

Health Connection

THE MAGAZINE OF WATSONVILLE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL



Dodging diabetes
How diet and exercise
can help

**Smart snacks
on the go!**

**5 ways to keep
your kids healthy**

**The wisdom of a
colonoscopy**

Watch your back!
Options to ease pain



**WATSONVILLE
COMMUNITY HOSPITAL**

www.watsonvillehospital.com

Make time for your mammogram

From salons to restaurants, it seems everything in life requires an appointment or a reservation. But as you set aside time for these little luxuries, don't forget to make one important date: your yearly mammogram.

Mammograms are the most powerful tools in the early detection of breast cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends every woman 40 or older get a yearly mammogram, although more frequent testing may be required if you've had breast cancer or have a strong history of it in your family.

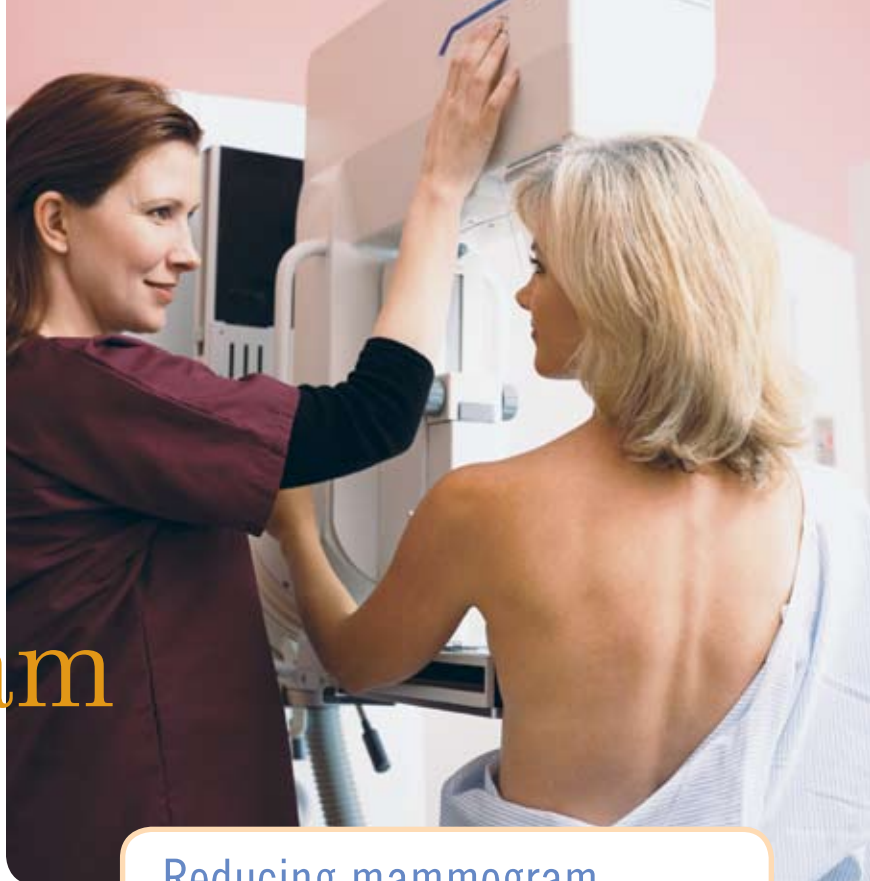
WHAT IS A MAMMOGRAM?

A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast. An image of breast tissue is produced for a radiologist to analyze. He or she looks for tumors or calcium deposits, which can signal cancer's presence.

If you're at high risk for breast cancer, your health-care provider may recommend magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) in addition to a yearly mammogram. This test uses magnets and radio waves to produce detailed images of the body. Suspicious areas found during testing may require an ultrasound, which uses sound waves to tell whether the problem area is cancerous.

GET SCREENED

Go to the same breast-screening facility every year so your radiologist can compare your current mammogram with past results. It's important for the radiologist to see whether there are any changes in your breast tissue from year to year. If you're going to a new facility, try to have your old mammograms sent there before your appointment.



