

Bryn Mawr Hospital  
Lankenau Hospital  
Paoli Hospital

SUMMER 2004

# Women's

## HEALTH SOURCE



**Fighting Cancer  
with the Latest  
Radiation Therapies**

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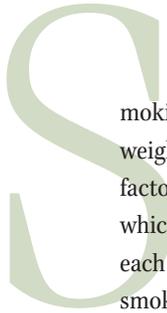
**Dreaming of a Good Night's Sleep?**

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# Women and Heart Disease: An Individual Approach



Smoking. High cholesterol. Being overweight. You may recognize these as risk factors that contribute to heart disease, which kills more than 500,000 women each year. But what if you're not a smoker and aren't overweight, yet have high cholesterol? Are your chances for heart disease still greater?

The truth is that every woman's risk for heart disease and stroke is not the same. That is why the new approach in predicting and fending off heart disease emphasizes a personal touch.

## FACTORING IN YOUR NUMBERS

The American Heart Association (AHA) developed a guide for preventing heart disease, based on a woman's individual cardiovascular health. Now, you and your doctor can create a more powerful plan for preventing cardiovascular disease and improving your chances to live a longer, healthier life.

Your doctor will assess your risk level by factoring in such elements as:

- ▶ your age
- ▶ whether or not you smoke
- ▶ your blood pressure
- ▶ your total cholesterol; high density lipoprotein (HDL) level—the higher your

HDL, the lower your risk for heart disease; and low density lipoprotein (LDL) level—the higher your LDL level, the higher your risk for developing heart disease.

Then, you will be placed in one of three risk categories—low, intermediate, and high. Low risk means a woman has a less than 10% chance of having a heart attack in the next 10 years.

Intermediate risk is defined as a 10 to 20% chance. And high risk is a greater than 20% chance.

## A PERSONAL PLAN FOR PREVENTION

Based on your level of risk, your doctor can set up lifestyle changes for you. These recommendations can include everything from exercising and following a heart-healthy diet to taking medications to control your cholesterol or blood pressure.

According to Leslie Poor, MD, cardiologist at Bryn Mawr Hospital, "Women who are at high risk need to aggressively reduce risk factors with both a healthy lifestyle and medications, if necessary. But, even women who are at low risk should eat a heart-healthy diet and exercise daily. These healthy lifestyles should begin early in life to reduce your lifetime

risk for developing heart disease."

Your doctor might recommend regular doses of aspirin if you're considered high risk—for example, you have a history of heart disease, high cholesterol, and are overweight. But aspirin therapy is not recommended for women at lower risk because the potential side effects of taking aspirin—upset stomach or increased chance of bleeding problems—outweigh the benefits.

The Nurses' Health Study demonstrates that living a healthy lifestyle can reduce your chances of developing heart disease by as much as 85%. It also recommends that all women quit smoking, exercise 30 minutes most days of the week, and follow a heart-healthy diet to prevent potential heart disease factors from developing. But now, with the help of these guidelines, you will be able to attack the problem of heart disease before it attacks you. ✦



Looking for a cardiologist? The Heart Center has more than 80 experienced cardiologists for your heart care needs. Call 1-866-CALL-MLH for information or visit [www.mainlinehealth.org](http://www.mainlinehealth.org).



## Moms and Daughters Connect Through Exercise

Mothers and their teen daughters participated in a 12-week fitness program. They did various exercises, such as walking, weight lifting, and using stair-climbing machines.

## FINDING

This program helped mothers and daughters find ways to become more active in their daily lives. Plus, they said that exercising together had improved their relationship.

Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, Vol. 74, No. 1

# Pregnancy Past 30: Safe and Successful?

Many women are becoming pregnant later in life. Some will be first-time mothers, while others are having another child. Older mothers may feel better able to care for a baby than a young mother would. But do older mothers and their babies face additional risks?

Research confirms that most women who become pregnant in their 30s and early 40s have safe, healthy pregnancies. But they do face higher risks:

- ▶ **Trouble conceiving:** Starting in their early 30s, women become less fertile.
- ▶ **Complications during pregnancy:** Women older than age 30 have a higher risk for diabetes and high blood pressure.
- ▶ **Higher risk of miscarriage:** One study reported that more than one-half of pregnancies in women older than ages 40 to 45 ended in miscarriage. For women between 20 and 24 years of age, the rate was about 9%.
- ▶ **Complications at delivery:** Older women may need more help during labor and delivery. Cesarean section or instrument-assisted vaginal delivery are examples.

