Does Your Diet Defend or Destroy?

Did you know that your diet could save your life? It’s true. According to the National Cancer Institute, as much as 50 percent of all cancers may be affected by the foods you eat. Scientific evidence proves that a diet that’s rich in fiber, loaded with fruits and vegetables, and low in fat can protect you from a wide range of cancers from breast cancer to colon cancer.

When planning your family’s meals and snacks, choose fresh, raw foods. Foods from the earth are packed with potent nutrients like beta-carotene, antioxidants, and carotenoids that protect your body from disease.

Do you have questions about cancer prevention? Tift Regional Medical Center has two full-time oncologists on staff. Call (229) 386-1300 or visit the Oncology Center web page at www.tiftregional.com.

Why It Counts to Check Your Cholesterol

Imagine your arteries as an intricate drainage system. When cholesterol builds up, it clogs your arteries like the drain in your kitchen sink. Your blood flow slows to a trickle, and you’re at serious risk for a heart attack. A plumber would be nice, but unfortunately, clogged arteries rarely give your body warning—until it’s too late.

So when was the last time you had your cholesterol level checked? The National Cholesterol Education Program recommends adults have their cholesterol screened every five years, but many wait much longer.

Americans often have cholesterol levels well above 200mg/dL, and that’s a dangerous place to be. So why wait? Get screened today to find out where you fit in.

Tift Regional Medical Center has three cardiologists on staff plus South Georgia’s only pediatric cardiologist. For more information, call (229) 382-7120 or visit the Heart Center web page at www.tiftregional.com.

Sign Up for Your Custom Health eNewsletter

Want to be the best parent you can be? Interested in learning how to better manage your diabetes? You can learn about these topics and many more through Tift Regional Medical Center’s free Health eNewsletter.

Simply log on to www.tiftregional.com, and with the click of a button you can sign up to receive information each month on a wide variety of health topics you choose—from Allergies and Children’s Health to Wellness and Women’s Health.

To sign up, just click the “Custom Health eNewsletter” button on the TRMC home page; then choose the health and wellness topics you want to read about each month. It’s personalized to your interests, and it’s completely confidential.

Sign up for your eNewsletter today! Log on to www.tiftregional.com.
Ergonomics 101

Slouching in your chair, glaring at your monitor, typing with your wrists bent.
After eight hours of this, you could experience back pain, eye strain, or wrist soreness.
Repetitive stress injuries like carpal tunnel syndrome have become all too common in the workplace. To combat this, Tift Regional Medical Center created WorkSmart, a program that blends the expertise of medical and business professionals to provide high-quality occupational health care at affordable prices.

Tift Regional understands that your health and productivity at work are important. That’s why WorkSmart incorporates ergonomics—the study and control of posture, stresses, motions, and other physical forces on the body while on the job—into all of its consultations.

Interested in ergonomics consulting for your place of business? Call WorkSmart, Tift Regional Medical Center’s occupational health clinic, at (229) 556-6320 or visit the WorkSmart page at www.tiftregional.com.

HATS OFF TO NAP TIME

If you’re like most people, you fought naps as a child and now wish for naps as an adult. Sometimes we all get a little drowsy in the middle of the day, but should you shake off the sleepy sensation?
Yes and no.
If your employer frowns at sleeping on the job, work hard to keep your eyes open. But if the urge to catch a few winks hits you on a Sunday afternoon, indulge yourself—napping is good for you!

Research shows that our core body temperature drops after midday (similar to the drop that occurs at night), causing us to feel drowsy. A short nap can combat this afternoon sleepiness. In fact, even a 15-minute nap can make a big difference in your productivity, increasing your alertness and sharpening your memory.

Source: The Berkeley Wellness Letter

Help for Your Heartburn

Do you get a burning feeling in your chest right after a meal? Or perhaps experience heaviness in your chest or throat?

Have you considered that you might be one of the 25 million Americans who have chronic (frequent) heartburn?

Most likely, your answer is yes. You’ve probably tried every method of relief on the market. But if you suffer from frequent heartburn and a tablet isn’t doing the trick, try avoiding foods that trigger heartburn, including
• spicy or fatty foods
• carbonated beverages
• caffeine
• chocolate
• mint

Tift Regional Medical Center has three gastroenterologists on staff specializing in digestive disorders. To learn more, visit the physician search tool at www.tiftregional.com or call (229) 382-7120.
It’s essential to safeguard your skin from the sun, but did you know that rays from the sun could harm your eyes, too?

“Protecting your eyes from the sun is important,” says Robert Holme, MD, board-certified ophthalmologist on staff at Tift Regional Medical Center.

“UV rays from the sun can damage your eyes for a lifetime. Research shows that sun damage increases the risk for cataracts and can lead to retinal problems.”

Fortunately, protecting your eyes from the sun is easy—even fashionable!

Wear sunglasses—good ones. “It is essential to have a good pair of sunglasses,” says Dr. Holme. “They should have 100 percent UVA and UVB protection.”

