

HEALTHY LIVING

elmbrook

memorial hospital

Life goes on

controlling chronic health matters

Ask an expert

seeking a specialist

Serious weight

bariatric excellence

Night life

snoring and sleep apnea

Wise up

what to know when choosing health care.

life goes on...

*By learning how to better manage a chronic condition day by day,
you can greatly improve your quality of life.*

Diabetes care, for the long run

Managing diabetes can seem overwhelming. Chronic complications resulting from diabetes may include heart disease, nerve problems, kidney damage, blindness, depression, and sexual dysfunction. "But you can limit long-term health risks caused by diabetes, by learning and implementing self-care strategies," says Elmbrook Memorial Hospital certified diabetes educator Barbara Van Patten, RN.

"The goal should be to balance diabetes with the demands of daily life," says Kate Glasenapp, APRN, BC-ADM, ANP, nurse practitioner at the Covenant Diabetes Center for Healthy Living. It is helpful to use the ABCs as a guide for control. There are specific recommended targets for "A," the A1C (a test for blood glucose), "B," blood pressure, and "C," cholesterol, for those with diabetes. It is important to know your own numbers compared with the recommended goals. "Other basics such as following your nutritional plan, getting routine exercise, taking medications when prescribed and monitoring foot problems—can't be emphasized enough," says Lisa Grudzielanek, registered dietitian.

People with diabetes need the informed expertise of their physician. They also benefit through involvement with a steady support team that may include a registered dietitian, a diabetes nurse educator, a nurse practitioner, and a pharmacist. Family, friends and co-workers may also support team members. "Staying connected with this support team helps patients to keep updated and to stay motivated to manage the disease day to day," Glasenapp says.

Elmbrook Memorial Hospital offers classes and one-on-one instruction for people with diabetes and their families. To learn more about diabetes education at Elmbrook Memorial, call 262-785-2235. Or, contact the Diabetes Center for Healthy Living, located at the Center of Excellence, 601 N. 99th Street in Wauwatosa, at 414-874-6030.

Making gains on pain

Chronic pain can prevent you from working, enjoying sports, getting dressed or even getting out of bed. If they can't find a solution, many people simply give up and live in misery. But help is available to find relief and regain functionality.

Elmbrook Memorial Hospital provides a variety of therapies to help patients manage pain so they can get on with life's functions. These can include physical or psychological therapies, mind-body therapies, alternative methods such as acupuncture, and other ways to alleviate pain. It could mean the difference between lying in bed or going to a movie; being stuck on a couch or playing with your kids.

Weight management strategies: finding the right fit

Serious chronic conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, osteoarthritis and sleep apnea can be minimized or prevented by maintaining a healthy weight.

"Think of losing weight as a work in progress, and do it for health reasons," says Heidi Manak, registered dietitian at Elmbrook Memorial Hospital. "Even moderate weight loss can improve your health and reduce the need for blood pressure medications."

Covenant Healthcare offers a safe and highly effective medical weight management program called The Healthy Way.

"Our program is unique because it is individualized, comprehensive, has a medically supervised multi-disciplinary approach, and provides long-term follow up," says Healthy Way clinical leader Magda Hennes, MD, PhD. "We combine the expertise of a qualified physician, registered dietitians, behavioral health specialists and physical therapists."

"If you want a total approach that is medically supervised, this is for you," advises Barbara Kletzke, who has lost 26 pounds so far with the program. "But you have to make the commitment for the long haul."

Taking control of chronic health conditions

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Keeping chronic conditions under control adds to quality of life.

To learn more about Covenant's Healthy Way Program, call 414-256-2480. For more information on weight management, see the article on page 8.

Asthma: clearing the air

Asthma is caused by a chronic inflammation of the airways and can exist without producing symptoms. But pollution, allergies, a cold, exercise, or hot, muggy weather can trigger wheezing, difficulty breathing or coughing—which can become life threatening.

Don't wait until you encounter one of your triggers and have to suffer through an attack.

"Many people try to get by without their controller medication but end up here at the hospital," says Tom Kissner, RRT, asthma educator at Elmbrook Memorial Hospital. The hospital assists patients at its Asthma Care Center, provides classes and offers support groups for people with asthma.

Dirt, dust mites and pets are also common triggers. "It's important to keep your home clean, especially the bedroom and family room where you spend most of your time," explains Kissner. "Try to keep your pet out of the bedroom. And if you're moving or remodeling, avoid irritants like paint or carpet glue."

Know the "Asthma Rule of 2": If you use your quick-relief inhaler more than 2 times a week, or awaken with asthma symptoms more than 2 times a month, or refill your quick-relief inhaler more than 2 times a year, you may need a controller or anti-inflammatory medication. Individuals suffering from asthma can schedule an appointment at Elmbrook Memorial's Asthma Care Center by calling 262-785-2400.

>> Seniors and medications: sorting it all out

Are you losing track of how many medications you have, when to take them and how they interact? Understandably, this can be confusing for older adults, who may be taking a number of medications.

Side effects and drug interactions can be major issues for seniors. Drugs can cause memory loss, fatigue, constipation, an unsteady gait and other problems that may be attributed to aging. Consequently, these symptoms may be treated with additional medications, possibly causing more side effects.

Taking several medications can increase the risk for drug interactions. Seniors should talk with their primary doctor about medications, especially if they experience new or unfavorable symptoms. This may also help reduce the number of medicines prescribed.

"Access to prescriptions is another serious issue," says Ellen Mutter, coordinator of the Vitality and Independence Program (VIP) for seniors at Elmbrook Memorial Hospital. In 2006, Medicare will change its drug coverage for people 65 and older. Contact Medicare for more information about how this "Part D" change could affect you.

