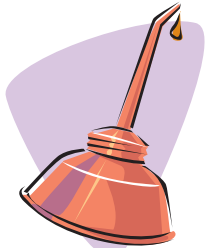




HEALTH SCENES®

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Health Link



CREAKY KNEES? If your joints aren't working the way they used to, lack of use—rather than age—is probably to blame. Stretching is a great way to keep your joints in good shape.

American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons

THE BATH TIME BLUES Annually, more than 43,000 American kids are injured in baths and showers, mostly from slips and falls. Using a nonslip mat is an easy way to help keep kids injury-free.

American Academy of Pediatrics



TIME TO STOCK UP Are you getting ready for cancer treatment? If so, it's important to eat well beforehand and afterward. Plan ahead, and fill up your pantry and freezer with favorite foods so that you won't need to shop often while you recuperate.

National Cancer Institute



DIABETES TREAT YOUR HEART TO A LITTLE TLC

“Am I doing everything possible to protect my heart?”
♦ If you have diabetes, this is a question you need to ask yourself repeatedly. Diabetes increases your risk of developing heart disease and having a heart attack.

Obviously, you can't change the fact that you have diabetes. Even so, there's much you can do to reduce your risk of developing heart disease. “Diabetes may keep you from manifesting classic symptoms of heart disease,” says Carmelita M. Hudson-Kane, MD, internal medicine physician and pediatrician at Perryville Family Care Clinic. “You can't take care of heart disease if you don't know you have it.”

Take control of the ABCs of diabetes. **A** is for the A1C test, which gives you your average blood sugar for the past two to three months. Most people with diabetes should aim for an A1C below 7 percent.

B is for blood pressure, which—if it's too high—can make your heart work too hard. Keep your blood pressure in a healthy range, ideally below 120/80 mm Hg.

C is for cholesterol. LDL cholesterol (the bad kind) clogs arteries, so keep it low—specifically, below 100 mg/dL of blood.

Follow through. “Being proactive about the diagnosis of diabetes or pre-diabetes is half the battle,” Dr. Hudson-Kane says.

Eat a heart-friendly diet and be active. Eat less fat (especially saturated fat and trans fat), go easy on salt and get at least 30 minutes of aerobic exercise (such as brisk walking) on most days of the week.

Drop a few pounds if you're overweight. Losing only 10 percent of your total weight can help protect your heart.

Finally, if you smoke, try hard to quit. “Many patients don't realize that diabetes can be just as damaging to blood vessels as smoking,” Dr. Hudson-Kane says.

Dr. Hudson-Kane is now accepting new patients at Perryville Family Care Clinic.

Medicine dos and don'ts

Medicines can successfully treat many health problems. But if you don't take them as directed by your doctor, you might not get the benefit you need. You could be harming your health if you:

- Fail to get prescriptions filled.
 - Don't take medicine when you should.
 - Stop taking medicine to save money or because you feel fine and don't think you need it anymore.
 - Avoid taking medicine because it has unpleasant side effects.
- Any of those choices could cause your condition to worsen or make you need more expensive treatment later.
- To help avoid possible problems with your medications:
- Make sure you understand the doctor's directions for taking them.
 - Talk to your doctor about any side effects you develop. Medicines often can be adjusted or changed.
 - Make a list of your medicines and when you take them. Post the list where it's easy to see.
 - Check your insurance policy. If it doesn't pay for a medicine and you can't afford it, ask your doctor for a less expensive drug. If one isn't available, check with your doctor or pharmacist to see if there are any programs that might help pay for the drug.

Sources: American Pharmacists Association; U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Interested in having health information and PCMH news delivered right to your inbox?

The PCMH e-newsletter is our way of providing you with updated health information on the topics you choose and news about community events sponsored by PCMH.

Sign up by clicking on the link at www.pchmo.org.



Clean safely, avoid tumbles

Cold weather is out, and warm temps are in.

If you're like many people, that means it's time to tackle those yearly home projects. Whether you'll be inside giving everything a good scrubbing or outside getting the yard back in shape, you need to keep safety in mind.

Thousands of people are hurt each year



in around-the-home mishaps ranging from ladder falls to garden tool accidents, the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) reports.

