

HealthToday

APRIL-JUNE 2010

 **Centegra** Health System

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message *to our*
community



With the last of the snow melting, I always look forward to stepping outside and shaking off winter's hold. It's a time of planning new summer activities and planting the seeds for a healthier you.

At Centegra Health System we are focused on providing the resources and facilities for you to

pick up a new hobby or begin a new exercise plan. At Centegra Health Bridge Fitness Centers, in both Crystal Lake and Huntley, a wide variety of exercise options are available, including numerous swimming classes in our indoor and outdoor pools. Find a class that's right for you in the accompanying calendar or when you visit centegra.org.

Before jumping into a new program, it is important to understand how to protect your body, inside and out. Turn to page 8 to learn about how to choose and use children's over-the-counter medications safely. This issue also explains how to keep your blood pressure in check. Read the full story on page 4.

At Centegra, we are committed to providing our community with programs and facilities to enjoy the upcoming warmer months. We look forward to growing together into a healthier community.

Sincerely yours,

Michael S. Eesley
President and CEO

Kids, swimming and safety: A great combination

SWIMMING IS A SKILL that lasts a lifetime. It's a gateway for fun and it can help keep you fit. So it makes sense for kids to learn to swim early.

That's where swimming lessons at Centegra Health Bridge Fitness Centers come in.

With nearly 200 classes at both Huntley and Crystal Lake locations, Centegra Health Bridge Fitness Centers offer many options to adapt to families. This includes arranging assessments quickly and working to get kids into classes that best fit their schedules.

"We try to cater to every child's needs," says Leslie Behrns, Aquatics Manager for the Centegra Health Bridge Fitness Center in Huntley. "We assess their abilities to get them into the correct class. When they excel, we quickly advance them to the next level."

The lessons also cost less than programs at other facilities—even if you're not a member.

Another advantage is the variety of lessons available for everyone from infants onward.

"Children can learn to swim at a very young age, prepare for a swim team, then go on to be a swim instructor, get certified as a lifeguard and even take up scuba—all before the age of 18," Behrns says. As kids move from level to level, they are also likely to continue with the same instructor for several classes.

Additionally, Centegra Health Bridge Fitness Centers have American Red Cross-certified swim instructors. ♦



Registration for classes that begin April 19 starts during the first week of April. **CALL 815-444-2900** to register.



Free educational programs for people of all ages

AT CENTEGRA HEALTH SYSTEM, we strive to provide the greater McHenry County community with access to the tools needed to remain healthy year-round. Part of this endeavor is educating our community about a variety of health topics.

In an effort to provide continuous education, Centegra Health System hosts multiple *free* monthly physician lectures. These educational sessions cover a variety of topics and are led by physicians who specialize in the fields discussed.

Are you experiencing joint pain? Are you concerned about diabetes? Do you have a history of heart disease in your family? Our physician lectures are an excellent educational starting point.

Physician lectures last between an hour and an hour and a half. For a complete list of our lectures, check out our online calendar at centegra.org or check our quarterly Calendar publication, enclosed with *Health Today*. You can also check our advertisements in the *Northwest Herald* for upcoming lectures. ♦

 For more information or to register for an upcoming lecture, **CALL 877-CENTEGRA (877-236-8347)**.



A doctor who listens



Ann Dilla, DO

ANN DILLA, DO, still vividly recalls how she felt when she received her first Centegra Health System business cards as a newly hired physician. On each card these words appeared: "We commit to serving with genuine respect, passionate caring and a joyful spirit."

"I felt as though I was at home again.

My parents raised me with a commitment to caring for and serving others, and these values are what drew me to medicine," says Dr. Dilla, a board-certified family physician at Centegra Primary Care – Spring Grove.

As a practicing family physician, Dr. Dilla can manage most medical problems and sees patients of all ages, from newborns to seniors. In essence, she is trained to treat the whole body and the whole family.

She has practiced for nearly two decades but still has not lost passion for what she does. "I consider it a privilege to know a patient from birth through the rest of his or her life," she reflects.

