

Regarding WOMEN

& HEALTHCARE



Don't Ignore the Signs of Memory Impairment

When should you be concerned about “normal” forgetfulness versus memory impairment that might signal a serious problem? A few signs:

- ▶ Trouble completing routine tasks, such as brushing teeth or showering
- ▶ Difficulty with communication—not just forgetting a word or name occasionally, but inability to understand what is being said or what is written on a page
- ▶ Becoming disoriented or lost, even in familiar places or a few blocks from home
- ▶ Exercising poor judgment, such as wearing summer clothes in winter or putting shoes in the oven

In other words, you may forget where you put your car keys, but if you forgot that you drove your car, seek an evaluation right away.

When Memory Fails ... Help and Support Don't

okes about forgetfulness abound. We tell people we believe in the “hereafter” because we walk into a room and ask ourselves, “Now, what am I here after?”

But if you are truly concerned about failing memory, forgetfulness isn't funny. It's frightening and isolating. Fortunately, families dealing with a loved one's increasing forgetfulness now have a trusted resource to help them through the tangle of memory disorders.

In the summer of 2008, the OSF Illinois Neurosciences Institute earned designation as the “Alzheimer's Disease Primary Provider Site,” the first hospital in Rockford to achieve this designation.

“As the Alzheimer's Diagnostic Center for the area, we became the central hub for assessment, education and resources for patients with memory disorders and their families,” explains Deb Lovik-Kuhlemeier, director of the OSF Illinois Neurosciences



Institute. “We provide assessments for memory disorders and for physical problems that affect memory; we work with the patient's primary care provider for diagnostic tests or medications; we help the patients and families get community resources, such as day care, home health and financial assistance.”

For more information, contact your physician or call the OSF Illinois Neurosciences Institute at **815-387-1717**. ❖

Mark important 2009 dates on your free pocket calendar, complete with motivational quotes and a “feel good” guide. See page 3 for coupon.

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When Wounds Won't Heal— Consider the OSF Wound Healing Center



In HBO therapy, patients lie on a reclining bed inside a large, clear acrylic shell. They can watch TV or rest during the treatments.

Wounds that won't heal are more than just an annoyance. Patients with non-healing wounds that are chronic often deal with pain, missed days at work, financial issues and possibly loss of mobility.

In October, the new OSF Wound Healing Center (WHC) opened in the Northern Illinois Medical Arts building in front of OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center. A multidisciplinary panel of physicians who have undergone specialized training ensures that patients receive the most advanced treatments for nonhealing wounds.

"While the majority of our patients have complications from diabetes," explains Bob Kinnison, program director for the WHC, "we can help those who have nonhealing surgical wounds, skin grafts, radiation wounds, pressure ulcers, peripheral insufficiency, burns or crush injuries."

Patients can be referred to the WHC by their physician or can make appointments without a referral. The initial visit includes a comprehensive evaluation, including a thorough examination of

the wound, to determine the course of treatment. Skin substitutes, specialized dressings, platelet gels and growth factors may be part of the usual 12- to 16-week treatment plan.

For some patients, hyperbaric oxygen (HBO) therapy will be prescribed. The WHC has two hyperbaric oxygen chambers that surround patients with 100 percent oxygen at higher-than-normal atmospheric pressure. The therapy allows oxygen to pass more easily through the plasma into the wounds to heal them.

"Red blood cells carry oxygen," explains Kathryn Torrey, RN, MS, clinical nurse manager of the OSF Wound Healing Center. "With HBO forcing

oxygen into the plasma, patients are not depending on red blood cells to carry all the oxygen. This is helpful for people who are highly anemic due to cancer treatments or who suffer from soft tissue destruction due to radiation therapy."

