

# PulseBeat

A PUBLICATION OF MCKENZIE-WILLAMETTE MEDICAL CENTER

## Rebound from surgery

Quicker recovery with da Vinci hysterectomy

## Knee replacements—easier than ever!

## Join our health programs

Before you dive in—  
is that water safe  
for swimming?

Better your  
blood pressure



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# The facts about fibroids

**Y**ou're constantly running to the restroom, your back hurts and your periods are particularly painful. What's going on? You might be dealing with uterine fibroids, noncancerous tumors that grow out of uterine tissue.

Physicians aren't sure why some women develop fibroids, but if you're overweight or African-American or an immediate family member has fibroids, you're at increased risk.

## WHAT DO FIBROIDS FEEL LIKE?

In most cases, you won't even know that you have fibroids. But consult your physician if you experience any of these signs:

- heavy or painful periods
- bleeding between periods
- constant pelvic pain
- a feeling of fullness in the lower abdomen
- an increased need to urinate
- pain during sex
- lower back pain
- reproductive problems, including infertility, multiple miscarriages or preterm labor

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Your physician will do a pelvic exam to see whether your uterus is enlarged or misshapen. If he or she spots abnormalities, an imaging exam, such as an ultrasound, can confirm the diagnosis.

Treatment depends on your symptoms' severity, the



fibroids' size and location, your age and whether you want children:

- If you don't have symptoms, treatment is usually unnecessary.
- If you're approaching menopause, you may be advised to do nothing, as fibroids tend to stop growing or even shrink when hormone levels drop.
- If you have occasional discomfort, try an over-the-counter pain reliever, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.
- If you're bleeding heavily, your physician may recommend hormonal treatments to lighten your flow or an iron supplement to prevent anemia.
- If your fibroids are large, your physician may suggest hormones to temporarily stop menstruation and shrink the growths. These hormones are sometimes prescribed before surgery to make it easier to remove the fibroids.
- If your fibroids are growing quickly or causing excessive blood loss, your physician may present several surgical options. Myomectomy (removing the fibroids while leaving the uterus intact) is the best option for women who wish to have children. Myolysis (freezing or using an electric current to destroy growths) and hysterectomy (removing the uterus) are other possible treatments.

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**W**e need your input! We'd like to know what you think about our publication so we can better serve your needs. Please take a few minutes to complete our online survey. Your responses will be used to improve our services to the community and to enhance our publication.

Filling out the online survey is easy: Simply go to [www.healthconnectionmag.com](http://www.healthconnectionmag.com) and complete the survey.

By completing our survey, you'll be automatically entered in a random drawing to win one of five gift cards.

All surveys must be completed online by June 1, 2009, to be eligible to win. One entry per person, please. Thank you for your time and assistance.

All responses will be kept strictly confidential. We do not sell, rent or give away your e-mail address.

# Gut check

## Could it be appendicitis?

**W**hat's tiny and useless but can cause a whole lot of pain if it's unhappy? Your appendix, a finger-shaped pouch attached to your lower intestine. And if your appendix ever becomes inflamed and fills with pus, you'll have a raging case of appendicitis, a potentially life-threatening illness.

### WHO'S AT RISK?

Though anyone can get appendicitis, it often strikes between ages 10 and 30. It usually happens when the appendix is blocked by fecal matter or a swollen lymph node following a digestive tract infection. A small number of people are diagnosed following traumatic abdominal injury, while others are genetically predisposed. In all, about 280,000 appendectomies are performed each year in the United States, according to the National Center for Health Statistics.

### NOT JUST A BELLYACHE

A hundred different ailments can cause stomach pain, but your appendix might be the culprit if you have:

- pain that starts around the belly button and moves to the lower right of the abdomen and gets worse when you move, take deep breaths, sneeze or cough
- abdominal swelling
- loss of appetite
- nausea and vomiting
- constipation or diarrhea
- an inability to pass gas
- a low-grade fever

### TIME TO TAKE IT OUT?

This isn't a wait-and-see kind of problem. Removal is the only effective treatment for appendicitis, so if you're having symptoms, head to the emergency room, stat. Once there, a physician will check for pain location and ten-



derness, run a blood test for infection and send you for a computed tomography (CT) scan to confirm the diagnosis. He or she will also look to rule out other possibilities for your symptoms, including ectopic pregnancy, ovarian cysts, kidney stones and Crohn's disease. If you *do* have appendicitis, your appendix will be surgically removed before it can rupture. It may be done laparoscopically (the surgeon makes a few small incisions in your abdomen) or with traditional open surgery (the surgeon makes one large incision). Since experts have been unable to pinpoint the appendix's function, it's unlikely that you'll suffer any long-term effects.

