

BALANCE



St. Vincent
Clay Hospital

body ■ mind ■ spirit[®]

fall 2010

clay.stvincent.org

ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

ENSURE YOUR WISHES
ARE RESPECTED

ARE YOU A CAREGIVER?

STRESS
MANAGEMENT
TIPS

Music
for the Heart
ADVANCING CARDIAC CARE



YOUR HEART

Near Middle Age

Your heart gives you what you need to participate in everyday life. It's a powerful organ—and it's also prone to serious disease.

If you're concerned about your risk for heart disease, ask yourself the following questions.

- + Do I drink more than one (if you're a woman) or two (if you're a man) alcoholic beverages per day?
- + Do I have diabetes?
- + Do I have high blood pressure or cholesterol?
- + Do I skip exercising?
- + Am I overweight or obese?
- + Do I smoke?
- + Do I frequently eat foods that are bad for me?

A "yes" answer to these questions means you could be at increased risk. Take steps now so you can answer "no" to the majority of these questions, and speak with your physician about ways to keep your heart healthy for years to come.

■ ACCORDING TO THE CENTERS for Disease Control and Prevention, heart disease is the leading cause of death among females in the United States, contrary to the general thought of heart disease being a "man's disease." The condition is also largely preventable. Certain healthy habits go a long way in reducing your chances of developing the disease, especially when you practice them in your 30s and 40s. Follow these tips to combat your risk before problems start.

Turn to your family tree. Find out whether or not anyone in your family has had heart disease. Knowing your level of risk facilitates more meaningful discussion with your healthcare provider about how to minimize it.

Eat good-for-you foods. Adopt eating habits that lead to a long, healthy life. Select foods that are low on the "bad stuff:" trans fats, cholesterol, sodium and added sugars. Prepare meals at home that feature lots of vitamin- and mineral-rich fresh fruits and vegetables.

Get and stay active. Not only is exercising great for your heart, but it also helps you remain at a healthy weight, gives you energy and helps you manage stress. Work toward the recommended 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity five days per week. If you feel crunched for time, keep a pair of sneakers at work and use your lunch break to take a brisk stroll, or ask your employer to dedicate a small room at the office to house a treadmill and exercise bike.

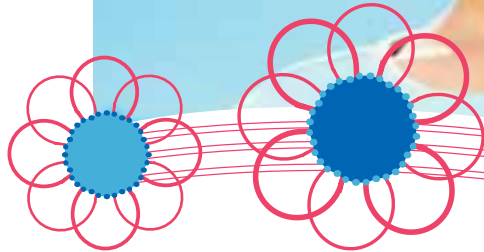
Get yearly checkups. Making time for annual checkups is essential to detecting and preventing heart disease. In addition to performing heart exams, your physician should regularly monitor your weight and body mass index (BMI), waist circumference, blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels, and fasting blood glucose level for those with prediabetes or diabetes. Proactively inquire about the health of your heart and what your numbers mean. Knowing the answers will help you gauge your health and determine the most appropriate steps to reduce your risk.

Learn more about caring for your heart at heartcenter.stvincent.org.

GROWING UP WITH Epilepsy



A diagnosis of pediatric epilepsy can be distressing for children and parents alike. However, help and hope are here.



Advice & Tips
 24/7 FREE Nurse Advice Line:
317.338.KIDS (5437)
 Health reminders for busy parents... sign up for our Tip of the Day at
peytonmanning.stvincent.org.

James Pappas, M.D.



■ WATCHING A PERSON experience a seizure can be a frightening situation. That fear is compounded if it's a parent seeing his or her child having a seizure.

Knowing the signs of a seizure and how to respond to a seizure can help you keep your child safe if a seizure strikes.

Symptoms of a seizure may include staring, lack of responsiveness, abnormal stiffening or turning to one side, brief startle-type jerking, and eye deviation to one side. If you notice any of these signs, you should:

- Observe your child closely and time the episode with a watch.
- Turn your child on his or her side during convulsions.
- Have your child evaluated in an emergency department for a first-time seizure.
- Notify your child's physician about subsequent seizures, especially if they last longer than five minutes.

