

# Women's

## HEALTH SOURCE

Lankenau Hospital  
Bryn Mawr Hospital  
Paoli Memorial Hospital

*When Is the  
Best Time to Get  
Pregnant?*

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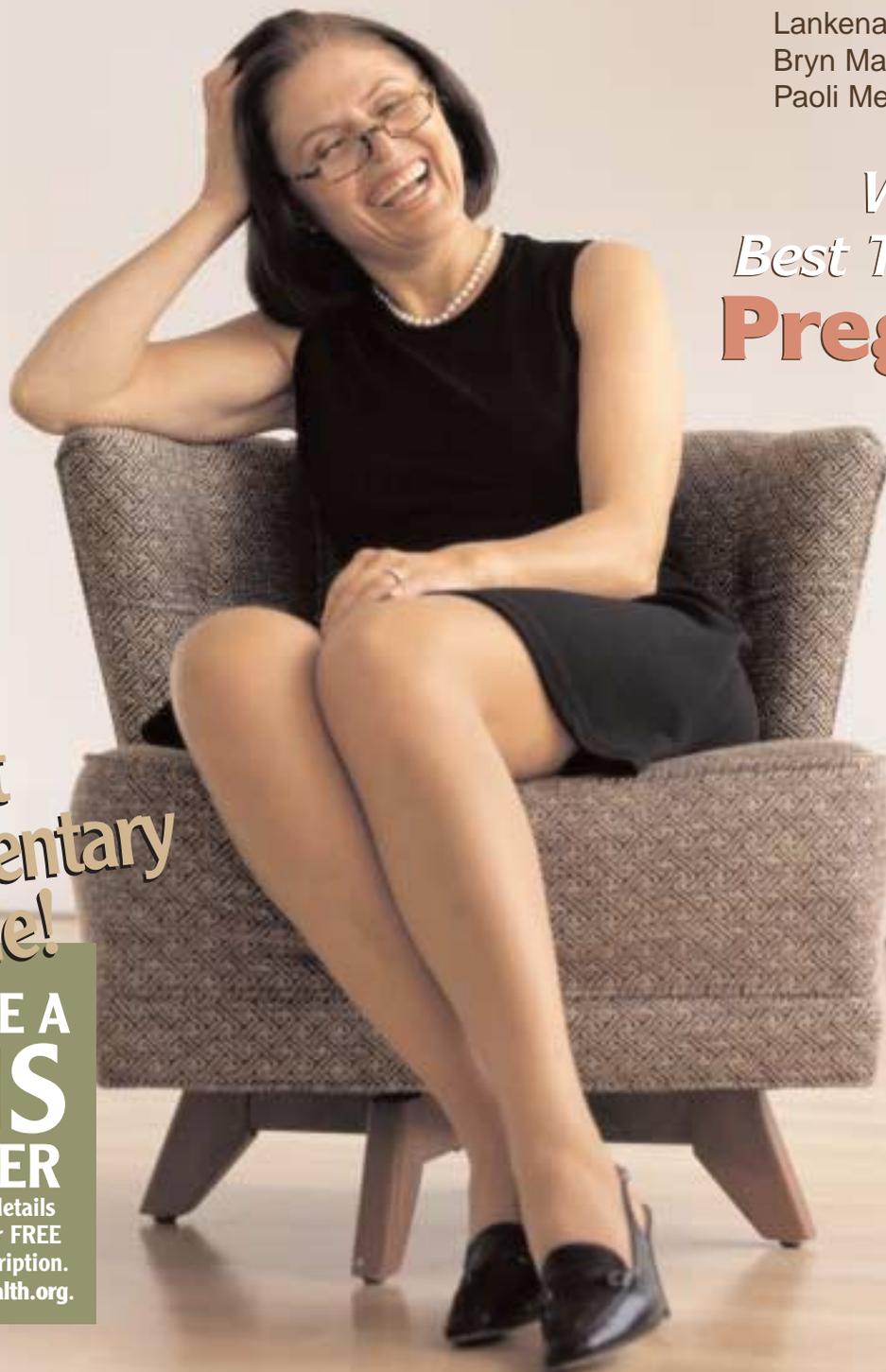
*Five Ways  
to Build and  
Protect  
Strong  
Bones*

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# Is There Room in Your Diet for Chocolate?

