

Health Connection

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY ONE FRIEND
AT A TIME AT UNION COUNTY HOSPITAL

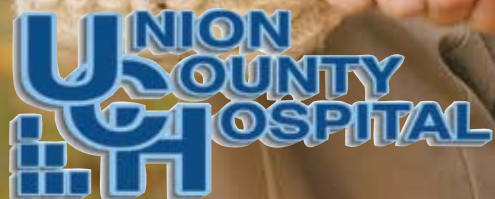
**Celebrate your
good health!**
Come to the 2009
Health Fair on Oct. 9

**Kids' sports injuries
on the rise**
Keep your child safe

Are you healthwise?
Take our quiz!

**Avoid the flu
this season!**

**Living well with
heart disease**





Do you really need a primary care physician?

Sure, most health plans require a primary care physician (PCP) for specialist referrals. But that's just one reason it's a good idea to have one dedicated clinician to oversee all your health concerns.

THE KEY TO SUPERIOR CARE

Developing an ongoing relationship with one physician who knows you and your medical history leads to a better overall outcome and lower costs. The reason? Your PCP can counsel you on healthy lifestyle choices, such as exercise options, an eating plan and other prudent lifestyle adjustments and modifications. Plus, seeing your PCP regularly makes him or her better at evaluating your symptoms than practitioners who don't know you. Additionally, a PCP provides routine health screenings, which can find diseases early—when they're easier to treat (see “Screenings your PCP may provide”). This, in turn, translates into less invasive and less expensive treatments.

A GUIDING LIGHT

If you've ever wished you could go to one place for all your health concerns or worried whether you're approaching the right physician for a particular ailment, you're in luck. A PCP can be your primary contact to address most personal healthcare needs.

The healthcare system can be intimidating—especially when you're faced with a frightening symptom. A PCP can evaluate the problem and either manage it him- or herself or arrange for the appropriate referrals. And if you need specialist care, your PCP can guide you and coordinate all aspects of your care. Plus, he or she can sort through and help explain the advice of other physicians.

Who's who in the PCP world

When picking a PCP, you can choose from many different types of healthcare professionals:

- **Family practitioners.** Physicians who care for children and adults of all ages. They may also practice obstetrics and minor surgery.
- **General practitioners.** Physicians who provide basic care for all ages.
- **Internists.** Physicians who care for adults of all ages and can treat many different medical problems.
- **Obstetricians/gynecologists.** Physicians who specialize in reproductive health. They often serve as a PCP for women, especially those of childbearing age.
- **Hospitalists.** Physicians who care for people who are hospitalized. Most hospitalists are trained in internal medicine and work with a hospitalized patient's PCP to provide the best care.
- **Nurse practitioners and physician assistants.** Nonphysician providers of primary healthcare. Often referred to as “physician extenders,” they consult with physicians. They may see children, adults or women only and can prescribe medications and other treatments.
- **Pediatricians.** Physicians who treat newborns, infants, children and adolescents.

Screenings your PCP may provide

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> blood pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> cholesterol | <input type="checkbox"/> diabetes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> breast cancer | <input type="checkbox"/> colorectal cancer | <input type="checkbox"/> obesity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cervical cancer | <input type="checkbox"/> depression | <input type="checkbox"/> prostate cancer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> chlamydia | | |

Strength-train your brain

The mental benefits of exercise

Exercise has long been touted for its physical health benefits, such as improving metabolism, lowering blood pressure and reducing your risk of heart disease, stroke and cancer. But working up a sweat is also good for your head. Here's how:

BEATS THE BLUES

In a review of 80 studies on exercise and depression, researchers concluded that getting physical can act like an antidepressant. The analysis found that exercise decreased depression more than relaxation training (such as meditation or breathing) or engaging in enjoyable activities did. Working out may boost levels of feel-good endorphins, natural painkillers that promote a heightened sense of well-being.

TAMES TENSION

Physical activity releases muscle tension, reduces levels of the stress hormone cortisol and raises body temperature, which may have calming effects. Additionally, it can shift your attention away from anxious thoughts to something more pleasant, like your surroundings or the music that gets you moving.

