

InTouch

THE MAGAZINE OF **DeTAR** HEALTHCARE SYSTEM



InTouch
gets a fresh
look!

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One year later**

Healthbriefs



tip

Walking

is a great way to reduce stress while you quit smoking. It aids in increasing mood and energy levels.

> New guidelines take the air out of ballooning obesity rates

More than two-thirds of adults and one-third of children are now considered to be overweight or obese. Excess weight raises the risk of serious health issues. To reverse this trend, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) updated their Dietary Guidelines for Americans in 2010. The guidelines focus on getting people to eat healthier and exercise more, and help policymakers create nutrition programs. The USDA and HHS released more consumer-friendly advice and tools, including a new food pyramid. They offer these simple strategies to help people change their habits and their weight:

- > Eat less.
- > Watch portion sizes.
- > Fill half of your plate each meal with fruits and veggies.
- > Switch to fat-free or low-fat milk.
- > Look for lower-sodium options.
- > Drink water instead of sugary drinks.



> Act F.A.S.T. to head off a stroke

Rapid medical care can help reduce the risk of brain damage from stroke. Physicians treat patients with a clot-busting drug that can help protect the brain against permanent damage, but the drug must be given within three hours of the stroke's onset. If someone is experiencing stroke symptoms, call 911. To help you remember stroke signs and determine whether someone you know has had a stroke, think **F.A.S.T.:**

- > **FACE:** Does the face look uneven? Can the person smile?
- > **ARMS:** Can the person raise both arms and keep them there?
- > **SPEECH:** Is the person's speech slurred or strange?
- > **TIME:** Call 911 if you notice any of these signs.

> Healthy diet may boost kids' IQs

Fish isn't the only food that's good for your brain. A new study says that other healthy selections might boost kids' intelligence. The flip side may also be true: If kids eat nothing but processed food, they might lose IQ points. Published in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, the report collected information from parents on almost 4,000 children. Surveys were given when children were ages 3, 4, 7 and 8.5. The "processed" diet included foods high in fat and sugar. The "health-conscious" diet included foods such as salad, rice, pasta, fish and fruit. Those who ate a processed diet at age 3 scored slightly lower on IQ tests at age 8.5 than those who ate a health-conscious one at age 3. While the difference between the groups was small, it might be another reason to encourage picky eaters to eat a few more vegetables.



Treating an ACL injury

➤ The dreaded torn ACL, or anterior cruciate ligament, is a common injury

for athletes—especially female athletes, who may be at a disadvantage because of hormonal influences and their build—but it can happen to just about anyone.

What is an ACL tear?

Your ACL is one of four knee ligaments. It's located in the middle of your knee and prevents the top of the shin bone, or the tibia, from sliding out in front of the end of the thigh bone, or the femur, while lending stability to your knee. Most often, ACL injuries occur when you stop suddenly and change direction while running, pivoting or landing from a jump or overextending your knee. You can also injure your ACL during contact, such as receiving a blow to your knee during a sports game or any nonsport accident.

When you injure your ACL, you may hear a popping noise and feel your knee giving out. Typically, painful swelling, joint tenderness, pain while walking and the inability to fully move your knee occur. Elevating the joint above heart level, icing it and using pain relievers are recommended until the injury can be evaluated. If your physician suspects an ACL tear, he or she may order an MRI to confirm that no other parts of the knee have been injured.

Treatment

The ACL cannot be “fixed.” Often, physicians have to create a new ligament through surgery. Surgery is the most common treatment for an ACL injury, as untreated injuries may lead to further instability of the knee and the beginning of arthritis in that area.

However, what's best for you depends on the degree of injury (is it a

partial tear or a complete tear?) and your lifestyle.

For example, a sedentary 75-year-old who has suffered only an ACL injury and has no knee instability may be able to function fine without surgery. In this case, bracing the knee combined with physical therapy can help the patient get back on his or her feet.

An athlete will most likely need surgery to continue to compete in sports, as will those who've suffered injury to multiple ligaments in the knee. In these cases, the ligament is rebuilt using a tissue graft from your own tendons, such as the hamstring, or from a cadaver. Most ACL tears typically require physical rehabilitation. Overall, ACL surgery has a long-term success rate of 82 percent to 95 percent.

Prevention

It's not easy to prevent an ACL injury, but you can do your part to reduce the chance that one will occur by:

- warming up properly before a physical activity
- engaging in strength training, such as using weight machines, to gain muscle strength
- asking a trainer to teach you how to land on the balls of your feet if you participate in sports that involve jumping and landing ●



tip

Warming

up properly before physical activity may help prevent ACL injuries.



A message FROM OUR CEO

WILLIAM R. BLANCHARD, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer

..... www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov provide the public with information on hospital processes of care for every hospital in the country.

