



LOMA LINDA
UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL CENTER

a healthy tomorrow

MAR/APR 2009

INFORMATION FOR A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE TODAY

**FREE BIKE
Giveaway!**

See story on
page 8 for
more
details.



Inactive to Active in Five Steps

NEW APPROACH TO HYSTERECTOMY
ALLERGIES AND YOU

DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS ARE? SEE PAGE 4.

New Approach to Hysterectomy Offers Better Options

The decision to have a hysterectomy isn't easy. But advances in surgical techniques can mean less pain and a speedier return to normal life for women who need this operation.

Doctors may recommend surgery to remove a woman's uterus for a number of reasons, including:

- Noncancerous growths called fibroids that cause heavy bleeding or pain
- Endometriosis—where tissue that normally lines the uterus grows outside of it
- Prolapsed uterus, in which the uterus has dropped down into the vagina
- Uterine, cervical, or ovarian cancer
- Persistent, heavy vaginal bleeding uncontrolled by medication or nonsurgical techniques
- Chronic uterine pain that continues despite treatment

Taking the uterus out through an abdominal incision is the traditional approach, especially for cancerous conditions. But additional options may

To find out about our minimally invasive surgical program, or to receive more information about the new Loma Linda University Heart & Surgical Hospital, please call **1-877-LLUMC-4U**.



be available when a woman and her doctor decide surgery may offer relief from troubling pelvic conditions.

Vaginal, Laparoscopic Hysterectomies Are Less Invasive

Surgeons can also remove the uterus through the vagina. The procedure, called vaginal hysterectomy, may be used for prolapse and menstrual problems

when the uterus is a normal size.

A newer procedure, laparoscopic hysterectomy, involves making very small incisions in the abdomen.

A laparoscope—a thin, hollow tube connected to a video camera—is inserted through one incision to guide the surgeon. Instruments inserted into the other incisions are used to perform surgical tasks.

The laparoscope may be used as part of a vaginal hysterectomy. Or the entire surgery may be done laparoscopically.

Tiny Incisions Bring Big Benefits

Smaller incisions can result in less pain and blood loss, shorter hospital stays, fewer wound infections, and quicker recovery than with abdominal hysterectomy. While it may take one to two months to return to normal activity with an abdominal hysterectomy, most women are able to recover completely in one to two weeks with laparoscopic surgery. ●

Technology Improves Hysterectomy

With advances in technology, robotic tools are becoming more common in hysterectomy. Several studies have shown that robotic surgery can be safe and effective for many types of operations. In some cases, using robots may lead to better patient outcomes, such as less pain and bleeding.

Robotic surgery systems have special instruments attached to robotic arms. The surgeon can operate these arms from a remote area that includes a computer and video monitor. These features make it easier for doctors to do delicate procedures with greater precision and dexterity.

Before performing robotic surgery, surgeons must be specially trained. Also, not everyone may be a candidate for this type of surgery.



How Ulcers Are Related to Stomach Cancer

Two out of every three people on the planet have a bug called *Helicobacter pylori*, or *H. pylori*, in their stomachs. Although most people who have these bacteria don't get sick from it, some do. About 2 to 20 percent of people infected with *H. pylori* will develop ulcers, or sores, in the lining of the stomach or upper small intestine.

The Connection to Cancer

Besides being a risk factor for ulcers, *H. pylori* infection also raises the risk of stomach cancer. In fact, it's the most important risk factor for cancer of the stomach. That may be because *H. pylori* weakens the natural protective coating of the stomach.

If you have symptoms of an ulcer, such as abdominal pain or heartburn, your doctor may check for *H. pylori* infection. Doctors can tell if you're infected using a breath test, blood test, or by testing stool. You also may need to have an endoscopy. During this test, a doctor inserts a thin tube through your mouth and down to your stomach to check for ulcers or other problems.

To wipe out *H. pylori*, treatment usually involves "triple therapy"—two weeks of antibiotics and acid suppressor and stomach protector medicines.

What Else Causes Stomach Cancer?