AMPS UP ENERGY

Often feel drained? Inactivity is the likely culprit. Yes, working out may make you tired in the short term, but it helps increase stamina and energy in the long run. And, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, staying active may improve sleep quality, which translates into more next-day pep.

CRANKS UP CONFIDENCE

If you're nervous, working up a sweat gives you a confidence boost. How does getting sweaty raise self-worth? The effect is thought to be brought about by the sense of accomplishment that comes from meeting fitness goals or challenges.

BOOSTS BRAIN POWER

Regular physical activity can help keep your thinking, learning and judgment skills sharp as you age. In one study of 62- to 70-year-olds, those who were still working and retirees who exercised sustained their levels of cerebral blood flow and performed better on cognition tests than inactive retirees. What's more, in a few studies of subjects older than age 65, those who worked out for at least 15 to 30 minutes three times a week were less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease.



How much is enough?

If you have a physical disability, talk with your physician before exercising. Once you get his or her OK, do the following activities to reap the mental and physical benefits:

- A minimum of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity (like brisk walking) each week. If you're just getting started, break your workout into three brisk 10-minute walks a day, five days a week. Not into walking? Do water aerobics, go for a bike ride, play doubles tennis or mow the lawn—anything that gets you moving.
- Muscle-strengthening activities that target all major muscle groups on two or more days a week. Try heavy gardening (digging, shoveling), yoga, lifting weights or other weight-bearing moves like push-ups or sit-ups. Aim for eight to 12 repetitions per activity.

Don't let the flu bug bite

A vaccination can help



By Terri Braddock, F.N.P.
Union County Hospital
Family Practice Clinic

If you're one of many Americans who think they're somehow immune to infectious diseases, you may be putting yourself

at risk for serious illness. That's why this season, you should be sure to get your influenza (flu) vaccine, which helps you:

- prevent influenza-related death
- prevent severe illness
- protect other people

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus, which spreads from person to person through coughing and sneezing. For most people, it lasts only a few days. Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, headache, chills, runny nose, fatigue and muscle aches. Stomach symptoms, which mainly affect children, include nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Some individuals experience complications like bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections and dehydration. Flu also can be dangerous for people with heart or breathing conditions. In children, it can cause high fever and seizures.

TYPES OF VACCINATIONS

The best way to prevent the flu is to get a vaccination each year. The inactivated (killed) vaccine, or flu shot, has been used in the United States for many years and is injected. In 2003, the live weakened vaccine, a flu vaccine that's sprayed into the nostrils, was licensed. Although October or November is the best time to get vaccinated, getting inoculated in December or even later can still help. Most flu activity occurs in January, but the flu season can last through May.



WHO SHOULD BE VACCINATED?

If you want to reduce your chances of contracting the flu, get vaccinated. At-risk individuals or those who live with others who are at high risk for complications from the flu should get a vaccine. High-risk individuals include children 6 months to 5 years old, pregnant women, people ages 50 and older, anyone with chronic medical conditions and people who live in nursing homes.

To help prevent transmission from caregiver to patient, The Joint Commission requires vaccinations for individuals who come in contact with the virus, making reduction of influenza transmission from healthcare professionals to patients a top priority in the United States. Accredited by The Joint Commission, Union County Hospital has implemented safety standards for patients and staff.



Avoid the flu this season!

For more information about flu vaccinations, call Terri Braddock, F.N.P., at (618) 833-2872 or visit www.unioncountyhospital.com or www.cdc.gov.

Novel H1N1 flu: 8 things you need to know

Novel H1N1 flu has been in the news, and everyone is worried. Before you cancel all your plans, read on for answers to common questions about H1N1 flu.

1. What is H1N1 flu? Originally called swine flu, H1N1 flu is a respiratory disease caused by an influenza virus. People don't usually get H1N1 flu, but now it's spreading around the world.

2. How does it spread? You won't catch H1N1 flu from eating pork products. It's spread by coughing, sneezing or even touching a door handle, elevator button, computer keyboard or other object that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth, eyes or nose. People with the virus can be contagious from one day before they have symptoms until seven days later.

