

Health Connection

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT BERWICK HOSPITAL CENTER



**Celebrating
100 years of service**

**Honoring
home care and
hospice providers**

**Meet our
endocrinologist**

**Cancer care,
close to home**

SURGERY 101:

A manual for peace of mind

Did you take your Girl Scout or Boy Scout oath seriously as a child? If so, to this day you're probably sure to pack what you need before a hike: a map, compass, first-aid kit, water and healthy snacks. You ask what the terrain is and where the trail ends so you can get home on schedule.

When it comes to surgery, studies have shown that this same "be prepared" principle can ease pre-op anxiety, reduce your hospital stay and speed recovery.

If you're about to undergo surgery, ask your doctor to describe the procedure completely. Knowing what to expect can defuse stress and help you approach surgery day with a calm head.

Here are some other ways you can make the time before, during and after surgery run more smoothly:

BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE

- Follow your physician's instructions about refraining from smoking, eating and drinking before the procedure.
- Ask your physician about taking aspirin or other anti-inflammatory drugs before surgery. Because they're blood thinners, these medications may cause excessive blood loss.
- Tell your doctor which prescription and over-the-counter drugs you take. This goes for vitamins and herbs, too, as certain herbal remedies, such as St. John's wort and kava, may extend the effects of anesthesia or create other complications.
- You won't be allowed to drive after the procedure, so make reliable transportation arrangements.
- Organize your home. Make sure you have groceries or frozen meals on hand. If climbing stairs will be a problem, make sleeping arrangements downstairs.

- Practice relaxation techniques such as meditation or yoga. These will help calm you and speed post-op healing.

DURING YOUR HOSPITAL STAY

Your cozy robe or a favorite photo will warm your surroundings and soothe you. Having family and friends visit will bolster you, but don't be afraid to set limits: You'll need some time to rest and recuperate without interruptions.

HOME AGAIN

A little help from friends can be useful. If worries about housework or bills are nagging at you, ask someone to take care of these chores. In the meantime, the relaxation methods you used before surgery can help you feel better now, too. Imagine yourself in the near future doing something you enjoy, such as taking an invigorating hike.



PROTECTING AGAINST FEMALE CANCERS

What every woman should know

Gynecologic cancer is the fourth most common type of cancer in women. Here's a rundown of the gynecologic cancers and facts that can help reduce your risk:

UTERINE CANCER

Uterine cancer—also known as endometrial cancer—is the most common type of reproductive cancer that strikes American women and occurs most often after menopause. Symptoms include unusual vaginal discharge, pelvic pain, pain during intercourse, unexplained weight change and difficult or painful urination.

Obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes and tamoxifen or hormone replacement therapy use may increase risk.

OVARIAN CANCER

Ovarian cancer is the deadliest cancer and often shows no obvious signs until late in its development. But when caught early, most cases can be successfully treated.

Symptoms include abdominal discomfort or pain, nausea, diarrhea, constipation, frequent urination, appetite loss, feelings of fullness, weight change with no known reason and abnormal vaginal bleeding.

An important risk factor is a family history of ovarian cancer. Fertility drugs, hormone replacement therapy, increasing age, infertility, having had no children and a family history of breast cancer may also increase risk.

CERVICAL CANCER

Thanks to Pap tests, deaths from cervical cancer are decreasing. Common symptoms are abnormal bleeding and bloody or discolored vaginal discharge.

The sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV) causes most cervical cancers. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently approved a vaccine that protects against HPV. A federal panel recommends females ages 11 to 26 receive the vaccine.

Other risk factors linked to cervical cancer can be avoided, such as smoking and poor diet.

CANCERS OF THE VAGINA, VULVA AND FALLOPIAN TUBES

These cancers tend to be rare. Women should alert their

doctors to symptoms that include unusual bleeding or discharge, persistent itching of the vulva, pain in the pelvic region, difficult or painful urination, unusual pain or pressure in the abdomen, pain during intercourse and a lump or sore on the vulva that won't heal.

