror when one experiences the potentially disabling effects of one of these conditions. Take the first step forward—we can make a difference in your quality of life. ■

CALL 

Need an Appointment?

Neurosurgeon Wayel Kaakaji, MD, welcomes new patients. Call **219-836-5167** (Munster) or **219-942-6510** (Hobart) to schedule an appointment.

Staying a Step Ahead of

Minimally invasive
*procedures provide greater
range of treatment options*

PAD

WHAT IS PAD?

PAD, or peripheral arterial disease, in the legs or lower extremities is the narrowing or blockage of the vessels that carry blood from the heart to the legs. It is primarily caused by the buildup of fatty plaque in the arteries.

Symptoms of PAD include achiness and burning and weakness in the legs, calves or feet, which can lead to significant impairment in the ability to walk. To help others like Linda Goddard avoid amputation and lead heart-healthier lives, St. Catherine Hospital offers free health fairs, community outreach and education, and discounted screenings year-round. Upcoming screenings include:

Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) Screening

- Tuesday, Feb. 10; 2—5 p.m.
- St. Catherine Hospital
4321 Fir St.
North Entrance—Cardiac
Rehabilitation Department

This simple 15-minute test screens for blockages in the arteries of the legs and offers consultation or physician referral.

- Cost is \$10 and participants must register in advance. To register, call **219-836-3477** or **866-836-3477**.

Advanced Comprehensive Heart Health Screening

St. Catherine Hospital is offering a new Heart Health Screening to help determine your heart health. The screening includes a series of tests: blood pressure, blood draw to test for total cholesterol (including HDL and LDL) and blood sugar, Doppler, carotid artery testing, abdominal aortic aneurysm screening, EKG, as well as waist circumference measurement and a questionnaire to determine your risk of heart disease.

- Register for a reduced-cost comprehensive Heart Health Screening by calling **219-836-3477** or **866-836-3477**.

► Visit **www.comhs.org** and click on St. Catherine Hospital and the Community Programs tab for more information.



When Linda Goddard's left toe became infected last year, she didn't think anything about it. Her focus was preparing for a family trip to Missouri. The day after she arrived in Missouri is when, she says, everything took a turn for the worse.

"My sister died unexpectedly just after I arrived and I returned home as sad and depressed as could be," says the 70-year-old Griffith resident. "Then, my toe infection seemed to be spreading



Cardiologist Najumal Ansari, MD



throughout my entire leg. I really don't remember much after that. I just know I was really sick. In the hospital, the infection got so bad, my entire leg had to be amputated at the knee," she says.

For 20 years, Goddard had suffered with Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD). She never thought a toe infection could lead to an amputation.

"Who knew?" she wonders out loud. "But, I sure learned from this experience and I tell others to keep their feet and toes healthy."

Just as she was healing after the initial surgery, Goddard noticed her right leg became red and swollen, definite signs of infection, she realized after her first incident.

"I thought, 'no way,' I am not going through this again," says Goddard. "I called St. Catherine Hospital close to home and got admitted right away. I am so thankful I met Dr. (Najumal) Ansari. He not only saved my right leg, he saved my life," she says.

Cardiologist Najumal Ansari, MD, says Goddard was very sick with heart disease for many years, but is now on her way to leading a healthier life.

"An atherectomy right limb salvage was performed on Ms. Goddard. This is a non-invasive procedure under local



anesthesia that utilizes a catheter with a sharp blade on the end to remove plaque from a blood vessel. The catheter is inserted into the artery through a small puncture, thus eliminating blockages and saving her limb," says Ansari.

Looking back, Goddard says she wishes she would have taken advantage of PAD and heart screenings the hospital offers and had taken better care of her feet and legs.

"I am bound and determined to walk again and regain my health, and I am very thankful to Dr. Ansari and the St. Catherine Hospital team," she says. ■



To help residents lead heart-healthier lives, St. Catherine Hospital offers free health fairs, community-outreach and education, and discounted screenings year round.

The New Beat on Heart Health

New technology offers patient a minimally invasive option to open heart surgery



Heart patient Geraldine Leka gave two thumbs up after being awarded a “graduation” certificate from her Phase II cardiac rehabilitation at St. Mary Medical Center.

“I am feeling better than I have in years,” she says. “Even though I was having difficulty breathing while doing everyday tasks like getting dressed, I didn’t think my condition was that serious. Now, I’m so glad I listened to my doctor.”

Leka is feeling great again after a new minimally invasive procedure to treat a life-threatening condition. St. Mary Medical Center cardiologist Arif Khalil, MD, is among the first surgeons in the Chicago area to use the FDA-approved Diamondback 360® Coronary Orbital Atherectomy System (OAS) to treat severely blocked coronary arteries.

“Over the years, I’ve had high blood pressure and occasional chest pains,” explains Leka. “After several medications failed, as well as a stress test, Dr. Khalil asked me to come in for consultation. It was a good thing I came in when I did. I had a 90 percent blockage in my heart,” she says.

Coronary arterial disease (CAD) is a life-threatening condition and leading cause of death in men and women in the United States. CAD occurs when a fatty material called plaque builds up on the walls of arteries that supply blood to the heart. The plaque buildup causes the arteries to harden and narrow (atherosclerosis), reducing blood flow. The risk of CAD increases if a person has one or more of the following: high blood pressure, abnormal cholesterol levels, diabetes or family history of early heart disease.

A Safer Way to Perform Angioplasty

“We used the Diamondback device to ‘sand away’ hardened plaque—the calcified matter that builds up on the inside walls of the blood vessels,” Khalil explains. “It is a safe, less invasive way to perform angioplasty and stenting to treat the blockage that can become more complicated with alternative techniques available.”

Diamondback 360® is a minimally invasive procedure that saves time and reduces the patient’s risk for complications in comparison to bypass graft surgery, Khalil says.

More than 400,000 people per year in the United States with CAD have coronary artery bypass graft surgery. During this open chest surgery, a segment of a healthy blood vessel from another part of the body is used to make a detour around the blocked part of the coronary artery. The associated hospital stay can last four to six days or longer.

A less-invasive treatment to open arteries that accounts for more than 1,300,000 procedures per year is called percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI). PCI is the technique in which a catheter is threaded through the blood vessels and is used to deliver a stent or balloon to the site and open the blocked artery. However, the PCI technique does not always effectively treat or eliminate the existing hardened plaque.

According to estimates, significant arterial calcium is present in nearly 40 percent of patients undergoing a PCI.

The Diamondback Atherectomy System uses a small, diamond-coated



Geraldine Leka goes to cardiac rehabilitation three times a week and works out with the help of Cardiopulmonary Rehab Nurse Cindy Batz, RN.



