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Windward Health

JOURNAL OF WELLNESS AND GOOD HEALTH CARE

SUMMER 2009

STATE-OF-THE-HEART CARE

When a heart attack strikes, every minute counts

BY MELE POCHEREVA

Having advanced cardiac care services nearby increases your chances of surviving a heart attack. ♦ “Getting to a hospital quickly for treatment of a heart attack is all-important—there are diminishing returns with every passing minute,” says Sonny Wong, MD, FACC, cardiologist, who has been affiliated with Castle Medical Center since 1996. “Fortunately for Windward residents, Castle offers a full spectrum of cardiology services, including acute, lifesaving interventional procedures to treat heart attacks.”

In fact, 90 percent of heart problems can be diagnosed and treated on the Windward side through Castle’s Cardiopulmonary Department and its Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory. Castle works with four excellent board-certified cardiologists who practice exclusively in Windward Oahu. In addition to Dr. Wong, they are Eckhart Diestel, MD, FACC, FSCAI; Maria Markarian, DO, FACC; and



ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY: Castle Medical Director of Cardiology Maria Markarian, DO, stands in the hospital’s Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory, which helps physicians identify defective heart valves, pinpoint the exact locations of blockages and detect other abnormalities in heart function.

Michael Yee, MD. Assisted by specially trained staff, these Castle physicians have some of the most advanced technology at their fingertips to diagnose and manage cardiovascular disease.

FASTER TREATMENT With technology such as electrocardiography and advanced diagnostic imaging of the arteries and heart, Castle’s Cardiopulmonary Department and cath lab help physicians identify defective heart valves, pinpoint the exact locations of blockages and detect other abnormalities in heart function. One of the newest diagnostic advances is the 64-slice computed tomography scan, a minimally invasive procedure that provides detailed 3-D images of the coronary arteries.

Castle’s cardiac care services do not include open-heart surgery, but the medical center does offer interventional procedures that can be alternatives to surgery, with long-term results and without a long hospital stay.

—Continued on page 3

Call 88 to reach Castle’s Rapid Response Team

An initiative launched three years ago by Castle Medical Center’s Cardiopulmonary Department is showing dramatic results in reducing the number of CPR procedures needed among patients whose medical conditions are not generally life-threatening, says the department’s director, Ron Sanderson. The program makes an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) nurse, a respiratory therapist and a lab technologist—the Rapid Response Team—available to respond to an in-house 88 call. A visiting family member or anyone else who thinks a patient is having a sudden medical emergency can make the call.

“Although emergencies such as cardiac arrest are less common among patient areas of the hospital other than Intensive Care or the Emergency Room [ER], where medical personnel are specially trained, we could expect 35 to 40 incidents of cardiac arrest—or Code Blue events—each year among our noncritical patients,” Sanderson says. “In the first six months of our Rapid Response program, we saw a 51 percent decrease in Code Blue events outside the ICU and ER. From 2007 to 2008, we had only 10 cardiac emergencies.”

Do more to help your heart: Quit smoking with our “Breathe Free” class. Learn more on page 8.



SEPT. 20
SAVE THE DATE

ESPECIALLY FOR WOMEN—see page 4.
Our Health and Beauty Fair is designed just for you!

MAMMOGRAMS

NOW MORE ACCURACY AND COMFORT

THANKS TO THE technology available at Castle Medical Center (CMC), women can depend on more accurate and comfortable mammograms. The hospital's R2 CAD (computer-aided detection) system allows radiologists to double-read mammography films digitally. Brian Matsusaka, director of Imaging Services at Castle, says studies indicate that the R2 CAD system—equipped with the latest software—can detect up to 6 percent more cancers.

"Breast cancer is one of the most difficult cancers to detect," Matsusaka says. "This technology provides our radiologist an additional tool for interpreting mammograms."

In addition, CMC also uses the MammoPad, which dramatically reduces some of the discomfort associated with a mammogram. The MammoPad allows CMC technicians to achieve proper compression—the key to producing high-quality images that allow physicians to detect breast cancer in its early stages—while at the same time reducing discomfort.

"Women have come to expect the very best in health care," Matsusaka says. "Now they can be assured that we are doing our part to fulfill this expectation."

 The R2 CAD system and MammoPad are available at the Kailua Imaging Center (KIC) and at Imaging Services at CMC. Call 263-3389 (KIC) or 263-5166 (CMC) to schedule your appointment.

Experience the difference a softer touch makes.



