

# Health Connection

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT BERWICK HOSPITAL CENTER

**Good day,  
sunshine!**

Greet the day  
with an SPF

**Fire up the grill!**

But read these  
food-safety tips first

MENTAL HEALTH:

**Special care for  
older adults**

**Special delivery:  
Getting ready  
for baby**

# Good day, sunshine!

## Greet the day with an SPF

**Y**ou don't have to be a sun worshipper to take sun protection seriously—even limited exposure can cause damage. Skin cancer is the most common kind of cancer in the United States, affecting nearly half of all Americans who live to age 65. Although most cancers don't appear until after age 50, skin cancer results from years of accumulated sun damage. However, you can avoid sun damage and enjoy your favorite outdoor activities by taking sensible precautions and using a sunscreen that protects your skin from damaging ultraviolet rays.

### THE ABCS OF SPFS

Sunscreen products are rated according to their sun protection factor (SPF)—the length of time a product will protect you from sunburn caused by ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. But sunscreens don't provide complete protection. You still need to be cautious about timing and limiting your sun exposure.

Your best bet when shopping for a sunscreen is to choose a product with an SPF of at least 15, according to the American Cancer Society. Check the label to make sure it provides “broad-spectrum” protection, which protects against UVB rays and ultraviolet A (UVA) rays. UVB rays cause sunburns that can lead to superficial skin cancers known as basal cell carcinomas and squamous cell carcinomas. They can also lead to the more deadly skin cancer, melanoma. UVA rays penetrate even more deeply into the skin, damaging connective tissue.

### SAVE-YOUR-SKIN TIPS

If you'll be outside, slather on sunscreen and find a shady spot, but keep in mind that sunlight reflects off surfaces such as water, sand and pavement. Avoid the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when rays are strongest. To block sunlight,



wear sunglasses, a broad-brimmed hat and clothing made from tightly woven fabric, preferably long-sleeved shirts and pants. For your sunscreen to be most effective:

- Apply about 30 minutes before going outdoors.
- Use liberally. Apply 1 ounce of sunscreen to cover all exposed areas of your body, including your neck, ears and scalp.
- Reapply every 90 minutes—more often if you sweat heavily or go swimming.
- Use even on cloudy days—UV rays can still reach you.

Harmful UV rays can pass through car windows, too, so apply sunscreen to exposed skin if you'll be driving during peak sun hours.

Make applying sunscreen a habit—like brushing your teeth—but don't rely on sunscreen for full protection against skin cancer. Be sure to examine your skin each month for unusual changes and see your dermatologist if you spot any irregularities.

**“When outside, apply sunscreen liberally every 90 minutes.”**



# Bouncing back from joint pain

**W**ith all the wear and tear we place on our joints, it's no wonder that almost 639,000 people underwent hip or knee replacement surgery in 2003, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Knees and hips, in particular, are prone to problems—largely because they play a part in almost everything we do—but shoulder, finger, ankle and elbow joints can need replacement as well.

## WHY ARE JOINT REPLACEMENTS NEEDED?

Joint replacement surgery, also known as arthroplasty, becomes necessary when conditions such as arthritis destroy the cartilage that cushions and separates bones. Over time, the friction of bone against bone wears away the joint, causing it to become stiff and painful.

Additionally, sports-related injuries and falls can create the need for surgery. Generally, arthroplasty becomes an option when joint pain disrupts your daily routine.

## GETTING NEW PARTS

Surgeons can create a new joint, relieving your pain and providing greater freedom of movement. During the procedure, destroyed bone and tissue are removed and replaced with prosthetics, or artificial parts. The parts are made from durable metal, plastic or ceramic and can last up to 20 years.

Newer minimally invasive techniques are being performed more often, using smaller incisions—just 3 to 5 inches, compared with 6 to 12 inches in standard procedures—and reducing recovery time. Your hospital stay may be reduced to one or two days from four or three, and some patients go home the same day as surgery. However, minimally invasive surgery is not for everyone; patients who are overweight, elderly or frail or who have bone abnormalities do not make good candidates.

