

Valley Hospital

ROCKWOOD HEALTH SYSTEM

# HealthConnection

THE MAGAZINE OF VALLEY HOSPITAL



How to  
know where  
to go!  
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# Healthbriefs



tip

## Balance

your protein choices. Lean animal, fish and vegetable sources can help lower cholesterol.

### › Pick cholesterol-lowering foods

When it comes to bringing down LDL (bad) cholesterol, it appears foods like soy protein, nuts and plant sterols (found naturally in plants) have the upper hand. According to a study in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, people with high cholesterol who combined such foods and incorporated them into their diets had a greater reduction in LDL cholesterol than those who followed low-saturated-fat diets that focused on high fiber and whole grains alone.

The study followed 351 people over the course of six months. Researchers found that the cholesterol levels of those who followed the low-saturated-fat diets dropped 3 percent, while those consuming the cholesterol-lowering foods saw a decrease of up to 13.8 percent. These results don't mean you should ditch a heart-healthy, low-saturated-fat diet. Instead try adding the cholesterol-lowering foods to an already heart-healthy regimen.

### › New moms: 5 ways to prevent back pain

Back pain is a common complaint of new moms. Here are some tips for keeping your back in good health, courtesy of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons:

- 1 With your obstetrician's OK, try to begin exercising shortly after you have your baby (women who've had C-sections usually have to wait at least six weeks). This will help rebuild tone in your abdominal and back muscles.
- 2 When lifting your baby, don't stretch your arms. Bring him or her close to your chest before picking the child up. Bend at your knees—lifting with your legs.
- 3 Carry your child in a front pack for longer walks. Avoid carrying him or her on your hip.
- 4 Kneel on the back seat when placing your child in the car seat. Don't attempt to load the baby when standing outside the car.
- 5 Use a chair that offers back support, not a soft couch.



### › Aerobic exercise key to banning belly fat

Looking to get rid of that spare tire or paunch? Then it's time to get your heart pumping. A recent study in the *American Journal of Physiology* found that aerobic activity burned 67 percent more calories than resistance training (such as weight lifting). The eight-month Duke University Medical Center study followed 196 overweight, inactive adults who either performed aerobic exercises equivalent to jogging 12 miles a week or did three sets of eight to 12 weight-lifting repetitions, three times a week. The researchers discovered that aerobic exercise greatly reduced liver fat and deep-lying abdominal fat (called visceral fat), which increases the risk of heart disease, diabetes and certain types of cancer. The aerobic activity improved insulin resistance, triglyceride levels and liver enzymes—risk factors for disease—while the resistance training didn't.

Your best bet? Aim for a balanced exercise regimen that incorporates weight training, which can improve your strength and build lean muscle, and aerobic exercise.



# Facing migraines head-on

➤ You're sitting at your desk at work when you feel it coming—that throbbing pain in your head. With dread, you prepare to face the nausea that will soon follow.

What you're experiencing, most likely, is a migraine, and you're not alone—28 million Americans get them.

## What's a migraine?

Simply put, migraines are severe headaches that usually come back, whether it's weekly, monthly or only every few years. They may be preceded by visual disturbances such as zigzagging lines or flashing lights; last several hours or a whole day; occur on one side of the head; trigger nausea or vomiting; and they're usually disabling.

Migraine triggers include stress, hormonal changes (such as pregnancy, menstruation and menopause), certain types of food (alcohol, aged cheeses, too much or too little caffeine, food additives such as MSG, processed meats and citrus fruits), environmental factors (bright lights, excessive heat, allergies and perfume), irregular eating and sleeping habits, smoking and certain medications.

## How can I control them?

The first step to managing migraines is to take note. When did your migraine happen? What were you doing? What did you eat in the past 24 hours? How long did it last? On a scale of one to 10, how bad was your migraine?

Keeping a migraine journal and answering such questions each time you experience one can help you avoid triggers and assist your doctor in tailoring an effective treatment plan.

Some people may benefit from medications, which can either knock out pain or prevent a migraine from occurring in the first place, while others may only need lifestyle adjustments:

- **Food substitutes.** For example, if blue cheese is a trigger, choose another type of cheese.
- **Stress.** Avoid stressful situations or engage in relaxing activities, such as yoga and meditation.
- **Sleep.** Aim for six to eight hours each night.
- **Exercise.** Remain active every day with activities such as brisk walks or laps at the local indoor pool.
- **Eating.** Eat regularly scheduled meals. Skipping meals can send your blood sugar crashing.
- **Smoking.** If you smoke, quit. Also avoid secondhand smoke.
- **Medicine.** Blood pressure medications and birth control pills are two types of medications that may aggravate migraines. If you think this is happening, talk with your doctor about possible substitutions (but don't just stop taking medicine).