"Epilepsy is defined as two or more seizures without an immediate cause," said James Pappas, M.D., medical director of pediatric neurology at Peyton Manning Children's Hospital at St. Vincent. "Some cases of epilepsy are genetic; however, the majority have no cause. Children who have a brain abnormality

or have suffered a brain injury are at greater risk for seizures. Some seizures involve brief staring episodes in which a child doesn't respond for 3 to 10 seconds. Others are characterized by repetitive movements or a depressed level of consciousness that may lead to general convulsions."

Seizing Control

Epilepsy is often evaluated with an EEG and MRI scan. Although EEG is often normal in epilepsy, abnormal discharges can be seen and can be helpful in choosing a medicine. MRI looks for abnormalities in the brain that may cause seizures.

Treatments for epilepsy include medication and, in more severe cases, surgery, including implanted devices such as the vagal nerve stimulator, which stimulates the vagus nerve, sending an electrical stimulus to the brain.

"There are a lot of misconceptions surrounding pediatric epilepsy," Dr. Pappas explained. "Many normal kids will have seizures, but they're treatable. If parents treat children with epilepsy differently, they will only create more problems."

For more information about our pediatric neurology services or to schedule an appointment with Dr. Pappas, please call 317.338.1600.

License to Make a Difference

Hoosier motorists wishing to express their support for Peyton Manning Children's Hospital at St. Vincent will soon be able to do so in a special way. When drivers choose their 2011 license plates from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, they can select a specialty plate benefiting the Peyton Manning Children's Hospital at St. Vincent Child Protection Center. The Child Protection Center is a haven of care and support for abused and neglected children, and \$25 from each sale of the \$40 license plate goes to support these vulnerable young people.

For more information about the specialty license plates, visit peytonmanning.stvincent.org or myBMV.com.

Peyton Manning
 Children's Hospital



Who Speaks for You?

It's a subject few want to discuss, yet all should—the creation of a living will or advance directive to convey your medical care wishes should an emergency occur. By taking the following steps, you can ensure decisions about your health are in the hands of those you designate.

A LIVING WILL HAS MANY NAMES—ADVANCE directive, medical directive and/or healthcare declaration. Whatever the term, this legal document communicates your health wishes if an illness or injury renders you unable to speak for yourself. The will considers the following scenarios and any additional health concerns you may have:

- Organ or tissue donation
- Resuscitation requests
- Tube feeding
- Use of dialysis and breathing machines

The document also allows you to grant a family member or loved one power of attorney, which enables him or her to make decisions on your behalf in the event of a health emergency.

“While there are many reasons a person does not complete a living will, there are significantly more compelling reasons why a person should,” said Karen Iseminger, Ph.D., director of ethics integration and family nurse practitioner at St. Vincent Hospital. “This document deals with life-or-death decisions, and it helps to ensure your wishes are carried out while also taking pressure and stress away from a family member who may otherwise have to make difficult choices.”

Talk About It

In addition to filling out the paperwork, it's important to discuss your decisions with your family and your physician. A study published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* found that only 20 percent of those exercising power of attorney did not make the same healthcare decisions as the patient would have in a given scenario.

“Putting it on paper isn't enough—talk through your wishes for how certain situations should be handled with the person to whom you have delegated power of attorney,” Karen said. “Emphasize that you are doing this because you trust that person and know he or she will always act in your best interest.”

For more information about advance directives, visit clay.stvincent.org.

For a printable wallet card that alerts healthcare workers that you have made your wishes known, visit putitinwriting.org.

According to the Pew Research Center, an estimated **29 percent** of Americans have living wills. Those ages 78 to 92 represent **57 percent** of that number but are not the only ones who need living wills. Download or request a living will form and **discuss your wishes** with your family.

When It's More Than Forgetfulness

November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month. Take time to familiarize yourself with the signs and symptoms of this common condition.

APPROXIMATELY 5.3 MILLION AMERICANS are living with Alzheimer's disease, a progressive condition in which brain cells are destroyed and memory becomes impaired. Although Alzheimer's disease symptoms can vary from person to person, they generally include:

- **Disorientation.** Alzheimer's patients often lose their senses of time and direction and may even become lost in familiar environments.
- **Memory loss.** Everyone battles with forgetfulness from time to time, but for a person with Alzheimer's disease, even the most seemingly simple tasks, such as remembering the names of family members or everyday objects, can be challenging.
- **Personality changes.** Alzheimer's patients may become easily irritated and wary of others.
- **Poor judgment skills.** Those with advanced Alzheimer's may find it increasingly difficult to complete tasks that require planning or decision making, such as what to do if food on the stove is burning.
- **Problems with word choice.** Finding the right words to express thoughts during conversation can become difficult. The person's ability to read or write may also be affected.

