

BALANCE



St. Vincent
Clay Hospital

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body ■ mind ■ spirit[®]
fall 2009

ARE YOU
PREPARED FOR
A PARENT'S
EMERGENCY?

THE LOWDOWN
ON LIQUID
CALORIES

You Can
STOP
the **FLU**



Listen to Your HEART



Crushing pain in his chest, radiating down his left arm, and alarming agony in his back—this was a heart attack, but the echocardiogram was normal. One more test revealed Kevin De Voe, an intermediate emergency medical technician (EMT-I) in Bloomington, was wise to come to St.Vincent.

KEVIN, 53, HAD COME TO FISHERS FOR THE DAY to visit his sister and work on her house. The intense pain he experienced knocked him to the floor. Once the pain subsided, the always-ready EMT-I used his cuff and stethoscope to take his own blood pressure.

A Close Call

Convinced he was doing better, Kevin did not call 911. He eventually let his sister drive him to the emergency department at St. Vincent Medical Center Northeast, which was only five minutes away. Routine cardiac test results appeared normal. However, his emergency physician insisted on performing one more test—the computed tomography \$99 HeartScan—to see if an aortic tear caused Kevin’s symptoms.

“The computed tomography scan did not hurt and gave my physician results in about five or 10 minutes,” Kevin explained. “Measuring the amount of plaque inside my heart’s arteries, the HeartScan showed blockages of 100, 95 and 80 percent. I was immediately transferred to St. Vincent Heart Center of Indiana.”

Kevin received four stents to help clear his blockages. He credits the HeartScan and his physician’s insistence for undergoing the scan for saving his life.

“I truly believe that if I had been at another hospital, I would have gotten the ‘all clear’ and been released without the treatment I needed,” Kevin said. “I have convinced about 20 people—friends and people from my fire department and work—to get a HeartScan. I think it should be required for everyone.”

Local Heart Heroes

Nationwide, about half of all cardiovascular procedures are performed on patients age 65 and older; however, more than a third of cardiac patients are ages 45 to 64. Younger men and women should act quickly if they experience the following symptoms of heart attack:

- + Chest pain
- + Discomfort in the arms, back, jaw, neck or stomach
- + Nausea or light-headedness
- + Shortness of breath

The emergency staff at every St. Vincent Health ministry works to provide the quickest path to treatment for patients experiencing symptoms of a heart attack.

“St. Vincent Health provides a wide range of cardiac services close to home,” said Kimberly Nealon, site administrator for St. Vincent Medical Center Northeast. “People will feel the Spirit of Caring the moment they walk through our doors.”

To schedule a \$99 HeartScan, call the St. Vincent CareLine at 317.338.CARE (2273) or toll-free 888.338.CARE.

You can receive a \$99 HeartScan through St. Vincent to identify your risk for heart disease. Used as a preventive measure, the computed tomography (CT) scan allows patients to make lifestyle changes based on the results. Call 866.432.4457 to schedule your HeartScan.



The Power of a Screening

The American Cancer Society recommends everyone over the age of 50 undergo a routine colonoscopy every 10 years. For Eugenia F. Green, 59, of Anderson, neglecting to have this recommended screening for more than three years after her 50th birthday is one of her biggest regrets.

WHEN EUGENIA WENT TO HER ANNUAL GYNECOLOGICAL appointment in 2004, her doctor recommended she get a colonoscopy after a routine exam revealed something suspicious. The screening confirmed Eugenia's worst fears—she had colorectal cancer.

"I was in disbelief when my physician informed me he found a cancerous polyp," Eugenia said. "It was terrifying, but I realize this important screening was potentially responsible for saving my life."

Identifying the Signs

Eugenia learned after her diagnosis that everyone older than age 50 should receive a colorectal cancer screening. It's something she wants everyone to know, as roughly 145,000 Americans are diagnosed with colorectal cancer and almost 50,000 die from the disease annually, according to the American Cancer Society.