Cardiologist A. Khalil, MD, FACC, FSCAI

crown designed to first sand away hardened plaque without damaging the good surrounding tissue then help deploy and position a stent at the site of the eliminated blockage.

and volunteering again. And now that I've completed cardiac rehabilitation, I'm going to continue with Phase III. It helps me stay active and I've made so many new friends," she says. ■

Feeling Better After the Procedure

"The Diamondback system grinds down the calcium built up and it evaporates and exits the body through the bloodstream," Khalil says. "I've been very pleased with the results."

"Almost the instant he was finished with the procedure, I felt 100 percent better," says Leka after her overnight stay. "I'm out and about going shopping

WEBSITE



Find Out More

For more information about the cardiovascular services available at St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart, visit www.comhs.org/stmary.

Balancing Act

Dizziness therapy restores quality of life

In the midst of the brutally cold, record-setting winter of December 2013, Susan Smith was salting her snow-capped driveway when she suddenly slipped and fell.

“I woke up freezing and with a terrible headache,” recalls the Schererville resident. “When I stood back up, everything was spinning. So, I lay back down, rolled over and crawled to the front door.”

Her accident landed Smith a trip to the local emergency department, where she was treated for a cut on her head and was told she had suffered a concussion. She was given medication for her pain and sent home.

Smith’s CT scan results showed nothing severe. However, she continually suffered dizziness from her concussion. She began to notice changes in her ability to function normally. Simple tasks like bending over to pick something up would cause her to become extremely dizzy.

“My ability to do basic math—add, subtract, multiply—was shot,” says Smith. “Even shampooing my hair was difficult because closing my eyes made me dizzy. I had to brace myself against the shower wall so I didn’t fall,” she says.

Getting Diagnosed

Dizziness can be related to a number of health issues. In some instances, a Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan is needed to rule out more severe causes.

Following her MRI, Smith was diagnosed with a condition known as benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV). Her fall had broken free tiny calcium crystals within her inner ear and repositioned them in another part of her ear responsible for maintaining balance. The crystals were then moving about freely inside her ear, and every turn of her head triggered dizziness.



**Sreekant
Cherukuri, MD**



**Priscilla Mulesa,
PT, MS, GCS**

“People who have a recent history of hitting their head, a recent upper respiratory illness or severe personal stress are at risk for BPPV,” says Sreekant Cherukuri, MD, Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) specialist at Community Hospital in Munster. They should see an ENT to make sure there are no ear infections or other ear diseases, which are also known to cause BPPV.

“I thought it would correct itself,” explains Smith. “When it got to be August I thought, wow, I should probably get this checked out.”

Smith had suffered for eight months before seeking therapy. “If left untreated, dizziness oftentimes goes away, but much more slowly than if a patient undergoes a particle repositioning maneuver, which is a series of specific head movements in an orchestrated fashion that move the inner ear crystals back to where they are supposed to be,” says Cherukuri. “Another way to improve BPPV is to go to a vestibular therapist for vestibular (balance) rehab.”

Finding a Cure

Community Hospital’s Physical Therapy Department, the Dizziness and Spine Therapy Services at Fitness Pointe® and the Community Hospital Outpatient Centre in St. John specialize in providing therapy to patients who experience dizziness caused by vestibular or neurological conditions, such as stroke or multiple sclerosis. “Vestibular therapy



Community Hospital physical therapist Priscilla Mulesa, certified in vestibular rehabilitation, teaches Susan Smith repositioning exercises that she can do at home to help alleviate dizziness after a fall.

is an excellent tool to resolve dizziness and improve balance,” explains Priscilla Mulesa, PT, MS, GCS, Community Hospital physical therapist and geriatric clinical specialist. “Patients need to be checked by a doctor first to diagnose the condition and then go to a therapist specializing in vestibular rehabilitation for treatment.”

Smith had five sessions with Mulesa and her dizziness and imbalance resolved. As she progressed through therapy, she was given a printout on how to do therapeutic repositioning exercises at home.

“They told me if you feel dizzy, do the exercises,” says Smith. “I haven’t had a dizzy spell since the week prior to my last appointment. The positioning Priscilla had me do fixed it,” she says.

Specialists at Community Hospital helped Smith’s inner-ear crystals and life fall back into place. “Everybody at the hospital has been very helpful and extremely kind,” says Smith. “I learned a few things from this experience: Don’t go outside unless someone knows where I am; always wear shoes with good treads; and don’t wait so long to see the doctor.” ■

WEBSITE



Find Out More

For more information about dizziness therapy services, visit www.comhs.org.

Paint the Town PINK

Annual event brings fun, funds
and awareness BY **ANGELA MOORE**



Each May, the City of Whiting “Paints” the Town Pink with fundraisers including dining out events, a Pink Bra Party, school activities and a 5K fun run. To date, the event has raised more than \$40,000 for the Cancer Resource Centre.

Like the color it’s named for, Whiting’s annual Paint the Town Pink event is bright, cheerful, bold, fun, contagious, inviting, educational and energetic. These characteristics also describe the spirit of the event’s co-founders: Madison and Ulm.

Since 2011, Stephanie Madison, credit union mortgage specialist, and Kathleen Ulm, downtown business owner, have worked with the City of Whiting, local businesses, schools and other organizations to bring breast cancer awareness to the forefront. Each May, the entire city “Paints” the Town Pink with fundraisers including dining out events, a Pink Bra Party, school activities and a 5K fun run and walk. Even the Northwest Indiana Oilmen baseball team is onboard.

St. Catherine Hospital has been a supporter of the event since it debuted. Hospital staff provide hundreds of free health screenings at the walk, where women also are able to pledge to have their annual mammogram and learn about the importance of early detection of breast cancer.

“The City of Whiting and St. Catherine Hospital are neighbors and when the opportunity to partner on such a worthy cause came about, it was a win-win for everyone involved,” says hospital CEO Jo Ann Birdzell.

To date, the popular event has raised more than \$40,000 for the Cancer Resource Centre in Munster. The Centre is a program of the Community Cancer Research Foundation, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of cancer care available to

residents. All services are offered free of charge to cancer patients.

“The Mayor and City of Whiting do everything they can to help make the activities a success, whether it is hanging our bright pink banners or organizing a walk team,” says Madison. “They are truly leading the community by example,” she says.

“Nothing but good comes out of these events and they bring the community together, raising awareness and money,” says Ulm.

