

# Healthy Lifestyles

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT  
CHEROKEE MEDICAL CENTER

**Goodbye  
sleepless nights!**

**Ease your  
child's earache**

**Kick the can**  
Don't indulge in  
diet soda

**Take steps to  
prevent prostate  
cancer**

**CHEROKEE**  
MEDICAL CENTER

[www.cherokeemedicalcenter.com](http://www.cherokeemedicalcenter.com)

# Keep your PROSTATE HEALTHY

**S**ens. Bob Dole and John Kerry, baseball team manager Joe Torre—what do all these men have in common? They're all prostate cancer survivors.

Cancer of the prostate—a walnut-shaped gland located below the bladder—is one of the most common cancers found in men. It may be slow growing and require little or no treatment, or it may be aggressive and spread quickly to other parts of the body.

## THE PREVENTIVE APPROACH

While prostate cancer isn't completely avoidable, certain measures may help reduce your risk:

- **Stay active.** Daily exercise improves your overall health and helps keep your weight in check. Some research has shown that men who exercise regularly have a lower incidence of prostate cancer compared to men who don't.
- **Watch your weight.** A sobering fact: Men who are obese when diagnosed with prostate cancer are more likely to have advanced cases, which are more difficult to treat. But eating right and exercising can help you keep off excess pounds.
- **Talk with your physician.** Discuss any risk factors you have—being older than age 65, African-American or

obese, or having a family history of prostate cancer. Also, learn about the pros and cons of screening tests. A digital rectal exam and the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test are two ways to identify cancer cases, but they can't tell a physician about the aggressiveness of the cancer. And prostate cancer treatments can have unpleasant side effects such as impotence and incontinence.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) recently revised its prostate cancer screening guidelines, encouraging more patient involvement in decisions about screenings:

- The ACS recommends that men at high risk of prostate cancer, including men with a family history of the disease, talk with their physicians sooner—as early as age 40.
- Men who do not have prostate cancer symptoms (trouble urinating, problems with urine stream, blood in urine or semen, leg swelling, pelvic discomfort, bone pain) and who are in relatively good health and are expected to live at least 10 more years should have the screening conversation with their physicians beginning at age 50.
- Men without symptoms who aren't expected to live 10 more years because of age or poor health shouldn't be offered the screening because the risks likely outweigh the benefits.

“  
**Daily exercise improves your overall health and helps keep your weight in check.**  
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## What to ask your physician about prostate health

**B**e prepared to ask some key questions at your next appointment:

- What is my risk of developing prostate cancer?
- Do you recommend I be tested?
- What is my PSA level (if you've had the test)?
- Will I need more tests? If so, which ones will I need?
- What do the test results mean?
- If I have cancer, what are my treatment options, and what are the pros and cons of each?

# Mammogram confusion

## Information on new screening guidelines



**W**e've all heard that early detection of breast cancer with mammograms saves lives. So it was surprising when in 2009, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF)—an independent panel that makes recommendations about which preventive services should routinely be offered and to whom—recommended against routine mammograms for women ages 40 to 49 who weren't at increased risk for breast cancer. Traditionally, all women ages 40 and older were encouraged to get the screening.

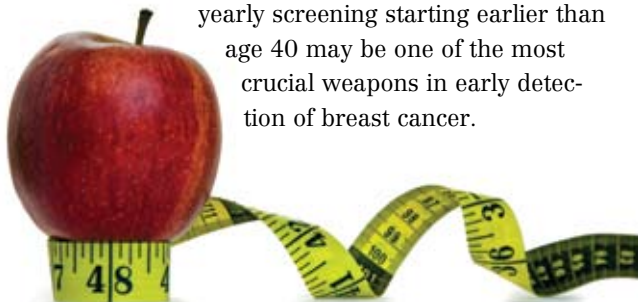
### THE FLIP SIDE

In disagreement with the USPSTF's recommendations were major professional health care organizations including the American Cancer Society. "I have tremendous difficulty in not recommending an intervention [mammography]," says Otis Brawley, M.D., chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society. "Women ages 40 and older should have a mammogram every year."