Many women don't consider chocolate a part of a well-rounded diet. However, this "decadent" treat may have benefits beyond simply tasting good.

## THE GOODS

Evidence shows that a few chocolates may have some of the same disease-fighting antioxidants found in fruits, vegetables, tea, red wine, and soy products.

Antioxidants come from plant-based foods. As natural byproducts of the cocoa bean, both chocolate and cocoa contain high concentrations of antioxidants.

These include:

- ▶ polyphenols. Found in high amounts in milk chocolate, cocoa, and dark chocolate, polyphenols may help ward off cancer.
- ▶ flavonoids. Women who had 4½ tablespoons of cocoa powder and about half an ounce of dark chocolate daily for a month had higher HDL, or "good," cholesterol levels compared to when they didn't eat it. HDL protects the heart by carrying excess cholesterol

away from the arteries.

Also, chocolate may not raise LDL, or "bad," cholesterol as much as meat and high-fat dairy products. Why? Chocolate—all kinds—contains cocoa butter. Though still a saturated fat, this butter isn't easily absorbed by women's bodies.

## HERE'S THE RUB

Chocolate does have a downside or two:

- ▶ Chocolate contains high amounts of sugar, which adds calories.
- ▶ Women who eat under stress are more likely to be overweight—and stressed women frequently crave chocolate. In fact, chocolate is the most frequently craved food among women—usually prior to menstruation.
- ▶ "Chocoholic" isn't a joke term. Some women can become physically dependent on certain ingredients in chocolate and the brief mood sensations

they cause. They may hide their habit, and then feel guilty and out of control.

What to do? An occasional, reasonably-sized chocolate treat is OK. Just remember: Moderation is key. ❖



## Need Shots Before Traveling?

Travel Medicine services can recommend the appropriate immunizations for any international vacation or business travel plans. Using the most current information available, we access recommendations for traveler's health. For information, call 1-866-CALL-MLH.



## Moderate Exercise Protects Against Mental Decline

Strenuous exercise has been shown to help women prevent the mental decline that may come with age.

But moderate, less-vigorous activity

also helps keep women's thinking and memory skills intact.

More than 5,900 women age 65 and older were studied for about 7½ years. Results showed that the amount of exercise each woman engaged in helped reduce her individual risk of mental decline. A woman's risk decreased by 13% for every 10 blocks she walked a day.

Archives of Internal Medicine, Vol. 161, No. 14

## FINDING

## Take Charge of Your Health

Each issue of our WHS newsletter offers FREE information on timely topics just for the asking. To obtain this information, call 1-888-876-8764 and press 2 on the phone tree or register online at [www.mainlinehealth.org](http://www.mainlinehealth.org).

### FREE Health Information Offered in this Issue

- ▼ Osteoporosis Kit (see page 5)
- ▼ Pregnancy Planning Kit (see page 3)
- ▼ Smoking Cessation Brochure (see page 3)

# REMEMBER TO PUT Cancer Screenings ON YOUR CALENDAR

Cancer screenings enable doctors to catch cancer in the early stages—when the disease is most treatable. The following chart offers screening guidelines from the American Cancer Society (ACS). Women and men at high risk for these diseases may need earlier or more frequent screenings.

Consult your physician for more information about cancer screenings and what schedule is right for you and your family. If you'd like to have more information about your personal risk for cancer, Main Line Health offers a FREE cancer risk assessment program. Contact our Women's Health Source clinical counselor, Sharon Register, RN, at **1-888-876-8764** for more information.



## FINDING

### Mealtime Distraction Linked to Calorie Intake

About 41 women ate the same meal once a week under four different situations:

- ① Alone
- ② In a group
- ③ Alone while listening to a recorded detective story
- ④ Alone while listening to a recorded message describing the food. This was to help the women focus on their meal.

The women ate about 70 more calories when they listened to the detective story compared to when they ate alone.

Interestingly, eating in a group didn't lead the women to eat more calories. However, the women reported that the food tasted better when they ate in a group. They said this even though they ate the same meal for the other three situations.

In the real world, women also may be distracted by activities such as reading, talking on the phone, listening to music, or watching TV.

