Take Charge of Your Health...and Your Future

- Recovering From Cardiac Surgery
- Do You Have Chronic Heartburn?
- Recognizing Autism
- When Others Pressure You to Eat

Also in this issue...

- Special Role of Stepparent
- So You're Newly Solo
- Are Light Cigarettes Worth It?

A Pledge to You
Between pages 14 and 15
Drive Up and Get Your Flu Shot!

Winter is coming—protect yourself from influenza.
Lehigh Valley Hospital offers free drive-up flu shots at:
- Dorney Park, Allentown Saturday, Nov. 18, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Northampton Community College, Bethlehem Sunday, Nov. 19, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

To learn more about flu prevention, including advice from our experts on the nasal flu vaccine, call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.

PROTECTING YOUR HEALTH

*Light* Cigarettes and Your Health

Don't be fooled—switching isn't better for you.

The Facts About Bad Breath

It can signal underlying health problems.

To Your Health

Nursing homes, radiation therapy

Preparing for a Hospital Visit

Lay the right groundwork beforehand

Healthy Transportation Alternatives

Park your car and get your heart pumping

Hearts of HealthyYou

Recovering From Cardiac Surgery

It doesn't take as long as it used to

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Women with heart disease can't carry the same load

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For More Information
The Cookie Challenge
Is it possible to make delicious, home-baked, healthy cookies? The answer is yes.

You look forward all year to those buttery, sugary, fabulous holiday cookies. The trouble is, they go straight to your waistline. Is it possible to trim some of the fat and sugar without losing the taste?

One trick is to bake your favorites in small batches and enjoy them in moderation. But you also can modify a cookie recipe and still keep it appealing, as our taste-testers will affirm. “The trick is staying as true as possible to the original recipe and making only small changes,” says registered dietitian Kim Campbell of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. Here are some simple substitutions even Santa won’t detect.

**Butter vs. margarine**—Butter is loaded with saturated fat, which raises LDL (bad) cholesterol. Substitute half the amount in the recipe with an equal amount of canola oil or unsweetened applesauce. “But stay away from stick margarine,” Campbell says. “It’s made of trans fats that raise bad cholesterol levels and lower the good kind.”

**A sweet suggestion**—Substitute half the white sugar in a recipe with Splenda. “If you use all Splenda, you’ll have less dough because it doesn’t have the bulk sugar does,” Campbell says. Another option: reduce the amount of sugar you use (for example, 1/2 cup instead of 3/4 cup). You’ll get a slightly less-sweet but still tasty cookie.

**Flour power**—Get more fiber and vitamin B into your cookies by replacing half the all-purpose flour with whole-wheat flour. “Don’t use all whole-wheat,” Campbell says, “or your cookie won’t hold together as well.”

**Hold the salt**—Baking soda and baking powder help cookies rise, but they contain sodium. If your recipe calls for one of them, omit the salt in the recipe. (It won’t affect taste.)

**Egg-cellent tip**—Can’t keep your children’s fingers out of the batter bowl? Uncooked eggs can cause salmonella poisoning. Instead, use an already pasteurized egg substitute like Eggbeaters. The switch also reduces fat, calories and cholesterol.

**When the chips are down**—For chocolate chip cookies, substitute mini chips for regular-size ones. “You can use fewer because they spread out more and ensure chocolate taste in every bite,” Campbell says. “If a recipe calls for 2 cups, use 1-1/2 cups.”

**Added goodness**—“Don’t be afraid to add ingredients to your cookie recipe,” says Campbell, who regularly adds a tablespoon or two of ground flaxseed (a good source of heart-protecting omega-3 fatty acids). You can also add wheat germ, oat bran or bran cereal.

Want to Know More? For recipes for the cookies our tasters are enjoying below, call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.

"We’re just testing"—These cookies are so yummy, they may be gone before Santa arrives! Tasters (l-r) Quinn, 3, of Whitehall and Will, 8, Laurel, 6, and Johnny, 7, of Allentown loved our healthy versions of gingerbread bars, chocolate chip meringues, snickerdoodles and other treats.
Weekend warrior or seasoned athlete, you can benefit from the services of this team

You're playing basketball and your knee pops. You try to walk off the pain, but it only gets more intense. What should you do? Your immediate options are the emergency room or your family doctor—but there's another resource you may not know about: the sports medicine physician, a specialist in athletic injuries.

Some sports medicine physicians are orthopedic surgeons, others have backgrounds in family, internal or emergency medicine, or pediatrics. They've all completed an additional one- or two-year fellowship in sports medicine and a board-certification test.

Thanks to that specialized education, these physicians better understand the mechanics involved in sports- or dance-related injuries. "Our knowledge of the muscles and tendons used in different activities allows us to diagnose these injuries, sometimes without the need for expensive tests," says sports medicine physician Laura Dunne, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. "For example, if a ballerina comes in with pain in her ankle, I'll ask her to stand on her toes. By examining her in position, I can get a better idea of what's causing the problem."

After identifying the injury, the sports medicine specialist has several treatment options. Who's on the Team?

Sports medicine physicians are the most highly specialized, but there's an array of professionals who can help you get fit and prevent or recover from injuries. These include:

- **Licensed physical therapist**—Evaluates and provides therapy to physically impaired patients, typically in medical/rehab settings; helps athletes, workers and others prevent injury. Requires master's or doctoral degree; clinical experience.
- **Certified exercise physiologist**—Monitors, assesses and guides clients through cardiovascular, strength and flexibility programs in academic, health care and sports settings. Requires master's degree in exercise science or related field.
- **Certified exercise specialist**—Monitors, assesses and guides clients through cardiovascular, strength and flexibility programs in medically based settings. Requires bachelor's degree or higher in health-related field.
- **Certified athletic trainer**—Works with athletes in school, college or pro-team settings to prevent, manage and rehabilitate sports-related injuries. Requires bachelor's or master's degree in athletic training.

"Many people claim to be fitness experts," says exercise physiologist John Graham of the Human Performance Center in Allentown. "Make sure they are credentialed by a reputable organization like the National Strength and Conditioning Association or the American College of Sports Medicine."

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**Ouch! Is This a Stress Fracture?**

How to tell and what to do about it

Every time you jog, you feel it—a "persistent pinprick of pain," in the words of orthopedic surgeon Neal Stansbury, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. What's going on? "If the discomfort is in one specific spot, you probably have a stress fracture," Stansbury says. "Pain from an injured muscle or ligament is more general."

Stress fractures are caused by overuse, most commonly during a sport or strenuous activity. They begin as microscopic breaks in a bone, which expand if you keep doing the stress-causing activity. Runners typically get stress fractures in the shin, foot or ankle. Gymnasts and football linemen often get them in the back or hip, and dancers in the heel.

"Stress fractures are common in teen athletes who are very committed to their training programs," says Stansbury's colleague, family medicine physician John Wolf, M.D. "They often make things worse by ignoring the pain and continuing to train."

Wolf also sees stress fractures in middle-aged "weekend warriors" or people who begin an exercise program without proper conditioning. Women are at greater risk than men due to their smaller bones, different body mechanics and hormonal issues.
options. Depending on the severity of the injury and the patient's goals, the solution might be as complex as surgery or as simple as an adjusted training regimen. "Just because you're injured, it doesn't mean you have to sit out the rest of your season," says Dunne's colleague, orthopedic surgeon Mitch Cooper, M.D.

Sports medicine physicians don't practice in a vacuum. They work closely with physical therapists, exercise specialists and others (see box, left), especially in the areas of rehabilitation and injury prevention.

As you work your way back from an injury, the sports medicine team can provide ongoing care. "If you're playing hurt, your body is using extra energy to compensate, and that hinders your performance," Dunne says. With that in mind, sports medicine professionals can help you make the right decisions during training about issues like nutrition, stretching and hydration techniques. That protects you from aggravating your injury or causing another.

Want to Know More? For a list of medical fitness centers, certification details, or referral to a fitness specialist who can guide you in a home program, or information on specific sports-related injuries, call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.

The standard treatment for stress fractures, though athletes hate to hear it, is rest," Stansbury says. How long you need to rest depends on how severe the fracture is. If you keep training in spite of the pain, you could make your fracture worse and recovery will take longer.

You needn't stop all activity while healing; low-impact exercise like swimming is usually fine. Ask your physician what he or she recommends. "Some stress fractures are severe enough to require a cast or surgery," Stansbury says, "but most heal well with rest."
The Special Role of Stepparent

It's not always easy, but it's worth it.

On TV’s "The Brady Bunch," everything was perfect—two families blending together to create one big, happy clan. True to life? Not exactly, says Denise Continenza, family living educator for Penn State Cooperative Extension of Lehigh County. “As every stepparent knows, this can be a challenging role,” she says. But in time, it is possible to build a strong, thriving family unit.

Many factors go into how a child will respond to a stepparent. “The child's age makes a big difference. Whether a parent passed away or there was an amicable or tumultuous divorce also will impact how he feels,” says Diane Davison, licensed clinical social worker with Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network.

The keys to building healthy relationships? “Good communication among the stepparent, biological parents and child, and a commitment to making all decisions with the child's best interest in mind.” Here are some strategies for successful stepparenting:

Be patient. A child may be grieving or reacting to the many changes in his life, such as a new home or school. “Don’t push him into the relationship,” Continenza says. “Instead, acknowledge his feelings by saying, ‘This must be a hard time for you.’” Don’t insist on being called Mom or Dad, which can be tough especially if the child’s biological parent passed away. Keep some consistency in your child’s life, such as regular sports and access to old friends. Stay positive—the first few months (or years) tend to be the most challenging.

Be on the same page. Parents and stepparents need to work out the rules in advance and support each other in enforcing them. “It works best when biological and stepparents put personal feelings aside and agree on discipline,” Davison says. Then, when you enforce your child’s bedtime, curfew or homework rules, he can’t say, “That’s not how it is at Dad’s house.”

Expect conflict. It’s only natural for children to lash out at what they believe to be the cause of the change in their lives—the stepparent. If your child says, “You can’t tell me what to do. You’re not my mother,” be compassionately firm. Say, “You’re right, but I am an adult in this family who cares about you. That’s why you need to follow our rules.”

Don’t create friction. Children respond best when biological and stepparents maintain a civil relationship. “Don’t talk badly about your spouse’s ex in front of your stepchild,” Davison says. “And don’t ask your stepchild to tell you details about the other parent’s life.”

Remember your spouse. Stepparents often put all their efforts into developing a relationship with the stepchild and neglect their new partner. “Schedule some alone time,” Davison says. “And don’t be afraid to kiss or hold hands in front of the kids.” Though they may react in disgust, parental affection is a good thing for them to see.

Have family meetings. Children in blended families may not get along, or may resent their biological parent paying attention to another child. Family meetings are an opportunity for children to say what’s on their minds and for the rest of the family to respond. “It’s a great way for families to find solutions to problems,” Davison says.

Ask for help. If you feel you need help with your role as a parent, don’t be embarrassed to see a family therapist. “Seeking help is a sign of strength,” Continenza says. “I’ve seen many people gradually develop into excellent stepparents and make a big difference in a child’s life.”

