

# Carolinas Health

Summer 2009

The magazine of Carolinas Medical Center-Pineville

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events  
for you  
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**SWIM SAFELY  
THIS SUMMER!**

**SKIN  
CANCER  
ALERT**

Are you  
at risk?

**KIDS AND  
OBESITY**

A closer look



Carolinas Medical Center  
Pineville

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# Healthy kids, healthy adults

## Tackling obesity in children

**N**orth Carolina has the fifth highest rate of childhood obesity in the country. That's about 31 percent of 10- to 17-year-olds carrying around excess pounds, according to the nonprofit advocacy group Trust for America's Health. This alarming statistic is part of an unsettling nationwide trend that has doctors worrying about the health and future of today's youth.

Overweight or obese kids face greater lifetime risks of chronic health conditions and a decreased lifespan. In fact, Connie Simms, administrator at Carolinas Weight Management & Wellness Center, says the center sees many with conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure and sleep apnea.



So what's behind the uptick? Genetics can certainly play a part in whether someone is more prone to gain weight. But John Tomcho, DO, RD, a bariatrician at the center, sees the perfect storm: reduced activity levels due to playing video games and spending time in front of the computer or television; bad eating habits like drinking soda; and the demise of the sit-down family meal in favor of eating in front of the TV.

And while outside influences such as school lunches and vending machines are certainly thought to contribute to this obesity epidemic, "The biggest positive impact can occur at home," Dr. Tomcho says.

### AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

You need to set a good, healthy life-style example for your children, but in reality, most homes are minefields of cookies, chips and other unhealthy snacks.

"The treatment for childhood obesity is really prevention," Dr. Tomcho says. "It can be tough getting kids on board—especially when their friends are eating whatever they want. But the changes don't have to be that drastic." Here are some tips:

✓ **Encourage activity.** Kids need a minimum of an hour of daily physical activity. Try family walks or encourage your child to participate in a sport or volunteer in the community.

✓ **Make it a family affair.** Don't single out an overweight child; cook up nutritious meals for everyone and avoid buying junk food.

✓ **Limit TV,** computer and video game time, and discourage eating in front of the TV. Mindless snacking is a big source of extra calories.

✓ **Skip the force-feeding.** Don't force kids to clean their plate if they're not hungry.

✓ **Cut back on juice and other sugary beverages.** Drinking plain water, flavored water or seltzer can save hundreds of calories.

✓ **Champion breakfast.** A healthy breakfast ramps up metabolism, gives kids energy and helps curb overeating later in the day.

✓ **Let there be snacks.** Fresh or dried fruit, nuts, low-fat yogurt and air-popped popcorn can give kids a nutrient boost and prevent overeating. But don't be



## CHANGES FOR LIFE

In 2008, Carolinas Weight Management & Wellness Center launched its Teen Lifestyle Changes (TLC) program for those ages 12 to 18. A team of weight-loss experts teaches patients how to revamp their diets and exercise and teens receive group or individual counseling, all under one roof. Eventually, surgical options for weight loss will be available for those who qualify. Some studies have found that gastric bypass weight-loss surgery can reverse type 2 diabetes in obese teens.

To qualify for surgical weight loss, a patient must be at least 16 years old and have completed his or her bone growth. He or she may also have a chronic condition such as diabetes or a five-year history of morbid obesity. Those who are interested in surgery will speak with a doctor who specializes in weight-loss surgery; eligible candidates will be enrolled in a comprehensive program to help them prepare for the procedure.

too strict—let your child know that the occasional pizza run with friends is OK, too.

✓ **Be supportive.** Remind your child that you love him or her no matter what and that many of the celebrities they see on TV don't have realistic body types.