Delay treatment and your appendix will likely rupture. If that happens, chances are good that you'll develop an infection of the abdominal cavity called peritonitis and then pain will take over and your entire abdomen will swell. Fever, thirst and low urine output will likely follow. This infection can cause organ failure, infertility and even death if not adequately contained with an abdominal cavity cleaning and intravenous (IV) antibiotics.

### Where does it hurt?

**A**fter migrating from your navel, pain from appendicitis nearly always settles at a place on your abdomen called **McBurney's Point**, named after the 19th century surgeon Charles McBurney, an authority on appendicitis. **Find it by drawing an imaginary line from your belly button to your right hip bone; you'll feel tenderness about halfway between the two points.**

## Caring for our neighbors



Maurine Cate  
Chief Executive Officer

At McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center, we believe our attention to patient-centered care is one of the things that distinguishes us in the community. We take pride in offering up-to-date technology in a familiar setting that is easily accessed and delivering professional medical treatment, along with truly personalized care.

### DEDICATED STAFF

One of our greatest assets is our professional and friendly staff, who are dedicated to providing care above and beyond patient expectations. In our recently returned Inpatient Satisfaction Survey (fourth quarter 2008), our nurses ranked in the 94th percentile of the 1,600 hospitals surveyed.

### HOURLY ROUNDING

The satisfaction of our patients can be linked in part to the commitment our staff has made to hourly rounding. Hourly rounding is a method of keeping our patients comfortable by providing regular visits by our clinical staff to assess the patient's needs.

Looking to the future, McKenzie-Willamette is committed to furthering our legacy of "caring for people in extraordinary ways" hourly, daily, weekly and every day of the year.

Best,

MAURINE CATE  
Chief Executive Officer  
McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center

# Advanced options for new knees



Since August 2008, Chris Walton, M.D., orthopedic surgeon at McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center, has performed partial knee replacements using a mobile (sliding) bearing implant, rather than a traditional rigid one. A mobile bearing implant for partial knee replacement is effective in treating arthritic knees. Whether due to arthritis or other reasons, some patients aren't candidates for full knee replacement or a partial rigid bearing implant. According to patient treatment surveys, the mobile implant has proven to be a reliable, less-invasive procedure that typically results in improved mobility, joint pain relief and an earlier return to daily activities.

Patient Mark Hoy suffered from pain and stiffness in his knee for several years. After discussions with Dr. Walton, Hoy made the decision to have partial knee replacement surgery using the mobile implant. "I'm very pleased with the outcome," says Hoy. "I was on crutches for only three days after surgery and now have full function of my knee—with no pain."

### OTISKNEE REPLACEMENT

Another groundbreaking procedure being done at McKenzie-Willamette is the OtisKnee replacement, which for the first time allows surgeons to precisely match the size and placement to the patient's unique and normal (nonarthritic) knee.

In December 2008, Robb Larsen, M.D., orthopedic surgeon, performed a total knee replacement using the OtisKnee. "The new technique shortens the length of surgery, results in less blood loss and can make for a shorter hospital stay," says Dr. Larsen.

"Being fairly young for knee replacement surgery, I wanted to explore the latest techniques available," says patient Harvey Chapman. "Dr. Larsen suggested the OtisKnee. After the surgery, I had very little pain or bleeding, which kept my hospital stay to less than three days. At home, there was some swelling, but it subsided fairly quickly. My discomfort is minimal, and I've regained my mobility faster than I expected. I couldn't be happier with my results and would recommend the OtisKnee surgery and Dr. Larsen to anyone needing knee surgery."

**!** Don't kneel down to pain!

To find out more about these knee procedures, call  
242-4812 or 743-2566.

# The da Vinci difference

## A new kind of hysterectomy



**By Geoff Gill, M.D.**  
**Obstetrician/Gynecologist**

A wide variety of benign conditions can affect a woman's reproductive system, which consists of the uterus, vagina, ovaries and fallopian tubes. Common types of gynecologic conditions like fibroids, endometriosis or vaginal/uterine prolapse can cause chronic pain, heavy bleeding and other disabling symptoms. Women who experience these symptoms are often treated with a hysterectomy, surgical removal of the uterus. This surgery is the second most common operation for women in the United States, and an estimated one-third of all women will have a hysterectomy by age 60. Most gynecologic procedures have traditionally been done through large abdominal incisions. These procedures often involve a long, painful recovery (often up to six weeks), moderate risk of infection, increased narcotic use and significant blood loss. Now, McKenzie-Willamette has joined just a handful of facilities across the country that offer an effective, less-invasive hysterectomy.

