

Health Connection

A PUBLICATION OF
NAVARRO REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Digital mammography
for your breast health

Are your child's
immunizations
up to date?

Control your
cholesterol

Visit
Healthy Woman
Online!

See page 4



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.



Xavier Villarreal
Chief Executive Officer

Dear friends,

Welcome to another issue of *Health Connection*, a community newsletter provided to you compliments of Navarro Regional Hospital.

DEDICATED TO YOU

In this issue, we highlight our digital mammography service on the back page, which brings advanced diagnostic technology to Navarro County. You'll also read about an exciting update to our popular Healthy Woman program in the column at right. And, on page 5 you'll learn about the importance of getting immunizations and eliminating certain childhood diseases.

ENHANCED CARE

With the completion of our \$5 million emergency department (ED) expansion, the new ED now offers:

- more space at 9,000 square feet
- 14 new private patient rooms
- a larger waiting room
- dedicated digital imaging technology

I'm always open to your thoughts and suggestions. Please feel free to call or stop by and see us.

We thank you for your support and look forward to more exciting developments.

In good health,

XAVIER VILLARREAL
Chief Executive Officer
Navarro Regional Hospital

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.navarrohospital.com

FOR QUESTIONS, E-MAIL US AT
HEALTHY_WOMAN@CHS.NET

Vein, vein go away!

Plagued by unsightly, painful varicose veins? The minimally invasive VNUS procedure treats varicose veins without the need for a hospital stay, general anesthesia or stitches and is now available at Navarro Regional Hospital. The procedure is performed by Alfonso Ballesteros, M.D., and Robert Kingman, M.D. For more information, call (903) 654-6800.



Keeping kids healthy

The importance of immunizations

Watching your children get a shot isn't easy. Seeing them get sick is even harder. Immunizations give your children the protection they need from preventable illnesses. While most vaccines protect against rare diseases, it's important to continue getting vaccinated. Instances of certain infections have almost disappeared in the United States because of the use of vaccines. If you have questions about vaccinations, the best place to find answers is your children's physician.

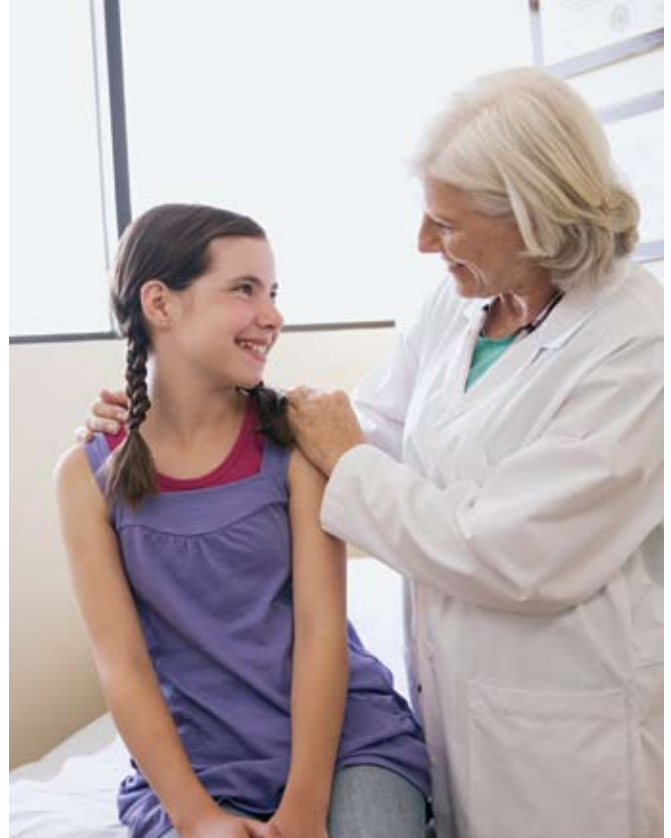
GET THOSE SHOTS!