These safety tips from the AAOS and other experts can help you avoid those potential hazards:

- Don't throw your back out along with those old boxes. When lifting, set your feet shoulder width apart and keep your back straight. Bend at the knees—not at the waist—and lift with your legs. If it's too heavy or awkward, get help.
- Match the tool to the job. Sure, a sofa or chair may be convenient when dusting hard-to-reach places, but a step stool is safer.
- Be careful up there. If you'll be using a ladder for outdoor tasks—for example, to clear gutters—take precautions. Place the ladder on firm, flat ground. When climbing, keep your belly button centered between the ladder's two outside rails. Once you're up the ladder, don't lean so far to the left or right that your belly button goes beyond those rails. Climb down and reposition the ladder instead.
- Don't overdo it. Take breaks from activities that require repeated motions, such as digging or pruning in the garden. While you're at it, drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.
- Follow safety labels and instructions. This includes directions for using cleaning products and lawn and garden chemicals and equipment.
- Mind the kids. Never let children play around or ride on lawn mowers, and keep chemicals and dangerous tools and equipment beyond their reach. Consider using nontoxic cleaners and lawn products.

Additional sources: American Academy of Pediatrics; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

FOR CAREGIVERS

Online help from Medicare

No matter how much you love a family member or friend, assuming a caregiver role is not an easy task. It can often be physically and emotionally demanding. It may require you to make difficult decisions. You could spend hours seeking solutions to multiple problems.

In response to these challenges, the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has created Ask Medicare, a website that provides important information and links to resources for caregivers.

Among the topics covered:

- How to enroll in Medicare.
- What Medicare covers.
- How to file claims for expenses covered by Medicare.

- Comparisons of supplemental insurance (medigap) and Medicare drug plans.
- Which doctors in your area accept Medicare patients.
- What to do if you have a grievance involving Medicare coverage.
- Financial and legal help for caregivers.
- How to get in-home services.
- Nursing home alternatives and other options for long-term care.
- How to stay healthy yourself.
- Coping tips from other caregivers.

The site also offers a free e-newsletter that can be sent directly to a subscriber's e-mail address.



You can find Ask Medicare at www.medicare.gov/caregivers.



TETANUS SHOT

A must-do for gardeners

Gardeners, how do you protect yourself when you're outside? Sunscreen helps prevent sunburn, and gloves minimize blisters and calluses. But what about tetanus?

You need a regular tetanus shot to be protected from this serious, even life-threatening, disease.

Rigid muscles Tetanus is a disease caused by bacteria that live in soil and manure, which is why gardeners are at particular risk. The bacteria produce a toxin so powerful that just a tiny amount can be lethal.

Tetanus is sometimes called lockjaw because it causes painful tightening of muscles, often starting in the jaw and neck. It can lead to spasms, difficulty swallowing and bone fractures. The infection is often fatal, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Tetanus usually comes from a deep cut or puncture, such as from stepping on a nail. Other common causes include:

- Getting deeply cut by barbed wire.
- Getting a splinter.
- Being stung or bitten by an insect or animal.
- Self-piercing and self-tattooing.

Take a shot A tetanus shot can prevent the disease. One shot does not give you lifelong immunity, however, so a booster shot every 10 years is important.

Check with your doctor to find out if you're currently protected. Everyone—gardener or not—should stay up-to-date on tetanus vaccination.

Journal Digest

PESTICIDE LEVELS IN BLOOD LINKED TO PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Scientists have long believed that environmental factors—particularly exposure to pesticides—play a role in the development of Parkinson's disease (PD). But they haven't been able to link a specific pesticide to PD until now.

In a study of 113 people who either had PD or Alzheimer's disease or were healthy, researchers found significantly higher blood levels of a type of pesticide called beta-HCH in those with PD than in the other groups.

The study subjects were between 50 and 89 years old, which meant they were probably exposed to beta-HCH from the 1950s to the 1970s—a time when there were much higher levels of the pesticide in the air, water and food chain than there are now because of tighter regulations.

Screening for beta-HCH in the blood may help detect PD early, when treatments can be more effective, the researchers report.

Archives of Neurology, Vol. 66, No. 7



DRINK TEA, CUT STROKE RISK

Having a cup of tea? Enjoy the taste—and reap the potential health benefits. According to researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles, drinking tea can dramatically cut your risk of stroke.

The researchers looked at data from nine studies spanning six countries, including the U.S., which examined the relationship between stroke and tea drinking.

They found that drinking 3 cups of green or black tea a day can reduce stroke risk by 21 percent compared with drinking less than 1 cup a day.

In addition, it appears that more tea is even better. Drinking 6 cups of tea a day lowers the risk of stroke by another 21 percent.

Scientists speculate that certain antioxidants or amino acids in tea are responsible for this effect.

