

Health Connection

Martin General
HOSPITAL

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT MARTIN GENERAL HOSPITAL

Quality care, close to home



David S. Sanders
Chief Executive Officer

Martin General Hospital (MGH) has a rich history in this community—one that spans many years. As one of the largest employers in Martin County, MGH's success has an impact on both the health of the people who live here and the local economy. MGH is the only full-service, acute care hospital in Martin

County. Fully accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, we offer a wide range of healthcare services, including:

- 24-hour emergency department and emergency medicine services
- intensive care with six units
- industrial medicine
- physician services, including:
 - anesthesiology
 - general surgery
 - family practice
 - internal medicine
 - obstetrics and gynecology
 - orthopedics
 - pediatrics
 - podiatry
- complete surgery facilities, including endoscopy and laser
- same-day surgery program, including ophthalmic surgery
- after-hours clinics
- full-service radiology services, including mammography, computed tomography (CT) and sonography with echocardiography and vascular/arterial studies
- mobile magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)
- mobile nuclear imaging
- rehabilitation services, including physical therapy and occupational therapy



- cardiopulmonary services
- laboratory services
- sleep lab
- pain management
- sports medicine

As MGH continues to adapt to changes in healthcare and changes in the community, we're listening to those we serve in order to find ways to best meet their needs. We do this by surveying those who have visited the emergency room to find out what we're doing right and what areas need improvement. When you receive one of these surveys, please complete it and send it back to us.

To those of you who tell us how we can improve our services and who refer family, friends and neighbors who need those services, I say, "Thank you." You're an important part of MGH. If you have any thoughts, questions or concerns about MGH, I encourage you to call me at **(252) 809-6122**.

DAVID S. SANDERS
Chief Executive Officer
Martin General Hospital

SURGERY 101:

A manual for peace of mind

Did you take your Girl Scout or Boy Scout oath seriously as a child? If so, to this day you're probably sure to pack what you need before a hike: a map, compass, first-aid kit, water and healthy snacks. You ask what the terrain is and where the trail ends so you can get home on schedule.

When it comes to surgery, studies have shown that this same "be prepared" principle can ease pre-op anxiety, reduce your hospital stay and speed recovery.

If you're about to undergo surgery, ask your doctor to describe the procedure completely. Knowing what to expect can defuse stress and help you approach surgery day with a calm head.

Here are some other ways you can make the time before, during and after surgery run more smoothly:

BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE

- Follow your physician's instructions about refraining from smoking, eating and drinking before the procedure.
- Ask your physician about taking aspirin or other anti-inflammatory drugs before surgery. Because they're blood thinners, these medications may cause excessive blood loss.
- Tell your doctor which prescription and over-the-counter drugs you take. This goes for vitamins and herbs, too, as certain herbal remedies, such as St. John's wort and kava, may extend the effects of anesthesia or create other complications.
- You won't be allowed to drive after the procedure, so make reliable transportation arrangements.
- Organize your home. Make sure you have groceries or frozen meals on hand. If climbing stairs will be a problem, make sleeping arrangements downstairs.

- Practice relaxation techniques such as meditation or yoga. These will help calm you and speed post-op healing.

DURING YOUR HOSPITAL STAY

Your cozy robe or a favorite photo will warm your surroundings and soothe you. Having family and friends visit will bolster you, but don't be afraid to set limits: You'll need some time to rest and recuperate without interruptions.

HOME AGAIN

A little help from friends can be useful. If worries about housework or bills are nagging at you, ask someone to take care of these chores. In the meantime, the relaxation methods you used before surgery can help you feel better now, too. Imagine yourself in the near future doing something you enjoy, such as taking an invigorating hike.



PROTECTING AGAINST FEMALE CANCERS

What every woman should know

Gynecologic cancer is the fourth most common type of cancer in women. Here's a rundown of the gynecologic cancers and facts that can help reduce your risk:

UTERINE CANCER

Uterine cancer—also known as endometrial cancer—is the most common type of reproductive cancer that strikes American women and occurs most often after menopause. Symptoms include unusual vaginal discharge, pelvic pain, pain during intercourse, unexplained weight change and difficult or painful urination.

Obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes and tamoxifen or hormone replacement therapy use may increase risk.

OVARIAN CANCER

Ovarian cancer is the deadliest cancer and often shows no obvious signs until late in its development. But when caught early, most cases can be successfully treated.

