

# HealthScope

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# Do you really need a primary care physician?

**S**ure, most health plans require a primary care physician (PCP) for specialist referrals. But that's just one reason it's a good idea to have one dedicated clinician to oversee all your health concerns.

## THE KEY TO SUPERIOR CARE

Developing an ongoing relationship with one physician who knows you and your medical history leads to a better overall outcome and lower costs. The reason? Your PCP can counsel you on healthy lifestyle choices, such as exercise options, an eating plan and other prudent lifestyle adjustments and modifications. Plus, seeing your PCP regularly makes him or her better at evaluating your symptoms than practitioners who don't know you. Additionally, a PCP provides routine health screenings, which can find diseases early—when they're easier to treat (see “Screenings your PCP may provide”). This, in turn, translates into less invasive and less expensive treatments.

## A GUIDING LIGHT

If you've ever wished you could go to one place for all your health concerns or worried whether you're approaching the right physician for a particular ailment, you're in luck. A PCP can be your primary contact to address most personal healthcare needs.

The healthcare system can be intimidating—especially when you're faced with a frightening symptom. A PCP can evaluate the problem and either manage it him- or herself or arrange for the appropriate referrals. And if you need specialist care, your PCP can guide you and coordinate all aspects of your care. Plus, he or she can sort through and help explain the advice of other physicians.

## Who's who in the PCP world

**W**hen picking a PCP, you can choose from many different types of healthcare professionals:

- **Family practitioners.** Physicians who care for children and adults of all ages. They may also practice obstetrics and minor surgery.
- **General practitioners.** Physicians who provide basic care for all ages.
- **Internists.** Physicians who care for adults of all ages and can treat many different medical problems.
- **Obstetricians/gynecologists.** Physicians who specialize in reproductive health. They often serve as a PCP for women, especially those of childbearing age.
- **Hospitalists.** Physicians who care for people who are hospitalized. Most hospitalists are trained in internal medicine and work with a hospitalized patient's PCP to provide the best care.
- **Nurse practitioners and physician assistants.** Nonphysician providers of primary healthcare. Often referred to as “physician extenders,” they consult with physicians. They may see children, adults or women only and can prescribe medications and other treatments.
- **Pediatricians.** Physicians who treat newborns, infants, children and adolescents.

## Screenings your PCP may provide

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> blood pressure  | <input type="checkbox"/> cholesterol       | <input type="checkbox"/> diabetes        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> breast cancer   | <input type="checkbox"/> colorectal cancer | <input type="checkbox"/> obesity         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cervical cancer | <input type="checkbox"/> depression        | <input type="checkbox"/> prostate cancer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> chlamydia       |  |  |

# Strength-train your brain

## The mental benefits of exercise

**E**xercise has long been touted for its physical health benefits, such as improving metabolism, lowering blood pressure and reducing your risk of heart disease, stroke and cancer. But working up a sweat is also good for your head. Here's how:

### BEATS THE BLUES

In a review of 80 studies on exercise and depression, researchers concluded that getting physical can act like an antidepressant. The analysis found that exercise decreased depression more than relaxation training (such as meditation or breathing) or engaging in enjoyable activities did. Working out may boost levels of feel-good endorphins, natural painkillers that promote a heightened sense of well-being.

### TAMES TENSION

Physical activity releases muscle tension, reduces levels of the stress hormone cortisol and raises body temperature, which may have calming effects. Additionally, it can shift your attention away from anxious thoughts to something more pleasant, like your surroundings or the music that gets you moving.

### AMPS UP ENERGY

Often feel drained? Inactivity is the likely culprit. Yes, working out may make you tired in the short term, but it helps increase stamina and energy in the long run. And, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, staying active may improve sleep quality, which translates into more next-day pep.

### CRANKS UP CONFIDENCE

If you're nervous, working up a sweat gives you a confidence boost. How does getting sweaty raise self-worth? The effect is thought to be brought about by the sense of accomplishment that comes from meeting fitness goals or challenges.