Reducing mammogram discomfort

While mammograms may sometimes be uncomfortable, you can take the edge off with these steps:

- Schedule your mammogram for a few days after your period has ended when your breasts are less tender. Avoid the week before your period.
- Take a pain reliever like ibuprofen or acetaminophen an hour before your mammogram.
- Avoid caffeine for two days before your mammogram.
- Tell your healthcare provider if you have breast implants.
- Ask your X-ray technician about thin, foam pads that she can place between your breast and the machine to lessen discomfort.
- Wear a two-piece outfit since mammograms only require that you strip to your waist. This way you'll feel less exposed.



Low-cost testing

Can't afford a mammogram? Call the American Cancer Society at **1-800-227-2345** for low-cost mammogram options near you. The National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program also offers information about free or low-cost testing for women without health insurance. Call **1-888-842-6355** or visit www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp.

Watch your back

Get relief from pain

Has back pain got you down for the count? In many cases, back pain goes away on its own. But if you're experiencing numbness or tingling, pain that's resistant to medications and rest or pain following a fall or an injury, see your healthcare provider. You could be facing a more serious back problem.

PAIN RELIEF

Most back ailments don't require surgery, so an operation is rarely the first line of defense. As a start, your healthcare provider may recommend hot or cold compresses, specific exercises to reduce pain, medication or pain-relief injections. He or she may also suggest complementary treatments such as massage; acupuncture; and transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS), which sends electrical impulses to nerves.

If your pain can't be quelled with conservative treatments, you may be a candidate for surgery. The pain's cause and the extent of damage will dictate what procedure may work. Some options include:

- a laminectomy/discectomy, which removes a herniated disc through an incision a few inches long
- spinal fusion, which joins two or more vertebrae with bone grafts, screws and rods to stabilize the spine
- vertebroplasty, which involves injecting a cement-like mixture into the damaged vertebrae to relieve pain and stabilize the spine
- disc replacement, which replaces the damaged disc with an artificial one

Only you and your healthcare provider can determine the right treatment for your condition. If you're experiencing persistent back pain, talk with him or her today to help get you on the road to a pain-free tomorrow.

5 steps to a healthier back

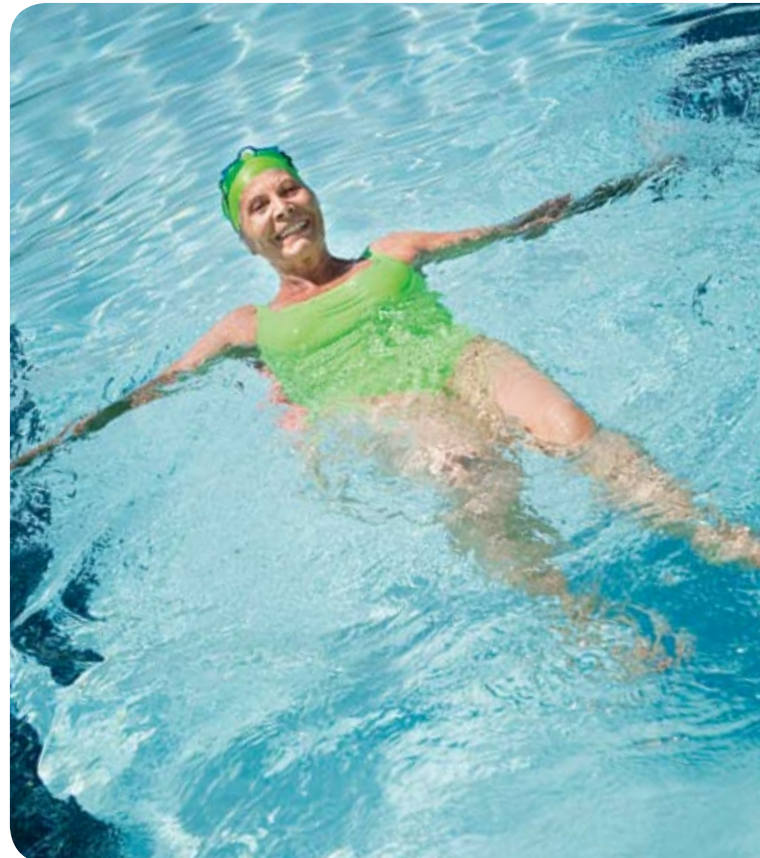
1. Exercise. Low-impact aerobic activities such as walking and swimming can increase back strength without strain. Ask your healthcare provider about exercises that can condition back muscles.

2. Quit smoking. Lighting up reduces oxygen levels in your spinal tissue, which can slow down an ailing back's healing process.

