

FALL 2010

Health Connection

A PUBLICATION OF SILOAM SPRINGS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

**Bye, bye,
sleepless nights!**

**Prepare for your
next checkup**

**SSMH benefits
the community**

SILOAM SPRINGS
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

www.siloamspringsmemorial.com



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.



Kevin Clement
Chief Executive Officer

Dear friends,

Siloam Springs Memorial Hospital (SSMH) is pleased to share our annual Community Report, which highlights our more than \$16 million economic impact on our community! This includes funds for salaries, wages, benefits, local vendor purchases, capital funds invested and sales/property taxes and utilities paid. Plus, we

provided more than \$10 million in charity, uncompensated and discounted care services. This report shows how far we've come as an organization—2,860 outpatient surgeries, 16,488 emergency department patient visits and 494 babies delivered—and demonstrates the growth that will sustain us in the future. Call (479) 549-2479 to receive a copy of our 2010 Community Report.



OTHER UPDATES

- Siloam Springs Hospital Auxiliary, Inc., also provides many hours of service to SSMH. More than 10,000 volunteer hours have been recorded.
- New services include the expansion of our Sleep Center. Patients no longer have to travel outside of the community for sleep studies (see this page for more information).
- With the addition of an ear, nose and throat (ENT) physician to our medical staff, we can now provide ENT surgical procedures right here in your community.

As chief executive officer, I'm committed to keeping you informed about our progress. We know our continued success and ability to retain a viable economic impact rely on the growth of our partnerships and relationships with our communities.

Warmest regards,

KEVIN CLEMENT
Chief Executive Officer
Siloam Springs Memorial Hospital

SSMH opens Sleep Center

As many as 70 million people in the United States have sleep problems. Many of them don't seek treatment. The good news? Siloam Springs Memorial Hospital (SSMH) recently expanded its Sleep Lab to an advanced Sleep Center. The center accommodates more sleep study patients in a renovated setting, offering more patient comfort, convenience and on-site diagnostic testing. People who have sleep issues no longer need to wait for time in the lab or leave their community for overnight sleep evaluations.

"The Siloam Springs Memorial Hospital Sleep Center is extremely beneficial to the community and the region," says David Davis, M.D., board-certified neurologist/sleep medicine specialist and medical director of the sleep center. "Patients can now have sleep studies done in a relaxing environment without leaving the area."

Located at 1675 W. Jefferson St., Suite E, in Siloam Springs, the SSMH Sleep Center provides evaluation and treatment for a variety of sleep-related disorders, including:

- obstructive sleep apnea
- insomnia
- narcolepsy
- snoring
- excessive daytime sleeping
- restless legs syndrome
- shift work
- sleepwalking or sleep talking
- severe nightmares

Dr. Davis says symptoms of insufficient sleep include:

- tiredness
- irritability
- edginess
- problems concentrating or remembering
- withdrawal or belligerence



! Goodbye sleepless nights!

If you have any of the symptoms above, contact your physician. For more information about services offered at SSMH, call (479) 524-4141 or visit www.siloamspringsmemorial.com.



Make time for your annual exams

By Ashish Mathur, M.D., Family Practice

If you're older than age 40, most medical experts suggest you get an annual physical exam. Clarify your short- and long-term health needs with your physician. You'll have more peace of mind by following your physician's suggestions about your best health plan. Plus, annual physical exams lead to early detection, which often means more successful treatment. Whether it's your first physical exam in years or a regular annual checkup, here are some tips.

BEFORE THE APPOINTMENT

Write down your brief medical history and details of your family's medical history, so your physician can pay attention to potential problems. Include any medications or supplements you take and details about your lifestyle that may affect your health, such as stress, trouble sleeping or recent weight loss or gain.

AN EXAM CHECKLIST

The following tests may be performed:

- blood pressure screening
- cholesterol (LDL, HDL and triglyceride levels) test
- skin cancer screening to check for suspicious lesions and/or changes in existing moles
- electrocardiogram (EKG) to check your heart rhythm
- fecal occult blood test for a colon cancer check
- height/weight
- urinalysis, which screens for diabetes and kidney problems

ADDITIONAL TESTS FOR WOMEN

- Pap test to check for cervical cancer
- pelvic and breast exams to check for cancer or other abnormalities

ADDITIONAL TESTS FOR MEN

- exams to check the testicles for tumors
- prostate check for cancer

At a follow-up appointment, your physician will review the test results with you. If you're diagnosed with a condition, he or she will discuss treatment plan options.



Stay on top of your health!

Talk with your physician about what screenings or tests you need. You'll feel better knowing you're taking steps for your health. To make an appointment with Dr. Mathur, call (479) 736-2213.

MEET DAVID DAVIS, M.D.



Siloam Springs Memorial Hospital (SSMH) welcomes David Davis, M.D., a neurologist and sleep medicine specialist, to the medical staff. Dr. Davis also will serve as medical director of SSMH's Sleep Center. Dr. Davis received his medical degree from the University of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City, served his internship at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School Department of Internal Medicine in Dallas, Texas, and completed his residency in its department of neurology.

Dr. Davis achieved board certification from the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology in 1982, from the American Board of Sleep Medicine in 2000 and from the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology with subspecialty certification in sleep medicine in 2009.

For more information, call the SSMH Sleep Center at (479) 549-2578.

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.

Health Connection is published as a community service of Siloam Springs Memorial Hospital. There is no fee to subscribe.

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Health Programs & Events

SILOAM SPRINGS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

CHILDBIRTH PREPARATION

Prepared Childbirth Classes

Monthly class designed to prepare soon-to-be parents for the birthing experience. Classes are held one evening a week for four consecutive weeks.

When: 6:30 p.m.

Where: Siloam Springs Memorial Hospital Education Annex (behind the hospital)

Call: (479) 549-2426 to enroll

WELLNESS

Extended Mammography Hours

When: First and third Thursdays of the

month, 8 a.m.–7:30 p.m.

Call: (479) 549-2410 for an appointment

Lunch and Learns

Every second Wednesday of the month, a medical health professional discusses a different health topic. Senior Circle members and the public are welcome to attend. Lunch is provided. RSVPs are required.

When: noon–1 p.m.

Where: First United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 325 E. Twin Springs St., Siloam Springs

Call: (479) 549-2443 to RSVP or for information about the monthly speaker

Need a physician?

The dedicated physicians of Siloam Springs Memorial Hospital (SSMH) can help you and your family stay healthy. To find a physician that's right for you, visit the online directory at www.siloamspringsmemorial.com. You can conveniently search by specialty or by last name. If you're new to the community and would like more information about SSMH and a free directory mailed to you, call (479) 549-2479.



! Get free health information

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