

Healthy Lifestyles

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The vein truth

How to keep your blood flowing

Normally, you don't think about them much. Your veins are just there, transporting blood to your heart from other organs and tissues on a daily basis. But when veins become visible, painful or begin affecting your health, you can't ignore them any longer.

WHEN GOOD VEINS GO BAD

Two conditions that you may encounter are:

- **Varicose veins.** When one-way valves in the veins fail to keep blood moving forward, the blood pools, causing swelling. That leaves you with bulging, twisting veins located just under the surface of the skin. While they rarely cause symptoms, varicose veins can lead to pain, blood clots and skin ulcers. You have a greater chance of developing varicose veins if you have a family history of varicose veins or are older, a woman, pregnant, overweight or obese or inactive. Varicose veins can be treated by procedures or surgery, including laser surgery, where laser light energy fades veins.
- **Deep vein thrombosis (DVT).** DVT is a blood clot that forms in a vein deep within the body, usually in the lower legs or thighs. It can cause a serious problem called pulmonary embolism, which occurs when the clot breaks free and travels to the lungs. Sitting for a long time can increase your risk of getting a blood clot, as can having

surgery and taking hormone therapy or other medications. Symptoms of DVT include pain, swelling, skin redness and warmth and tenderness over the vein. Your physician may prescribe anti-clotting medications to treat DVT.

PREVENTING PROBLEMS

You can take steps to help reduce your risk of vein problems, or help you manage if you already have them. To keep veins in their place:

- **Get moving.** Exercise can help blood move through veins.
- **Avoid sitting or standing for too long.** Don't cross your legs, and if you can, raise your legs above the level of your heart when sitting or resting. If you've had surgery, get moving as soon as possible afterward.
- **Lose weight.** This will help blood flow and take some of the pressure off your veins.
- **Toss your tight clothes.** Don't wear anything that's tight around your waist, groin or legs, as it can cut off blood flow.
- **Skip the stilettos, ladies.** Low heels can help tone calf muscles, which can get blood moving through your veins.
- **Ask your physician about compression stockings.** They can help keep blood from pooling and reduce leg swelling.
- **Get up and walk around while traveling.** If traveling by car, try to stop every hour for a walking break.

Medicine cabinet makeover

Taking stock can keep your family healthy

Is your medicine cabinet a disaster area, a catchall for old medications, unlabeled bottles and other hazards? If you answered yes, a good cleaning at least once a year is recommended.

So where do you start? First, move all your medicine out of the medicine cabinet, since it's not recommended that you store medicine in the bathroom. Bathrooms are humid places, and that humidity can make your medicines less effective, or, in extreme cases, toxic. Instead, find a cool, dry place to keep your medicines.

Next, get rid of any medication that's expired. However, don't throw it down the toilet, which poses an environmental risk. Instead, throw old drugs in the trash, taking care to mix them with kitty litter or coffee grounds to make them less attractive to children and pets.

Also, make sure to keep medication in its original container, which contains important information like when the drug expires, how much to take, possible drug interactions and who it was prescribed for. Don't leave that cotton plug in any bottles either, as it can draw moisture into the bottle.

Here are some things you may have in your cabinet that deserve a closer look:



Clean out your medicine cabinet at least once a year to keep your family healthy and safe.

SYRUP OF IPECAC. It used to be recommended to make a child throw up if he or she had swallowed poison. However, there's no evidence it works and it may actually cause other treatments to fail. Throw it out! Instead, call poison control in an emergency.

COUGH AND COLD MEDICINE. It's not recommended for kids younger than age 4. And never give a child an adult-strength medication, as it could cause a serious reaction.

ASPIRIN. It's safe for most adults, but if you have kids, be extra careful. Aspirin's been linked to a rare

condition called Reye's syndrome, which can cause brain damage and liver function problems in children and teens, especially those taking the drug to treat chickenpox or the flu. Instead, keep other pain relievers and fever reducers, like acetaminophen and ibuprofen, on hand.

UNUSED ANTIBIOTICS. Don't save them for later or give them to another person. Get rid of them.

THERMOMETERS. If they break, old mercury thermometers can expose you to toxic mercury. Use an oral thermometer for older kids; choose an axillary (under the armpit) or rectal one for younger children.



Cherokee Medical Center

Focused on your health

At Cherokee Medical Center (CMC), keeping you healthy and informed is our primary goal. CMC's board of trustees is focused on this very same goal, and

regardless of change our vision will always be the same. We live and work here, are your friends and neighbors and understand the importance of quality health care. We continue to look for opportunities to meet health care needs and increase services, and we're pleased to announce two recent changes at CMC.

NEW PHYSICIAN ABOARD

As mentioned in this issue of *Healthy Lifestyles*, Cherokee Health Clinic has welcomed Anthony T. Arnott, M.D., a physician specializing in family medicine, to its medical staff. Dr. Arnott is excited to be a part of our medical community, and he wants you

to know that he's here to keep you and your family healthy. Please contact Dr. Arnott today at **(256) 927-4900** if you or your family needs health care services.