### NOW WHAT DO I DO?

Amid the confusion, you may be wondering about how to approach your own mammogram. Some words of advice: Talk with your physician.

The USPSTF's recommendations were just that—recommendations, not rules. Discuss your personal and family health history and how frequently you should get mammograms with your physician. And, if you're at high risk—see *Are you at risk?* at right—a yearly screening starting earlier than age 40 may be one of the most crucial weapons in early detection of breast cancer.



## Mammogram comfort

**T**ry these tips for a more comfortable mammogram, courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- Don't schedule your mammogram for the week before or during your period, which is when your breasts are likely to be tender or swollen, making mammograms less comfortable.
- Skip the deodorant, perfume and powder on the day of your mammogram. These may show up as white spots on the X-ray.
- For ease of undressing from the waist up, wear a blouse with a skirt or pants, instead of a dress.

## Are you at risk?

**A**ccording to the National Institutes of Health, breast cancer will affect one in eight women in their lifetime. Why breast cancer affects some women and not others isn't known; however, several known risk factors for the disease include:

- increasing age
- having the BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes; if your family members have had breast or ovarian cancer, talk with your physician about getting tested
- starting your period before age 12 or going through menopause after age 55
- being overweight
- using menopausal hormone therapy
- taking birth control pills
- drinking alcohol
- not having children or having your first child after age 35
- having dense breasts



M. Patrick Trammell  
Chief Executive Officer

## People matter at CMC

**W**elcome to another issue of *Healthy Lifestyles*. It takes a lot of talented and skilled people to run any hospital, and our employees and community have a lot to be proud of at Cherokee Medical Center (CMC).

### RECOGNIZING OUR TEAM

It was such a pleasure to attend the annual CMC Service Awards Luncheon. At the event, I was overcome by a sense of pride for our staff's commitment to taking care of others and their loyalty to CMC. We recognized a roomfull of employees, some of whom have worked at CMC for 40 years. This special event was a time for us to celebrate not only our staff's years of service, but also their dedication and passion for caring. It's this same passion and dedication that will drive us toward our goal of being the health care provider of choice in our area.

### PERSONALIZED CARE

As we strive to serve our patients better by improving processes and adding new services or medical technology, we're mindful that the patient experience is the key

driver of our long-term success. It's with this awareness that our compassionate caregivers deliver personalized care that meets the unique needs of every patient.

### NEW SLEEP CENTER

Take an opportunity to try us out for yourself in the new CMC Sleep Disorder Center (see more on page 8). You now have access to advanced care for sleep medicine, close to home, at the fully accredited facility. Sleep Disorder Center medical director David Koury, M.D., is a board-certified neurologist and board-certified sleep specialist who will take great care in diagnosing any sleep disorders you may have that could require further treatment.

As always, we thank you for your support, and look forward to providing personalized, close-to-home health care for you and your loved ones, whenever you may need us.

Sincerely,

*M. Patrick Trammell*

Chief Executive Officer  
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](http://www.cherokeemedicalcenter.com)

FOR QUESTIONS, E-MAIL US AT [HEALTHY\\_WOMAN@CHS.NET](mailto:HEALTHY_WOMAN@CHS.NET)

# Oh, that aching ear!

## Erase childhood earaches



By Thomas T. Leach, M.D.  
Board Certified in Family Medicine

**E**araches are a common ailment in small children. Children's ear infections are the most common bacterial illness for which antibiotics are prescribed in the United States, reports the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Ninety percent of children get a middle ear infection between ages 6 months and 4 years.

### THE MECHANICS OF AN EARACHE

Children are more likely to get earaches and ear infections because their ear passages are smaller, narrower and angled differently than adults'—making it easier for germs to reach the middle ear and fluid to build. Once the infection settles in, it's more difficult for a child's body to fight it.

Like the common cold, a child's ear infection begins with a viral infection. Fluid may build behind the eardrum; in other cases, the eustachian tubes—the narrow passages between the middle ear and the back of the nose—become swollen, blocked or infected. While ear infections often follow a cold, the ear infection itself can't be spread from person to person.

