

# Health Connection

A PUBLICATION OF PONCA CITY  
MEDICAL CENTER

Meet our  
new CEO

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immunize!

Start your  
day off right

Why breakfast is your  
most important meal

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staff members  
for you

**PONCA CITY**  
MEDICAL CENTER

[www.poncamedcenter.com](http://www.poncamedcenter.com)

# Mind your medicine

## Smart strategies to stay well



**A**dults over age 65 who have adverse drug reactions account for more than 177,000 emergency room visits each year. One-third of these visits are related to three drugs: warfarin (a blood thinner), insulin (for diabetes) and digoxin (a heart medicine). Many of these reactions can be avoided with better communication between patient and physician. Follow this advice to help you avoid becoming a statistic:

- **Tell your physician about all the medicine you're taking.** That

includes prescription medications and over-the-counter drugs and supplements. Your physician will want to make sure you're not taking anything that can cause a reaction or affect a drug's potency. For example, Ginkgo biloba, garlic, ginger and ginseng can all interact with warfarin, as can medications taken for headaches and joint pain, such as aspirin and ibuprofen. Iron and calcium supplements can interfere with thyroid medication absorption.

- **Ask questions.** Don't be afraid to ask your physician to clarify a medication's purpose and common side effects. Also make sure you know when and how often you should take it and what to do if you miss a dose. Learn both the medicine's brand name and generic name and its shape, size and color.
- **Write it down.** Keep a list of all the medications you take in your wallet in case you do end up in the ER. This will allow physicians and nurses to avoid giving you medicine that could cause a dangerous interaction.
- **Take your medication as prescribed.** Don't stop your treatment because you think it's not working, you have side effects or you think your pill-taking regimen is hard to stick with. Instead, call your physician. He or she may be able to prescribe a different medicine or dosage to minimize side effects or simplify your regimen.

Also let your physician know if you've stopped taking a prescribed medicine. Otherwise, he or she may assume the drug isn't working and give you a higher dosage or different medication.

- **Go to follow-up appointments.** Some medications, such as blood thinners and drugs for diabetes, seizures and heart problems, require regular blood tests and monitoring by your physician. Regular visits are crucial to ensure you're getting a safe and effective dose.



# Snap, crackle, pop!

## What are your joints telling you?

**Y**our body is a symphony of sounds—that cracking in your ankles, the popping in your knee. What causes these noises? Sometimes, it's just ligaments or tendons tightening and moving with a joint. For the most part, these sounds are normal and don't require any treatment.

But sometimes these noises can signal a more serious problem. A loud pop and locking of a joint can mean that torn cartilage, a piece of bone or something else has gotten caught between joint surfaces. Cracking and grinding may be a sign of arthritis. A loss of smooth cartilage and roughening of the joint surface is to blame for these noises.

### JUST MAKING NOISE?

To find out whether your popping and cracking should be of concern, look for the following signs. See your physician if you have any of these symptoms:

- pain accompanying the popping
- swelling of the joint
- locking or sticking of the joint
- loss of motion or function

### A JOINT EFFORT

The Arthritis Foundation and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons suggest following these tips to keep your joints healthy:

- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Stretch to increase your flexibility. Ask your physician to help you develop a regular stretching program.
- Stand up straight, shoulders back.
- When you lift heavy objects, use your legs instead of using your back. If you can't lift something yourself, ask for help.



- Alternate heavy activity such as housework, brisk walking or strenuous yardwork with rest periods.
- Wear protective gear, such as wrist, elbow or knee pads, if you're engaging in an activity where you could fall.
- Pay attention to your body. Pain may be a sign you're overworking your joints.
- Eat a well-balanced diet that includes plenty of calcium (1,200 mg a day for those over age 50; 1,000 mg for those ages 19 to 50).

## Knuckle cracking: Bad to the bone?

**S**ome people just can't resist cracking their knuckles. The cracking sound you hear is the "popping" of air bubbles when the joint is pushed or pulled a certain way. Knuckle cracking can certainly be annoying to others, but does it really make your knuckles larger? That old wives' tale hasn't been proven, but this is still a habit you should try to break, as studies point to possible soft-tissue damage in joints, a weak grip and hand swelling as a result of repeated cracking.