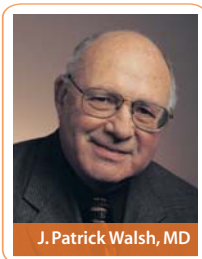
VIP offers assistance in enrolling in SeniorCare, as well as discounts on pharmacy and medical equipment. This fall, VIP will offer free education sessions on the new Medicare prescription drug program (Medicare Part D).

To join Covenant VIP, register for a Medicare Part D education session or for a free copy of Covenant's Senior Services Resource Directory, call 414-527-8120.

>> Most people receive the bulk of their medical care from a primary care physician who can meet their needs quite well. But sometimes a situation calls for the additional expertise of a specialist.

Specialists can provide diagnoses or perform advanced treatments that

“Communication between you, your physician and the specialist is essential for determining the best care,” says urologist J. Patrick Walsh, MD “You have to be comfortable and confident with the care you’re getting from a specialist.”



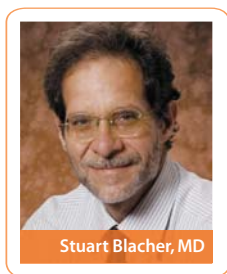
J. Patrick Walsh, MD

getting special treatment

Basic facts about highly focused care

expand upon the care your primary care physician provides. But how do you know when to seek specialized care? What about second opinions? How and why do you go about getting one? Here are some insights that may help you decide.

“While it’s okay to consult a specialist on your own, it’s best to ask your primary doctor first about your condition,” says radiation oncologist Stuart Blacher, MD. “If you have something difficult to diagnose like a general abdominal problem, it could mean any number of things. A primary care doctor has better expertise to study your symptoms and refer you to the proper kinds of specialist, rather than you taking your best guess at which specialist to see.”



Stuart Blacher, MD

Seeking a specialist

Sometimes it’s obvious when you should see a specialist. Maybe your primary doctor refers you to a dermatologist because you have an unexplained skin rash. Or your son may need his tonsils removed, so you consult an ear, nose and throat specialist.

Typically, your primary physician will refer you to a specialist, but in some cases you may want to seek one on your own. Either way, discuss your plan and the result of your specialist consultation with your primary care doctor.

Elmbrook Memorial Hospital has a great many specialists available. For instance, when cancer is involved, the Center for Cancer Care at Elmbrook Memorial Hospital has a widely respected team of specialists who regularly provide patient consultation while working with primary care physicians to determine the best care options available.

BEFORE YOU SEE A SPECIALIST...

When it’s time to see a specialist or obtain a second opinion, do you need a formal order from your primary care physician? Not typically. However, there may be situations when insurance requires a second opinion, or when insurance may not cover a specialist visit. To make sure your insurance will pay for a second opinion or specialty care, contact your insurance provider directly before you consult the specialist or second opinion provider.

Getting a second opinion

Requesting a second medical opinion can be a confusing concept for many people. It can feel like you're second-guessing or somehow betraying your doctor. But it's your health on the line.

"If your doctor makes a recommendation that you're not comfortable with, or if a treatment involves risks that you want to be sure you're willing to take, it's not a bad idea to get a second opinion, especially for serious problems," says Dr. Blacher. But be prepared; the second-opinion process can delay treatment. It can also create an entirely new recommendation that you now have to weigh with the first one. By consulting with reputable, unbiased experts, a second opinion can be helpful.

"A second opinion is wise if you face a life-threatening medical situation such as cancer or cardiac disease," says Dr. Walsh. "If the second opinion is different from the first, you need to ask about details of the treatment: How would it be done, where, by what means and by whom."

"We want patients to be confident with their decisions so that they have peace of mind and find a resolution," says urologist William Annesley, MD. "Patients should have all options presented and discussed with them, including medical and non-surgical interventions." While second opinions often help to confirm what has already been determined, looking at things from a different perspective can be very helpful, says Dr. Annesley.

Doctors Walsh, Annesley and Blacher have joined radiation oncologist David Sherman, MD, to form the new **Center for Urological Cancer**. The Center provides men and women with a critical second opinion on diagnoses of urological and prostate cancer. For more information, call 262-780-4100.

>> Ovarian cancer: worth a second opinion

Don't think a second opinion is important? Consider ovarian cancer. It can spread silently or show vague symptoms, often going undetected until reaching an advanced stage.

Today, specialized care in gynecologic oncology offers new hope. Numerous studies confirm that women whose initial surgeries are performed by GYN oncologists have better survival rates. That means if you're diagnosed with ovarian cancer, getting a second opinion from a GYN oncologist could be a matter of life and death.



Elmer Lehman, MD

"Accurate diagnosis and appropriate surgical intervention is key to successful treatment," says Covenant Healthcare gynecologic oncologist Elmer Lehman, MD. "That begins with a process called 'staging.' Through surgery, we are able to confirm the presence, location and extent of cancer, then remove as much of it as possible during a procedure called 'de-bulking.'"

GYN oncologists can be difficult to find (there are only about 1,000 in the entire country). Fortunately, Dr. Lehman—one of the nation's best—is right here in our community. He holds extensive experience and advanced training in cancers of the female reproductive system. After earning his medical degree in obstetrics and gynecology, he completed a fellowship in GYN oncology at the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center. This level of expertise allows him to accurately detect ovarian cancer and recommend the most effective treatments.

To learn how Dr. Lehman can help you or someone you love, call 414-259-7575.