Although she is a family physician and not a specialist, you might say Dr. Dilla has a specialty in listening. She practices medicine following the advice of a doctor who mentored her early in her career. "He told me that if you truly listen to your patients, you can usually discover what is wrong even before you examine them. I live by this philosophy." ♦



Dr. Dilla is located at Centegra Primary Care – Spring Grove. To schedule an appointment with Dr. Dilla, **CALL 815-338-6600**.



Keep your blood pressure in check

YOU may think high blood pressure is something only older people need to worry about, but the truth is you can develop high blood pressure at any age.

According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), one in three American adults has high blood pressure (hypertension). However, many people don't know anything is wrong until high blood pressure has already caused harm to their body.

"High blood pressure usually doesn't have any symptoms," explains Michael Fortsas, MD, a cardiologist on staff at Centegra Health System. "It's known as the silent killer because you can have it for years and feel fine. During that time it can damage your body in many ways."

Some life-threatening complications caused by untreated high blood pressure include stroke, congestive heart failure, coronary artery disease and kidney failure.

"That's why it's important for people to have periodic blood pressure checks," Dr. Fortsas says. "People under age 50 should get their blood pressure checked at least once a year."

WHAT THE NUMBERS MEAN

Blood pressure is the force of blood against the artery walls as the heart pumps out blood. A blood pressure reading has two numbers. Systolic pressure (the top number) measures

the force when the heart beats while pumping blood. Diastolic pressure (the bottom number) measures the force when the heart is at rest between the beats.

It's normal for blood pressure to rise and fall throughout the day. When blood pressure stays high over time, it puts a strain on the heart. The NHLBI categorizes blood pressure readings the following way:

- Normal—less than 120/less than 80 mm Hg (millimeters of mercury).
- Prehypertension—120-139/80-89 mm Hg.
- Hypertension—140 or higher/90 or higher mm Hg.

According to the NHLBI, most people who have prehypertension eventually develop high blood pressure unless they take steps to prevent it.

If your blood pressure is consistently high, your doctor may prescribe medication and lifestyle changes to bring it down.

HYPERTENSION PREVENTION

No matter where you fall on the blood pressure continuum, studies show that the following healthy lifestyle choices can help keep blood pressure in check.

Get moving. Just 30 minutes of moderately intense exercise on most days of the week can help you maintain a healthy blood pressure and lower high blood pressure. Good options include brisk walking, bicycling or swimming.

Watch your weight. As you gain weight, your blood pressure increases. "Being overweight can also cause sleep apnea, which is another cause of high blood pressure," Dr. Fortsas says. Even a weight loss of 10 pounds can help lower your blood pressure, according to the NHLBI.

Eat your fruits and vegetables. "Research shows that people who regularly eat up to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables a day and watch their sodium intake can lower their blood pressure," Dr. Fortsas says. Other blood pressure-friendly foods include whole grains, nuts, fish and low-fat or nonfat dairy foods.

Pass on the salt. A high-sodium diet raises blood pressure. Instead of adding salt to foods, experiment with different herbs and spices to give food more flavor. Check labels of processed foods for the sodium content. Look for foods that say "Low sodium" or "No salt added" on the label.

Avoid excessive alcohol use. Drinking too much alcohol can raise blood pressure and adds empty calories to your diet. If you drink, do so in moderation—no more than two drinks a day for men and no more than one drink a day for women. One drink is defined as either 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine or 1½ ounces of 80-proof whiskey, according to the NHLBI.

Don't smoke. Each cigarette you smoke temporarily raises your blood pressure. It also damages the blood vessel walls and is a major risk factor for coronary artery disease, which can cause heart attack. ♦



FIND OUT your risk for heart disease through Centegra's Heart Aware program. **VISIT** centegra.org/heartaware and take a free heart assessment.

Generations of generosity

Passing down charitable habits

GIVING back to the community has always been a family value for Tom and Julie Carey. Whether it's stocking shelves at the homeless shelter or making a donation to their local healthcare system, the Careys try to pitch in wherever they can.

So of course it was important to the Careys to pass that spirit of giving on to their children. Julie began by involving their sons, Jordan and Walker, in her volunteer activities when the boys were still in grade school—but mostly she and Tom taught by example.