SERVICE GROWTH AND EXPANSION

CMC continues to focus on expanding services so greater Cherokee County residents can receive advanced care in a clean and secure environment. We have recently seen significant growth in our rehabilitation services (physical, occupational and speech therapies) and will be making further investments in this area to meet your rehab needs.

Our ultimate goal is for CMC to be a great place for employees to work, physicians to practice medicine and patients to receive care. Thank you for the opportunity to be your health care provider of choice and for helping CMC increase services in Cherokee County.

Regards,

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Cherokee Medical Center



HEALTHY WOMAN
has moved ONLINE

Connect now to communicate with friends, neighbors and other women like you - in a whole new way!

Visit Healthy Woman Online!

Healthy Woman Online is a free resource to empower women ages 25-65 to make informed health and well-being decisions. Join today to:

- be the first to learn about and sign up for events
- connect with other Healthy Woman members
- receive information about your health, relationships and life issues

To confirm that you want to remain or to become a member of the Healthy Woman program, you must sign up at www.cherokeemedicalcenter.com

FOR QUESTIONS, E-MAIL US AT HEALTHY_WOMAN@CHS.NET

Congrats to Patient Choice Award winner Frances Roberts, R.N.



Cherokee Medical Center (CMC) is pleased to announce that Frances Roberts, R.N., has been selected for the Patient Choice Award 2010. Patients and their families select the award recipient. The Patient Choice Award recognizes the compassion and quality of care that nurses give to their patients. “Frances is a truly dedicated nurse, and we celebrate her dedication in our emergency department,” says Rebecca Smith, emergency department director. “She greets each patient and co-worker with a smile on her face, for she truly enjoys being a nurse alongside her peers.”

STANDING AT THE TOP

The Patient Choice winner displays personal and compassionate care and expresses sincerity in his or her caring. “Sometimes it’s too hard to spot one nurse when there are so many nurses in our hospital who display the many requirements of the Patient Choice Award daily, but I can say that if I had to choose, Frances would be one that I would pick,” says Angela Bennett, R.N., M.S.N., chief nursing officer of CMC. “I’ve personally received this award and feel that it’s one of the



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highest honors a nurse can receive. To be nominated by those whom you serve is a true honor.”

Born and raised in Etowah County, Roberts is the daughter of J.T. and Gladys Teal. She’s married to Wilson Roberts, and they have two children. When asked about her desire to become a nurse, Roberts says, “My mother was a nurse for 31 years, and I’ve wanted to be a nurse since I was in the third grade. When I completed nursing school, I couldn’t wait to start taking care of patients, for that has always been my love.” Roberts and her husband live in Etowah County, where she enjoys gardening and spending time with her grandchildren.

The Patient Choice Award was presented on May 14 in a ceremony honoring Roberts, with co-workers, family and friends and those who nominated her in attendance.



“My mother was a nurse for 31 years, and I’ve wanted to be a nurse since I was in the third grade. When I completed nursing school, I couldn’t wait to start taking care of patients, for that has always been my love.”

—Frances Roberts, R.N.

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

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

Take this quiz to find out.



CURB YOUR CHOLESTEROL

Every year, more than a million Americans have heart attacks, and about 500,000 die from heart disease. One of the major risk factors for such heart trouble is high cholesterol. This fatlike substance builds up in your arteries and slows or blocks blood flow to the heart.

Some experts recommend that you start cholesterol testing by age 20; others say to start at age 35. Using a simple blood test called a lipoprotein profile, your physician can determine if your cholesterol levels are too high. Here's what's considered healthy:

>**Total cholesterol:** less than 200 mg/dL

>**LDL (bad) cholesterol:** less than 100 mg/dL is optimal; 100 to 129 mg/dL is near optimal/above optimal

>**HDL (good) cholesterol:** 60 mg/dL or higher may protect the heart; less than 40 mg/dL for men (less than 50 for women) puts you at a greater risk for heart problems

>**Triglycerides (another type of blood fat):** less than 150 mg/dL

WORK ON IT

Are your levels higher than they should be? You can often make a big impact on your cholesterol by making a few small changes:

- **Cut back on saturated fat and cholesterol.** The American Heart Association recommends that you keep your saturated fat consumption to less than 7 percent of your total daily calories. So if you consume about 2,000 calories a day, no more than 140 of them should come from saturated fat, or about 16 grams a day. Avoid trans fats and stock up on fruits, vegetables, whole grains and foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids (salmon, walnuts, almonds).

- **Get active.** Engage in physical activity for at least 30 minutes daily.

- **Lose weight.** Being active and revamping your diet can help. Dropping even 5 to 10 pounds can lower cholesterol.