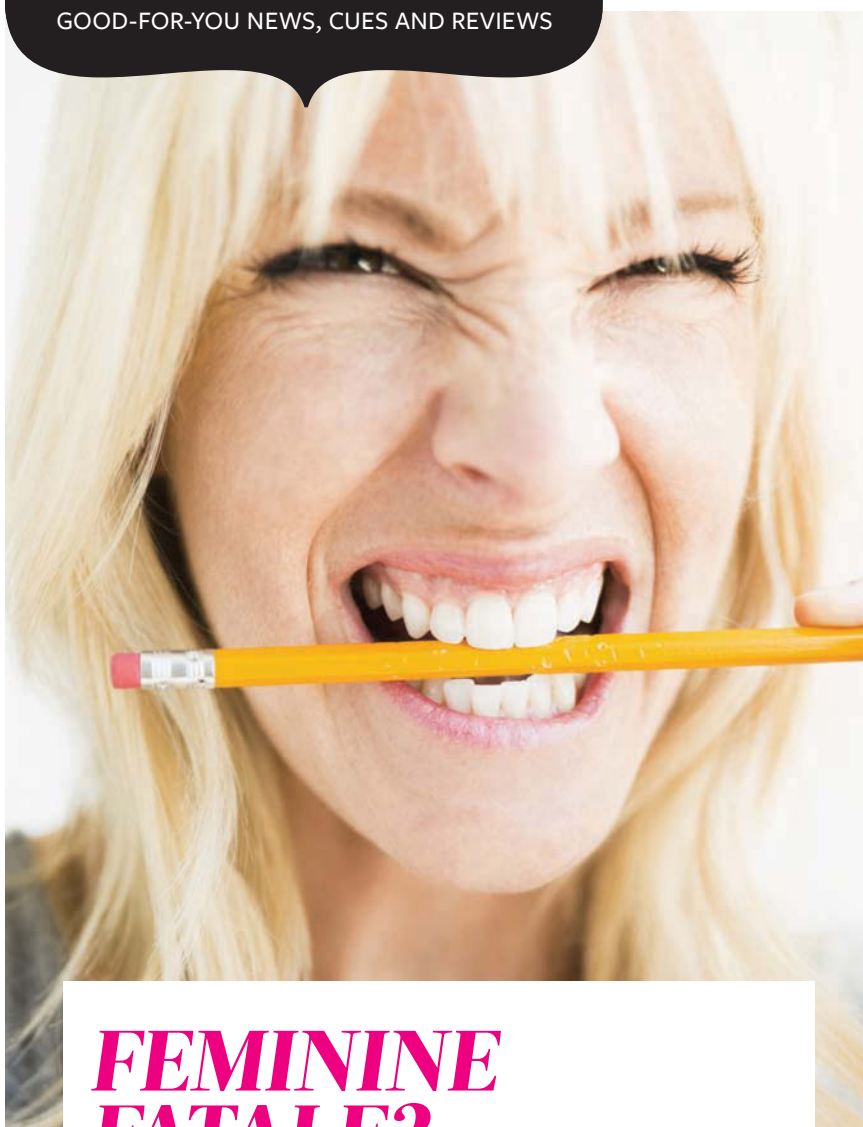
Last year, the Northwest Indiana Oilmen took their turn at helping support the community-wide event by hosting their first “Paint the Game Pink” night at Oil City Stadium.

“This is an important cause for our organization and a personal one for my family,” says Oilmen President Don Popravak, whose wife lost both her mother and grandmother to breast cancer. “We are very proud to be a part of the city’s efforts.” ■

“Nothing but good comes out of this event that brings the community together, raising awareness and critical funding.”

THIS JUST IN

GOOD-FOR-YOU NEWS, CUES AND REVIEWS



FEMININE FATALE?

There's no fury like a woman scorned. And her blood pressure? Oy vey.

Negative social interactions may cause more than just a “talk to the hand” type of tension, according to a study in *Health Psychology*. They may also cause hypertension, commonly known as high blood pressure.

In the study, women ages 51 to 64 who reported having too many demands placed on them or being criticized, disappointed or aggravated with others were more likely to develop high blood pressure. The dynamic did not hold true for women 65 and older or men.

This Mother's Day, you might ask the kids to swap the flowers for a home blood pressure monitor.



BAD DOG

See Spot run. See Spot jump. See Spot let you get a good night's sleep. Two out of three ain't bad.

While dogs may encourage healthy activities such as walking, they may also be wrecking your sleep at night. Ten percent of sleep center patients reported sleep disruption caused by pets—up from 1 percent in 2002, a recent study shows.

Top pet disturbances are snoring, whimpering, wandering, whining to go outside and medical needs.

APP



Slot Those Shots

Find it hard to keep up with child and adult immunization schedules? Download the CDC Vaccine Schedules app, which updates with new guidelines automatically, at cdc.gov/vaccines.

THIS JUST IN

GOOD-FOR-YOU NEWS, CUES AND REVIEWS

SHADY NUMBERS

Spring kick-starts months of gardening and outdoor runs. And while popping a baseball cap on your noggin offers a bit of protection from the sun, it's not helping as much as you might hope.

A recent article in the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology* examines the actual sun-protection factor of common shade devices.

- ▶ **SHADE UMBRELLA:** SPF 4
- ▶ **WIDE-BRIMMED HAT:** SPF 2 for the chin; SPF 7 for the nose
- ▶ **NARROW-BRIMMED HAT:** SPF 1.5 for the nose; minimal to no protection elsewhere
- ▶ **MAKEUP FOUNDATION WITHOUT SUNSCREEN:** SPF 2 to 6
- ▶ **TREES:** SPF 4 to more than 50, depending on density of leaves

Bottom line: Even shade-seekers need to commit to sunscreen. Most experts recommend broad-spectrum SPF 30.

WEBSITE



How Clean Is Your Air?

Visit stateoftheair.org to see whether your city ranks among the most polluted or the cleanest cities in America based on ozone and particle pollution.

ORANGE JUICE VS. APPLE JUICE

Which drink is healthier?

ANSWER: ORANGE JUICE.

A 1-cup serving of OJ has more vitamin C, nearly double the potassium and 2 grams less sugar than apple juice, according to the USDA National Nutrient Database. For the healthiest choice, eat a whole orange or apple for more fiber and less sugar.



PHOTO BY GETTY/THE IMAGE BANK



SPRING-CLEANING

If you know a young mom who's the queen of clean, let her know—gently—that she might be creating a royal mess.

A home that's too clean may leave infants vulnerable to a higher incidence of allergies or asthma later in life, recent research suggests. The findings support the idea that squeaky-clean surroundings don't allow the body to develop the ability to fight off allergens.

So, while spring-cleaning may be good for the soul, it also turns out that a little dirt won't hurt.

▶ TRUE OR FALSE

Video games may cause osteoarthritis.

TRUE As if violence, antisocial behavior, fatigue and even seizures from flashing lights in video games weren't scary enough, it appears we can add osteoarthritis to the list of risks of playing video games.