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW CEO



Andy Wachtel  
Chief Executive Officer

Dear friends,

**W**elcome to another edition of *Health Connection*, a community newsletter provided

to you compliments of Ponca City Medical Center (PCMC). As the new chief executive officer, I'm committed to keeping you up to date on the hospital's progress. We have a lot to be proud of and are continuously

advancing to meet your healthcare needs. Personally, I look forward to a long relationship with PCMC and getting involved in our community.

In this issue, we introduce you to four of our active medical staff members. In addition, you'll read about the benefits of digital mammography.

### OUR RECRUITING EFFORTS

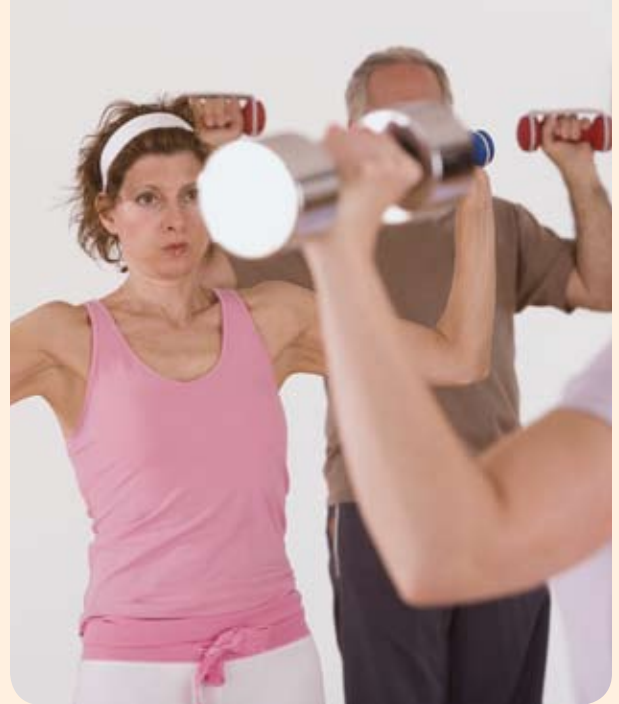
Plans are progressing to recruit new providers to our medical staff. Current efforts include recruitment of a psychiatrist; general/vascular surgeon; interventional cardiologist; ear, nose and throat physician; and two family care physicians.

### DEDICATED TO YOU

I'm always open to your thoughts and suggestions. Please feel free to call or stop by and see us. We thank you for your support and look forward to exciting developments in 2009.

Best wishes,

ANDY WACHTEL  
Chief Executive Officer  
Ponca City Medical Center



## Team up for fitness

**L**ack of time, motivation and enjoyment are among the top reasons people don't exercise. One way to get around those barriers is to recruit someone to work out with you and make it fun, especially after holiday indulgences! Try these ideas:

- **Find hidden ways to move.** If you can't get your partner to start moving, find local events to attend together that make a perfect excuse to get out for a walk.
- **Explore the power of two.** Many communities have adult coed recreation teams, such as volleyball, bowling or soccer. Find one you both enjoy.
- **Learn a new sport or activity together.** When you're both beginners, it eliminates the tension that can arise when one person is the expert and the other is the novice who's doing it wrong. Consider trying kick-boxing, indoor rock climbing or ballroom dancing.
- **Make a difference.** Join fitness events for worthy causes important to both of you, such as Walk MS for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society or Relay For Life for the American Cancer Society.

**!** A new year, a new you!

**S**tart the year off healthy! Make an appointment with your physician or find a physician close to home by visiting [www.poncamedcenter.com](http://www.poncamedcenter.com).

# A better kind of mammogram

## PCMC features digital mammography

**B**reast cancer often makes itself known in its early stages, when there's a good chance for a cure. But here's the catch: You need the right screenings to detect breast cancer. Women who undergo routine mammograms at Ponca City Medical Center (PCMC) have advanced diagnostic technology available—digital mammography.

In 2005, PCMC became the first healthcare provider in the Kay County area to feature digital mammography to aid breast cancer detection.

"We're excited to be able to offer this technology," says Donald Sanders, radiology director at PCMC. "It

allows us to offer our patients advanced mammograms with the least possible hassle and disruption to their lives. Digital mammography has many advantages, and until recently, you had to travel to Oklahoma City, Tulsa or Wichita to have this type of mammogram."

