

Choose Wisely... Choose HEALTH!

A newsletter brought to you by OSF Saint Francis Medical Center



How Strong Are Your Bones? by Reba Wright RN OSF Saint Francis Women's Services

Osteoporosis is currently one of the most under-diagnosed and under treated disorders in America. Osteoporosis, which means "porous bones," causes bones to become weak and brittle, which can lead to fractures. Taking care of our bone health is becoming even more important as life expectancy increases as does our desire to stay active in our later years.

Have you ever wondered if you have lost bone mass or are at risk for osteoporosis? There are several methods to measure bone density. One type of bone density test is a diagnostic test called a DEXA scan, using dual energy x-ray. Your physician can prescribe this test for you. Another method, and more affordable, is a screening test by ultrasound using the heel bone. A physician's order is not necessary for this screening. OSF Saint Francis Women's Services offers this heel bone screening. This painless, quick measurement will help your physician assess your risk of osteoporosis. A personal one-on-one counseling session is also included with the screening and will give you ways to improve your overall bone health. The total cost is \$20.00.



Call today and schedule your Bone Density Screening!

Toll free number 1-888-627-5673.

You can also call Reba Wright RN at 683-6657 to learn more!

Calcium Rich Lifestyle


Eating right and being active are hallmarks of healthy living. When it comes to bone strength, it is especially important to build calcium reserves early in life and continue as we age.

Start young people out right with a calcium rich diet from the start. Habits they learn early stick with them for life. Keep low fat dairy products on hand for snacking after school. Try freezing regular yogurt as a special treat. When making instant oatmeal, or even regular oatmeal for that matter, use low or fat free milk in place of water. Try calcium enriched products. Add dried milk powder to soups and gravies for extra calcium and protein. These tips are not just for young people either. They work for kids of all ages!

If you don't think your diet is rich enough in calcium, speak to your healthcare provider about supplements. Don't forget, adequate Vitamin D levels are also needed to ensure calcium absorption.

Exercise also helps build and maintain bone strength. Take time each day for some sort of physical activity.

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Food rich in calcium	Activity that helps build strong bones
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dairy products like milk, yogurt, pudding, and cheeses ✓ Sardines, salmon with bones ✓ Fortified Orange juice ✓ Dark green leafy vegetables like spinach, kale, turnip greens, and broccoli ✓ Tofu ✓ Fortified grain products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Weight bearing exercises like walking, running, skating, and dancing or bowling ✓ Resistance training like lifting weights or using exercise bands <p>References: webmd.com</p> 

Stroke Awareness

by Maureen Mathews APN,CNP, CNRN INI Stroke Center and STROKE NETWORK

May is National Stroke Awareness Month.

Do you know the warning signs of stroke? Five simple words will help you remember:

- ✓ WALK
- ✓ TALK
- ✓ REACH
- ✓ SEE
- ✓ FEEL

Is balance off? Face droopy or speech slurred? One side of the body weak and/or numb? Loss of part or all of vision in one or both eyes? Severe headache?

Stroke is the 3rd leading cause of death in the U.S. and the #1 reason for long term disability. If you think someone (or even yourself) might be having a stroke, call 911 right away. Time lost is brain function lost.

Even if a stroke has already occurred, today, more than ever, new treatments are being tested and showing success in helping stroke survivors regain a meaningful life. Our brains possess a characteristic called plasticity, which means brain cells are able to recover. Simply thinking about a particular movement can help unused areas of the brain to start working.

Practice, practice, practice!

Movement by yourself or with the help of a therapist or caregiver can stimulate the plasticity of the brain. If you or someone you know has been affected by a stroke you can get more information from the following sites:

<http://www.strokeassociation.org>, <http://www.stroke.org>.

Do you have a latex allergy? Is there a connection between latex allergy and foods?

by Kim Moberly Center for Occupational Health

Natural rubber latex comes from a liquid in tropical rubber trees. This liquid is processed to make many rubber products used at home and at work. Many medical and dental supplies also contain latex, most commonly the latex glove. The protein found in the rubber can cause an allergic reaction in some people. This reaction can range from sneezing to anaphylactic shock, which is a serious condition that requires immediate medical attention.

