

health
happiness
you

h2u® news

June 2008

Valley Regional Medical Center

www.valleyregionalmedicalcenter.com

(956) 544-4448

Men – Go to the Doctor!

Why won't men go to the doctor? Recent studies suggest that one reason that men get sicker and die younger than women is because they do not develop a beneficial relationship with a personal physician and schedule regular office visits.

A study published in the *International Journal of Men's Health* cited statistics from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that confirm men visit doctors less during their lifetime and are two times more likely than women to have skipped physician visits for two years or more.

Now that it has been shown – at least through anecdotal, if not completely scientific, evidence – that most men need to develop a better relationship with a personal physician, how can this information be used to take action? If you are a male reader, make a plan to ensure that – as a minimum – you have had the basic screenings and tests that indicate overall health status. (If you are a spouse or

friend of a reluctant healthcare seeker, here's your secret checklist!)

Cancer Screenings

Starting at age 50, consult your doctor about getting screened for colorectal cancer. At this time you should also talk to your doctor about the possible benefits of prostate cancer screening.

It is also important that you perform monthly self-exams for testicular cancer. See your provider regularly for a testicular exam and call promptly if you find a lump. This cancer most commonly occurs in men ages 15-40, those with a family history of the disease, or those who have a testicle that is out of normal position. Men with any of these risk factors need more frequent screening.

You should also get a total body skin exam by your doctor every three years if you're between the ages 20-39, or yearly after 40. Learn how to examine your own skin monthly for signs of skin cancer.

Continued on next page



Health Bite

The less-than-desirable state of men's health has been considered a public health issue needing attention since at least 1994, when Senator Bob Dole introduced legislation establishing "National Men's Health Week" in order to help focus public attention on improving men's health. The public education campaign is held each June. This year's observance is June 9-15.

To find out more about men's health, visit www.h2u.com and click the blue tab labeled "Healthy Lifestyles." Go to the orange box on the left and click on "Men's Health." Another source of information that many find entertaining is "Men's Health" magazine, www.menshealth.com or for subscription information call (800) 696-2303.

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Men – Go to the Doctor!

From front page

Heart Disease Screening

Have your blood pressure checked at least every two years, more often if you're at increased risk. Risk factors include a family history of high blood pressure, African-American race, above-normal weight, or age greater than 50.

Cholesterol should be checked at least every five years, starting at age 35. If you have risk factors for heart disease, begin at age 20 and have it checked more often.

Dental Screening

At least once or twice a year, have a dentist examine your teeth, gums and mouth. Your dentist may also recommend periodic x-rays to check for cavities and other problems.

Vision Screening

After age 40, have your eyes checked periodically, especially if you have risk factors for eye disease. Risk factors include a personal or family history of eye disease, chronic disease (such as diabetes or high blood pressure), or African-American race.

After age 65, it's especially important to make sure you're having your eyes examined on a regular basis.

Miscellaneous Tests

Ask your doctor about a blood test to screen for diabetes if you have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, a family history, other risk factors for the disease, or are overweight. Talk to your doctor to see whether you should be screened for sexually transmitted diseases, such as AIDS.

These screening suggestions should be considered a "baseline" or the very minimum number of procedures that healthy men should pursue in managing their own health. Persons with known risk factors or a family history of disease will probably require more thorough tests and screenings.

Different Headaches Require Different Treatments

National Headache Awareness Week is June 1-7, a great time to review the many types of headaches, their symptoms and precipitating factors and useful treatment and prevention methods.

Tension Headaches

Usually dull, non-throbbing constant pain, often on both sides, associated with tightness of scalp or neck. Caused often by emotional stress or hidden depression. Treat with rest, over the counter pain relievers or in combination with caffeine, ice packs or muscle relaxants. Prevent these headaches with relaxation techniques or antidepressant medication.

Caffeine-Withdrawal Headaches

A throbbing headache caused by rebound dilation of the blood vessels, occurring multiple days after consumption of large quantities of caffeine. In extreme cases, the treatment will be the termination of caffeine consumption. Avoid excessive amounts of caffeine.

