

Health Connection

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



**Enhanced
breast imaging**
Digital mammography
comes to UCH

**Celebrate life as
a Healthy Woman!**

**Are you
exercise savvy?**
Find out inside

**Start your
day off right**
Why breakfast is your
most important meal

**Be wise—
immunize!**



Mind your medicine

Smart strategies to stay well



Adults over age 65 who have adverse drug reactions account for more than 177,000 emergency room visits each year. One-third of these visits are related to three drugs: warfarin (a blood thinner), insulin (for diabetes) and digoxin (a heart medicine). Many of these reactions can be avoided with better communication between patient and physician. Follow this advice to help you avoid becoming a statistic:

• **Tell your physician about all the medicine you're taking.** That

includes prescription medications and over-the-counter drugs and supplements. Your physician will want to make sure you're not taking anything that can cause a reaction or affect a drug's potency. For example, Ginkgo biloba, garlic, ginger and ginseng can all interact with warfarin, as can medications taken for headaches and joint pain, such as aspirin and ibuprofen. Iron and calcium supplements can interfere with thyroid medication absorption.

- **Ask questions.** Don't be afraid to ask your physician to clarify a medication's purpose and common side effects. Also make sure you know when and how often you should take it and what to do if you miss a dose. Learn both the medicine's brand name and generic name and its shape, size and color.
- **Write it down.** Keep a list of all the medications you take in your wallet in case you do end up in the ER. This will allow physicians and nurses to avoid giving you medicine that could cause a dangerous interaction.
- **Take your medication as prescribed.** Don't stop your treatment because you think it's not working, you have side effects or you think your pill-taking regimen is hard to stick with. Instead, call your physician. He or she may be able to prescribe a different medicine or dosage to minimize side effects or simplify your regimen.

Also let your physician know if you've stopped taking a prescribed medicine. Otherwise, he or she may assume the drug isn't working and give you a higher dosage or different medication.

- **Go to follow-up appointments.** Some medications, such as blood thinners and drugs for diabetes, seizures and heart problems, require regular blood tests and monitoring by your physician. Regular visits are crucial to ensure you're getting a safe and effective dose.



Snap, crackle, pop!

What are your joints telling you?

Your body is a symphony of sounds—that cracking in your ankles, the popping in your knee. What causes these noises? Sometimes, it's just ligaments or tendons tightening and moving with a joint. For the most part, these sounds are normal and don't require any treatment.

But sometimes these noises can signal a more serious problem. A loud pop and locking of a joint can mean that torn cartilage, a piece of bone or something else has gotten caught between joint surfaces. Cracking and grinding may be a sign of arthritis. A loss of smooth cartilage and roughening of the joint surface is to blame for these noises.

JUST MAKING NOISE?

To find out whether your popping and cracking should be of concern, look for the following signs. See your physician if you have any of these symptoms:

- pain accompanying the popping
- swelling of the joint
- locking or sticking of the joint
- loss of motion or function

A JOINT EFFORT

The Arthritis Foundation and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons suggest following these tips to keep your joints healthy:

- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Stretch to increase your flexibility. Ask your physician to help you develop a regular stretching program.
- Stand up straight, shoulders back.
- When you lift heavy objects, use your legs instead of using your back. If you can't lift something yourself, ask for help.



- Alternate heavy activity such as housework, brisk walking or strenuous yardwork with rest periods.
- Wear protective gear, such as wrist, elbow or knee pads, if you're engaging in an activity where you could fall.
- Pay attention to your body. Pain may be a sign you're overworking your joints.
- Eat a well-balanced diet that includes plenty of calcium (1,200 mg a day for those over age 50; 1,000 mg for those ages 19 to 50).

Knuckle cracking: Bad to the bone?

Some people just can't resist cracking their knuckles. The cracking sound you hear is the "popping" of air bubbles when the joint is pushed or pulled a certain way. Knuckle cracking can certainly be annoying to others, but does it really make your knuckles larger? That old wives' tale hasn't been proven, but this is still a habit you should try to break, as studies point to possible soft-tissue damage in joints, a weak grip and hand swelling as a result of repeated cracking.





New technology, advanced care

UCH offers digital mammography

Women who undergo routine mammograms at Union County Hospital (UCH) now have an advanced diagnostic technology—digital mammography—available to them. UCH is excited to be the first healthcare provider in Union County to feature the Selenia digital mammography system from Hologic for breast cancer detection.

ENHANCED IMAGES

Digital mammography is different from conventional mammography in how the breast's image is viewed and, more important, manipulated. The radiologist can magnify the digital images, increase or decrease contrast and invert the black and white values while reading the images. These features allow the radiologist to evaluate microcalcifications and focus on areas of concern.