Want to Know More about comforting children following a divorce? For a list of things to tell them and ways to make visitation time healthy, call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvhn.org/healthyyou.

A solid relationship—Rick Martuscelli of Coaldale has been stepfather to 16-year-old Brittany for 11 years. They do homework together, go golfing (Brittany’s on the golf team at Marian Catholic School), and share a love of the Philadelphia Eagles.
Parents and teachers, listen up! Children are the greatest transmitters of contagious illnesses like colds, flu and diarrhea, but a few simple steps can help you and your family stay healthy this winter.

"Children are contagious for about 10 days, twice as long as adults," says infectious disease specialist Luther Rhodes, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. "It's important to teach them cough etiquette and respiratory hygiene—and then to continually remind them." Here's what your family needs to know.

To prevent germs from spreading, avoid close contact with anyone who's sick (3 feet is a safe distance). Don't share items like tissue boxes, pencils and cell phones. Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and throw used tissues away. Since viruses can live up to six hours, it's a good idea to wipe door handles, toys, telephones, keyboards and other shared surfaces with baby wipes or household wipes.

Wash your hands frequently. "Hand-washing is your primary defense against germs," Rhodes says. "Classrooms, offices and homes should be well-stocked with alcohol-based hand sanitizers and tissue boxes. When using soap and water, choose a liquid soap and wash long enough to sing the entire ABC song. Use paper towels, not cloth (which can harbor germs), then use the paper towel to turn off the faucet."

It's also important to stay home when you're sick, says Rhodes' colleague, pediatrician Kelly Costello, M.D. Children and adults with a fever should stay home until they are fever-free for 24 hours without medication. If you have diarrhea or vomiting, stay home until you're back to normal.

"Getting sick at a young age isn't all bad," Costello says. "Preschoolers exposed to other children's germs do build immunity that can protect them later, when they're in school. They usually get sick less often after the first year. But if your child has complications like asthma or frequent ear infections, or is sick often, you might consider in-home child care rather than a group setting."

Be careful, too, not to run the risk of sharing your illness with people who've recently had surgery or those with medical conditions. "Put off that visit to Grandma for a few days," Rhodes says. "A hug or kiss could put her in the hospital. It's not worth the risk."

Make 'em squeaky clean—Careful hand-washing keeps germs at bay for (large photo, l-r) Will of Zionsville, Joy of Center Valley and Kacey of Allentown. In small photo, Ben of Allentown shows the results.

Want to Know More? Lehigh Valley Hospital offers the Glitterbug program to schools and community groups to demonstrate effective hand-washing. For more on Glitterbug, the flu or childhood vaccines, or for a germ-control poster, call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.

Fight Off That Infection! If your child eats well, exercises, gets enough rest and stays current on immunizations, she'll be in better shape to resist infections. The Centers for Disease Control now recommends influenza (flu) vaccines for all children age 6 months to 5 years, not just those in high-risk categories. Talk to your doctor about vaccines for your family.
The Pursuit of Happiness

Exactly what is this mysterious quality—and where do you find it?

"Be happy!" It’s an age-old refrain, especially in the holiday season—and now, researchers have new insights into the meaning of that familiar word.

Using everything from questionnaires to brain scans, they’ve discovered that a good marriage and social network are bigger factors in happiness than health, wealth, or a nice home. A sense of control over your life and a spiritual dimension also are important. Even genetic makeup plays a role.

How would you define happiness? For counseling psychotherapist Ralph Erickson of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network, “You’re happy when you’re at peace with life.” His colleague, chaplain Barbara Rutt, agrees: “Happiness isn’t a momentary thing, but a deep contentment.”

In a culture that breeds dissatisfaction, she says, that’s not easy to achieve. “We’re constantly told to be more perfect and acquire more things, versus being happy with who we are.”

The truth, Erickson says, is that “you have control over whether or not you’re happy. Of course there will be tough times, but it’s all in how you react. You can choose happiness; it just takes practice.” Ready to start?

Cultivate gratitude. Think of all you have to be thankful for. Write to someone you haven’t properly thanked.

Make time for happiness. “Commit to doing the things that bring you joy,” Erickson says.

See the bright side. “You can find something beautiful in any person or situation if you just look,” Rutt says. “Even getting stuck in traffic can become a chance to unwind.”

Oh, Those Annoying People!

Who makes your blood pressure skyrocket? Maybe it’s the neighbor whose dog barks at all hours. Or your sister, who wants you to host Thanksgiving again this year. “Your mood, personality and past experiences all determine who and what will set you off,” says social worker Tony Buchman of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network.

Fortunately, some aggravating people cross your path for only a moment. Others, like family members, may have annoyed you since childhood and continue to do so—especially around the holidays, when families tend to converge. To help you deal with irritating people and the annoying situations that tag along with them, here are Buchman’s suggestions:

Breathe deeply. Deep breathing helps to trigger relaxation so you can deal with situations more calmly. Breathe in slowly through your nose and out slowly through your mouth.

Count to 10. It will give you a few seconds to gain perspective.

Be appropriately assertive. Avoid yelling or making the situation worse; many people offend easily and just get defensive. Instead, politely say, “I’m not sure you realize your dog is barking. I’m trying to sleep and would appreciate your bringing him in for the night.” You can tell your sister, “I won’t be able to host Thanksgiving this year. If you can’t do it, maybe we could all go to a restaurant instead.”

Offer to help. If it looks like someone’s having trouble, diffuse your own angry feelings by lending a hand. For example, if an older person is tying up the supermarket line fumbling with a heavy item, ask if she’d like some assistance.
Stop beating yourself up. "All the great religions teach self-acceptance," Rutt says. Live healthy. Promote your well-being by exercising, breathing deeply, eating well, getting enough rest, and letting go of anger and frustration.

Take charge of your fears. Humans are the only animals able to imagine the future—and we imagine the worst. Erickson calls it "awfulizing." "Think that worst-case scenario through to the end," he says. "You’ll discover that you can cope."

Reinforce the non-material, especially with children. Family togetherness is a much more lasting gift than an iPod.

Do things for others. It’s a powerful source of satisfaction.

Laugh. It helps you see the absurdity in stressful situations, take yourself lightly and maintain joy.

Be fully present in the moment. The past is gone and the future is unknown. Learning to savor "right now" is a key to contentment.

Want to Know More about the power of laughter, volunteering or healthy gifts for children? Call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvho.org/healthyyou.

Step outside yourself. How would you like others to see you handling this annoying situation? Would you rather they view you as a calm, rational person, or someone who’s impulsive, agitated and aggressive?

Remember the Golden Rule. It's usually better to treat people politely and courteously—just as you’d like to be treated yourself. Maybe the irritating person has had a bad day or doesn’t realize her actions are affecting you.

Explore your spiritual side. Some types of spirituality—Buddhism, for example—teach you to focus on the moment. This helps you take irritating situations in stride. Stress-reduction techniques such as yoga and meditation also can help.

Want to Know More about dealing with stress? For a helpful booklet, call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvho.org/healthyyou.

Fitness and Rhythm

Discover how moving to a beat can improve your workout

Have you ever found yourself tapping your foot to the beat of a song, or gotten lost in the chimes of church bells? It’s easy to do. Rhythmic sounds surround us, from heartbeat to telephone rings to a baby's crying. And you can use rhythm to enhance your workout.

"Following a beat can motivate you, soothe you, and be incorporated into almost any fitness routine," says Tahya of Whitehall, a movement artist who teaches a new Healthy You class called FitRhythms®. "It combines live drumming and dance for an exciting, noncompetitive group workout that's proven effective."

To include rhythm in your workout:

Listen to music while walking or running, synchronizing your steps to the beat. Choose a slow song for a light workout, a faster beat for more strenuous activity. As your heart rate increases, you’ll strengthen it and burn more calories.

Clap your hands, bang a drum or shake a tambourine, creating rhythms as you move. It helps relieve stress by prompting your body to release "feel good" endorphins. Include your family, giving each person a different instrument. You’ll be amazed at the positive attitude you can create.

Dance. Put on music (or drumbeats) to inspire you, and explore different movements. Remember, there are no wrong steps!

Observe your personal rhythmic pattern while swimming, running or biking. It will motivate you to exercise longer and farther, and also calm your mind.

Whether you’re a champion athlete or wheelchair-bound, rhythm can benefit your body and mind. "Studies show drumming can even boost your immune system," Tahya says. "In our fast-paced society, it’s easy to get lost in e-mails and cell phones. Rhythm helps us take a break from our work and worries and reconnect with our bodies."

Want to Know More about FitRhythms and more Healthy You fitness classes that incorporate rhythm? Call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvho.org/healthyyou.

Sign Up Now!
Too heavy... too frequent... skipped altogether? There are solutions

Are they really necessary?

At best they're an inconvenience, but sometimes menstrual periods are cause for more serious concern. Absent or skipped periods, or periods that are too frequent or heavy, can stem from many different causes and should be evaluated, says Joseph Patruno, M.D., gynecologist at Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network.

First, what's normal? It varies with the individual, but most women menstruate every 21-35 days, Patruno says. Heavier periods are common in the teens when hormones are fluctuating, and women in their late 30s or 40s often have heavy or irregular periods as they approach menopause.

"If you have heavy periods, a pain reliever like ibuprofen or naproxen can help decrease cramps and bleeding. But if periods become especially heavy, last more than seven days or cause anemia, or if you have bowel or bladder problems, see your doctor," Patruno says. Vaginal bleeding in girls under age 10 or in women past menopause should always be evaluated by a doctor.

Heavy periods often are hormone-related, and birth control pills, injectable hormones like Depo-Provera or a progesterone-containing intrauterine device (IUD) can help stabilize the condition. Thyroid disorders are another possible cause of heavy or irregular periods, and these usually can be treated easily with medication.

If the heavy periods are caused by growths—fibroids or endometrial polyps—they usually can be removed with small incisions and quick recovery. This may involve placing a laparoscope in the abdomen or a hysteroscope into the uterus. "We have many alternatives to hysterectomy (removing the uterus) now, although it is still sometimes appropriate," Patruno says. "Even hysterectomies can be done laparoscopically today, for less pain and a quicker recovery."

Since heavy bleeding can be caused by cervical or uterine cancer, a biopsy may be necessary to rule that out. Another study commonly ordered in the evaluation of abnormal bleeding is an ultrasound of the pelvis.

On the flip side are absent or missed periods. This problem may stem from lifestyle factors such as substance abuse, stress, travel and excessive exercise. Eating disorders and major weight changes also can cause altered periods. And menstruation can be affected by medications, chemotherapy or radiation therapy.

Diseases that disrupt the timing of the menstrual cycle include polycystic ovary syndrome, adrenal disease, ovarian cysts, pituitary disease, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, liver disease and certain cancers.

"Your doctor will do a thorough workup to find the underlying cause, but don't panic. It's not unusual to miss or have an atypical period now and then," Patruno says. "It is always important to eat a balanced diet, exercise regularly and keep stress in check. If you don't wish to get pregnant, a number of birth control methods offer the added benefit of regulating your periods."