*American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*,  
Vol. 74, No. 2

Type of Cancer	Who Needs Regular Screenings?	ACS Recommendation
<b>Breast</b>	All women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly breast self-exams beginning at age 20</li> <li>• A physician breast exam every three years for women ages 20 to 39</li> <li>• Annual mammograms and physician breast exams for women age 40 and older</li> </ul>
<b>Cervical</b>	All women age 18 and older, or upon becoming sexually active	Annual Pap smears. After three normal tests, a woman may need less frequent tests.
<b>Colorectal</b>	All adults age 50 and older	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fecal occult blood test every year</li> <li>• Flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years</li> <li>• Double contrast barium enema every five years</li> <li>• Colonoscopy every 10 years</li> </ul>
<b>Prostate</b>	Men age 50 and older	<p>The ACS suggests that men talk to their doctor about the value of two tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• digital rectal exams</li> <li>• prostate specific antigen blood tests</li> </ul>
<b>Skin</b>	All adults age 20 and older	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skin self-exam once a month</li> <li>• Physician skin exam every three years until age 39, and once a year beginning at age 40</li> </ul>

# What It Takes to Curb Migraine Pain

It's estimated that more than 26 million Americans get migraine headaches—75% of them women. Luckily, there are ways to put a stop to the pain before it puts a stop to your schedule.

## PAINFUL ATTACKS

The exact cause of migraines has yet to be discovered. But their pain may be related to the shrinking and swelling of blood vessels that supply the brain. Researchers also know that many women who have them also have a family history of the condition.

Migraine sufferers may have the following symptoms:

- ▶ Pain, often intense and throbbing, that begins on one side of the head and lasts up to 72 hours
- ▶ Stomach sickness that may include vomiting
- ▶ Extreme sensitivity to bright lights, noise, and certain odors

## KEY TO REPRIEVE

There are two keys to managing migraines:

- ▶ Stopping the migraine before it starts
- ▶ Treating the pain effectively

Avoiding a migraine altogether is the best medicine. A wide variety of causes can trigger them, including certain foods, lifestyle factors, and some medications. Keeping a headache diary may help you identify and avoid triggers—leading to fewer attacks. Each time you experience a headache, note when and under what conditions it occurred. You

### Biofeedback for Migraine Pain

Brain Wave Biofeedback is a learning strategy that enables a person to alter their brain waves; an exercise for the brain. In the case of chronic pain, such as frequent headaches or migraines, biofeedback can be an effective treatment. Biofeedback is a painless, noninvasive procedure.

For additional information, call **610-251-5430**.



**Women report more severe migraine headache symptoms than men. At the onset of a migraine, try applying pressure in front of the ear on the side of the head that hurts.**

also can share this information with your doctor to help find an effective treatment.

If you do experience a migraine, both over-the-counter and prescription medications are available to help you manage it. Some medicines can help prevent attacks from occurring. Others may stop—or at least minimize—an attack once it has begun. Your doctor can help you decide which medications will work best for you. ✦



## Seasonal Affective Disorder

Some people suffer from symptoms of depression during the winter months, which may be a sign of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). SAD is a mood disorder related to seasonal variation of light. As seasons change, there is a shift in our “biological internal clocks.” Due to changes in sunlight patterns, our clocks fall out of step with our daily schedules. Women and younger persons are at higher risk to suffer from SAD. To speak to a professional regarding SAD, call **1-888-CARE-898**.

### Paoli Memorial Hospital Represented at “Best of the Best” Conference

For the fifth consecutive year, Paoli scored in the 99th percentile in the Press Ganey Associates’ survey of how satisfied people are with the services they receive during their hospital stays. As a result of these consistently high inpatient satisfaction scores, Paoli was recognized as one of the “Best of the Best” along with other Press Ganey top scores at a conference hosted by Bristol Hospital in Bristol, Connecticut.

### Grand Opening of Lankenau Hospital’s Expanded Emergency Department

Lankenau Hospital announces the opening of our expanded Emergency Department (ED)! The newly renovated ED has doubled the service area, is conveniently located for patients, and has state-of-the-art design and equipment. Visit [www.mainlinehealth.org](http://www.mainlinehealth.org) to view the new ED online.

