



# Health and Wellness CONNECTION

a quarterly newsletter for members of our community

Embracing the Miracle of Life

Summer 2009

## A Message to the Community from the Hospital CEO

Thank you for your participation in our annual Whitehaven Healthy Community Day on April 18. The inaugural event was successful by all indications despite the threat of rain in the morning. We are extremely pleased with the turnout and the opportunity to create a healthy Whitehaven community.

In addition to the hospital's mission of helping our community live well and be healthy, I am proud to announce that this fall we will add additional new imaging techniques to our array of services. This is due to your support and the increased number of community members who are now making Methodist South their primary hospital. We will add a new magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine and Cardiac Cath Lab.

The new MRI will enable us to service more patients than we currently see due to the increased size of the machine. Those who have a fear of being in a confined space with our closed scanner will find the exam much easier in our new wide-bore machine. And the

new Cath Lab will allow us to treat more patients with cardiac and peripheral artery diseases. As your community hospital, our goal is to see that all your healthcare needs are met in your community.

Finally, I want to thank those of you who completed our recent survey distributed in our spring edition. We will share the results of that survey in our fall edition. As always, I want to thank you for making us your hospital of choice.



Sincerely,  
Michael Ugwueke,  
DHA, FACHE  
CEO/Administrator



## Stars, Stripes and Safety

If you'll be lighting the sky with fireworks this Independence Day, make sure you, your friends and family members follow these safety tips:

- Always have an adult supervise children around fireworks, and never let small children handle or light fireworks.
- Keep water nearby with a garden hose and bucket.
- Wear eye protection when lighting fireworks, and back away from a firework as soon as it's lit.
- Never re-light a dud firework.
- Never throw fireworks or point them at people or animals.
- Dispose of fireworks by first soaking them in water and then putting them in a trashcan.

Source: [www.fireworkssafety.org](http://www.fireworkssafety.org).

# Protect Your Precious Eyes

Although mothers are notorious for reminding children to eat carrots for healthy eyes, it's easy to neglect eye care until vision problems actually occur.

Glaucoma, macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy and cataracts all affect vision differently and can lead to the loss or obstruction of central and/or peripheral vision. More than 1.5 million surgeries are done to remove cataracts each year.\* The damage done by other eye diseases is usually irreversible, but early treatment can prevent further vision loss. That's why it's important to have regular eye checkups and see your eye care professional at the first sign of vision problems.

## Risk Factors

Eye disease can affect anyone, but some people are at greater risk. Age is a major risk factor in all eye diseases. The National Eye Institute recommends people over age 60 have an eye exam at least once every two years. People with diabetes or a family history of eye disease should check with their doctor regarding the frequency

of eye exams. Being white, female or a smoker increases the risk for developing macular degeneration, a disease that destroys central vision. Black people over age 40 have a greater risk for developing glaucoma, a disease that causes the fluid pressure inside the eye to rise, narrowing the field of vision. Three million people in the United States have glaucoma, and it is a leading cause of blindness.\*



Good eye care may not stop the onset of eye diseases, but taking protective steps now can help keep your eyes healthy.

\* Source: National Eye Institute, [www.nei.nih.gov](http://www.nei.nih.gov).

## Ways to Protect Your Sight

- ❑ Block harmful ultraviolet rays with sunglasses.
- ❑ Wear eye protection when playing sports, using machinery or working with chemicals.
- ❑ Avoid computer eyestrain by sitting 20 inches from the monitor and taking periodic rest breaks.
- ❑ Don't forget mother's advice: eat plenty of carrots (and other foods rich in vitamins A, C and E).



# Stroke: Know the Warning Signs

Each year approximately 700,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke in the United States.\*

More than 163,000 of these people die, making stroke the third-leading cause of death.\* Learning to recognize a stroke is crucial because, in the words of the American Stroke Association, "Time lost is brain lost."

is clogged (ischemic stroke) or bursts (hemorrhagic stroke). The damaged vessel doesn't deliver the blood and oxygen the brain needs, and nerve cells in the affected area of the brain die within minutes.

## Understanding Strokes

Strokes are often known as brain attacks. A stroke occurs when a blood vessel bringing oxygen and nutrients to the brain

## Could You Be a Stroke Victim?

Anyone can have a stroke. While you can't control some risk factors, such as being

# Important Reasons to Breastfeed

Breastfeeding has numerous benefits for baby and mother, including decreased risk of illness for a newborn and increased bonding between mother and child.