Want to Know More about painful cramps, endometriosis and other factors that affect fertility? Call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.

Want to Know More? For added information on natural feminine hygiene, call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.

When taking antibiotics, eat plain yogurt or take cranberry concentrate capsules to prevent urinary tract or yeast infections.

- Use an organic shampoo on pubic hair, and keep chemicals and perfumes away from the vagina.
- Don't assume you need to douche regularly.

Vaginal discharge is part of the cleansing process, and a mild odor is normal, Leonetti says. See your doctor or nurse practitioner if you develop a strong odor or colored discharge.

Feminine Hygiene Products

Stop shelves are lined with "feminine hygiene" products to kill germs and make you smell sweet and feel fresh. But most are loaded with chemicals, and these products may actually do more harm than good.

"Perfumed soaps, sprays, creams and washes can cause irritation of the vulva and vagina," says gynecologist Helene Leonetti, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. "A woman's body has its own natural way of cleansing itself. Adding artificial ingredients not only irritates sensitive skin, it can break down the body's defenses against infection." Her suggestions for staying fresh the natural way:

- Wear underwear made of cotton or with a cotton crotch.
- Sleep without underwear.
- Don't wear tight pants or pantyhose for long periods.
- Drink lots of water.
- Eat a healthy diet of natural and unprocessed foods, including vegetables, fruits and organic dairy and meats.
- Limit sugars and refined carbohydrates like white bread.
A Better Drug for Preventing Breast Cancer?

What you need to know about raloxifene

Because of her faith, Betty Heckman, 77, of Allentown never worried about breast cancer despite her four biopsies and numerous cysts (all benign). Yet when she saw a Healthy You story several years ago about a clinical trial and how it could help women manage their breast cancer risk, she took action.

“I had to help others and maybe even myself by getting involved in the trial,” Heckman (pictured at right) says. “Research is the only way to discover new treatments.”

Heckman—and 19,746 other women—took part in the STAR (Study of Tamoxifen and Raloxifene) trial. Initial results, released in April, shared the news that the osteoporosis drug raloxifene was just as effective as the tried-and-true cancer drug tamoxifen in reducing breast cancer risk for high-risk postmenopausal women. Even better, raloxifene didn’t appear to cause as many serious side effects, such as uterine cancer and blood clots.

Then the controversy started. The findings on uterine cancer were not “statistically significant,” said the news media reports—in other words, the difference in uterine cancer occurrences was so small it could have happened by chance.

What should women believe? “Overall, raloxifene appears to be the safer drug,” says Gregory Harper, M.D., breast cancer specialist at Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. “These news stories sometimes stir up controversy and don’t focus on the results, which speak for themselves. The prevention benefit is equal in both drugs, while raloxifene causes fewer side effects overall.”

Breast Cancer Risk Factors

- Age over 50
- Family history of breast or ovarian cancer on mother’s or father’s side, especially first-degree relatives (mother, sister, daughter)
- Menstruation before age 12 or menopause after age 55
- No children or first child after age 30
- Several years of hormone replacement therapy, especially combined estrogen/progestogen
- Alcohol use (risk rises with daily amount consumed)
- Obesity, high-fat diet, lack of exercise, especially after menopause

If you think you’re at increased risk for breast cancer (see box below), talk with your doctor about which medication—if any—is right for you. “If I suspect a woman is at risk, I recommend that she get genetic counseling before prescribing anything,” says Harper’s colleague, gynecologist Alexandria George, D.O.

“I also ask her if she’s tracking her breast health with monthly self-exams and annual mammograms.”

If you and your doctor decide a drug would be a good strategy, the next step is to look at your options. “If you also have osteoporosis, raloxifene might be the best choice,” says Deborah Kane, R.N., clinical trial study coordinator at the hospital. “But if you’re premenopausal, tamoxifen is the way to go.”

“Raloxifene gives women a choice,” Harper says. “It’s another tool in our fight to prevent breast cancer.”

Want to Know More about Lehigh Valley Hospital’s cancer risk assessment program, an upcoming breast cancer prevention clinical trial, or how to do a breast self-exam? Call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.

Many Drugs Going Generic

If you’re taking a brand-name drug, ask your doctor or pharmacist if it’s available as a lower-cost generic. This year, the patents have expired on several major drugs, including Zocor for cholesterol and Zoloft for depression. This opens the door for generic copies that can save you up to half the cost. For more details, visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.
**What Does an Osteopath Do?**

This discipline blends a 'whole person' approach and high-tech care

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Osteopathic medicine was founded in 1874 by Andrew Taylor Still, M.D., as a "whole person" approach to patient care. Still believed that the musculoskeletal system (the network of nerves, muscles and bones) was key to jump-starting the body's natural healing abilities. He developed a healing-touch method called osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) to correct musculoskeletal problems, diagnose illness, ease pain and promote healing. By contrast, M.D.s focused more on specific diseases and symptoms, using medications and surgery to treat them.

Some of these differences remain. "D.O.s receive ongoing musculoskeletal training, and many practice OMT along with allopathic treatments," says Rosenau's colleague, family medicine physician Stephen Miller, D.O. "A majority—about 60 percent—go into primary care and focus on 'wellness' medicine, emphasizing the role of family history, stress, diet, exercise and other lifestyle factors in health."

The two fields also differ in size. There are currently 20 osteopathic medical schools around the country, compared to 125 allopathic medical schools. D.O.s represent 6 percent of American doctors (about 56,000), but their numbers are rising—up 67 percent since 1990. That makes osteopathy one of the fastest-growing medical professions.

The lines between D.O. and M.D. continue to blur as the two fields come closer together. "D.O.s have gone from focusing only on OMT to using drugs and surgery, and M.D.s have incorporated more holistic thinking and high-touch medicine," Rosenau says. "We've drawn the best from each other, enhancing care for all our patients."

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**D.O. or M.D.?**

If you're like most people, you probably don't think much about the initials behind your doctor's name. In fact, you may not even notice them.

That's because doctors of osteopathic medicine (D.O.s) and medical doctors (M.D.s) are much more alike than they're different. "Many in the healing arts call themselves 'doctor,' including dentists, podiatrists and optometrists," says emergency-medicine physician Alex Rosenau, D.O., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. "But only D.O.s and M.D.s are licensed to address the needs of the entire patient, using the full range of medicine including prescribing drugs and performing surgery."

These days, D.O.s and M.D.s work side-by-side in physician practices, hospitals and residency programs, covering all medical specialties from cardiology to psychiatry. They get similar training—four years of undergraduate education emphasizing science; four years of comparable medical education (D.O.s attend osteopathic medical schools and M.D.s attend allopathic medical schools); and a residency lasting two to six years, depending on the specialty. Each must pass a licensing exam.

The differences that do exist relate to the historical roots of these two branches of medicine.

Osteopathic medicine was founded in 1874 by Andrew Taylor Still, M.D., as a "whole person" approach to patient care. Still believed that the musculoskeletal system (the network of nerves, muscles and bones) was key to jump-starting the body's natural healing abilities. He developed a healing-touch method called osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) to correct musculoskeletal problems, diagnose illness, ease pain and promote healing. By contrast, M.D.s focused more on specific diseases and symptoms, using medications and surgery to treat them.

Some of these differences remain. "D.O.s receive ongoing musculoskeletal training, and many practice OMT along with allopathic treatments," says Rosenau's colleague, family medicine physician Stephen Miller, D.O. "A majority—about 60 percent—go into primary care and focus on 'wellness' medicine, emphasizing the role of family history, stress, diet, exercise and other lifestyle factors in health."

The two fields also differ in size. There are currently 20 osteopathic medical schools around the country, compared to 125 allopathic medical schools. D.O.s represent 6 percent of American doctors (about 56,000), but their numbers are rising—up 67 percent since 1990. That makes osteopathy one of the fastest-growing medical professions.

The lines between D.O. and M.D. continue to blur as the two fields come closer together. "D.O.s have gone from focusing only on OMT to using drugs and surgery, and M.D.s have incorporated more holistic thinking and high-touch medicine," Rosenau says. "We've drawn the best from each other, enhancing care for all our patients."

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Shannon Kearney, D.O., allergist

"Looking at the entire person is exceptionally important in my specialty, because I focus on the quality of patients' lives and what makes their allergies worse, not just the medical aspects. By asking questions about their homes, pets, families and habits, I really get to know them—and that's the best part of medicine."

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Joshua Kassan, D.O., psychiatrist

(physical medicine and rehabilitation)

"I find osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) a good adjunct to conservative treatment of neck and low back pain for patients trying to avoid surgery. I treat the immediate symptom, but also take a more holistic approach, looking at things like the biomechanics of how the patient moves and leg-length discrepancies."

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David Meir-Levi, D.O., vascular and thoracic surgeon

"For a specialist like me, what remains from osteopathic training is mostly that the whole body works together as a system. It's a holistic approach that shows up in how we approach patients, how we talk to them, the questions we ask."
‘Light’ Cigarettes Are Heavy on Your Health

Don’t be fooled! Switching isn’t better for you.

Given the news that the nicotine level in cigarettes has risen 10 percent in the past six years, should you change to “lights”?

Don’t let the words “light” or “low-tar” fool you. “Smoking light cigarettes doesn’t necessarily reduce your risk for smoking-related illness,” says Suzanne Smith, community health clinical prevention manager at Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network.

These products aren’t light at all—most of them contain the same amount of nicotine, tar and toxins as normal cigarettes. One difference is a filter with ventilation holes. Air passes through the holes and dilutes the tobacco smoke, meaning you take in less of the smoke per puff.

But, these filters are easily fooled. “Smokers cover them with their fingers, and they don’t work properly,” Smith says. “You also can take more puffs or longer, deeper breaths to get the same amount of nicotine as from a regular cigarette.”

The best way to deal with tobacco and improve your health is to quit.

Want to Know More about programs that can help you quit smoking?
Call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.

Cigarette Facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nicotine Content</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Amount Consumed</th>
<th>Other Additives</th>
<th>Passive Smoking</th>
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<tr>
<td>The level of nicotine in U.S. cigarettes has risen in the past six years, making it easier to get hooked and harder to quit.</td>
<td>Light cigarettes don’t cost any less than regulars.</td>
<td>People who smoke light cigarettes often compensate by inhaling more deeply or smoking more cigarettes.</td>
<td>Both regular and light cigarettes contain at least 43 ingredients known to cause cancer in humans.</td>
<td>Breathing secondhand smoke is just as damaging to your health as smoking a cigarette (regular or light).</td>
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The Facts About Bad Breath

Don’t ignore it—it can signal underlying health problems.

No one wants to admit to having bad breath (halitosis)—it’s socially embarrassing! But to a large extent, you can control this unpleasant little health problem. And it’s worth your attention; persistent halitosis may signal something more serious.

One of the most common causes of bad breath is bacteria in your mouth, says dentist Sophia Kladias, D.M.D., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. If you don’t practice good oral hygiene, leftover food particles promote the growth of bacteria on teeth, gums and tongue, and the bacteria produce bad-smelling sulfur compounds. Eventually, plaque builds up on teeth and you develop gum disease (gingivitis). “Masking the problem with chewing gum, candy mints or sweet rinses can do more harm than good,” Kladias says. “Bacteria just feed off the sugar.”