Those with a family history of the disease should be screened before reaching age 50. Additionally, watch for these signs:

- A change in bowel movements, including diarrhea and constipation
- Abdominal discomfort
- Blood in stool
- Unexplained fatigue

Winning the Fight

For those diagnosed with colorectal cancer, the right treatment options, including surgery, chemotherapy, medication and radiation, are available nearby.

"After being diagnosed with colorectal cancer, I underwent radiation therapy and chemotherapy," Eugenia said. "I can't thank the compassionate nurses and physicians at St. Vincent enough for their demeanor. They made me feel calm and comfortable throughout my battle to overcome cancer."

Cancer-free since 2005, Eugenia has made many lifestyle changes as a result of her journey.

"I have made it my mission to educate my family and friends about the importance of routine health screenings," Eugenia added. "Living a healthy lifestyle isn't just about eating right and exercising. To be truly proactive about your health, you must be aware of and receptive to health education and early screenings."

For more information about cancer services at St. Vincent Health, visit stvincent.org and choose "Our Services" then "Cancer."

Know Your Risk

While researchers haven't identified a direct cause of colorectal cancer, they have determined risk factors that may increase your chance of developing the disease:

- + Advanced age
- + Diabetes
- + Excessive alcohol consumption
- + Family history of the disease
- + Obesity
- + Personal history of the disease or colon polyps
- + Poor diet including foods that are high in fat, calories and protein
- + Sedentary lifestyle
- + Smoking

Call 317.338.CARE (2273) to find a physician who can ensure you're receiving the proper cancer screenings.





A Breath of RELIEF?

Vicks® VapoRub® has long been used as a remedy for easing symptoms such as cough and congestion. However, when used incorrectly, the product can have dangerous side effects.

■ VICKS VAPORUB IS A TOPICAL ointment that can help alleviate cold-like symptoms as well as minor aches and pains. After applying VapoRub, the user breathes in medicated vapors, which help relieve symptoms without the unpleasant side effects of drowsiness or jitters often caused by oral cough medicines.

While the product is safe for children ages 2 and older when used correctly, recent

headlines reported that improper use placed a young girl in the hospital. The 18-month-old child had an upper respiratory infection, and her grandparents applied VapoRub under her nostrils. Because VapoRub contains ingredients that stimulate the airways, placing it under the nostrils or on other places of the body not intended for its use can cause a child's small airways to constrict.

Be sure to take the following precautions when using VapoRub:

- Avoid contact with the eyes.
- Do not apply it to the mouth, nostrils, wounds or damaged skin.
- Do not use it on children younger than 2 years of age.
- Wear loose clothing around the throat and chest to allow vapors to reach the nose and mouth.
- Repeat no more than three times a day.

To locate a physician at St. Vincent Clay Hospital, visit clay.stvincent.org and click "Find a Physician."



A Calorie Is Not *Always* a Calorie

Help reduce your weight by cutting out unnecessary—and unsatisfying—calories found in everyday beverages.

■ CALORIES ARE UNITS of measurement for the energy stored in food. They help quantify how much energy we need to live and measure the excess energy potential we consume that will be stored as fat if we overeat.

Although a calorie is technically a calorie—whether found in lettuce or a piece of chocolate—a new study finds cutting back on the calories of sugar-sweetened drinks has a greater impact on weight loss than limiting food calories.

I'm Not Satisfied

More than 800 participants in the Blood Pressure Control (PREMIER) trial were interviewed about their beverage consumption and weighed throughout the trial. Drinks consumed were divided into seven categories:

1. sugar-sweetened beverages, including fruit drinks, fruit punch, soft drinks or

- other high-calorie, sugary drinks
2. diet drinks
3. milk, including skim, 1 percent, 2 percent and whole
4. 100-percent fruit and vegetable juices
5. coffee and tea with sugar
6. coffee and tea without sugar
7. alcoholic beverages

The results showed reducing consumption of drinks from only the first category caused a weight loss of more than one pound at six months and an additional 1.4 pounds at 18 months. Researchers suggest the human body registers fullness when foods are consumed, but calorie-laden drinks from the first category have little effect on satisfying thirst and contribute to over-consumption.