- **Quit smoking.**

- **Follow your physician's advice.** That includes taking medication, if needed.

1 Which of the following is not a symptom of type 2 diabetes?

- a. fatigue
- b. increased hunger
- c. difficulty urinating
- d. slow wound healing

2 Having diabetes can increase your chances of developing:

- a. glaucoma
- b. digestive problems
- c. gingivitis
- d. all of the above

3 Your physician may diagnose you with diabetes by performing a:

- a. thyroid test
- b. glucose test
- c. complete blood count
- d. none of the above

4 According to the National Institutes of Health, what percentage of people with type 2 diabetes are overweight?

- a. 60
- b. 70
- c. 80
- d. 90

5 Which of these statements about diabetes is true?

- a. You don't have to avoid sweets and chocolate.
- b. You'll eventually develop it if you're overweight.
- c. It makes you more likely to get colds or other illnesses.
- d. Eating too much sugar can cause it.

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

Flu, flu, go away!

It's fall again, and with the changing of the seasons often comes the dreaded flu. Recently, the seasonal flu has been upstaged somewhat by H1N1. Both strains are serious, may lead to complications such as pneumonia and bronchitis and can result in hospitalization and even death.

You can't always keep flu out of your home, but you can certainly reduce the risk of getting infected. Try these tips from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- **Get vaccinated.** This year, the seasonal flu vaccine comprises three strains of flu including H1N1. It's especially important for pregnant women; young children; people older than 65; people who have chronic health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease or lung disease; and others at high risk for complications.
- **Play defense.** Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue out; wash

your hands often (use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available); keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth; avoid close contact with sick people; and stay away from crowds during a flu outbreak. Stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone.

- **Take your medicine.** If you get sick, your physician may recommend an antiviral drug to make the symptoms milder, shorten the time you're sick and prevent complications.



5 must-eat foods

Despite what you might read on the Internet, there's no magic food to prevent disease or cure you of all your ills. However, certain foods are high in antioxidants, vitamins and minerals and, when combined with an overall healthy diet, may help you maintain good health. Consider adding these good, and good-for-you, foods to your diet:

1 Blueberries. Blueberries have plenty of fiber and vitamins A and C, and they may improve short-term memory. Add them to cereal or yogurt for a tart kick.



2 Sardines. Those little fish canned in oil pack a powerful nutrient punch, supplying plenty of protein, calcium and heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids and vitamins B12 and D. Try them in sandwiches, salads or sauces.

3 Almonds. Thanks to good fats, vitamin E and fiber, almonds are exceptionally good for your heart. Grab a small handful daily or sprinkle them on a salad.



4 Red beans. They're high in potassium, iron and magnesium (not to mention low in fat and an excellent source of protein), and may play a role in preventing heart disease and some forms of cancer. Try adding them to stews instead of meat.

5 Sweet potatoes. That orange color is due to loads of beta carotene, which may help slow the aging process. Sweet potatoes also provide vitamins B6, C and E; folate; and potassium. Try them baked or sliced into wedges for another take on french fries.

Healthy Lifestyles is published as a community service of Cherokee Medical Center. There is no fee to subscribe.

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THE RIGHT PHYSICIANS FOR YOU

The experienced, dedicated physicians of Cherokee Medical Center (CMC) can help keep you healthy. We'd like to introduce one of them to you.



ANTHONY T. ARNOTT, M.D.
Family Medicine

Cherokee Health Clinic
395 Northwood Drive
Centre
(256) 927-4900

CMC welcomes its newest family medicine physician, Anthony T. Arnott, M.D. Dr. Arnott is a recent graduate of Floyd Medical Center's family practice residency program and has recently opened his practice at Cherokee Health Clinic in Centre. Originally from a small town in West Virginia, Dr. Arnott attended college at Marshall University in Huntington, W.Va., and pursued his medical degree at West Virginia University School of Medicine in Morgantown.

Dr. Arnott is active in several groups and organizations and is very involved with community service organizations, as well as the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Society for Clinical Pathology and Habitat for Humanity. Dr. Arnott has also participated in a number of foreign medical mission trips.

He enjoys small-town living and lives in Cedar Bluff. Dr. Arnott looks forward to meeting the needs of Cherokee County and growing his practice here. He's accepting new patients, so make an appointment today.

ABOUT FAMILY MEDICINE

Created in 1969 to reverse the decline of physicians becoming generalists by encouraging medical students to enter "general practice," family medicine specializes in providing comprehensive medical care for the entire family. This specialty incorporates knowledge, skill and process and encompasses all ages, men and women, all body systems, acute and chronic diseases and preventive care. While knowledge and skill are shared with other medical specialties, family medicine is distinguished by the long-term patient-physician relationship, which is valued, developed, nurtured and maintained.

For a list of physicians by specialty, visit www.cherokeemedicalcenter.com.