How does a mother's age affect her baby? Researchers report that babies born to older mothers may have a higher risk for diabetes, prematurity, and low birth weight.

Keep in mind that most women older than age 30 have successful pregnancies and deliveries. Advances in medical care can help prevent and treat many of the risks.

Early and regular prenatal care is key to having a healthy baby at any age. And it's important to make sure you're in good health and eat a nutritious diet before

and during your pregnancy. Also, it's best to avoid cigarettes and alcohol, which can harm the baby.

Discuss any pregnancy plans with your doctor, who can identify any special needs you may have and help make suggestions.

For more information about maternity-related services at Bryn Mawr, Lankenau, and Paoli Hospitals, see our "Take Charge" coupon on page 7 or visit us online at [www.mainlinehealth.org/takecharge](http://www.mainlinehealth.org/takecharge). ✦



## Ask Sharon



Sharon Register, Women's Health Source Nurse Clinical Counselor.

### How long is "after eating," for the purpose of making aspirin harmless to one's stomach?

The idea of eating before taking medication like aspirin, is to coat the stomach in order to protect it. Take aspirin at the end of a meal or as close to the end of the meal as possible—half an hour to an hour at most. Keep in mind your stomach will be empty approximately two hours after you eat.

Medications that you take on an "empty stomach" should be taken one hour before eating or two hours after eating. These medications will not be fully absorbed in the presence of food.

Do you have a health question? Need help finding a specific service or support? Sharon Register, Women's Health Source nurse clinical counselor, is available to help find answers to your health care questions. Contact Ask Sharon at [WHS@mlhs.org](mailto:WHS@mlhs.org) or by phone at 1-888-876-8764.



## FINDING

### Tiny Parasite Poses Big Risks During Pregnancy

Toxoplasmosis is an infection caused by a microscopic parasite. It's usually very mild, but in an unborn baby, this infection can result in brain damage, blindness, epilepsy, and other severe health problems. The parasite is most often found in cat droppings and raw or undercooked meat. Here are some ways to protect your baby:

- ▶ Always cook meat thoroughly. Use a meat thermometer to make sure it reaches 160 degrees Fahrenheit.
- ▶ If you own a cat, have someone else clean the litter box during your pregnancy, if possible. If not, always wear gloves to do the job, and wash your hands well afterward.

American Family Physician, Vol. 67, No. 10

# New Upgrades in Radiation Oncology: On the Forefront of Cancer Technology

**B**ryn Mawr, Lankenau, and Paoli Hospitals provide cancer patients with advanced therapies that improve cancer control and survival. More than half of all cancer patients are treated with radiation therapy, so keeping abreast of the latest advances is critical to offering state-of-the-art care.

## **BRYN MAWR HOSPITAL ADDS HIGH DOSE RATE EQUIPMENT**

Bryn Mawr Hospital's Radiation Oncology Center recently upgraded its services by adding High Dose Rate (HDR)

brachytherapy to treat breast, gynecologic, and others cancers. Bryn Mawr Hospital was the first in the area to offer IMRT technology and will now add to its therapies by providing this new technology, which includes Mammosite for breast cancer. "With these techniques, patients can be treated on an outpatient basis over a much shorter period of time, with better cancer control and improved tolerance," said Richard J. Carella, MD, Main Line Health System Chief of Radiation Oncology.

## **LANKENAU HOSPITAL EXPANDS SERVICE**

Lankenau Hospital has consistently offered the community state-of-the-art care at its Radiation Oncology Center. Lankenau was the first in the region to offer the Mammosite technique for breast cancer and now has expanded by adding a second linear accelerator. The Varian 21EX Silhouette offers advanced therapies, including IMRT, which targets tumors with higher radiation doses. "The new equipment allows us to treat more patients with shorter waiting periods and to add new therapies as they become available," said Albert DeNittis, MD, Campus Chief for Lankenau Hospital.

