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JANUARY 2016



Moving Toward a healthier New Year

the lasting impact
of healthy habits

PLUS:

**3D Mammography
at Southern OB/GYN**

**Understanding the
Affordable Care Act**

**Health and wellness
programs at SGMC**

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Your Times
YOUR+HEALTH
...and Medical Directory

Established 2005
Volume XII Number 1

YOUR HEALTH magazine is published
monthly at 201 N. Troup St.,
Valdosta, GA 31601 by

The Valdosta Daily Times

Your News. Your Voice. Your Times.

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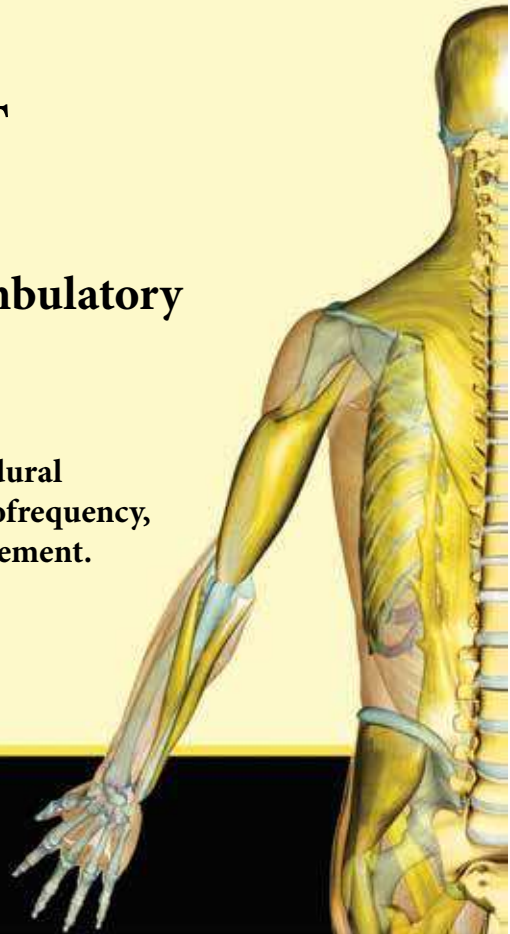
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Southern OB/GYN offers 3D mammograms

By Southern OB/GYN

Southern OB/GYN Associates is the first facility in Lowndes County to offer new technology by Hologic's Genius 3D Mammography system for its patients.

Genius 3D is the only mammography technology proven to detect 41 percent more invasive breast cancers than previous screening tools and reduce false

positives by up to 40 percent. With early detection, the five-year survival rate is now almost 100 percent, according to Southern OB/GYN.

"This improved accuracy and the ability to detect cancer earlier, is one of the main reasons we purchased the Genius 3D system," said Dr. Alex Culbreath. "Southern OB/GYN strives to and is proud to

be able to offer the best possible, cutting-edge technology to women in our community."

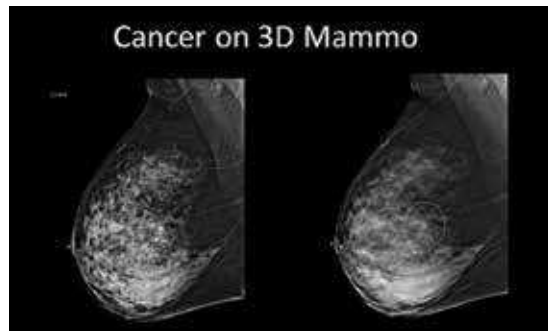
The mammography department is licensed and accredited by the American College of Radiology. With more than 30 years of experience performing mammograms, all Southern OB/GYN technologists are registered technologists in radiology and mammography.



"This improved accuracy and the ability to detect cancer earlier, is one of the main reasons we purchased the Genius 3D system."

- Dr. Alex Culbreath

is the only mammography technology proven to detect 41 percent more invasive breast cancers than previous screening tools and reduce false positives by up to 40 percent.



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- **What is 3D mammography?**

Breast tomosynthesis imaging: a new screening tool that converts digital images into a stack of thin layers or “slices,” building a three-dimensional reconstruction of the breast that is much clearer to read.

