



Meridian Matters

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The basics of living longer—and better

Carrot juice. Meditation. Garlic. Hormone therapy. Bottled water. Genetics.

When it comes to the topic of health and age, there's no shortage of methods and advice aimed at prolonging and improving our lives. The mythical fountain of youth, it seems, has been replaced by a waterfall of information.

"It can be overwhelming," says Vishnu Mohan, M.D., a primary care doctor with Legacy Clinic Tigard-King City. "But if you can pay attention to the basics, many people can expect to have a reasonably healthy life. Even those who adopt healthy changes later in life can feel the benefits."

Among the basics: Regular visits with a primary care doctor, daily exercise, proper weight, normal blood pressure, controlling diabetes, no smoking and a yearly flu shot. Also, he says, "Enjoy your life. Live in moderation and enjoy your golden days. Our philosophy at the Legacy Clinic Tigard-King City is to emphasize quality of life just as much as medical problems."

Dr. Mohan's advice is in line with the countless strategies and programs that make a point to pay attention to such basics as:

- Exercise
- Nutrition
- Detection/screenings
- Safety
- Overall well-being

With that in mind, let's explore the foundations of healthy aging.



Exercise: the anti-aging pill

The benefits of regular exercise stretch beyond keeping weight down. Exercise assists in reducing risks of heart disease and stroke, high blood pressure, Type II diabetes, obesity, back pain and osteoporosis. Plus, it can improve your mood, your sleep and your ability to manage stress. All of these are factors in staving off the effects of old age.

"Exercise is the most effective anti-aging pill ever discovered," according to the National Institutes of Health.

Case in point is exercise and heart disease. Heart disease is the No. 1 cause of death in the United States. The incidence of heart disease and stroke rise steeply after age 65, accounting for more than 40 percent of all deaths among those ages 65 to 74.



Dr. Mohan says that exercise is beneficial in strengthening your heart muscle, lowering your blood pressure, raising your levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL, the good cholesterol) and lowering your levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL, bad cholesterol), improving blood flow, and increasing your heart's working capacity.

Regular exercise seems to help every aspect of heart health. "Exercise training appears to improve the function of virtually every cell in the cardiovascular system," says Dr. Mohan. "Evidence now suggests that benefits of exercise on the heart occur even when fitness regimens begin later in life, at age 60 or 70."

Dr. Mohan says

Some guidelines:

- The best exercise is the one that you enjoy or, at least, will do.
- Try 20 to 30 minutes of aerobic activity three or more times a week and some type of muscle strengthening activity and stretching at least twice a week.
- The benefits of walking are significant. Even if you can't manage 30 minutes of walking in a single session, try three 10-minute walks in a day.

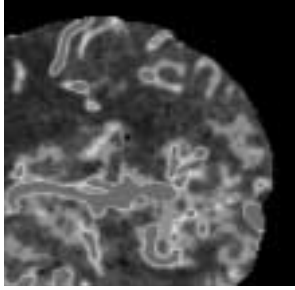
The nutrition puzzle

Perhaps no subject in the issue of health is as perplexing as nutrition. Low-carb, high-carb, vegan, fish oil, what is the right choice?

It's difficult to know. There many plans or books that offer excellent guidance for improving health. The *Okinawa Program*, for one, offers advice from the Okinawans, the people from the Japanese island who are the longest lived population in the world. Among the Okinawan ways are vegetables, fruits,



tofu, soy, cold-water fish and herbal teas. Another interesting choice is the national bestseller *Healthy Aging* from Andrew Weil, M.D., who recommends regular intake of such food as broccoli, salmon, garlic, ginger and more.



If you haven't already done so, you may want to talk with your doctor and do some research on the latest in nutrition for your own needs. "There are so many choices, a lot of them personal," says Denise Hudson, R.N., coordinator of the diabetes education program at Legacy Meridian Park Hospital. "However, there are some basics that apply to everyone."

To attend to the core guidelines Hudson notes these 10 "super foods": blueberries; broccoli; nuts; salmon; orange/yellow fruits and vegetables and leafy greens; oats; yogurt; free range eggs; beans and lentils; and dark chocolate.