For more information or to find a physician at St. Vincent Clay Hospital, visit clay.stvincent.org.



Put Your Health First

Since your mom was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease last year, you have assumed responsibility for her care and have barely had a chance to take care of yourself. As a caregiver, it's important to consider your own needs.

ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR Caregiving, an estimated 65 million people provide care for a chronically ill, disabled, or aged family member or friend each year.

While taking care of someone who needs your help can be rewarding, it can also negatively affect your health. In fact, caregivers often suffer from:

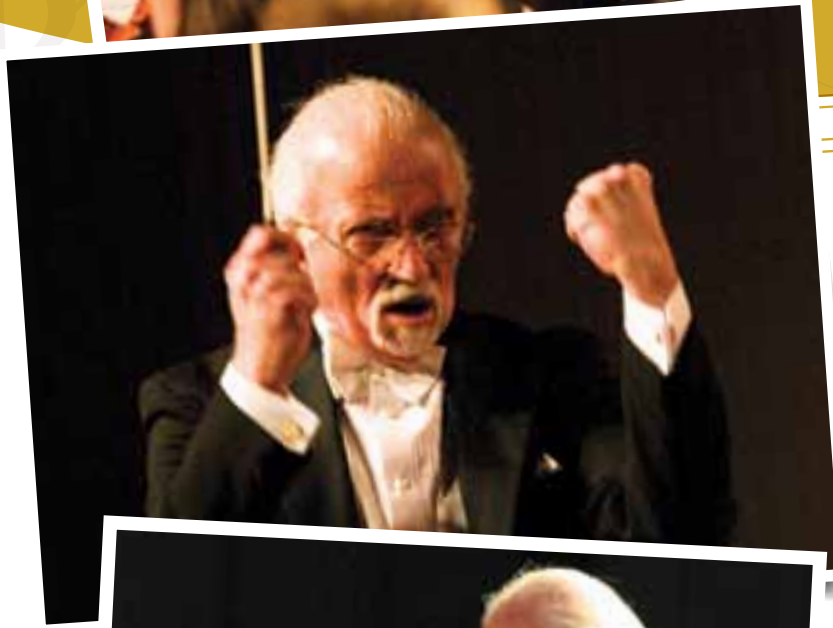
- Depression
- Irritability
- Lack of exercise
- Poor eating habits
- Sleep deprivation

Manage Your Stress

If the responsibilities of caring for a loved one leave you feeling overwhelmed, remember that you aren't alone. Here are some tips for overcoming caregiver stress:

- **Turn to others.** Ask family members and friends to help carry the burden. For example, have someone run important errands and ask another person stay with the loved one at least one night a week.
- **Don't feel guilty.** Taking care of two households can be overwhelming. Don't beat yourself up if your house isn't as clean as you would like or you haven't done the laundry in a week.
- **Stay healthy.** Try to exercise most days of the week and get enough sleep. Be mindful of your diet as well.

To learn more about the services and programs available at St. Vincent Clay Hospital, visit clay.stvincent.org and click "Our Services."



Photos by Lisa Blythe

Benjamin Del Vecchio's heart has always skipped to the beat of his own music, figuratively and literally, as Benjamin has a heart murmur.

AT 66, BENJAMIN HAD A REWARDING career as an orchestra conductor and instructor that spanned nearly 50 years and led to his present position. As the musical director of the Hendricks Symphony, his chosen profession requires him to stand for hours throughout the day, conducting his musicians with vigor and enthusiasm as he leads them through rehearsals and performances.

"I've had a heart murmur all my life, and I was always fine and seemingly unaffected. As I grew older I noticed subtle changes," explained the Indianapolis resident. "I started experiencing shortness of breath and extreme fatigue. I grew concerned when I would get up to rehearse and 10 to 15 minutes into it, it felt as if the room were spinning and I became dizzy. I knew I had to seek help."