How to get ready

You've made the decision to have a mammogram. Good for you! Here's how to prepare:

- Schedule your appointment for one week after your menstrual period. Your breasts may be tender the week before your period.
- If you've had previous mammograms at a different facility, request

that the x-rays or digital pictures be sent to you or the new facility so that doctors can compare the old and new images.

- On the day of your appointment, wear a two-piece outfit so that it's easy to remove your top. Avoid wearing deodorant or antiperspirant. These products may affect the quality of the images.
- Before the exam, describe to the

technologist who will be doing your mammogram any breast problems or symptoms you've experienced. You should also let the technologist know if there's any chance you might be pregnant.

After the test, be sure to ask when you should receive your results. If you don't get those results as expected, follow up.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

HEALTHY STEPS

Get up and moving this summer with Castle—see page 8.

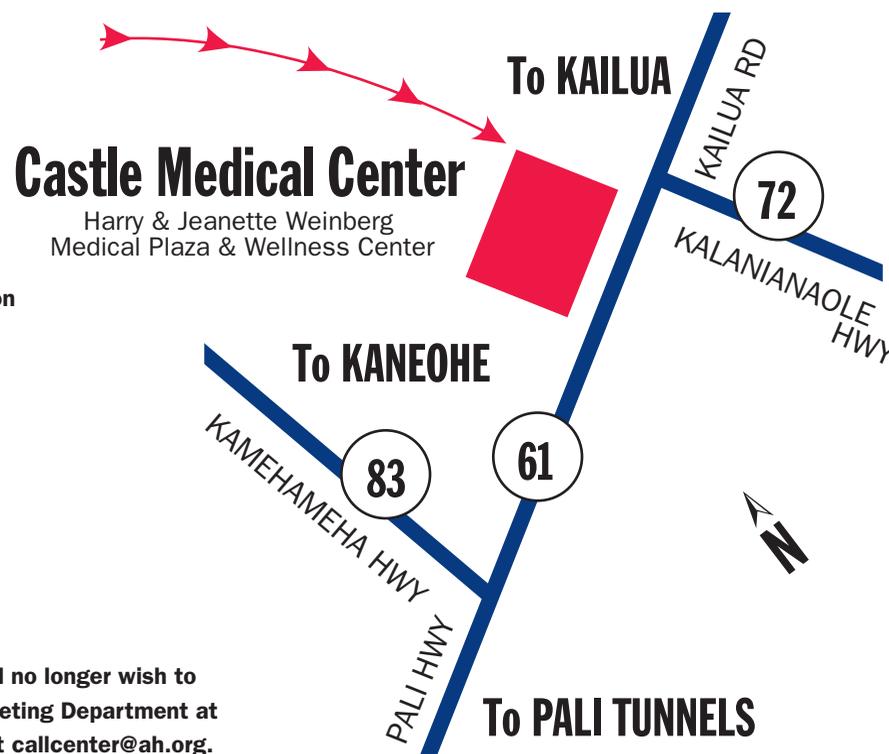
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■ Request a physician directory.

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HEART HEALERS: Pictured from left are cardiac catheterization technologist Blake Taira; Kathy Earles, RN; Medical Director of Cardiology Maria Markarian, DO; and cardiac catheterization technologists Emily Huff and Cynthia Wesley.

State-of-the-heart

—Continued from page 1

For 90 percent of patients experiencing a heart attack or coronary artery blockage, percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), or balloon angioplasty, has become the standard treatment. Previously this procedure was only performed in medical centers that offered cardiac surgery as a backup procedure. Today, many medical centers, including the cath lab at Castle, are performing PCI to the highest standards of patient safety.

Other common interventional procedures include implantation of a pacemaker to keep the heart beating at a regular rate and peripheral vascular catheterization, a procedure similar to angioplasty that removes plaque buildup and blockages in the arteries.

A new program for heart patients The transtelephonic pacemaker and defibrillator interrogation program allows patients to check their pacemaker devices and monitor heart function from home. Plug-in interrogation units relay information to Castle through patients' phone lines. Technicians and physicians at Castle review the information and advise patients if they need to see their physicians to have their pacemakers adjusted.

Castle is the only hospital in Hawaii currently offering this program, says Ron Sanderson, director of Castle's Cardiopulmonary Department.

'The experience was magical'

Castle ER doctor takes medical skills to sea on *Hokule'a* canoe

Sailing was a first career for Castle Medical Center Emergency Room (ER) physician Craig Thomas, MD. He grew up racing dinghies all over the world, winning a couple of North American and world championships before leaving the competitive sailing circuit for medical school. He and his wife, Susan, arrived in Hawaii aboard their 37-foot ketch *Honu*, which they sailed from Connecticut.