In addition, the United States Department of Agriculture recently released "key recommendations for the general population." Some highlights:

- Consume about two servings (cups) of fruits and three servings of vegetables every day. Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables.
- Consume three or more ounces of whole-grain products per day. In general, at least half of your cereals, breads and pastas should come from whole grains.
- Limit the intake of saturated fat and avoid trans fats.
- Choose and prepare foods and beverages with little added sugars or caloric sweeteners.
- Consume less than 1 teaspoon of salt per day.
- If you choose to drink alcoholic beverages, limit to one or two a day.

Better living through screening

A good way to beat medical problems is to detect them early. Particularly cancers. "The treatment options have advanced," says Dr. Mohan. "However, the key is early detection. The earlier we find the cancer, the better success we have in defeating it."

Regular checkups and screenings are vital in detecting cancers and other diseases. This schedule may help.

General tests

- **Cholesterol:** Every 5 years beginning at age 45. Every 3 to 5 years after age 65
- **Colon exam:** Regular examinations at age 50 or earlier with family history of colon cancer. Ask your doctor about exam options.
- **Thyroid exam:** After age 60
- **Bone scan:** After age 65
- **Urinalysis:** Annually after age 65

- **Routine tests:** blood pressure, skin examination, obesity screening, eye exams and dental exams

Women

- **Pap test:** annually for women 21 or older
- **Pelvic exam:** annually when sexually active or by age 18
- **Clinical breast exam:** annually beginning at age 20. Women are encouraged to perform monthly breast self-exams.
- **Mammogram:** every 1 to 2 years for women ages 40-49 and annually for women 50 or older. Legacy operates a Breast Health Center at Legacy Meridian Park Hospital; please see website or call 503-413-4840 for more information. www.legacyhealth.org/bhc

Men

- **Prostate cancer**— Precise recommendations vary; talk with your doctor. However, the American Cancer Society recommends that men with a family history of prostate cancer should



News Briefs

Get ready for Heart & Soul

Don't miss the third annual Heart & Soul Gala Dinner and Auction to benefit the expansion of pediatric services at Legacy Meridian Park Hospital. The event is from 6 to 8 p.m., Friday, March 10, at the Tualatin Country Club, 9145 SW Tualatin Road, Tualatin.

The event is part of an effort to raise \$100,000 for the establishment of outpatient pediatric rehabilitation services at Legacy Meridian Park. The aim is to have a team of highly trained pediatric specialists at Legacy

Meridian Park who will help children from birth to age 18 with a range of physical, occupational and speech difficulties.

Anyone who would like to attend, make a donation or volunteer should please call the Meridian Park Foundation, 503-692-2401.

Meridian expands surgical capabilities

Legacy Meridian Park Hospital is growing as one of the most technically advanced, comprehensive medical centers in the region. To that end, Legacy Meridian Park is expanding its surgical facilities—upgrading two of its surgical suites to make them better equipped for innovations in minimally invasive surgery. In minimally invasive surgery, surgeons use of laparoscopes, miniature cameras and other specialized surgical

equipment to perform surgeries through small incisions, reducing the recovery times and scarring from conventional surgery.

Legacy Meridian Park installed high-definition flat screen monitors that improve physicians' capabilities to view inside body cavities. "We want to offer our patients the latest innovations for successful surgeries that allow them to return their normal activities as quickly as possible," says Gail Foraker, manager of the operating room.

Legacy Meridian Park's medical staff includes a range of excellent surgeons. To find a surgeon or other doctor at Legacy Meridian Park, please call Legacy Referral Service at 503-335-3500.



begin prostate-specific antigen (PSA) screening annually at age 40. Those with no family history should begin annual screenings at age 50.

Falls, crashes and other accidents

Acting youthfully can be healthy; acting foolishly often is not. Using seat belts, wearing bicycle helmets, driving responsibly, preventing falls all are good methods to prevent serious accidents that could derail your healthy aging process.

"Avoiding injuries is a major factor in helping you stay healthy and independent," says Susan Sabo Rose, Ph.D., A.P.R.N., a gerontologist and clinical nurse specialist who works with elderly patients at Legacy Meridian Park Hospital.

As you grow older, the risk of falling grows. Some 12 percent of people over the age of 65 fall at home. Falls that result in serious injury often mean that the person "never completely gets their life back," says Dr. Rose, who is involved in an effort to reduce falls by patients at Legacy Meridian Park Hospital and across Legacy hospitals.

She says that many people are reluctant to discuss falls. "People think it's normal to fall," Dr. Rose says. "It isn't. Falls are caused by multiple factors, including physical ones." She says to report falls to your doctor.