- **How is 3D mammography different than 2D?**

3D mammography is used in conjunction with a traditional 2D digital mammogram to create a clearer picture of the breast health. It’s like looking at the assembled pages of a book instead of just the cover — you can flip through all the “pages” to see more detail.

- **Is there increased radiation with 3D mammography?**

3D mammography is safe, and radiation exposure to the breast is equal to or even less than that from traditional mammography as there is less of a need for additional views.

- **What can I expect during a 3D mammogram?**

3D mammography may require less compression than traditional mammography because it is no longer necessary to compress and spread the breast tissue exactly parallel to the detector.

- **What are the benefits to using 3D mammography?**

The Genius 3D mammography procedure has been shown in clinical studies to be 41 percent more accurate than conventional mammography alone for detecting cancers earlier. It also reduces “extra views” by 40 percent. Clearer images and a better picture of breast health are critical in early diagnosis.

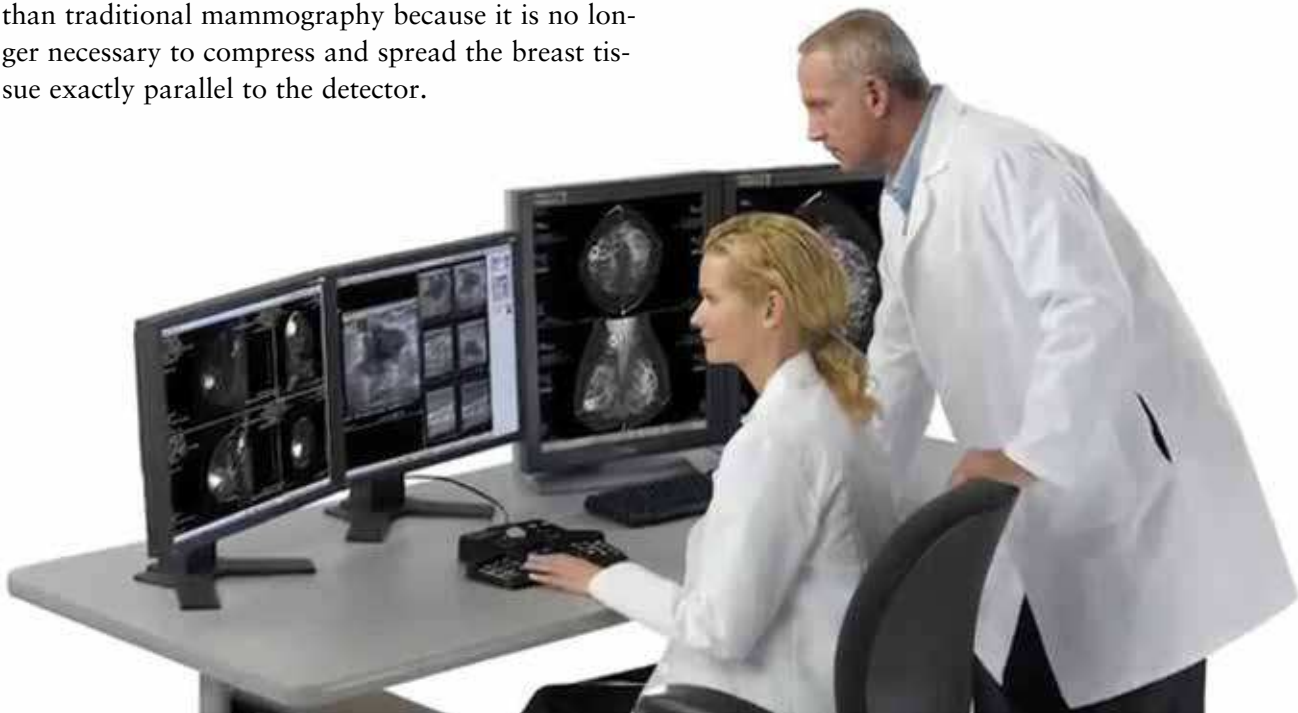
- **Is 3D mammography safe for women with breast implants?**

Yes.