Symptoms include abdominal discomfort or pain, nausea, diarrhea, constipation, frequent urination, appetite loss, feelings of fullness, weight change with no known reason and abnormal vaginal bleeding.

An important risk factor is a family history of ovarian cancer. Fertility drugs, hormone replacement therapy, increasing age, infertility, having had no children and a family history of breast cancer may also increase risk.

CERVICAL CANCER

Thanks to Pap tests, deaths from cervical cancer are decreasing. Common symptoms are abnormal bleeding and bloody or discolored vaginal discharge.

The sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV) causes most cervical cancers. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently approved a vaccine that protects against HPV. A federal panel recommends females ages 11 to 26 receive the vaccine.

Other risk factors linked to cervical cancer can be avoided, such as smoking and poor diet.

CANCERS OF THE VAGINA, VULVA AND FALLOPIAN TUBES

These cancers tend to be rare. Women should alert their

doctors to symptoms that include unusual bleeding or discharge, persistent itching of the vulva, pain in the pelvic region, difficult or painful urination, unusual pain or pressure in the abdomen, pain during intercourse and a lump or sore on the vulva that won't heal.

Women may be at risk for vaginal and vulvar cancers if they've had genital warts, chronic vulvar irritations, abnormal Pap tests or intercourse at an early age or with many partners. Women who smoke or whose mothers took DES (diethylstilbestrol) when they were pregnant may also be at risk. Risk factors for tubal cancer are unknown, but it tends to strike women after menopause.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Regular screenings and an annual pelvic exam can detect and even prevent some gynecologic cancers. Keep your doctor informed of any risk factors, especially family history, that you may have.



When seconds count, we're here for you!

You don't plan to visit the emergency department, it just happens—usually when you least expect it. At Martin General Hospital, we practice a philosophy of emergency care called ER+, which helps further our goal of delivering quality medical care as quickly and as professionally as possible.

Our emergency department is ready to work for you during your time of need—24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year—treating injuries ranging from minor cuts and bruises to life-threatening conditions. With ER+, you have access to qualified physicians who take the time to listen to what you have to say. Our team of physicians, nurses and technicians are trained to provide fast, quality care supported by modern technology and diagnostic equipment. They'll listen to you, examine you carefully and prescribe a treatment plan that you can understand and believe in.

Our patients are important to us. Our goal is to do our best to get you through the admission process as quickly as possible. When you arrive at the emergency department, you'll be greeted by compassionate nurses and a registration staff who understand that people come before paperwork. A nurse will check your vital signs and inquire about your symptoms, medical history, medications you are currently taking and drug allergies. The nurse will then perform an initial evaluation to determine the nature of the illness. Patients who present themselves to our emergency department are seen based on the severity of the illness. Severe and life-threatening conditions are given top priority by our staff.

"We have a quality team of nurses and physicians caring for our families, friends and neighbors," says David S. Sanders, chief executive officer at Martin General Hospital. "They are one of the most caring and compassionate groups of people I've worked with."

At our emergency department, ER+ represents a commitment to providing quality service by meeting the needs of our patients



and their families with courtesy and respect. Your emergency experience at ER+ should be one of care, concern and attention to your emotional and physical needs. It's our goal not only to meet our patients' needs, but to exceed the expectations of the people in the community we serve as well.

Learn more!

For more information about Martin General Hospital's emergency department, call (252) 809-6300.



A practical plan to attack-proof your heart

About half a million Americans die every year from coronary heart disease, which is caused by a narrowing of the coronary arteries that feed the heart. The good news: You can improve your heart health by identifying your risks for coronary disease and reducing them with lifestyle changes like these:

- **Eat better.** Choose a balanced diet with foods from all major food groups, emphasizing fruits, vegetables and grains. Include fat-free and low-fat dairy products, beans, poultry and lean meats. Fish is a must, since it contains omega-3 fatty acids, which have been shown to significantly reduce the risk of heart disease.
- **Choose to lose.** Make the commitment to lose excess weight with a good diet and exercise. Steer clear of foods high in calories and/or low in nutritional quality, including those with lots of sugar, additives and preservatives.
- **Lower cholesterol levels.** Avoid foods with a high content of saturated fat, cholesterol and trans fatty acids (foods containing partially hydrogenated vegetable oils such as some margarines).
- **Watch your blood pressure.** Have your blood pressure checked frequently and limit salt to one teaspoon a day.
- **Sample soy.** Eating soy protein instead of animal products reduces total cholesterol levels, the “bad” cholesterol and triglycerides. Also try soy as a milk alternative with cereal.
- **Enjoy yourself.** Take up a sport or relax with meditation to help lower blood pressure and high cholesterol levels.
- **Quit smoking.** It’s not easy, but try gums, patches and smoking-cessation classes.