One guide to assess your risk of falling: Try to rise from a chair without using your arms, which tests muscle strength in the lower limbs. If you can't rise without using

your arms, try increasing exercise, (such as walking), plus some stretching and even some balance routines such as tai chi.

Other things to watch:

- Avoid excessive alcohol
- Monitor diuretics (use the rest room frequently rather than urgently)
- Reduce clutter
- Secure rugs
- Wear sturdy slippers

Mind, soul and well-being

From deep breathing to friendship to prayer to laughter, there seems to be more to staying healthy than science and medicine. Clinical studies over the years show that a range of spiritual, emotional and personal factors can contribute to good health.

Here is a sampling of the research on how our health is affected by many aspects of life:

- **Friends and family.** Research shows that older people who have a strong social network live longer. A recent Australian study examined 1,500 people aged over 70 and found that those who had contact with friends were 22 percent less likely to die in the next decade than those who had reported few, distant friends. Close ties with children or other close relatives had no effect.
- **Prayer/spiritual aspects.** The benefits of prayer and meditation have been studied for years. "[Some] 350 studies have examined religious involvement and health," says an article in the *Journal of American Medical Association*. "The majority of these have found that religious people are physically healthier, lead healthier lifestyles, and require fewer health services." Exactly why is a source of debate, but one reason may be those activities lower stress levels and provide a sense of purpose. Interestingly, not only does prayer seem to have healing effects upon the people who pray, it also appears to benefit those who are prayed for by others.
- **Stress.** Some research indicates that stress is a contributing factor in 80 percent of all major illnesses, including cancer, heart disease and diabetes. Although stress is seen as a psychological issue, it leads to a range of physical side effects that affect almost all major organs. Reduce stress through breathing exercises, massage, music, pets, exercise, hobbies, sleep, diet and many others. Take stock of your stress and find ways to manage it.

Dear Readers:

We're enthused and excited about the present and the future of Legacy Meridian Park Hospital. Our steady growth continues into 2006—among the noteworthy changes this year are expansion of our surgical suites to accommodate more technically advanced surgeries and a campaign to raise money for outpatient pediatric rehabilitation services. (Please see the details below about the dinner and auction to support this drive.)

These expansions build upon other recent additions, such as our pediatric emergency services, emergency care for heart problems and the Legacy Meridian Park Total Joint Center, which offers complete care for knee and hip replacement. In total, we think these new services support our effort to make life better in the south metro area. We are proud to be your full-service hospital for more than 30 years.

Sincerely,

Allyson Anderson
Administrator,
Legacy Meridian Park Hospital



Looking for a primary care doctor?

If you are looking for a doctor, we can help. There are many physicians, from primary care doctors to a range of specialists, in and around the campus of Legacy Meridian Park Hospital.

For primary care doctors, Legacy features three clinics: Legacy Clinic Tualatin, Legacy Clinic Woodburn and Legacy Clinic Tigard-King City.

Call Legacy Referral Service at 503-335-3500 to find a Meridian Park doctor who is right for you.

A Great Place to Work!

A leader in healthcare offering a spectrum of career opportunities, Legacy Health System is a great place to work. Please visit our web site to apply and/or view a complete listing of our exciting employment openings: www.legacyhealth.org. Legacy Employment Services, 503-415-5405, EOE/AA.

A Great Place to Support!

Charitable gifts are vital for the non-profit Legacy Meridian Park Hospital to offer the finest in medical services for our community. If you're interested in finding out how to support Meridian Park Medical Foundation, please call 503-692-2401.

right for you, please call Legacy Referral Services at 503-335-3500.

Performance available on Legacy website

We're proud of the quality of care we provide at Legacy Meridian Park Hospital and across Legacy Health System. We measure our performance against the nationally recognized quality measures and are proud to report our results on Legacy's website, www.legacyhealth.org/qualitystats

Choose a health plan that includes Meridian Park

When it's time to choose a health plan from your employer, please consider a plan that includes Legacy Health System and Legacy Meridian Park Hospital. Legacy participates in most major health plans, including Regence BlueCross BlueShield, Managed HealthCare Northwest, Health Net, LifeWise Health Plan of Oregon, Great-West Healthcare, PacifiCare and UnitedHealthcare.

