

Health Connection

BROUGHT TO YOU BY HELENA REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Holidays without heartburn

Building for a healthy future

**Real-world strategies
to control your weight**

Banish caregiver burnout

Helena Regional

MEDICAL + CENTER

Quality Care. Right Here.

SURGERY 101:

A manual for peace of mind

Did you take your Girl Scout or Boy Scout oath seriously as a child? If so, to this day you're probably sure to pack what you need before a hike: a map, compass, first-aid kit, water and healthy snacks. You ask what the terrain is and where the trail ends so you can get home on schedule.

When it comes to surgery, studies have shown that this same "be prepared" principle can ease pre-op anxiety, reduce your hospital stay and speed recovery.

If you're about to undergo surgery, ask your doctor to describe the procedure completely. Knowing what to expect can defuse stress and help you approach surgery day with a calm head.

Here are some other ways you can make the time before, during and after surgery run more smoothly:

BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE

- Follow your physician's instructions about refraining from smoking, eating and drinking before the procedure.
- Ask your physician about taking aspirin or other anti-inflammatory drugs before surgery. Because they're blood thinners, these medications may cause excessive blood loss.
- Tell your doctor which prescription and over-the-counter drugs you take. This goes for vitamins and herbs, too, as certain herbal remedies, such as St. John's wort and kava, may extend the effects of anesthesia or create other complications.
- You won't be allowed to drive after the procedure, so make reliable transportation arrangements.
- Organize your home. Make sure you have groceries or frozen meals on hand. If climbing stairs will be a problem, make sleeping arrangements downstairs.

- Practice relaxation techniques such as meditation or yoga. These will help calm you and speed post-op healing.

DURING YOUR HOSPITAL STAY

Your cozy robe or a favorite photo will warm your surroundings and soothe you. Having family and friends visit will bolster you, but don't be afraid to set limits: You'll need some time to rest and recuperate without interruptions.

HOME AGAIN

A little help from friends can be useful. If worries about housework or bills are nagging at you, ask someone to take care of these chores. In the meantime, the relaxation methods you used before surgery can help you feel better now, too. Imagine yourself in the near future doing something you enjoy, such as taking an invigorating hike.



PROTECTING AGAINST FEMALE CANCERS

What every woman should know

Gynecologic cancer is the fourth most common type of cancer in women. Here's a rundown of the gynecologic cancers and facts that can help reduce your risk:

UTERINE CANCER

Uterine cancer—also known as endometrial cancer—is the most common type of reproductive cancer that strikes American women and occurs most often after menopause. Symptoms include unusual vaginal discharge, pelvic pain, pain during intercourse, unexplained weight change and difficult or painful urination.

Obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes and tamoxifen or hormone replacement therapy use may increase risk.

OVARIAN CANCER

Ovarian cancer is the deadliest cancer and often shows no obvious signs until late in its development. But when caught early, most cases can be successfully treated.

Symptoms include abdominal discomfort or pain, nausea, diarrhea, constipation, frequent urination, appetite loss, feelings of fullness, weight change with no known reason and abnormal vaginal bleeding.

An important risk factor is a family history of ovarian cancer. Fertility drugs, hormone replacement therapy, increasing age, infertility, having had no children and a family history of breast cancer may also increase risk.

CERVICAL CANCER

Thanks to Pap tests, deaths from cervical cancer are decreasing. Common symptoms are abnormal bleeding and bloody or discolored vaginal discharge.

The sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV) causes most cervical cancers. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently approved a vaccine that protects against HPV. A federal panel recommends females ages 11 to 26 receive the vaccine.

Other risk factors linked to cervical cancer can be avoided, such as smoking and poor diet.

CANCERS OF THE VAGINA, VULVA AND FALLOPIAN TUBES

These cancers tend to be rare. Women should alert their

doctors to symptoms that include unusual bleeding or discharge, persistent itching of the vulva, pain in the pelvic region, difficult or painful urination, unusual pain or pressure in the abdomen, pain during intercourse and a lump or sore on the vulva that won't heal.