### BOOSTS BRAIN POWER

Regular physical activity can help keep your thinking, learning and judgment skills sharp as you age. In one study of 62- to 70-year-olds, those who were still working and retirees who exercised sustained their levels of cerebral blood flow and performed better on cognition tests than inactive retirees. What's more, in a few studies of subjects older than age 65, those who worked out for at least 15 to 30 minutes three times a week were less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease.



## How much is enough?

**I**f you have a physical disability, talk with your physician before exercising. Once you get his or her OK, do the following activities to reap the mental and physical benefits:

- A minimum of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity (like brisk walking) each week. If you're just getting started, break your workout into three brisk 10-minute walks a day, five days a week. Not into walking? Do water aerobics, go for a bike ride, play doubles tennis or mow the lawn—anything that gets you moving.
- Muscle-strengthening activities that target all major muscle groups on two or more days a week. Try heavy gardening (digging, shoveling), yoga, lifting weights or other weight-bearing moves like push-ups or sit-ups. Aim for eight to 12 repetitions per activity.



# Hospitalists enhance patient care team

**H**ospitalist physicians are improving hospital medicine all over the country. Here at Gateway, they're increasing the contact patients have with physicians while in the hospital and making hospital care more efficient. But despite the considerable benefits hospitalists offer patients, many people don't know who they are or what they do.

## A KEY ROLE

The term hospitalist was first used in 1996 to refer to physicians who work exclusively in hospitals. Once a patient is admitted, the hospitalist and the patient's regular physician work as a team, communicating frequently to ensure proper care based on the patient's preexisting conditions and unique needs. The patient returns to the care of a regular physician upon discharge.

For example, if a patient is admitted to the hospital for surgery, his or her surgeon will perform the operation. After surgery, a hospitalist partners with the surgeon in caring for the patient during the remainder of his

or her stay. The hospitalist also communicates regularly with the patient's primary care physician.

Hospitalists are the fastest-growing group of physician specialists in medicine today. The rapid growth of hospitalists in the United States is due in part to the many ways they benefit hospital patients.

## AROUND-THE-CLOCK CARE

Hospitalists increase the efficiency of hospital treatment. They request, receive and analyze test results immediately and administer care if necessary, cutting down on wait time. Studies show that hospitalists can also reduce the length of a patient's stay by as many as two days sooner than normal. This means that families make fewer trips to the hospital and their loved ones are home quicker.

Hospitalists can also help patients and their physicians feel more comfortable about hospital visits. It's reassuring for patients, their families and their physicians to know that a physician will be close at hand at all times. Hospitalists are regularly available to assist nurses in making timely treatment decisions, and they take pressure off private practice physicians who can't be present at a hospital 24 hours a day.

Hospitalists help connect the dots in inpatient care, making hospitals more efficient and assuring patients and their families that a physician is in the house. In the end, the goal is timely, quality care. At Gateway, hospitalists help us work toward that goal every day.

**!** Visit us online!

**F**or more information about services at Gateway Medical Center, visit [www.todaysgateway.com](http://www.todaysgateway.com).

# Staying healthier is now easier than ever!

## Gateway offers new online resources



**G**ateway Medical Center has more ways than ever to keep you informed about the latest health news. Visit [www.todaysgateway.com](http://www.todaysgateway.com) to find everything from medical podcasts, eNewsletters, recipes, and health tools and calculators to our latest “tweets” on Twitter.

Our Health Resources include thousands of pages about diseases and conditions and key information for surgical procedures, lab tests, symptoms, medications and much more. And while you’re there, sign up for our free monthly eNewsletter. You’ll receive a timely health article with

important information about new surgical procedures, diseases and conditions.



### PODCASTS AND TWITTER, TOO!

With our new medical podcasts, listen to our medical experts discuss the latest healthcare topics right from your computer, or download and take them with you on your iPod or MP3 player. Just look for the podcast icon on our home page.

