

# HealthPlus

## News

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## The Fight against Alzheimer's

**More than 5.3 million Americans have some form of Alzheimer's disease. Fortunately, family, friends, and people close to Alzheimer's patients can learn to recognize signs and symptoms of the disease.**

**T**hose close to someone with Alzheimer's are often the first to notice a shift in a loved one's mental state. Sometimes the patient can be in denial of the illness.

"By looking at the family history, we can engage family members and caregivers in the diagnostic process," says Anthony Giatras, MD, neurologist on the medical staff at Tift Regional Medical Center. "It often takes a family member or friend to bring it to light."

The Alzheimer's Association recommends watching for the following signs:

- challenges in planning or solving problems
- changes in mood or personality
- confusion with time or place
- decreased or poor judgment
- difficulty completing familiar tasks
- disruptive memory changes
- new problems with speaking or writing

Cognitive symptoms of Alzheimer's can affect



the patient's attention span, judgment, language, memory, and planning abilities. According to Dr. Giatras, various treatments for cognitive symptoms include medications such as Aricept, Exelon, Namenda, and Razadyne.

The caregiver plays an essential role for a patient with Alzheimer's, and as patient care evolves, so does the inclusion of the caregiver's needs.

"The caregiver is the driving force behind the patient being evaluated," Dr. Giatras says. "Here at TRMC, we've made tremendous strides in taking care of both the patient and the caregiver."

*Dr. Giatras is available to see patients the fourth Thursday of every other month at the office of Thomas Faucett, MD, in Adel. To make an appointment, please call (229) 686-6979.*



## The Power of the Dinner Table

During the past 40 years, the number of children battling childhood obesity has skyrocketed at an alarming rate. The Nemours Foundation estimates that nearly 30 percent of American children are overweight or obese.

As a parent, you may be surprised to learn that you can play a vital role in combating childhood obesity by simply including your child in the preparation and planning of meals. Make balanced meals at home and allow your children to help. Working together in the kitchen can encourage your children to become excited about cooking healthy foods. According to the Nemours Foundation, families who eat healthfully generally have fewer behavioral issues and better overall health.



# Schedule Your **Mammogram**

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and as the most common cancer after skin cancer and second leading cause of cancer death for women in the United States, breast cancer affects thousands of lives every year. The American Cancer Society (ACS) estimates that breast cancer will be responsible for 192,000 diagnoses and 40,000 deaths among women in 2009 alone.

The most important factor in avoiding breast cancer-related deaths is early detection. The ACS recommends that women receive clinical breast exams every three years between the ages of 20 and 39 and a mammogram every year beginning at age 40.

*Sandra Brickman, MD, OB/GYN, is available to see patients at Sylvester HealthPlus on the second Tuesday of each month. Bridgett Asbury, MD, OB/GYN, is available to see patients the first Monday of each month.*



Sandra Brickman, MD, OB/GYN



Bridgett Asbury, MD, OB/GYN

## TRMC Part of **National Heart Study**



For the past three years, Tift Regional Medical Center has been involved in a national clinical trial that's advancing the treatment of coronary artery disease.

The Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) trial attempts to prove that hospitals can safely perform PCI without needing to have open-heart surgery in place as a back-up measure in case of complications. PCI—also known as balloon angioplasty or stenting—encompasses a variety of procedures performed via catheter to treat patients with blocked arteries.

Patients may be eligible to participate in the PCI trial if they undergo a cardiac catheterization and the results indicate PCI is needed. Patients who meet the criteria receive education about the clinical trial and are offered a choice of undergoing the procedure at TRMC or being transferred to another facility where open-heart surgery is available.

*For more information about the PCI trial, visit [www.tiftregional.com](http://www.tiftregional.com) and click on the link under "Angioplasty Clinical Study."*

## Getting Your **BACK** on Track



An estimated 80 percent of Americans suffer from back pain at some point in their lives. Fortunately, there is relief.

Through the Spine Treatment Program at Tift Regional Medical Center, patients have access to both operative and nonoperative spinal care. TRMC has two fellowship-trained orthopedic spine surgeons on its medical staff: Mac Sims, MD, and Edward Hellman, MD. In addition, TRMC offers an outpatient spine therapy center with a physical therapist, Melanie Peavy, MPT, RN, BSN.

"If you suffer from degenerative spine disease or other chronic back problems, we have the experts who can treat you and manage your symptoms," says Chris Efaw, director of Outreach and Development at TRMC. "Our experienced staff members remain on the leading-edge of spinal procedures so patients can get the best care close to home."

*For more information about the Spine Treatment Program, call (229) 353-3047.*



## The Doctor Is In...

When you're referred to an out-of-town specialist for advanced medical care, wouldn't it be great if he or she could come to you? That's now possible with Telehealth.