### PATIENT BENEFITS

Performed using the da Vinci Surgical System™, da Vinci hysterectomy is fast becoming a treatment of choice. The system is essentially an extension of the surgeon's hands. After placing the instruments into the abdomen, the surgeon is seated at a console immediately next to the patient. The console is a computer-enhanced system that replicates the surgeon's movements in real time on a high-definition 3-D screen. Operations performed with the da Vinci Surgical System follow the same basic steps as traditional surgeries, with one exception: We use advanced, minimally invasive technology.

This technology allows surgeons to perform major

operations, such as hysterectomies, through multiple small incisions (ranging in size from 1.0 to 1.5 centimeters—about the size of a dime) on the patient's abdomen. The da Vinci Surgical System offers multiple benefits to both surgeons and patients. For the surgeon, procedures with the system allow greater surgical precision, increased range of motion, improved dexterity, enhanced visualization and improved access. More importantly, patients may experience shorter hospital stays, less pain, less risk of infection, less blood loss, fewer transfusions, less scarring, faster recovery and a quicker return to normal daily activities.



**!** Discover the benefits today!

If you would like more information about options for women's surgery and the da Vinci Surgical System, call 686-7007 or visit [www.mckweb.com](http://www.mckweb.com).

## HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about **allergies**?

Take this quiz to find out.

**1** Approximately how many people suffer from allergies?

- a. 50 million
- b. 35 million
- c. 27 million
- d. 18 million

**2** You're more likely to develop allergies if you:

- a. eat shellfish
- b. have a family member who has allergies
- c. had pets as a child
- d. regularly garden

**3** Which does *not* aggravate allergies?

- a. cigarette smoke
- b. cockroach droppings
- c. pet saliva
- d. they all can trigger allergies

**4** Where does pollen first appear in the spring?

- a. weeds
- b. trees
- c. grass
- d. mold

**5** What reduces pollen allergies in the spring?

- a. not drying laundry outside on a clothesline
- b. removing your shoes before coming indoors
- c. not going outside before 10 a.m.
- d. all of the above

ANSWERS: 1. A; 2. B; 3. D; 4. B; 5. D

# Get your blood pressure under control

**H**igh blood pressure truly is sinister: You can have it but not know it until you suffer a heart attack, stroke or another serious health complication.

Hence, its nickname: the silent killer. Seeing your physician regularly is the best way to determine whether you have high blood pressure—or hypertension. He or she will measure the force of blood in your arteries by looking at your systolic (the higher number) and diastolic (lower number) pressure. Elevated levels (140/90 mm Hg or more) indicate hypertension,



while numbers ranging from 120/80 to 139/89 point to prehypertension, a condition that puts you at risk for high blood pressure in the future. Normal blood pressure is under 120/80. Although hypertension has no cure, you can take steps to control it and protect your health:

- **Eat a healthy diet.**

High-fat and sugary foods contribute to high blood pressure,

so reach for foods from the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet. They include whole grains, fish and poultry, nuts, fruits and vegetables and low-fat and low-sodium foods.

- **Get moving.** Aim for 30 minutes of cardiovascular activity most days of the week. If you're short on time, break up your workout into three 10-minute segments over the course of the day. Take a walk around the block, dance to your favorite CD or work out to an exercise DVD.

- **Take your meds.** Sometimes medication is the only way to lower your blood pressure. Because hypertension drugs work only when they're regularly in your system, you should never miss a dose or stop taking them.



### HOW DOES WATER GET CONTAMINATED?

When it comes to swimming pools, water parks and play fountains, most disease comes from fecal matter on the bodies of sick splashers. If chlorine and pH levels aren't carefully calibrated, other swimmers could swallow live bacteria. In hot tubs, naturally occurring germs can cause rashes and respiratory problems, ranging from the common cold to pneumonia. Large bodies of water—from rivers to the ocean—can be contaminated by sewage, animal waste, swimmers' feces and even parasites.

