

# Health Connection

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

## Be in the know

Healthy Woman  
empowers and  
informs

Seniors:  
Join our circle  
of friends

## Getting back in the game

Our orthopedic team  
can help

7 steps to a  
healthier you

## First-aid foresight

How to handle  
an emergency

# Preparing for outpatient surgery

**T**hanks to the miracle of science, surgeries that once required a hospital stay can now be done on an outpatient basis. That's good news for those who recover better in the comfort of home, but it also means that any necessary arrangements must be made before the surgery date. If you or a loved one is facing outpatient surgery, try the suggestions below to help make the experience as smooth as possible.

## PLAN AHEAD

As surgery day draws closer, you'll find it helpful to have certain things taken care of. Once you know your surgery date and time, ask yourself these questions:

- **Do I need to make any changes in my house's setup?** You may have to set up a temporary bedroom on the first floor if you think you'll have difficulty climbing stairs, for instance.
- **Do I have enough food in the house?** Stock up on meals in the freezer (either homemade or store-bought) so you

won't have to worry about food preparation. Ask your doctor about dietary restrictions or recommendations.

- **Will I need help in the house?** Plan to have a friend or a family member drive you home from the hospital. It's also a good idea to have someone stay with you during the first 24 hours. After that, schedule your visitors. They'll brighten your mood but may also cut into your resting time. Be sure to limit visits based on how you feel.
- **Is there anyone I'm responsible for?** If you have baby-sitting or caretaking responsibilities, remember to make other arrangements for your recovery period.

## THE DAY BEFORE

Your doctor will probably instruct you not to eat or drink within eight hours of surgery. Ask your doctor whether you should abstain from taking medication or bring a day's dosage with you to the hospital.

If you're recovering from or coming down with a cold, tell your doctor. Your surgery may be postponed until you feel healthy.

Because skin-tone changes can sometimes be a sign of postsurgery problems, don't wear any makeup the day of surgery, including eye makeup and nail polish. Also, plan to wear loose clothing to the hospital.

## AFTER SURGERY

Tell your healthcare team about any discomfort, irritation or pain you feel. How long you stay at the hospital will depend on your ability to drink fluids, walk and urinate. The amount of pain you're in will also affect your discharge. Before you leave, get a written list of postoperative instructions, symptoms to monitor and in-case-of-emergency phone numbers.





**A strong, stable core helps reduce your risk of injury and prevent back pain.**

# At the core of fitness

postures that focus on building flexibility, balance and strength.

- **Tai chi.** This Chinese ritual involves precise, relaxed exercises to increase both agility and balance.

- **Pilates.** It's the latest craze, involving the use of certain exercises to create longer and stronger muscles without the bulk.

- **Weight training.** Focus on exercises that target your core muscles. Start light and increase the intensity of your workout over time. You may want to consult with a personal trainer to develop a program tailored to your needs.

- **Stability ball.** Sometimes

called a Swiss ball or a resist-a-ball, this large, rubber exercise ball is one of the best ways to actively target and stabilize your core. Start with the ball slightly deflated or secure it against a wall until you're ready to add more challenge to your balance. Choose a ball that comes with a video of basic exercises.

- **BOSU ball.** Shaped like a stability ball cut in half—flat on one side, domed on the other—the BOSU ball is designed to activate and strengthen your core as you perform exercises on it. Many gyms offer BOSU ball classes, and you can also buy video and DVD workouts to use with the BOSU at home.

- **Stability equipment.** Other light equipment ranging from foam rollers, balance pads and discs and mini-trampolines (ideal for beginners) to balance and wobble boards (for the more advanced) can help you improve core strength and stability.

**H**ead of core conditioning? It's the "apple-a-day" way for you to ensure that your body stays strong and steady. Simply put, core conditioning is a series of exercises that target your core—the body's center of power that starts just below your shoulders and ends just below your hips. You work out to gain strength in the muscles that control your trunk and spine while improving balance, agility and flexibility. Adding core strength helps you perform daily functions like lifting grocery bags, playing with your kids and getting in and out of your car. A strong, stable core also helps reduce your risk of injury and prevent back pain.

