



Grant Regional Health Center

You're the Center of Everything We Do.

507 S. Monroe St. • Lancaster, WI 53813 • 608-723-2143



ACHY LEGS?

Joseph Jenkins, MD, from Tri-State Vein Center is offering free vein screenings on March 10.

SEE PAGE 7 ►

HEALTH SCENE®

JOURNAL OF WELLNESS AND GOOD HEALTH CARE • SPRING 2014



HEALTH BITS

SEEING SPOTS? If you have age spots you don't like, see a dermatologist. Several procedures might help, including bleaching treatments, chemical peels, freezing, derm-abrasions and laser skin resurfacing.

American Academy of Dermatology



MAKE A SAFETY SWAP

Household smoke alarms do not last forever. Units that run on 9-volt batteries or are hardwired into a home should be replaced every 8 to 10 years.

U.S. Fire Administration



WAIT FOR THE WAG

About 800,000 people a year in the U.S. need medical attention for dog bites, and most of them are children. Wait until kids are more than 4 years old before adding a dog to the family.

American Academy of Pediatrics

GET BACK IN THE GAME WITH JOINT REPLACEMENT

Is your hip just not hopping like it used to? Is your knee now needing a lot of attention? Or is your shoulder shouldering more than its fair share of pain?

If so, then it may be time to think about replacing that joint—especially if you've tried other things, like taking medications and exercising, and you still hurt.

Here's what you need to know about this potentially life-changing surgery.

OUT WITH THE OLD Like many things, joints can eventually wear out. Age, injury and diseases such as arthritis may take a toll. Your favorite activities—even everyday life—can become difficult and uncomfortable.

Joint replacement involves surgically removing a damaged joint and inserting one made of plastic, metal or both in its place. In some cases, surgeons cement the pieces of the new joint into existing bone. Over time, bone grows around the artificial joint, holding it in place. The replaced joint will function just like a healthy joint.

Hips and knees are the most commonly

replaced joints. But ankles, fingers, elbows and shoulders can also be replaced.

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY Typically, you spend at least a few days in the hospital following joint replacement surgery.

You'll begin using your new joint right away. Physical therapy will help you strengthen your muscles and improve your range of motion.

Once you're home, it will be important to exercise with your doctor's guidance. Eating well and taking medications as directed are also key to recovery.

Sometimes there are restrictions on what you can do with your new joint. Running and singles tennis may be discouraged if you've had hip or knee replacement, for example. But most people return to active lifestyles. Depending on the type of surgery you have, full recovery may take several weeks to six months.

To learn if joint replacement surgery is right for you, speak with your doctor. And go to www.grantregional.com/jointreplacement to get all the joint facts you need.

Sources: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons; National Institutes of Health

GRHC is excited to welcome Dr. Brad Binsfeld, orthopedic surgeon, in April!

HEALTH TALK NEWS, VIEWS & TIPS

Bone health by the numbers

Wondering why and how to take care of your bones? A few facts and figures can help answer those questions.

The why 40: The age at which most people slowly begin to lose bone mass.

48 million: The number of Americans age 50 and older with low bone mass. This condition puts people at risk for the bone-thinning disease osteoporosis.

9 million: The number of Americans age 50 and older with osteoporosis, which can cause bones to become weak and fragile.

80 percent: The portion of people with osteoporosis who are female.

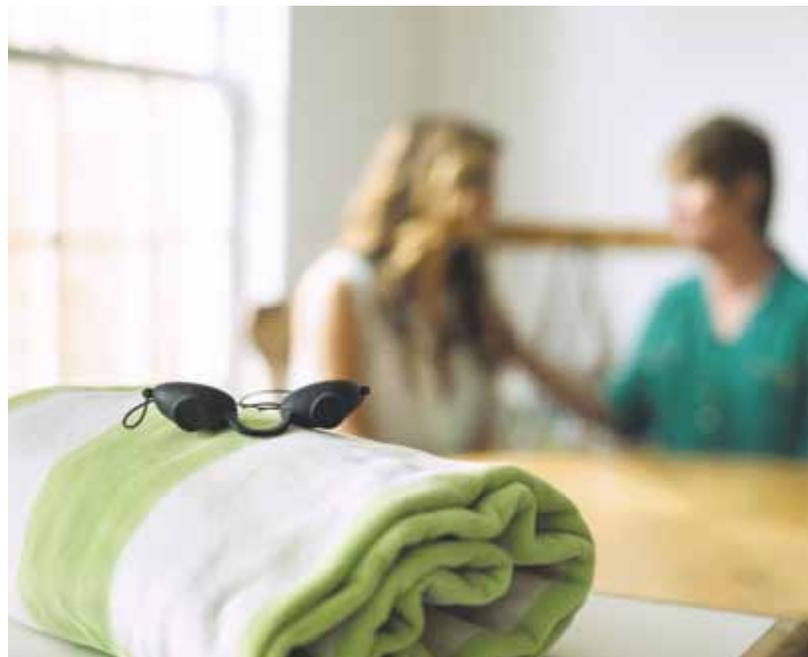
The how 1,200 milligrams (mg): The amount of calcium a woman 51 or older should consume daily to keep bones strong. Men are also at risk for osteoporosis. They need 1,000 mg of calcium a day from ages 51 to 70. After age 70, they need 1,200 mg daily. Low-fat dairy products have calcium. It's also found in leafy green vegetables and almonds.