Legacy Meridian Park offers comprehensive services, including 24-hour emergency care; state-of-the-art intensive care/critical care service; Family Birth Center with more than 1,300 babies born a year; technologically advanced surgical and imaging services; Breast Health Center; cardiology and emergency heart treatment; and cancer treatment.

Meridian Park's complete services mean that patients in the south metro area don't have to travel to receive excellent medical care.

Neurosurgeon seeing patients at Legacy Meridian Park

Michael Dorsen, M.D., an experienced and board-certified neurosurgeon, is seeing patients at Legacy Clinic Tualatin on the campus of Legacy Meridian Park Hospital. Dr. Dorsen offers diagnosis and treatment of adult and adolescent patients with conditions of, or injury to, the brain, spinal cord, and spinal column.

Legacy Meridian Park is also served by a number of excellent neurosurgeons, including Bradley Bergquist, M.D., and Francisco Soldevilla, M.D. To find a physician who is

How you can find us!



Patient/General Information503-692-1212
 Legacy Physician Referral 503-335-3500
 TDD711
 Community Health Education/Senior Services .503-692-7444

The treatments discussed in *The Meridian* are among a number of valuable options. Physicians quoted may express diverging views. There can be several ways of treating disease or injury. Please consult your own physician for his or her recommendation.

Legacy Health System, a nonprofit organization, includes Emanuel Hospital & Health Center, Emanuel Children's Hospital, Good Samaritan Hospital & Medical Center, Meridian Park Hospital, Mount Hood Medical Center, Salmon Creek Hospital, Legacy Clinics and CareMark/Managed HealthCare Northwest PPO. ©2006.

Legacy Meridian Park Hospital can be found in the yellow pages under "Hospitals," the white pages under "Legacy" or through directory assistance. Visit us online at www.legacyhealth.org.

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In this issue: "Attending to the Basics" offers you a framework for creating a longer, healthier life. From exercise (page 1) to nutrition (page 1), from screening for diseases (page 2) to preventing falls (page 3), to mind and spirit (page 3), we're addressing the cornerstones of healthier aging.

Health Education Calendar Winter 2006

Legacy Meridian Park Hospital offers a variety of educational opportunities. **Preregistration is required for all classes.** Please call the number indicated or TYY 711. For a catalog of all classes call 503-335-3500.

Stroke Screening

Stop stroke! Learn about practicing prevention and test your knowledge so that you're not "put to the test." Free screening includes blood pressure check, calculation of body type, risk of stroke, and an interview with a stroke nurse. Cholesterol screen-

ing may be available; call 503-335-3500 to register and for more information. Sponsored by Clackamas Community College School of Nursing and Legacy Health System.

Clackamas Community College Campus
 DeJardin Bldg Room 226
 Tuesday, May 23
 Call 503-335-3500 for an appointment.

What About Boys?

How can we connect with our boys and support them? Howard Hiton, M.S./L.P.C., and Kathy Masarie, M.D., pediatrician, discuss the tumultuous world boys live in today and unique ways to

communicate and connect. \$5 at the door.

Meridian Park: Tuesday, April 25, 7-9 p.m.
 Call 503-335-3500 to register.

Do You Know Your Numbers?

Men and women are invited to have a personalized measurement and analysis of their blood pressure, cholesterol levels, lean body mass, fat weight and optimal weight. Appointments required. Stroke screening available at Meridian Park location only; please request when scheduling your appointment. \$30.

Meridian Park: Third Thursday of every month, 7-9:30 a.m.
 Call 503-692-2548 to make an appointment.

Your Healthy Joints: Treatment Options for Arthritis & Joint Pain

Mobility is the cornerstone of independent living. This resource class will discuss treatment options for degenerative joint disease, including total hip or knee replacement surgery, exercises and medication regimes. Free.

Meridian Park: Thursday, March 16 or April 20, 6:30-8 p.m.
 Call 503-692-2411 to register.

Babysitter's Training

Children ages 11 and older learn basic first aid, emer-

gency procedures and responsible babysitting skills in this two-session course. American Red Cross certification. \$35.

Meridian Park: Saturday, March 11, 9 a.m.-3:45 p.m.
 Call 503-280-1440 to register.

Legal-Financial Planning for Mid-life and Beyond

Learn legal strategies to prepare your family for important healthcare decision making, including preserving independence and planning for the distribution of estates to loved ones and charities. Free.

Meridian Park: Tuesday, April 11, 6-8 p.m.
 Call 503-335-3500 to register.