Dr. Thomas had an opportunity to exercise both his passion for sailing and his medical expertise as the onboard physician for the Polynesian sailing canoe *Hokule'a* during its recent training voyage to Palmyra Atoll.

"I think they primarily invited me because I wrote a text about treatment of Hawaii's marine injuries," Dr. Thomas says. "They found out about my sailing experience en route."

During the 950-mile leg from Honolulu south to

Meet our cardiologists

Maria Markarian, DO, FACC, is certified by the American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine in cardiovascular disease and internal medicine. She has specialty board certification in interventional cardiology and serves as medical director of Castle's Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory.

Sonny Wong, MD, FACC, is board-certified in internal medicine with a subspecialty certificate in cardiovascular disease.

Michael Y. T. Yee, MD, is board-certified in internal medicine with a subspecialty certificate in cardiovascular disease.

Eckhart Diestel, MD, FACC, FSCAI, is board-certified in internal medicine with subspecialty certificates in cardiovascular disease and in interventional cardiology.

"The remote interrogation system doesn't eliminate the need to see your doctor for checkups, but it's particularly beneficial to those with limited mobility or full-time jobs, since it can reduce the frequency of those visits," he says.



MARITIME MEDICINE: Craig Thomas, MD, sailed on the Polynesian sailing canoe *Hokule'a* as the onboard physician.

Palmyra, he treated seasickness, salt water boils and sunburn—a real problem on an open vessel like *Hokule'a*. Fortunately, there were no serious medical emergencies along the way.

Reflecting on the voyage, Dr. Thomas says: "The teamwork required to operate the canoe was a lesson in coalescing diverse abilities to accomplish difficult tasks, much like an emergency department. The experience was magical."

Castle News

WINDWARD SURGERY CENTER OPENS The new \$5.3 million Windward Surgery Center opened at Castle Medical Center (CMC) in the spring. The 9,000-square-foot facility is in the Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Medical Plaza & Wellness Center and has two operating rooms, two endoscopy rooms, and waiting and recovery rooms. It offers same-day surgery, screenings and other pro-



cedures in general surgery, orthopedics, gynecology, urology and podiatry.

The ambulatory center is a partnership between CMC and a group of 15 Windward Oahu surgeons. It is managed by Colorado-based Health Inventures.

CMC ONE OF BEST PLACES TO WORK For the fourth time, Castle Medical Center (CMC) has made the list of the top 10 Best Places to Work in Hawaii in the Large Companies category. Castle is the only acute care hospital to make the list since *Hawaii Business Magazine* started the awards program five years ago.



CASTLE RECOGNIZED FOR QUALITY Castle Medical Center (CMC) has received the American Heart Association's (AHA's) Get With The Guidelines—Coronary Artery Disease Gold Performance Achievement Award. The award recognizes Castle's commitment to quality and success for more than 24 consecutive months in implementing a higher standard of cardiac care that effectively improves treatment of patients hospitalized with coronary artery disease. The AHA will recognize CMC and other honored hospitals in the issue of *U.S. News & World Report* featuring "America's Best Hospitals."

Professional Research Consultants, Inc., (PRC) recently awarded CMC the Four-Star Excellence Award. The hospital received the award for scoring in the top 25 percent nationally for the percentage of associates who rated Castle as "excellent" on PRC's Employee Engagement Survey in 2008. PRC is a premier research organization that provides information and resources to support health care organizations' health care improvement efforts.

GOVERNING BOARD WELCOMES TWO NEW MEMBERS

Two new board members have been appointed to Castle Medical Center's Governing Board. Betti Anders is the founder, president and CEO of Professional Dynamics, Inc., a national injury and disability management



Betti Anders



Noemi Pendleton

services organization. Noemi Pendleton is the director of the Hawaii State Executive Office on Aging, which funds aging and caregiver support services through statewide county and community agencies on aging.

On stage

- Kaukahi.
- New Dimensions Fashion Show.

Rejuvenate your body

Health and beauty events, including free screenings and education:

- Cholesterol screening.
- Blood pressure check.
- Lung function test.
- Incontinence and lymphedema information.
- Breast health.
- Sleep assessment.
- Body composition assessment.
- Skin cancer screening.
- Community health organizations.
- Stress management.

Refresh your mind

Get in touch with your body. Attend free seminars by Castle Medical Center physicians on:

- Women's health.
- Skin care.
- Colon cancer.
- Fibromyalgia.
- Women and heart disease.
- Infertility treatment.
- Abnormal Pap tests.
- Surgical weight loss.