Women may be at risk for vaginal and vulvar cancers if they've had genital warts, chronic vulvar irritations, abnormal Pap tests or intercourse at an early age or with many partners. Women who smoke or whose mothers took DES (diethylstilbestrol) when they were pregnant may also be at risk. Risk factors for tubal cancer are unknown, but it tends to strike women after menopause.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Regular screenings and an annual pelvic exam can detect and even prevent some gynecologic cancers. Keep your doctor informed of any risk factors, especially family history, that you may have.





Building for a healthy future

To continue to provide quality care to our community, Helena Regional Medical Center has made several new capital improvements. We have purchased new endoscopy equipment that allows physicians to peer through the body's passageways. Endoscopy is the examination and inspection of organs, joints or cavities through an endoscope. An endoscope is a device using fiber optics and powerful lens systems to provide lighting and visualization.

Internal abnormalities revealed through endoscopy include abscesses, biliary (liver) cirrhosis, bleeding, bronchitis, cancer, cysts, degenerative disease, gallbladder stones, hernia, inflammation, metastatic cancer, polyps, tumors and ulcers.

Endoscopy is a minimally invasive procedure and can often be done on an outpatient basis. Outpatient procedures performed at hospitals or ambulatory centers allow the patient to go home or return to work within a short while after their procedure.

Other improvements include a new CT scanner, new hearing screening equipment, new computer system, new patient food tray system and a new defibrillator for the Emergency Department.

Holidays without heartburn

Holiday decorations, family festivities and merry gift giving are holiday staples for many. Add rich food, a lack of exercise and maybe a cocktail or two, and you've got holiday heartburn just waiting to happen.

CAUSES OF HEARTBURN

Heartburn happens when stomach acid flows backward or up into the esophagus. Diet and medication can inadvertently contribute to heartburn by relaxing the sphincter, increasing the amount of acid produced in the stomach and making the esophagus more sensitive to stomach acid.

Episodes of heartburn may also be caused by the positioning of the body and certain movements such as lying down, bending over or doing any strenuous activity. Luckily, one handy defense mechanism against heartburn is gravity. When standing in the upright position, gravity tends to prevent acid from moving upward back into the esophagus, reducing the chance of heartburn. Lying down or bending alters the state of gravity and increases abdominal pressure, increasing the chances for heartburn.

PREVENTING HEARTBURN

If you are one of the more than 15 million Americans who suffer from heartburn on a regular basis and especially during the holidays, knowing the foods that may trigger heartburn will help you navigate a holiday smorgasbord.

Many of the foods and beverages served at social events and holiday get-togethers may cause heartburn. Those "trigger" foods include:

- marbled meats
- rich sauces
- creamy cheeses
- citrus products (tomatoes, lemons, oranges and grapefruit)
- caffeine
- alcohol

Heartburn does not have to ruin the holiday season if you are mindful of the foods and drinks you consume. If you have any questions regarding heartburn and its effects, contact your physician.



THE RIGHT DOCTORS FOR YOU

The experienced, dedicated physicians of Helena Regional Medical Center can help your family stay healthy. We'd like to introduce you to two of them.



EDWARD "NED" PILLOW, M.D.
Internal Medicine and
Pediatrics

Pillow Clinic North
101 Shirley Hicks Lane
Helena
(870) 572-5996

Edward "Ned" Pillow, M.D., completed his undergraduate work in microbiology at the University of Arkansas in

Fayetteville. He is also a graduate of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, College of Medicine in Little Rock. He completed his residency in a combined internal medicine and pediatrics specialty at the University Hospital of Arkansas and Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock, where he served as chief resident for internal medicine/pediatrics. His professional memberships include the Arkansas Medical Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Physicians—Internal Medicine. He looks forward to practicing in his hometown in partnership with his wife, Jill S. Pillow, M.D., and two brothers. He is accepting new patients of all ages.