Of course, you may be wondering if your child's weight issues are long-term or will be outgrown. "It's not something to jump the gun on, but you and your child's doctor need to keep a close eye on the situation," says Dr. Tomcho. That means measuring your child's weight gain against a child-specific body mass index (BMI) chart; visit [www.carolinasweightmanagement.org/default/bmi-calculator](http://www.carolinasweightmanagement.org/default/bmi-calculator) to view a BMI chart for children. Those in the 85th percentile and above are considered overweight or obese, he says. Your child's weight will be noted at doctor visits to see if weight gain levels off or continues to climb. If the scales continue to tip, you may need to seek medical help. 🌱

### DOES YOUR TEEN NEED HELP?

Contact Carolinas Weight Management & Wellness Center at **704-355-9484** to schedule a consultation.



“Active Women has provided an invaluable tool for its members.”

**M**y sister, Robin, visited me this past weekend from Minneapolis. After a delicious dinner, Robin became violently ill. She apparently had an allergic reaction to the mussels she ate at dinner—it was very scary.

We called the *Active Women*\* Hotline, where we spoke with a registered nurse (nurses are available to speak with callers 24 hours a day, seven days a week). The nurse who spoke with Robin was helpful and courteous. She assessed her symptoms, and within the hour Robin’s illness finally subsided. It could have been a miserable night if we hadn’t had access to this service or had gone straight to the emergency room. *Active Women* has provided an invaluable tool for its members. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Tish Atkins, member, *Active Women*  
Charlotte, NC

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\**Active Women* is a membership group that provides health-related amenities and discounts at local retailers. Membership is free when you register online at [www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org/active](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org/active).

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Editor’s note: We receive hundreds of letters each year from patients and family members who write to share their appreciation of the care they received. With each author’s permission, we will share these letters with you. Please visit [www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org) for more patient testimonials.

## MEET OUR DOCTORS

Join us as we welcome the following physicians who have recently joined our growing family. To find a physician near you, call 704-355-7500 or visit [www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org).

### Samuel Adkins, MD

Cabarrus Family Medicine-Prosperity Crossing

### Tammy Bradshaw, MD

Piedmont GYN/OB-Ballantyne and Waxhaw

### Jason A. Brancato, MD

Mecklenburg Medical Group-Museum

### Brian Brighton, MD

Levine Children’s Hospital

### Kimberly D. Clay, MD

Mecklenburg Medical Group-SouthPark

### Meredith Dasher, MD

Mecklenburg Medical Group-SouthPark

### Mia Griggs, MD

Cabarrus Family Medicine-Prosperity Crossing

### Christopher “Kit” Henry, MD

Pediatric Associates

### Juhayna Kassem, MD

Mecklenburg Medical Group-Ballantyne

### Jakub Mieszczak, MD

Pediatric Endocrinology and Diabetes Specialists

### Archita Patel, MD

Carolinas Hospitalist Group-Mercy

### Laura K. Tagle, MD

Mecklenburg Medical Group-NorthCross

# How safe is your pool?



**A**s a parent, your child's safety is of utmost importance. You would do anything to protect him or her. Yet, according to Safe Kids USA, 69 percent of drowning or near-drowning incidents occur while one or both parents are supervising, and 65 percent occur in the family pool. How can this be?

“Unfortunately, most of the pool deaths we see are from children leaving the house and getting into the yard without supervision,” says Janice Williams, director of injury prevention for Carolinas Medical Center. “There are many hidden dangers that parents don’t consider.”

One is leaving toys in or near the pool—they can attract children. Another is not maintaining the area around the pool. Make sure that latches on pool fences work properly, and trim back bushes so kids can’t use them to gain access to the pool.

## GUARD AGAINST ACCIDENTS

The key to pool safety is using several layers of protection:

- Constant supervision is the most important rule. A designated “water watcher” is needed at all times when children are in or near water.
- Construct a four-sided, four-foot-high barrier to enclose the pool, and offer access only through a self-closing, self-latching gate.
- Install alarms. They’re available for use on house doors, windows and fence gates; as in-pool motion detectors; and as a wristwatch to alert you if a child

## SWIM SAFELY!

**V**isit [www.carolinasinjuryprevention.com](http://www.carolinasinjuryprevention.com) to download a pool safety checklist.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**I**f you have a pool or other body of water, you may be required by state or local law to construct a barrier. Call your county code enforcement office for more information. Mecklenburg County inspectors will check your pool for free to ensure it meets requirements.

accidentally winds up in the pool.