Many childhood diseases can now be prevented by following recommended guidelines for vaccinations:

- **meningococcal vaccine (MCV-4)**, to protect against meningococcal disease
- **hepatitis B vaccine**, to protect against hepatitis B
- **inactivated polio vaccine (IPV)**, to protect against polio
- **DTaP vaccine**, to protect against diphtheria, tetanus (lockjaw) and pertussis (whooping cough)
- **Hib vaccine**, to protect against *Haemophilus influenzae* type B, which causes spinal meningitis
- **MMR vaccine**, to protect against measles, mumps and rubella (German measles)
- **pneumococcal vaccine (PCV7)**, to protect against pneumonia, infection in the blood and meningitis
- **varicella vaccine**, to protect against chickenpox
- **RotaTeq® vaccine**, to prevent infections caused by rotavirus
- **hepatitis A vaccine**, to protect against hepatitis A
- **HPV vaccine**, to protect against human papillomavirus, which is linked to cervical cancer and genital warts
- **seasonal influenza vaccine**, to protect against different flu viruses

Your child's first vaccination is given at birth. Immunizations are scheduled throughout childhood, with many beginning within the first few months of life. By following a regular schedule and making sure your child is immunized at the right time, you're ensuring the best defense against dangerous childhood diseases.

Visit www.navarrohospital.com and click on the "Health Resources" tab for more information about immunizations.

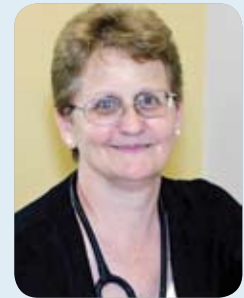


Looking out for your kids

At Medical Associates of Navarro County—Pediatrics, we offer complete care for children, including immunizations. We're at 400 Hospital Drive, Suite 208, in Corsicana. Call (903) 641-4800 for an appointment.



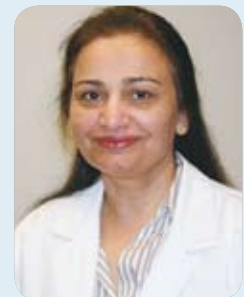
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MUSSARAT SHAFIQ, M.D.
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HEALTHWISE QUIZ

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. (d) 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 Navarro Regional Hospital. There is no fee to subscribe.

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A better kind of mammogram

Breast cancer often makes itself known in its early stages, when there's a good chance for a cure. But here's the catch: You need the right screenings to detect breast cancer. Women who undergo routine mammograms at Navarro Regional Hospital (NRH) have advanced diagnostic technology available—digital mammography. Since 2006, NRH has been the provider of choice in the Navarro County area to feature this method of breast cancer detection. “We’re excited to be able to offer this technology,” says Jack Wepler, radiology director at NRH. “It allows us to offer our patients advanced mammograms combined with the advantage of superior imaging technology. There are many advantages to digital mammography, and until recently, you had to travel outside of Navarro County to receive this type of mammogram.”

BENEFITS OF GOING DIGITAL

While digital imaging feels almost identical to conventional screening from the patient's perspective, digital mammography has several benefits, including shorter exam times and a significant reduction in call-backs to obtain more images.

With digital mammography, the radiologist reviews electronic images of the breast using special high-resolution monitors. The physician can adjust the brightness, change contrast and zoom in for close-ups of specific areas. Digital images also can be easily stored, copied without loss of information and transmitted and received in a more streamlined manner, eliminating dependence on one set of original films.

To supplement this technology, the hospital added a digital computer-aided detection (CAD) system, which



October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month!

Make your commitment to early detection by scheduling a mammogram and encouraging your friends to do the same. NRH is committed to providing quality breast care, close to home. To make an appointment, call (903) 654-6824.

highlights common characteristics of breast cancer, including masses, clusters of microcalcifications and changes in breast tissue, also called architectural distortion. CAD flags these abnormalities to help the radiologist detect breast cancer early. “Digital CAD is like a second set of eyes to support and enhance the radiologist's judgment,” says Wepler.