Women may be at risk for vaginal and vulvar cancers if they've had genital warts, chronic vulvar irritations, abnormal Pap tests or intercourse at an early age or with many partners. Women who smoke or whose mothers took DES (diethylstilbestrol) when they were pregnant may also be at risk. Risk factors for tubal cancer are unknown, but it tends to strike women after menopause.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Regular screenings and an annual pelvic exam can detect and even prevent some gynecologic cancers. Keep your doctor informed of any risk factors, especially family history, that you may have.



Medical oncology and hematology treatment—close to home

Berwick Hospital Center's medical oncology and hematology services provide high-quality care for the residents of the Berwick area and surrounding communities. Chemotherapy and other medications, administered to patients undergoing treatment for cancer and blood disorders, are provided in a friendly, close-to-home environment.

The medical oncology and hematology unit is staffed with highly trained and compassionate professionals under the direction of Jose Castillo, M.D. Dr. Castillo is a board-certified medical oncologist, hematologist and internal medicine physician. Nursing staff members include Vicky Benko, R.N.,



Jose Castillo, M.D.
Board Certified in Oncology, Hematology
and Internal Medicine

oncology certified nurse; Carl Smith, R.N.; and Carol Yemola, R.N.

"We offer compassionate care to our patients," says Benko. "We may be small, but we excel in our dedication to our patients and their families."

The Berwick Hospital Center, in conjunction with the American Cancer Society, hosts various educational and screening programs throughout the year. The Outpatient Procedure Unit is open from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with convenient, extended hours on Wednesdays.

If you need an appointment to see Dr. Castillo, call (570) 759-5080.

Endocrinologist joins our medical staff



Cristina Ogrin, M.D.
Board Certified in Internal Medicine
and Endocrinology

Welcome, Cristina Ogrin, M.D., endocrinologist! Dr. Ogrin is part of Berwick Medical Professionals, P.C., a newly formed multi-specialty group. She is board certified in internal medicine and endocrinology and specializes in thyroid disease and diabetes.

"We're very excited and fortunate to have Dr. Ogrin join our medical staff," says Stephen J.

Grubbs, chief executive officer of Berwick Hospital Center. "Her qualifications and specialty are much needed in our local community."

Recently, Dr. Ogrin spoke to Healthy Woman members

about thyroid disease and Senior Circle members about vitamin-D deficiencies.

Dr. Ogrin is a graduate of Ovidius University School of Medicine in Constanta, Romania, and was a resident physician at Albert Einstein College of Medicine/Jacobi Medical Center in Bronx, N.Y. She completed an endocrinology fellowship at SUNY Downstate in Brooklyn, N.Y. Her professional memberships include the American Medical Association, the Endocrine Society, the American Thyroid Association and the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists.

Need an appointment?

Dr. Ogrin's office is at 751 East 16th St., Suite 400, Berwick; hours are Monday through Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. She's accepting patients ages 18 and older. Call (570) 759-5555 to schedule an appointment.

Celebrating National Home Care and Hospice Month

The National Association of Home Care and Hospice designated November as National Home Care and Hospice Month, a time to honor the home care professionals, volunteers and family caregivers who make it possible for seniors, people with disabilities and those who are chronically ill to stay in their homes to receive the care and therapy they need.

For 22 years, the Berwick Hospital Center's Home Health and Hospice Care team has provided in-home services to assist in restoring health and improving outcomes. From the physician to the home health providers, supportive professionals are involved in the patient care plan and progress and are sensitive to the patients' and families' concerns.

"I'm proud of the dedication displayed by the home care team," says Carolyn Diehl, M.S.N., R.N., B.C., director of Berwick Hospital Center's Home Health and Hospice Care. "These people help our patients achieve quality outcomes and meet their individual goals."

HOME HEALTH

Home health provides care after surgery or an illness and helps patients recuperate in their own homes. Services are provided by registered nurses; physical, speech and occupational therapists; medical social workers; and home health aides. The home health program professionals emphasize patient and family education.

HOSPICE

Hospice's core philosophy is that each person has a right to live his or her life free of pain and approach the end of life with dignity, surrounded by compassionate family and loved ones. Berwick Hospital Center's hospice program uses a team approach to care that focuses on providing physical, emotional, psychosocial and spiritual care and support to patients and their families or significant others. The hospice team includes a

medical director, nurses, a medical social worker, home health aides, volunteers, a bereavement coordinator and a spiritual counselor. At hospices across the country, more than 500,000 trained volunteers provide more than 10 million hours of service each year, helping professionals support individuals and families coping with life-limiting illnesses.