- Keep safety equipment including a safety hook, lifesaving ring and telephone close by.
  - Learn infant and child CPR.
  - Install a power safety cover to use when no one is swimming.
  - Keep pool furniture and other items that can be climbed on away from the fence, preferably inside the fenced-in area.
  - Don’t leave toys in or near the pool.
  - Provide your child with swimming lessons starting at age 4. (However, lessons aren’t a safeguard against drowning and should never replace supervision.)
- Commit to being a “water watcher” for your children and their friends, so summer swimming can be fun and safe. 🌿

# Are you at risk for melanoma?

**A**s the days grow warmer and the sun shines brighter, it's important to remember that too much sun exposure can be harmful. Every hour, someone dies from melanoma—usually due to inadequate sun protection.

“Skin cancer is the most common of all cancers, and more than a million Americans develop it every year,” says Terry Sarantou, MD, a surgical oncologist at Carolinas Medical Center-Pineville. “Melanoma accounts for about 4 percent of diagnosed skin cancers, but it’s the deadliest form.”

## WHAT IS MELANOMA?

Melanoma, also called malignant melanoma, usually occurs when ultraviolet rays from the sun or tanning beds damage DNA in the skin, causing tumors to form in the cells that produce melanin, the pigment that colors the skin.

“Melanomas usually develop in pre-existing moles or appear as new moles,” says Dr. Sarantou. “But hidden melanomas can develop in places you wouldn’t expect.” These include the scalp, under nails, on eyelids or eyeballs and on mucosal tissue lining the nose, mouth, female genitals, anus, urinary tract and esophagus.

## WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF MELANOMA?

Unlike two other common forms of skin cancer (basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma), untreated melanoma is likely to spread to lymph nodes and internal organs. “Once it spreads, the

prognosis is poor,” Dr. Sarantou says, “so early detection is critical.”

## CAN MELANOMA BE CURED?

With early detection and proper treatment, melanoma has a cure rate of about 95 percent. All melanomas are surgically removed; when melanoma has spread to other parts of the body, doctors may also use chemotherapy, radiation therapy, biological therapy and gene therapy.

## HOW CAN I PREVENT MELANOMA?

While you can’t undo past sun damage, change your complexion or erase a family history of melanoma, you can reduce your chances of developing

melanoma by:

- ☀️ staying out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when its rays are strongest
  - ☀️ avoiding tanning beds
  - ☀️ applying a broad-spectrum sunscreen and lip balm with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher and reapplying every two hours while outside, even on cloudy or hazy days
  - ☀️ wearing protective clothing, including a hat and sunglasses, when outdoors
- “Even if you’ve been conscientious about using sunscreen in recent years, you can’t be complacent,” says Dr. Sarantou. “Sunburns you received as a child can develop into melanoma years later.”
- Check your skin each month for signs of skin cancer and visit a dermatologist annually or more frequently if you’re at risk for skin cancer. 🌐

“Sunburns you received as a child can develop into melanoma years later.”

—Terry Sarantou, MD





## BE INFORMED

**R**isk factors for melanoma include:

- a family history of melanoma
- a personal history of many moles (more than 25)
- large moles (larger than a pencil eraser)
- atypical or unusual-looking moles
- fair skin
- light eye or hair color
- a suppressed immune system
- excessive sun exposure as a child or adult
- tanning salon usage
- sun sensitivity

## MORE CANCER CARE, CLOSE TO HOME

**W**ith the opening of a Blumenthal Cancer Center satellite facility in Pineville and the expansion of surgical oncology services at CMC-Pineville, we're extending our cancer services in your area.