## **ADVANCED TREATMENTS CLOSE TO HOME AT PAOLI HOSPITAL**

As a member of the Fox Chase Network, patients coming to Paoli Hospital can access the latest research and treatment services close to home. Radiation Oncology services at Paoli offer the latest technology including IMRT and radiation seed implants, an internal radiation technique to treat prostate cancer. "It's important to us to provide the community the best possible cancer care available while still allowing patients to be close to family. These advances result in fewer side effects and better cancer control," said Richard Yelovich, MD, Campus Chief for Paoli Hospital. ❖



If you would like more information about the Cancer Centers at Bryn Mawr, Lankenau, or Paoli Hospitals, please call **1-866-CALL-MLH** or visit us online at [www.mainlinehealth.org/cancer](http://www.mainlinehealth.org/cancer).

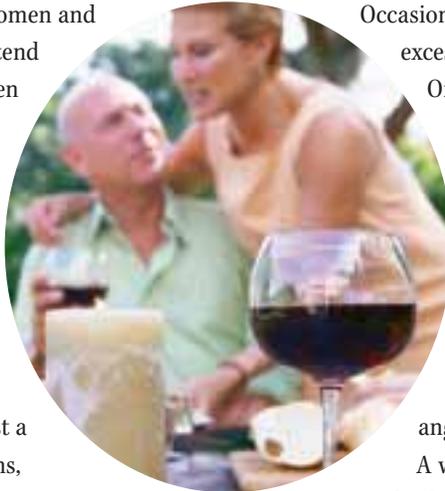
## Could You Have a Drinking Problem?

An occasional drink can be enjoyable and may even be good for your heart. But overdoing it is dangerous—especially for women. For example, women typically develop alcohol-related diseases sooner than men. Plus, these conditions often cause a woman's health to deteriorate more quickly than a man's.

Why does drinking affect women and men differently? First, women tend to be smaller than men. But even a woman who weighs the same as a man typically has less water in her body to dilute the alcohol. Plus, women generally have less of an enzyme that breaks down alcohol before it enters the bloodstream.

Excessive drinking can boost a woman's risk for many problems, such as:

- ▶ liver disease
- ▶ early menopause
- ▶ high blood pressure
- ▶ head and neck, breast, and digestive cancers
- ▶ heart disease



▶ delivering a baby with birth defects.

Experts caution women to drink no more than seven drinks per week, or one drink a day. What's one drink? A 5-ounce glass of wine, one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof liquor.

And don't save up all those drinks for the weekend.

Occasional binge drinking is considered excessive, too.

One or more of these behaviors also could point to a drinking problem:

- ▶ Acting differently while drinking
- ▶ Drinking solely to get drunk
- ▶ Thinking about alcohol often
- ▶ Regularly consuming more alcohol than you intended
- ▶ Drinking when you're angry or sad

A woman with a drinking problem may drink increasing amounts over time and find it impossible to stop. When she abstains from alcohol, she might experience withdrawal symptoms, such as nausea, sweating, or shaking.

If you think you have a drinking problem or are an alcoholic, ask your doctor for guidance. ❖

## Volunteers Make a Difference

Looking for a way to contribute to the health and wellness of your community? Consider becoming a hospital volunteer.

Volunteering is a rewarding experience shared by many from our local community. Our volunteers come from all walks of life, and opportunities are available for ages 14 and up. Here are a few of the unique volunteer opportunities:

- ▶ Patient Escort
- ▶ Thrift/Gift Shop
- ▶ Information Desks
- ▶ Knitters/Sewing
- ▶ Nursing Unit/Emergency Room

- ▶ Office Support
- ▶ Flower Delivery/Messenger
- ▶ Surgical Waiting Room

For more information or to receive a volunteer packet, please contact the volunteer offices at the following Main Line Health locations:

**Paoli Hospital:** 610-648-1099 or [mckeed@mlhs.org](mailto:mckeed@mlhs.org)

**Bryn Mawr Hospital:** 610-526-3058 or [marciantej@mlhs.org](mailto:marciantej@mlhs.org)

**Lankenau Hospital:** 610-645-2138 or [watsonl@mlhs.org](mailto:watsonl@mlhs.org)

### Bryn Mawr Hospital

Bryn Mawr Hospital announces the opening of its Wound Healing Center. This outpatient service will bring together different specialists to offer patients a centralized resource for effective diagnosis and treatment of chronic, nonhealing wounds. The center is equipped with the latest technology, including hyperbaric oxygen therapy. For more information about the Wound Healing Center, please call Sharon Hannum at 610-526-8820.