Need more? Follow us on Twitter to keep up with all our latest resources and news. Go to [www.twitter.com/TodaysGateway](http://www.twitter.com/TodaysGateway).

### WHAT’S COOKING?

Interested in more healthy cooking ideas? Gateway’s Web site now includes a collection of heart-healthy and diabetes-friendly cooking videos and recipes. Just look for the *Health eRecipes* icon on our home page.

## ! Get a free cookbook!

If you’re one of the first 15 people to sign up for our free eNewsletter before Sunday, October 11, you’ll receive a free copy of Food Network personality Ellie Krieger’s cookbook, “The Food You Crave: Luscious Recipes for a Healthy Life.” Visit [www.todaysgateway.com](http://www.todaysgateway.com) today!

## PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHTS

We’d like to introduce you to the newest members of Gateway Medical Center’s medical staff.



**LYNN GIARRIZZO, D.O.**  
Anesthesiologist



**DONNA HINES, M.D.**  
Pediatrician



**BRUCE SPINZIG, M.D.**  
Internist

To learn more about our new medical staff members, visit [www.todaysgateway.com](http://www.todaysgateway.com).

## HEALTHWISE QUIZ

### How much do you know about breast cancer?

Take this quiz to find out.

- 1** Your risk of developing breast cancer is increased by which of the following?
  - a. radiation exposure to the chest as a child or a young adult
  - b. first pregnancy after age 30
  - c. use of estrogen and progesterone to treat menopausal symptoms for four or more years
  - d. all of the above
- 2** Which is not a risk factor for developing breast cancer?
  - a. having a family history of the disease
  - b. being overweight
  - c. antiperspirant use
  - d. excessive drinking
- 3** Symptoms of breast cancer typically don't include:
  - a. changes in the size or contour of the breast
  - b. breast pain
  - c. an indentation of the nipple
  - d. a clear or bloody discharge from the nipple
- 4** Which of the following is not true about male breast cancer?
  - a. One in five men with breast cancer has a close male or female relative with breast cancer.
  - b. The average male is 60 to 70 years old at diagnosis.
  - c. Being overweight doesn't increase breast cancer risk.
  - d. Health conditions that affect the testicles may increase risk.
- 5** An annual mammogram once you turn 40 is important because:
  - a. your chance of being diagnosed with breast cancer increases with age
  - b. you may have a small cancer that won't show up until your next annual screening
  - c. the sooner you're diagnosed with breast cancer, the easier it is to treat
  - d. all of the above

ANSWERS: 1. (D), 2. (C), 3. (B), 4. (C), 5. (D)



## Living with heart disease

**B**eing diagnosed with heart disease can be scary. You may wonder: Will I still be able to do the things I love? By making a few adjustments, you can control your condition and enjoy life to its fullest. Here's how:

**Master your medications.** If your physician prescribes cholesterol- or blood pressure-lowering pills, tape a note to your mirror, set an alarm—whatever's necessary—to ensure you take them as directed every day.

**Learn food math.** Don't worry: You can still eat delicious meals. But you'll have to learn to read labels and keep tabs on your daily intake of certain foods. The basics:

- Keep total fat to less than 35 percent of your calories (saturated fat should equal just 7 percent).
- Limit cholesterol to 200 mg a day.
- Restrict sodium to 2,400 mg or less a day.
- Eat just enough calories to maintain or achieve a healthy weight.

**Move more.** Joining a gym is great (if you'll go), but it's not a requirement. Cleaning your house, walking your dog briskly and biking to the store are all examples of valid activity. Just 30 minutes a day will help protect your heart—even if you do only 10 minutes at a time. Of course, always check with your physician before beginning any exercise program.

If you follow these recommendations, you'll drop any extra pounds slowly, which means your weight loss is more likely to stick. The great news: Losing even 5 to 10 percent of your current weight can reduce your risk of heart attack and improve your overall health.