Excessive gaming may lead to osteoarthritis, particularly in boys, a recent study shows. One reason? The weight of and the button placement on game controllers were designed for adult use, thus a child's developing joint structure may be damaged by the overuse of joints.



SMOKE-FREE FACTS



20

MINUTES

after quitting:
Heart rate and blood pressure drop.



2

WEEKS

to 3 months:
Lung function increases.



1

YEAR:

Additional risk of heart disease is half that of a smoker.



2 TO 5

YEARS:

Stroke risk can fall to that of a nonsmoker.

Source: American Cancer Society

GOT RHYTHM?

Finding your heart health answers is easy with low-cost vascular screenings offered by the hospitals of Community Healthcare System and their outpatient facilities. Scheduled several times throughout the year, the program helps identify possible risks for stroke or heart attack, even before symptoms occur.

Our cardiac and cardiopulmonary specialist will read the results and deliver them to your physician for follow-up, if necessary. Screenings include:

1. Stroke/Carotid Artery Screening
2. Heart Rhythm Screening
3. Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening
4. Peripheral Arterial Disease Screening

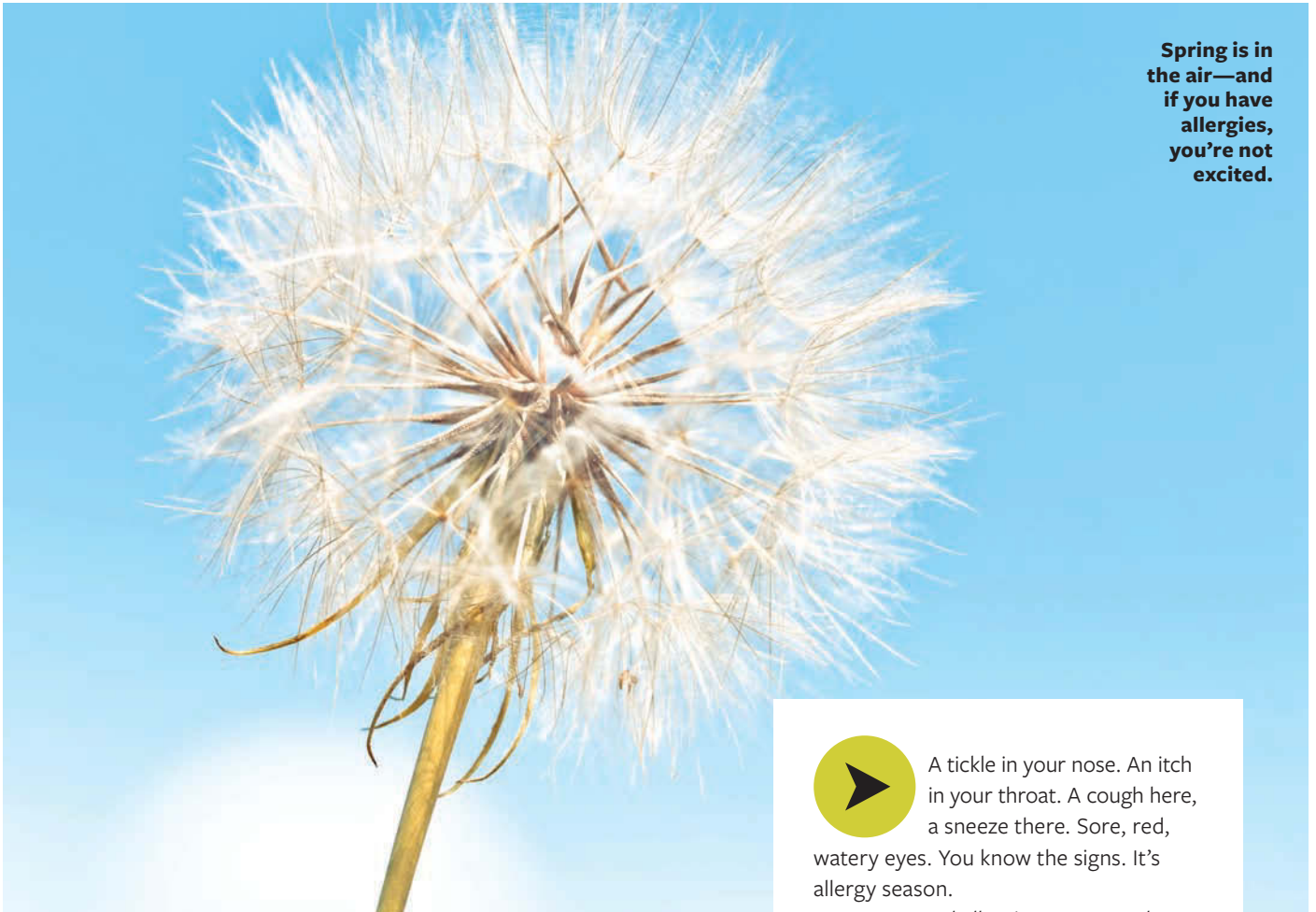
CALL



What's Your Risk?

A variety of heart health screenings are offered at several locations throughout Community Healthcare System. To register, call our physician referral line at **866-836-3477**.

Spring is in the air—and if you have allergies, you're not excited.



THE TRUTH ABOUT **ALLERGIES**

.....
Ah, spring. The season of new grass, flowering trees—and watery eyes. Learning fact from fiction about seasonal allergies can help relieve the misery.



A tickle in your nose. An itch in your throat. A cough here, a sneeze there. Sore, red, watery eyes. You know the signs. It's allergy season.

But seasonal allergies are more than just an annual nuisance. They occur when exposure to allergens causes your immune system to overreact and produce symptoms ranging from minor (a runny nose) to major (wheezing and shortness of breath). Think you know your seasonal allergies? Read on to find out.

TRUE OR FALSE:

Allergies last for life.

→ **FALSE.** “That is a common misconception,” explains Janna Tuck, MD, a spokeswoman for the American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology. “But allergies do come and go.”

Allergies tend to first appear in childhood, she says. In that case, don't expect

to outgrow them. Conversely, you might not even experience allergies until you're an adult, depending on when you're first exposed to certain allergens.

But, as Tuck notes, allergies are more related to genetics and environment than age.

You have a 70 percent chance of having allergies if both your parents have allergies, according to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America. But since you can't change your genetic code, the better option is to find out what you're allergic to.

Then, you can find ways to alter your environment or discuss treatment options with your doctor.

TRUE OR FALSE:

Allergies occur only in spring.

→ **FALSE.** There's not any one season for allergies.

In spring, people have to contend with pollen, a common allergen. But for people allergic to grass, summer is prime allergy season. Meanwhile, fall brings ragweed, and winter's dampness can trigger mold allergies. Depending on your immune system, you could be affected by allergies for one season—or all year.