The other classic breath-destroyer is strong-smelling foods like garlic and onions. As they’re digested and absorbed into your bloodstream, the odors are given off by your breath. They won’t go completely away until the offending food has passed through your system.

Dry mouth, or a shortage of saliva, also can cause halitosis. Saliva acts as a natural cleansing agent, and when you don’t produce enough—due to medication side effects, salivary gland problems or sleeping with your mouth open—your breath will tell you so.

Persistent bad breath can be a warning sign of a variety of illnesses, including chronic sinus infection or postnasal drip, respiratory problems like bronchitis, and acid reflux (GERD; see story on page 20). Systemic diseases like diabetes or kidney disease produce a distinctive type of bad breath called ketosis, says Kladias’ colleague, family medicine physician Suzanne Widmer, D.O. “You’ll notice a fruity flavor or smell,” she says. “It’s your body’s way of telling you something is wrong.”

Clearly, you need to see your doctor in cases like that. But for the most part, you can prevent bad breath if you:

- **Brush and floss faithfully.** Brush your teeth and tongue twice a day, and floss daily to remove particles and plaque between teeth. Mouthwash is helpful if it’s an antiseptic brand.

- **See your dentist regularly** for a professional cleaning and exam to detect and treat gum disease, dry mouth and other problems.

- **Steer clear of onions and garlic** before social occasions. (The rest of the time, enjoy these healthy foods.)

- **Avoid tobacco products.** Smoking or chewing tobacco definitely affects your breath.

- **Drink plenty of water.** It helps keep your mouth moist (among many other health benefits).

Want to Know More about basic tooth care, gum disease or Lehigh Valley Hospital’s Tobacco Treatment Program? Call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.
Recognizing Autism
Learn the signs of this mysterious disorder

Sheri Miltenberger Garrou's 9-year-old twins, James and Thomas, were born eight weeks premature, so she expected some delay in development. But when the twins were around 18 months, Garrou and her then-husband became concerned about Thomas. "He didn't interact with us in the way James did, and he'd spin around in circles over and over again," she says.

The couple suspected autism, and ultimately their fears were confirmed. "My immediate reaction was to fix the problem," she says. Unfortunately, this problem wasn't something that could be fixed.

Autism is a brain development syndrome that sets in before 3 years of age. Its key characteristics are difficulty communicating verbally and nonverbally, problems with social interaction and certain behavior patterns (see box at right). "These symptoms don't develop overnight," says pediatric neurologist Shu-Gang Xu, M.D. "Often the family starts to sense something's not right. The child doesn't play or talk like other kids, or spends hours alone lining up his toys."

Autism ranges in severity. Some children have mainly social problems. (One example is Asperger syndrome, a type of autism in which language develops in a normal timeframe.) Others have more serious cases including evidence of mental retardation. "We have no clue as to why this variation occurs," says developmental pediatrician Karen Senft, M.D.

Because symptoms are so varied, Garrou didn't realize that her other twin had autism, too. "He was diagnosed at age 3 with a milder form," she says. James isn't at grade level, but "he's a great speller and can read and do math."

Autism transcends all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups, but is four times more common in boys. Research points to multiple genetic factors, with possible environmental triggers. A few years ago, the question arose of a link between autism and childhood vaccinations containing mercury. The mercury was removed, yet the rate of autism continues to rise—statistics range from 1 in 1,000 to 1 in 166 children. "Public health professionals today are not averse to the idea that we need to know more about any risk factors for autism," says Garrou.

How to Recognize Autism

An autistic child may...
- Laugh or giggle inappropriately
- Have trouble expressing needs
- Have unusual or repetitive patterns of play, such as spinning
- Avoid eye contact
- Be uninterested in cuddling
- Prefer to be alone and have problems interacting with others
- Insist on sameness in surroundings and routine

If you notice some of these signs in your child (usually by age 3), talk to your pediatrician or family doctor immediately. Early care makes a big difference.

All the specialists in this article are with Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network.
awareness has a lot to do with the increase in diagnoses," Xu says. "Developmental screening is becoming routine."

"One thing we know for sure, parenting skills do not in any way cause autism," says child-adolescent psychiatrist Dhanalakshmi Ramasamy, M.D.

Parents typically bring their suspicions of autism to the doctor when the child is about 18 months old, says pediatrician Mary Stahl Levick, M.D. "We ask simple screening questions like, 'Does the child make eye contact?,'" she says. The pediatrician may refer the family to a neurologist, developmental pediatrician or other resource. "Diagnosis is based heavily on observing the child and listening to what the parents have to say about his or her development," Xu says.

"While no pill or therapy can cure autism, there is hope for helping these children reach their full potential," says adolescent psychiatrist John Campion, M.D. "The key is getting an early diagnosis so treatment can begin as soon as possible."

To treat autism, specialists use a range of approaches including speech, occupational and behavioral therapy to help the child learn to communicate, play and interact with others.

Clearly, this disorder presents challenges for the entire family—from coping with the autistic child's behavior to impact on siblings, child care options and choices of schooling. "Seek support," Senft counsels families. Whether that's respite care, assistance from the extended family or a support group, "it's important to take help when you can get it."

"You have to redefine your dreams for your child," Sheri Garrou says. "Even though my sons will never be cured, they are slowly getting better."

Want to Know More about symptoms of autism, local resources and recommended readings? Call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.

**What Two Doctors Learned From Their Patients**

The life lessons they share could inspire you, too

Have you ever failed to truly listen to someone? Felt certain you already knew all you needed to about a subject and didn’t need to pay attention? If so, chances are it wasn’t a life-or-death matter.

Failure to truly listen may have the potential to harm a patient, say neurologists and authors John Castaldo, M.D., and Lawrence Levitt, M.D. It almost happened to Castaldo in the case of a patient with an unusual tattoo. That's when he reinforced an important life lesson: that a medical education should be a springboard for careful listening and lifelong learning—including learning from patients.

In their new book, *The Man With the Iron Tattoo and Other True Tales of Uncommon Wisdom*, Castaldo and Levitt share 13 patients' inspiring stories and the insights they took away from these encounters.

"John and I used to keep a logbook of lessons we learned from our patients' circumstances," says Levitt, who was Lehigh Valley Hospital's first neurologist and now teaches there. "Initially, they were medical lessons. But over the years, the lessons became more philosophical—such as how to be a better person."

Here's a sampling of the stories in the book:

**Australian Blue Healer**—Could a dog really detect the onset of a stroke in his owner? Castaldo's patient clearly has had a stroke, but it's not clear exactly when—and clot-busting drugs only work within a three-hour window. Is it too late to administer the drug? Castaldo has to base his decision partly on reports of the frenzied behavior of the patient's dog, Blue. It's a big lesson in how to add up clues and trust one's instincts.

**Encountering Leonard**—As a first-year resident, Levitt invites the husband of a patient home for a warm meal. When he's summoned to the hospital president's office (usually a bad sign), he wonders if he crossed an unwritten line and risks losing his job. In the end, he learns that reaching out to families who may be anxious or lonely is an important part of medicine.

"I was profoundly moved to tell these stories, including one about my son, David, who was in a coma for 10 days after a tragic car accident," says Castaldo, who heads the hospital's neurology division. "Now, when I speak words of comfort to my patients' families, it is from the heart as well as the head."

Want to Know More? You can find *The Man With the Iron Tattoo* (published by BenBella Books) at area and online bookstores. For information on the neurosciences program at Lehigh Valley Hospital, call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.
Preparing for a Hospital Visit

Lay the right groundwork beforehand

Getting the news that you need hospital care can be overwhelming. What hospital should you choose? What do you need to know? What should you bring with you?

“It’s important to answer these questions so you can concentrate on the most important thing—getting better,” says Lehigh Valley Hospital emergency nurse Mary Jo Moerkirk, R.N. Here’s what to do:

Choose the right hospital

The perfect time to choose a hospital is when you don’t need one. Then you’re prepared for whatever emergency, elective surgery or chronic health condition you may someday face. For example, if you need heart surgery, it’s important to know that the hospital performs enough of these procedures, gets good results and has skilled, board-certified surgeons.

Then make sure your doctor (and specialists) work at your hospital of choice. “Doctors are affiliated with different hospitals, so it’s important to ask,” says Moerkirk’s colleague, family medicine physician Lou Lukas, M.D.

These two online guides can help:


Magnet—It’s the national designation of hospitals with excellent nursing care. Find a full list of Magnet hospitals at www.nursingworld.org/ancc.

Know the ins and outs of your health insurance

If you’re not sure whether your insurance covers a given surgery or whether you pay for part of your emergency visit, call your insurance provider (the number should be on the card). Don’t assume your plan is identical to a friend’s with the same insurer but a different employer—insurers negotiate a variety of policies. If you don’t have insurance coverage, contact the hospital to see what financial help is available.

Keep the right people informed

Your family doctor or internist—If your doctor isn’t “in the loop” about your hospital stay—for example, you’re referred directly by a specialist, or you go to the emergency room—make sure he or she is informed. (After hours, leave a message with the answering service.) “Your doctor can then share relevant information and follow up on your condition,” Moerkirk says.

Family and friends—Bring someone with you to the hospital to help ask questions and remember caregivers’ directions and advice—after all, you probably won’t be feeling your best. And you’ll need to let your caregivers know whom to inform about your condition. New privacy laws make this your responsibility.

Bring the right things

If you’re staying overnight, pack personal care items (toothbrush, short robe, etc.), notepad and pen, and small comforts like a favorite blanket or family photo.

Don’t bring valuables like jewelry (remove rings, as your fingers may swell) and cash.

For any hospital treatment or doctor visit, bring a complete list of your allergies and all the medications you’re taking, with dosages. If you have an extensive medical history, include diagnoses, hospitalizations, surgeries and past physicians on your list.

Want to Know More about how Lehigh Valley Hospital helps families unable to pay their hospital bills? Call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.
Learn About

Our Pledge to You

at our 2006 Community Meeting

Wednesday, December 6
5 p.m. (Doors open at 4:15 p.m.)
Agricultural Hall at the Allentown Fairgrounds

She saved a local man's life—Judy Post, R.N., diagnosed James Zimmerman's abdominal aortic aneurysm in the emergency department. Her
Our pledge to you

We pledge to:

Provide health care **services you need close to home**, so you don’t have to travel outside the area.

Help you stay healthy through educational programs, free screenings and community partnerships.

Give care to those who need it, even if you can’t afford it, with financial counselors who can offer free or reduced-cost care.

Give you information about our performance and how it benefits our community.

Is to create the kind of hospital that you would create for yourself.

She makes sure all “her children” receive care—To Mary Ellen Griffin, all 400 children at The Caring Place Youth Development Center (including Justin, right) are “her children.” Through a partnership with Lehigh Valley Hospital, The Caring Place offers free health care to the center’s children, families and center-city Allentown residents.
He's back from a heart attack—Larry Sherman, 65, of Kempton (shown here with grandsons Nathan and Michael), was walking two miles a day just two weeks after undergoing triple-bypass surgery. Read his full story in the November/December Healthy You.