Hangover Headaches

Migraine-like symptoms of throbbing pain and nausea not localized to one side. Alcohol is the cause, as it produces dilation and irritation of the blood vessels of the brain and surrounding tissue. Consume liquids (including broths) to treat the headache. The consumption of fructose (found in honey or tomato juice) will help metabolize the alcohol. The best preventive advice: drink only moderate amounts of alcohol.

Arthritis Headaches

Pain located at the back of head or neck that intensifies on movement. These are caused by inflammation of the blood vessels of the head or bony changes in the structures of the neck. Unfortunately, the cause of these headaches is unknown and can't be prevented. Treat with anti-inflammatory drugs or muscle relaxants.

For a complete chart of headaches, visit www.headaches.org/press.

Vitamins & Minerals – A to Z

Manganese

Manganese is an important metal for our bodies, as it plays a vital role in the formation of enzymes that fight damaging free radicals. It also helps energy metabolism, thyroid function, blood sugar control and normal skeletal growth.

Manganese is thought to be safe when taken by adults at a dose of 11 mg daily or less. The official U.S. recommendations for daily intake of manganese for males 19 years and older

is 2.3 mg daily, while for females (not pregnant or nursing) it is 1.8 mg daily.

The best sources of dietary manganese are whole grains, legumes, avocados, grape juice, chocolate, seaweed, egg yolks, nuts, seeds, boysenberries, blueberries, pineapples, spinach, collard greens, peas and green vegetables.

If you are taking iron, copper, zinc, magnesium or calcium, you may need extra manganese, and vice versa. You may also need extra manganese if you regularly take antacids.

h2u health & community events

Grieving Support Group

Monday, June 2

6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

h2u Office

Free

Grieving support with VRMC Chaplain Sister, Esther Rodriguez. For more information, call 350-7124. The sessions are in Spanish.

Bunco

Tuesday, June 3

1:30 p.m.

h2u Office

\$5

Join the Bunco Babes the first Tuesday of every month. Please sign up early.

New – Dancing at the Ringgold Pavilion

Thursdays, June 5 and June 19

7:00 p.m.

Ringgold Civic Pavilion

Free

Join the h2u Gulf Coast Dancers and watch them perform their latest routine. You're guaranteed an unforgettable evening. Concession snacks will be available.

Line Dancing

Mondays and Wednesdays

NEW HOURS

Beginners class at 10:30 p.m.

Dance Club Group A at 12:30 p.m.

Dance Club Group B at 2:00 p.m.

h2u Office

If dancing is what you love, then come join the fun with the h2u dance class. Instructor: Carol Hogue.

Starters Line Dancing

Tuesdays

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Ringgold Civic Pavilion

If you have always wanted to line dance,



then it's time to kick up your heels and have some fun! This starter class is just for you! You will be learning the basic steps and dance to some up beat music, and you're guaranteed a great time. Everyone is welcome!

Low-Impact Aerobics

Monday and Wednesday

8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m.

and Friday, 9:15 a.m. (cardio-dance)

h2u Office

This is a low-impact aerobics class for h2u members. An h2u consent form must be prior to starting the class.

Quilting

Mondays and Fridays

1:30 p.m.

h2u Office

Join the Sew Nice Quilting Club and see for yourself the beautiful quilts our talented ladies put together.

Tai-Chi Chuan

Mondays (beginner's class),

Tuesdays and Thursdays

5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

h2u Office

Join Tai-Chi instructor Gabriel Sanchez and the rest of the gang while taking part in learning one of the most popular martial arts in the world.

SPONSORING HOSPITAL



VALLEY REGIONAL
Medical Center

membership information

To contact the h2u national office:

h2u Membership Center
P.O. Box 1300
Nashville, TN 37202-1300
(800) 771-0428

To contact your local h2u office:

h2u at Valley Regional Medical Center
2334 Boca Chica Boulevard, Suite 500
Brownsville, TX 78521
(956) 544-4448

Affiliate Director: Oscar Medrano
or go to www.h2u.com

This newsletter is not intended to provide advice on personal medical matters, nor is it a substitute for consultation with a physician.

Muscle Toning Classes

Tuesdays and Thursdays

8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

h2u Office

Join Certified Instructor Laura Juarez and make muscle strengthening part of your daily exercise routine.