- **What does 3D mammography cost?**

Most insurance companies including Medicare recognize the benefits of 3D mammography and cover the additional cost. You may call your insurance plan to see if this new technology is covered, or a member of our insurance staff can assist you with obtaining this information.

For more information: Contact Southern OB/GYN, (229) 241-2800.



Insure GA helps Georgians understand **Affordable Care Act**

By Cancer Coalition of South Georgia



Open Enrollment for the 2015-2016 year has begun and Insure GA is ready to assist Georgia's 1,659,293 uninsured individuals in understanding their options for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act, according to the organization.

With 44 licensed navigators strategically placed throughout the state, partnerships with reputable and trusted organizations such as the Cancer Coalitions of Georgia,

Emory University, Morehouse School of Medicine, and the Northwest Georgia Healthcare Partnership, and a virtual call center staffed with both English- and Spanish-speaking navigators, Insure GA is optimistic about its ability to reach Georgians wherever they may be in their journey to getting health coverage.

Insure GA aims to educate and assist Georgians in gaining access to high-quality, affordable health insurance coverage through the

health insurance marketplace.

Additionally, Insure GA can assist with hardship exemptions, re-enrollments, and referrals to other organizations such as Medicaid and Medicare.

Through strategically placed navigators, Insure GA will host in-person enrollment events in all 159 counties in the state by the end of open enrollment.

The events serve as a means for consumers to meet face-to-face with their local navigator and can

be hosted anywhere open to the general public. Locations for these events range from libraries to churches, fairs to food banks, and even some schools and universities.

Realizing that some consumers may not have access or the ability to come to an in-person event, Insure GA remains dedicated to its mission by staffing a virtual navigation center. The call center is staffed from 7 a.m.-7 p.m. with English and Spanish speakers.

To augment this service, each virtual navigator has the ability to securely share the consumers screen so as to better understand what the consumer is being asked.

From answering simple questions to sitting down with a consumer to do a one-on-one navigation, Insure GA's navigators provide

quality assistance every time, according to the organization.

Insure GA has assisted Georgians for two years through its multiple channels.

Last year, the initiative assisted more than 8,000 individuals in gaining access to health coverage while hosting more than 350 events throughout the state, excluding the metro Atlanta area.

Insure GA is federally funded through CMS's Navigator Grant. With an award of \$2.3 million this year, Insure GA has expanded its efforts to cover the entire state, as well as the number of licensed navigators on staff.

Insure GA remains apolitical, non-biased, and free service to all. The initiative champions the success of the Affordable Care Act while responsibly acknowledging

its shortfalls.

If you are interested in partnering with Insure GA, need health insurance, or simply have questions, visit Insure GA's website at www.InsureGA.org or call 1-866-988-8246.

Ted Hall, MS, is the regional navigator for Valdosta and surrounding counties. Hall is housed at the Valdosta Goodwill, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. each Wednesday. Appointments can be scheduled during additional time slots.

Call 1-866-988-8246 to schedule an appointment with Hall.

More information: Contact Katie Smoak Benzur, director of outreach, (478) 254-5217; or ksmoak@chwg.org

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Growing healthy together with SGMC

By South Georgia Medical Center

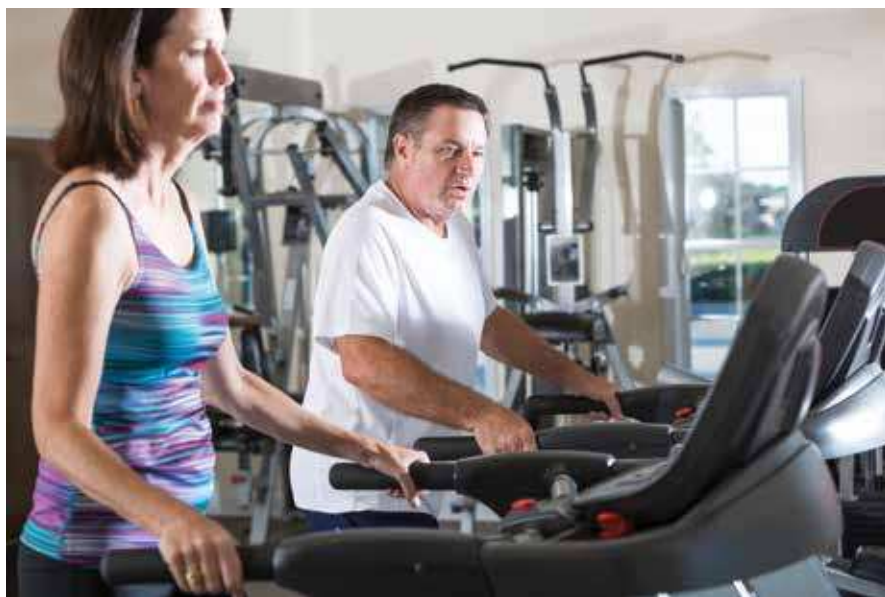
At South Georgia Medical Center, its campuses and affiliates, nothing is more important than your health.