Better health is just a click away!

Everyone’s been there. You’re concerned about a bad cough, a scratchy throat or a sick friend. Where can you turn to find complete and accurate answers to your healthcare questions? Martin General Hospital’s Web site, www.martingeneral.com.

Martin General Hospital has launched Discovery Hospital on its Web site. Discovery Hospital, an offering of Discovery Communications, which owns the Discovery Channel, provides hospitals with online health information specifically designed to assist individuals in managing their personal health. It consists of more than 7,500 pages of health-related articles and interactive tools. Visit our Web site, www.martingeneral.com, and click on “Discovery Hospital.” You’ll find numerous educational and interactive components, including a medical library of various diseases and conditions, an anatomy explorer, a body mass

calculator, explanations of various procedures and tests, nutrition information, a symptom explanation module, health centers and more.

Discovery
Hospital

Visit www.martingeneral.com today!



HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about arthritis?

Test your knowledge and learn more about arthritis.

1

What does the word arthritis mean?

- a. Sore joint
- b. Joint irritation
- c. Joint inflammation
- d. Rigid joint

2

Which of the following statements about arthritis is true?

- a. Using artificial sweeteners like Equal and Nutrasweet that contain aspartame increases your risk of developing arthritis.
- b. Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in Americans over age 15.
- c. Arthritis is more prevalent in women than in men.
- d. Most people with arthritis will need minor surgery to lessen the pain.

3

Osteoarthritis is caused by the breakdown/loss of _____ in the joints.

- a. bursa
- b. cartilage
- c. air
- d. synovial fluid

4

How is rheumatoid arthritis different from other forms of arthritis?

- a. It occurs in joints on both sides of the body.
- b. Doctors recommend people with it sleep on a waterbed to alleviate pressure on joints.
- c. Pain is felt only early in the morning or late at night.
- d. It occurs when crystals build up in the joints.

5

Older adults aren't the only ones affected by arthritis; it can affect any age group. How many children are estimated to have arthritis?

- a. 35,000
- b. 150,000
- c. 300,000
- d. 500,000

ANSWERS: 1. C, 2. B, 3. B, 4. A, 5. C

8

easy ways to get more exercise

Fitting exercise into your schedule doesn't have

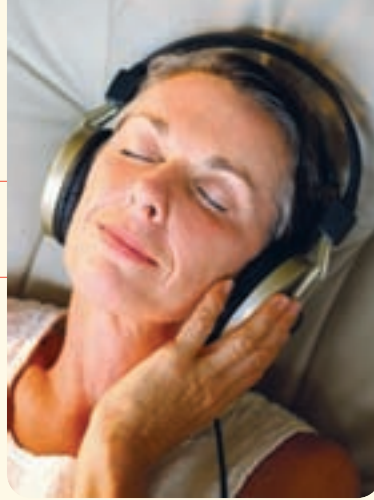
to involve a large bank account or even a lot of time. The following list of ways to make

physical activity a habit was created for even the busiest people.

- 1 **Take the stairs instead of the elevator.** This alternative burns calories and tones muscles.
- 2 **Avoid the phone.** At work, walk down the hallway instead of using the telephone or e-mail to communicate with a co-worker.
- 3 **Walk instead of drive.** It may not be the speediest mode of transportation, but it's effective when you want to visit a neighbor down the street, take your child to a nearby park or pick up a few items at the corner market.
- 4 **Walk during lunch.** Take a friend for company or listen to a book on tape to make your walk mentally as well as physically productive.
- 5 **Clean the house.** You'll have to do more than load the dishwasher to get your heart pumping, but a vigorous cleaning that takes two to three hours may be just what the doctor ordered.
- 6 **Ride your bike.** It's quicker than walking, cheaper than driving and it burns calories.
- 7 **Break activity down into small time increments.** If you don't have the time or energy for 30 minutes of continuous exercise, spread it out. Start with 10 minutes of activity, then do it again and again—for a total of 30 minutes.
- 8 **Vary your activities.** Boredom is one of the biggest commitment killers, so find several activities you enjoy and pick and choose depending on the weather and your mood.



