

Carolinas Health

Fall 2008

The magazine of Carolinas Medical Center-Mercy

Team up for
Hopebuilders

5K

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BETTER CARE FOR YOU

thanks to our new
technology

INPATIENT CARE THAT COUNTS

Hospitalists make
a difference

HEALTHY@HOME LEND A HAND



Carolinas Medical Center
Mercy

Blood clot in the leg: A cause for concern

A blood clot in a deep leg vein isn't apt to send someone rushing off to a doctor. That's because this type of clot—called a deep venous thrombosis, or DVT—is often symptomless. It usually goes away on its own, and as long as it stays put it's not likely to be dangerous.

Trouble is, a DVT doesn't always stay put. Sometimes a fragment breaks off and travels through the bloodstream. When that happens, it's called an embolus. If the embolus gets carried to the heart, it may end up in an artery that delivers blood to the lungs. At that point, it becomes a life-threatening crisis known as pulmonary embolism.

PINPOINTING THE CLOT

How can a doctor identify a DVT? A common test is Doppler ultrasound scanning, which uses sound waves to form a picture. Other methods include contrast venography, an X-ray taken after injecting contrast material into the leg veins; impedance plethysmography, which measures blood flow in the legs; platelet scintigraphy, which traces clots through the veins; and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

WHO'S AT RISK?

Although sometimes DVT just happens, most cases occur after surgery, especially following procedures that take place near the pelvis or upper leg. However, any condition that immobilizes a person can raise risk, and susceptibility to DVT rises with age and obesity.

KEEPING THE VESSELS OPEN

In-bed exercises can prevent DVT in surgical patients. Sometimes anticoagulant drugs are given during and after an operation to prevent clots from forming.

Anticoagulant drugs or thrombolytic drugs are administered during an episode of DVT to prevent the clot from getting larger. 🌿



GOING THE DISTANCE

Sitting still for long periods of time, as on an airplane or a cross-country bus ride, can lead to DVT. Here are a few precautionary measures:

- Get up frequently from your airplane or bus seat and walk up and down the aisle.
- Stop every hour or so during long car rides.
- Reposition your legs often.
- Don't cross your legs.
- Keep your feet elevated whenever possible.

WATCH OUT FOR BLOOD CLOTS

Call Sanger Clinic at **704-355-8188** to schedule an appointment today!

TRANSFORMING PATIENT CARE

Electronic medical records benefit patients and physicians

An innovative and highly secure system of electronic medical records (EMR) is making it easier for doctors to provide superior patient care.

Digital records are stored in a secure, Web-based system, giving physicians quick access to current patient information. However, “electronic medical records are much more than a shift from paper to computer,” says Gregory Weidner, MD, an internist at Mecklenburg Medical Group and CPN medical director for Electronic

Patient Care Transformation. “They will transform how we deliver care.”

Doctors in the network use EMRs to more easily communicate with each other about their patients. They have immediate access to the latest lab results and X-rays, and they’re able to share patient notes and observations and review prescriptions. “If a patient sees her primary care physician in the morning and her gynecologist in the afternoon, both doctors can review the same updated medical information,” says Dr. Weidner. Common records also apply as patients travel among hospital, emergency and urgent care environments.



Gregory Weidner, MD

DELIVERING EXCELLENCE

Using an EMR is just one reason why several Carolinas HealthCare practices have received best practice recognition from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), an organization dedicated to improving healthcare quality. The NCQA Physician Practice Connections Program recognizes practices that make systematic use of clinical information to deliver excellent patient care.

IMPROVED SAFETY, QUALITY AND CONVENIENCE

The benefits of EMRs reach beyond physician communication. Built-in monitoring reduces the likelihood of medical errors. “When entering patient information, we receive prompts on possible medical allergies and drug interactions,” says Dr. Weidner. “The system is designed to improve the quality of our care and patient safety.”

Carolinas HealthCare physician practices are transitioning to the EMR system. Ultimately, hundreds of physicians across every medical specialty will be using it. This far-reaching vision also includes patients. In the not-so-distant future, a patient will be able to see his or her health record, review prescriptions and make doctor appointments. Physicians are already able to send a prescription directly to a patient’s pharmacy, where medication will be ready and waiting. “This is a significant convenience for patients and improves prescribing accuracy as well,” says Dr. Weidner. 🌐



LOOKING FOR A PHYSICIAN?

To find a physician in your area, call the Physician Referral line at **704-355-7500** or visit **www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org** and choose “Find a Physician.”