SGMC not only strives to offer the best medical care in the region, but also to provide programs to keep you healthy. Often, we collaborate with community partners to achieve maximum results.

SGMC's programs offer something for everyone in the community.

From a fitness and weight-loss challenge to smoking cessation classes, SGMC's highly trained staff is committed to providing the know-how to increase your family's personal health and wellness to make our region healthier.

SGMC maintains a list of classes, programs, dates, times and locations on the website: www.sgmc.org. For questions or to register by phone, call Community Health Promotions, (229) 433-1074.



South Georgia Medical Center offers several programs in 2016 to help area residents improve their health.

Wellness Challenge

SGMC and the YMCA want to provide the community with tools to sustain a healthy lifestyle, eat more nutritiously and exercise safely.

For the past five years, SGMC has partnered with the Valdosta-Lowndes County YMCA and Pepsi to sponsor Team Lean.

The community-wide 10-week wellness challenge has added some great new features this year.

In addition to the traditional weight-loss component, personal trainer and health and fitness

education classes, participants can now earn points for doing physical activity and participating in fitness challenges. Points can even be earned for shopping at your local grocery store.

Not a member of the YMCA? This is not a problem.

Team Lean is open to everyone 14 years and up. Participants can register as an individual or with a team. Participants must weigh in and submit fitness and challenge points every Thursday to be eligible for prizes.

The cost per participant is \$50.

The kick-off for this community event is 9 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 9, YMCA on Gornto Road.

Come out and challenge yourself and the community to get fit.

Smoking Cessation

Ready to quit smoking?

SGMC provides the American Lung Association's "Freedom From Smoking" program at no cost to area tobacco users. Call (229) 433-1074 to register for an upcoming session.

The "Freedom From Smoking" program is eight sessions long and uses a positive behavior-change approach to help participants quit and become non-smokers for good.

Participants learn how to deal with recovery, control weight, manage stress and fight those urges to go back to smoking.

Sessions are offered at SGMC's main campus in Valdosta, SGMC Berrien Campus in Nashville, and SGMC Lanier Campus in Lakeland.

Cardiac Rehab

South Georgia Medical Center offers cardiac rehabilitation services that are certified by the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation.

Cardiac rehabilitation programs help people with cardiovascular problems (e.g. heart attacks, coronary artery bypass graft surgery, chronic chest pain, angioplasty, etc.) recover faster and improve their overall quality of life.

Cardiac rehab includes exercise, education, counseling and support for patients and their families. It is an important component of the complete continuum of care available locally at SGMC's Dasher Memorial Heart Center.

Anyone whose physician recommends a program of exercise can benefit from cardiac rehabilitation. SGMC Cardiac Rehab encourages lifestyle modifications that help reduce the risk of recurrent cardiac problems.

There are three phases to the program which begin during an inpatient stay and conclude with supervised exercise at the YMCA.

Heart health is too important to take for granted. For more information, contact SGMC's Cardiac Rehab at (229) 245-6211.

Dementia Health Seminar

SGMC wants to bring awareness and help the community address the behavioral health needs of aging citizens.

Impacting nearly 5.4 million Americans, Alzheimer's is a brain disease that causes a slow decline in memory, thinking and reasoning skills. Early diagnosis provides the best opportunities for treatment and support.