Benjamin contacted one of his former college students, Kirk Parr, M.D., cardiologist with St. Vincent Heart Center of Indiana, and described his symptoms. Dr. Parr referred him to a colleague, Jack Hall, M.D., cardiologist and cardiovascular disease specialist at St. Vincent Heart Center of Indiana.

Dr. Hall discovered Benjamin had mitral valve regurgitation, or a "leaky valve," caused by his heart murmur and age progression. Mitral valve regurgitation occurs when the heart's mitral valve doesn't close correctly and causes

A Grade Above the Rest

According to the Annual Hospital Quality in America Study performed by HealthGrades, St.Vincent Heart Center of Indiana continues to be ranked number one in Indiana for overall cardiac services, a ranking that's been reflected in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010. St.Vincent Heart Center of Indiana also ranks among the top 5 percent of all hospitals across the nation.

Musical Interlude of the Heart

blood to flow backward into the upper heart chamber when the lower chamber contracts. Symptoms typically include:

- Cough
- Excessive urination at night
- Fatigue or exhaustion
- Light-headedness or dizziness
- Shortness of breath

The Crescendo

Following his diagnosis, physicians determined Benjamin would require surgery.

"I remember I was terrified at first," Benjamin recalled. "I also was concerned because my surgery was scheduled for Aug. 7, and the first day of symphony rehearsal was Aug. 17—I had to be back at work in 10 days. You just don't miss rehearsal nights in this business."

Benjamin's surgery was successful, and he was strong enough to attend that first rehearsal. He credits the skilled physicians at St.Vincent Heart Center of Indiana and the incredible care he received as contributors to his speedy recovery.

"I've been to other facilities for other conditions, and the physicians at St.Vincent have been the best I've ever had," Benjamin said. "My wife was able to stay with me overnight following my procedures, which was really nice. I don't even remember much about my admission experience or when it was time to leave—that's how seamless the care was."

Music to the Ears

Today, Benjamin reports he's feeling great. "I don't get exhausted at all like I used to," he said. "Before, I would come home from rehearsal, eat supper and fall asleep immediately. Now, after rehearsal my wife and I can go out to dinner and when we come home, I feel like I could go out and do my day all over again. My quality of life is much better. I'm on my feet, singing, yelling and conducting the music I love and hope I'll be doing just that for another 20 years."

Chamber Music

People with similar cardiac conditions now can turn to the St.Vincent Valve Center of Excellence for advanced care.

"The Valve Center is a new concept in medicine in which cardiologists, cardiothoracic surgeons and other caregivers work together under one roof, providing comprehensive care to patients in one visit with no referral," said David Heimansohn, M.D., cardiothoracic surgeon at the St.Vincent Valve Center of Excellence. "Our physicians and surgeons offer the latest technology and valve replacement procedures, improving patient care and saving time by providing all these services in one location."

Learn more about complete cardiac care throughout St.Vincent Health by visiting heartcenter.stvincent.org.

Take Your Pulse

Individuals may take their pulse to guard against stroke and other serious heart conditions.

Take your pulse:

- + **STEP 1**—Take three fingers and place them on the outside of your wrist.
- + **STEP 2**—Count pulses (beats) for 15 seconds.
- + **STEP 3**—Multiply the number you count by 4; this will reveal your beats per minute (BPM).

A BPM between 60 and 100 is considered normal. If you are outside this range or feel your heartbeat is irregular, contact your physician to be evaluated.

"Atrial fibrillation is an abnormal rhythm of the heart that can lead to serious problems," said Jeff Olson, D.O., electrophysiologist with St.Vincent Heart Center of Indiana. "Taking your pulse and determining if you are within a normal range can give you insight as to whether you should have cause for concern."



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Community Needs



Even in this challenging economic environment, our mission to improve the health of our community remains our primary focus. In a continued effort to

help us better understand our community, we have asked for your input through the 2010 Community Needs Assessment.

Recently, more than 1,200 residents of Clay County were surveyed, and soon the results will be shared with our community. The goals of the needs assessment were to identify the strengths of our community and determine potential concerns and challenges that we face. The results will help in directing our resources so they have the greatest affect on the health of our community as we care for you, your families, friends and neighbors.