### Bryn Mawr Hospital Surgicenter Named Best Performer

The Bryn Mawr Hospital Surgicenter was named the best performer in knee arthroscopy by OR Benchmarks, a national voluntary benchmarking organization. The Surgicenter was compared to nine other facilities across the country on the basis of efficiency and supply, and was rated number one. The Surgicenter dedicates three ORs to arthroscopy on Fridays for the entire day. We congratulate the staff, surgeons, and anesthesiologists for their efficiency and knowledge.

## Five Ways to **Build** and **Maintain** Strong Bones

Your bones reach their peak growth in early adulthood and naturally begin to lose density after age 40. Women lose bone density after menopause, putting them at higher risk for the bone-weakening disease, osteoporosis. Luckily, there are many things you can do to offset these losses and help build healthy bones.

Here are five pointers:

### 1 **Keep track of your nutrients.**

Most important is calcium, which builds bone. Vitamin D, a close second, promotes calcium absorption. Nondairy foods that are big in calcium include:

- ▼ dark green leafy vegetables
- ▼ tofu
- ▼ canned salmon or sardines with bones
- ▼ calcium-fortified juice, bread, and cereal.

Good vitamin D sources include sunlight and fortified cereals.

**2 Consider supplements.** Calcium carbonate in popular antacids is less expensive than calcium citrate and calcium phosphate, but it must be taken with meals to be absorbed. Talk to your physician about which supplement is best for you.

**3 Get regular exercise.** Engaging in regular weight-bearing exercise can reduce the rate of bone loss. Good examples include walking, dancing, weight

training, and low-impact aerobics.

**4 Early detection is key.** Effective treatment of osteoporosis begins with early detection. The DEXA scan is a painless X-ray that measures bone density of the spine, hip, and wrist. Considered the most reliable measurement of bone density, DEXA scans are used for both assessment of risk and for follow-up serial measurements. Another screening tool, the PIXI Scan, measures bone density at only one site, such as the wrist. Women who are perimenopausal or postmenopausal should ask their doctors about baseline testing and which test is best based on their medical history.

**5 Talk to your doctor.** Certain conditions—including hyperthyroidism, digestive disorders, and diabetes—can hasten bone loss. So can medications such as thyroid extract and certain steroids. Your doctor can discuss the FDA-approved drugs available to treat, and even prevent, osteoporosis.

To consult with a physician at Bryn Mawr, Lankenau, or Paoli Memorial hospitals, call **1-866-CALL-MLH**. ❖

To learn more about the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of osteoporosis, call **1-888-876-8764** or register online at [www.mainlinehealth.org](http://www.mainlinehealth.org) to receive a FREE kit.

### Snoring: A Possible Diabetes Risk Factor

Snoring may put women at risk for diabetes. A group of healthy women ages 40 to 65 were asked about their snoring habits. Then, every two years for a 10-year period, the women were asked if they had developed type 2 diabetes.

In that time, nearly 2,000

women developed the disease. Regular snorers had double the risk of developing diabetes, compared with nonsnorers. This was true regardless of risk factors. Occasional snorers had a slightly higher chance of getting diabetes than nonsnorers.

Regular snoring may raise

insulin levels and cause resistance. Experts suggest that regular snorers try to reduce their risk for snoring and diabetes through regular exercise, not smoking, and maintaining a healthy weight.

American Journal of Epidemiology, Vol. 155, No. 5

FINDING



## Child's Play: Keep It Fun with Safe Toys

**B**links, beeps, buzzes—and injuries? With all the different types of toys on the market, it's hard to figure out which is safest for your child. But smart selecting can decrease the chance for injury—and increase the chance for learning and fun. Here are ways to ensure you're protecting your children.

### SAFE TOYS LET YOU KNOW

Many toys are labeled to help you decipher which are meant for your child's age group and abilities. Safe toys also are marked in the following ways to show that they have been tested and approved:

- ▶ Safe paints, crayons, and markers are labeled nontoxic.
- ▶ Quality electric toys carry the "UL approved" label. This means the toy has been checked by a product safety organization.
- ▶ Recommended fabric products have a label that states "Flame retardant/Flame resistant."

- ▶ Stuffed toys and dolls should boast a "Washable/hygienic materials" label.

### IT'S NOT THE AGE THAT MATTERS

Think big. Many toys with small parts are harmful to both older and younger children. For example, toys that shoot small objects can cause eye injuries.