Our pledge to you
We'll be here to care for you, your children and grandchildren for generations to come.

Attend our 2006 Community Meeting, Wednesday, December 6 at Agricultural Hall, Allentown Fairgrounds

You will hear firsthand:
- Highlights of 2006 from Elliot J. Sussman, M.D., president and CEO, and Jefferson K. Aiken Jr., D.Min. chair, Board of Trustees
- Inspiring stories from people who overcame health challenges
- Information about how we provide culturally sensitive care
- Details about how we give back to our community
- Research and education programs that make your care better
- The latest on our expansion at Lehigh Valley Hospital—Cedar Crest
- Details on how our Board of Trustees helps us make the best use of our resources

See the back panel to learn more about the Community Meeting.
Save the Date!

Wednesday, December 6
Agricultural Hall at
the Allentown Fairgrounds
FREE admission

Free parking and shuttle transportation from parking lots. The meeting starts at 5 p.m.; doors open at 4:15 p.m. Seating is first come, first-served; refreshments after meeting.

Please R.S.V.P. by Nov. 22
Call 610-402-CARE

The Lehigh Valley Hospital Community Meeting Is in Your Neighborhood

If you can't attend, you can still see and hear the proceedings on DVD. Get yours by calling 610-402-CARE.
Coping With Cystic Fibrosis

For children with this chronic disease, staying healthy is a constant challenge

If your child catches a cold, you know she'll probably be healthy in a week or so. If 4-year-old Bree catches a cold, it can be life-threatening. Bree has cystic fibrosis (CF). "It's a constant balancing act, shielding her from infection and letting her enjoy childhood," says Bree's mother, Liza Gould.

Bree needs to take 30 tightly scheduled medications a day—enzymes to aid digestion, vitamins to boost nutrition, and drugs for sinus and lung problems. Twice a day she has a therapy vest treatment to vibrate her chest and loosen mucus so she can cough it out. Twice a day she inhales antibiotics, and at night she gets extra nourishment through a feeding tube.

Despite all this, Bree is a happy little girl, her mother says. "She loves swimming, fishing and playing in the park with other children, although she needs to avoid contact with people who are sick. She understands that she has CF, but together we try each day to make sure her whole life is not consumed by this illness."

Cystic fibrosis is a genetic disease in which the defective gene—inherited from both parents—affects the regulation of fluids and mucus in the lungs and digestive organs. The mucus becomes thick, trapping bacteria in the lungs and blocking the action of digestive enzymes. Like Bree, some 85 percent of children with CF need enzyme medication to help them absorb nutrients from their food.

"This is a complex illness with more than 1,000 genetic variations," says Robert Miller, M.D., pediatric pulmonologist at Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. "Its effects can vary from severe to mild. Some children struggle constantly against infection, while others live moderately healthy lives. Many children with CF are able to attend public school and even take part in sports and other activities."

Though there is no cure for CF, researchers have made progress understanding and detecting the disease.

Of the two main tests that help in diagnosis, Miller says, the gold standard is the sweat chloride test measuring the amount of salt in the child's perspiration. "Many children with CF," he says, "are identified at a very young age through supplemental newborn screening tests. This early identification means we can begin treatment before problems become more severe."

Researchers have been working to develop new therapies to manage CF symptoms. In the past 10 years, the median life expectancy of CF survivors in the United States has risen from late teens to 36.8 years. "Our goal," Miller says, "is to help the child and family lead as healthy a life as possible."

Want to Know More about the expanding cystic fibrosis program at Lehigh Valley Hospital's Pediatric Specialty Care Center? Call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.

We try to keep his life as normal as possible—Joshua, 7, spent months in the hospital last year with CF. But he's back in school and playing in the Miracle Baseball/Softball League for children with health conditions. In large photo he's snuggling with his foster mother, Sandra Donches (left), and caregiver Deanna Buchman, R.N., of Lehigh Valley Hospital. Read about this remarkable Allentown family and about the Miracle League at www.lvh.org/healthyyou.

'She's a happy little girl'—With twice-daily therapy vest treatments (she's wearing the vest above) and TLC from her mom, Liza Gould, 4-year-old Bree lives a full life despite her cystic fibrosis.
Recovering From Cardiac Surgery

It doesn't take as long as it used to

Two days after Larry Sherman began having chest pain, he underwent triple-bypass surgery at Lehigh Valley Hospital. The very next day he was walking, and three days later he went home. Within two weeks, Sherman was healthy enough to walk two miles. "I never thought I'd be up and around so quickly," the 65-year-old Kempton man says.

There are many reasons why heart surgery patients today can recover so fast, says Sherman's surgeon, Theodore Phillips, M.D. Bypass patients like Sherman benefit from the growing skills of the surgical team. "More than half a million heart surgeries are performed in the United States every year," Phillips says. "With more experience and better technology, we're simply getting better at what we do."

That means patients are under anesthesia and on the heart-lung machine for shorter periods. The incision left the hospital, and within two weeks he was logging two miles.

A little farther every day—Larry Sherman was up and walking before he left the hospital, and within two weeks he was logging two miles.

bypass the non-working heart artery has shrunk from 20 to 3 inches. "Smaller incisions are less painful and prone to infection, and they take far less time to heal," Phillips says.

At Lehigh Valley Hospital (whose heart bypass results have been the best in Pennsylvania for three consecutive years), most bypass patients are home in four days.

The newest approach to correcting heart-related problems is "minimal" surgery—and patients eligible for this kind of procedure often go home even more quickly. Surgeons correct problems like irregular heartbeat using instruments inserted through very small incisions, and there's no need for a heart-lung machine.

Another factor in getting heart patients up and about is education. "When patients know exactly what's going to happen and what milestones they need to accomplish, they work to attain them," Phillips says.

Go to a cardiac rehabilitation center and you'll see that take-charge attitude. "Years ago, patients would lie in bed for days," says cardiac rehab nurse Michele Saladyga, R.N. "Many would lose their strength or develop breathing or circulation problems because they weren't moving around." Before today's patients even leave the hospital, they're doing arm, leg and breathing exercises and walking six times a day.

After discharge from the hospital, they come to an outpatient rehab center three times a week. "They begin doing 25 minutes of continuous exercise, and in six weeks most of them advance to 45 minutes," says Darlene Garon, clinical exercise physiologist. Staff members watch patients' vital signs as they use a treadmill, stationary bike, rowing machine, stair climber or dumbbells. "Because we're monitoring them, we can push them to work harder," Phillips says. "When they're exercising at home on their own, they only need to do a little more each day."

That's what Sherman is doing. Every day he walks and bikes a little farther—and though he cautions other recovering heart patients not to overdo it, he reports he's feeling great. •

Strength matters, too—Rehab patients like Sherman rebuild their strength with help from staff members like exercise physiologist Truie Benninger.
'Mom's Role Has Changed'

After a heart disease diagnosis, women can't carry the same load as before

Christine Wexler always put her two children and husband first. Then suddenly, the Allentown woman found herself struggling after having heart surgery. "I wanted to be a wife and mother again, but I just couldn't," she says. "I was fatigued and depressed. My family expected me to bounce back."

Wexler isn't alone. Many women and their families struggle with changing roles after a diagnosis of heart problems. "People aren't aware that heart disease is harder on women than men," says cardiologist Deborah Sundlof, D.O., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. "They are more likely to have a second heart attack or develop congestive heart failure. And while all heart disease patients are at increased risk for anxiety and depression, the risk is higher for women."

When Mom has no energy, who fills her shoes?

"There isn't a natural person, and families don't know how to resolve it," says Sundlof's colleague, psychiatrist Edward Norris, M.D. The solution can't just be left to Mom, he urges. "Families should be there when the doctor explains her limitations and needs, and find ways to help."

One good strategy is to learn from other women and families—including the examples here.

Christine Wexler, 56, Allentown

Successes: She found strength in a local branch of the national WomenHeart support group. "I understand how they feel, and they understand me."

Struggles: Wexler still tends to put her family first, but knows now that she has to be honest. "My husband asked if he should stay home after my surgery. I told him 'no,' I meant 'yes.'"

Irene Dvorscak, 69, Allentown

Successes: She founded the local WomenHeart support group to connect with other women. "I've committed to things like getting together with friends and taking a day to enjoy shopping."

Struggles: She accompanies her husband to his doctor appointments but still attends her own alone. "Family members have to make a commitment to themselves and not rely on Mom to solve problems."

Joyce Dietrich, 64, Lenhartsville

Successes: She closed her large fruit and vegetable operation in favor of a small garden, and scaled back Christmas Eve dinner to pizza and soup. Since retiring from her job, she takes naps. "I tell my family, 'Doctor's orders.'"

Struggles: She can't let go of housework, hosting dinners and stocking the family refrigerator. "I try to find energy, but they don't know how tired I am."

Marie von Funk, 54, Kutztown

Successes: She took her daughter to the WomenHeart support group so she'd better understand her mother's condition. "I don't apologize for asking for help. I have to take care of myself so I can take care of my family."

Struggles: "I still let stress get to me, and that causes angina (chest pain)." Her goal: meditate 20 minutes a day and learn yoga. "I try to take walks, too, but I don't like exercise."

Want to Know More? For a WomenHeart brochure and bookmark, call 610-402-CARE.

Women's Heart Attack Signs

Even if you think you know the symptoms of a heart attack, you probably don't know that...

- Many women describe what they feel in their chest as "discomfort" rather than sharp pain.
- Women's chest discomfort or pain can result from emotional stress or occur at night.
- Gastrointestinal upset (such as nausea) may be a symptom of a woman's heart attack.

Sometimes women delay seeking treatment for hours, days or weeks. Listen to your body, and if you have symptoms, call 9-1-1 immediately!

Want to Know More about heart attack symptoms that are more likely in women than men? Call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.

610-402-CARE (2273) • www.lvh.org • Healthy You 17
How many times a day do you start your car? With gasoline hovering between $2 and $3 a gallon, daily trips to work or shopping can really strain your budget. There are many ways to lower your gasoline bill, says family medicine physician Aaron Katz, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network—and happily, “these alternatives will save you money and improve your health.”

Take the shoe leather express

Ditch your car keys and lace up your walking shoes. “Walking is the easiest form of exercise and doesn’t take more than a decent pair of sneakers and some time,” Katz says. Like any form of exercise, it improves cholesterol, lowers blood pressure, reduces stress, boosts metabolism, burns calories and makes you feel better.

“Wear shoes with the right fit, good cushioning and arch support,” Katz says. If you’re a beginner, start off gradually. “You don’t have to get out of breath to positively impact your health.”

Two wheels are better than four

Sharon Merkel lives in Barto and works in downtown Allentown, a 36-mile round trip. But her commute doesn’t cost a cent. “I’ve been riding my bicycle to work since 1982,” says the 48-year-old. “I get a morning workout and save money and time because I don’t have to exercise when I get home.”