"You can tell your kids they are blessed and they need to share that with other people," Tom says. "The real impact comes from showing them."

Julie adds, "You have to demonstrate to them how to help and what it means to help."

When Tom and Julie began donating to and volunteering for Centegra Health System, they talked with their sons about what they were doing—and why they were doing it. This type of conversation helps children understand the role of giving in their family and how important giving is to their community.

"Tom and I both feel very strongly that a thriving community hospital improves the quality of life for everyone in the area," Julie explains. "We let the boys know that this is why

"He saw...the value of a good health system to the community."

we support Centegra in as many ways as we can."

ALL IN THE FAMILY

The tradition has taken root in the Carey family. The past two summers, on break from the University of Notre Dame, Jordan has taken on internships with Centegra Hospital – McHenry and Centegra Specialty Hospital – Woodstock, South Street. He also decided to donate part of his small internship pay back to Centegra Health System through an employee giving program.

"We were very happy when Jordan made the choice to give," Tom says. "We were also quite impressed to learn how many employees give back to Centegra. It speaks highly of the organization when those inside feel it is worthwhile to contribute."

CONTINUING CONNECTION

The Carey family's involvement with Centegra Health System continues. Julie volunteers, helping to raise funds through the Mad Hatters Luncheon and the Gala, and Tom volunteers his time to the corporate and foundation boards. Though Jordan is back in school, finishing his senior year, he still feels connected to Centegra Health System.

"When Jordan was working there, something really took hold for him," Tom says. "He saw the importance of the organization and the value of a good health system to the community. He really felt part of something special, and he continues to feel part of the outstanding organization." ♦



CHEERFUL GIVERS Tom Carey and his two sons continue to give back to Centegra Health System.

TALKING TO KIDS ABOUT GIVING BACK

If you want your children to take up your charitable impulse, start talking to them about philanthropy at a young age. Here are three ideas for starting the conversation:

1. Pick a news article that focuses on a public figure who exemplifies giving and sharing and discuss it with your children.
2. Share a family story with your children that illustrates what it means to give or receive.
3. When an opportunity to give arises, tell your children specifically what you give and why: "We give money to support Centegra Health System because it is important to have good healthcare in our community"

Source: Learning to Give—Curriculum Division of The LEAGUE



Get your whole family involved in giving and volunteering.
CALL 815-788-5870 or e-mail foundation@centegra.org to learn how you can help.

Cancer survivor offers hope, support to others

THE first sign of trouble came at about 9:30pm. April Dougherty remembers a pain that wouldn't go away piercing her side. By 5am, she was on her way to the hospital to meet her doctor.

Kidney stones, she thought. "I'd heard they were very painful," she says. "I was definitely in pain."

An ultrasound revealed that she had a tumor the size of an orange on her ovary and that the tumor had burst. After surgery and biopsies, her doctor gave her the news—she had advanced ovarian cancer.

"The type of cancer I had was very aggressive," says Dougherty, who owns a jewelry store in Woodstock with her husband, Tom. "At the time, I had two boys in high school. My focus from day one was that death wasn't an option. I had grandchildren to rock someday."

Her second surgery took 11½ hours. A gynecologic oncologist (a specialist in gynecological cancers) did a complete hysterectomy and removed her appendix, part of her colon and her omentum, an abdominal membrane that protects organs. He also scraped bones and organ surfaces to remove as many cancer cells as possible.

Four months of chemotherapy, a third surgery and more than sixty biopsies later, her doctor declared her cancer-free. Like other cancer survivors, Dougherty will have careful, lifelong

monitoring for complications and second cancers.

SHARING HER STORY

Fifteen years have passed since Dougherty felt that first pain. "I didn't know at the time, but I only had about a two percent chance to live," she says. "For some reason, I survived."

Dougherty is one of more than 11.4 million people in the U.S. who have survived cancer. As a survivor, she has some advice for others who are in treatment or recovery. She urges them to focus on something they are looking forward to. For her, it was her dreams and plans about the house she and her husband were building when she was diagnosed.