The soap and water solution

One of the best things you can do to avoid getting sick is also the simplest—wash your hands. Wash them often and well. Many diseases are spread through hand-to-hand or hand-to-food contact. You can help prevent illnesses such as colds, flu, gastrointestinal disorders and food-borne infections with good hand hygiene.

Each day, your hands pick up all kinds of germs from people, pets, food and surfaces like tables, doorknobs and railings. Washing your hands with soap and water or with a waterless alcohol-based hand sanitizer helps to eliminate germs. Wash for at least 20 seconds—the amount of time it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” twice. And don’t forget your wrists, the backs of your hands, between your fingers and under your fingernails. 🌍

TIME FOR A GOOD SCRUBBING!

Wash up anytime your hands are visibly dirty, as well as:

- before, during and after preparing or eating food
- after using the bathroom
- after handling animals or their waste
- after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
- after changing a diaper (wash baby’s hands, too)
- before and after treating wounds or attending to an ill person
- after handling garbage
- before inserting or removing contact lenses

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.

SUSAN BROWN, MD

Greater Carolinas Women’s Center

KIMBERLY BUSH, MD

CMC Behavioral Health

AUBREY CALHOUN, MD

Mooresville Internal Medical Associates

ANNIE CONDON, MD

Davidson Clinic

JILL CONWAY, MD

CMC Department of Neurology

KATHLEEN CUSICK, MD

Charlotte OB/GYN

STEVE FERGUSON, MD

Mooresville Internal Medical Associates

PATRICK FRY, MD

Mooresville Internal Medical Associates

KRIS GASTON, MD

McKay Urology

MICHAEL GREEN, MD

Charlotte Medical Clinic

JENNIFER HICKMAN, MD

Eastover OB/GYN

NICOLE HIGHT, MD

Arboretum Pediatrics

KAMLA T. JAIN, MD

Cotswold Family Medicine

SUNEET KAUR, MD

CMC-Myers Park

ROBERT KELLEY, MD

Carmel Family Practice

ALLEN KINSLER, MD

CMC Department of Internal Medicine

HOLLY LAYMAN, DO

Cornelius Family Medicine

T. BASIL MATHEW, MD

Mooresville Internal Medical Associates

JOHN MCGUINNESS, DO

Mooresville Internal Medical Associates

ELIZABETH MORAN, MD

Eastover OB/GYN

BRIAN POPE, MD

Shiland Family Medicine—Fort Mill

GLENN POWELL, MD

Greater Carolinas Women’s Center

SHILOH SMAJSTRLA, MD

CMC Department of OB/GYN

JUSTIN SWARTZ, MD

CMC Department of Internal Medicine

STEVEN ZACKS, MD

CMC Department of Internal Medicine

Minor medical emergency?

Your teenage son sprains his ankle during soccer practice. Your physician's office is closed for the day and the emergency department is more than you need. Where should you go?

COMPREHENSIVE CARE THAT'S CLOSE BY

Carolinas HealthCare Urgent Care centers are open throughout the region to serve patients who have urgent but not life-threatening conditions. "We offer a convenient and cost-effective alternative to the emergency department for minor illnesses and injuries," says Sara E. Allgood, MD, a physician at Carolinas HealthCare Urgent Care-Eastland.

Urgent care centers serve as an additional healthcare option when you're unable to schedule an appointment on short notice with your primary care physician or if you're new to the neighborhood and don't have your own doctor.

Some of the medical needs that can be treated at our facilities include sore throat, earache, flu, bronchitis, upset stomach and minor injuries. Physical exams for school, camp or work are also offered.

Each Carolinas HealthCare Urgent Care center is equipped with an on-site laboratory and digital X-ray equipment. 



Carolinas HealthCare Urgent Care centers are open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day except Thanksgiving and Christmas. No appointment needed.

Thirteen Urgent Care centers are located throughout the region; more are scheduled to open soon.

Arboretum	704-543-6636	
Ballantyne	704-540-4445	
Cabarrus	704-786-6122	
Cotswold	704-366-7584	(Re-opening fall 2008)
Cox Road	704-852-9561	
Eastland	704-563-2150	(Re-opening fall 2008)
Fort Mill	704-667-3380	(Opening fall 2008)
Matthews	704-512-6850	
Mint Hill	704-863-9600	
Monroe	704-283-8193	
Morrocroft	704-512-6240	
Mountain Island	704-801-2000	
NorthCross	704-801-1085	
Prosperity Crossing	704-863-9930	
Steele Creek	704-587-6700	
Union West	704-246-2777	

HOSPITALISTS: FOCUSING ON YOU

Not too long ago, when patients were admitted to the hospital, their own family doctor would handle their general care during their stay. In recent years there's been a shift in that trend—many physicians now rely on hospitalists. These physicians are board-certified internal medicine specialists who care for patients only in the hospital setting.