Weight Watchers Meeting

Wednesdays

5:30 p.m.

h2u Office

Pricing available upon request

The Weight Watchers meetings are open to the public. Members of h2u are welcome.

SPECIAL EVENTS

New Member Orientation

Wednesday, June 4

11:30 a.m.

h2u Office

If you joined h2u recently, we encourage you to attend this New Member Orientation. Come and find out about all the new benefits available to you through h2u. Discover for yourself what we're all about. Please R.S.V.P.

Lunch Bunch at Coyote Canyon

Wednesday, June 11

11:30 a.m.

Coyote Canyon Buffet

Dutch treat

Join us for an afternoon of fun and friends.

Don't forget your extra dollar for our famous "mini-lotto." Please R.S.V.P.

Alzheimer's Disease Workshop

Thursday, June 19

1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

VRMC (Texas - Mexico)

Free

h2u in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Association present another Alzheimer's Disease Workshop. Come learn the latest on how to treat this disease. Please R.S.V.P.

Dining with the Doctor

Tuesday, June 24

12:00 p.m.

h2u Office



Free to members

It's our monthly "Doc Talk" at h2u. Each month we invite a physician to speak on an array of different subjects that are of interest to our members. Reservation required. Space is limited.

Celebrate Cancer Survivorship June 1

Today, thanks to advances in treatment and medical technology, there are more than 11 million cancer survivors in the United States and nearly 70 percent of individuals receiving a cancer diagnosis are living at least five years after their original diagnosis.

To honor those who have fought cancer and to emphasize the importance of health screenings, the Lance Armstrong Foundation and the Center for Disease Control have joined together to celebrate cancer survivorship. The two organizations have created a "National Action Plan for Cancer Survivorship: Advancing Public Health Strategies" to address the growing number of American cancer survivors.

Cancer has affected many Americans, whether they have suffered themselves or someone close to them has suffered from this illness. Please take time to acknowledge and celebrate National Cancer Survivors Day on June 1 to honor those who have fought the battle against cancer. This year marks the 21st anniversary of this worldwide celebration of life.

For more information on a National Cancer Survivors Day event in your area, e-mail info@ncsdf.org or call (615) 794-3006.

And be sure to phone a friend or family member diagnosed with cancer and let them know how proud you are of them for battling cancer.



h2u CALENDAR OF EVENTS JUNE 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m. Low-Impact Aerobics 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m. Line Dancing 1:30 p.m. Quilting 5:00 p.m. Tai-Chi 6:00 p.m. Grieving Sup. Grp.	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Muscle Toning 11:00 a.m. Starters Line Dancing 1:30 p.m. Bunco 5:00 p.m. Tai-Chi	8:00 & 9:15 a.m. Low-Impact Aerobics 11:30 a.m. New Member Orientation 12:30 & 2:00 p.m. Line Dancing 5:30 p.m. Weight Watchers	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Muscle Toning 5:00 p.m. Tai-Chi 7:00 p.m. Dancing at the Ringgold Pav.	8:00 & 9:15 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Cardio-Dance Aerobics 1:30 p.m. Quilting	7
8	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 5:00 p.m. Low-Impact Aerobics Line Dancing Quilting Tai-Chi	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 6:00 p.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 5:00 p.m. Muscle Toning Starters Line Dancing Bunco Tai-Chi	8:00 & 9:15 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12:30 & 2:00 p.m., 5:30 p.m. Low-Impact Aerobics Lunch Bunch at Coyote Canyon Line Dancing Weight Watchers	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 6:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m. Muscle Toning Tai-Chi	8:00 & 9:15 a.m., 1:30 p.m. Cardio-Dance Aerobics Quilting	14
15 FATHER'S DAY	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 5:00 p.m. Low-Impact Aerobics Line Dancing Quilting Tai-Chi	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 6:00 p.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 5:00 p.m. Muscle Toning Starters Line Dancing Bunco Tai-Chi	8:00 & 9:15 a.m., 12:30 & 2:00 p.m., 5:30 p.m. Low-Impact Aerobics Line Dancing Weight Watchers	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 6:00 p.m., 1:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m. Muscle Toning Alzheimer's Workshop Tai-Chi Dancing at the Ringgold Pav.	8:00 & 9:15 a.m., 1:30 p.m. Cardio-Dance Aerobics Quilting	21
22	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 5:00 p.m. Low-Impact Aerobics Line Dancing Quilting Tai-Chi	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 6:00 p.m., 11:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 5:00 p.m. Muscle Toning Starters Line Dancing Dining w/Doc Bunco Tai-Chi	8:00 & 9:15 a.m., 12:30 & 2:00 p.m., 5:30 p.m. Low-Impact Aerobics Line Dancing Weight Watchers	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 6:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m. Muscle Toning Tai-Chi	8:00 & 9:15 a.m., 1:30 p.m. Cardio-Dance Aerobics Quilting	28
29	8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 5:00 p.m. Low-Impact Aerobics Line Dancing Quilting Tai-Chi					