With hip or knee replacement surgery, expect to use a walker, crutches or a cane initially after the procedure. As you recuperate, a physical therapist will help you perform exercises to strengthen the joint, guiding your movements so you don't accidentally dislocate the replacement. Barring the unforeseen, you should be walking unassisted two to six weeks later. And though grueling workouts like 10-mile runs may still be too tough for artificial hips or knees, make plans to resume long-lost activities like dancing or strolling on the beach within six months.



## Do you need joint replacement surgery?

**Y**our overall health and age and the condition of your joints will help you and your healthcare provider decide whether you're suitable for joint replacement. If you can answer yes to any of the following questions, you may want to consider surgery.

- Are you still in pain even after losing excess weight?
- Does your pain keep you awake nights?
- Does your pain interfere with your ability to earn a living?
- Has your quality of life suffered because of your pain—your ability to travel, perform household chores or visit with friends or family?
- Have you exhausted all other options, including anti-inflammatory drugs to relieve joint pain, walking with a cane, power-walking or swimming instead of jogging?

# A brighter tomorrow

## Special care for older adults



and developing social skills and self-esteem.

Referred patients are evaluated for admission, and treatment can be provided using Berwick Hospital Center's resources as necessary. Available services include a neurological exam; CT scans; recreational and speech therapies; dietary education; and individual, group and family therapies. Patient and family involvement in treatment decisions and discharge plans is a very important part of the program.

The staff shares a strong commitment to older adults and encourages them to reach their fullest potential with the additional help of educational and community services.

The Speaker's Bureau has available staff members who provide presentations to local healthcare facilities on mental health and geriatric issues.

The Alzheimer's Support Group provides support and encouragement for families and caregivers of loved ones with Alzheimer's disease. This

educational program is held on the third Wednesday of each month from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in Berwick Hospital Center's Conference Rooms 1 and 2. No fee or registration is required.

Berwick Hospital Center's Behavioral Health Services for Older Adults accepts inquiries and referrals from family members, healthcare providers, nursing home care providers, social workers and individuals. An initial assessment is free and confidential. For more information about these services, contact Program Director Kristina Birdsall Culver, M.S.W., at (570) 759-5160 or by e-mail at [kristina\\_culver@chs.net](mailto:kristina_culver@chs.net). Berwick Hospital Center Behavioral Health Services for Older Adults is located at 701 East 16th Street, Berwick. Visit Berwick Hospital Center's Web site at [www.berwick-hospital.com](http://www.berwick-hospital.com).

**M**ental health status can change dramatically with advancing age. Professional medical and psychiatric help for illnesses such as Alzheimer's disease or related dementias, depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive behaviors and schizophrenia may become essential. Berwick Hospital Center's Behavioral Health Program is dedicated to treating older adults—ages 55 and over—who have mental health issues.

Many people are confused by the term *behavioral health*. What is it? How can it benefit an older adult?

Simply, behavioral healthcare is the treatment of mental health disorders. Berwick Hospital Center's specialized inpatient behavioral health program focuses on respecting the dignity of each individual, maintaining and improving cognitive skills, encouraging independence

# Preparing for a special delivery at Berwick Hospital Center



**A**t Berwick Hospital Center, we have been delivering babies for decades. The compassionate, caring staff and qualified doctors of our obstetrics (OB) department offer women services from fertility counseling to pediatric care.

Expectant mothers need to know they have a source of accurate information and a doctor they can trust. Berwick Hospital Center provides families with the knowledge they need to prepare for childbirth, how to maintain a healthy lifestyle throughout the pregnancy and what to expect during delivery. It doesn't end there. We even offer useful tips on what to do after your baby is born.