Restore your spirit

Take advantage of these activities to lift your spirit:

- Cooking demonstrations.
- Make-up and fragrance demonstrations and samples.
- Free massages.
- Free manicures and pedicures.
- Giveaways and door prizes.

Plus: Free car seat safety checks!

WOMEN'S HEALTH & BEAUTY FAIR

Join us Sunday, Sept. 20, from 1 to 5 p.m. For details, call 263-5400 or visit www.castlemed.org. There click on "News & Events," then "Events."



LOSING WEIGHT

GET READY TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

If you're trying to lose weight, you probably wish you could just snap your fingers and make the pounds instantly melt away. ♦ Unfortunately, losing weight isn't that easy.

But if you know the facts about losing weight and have a weight-loss plan, you can lose those extra pounds—and keep them off.

SLOW AND STEADY IS BEST Many diets promise fast weight loss, and some do work in the short term because they're low in calories. But it's the long term that matters most: You want to both lose weight and not gain it back.

Studies show that people who lose weight gradually (about 1 to 2 pounds per week) are more likely to keep the

weight off than are people who lose weight quickly.

That's because healthy weight loss isn't about dieting but about changing your lifestyle for good. Exercising more and eating less will help you reach your weight-loss goals and maintain them.

Another thing to keep in mind when trying to shed pounds: Even a modest weight loss will lower your risk for chronic diseases related to obesity, such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and diabetes.

For instance, by losing just 5 to 10 percent of your total body weight, you could see improvements in your blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood sugars.

CALORIES AND EXERCISE COUNT Think of your weight as a balance scale. If your weight is staying the same, then the number of calories you take in is the same as the number you burn.

If the scale tips one way or the other, then you will either lose weight (calories burned exceed calories taken in) or gain weight (calories eaten are more than what you burn).

To lose 1 to 2 pounds a week, you need to reduce the number of calories you eat by 500 to 1,000 a day.

Exercise can further help you lose weight by increasing the number of calories you burn.

Studies also show the only way to maintain weight loss is to exercise regularly. You may need more than 300 minutes (five hours) a week of moderate-intensity physical activity to keep the weight off.

WE CAN HELP Call 263-5400 for information about Castle Medical Center's comprehensive weight-management programs.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; U.S. Food and Drug Administration

You go, girl! Get a leg up on protecting your ACL

There's at least one area where women in sports rack up higher stats than men—ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) injuries.

Depending on the sport, female athletes are between two and seven times as likely to sustain such an injury.

And 20 years after an ACL injury, women are much more likely than men to wind up with osteoarthritis, reports the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

Why are women more vulnerable to ACL injuries than men? Experts suggest a combination of these factors:

- The quadriceps muscles are aligned slightly differently in women than men, creating an angle that may increase the risk for injury.
- Women's smaller ACLs may be more likely to tear.
- Higher estrogen levels may make women's ligaments looser.
- Relatively weaker hamstring muscles in women make their knees less stable.
- Women often favor one leg over the other, which creates uneven movement patterns.

■ Women tend to flex their knees less than men do when running or landing from a jump.

Safer knees

Women can't change their anatomy, but they can reduce their risk for ACL injuries. If you have a coach or trainer, ask for advice about your technique and positioning.

These steps can also help protect your knees:

- Training to improve your balance, such as using a device called a wobble board.
- Exercising to strengthen your leg muscles, such as doing leg presses, squats and lunges.
- Learning to flex your knees more when jumping or running.
- Doing strength training for the core muscles of your back, chest and abdomen. A stability ball is a good tool for this.



To learn more about preventing injuries, visit the American Council on Exercise at www.acefitness.org.

PRENATAL CARE

WHY IT MATTERS

You've checked and double-checked—and then checked again just to be sure. And all the home pregnancy tests agree: You're pregnant. ♦ Now it's time for a flurry of phone calls to share the news with family and friends. Just be sure at least one of those calls is to your doctor's office—it's time to make an appointment for your first prenatal checkup.

THE BEST START Prenatal checkups are essential for both you and your baby. Getting regular prenatal care can:

- Help you have a healthy baby.
- Decrease your risk of having your baby too early.
- Help your doctor find and treat potential problems early.

In general, you'll have about one prenatal checkup per month for the first several months of pregnancy. As you get closer to your due date—or if you have any health conditions that need to be monitored more closely—you'll need more frequent checkups.

During prenatal visits, your doctor may:

- Determine the baby's due date.
- Check the baby's heartbeat and growth.
- Check your weight and blood pressure.
- Check you for problems, such as anemia, infections or gestational diabetes.
- Talk to you about some essential healthy habits, such as eating well, getting enough folic acid, and not smoking or drinking during your pregnancy.
- Answer your questions and concerns.