JILL S. PILLOW, M.D.
Pediatrics

Pillow Clinic North
101 Shirley Hicks Lane
Helena
(870) 572-5996

Jill S. Pillow, M.D., completed her undergraduate studies in microbiology at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville and is also

a graduate of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, College of Medicine in Little Rock. She completed her residency in pediatrics at Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock and is board eligible for certification as a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics. She spent an additional year working in the field of developmental-behavioral pediatrics at the Dennis Development Center in Little Rock. Her professional memberships include the Arkansas Medical Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Medical Association. Dr. Pillow, a native of El Dorado, looks forward to establishing her pediatric practice in Helena-West Helena. She is accepting new patients, but limits her practice to children under the age of 18.

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about arthritis?

Test your knowledge and learn more about arthritis.

1

What does the word arthritis mean?

- a. Sore joint
- b. Joint irritation
- c. Joint inflammation
- d. Rigid joint

2

Which of the following statements about arthritis is true?

- a. Using artificial sweeteners like Equal and Nutrasweet that contain aspartame increases your risk of developing arthritis.
- b. Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in Americans over age 15.
- c. Arthritis is more prevalent in women than in men.
- d. Most people with arthritis will need minor surgery to lessen the pain.

3

Osteoarthritis is caused by the breakdown/loss of _____ in the joints.

- a. bursa
- b. cartilage
- c. air
- d. synovial fluid

4

How is rheumatoid arthritis different from other forms of arthritis?

- a. It occurs in joints on both sides of the body.
- b. Doctors recommend people with it sleep on a waterbed to alleviate pressure on joints.
- c. Pain is felt only early in the morning or late at night.
- d. It occurs when crystals build up in the joints.

5

Older adults aren't the only ones affected by arthritis; it can affect any age group. How many children are estimated to have arthritis?

- a. 35,000
- b. 150,000
- c. 300,000
- d. 500,000

ANSWERS: 1. C, 2. B, 3. B, 4. A, 5. C

8

easy ways to get more exercise

Fitting exercise into your schedule doesn't have

to involve a large bank account or even a lot of time.

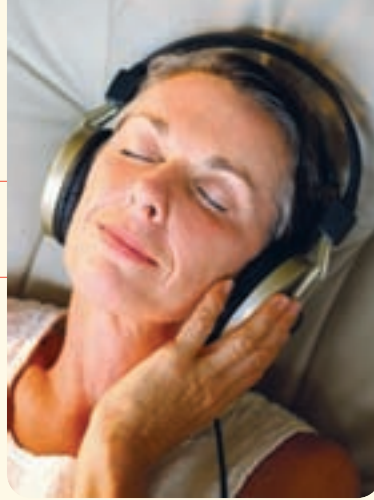
The following list of ways to make

physical activity a habit was created for even the busiest people.

- 1 **Take the stairs instead of the elevator.** This alternative burns calories and tones muscles.
- 2 **Avoid the phone.** At work, walk down the hallway instead of using the telephone or e-mail to communicate with a co-worker.
- 3 **Walk instead of drive.** It may not be the speediest mode of transportation, but it's effective when you want to visit a neighbor down the street, take your child to a nearby park or pick up a few items at the corner market.
- 4 **Walk during lunch.** Take a friend for company or listen to a book on tape to make your walk mentally as well as physically productive.
- 5 **Clean the house.** You'll have to do more than load the dishwasher to get your heart pumping, but a vigorous cleaning that takes two to three hours may be just what the doctor ordered.
- 6 **Ride your bike.** It's quicker than walking, cheaper than driving and it burns calories.
- 7 **Break activity down into small time increments.** If you don't have the time or energy for 30 minutes of continuous exercise, spread it out. Start with 10 minutes of activity, then do it again and again—for a total of 30 minutes.
- 8 **Vary your activities.** Boredom is one of the biggest commitment killers, so find several activities you enjoy and pick and choose depending on the weather and your mood.



Banish caregiver burnout



If you're caring for someone who depends on you, you need to be healthy and energetic. Yet the sheer amount of time and thought involved in providing care may mean you've put yourself at the bottom of your priority list—making you ripe for stress and burnout. Try these steps to protect your health:

1 Get regular medical checkups. Tell your doctor about your caregiving commitment—he or she may suggest resources to make your life easier.