### Lankenau Hospital

Throughout 2004, we are celebrating 50 Years of Medical Milestones on the Main Line, commemorating Lankenau's rich history of medical innovations and achievements. Lankenau was built during 1952 and 1953 to serve the community surrounding Lancaster and City Avenues, which at the time was the second fastest growing region in the country. On December 19, 1953, the entire hospital was moved from Girard and Corinthian Avenues to the modern facility, designed by Vincent Kling, in Wynnewood. The first baby born at the "new Lankenau" arrived at 12:31 p.m., only half an hour after moving was complete.

### Paoli Hospital

In early July, hyperbaric oxygen therapy will be available at Paoli Hospital's Wound Healing Center. This state-of-the-art treatment option enhances wound healing and is beneficial to patients with many diagnoses. Currently, this therapy is not available in Chester or Delaware Counties. For more information, call Kathy Gilchrist, RN, at 610-648-1419.

# Dreaming of a Good Night's Sleep?



**T**rouble falling or staying asleep is a common complaint among women. Stress, depression, menstruation, some prescription drugs, pregnancy, and menopause are common contributors to both short-term and chronic insomnia.

Not everyone needs the same amount of sleep. Seven or eight hours a night is probably best for most women, say experts. Rochelle Goldberg, MD, Associate Medical Director, Sleep Medicine Services, Main Line Health, points out that meeting these sleep needs can often be more of a challenge for women as they

try to balance the needs of work, home and family, and fitting in some sleep. Consistently getting less sleep than you require can lead to depression, fatigue-related car crashes, weight problems, difficulty concentrating, and mood swings.

Whether you toss and turn often or have only occasional restless nights, try these tips for better sleep:

▶ Avoid caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol for four to six hours prior to bedtime—or eliminate them altogether.

- ▶ Exercise for 20 to 30 minutes daily, several hours before going to bed.
- ▶ Don't take naps.
- ▶ Make sure your bedroom is dark, quiet, and not too hot or too cold.
- ▶ Relax before getting into bed with soft music, a book, or a warm bath.
- ▶ Go to bed and get up at the same time every day.
- ▶ Don't eat meals before bedtime.

If you still have trouble falling or staying asleep night after night, talk to your doctor.

The Sleep Medicine Services of Main Line Health are fully accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and are recognized as Centers of Excellence by *Philadelphia* magazine. They are located at Paoli and Lankenau Hospitals and the Main Line Health Center in Broomall. For more information or to schedule an evaluation, please call 1-866-CALL-MLH. ✦

## Did you know?

The Main Line Health Sleep Medicine Program is the largest sleep disorders program in Southeastern Pennsylvania, providing comprehensive diagnosis and treatment for more than 80 recognized disorders of sleep and wakefulness, with particular strength in sleep apnea. Study results are generally available in two business days, and sleep lab studies are currently scheduled within a week.



## FINDING

### Kids Who Snore Tonight May Have Poor Grades Tomorrow

Snoring usually is thought of as a sleep problem that affects adults. But many children snore—and that nighttime symphony may affect their daytime school performance.

A study of grade-school children showed that those who snored most nights were at least twice as likely to have trouble academically. They scored lower on tests and report cards than did nonsnorers.

Why? For one thing, a child who snores may not sleep well. The result? A tired child who misbehaves, has a short attention span, and falls asleep during class. Children who snore also are more likely to have trouble hearing. The root of the problem is often swollen adenoids or tonsils—a source of snoring as well as constant ear infections in many children.

American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, Vol. 168, No. 4

# Pets: Cause or Cure for Your Child's Allergies and Asthma?

Early exposure to pets in infancy may protect against allergies and asthma later in life. But some experts think the opposite. So what should parents do if they want a pet for their child?

If there is a strong family history of allergies, don't adopt a furry pet until you can be certain your child is not allergic. If you already have one, monitor your child carefully. Common signs of an allergic reaction include lasting coldlike symptoms or skin reactions such as hives and rashes. An allergist can perform tests to determine if your child has allergies to pets.