Because Merkel was overweight in her youth and has a family history of diabetes, her doctor stresses staying fit. Biking makes her feel great physically and mentally. “When I get to work, I know I’ve already accomplished something good,” she says. “And after a stressful day, biking is a great way to unwind.”

Everyone in the car (or bus) pool

If you live near a co-worker, share the ride. A recent government study found that two colleagues sharing a 20-mile round-trip commute for one year save 500 gallons of gasoline. That’s more than $1,200 at today’s prices.

Carpooling also protects the environment and improves your respiratory health. “Car emissions affect the breathing of people with asthma and emphysema, especially during the summer heat,” Katz says. (Have your car inspected regularly by a mechanic for cleaner emissions and better gas mileage.)

Using public transportation has the same effect as carpooling on your pocketbook and Mother Nature. An all-day LANTA Metro bus pass is just $2, and a monthly pass just $35. You can even take your bike on the bus—all LANTA buses have bike racks.

She uses Community Exchange—Pamela Mineard (left) swaps her clerical skills for free rides from Georgette Sandt of Bethlehem.

Swap your skills for a free ride

Pamela Mineard of Allentown may have the most unique way to save money on gas. She belongs to Community Exchange, a program that connects people who have skills to share. “I get free rides to the Dr. Dean Ornish program at Lehigh Valley Hospital,” says Mineard, 41. “In return, I do clerical work for Community Exchange.” She’s trimming expenses and has lost 65 pounds on Ornish. “It’s a win-win situation, and I love it,” she says.

Want to Know More about walking for good health or choosing the right bike? Call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.
When Others Pressure You to Eat

Don't feel bad about resisting. All it takes is practice

"Have some pumpkin pie, dear. I made it just the way you like it."

Pressures to eat come at us from all directions. But during the holidays, when the source is a well-meaning relative or friend, they can be harder to resist.

One issue is the "ancient tradition of hospitality," says family medicine physician Will Miller, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. "It's about being able to offer something of value from the home as a sign of welcome and inclusion. As the guest or recipient, your side of the unspoken hospitality contract is to accept the offering with signs of pleasure."

If you're trying to watch your diet, it can be a challenge to balance gratitude, tact and restraint.

Another pitfall to healthy eating is people who try to undermine your commitment to your diet, says support group facilitator Jane Banach of the hospital's Weight Management Center. "They may secretly feel resentful and angry at themselves because you're getting a grip on your weight and they aren't. This may not be happening at a conscious level, but misery does love company."

If you feel your friends simply don't understand what you're trying to accomplish, sit them down and explain matter-of-factly: "These are my goals and why it's important. Here are some ways you could support me..."

The holiday season provides a great opportunity to learn a new set of social skills, focusing on goal-setting, affirmations and being assertive. If you're tempted to cave in because it's easier to eat than speak up, the solution is practice. Before each social event, Banach says, consider the possible scenarios you'll encounter and practice your responses. For example:

Host: "I only make baklava once a year... have some just this time?"
You: "I look forward to your baklava all year long. This year, I'll have to savor my memories of it."
Host: "We used to have such a good time eating together."
You: "We can still have a good time together—you were always more important to me than the food."

Finally, Banach stresses the value of learning to say "No, thanks" firmly, without apologies. If you sound uncertain, your host will be more tempted to push.

Want to Know More about dealing with other kinds of pressures to eat? Call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvhh.org/healthyyou.
Acid reflux can sometimes lead to cancer if left untreated

Most of us know what heartburn feels like—that searing sensation from breastbone to throat, sometimes with an acid taste. “Heartburn occurs when stomach contents back up into the esophagus after you’ve eaten,” says gastroenterologist Carl D’Angelo, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network.

Some 30 million people have heartburn at least twice a week, a chronic condition known as gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). Along with the burn, D’Angelo says, they may have less-common symptoms like non-cardiac chest pain, asthma or recurrent sinus or ear infections.

GERD can be traced to a malfunction in the valve separating the esophagus and stomach. When it’s working well, this valve prevents acids from flushing up into the esophagus and causing that burning feeling in the back of your throat.

GERD isn’t just a nuisance. Left untreated, it can become chronic and severe—and that may raise the risk for a condition called Barrett’s esophagus, which can progress to a type of esophageal cancer (adenocarcinoma). If you think you have GERD, see your doctor. Treatment usually includes diet changes and/or medication.

If you have long-standing GERD, your doctor can use an endoscope (a device that allows the doctor to view inside the gastrointestinal tract) to test for Barrett’s esophagus. “People with Barrett’s are closely monitored, so we can detect cancerous changes quickly,” D’Angelo says. They’re also encouraged to make lifestyle changes to reduce their cancer risk.

While the incidence of many cancers is declining, adenocarcinomas have been on the rise over the past 10-20 years, says D’Angelo’s colleague, radiation oncologist Clinton Leinweber, D.O. “To reduce your risk, see your doctor immediately if you have trouble or pain swallowing, poor appetite or unexplained weight loss,” he says. “It’s easy to attribute these symptoms to other things, but you should take them seriously.” •

One Man’s Triumph Over Esophageal Cancer

Donald Winterhalt of Emmaus had so much trouble swallowing that he lost 30 pounds last year. “I thought it was indigestion or acid reflux,” says the 68-year-old. But his doctor was concerned enough to send him to a gastroenterologist, who found a cancerous growth in his esophagus.

A team of cancer specialists at Lehigh Valley Hospital planned Winterhalt’s care, mapping an aggressive, three-month treatment that included chemotherapy, radiation therapy and surgery. “Early detection and aggressive therapy give esophageal cancer patients the best hope long-term,” says cardiothoracic surgeon Michael Szwarc, M.D.

After the chemotherapy and radiation, Szwarc and a colleague surgically removed the tumor, then rebuilt Winterhalt’s esophagus using part of his stomach. It was major surgery, yet Winterhalt was able to leave the hospital in a week and was soon eating regular food. He is enjoying his woodcarving hobby once again.
Newly Solo
After the loss of a partner, reaching out is key

When you lose a partner of many years to death or divorce, you may feel your life is over. Believe it or not, you can and will survive. You can and will be happy again.

You’re certainly not alone—by the latest census, 5.9 million men and 14 million women age 55 to 84 are single. While the odds of finding a new mate aren’t as good for women as for men, marriage is not the only key to happiness.

“Of course it will take time to recover from your loss, and life won’t be the same,” says outpatient mental health nurse Gayle Levas, R.N., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. “But many find that their new single status brings exciting new opportunities.”

Your attitude about being single makes all the difference in your well-being, Levas says. “Find out what makes you happy and do it. Everyone needs a purpose in life, a reason to get up.” Some newly single men and women find satisfaction and make connections by revving up their careers. Others discover or renew an interest in sports or the arts, for a sense of accomplishment and self-discovery as well as new friends.

“Singleness needn’t equate to loneliness,” says Levas’ colleague, geriatrician Brooks Betts, D.O. “Look in the newspaper and you’ll see all kinds of opportunities—classes, church groups, excursions. You just have to get out there.” If your mobility is limited, look to your computer. Online support groups, interest groups or links to old classmates can lead to new and wonderful relationships.

There’s good reason to reach out, Betts says: Social isolation can be deadly.

Researchers have found that lonely people have higher blood pressure, and the effect increases with age. That may account for higher rates of stroke and heart disease among singles.

Singlehood can be especially challenging for older men, whose social networks typically aren’t as strong as women’s. “Some men are quite lost,” Betts says, “and may seek out new partners prematurely, before they’ve had time to learn to cope on their own.”

If you or someone you care about is newly single, here are some helpful strategies:

Set goals in terms of how you want to spend your time, what you’d like to learn, where you want to travel, etc.

Volunteer in a setting where you can share your skills or develop new ones. Many agencies offer training.

Consider new forms of companionship. A pet is a great antidote to loneliness and a boon to health. And there’s probably a child in your life who’d love to get to know you better.

Exercise with others. Find a walking companion or sign up at a gym; it’s good for your heart in every way.

Put the best spin on things. Lose the self-pity and find ways to be grateful. If you just can’t shake those low feelings, consider seeing a therapist or joining a support group. Remember that time will help.

A fresh start—Martha Forss, 54, of Allentown (left) makes new friends and helps others as a Habitat for Humanity volunteer. Below, Brian Misanko, 64, of Allentown gains strength from his friends, family and colleagues at Cedar Crest College, and Roberta Rizzotto, 53, of Whitehall de-stresses and stays trim by using the gym at Air Products. For more on how these and other local people adjusted to being single, call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvh.org/healthyyou.
If your arms aren't long enough to read the fine print anymore (a condition of aging eyes called presbyopia), there's good news. You're not limited to those "lined" bifocals your parents wore to see up close. "Bifocals come in all styles now—including progressive lenses, special coatings and bifocal contacts," says Allentown optometrist Bruce Hillman, O.D. "Your choice depends on your occupation and needs. Focus on proper fit and high quality."

**Progressive lenses** (no-line bifocals/multifocals) offer a smooth transition from distance to near vision without lines. Progressives start at about $190 and can be customized—for instance, with intermediate vision for computer work—or fitted into today’s fashionable smaller frames.

You'll probably adjust quickly to progressives, but some people have continuing distortion. "Most manufacturers offer a trial period during which lenses can be adjusted or exchanged for lined bifocals or single-vision reading glasses," Hillman says.

Lens coatings and tints enhance eyeglass performance, but each adds another $20-$80 to the total price. "Check your insurance coverage and choose based on your needs," Hillman says.

**Scratch-resistant coatings** significantly reduce scratches and often come built into plastic lenses, including traditional plastic, polycarbonate (shatter-resistant), and high-index (lighter, thinner lenses for stronger prescriptions). Double-check to be sure.

**Ultraviolet coatings** (they’re invisible) block the sun’s harmful UV rays, which contribute to cataracts and macular degeneration.

**Anti-reflective coatings** have metal oxide layers similar to camera lenses. They cut glare, particularly at night, but may smudge easily.

**Photochromic or transitional lenses** automatically adjust from clear to dark, depending on light conditions. Most people opt for separate sunglasses (including progressives) or clip-ons. But photochromic lenses make sense if you have blue or gray eyes (which are more light-sensitive) or go in and out of doors frequently.

**Permanent color tints** also protect light eyes and cut glare, if you like this look.

If you prefer contact lenses to glasses, again you have plenty of options. Bifocal or multifocal contacts come in soft and gas-permeable styles and work like progressive eyeglasses. But they may be too weak for people with high near-vision needs, and some users notice distortion. A year’s supply of lenses costs $200-$260.

Your other choice is monovision contacts, in which the dominant eye is corrected for distance vision and the other eye for near vision. Your brain compensates for the difference, but some people never adjust. A year’s supply averages about $160. Ask for a trial period for both bifocal and monovision contacts.

So many choices!—Mark and Mary Ann Yenser of North Catasauqua try on eyeglass frames at For Eyes in Allentown.
Alcohol and Aging

Drink responsibly—alcohol can cause serious problems in older adults

For many older adults, the post-golf beer or pre-dinner cocktail is an established routine. But as your body ages, even one or two drinks can put you at serious risk for a variety of health problems.