If you experience symptoms such as a sudden headache (like a thunderclap) or a headache accompanied by other symptoms, such as fever, a stiff neck or trouble speaking, seek immediate medical attention, as these can indicate more serious conditions. ●

**If you experience symptoms such as a sudden headache or a headache accompanied by other symptoms, seek medical attention.**

tip

Keep

a journal to track your migraines and help you learn more about what triggers them.





## From us TO YOU

**DENNIS BARTS**  
Chief Executive Officer

### DEAR FRIENDS,

February is American Heart Month. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. The good news is that lifestyle changes and early intervention can reduce your risk of a serious coronary event. A low-fat, low-cholesterol and low-sodium diet and physical activity are the best weapons to fight heart disease. Regular screenings for elevated blood pressure or high cholesterol are another important weapon—and new, less-invasive interventional radiology and vascular procedures make it easier than ever to treat certain conditions that could lead to heart attack.

I'm happy to report that Valley Hospital can help you in all of these areas. With our Healthy Woman and Senior Circle programs, we offer ongoing education about ways to be a healthier person (they're easy to join—visit [www.SpokaneValleyHospital.com](http://www.SpokaneValleyHospital.com) for more information) and with expanded services in cardiology, interventional radiology and vascular surgery, Valley Hospital regularly treats heart-related ailments. Just recently, the hospital welcomed Beejay Feliciano, M.D., a fellowship-trained vascular and endovascular surgeon, to our medical staff. Along with our outstanding cardiologists and radiologists, surgeons like Dr. Feliciano can perform minimally invasive procedures to preserve heart health.

### We've got you covered

Unfortunately, some heart attacks are sudden and early intervention isn't an option. For those cases, Valley Hospital has you covered as well. Our emergency room (ER) is staffed by doctors and registered nurses experienced in cardiac emergency, trauma and critical care. Valley Hospital's ER also includes a cardiac activation team and cardiac treatment rooms specifically designed for patients with heart emergencies. For patients arriving by ambulance, we communicate with paramedics on their way to our ER to ensure that we're fully prepared to treat you upon arrival.

So, start by taking care of your heart, but if you need medical intervention, please choose Valley Hospital for your cardiac care.

Sincerely,

## Dennis Barts

Chief Executive Officer  
Valley Hospital

# Valley Hospital recognized as a Top Performer

Valley Hospital was recently named one of the nation's Top Performers on Key Quality Measures by The Joint Commission, the leading accrediting body of health care organizations in America. The hospital was recognized based on data reported about evidence-based clinical processes that are shown to improve care for certain conditions. To earn this recognition, Valley Hospital achieved exceptional performance standards in pneumonia and surgical care.

Valley Hospital is 1 of only 405 hospitals nationwide earning this distinction for attaining and sustaining excellence; 1 of only 5 hospitals in the state of Washington and the only hospital in the greater Spokane/northern Idaho area to be recognized on these Key Quality Measures. Inclusion on the list is based on an aggregation of accountability measure data reported to The Joint Commission during the previous calendar year.



"We understand that what matters most to our patients is safe, effective care," says Dennis Barts, chief executive officer of Valley Hospital. "That's why Valley Hospital has made a commitment to accreditation and to evidence-based care processes. We've earned this recognition through the dedication and skill of our medical staff, nurses and other clinicians who care for our patients each day." ●



### Want to learn more?

Visit The Joint Commission's website at [www.QualityCheck.org](http://www.QualityCheck.org) to see profiles and ratings of area hospitals.



# Emergency care

## How to decide where to go and when

BY ROBERT HARTMAN, M.D.  
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER  
VALLEY HOSPITAL AND DEACONESS HOSPITAL

➤ It can be confusing to know where to go for medical care. To get the proper care in the most cost-effective manner, it matters what type of facility you choose. Below are some general guidelines to assist you in determining where to get care.

### Doctor's office

Unless you have a life-threatening emergency, start with your doctor or clinic. They know your medical history and can provide basic care for common illnesses, minor injuries and routine health exams. You can search for local doctors on Valley Hospital's website, [www.SpokaneValleyHospital.com](http://www.SpokaneValleyHospital.com).