Tift Regional Medical Center, in affiliation with the Georgia Partnership for Telemedicine, uses a high-speed telecommunication system and specialized medical cameras to examine, diagnose, treat, and educate patients electronically. This eliminates the need for patients to travel hundreds of miles to seek the care they need.

"Patients can continue to be cared for by their local provider and receive

medical treatment from a specialist via telemedicine without having to travel outside their community," says Jeff Robbins, director of Neurodiagnostics and Telehealth at TRMC. "This technology saves patients time and money while still offering optimal care and guidance."

Specialties currently offered through Telehealth at TRMC include:

- child and adolescent psychology
- neurology
- pediatric pulmonology
- transplant surgical follow-ups

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## Time-Out Day Every Day

Part of The Joint Commission's Universal Protocol National Patient Safety Goal, time-out is a final assessment process that is conducted at Tift Regional Medical Center prior to all invasive or surgical procedures. Each member of the surgical team is involved, and a number of points are addressed, including:

- correct markings for location and side of body
- patient identity, positioning, and consent
- safety precautions based on patient history and medications

In celebration of National Time-Out Day, all staff members at TRMC received training on the basics of time-out policy and procedure.

"It was National Time-Out Day on June 17, but to ensure consistent patient safety for every procedure, it is 'time-out day' every day at TRMC," says Mindy McStott, director of Quality and Case Management.

*To learn more about surgical care at TRMC, visit [www.tiftregional.com](http://www.tiftregional.com) and select "Surgery Center."*



## Eating to Improve Your Mood

Everyone's familiar with the idea behind comfort food—those delicious indulgences we enjoy after a particularly bad day. While there may not be many scientific facts backing the effectiveness of chicken and dumplings to enhance your mood, there are food choices that can help keep your blood glucose levels balanced and your mood light.

To eat to your advantage, nutritionists recommend limiting the number of refined sugars consumed—such as those found in white flours and sodas—because they can spike your blood sugar and lead to a noticeable drop in both glucose and mood later. Instead, opt for whole grains packed with fiber, colorful vegetables, and lean proteins. Also, including omega-3 fatty acid-rich dishes like salmon in your diet can keep your mind alert and sharp.

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**HEALTHPLUS**  
*Physician Guide*

**ADEL**  
Anthony Giatras, MD, Neurology  
Available the fourth Thursday of every other month at the office of Thomas Fausett, MD (707 North Parrish Avenue).  
To make an appointment, please call (866) 233-5432.

**NASHVILLE**  
Bridgett Asbury, MD, Obstetrics/Gynecology  
Available every first Monday, 2–4 p.m.

Eric Massa, DPM, Podiatrist  
Available every fourth Wednesday, 8 a.m.–noon.

David Banks, MD, Orthopedic Surgery  
Available every other Tuesday, 9 a.m.–noon.

HealthPlus is located in Nashville at 205 Dogwood Drive. To make an appointment, please call (229) 686-6979. Visit the HealthPlus web site at [www.discoverhealthplus.com](http://www.discoverhealthplus.com).

Please note: Specialists are independent contractors who lease space from HealthPlus on a weekly or monthly basis and are not employees of Tift Regional Medical Center.

**Monthly HealthPlus Support Group**  
Every second Tuesday, 5:30 p.m.

This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.

# Meeting Your Orthopedic Needs

**When you need joint replacement or ligament reconstruction, it's good to know that quality orthopedic care is available close to home. David Banks, MD, fellowship-trained, board-certified orthopedic surgeon on the medical staff at Tift Regional Medical Center, offers solutions for all your orthopedic needs.**



**Dr.** Banks offers a wide range of minimally invasive, joint repair and replacement procedures at TRMC.

“We offer complete orthopedic care covering all specialties of orthopedic surgery,” says Dr. Banks. “We’re proud to offer excellent orthopedic care for the community right here at home.”

### **Pain, Pain, Go Away**

For patients suffering from painful arthritis, sometimes medication doesn’t ease the pain. Joint replacement may be an option for those patients, and Dr. Banks can help, offering shoulder, hip, knee, and partial knee replacements.

Dr. Banks also offers a variety of other minimally invasive procedures such as endoscopic carpal tunnel surgery so patients can recover more quickly.

“We routinely perform arthroscopic surgery for various shoulder and knee conditions,” says Dr. Banks. “I’m happy to be able to provide complete orthopedic care for members of the community to help keep them healthy and active.”

*Dr. Banks is available to see patients every other Tuesday at Nashville HealthPlus. To make an appointment, call (229) 686-6979.*