INPATIENT CARE SPECIALISTS

The high cost of medical care and demands from an aging population have contributed to the changing role of primary care physicians. Hospitalists allow primary care physicians to focus on their office patients. Research supports the value of hospital medicine—studies show that hospitalists help reduce a patient's length of stay and treatment costs and improve overall quality of care. Because they're more specialized, hospitalists are better equipped to provide for a patient's care while in the hospital.



TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR CARE

If you're hospitalized at Carolinas Medical Center-Mercy, the hospitalists in Carolinas Hospitalist Group (CHG) will coordinate your care. They provide coverage for patients 24 hours a day, seven days a week and communicate frequently with your primary care physician. This ensures someone is available to answer questions about your care at all times and is immediately available in case of an emergency.

"Physicians who work in the hospital every day are best equipped to provide quality care for your hospital stay," says Sandeep Pangarkar, DO, medical director of Carolinas Hospitalist Group at CMC-Mercy. "Moreover, having hospitalists available to you 24/7 gives you the added advantage of around-the-clock care. Hospitalists are able to see you as often as needed and better able to make changes to your treatment as new information becomes available. This, in turn, helps you recover and get back to enjoying life more quickly."

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Our hospitalists maintain a close relationship with your primary care physician throughout your stay. At the time of admission, your primary care physician will be contacted to complete a full assessment of your condition.

When you're discharged, the hospitalist will speak with your physician to discuss further treatment needs, help arrange follow-up care and prescribe medications. This allows your primary care physician to be in the office with fewer delays and interruptions during your visits to his or her office. Most important, it enables you to receive the best care possible in the hospital setting. 

WHAT IS A HOSPITALIST?

A hospitalist is a medical specialist who provides quality medical treatment to individuals while they're in the hospital. Because hospitalists don't maintain a private practice, their time is devoted solely to caring for hospitalized patients.

Younger women at risk: Heart attack under age 50

Question: Which of the following statements about heart disease are true?

- It's the leading killer of women in this country.
- It can strike the young as well as the old.
- Younger women are more likely to die of a heart attack than their male counterparts while still in the hospital.

Answer: All of the above.

Yale researchers studied nearly 400,000 heart attack victims ages 30 to 89 and found that women under age 50 are twice as likely to die following a heart attack than men under age 50. What's more, the younger a female heart attack victim, the higher her risk of death compared to that of a man the same age. Physicians don't know why, but they have some theories:

- **A serious delay.** Women sometimes feel only a slight pressure or a burning sensation during a heart attack, so they often put off seeking help. Delay can be extra damaging, if not deadly.
- **More risk factors.** Young women who suffer a heart attack may be more likely to have high blood pressure, heart failure, heartbeat irregularities, valve problems and diabetes.
- **Smoking is worse for women.** Smoking causes more heart attacks in women—a female smoker's risk is up to six times higher than that of a nonsmoking female.



GET HEART SMART!

Visit www.cmc-mercy.org
or call **704-304-5913** to
learn more about The Heart
Center at CMC-Mercy.

• **Estrogen is less effective.** While estrogen shields most women from heart disease, researchers suspect that heart disease in young female heart attack patients may be so aggressive that estrogen doesn't offer adequate protection.

• **Less aggressive treatment.** Research suggests that women who seek medical attention for a heart attack are treated less aggressively than men.

• **A woman's body.** The Yale researchers found that heart attacks in young women are often the result of blood clots and spasms in arteries. This means traditional diagnostic tests don't always detect early-stage heart disease.

PROTECT YOUR HEART HEALTH

Whatever your age, following these steps can help you keep your heart healthy:

- Don't smoke.
- Exercise and maintain a healthy weight.
- Control high blood pressure and diabetes.
- Take measures to manage stress.

"Don't wait until after you've had a heart attack to address your cardiac risk factors, like family history," says Richard Jacoby, MD, chairman of Critical Care Committee at CMC-Mercy and Charlotte Cardiology Associates. "Heart attacks are preventable, so talk to your family physician or a cardiologist if you're at risk." 🌱



LOOKING BACK:
Kids of all ages
enjoyed taking
part in last year's
Hopebuilders 5K.

Get moving!

Support Levine Children's Hospital at the Hopebuilders 5K

If you're interested in a healthy activity that benefits you as well as others, then lace up your running shoes and gear up for the 13th Annual Hopebuilders 5K Run/Walk this October.