600 international units (IU): The amount of vitamin D needed for healthy bones in men and women ages 51 to 70. At age 71, that amount jumps to 800 IU per day. Salmon and tuna contain vitamin D. So does vitamin D-fortified low-fat milk.

30 minutes: The minimum amount of physical activity adults should get each day to help maintain a strong skeleton. Start with weight-bearing exercise, like walking or playing tennis. Then mix in balance and strengthening exercises, such as weightlifting.

0: The number of cigarettes you should be smoking if you want to lower your risk for osteoporosis.

Sources: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons; National Institutes of Health; National Osteoporosis Foundation



TANNING BEDS

Not worth the risk

Tanned skin is damaged skin. So say skin experts. Yet today, many teens, especially girls, are risking their skin in a place they might think is safe—a tanning salon.

Commercial tanning beds and lamps give off harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays that can be as strong as, or even stronger than, the sun's UV rays. And overexposure to UV rays—from any source—has been linked to melanoma. Doctors are increasingly diagnosing this most deadly form of skin cancer in young women, which may be caused in part by indoor tanning.

The more often a teen goes to a tanning salon, the higher the risk. Teens who tan even just once a month increase their risk of melanoma by 55 percent. The risk continues to go up with every single trip to a tanning bed.

If you're the parent of a teenage girl, one of the best things you can do to help save her skin is to ban indoor tanning. And if she begs you to let her go, remember this: Melanoma is now the second most common form of cancer in women who are 20 to 29 years old.

Sources: American Academy of Dermatology; JAMA Internal Medicine; U.S. Food and Drug Administration

SPRING CLEANUP

Always make it a safe one

Finally, it's spring and the days are growing longer. If you're spending some of your extra daylight hours spiffing up your home space, make sure you're doing it safely.

Ladders up. Whether you're climbing indoors to change smoke detector batteries or outdoors to paint the trim, make sure:

- Your ladder is in good repair.
- Your ladder is on a firm, level surface.
- There's someone around to spot you.

Once you're up, follow the navel rule: When you lean to clean, make sure your belly button doesn't go beyond the ladder's sides.

Mowers on. Whenever you cut grass, be sure to:

- Wear protective eyewear, work gloves and sturdy shoes.
- Mow forward, never backward (unless it's unavoidable).
- Watch for people behind you.

Windows open. Throw up the sash and let the fresh air in—just be sure to open only windows that kids can't reach. If you keep your windows closed, check that they're not painted shut. In an emergency, you may need to escape through one.

Sources: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons; National Safety Council



Pet pals can have a positive effect on health

It's not only an apple a day that can keep the doctor away. Fluffy and Fido can probably do that too.

Pets may do far more for their owners than fetching the paper, scaring off intruders or returning love. Having a pet might actually reduce your risk of potentially serious health problems like heart disease.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a pet at your side can help lower both your blood pressure and your cholesterol—two major risk factors for heart disease.

What's more, if you already have

heart disease, four-legged friends appear to reduce your risk of dying from it.

Consider the results of a study funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) that tracked 421 adults who had heart attacks. A year after those attacks, dog owners were much more likely to be alive than those without dogs, no matter how severe the heart attack.

Dogs in particular may protect against heart disease because their owners tend to exercise more—which reduces risk—than people without dogs. Dog owners are also more

likely to meet recommended exercise guidelines.