"Our patients have the same doctor all the way through; you're not just a number," says Trudy Shultz, R.N., interim director of OB Services at Berwick Hospital Center. "In most places, that's something rare these days."

Berwick Hospital Center's OB Department consists of two highly qualified and educated doctors. Niharika Mehta, M.D., FACOG, is board certified and has been on the Berwick Hospital staff since 1984. Her specialty is obstetrics and gynecology, and she has extensive skills in infertility, including microsurgery and laparoscopic procedures. Dr. Mehta is a member of the American Medical Association and Pennsylvania Medical Society.

Patrick Fiero, M.D., FACOG, FACS, is board certified and specializes in obstetrics and gynecology, with extensive skills in laparoscopic procedures. Dr. Fiero

joined the Berwick Hospital Center family in 2002. He is a graduate of the University of the Northeast School of Medicine. He was also a clinical assistant professor at the New York Medical College for eight years.

At Berwick Hospital Center, you can expect great care for you and your baby. An eight-week series of prenatal classes covers a variety of topics, including tips on child care and parenting, what to expect during the first three months, breastfeeding, bottle feeding, Cesarean section, labor rehearsal and infant/child safety and CPR. Prenatal classes are held every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Berwick Hospital Center Multi-Purpose Conference Room.

If you have questions, call Berwick Hospital Center at **(570) 759-5000** or visit our Web site at **[www.berwick-hospital.com](http://www.berwick-hospital.com)**.



## Need an appointment?

**N**iharika Mehta, M.D., FACOG, (right) has offices at 695 East 16th Street in Berwick and 101 West Broad Street, Suite 307, Hazleton. To schedule an appointment with Dr. Mehta, call **(570) 759-1830** (Berwick) or **(570) 459-0303** (Hazleton).

Patrick Fiero, M.D., FACOG, FACS, (left) has an office at 751 East 16th Street, Suite 100, Berwick. To schedule an appointment with Dr. Fiero, call **(570) 759-8050**.

## HEALTHWISE QUIZ

### How much do you know about ADHD?

Take this quiz to find out how much you know about attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

- 1 Which of the following is *not* a symptom of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder?
  - a. hyperactivity
  - b. obsession
  - c. impulsivity
  - d. inattention
- 2 ADHD is thought to be caused by:
  - a. poor parenting
  - b. a genetic disorder
  - c. rheumatic fever
  - d. all of the above
- 3 Other disorders may accompany ADHD in as many as one in three cases. These include:
  - a. Tourette's syndrome
  - b. learning disabilities
  - c. bipolar disorder
  - d. all of the above
- 4 Most children who have ADHD begin to show signs and symptoms of the disorder between ages:
  - a. 1 and 2 years
  - b. 4 and 6 years
  - c. 9 and 12 years
  - d. 13 and 15 years
- 5 Adults can also suffer from ADHD. To be diagnosed with the disorder, a person must:
  - a. have shown symptoms of ADHD in childhood
  - b. have suffered from a serious illness as a child
  - c. have trouble holding down a job
  - d. be a reckless driver

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



## STROKE SMARTS

### How to spot a stroke

A stroke is similar to a lightning strike—it can happen suddenly and without warning. However, there are sometimes warning signs that lightning is imminent, such as storm clouds, rain and thunder.

Warning signs can signal a stroke, too. If you spot them and act quickly, you may prevent severe disability or death. If you or someone around you show any of these symptoms, seek emergency medical treatment immediately:

- sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- sudden, severe headache with no known cause

These signs point to a stroke in progress. Blood and oxygen are not getting to a part of the brain as a result of a burst blood vessel or a blood clot, and that portion of the brain begins to die. Speedy medical care may minimize brain damage.

#### RISK FACTORS

Lifestyle factors and other health conditions that weaken blood vessels or contribute to blood clots increase your risk for stroke. You can control or treat some of them, such as high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, carotid or other artery disease, abnormal heart rhythm, transient ischemic attacks (mini-strokes), certain blood disorders, sickle cell disease, high blood cholesterol, high triglycerides, physical inactivity, obesity and substance abuse.