Visit clay.stvincent.org to find a doctor who can help put you on the path to good health.

IN CASE OF Emergency

If your aging parent has an emergency, the last thing you want to think about is searching for medical records. By gathering the appropriate information now, you can make a potential trip to the emergency department (ED) as smooth as possible.

■ **PREPARE MEDICAL HISTORY** forms with your parents' physicians. Forms should include detailed information about medications and dosages, allergies, and past and current medical conditions.

Maintain a list of your parents' physicians and various care providers with their contact information, as well as how long your parents have been seeing them. Recent surgeries and abnormal test results should also be included.

Keep copies of your parents' medical insurance cards accessible for emergencies. It's easiest to have this information on one sheet of paper to avoid sorting through different documents.

In Case of Admission

Waiting for loved ones to receive emergency care can be a long process. Bring books and magazines to occupy your time. Pack a change of clothes for

yourself and your parent, should you need to stay overnight.

If your parent is admitted to the hospital with a critical or life-threatening condition, it's important to be prepared with his or her living will. Talk with your parents about their final wishes and care preferences.

To get started preparing for potential emergencies, download a medication management card at clay.stvincent.org. For more information about emergency department services at St. Vincent Clay Hospital, visit clay.stvincent.org or call 812.442.2500.



Better Your BALANCING ACT



For seniors, falls can mean more than a bruised hip or scraped knee. In fact, it is estimated that as many as one-third of all American adults over age 65 fall each year. Fortunately, seniors can take steps to remain on their feet. →

■ **FALLS REMAIN THE LEADING CAUSE OF INJURY-** related deaths for seniors. In the past few years, the number of deaths related to falling has risen significantly, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Fortunately for seniors, it is possible to decrease the risk of falling by following a few simple rules:

- **Exercise regularly.** A routine exercise program is one of the best defenses seniors have against falls. Exercise increases balance and makes you stronger and more flexible.
- **Consider home safety.** According to the CDC, approximately half of all seniors who fall do so at home. To help keep your home fall-proof, consider removing throw rugs from the floor; keeping clutter such as shoes or papers off the floor; using non-slip mats in the bathroom; and installing handrails around the house.
- **Get a medical review.** Having a doctor or pharmacist look over all your medications—including over-the-counter drugs and herbal supplements—may save you from side effects such as drowsiness and lightheadedness. In addition, it's important to have your vision checked regularly.

To learn more about services for seniors offered through St. Vincent Clay Hospital, visit clay.stvincent.org.



STOP the Flu *Achoo!*

Flu Shots 101

Flu shots are one of the easiest ways to protect yourself from the seasonal flu.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), any individual who wishes to lower his or her risk of getting the flu should be vaccinated. However, the CDC recommends that certain at-risk groups receive annual vaccinations. These groups include:

- + *Children between the ages of 6 months and 19 years*
- + *Pregnant women*
- + *Adults older than age 50*
- + *Individuals with chronic medical conditions*
- + *Caregivers and day care employees*

If you're afraid of shots, you can still be vaccinated. Your physician can administer a nasal spray flu vaccine.

Flu season is upon us. From personal hygiene to vaccines, you can take steps to help prevent flu, make your fall and winter more enjoyable and ensure your health for years to come.

INFLUENZA, MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE flu, is an infection of the nose, throat and lungs. Every year, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized due to flu-related complications. Spread easily from person to person, influenza can quickly turn from a troublesome illness into a serious medical condition. From coughing and sneezing to fever and chills, flu symptoms are miserable, but the virus is preventable.

Your First Line of Defense

One of the first steps toward flu prevention begins with personal hygiene habits, so make these practices a part of your daily routine:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze, or after touching public items such as door handles or stair handrails.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home from work or school, and limit contact with others if you feel ill.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Maintain a healthy diet and exercise routine.