So the next time your dog pesters you for a walk, grab the leash—and consider yourself lucky.

Nice to meet you Man's best friend may also help you make more human friends, the NIH reports.

Research reveals that walking dogs tends to spark conversations and helps us stay socially connected—a real plus. In general, the more social relationships we have, the longer we live—and the less likely we are to decline mentally or physically.

HEALTH TALK NEWS, VIEWS & TIPS



On the job: 4 ways to stifle stress

Not to add more strain to your day, but you may have noticed that work is more stressful than it was in years past. The economy can have that effect, as worries about finances, layoffs, downsizing, job security and heavy workloads mount.

Work-related stress has the same pitfalls that stress in your personal life does. It can weaken the immune system; cause fatigue and missed days of work; and trigger a host of ailments, from backaches to diabetes to heart problems.

You can't control everything at work. But you can try to keep stress at manageable levels. These are some tricks of the trade:

Take 5 (or 10). A quick walk, a chat with colleagues or a few moments to breathe deeply can clear the mind, calm thoughts and give you time to regroup.

Make wellness a priority. You'll be better prepared for challenges and deadlines if you get at least 30 minutes of exercise almost every day, eat healthy foods and get enough sleep.

Divide and conquer. Split large projects into smaller tasks, keep careful to-do lists and stay organized. You may have to reset priorities often to keep up with a fast-changing business climate.

Ask for help. Often an honest conversation with a colleague, loved one, counselor or adviser can keep you moving and thinking in positive and productive ways.

Sources: American Psychological Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Mental Health America

**Stressed?
Anxious? Learn
more remedies at
www.grantregional.com/stress.**

CYBERBULLYING

Help protect your child

Bullying is hard enough to deal with when it happens face-to-face on the playground or in school halls. But cyberbullying—through the use of technology like cellphones, chat rooms, social media sites and even online gaming—can take on a whole new level of meanness.

And for the child being bullied, there is little chance of escaping the harassment. Technology can reach him or her at home or school, day and night. It's a problem to take seriously.

Watch for red flags The biggest warning signal of cyberbullying is a sudden change in a child's computer or phone habits. If your child suddenly stops using technology, find out why. Also be on the lookout for:

- School problems, such as dropping grades, getting in trouble or skipping school.
- A change in mood. For example, your child suddenly becomes depressed, very stressed, moody or agitated.
- A change in friends.
- A lack of interest in activities your child used to like.



What to do Let your child know to never respond to a bully, whatever method is being used. Instead:

- Keep track of what happened and when.
- Save or print the email, text or screenshot so there is a record of the harassment.
- Block the person, if possible, so there is no further contact.

Even if it happens outside of school hours, your child's school should still be notified. Alert the police if the bullying involves threats, stalking or sexually explicit materials.

Also, contact the web or cell service provider being used by the bully—the provider may be able to help track down the person if the bullying is being done anonymously. And inform the social media site where the bullying occurred. It may be able to ban the person from the site.

Sources: National Crime Prevention Council; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



RESTLESS LEGS SYNDROME

Give those legs a good night's rest

Your legs are itching and burning. There's a creeping feeling on your skin.

You might have an angry insect trapped between your pants and skin.

But if these unpleasant sensations occur mostly when you're lying down and go away when you get up and move, it's more likely to be restless legs syndrome (RLS).

RLS is a nervous system disorder. Its symptoms can be mildly annoying, or they can be so severe that good sleep becomes a seldom thing. The resulting daytime fatigue can make it hard to focus on even simple tasks, creating problems at work and elsewhere.

By now you may be thinking that having an insect be the source of your symptoms is preferable, but hang on: There are many treatments that can help control RLS and make sleep peaceful again.

The basics of RLS No one knows for sure what causes RLS. It may run in families. It may be linked to low levels of iron in the brain.

Its symptoms can occur while sitting or lying down—or after doing either one for a long time. In addition to the symptoms already mentioned, you may feel a pulling in your legs. They may jerk or twitch. You'll also feel an irresistible urge to move your legs around, to flex them, or to get up and pace.

Symptoms may come and go, but RLS usually can't be cured.

What can help Your doctor may prescribe medications that contain dopamine (a brain chemical linked to RLS) or iron supplements. Antiseizure medications like pregabalin (brand name Lyrica) also can lessen symptoms. You might also try:

- Avoiding caffeine, alcohol and tobacco.
- Walking on a treadmill several times a week.
- Using heating pads or ice packs.
- Massaging your legs.