Terry Sarantou, MD, a fellowship-trained CMC surgical oncologist who specializes in treating melanoma and breast cancer, is leading the expansion effort.

The new Blumenthal Cancer Center satellite, opening this fall, will be located in Pineville Medical Plaza on the campus of CMC-Pineville and will provide more convenient services to residents of south Mecklenburg, York and Lancaster counties.

# Your future destination for emergency care

## CMC-Steele Creek

It's the middle of the night, and you think you might have appendicitis. Where can you go to be examined without having to wait in a crowded emergency department (ED)? CMC-Steele Creek, the area's first health pavilion, will soon be there to help. With plans to open in early October, the health pavilion will house the area's first freestanding ED operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as well as an adjoining medical office building.

### A SKILLED AND CARING STAFF

All attending physicians in the ED are board certified in emergency medicine, and our nursing and support staff are highly trained and ready to treat patients who have urgent or emergency medical needs.

The 22,500-square-foot ED has eight private patient treatment rooms. One will be designated as a trauma/resuscitation room, and the other seven will serve as emergency/urgent care treatment rooms.

Any patient requiring critical care will have direct access to Carolinas Medical Center-Pineville and the advanced trauma services and resources at Carolinas Medical Center, the region's only Level I trauma center. The CMC-Steele Creek ED will provide state-of-the-art radiology services on-site, including



### COMING THIS FALL!

CMC-Steele Creek is located at 13460 Steelcroft Parkway on the corner of Steele Creek Road (Hwy. 160) and South Tryon St. (Hwy. 49). It houses an adjoining medical office building for primary care physicians and specialists. Practices currently located at this site are:

- **Charlotte Pediatric Clinic**  
[www.charlottepediatricclinic.org](http://www.charlottepediatricclinic.org)
- **Mecklenburg Medical Group**  
[www.mecklenburgmedicalgroup.org](http://www.mecklenburgmedicalgroup.org)
- **Piedmont GYN/OB**  
[www.piedmontgynob.org](http://www.piedmontgynob.org)

a 64-slice CT scanner, digital X-ray and ultrasound.

When you're ready to be discharged, you'll also receive detailed instructions and help with any follow-up doctor appointments.

### A GOOD NEIGHBOR

"The health pavilion offers much more than emergency services—primary care physician

offices are right next door," says Chris Hummer, president of CMC-Pineville, who will oversee the facility. "The idea is to provide quick, convenient access to emergency care as well as offer physician offices close to home. It's an excellent way to provide superior healthcare to this fast-growing section of Steele Creek and southern Mecklenburg County."

Physicians and other healthcare providers plan to offer health education, as well as health and wellness screenings, once the ED is open. 🌿



# Good oral health and good general health

## What's the connection?

**C**ompromised oral health has been associated with health risks such as heart disease, stroke and respiratory infection. Although the results of these studies are incomplete, it's clear that people who have poor oral hygiene consequently have chronic low-grade oral infections. This puts some people at a higher risk for infections of the heart.

Researchers believe that bacteria in the mouth cause a general inflammatory response in the body, which results from mouth bacteria regularly entering the blood stream. While this isn't a major concern for most people, it can pose a serious health threat for others.

Periodontal disease (disease of the gums) is often silent—patients aren't always aware of the problem until the disease is at an advanced stage. Warning signs include:

- red, swollen or tender gums or other mouth pain
- gums that bleed when brushing, flossing or eating hard foods
- gums that have receded, causing teeth to look longer than before
- teeth that are loose or separating
- pus between your gums and teeth
- sores in your mouth

- persistent bad breath
- a change in the way your teeth fit when you bite or a change in the fit of partial dentures

If left untreated, periodontal disease results in the loss of teeth, which can lead to a nutrient-poor diet. For those who've lost all of their teeth, evidence shows that replacing teeth with dentures doesn't completely resolve nutritional deficiencies. Maintaining good nutrition helps prevent the development of disease and promotes healing. Conditions such as anemia, heart disease, diabetes and obesity are also affected by diet.