3. Maintain a healthy weight. Excess weight can strain your back muscles. Eat a healthful diet of fruits, vegetables and whole grains and make sure to include plenty of calcium and vitamin D, which help to build bone strength.

4. Practice perfect posture. If you're standing for long periods, rest one foot on a stool, alternating feet, to take the weight off your lower back. While sitting, make sure your chair supports your lower back. Place your feet flat on the floor.

5. Lift with care. Keep your back straight and bend only your knees as you reach down to lift an object. Hold the object close to your body and straighten your knees to stand.



Colonoscopy offers peace of mind



Ali Khademi, D.O.
Gastroenterologist and
Internal Medicine Physician

Colon and rectal cancer, commonly called colorectal cancer, is a leading cause of cancer-related death in the United States among both men and women, says the American Cancer Society (ACS). About 149,000 new cases of colorectal cancer are expected to be diagnosed and 50,000 lives claimed this year. “The good news is that more than 90 percent of

people whose colon or rectal cancer is caught early survive the disease,” says Watsonville Community Hospital (WCH)

gastroenterologist and internal medicine physician Ali Khademi, D.O., a Southern California native who’s practiced in Watsonville for seven years.

While a variety of tests are available to screen for colorectal cancer, the only test that immediately identifies cancer throughout the area is the colonoscopy, says Dr. Khademi. “Unlike other tests, if a polyp [growth that can be identified and removed before it can spread cancer throughout the body] is found, it can be removed during the colonoscopy itself, avoiding follow-up visits, tests and procedures that are performed when a polyp is discovered by an alternate test.”

YOUR RISKS

The ACS recommends colorectal screening beginning at age 50 for most people, and earlier for those at high risk, including people with a strong family history of colorectal cancer and those with certain gastrointestinal disorders such as inflammatory bowel disease. Since 93 percent of cases occur in persons older than age 50, age is one of the strongest risk factors. “But diabetes—common here in the Watsonville area—is another condition that puts people at risk for colon and rectal cancer, so we’re especially anxious to put the word out for screening in our community,” says Dr. Khademi.

While an annual fecal occult blood test, which can be collected and sent to a lab from home, is helpful at spotting potential cancer, a colonoscopy once every 10 years after age 50 can give people peace of mind because it provides a clear view and allows the specialist to examine the entire colon.

WHAT TO EXPECT

During a colonoscopy, a probe with a light and camera is placed inside the colon while the patient is lightly sedated in a condition known as twilight sleep. “Most patients don’t remember the procedure, but they do remember the liquid preparation they swallowed the day before to clean the bowel for the examination,” says Dr. Khademi.





“But the day after the test, most patients experience the peace of mind that comes from finding either they were cancer free or that a polyp was successfully removed.” Because sedation keeps patients comfortable, they’re told not to operate an automobile or heavy machinery or make complex decisions for 24 hours after the test.

For patients at risk, colonoscopies are typically covered by all insurance plans, including Medicare.

EXPERIENCED CARE

Dr. Khademi, who’s board certified by the Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine, performs colonoscopies four days a week in WCH’s Special Procedures Unit. He joined WCH “not only because it’s comfortable and convenient for our community, but also because of the consistently experienced and skilled nursing and other staff members who work with me,” he says. In addition, patients have the option of visiting the unit’s PreAdmission Testing Service before their surgery to get a full explanation of what to expect, receive a facility tour and learn how to be best prepared so they’ll be as comfortable as possible when they return for the colonoscopy.

Before coming to WCH to practice, Dr. Khademi served a three-year specialty fellowship at St. Vincent’s Medical Center of New York Medical College in New York City. He graduated from Western University of Health Sciences in Pomona, Calif.

If you are age 50 or older or are at high risk for colorectal cancer, trust WCH and Dr. Khademi with your colonoscopy. It could be a lifesaving decision.

Reduce your risk

To reduce your colorectal cancer risk, Ali Khademi, D.O., recommends a generally healthy lifestyle, including exercise and a high-fiber diet.

! Early detection is key!

When it comes to disease, the earlier the diagnosis, the more effective the treatment. To make an appointment for your colonoscopy at WCH today, call Ali Khademi, D.O., at (831) 662-9999; Frederick Chen, M.D., at (831) 728-1410; or Albert Crevello, M.D., at (831) 728-1418.