### TREATMENT OPTIONS

Ear infections generally don't require intervention or medication and usually clear up on their own within one to two weeks. Children who receive medical treatment recover at about the same rate as children who don't receive treatment. And, antibiotic

### More than just pain

If your child is experiencing any of the following symptoms, he or she may have an ear infection:

- pulling or tugging at the ear
- fever or headache
- excess fluid
- cough or nasal discharge
- vomiting or diarrhea
- fullness, buzzing or ringing in the ears
- ear drainage

usage may lead to drug-resistant bacteria. Therefore, prescription medication is usually reserved for severe infections or infections in young infants.

Just as important as knowing what to do is knowing what not to do in treating your child's ear pain. The AAP doesn't recommend decongestants, antihistamines, steroid nasal sprays or prolonged, frequent or low-dose antibiotics. While many ear infections are unavoidable, parents can create a healthy environment for their children: Avoid smoking and practice good hygiene, including frequent hand washing.



### ! Get help for your child!

If your child is experiencing earache symptoms, call board-certified family physician Thomas T. Leach, M.D., at (256) 927-4904. His office is located at 395 Northwood Drive in Centre.

## HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about **high blood pressure**?

Take this quiz to find out.

- 1** How many American adults have high blood pressure?
  - a. one in three
  - b. one in five
  - c. one in 10
  - d. one in 20
- 2** Most people with high blood pressure experience:
  - a. nausea
  - b. weakness
  - c. trouble concentrating
  - d. no symptoms
- 3** Healthy adults with no history of high blood pressure should have their blood pressure checked every:
  - a. six months
  - b. year
  - c. two years
  - d. 10 years
- 4** High blood pressure can increase your risk for:
  - a. dementia
  - b. eye damage
  - c. bone loss
  - d. all of the above
- 5** Which of the following statements is true?
  - a. After age 65, more women than men have high blood pressure.
  - b. After age 65, more men than women have high blood pressure.
  - c. After age 65, an equal number of men and women have high blood pressure.
  - d. After age 65, the number of men and women suffering from high blood pressure is unknown.

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

# Show your heart a little love

**Y**our heart works hard for you, pumping day in and day out to supply your body with the oxygen-rich blood you need for survival. So what are you doing to nurture it? Try these five tips to ensure better heart health:

**➔ Choose good-for-you foods.** Follow a diet such as Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH). This eating plan is centered on foods low in fat, cholesterol and salt; and rich in fruits and vegetables (aim for five to 10 servings a day), whole grains and low-fat dairy products. Foods that are good for the heart also include those with high levels of omega-3 fatty acids, a type of polyunsaturated fat, found in fish such as salmon, mackerel and sardines.

**➔ Give your heart a workout.** You don't need a gym membership to keep your heart in tip-top shape. Get the recommended 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity daily by walking, jogging or biking—and remember that everyday tasks such as gardening, vacuuming and taking the stairs count toward your activity goals. Activity, along with eating healthy foods, can help you maintain a healthy weight, which is another way that you can boost heart health.

**➔ Consider aspirin therapy.** A daily aspirin can benefit many people, but not everyone, so talk with your physician first about the risks and benefits. For example, aspirin can help prevent first and second heart attacks in older women and men of all ages, but only second heart attacks in women younger than age 65. Aspirin also may prevent certain types of strokes.

**➔ Quit smoking.** Tobacco smoke contains thousands of chemicals that damage the heart and blood vessels, including nicotine, which narrows blood vessels and makes your heart work harder. Within one year of quitting, you can expect to see your heart-disease risk drop dramatically.

**➔ Get checked.** Have your blood pressure and cholesterol checked regularly. Ask your physician how frequently you should be tested based on your health history.





## CLEAN UP your health

It's easy to focus on all the bad things we breathe in the air outside, such as pollen and pollutants. But what about what's lurking inside our houses? Household dust, mold and various chemicals can make breathing difficult. Here's what might be stirring up trouble at home:

**Dust mites.** In dust around the home lie dust mites—microscopic insects that are the most common cause of dust allergies. They can also trigger asthma and flu-like symptoms.

**Combat them:** Wipe dusty surfaces with a damp cloth, and vacuum once a week. Wash bedding once a week in hot water, and cover mattresses, box springs and pillows in mite-proof covers.