3. What are the symptoms? They're similar to those of the regular flu—fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also experience diarrhea and vomiting.

4. Are there medicines to treat H1N1 flu? Yes. The prescription antiviral medicines Tamiflu and Relenza can prevent infection and, if you do get sick, make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious complications. But not everyone needs these drugs—some people have improved without treatment.

5. Is there an H1N1 flu vaccine? No. Researchers are working on a vaccine, but it's a long process that will take months.

6. What can I do to protect myself? Washing your hands for at least 15 to 20 seconds is the best way to protect against germs. No soap and water? Use alcohol-based hand wipes. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

7. What should I do if I get sick? If you have flulike symptoms, stay home to keep the infection from spreading. Still not feeling well? Contact your physician to find out if you need testing or treatment.

8. Are there any warning signs? Yes. If you have trouble breathing; flulike symptoms that worsen; a fever with a rash; chest or stomach pain; sudden dizziness or confusion; or persistent vomiting, get emergency care.

Our Convenient Care Clinic

Dear friends,

In June, we held an open house to preview the exciting renovation and relocation of Union County Hospital's outpatient clinic. In addition to the clinic's physical changes, we're making an important change to its name.



Jim Farris
Chief Executive Officer

SAME QUALITY CARE

For years, this clinic has been referred to by many names: outpatient clinic, rural health clinic, urgent care and "that clinic on the second floor." To avoid this confusion, we've changed its name to the Convenient Care Clinic.

This new name best describes the services we offer. We're open seven days a week, 360 days a year to provide basic primary care services without an appointment. In other words, it's convenient care!

FOCUSED ON YOU

Patient and visitor convenience has been our focus throughout our recent renovations, from the opening of the new emergency room, radiology department, registration area and lobby addition in November 2007 to the operating room expansion and renovation project that's scheduled for later this year. As we work to continually improve our services and facilities, we remain focused on providing quality, convenience and confidentiality.

Regards,

JIM FARRIS
Chief Executive Officer
Union County Hospital

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about breast cancer?

Take this quiz to find out.

- 1** Your risk of developing breast cancer is increased by which of the following?
 - a. radiation exposure to the chest as a child or a young adult
 - b. first pregnancy after age 30
 - c. use of estrogen and progesterone to treat menopausal symptoms for four or more years
 - d. all of the above
- 2** Which is not a risk factor for developing breast cancer?
 - a. having a family history of the disease
 - b. being overweight
 - c. antiperspirant use
 - d. excessive drinking
- 3** Symptoms of breast cancer typically don't include:
 - a. changes in the size or contour of the breast
 - b. breast pain
 - c. an indentation of the nipple
 - d. a clear or bloody discharge from the nipple
- 4** Which of the following is not true about male breast cancer?
 - a. One in five men with breast cancer has a close male or female relative with breast cancer.
 - b. The average male is 60 to 70 years old at diagnosis.
 - c. Being overweight doesn't increase breast cancer risk.
 - d. Health conditions that affect the testicles may increase risk.
- 5** An annual mammogram once you turn 40 is important because:
 - a. your chance of being diagnosed with breast cancer increases with age
 - b. you may have a small cancer that won't show up until your next annual screening
 - c. the sooner you're diagnosed with breast cancer, the easier it is to treat
 - d. all of the above

ANSWERS: 1. (D), 2. (C), 3. (B), 4. (C), 5. (D)



Living with heart disease

Being diagnosed with heart disease can be scary. You may wonder: Will I still be able to do the things I love? By making a few adjustments, you can control your condition and enjoy life to its fullest. Here's how:

Master your medications. If your physician prescribes cholesterol- or blood pressure-lowering pills, tape a note to your mirror, set an alarm—whatever's necessary—to ensure you take them as directed every day.

Learn food math. Don't worry: You can still eat delicious meals. But you'll have to learn to read labels and keep tabs on your daily intake of certain foods. The basics:

- Keep total fat to less than 35 percent of your calories (saturated fat should equal just 7 percent).
- Limit cholesterol to 200 mg a day.
- Restrict sodium to 2,400 mg or less a day.
- Eat just enough calories to maintain or achieve a healthy weight.