Today, physicians and dentists are paying greater attention to the proper diagnosis and treatment of oral disease. For example, swollen, bleeding gums were once so common they were considered to be "normal" or "healthy." Current standards are much different, and normal now means no bleeding or swollen gums. New methods have been developed to assess and control these long-term problems.

If you think you may have periodontal disease or another serious oral condition, schedule an appointment with your dentist as soon as possible. It just may help your overall health. 🌍



## KEEP YOUR SMILE HEALTHY!

**M**ake your appointment today by calling 704-512-2110, or visit [www.carolinasoralhealth.org](http://www.carolinasoralhealth.org) for more information.

## COMPLETE ORAL HEALTHCARE IS HERE

**C**arolinas Center for Oral Health is a new, comprehensive, state-of-the-art general dentistry, oral medicine and oral surgery practice for adults and children, located near the intersection of Woodlawn and Park Roads on Abbey Place.

John Merrill, DDS, and Richard Haug, DDS, lead the center. Dr. Merrill is a recognized leader in the field of general and cosmetic dentistry with more than 26 years of experience in private practice. Dr. Haug is a nationally and internationally renowned expert in oral and maxillofacial surgery with more than 29 years of experience.



# Give your heart a workout

**S**till on the fence about making the commitment to become more active? Consider what it can do for your heart.

Your heart is constantly working to move oxygen- and nutrient-rich blood throughout your body. The heart's tone, strength and function can be improved through regular activity.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU'RE ACTIVE?

As you work out, your body's muscles demand more oxygen, requiring your heart to work harder to pump blood throughout your body. The more often you make your heart work harder, the stronger it becomes. As your heart's fitness improves, so does your blood circulation. And your resting heart rate—the number of times your heart beats when you're not active—will likely decrease.

## BREAKING NEWS!

**C**arolinas Heart & Vascular Institute, Sanger Clinic and Charlotte Cardiology Associates are now:



**Sanger Heart & Vascular Institute**

*Uncompromising Excellence. Commitment to Care.*

Learn more at [www.sangerheart.org](http://www.sangerheart.org).

Being active has other benefits, such as reducing blood pressure, improving cholesterol, lowering stress, boosting mood and burning calories to avoid weight gain.

## ACTIVITIES THAT HELP YOUR HEART

Aerobic activities such as jogging, running, swimming or dancing are the surest way to improve your heart's fitness.

If you've never been active before, your doctor can help you design a program. Start with low-intensity activities like walking, cycling or dancing. Work your way up to at least 30 minutes a day on most, if not all, days of the week. As you get stronger, strive for a moderate intensity level to increase the benefits to your heart. For some, walking may be moderate; for others, a slow jog meets that level.

## FINDING YOUR PACE

To give your heart a workout, aim for your target heart rate, a percentage of your heart's maximum beats per minute. To learn yours, subtract your age from 220. Strive for a rate that's 50 percent to 75 percent of your maximum. Use a heart rate monitor or take your pulse for 10 seconds, then multiply that number by six. Too slow? Step up your pace or intensity. Too fast? Slow it down.

As your heart adapts to the demands you're placing on it, try new or more vigorous activities, incorporate higher intensity intervals or lengthen your workouts. 🌍

## BECOME HEART SMART!

**T**ake our quick and confidential risk assessment to determine if you may have heart disease.

Visit [www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org/heartaware](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org/heartaware) to complete the assessment.



# Mark your calendar

**C**arolinas Medical Center is committed to improving the health and wellness of your family by participating in a wide variety of community health events, educational seminars and wellness classes. To view a complete list of upcoming events and classes, visit [www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org) for more information.