Often associated with treating decompression sickness (the "bends") that divers may experience, HBO therapy benefits patients with diabetic foot ulcers, carbon monoxide poisoning, bone infections, radiation injuries, skin grafts and burns. ❖

For information or an appointment, call **815-484-7330**.

fact

Some wound healing centers report that patients with chronic wounds dating back to World War II have been successfully healed after entering into a focused wound healing center and hyperbaric oxygen treatment program like the one at OSF.



Nix That Neck Pain

As more people spend their days hunched over a computer, complaints of neck pain and soreness soar.

The best medicine may be targeted strength training for 20 minutes,

FINDING three times a week. In one study, dumbbell exercises that focus on the neck and shoulder muscles, like the upright row, significantly reduced chronic neck pain. To do an upright row, hold a dumbbell in each hand while standing. Let your arms hang, elbows slightly bent, with your palms facing your legs. Lift the dumbbells up to armpit level, like zipping a jacket. Lower your hands back to the starting position. Repeat eight to 12 times.

Arthritis and Rheumatism, Vol. 59, No. 1

SAFE CLEANING TIPS FOR MOMS-TO-BE

Most household cleaners are safe for pregnant women to use, but some may not be. Take these steps to help protect you and your baby:

- ▼ Read labels before using any product. If the label says toxic or dangerous, find an alternative. Baking soda, borax and vinegar are safe, effective cleaners.
- ▼ Follow instructions carefully, and never mix ammonia and chlorine products.
- ▼ Keep the area you're cleaning well ventilated. Open windows and doors, or use an exhaust fan.
- ▼ Wear rubber gloves, and wash hands and arms after using chemicals.

Cervical Cancer: What You and Your Daughter Need to Know

Cervical cancer is one disease women may be able to prevent. Two years ago, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the use of Gardasil, a vaccine that is administered to girls and women ages nine to 26 before they become sexually active.

“Preventing cancer is a big deal,” says Diane H. Zug, MD, family practice physician affiliated with OSF Medical Group-Springcreek. “The only other vaccine that may be able to do that is for hepatitis B.”

Gardasil, which is given as three shots over a period of six months, protects against infection from the two types of human papillomavirus (HPV) that cause approximately 70 percent of all cervical cancer. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that girls ages 11 to 12 be vaccinated.

The young age is recommended because the immune system is more robust then, and the vaccine needs to be administered prior to HPV exposure.

“I definitely recommend the vaccine for patients who meet the guidelines,” adds Dr. Zug. “It gives girls a sense of empowerment to take control of their lives and to prevent a type of cancer before it can even begin to take hold.”

Most HPV infections cause no symptoms and clear up within two years. Rarely, infection lingers and causes cells on the cervix to become cancerous over a period of approxi-

mately 12 to 15 years.

All women need to continue with regular Pap tests as advised by their physicians, whether they have received the HPV vaccine or not. The vaccine doesn't shield against all cancer-causing HPVs, and it cannot protect women who have already been infected. Regular screening helps detect any problems before cancer develops.

Doctors recommend Pap tests once women reach age 21 or are sexually active for three years. Most women should have a Pap test annually or at least once every two to three years if previous screens have been clear.

Since not all cervical cancer is caused by HPV, adopting a healthy lifestyle can also help lower risk. High stress levels may leave women with HPV more vulnerable by hampering the immune system, according to a study in the journal *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*. A strong immune system is key to helping the body fight HPV infection.

Other strategies for reducing risk include maintaining a healthy weight, exercising, not smoking, and eating green vegetables such as broccoli.

“If you are considering the vaccine for your daughter, be sure to encourage her to adopt a healthy lifestyle as well,” advises Dr. Zug. “And it's vital to keep the communication channels between the two of you open.” ❖



Stroke Symptoms? Act FAST

If you suspect that someone is having a stroke, think F.A.S.T.

FACE Ask her to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

ARMS Ask her to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

SPEECH Ask her to repeat a simple sentence. Are the words slurred? Can she repeat the sentence correctly?

TIME If she shows any of these symptoms, time is important. Call **911** or get to the hospital fast. Brain cells are dying.