In addition to *H. pylori*, risk factors for stomach cancer include:

- Age—most people with stomach cancer are in their seventies or older
- Having chronic gastritis, an inflammation of the stomach

- Being male
- Being Asian-American, African-American, or Hispanic
- Smoking
- A family history of stomach cancer
- Eating too many salted, smoked foods

On the flip side, some research has suggested that eating foods high in beta-carotene and vitamin C, such as fruits and vegetables, may lower the risk for stomach cancer. ●

FOR MORE INFORMATION or to find out how to make an appointment with **Dr. CT Hsueh, stomach cancer specialist at the Loma Linda University Cancer Center, please call 1-877-LLUMC-4U.**



Free Booklet Offer

Call today to receive a booklet on stomach cancers.



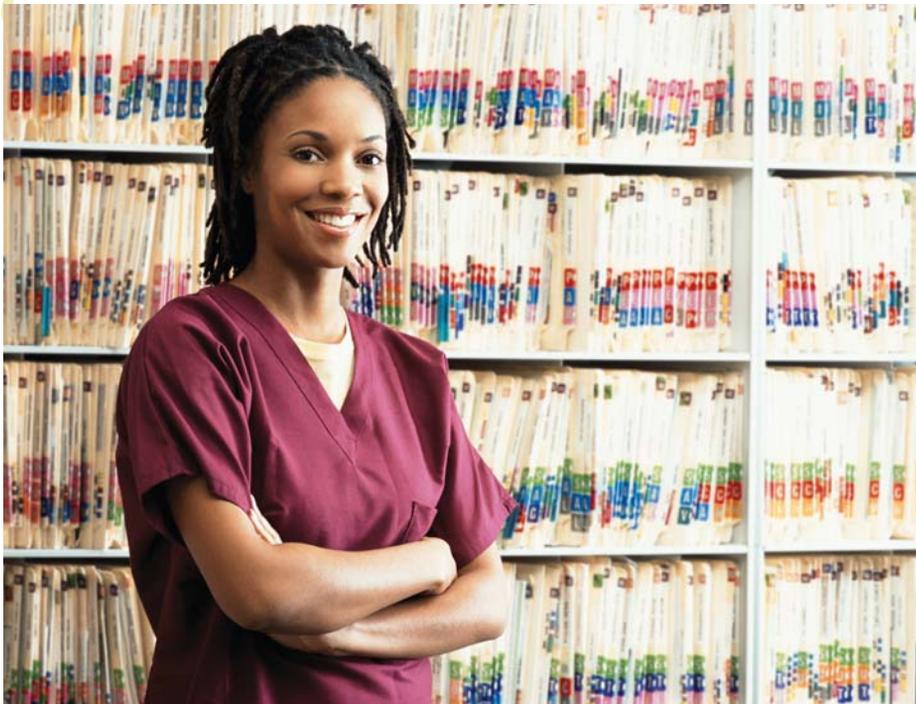
Suffering from "Brain Fog"? Low Iron May Be to Blame

About 2 billion people worldwide suffer from iron deficiency or full-blown anemia. Women ages 18 to 35 are among those at highest risk.

Low iron especially can affect the brain. Symptoms include difficulties with memory, learning, and attention span. In one study, women who were iron deficient or anemic took a daily iron supplement. For women who successfully increased their iron levels after four months, tests of mental ability improved dramatically—as much as five to seven times higher than original scores.

If you're concerned about low iron, talk with your doctor. A simple blood test can show whether iron supplements are right for you.

American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Vol. 85, No. 3



Have Power over Your Care: Get Your **Medical Records**

Who needs to keep track of your vital health information? You do. While doctors, pharmacies, and hospitals have a part of your medical record, you're likely the only one who can put the pieces together. And that can help your doctor make a better diagnosis and avoid medical errors.

Your medical records contain important information about your health and medical history. Having that information on hand lets you:

- More actively work with your doctor to manage health care
- Easily transfer complete medical information to new providers
- Clearly understand your doctors' instructions, medications and dosages, allergies, immunizations, and test results

Your Legal Rights

Get a copy of a medical record by filling out an "authorization for the release of information form" from your doctor. You may have to pay a small copying charge

or postage if the record is mailed. Usually, you will receive the information within 30 days. It may take as long as 60 days.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is a federal law passed in 1996. It sets rules about how medical information is documented, handled, and protected. HIPAA requires health care providers to give you a written explanation of your health care information access and privacy rights.