Sources: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; National Institutes of Health

DIABETES

Beyond the obVIOUS

Four unexpected ways to
stay healthy with diabetes

W

Whether you are newly diagnosed with diabetes or have lived with it for years, you probably already know much of the standard advice for staying healthy with this illness. Stay on top of your blood sugar, and do your absolute best to keep it in the range your doctor advises. Be active, and make sure your diet is a healthy one. Take any medicine your doctor prescribes precisely as directed. ♦ That's incredibly important advice, and hopefully you're following all of it. ♦ But there's some additional advice for staying healthy with diabetes that you should know—and that might surprise you. What follows are four lesser-known tips for managing diabetes that could make a big difference in your health and future.



1 Try to tame tension

Emotional stress—whether it’s brought on by a rough patch in a relationship, a bad day at work or even the day-to-day challenges of living with diabetes—can affect your blood sugar. But just what it does depends on the type of diabetes you have.

Do you have type 2 diabetes? Then stress will probably raise your blood sugar. And prolonged stress has the potential to keep blood sugar at consistently elevated levels.

If you have type 1, then the influence of stress is less predictable. While it’s also likely to make your blood sugar go up, it can sometimes have the opposite effect and actually lower it.

How can you tell how stress affects you? Try this: For a week or two, rate your stress on a scale of 1 to 10 before taking your blood sugar. Record that number next to your blood sugar reading. Then look for a pattern. If the stress in your life seems to peak along with high blood sugar levels, it’s time to unwind with steps such as these:

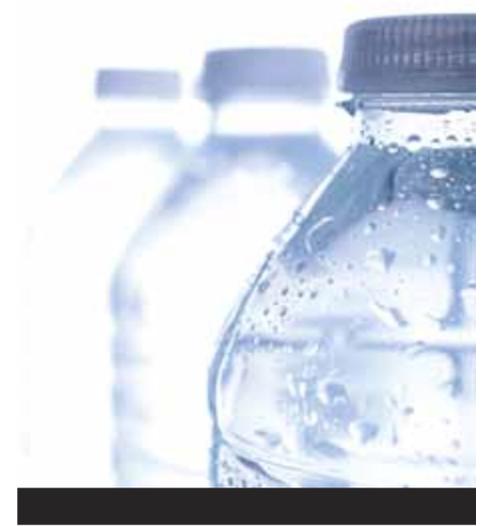
- **Move more.** A brisk walk—or any other physical activity—is a win-win. That’s because exercise helps control blood sugar, even when you’re not stressed. And when you are, it can help you feel less anxious and keep your blood sugar from climbing.



- **Problem-solve.** Do your best to eliminate stress triggers. If morning rush-hour traffic makes you tense, try to leave home early enough to avoid traffic jams. If your job is increasingly stressful, confide in your boss and see what might make your duties more manageable.

- **Replace bad thoughts with good ones.** Whenever a negative thought surfaces, think of something that makes you happy or proud.

Most important, if managing your diabetes is a source of stress, speak with your doctor. He or she can suggest ways to cope, whether it’s seeing a dietitian or joining a support group for people with diabetes.



4 Ready yourself for emergencies

Everybody should prepare for a possible disaster by stocking up on food and water and assembling an emergency supply kit. But because you have diabetes, that kit is especially important. It should include everything you need to take care of yourself, such as:

- A blood glucose meter, lancets and testing strips.
- Your diabetes medicines.
- An insulated bag to keep insulin cool (if you take insulin), plus syringes.
- Glucose tablets and other foods or drinks to treat low blood sugar.
- Antibiotic ointment or cream.

Include, too, any other medicines you take; copies of all your prescriptions; and a list of the type and model number of any medical devices you use, such as an insulin pump.

Also talk to your doctor about what to do if you run out of any medicine you need—especially insulin—during an emergency.

And if an emergency does strike, you need to protect yourself in some very specific ways. If, for example, you stay at an emergency shelter, identify yourself to people in charge as someone who has diabetes. And whether you’re in a shelter or not, keep something containing sugar with you at all times in case you develop dangerously low blood sugar.

If the power is out and it’s hot, drink plenty of fluids—particularly water—to avoid becoming dehydrated. Diabetes makes it harder for your body to handle heat.

Finally, pay special attention to your feet. Stay out of contaminated water, and check your feet carefully for signs of an infection or injury, such as redness or swelling. And always get medical help right away if you notice any possible problem with your feet.