Because some proteins in rubber are similar to food proteins, some foods may cause an allergic reaction in people who are allergic to latex. The most common of these foods are banana, avocado, chestnut, kiwi fruit and passion fruit. Although many other foods can cause an allergic reaction, attempting to avoid all of them may cause nutrition problems. Therefore, it's recommended that you avoid only the foods that have given you an allergic reaction in the past. If you think you have a latex allergy see a doctor experienced in the treatment of allergies.

AMBER ALERTS

You could make a difference in saving a child's life. Research shows that the first 3 hours after a child is abducted are the most critical in recovery efforts.

Sign up for **FREE Wireless AMBER™ Alerts** to your cell phone.

- ✓ Visit www.wirelessamberalerts.org
- ✓ You will only receive AMBER alerts for your area (determined by zip code you submit.)
- ✓ You can enter up to 5 zips in the event you travel far.
- ✓ You will receive a message whenever the alert is cancelled as well.
- ✓ You can also enter the program using your cell phone. Text the word AMBER followed by a space and your 5-digit ZIP code to 26237.
- ✓ You will get a reply confirming your enrollment.
- ✓ If you wish to unsubscribe, send STOP to 26237.
- ✓ The Wireless AMBER alert Service is free and there is no charge to enroll.

Help save a child!



Fibromyalgia

by Lisa Hartwig Exercise Specialist OSF Saint Francis Wellness Services at the RiverPlex

Fibromyalgia affects 2-4% of the population. It has been known by many names: soft-tissue rheumatism, fibrositis, myofascitis, and muscular rheumatism. While its cause is unclear, certain characteristics have been found. People with Fibromyalgia seem to have an abnormal response to pain by the central nervous system. Rather than feeling pain where it occurs, the whole body feels the pain and at a higher level. Even mild sensations such as a touch or sound can be sensed by the body as pain. Other abnormalities found in people with Fibromyalgia include sleeping disorders, hypothyroidism, abnormal serotonin metabolism, and deficiencies of Vitamin D, growth hormone, or certain amino acids. Fibromyalgia can exist with many other conditions which can make proper diagnosis a challenge.

Persons with Fibromyalgia commonly experience:

- ✓ Widespread pain and fatigue
- ✓ Non-restorative sleep
- ✓ Depression
- ✓ Anxiety
- ✓ Inability to concentrate
- ✓ Short-term memory loss
- ✓ Headaches
- ✓ Bowel and bladder irritability
- ✓ Cold intolerance
- ✓ Numbness and tingling in the hands, arms, feet, and legs
- ✓ Muscle cramps
- ✓ Dizziness
- ✓ Non-cardiac chest pain
- ✓ TMJ
- ✓ Sensitivity to environmental stimuli

Because of their pain and fatigue many people with Fibromyalgia have a fear of increased activity. This often leads to extreme deconditioning and further fatigue, pain, depression, loss of sleep and increased risk for injury and chronic illness. It becomes a vicious circle.

Most current treatments for Fibromyalgia focus on relieving symptoms. Studies have shown that exercise relieves many of these symptoms. Studies have also found that improvements in symptoms of Fibromyalgia can last a long time when exercise is begun slowly, and is designed to meet each person's needs.



“Fit & Strong...Lifelong”

OSF Saint Francis Fibromyalgia Wellness Program, “Fit & Strong...Lifelong” has been created with all the above things in mind. Located at the RiverPlex Recreation and Wellness Center on Peoria's riverfront, “Fit&Strong...Lifelong” offers many opportunities for people with Fibromyalgia. These include exercise classes and an exercise DVD developed to fight the pain and fatigue of Fibromyalgia, personal consultations for developing your own Personal Exercise Program, and an ongoing education series which offers seminars, newsletters, and other wellness opportunities.

If you or someone you love has Fibromyalgia, call 282-1607 and join us in a program designed just for you!