Banish caregiver burnout



If you're caring for someone who depends on you, you need to be healthy and energetic. Yet the sheer amount of time and thought involved in providing care may mean you've put yourself at the bottom of your priority list—making you ripe for stress and burnout. Try these steps to protect your health:

1 Get regular medical checkups. Tell your doctor about your caregiving commitment—he or she may suggest resources to make your life easier.

2 Get plenty of rest. Sleep deprivation contributes to depression. Have a family member pinch-hit (or hire a respite worker) so you can get to bed at a reasonable hour or sneak in a nap.

3 Eat a nutritious diet. A poor diet can lead to malnutrition and fatigue. Regular, well-balanced meals boost energy. Ask family members to help with shopping and meal preparation.

4 Get regular exercise. Moderate exercise combats stress, increases energy and provides a mental-health break.

5 Manage stress. Meditate or learn relaxation techniques. Share your feelings with friends and family members. Ask your doctor for advice or referral to a counselor.

6 Ask for help. Don't try to be a superhero! Ask family

members to help pick up prescriptions, do laundry or drive to doctors' appointments. Ask your doctor about local resources like transportation to medical checkups, home-delivered meals, respite care or adult day-care services.

7 Schedule time for yourself. Schedule time to enjoy your hobbies. Spend time with friends. Try a change of scenery—take a short drive or see a play or concert.

8 Be realistic and flexible. Accept that your loved one's illness may change from week to week. Be flexible as you plan for the future. Acknowledge the many good things you've done and don't be hard on yourself for not being able to do everything on your own.

Real-world strategies to control your weight



Visit the diet and nutrition section of any bookstore and you'll be amazed by the number of books offering the latest miracle diet. Low carb, no carb, high protein, low calorie—but do any work?

Fad diets tend to be tough to stick with. Even worse, people often feel deprived and pile unwanted pounds back on once they're off the diets.

The best way to take off fat is slowly and steadily. That means a weight loss of no more than one to two

pounds a week. Many fad diets drastically reduce your food intake and put your body into “starvation” mode, slowing your metabolism to conserve calories. That's the

exact opposite of what you want. Similarly, restricting certain foods—such as carbohydrates—can lead to cravings that will derail your efforts.

THE TRIED AND TRUE

The following are real-life tips to help you look and feel your best:

- **Rebalance your diet.** If your diet is heavy on foods like crackers, bagels, white rice, low-fiber cereal and pasta, substitute them with whole grains like brown rice, multi-grain breads and pasta enriched with soy. To feel satisfied longer, combine carbs with protein.

- **Count calories.** Simply put, to lose weight you have to ingest fewer calories than you expend.

- **Spread out meals.** Eating small amounts throughout the day boosts your metabolism. Aim for three equal-sized meals, plus nutritious snacks in between.

- **Ditch self-denial.** Instead of avoiding any one food group, make wise choices. Whole-wheat crackers with peanut butter are a smarter snack than a bag of chips.

- **Emphasize weight training.** Add strength training to your exercise program. Resistance exercises build muscle, which burns more calories by increasing your metabolism.

Building for a healthy future

If you've driven or stopped by the grounds of Martin General Hospital you may have noticed one of our construction projects. We're very excited about our new Conference Center. The facility's technology will allow on-site training for our employees as well as teleconference capabilities with other hospital facilities. The building will be approximately 3,200-square feet and will include two meeting halls and office space. It will be the future home of our Education Department, Senior Circle program and Business Development/Marketing Department. The additional space will enable us to move many of our Senior Circle functions on-site.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Martin General Hospital Auxiliary for their generous donation toward this project.

A Grand Opening Celebration is scheduled for the beginning of 2007. Please keep watching as we continue to grow!



Martin General Hospital's new Conference Center



Fast fact

If you've survived a heart attack, the odds are already in your favor. Still, that

doesn't mean you're off the hook. During the first six years after a heart attack, the chance of having a second one is 35 percent for women and 18 percent for men. If anything positive can be said about having a heart attack, it's that it provides an incentive to make some lifestyle changes.

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