Berwick Hospital Center's Home Health and Hospice Care is at 120 East 3rd St., in Berwick. To learn more about home health and hospice services, including the monthly bereavement program, call (570) 759-7892 or (570) 759-7893. Coverage is provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Members of the Home Health and Hospice Care team include, left to right, Denise Moyer, R.N., hospice team leader; Sue Hough, R.N., clinical coordinator; Cheri Spohrer, R.N., home health nurse; Kathy Carper, R.N., B.S.N., home health team leader; Carolyn Diehl, M.S.N., R.N., B.C., director of Home Health and Hospice Care.

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about arthritis?

Test your knowledge and learn more about arthritis.

1

What does the word arthritis mean?

- a. Sore joint
- b. Joint irritation
- c. Joint inflammation
- d. Rigid joint

2

Which of the following statements about arthritis is true?

- a. Using artificial sweeteners like Equal and Nutrasweet that contain aspartame increases your risk of developing arthritis.
- b. Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in Americans over age 15.
- c. Arthritis is more prevalent in women than in men.
- d. Most people with arthritis will need minor surgery to lessen the pain.

3

Osteoarthritis is caused by the breakdown/loss of _____ in the joints.

- a. bursa
- b. cartilage
- c. air
- d. synovial fluid

4

How is rheumatoid arthritis different from other forms of arthritis?

- a. It occurs in joints on both sides of the body.
- b. Doctors recommend people with it sleep on a waterbed to alleviate pressure on joints.
- c. Pain is felt only early in the morning or late at night.
- d. It occurs when crystals build up in the joints.

5

Older adults aren't the only ones affected by arthritis; it can affect any age group. How many children are estimated to have arthritis?

- a. 35,000
- b. 150,000
- c. 300,000
- d. 500,000

ANSWERS: 1. C, 2. B, 3. B, 4. A, 5. C

8

easy ways to get more exercise

Fitting exercise into your schedule doesn't have

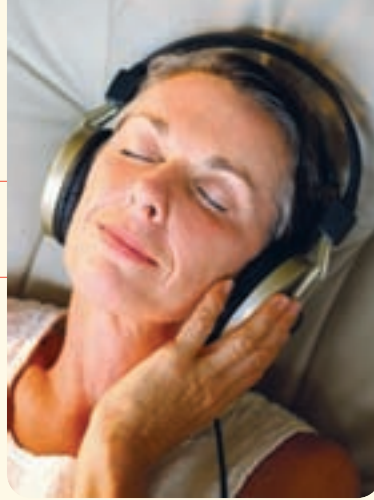
to involve a large bank account or even a lot of time. The following list of ways to make

physical activity a habit was created for even the busiest people.

- 1 **Take the stairs instead of the elevator.** This alternative burns calories and tones muscles.
- 2 **Avoid the phone.** At work, walk down the hallway instead of using the telephone or e-mail to communicate with a co-worker.
- 3 **Walk instead of drive.** It may not be the speediest mode of transportation, but it's effective when you want to visit a neighbor down the street, take your child to a nearby park or pick up a few items at the corner market.
- 4 **Walk during lunch.** Take a friend for company or listen to a book on tape to make your walk mentally as well as physically productive.
- 5 **Clean the house.** You'll have to do more than load the dishwasher to get your heart pumping, but a vigorous cleaning that takes two to three hours may be just what the doctor ordered.
- 6 **Ride your bike.** It's quicker than walking, cheaper than driving and it burns calories.
- 7 **Break activity down into small time increments.** If you don't have the time or energy for 30 minutes of continuous exercise, spread it out. Start with 10 minutes of activity, then do it again and again—for a total of 30 minutes.
- 8 **Vary your activities.** Boredom is one of the biggest commitment killers, so find several activities you enjoy and pick and choose depending on the weather and your mood.