TRUE OR FALSE:

Eating local honey helps prevent allergies.

→ **FALSE.** Some experts say the theory behind this form of immunotherapy is sound—the idea being that the honey contains small amounts of local pollen, which can help the body become less sensitive to it.

“But there's no scientific proof that eating local honey does anything,” Tuck says.

One reason, experts say, could be that

TIME TO SEE AN ENT

Itchy eyes, chronic runny nose, dreaded sinus headache? When is it time to see a specialist? Seasonal changes, environmental allergies and geographic location can all play a role in overall sinus health. In areas with seasonal changes, such as the Midwest, allergies, asthma and sinusitis often overlap. Some infections are short-lived or acute, while others continue to persist despite antibiotic treatment, a condition referred

to as chronic. A thorough history, allergy testing and imaging studies are useful tools to aid in diagnosis. An otolaryngologist (or ear, nose and throat specialist) can treat a variety of conditions affecting the ears, nose, throat, sinuses, oral cavity and larynx. Since every patient is different, it is important to make an appointment with an otolaryngologist who can customize a treatment plan to satisfy your individual needs.

the pollen that triggers allergies isn't the same kind of pollen bees carry.

TRUE OR FALSE:

Moving to the desert can alleviate allergies.


→ **TRUE—AND FALSE.** If you're allergic to pollen, you'll be allergic to pollen anywhere. But if you move to the desert, where there's less of the stuff in the air, you'll likely experience an improvement in symptoms.

But beware, Tuck says. The desert is not an allergen-free environment, and you can find you're allergic to something in the desert air, too.

TRUE OR FALSE:

Lifestyle changes can relieve allergies.

→ **TRUE.** Start with environmental changes. Staying inside on high-pollen-count days and keeping doors and windows closed can make a huge difference. A number of effective medication options

CALL 

Dial Up Relief

For a referral to an ear-nose-throat specialist on staff at Community Hospital, St. Catherine Hospital or St. Mary Medical Center, call **219-836-3477**.

are also available, Tuck says. And allergen immunotherapy, also known as allergy shots, can work as a long-term solution, gradually allowing your body to develop a tolerance to the allergen.

“For the most part, allergies and asthma aren't life-threatening, but they do affect how people enjoy their lives,” she adds. “Good control of your symptoms can really make a difference in how you feel.” ■

GOLDEN GIFTS

Our top gift picks for the stylish and savvy seniors in your life

► Bette Davis famously once said, “Old age ain’t no place for sissies,” and she was right—just ask anyone older than 65. Though aging comes with challenges, gifts for the older set don’t have to look as if they came from a medical supply shop. Today’s stylish and savvy seniors deserve better. We share our top gift picks for the mature folks in your life. ■



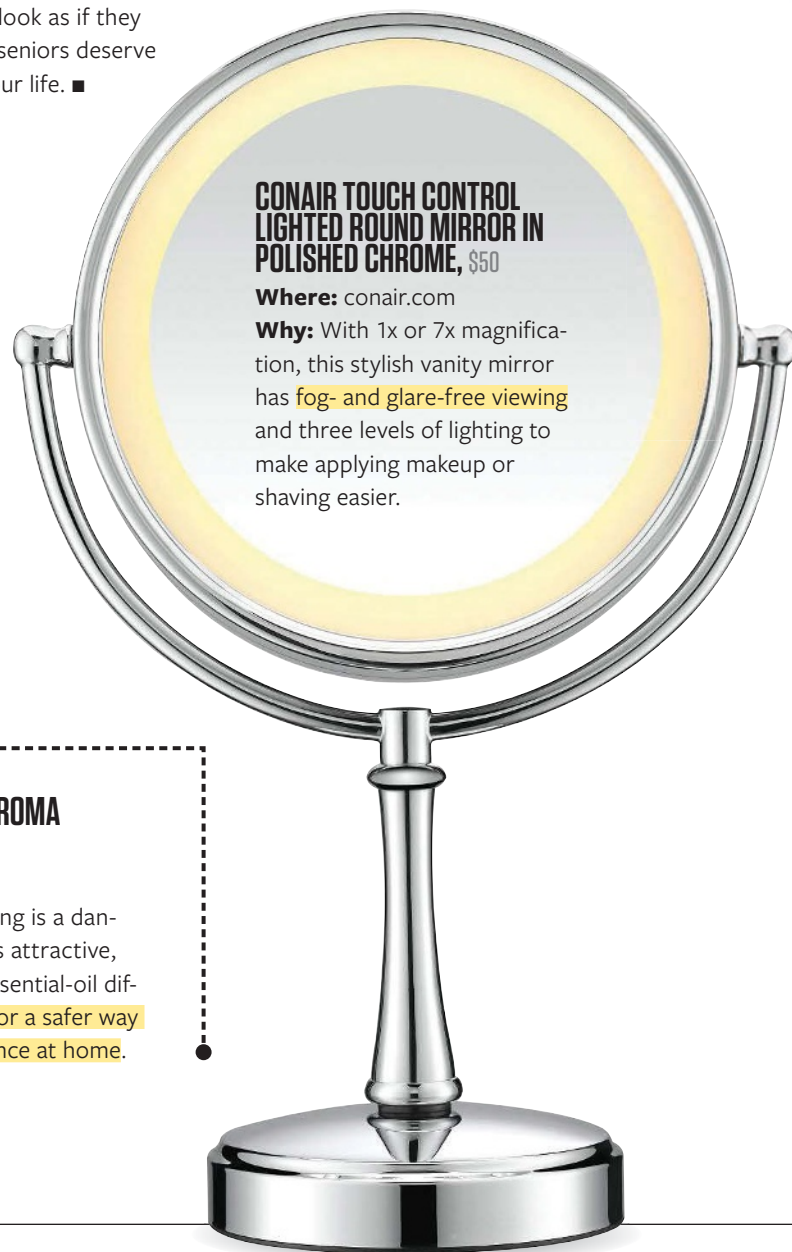
FULGRUM 12-LED LANTERNA TOUCH LAMP IN BRUSHED SILVER, \$30

Where: Various online retailers
Why: This contemporary, cordless touch lamp provides diffused, portable light for navigating the dark. Great as a table lamp that can be used for nighttime trips to the bathroom. Also available in brushed copper.



PUZHEN YUN FIVE-SENSE AROMA DIFFUSER, \$369

Where: puzhen.com
Why: Leaving candles burning is a dangerous idea for seniors. This attractive, remote-control-operated essential-oil diffuser plays soothing music for a safer way to add fragrance and ambience at home.



CONAIR TOUCH CONTROL LIGHTED ROUND MIRROR IN POLISHED CHROME, \$50

Where: conair.com
Why: With 1x or 7x magnification, this stylish vanity mirror has fog- and glare-free viewing and three levels of lighting to make applying makeup or shaving easier.