### Urgent care clinics

When your doctor isn't available, urgent care clinics provide care for nonlife-threatening medical issues. Urgent care clinics are typically less expensive than hospital emergency rooms (ERs) and should be considered for after-hours prescription refills, dental aches and easily treatable illnesses, such as strep throat. Valley Hospital has seven affiliated Rockwood urgent care centers, three of which are located in the greater Spokane Valley area—Millwood: 2713 N. Argonne (509-342-3980), Valley: 14408 East Sprague Ave. (509-755-5711) and Liberty Lake: 1431 N. Liberty Lake (509-342-3990). All are open 8 a.m.– 8 p.m. on weekdays and 8 a.m.– 4 p.m. on weekends. Walk-in care is available and a wide variety of insurances are accepted.

### Hospital emergency room

You should use a hospital ER for very serious or life-threatening problems. If you have an emergency such as cardiac

distress, don't wait. Dial 911 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room. Valley Hospital's ER is a Level III trauma center and active participant in Washington State's cardiac and stroke activation program. Additionally, Valley Hospital provides trained pediatric caregivers and in-house pediatric hospitalists who can admit children to the hospital, day or night. The ER is located at 12606 E. Mission Ave., with easy access off I-90 at the Pines exit. Free, close parking is available and the ER is open 24/7/365.

Still not sure where to go? Many insurance companies have a phone line to help you. Check your coverage to see whether a resource such as this is available. Also, consider carrying a list in your wallet or purse of all medications that you take and any health conditions you have. This list can come in handy as you seek care and if you need emergency care and are unable to speak or communicate for yourself. ●



### Unsure about a health issue?

Valley Hospital offers a free, online, medically reviewed, searchable health information database. Go to [www.SpokaneValleyHospital.com](http://www.SpokaneValleyHospital.com), click on "Health Resources," then "Online Knowledgebase."



## HealthWise QUIZ

How much do you know about dementia?

> TAKE THIS QUIZ TO FIND OUT.

- 1 The most common type of dementia is:**
  - a. Alzheimer's disease
  - b. Lewy body disease
  - c. vascular dementia
  - d. none of the above
- 2 Which of the following conditions can cause or mimic the symptoms of dementia?:**
  - a. Lyme disease
  - b. thyroid problems
  - c. low blood sugar
  - d. all of the above
- 3 According to the Alzheimer's Association, the risk of developing Alzheimer's after age 85 is about:**
  - a. 10 percent
  - b. 25 percent
  - c. 50 percent
  - d. 75 percent
- 4 One known risk factor for dementia is:**
  - a. getting too much vitamin D
  - b. having diabetes
  - c. regularly using a cell phone
  - d. exposure to everyday sources of aluminum
- 5 While there's no surefire way to prevent dementia, experts recommend which of the following measures to possibly lower your risk of developing it?:**
  - a. taking high doses of vitamin C
  - b. lowering your blood pressure
  - c. keeping up to date on vaccinations
  - d. both (b) and (c)

Answers: 1. (a) 2. (d) 3. (c) 4. (b) 5. (d)

# A dangerous trio

## Sorting out stroke, heart attack and cardiac arrest

> What do stroke, heart attack and cardiac arrest have in common? They're all possible complications of heart and blood vessel diseases that affect millions of Americans.

Read on to learn more about each of these conditions and their unique causes and symptoms.

### Heart attack

When fatty deposits called plaque build up in the arteries, it can narrow them or cause a blood clot to form. When this occurs, blood flow to the heart is blocked, damaging heart muscle.

> **Symptoms:** Signs of a heart attack vary, but may include: tightness, a feeling of heaviness, pressure or a squeezing sensation in the chest; indigestion; anxiety; fainting; dizziness; nausea or vomiting; irregular heartbeats; shortness of breath; and sweating. Women may also experience less common symptoms, such as fatigue. Silent heart attacks, where no symptoms are present, can also occur.

### Stroke

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel leading to the brain becomes blocked (usually by a clot) or ruptures. This deprives the brain of oxygenated blood, causing parts of the brain to die.

> **Symptoms:** Stroke symptoms come on suddenly and include: numbness or weakness in the

face, arm or leg (particularly on one side of the body); confusion; speech and comprehension problems; vision difficulties; problems walking; and severe headache with no known cause.

### Cardiac arrest

Sudden cardiac arrest is a condition in which the heart abruptly stops beating without warning, depriving the body of oxygenated blood. If not treated immediately (with CPR and a defibrillator), a person in cardiac arrest usually dies within minutes. Heart attacks can sometimes trigger cardiac arrest.

> **Symptoms:** Cardiac arrest symptoms include sudden collapse, lack of pulse, no breathing and loss of consciousness.