Stroke, Vol. 40, No. 5

Kids' shoes: How to make them foot-friendly

Keeping your kids in properly fitting shoes can feel like an impossible feat, especially when new growth spurts seem to start even before the last ones have ended.

But the right shoes can really make a difference for your child. A proper fit can help prevent discomfort, injury and even serious foot deformities, according to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

When buying shoes for your kids,

there are several important things to keep in mind:

- **Shoeless is fine at first.** Until kids start to walk, shoes are unnecessary. Socks or booties will keep a crawling infant's feet warm. Even when your child starts to stand and walk, barefoot is generally fine when he or she is indoors. If your child is walking outside, though, shoes are a good idea to help prevent injury.

- **Sneakers rule.** Soft, flexible shoes like sneakers are usually good choices for kids of all ages. For kids who regularly participate in sports, shoes specially designed with that sport in mind are best.

- **Measuring is important.** Every time you buy shoes for your children, have their feet measured first. Don't rely on the size marked on the shoes or on the box they come in. For accuracy, have your kids stand while their feet are being measured.

- **Wiggle room is a must.** Make sure shoes are roomy enough so that kids can easily move their toes. But at the same time, the shoe should not be so loose that it slips off the heel when the child walks or runs.

- **Anticipate growth.** Generally, a finger width of extra length at the toe end of the shoe equates to about three to six months of growth in a child. This varies, so check your child's shoes every month or so to see if they still fit. Often, children outgrow their shoes before the shoes wear out.

- **Look for trouble signs.** Red spots, calluses or blisters on your kids' feet could be signs that their shoes are too tight. Also, if your child routinely removes his or her shoes, it might be because the shoes fit poorly.

If you suspect a problem with your children's feet, talk to your doctor.



All about bone health

Keeping the structure strong—it's important for buildings and bodies. Like a good house frame, good bones will stand soundly for years to come.

"The *U.S. News & World Report* states that approximately 300,000 individuals are hospitalized after hip fracture each year, which is especially concerning in the field of orthopedics," says Ashley Nordmeyer, PA, of Perry County Orthopedics & Sports Medicine.

So what can you do to help keep your bones strong? The following information can help.

Feed your femur Calcium and vitamin D are essential building blocks for bone health.

If the body is getting enough calcium, it will use it to help build bone. If it's not getting enough, it will actually take calcium away from the bones and use it for other functions that need the mineral, such as blood clotting.

Recommendations for daily calcium intake vary from 1,000 to 1,300 milligrams a day, depending on your age and sex.

Dairy products, some green vegetables and calcium-fortified foods are the best sources for getting enough of this essential mineral.

Talk to your doctor about how much calcium you need on a daily basis.

Vitamin D is necessary in order for the body to absorb and use calcium.

You can get vitamin D from your diet or from briefly exposing your skin (without sunscreen) to the sun. Few foods naturally contain vitamin D. However, milk, orange juice and some cereals are often fortified with vitamin D.

The current recommendations from the National Osteoporosis Foundation for daily vitamin D intake are:

- For those under age 50, 400 to 800 international units (IU).

- For people 50 and over, 800 to 1,000 IU.

Taking a supplement is also an option if you find it difficult to get enough calcium and vitamin D. But there are some precautions. For instance, it's possible to take too much vitamin D. It's best to check with your doctor before starting supplements.

Strengthen your spine Bones get stronger and denser when you make them work. Weight-bearing exercises, like jogging and jumping rope, are good for bones. So are walking and climbing stairs. Try doing one of these weight-

bearing activities for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week. Always check with your doctor before starting a new exercise program.

By getting the right nutrition and exercise, you are taking steps to strengthen your bones, which will help keep your structure strong.



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Improving quality of life

You don't have to be injured at work or have a job to benefit from seeing an occupational therapist (OT).

An OT can help anyone with a disabling mental or physical condition improve his or her ability to perform tasks at home as well as in the workplace.

"Occupational therapy enables people of all ages who have an injury, illness or life challenge to engage in activities that are meaningful and purposeful in their lives," says Debbie Jokerst, MHS, OTR/L, of Perry County Memorial Hospital.

An OT is a highly trained health care professional who helps people who have been through some type of life-changing experience, such as a heart attack or stroke, improve basic motor skills and compensate for permanent loss of function.

For example, if you have had a stroke and are paralyzed on one side of your body, an OT can help you learn how to do things one-handed or relearn how to use the impaired side of your body.