OSF Primary Stroke Center Earns Gold Seal

Helping people adopt lifestyle changes and recognize the warning signs of stroke are some objectives of the OSF Saint Anthony Primary Stroke Center, Rockford's first certified center. This summer, OSF Saint Anthony earned the Gold Seal of Approval™ from The Joint Commission for Primary Stroke Centers by demonstrating that its stroke care program can significantly improve outcomes for patients. By diagnosing and treating patients quickly and by helping prevent strokes, the experienced OSF team of specialists is dedicated to helping people fully live their lives.

FREE! 2009 Motivational Pocket Calendar. Filled with words of wisdom, motivation and encouragement, this purse-sized calendar will help you record special dates and events.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

E-mail _____

Send to **Marketing & Communications, OSF Saint Anthony Center for Health, 5510 East State St., Rockford, IL 61108-2381.**

Quantities are limited. This offer expires February 28, 2009.

CUT ALONG THE LINE

radiosurgery Targets Previously Inaccessible Tumors

OSF Fights Cancer Battle with You

Since opening in 1995, the OSF Center for Cancer Care has provided caring, compassionate support for patients and their loved ones. Patient navigators, self-hypnosis for wellness and support groups—as well as being the first local provider of such innovative treatments as image-guided radiation therapy, Mammosite, and brachytherapy—keep OSF at the forefront of cancer care.

There is a new weapon in our arsenal for battling tumors of the brain and spine. OSF Cancer Center radiation oncologists and OSF Illinois Neurosciences Institute neurosurgeons have collaborated to perform the first stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS) in our region.

SRS is not “surgery” in the sense we usually associate with incisions, open wounds and sutures. In this procedure, treatment is planned in three dimensions and calculations are precisely made so that multiple radiation beams can target a specific area with a high degree of precision.

These high-dose beams can treat tumors, abnormalities or functional disorders, often in a one-day session. The patient’s head and neck must

be immobilized in order to ensure precise targeting.

The procedure allows patients who meet certain criteria to avoid lengthy and dangerous conventional surgery while sparing as much healthy tissue as possible.

Physicians may use SRS during the patient’s first treatment, such as when a tumor is inaccessible through surgery, or as a boost to other treatments for a recurring or malignant tumor. It does not remove the tumor or lesion, but distorts the DNA of the tumor cells, which then lose their ability to reproduce and grow.

Benefits of SRS include providing treatment for previously inaccessible tumors, avoiding incisions in the skull, decreased risk for infection and quicker recovery time. ♦

Keep Those Lips Luscious All Winter Long

Cool winter weather can sap your lips of much-needed moisture. Try this advice to keep them soft and smooth during drier, colder spells:

- ▼ Drink more water. It helps moisten lips from the inside out.
- ▼ If your mouth is always dry, medications you are taking could be the reason. Talk with your doctor about switching medicines.

- ▼ Use a humidifier to add moisture to indoor air.
- ▼ Apply lip balm that contains lanolin or beeswax several times a day and before bed. A dab of petroleum jelly on your lips also works.
- ▼ Don’t lick your lips; it can dry them out more.
- ▼ When outdoors, use a lip balm that has a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. On blustery days, cover your mouth with a scarf.

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FINDING

Fight Obesity: Trim Salt from Your Kids’ Diet

If you’re worried about your child’s weight, start shopping for low-salt foods and snacks. Salty foods make people thirsty. Kids and teens tend to reach for sugar-sweetened soft drinks when they get thirsty, says a recent study. So trimming daily salt intake could lower soft drink consumption. Cutting salt intake by half could mean 2.3 fewer soft drinks per week. And that could help children avoid weight gain and obesity. Most of the salt in our diet comes from packaged and prepared foods. So one way to trim salt is to look for grocery items marked “low sodium.”

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Regarding WOMEN & HEALTHCARE

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