Factors you can't change include increasing age, gender (more men suffer strokes), family history, race (African-Americans face greater risk) and having had a prior stroke or heart attack. Talk to your doctor about ways to reduce your risk for stroke and be prepared to act quickly if warning signs appear.

# Outward bound

## 10 play-safe tips for your kids

**W**hat's one of the best things to say to your child? Go outside and play! Close supervision, proper protective gear and these simple precautions will help your kids safely enjoy the great outdoors:

- 1 Apply a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 every day—even on cloudy days—and reapply every 90 minutes, especially after swimming or sweating.
- 2 Outfit kids with brimmed hats and don't forget the sunglasses.
- 3 Keep babies under age 6 months out of direct sunlight and in the shade.
- 4 Avoid using swimming aids such as "floaties." They don't substitute for a life vest and can give kids a false sense of security.
- 5 When kids are swimming, keep a portable phone and rescue equipment like a shepherd's hook and life preserver nearby.
- 6 Supervise kids at all times near water and stay within arm's length of babies and toddlers. If you have to step



away even for a moment, get everyone out of the pool area and take little ones with you.

- 7 Insist kids wear proper protective equipment, especially a helmet, wrist guards and knee and elbow pads when bicycle riding, skateboarding and in-line skating.
- 8 Teach kids to bike skillfully. Enroll your children in a class to practice basic skills, such as balance and braking, on a smooth surface away from traffic.
- 9 Visit playgrounds that have soft surfaces like wood mulch or chips, shredded rubber tires or sand to lessen the impact of falls. Avoid play equipment on asphalt, concrete, packed dirt and grass.
- 10 Don't let kids wear helmets, necklaces, backpacks, scarves or clothing with drawstrings while on playgrounds.



## Fire up the grill!

### But read these food-safety tips first

**F**or many people, summertime fare means fresh, fast, no-fuss meals cooked outdoors. However, warm temperatures can set the stage for a nasty bout of food poisoning. Take these

precautions to make sure your meals are safe:

- **Defrost thoroughly.** Place frozen foods in the refrigerator for safe thawing. If meats are out too long, bacteria can produce illness-causing toxins that remain active even during cooking.
- **Marinate right.** Keep foods refrigerated while marinating.
- **Transport safely.** When traveling, use an insulated cooler with enough ice or cold packs to maintain a temperature of at least 40° F. Wait until you're ready to leave to

pack refrigerated foods in the cooler. Then place it in the coolest part of the car—not the trunk. When you arrive at your destination, move the cooler into the shade, avoid opening it frequently and replenish ice as needed.

- **Bring extra plates and tools.** Use one

platter and spatula, tongs and sauce brush for raw foods and a different platter and utensils for cooked foods.

Don't use a fork to turn meats since puncturing can introduce surface bacteria into the meat.

- **Keep clean.** Bring paper towels and disposable wipes or a sanitizing gel for convenient hand washing and surface cleanup.

- **Prepare the grill.** Light the coals and allow the cooking surface to heat up to kill microorganisms before putting on the food.

### Is it done?

Use an instant-read meat thermometer to test meat's doneness. Grill precooked meats such as hot dogs to 165° F until steaming hot. Refer to the chart at right to determine when cooked meat is safe to eat.

Meat product	Safe temperature
poultry	180° F
pork	160° F
beef, ground	160° F
beef, steaks or roasts	145° F
veal	145° F
lamb	145° F

They treated me like  
I was someone special.  
I feel the same way  
about them.



**er.** Emergencies can happen anytime, anywhere. Good thing we bring the care you need close to home – with a caring and responsive staff, advanced medical technology and, of course, the compassion and respect you deserve. In an emergency, you should know that the right care from the right people is always right here.

 **BERWICK  
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