According to the American Occupational Therapy Association, you may benefit from occupational therapy if you have:

- A work-related injury, such as a low-back problem or a repetitive stress ailment.

- Arthritis, multiple sclerosis or another chronic health condition.

- Mental health or behavioral problems, including Alzheimer's disease and post-traumatic stress disorder.

- A child struggling with a developmental milestone.

- A spinal cord injury, an amputation or a burn-related injury.

An OT can help you with all types of activities, from using a computer to caring for daily needs—such as dressing, cooking and eating—to finding a suitable job.

An OT can also aid you in setting up an exercise program to increase strength and dexterity and teach you how to use adaptive devices, such as wheelchairs.

"An OT wants you to get back to doing what you love and will do everything in his or her power to help you do just that," Jokerst says.

PREGNANCY PRECAUTIONS

IF YOU'RE PREGNANT or planning on becoming pregnant, you probably know the importance of eating right and going for your prenatal visits.

But you also need to be aware of situations that might put you and your unborn baby in harm's way. Taking precautions can help keep you and your baby safe and healthy.

EXERCISE Staying fit is often a great way to meet the demands of pregnancy. Exercise can help:

- Ease constipation, varicose veins, backaches and exhaustion.
- Lower the risk of developing pre-eclampsia and gestational diabetes.

But not all pregnant women can safely exercise. So it's important to check with your doctor before starting or continuing an exercise program.

Once your doctor says it's OK to exercise, you should avoid activities that could cause you to fall, such as downhill skiing or horseback riding. You should also avoid activities that might cause you to get hit in the abdomen, including basketball and kickboxing. Instead, walk, swim or do other low-impact activities.

Aim for a total of 2½ hours of moderate-intensity exercise spread throughout the week.

SEAT BELTS Among pregnant women, car crashes are the major cause of blunt-force trauma to the abdomen

and the leading cause of injury-related death.

Lois Jensen, MD, an obstetrician/gynecologist at Perry County Women's Care, urges women to always buckle up when traveling. The following is the proper way to wear a seat belt when you're pregnant:

- Put the lap belt under your belly and across your hips.
- The shoulder strap goes between your breasts and to the side of your belly.
- Make sure both parts of the belt fit snugly.

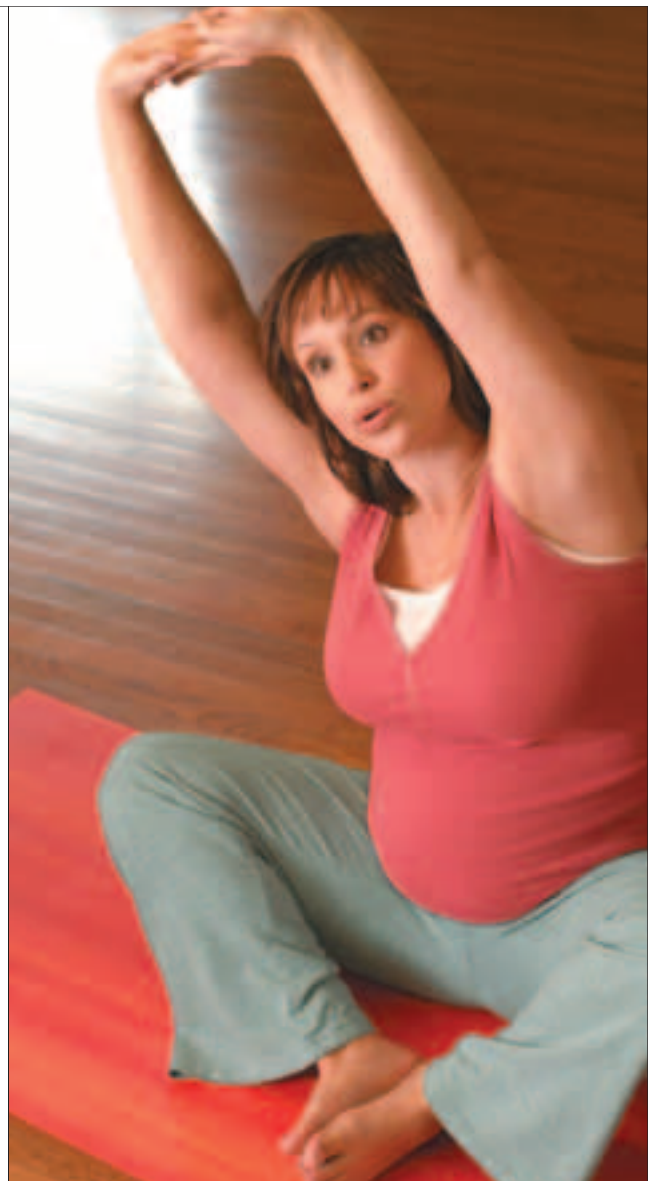
ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS If you're in an abusive relationship, now is the time to get out.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, abuse from a partner often happens during pregnancy. It can lead to preterm birth, low birth weight, stillbirth and even homicide. About 50 percent of men who abuse their partner also abuse their children.