## Keeping Babies Happy and Healthy

Breast milk is the most complete form of nutrition for an infant. It contains just the right amount of protein, vitamins, minerals and fat that a newborn needs for proper growth and development. Breastfed infants tend to gain less unnecessary weight and be leaner than formula-fed babies. In addition, most babies have an easier time digesting breast milk than they do formula.

The antibodies found in breast milk can help babies stay healthy. These antibodies boost immunity against ear, respiratory and digestive infections. Breast milk also lowers a baby's risk of developing allergies, tooth decay, high blood pressure and obesity later in life.

Breastfeeding can also help promote emotional closeness and attachment between baby and mother. This physical contact can help babies feel secure, warm and comforted.

## Benefits for Mom

Not only is breastfeeding ideal for babies, it is beneficial for moms as well. Breastfeeding can help:

- ❑ Burn extra calories, making it easier to lose pregnancy weight. However, it is important for nursing mothers to consume an extra 300-500 calories a day for the extra energy needed for breastfeeding.
- ❑ Lower the risk of breast and ovarian cancers. It also strengthens bones, and may reduce the risk of hip fractures and osteoporosis after menopause.\*
- ❑ Promote bonding between mother and child. This closeness and intimacy is beneficial for both.

Breastfeeding may also be more convenient than bottles and formula. A breastfeeding mother can give her baby immediate satisfaction at the first sign of hunger. There is no formula to prepare or bottles to wash.



## Staying Positive

Many women may be reluctant to breastfeed due to common misconceptions about breastfeeding or initial difficulties. If you choose to nurse, it's important to keep in mind that breastfeeding calls for patience, experimentation and family support. As you continue to nurse your baby, it will likely get easier as you discover what works best for both you and your baby. If breastfeeding isn't working, your doctor can recommend possible nursing alternatives.

\* Source: Mayo Clinic, [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com).

## We Can Help

The more you know about breastfeeding, the better prepared you'll be when the time comes. We offer prenatal classes that will help you learn all you need to know about breastfeeding and its benefits. In addition, lactation specialists are available to help new moms with questions or concerns. For more information about prenatal classes and lactation services, call **(901) 516-3475**.

more than 60 years old or having a family history of strokes or TIAs (transient ischemic attacks), you can work with your physician to control or treat other risk factors. These include:

- ❑ High blood pressure
- ❑ Tobacco use
- ❑ Diabetes mellitus
- ❑ Carotid or other artery disease
- ❑ Atrial fibrillation or other heart disease
- ❑ A high red blood cell count
- ❑ Sickle cell anemia
- ❑ High blood cholesterol
- ❑ Physical inactivity
- ❑ Overweight and obesity
- ❑ Excessive alcohol intake

## Watch for These Warning Signs

It is crucial to seek immediate medical treatment to minimize the damage caused by a stroke. Call **911** if the following symptoms suddenly appear.

- ❑ Numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- ❑ Trouble seeing out of one or both eyes; blurred or double vision.
- ❑ Confusion; trouble speaking or understanding.
- ❑ A severe headache of unknown cause.

- ❑ Loss of balance or coordination, trouble walking or dizziness.

## For More Information

To learn more, consult your physician. You can also visit the American Heart Association's Web site at [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org) or call **(800) 242-8721**. For stroke education and information on our support group for survivors and caregivers, call Methodist South's Rehab Department at **(901) 516-3726**.

\* Source: American Stroke Association, [www.strokeassociation.org](http://www.strokeassociation.org).



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Visit us online at  
[www.methodisthealth.org](http://www.methodisthealth.org)  
or call (901) 516-3700.

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“Today, I turned 78 years old. Thanks to God, my family and my good neighbors at Methodist South Hospital.”

Around his neighborhood, R.C. is known for having a caring heart. When he found out he needed triple bypass surgery, he placed his trust in the hospital he and his neighbors rely on most, and where he was confident in receiving the best of care. Methodist South Hospital has provided communities like Whitehaven and surrounding areas with superior care for decades. With state-of-the-art facilities and renowned doctors who have helped patients like R.C. blow out a few more birthday candles for years to come.

Compassionate care is always waiting for you at Methodist South Hospital. Log on to [methodisthealth.org/south](http://methodisthealth.org/south) to learn more about our commitment to providing exceptional healthcare. To find a physician, call Methodist South's physician referral line at 1-888-777-5959.



*Embracing the Miracle of Life.*

To protect patient privacy, this is representative of an actual case. © 2009 Methodist Healthcare.