Furry pets, such as cats and dogs, are among the most common sources of allergies for kids. A protein found in the animals' saliva, dander, and urine—not the fur—is to blame. "Contrary to popular belief, studies show there are no breeds of dogs that are less allergenic than others," states Ruthven A. Wodell, MD, a member of the Bryn Mawr Hospital department of Pediatrics and a pediatric allergist. However, cats cause more reactions in children than dogs. Smaller animals such as guinea pigs, hamsters, or rabbits also may cause symptoms.

Allergies are a primary trigger for asthma, a condition that causes breathing difficulties in children. Identifying and

reducing exposure to these triggers is important in controlling asthma.

If parting ways with your pet is unthinkable, here are some ways to help your child breathe easier:

- ▶ Try to keep your pet outdoors. This will reduce the amount of dander inside.
- ▶ If the pet has to be indoors, shampoo and brush the pet regularly—outside—to reduce shedding of dander.
- ▶ Keep bedrooms and play areas pet free.
- ▶ Install a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter in your child's bedroom to help remove allergens from the air. ❖



## Keep Kids from Getting Sunk by Swimmer's Ear

Got a water baby at home? You should know about an ear infection called otitis externa. Also called swimmer's ear, it can occur when there's too much moisture in the ear canal. Bathing, water sports, and even sweating can be to blame. Sticking objects in the ear is another common trigger.

Swimmer's ear often causes ear pain, redness, pus, and a feeling of "fullness" in the ear. It can even lead to temporary hearing loss.

Fortunately, you can prevent swimmer's ear. After your child swims, bathes, or showers, dry her ears with a hairdryer on the lowest setting. And don't let her stick anything in her ears. This includes earplugs, which can irritate the ear canal and actually lead to swimmer's ear. But keeping water from entering the ears is also a key preventive step. What's a parent to do? Have your child wear a tight-fitting bathing cap that covers her ears.

### Take Charge of Your Health!

Check the information that interests you, fill out your name and address, and send us this coupon. We'll mail you the FREE information you've requested.

- Prenatal and Delivery.** Brochure with information on obstetric and neonatal intensive care services.  **No, I am not a Women's Health Source member.** Please register me for your free membership program.

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ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: Main Line Health, Gerhard Building, Second Floor, 130 S. Bryn Mawr Ave., Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania 19010; log on to [www.mainlinehealth.org/takecharge](http://www.mainlinehealth.org/takecharge); or call 1-888-876-8764.

✂ CUT ALONG THE LINE

# Annenberg Conference Center Under Construction

Construction is under way for The Walter and Leonore Annenberg Conference Center for Medical Education at Lankenau Hospital. Scheduled to open in fall 2004, this world-class facility will be a hub for medical education at Lankenau, Main Line Health, and medical centers throughout the region.

The top floor of the three-level center will house a reception lobby and meeting rooms for

medical teaching conferences. The second floor will contain offices for the departments of Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics/Gynecology, and for Graduate and Continuing Medical Education. This level also will connect to the auditorium, scheduled for renovation as a fully equipped conference arena. The ground floor will be the home of the new, technologically advanced Lankenau Medical Library. ❖

## Get Your Fitness in Gear with Biking

Biking is more than just a fun hobby. Whether you're touring the great outdoors or peddling on a stationary bike in your living room, cycling is smart exercise. For example, a 150-pound woman who covers six miles in an hour can burn 240 calories. And regular biking—like

other varieties of exercise—may cut your risk for heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers.

Ready to reap more from your biking routine? Take these routes:

▶ Ease into your workout. If you're new to biking, start slowly with just 15- to 30-minute rides. Then gradually increase your riding time each week. Try to aim for at least 30 minutes of biking or other exercise on most—or all—days of the week.

▶ If you are overweight or have back pain or balance problems, try out a reclining stationary bicycle.

▶ Cruise with a group of pals who peddle at the same pace you do.

▶ To burn even more calories, use a dual-action stationary bike, which gets your arms moving, too. ❖



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## FINDING

### Menopause Causes Memory Problems? Forget About It!

In the past, some research has suggested that a woman's memory worsens as she goes through menopause. But, the results of a six-year study challenge that notion. More than 800 women were observed as they progressed naturally—without hormone treatment—through menopause. They took memory tests throughout the study. In general, participants' memory did not decline as they got older. In fact, in most cases, the women got better scores on the tests over time.

Neurology, Vol. 61, No. 6

This publication has been made possible by a partial grant from Wyeth.

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