**LiveWELL**  
**Carolinas!**  
 Work. Eat. Learn. Live.

## CMC-MORROCROFT SPEAKER SERIES

### Arthritis Treatment and Prevention

**WHEN:** Wednesday, July 22, 7–9 p.m.

### Type 2 Diabetes

**WHEN:** Wednesday, August 26, 7–9 p.m.

**WHERE:** CMC-Morrocroft Medical Plaza, 4525 Cameron Valley Parkway, Charlotte

**COST:** Free and open to the public

**CALL:** 704-512-3209 to register

## CMC-MERCY SEMINAR SERIES

A light dinner will be served at 6 p.m. Lectures begin at 6:30 p.m.

### How Air Quality Affects Children

**WHEN:** Thursday, July 9

### Running Inside the Lines

**WHEN:** Monday, August 17

**WHERE:** CMC-Mercy Auditorium, 2001 Vail Ave., Charlotte

**COST:** Free and open to the public

**CALL:** 704-512-3820 to register

## RESPONSIBLE FERTILITY TREATMENTS

Join us to hear reproductive endocrinologist Rebecca Usadi, MD, with CMC's Women's Institute, discuss responsible fertility treatments. Light refreshments will be provided.

**WHEN:** Thursday, July 16, noon–1 p.m.

**WHERE:** Levine Jewish Community Center, 5007 Providence Road, Charlotte

**COST:** Free and open to the public

**CALL:** 704-355-1920 to register

## NUTRITIONAL COOKING FOR WORKING WOMEN

Join Chef Susan Batten and other *Active Women* members to learn how to cook new healthy recipes.

**WHEN:** Tuesday, July 21, 6:30–8 p.m.

**WHERE:** Johnson and Wales University, 801 W. Trade St., Charlotte

**COST:** Free and open to *Active Women* members only.

Visit [www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org/active](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org/active) to join. Membership is free.

**CALL:** 877-667-2525 to register; seating is limited

## FINANCIAL PLANNING—WHAT EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW

Kristen Rhyne, certified financial planner, presents a life-changing seminar to help women plan for their financial future.

**WHEN:** Tuesday, August 11, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** Hampton Inn SouthPark at Phillips Place, 6700 Phillips Place Court, Charlotte

**COST:** Free and open to *Active Women* members only. To join, visit [www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org/active](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org/active). Membership is free.

**CALL:** 877-667-2525 to register; seating is limited

## MIRACLE TREAT DAY AT DAIRY QUEEN

Get a sweet treat at your local Dairy Queen and help support Levine Children's Hospital. The proceeds from Blizzard sales will benefit Levine Children's Hospital.

**WHEN:** Thursday, August 13

## CMC HEALTH & WELLNESS FAIR AT SOUTHPARK MALL

Come by for health information, free screenings and the chance to speak with a board-certified physician.

**WHEN:** Saturday, September 12, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.

**WHERE:** SouthPark Mall center court

## THE WELL-BEHAVED CHILD: DISCIPLINE THAT REALLY WORKS

John Rosemond, child psychologist, author and nationally syndicated newspaper columnist, conducts a half-day workshop for parents.

**WHEN:** Saturday, September 26, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

**WHERE:** Steele Creek Presbyterian Church, 7407 Steele Creek Road, Charlotte

**COST:** \$8 for lunch. Open to *Active Women* members only.

Visit [www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org/active](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org/active) to join. Membership is free.

**CALL:** 877-667-2525 to register; seating is limited



# Carolinas Health

Summer 2009

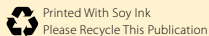
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The information contained in this publication is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice. If you have medical concerns, please consult your healthcare provider.

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## From our crib to yours.

We've developed a reputation for providing wonderful experiences for expecting families. From our highly-trained, compassionate physicians and staff, to our in-depth specialties and cozy birthing suites, you're surrounded by caring expertise. You should expect the best possible experience when delivering your child. And at CMC-Pineville, we deliver.



Carolinas Medical Center  
Pineville

*Uncompromising Excellence. Commitment to Care.*