You will get this at your first visit.

You may also choose who is allowed to view your medical record. In general, employers can't see your record. However, it is available to those who treat you.

Create a Personal Health Record

Once you have copies of your medical records, create your own health record. Organize it with the most recent information first. Include in your file:

- Medical and dental records
- A short summary of significant medical information. Write down:
 - Your doctors' phone numbers
 - A health summary
 - Medicines and supplements you take
 - Any bad reactions you've ever had to medications
- A list of immunizations
- Health insurance information and claims
- A personal and family medical history that lists major illnesses
- A copy of an advance directive that gives care directions if you're not able to do so

You can also computerize your file. Special programs or Web sites can help you organize and store health records. The important thing is to have it in one place and readily available. ●

Inactive to Active in Five Steps

Exercise can quickly add up to the recommended 30 to 60 minutes a day:

- ① Schedule an hour of housework and gardening each week.
- ② Use your own leg power instead of the escalator or moving walkway.
- ③ Forgo the golf cart and carry your own clubs.
- ④ Push a manual lawn mower.
- ⑤ Wash your car by hand.

American Family Physician, Vol. 69, No. 4



Get a Leg Up on Peripheral Vascular Disease

Do you experience cramps or numbness in your legs while walking? Don't ignore these symptoms. They could signal peripheral vascular disease (PVD), a serious health problem. The good news is that self-care and simple treatments for PVD could save your life.

PVD is atherosclerosis, or plaque buildup, in the arteries that supply blood to the arms and legs. This buildup is usually a sign of other cardiovascular problems, such as clogging of the heart or neck arteries. In fact, having PVD boosts the chances of dying from cardiovascular causes as much as having a history of stroke or coronary heart disease.

Know the Warning Signs

The most common symptom of PVD is aching or cramping pain in the hips or one or both legs while walking. This pain usually disappears after a brief rest period. Other possible symptoms of PVD include the following:

- Sore feet while resting
- Feelings of weakness, numbness, or heaviness in the legs
- Skin color changes, especially in the legs or arms
- Leg or foot sores that take a long time to heal

Unfortunately, some people with PVD experience no symptoms at all. A doctor can easily diagnose this condition by taking blood pressures in your arm and ankle.

Who Is At Risk?

While PVD can strike at any age, the typical sufferer is older than age 50. Besides age, other risk factors include:

- Smoking
- Diabetes
- A family history of cardiovascular disease
- High cholesterol
- Obesity
- High blood pressure
- Physical inactivity

Self-Care and Treatment Options

Fortunately, healthy habits can help PVD sufferers lower their threat of death and disability. Experts recommend these tactics:

- Exercise regularly.
- Don't smoke.
- Lose weight, if necessary.
- If you suffer from high cholesterol, diabetes, and/or hypertension, be sure to keep these conditions in check.

In addition to lifestyle measures, medications may be needed to manage PVD. Some ease the leg pain associated with this disorder. Others can help prevent blood clots and lower the risk of heart attack and stroke. ●

IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS about PVD and would like a physician referral, please call 1-877-LLUMC-4U.



Strawberry Cheesecake

- 6 graham crackers (2-inch square)
- Cooking spray
- 2 8-ounce packages fat-free cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 1 pint fresh strawberries, hulled and halved
- 3 tablespoons seedless raspberry jam
- 1 tablespoon water

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Crush graham crackers. Spread evenly over bottom of lightly sprayed 8- or 9-inch pie pan.

Beat cream cheese with sugar and vanilla until well blended, about five minutes. Add eggs and blend.

Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until center is almost set. Cool, then refrigerate overnight.

Melt raspberry jam with water in microwave or on top of stove.

Cut wedges and put on serving plates. Arrange strawberries over wedges and drizzle melted jam over each piece.

Serves eight. Each slice contains approximately 171 calories, 10 grams protein, 1.9 grams fat, 25 grams carbohydrate.

What You Need to Know About Allergies

Do you have a cough that doesn't seem to go away? Do you have a hard time breathing outside? Or do you often develop a rash after hiking or gardening? You may have allergies. Correctly identifying allergies can help you control them.