A premier fundraising event for Levine Children's Hospital (LCH), Hopebuilders attracts a variety of supporters, from corporate sponsors to competitive runners, fitness walkers and family teams. Thousands have run or walked in honor of or in memory of a special child in their lives. Thanks to the collective efforts of our community, millions of dollars have been raised to help sick and injured children throughout the Carolinas.

Because of this overwhelming participation, Hopebuilders has grown into a new route this year—it will begin and end at LCH.

Proceeds from the event will be used to help children from all walks of life who are treated for a range of illnesses and injuries, including AIDS, asthma, birth defects, cancer, cerebral palsy, chemical dependency, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, Down syndrome, heart disease, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida, sickle cell anemia and more.

Don't miss your chance to join a team or walk on behalf of a child, and help us build hope for children in our community.



HELP BUILD HOPE FOR CAROLINAS' CHILDREN

To register for this charitable event, visit www.hopebuilders5k.org.



JOIN US!

Saturday, October 11, 8 a.m. (rain or shine)

- Form a team and ask neighbors or co-workers to support you.
- Uphold a 13-year tradition.
- Tell your family and friends about this great event!

A more comfortable mammogram

Even though screening mammograms save lives, many women delay or simply don't bother getting them on the recommended schedule. Reasons for reluctance include fear of discomfort and the "nuisance factor." These tips will make getting a mammogram more agreeable:

Schedule your mammogram when your breasts will be least tender. To minimize discomfort, avoid scheduling your exam for the week before your period, when your breasts are most tender. If your breasts are sensitive, consider taking a mild, over-the-counter pain reliever an hour before your mammogram.

Have the necessary information. Bring a list—it will save you from having to remember dates and phone numbers. Among the information you may need:

- name, address and phone number of any facility where you've had a mammogram
- name, address and phone number of your doctor
- the date your last period began or when menopause began
- the dates of any biopsies or other breast treatments you've had



Wear a two-piece outfit. This way, you'll only have to remove your top.

Don't use deodorant, talcum powder or lotion under your arms or near the breasts on that day. These products can show up on the X-ray picture.

If you can't remain perfectly still, let the technician know. Any movement will blur the image, and the mammogram will have to be repeated.

If you've had mammograms at other facilities, bring them to your appointment. This will allow the radiologist to compare your new mammogram to earlier ones to check for changes.

"Breast cancer that's detected early, before there's evidence of any cancer spread, can be treated successfully in 90 percent of cases," says Richard L. White, Jr., MD, co-director of Carolinas Medical Center's Breast Program. 

WHAT'S THE SCHEDULE?

The American Cancer Society recommends the following screening schedule. (If you have a family history of breast cancer, you may need earlier, more frequent screening and additional screening tests such as magnetic resonance imaging.)

Age	Frequency
20 to 39	Women should have a clinical breast exam (CBE) every three years. Women at high risk should discuss a screening schedule with their doctor.
40 and older	Women should have an annual screening mammogram and CBE.

GET SCREENED TODAY

National Mammography Day is October 17, 2008. Call the Carolinas Women's Pavilion at **1-866-51-WOMAN** to make your mammogram appointment.



OFFERING A CONTINUUM OF CARE

Ever wish you had a crystal ball and could see into the future? Think how easy that would make it for you and your loved ones to avoid the unforeseen health-related problems that often accompany aging. Well, the services provided by Healthy@Home may be the next best thing.

WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP

According to Jane Dawson, assistant vice president for post-acute care services at Carolinas HealthCare System, Healthy@Home's personal care management service is designed to empower individuals—especially those in their senior years—with the knowledge, resources and assistance they need to stay healthy and in their homes as long as possible. “Healthy@Home puts people in touch with resources that aren't readily available in the

WE'RE AT YOUR SERVICE

Healthy@Home's services include:

- financial planning and insurance management
- consumer education and advocacy
- relocation, transition and support services
- caregiver counseling, support and crisis intervention
- home care
- infusion services and in-home medical equipment

STAY HEALTHY AND SAFE!

Call Healthy@Home at **704-512-7903** or send us an e-mail at healthyathome@carolinashealthcare.org.

community or aren't easily accessible,” says Dawson. “Sometimes, unless you're in the hospital, you may not have access to a social worker or nurse to lead you in the right direction. We provide a variety of services to help families plan ahead, whether it's relocating aging parents, making sure they have long-term care insurance, understanding Medicare or making informed financial decisions.”