"People told me, 'Forget the house. It's not that important.' But it was to me," she says. Continuing with the project ended up being a comfort to her during a very difficult time. "That house and my grandchildren were two dreams I hung onto to get myself through that."

Dougherty shares her story and experiences with others at Centegra Health System's Hats Off Cancer Support Group, which is open to men

CANCER SCREENING

"The earlier cancer is diagnosed, the more likely it is to be cured—and that's true of virtually any cancer we know about," says Geoffrey L. Smoron, MD, Medical Director of the Centegra Sage Cancer Center's radiation oncology program.

Dr. Smoron advises following the recommended guidelines for cancer screening and following up on anything suspicious. Currently, screening tests are available for:

- Breast cancer
- Cervical cancer
- Colorectal cancer
- Skin cancers
- Oral cancer
- Prostate cancer

Talk to your doctor about your risk factors and any other screenings you might need.

The 23rd annual National Cancer Survivors Day is Sunday, June 6.

and women with any type of cancer.

A key benefit of monthly support groups is that patients and survivors get to talk with others who are in similar circumstances. The meeting is a safe place to speak, listen, learn, ask questions and find support.

"More than forty percent of people with a cancer diagnosis have an anxiety disorder," says Kathleen DeRoche, group facilitator for Hats Off. "Support groups help decrease that anxiety. They let people know they are not alone, despite a diagnosis that can feel very isolating. People get a chance to find out what others have done as they move through treatment and find encouragement from others diagnosed with cancer who are focused on getting well. That kind of information and support can really help in the healing process." ♦



JOIN author Keith Block, MD, for a free presentation of his new book, *Life Over Cancer*, at McHenry County College, **Wednesday, April 7**, from 6:30 to 8:30pm. **CALL 877-CENTEGRA (877-236-8347)** to register.

Race to recovery

College athlete back on track after ACL surgery

WHEN he hurt his knee during a touch football game last March, Dan Pulvino feared that his track career was in jeopardy.

"I knew it was bad right away," says Pulvino, a sophomore sprinter on the University of Illinois at Chicago track team. "I jumped up to catch the ball and my foot got stuck. All of my weight came down on my knee and I heard a pop."

Pulvino had suffered a serious knee injury—a torn anterior cruciate ligament (ACL).

Thanks to an ACL procedure performed by Harpreet Basran, MD, an orthopaedic surgeon on staff at Centegra Health System, Pulvino has been able to resume running.

"Dr. Basran was great right from the start," Pulvino says. "He replaced the ACL in my knee last May. My recovery has gone really well. I've been working out and I should be able to compete again in the spring."

A COMMON INJURY

The ACL is one of four primary ligaments in the knee. It connects the front top part of the shin bone to the back bottom part of the thigh bone. The ACL prevents the shin bone from sliding forward.

"ACL tears are very common injuries," says Dr. Basran. "They are especially common in contact sports, such as football, basketball and soccer."

The treatment for a torn ACL varies from person to person. Some patients may need surgery, while others may not.

"The ACL is critical for any type of



Harpreet Basran, MD

cutting or pivoting and preventing damage to other structures of the knee," Dr. Basran says. "For patients whose normal activities don't include turning quickly or pivoting, surgery may not be required."

ACL surgery generally involves replacing the damaged ligament with other tendons taken from around the knee or with a tendon from an organ donor.

"The ACL procedure has come a long way," Dr. Basran says. "It used to be career-ending. Now the patient can go home the same day they have surgery and after proper rehabilitation, resume normal activities—including sports."

Recovery from ACL surgery—which involves physical therapy and wearing a knee brace—usually takes anywhere from 6 to 12 months.

ACL SPECIALISTS

At Centegra Health System, a team of highly skilled professionals take pride in helping patients with ACL tears make a full recovery.

"Besides being general surgeons, we specialize in treating sports injuries," Dr. Basran says. "We focus on getting the athlete back to where he or she was before the injury."

Dr. Basran points to Pulvino as a prime example of successful ACL treatment. "Dan is an elite athlete. He's done well from day one," Dr. Basran says. "He regained his strength almost

immediately. He should be able to compete at full speed this spring."