COMPUTER-AIDED DETECTION

To supplement this technology, UCH has incorporated digital computer-aided detection (CAD), the first of its kind in Anna. When activated, CAD highlights abnormalities to help the radiologist detect breast cancer early. CAD is like another set of eyes to support the radiologist's assessment.

Digital mammography feels identical to conventional screening from a patient's perspective, though women may notice shorter exam times and a reduction in callbacks to obtain additional images. Demand for digital mammography is high, and UCH is excited to offer this technology. Read more about its benefits on page 5.

! Get screened!

At Union County Hospital, our primary mission is to offer quality acute healthcare and preventive medical care in a caring and compassionate manner to all people who live in, work in or visit Union County and its surrounding areas. For more information about our comprehensive services or digital mammography, call (618) 833-4511 or visit www.unioncountyhospital.com. Detecting disease early offers you the best chance for beating it and staying on the path of wellness.

Inside digital mammography

Women will notice little difference when going for a digital mammogram at Union County Hospital (UCH). The procedure is the same as traditional film mammography, but it's less time consuming, since repeated breast repositioning for additional imaging is frequently unnecessary. The radiologist can process and retrieve the images faster, and because digital mammography is filmless, nothing has to be developed. Images are analyzed on a monitor and stored electronically, and hard copies can always be produced if needed.

CLEAR IMAGING

Women with dense breasts also benefit from a digital mammogram. Many younger women and those choosing menopausal hormone therapy may have dense breasts. For them, screening with digital mammography provides better breast tissue visualization.

When reading digital mammogram results, the radiologist is better able to manipulate the image to see through the breast more clearly—from the skin line to the chest wall. If calcifications exist, for example, they can be enhanced or magnified. This helps determine whether or not the calcifications are suspicious.

As always at UCH, the patient receives an indication of whether her mammogram is normal before leaving the office. Read more about this new advanced option on page 4.

► Digital mammography provides faster image retrieval and processing.



! Mammograms save lives!

To make an appointment for a digital mammogram, call the UCH radiology department at (618) 833-4511.

Commitment to growth

Dear friends,

More than a year ago, we opened an addition to the hospital containing our new emergency room, radiology department, registration area, gift shop and lobby. However, this was only phase I of a five-phase facility development plan.



Jim Farris
Chief Executive Officer

PHASES OF GROWTH

Phases II and III included the remodeling of our medical/surgical unit and life safety upgrades. We continue to grow and enhance our facility and expand our services and technology.

In early 2009, we'll complete phase IV of our plan: the relocation of our outpatient clinic from the second floor to a more accessible location on the hospital's first floor. This will be more convenient for our patients and offer more patient privacy in a comfortable, contemporary environment.

We'll begin phase V in 2009 with construction of an additional operating room and renovation of the current surgery department, where we'll provide our patients with a more comfortable, private surgical experience.

We're also excited to now offer new health services, such as digital mammography and cardiac stress testing. We look forward to another great year of "Building Better Healthcare for Our Community."

Regards,

JIM FARRIS
Chief Executive Officer
Union County Hospital

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about **exercise**?

Take this quiz to find out.

1 To lose one pound, you need to burn how many calories?

- a. 500
- b. 1,500
- c. 2,500
- d. 3,500

2 A good way to measure the intensity of an exercise is to keep track of your:

- a. heart rate
- b. blood pressure
- c. sweat levels
- d. thirst intensity

3 Exercise can:

- a. reduce depression
- b. help manage type 2 diabetes
- c. boost good HDL cholesterol
- d. all of the above

4 The *minimum* amount of time you should be active every day is:

- a. 15 minutes
- b. 20 minutes
- c. 30 minutes
- d. there is no minimum

5 Which of the following exercises will *not* help you build stronger bones?

- a. running
- b. swimming
- c. lifting weights
- d. dancing

ANSWERS: 1. (d) 2. (a) 3. (d) 4. (c) 5. (b)

The kidney-heart connection

If you think kidney disease only affects your kidneys, think again. Though researchers can't fully explain the link, kidney disease is an independent risk factor for heart disease and greatly increases the risk of dying from heart problems. In fact, heart disease is the most common cause of death for the more than 20 million Americans with chronic kidney disease.

WHO GETS KIDNEY DISEASE?

Kidney disease is often called a "silent killer" because many people don't even know they have it until it reaches an advanced stage. Risk factors include being obese; smoking; and having high blood pressure, diabetes or a family history of kidney disease. Ask your physician about testing if you're at risk. If he or she suspects you may have chronic kidney disease, blood and urine samples can diagnose it.