GEMSTONE AND PEARL EYEGLASS NECKLACE, \$125

Where: strandsjewelry.com

Why: Misplacing glasses is a common problem. This pretty 22-inch-long eye-glass necklace is an attractive way to keep them close and can be adjusted to wear as a bracelet.



TEMPUR-PEDIC CLOUD MOC, \$59

Where: tempurpedic.com

Why: With patented TEMPUR insoles, a soft fleece lining and a nonslip, durable sole, these slippers can be worn indoors or out.



HOMEDICS JET SPA ELITE FOOT BATH WITH HEAT, \$40

Where: homedics.com

Why: Massaging bubbles target the heels, arches and toes to rejuvenate tired feet while a toe-touch control and spinning pedicure center cleans, exfoliates or massages with no bending required.



TOESOX HALF-TOE BELLA GRIP SOCKS, \$16

Where: toesox.com

Why: Go one better than barefoot. These colorful socks feature exposed toes to improve balance and patented grippers to reduce the chance of slipping at home.

► HEALTHY BUYS



LEVO G2 DELUXE STAND, \$190

Where: bookholder.com

Why: This adjustable stand lets seniors use a tablet, book (with optional accessory) or e-reader hands-free, bringing it as close or far away as needed for a comfortable reading experience.



AMEFA CURVED ERGONOMIC DINING UTENSILS SET, \$50

Where: elderlux.com

Why: Thoughtfully designed lightweight utensils with thick, ergonomic handles and special curves make dining easier for those with arthritis and who have a limited range of motion in their hands or wrists.



OXO 15-PIECE EVERYDAY KITCHEN TOOL SET, \$100

Where: oxo.com

Why: This set features soft, easy-grip handles to avoid slips and a large capacity holder for keeping kitchen essentials within arm's reach.

UNGER NIFTY NABBER PLUS, \$20

Where: Various online retailers

Why: This handy 36-inch pickup tool can snatch up objects as light as a penny or as heavy as 8 pounds to help seniors avoid painful bending or dangerous climbing to get what they need.





RADIUS ERGONOMIC GARDEN TOOL SET, \$40

Where: radius.gostorego.com

Why: This sleek, multifunction gardening tool set **minimizes hand and wrist stress** for maximum comfort while working in the garden.



KINDLE PAPERWHITE, \$119

Where: amazon.com

Why: With a high-resolution display that reads well in dark or daylight without glare or eyestrain, this e-reader offers millions of books and periodicals and lets the user **magnify text and read easily with one hand.**

TICKET TO GOOD HEALTH

Most of us know that physical activity promotes good health, but could a ticket to the theatre provide similar benefits?

Researchers in Norway who followed the health status of more than 50,000 people found participation in cultural activities whether in schools, at church or in the community at large is good for your health. The study found that the more culture there was, the better the study participants' health, regardless of whether they consumed or created the culture.

There were some noted differences between men and women—men seemed to get more health benefits from engaging in passive cultural activities, such as

watching a play, rather than acting in it. Women who participated in cultural activities noted more benefits than women who consumed cultural events.

A Swedish study that followed more than 10,000 people over 14 years found a relationship between longevity and the people who most visited the cinema, concerts, museums or art exhibitions—although interestingly, no link existed between longevity and those who attended sporting events.

The takeaway from the Norwegian study, as well as other studies, is this: Culture can lower your stress levels and how you engage with cultural activities doesn't seem to matter.

CALL



A Night Out

Theatre at the Center produces live theatre productions, along with variety, musical and comedy events at the Center for Visual and Performing Arts in Munster. Gift certificates available, **219-836-3255; www.theatreattehcenter.org**

Frequent trips to the bathroom: a sign of kidney stones or a urinary tract infection?



FREAK OUT OR CHILL OUT?

Take this quiz to learn how savvy you are about confusing health symptoms



When it comes to understanding health woes, the Web can be both a great tool and a source of irrational fear. We've all been there—one minute you're Googling symptoms, the next you've diagnosed your condition as a rare and deadly disease. We've collected a handful of symptoms that can cause confusion, and analyzed each. So before you start panicking about your health, read on for a dose of reality.

PHOTO BY GETTY/THE IMAGEBANK

Q You've noticed in the past couple of days that you're making more trips to the bathroom than normal—and it burns when you urinate. Even though you feel the urge to go frequently, you pass only small amounts each time.

IS IT: Kidney stones or a urinary tract infection?


URINARY TRACT INFECTION (UTI).

While both UTIs and kidney stones can cause pain during urination, stones are often accompanied by severe pain in the back and the ribs, as well as nausea and vomiting. The more benign UTI typically causes problems related only to urination. Don't put off seeing your doctor if you have UTI symptoms. Short-term antibiotics usually end the infection quickly. Recurring or chronic infections require more tests and treatment.

Q After a bout of what you thought was the common cold, your little one is plagued with a bright red face and body rash. You aren't sure whether she's allergic to her cold medicine or it's something viral.

IS IT: An allergic rash or fifth disease?

FIFTH DISEASE. Fifth disease, which gets its name from its place on the list of standard rash-causing childhood diseases, is characterized by a low-grade fever, headache and coldlike symptoms followed by a bright red rash, particularly on the cheeks (hence the nickname "slapped cheek disease"). Caused by human parvovirus B19, the disease isn't preventable but isn't particularly worrisome either, typically requiring no treatment.

WEBSITE 

Don't Be an E-Hypochondriac

Sure, it's great to be informed about your health, but be careful where you go searching. A good place to start is MedlinePlus, which features a wealth of trustworthy health information verified by the National Institutes of Health. Visit nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus.

Q Spring has sprung, but even with the sun shining and the flowers blooming, you can't muster any get-up-and-go. Your energy level is low, you've put on a few pounds, and you're down in the dumps.

IS IT: Depression or hypothyroidism?

BOTH. Admittedly, this is a bit of a trick question. Hypothyroidism, a condition defined by an underactive thyroid, can cause depression, so if you're feeling blue for two weeks or more, talking to your doctor is the best place to start. The thyroid gland regulates your body's metabolism, so hypothyroidism can affect mood, weight, energy, skin and muscles among other things. A blood draw makes for an easy test, and hypothyroidism is treatable with medication.

Q Yoga pants are usually your go-to for weekend attire, but for the past few days, vaginal itching is making anything you wear uncomfortable. You also have abnormal discharge, and intercourse is painful.

IS IT: A yeast infection or cervicitis?

YEAST INFECTION. The combination of itching, pain and discharge is a classic sign of a yeast infection. If you've never

had one before, it's best to see a doctor to rule out anything more serious, but otherwise, over-the-counter treatments are usually just fine. Cervicitis, or cervix inflammation, also is common and might produce vaginal discharge and painful urination, but itching is not among the symptoms.