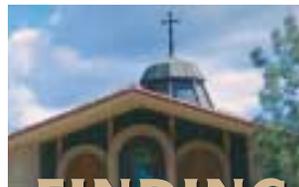
Another serious concern is choking. Toys and toy parts that are smaller than your child's mouth can pose a serious threat. Specific toys and parts that have been linked to choking include:

- ▶ balloons. To be safe, store balloons out of reach. Deflate and throw them out after use.
- ▶ small batteries. These also are toxic. Make sure they are firmly placed and covered in electronic toys.
- ▶ marbles and tiny balls. Avoid giving children age 3 and younger any marbles and balls with a diameter less than 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches or a length shorter than 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches.

Older toys can break and leave parts small enough to be swallowed or to become lodged in a child's throat, ears, or nose. Check all toys periodically for any potential hazards. ✦

## KNOW

**DID YOU** According to James Reilly, MD, otolaryngologist at Bryn Mawr Hospital/duPont Children's Health Program, "For younger children, the most important thing parents need to do is to select age-appropriate toys based upon the proper labels." For more information on toy safety, visit our *KidsHealth* section on [www.mainlinehealth.org](http://www.mainlinehealth.org).



### Church-Based Programs Can Help Women Get Healthy

Church-based group programs may help African-American women adopt healthy habits.

## FINDING

About 250 women participated in weekly nutrition classes and 30-minute aerobic exercise sessions at their places of worship. After a year, the women had improved their blood pressure, waist size, and body weight. Their dedication to their religious communities appeared to be the motivating factor.

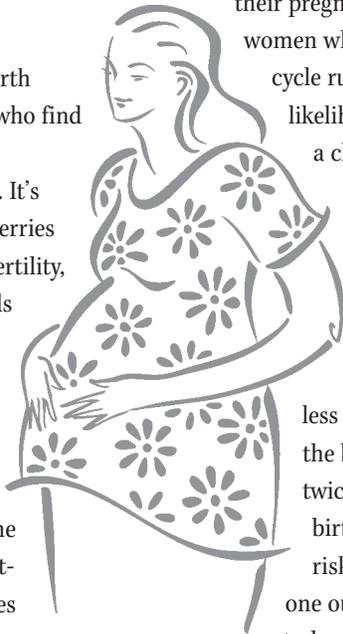
Public Health Reports, Vol. 116, No. 1 (Suppl.)

# When Is the Best Time to Get Pregnant?

Women who are hoping to get pregnant sometimes wonder exactly when the best time is to conceive.

The most likely time is Christmas—at least in North America, say researchers who find that births here peak nine months after the holidays. It's not that turkey and cranberries have a magical effect on fertility, they say. Instead, husbands and wives who are separated by travel throughout the year tend to be together during the Christmas holidays. In countries that celebrate the New Year instead of Christmas, the peak in birth rates comes a bit later.

Although conceptions peak in December, men may be more fertile around February and March, when sperm counts tend to peak, studies show. Women, by contrast, show no seasonal changes in fertility.



There are some other time factors that women should consider in planning their pregnancies. For example, women who conceive later in their cycle run a slightly increased likelihood of having twins, a chance that increases with age.

Women who are wondering how far apart to space their children should know that babies conceived less than nine months after the birth of a sibling are twice as likely to have a low birth weight. The highest risk of a low birth weight—one out of nine, in one study—is found among babies conceived within three months after a previous birth. ❖

Thinking of having a baby? Receive a FREE Pregnancy Planning Kit by calling **1-888-876-8764** or registering online at [www.mainlinehealth.org/women](http://www.mainlinehealth.org/women).

## Women Smokers: Higher Heart Attack Risk

Women who smoke heavily run a heart attack risk six times greater than women who have never smoked. Among male heavy smokers, heart attack risk is nearly three times higher than for men who have never smoked.

A study found that smoking had a much more harmful effect on women than men. It found that smoking eliminated the natural female advantage in heart health. Cigarette smoke appears to weaken women's natural protective agents. These agents are estrogen and higher levels of high-density lipopro-

tein (HDL), the "good" cholesterol. The increased heart attack risk for women who were heavy smokers was especially apparent among women age 44 or younger. Their risk was seven times higher than for nonsmoking women.