Good sunglasses aren’t necessarily expensive. You can find them everywhere from the mall to the drugstore. The UV label will appear on approved sunglasses.

Add a hat. “A wide-brimmed hat offers an extra shield by shading your eyes from above,” explains Dr. Holme.

Protect kids, too! “People of all ages should protect their eyes,” says Dr. Holme. “Children and infants should wear hats and sunglasses. But be wary of what kind you buy—fashion sunglasses without protection will do more harm than good.”

Ophthalmologist Robert Holme, MD, practices with Tifton Ophthalmology and is a member of the TRMC medical staff. To contact Dr. Holme, please call (229) 386-2181.

In-Vitro Fertilization: Making Dreams Come True

For many couples, one of the greatest moments in their lives is when they find out they’re having a baby. But for more than 6 million women and men in America, that moment is one they fear they will never experience.

Infertility can be frustrating and heartbreaking. Fortunately, today’s technology enables couples with problems such as fallopian tube disease, endometriosis, and low sperm count to fulfill their dreams of having children. But the first step toward that goal is seeking help.

“When couples are unable to become pregnant after a year of trying, they should visit their doctor to determine what is hindering conception and see if they are candidates for in-vitro fertilization,” says Kaylar Howard, MD, OB/GYN on staff at Tift Regional Medical Center.

If in-vitro fertilization (IVF) is an option, the female patient receives a series of medications to develop multiple eggs in her ovaries. The eggs are mixed with the male’s sperm and cultured for three to five days to develop embryos. They are then transferred to the uterus.

Two weeks later, the couple finds out if the procedure was a success, and sometimes they get more than they wished for—about 25 percent of IVF couples have twins and 5 percent have triplets or more.

OB/GYN specialist Kaylar Howard, MD, practices with The Howard Center for Women’s Health in Tifton and is a member of the Tift Regional Medical Center staff. To contact Dr. Howard, please call (229) 391-3500.

You’d Better Wear Shades!

In the summer sun, it is easy to forget about the importance of protecting your eyes from the harmful UV rays. But just like you would put on sunscreen to protect your skin, you should also protect your eyes from the sun. Here are some tips to keep your eyes healthy:

1. Wear good sunglasses—100 percent UVA and UVB protection is key.
2. Add a hat to your sun protection.
3. Protect kids, too. Children and infants should wear hats and sunglasses, even in bright sun.
4. Fashion sunglasses without protection can do more harm than good.

It’s a good idea to protect your eyes from the sun, just like you would protect your skin. So, remember to wear good sunglasses and add a hat to your daily routine to keep your eyes healthy and happy.
Summer is the perfect time to get in shape and feel great. But if you have arthritis, an energetic workout may seem like the last thing you want to do. The truth is, regular exercise offers big benefits to everyone, and people with arthritis are no exception.

“How can exercise ease arthritis pain?”

“The term ‘arthritis’ literally means joint inflammation,” says James Mos- sell, DO, board-certified rheumatologist on staff with Tift Regional Medical Center. “Though arthritic inflammation is typically associated with joints, it also affects the tendons, muscles, and bones that support joints.”

Arthritis can flare up unexpectedly and cause:
- pain
- swelling
- heat
- redness
- tenderness

“Regular exercise can reduce the pain and stiffness that often accompanies arthritis,” explains Dr. Mossell. “To maximize the advantages of exercise, arthritis sufferers should include three types of exercise in their regular routines.”

Fight your arthritis pain with the following plan:

**RANGE-OF-MOTION EXERCISE.** This type of exercise increases flexibility and helps maintain normal joint movement. Yoga, tai chi, dance, and even simple stretches all enhance range of motion and fight joint stiffness. In addition, increased flexibility improves balance and decreases the risk of injury. Range-of-motion exercises should be performed daily.

**STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE EXERCISE.** Strong bones and muscles protect your joints and are critical in the fight against the pain and inflammation of arthritis. Weight training is a great way to build strength, and for people with arthritis, exercise machines are better than free weights.

For best results, try strength and endurance exercises every other day. Start with light or no weight; gradually increase frequency and weight as you become stronger.

**AEROBIC EXERCISE.** For decades experts have touted the benefits of aerobic exercise for the cardiovascular system, but did you know it’s great for your joints, too? In addition to building a healthier heart and raising your spirits, aerobic activity helps you keep away extra pounds.

Weight control is an important part of arthritis management. Because any extra pressure adds stress to sensitive joints, being overweight can aggravate arthritis symptoms. A balanced diet and aerobic exercise can help you maintain a healthy weight.

You should exercise at least 30 minutes a day three times a week. Arthritis sufferers should stick to low-impact forms of exercise such as swimming and avoid activities like jogging that create extra strain on the joints.

**Moderation Matters**

“Most importantly, people with arthritis should remember that the key to an effective exercise routine is moderation,” says Dr. Mossell. “Talk to your doctor to find the regimen that will bring the best benefits for your type of arthritis.”