What Are Allergies and Why Do They Occur?

Allergies occur when the body's immune system thinks common substances are harmful and tries to fight them off. These substances are called allergens. Common allergens include:

- Dust mites
- Pollen
- Mold spores
- Pet dander
- Foods, such as peanuts or milk
- Insect stings

Experts believe that allergies are caused by both genetic and environmental factors. If you have allergies, you inherited a tendency to be allergic to one or more allergens. But you must be exposed to an allergen to have a reaction. This can take years to develop, or it can happen with one exposure.

How Do I Know if I Have Allergies?

Allergies often begin in childhood. But adults can develop them, too. Common symptoms include:

- A clear runny nose
- Congestion
- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Headache
- Itchy eyes, mouth, throat, or skin
- Swelling, such as around an insect sting
- Hives
- Wheezing

Many allergy symptoms resemble signs of a cold or the flu. To tell the difference, pay attention to when you experience symptoms. An allergic reaction occurs as long as you are exposed to the allergen. For example, a reaction could recur at the same time each year, last for weeks on end, or happen only when you eat certain foods. But cold and flu symptoms usually come and go within a week or two.

If you're unsure if you have allergies or need help identifying what's causing symptoms, see your doctor. A simple skin test can help determine what you're allergic to.

What Can I Do About Allergies?

To improve symptoms, try to avoid your allergens. For example:

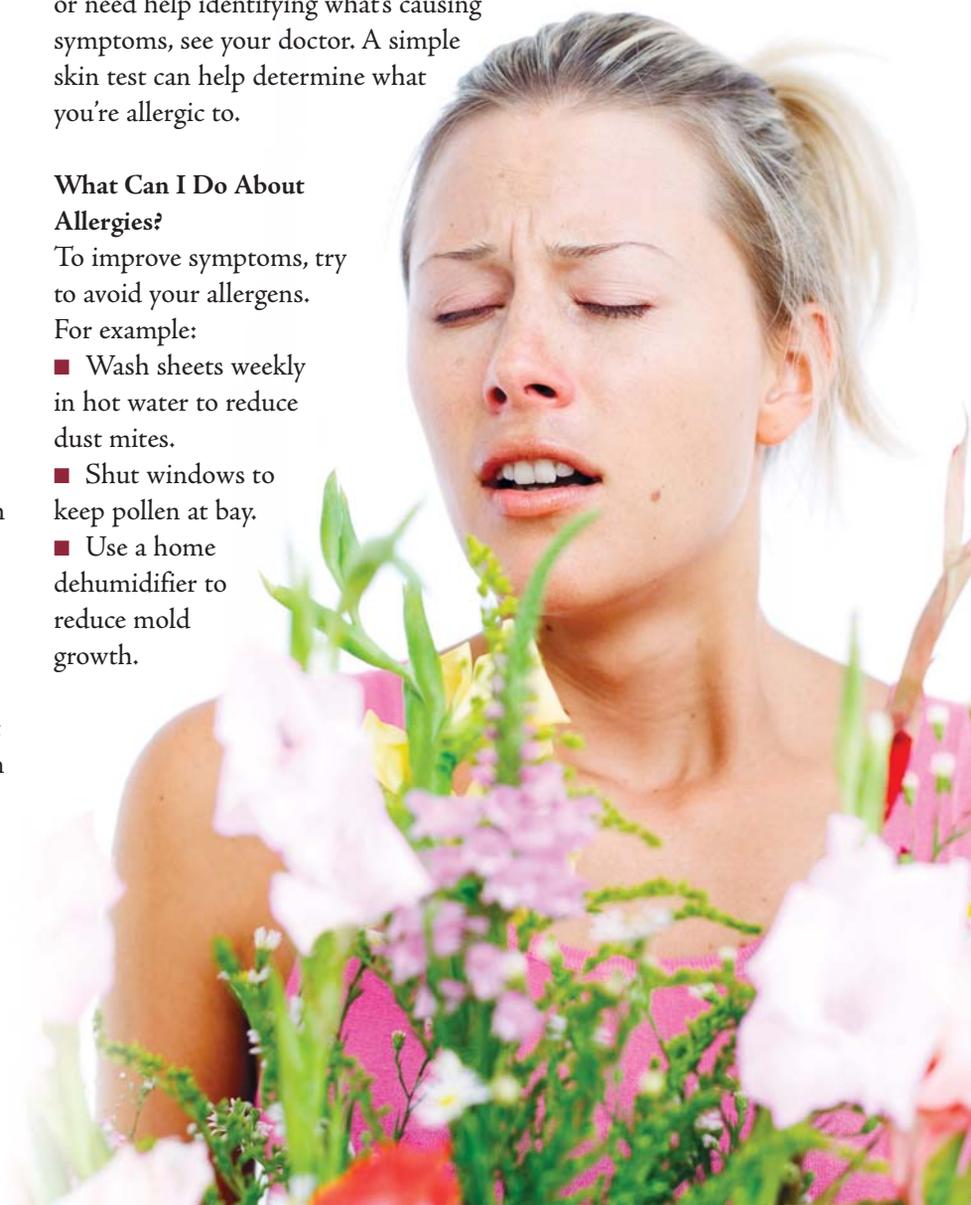
- Wash sheets weekly in hot water to reduce dust mites.
- Shut windows to keep pollen at bay.
- Use a home dehumidifier to reduce mold growth.