PRE-PREGNANCY CARE Ideally, prenatal care starts even before a woman gets pregnant, with a preconception checkup. During this checkup, a doctor can help identify any potential health problems and suggest ways a woman can be at her best before getting pregnant.

Sources: American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; March of Dimes; National Institutes of Health

Baby on the way? Get ready in our "Prenatal Fitness" class. See page 8 for details.

CARDIAC HEALTH

YOUR HEART UNDER ATTACK

What is the most important hour of your life? Maybe it's the hour you gave birth. Or the hour you met the love of your life. ♦ Or it could be the first hour after you have a heart attack.

Women are more likely than men to delay seeking medical care for a heart attack. In fact, women are more likely to die of a heart attack than men—in part because they often wait longer to call for help.

But if you recognize symptoms and seek treatment within one hour of having a heart attack, you have a better chance of getting lifesaving care. Some heart attack medications are most effective at limiting or preventing heart attack damage if taken within one hour of the onset of symptoms.

WHAT IT FEELS LIKE Women may hesitate to call 911 because they don't think they're having a heart attack. So it's important to recognize heart attack warning signs.

Signs of a heart attack aren't the same for everyone. However, chest pain or discomfort that lasts more than a few minutes or that goes away and comes back is the most common symptom for both men and women. Women are slightly more likely than men to have other symptoms of a heart attack, such as shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

Keep in mind that symptoms can be mild or come on slowly. And if you've had a heart attack before, your symptoms may not be the same as the last time you had an attack.

Embarrassment prevents some women from seeking emergency care for a heart attack, reports the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

You might not want to admit that your symptoms may be serious. Or you may not want to bother or worry others or act like it's an emergency if it turns out to be a false alarm.

However, you should always immediately call for help, whether you're sure you're having a heart attack or not. The longer you wait to seek care, the more likely it is that you will have permanent or even fatal heart damage.

The best way to get emergency care is to call 911. Calling 911 brings emergency medicine to your door, so you receive treatment even before you get to the hospital.

Don't wait longer than five minutes after the onset of symptoms to call 911, advises the NIH. And even if your symptoms stop completely in less than five minutes, you should call your doctor.

Once you arrive at the hospital, don't be embarrassed to let doctors know what you need. You are not overreacting. You have the right to ask for tests to determine if you've had a heart attack.

Is your heart at risk?

Heart disease is the most common cause of heart attacks and the No. 1 killer of women in the U.S.

Some factors can increase your risk of developing heart disease. For example, a family history of early heart disease—before age 55 in men and age 65 in women—in an immediate family member increases

your chance of developing it.

According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, a woman's risk of heart disease is also high if she: ■ Is over 55. ■ Has a high total cholesterol or high LDL (bad) cholesterol. ■ Has high blood pressure. ■ Smokes cigarettes. ■ Does not exercise regularly. ■ Is overweight. ■ Has diabetes.

Some lifestyle changes may help reduce your risk of heart disease, such as quitting smoking and getting daily exercise. If you have high cholesterol, eating a low-fat diet that is filled with fruits, vegetables and high-fiber foods might bring it down. If lifestyle changes alone aren't sufficient to change your cholesterol numbers, you may need to take medications.



DO YOU NEED A DIETITIAN?

The answer may surprise you

WHAT DO PREGNANT women, weightlifters, 75-year-old men and people with diabetes all have in common?

They could all be healthier with advice from a registered dietitian.

No matter what stage of life you're at or state of health you're in, proper nutrition is important for everyone, says Keri Gans, a registered dietitian and spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association (ADA).

"Registered dietitians are the nutrition experts," she says. "Whether you want to improve your health or maintain your health, you need somebody who can work with you in an individualized way to help you reach your own personal health goals."

Becoming a registered dietitian takes a lot of specialized, science-based training: a bachelor's degree, 900 to 1,200 hours of supervised practice and a passing grade on a national exam. Registered dietitians also must complete 75 hours of continuing education every five years.

Our registered dietitian can help you create the right wellness plan for you. Call 263-5050.

Using that training, a registered dietitian can—among other things—help you:

- Lose, gain or maintain weight.
- Manage diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol or heart trouble.
- Control digestive problems like ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease or irritable bowel syndrome.
- Deal with an eating disorder.
- Cope with food allergies or intolerances.
- Get the best nutrition during pregnancy or while breastfeeding.
- Improve athletic performance.
- Continue to eat healthfully as you get older.