“Your body has proportionately more fat and less water as you age,” says geriatrician Francis Salerno, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. “Alcohol dissolves in water but is retained in fat, so older adults have a higher concentration of it. They get intoxicated more easily and are more likely to suffer from hangover, high blood pressure, stomach ulcers, liver problems and other alcohol-related disorders.”

Alcohol also can interact with prescription and over-the-counter medications, causing potentially serious interactions and changing the drugs’ effectiveness.

“Alcohol is often overlooked as a contributing factor in health problems because it’s a well-accepted drug in our society,” Salerno says. “Studies have shown that it plays a role in about half of all hospital admissions. Many so-called natural effects of aging—falls, confusion, depression, accidents, poor eating and sleeping, gastritis—may actually be alcohol-related.”

People drink for many reasons, says Salerno’s colleague, psychiatrist Laurence Karper, M.D. For some, it’s part of a lifestyle based on social networks, and more leisure time post-retirement means more social time. Others drink to soothe feelings of loneliness or depression, especially if they’ve recently lost a spouse.

Whether you’ve been a drinker for years or started later in life, the harmful effects are the same.

You’re at greater risk to develop alcohol-related problems if you’re a woman. Due to differences in metabolism and body fat, women can grow dependent on alcohol (and suffer the health consequences) from smaller amounts and shorter periods of drinking. For example, as little as one-half drink a day raises a woman’s risk for breast and colon cancer.

“Alcohol becomes a problem when it impacts your life in a negative way,” Karper says—for example, if you drive while alcohol-impaired, embarrass yourself socially or must have a drink to relax or steady your nerves. “It’s not how much you drink,” he says. “For many older people, one drink is too much.”

For those who use alcohol to ease loneliness, Karper and Salerno advise staying connected to friends, family and networks like senior centers and church groups.

For all alcohol users, they urge being honest with your doctor about your consumption, especially if you’re on medications.

If you do drink, limit yourself to one per day. That means 1 ounce of hard liquor, 4 ounces of wine or 8 ounces of beer, Salerno says. “Alcohol in moderation may help prevent certain disorders, like heart disease, but don’t start drinking for that reason. If you drink too much, you may actually bring on heart disease—and a host of other problems.”

Want to Know More? For a guide to aging, medicines and alcohol; tips on recognizing an alcohol problem; information on depression in the elderly; or recipes for nonalcoholic party drinks, call 610-402-CARE or visit www.lvhs.org/healthyyou.

Comparing Alcohol’s Effects

Five decades make a big difference in how your body processes alcohol. The 70-year-old at right weighs the same as the 21-year-old, but a drink affects her differently because of:

- **Digestion**—It slows down with age, delaying alcohol’s action.
- **Body composition**—Older bodies have proportionately more fatty tissue, which retains alcohol longer.
- **Liver function**—As it shrinks with age, the liver takes longer to break down alcohol and higher concentrations remain in the body.
- **Kidney function**—This organ also gets smaller and less able to flush alcohol out of the body.
- **Sensory and memory loss**—These changes affect an older person’s ability to cope with the effects of alcohol.
- **Reaction time**—Slower reactions put older drinkers at greater risk for falls and driving accidents.
Registration is a must! Healthy You class space is limited! If you want to attend a program you should register in advance at 610-402-CARE or www.lvh.org. We may need to cancel a program or class if not enough people enroll. You'll get a full refund.

Eating Healthy

Eat Well for Life
Learn healthy food choices to improve your well-being and help you manage your weight long-term. Includes grocery store tour.
4 sessions • $60
For details, including possible insurance discounts, call 610-402-CARE.

Culture of Wellness Nutrition Services
Food Diary Analysis
Submit a 3-day food diary and get a detailed breakdown of your nutrition intake. • $22.50

Recipe Makeover
A nutrition overhaul of your favorite recipe: trim fat, salt, sugar, calories. • $15

Metabolism Measurement
A breath test shows your calorie-burning rate, and a dietitian interprets the results. • $45

Nutrition Assessment/Counseling
Meet 1-on-1 with a registered dietitian. For fee details, call 610-402-CARE.

FitKidz
Six weeks of nutrition and fitness for 9-13-year-olds and their parents. Healthy eating, fun exercises and more.
For details, call 610-402-CARE.

Support for Your Diet
Use the Balance Log program to monitor your diet, and get tips, tracking and support from a registered dietitian: $50/CD-ROM, $45/1 month-4 consultations
For details, call 610-402-CARE.

Managing Your Weight

The NEW You
Medical Weight-Loss Program—6-month individualized programs, physician supervised.

Nutrition Counseling—Individual assessment and recommendations, $50

Exercise Evaluation—Individual assessment and recommendations.

Weight-Loss Surgery Information Night—Meet a surgeon and members of the Weight Management Center team for pre- and post-operative information.

Weight-Loss Surgery Program—Comprehensive 6-month pre-operative program with long-term follow-up.

Weight-Loss Surgery Pre-Op Education Class—Learn what to expect pre- and post-surgery, including diet and lifestyle changes. $10

Bounce Back to a NEW You—Get back on track to your weight-loss goals. 4 classes/4 weeks, 5 months follow-up. $130

Weight-Loss Surgery Support Group—Educational information and chance to share personal experiences. FREE
For details, location and registration, call 610-402-CARE.
See related article on page 19.

Staying Fit

NEW Rhythms™
This new program combines live drumming and dance for an uplifting workout. Find community, creativity and wellness in group music-making!
Preview • $10
• Sat., Dec. 2 at 1:2 p.m.
At Healthy You Center
Tobyn, dance instructor
See related article on page 7.
Learn basic stroke and rhythm patterns of the frame drum, one of the oldest instruments.

**NEW Intro to Rhythms—Frame Drum Class**

Discover the joys, healing and mystical aspects of the frame drum, one of the oldest instruments. Learn basic stroke and rhythm patterns.

**One-day Workshop**

- $30
- Fri., Jan. 17; 10 a.m.

At Healthy You Center
Tokyo, dance instructor

**Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction**

Learn to reduce stress using group support, improved communication skills and deep relaxation through yoga and meditation. This nationally recognized program has a 25-year history.

**Free introductory session**

- Tue., Jan. 17; 6-7:30 p.m.

At LVH—Cedar Crest, Center for Healthy Aging

**Tuesday Group—Improve your coping skills and well-being.**

- Tue., Jan. 17; 6-7:30 p.m.

**Ongoing Fitness Classes**

**Cardio Fit**—Recreational water fitness class to build cardiovascular endurance. Appropriate for post-cardiac recovery.

- 12 classes/6 weeks • $65
- $50 with Vitality Plus GOLD

At Rodale Aquatic Center, Cedar Crest College

**Get on the Ball**—Using an inflated exercise ball, enhance your balance, endurance. Appropriate for post-cardiac rehabilitation.

- 8 weeks • $56
  - Sat., starting Dec. 9, 10:15-11 a.m. (A)
  - Tue., starting Jan. 2, noon-1 p.m. (A)
  - Fri., starting Jan. 23, noon-1 p.m. (A)

**Belly Dancing for Fun and Fitness**—Belly dancing stimulates senses, tones muscles, builds coordination, boosts creativity. 

- 8 classes • $56

**Pump**—A group workout with light weights, producing visible results.

- 8 classes • $64
  - Wed., starting Nov. 26, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (A)
  - Sat., starting Dec. 9, 7:45-8:45 a.m. or 9-10 a.m. (A)

**Pilates Express**—Deep muscle conditioning builds core strength, great for beginners.

- 8 classes • $48
  - Wed., starting Dec. 6, 5:15-6 p.m. (A)
  - Tue., starting Dec. 12, 11-11:45 a.m. or 5-5:45 p.m. (A)

**Staying Strong**—A program designed to build muscle tone, slow bone loss and ease arthritis.

- 24 classes/8 weeks • $66
  - Mon., Wed., Fri., starting Nov. 20, 10-11 a.m. (LM)
  - 16 classes/8 weeks • $44
  - Tue. and Thu., starting Dec. 21, 5:45-6:45 p.m. (B)

**Age-Proof Workout**—Low-impact cardio, strength training and yoga—mind/body exercise!

- 16 classes/8 weeks • $90
  - Tue. and Thu., starting Nov. 18, 8:30-9:45 a.m. (A)

**Exercise for Life**—A low-intensity class to prevent disease, build muscle and boost well-being.

- Monthly fee • $30
  - $20 with Vitality Plus GOLD

**Cardio Kickbox**—A high-powered routine strengthening both body and mind.

- 8 classes • $56
  - Mon., starting Dec. 4, 7:30-8:30 p.m. (A)
  - Wed., starting Dec. 6, 7:45-8:45 p.m. (A)

**FlashFit**—Circuit training—a fun, motivating way to boost energy and burn fat.

- 16 classes/8 weeks • $52
  - Mon. and Wed., starting Nov. 13, 8-9:15 a.m. (A)
  - Tue. and Thu., starting Nov. 28, 7-7:45 p.m. (B)
  - Mon. and Thu., starting Dec. 14, 5-5:45 p.m. (A)

**Caring for Mind and Body**

**NEW Dr. Stitches and Dr. Band-Aids**

Learn how these caring clowns bring fun to hospital patients and their families, how you too can volunteer, and how laughter helps keeps you well. **FREE**

- Fri., Nov. 17; 10 a.m.

At LVH—Cedar Crest, Center for Healthy Aging

**Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction**

Learn to reduce stress using group support, improved communication skills and deep relaxation through yoga and meditation. This nationally recognized program has a 25-year history.

**Free introductory session**

- Tue., Jan. 17; 6-7:30 p.m.

At LVH—Cedar Crest, Center for Healthy Aging

**Tuesday Group—Improve your coping skills and well-being.**

- Tue., Jan. 17; 6-7:30 p.m.

**Partner Massage**

Learn how to communicate, des-stress, stretch and enjoy the benefits of massage together.

- Bring two pillows, blanket and water bottles.
  - $65/couple

**Partner Massage I**

- Sat., Nov. 4; 11:45-2:15 p.m.

**Partner Massage III (prerequisite Partner Massage I and II)**

- Sat., Nov. 11 or Dec. 2, 11:45 a.m.-2:15 p.m.

At LVH—Muhlenberg, Banko Center
Scott Pellington, supervising massage therapist

**Wednesday Group**—Relieve symptoms of anxiety, depression, chronic pain, etc.

- Wed., starting Jan. 24; 7-8 p.m.

For fee, details and to schedule an evaluation, call 610-402-CARE.

610-402-CARE (2273) • www.lvh.org • Healthy You
Meditation Workshop
Learn techniques to help you combine stillness with breathing to promote harmony and balance and help you through the holiday season.
$25
• Sat., Dec. 9, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
At Healthy You Center

Discover Relaxation Within
Whatever it is that stresses you, learn to ease the stress through a variety of relaxation techniques.
4 sessions • $50
For details, including possible insurance discounts, call 610-402-CARE.