Try these exercises to build the back, abdominal, thigh and buttock muscles associated with a strong core. Check with your physician first to be sure you're starting at a fitness level that's right for you.

- **Yoga.** This ancient practice involves stretching and holding



## Be in the know

### Healthy Woman empowers and informs

**D**id you know that women make up to 90 percent of the healthcare decisions for their families? They also often balance careers, primary and secondary families, issues with parents and civic work. As a woman, wouldn't it be great to have a program designed especially to help you make these sometimes monumental choices?

Now you have one. Volunteer Community Hospital is excited to introduce the Healthy Woman program. A community resource dedicated to improving the emotional, physical and fiscal well-being of women and their families, the program offers a woman-focused monthly series of free seminars, health fairs, educational programs and interactive events. Monthly presentations will cover physical and emotional well-being, as well as financial issues and spiritual development. A selected women's advisory council will help the hospital identify areas of interest to women in our community.

Healthy Woman was created for women by women to provide up-to-date healthcare information for their entire family. Women of all ages are invited to join.



### Sign up now!

**T**o join the Healthy Woman community, register for your free membership at [www.volunteercommunityhospital.com](http://www.volunteercommunityhospital.com) (click on the "Healthy Woman" icon) or contact Lora McDonald at (731) 588-3484 or [lora\\_mcdonald@chs.net](mailto:lora_mcdonald@chs.net) to request a membership form.

# A circle of friends

## Classes, discounts and more, just for seniors

**W**hat program helps you get fit, save money, protect your health—and lets you make new friends while you're at it? Volunteer Community Hospital's (VCH) Senior Circle program. With more than 300 members in the VCH chapter, this national program for men and women ages 50 and older is growing every day.

Senior Circle's mission is to encourage a healthy and active lifestyle by providing programs that encourage continued learning, wellness, health and volunteering, coupled with a host of social activities.

VCH provides exciting monthly Lunch and Learn events with a variety of healthcare topics, from headaches, cancer and stroke to osteoporosis and aromatherapy. For an annual membership fee of only \$15, you'll have access to a generous menu of national and local discounts, benefits, events and services. You'll also receive a free subscription to the national quarterly magazine, *Inside Circle*, and the local publication, *Circle News*.



### Join today!

**T**o become a Senior Circle member, call Lora McDonald at (731) 588-3484 for a free brochure, application and information about members-only benefits. You also can visit our Web site at [www.volunteercommunityhospital.com](http://www.volunteercommunityhospital.com).





Steve Westenhofer  
Chief Executive Officer

## Your satisfaction is important

**W**hether you're an inpatient or outpatient at Volunteer Community Hospital, your satisfaction with our services is very important to us. You're our customers as well as our neighbors and we want to meet your expectations when you allow us to serve your medical needs.

That's why we continually measure our patient satisfaction through our survey program. Our survey service contacts patients for feedback on an ongoing basis and produces quarterly results.

Recent results have demonstrated that our focus on customer service has improved satisfaction to a rate above the national average. Our inpatient survey showed an overall satisfaction level of 97 percent. One-hundred percent of patients were satisfied with their overall daily care and 97 percent were satisfied with their doctor's attention, sensitivity and communication. Our survey also showed 94 percent of patients were satisfied with the concern and caring demonstrated by our emergency department physicians and nursing staff. The registration, lab and radiology staff received a 96 percent satisfaction level.

While we'll always have an opportunity to improve, we're pleased to deliver care in a way our patients expect. Our goal is not just to be better than average, but to be sure every patient knows they're important and that we're attempting to care for them in the same way we'd want someone to care for us. We appreciate every opportunity to serve you and we'll keep working to be better and better.