“Flu prevention begins by limiting your exposure to the illness,” said Mark Freije, M.D., family medicine physician with St. Vincent Physician Network in Noblesville. “Following basic standards for personal hygiene, combined with annual flu vaccines, are tremendously effective against the seasonal flu.”

Not Just for Kids

In the fight against the flu, annual vaccination is one of your best allies. An annual flu shot dramatically reduces your chances of getting sick.

Administered in the fall or winter, the annual flu vaccine is an injection that contains dead strains of three influenza viruses; the strains are determined based on expert analyses of the viruses felt to be most dangerous each year. Within two weeks of receiving the vaccine, patients develop antibodies that provide protection from the live strains of the sickness.

Although the flu vaccine can help fight off the illness, it may not be right for everyone. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that people who are severely allergic to chicken eggs or the influenza vaccine, and children under 6 months of age should not receive a flu shot. Also, people who are sick or running a fever at the time of vaccination should not get a flu shot.

“In addition to the flu vaccine, adults should remain up-to-date with other vaccines to ensure their health,” Dr. Freije said. “In the

United States, we have been so successful in vaccinating children for many conditions that we no longer fear some very dangerous illnesses. As we age, vaccinations become a vital part of disease prevention and are key to a healthy lifestyle.”

The CDC recommends the following vaccines to ensure overall health:

Pneumococcal—adults over the age of 65 or patients suffering from chronic medical conditions should receive a pneumococcal vaccine to prevent potentially fatal pneumonia infections.

Tdap—individuals who are behind on the tetanus vaccine or who have an unclear vaccination record should receive the Tdap immunization to protect against tetanus and diphtheria.

Zoster—the zoster vaccination is recommended for persons over the age of 65 to prevent shingles.

Flu vaccinations, as well as other adult immunizations, are available at all St. Vincent Health ministries. Speak with your physician to learn which immunizations are right for you.

For more information about flu prevention, adult vaccinations or to find a physician, visit stvincent.org.

Breaking News on H1N1

First appearing in the United States in April 2009, the H1N1 virus reached pandemic status this spring, according to the World Health Organization. Now affecting more than 191 countries and territories around the world, the 2009 H1N1 virus is widespread across the majority of the United States. Although cases in the U.S. are no longer counted, more than 1 million people have had influenza-like illness in the past few months, with nearly 100 percent of those tested being H1N1. Although the virus has continued to spread, researchers have remained diligent in the study of the H1N1 illness to facilitate a quick development of a vaccine.

“Since initial cases started appearing, a tremendous amount of knowledge has been gained regarding H1N1 flu,” said Robert M. Lubitz, M.D., vice president of Academic Affairs and Research at St. Vincent Indianapolis Hospital. “From how the illness reproduces to how it is transmitted, each piece of information allows for better preparedness and improves our ability to fight the virus.”

Get the latest H1N1 news at stvincent.org and cdc.gov.

Administrator Jerry Laue
Executive Editor Andrea Baysinger

This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines. To remove your name from our mailing list, please call 877.982.CARE.

St. Vincent Clay Hospital is a member of St. Vincent Health, the state's largest faith-based healthcare system with 18 ministries serving 45 counties in Central Indiana. | The Spirit of Caring® close to home.

A Shot at Prevention

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

■ GIVEN THE EVER-CHANGING condition of health care, this proverb rings even more true today.

Although many people use this saying to emphasize how much easier it is to help prevent a problem than to deal with it after it has happened, they often do not apply the principle to their own health.

Research shows health affects every aspect of people's lives. Lack of exercise and poor nutrition have contributed to childhood

obesity, while chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension have become the leading reasons for hospitalization.

Consumers are inundated with information about disease management. Every day, magazine articles and television advertisements highlight the newest and greatest advancements in health care, but our "pound of cure" is getting expensive.

During the upcoming influenza (flu) shot season, take time to invest in "an ounce of prevention" by getting your annual flu vaccine. St. Vincent Clay Hospital will host a variety of community flu shot clinics in the coming weeks. Please stay tuned for details, and mark your calendar as a reminder to take time to invest in your health.