Move more. Joining a gym is great (if you'll go), but it's not a requirement. Cleaning your house, walking your dog briskly and biking to the store are all examples of valid activity. Just 30 minutes a day will help protect your heart—even if you do only 10 minutes at a time. Of course, always check with your physician before beginning any exercise program.

If you follow these recommendations, you'll drop any extra pounds slowly, which means your weight loss is more likely to stick. The great news: Losing even 5 to 10 percent of your current weight can reduce your risk of heart attack and improve your overall health.

Keeping little athletes safe



Kids love sports, and we love watching them play. But each year, more than 3.5 million children under age 15 are treated for sports-related injuries, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). That number is on the rise. One reason: Many kids now play the same sport year-round, resulting in overuse injuries such as chronic muscle strains, stress fractures and tendonitis. Plus, some sports have gone more extreme. Cheer-leading alone injured almost 70,000 children in 2007. So how can you keep your child out of the ER?

- **Don't start too soon.** Don't let your child join a team until he or she is at least 6 years old, says the AAP.
- **Get a pre-season checkup.** Visit your pediatrician to make sure your son or daughter is indeed sports-ready.
- **Gear up correctly.** Make sure your child doesn't compete without the right sporting shoes, helmet and safety equipment.

- **Teach the wisdom of warming up and cooling down.** Insist that young athletes exercise lightly for at least three minutes, then stretch the muscles to be used for at least 30 seconds each before practice or a game.
- **Fill 'er up.** Make sure your child carries a water bottle and knows the importance of drinking frequently, even if he or she isn't thirsty. Dehydration can cause fatigue and sickness.
- **Watch carefully.** Discourage participation in just one sport. If your child shows sign of strain or injury, insist he or she stop playing immediately—then see your pediatrician.

Healthy eating on the run

You're out and about when hunger pangs hit. Stopping at the nearest fast-food joint, you order a cheeseburger, fries and a soda and quickly wolf it all down in your car. Minutes later you feel sluggish, bloated—and guilty.

The good news: Your healthy diet doesn't have to suffer just because you're racing from one obligation to the next, spending the day running errands or hitting the road for a family vacation. Be prepared with these smart-snacking tips:

- **Always take water with you.** If it's too

bland, add a slice of fruit or a splash of juice.

- **For an on-the-run breakfast,** grab low-fat string cheese and a piece of fruit.
- **Fill an insulated lunch box with fresh fruit,** carrots, celery sticks, walnuts, yogurt or peanut butter on 100 percent whole-wheat bread for snacks during the day. Keep protein bars or snack bags of almonds or raisins in your purse, glove compartment or tote bag for hunger attacks.
- **If you must hit the drive-through,** opt for a kid-sized meal with fresh fruit or a side salad (with low-fat dressing) instead of fries, and a grilled chicken sandwich instead of one that's breaded and fried. Skip the mayo and other fatty spreads.
- **Need a coffee break?** Order the low-fat, sugar-free version of your favorite frozen coffee or latte and skip the whipped cream and caramel drizzle.



Health Connection is published as a community service of Union County Hospital. There is no fee to subscribe.

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

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FALL 2009



UCH Health Fair 2009!

Friday, October 9, 8 a.m.–3 p.m.

Special health services

- basic metabolic panel testing
- blood pressure checks
- blood sugar checks
- complete blood count testing
- lipid panels
- mini bone density scans
- prostate-specific antigen screening
- pulse oximetry
- skin cancer screening

Entertainment schedule

- Wii bowling open to Union County students in sixth to eighth grades and ninth to 12th grades
- Senior Circle bingo
- and much more!

Fun for kids

- Bounce Blast
- crafts and games
- face painting



▲ Kids had plenty of fun at the 2008 Health Fair.

▼ Last year's Wii bowling winners showed their skills!

Many area businesses will offer information and giveaways!

Health information

- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease display
- home health services
- mammograms
- nutrition
- therapy services



Kick off ColorFest with a healthy start!

ColorFest is also on Friday, October 9! For more information, call (618) 833-4511, ext. 4359.

Plus food and refreshments and free popcorn all day!