Banish caregiver burnout



If you're caring for someone who depends on you, you need to be healthy and energetic. Yet the sheer amount of time and thought involved in providing care may mean you've put yourself at the bottom of your priority list—making you ripe for stress and burnout. Try these steps to protect your health:

1 Get regular medical checkups. Tell your doctor about your caregiving commitment—he or she may suggest resources to make your life easier.

2 Get plenty of rest. Sleep deprivation contributes to depression. Have a family member pinch-hit (or hire a respite worker) so you can get to bed at a reasonable hour or sneak in a nap.

3 Eat a nutritious diet. A poor diet can lead to malnutrition and fatigue. Regular, well-balanced meals boost energy. Ask family members to help with shopping and meal preparation.

4 Get regular exercise. Moderate exercise combats stress, increases energy and provides a mental-health break.

5 Manage stress. Meditate or learn relaxation techniques. Share your feelings with friends and family members. Ask your doctor for advice or referral to a counselor.

6 Ask for help. Don't try to be a superhero! Ask family

members to help pick up prescriptions, do laundry or drive to doctors' appointments. Ask your doctor about local resources like transportation to medical checkups, home-delivered meals, respite care or adult day-care services.

7 Schedule time for yourself. Schedule time to enjoy your hobbies. Spend time with friends. Try a change of scenery—take a short drive or see a play or concert.

8 Be realistic and flexible. Accept that your loved one's illness may change from week to week. Be flexible as you plan for the future. Acknowledge the many good things you've done and don't be hard on yourself for not being able to do everything on your own.

Real-world strategies to control your weight



Visit the diet and nutrition section of any bookstore and you'll be amazed by the number of books offering the latest miracle diet. Low carb, no carb, high protein, low calorie—but do any work?

Fad diets tend to be tough to stick with. Even worse, people often feel deprived and pile unwanted pounds back on once they're off the diets.

The best way to take off fat is slowly and steadily. That means a weight loss of no more than one to two

pounds a week. Many fad diets drastically reduce your food intake and put your body into “starvation” mode, slowing your metabolism to conserve calories. That's the

exact opposite of what you want. Similarly, restricting certain foods—such as carbohydrates—can lead to cravings that will derail your efforts.

THE TRIED AND TRUE

The following are real-life tips to help you look and feel your best:

- **Rebalance your diet.** If your diet is heavy on foods like crackers, bagels, white rice, low-fiber cereal and pasta, substitute them with whole grains like brown rice, multi-grain breads and pasta enriched with soy. To feel satisfied longer, combine carbs with protein.

- **Count calories.** Simply put, to lose weight you have to ingest fewer calories than you expend.

- **Spread out meals.** Eating small amounts throughout the day boosts your metabolism. Aim for three equal-sized meals, plus nutritious snacks in between.

- **Ditch self-denial.** Instead of avoiding any one food group, make wise choices. Whole-wheat crackers with peanut butter are a smarter snack than a bag of chips.

- **Emphasize weight training.** Add strength training to your exercise program. Resistance exercises build muscle, which burns more calories by increasing your metabolism.



Stephen J. Grubbs
Chief Executive Officer

Celebrating the past, envisioning the future

Reflecting on the time I've spent at Berwick Hospital Center thus far, I feel a sense of pride in being associated with an institution that's served the region for the past 100 years. Our goal has been to provide you with quality healthcare close to home, and I feel we do

continued support—for the past 100 years.

Berwick Hospital Center continues to be one of Columbia County's leading institutions for employment and economic development, and we invite you to join us as we grow. The future is bright for Berwick Hospital Center, and "Celebrating the past (100 years) and envisioning the future" is our theme for 2006 and beyond.

Sincerely,

STEPHEN J. GRUBBS
Chief Executive Officer
Berwick Hospital Center

that. In fact, the results of our most recent patient satisfaction survey indicate that we exceeded your expectations. One hundred percent of those surveyed say they would recommend Berwick Hospital to others. In addition, 99 percent of those surveyed say they're satisfied with the care they received at Berwick Hospital. These are perhaps the best overall satisfaction survey results I've seen in my 18 years as a healthcare executive, and we at Berwick Hospital Center thank you for your



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