If you or a loved one experiences symptoms of any of the conditions listed, call 911 or seek immediate medical help. ●



# Breaking cabin fever

## Five ways to beat the indoor blues

Rainy days, snowy days, bitterly cold days—whatever's going on outside can test the patience of adults and kids alike who are trapped inside.

While it's tempting to flip on the TV or let your children play video games, neither of these keeps them physically active or their brains engaged. Try these healthier boredom busters instead:

**1 Create family time.** Bond with your children over a board game or plan a family outing to places you may not visit in nicer weather, such as a museum.

**2 Let your children's imagination run wild.** Check your closets and discount stores to put together a trunk of clothes for dress-up; build a fort using sheets and furniture; or create a craft

box by adding items such as paper, crayons, glue, glitter, string, beads and buttons.

**3 Keep your children active.** Make an obstacle course in your living room with couch cushions and laundry baskets. Or, try classic childhood games such as Duck, Duck, Goose. Old-time favorites like Simon Says and the hokeypokey are great ways to teach toddlers about following commands and different parts of the body.

**4 Get in touch with nature.** Have a set of binoculars? Help your children spot the many different types of birds or other wildlife in your backyard.

**5 Get them involved.** Planning a big vacation? Lay out travel materials and let your children help plan the itinerary. ●



# Reclaim your colon

## The right food can keep things running smoothly

Do you have a happy colon? If you're regularly battling constipation or diarrhea, chances are the answer is no. But there are foods that can help get you back on "tract."

### Yogurt

Yogurt contains "good bacteria" called probiotics, which some research suggests may curb diarrhea and tackle the symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

It's also a good source of calcium, which, along with vitamin D, may protect against colon polyps and colon cancer.



### Veggies, whole grains and legumes

These are all sources of insoluble fiber, which can ease or prevent constipation by bulking up and softening your stool. On the flip side, fiber can add substance to loose stool, relieving diarrhea, and may ease IBS symptoms. Fiber may reduce the risk of diverticular disease, a condition that causes small pouches in the colon.

Don't forget that legumes, potatoes, brown rice and whole grains are also good sources of vitamin B-6, which some research has shown may help prevent colon cancer in women.



### Low-fat foods

Eating a lot of fat—especially saturated fats from red meat and foods such as hot dogs—can increase your colon cancer risk.

Increasing low-fat or nonfat dairy and vegetable intake are great additions to your diet. Reduce the fat by making other substitutions: lean poultry, pork or fish instead of red meat; frozen fruit instead of ice cream; or tub margarine instead of stick margarine or butter. Since not all margarines are created equal (some can be worse than butter), it's important to check the nutrition label for the amount of saturated and trans fats. ●



# Valley Hospital

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ROCKWOOD HEALTH SYSTEM

## A shorter name, but the same commitment to our community

Recently, we made the decision to streamline the name of our hospital. Our research and other recent studies indicate that consumers prefer “hospital” to “medical center” and our goal is to communicate clearly and simply with the community. Valley Hospital and Medical Center is now known simply as Valley Hospital and our sister facility, Deaconess Medical Center, is Deaconess Hospital. At the same time, the Rockwood Health System brand was unveiled to visibly unite the operations, people and mission of Valley Hospital, Deaconess Hospital and Rockwood.

Two years ago, Deaconess Hospital, Valley Hospital and Rockwood joined forces to transform health care in the Spokane community. Working together, the organizations have increased access to health services, improved coordination of patient care and sharpened their focus on quality and customer relationships.

As this growing integrated health care delivery system continues to care for more patients across the Inland Northwest, the need for a unified brand identity has become increasingly important.

“Valley Hospital and the Rockwood Health System will continue to grow over time to meet our most important goal—elevating the quality of patient care for

our community,” says Dennis Barts, chief executive officer of Valley Hospital. “The new name clearly communicates that we’re working together to create healthier lives for the patients who receive care from one, or even all three, of the partners.”

### What’s behind the name matters most

At Valley Hospital, this new brand means changes to exterior signage and other marketing materials. Even as we establish this new name, we’ll continue to work with all of our community doctors who are an integral part of Valley Hospital. In addition, Valley Hospital continues to serve all patients (even those who don’t have a Rockwood primary care doctor) with the same commitment to compassionate care. Of course, it’s what’s behind the name that matters most. The local employees who provide care will continue to be the cornerstones of Valley Hospital.

At every point along the continuum of care, patients should know that they’re being treated by a network of providers with a shared vision of seamless, coordinated care.

We’re working together for a healthier life! ●



### Your healthier life starts here!

Find out more about coordinated care and the extent of Rockwood Health System’s services at [www.RockwoodHealthSystem.com](http://www.RockwoodHealthSystem.com).