Sources: American Diabetes Association; National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse; U.S. Department of Agriculture

2 Tune in to hearing loss

Research from a study of more than 5,100 adults revealed that hearing loss may be twice as common in people with diabetes as in those who don’t have the disease. Moreover, that diminished hearing was particularly likely to occur in people with diabetes who were younger than 50, suggesting that hearing loss starts earlier in those with the illness.

Exactly how diabetes might contribute to hearing loss is still a big question. But it’s well known that—over time—high blood sugar damages the body’s small blood vessels and can cause the eye, kidney and nerve problems that are common complications of diabetes. Consequently, scientists speculate that consistently high blood sugar could also harm the small blood vessels of the inner ear, which play an important role in our ability to hear.

The upshot: Anyone with diabetes should be alert to the warning signs of hearing loss, which happens slowly and might be hard to detect initially. You might be losing hearing if you:

- Often ask people to repeat themselves.
- Have trouble following conversations that involve more than two people.
- Think that others are mumbling.
- Find it difficult to hear the voices of women and small children.
- Have people repeatedly tell you that the volume on your TV or radio is too loud.



Should you experience any of these red flags, tell your doctor right away. And even if your hearing seems to be perfectly fine, ask your doctor how often it should be checked. A full hearing exam can help detect any hearing loss you might experience without realizing it.



3 Fend off food poisoning

One consequence of diabetes is that you’re more vulnerable than someone without the disease to becoming ill—perhaps seriously—from food contaminated with disease-causing bacteria, viruses or parasites.

Why the increased risk? Because diabetes can disrupt your immune system. As a result, if you do become sick, you’re more likely to have a lengthier illness or be hospitalized than someone without diabetes.

So defend yourself. Certain foods are riskier to eat than others, and you want to steer clear of them. Among them: raw sprouts of any kind and raw or undercooked meats, poultry and seafood. For safety’s sake, also:

Lather up. Wash your hands well—that means scrubbing them in warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food and after using the bathroom, changing diapers, or touching pets.

Avoid cross-contamination. Dangerous bacteria can spread from one food to another, especially when you’re handling raw meat, poultry, seafood or eggs. Stop this spread by using one cutting board only for raw foods and another for ready-to-eat ones. And never put cooked food on a plate that once held raw foods—unless you first wash that plate in hot, soapy water.

Chill well. Cold temperatures help keep bacteria from multiplying. Always refrigerate or freeze perishable foods within two hours of cooking or purchasing them. And never thaw food at room temperature—for instance, on a counter top. Instead, thaw foods in the refrigerator, in cold water or in a microwave.

When you have diabetes, you want to pay attention to what you eat. Check out yummy, good-for-you recipes in our health library. Go to www.grantregional.com/recipes.

2013 TRADITION OF GIVING

The Grant Regional Health Center Foundation Board and Staff would like to thank our philanthropic friends for making 2013 such a successful year! Through your generosity, both gift and monetary, the Foundation was able to support Grant Regional Health Center with:

- Infant Warmer for the O.B. Department
- Lite Gait Harness system for the Rehab Department
- Bariatric furniture for the waiting room made possible through the Auxiliary
- Geri-Chair for use in Outpatients during infusion therapy
- Small children's bench for the Mediation Room
- Flat screen TV for the O.R. lounge
- Announcement Signs – Baby Girl, Baby Boy signs for new parents
- Three walkers donated to the Rehab Department
- Two smoking cessation DVD's for the Cardiac-Pulmonary Departments
- Wheelchair
- Seven engraved stones displayed by the lower level parking lot
- Additional bricks & pavers placed in the Memory Walk
- 427 Teddy Bears/Beanie Babies for distribution to children

- Weight Bench for use in the Rehab Department
- Breast Pump donated to the O.B. Department
- Funds to host the annual Cardiac Pulmonary Luncheon
- Nu-Step treadmill for the Rehab Department
- 6 Healthcare Scholarships were awarded
- \$2000 from the Grant Cancer Coalition for breast and prostate cancer awareness campaigns
- \$1100 from Fun Run T-Shirt sponsors
- Scrub shirts and snacks for 40 Club Scrub members
- Many miscellaneous items such as games, books and supplies

Special thanks to those who have given so generously and in so many ways!