DEAR NEIGHBORS,

As health care becomes more transparent, data is more readily accessible to the public than ever before. Leading websites such as

The care you deserve

Processes of care measures show how often hospitals give recommended treatments known to get the best results for patients with certain medical conditions or surgical procedures. They're based on best practices from medical research and reflect the care you should receive if you're a patient in any hospital.

On page 5, we've included a sampling of information found on the Hospital Compare website. We're proud of our progress and the fact that we provide a level of quality care that meets or exceeds care provided throughout Texas and the United States.

In this issue, you'll also find more information about our robotic-assisted surgery program. The robotic-assisted surgical system provides our surgeons with the precision, dexterity and control needed for many complex surgical procedures. The advanced technology also helps us provide the best possible outcomes for our patients and is proof of our commitment to provide our community access to the advancements in minimally invasive surgery.

The medical staff and employees at DeTar Healthcare System are committed to providing comprehensive patient care, and we welcome your feedback at any time on what we're doing well and where there are opportunities for improvement.

Regards,

William R. Blanchard, FACHE

*Chief Executive Officer
DeTar Healthcare System*

MEET OUR NEWEST MEDICAL STAFF MEMBER

We're pleased to introduce a physician who has joined the medical staff at DeTar Healthcare System. When it comes to finding a physician, we've got you covered.



Gus Zamora, M.D.
Obstetrics/Gynecology

Victoria Women's Clinic
110 Medical Drive, Suite 100
(361) 578-5233

Whether you're starting a family or preparing for menopause, you need a physician you can trust. Fortunately, Gus Zamora, M.D., is here for you. Dr. Zamora is a graduate of the University of Texas Medical School at Houston where he received the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology Outstanding Student Award in 2007. He's excited to bring his knowledge of women's health to our community. We're impressed with the qualities he brings to our hospital, and we think you'll be equally impressed with the level of care he brings to you.



Try it out!



Scan this QR code with your smart phone to visit our website and add our quick-launch web app to your home screen.

We treat you right

Our quality scores are in

➤ **Quality care means doing the right thing at the right time in the right way—and getting the best possible results. At DeTar Healthcare System, we measure quality with data that's reported on the Hospital Compare website on a quarterly basis, and we're proud of our progress. Below is a sampling of information found at www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov, which compares DeTar with averages of other hospitals around the country and in the state of Texas. To learn more about DeTar's process of care success, visit our website at www.DeTar.com/Compare.**

Surgical care

Percentage of outpatients who received an antibiotic at the right time (within one hour before surgery)

- **DeTar: 98**
- **State: 93**
- **National: 92**

Percentage of patients whose preventive antibiotics were stopped at the right time (within 24 hours after surgery)

- **DeTar: 98**
- **State: 94**
- **National: 94**

Percentage of patients whose urinary catheters were removed on the first or second day after surgery

- **DeTar: 97**
- **State: 89**
- **National: 90**

Pneumonia

Percentage of pneumonia patients given initial antibiotic(s) within six hours of arrival

- **DeTar: 98**
- **State: 95**
- **National: 95**

Percentage of patients given the most appropriate initial antibiotic(s)

- **DeTar: 96**
- **State: 91**
- **National: 92**

Percentage of pneumonia patients assessed and given influenza vaccine

- **DeTar: 98**
- **State: 93**
- **National: 91**

Heart failure

Percentage of heart failure patients given discharge instructions

- **DeTar: 100**
- **State: 89**
- **National: 88**

Percentage of heart failure patients given smoking cessation advice/counseling

- **DeTar: 100**
- **State: 99**
- **National: 98**

Patient satisfaction

Physicians' communication

- **DeTar: 83**
- **State: 82**
- **National: 80**

Well-controlled pain

- **DeTar: 71**
- **State: 71**
- **National: 69**

Medications explained

- **DeTar: 66**
- **State: 62**
- **National: 60**

Quiet room


- **DeTar: 67**
- **State: 66**
- **National: 58**

Patients who rated the DeTar Healthcare System a 9 or 10 on a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest)

- **DeTar: 73**
- **State: 69**
- **National: 67**

KEY:

- **DeTar Healthcare System**
- **State average**
- **National average**

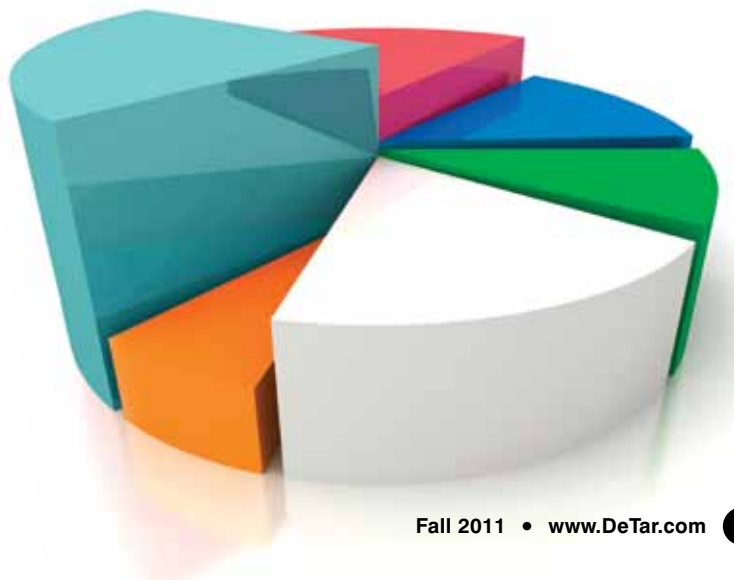


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Visit our online issue!

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By signing up on our website, you'll automatically receive an e-mail notifying you when the next issue is available to read online.



Can heart attacks be 'silent'?

➤ **You're undergoing a routine heart test when your physician drops a bombshell:**

"You've had a heart attack."

These are words you didn't expect to hear, because you didn't know you'd ever had one. But that's the trouble with what experts call "silent heart attacks."

While they don't produce the telltale warning signs of heart trouble, they still damage your heart and the rest of your body.

Silence isn't golden

A heart attack occurs when an artery that supplies oxygen-rich blood to the heart becomes blocked. Besides chest pain and shortness of breath, some people experience nausea, extreme fatigue, discomfort in their extremities and sweating.

People who experience a silent heart attack—studies put the number of Americans who do at almost 200,000 a year—either have no symptoms or symptoms

so mild that they're not recognized as a heart attack. These people are more likely to be women and those who have conditions such as heart failure and diabetes. Silent heart attacks also tend to accompany a condition called silent ischemia—or a painless chronic shortage of blood and oxygen to the heart because of artery plaque.

The longer you don't receive treatment, the more likely it is that serious, irreversible damage is being done to heart muscle, which reduces its ability to pump and can greatly increase your risk of death down the road.

Some silent heart attacks may be picked up on an electrocardiogram (ECG) during a routine physician visit because the damage done to heart muscle produces a different "wave."

Breaking through the silence

Risk factors such as smoking, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity and a sedentary lifestyle increase your risk for trouble. Your best bet to prevent a heart attack is to follow a heart-healthy lifestyle:

- Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, fish and fat-free or low-fat dairy products; limit saturated fats, cholesterol and sodium.
- Work out regularly.
- Quit smoking.
- Manage your diabetes.
- Take any medications used to treat high cholesterol or blood pressure as prescribed. ●

HealthWise QUIZ

How much do you know about colon cancer?

➤ TAKE THIS QUIZ TO FIND OUT.

- 1 **Which of the following is known to raise your risk of colon cancer?**
 - a. exercising too much
 - b. being under the age of 50
 - c. being obese
 - d. being of Asian descent
- 2 **How often should healthy individuals ages 50 or older at average risk of colon cancer get a colonoscopy?**
 - a. once every three years
 - b. once every five years
 - c. once every seven years
 - d. once every 10 years
- 3 **A possible symptom of colon cancer is:**
 - a. narrower stools
 - b. fatigue
 - c. rectal bleeding
 - d. all of the above
- 4 **Although more research is needed, which of the following supplements may possibly help reduce the risk of colon cancer?**
 - a. folic acid
 - b. green tea
 - c. vitamin A
 - d. vitamin C
- 5 **A true statement about colon cancer is:**
 - a. It's the leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States.
 - b. It usually arises from growths called polyps.
 - c. Blood tests can be used to detect colon cancer.
 - d. all of the above

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



Dangerous dishes

Keep your child safe from culinary choking hazards

➤ **Each year, more than 10,000 children younger than age 14 end up in the emergency room after choking on food.** That's because children lack the larger molars, stronger chewing ability and wider airways of older children and adults.

The American Academy of Pediatrics in 2010 recommended that hot dogs—one of the most common food choking hazards in children—carry a choking hazard warning on packaging, and that the hot dogs themselves be redesigned to make them less likely to get stuck in young throats.

But hot dogs aren't the only concern. Other choking hazards include peanuts, sausages, whole grapes, chewing gum, hard candy, whole cherry tomatoes, popcorn, tough meat, large pieces of raw fruits and vegetables and chips. You

can reduce the threat of injury or death by following these tips:

- Keep an eye on your child as he or she eats.
- Make sure your child is sitting up straight.
- Cut food into no more than ½-inch pieces.
- Teach children to chew and swallow properly.
- Cook vegetables until they're soft or grate them.
- Be on the lookout for stuffed cheeks—a sign your child is storing large quantities of food in his or her mouth and not swallowing. ●



In case of emergency

It's always a good idea to be prepared in case of a choking emergency. Visit www.redcross.org/www-files/Documents/pdf/Preparedness/ConsciousChokingPoster_EN.pdf to print out a chart that shows you what to do if an adult, child or infant is choking.