If a visit to a registered dietitian is right for you, expect your first session to involve a lot of questions.

Your dietitian will likely ask about your medical history, your family's history, what foods you like and dislike, whether you routinely cook, and if you have any allergies. He or she may also review any recent blood work, ask what medications you take and check your weight.

Many dietitians will then ask you to keep a food journal for a week or two. You'll record everything you eat and drink each day, along with your meal and snack times and the amount of exercise you get.

All of this data helps your dietitian create the right diet and exercise plan for you, one that focuses on gradual, long-term change.

He or she also offers ongoing support and encouragement to help you stay on the right track.

"Working with a registered dietitian is like working with your own personal coach," Gans says. "We're in it with you to help you reach your goals."

Go To learn more about dietitians, go to the ADA website, www.eatright.org.

HEALTHY SALAD MAKING 101

HERE'S A THOUGHT to toss around at mealtime: That salad you'll be having—the one you think is a heaping helping of health—actually might not be so good for you.

You're not alone if you automatically think of salad as a health food. A lot of people do.

"I think that's because we think vegetables are usually part of salad, and vegetables are healthy," says Bethany Thayer, MS, RD, spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association. "But oftentimes the things that come with the vegetables are very high in fat and salt."

That can make a seemingly good food choice a dietary trap in disguise.

To build a better salad, Thayer and other experts offer these tips:

1 Think fruits and veggies first. Loaded with nutrients, they should make up the bulk of your salad. Beans are a good choice too.

Salad items that are typically high in fat—such as cheese, croutons and chow mein noodles—are best limited. But you don't have to avoid them completely.

"Our motto at the American Dietetic Association is,

'All foods fit,' " says Thayer. Just remember the concept of moderation.

2 Be colorful. Paint a pretty picture on your plate—choose orange carrots, yellow peppers, white cauliflower, purple grapes and red tomatoes.

"You want to make your salad as colorful as possible," says Thayer. "That will help you get the most nutrients."

3 Get nutty. Nuts, such as almonds or walnuts, can be a healthy addition. They're high in calories, however. So use them sparingly.

4 Don't overdress. A cup of lettuce only has about eight calories. But add 2 tablespoons of regular salad dressing to it, and suddenly you're consuming 150 calories or more, according to Thayer.

You can cut calories by dipping your fork in the dressing before each bite—rather than pouring the dressing over the salad—and by using a low-fat or nonfat dressing. Or try seasoning your salad with low-calorie and low-fat options, such as tasty vinegar, lemon or lime juice, some green herbs, or spices.

Now, grab your fork and eat up. You'll be doing it the healthy way!

Ordering a salad? Be smart about your choice

If you're perusing the salads on a restaurant menu or heading for the salad bar, remember this: It pays to be picky.

You might think that a taco or chef's salad is a healthy choice. But premade salads aren't always smart, according to Bethany Thayer, MS, RD, spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association.

The shell that comes with a taco salad can be very high in fat and calories, for example. And a chef's salad can be loaded with meats and cheeses and have very few vegetables and only a small amount of lettuce.

"Something like that may have as many calories and as much fat as a hamburger and french fries," says Thayer.

The key is to be selective in what and how much you eat. For instance, skip that shell in the taco salad, or don't eat the whole chef's salad in one sitting.

That same advice about being picky also applies to the salad bar. Thayer recommends checking out what's available before fixing your plate. That way you can choose which items you most want and know which items to pass up.

Also, be aware that many side salads are loaded with fat-filled or calorie-laden ingredients, such as mayonnaise or whipped topping. Consider going easy on those items or bypassing them in favor of something healthier.

AGING IN PLACE

As Dorothy would say,
there's no place like home



You chose the decor and furniture. You have space for your hobbies, projects, plants and garden. Your best memories were made there. All of these are reasons your home is important to you. ♦ As you age,

however, it may become more and more difficult to remain independent and in your home. Needs and abilities change over the years, but homes—unless modified—don't change with them.

Living with family or moving to a nursing home used to be a matter of course for people who had trouble living alone, reports the National Aging in Place Council (NAIPC). But now there are many ways to modify your home to meet your changing needs—that is, to age in place.

MAKE A PLAN “Most people want to be able to age in place,” says Peter Bell, executive director of the NAIPC. “They want to stay in a home they're comfortable in and in a community they know.”

Unfortunately, people are often faced with the reality of making home modifications after an injury or illness strikes.

“People coming home from the hospital are rushing around trying to figure things out,” says Bell. “Or people are deteriorating slowly, and they have to rely on an adult child who may live in a different state.”