General Donations:
Platinum Level - \$1000 and higher
Chester & Marvin Hass (\$10,000)
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Nicole Clapp

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Memory Walk:
(ongoing project, \$32,000 – to date)

Grants: (\$28,000)
SHIP Grant
Lancaster Community Foundation Grant
Helen Bader Foundation Grant
WSCPFR Grant

Festival of Trees: (\$4000)
Festival Star – Findorff & Sons - \$1000
Festival Elf – Majestic View Dairy - \$250
Special thanks to the many Clubs and Businesses that supported this event. Thanks also to everyone who attended.

2012–2013 Annual Campaign
Following is a list of donations made in 2013 towards the 2012 campaign

Bronze Level - \$100 - \$249
Illinois Tool Works (Matching employee funds)

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It all comes back™
to you



The donor list is tracked with great care. We appreciate all contributions. Any errors or omissions are unintentional and should be brought to the attention of GRHC Foundation. Thank you!

Grant Regional Health Center Foundation

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GRANT REGIONAL HEALTH CENTER

offers free vein screening



Grant Regional Health Center is offering free vein screenings on Monday, March 10, beginning at 1 p.m. Grant Regional is excited to announce that Joseph Jenkins, MD, of Tri-State Vein Center will begin his outreach practice in Lancaster in March and be available for consultation and potential treatment. He accepts a wide array of insurances and encourages people to take advantage of this free screening.

It's estimated that thousands of Americans have vein problems, known as venous insufficiency. The circulation issues can lead to pain and swelling and may worsen over time and even become life-threatening. That's why getting screened for vein diseases is so important.



Joseph Jenkins, MD

Many people are alerted to their vein problems because they're visible, as in varicose or spider veins. But you can also have problems with your veins without any visible signs. This upcoming free ultrasound screening at Grant Regional could help you get the treatment you need.

With any type of under-functioning veins, the pressure created by the backflow of

blood and pooling in the lower legs can lead to a progressive condition that Dr. Jenkins says will only worsen over time.

Dr. Jenkins has been a general surgeon for more than 25 years, practicing in Dubuque, Iowa. His practice now specializes in vein treatments, including Venefit/VNUS Closure, ambulatory phlebectomy, sclerotherapy and Vein-Gogh. He is a diplomate of the American Board of Venous & Lymphatic Medicine. For more information about these treatments, visit www.grantregional.com.

"Apart from the symptoms affecting your lifestyle, it gets worse with time and never stops unless you take measures and get treatment to stop it," explains Dr. Jenkins. With Venefit/VNUS Closure using a radiofrequency treatment, he can treat the patient's condition with minimal pain and virtually no downtime. The newer method using radio-frequency actually heats the vein and welds it closed, so the blood is rerouted into other healthy veins of the leg.

Dr. Jenkins explains that this is one example of many

vein treatment options that have improved dramatically in recent years and that a simple ultrasound screening could end up making a big difference in a person's life.

"If people have aches and pains in their legs, particularly in the latter part of the day or night, it's important for them to be screened."

He said in addition to pain symptoms, it's a good idea to get screened if you have varicose or spider veins, swelling, discoloration of the skin—especially around the ankles—or a family history of venous insufficiency.

Dr. Jenkins will be offering free screenings on Monday, March 10, with appointments beginning at 1 p.m. Follow-up appointments will begin on March 31. To schedule a free screening on March 10, call Grant Regional Health Center at 608-723-3249.

Now even more insurances accepted!

Grant Regional Community Clinic is now part of Grant Regional's family of health care services. We are excited to offer even more insurances than before! We are welcoming back past patients and hoping to open the door to new ones too!

Insurances accepted:

Aetna Central PPO, Alliance, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, Cigna, Dean Gold, Dean HMO, Dean MA, EPO,

Group Health Compcare, Gundersen Health and MA, Managed Choice, Midlands Choice, Physician Life, Physician Mutual, Physicians Plus, Tricare, United Health Care, Unity HMO, Wisconsin Medicaid, WEA Trust, and WPS. Even more insurances will be added soon!

Trusted care

We're offering the same great care you've come to know. Familiar faces, convenient location—all for you and your family!

By purchasing the clinic, Grant Regional Health Center made a strong commitment to securing health care and provider choice in our region. Our experienced and compassionate providers welcome the opportunity to care for you and your family. Whether you are ready to welcome a new baby to your family or need a routine examination—they will listen to your needs and care for you in a way that is best for you.