from the desk

Ignorance—truly being unaware—is no excuse for disregarding the state of one's health, even if you are a man! In today's world that provides information all the time, everywhere you look, health information is readily available. Unfortunately, men seem reluctant to take control of their own health. The same man who wouldn't dare miss having the oil changed in his car every 3,000 miles to protect his automotive investment won't go to the doctor for years on end, despite knowing that his body has changed and he wonders about certain things.

Fortunately, men that are members of the h2u program at Valley Regional Medical Center have an advantage that other men in our community do not have. They get to hear our physicians talk about health topics; they have access to free health screenings and other fun events where they may find out more about their own health. And, h2u can offer assistance in all health-related matters. Just ask me. Because we do want to do our best to make sure men are healthy, too!

Oscar Medrano

h2u Affiliate Director
h2u at Valley Regional Medical Center

Our mission is to understand the unique health needs of adults and their families and provide them with valuable health information, resources and experiences.

Q&A

Q: Being a member of the h2u program and attending events at the hospital are the main reasons I found a new doctor and I am now going for routine health visits. I have never really talked to any of my doctors very much and I don't know what to do to get the most from my visits. Do you have any suggestions?

A: There are so many rapid changes in the medical field and patients are increasingly being asked to take greater responsibility for their own care. In order to do this, they must be able to

understand the instructions and basic information they are given. Most discussions with physicians could probably be clearer to the patient.

Valley Regional Medical Center recommends a simple approach, like the one outlined by the American Medical Association's Ask Me 3 campaign. As the patient, try to remember to frame your questions in a very simple way. Ask your doctor in the following manner: "What is my main problem? What do I need to do? Why is it important for me to do this?"

Setting up the conversation this way provides your doctor with some clues to slow down when speaking and to avoid excessive medical jargon. It also gives you a chance to repeat the new medical information you have received using your own words. For many patients, there is a lot of anxiety involved in these discussions, so keeping it simple can really be beneficial.

h2u.com

Survey Says: h2u Readers are Active, Loyal

A recent survey of subscribers to h2u health eNews reveals that h2u members are active and have a healthy appetite for health information.

The e-newsletter, free to all h2u members, is a monthly digest of current health information from more than 300 medical journals and health publications. Subscribers can choose from more than 20 health topics to customize the e-newsletter to their specific health information needs.

The survey reported that nearly 67 percent of the subscribers chose health topics that directly corresponded to their health needs or the needs of their loved ones.

One of the most telling statistics from the survey is that 77 percent of the respondents reported new awareness of services at a hospital that sponsors the h2u program. Some of the most popular hospital services included: walking programs, exercise classes, cholesterol and blood pressure screenings, flu shots, physician lectures and smoking cessation programs.

Some of the most popular social and education programs include video rentals, day trips and movie nights. More than 82 percent of the respondents reported that they were likely to continue their subscription to h2u health eNews.