**Mold.** Mold spores thrive in damp areas such as basements and bathrooms. Along with dust mites, mold is considered a biological pollutant and can also trigger allergies and asthma.

**Combat it:** Use ventilation fans and dehumidifiers to keep humidity at 30 percent to 50 percent. Treat moldy bathrooms, basement walls and furniture with diluted bleach or other disinfectants.

**Volatile organic compounds (VOCs):** These gases are emitted from products such as paints and cleaning supplies. Health effects range from ear, nose and throat irritation to central nervous system damage.

**Combat them:** Use chemicals only in well-ventilated areas. Consider purchasing low-VOC paint.

### Don't let the bedbugs bite!



**B**edbugs are one souvenir you don't want to take home with you from vacation. But these flat, little reddish-brown pests, which are more common in places such as hotels, may find a way into your home by hitching a ride in your suitcase. Waiting to strike, they hide out in beds, box springs, headboards and bed frames. When they do bite, they can cause red, itchy, clustered bite marks on the face, neck, arms and hands. The best way to eliminate them is with a professional exterminator.

## DOUBTING diet soda

**D**iet soda: It's sugar and calorie free, so it must not be bad for you, right? Some recent research suggests otherwise. While most of these health concerns need further investigation, now might be a good time to either limit your diet-soda intake to the occasional indulgence, or switch to water, skim milk or diluted 100-percent fruit juice. Here's why:

**Tough on teeth.** Diet soda is just as acidic as regular soda, which can damage tooth enamel and promote decay.

**Wicked to waistlines.** Some studies have found that drinking diet soda regularly may be connected to obesity and type 2 diabetes. Researchers are unsure if diet soda actually causes obesity, but one study found that those who drank three or more of the beverages daily were more likely to gain weight than those who didn't.

**Unkind to kidneys.** One major study found that women who consumed two or more artificially sweetened sodas a day doubled their risk for kidney function decline. Drinking regular soda or only one diet soda daily did not decrease kidney function more than normal. However, for those prone to kidney stones, a separate study discovered that citrus-flavored diet sodas contain high levels of a compound that may inhibit stone formation.

**Bad to the bones.** According to the National Institutes of Health, people may be replacing bone-friendly, calcium-rich milk with soda, which may lead to decreased bone mass and an increased risk of fracture.



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70CMC

# Trouble getting your zzzs?

## Our Sleep Disorder Center can help



Sleep studies are conducted in a relaxing, homelike atmosphere.

**A**t one time or another, just about everyone has had a sleepless night because of occasional stress. In fact, anything that increases a person's emotional response can interfere with sleep. Many times, people are unaware that their work, family, friends and social events have elevated their stress levels. For many, stress-induced sleep loss is temporary. But this isn't the case for all.

Many people unwittingly suffer from undiagnosed medical conditions that contribute to their sleep loss. These conditions, coupled with stress, can increase a person's inability to get a good night's sleep. If left untreated, long-term disorders may develop.

### WE'RE HERE FOR YOU

When is it time to consult a physician? When you have sleep problems that last more than two weeks and interfere with other parts of your life, or if you stay up for days and miss sleep, it's time! Treatments are available for most sleep ailments, but the first step is recognizing that a problem exists. Your physician can order a sleep evaluation from the Sleep Disorder Center at Cherokee Medical Center (CMC). Under the direction of Michael Jimmerson, C.R.T., the Sleep Disorder Center uses advanced technology to record sleep patterns and determine whether a

disorder is present. Various sleep disorders are treated at the center, such as:

- sleep apnea
- insomnia
- excessive daytime sleepiness
- narcolepsy
- restless legs or periodic limb movement disorder
- sleepwalking
- night terrors
- sleep violence
- sleep eating
- gastroesophageal reflux

Patients benefit from a quiet and relaxing atmosphere coupled with comprehensive monitoring equipment for diagnosis and treatment of sleep disorders. The Sleep Disorder Center meets the American Academy of Sleep Medicine standards. Remember, your sleepless nights may indicate a problem bigger than just fleeting stress.



## Get your shuteye!

Call the Sleep Disorder Center at Cherokee Medical Center at (256) 927-1404 today.