SGMC's Dogwood Senior Health Center hosts free, quarterly education for caregivers and seniors on the signs and symptoms of dementia and Alzheimer's. (Dates and times TBA). Call the SGMC Dogwood Senior Health Center for more information, (229) 433-8680.

Heart Health Expo

To be held 9 a.m.-noon, Feb. 20, Valdosta State University Center, the Heart Health Expo is one of our most popular events.

Sponsored by the Dasher Memorial Heart Center, South Health District, 100 Black Men and other community partners, the event offers free EKGs, and screening tests, blood pressure checks, foot screenings and body fat analyses.

Educational classes on Compressions-Only CPR, heart-healthy eating, smoking cessation, and diabetes management will also be provided. Community education lectures will be presented by SGMC-affiliated cardiologists and cardiovascular surgeons. Appointments are required for portions of this event and can be made by calling (229) 433-1074 after Feb. 1

SGMC, its campuses and affiliates care about your health and encourage you to assume a proactive program of health and wellness. The programs are just a few of the total Community Health Promotion offerings we provide.

For more information, call **SGMC's Community Health Promotions, (229) 433-1074** or visit **www.sgmc.org** to see a complete schedule of community health promotion activities.

How to shorten the duration of a cold

Few things can be as uncomfortable as the common cold. In their book "Common Cold," authors Olaf Weber and Ronald Eccles say the common cold has been around since the ancient times. More than 200 virus strains can contribute to colds, but the rhinovirus is the most common. Colds produce a bevy of symptoms, including runny nose, congestion and sore throat, so it should come as no surprise that sufferers want to find relief fast.

Colds typically last for a week or more. While there's no cure for the common cold, according to The Mayo Clinic, there are some remedies that can help cold sufferers feel better more quickly.

- **Rest:** One of the best things to do when you have a cold is to get adequate rest. Your body's immune system is working overtime to combat the cold virus, and restricting activity can help it direct efforts where they're needed most. Keep away from strenuous activities, and spend more time relaxing or sleeping to let your body do its job.

- **Hydration:** Consuming plenty of clear fluids can reduce congestion and ensure that you do not get dehydrated. Plus, warm beverages can be soothing to an irritated throat. Avoid coffee, caffeinated sodas and alcohol, which can exacerbate dehydration.

- **Saline rinses:** Intra-nasal saline sprays, neti pots and similar products can help loosen mucus that is clogging the nose and sinus cavities, allowing it to flow out. This makes blowing your nose more effective and may help prevent post-nasal drip. Avoid prolonged use of medicated decongestant sprays. They may work well, but they can cause rebound congestion that's worse than the original stuffiness.



- **Vitamin C:** Vitamin C will not prevent colds, but it could help in other ways. Taking vitamin C before the onset of cold symptoms may shorten the duration of symptoms. Vitamin C also may provide benefits for people at high risk of colds due to frequent exposure, offers The Mayo Clinic.

- **Soup and tea:** Soup is an easy-to-digest meal that provides many of the necessary remedies

for a cold, including warm broth to hydrate and soothe, antioxidant-rich vegetables and protein to help fuel the body's recovery process. In 2000, Dr. Stephen Rennard of the Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha actually tested if chicken soup clinically makes people with colds feel better. He found that chicken soup inhibited neutrophils, immune cells that cause congestion. Decaffeinated tea also may help you stay hydrated and relieve many cold symptoms.

- **Reinfection:** Use cleaning products that are effective at killing viruses around the house to prevent reinfection and cold relapses. Also, avoid touching your nose, eyes and mouth between hand-washings to keep germs at bay.

Colds can be a nuisance. Most medicines will help relieve symptoms but cannot make colds go away faster. Natural remedies can help the body's immune system work at its best and lessen the severity of a cold. **YH**



DID YOU KNOW...?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, research has shown that strengthening exercises are safe and effective for men and women of all ages, including seniors. The CDC also notes that men and women with heart disease or arthritis may benefit the most from exercise regimens that include lifting weights several times per week. A strength-training program at Tufts University enlisted older men and women with moderate to severe knee osteoarthritis. The program lasted 16 weeks, and by the end of those 16 weeks, participants reported that their pain had decreased by an average of 43 percent while also decreasing the disability caused by their conditions. In addition to the benefits uncovered in the Tufts program, strength training can benefit older men and women by improving balance and flexibility, which can decrease their likelihood of falling and the severity of those falls if they do slip.