### BENEFITS OF GOING DIGITAL

While digital imaging feels almost identical to conventional screening from the patient's perspective, digital mammography has several benefits, including shorter exam times and a significant reduction in callbacks to obtain more images.

With digital mammography, the radiologist reviews electronic images of the breast using special high-resolution monitors. The physician can adjust the brightness, change contrast and zoom in for close-ups of specific areas. Because digital mammography images are electronic, they can be transmitted quickly across a computer network.

Digital images also can be easily stored, copied without loss of information and transmitted and received in a more streamlined manner, eliminating dependence on one set of original films.

To supplement this technology, the hospital added a digital computer-aided detection (CAD) system, which highlights common characteristics of breast cancer, including masses, clusters of microcalcifications and breast tissue changes, also called architectural distortion. CAD flags these abnormalities to help the radiologist detect breast cancer early. "Digital CAD is like a second set of eyes to support and enhance the radiologist's judgment," says Sanders.

Make your commitment to early detection today by scheduling a mammogram if you're due and encouraging your friends to do the same. PCMC is dedicated to providing quality breast care, close to home.



**!** Mammograms save lives!

**T**o make an appointment for your digital mammogram at PCMC, call (580) 765-0499.

## HEALTHWISE QUIZ

### How much do you know about **exercise**?

Take this quiz to find out.

**1** To lose one pound, you need to burn how many calories?

- a. 500
- b. 1,500
- c. 2,500
- d. 3,500

**2** A good way to measure the intensity of an exercise is to keep track of your:

- a. heart rate
- b. blood pressure
- c. sweat levels
- d. thirst intensity

**3** Exercise can:

- a. reduce depression
- b. help manage type 2 diabetes
- c. boost good HDL cholesterol
- d. all of the above

**4** The *minimum* amount of time you should be active every day is:

- a. 15 minutes
- b. 20 minutes
- c. 30 minutes
- d. there is no minimum

**5** Which of the following exercises will *not* help you build stronger bones?

- a. running
- b. swimming
- c. lifting weights
- d. dancing

ANSWERS: 1. (d) 2. (a) 3. (d) 4. (c) 5. (b)

# The kidney-heart connection

If you think kidney disease only affects your kidneys, think again. Though researchers can't fully explain the link, kidney disease is an independent risk factor for heart disease and greatly increases the risk of dying from heart problems. In fact, heart disease is the most common cause of death for the more than 20 million Americans with chronic kidney disease.

## WHO GETS KIDNEY DISEASE?

Kidney disease is often called a "silent killer" because many people don't even know they have it until it reaches an advanced stage. Risk factors include being obese; smoking; and having high blood pressure, diabetes or a family history of kidney disease. Ask your physician about testing if you're at risk. If he or she suspects you may have chronic kidney disease, blood and urine samples can diagnose it.

## KEEP YOUR KIDNEYS HEALTHY

If you already have kidney disease, early treatment can help keep it from getting worse. But the best method of attack is to prevent the problem in the first place. Take these steps to minimize your risk:

- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Eat healthful foods and be active every day.
- **Quit smoking.** Besides the damage it can do to your heart, smoking can interfere with medicine for high blood pressure.
- **Get your blood pressure level to 120/80 mm Hg or lower.**

Start by slashing salt from your diet and getting more potassium (found in bananas, apricots and broccoli). If changing your diet doesn't help, discuss medications with your physician.

- **Control your blood sugar if you have diabetes.** Dietary changes and medication may be needed.



# 'Brake' for breakfast



**Y**ou wouldn't take off for a road trip with no fuel in your car, so it doesn't make much sense to send your body out for the day with nothing to run on. Your tank needs breakfast.