Q Every day for the last week, you've woken up at 3 A.M. with a sharp pain on the left side of your head from your neck to your temple. The pain lasts for more than an hour.

IS IT: A cluster headache or a brain aneurysm?

A CLUSTER HEADACHE. Symptoms of a brain aneurysm are a sudden and unusually severe headache along with vision impairment, nausea, vomiting and loss of consciousness; these are signals to call 911 immediately. Cluster headaches typically occur at the same time every day and affect one side of the head. While painful, they are not life threatening. Avoiding triggers such as alcohol and smoking may help, and your doctor can prescribe medications to alleviate the pain. ■

SMOKE ALARM



Every day, more than 3,200 American teens smoke their first cigarette. Recent federal antismoking ads appeal to adolescent vanity with a message about nonsmokers being better athletes, having smoother skin and being more kissable. Refraining from smoking can also do wonders for their bottom line.

\$12.1 billion

was spent on lung cancer care in the U.S. in 2010, equal to **buying new homes for 79,605 American families.**

\$8.4 billion

The tobacco industry spent \$8.4 billion on ads and promotions in 2011 that encouraged smoking. **That would buy a Mac Mini for 1.4 million families.**

\$35 billion

The combined profits of America's six biggest tobacco companies was \$35 billion in 2010. That would **buy everyone on the planet 7 to 12 pounds of rice.**

\$60,700

covers the first year of treatment for lung cancer, after adjustments for patient deductibles and coinsurance expenses. **That would send a student to Harvard for a year, including room and board.**

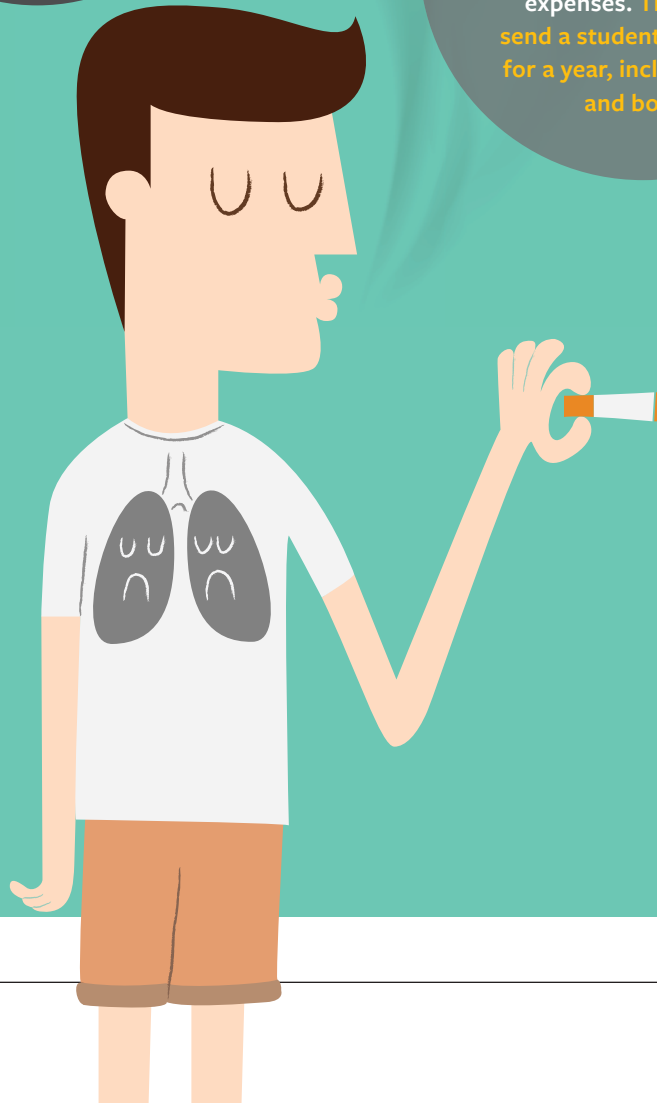
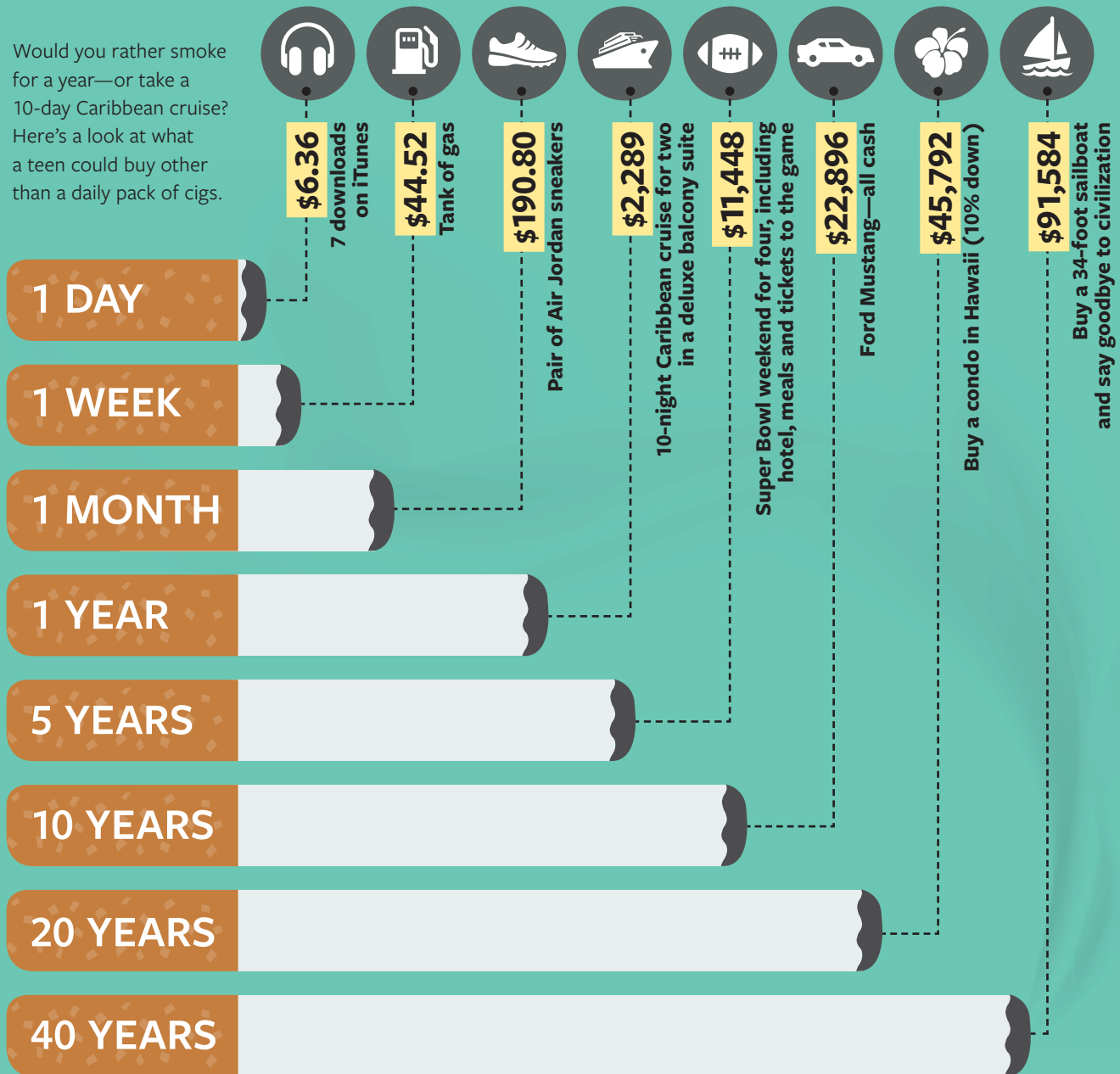