Best regards,

STEVE WESTENHOFER  
Chief Executive Officer  
Volunteer Community Hospital



## 10 secrets of weight-loss winners

**Y**ou're probably well into your New Year's resolution of getting healthy and shedding those unwanted pounds. We know it's tough to lose weight—and just as difficult to keep it off. To help, researchers suggest these 10 habits of people who have successfully kept off the weight:

1. They walk several miles a week.
2. They rely on the support of friends, neighbors and co-workers. For example, they form exercise groups for motivation.
3. They eat different healthy foods in moderation. They cook with little or no fat, and eat fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nonfat dairy products and lean entrees.
4. They limit portion sizes. They know that calories (not just fat) count.
5. They distinguish hunger from anger, loneliness and fatigue. For those emotions, they call friends or breathe deeply.
6. They examine underlying issues that may cause overeating. Counselors can help resolve such issues.
7. They don't make excuses for overeating and use a lapse as incentive to take a walk or cut portions next time.
8. They use behavioral strategies like planning meals, storing foods out of sight and linking exercise to daily habits like walking.
9. They recognize that weight management—exercising, eating nutritiously and thinking positively—lasts a lifetime.
10. They live in the present. They participate in enjoyable activities instead of waiting for the perfect shape to do the things they want to do.

## HEALTHWISE QUIZ

### How much do you know about **menopause**?

Take this quiz to find out.

**1** The average age when women in the United States reach menopause is:

- a. 51
- b. 55
- c. 48
- d. 64

**2** The single biggest risk factor for osteoporosis, or brittle bone disease, is menopause. All of the following are signs that you may have osteoporosis except which one?

- a. height loss
- b. tooth loss
- c. joint pain
- d. backaches

**3** One of the few reasons you should consider using hormone therapy is to:

- a. prevent ovarian cancer
- b. relieve severe menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes
- c. protect against heart disease
- d. lower your risk of breast cancer

**4** The transitional period of two to 10 years before menopause, characterized by hormone fluctuations that can cause menopausal symptoms, is called:

- a. premature menopause
- b. premenopause
- c. perimenopause
- d. postmenopause

**5** Of the following remedies, which is the only one approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to relieve hot flashes?

- a. soy
- b. black cohosh
- c. phytoestrogens
- d. hormone therapy

# Take control!

## 7 steps to healthy blood pressure and cholesterol

**H**eat disease and stroke kill millions of Americans each year. Unless you take steps to control your blood pressure and cholesterol levels, you may be at risk for these diseases. Get on the road to better health today with these seven simple steps:

- 1 Take a walk.** Exercise helps control your blood pressure and improves your cholesterol. Choose activities you enjoy and strive for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most days of the week.
- 2 Manage your weight.** Reducing your weight by just 10 pounds may help lower your blood pressure and reduce bad cholesterol. Since dropping pounds may be easier when working with a group, ask your healthcare provider to refer you to experts, groups or classes that can help.
- 3 Toss the cigarettes.** Smoking causes blood vessels to narrow and blood pressure to rise. It also makes it easier for cholesterol-rich plaque to stick to artery walls. A smoking cessation class can offer extra support.
- 4 Eat well.** Enjoy vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans and legumes, along with moderate amounts of lean protein and healthy fats like those in salmon and olive oil. Avoid foods high in saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, sugar and trans fatty acids.
- 5 Try soy.** A recent study shows that two servings a day of uncooked soy protein—found in tofu, soy milk or soy powder—lowers cholesterol levels by as much as 9 percent.
- 6 Limit your liquor.** Women should consume no more than one drink a day and men no more than two drinks a day.
- 7 Get screened.** Routinely checking your blood pressure and cholesterol levels keeps you on top of your cardiovascular disease risks. If your blood pressure's high, ask your doctor about buying a blood pressure monitor for home use.





# First-aid foresight

Would you know what to do?

**S**ooner or later, we all face a medical problem that calls for immediate first aid and clear thinking. Knowing what to do next is a health skill everyone needs.

**Bleeding.** Apply pressure to the wound with a thick, clean cloth and raise the wound above the heart. If bleeding is severe or isn't controlled in five minutes or if the wound is very dirty, longer than an inch or gaping, get immediate medical care.

**Puncture wounds.** Don't self-treat deep puncture wounds since they can result in deep-tissue injury or infection.

**Burns.** Run cool water over minor burns, immerse in cold water or wrap the burned area in a cold, wet cloth for about 10 minutes or until pain subsides. Apply an antibiotic ointment and cover with a bandage. Call your doctor if blisters form.

**Poisoning.** Before doing anything, call the National Poison Control Hotline at 1-800-222-1222. Induce vomiting only if instructed.