**Become a quitter!** SmokeFree, Main Line Health's smoking cessation program, teaches behavior modification skills to address the physical and psychological addiction to smoking. For further information, call **1-888-876-8764** or visit [www.mainlinehealth.org](http://www.mainlinehealth.org).



## FINDING

### Cereal: Too Much of a Good Thing?

Fortified cereals help women avoid iron deficiency and other health problems. However, eating large bowls daily may lead to iron and folate overload. Excess amounts of these nutrients have been linked to colon cancer and heart attack.

Women and men filled bowls with the typical amount of cereal they eat. On average, the amount of cereal eaten was about two cups—twice the labeled serving size amount.

Combining these large cereal quantities with other food and supplement sources may push women over the safe, upper limits of daily intake for iron and folate, researchers say.

Until more is known, the recommended dietary allowance of iron for women ages 15 to 50 is 15 milligrams a day. Recommended folate intake is 400 micrograms daily.

Journal of the American College of Nutrition, Vol. 20, No. 3

# WHS *Event Calendar*

## Heart-y Mediterranean Meals

Understand the heart-healthy benefits of eating a Mediterranean diet and incorporating soy into your meals. The program will review soy's nutritional value and soy products available in supermarkets, and provide easy cooking tips. Taste testing samples and take home recipes available. Parking is FREE for this event.

**Speaker: Judy Matusky, RD**

**Tuesday, February 4**

**7 to 9 p.m.**

**Bryn Mawr Hospital, Pennypacker Auditorium**

*Sponsored by the Main Line Health Heart Center*

## On the Road to Fertility... Beating the Biological Clock

Most couples assume that conception will occur quickly once they stop using birth control. For some it is not as easy as they anticipated. Michael J. Glassner, MD, Director of the Center for Reproductive Medicine, will examine the current issues and available treatment options for those facing the special challenges of age-related infertility.

**Thursday, February 6**

**7 to 8:30 p.m.**

**Bryn Mawr Hospital, Pennypacker Auditorium**

Preregistration is required for all programs. Call **1-866-CALL-MLH** or register online at [www.mainlinehealth.org](http://www.mainlinehealth.org).

## F.A.S.T. Defense

Learn to effectively control the adrenaline and fear-induced stress experienced when faced with a threatening situation. During this interactive seminar you will learn how to harness your own power into self-defense strategies.

**Saturday, February 22**

**1 to 5:30 p.m.**

**The Max Family Training Center,**

**120 West Lancaster Avenue, Ardmore**

**Fee: \$75 discounted fee**

**Registration: 610-649-5425**

## Women and Heart Disease Forum

Save the date for this exciting event featuring guest speakers, informative topics, and advice on heart-healthy living.

Look for details in our next WHS newsletter.

**Saturday, March 15**

**9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

**Merion Cricket Club, Bryn Mawr**

*Sponsored by the Main Line Health Heart Center*



## NEW to WHS!

### Birthday Club for Online Members

WHS wants to help celebrate your birthday by providing a \$15 gift certificate towards a one-hour massage. Just update your profile on the WHS web page and during the month of your birthday, you'll receive an e-mailed gift certificate. Go to [www.mainlinehealth.org](http://www.mainlinehealth.org).

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## Women's HEALTH SOURCE

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## Benefits Update

### F.A.S.T. Defense

Take the F.A.S.T. track to increase self-confidence and personal safety. Discounts to WHS members. Call **610-649-5425**.

### Tupperware

Receive a 30% discount off of second item purchased. Call **610-873-8168**.

### Cushman's Fruit

Receive a 10% discount on regular priced items on Internet purchases. Visit [www.honeybell.com](http://www.honeybell.com).

### Facts Inc.

Receive a 50% discount on your first month of any program. Visit [www.ictraining.com/factsinc](http://www.ictraining.com/factsinc).

### Healing Hands Massage

Get \$15 off any full massage or gift certificate. Visit [www.hhmassage.com](http://www.hhmassage.com).

### Edward Jones Investments

Receive a FREE consultation and "Winning Strategies for Women" investment packet. Call **610-917-3378**.

### Pampered Chef

Receive a \$20 gift certificate to use for your at-home kitchen show. Call **610-363-8871**.

### First Union Complex

Take advantage of special group pricing available to members. Call **215-952-7064**.

### Main Line Health

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