It's better to plan ahead, says Bell. That way, you can anticipate problems that might arise and find out what resources are available. “Ideally, you should be thinking about these issues before you retire or [right now] if you're already doing remodeling on your home,” he says.

Start by thinking about any illnesses you have, such as diabetes or heart disease, suggests the National Institute on Aging. Talk with your doctor about how these

conditions may impact your lifestyle in the future. Will it be hard for you to move around? Will you be able to cook? Will you need help getting dressed or taking medication?

“If staying in your home is the goal, it shouldn't be left to happenstance,” cautions Bell. “It should be something you plan for.”

MAKE OVER YOUR HOME Some places in the home tend to be particularly problematic as people become less mobile, says Bell. Here are a few suggestions on how you can improve access and safety in these key areas of your home:

- Install grab bars, nonslip flooring, an elevated toilet seat and a walk-in shower in the bathroom.
- Make sure storage space, sinks and countertops are easy to reach.
- If someone will be using a wheelchair or scooter, aim for a floor plan that allows for easy maneuvering of the device.
- Replace steps leading to the front door with a ramp or graded sidewalk.
- Make sure walkways and stairways have plenty of light.
- If you garden, try building raised beds for easier access to plants.
- Have at least one bedroom and one full bathroom on the main floor.

MAKE CONTACT Services and personal care are another important part of planning to age in place. “You might need help having the house cleaned,” says Bell, “or

getting seasonal things done—like changing heating filters and window screens and removing leaves and snow.”

You might also need help with personal care, such as bathing, cooking or getting dressed. A friend or family member may be able to help with these tasks. Or you might consider hiring a home-health aid.

You'll also want to find out about other resources available to you. For example, are there people in your community who could mow your lawn or do your grocery shopping? Are there local government agencies or nonprofit organizations that offer special programs or services for older adults?

In addition, many services and assistive technology products are available for a cost.

“A good place to start is to hire a professional geriatric care manager to do a home assessment,” suggests Bell. “They can help you develop a plan for aging in place.”

Financial options, such as insurance policies and reverse mortgages, can help people pay for long-term in-home care, reports the National Council on Aging. Reverse mortgages allow people to borrow against home equity without making payments for as long as they live in the home.

MORE IDEAS To learn more about how best to age in place, go to these websites:

- www.naipc.org.
- www.nia.nih.gov.
- www.ncoa.org.

Regular checkups can help you stay in your home

An important step for aging in place is to see your doctor on a regular basis. He or she can help you manage or avoid certain chronic illnesses and their complications, allowing you to remain independent well into old age.

As part of your checkups, your doctor may recommend tests for:

- Vision, including glaucoma.
- Cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and osteoporosis.
- Blood pressure and blood fats, such as cholesterol.
- Depression.

Your doctor may also recommend shots for flu, pneumonia and hepatitis B, and he or she may test your balance and leg strength.

At your appointment, be sure to talk with your doctor about any medications you are currently taking, advises the American Geriatrics Society.

Drug interactions may lead to balance problems, which could cause a fall and rob you of your independence. Your doctor can help you identify and treat problems that can lead to falls.

Regular checkups can help you stay as healthy as possible for as long as possible. But according to the National Institute on Aging, checkups are just one part of healthy aging. It's also important that you: ■ Eat a healthy, balanced diet. ■ Exercise your body and mind. ■ Quit smoking, if you do smoke.

HOME SWEET HOME

Castle Home Care and Community Care aims to help you receive quality care at home and maintain as much independence as possible. Call 247-2828.

TAKE TIME

Castle Medical Center



FOR YOUR HEALTH

Summertime is about having fun and being healthy! Check out the opportunities at Castle Medical Center. We invite you to register for a health-promoting class or seminar or call for a physician referral. Call 263-5400, or visit our website at www.castlemed.org.

EVENTS CALENDAR



FAMILY

Call for locations.

Prenatal Fitness

Offered mornings and evenings

To improve cardio capacity, overall strength and flexibility in preparation for childbirth and caring for a newborn. This is a great opportunity to connect with other expectant mothers.

Childbirth Basics Seminar

■ Sunday, July 12
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

■ Tuesday, Sept. 8
5 to 10 p.m.

\$50 (single)/\$65 (couple); delivering at Castle: \$45 (single)/\$55 (couple)

Breastfeeding

Thursdays, July 9, Aug. 13, Sept. 17

6 to 8:30 p.m.

\$25 (or free with a childbirth class)

Taught by a certified lactation consultant.

Birth Center Tour

Tuesdays, July 14, Aug. 4, Sept. 1

5 p.m.