You can customize your e-newsletter with the health topics of your choice at any time by logging into the newsletter at the h2u Web site. If you have any questions, contact h2u at (800) 771-0428.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Louisiana Casinos

Nov. 10 - 12

\$90 per person, double occupancy

Back by popular demand! Join us in this magical adventure round trip via motor coach to the Louisiana casinos. Includes:

- Bus transportation to and from Louisiana
- Two nights hotel accommodations

- \$23 perk money at Coushatta
- \$20 perk money and a \$10 meal ticket at Paragon
- Meal tickets to all-you-can-eat buffets
- \$15 perk money

An h2u travel consent form must be signed prior to boarding. More information will be available soon.



h2u BENEFITS

VRMC Auxiliary Searching for Volunteers

h2u members are invited to join the VRMC Auxiliary Team. Auxiliary volunteers are trained in a variety of roles including assisting the front desk and floor, assisting in operating the gift shop, and running the hospital service cart. Join today, and don't miss out in this great opportunity to contribute your specific skills and talents to VRMC, its patients and visitors. For more information contact h2u at 544-4448. Join today!



h2u Office Volunteers

h2u is searching for office volunteers. For more information contact Oscar Medrano at 544-4448.

Dell Computer

Through the h2u relationship with Dell Computer, h2u members will save up to six percent on any computer model offered by Dell, and even more with specially priced bundles. Are you looking for an on-ramp to the "Information Superhighway" or a cool gift for a high



school graduate? Check out the special prices for h2u members by going to the Member Benefits section of the h2u Web site or by calling (800) 695-8133. Use the member code "HCA" and the promotion code "HS31700684."

John Hancock Services

John Hancock Financial Services can help you plan for the future. Through a special program for h2u members, John Hancock will provide you with solutions through life and long-term care insurance, annuities and a variety of investment options. For more information, call John Hancock at (866) 587-3748 and tell them you are an h2u member.

Learning More About Dystonia

Dystonia affects around half a million individuals in North America and is the third most common muscular disorder in the United States; yet, there is still not sufficient public awareness about this illness. According to the Bachmann-Strauss Dystonia and Parkinson Foundation, more people suffer from Dystonia than muscular dystrophy, Huntington's disease and Lou Gehrig's disease combined. Please take the time to educate yourself on this illness in honor of Dystonia Awareness week, June 1-7.

According to the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation, Dystonia is a movement disorder that causes muscles to contract and spasm involuntarily. Due to a neurological deficiency, muscles are unable to relax when not in use causing

repetitive and awkward bodily postures, speech problems, tremors, or uncontrollable eye blinking. There are 13 different forms of Dystonia and each form can either affect a centralized group of muscles or all muscles throughout the body. The level of pain can vary but the large majority of cases do not impact intelligence, life span or cognition.

According to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, Dystonia can be inherited or occur as a result from environmental or disease related damage. Dystonia can be attributed to birth defects, certain infections to drugs, trauma, heavy metal or carbon dioxide poisoning. Over half of cases are a result of no disease or injury but genetics.

If you are interested in learning more



about Dystonia please visit h2u.com, the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation, or the Bachmann-Strauss Dystonia and Parkinson Foundation website.

Is My Drinking Water Safe to Drink?



Regularly consuming water is vital to maintaining good health. Here in the United States, water is readily available in most households, yet buying bottled water has become a growing trend. A study conducted in 2004 by the Beverage Marketing Corporation indicates that bottled water is the fastest-growing drink option in the United States.

Whether your water comes from rivers and lakes, or from an underground

water source, the origins of water are all very similar. Yet, each has a different taste. The taste of water, whether bottled or tap, depends upon the water's mineral content and the treatment procedures that were used.

The Federal Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency jointly set standards for bottled and tap water. If these standards are met, then there should be no need to worry about the safety of the water you're drinking.

Water Lingo

- **Artesian and Spring Water:** Water from an underground source. Well water and artesian water are tapped through a well, in comparison to spring water, which is collected as the water flows to the surface of the earth.
- **Distilled Water:** Steam from boiling water that is re-condensed and bottled. Distilling water kills microbes and

removes water's natural minerals, giving it a flat taste.

- **Mineral Water:** Ground water that naturally contains 250 more parts per million of total dissolved solids.
- **Purified Water:** Water that originates from any source but has been treated to meet U.S. standards. It is essentially free of all chemicals and may be free of microbes.
- **Sterile Water:** Water that originates from any source, but has been treated to meet U.S standards for sterilization. This water is free of all microbes.

For more information go to www.epa.gov and www.fda.gov.