2 Get plenty of rest. Sleep deprivation contributes to depression. Have a family member pinch-hit (or hire a respite worker) so you can get to bed at a reasonable hour or sneak in a nap.

3 Eat a nutritious diet. A poor diet can lead to malnutrition and fatigue. Regular, well-balanced meals boost energy. Ask family members to help with shopping and meal preparation.

4 Get regular exercise. Moderate exercise combats stress, increases energy and provides a mental-health break.

5 Manage stress. Meditate or learn relaxation techniques. Share your feelings with friends and family members. Ask your doctor for advice or referral to a counselor.

6 Ask for help. Don't try to be a superhero! Ask family

members to help pick up prescriptions, do laundry or drive to doctors' appointments. Ask your doctor about local resources like transportation to medical checkups, home-delivered meals, respite care or adult day-care services.

7 Schedule time for yourself. Schedule time to enjoy your hobbies. Spend time with friends. Try a change of scenery—take a short drive or see a play or concert.

8 Be realistic and flexible. Accept that your loved one's illness may change from week to week. Be flexible as you plan for the future. Acknowledge the many good things you've done and don't be hard on yourself for not being able to do everything on your own.

Real-world strategies to control your weight



Visit the diet and nutrition section of any bookstore and you'll be amazed by the number of books offering the latest miracle diet. Low carb, no carb, high protein, low calorie—but do any work?

Fad diets tend to be tough to stick with. Even worse, people often feel deprived and pile unwanted pounds back on once they're off the diets.

The best way to take off fat is slowly and steadily. That means a weight loss of no more than one to two

pounds a week. Many fad diets drastically reduce your food intake and put your body into “starvation” mode, slowing your metabolism to conserve calories. That's the

exact opposite of what you want. Similarly, restricting certain foods—such as carbohydrates—can lead to cravings that will derail your efforts.

THE TRIED AND TRUE

The following are real-life tips to help you look and feel your best:

- **Rebalance your diet.** If your diet is heavy on foods like crackers, bagels, white rice, low-fiber cereal and pasta, substitute them with whole grains like brown rice, multi-grain breads and pasta enriched with soy. To feel satisfied longer, combine carbs with protein.

- **Count calories.** Simply put, to lose weight you have to ingest fewer calories than you expend.

- **Spread out meals.** Eating small amounts throughout the day boosts your metabolism. Aim for three equal-sized meals, plus nutritious snacks in between.

- **Ditch self-denial.** Instead of avoiding any one food group, make wise choices. Whole-wheat crackers with peanut butter are a smarter snack than a bag of chips.

- **Emphasize weight training.** Add strength training to your exercise program. Resistance exercises build muscle, which burns more calories by increasing your metabolism.

Providing for the community



Tom Kinnebrew
Chief Executive Officer

Helena Regional Medical Center provides a substantial benefit to the local economy by employing area residents, providing charity care and reinvesting revenue at the local level. To continue to provide these essential benefits, we must sometimes ask for you to assist us in this financial responsibility. A program has been introduced to help patients make payments on their

outstanding balances, while at the same time not creating a financial burden on their families. We understand that paying deductibles and co-pays sometimes can be difficult due to life situations, so patients will be referred to a representative who can help identify possible financial assistance or develop a payment plan.

For your convenience, we accept cash, checks and credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover). We also have introduced a program called Easy Pay, a safe, secure method of payment that will allow the balance of the bill after insurance

disbursements to be set in installments and be automatically deducted from your checking account or billed to a credit card on a monthly basis.

The primary focus of our Emergency Room is just that—emergency care for critically ill or injured patients. Our nurses and physicians are not involved in the collection process, since their only concern is the clinical care of their patients. With that in mind, after a medical screening examination has been performed and the patient is determined not to have an emergency medical condition, the registration clerk may ask for payment.

The community has always been extremely supportive and we in turn are dedicated to serving you. By collecting payments in a timely manner, costs are kept down, and the reinvested savings can help operate the hospital, pay for new technology and maintain the facility—which benefits all of us.

Regards,

TOM KINNEBREW
Chief Executive Officer
Helena Regional Medical Center

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Helena Regional
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