Rheumatologist James Mossell, DO, practices in Tifton and is a member of the Tift Regional Medical Center staff. To contact Dr. Mossell, please call (229) 391-3320.
ON HEALTH SUMMER 2002

Elixir of Life?
There’s More to Alternative Medicine Than You Might Think

What comes to mind when you hear the phrase “alternative medicine?” Magnets with magic? Powerful potions? Get ready to be surprised.

Alternative Medicine Gains Attention

“Many people are leery of alternative medicine because they think it’s unfounded,” says Lora Efaw, MD, family physician on the Tift Regional Medical Center medical staff. “In reality, it has proven to be a leading form of health care for many people.”

“Alternative medicine offers a balanced approach to medicine. This balance is derived from attention to the emotional and spiritual states of a person, rather than solely the physical.”

In fact, the National Institutes for Health (NIH) created the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) to study the effectiveness of alternative treatments. And according to the NCCAM, since 1997 more than 42 percent of Americans have used alternative therapies for healing.

What Is Alternative Medicine?

Alternative medicine is best defined by what it is not. The NCCAM says that alternative medicine, covering a spectrum of healing philosophies and therapies, can be defined as those treatments and healthcare practices that are not taught widely in medical schools.

“Alternative medicine offers a balanced approach to medicine,” says Dr. Efaw. “This balance is derived from attention to the emotional and spiritual states of a person, rather than solely the physical.”

Meditation, prayer, and faith healing are just a few ways alternative therapies address the whole person. Alternative medicine also integrates natural, organic foods and supplements into its healing regimen.

“I prefer the term ‘complementary’ over ‘alternative’ because I believe there is a place for both traditional and alternative therapies in health care,” says Dr. Efaw. “And oftentimes, the term ‘alternative medicine’ carries with it a negative connotation.”

Alternative vs. Complementary

The NCCAM recognizes a distinction between alternative medicine and complementary medicine. Therapies used alone are referred to as alternative, while those used with more conventional medical therapies are referred to as complementary.

To better understand complementary medicine, consider the following scenario:

“If a patient walks into my office and complains of a cough and a sore throat, I will prescribe cough medicine and maybe some antibiotics,” says Dr. Efaw. “But in addition, I may talk to the patient about various herbs and vitamins that build the immune system, about exercise and a healthy diet that strengthen the body, and about prayer as a way to calm and soothe the spirit.

“If your spirit isn’t healthy, your body won’t be healthy either,” she continues. “Complementary medicine addresses the whole person—mind, body, and spirit.”

Family physician, Lora Efaw, MD, practices at the Center for Healing and Wellness in Tifton and is a member of the TRMC medical staff. To contact Dr. Efaw, call (229) 388-9393.

The following are some common forms of alternative medicine therapies:

- HOMEOPATHY
- MASSAGE
- AROMATHERAPY
- MEDITATION
- ACUPUNCTURE
- CHIROPRACTIC
- FAITH HEALING
- HERBS
- CHELATION
- VITAMINS

To learn more about alternative medicines, log on to www.nccam.nih.gov.
Support Groups

Heart Support Groups
Available at HealthPlus-Ashburn (every first Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m.) and HealthPlus-Nashville (every second Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.).

Cancer Support Group
Meets every fourth Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. at the Oncology Center.

Diabetes Support Group
Meets every fourth Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the TRMC Dining Room.

Please call (229) 556-6318 for more information or visit the community calendar at www.tiftregional.com.

Cardiac Rehabilitation
Now being offered by Tift Regional Medical Center

- Exercise Therapy
- Lipid Management
- Hypertension Control
- Smoking Cessation

Located at Tifton Physicians Center
907 E. 18th Street, Suite 280, Tifton
(229) 386-7796

Specialized healthcare services for business and industry

Under the medical direction of a board-certified physiatrist, Tift Regional’s WorkSmart clinic offers comprehensive occupational medicine services, including treatment of work-related injury and illness, physicals, case management, coordination, and tracking of cases. WorkSmart’s emphasis is placed on returning employees back to work as soon as possible. Additional services include physical assessments, wellness education, prevention programs and corporate health fairs.

(229) 556-6320
www.tiftregional.com
You’ve got questions?  
**Well, we’ve got answers!**

*What’s the latest in health and wellness news?* Find out the answer by signing up for our new monthly eNewsletter.

*What’s going on in your community?* Read about upcoming events in our community calendar, and learn about the latest technology arriving at Tift Regional Medical Center.

*Searching for a physician?* The information you need to find the perfect fit is just a click away.

*Need a job?* Come be a part of our winning team! You can browse our job listings and fill out your résumé online!

**Log on to [www.tiftregional.com](http://www.tiftregional.com)** for all the answers to your healthcare questions—from the comfort of your home.

*At Tift Regional Medical Center, we make mouse calls.*