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

Healthy@Home's certified personal care managers have years of higher education and hands-on experience. Their knowledge and skill allows them to assess each individual and create a plan for his or her current and future healthcare needs. This may include the use of devices such as Lifeline, a system that alerts relatives and healthcare professionals in the event of an in-home emergency. In-home monitoring or automated drug dispensing systems may also be recommended. “Too often, people choose assisted living because they can't remember when to take medicine or how much to take,” says Dawson. “Something as simple as an automated medication dispenser can provide patients with an alternative to nursing home care.”

Aging can bring many physical, emotional, social and financial challenges, but with Healthy@Home's resources, you can ensure that you or your loved ones maintain optimal health and independence. 🌿

Mark your calendar



LiveWELL
Carolinas!
Work. Eat. Learn. Live.

Carolinas Medical Center is committed to improving the health and wellness of your family by offering 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 or call **1-800-456-7488** for more information.

MALL WALKERS PROGRAM

Join us to hear physicians and healthcare professionals speak about various health and wellness topics. All programs are free and a continental breakfast is provided.

WHERE: SouthPark Mall Food Court

WHEN: First Tuesday of each month, 8:30 a.m.

WHERE: Carolina Place Mall Food Court

WHEN: Last Wednesday of each month, 8:30 a.m. (no meeting in December)

WHERE: Northlake Mall Food Court

WHEN: First Wednesday of each month, 8 a.m.

CHOLESTEROL/GLUCOSE SCREENINGS

CMC Health Centers at area YMCA locations hold monthly screenings. Tests include total cholesterol, LDL/HDL ratio, triglycerides and glucose level. All tests require a 12-hour fast (nothing to eat or drink, except water). Open to the public.

COST: Fees may apply

CALL: **704-512-3820** for information

IMMUNIZE EARLY!

Don't forget to protect yourself and your family from the flu by getting your annual flu shots. Flu shots will be available starting in October.

CALL: **704-716-4640** to schedule an appointment

FREE MEDICATION EVALUATIONS

Did you know that vitamins and other supplements can interact with prescription medications and can interfere with treatment you may be receiving for a health problem? Let our pharmacist help you sort through all of the confusion. Bring in your prescription medications and dietary supplements for a free 30-minute consultation.

WHEN: By appointment only

WHERE: CMC-Morrocroft Pharmacy

CALL: **704-512-6040** for information

SOUTHERN WOMEN'S SHOW

This annual show features fashion, food, health, business, home, travel and all areas of interest to women. Stop by the Carolinas Medical Center booth during the show to check out the "CMC Garden of Wellness."

WHEN: Thursday, Sept. 18–Sunday, Sept. 21

WHERE: Charlotte Merchandise Mart

VISIT: www.southernshows.com to purchase tickets

MAINTAINING YOUR BALANCE

Join us to hear a CMC physical therapist talk about how to maintain your balance. A light lunch will be provided. This free talk is open to the public.

WHEN: Friday, Sept. 19, noon–1 p.m.

WHERE: Simmons YMCA, 6824 Democracy Drive, Charlotte

CALL: **704-716-6611** to register

AMERICA ON THE MOVE

This weeklong event is filled with a host of activities and promotions. Come join a walking team, get health information and meet other members of your community.

WHEN: Saturday, Sept. 20–Saturday, Sept. 27

WHERE: Gateway YMCA, 900 W. Trade St., Charlotte

CALL: **704-716-4700** for details

13TH ANNUAL HOPEBUILDERS 5K RUN/WALK

A premier fundraising event for Levine Children's Hospital, Hopebuilders is a community event for runners and walkers of all ages. This year's event features a new route.

WHEN: Saturday, Oct. 11, 8 a.m.

WHERE: Levine Children's Hospital, 1600 Blythe Blvd., Charlotte

COST: \$20 in advance; \$25 day of race

VISIT: www.hopebuilders5k.org for more information

UPCOMING BLOOD DRIVES

Don't miss this opportunity to help save a life in our community by donating blood.

WHEN: Tuesday, Oct. 14, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

WHERE: Gateway YMCA, 900 W. Trade St., Charlotte

CALL: **704-716-4724** to schedule an appointment; drop-ins also welcome

WHEN: Friday, Oct. 17, 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

WHERE: CMC-Pineville, Conference room B, 10628 Park Road, Charlotte

CALL: Lisa Foster at **704-667-5514** for an appointment

Visit us at www.cmc-mercy.org

Find what you're looking for.



If you've searched online for healthcare information, you already know how confusing the Internet can be when you just want quick, reliable information. That's why Carolinas Medical Center-Mercy created a new Web site built on one simple premise — to provide you with well-organized, accurate healthcare information in one location.

It's just a click away!



Carolinas Medical Center
Mercy

Uncompromising Excellence. Commitment to Care.

704-304-5000



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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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