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The benefits of reading

Many people are avid readers, feeling that a good book remains the most entertaining form of escapism. But reading provides more than just an opportunity to leave the daily grind behind.

While many people may read to immerse themselves in something other than a movie or a television show, they may not know about all the additional benefits they are enjoying when cuddling up with a good book.

- Reading can improve brain function. A recent study from researchers at Emory University discovered that reading a novel can improve brain function in various ways. During the study, researchers found that reading fiction improves connectivity in the brain. In addition, reading fiction improved readers' ability to put themselves in other peoples' shoes, which might help them relate better to people in both the present and future.

- Reading can benefit long-term brain health. While readers engrossed in a great book might only be worried about what's coming on the next page, the benefits to reading are much more

long-term than the next chapter. Researchers at the Rush University Medical Center in Chicago found that reading is one of a handful of mentally stimulating activities that can benefit brain health in old age. In their Rush Memory and Aging Project, researchers examined nearly 300 elderly men and women, giving them tests of memory and thinking throughout the final years of their lives. When participants, who were surveyed as to how often they engaged in mentally stimulating activities such



as reading, passed away, their brains were examined for signs of Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Researchers discovered that the participants who engaged in mentally challenging activities most often had slower rates of memory decline. In addition, even those who had symptoms of brain damage that are commonly associated with Alzheimer's and dementia

seemed to benefit from the stimulation that mentally challenging activities produced.

- Reading can help reduce stress. Another big benefit of reading is its relationship to stress. According to a 2009 study from researchers at the University of Sussex in England, reading can reduce stress by up to 68 percent. In addition, reading might help relieve that stress even faster than other forms of stress relief because it allows for a more immediate escape from the stress of daily life.

- Reading can help you get a more restful night's sleep. According to the National Sleep Foundation, engaging in a calming activity for an hour before going to bed can help your body wind down and ready itself for sleep. Some people may struggle to fall asleep after reading on an electronic device, such as a tablet or e-reader, as the light that emanates from such devices may be activating the brain. If need be, stick to reading traditional print books and magazines before going to bed.

Reading is not only a favorite activity for many people, but it's also something that can benefit the body in myriad ways. **YH**

DID YOU KNOW...?

Research indicates that people who laugh a lot are much healthier and may live longer than those who don't find time to chuckle. A good, deep belly laugh can provide your body and mind with a great workout. Dr. Lee Berk at the Loma Linda School of Public Health in California found that laughing lowers levels of stress hormones and strengthens the immune system. The organization Laughter Works, which teaches people how and why to laugh, says laughter can cause blood pressure to drop, blood to become oxygenated and endorphins to kick in, which can improve mood. And that's just the beginning. Laughing can help reduce stress and promote stronger relationships between people who laugh together. Data indicates children around the age of six laugh the most, laughing roughly 300 times per day, while adults average only 15 to 100 laughs per day.



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Be smart about antibiotic use

When used correctly, antibiotics and similar drugs known as antimicrobial agents can alleviate infections caused by various bacteria and some types of fungi and parasites. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that these drugs have been used successfully for the last 70 years to treat patients with infectious diseases.

But antibiotics cannot treat illnesses stemming from viruses, which include most colds and the flu.

As effective as antibiotics can be, antibiotic resistance is a growing problem. The CDC reports that at least two million people become infected with bacteria that have become resistant to antibiotics, and roughly 23,000 people die each year as a result of these types of infections. An April 2014 report from the World Health Organization stated, "This serious threat is no longer a prediction for the future, it is happening right now in every region of the world and has the potential to affect anyone, of any age, in any country. It is now a major threat to public health."

The Alliance for the Prudent Use of Antibiotics says antibiotic resistance occurs when an antibiotic has lost its ability to effectively control or kill bacterial growth. The three main ways resistance develops include natural resistance to certain types of antibiotics,



genetic mutation or through the acquisition of resistance from another bacterium. This resistance can occur spontaneously or through misuse of antibiotics or antimicrobials. Prescription medications are not always the culprits, either. Antibiotic use in livestock and food production also may contribute to resistance.