Studies have shown that those who eat this most important meal of the day are less tired and irritable, have better concentration and are more likely to maintain a healthy weight. Not a bacon-and-eggs person? No problem. Try these

out-of-the-cereal-box suggestions from the American Dietetic Association:

- one cup of vanilla low-fat yogurt topped with whole-grain cereal and berries
- leftover veggie pizza with a piece of fruit and a glass of milk
- whole-grain toast topped with a little peanut butter and apple slices
- whole-grain waffles or pancakes topped with fresh banana
- a super-fast smoothie, made from frozen fruit and yogurt, whipped up in a blender
- a breakfast wrap (try low-sodium deli turkey, low-fat cheese and spinach in a tortilla)
- oatmeal sprinkled with cinnamon and walnuts

## Ready, aim, vaccinate!

**V**accines aren't just for babies. If your child hasn't been to the pediatrician in a while, he or she may have missed some important shots. And don't forget that adults need vaccines, too! Talk

with your pediatrician about your child's specific needs and whether he or she is at high risk. And ask your own physician about *your* needs. Use this handy chart as your guide.

IMMUNIZATION	BIRTH TO AGE 6	AGES 7-18	AGES 19+
Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTap, Td/Tdap)	4 doses by 18 months; final dose at age 6	Kids need a booster at ages 11-12. For teens, ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	Get a Td booster every 10 years. If you're under age 65 and haven't been vaccinated with Tdap before, you need a single dose.
Haemophilus influenzae type b	4 doses by age 15 months		
Hepatitis A	2 doses between 12 and 23 months	High-risk kids and adults need a vaccination.	
Hepatitis B	3 doses within first 18 months of life	Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	High-risk adults should be immunized.
Human papillomavirus (HPV)		3 doses are recommended for girls ages 11-12, or later if a young woman isn't up to date. Ask your physician about the pros and cons of vaccination.	
Inactivated polio virus	3 doses by 18 months	Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	
Influenza	Yearly, for kids ages 6 months to 19 years		Anyone <i>can</i> get vaccinated; high-risk adults and those over age 50 <i>should</i> be.
Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)	1 dose at 12-15 months; another at ages 4-6	Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	If you haven't had this vaccine, you need it. High-risk adults need a second dose. If you were born before 1957, you're considered immune to measles and mumps.
Meningococcal (meningitis)	Ask your pediatrician if your child is high risk.	It's recommended for kids ages 11-12; otherwise, ask your pediatrician if your child is at high risk.	It's a must for high-risk groups.
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	4 doses of pneumococcal conjugate by 15 months	High-risk kids and adults need the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine. Adults should get vaccinated at age 65; some older adults may need a booster.	
Rotavirus	3 doses by 6 months		
Varicella (chicken pox)	1 dose at 12-15 months; another at ages 4-6	Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date.	If you aren't up to date and never had the chicken pox, speak with your physician.
Zoster (shingles)			Get it once, at age 60 or older.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

# MEDICAL STAFF SPOTLIGHTS

The experienced, dedicated medical staff members of Ponca City Medical Center (PCMC) can help keep you healthy. We'd like to introduce four of them to you.



**DAVID SPARKS, M.D.**  
Orthopedic Surgery

415 Fairview, Suite 201  
(580) 762-0202

**O**rthopedic surgery is a second career for David Sparks, M.D., who was a coach and teacher for several years before attending medical school. Dr. Sparks earned his medical degree and completed a one-year general surgery internship and a five-year orthopedic residency at OU Medical Center in Oklahoma City.



**BRAD EDMONDS, M.D.**  
Anesthesiology

1900 N. 14th  
(580) 765-3321

**A**nesthesiologist Brad Edmonds, M.D., joined the PCMC medical staff in 2006. Dr. Edmonds graduated from the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine in 1987 and finished his internship at the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa. He completed his residency at the University of Kansas Medical Center in Wichita, Kan.



**MELINDA ALLEN, D.O.**  
Internal Medicine

215 N. Third  
(580) 762-1777

**M**elinda Allen, D.O., an internal medicine specialist, has been a member of the PCMC medical staff since 2002. Dr. Allen received her medical degree from Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1999 and completed her residency at Tulsa Regional Medical Center in Tulsa.



**KRISHNA VAIDYA, M.D.**  
Neurology

400 Fairview, Suite 10  
(580) 762-7701

**N**eurologist Krishna Vaidya, M.D., has been a member of the PCMC medical staff since 1987. Dr. Vaidya received his medical degree from B.J. Medical College in Poona, India, in 1972. He completed his neuromuscular disease residency and fellowship at University of Missouri Medical Center in Columbia, Mo.

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