### HOW CAN I AVOID CONTRACTING RWI?

Take these precautions to stay healthy when you swim, dive or just splash around:

- Avoid pools with murky or chemical-smelling water (properly chlorinated pools don't have an odor).
- Don't share towels, kickboards or toys.
- Keep water out of your mouth and never swallow it.
- Stay on dry land if you have open sores.
- Skip bodies of freshwater on very hot days, since bacteria flourish in warm water.
- Plug your nose when swimming in freshwater to keep parasites out.
- Shower before and after swimming and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.
- Take children on frequent bathroom breaks and change diapers in the bathroom, not poolside.

# Warding off water illness

**A**s the weather warms up, we all look forward to swimming laps in the pool; splashing in the ocean, stream or river; or lounging in a hot tub. But those waters may mask something ominous: Contaminated water can lead to recreational water illness (RWI). Touching or swallowing water in pools, lakes, spas, rivers and oceans can lead to gastrointestinal, outer ear, eye, skin, respiratory and neurologic infections—and children, pregnant women and people with compromised immune systems are at greatest risk.

## Be a fruit-and-veggie role model

**W**hether you're driving the car or stepping into high heels, your little ones want to be just like you. So why not use your power for good? Follow these tips, and the eating habits your children copy will positively influence their health—and yours—for years to come:

- 1 Restock the pantry.** Keep healthy snacks around. Say goodbye to cookies loaded with high-fructose corn syrup and bright orange cheese puffs and hello to baked veggie chips and sugar-free applesauce.
- 2 Drink right.** Switch out your super-acidic, high-sugar soda for water and 100 percent juice—little teeth and waistlines will thank you.
- 3 Start the day right.** No time to sit down to breakfast? Send your kids off with a banana and a baggie filled with dry whole-grain cereal. Studies show that breakfast eaters boast improved math grades, less incidence of hyperactivity and better school attendance. And teen-

agers who eat first thing tend to weigh less, exercise more and generally have a healthier diet than their breakfast-skipping pals.

**4 Turn off the tube.** People who eat in front of the television are more likely to eat unhealthy foods.

**5 Eat together.** Children who dine with their parents tend to consume more fruits and veggies and fewer unhealthy snacks.

**6 Pack a lunch for everyone.** You'll save cash while making sure the whole family is eating well. Be sure to include a lean protein, low-fat dairy, grains, a vegetable and a piece of fruit (try sliced turkey and low-fat cheese on whole-wheat bread with carrot sticks and an apple).





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## Community Events and Programs 2009

McKENZIE-WILLAMETTE MEDICAL CENTER

### HEALTHY WOMAN A McKENZIE-WILLAMETTE MEDICAL CENTER RESOURCE



Healthy Woman offers free monthly events on health, communications, relationship and life-balance issues designed to enhance your life and the lives of those you love.

As a member, you'll receive detailed reminders about monthly Healthy Woman events and a free monthly e-mail newsletter. Call **726-4789** or visit **www.mckweb.com** and click on "Healthy Woman" to register and for times and locations of upcoming monthly events.

*"We love the Healthy Woman events. I take my mother, and we have the best time. Every event has been informative, enjoyable and well-organized. We think this a wonderful offering for our community."*

—Healthy Woman member for nearly a year

*"Last evening, I attended my first Healthy Woman presentation. It was an excellent program. Not only was it an enjoyable evening, but I found it interesting and filled with useful, practical ideas to make my life healthier and easier as well. I appreciated the fact that everything was well-organized and executed. Thank you for your efforts."*

—Current Healthy Woman member



### TINY TOES ARRIVES AT McKENZIE-WILLAMETTE

If you're expecting or expect to be, make sure you get started on the right

foot by enrolling in Tiny Toes, our free OB club to cover pregnancy through baby's first birthday. Valuable resources for mom and family include health information timed to your pregnancy, perks for after delivery and a password-protected baby web nursery. Find out more at **www.mckweb.com/services**.



#### Prenatal classes

McKenzie-Willamette's Women's Health and Birth Center offers a variety of educational programs for new and more experienced parents. Free facility tours are offered several times a month. Our childbirth educators are certified through the International Childbirth Education Association.

**Call: 741-4649** or visit **www.mckweb.com** and click on "Classes & Events"

#### SUPPORT GROUPS

For information about Better Breathers, Breast Cancer Support, Caregivers Support, the Ostomy Association and Grief Support, visit **www.mckweb.com** and click on "Classes & Events."