ILLUSTRATION BY THINKSTOCK

THE COST OF SMOKING

Would you rather smoke for a year—or take a 10-day Caribbean cruise? Here's a look at what a teen could buy other than a daily pack of cigs.



Sources: CDC, National Cancer Institute, American Lung Association, World Lung Foundation

3 WAYS TO COOK **SPINACH**

Popeye knew a good thing when he saw it: Low in calories but high in nutrients, this leafy, dark green does a body good



The “prince of vegetables” and the “captain of leafy greens” was how Ibn al-Awwam, a 12th-century writer and agriculturist, described spinach. And Torey Jones Armul, a registered dietitian nutritionist and an Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics spokeswoman, agrees. “Spinach is the ultimate power food, since it’s packed with vitamins and minerals but very low in calories, fat and sugar,” she says.

One cup of this green contains half our recommended daily allowance of vitamin A, which helps with vision, and twice the allowance of vitamin K, an aid in blood clotting as well as building healthy bones and tissue. Other star nutrients include folate, which helps make new cells and is essential for pregnant women; iron and vitamin C. A mix of raw and cooked spinach is ideal; heating the leaves can make some components easier to absorb. Try these three preparations to be sure you’re getting enough:



1 BLEND A SMOOTHIE

Experiment to find your favorite combination, but a good ratio is 1 cup of raw spinach (or a half-cup frozen), 1 cup of fruit, 1 cup of milk or juice, and about a half-cup of ice. Tell your kids the drink is named “The Green Monster,” and they’ll slurp it down.



2 SAUTÉ IT

Think of sautéing as the little black dress of spinach recipes: classic and effortless. Simply heat olive oil in a pan on high, add the leaves and toss with tongs until they’re bright green. Season with lemon juice and your favorite herbs or spices.



3 MAKE CUPCAKES

Purée 1 cup of spinach in the blender or food processor with a few tablespoons of water (it should look like baby food). Add it to your favorite cake batter, and other than the green tint, your kids will be none the wiser. ■



SPINACH SAVANT

FRESH VS. FROZEN

Fresh and frozen spinach are similar nutritionally, though raw leaves typically work better on sandwiches and wraps, and the frozen variety is easier to work into a baking or smoothie recipe. In late fall or early winter, when fresh spinach isn't as widely available, it's more economical to buy the frozen stuff.

WASH IT WELL

Spinach is notoriously sandy. Remove the stems and run the leaves under the faucet in small batches or soak them in a large bowl or basin of water. If soaking, you may need to change the water and repeat. Before cooking, taste a leaf to check for lingering grit and rewash if necessary. If you're serving a prewashed spinach mix to a child, a pregnant woman or anyone with a compromised immune system, Armul suggests washing the leaves in a salad spinner one final time as an extra precaution against food-borne illness.

TALKIN' TEETH

After munching on spinach salad, have you noticed that your teeth feel as if they have a coating? Chewing the leaves releases a harmless compound called oxalic acid, which is responsible for this sensation.


WEBSITE



Play with Their Food

Send kids to choosemyplate.gov/kids, where they can check out nutrition-focused games (Nutrition Sudoku) along with fun videos (first lady Michelle Obama demonstrating *The Evolution of Mom Dancing*).

FOCUS ON FERTILITY

 Between 1982 and 2010, infertility rates among married women decreased from 8.5% to 6%.

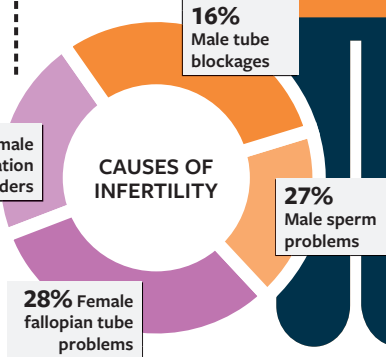


1 OUT OF 5 full-term pregnancies resulting from fertility treatments produces multiple births.

\$12,400

The average cost of an in-vitro fertilization cycle is \$12,400.

20% of U.S. women have their first child after 35.



13% Cigarette smoking causes up to 13% of infertility in women.

A third of couples have fertility problems when the woman is older than 35.



An average couple with no fertility issues requires six to 12 months of active efforts before achieving a pregnancy.

15% Couples in their 30s have a 15% chance of conceiving each month.

Sources: American Society of Reproductive Medicine, U.S. National Library of Medicine, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Society for Assisted Reproductive Technology, Human Reproduction

STRESS AND INFERTILITY

A little stress can be good thing. However, too much stress can affect your quality of life and lead to many health problems, including infertility in women. Everyone knows it is important to take care of yourself while you are pregnant, but it is also just as important to take care of yourself before pregnancy, too.

If you worry excessively, are unable to concentrate or notice changes in sleep or eating patterns, you may have fallen victim to stress, which may affect your ability to become pregnant. To avoid the complication of long-term stress, fight back with techniques to deal effectively with stress

such as deep breathing, exercise, eating right and partnering with a physician who specializes in infertility to help you through this process.

The hospitals of Community Healthcare System—Community Hospital in Munster; St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago and St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart—have obstetricians and gynecologists on staff who specialize in infertility and can help women take steps toward decreasing the harmful effects of stress on the body. Stress may lead to infertility, which in turn can lead to even more stress.

WEBSITE



Infertility Concerns?

Community Healthcare System has OB/GYN offices conveniently located throughout Northwest Indiana. To find a physician specializing in infertility issues, visit our website at www.comhs.org or call 219-836-3477 or toll free 866-836-3477.



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