KEEP YOUR KIDNEYS HEALTHY

If you already have kidney disease, early treatment can help keep it from getting worse. But the best method of attack is to prevent the problem in the first place. Take these steps to minimize your risk:

- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Eat healthful foods and be active every day.
- **Quit smoking.** Besides the damage it can do to your heart, smoking can interfere with medicine for high blood pressure.
- **Get your blood pressure level to 120/80 mm Hg or lower.**

Start by slashing salt from your diet and getting more potassium (found in bananas, apricots and broccoli). If changing your diet doesn't help, discuss medications with your physician.

- **Control your blood sugar if you have diabetes.** Dietary changes and medication may be needed.



'Brake' for breakfast



You wouldn't take off for a road trip with no fuel in your car, so it doesn't make much sense to send your body out for the day with nothing to run on. Your tank needs breakfast.

Studies have shown that those who eat this most important meal of the day are less tired and irritable, have better concentration and are more likely to maintain a healthy weight. Not a bacon-and-eggs person? No problem. Try these

out-of-the-cereal-box suggestions from the American Dietetic Association:

- one cup of vanilla low-fat yogurt topped with whole-grain cereal and berries
- leftover veggie pizza with a piece of fruit and a glass of milk
- whole-grain toast topped with a little peanut butter and apple slices
- whole-grain waffles or pancakes topped with fresh banana
- a super-fast smoothie, made from frozen fruit and yogurt, whipped up in a blender
- a breakfast wrap (try low-sodium deli turkey, low-fat cheese and spinach in a tortilla)
- oatmeal sprinkled with cinnamon and walnuts

Ready, aim, vaccinate!

Vaccines aren't just for babies. If your child hasn't been to the pediatrician in a while, he or she may have missed some important shots. And don't forget that adults need vaccines, too! Talk

with your pediatrician about your child's specific needs and whether he or she is at high risk. And ask your own physician about *your* needs. Use this handy chart as your guide.

| IMMUNIZATION | BIRTH TO AGE 6 | AGES 7-18 | AGES 19+ |
|--|---|---|---|
| Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTap, Td/Tdap) | 4 doses by 18 months; final dose at age 6 | Kids need a booster at ages 11-12. For teens, ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date. | Get a Td booster every 10 years. If you're under age 65 and haven't been vaccinated with Tdap before, you need a single dose. |
| Haemophilus influenzae type b | 4 doses by age 15 months | | |
| Hepatitis A | 2 doses between 12 and 23 months | High-risk kids and adults need a vaccination. | |
| Hepatitis B | 3 doses within first 18 months of life | Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date. | High-risk adults should be immunized. |
| Human papillomavirus (HPV) | | 3 doses are recommended for girls ages 11-12, or later if a young woman isn't up to date. Ask your physician about the pros and cons of vaccination. | |
| Inactivated polio virus | 3 doses by 18 months | Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date. | |
| Influenza | Yearly, for kids ages 6 months to 19 years | | Anyone <i>can</i> get vaccinated; high-risk adults and those over age 50 <i>should</i> be. |
| Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) | 1 dose at 12-15 months; another at ages 4-6 | Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date. | If you haven't had this vaccine, you need it. High-risk adults need a second dose. If you were born before 1957, you're considered immune to measles and mumps. |
| Meningococcal (meningitis) | Ask your pediatrician if your child is high risk. | It's recommended for kids ages 11-12; otherwise, ask your pediatrician if your child is at high risk. | It's a must for high-risk groups. |
| Pneumococcal (pneumonia) | 4 doses of pneumococcal conjugate by 15 months | High-risk kids and adults need the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine. Adults should get vaccinated at age 65; some older adults may need a booster. | |
| Rotavirus | 3 doses by 6 months | | |
| Varicella (chicken pox) | 1 dose at 12-15 months; another at ages 4-6 | Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date. | If you aren't up to date and never had the chicken pox, speak with your physician. |
| Zoster (shingles) | | | Get it once, at age 60 or older. |

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

A healthy mind, body and spirit!

It all begins with Healthy Woman

We created Healthy Woman because you told us you needed a program especially for you. A free resource from Union County Hospital, Healthy Woman is designed to improve your life and the lives of those you love through monthly events covering health, communication, relationship and life-management issues. Now this special program is celebrating its anniversary, and we'd like you to join us!

Watch for details about our upcoming 2nd anniversary event!



- ▲ Door prize winners from the 2008 anniversary event.
- ◀ Dianna Gaultney (far left) won the Memphis Weekend Getaway package at the 2008 event. With Gaultney are UCH Healthy Woman coordinators Mary Rothschild and Mary Nash-Swink.
- ▼ (left-right) UCH CEO Jim Farris, Melinda Stamp, Jeanette Hook and Courtney Haire enjoy last year's event.



! Become a Healthy Woman!

To become a member, call (618) 833-4112 or register online at www.unioncountyhospital.com.

HEALTHY WOMAN
A UNION COUNTY HOSPITAL RESOURCE

www.unioncountyhospital.com

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UNION COUNTY HOSPITAL

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