When antibiotic resistance occurs, a stronger drug may be needed to treat an infection that was once taken care of by a milder medication.

Prudent antibiotic use can help prevent the recurrence of resistance. Individuals can help the process in a number of ways.

• Become educated. The health resource Medscape, powered by WebMD, says in a recent survey of 796 clinicians, 42 percent of doctors have admitted to prescribing antibiotics 10 to 24 percent of the time even when they are not sure they are necessary. Patient

request is a large factor in such offerings. About 25 percent of patients ask their doctor or nurse for antibiotics. Patients who educate themselves about the proper application of antibiotics may be less likely to request them, and that can help prevent the development of a resistance.

• Confirm need. Only take antibiotics when a bacteria-, parasite- or fungus-based illness is identified. These illnesses may include strep throat, urinary tract infections or ear infections.

• Take a wait-and-see approach. Wait for lab results to come back for strep throat or other cultures to see if you need an antibiotic. Many viral-based illnesses will go away within two weeks' time.

• Adhere to dosage guidelines. When prescribed antibiotics for an infection, take them as directed, making sure you complete the dosage cycle. Do not stop simply because you feel better. Stopping early may not be enough to effectively kill the bacteria and may contribute to resistance in the future.

Antibiotic abuse and resistance are concerns that can be addressed by becoming informed and making smart medication choices. **YH**



DID YOU KNOW...?

Born in 1907, Hungarian physician Hans Selye is credited with coining the medical term "stress" in 1936. While studying medicine at the German Medical School in Prague, Selye, at the ripe old age of 17, observed that patients suffering from various diseases had a tendency to exhibit identical signs and symptoms. According to the American Institute of Stress, Selye tested animals with various physical and emotional stimuli, noting that, regardless of the stimuli, the animals all exhibited the same pathologic changes, namely enlargement of the adrenals, shrinkage of lymphoid tissue and ulcerations of the stomach. Selye would go on to discover General Adaptation Syndrome, which he described as the body's response to the demands placed on it. That syndrome noted how stressful situations induced involuntary hormonal responses that contributed to a host of negative side effects, including high blood pressure and arteriosclerosis, that are still associated with stress today.

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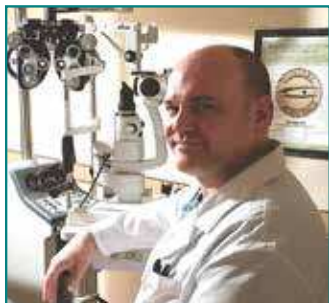
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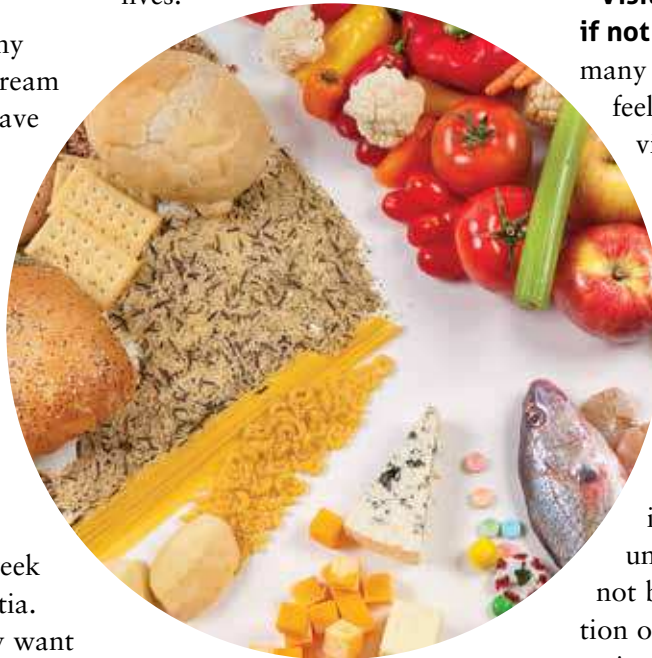
Healthy habits that can have a lasting impact

A long and healthy life is the ultimate goal for many people. While a host of factors beyond a person's control, such as genetics, impact how long that person lives and how susceptible to certain medical conditions he or she may be, there are many things men and women can do to improve their chances of living long, healthy lives.