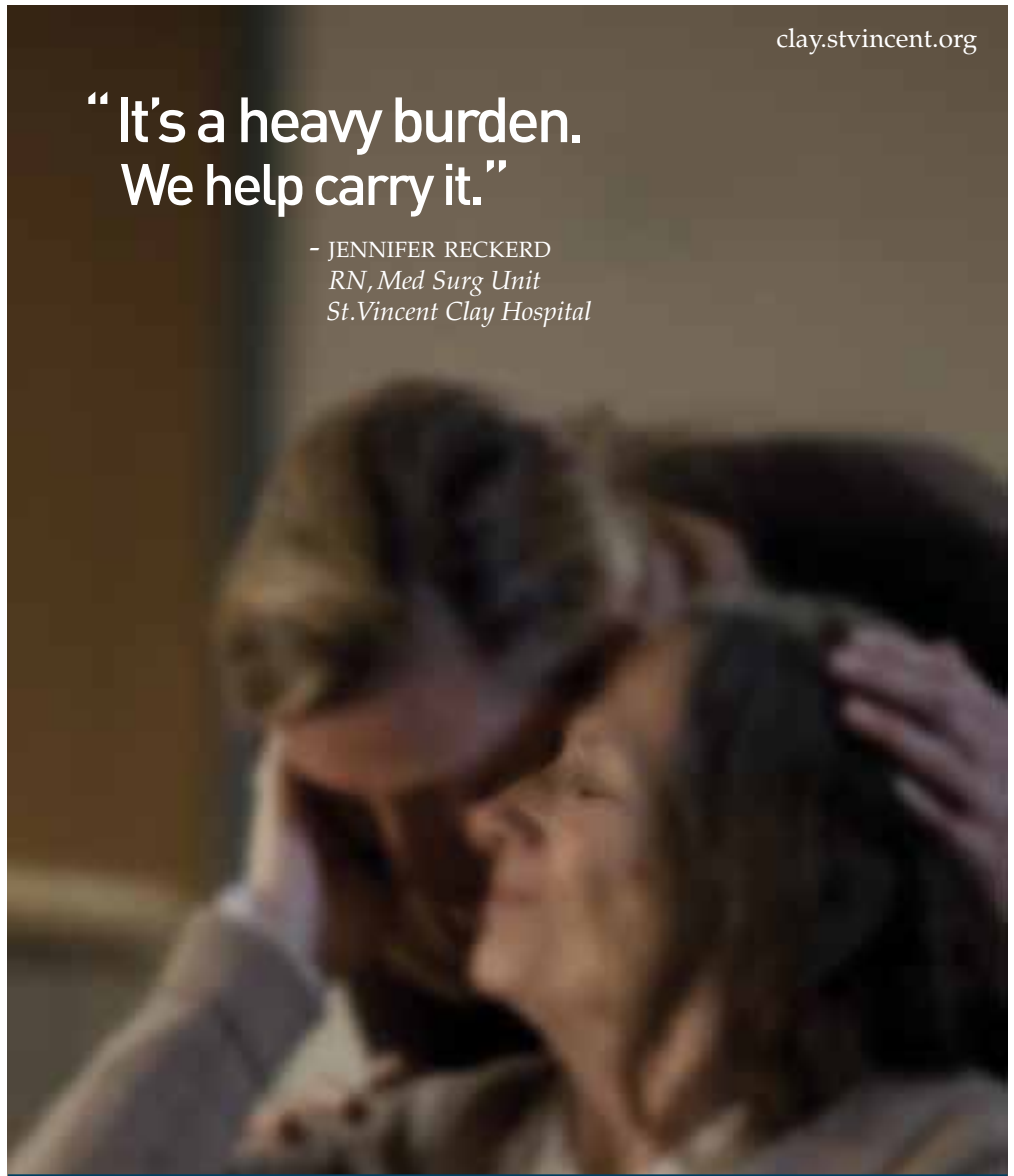
Sincerely,

Jerry Laue
 Administrator, St. Vincent Clay Hospital

clay.stvincent.org

“It’s a heavy burden.
 We help carry it.”

- JENNIFER RECKERD
 RN, Med Surg Unit
 St. Vincent Clay Hospital



THE SPIRIT OF CARING®