Call for reservations.

General Newborn Care

Tuesdays, July 14, Aug. 4, Sept. 1

6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

\$25 per couple



Infant CPR and Safety

■ Sunday, July 19

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

■ Tuesdays, Aug. 25,

Sept. 15

6 to 9 p.m.

\$15 per couple

Does not provide certification.

Lamaze Prepared Childbirth

These six-class series begin:

■ Sundays, July 26, Sept. 6

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

■ Sunday, Aug. 30

4:30 to 7:30 p.m.

■ Mondays, July 13,

Aug. 17

6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

\$75 per couple; delivering at Castle: \$65 per couple

FITNESS

Exercise Classes

Registration required (may include a medical clearance and physical therapy screening).

- Bone Builder
- Core Strength
- Freedom of Movement
- Interval Training
- Longer Life
- Pilates
- Prenatal Fitness
- Steady on Your Feet
- Qigong

Personal Training

Ongoing, by appointment

Assess your current fitness level and receive a tailored plan to assist with general health, weight loss or management, or sports-specific training.



JOINT CARE

Joint Care Seminars

■ Thursday, July 9

11 a.m. to noon

■ Tuesday, Aug. 18

10 to 11 a.m.

■ Thursdays, July 30, Sept. 10

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Orchid Room

Learn about the causes of hip and knee pain and how you can reduce pain using diet, exercise, medication or joint replacement surgery. Discover diet and exercise tips that can help reduce pain, and get information about available treatments. Call for information and registration.

NUTRITION

Your insurance may cover fees. To register or for more information, call 263-5050.

Diabetes Interactive Group Education

Morning and evening classes offered
10 a.m. to noon

This four-class series is designed to transform the way you learn about diabetes self-management.

30-Minute Diabetes Information Sessions

Morning and evening sessions offered
FREE

Nutrition Counseling

Ongoing, by appointment
To help you get on a healthy diet and nutrition program for optimal health. Focuses include general

ADVANCES IN MEDICINE WELLNESS SEMINARS

Health care providers share expertise on an array of topics.

FREE

Call 263-5400 for class information and registration.

nutrition, vegetarian nutrition, weight loss, diabetes, renal disease, heart disease and cholesterol reduction.

SMOKING CESSATION

Breathe Free

Class series starting Tuesdays, July 21, Sept. 15
7 to 8:30 p.m.

This dynamic stop-smoking program takes a total lifestyle approach to quitting smoking, and it can help you quit without gaining weight. Insurance may cover the class fee. \$120 for eight sessions; fee includes all materials and ongoing group sessions

Free 30-Minute Stop-Smoking Sessions

■ Tuesday, Aug. 18

12:30 p.m.

■ Tuesday, Sept. 8

6:30 p.m.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Free and open to anyone needing support.

- Bereavement
- Cancer
- Caregivers
- Parkinson's disease

WEIGHT LOSS

Weight-Loss Surgery Seminar

Wednesdays, July 15,

Aug. 19, Sept. 16
6:30 p.m.

Learn about Castle's comprehensive surgical weight-loss program



Steven Fowler, MD

from bariatric surgeon Steven Fowler, MD, and other members of the bariatric team. Registration required.

Take Shape for Life!™

For information about Castle's popular weight-loss program, go to www.castlewellness.tsfl.com/hp. Call 263-5050 to schedule a consultation and taste-testing and to learn about special discounts.

Individualized Weight Management Program

Ongoing, by appointment

Includes four one-on-one nutrition counseling sessions with a registered dietitian, four personal training sessions with a certified exercise specialist, menu planning, fitness classes and body composition analysis. Call 263-5050 for more information.

COOKING CLASSES

\$15 per person; \$20 per couple; \$10 for students and seniors

Delicious, light meal and recipes included. Registration and fee due two days before each class.

Spice Up Your Rice

Thursday, July 9
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

There's more to rice than just "two scoops!" Seasonings, color and texture all add up to spiced-up rice dishes for any meal. Presented by Eileen Towata, Wellness Department health educator.



Eileen Towata



Rebecca Woodland

It's Greek to Me

Thursday, Aug. 27
6:30 p.m.

Enjoy the plant-based versions of some classic Greek dishes from seasoned traveler and health-promoting chef Rebecca Woodland.

Protein-Packed Power Foods

Thursday, Sept. 24
6:30 p.m.

Concerned you might not be getting enough protein in your plant-based diet? Chef Paul Onishi will show you how easy and delicious it can be to meet your protein requirements without the use of animal products.



Paul Onishi