- Keep pets out of the bedroom.
- If you're allergic to a specific food, read all ingredient labels.

If allergy symptoms continue to bother you, talk with your doctor. Over-the-counter or prescription drugs can help. ●

Sinus & Allergy Center—Now Open

To find out more about the new Sinus & Allergy Center's services, call **1-877-LLUMC-4U**.



classes & programs

MAR/APR 2009

If you do not see a class or event you are looking for or for more detailed information, call **1-877-LLUMC-4U**.

Miracles in the Marketplace Annual Children's Hospital Foundation Gala

Sunday, April 5, 5 to 9 p.m.
Please help us make the "First Million for Miracles" a reality today in order to prepare for the needs of tomorrow's children. **Please call to purchase tickets and for more information.**



Special Events

Blood Drives

The Bloodmobile will be in the Medical Center parking lot weekly; please call for times. Sign up in the Children's Hospital. You can also check Loma Linda times at www.bbsbrc.org.

Classes/Programs

Moms Joining Moms

Fridays, 9 to 11 a.m.
Five-week, free-of-charge group for new moms and their babies.

Winning with Diabetes

Morning and evening classes; series of five sessions on types, causes, and self-management. Spanish classes offered every other month. **Please call to register.**

The Art of Infant Massage

Babies must be pre-crawling. Open to all moms/families in the community. **Please call for dates and times.**

Prenatal Class

**Second Monday of each month
5:30 to 7 p.m.**
English and Spanish classes providing information for a safe and healthy pregnancy.

Lean Choices

Tuesdays, 6 to 7 p.m.
This 12-week program gives you tools to lose weight and develop a healthy lifestyle. **Please call to register.**

Optifast

A 26-week medically supervised program for those with 50 or more pounds to lose. **Please call to register.**

Child & Adolescent Asthma

One-on-one counseling session to educate and develop an asthma control plan. **Please call to register.**

International Travel Clinic Every Wednesday

Walk-in clinic provides a full range of vaccinations necessary for travel. **No appointment necessary.**

Perinatal Institute Total Care Birth Center Classes

- Preparing for Childbirth
 - Newborn Care
 - Breastfeeding Basics
 - Health and Fitness in Pregnancy
 - Infant/Child CPR
 - Sibling Preparation
 - Infant Massage
- Please call for details.**

Shield Program for Adolescent Self-Injury

For adolescents who are in need of treatment for self-injurious behaviors including cutting, burning, scratching, picking at skin, and so forth. **Please call for an assessment appointment.**

Chronic Pain Medication Dependency Program

For those who have become dependent on prescription drugs.

Eating Disorder Program

Available for adults and adolescents.

Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation

**Monday through Thursday
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

For those with chest pain, heart attack, bypass surgery, or lung disease. **Please call to register.**

Support Groups

Diabetes Support Group

**First Tuesday of each month, 6:30 to
7:30 p.m., 11135 Mountain View Ave.,
Loma Linda**

Diabetes experts provide educational and resource information each month. **No registration; no fee.**

HITSS (Head Injury & Trauma Spinal Cord Support Group)

**Fourth Monday of each month
6 to 8 p.m.**

A group for head and spinal cord injury survivors and their loved ones.

Mended Hearts

**Fourth Friday of each month
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

A group for all heart patients and their families. **No registration, no fee.**

Always in My Heart

**Second Monday of each month
7 to 8:30 p.m., fourth Tuesday of each
month, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.**

A bereavement class for parents who have lost a baby. **Call for location and details.**

Lupus/Fibromyalgia Rheumatological Support Group

**Third Thursday of the month
4 to 6:30 p.m.**

Please call to register.

Drayson Center Fitness & Wellness

- Personal Training
- Massage Therapy
- Nutrition Counseling
- Senior Wellness Program

T'ai Chi Ch'uan

**January 8 to March 26
6 to 7 p.m.**

A low intensity exercise suitable for all ages. Helps you relax and reduce stress. **Registration required.**

Services

Cancer Resource Center

**Monday to Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to
5 p.m., Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.**
All materials free to the community.

Executive Health Physical

By appointment only. A complete medical history and physical combined with a thorough assessment of potential risk factors.

Volunteer Opportunities

We Need You!

Openings now available at the new LLU Heart & Surgical Hospital and Medical Center include: Info Desk, Patient Escorts, and Surgery Desk Hosts. Please attend our Volunteer Information and Orientation session to learn more about our programs and how to become a volunteer. **Call for dates, times, and details.**

If the event or class you are looking for is not listed here, please call **1-877-LLUMC-4U** for more information.

a healthy tomorrow

A *Healthy Tomorrow* is published by Loma Linda University Medical Center to provide general health information. It is not intended to provide personal medical advice, which should be obtained directly from a physician. © 2009. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

Ruthita J. Fike
CEO/Administrator

Tammy Veach
Executive Director Marketing

Jemellee Ambrose
Editor-in-Chief

Shelly Moore
Managing Editor



Loma Linda University Medical Center
11234 Anderson Street
Loma Linda, CA 92354-2804

Postmaster: Please deliver
between February 23 and 27.

Nonprofit Org
US Postage
PAID
Loma Linda University
Medical Center

Printed on Recyclable Paper

964M

Kids Ages 6 to 12 Could Win a Free Bike!

Sponsored by the Loma Linda University Children's Hospital Foundation

Do you have what it takes to be one of the Healthy Tomorrow Kids? If you think you are one of the healthiest kids in your neighborhood, you just might win a bike! To enter the Healthy Tomorrow Kids Bike Contest, e-mail us at healthytomorrow@llu.edu and include the following:

- 1 A color picture of yourself doing something healthy
 - 2 A week's worth of activities (at least five days) that can be considered healthy. For example, you can tell us that from Monday to Friday, you exercised by riding your bike for at least 30 minutes each day or that you ate at least two servings of fruit each day.
 - 3 Approximately five to eight sentences telling us what makes you a healthy kid
 - 4 Your name, physical address, and telephone number
- All entries must be received by April 10, 2009.



Bicycling Basics: Know the Rules for Safe Riding

Bicycling is a wonderful way to enjoy the outdoors. And it's a popular one: About 57 million Americans ride bikes regularly. To keep your bike trips safe as well as fun, review these important safety rules. If you have children who ride, make sure they know the rules, too.

- Do make sure that you and your children wear proper fitting helmets.
- Do invest in a bell or horn and a rearview mirror.
- Do attach reflectors to the front, rear, pedals, and both wheels of your bicycle.
- Do ride on the right side of the road

with the traffic flow, not against it.

- Do ride single file when cycling with others.
- Do walk your bike across busy streets, especially if traffic is heavy.
- Do wear bright clothing during the day so drivers can easily see you.
- Do wear reflective clothing and use a headlight if you choose to ride after dark. Experts caution, however, that children should avoid bicycling at night.
- Do use the proper hand signals and teach them to your children.
- Do look behind you for oncoming traffic before you turn or change lanes. ●