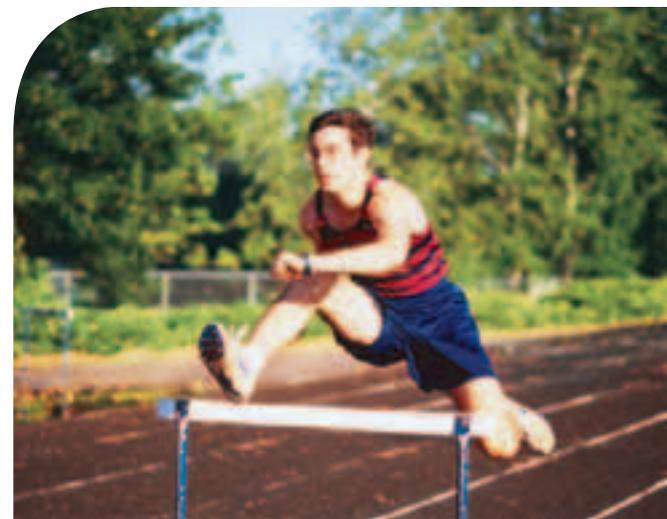
Pulvino says his recovery from ACL surgery has been easier than he expected.

"The recovery period has been great. I thought it would be a lot worse than it was," Pulvino says. "I'm very happy with the results. I would recommend this procedure to anyone." ♦

Additional source: American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine



LEARN more and meet Dr. Basran at his free ACL lecture Tuesday, April 13, 6:30pm at Centegra Health Bridge Fitness Center – Huntley. **CALL 877-CENTEGRA (877-236-8347)** to register.



Over-the-counter medicines for kids

Play it safe

WHEN your child needs an over-the-counter (OTC) remedy for a minor illness, it's important to give the right dose of the right medication.

These tips can help you choose and use children's OTC medications.

Follow directions. Read directions carefully to learn how much medication to give and how often. Many brands have different versions and strengths, says Jennifer Suh, MD, a pediatrician with Centegra Primary Care – McHenry and Crystal Lake.

For example, many people think medications that come in drops for infants are less potent than children's liquid forms, but they're actually more concentrated, she says. Choose the proper medication for your child's age and weight, and follow dosing directions carefully.

Know your child's weight. Since kids can be small or large for their ages, the weight range is often most accurate, Dr. Suh says.

Ask questions. If you have questions or if a weight or age range isn't listed, don't guess. "If you're unsure of the dose, always call your pediatrician," Dr. Suh says.

Use caution with cough and cold medications. They are not recommended for kids younger than 2 years old. Check with your child's doctor before giving cough and cold medications to other young children. "For a toddler, you need to consult with your physician to find out which preparations to use and what dose to give," Dr. Suh says. Cough and cold medicines may not help young kids, and there are side effects.

Kids who have a fever or mild aches may benefit from children's or infants' versions of acetaminophen (such as Tylenol) or ibuprofen (such as Motrin or

Advil); however, it's important that you don't give ibuprofen to infants younger than 6 months, acetaminophen to babies under 2 months or aspirin to any child without your doctor's advice. ♦



LEARN about pediatric care at Centegra Health System. **VISIT** centegra.org. To find your perfect doctor, call **815-338-6600**.

Send us your FEEDBACK.

What do you think about Centegra Health System and *HealthToday*? Your comments can help us better serve you and the community. **VISIT** centegra.org/feedback today to share your thoughts or ask a question.

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WELCOME, NEW CENTEGRA PHYSICIANS



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McHenry Radiologists
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Cary Grove Foot & Ankle Center
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Ginny Kamboj, MD
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SURGERY
Cardiac Surgery
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Shingo Yano, MD
PAIN MANAGEMENT
Illinois Pain Institute
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To find the Centegra physician who's right for you, **VISIT** centegra.org. You can also **CALL 877-CENTEGRA (877-236-8347)**.

Centegra Behavioral Health Services
800-765-9999

Call for urgent mental health assessments.

McHenry County Crisis Services
800-892-8900, mchenry-crisis.org

Call for a referral or immediate assistance.

Centegra Referral Line
877-CENTEGRA (877-236-8347)

Call 24 hours a day.