**Shock.** Shock may cause cold, clammy skin; weakness; confusion; a rapid heartbeat; or deep, shallow or irregular breathing. Keep the victim warm and lying down on his or her back until help arrives. Don't give the victim anything to drink.

**Electrical injuries.** Do not touch someone who has just been electrocuted—the current may pass through you. While waiting for help to arrive, try to turn off the source of electricity.

**Sprains and strains.** To treat sprains and strains, follow the RICE method: rest, ice, compression and elevation. Apply ice packs or cold-water compresses to relieve swelling. Wrap the injury in an elastic bandage and keep it elevated above the heart.

**Broken bones.** Quickly call for emergency assistance. It's best not to move the person or attempt to straighten a broken bone.

## Dine the Greek way

**A**lthough many of their meals consist of 40 percent fat, residents of the Greek isle of Crete who eat a traditional diet live longer than most other ethnic groups. In fact, Greeks who haven't succumbed to Western-style meals are 20 percent less likely to die of coronary artery disease and about 30 percent less likely to die of cancer than Americans are.

These stats make nutritionists take note, and what they've found is that the traditional Greek diet is one of the healthiest eating styles you can choose. The diet focuses on:

- vegetables, fruits, fish, grains, beans, nuts and legumes like chickpeas
- olive oil as the sole source of added fat
- only a few weekly servings of poultry, eggs and sweets
- daily, small to moderate amounts of cheese and yogurt
- red meats saved for special occasions only

What's more, the Greek diet is tasty—a sign that you don't have to give up good food to stay healthy.

### BEWARE OF TROJAN HORSES

But be cautious: Some Greek foods found in the United States don't fit the heart-healthy profile of traditional



Greek cuisine. The nonprofit Center for Science in the Public Interest analyzed typical restaurant-size portions of some popular Greek meals. What they found could stop your heart. For example, spanakopita (spinach pie in phyllo dough) has 410 calories and 24 grams of fat, beef or lamb gyro (sandwich) has 760 calories and 20 grams of fat and moussaka (a meat and eggplant casserole) has 830 calories and 48 grams of fat!

# Getting back in the game

## Our orthopedic team can help

**B**roken bones, bad hips and knees, sprains or joint injuries can occur at any time, but this doesn't mean you have to stop doing the things you love. Under the direction of experienced Orthopedic Surgeons Peter Lund, M.D., and Blake Ragsdale, M.D., our new team member, Volunteer Community Hospital (VCH) provides the care you need, close to home.

From surgery to therapy, we'll be with you every step of the way to help make sure you're back to normal activity as soon as possible. Under the direction of our orthopedic surgeons, our physical therapy department provides one-on-one care to hospitalized patients as well as to outpatients requiring therapy after surgery or an injury. We have an

easily accessible entrance for outpatients.

It's VCH's goal to provide patient-focused care in a personalized, caring and safe manner with total satisfaction our top priority. Whether you need general orthopedic surgery, joint replacement, arthroscopic surgery, hand surgery or sports medicine care, the orthopedic team at VCH can help you get back to life and back in the game.

### OUR NEW ORTHOPEDIC SURGEON

VCH is pleased that **Blake Ragsdale, M.D.**, has joined our team. The Memphis native attended the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis. Dr. Ragsdale completed his residency and fellowship at Campbell Clinic, also in Memphis. Board certified in orthopedic surgery, he provides general orthopedic care with an interest in reconstructive surgery, trauma and sports medicine.

Dr. Ragsdale joins the quality orthopedic practice of **Peter Lund, M.D.**, at Surgical Associates of Martin. Dr. Lund has practiced in Martin for 10 years. He completed a five-year orthopedic residency at Tulane University in New Orleans, La. He has extensive training in hand surgery and treats conditions like carpal tunnel syndrome and fractures. Board certified in orthopedic surgery, he recently completed a course on arthroscopic rotator cuff repair at the Texas Orthopedic Hospital in Houston, Texas.

To make an appointment with Dr. Ragsdale or Dr. Lund, call (731) 587-2525.

Peter Lund, M.D., (left) and Blake Ragsdale, M.D., provide quality orthopedic care at VCH.



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# Health Connection

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