6 great reasons to get moving

Want more energy and a better outlook and health, not to mention a trimmer figure? Then make physical activity part of your daily schedule this summer. Check out these benefits:

- 1. Reduced heart disease risk.** Exercise helps to lower blood pressure and protects against heart disease by improving your cholesterol and triglyceride levels, cleansing the blood of artery-blocking fats.
- 2. Osteoporosis prevention.** The development of this bone-thinning disease can be slowed with weight-bearing exercises like walking, jogging and aerobics.
- 3. Control of diabetes.** Active people are much less likely to develop type 2 diabetes than inactive people. For those with diabetes, exercise may help reduce the need for medication.
- 4. Obesity prevention.** Combined with a low-fat, low-calorie diet, regular activity helps prevent obesity.
- 5. Increased flexibility.** Regular exercise strengthens muscles and keeps joints, tendons and ligaments more flexible.
- 6. Elevated mood.** Exercise can have a positive effect on your mood, including reducing anxiety, tension and even depression symptoms.

! Boost your quality of life!

Take steps to improve your health today. Visit www.watsonvillehospital.com to find the resources you need to stay active.

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about headaches?

Take this quiz to find out.

- 1** What is the most common type of headache?
 - a. sinus
 - b. migraine
 - c. cluster
 - d. tension

- 2** Which statement about caffeine is true?
 - a. It can only worsen headaches and should always be avoided.
 - b. It is a common ingredient in headache medications and makes them more effective.
 - c. Science has not proven caffeine to be an effective headache treatment.
 - d. none of the above

- 3** About how many Americans suffer from chronic headaches?
 - a. 15 million
 - b. 25 million
 - c. 35 million
 - d. 45 million

- 4** Which of the following tests can best help your healthcare provider evaluate your headaches?
 - a. MRI
 - b. EKG
 - c. sonogram
 - d. bone scan

- 5** What can you do to reduce headache occurrence?
 - a. drink at least 600 mg of caffeine a day
 - b. work harder to take your mind off your headache
 - c. exercise regularly
 - d. skip breakfast

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



Dodge diabetes with exercise and diet

The diabetes prevention equation seems simple enough: *healthy eating + regular exercise = a reduced diabetes risk*. Incorporating the equation into your everyday life? Not so simple. But here are some ideas to get you on the right path.

EXERCISE

- Try to get at least 30 minutes of moderate activity on most or all days. This includes aerobic activity like brisk walks, dancing, swimming or biking, as well as strength-training exercises with free weights and weight machines.
- Vary your exercise routine so you don't get bored. Bring a buddy to keep you company.
- Walk instead of driving when you can, take the stairs instead of the elevator or do some gardening.

DIET

- Substitute traditional white rice and noodles with brown rice and whole-wheat pasta to get your fiber fill.
- Limit fat to less than 30 percent of your daily calories by opting for lean meat cuts that end in "loin," filling up on fruits and veggies and going for low-fat dairy such as skim milk and nonfat yogurts and cheeses.
- Sip low- or no-calorie drinks such as water and diet drinks.
- Eat fish twice a week.

Contributing to the community

Dear neighbors,



Lynn C. Miller
Board Chairman

On behalf of the board of directors, I'm pleased to have this opportunity to talk about Watsonville Community Hospital (WCH). I've served as a board member at WCH for 13 years and as board chairman since 2006.

ENHANCED CARE

When someone in your family becomes sick or is hurt, it's comforting to know that WCH is right here to take care of your loved ones. We've continually enhanced our facilities with advanced technology and focused on recruitment of medical staff specialists so you don't have to travel out of the area for medical needs. Our staff continues to receive training on current medical treatments, making quality a top priority.

LENDING A HAND IN THE COMMUNITY

WCH contributes to our community through sponsorships such as the Relay For Life, Healthy Kids, the American Cancer Society, CASA, the United Way and the Pajaro Valley Community Health Trust. WCH also supports the furthering of education with

scholarships and career days at Pajaro Valley Unified Schools and Cabrillo College. We contribute more than \$29 million annually to our community through charity care and nearly \$1.2 million in property and sales taxes. We also provide more than 700 jobs to local residents who are dedicated and committed to the community in which they live.

Since serving on the board, I'm more confident than ever that WCH is a community treasure and that you and your loved ones will receive comprehensive care with compassion by people who live here.

Sincerely,

LYNN C. MILLER
Board Chairman
Watsonville Community Hospital



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