• **Keep working.** While many working men and women dream of the day when they can leave the daily grind behind once and for all, they might want to think more about a second career than a long, carefree retirement. A study from British researchers published in the *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry* found that each extra year that men and women work was associated with a six-week delay in the onset of dementia. While men and women may want to retire from their professions, finding second careers or volunteering close to full-time hours may improve their long-term health and quality of life.

• **Stay on your toes.** A healthy diet is a key component of a healthy lifestyle, but diet alone

is not enough to promote a long and healthy life. According to the Johns Hopkins Medicine Health Library, the risks associated with a physically inactive lifestyle are considerable. Such risks include a greater risk of developing high blood pressure and coronary heart disease and even a greater risk for certain cancers. In addition, physical inactivity can add to feelings of anxiety and depression. Inactivity tends to increase with age, so men and women aiming for long and healthy lives should make physical activity a vital part of their daily lives.



• **Get your whole grains.** Whole grains may be another key ingredient to a long and healthy life. Numerous studies have shown that increasing whole grain consumption can help prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes.

Researchers who conducted a systematic review of studies examining the link between whole grains and type 2 diabetes prevention in 2007 found that eating an extra two servings of whole grains per day decreased a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 21 percent. That's an important finding, as additional research has found that people with diabetes have an increased risk of developing Alzheimer's disease, a neurodegenerative condition that can dramatically reduce quality of life.

• **Visit your physician annually if not more frequently.** While many people, especially those who feel healthy, are hesitant to visit their physicians, doing so may just save your life. Several diseases, including cancer and heart disease, are more effectively treated when detected early. Annual physicals and discussions with your physician may uncover a disease in its early stages when it is most treatable. Waiting until symptoms appear may not be too late to treat a condition or disease, but taking a proactive approach increases the likelihood of early detection, which increases your chances of living a long and healthy life.

Healthy habits improve people's quality of life while also increasing the likelihood that men and women live long, healthy and productive lives. **YH**

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VMS cheerleaders donate \$500 to SGMC Pearlman Cancer Center



Valdosta Middle School cheerleaders presented Bridgett Young, South Georgia Medical Center Pearlman Cancer Center director, with a \$500 check recently. The donation will benefit local cancer patients who are treated at Pearlman. The cheerleaders raised money during October with jean and hat day fundraisers. 'Their thoughtfulness and generosity are greatly appreciated,' according to SGMC. More information on Pearlman Cancer Center visit, www.sgmc.org/cancer

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DID YOU KNOW...?

According to data from Statistics Brain, the American Cancer Society and Health Land, around 70 percent of smokers harbor a desire to quit altogether, while 40 percent of smokers will try to quit this year. Quitting smoking is a popular New Year's resolution, and a choice that can improve smokers' health dramatically. Smokers can reduce their rate of dying from smoking by half just by quitting before age 50. Although the percentage of smokers who will succeed in quitting the first time around is small, it is still worth the effort. Today there are many different plans, medications and smoking-cessation support groups to help smokers as they attempt to quit.

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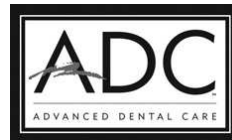
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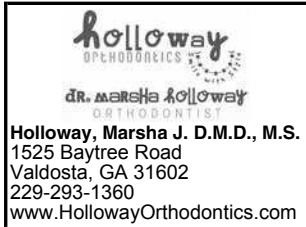
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Barbara Pearce, NP
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229-247-3300
Fax: 229-247-1131

South Georgia Toxicology
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Valdosta, GA 31605
229-242-4600
Fax: 229-247-2993
Toll Free 1-877-889-8841

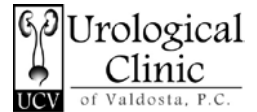
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229-253-0715- phone
229-253-0785- fax
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Dewayne Blanton, PA-C
Brad Ridge, PA-C
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www.urologyvaldosta.com

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