Looking Good
NEW For a More Youthful You
Learn about advanced mineral makeup, antioxidants and hand/nail care at this mini spa.
Includes prize drawing, discount coupons, free foot massage. FREE
• Tue., Dec. 5, 6:30-8 p.m.
At Charles Chris Community Center of Palmer Twp.
Staff from Youthful You Institute

Healthy Hands and Nails
Your hands deserve TLC. Preview our moisturizing and strengthening education program. FREE
• Sat., Dec. 9; 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
At Healthy You Center

Massage Therapy
Massage improves circulation, relaxes muscles, and soothes mind and body. Options: relaxation; therapeutic; foot; pregnancy; hot and cool stone; neck, back and shoulder; Thai yoga; Reiki energy.
4 sessions • $50
Walk-in hours
• Tue., Dec. 5; 6:30-7:30 p.m.
At LVH—Muhlenberg, south entrance, 1st floor conference room
Laura Transue, licensed cosmetologist, Youthful You Institute

Caring for Mind and Body at HealthSpring
At Health Center at Bethlehem Twp.
Offering yoga, back care and therapeutic treatments.
For details, call 610-402-CARE.

Screenings
LVH—17, Suite 403
Osteoporosis FREE
• First Mon. of each month, 9-11 a.m.
• Third Wed. of each month, 1-4 p.m.
LVH—Muhlenberg
Osteoporosis FREE
• First Tue. of each month, 4-6 p.m.
Beginning Jan. 4, first Thu. of each month, 4-6 p.m.
To schedule an appointment, call 610-402-CARE.

LVH—17, AIDS Activities Office
HIV Testing
Free, anonymous and confidential HIV testing with results in 20 minutes.
Walk-in hours
• Tue., 1-3 p.m.
• Thu., 10-11:30 a.m.

LVH—17, Center for Healthy Aging
Vascular Screenings
Painless testing for vascular disorders in those age 60+ with high cholesterol, high blood pressure or family history of vascular disease.
Stroke • $40
Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm • $40
Peripheral Arterial Disease • $15
• Tue., Dec. 12, 1-3 p.m.

Tai Chi, Qigong, Ener-Chi, Yoga and Yogalatte
Build flexibility and strength, ease stress, rejuvenate energy and rebalance your life with these mind/body practices.
All classes are at Healthy You Center unless otherwise noted.

Qigong—Combine movements and meditations to build and rejuvenate energy, health and balance of body, mind and spirit.
8 weeks • $68
• Mon., starting Nov. 20; 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Ener-Chi—Fusion of tai chi, kung fu, qigong, yoga and meditation
8 classes • $68
• Tue., starting Nov. 21; 8:15-9:15 p.m.
• Wed., starting Nov. 22; 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
• Fri., starting Dec. 1; 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Daily Tai Chi
8 weeks • $68
• Mon., starting Nov. 20; 10-11 a.m.
• Tue., starting Nov. 21; 7-8 p.m.
• Wed., starting Nov. 22; 10-11 a.m.

Relaxing
• Thu., starting Dec. 7; 10:11:15 a.m.
• Mon., starting Jan. 8; 6-7:15 p.m.

Energizing
• Thu., starting Dec. 14; 7:30-8:45 p.m.

Yogalatte
8 classes • $48
• Tue., starting Dec. 12; 6-6:45 p.m.
• Thu., starting Jan. 4; 4:45-5:30 p.m.
At LVH—17, School of Nursing, auditorium

Protecting Your Health
NEW Your Healthy Eye
Vision is precious! Learn how often you need an eye exam and how to choose an eye doctor, protect vision and recognize problems early. FREE
• Thu., Nov. 16; 7-8 p.m.
At LVH—Muhlenberg
Parmeet Vellore, M.D., family medicine physician
See related article on page 22.

Positive Lifestyle Program
Need a jump-start to heart health? This program includes evaluation, exercise, some telemetry monitoring, counseling and education.
• Tue. and Thu.
At LVH—Cedar Crest, lower level
For scheduling and fee information, call 610-402-CARE.
See related article on page 16.
This well-known heart health program includes nutrition, exercise, stress management, group support, education and follow-up.

**Dr. Dean Ornish Program** — 12-week reversal program for those with diagnosed heart disease

**Ornish Advantage** — 6-week prevention program for those with heart disease risk factors

For details, including possible insurance discounts, call 610-402-CARE.

**Tobacco Treatment Program**

This 12-month program of individual counseling and ongoing support (in person or by phone) can help you quit smoking.

For details, call 610-402-CARE. See related article on page 11.

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**NEW**

**Parenting a Child with Autism** (see page 26)

**DaVinci Mark J. Young, M.D., Medical Challenge** (see page 28)

**Family Fitness Day** (see page 28)

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**VIP for Life**

Classes to help you make lifestyle changes to improve your vascular health: \$15 per class

- **Vascular Disease** — What you need to know to reduce your risk.
- **Nutrition for Your Health** — Learn about fats, portions, label reading, heart-healthy foods.
- **Get Going With Exercise!** — How to set goals, equip yourself and fire up a fitness program.
- **De-stress for Success** — Learn how attitude affects life, and how to manage stressors.
- **Control Blood Pressure** — Diet, exercise, stress management, medications.
- **Reduce Your Diabetes and Heart Disease Risk** — Learn the facts on metabolic syndrome, a cluster of symptoms raises risk.
- **Improve Your Cholesterol** — How do LDL, HDL and triglycerides affect your heart?

For details, including possible insurance discounts, call 610-402-CARE.
Ongoing Diabetes Programs - continued

Intro to Insulin Pump Therapy—See and learn about the various pump options to find out if this approach is right for you.

Insulin Pump Training—Hands-on instruction, trouble-shooting for pump users.

Insulin Pump Follow-up—Learn advanced features of the pump.

Intensive Management Education—Learn to fine-tune your diabetes control (injections or pump) and balance insulin needs.

Diabetes in Pregnancy—Education and support, preconception through pregnancy.

Adult Diabetes Support Group FREE
• Third Thu. of each month, 6:30-8 p.m.

Insulin Pump Support Group FREE
• Third Mon., every other month, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

For Cancer Patients and Their Families

Holiday Party
For cancer survivors, their families and all those touched by cancer, celebrate with music, tree-trimming, refreshments and gift basket drawings. FREE
• Thu, Dec. 14, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
At LVH—Cedar Crest, Muhlenberg Cancer Center and LVH—Muhlenberg Cancer Center

Round Our Community

NEW Holiday Celebration
View a display of trees (to be donated to seniors) decorated by Lehigh Valley Hospital employees—voted on by your favorite! Enjoy holiday music and refreshments, enter to win gift basket. FREE
• Fri, Dec. 8, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
At LVH—17, Center for Healthy Aging

NEW Virtual Golf
Use real golf clubs and balls in this lifelike simulation of 26 courses from around the world. Have your swing analyzed. Individual and league.
At Lehigh County Senior Center
For free demonstration information, call 610-402-CARE.

NEW Clutter Busters
Hear how you can remove the clutter in your home and learn to enjoy life more. Join a team to work together on this. FREE
• Mon., Dec. 4, 2:45 p.m.
At LVH—17, Center for Healthy Aging

NEW Family Fitness Day
Learn about fun fitness activities for the New Year, and spin Lehigh Valley Hospital's Feel Good Wheel for Kids—you could win a prize!
• Sat, Jan. 6, 1-4 p.m.
At Hanover Twp. Community Center

Ongoing Cancer Programs and Support Groups

For dates, locations and registration, call 610-402-CARE.

Psychotherapy for Management of Insomnia—Strategies, skills for those with cancer suffering from insomnia.

Preparing for Breast Cancer Surgery—Learn what to expect after surgery and how to better prepare through exercise.

Lehigh Valley Chapter of the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition—Promotes education, awareness and advocacy.

Bereavement Support Group—For family and friends who have experienced a loss through death. Monthly topics vary.

Adolescent Support Group—For adolescents who have lost a loved one to cancer.

Men Facing Cancer—Discussion group for men with prostate, bladder or genitourinary cancer; partners and friends welcome.

Support of Survivors—A 24-hour phone line staffed by breast cancer survivors to help recovering women. 610-402-8405 (4767).
• Support group meets first Mon. of each month.

Keeping Up to Date

Health Insurance for Small Businesses (of 2-50)
Learn about options through insurers contracted with Valley Preferred, including health savings accounts/health reimbursement arrangements. FREE
• Tue., Jan. 9, 1:30 p.m.
For location and to register, call 610-402-CARE.

Ongoing Computer Classes
For information on all computer classes, call 610-402-CARE.

Electronic Newsletters—Learn about free e-mail newsletters on health, current events, and more. Requires e-mail address and Internet familiarity.
$20, $15 with Vitality Plus GOLD

Basic Computer Skills—Beginners learn to use a keyboard, mouse, programs, toolbars and more.
$25, $20 with Vitality Plus GOLD

Introduction to the Internet—Hands-on course includes healthy aging Web sites. Basic computer skills needed.
$25, $20 with Vitality Plus GOLD

Learn Basic E-Mail—Hands-on course uses free Yahoo. Basic computer skills needed.
$40, $35 with Vitality Plus GOLD
All at LVH—17, Center for Healthy Aging

Introducing Breast Care: From Prevention to Post Treatment
Get an overview of breast care with emphasis on prevention, including risk factors and ways to lower your risk. FREE
• Mon, Nov. 20, Dec. 18, 2-4 p.m.
At LVH—17, Center for Healthy Aging

Support Groups
Support groups are available for mood management, amputees, diabetes, cancer, heart disease and other conditions.

WomenHeart—For women diagnosed with heart disease and their families, learn about the condition and how to advocate for better research and testing. FREE
• Second Mon. of each month; 7-8 p.m.
At LVH—17, Center for Healthy Aging
For details, call 610-402-CARE.

Need a Speaker?
Lehigh Valley Hospitals
Your Community Partner
This presentation will show you how Lehigh Valley Hospital fulfills its mission to heal, comfort and care every day. FREE
To schedule, call 610-402-CARE.

Behind the Scenes—Heart Care
Tour the state-of-the-art cardiac catheterization lab and cardiac intensive care unit. Teens and older; ages 13-16 requires an adult.
At LVH—Muhlenberg
For details, call 610-402-CARE.
See related article on page 16.
Healthy You, that is. Lehigh Valley Hospital has taken the philosophy of Healthy You and applied it to our Web site, lvh.org. The result is a health education Web site that is packed with practical, easy-to-understand information. It's organized in a commonsense way, so you'll spend less time and fewer clicks finding what you need. And it's really simple to use.

Lvh.org now has special sections like Women's Health, Men's Health and Healthy Aging. You can look for information by symptom, disease, specialty or doctor. If you want to read in Spanish, click on Español. There's even a search engine powered by Google, so results are in a familiar, highly useful format. And once you've found what you're looking for, you can make the on-screen type bigger by clicking on Font.

Best of all, lvh.org will continue to change based on how you use it. We hope you'll share your ideas by writing to info@lvh.com. After all, this Web site really is all about You.