In back: Laurie Meighan, APNP, and physicians Erin Huebschman, MD, and Sheirle LaMantia, MD. In front: Kelly Muench, PA-C, and Kayte McQuillan, APNP.



WELLNESS

TAKE



QUESTIONS FOR THE EXPERTS

We asked members of our medical staff to answer questions about some common health concerns.



Kelly Muench, PA-C
Grant Regional
Community Clinic

Q What are the symptoms of head lice?

▲ Kids who have head lice typically scratch a lot—especially near the back of the neck. Sometimes they also say it feels like something's moving in their hair.

Other common scalp issues—dandruff, for one—can cause itching. So if you suspect head lice, take a close look.

Start by parting your child's hair in several places. Lice are tiny insects—about the size of a sesame seed—and scoot away quickly. So it's often easier to see their nits (eggs) instead, especially if you have a magnifying glass and bright light.

Look for small white specks attached to the base of the hair shafts. Unlike

dandruff flakes, nits will not come off easily if you rub the hair strand between your fingers.

If your child does have head lice, it's not a sign of poor hygiene. Lice spread mainly by direct head-to-head contact, such as when little ones play close to each other, as they often do.

Fortunately, head lice aren't a health hazard. But if your child has head lice, you'll want to treat them. And there are effective medicines, including anti-lice shampoos and lotions you can buy without a prescription.



Dr. Krynyn Buckley
Gynecology/Women's Health
Grant Regional
Health Center

Q How do I know when I have officially reached menopause?

▲ One way to tell is to count to 12. Here's

why: You only reach this midlife milestone after you've missed 12 menstrual periods in a row. That's unless you have a hysterectomy with both of your ovaries removed—then you'll start menopause right away.

Assuming you go through menopause naturally, when is it likely to happen?

Most women experience menopause sometime between ages 40 and 58. The average age is 51.

But smoking can also affect the timing. Women who light up usually reach menopause about two years earlier than nonsmokers.

Your body may also give you clues that menopause is nearing. That's because your ovaries begin to make less of the female hormones estrogen and progesterone for several years leading up to menopause.

During this time, called perimenopause, your body might react with hot flashes—sudden waves of warmth in your upper body and possibly all over. You might sweat and then have chills. At night, these hot flashes may wake you up.

Irregular periods are another tipoff of menopause's

approach. Your periods may become heavier or lighter, arrive closer together, or stop and then start again. And you might experience these changes, too: ● Mood swings. ● Vaginal dryness. ● Urinary tract infections.

Be aware that menopause affects every woman differently. Some breeze through it with few or no problems. Others experience many of the symptoms you've just read about.



Kayte McQuillan, APNP
Grant Regional
Community Clinic

Q What are some healthy snacks that I can keep at work?

▲ Snacking gets a bad rap, but done right, it can save the day. A healthy, strategic nosh is a good pick-me-up, helps you ignore leftover donuts and

keeps you from overeating at the end of the work day.

You can quickly assemble these 10 healthy snacks with items stashed at your desk or in the office fridge:

- 1 Fat-free yogurt topped with wheat germ.
- 2 A package of instant oatmeal topped with fresh fruit.
- 3 A single serving of tomato soup and five whole-grain crackers.
- 4 Low-fat cottage cheese on whole-wheat crackers and topped with fresh berries.
- 5 One 4-ounce fat-free, ready-to-eat pudding with half a cup of fresh fruit.
- 6 Hummus with fresh baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, and cut-up bell peppers and celery.
- 7 An orange with a 100-calorie individual pack of plain nuts.
- 8 An individual-size unsweetened applesauce and whole-wheat pretzels.
- 9 Light string cheese with fresh fruit.
- 10 Trail mix made with unfrosted cereal, dried fruit, nuts and seeds.

Remember to always eat snacks slowly—it takes about 20 minutes for your brain to register that your stomach is full.

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Save lives by donating blood



Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center is the exclusive provider of blood to Grant Regional Health Center. Donating blood is a safe and simple procedure that only takes about an hour. Blood donation saves lives. It's simple, yet important. For more information or to schedule a donation time, call Janis Waddell at **608-723-2143, ext. 216.**

Donate at a blood drive at Grant Regional Health Center, Monroe Conference Room

- **Wednesday, March 26:** 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **Thursday, June 26:** 2:30 to 6:30 p.m.
- **Tuesday, April 29:** 2:30 to 6:30 p.m.
- **Wednesday, May 28:** 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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