Discuss the abuse with your doctor at your prenatal visit. You can also call the National Domestic Violence Hotline for help at 800-799-SAFE (800-799-7233).

ANY OTHER CONCERNS Don't hesitate to talk with your doctor if you are worried about something or if you notice any unusual changes during your pregnancy.

Having a safe and healthy pregnancy means a better chance of delivering a healthy baby.



Baby-safe medications

Some things are good for you and your baby when you're pregnant, like a healthy diet, daily exercise and sufficient sleep.

And some things—like alcohol and cigarettes—you know to avoid.

But what should you do about medications?

First, talk with your doctor about the risks and benefits of any medications—prescription, herbal or over-the-counter—before you use them.

Most herbal remedies have not been evaluated well enough for use during pregnancy. All over-the-counter medicines, however, have information specifically for pregnant women on the drug facts label.

The labels on some drugs—such as

ibuprofen, naproxen and aspirin—will indicate that they are not to be used by pregnant women.

Prescription drugs are different. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration assigns these drugs a letter category—A, B, C, D or X—from the safest (A) to the most dangerous (X). The category is based on studies of the drug's effect on human or animal pregnancies.

Some drugs are considered safe for

use in pregnant women (A, B). Other drugs are not well-studied or are known to pose a slight risk to a fetus (C, D). However, in certain situations, doctors still prescribe these medicines because the drugs may do more good than harm.

Some medications (X)—such as isotretinoin (for acne) and thalidomide (for skin disease)—should never be taken during pregnancy.

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

HEALTH CLASSES

CHAIRSIDE AEROBICS

■ Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.
Perryville Community Center
■ Mondays and Fridays 9 a.m.

Frohna

■ Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 8 a.m.
Altenburg

CHILDBIRTH CLASSES

■ Tuesdays, April 6 through 27
■ Tuesdays, July 6 through 27

■ Tuesdays, Oct. 5 through 26 7 to 9 p.m.
PCMH Ed Center Room A \$20 fee. Call the OB Department at 768-3274.

CPR

Upon request; call Terrie at 768-3271.

INFANT CPR

Upon request; call the OB Department at 768-3274.

INFANT MASSAGE

Upon request; call Physical Therapy at 768-3349.

SIBLING CLASSES

Call the OB Department at 768-3274.

SUPPORT GROUPS

BETTER BREATHERS

Date to be announced, 10 a.m. to noon
RSVP to Respiratory Care at 768-3352.

UPCOMING EVENTS

BLOOD DRIVES

Mondays, April 5, June 7, Aug. 2 and Oct. 4, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
PCMH Ed Center Room A
Call Jessica at 768-3205 for an appointment.

"BOOKS ARE FUN" SALE

■ Thursday, Sept. 23, 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
■ Friday, Sept. 24, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.
PCMH Ed Center Room A

CHOLESTEROL AND BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

First Friday of each month, 8 to 10 a.m.
PCMH Medical Library \$20 for cholesterol screening. For more information, call 768-3239.

"MASQUERADE" JEWELRY SALE

■ Thursdays, April 15, Oct. 28, 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
■ Fridays, April 16, Oct. 29, 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

\$5 jewelry

PCMH Ed Center Room A

MATURE DRIVING COURSE

Friday, April 9, 8 a.m. to noon
PCMH Ed Center Room B \$12 for AARP members,

\$14 for nonmembers. Call Shearry at 768-3488 to register.

SAFE SITTER CLASS

■ Thursday, June 3
■ Friday, June 11 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
\$25 fee. Call Kathy at 768-3272 to register.

SHOE ROADS PRODUCTIONS

■ Thursday, June 24, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
■ Friday, June 25, 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
PCMH Ed Center Room A

UNIFORM SALE

■ Thursday, May 20, 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
■ Friday, May 21, 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
PCMH Ed Center Room A

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HEALTH SCENE

SPRING 2010

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CALENDAR