# Keeping little athletes safe



**K**ids love sports, and we love watching them play. But each year, more than 3.5 million children under age 15 are treated for sports-related injuries, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). That number is on the rise. One reason: Many kids now play the same sport year-round, resulting in overuse injuries such as chronic muscle strains, stress fractures and tendonitis. Plus, some sports have gone more extreme. Cheer-leading alone injured almost 70,000 children in 2007. So how can you keep your child out of the ER?

- **Don't start too soon.** Don't let your child join a team until he or she is at least 6 years old, says the AAP.
- **Get a pre-season checkup.** Visit your pediatrician to make sure your son or daughter is indeed sports-ready.
- **Gear up correctly.** Make sure your child doesn't compete without the right sporting shoes, helmet and safety equipment.

- **Teach the wisdom of warming up and cooling down.** Insist that young athletes exercise lightly for at least three minutes, then stretch the muscles to be used for at least 30 seconds each before practice or a game.
- **Fill 'er up.** Make sure your child carries a water bottle and knows the importance of drinking frequently, even if he or she isn't thirsty. Dehydration can cause fatigue and sickness.
- **Watch carefully.** Discourage participation in just one sport. If your child shows sign of strain or injury, insist he or she stop playing immediately—then see your pediatrician.

## Healthy eating on the run

**Y**ou're out and about when hunger pangs hit. Stopping at the nearest fast-food joint, you order a cheeseburger, fries and a soda and quickly wolf it all down in your car. Minutes later you feel sluggish, bloated—and guilty.

The good news: Your healthy diet doesn't have to suffer just because you're racing from one obligation to the next, spending the day running errands or hitting the road for a family vacation. Be prepared with these smart-snacking tips:

- **Always take water with you.** If it's too

bland, add a slice of fruit or a splash of juice.

- **For an on-the-run breakfast,** grab low-fat string cheese and a piece of fruit.
- **Fill an insulated lunch box with fresh fruit,** carrots, celery sticks, walnuts, yogurt or peanut butter on 100 percent whole-wheat bread for snacks during the day. Keep protein bars or snack bags of almonds or raisins in your purse, glove compartment or tote bag for hunger attacks.
- **If you must hit the drive-through,** opt for a kid-sized meal with fresh fruit or a side salad (with low-fat dressing) instead of fries, and a grilled chicken sandwich instead of one that's breaded and fried. Skip the mayo and other fatty spreads.
- **Need a coffee break?** Order the low-fat, sugar-free version of your favorite frozen coffee or latte and skip the whipped cream and caramel drizzle.





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706HS

## New programs in your hometown!

### Today's woman: family healthcare leader



**A**s a woman, you're probably responsible for nearly all of the healthcare decisions for your family. And it's not just your children anymore. Many now face having to make decisions about the health and well-being of aging parents. How do you know what to do?

Gateway Medical Center is here to help. Our Healthy Woman program is a free community resource designed to empower women with the knowledge and confidence to make informed healthcare and well-being decisions for themselves and their loved ones. Members are invited to health seminars and events and receive monthly e-mail communications. Our program will arm you with the ability to take charge of your health and the health of your family.



#### ! Become a Healthy Woman!

To join, visit [www.todaysgateway.com](http://www.todaysgateway.com) or call (931) 502-1111.

### Have the time of your life in the prime of your life!



**B**eing a senior has its advantages. Gateway now has an organization for those in our community ages 50 and better. The Senior Circle program encourages seniors to live the healthiest, most fulfilling lives possible. It's our goal to promote health and wellness to seniors while providing an outlet where they can participate in activities and share common interests with other seniors. Senior Circle offers a full calendar of health education, social events, exercise programs, travel opportunities and member discounts—and it's only \$15 a year. Don't miss another day! You owe it to yourself to find out more.



#### ! Join the circle!

To start benefiting today, call our Senior Circle advisor at (931) 502-1054 or visit [www.todaysgateway.com](http://www.todaysgateway.com).