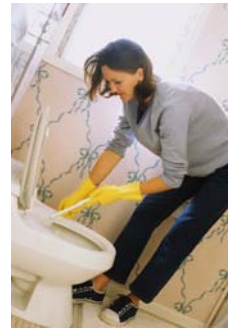
For more information about Choose HEALTH! call (309) 282-1624. Teaching handouts from OSF Saint Francis Medical Center are not medical advice nor are they to be used in place of proper medical care. If you have any questions or concerns about your health or well-being, please talk with your doctor or healthcare provider who knows you best.

Go Green for the Health of our Planet by Kathleen Riley RN, BSN, MS

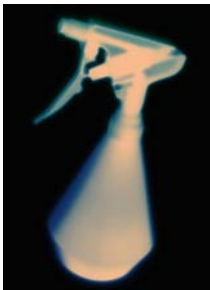
It might seem that “going green” is hard work. But it really is easier than you might think. Just like small daily choices can help our personal health, such choices can also affect the health of our planet, OUR HOME. And true “Wellness” encompasses our choices in relation to others, too.

Here is a good way to start. If you don't already have vinegar in your home, buy some this week on your routine trip to the store. I love vinegar! It is a safe, all natural, economical, environmentally friendly product. It has been around for thousands of years and has literally hundreds of uses. Here are a few to get you started:

- ✓ **Keep automatic dishwashers** fresh smelling, control lime buildup and glass spotting by adding 1/2 cup of vinegar to the rinse cycle. I actually use 1 cup and throw it in the bottom of the dishwasher at the beginning of the wash cycle and it works just fine, even with my hard water.
- ✓ **Unclog showerheads**-remove from the shower and soak overnight in slightly diluted vinegar solution.
- ✓ **Toilet bowl cleaner**-pour 1 cup vinegar into the bowl, let set for 5” and then flush. I actually pour more in, let it set longer (sometimes overnight) and even give it a swish with the toilet brush before flushing.
- ✓ **Spray shower stall walls** with vinegar to prevent mildew.
- ✓ **Unclog a drain**-pour a handful of baking soda down the drain and follow with 1/2 cup of vinegar. Rinse with hot water once the fizz stops. Yes, fizz! That is one of the coolest parts! I actually do this on a regular basis to prevent clogging.
- ✓ **Clean and disinfect cutting boards**-wipe with full strength vinegar. Because of its high acidity level, vinegar is effective in killing mold, bacteria, and germs.
- ✓ **Wash off your produce** with a mixture of water to vinegar 3:1 in a spray bottle. Rinse with water afterwards.
- ✓ **For brighter, sweet smelling, soft clothes** add 1 cup vinegar to your final rinse cycle in the washer.
- ✓ **Unwanted grass and weeds** can be kept off of sidewalk cracks and driveways by dousing them with vinegar. I have not tried that yet but with my confidence in all of vinegar's powers I bet it will work!
- ✓ **Keep flowers fresh longer** by mixing 2 Tablespoons of vinegar and 2 tablespoons of sugar to a quart vase of water. Trim stems and change water every 5 days.
- ✓ **Deter ants** by wiping counter tops, cabinets and floors with vinegar.
- ✓ **Have fun** by soaking a chicken bone in vinegar for 3 days-it will bend like rubber!



The list does not stop here. It is truly remarkable. Some people may not like the fragrance associated with vinegar, but it dissipates in seconds. I think it smells fresh, natural, and safe-no chemicals! More perks: vinegar is self preserving and does not need refrigeration-it's shelf life is almost indefinite!



You will use vinegar full strength at times and for other jobs you will want it diluted. Keep a spray bottle (recycled of course) to store both (labeled) for handy usage. Just think of how many store bought chemicals you will no longer need and keep out of the environment.

White distilled vinegar is to be used for all the ideas above. Other types of vinegar have special purposes as well. May is National Vinegar Month. Get on the internet and see for yourself all the wonders of vinegar! Here are two sites to start with from where these tips were gleaned:

www.versatilevinegar.com, www.wackyuses.com, www.dailytips.idealbite.com