The truth about cereal

Is your breakfast bowl a dietary disaster?

➤ **Just how healthy are the cereals you and your child eat?** Sure, the box promises plenty of whole grains and fiber, but that might not be the reality.

Cereal can be a tasty and fast way to get your day started healthfully. But you need to look carefully at the nutrition label when making your purchase. First, carefully note the serving size; otherwise, you may be eating double the calories shown. Then, look for other key information:

➤ **Sugar.** Excess sugar is a major source of extra calories in the American diet. It also promotes tooth decay and may raise triglyceride levels—a type of blood fat—which can boost heart disease risk. Opt for cereal with 5 grams or less of sugar per serving. Skip cereals that list sugar at the top of the ingredients list or that contain many types of added sugar, such as high-fructose corn syrup.

➤ **Calories.** To avoid calorie overload, choose cereals with 120 calories or less per serving. Just remember, some cereals can be slightly higher in calories and still be healthy.



➤ **Fiber.** Ideally, you should purchase cereal that has at least 5 grams of fiber per serving, but be sure there are no less than 3 grams per serving. Why? This important nutrient may help lower your cholesterol and reduce your risk of heart disease, diabetes and some types of cancer. Make sure you're using fat-free or low-fat milk instead of whole milk or you could be canceling out those healthy benefits!

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Celebrating one year of robotic-assisted surgery

➤ Earlier this year, DeTar Healthcare System's surgery team reached

a milestone by completing the first full year of surgical procedures using the da Vinci robotic surgical system. The hospital performed the first procedure on April 28, 2010; since that time, we've performed more than 275 robotic-assisted surgeries.

"Robotic surgery is the most significant improvement in surgical capability and safety in the last 20 years, and I believe it will be the standard of care in the very near future," says Philip Suarez, M.D., a board-certified Ob/Gyn. "And it's astounding that such revolutionary technology is here in Victoria and that we are, in fact, leading the way for South Texas at DeTar Hospital North."

Benefits for patients and physicians

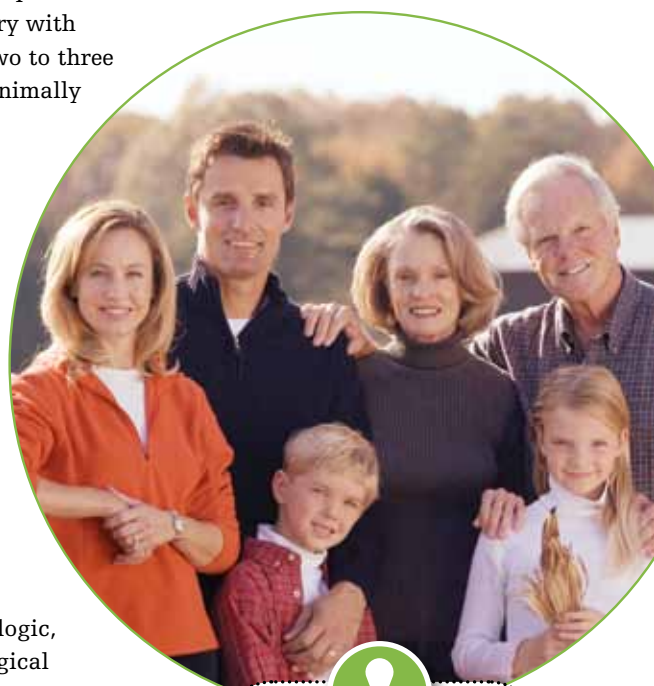
To operate the robotic technology, the surgeon sits at a console near the patient and uses a high-powered camera to guide the robot's "arms" while mimicking the feel of traditional open procedures. The robot's monitoring system provides the surgeon with a color, magnified, 3-D view of the patient's anatomy. In contrast, laparoscopic surgery is 2-D.

Most patients have only a few small

incisions and leave the hospital the day following their surgery with typical recovery within two to three weeks. "And like other minimally invasive techniques, this procedure offers patients benefits that may include less pain and blood loss," Dr. Suarez adds. "A traditional hysterectomy requires a large incision, a greater risk of postoperative blood clot formation, a longer hospital stay and four to six weeks of recuperation."

Currently, DeTar's robotic-assisted surgery program includes gynecologic, general and bariatric surgical procedures.

"The addition of the robotic-assisted surgery program's advanced technology is a great benefit to both DeTar and the Crossroads area," says William R. Blanchard, FACHE, chief executive officer for DeTar. "This program offers area residents yet another reason to choose to have their procedures performed locally." ●



Learn more!

For more information about robotic-assisted surgery at DeTar, visit www.DeTar.com and click on "Services."