

Winter 2017

health + care

A PUBLICATION FROM MERCY REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Keeping up with Ned

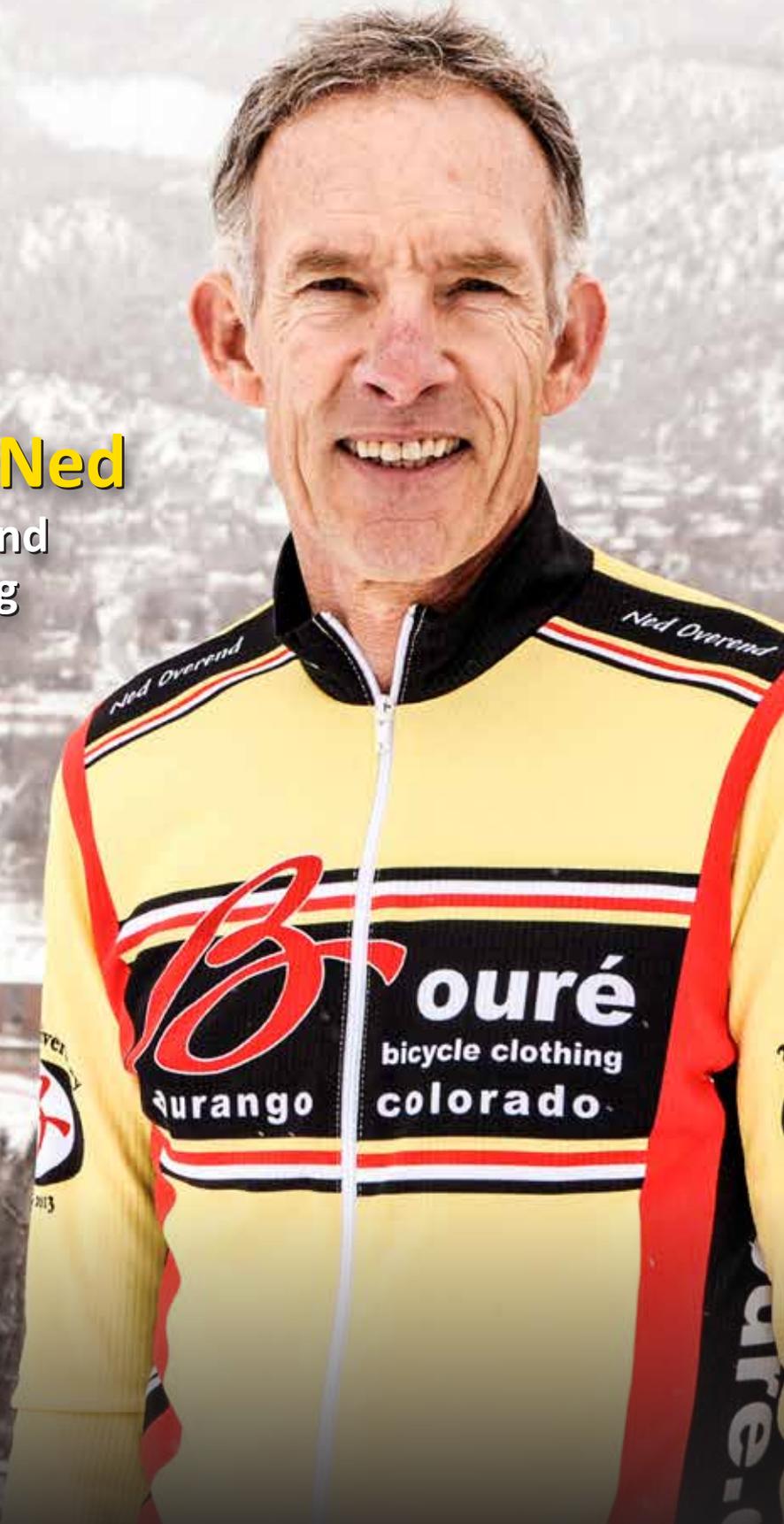
Cycling champ Ned Overend discusses fitness and aging
page 6

Strokes and alcohol

Can a cocktail a day keep the doctor away?
page 8

A head start on healthy eating

It's never too soon to get your kids on track
page 4



Mercy Regional Medical Center

Centura Health

INSPIRE HEALTH

Bite Size NEWS

IS NECK PAIN AFFECTING YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE?

You're invited to join spine surgeons Douglass Orndorff, M.D., Amir Abtahi, M.D., and physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist Thad Rae, M.D., for **"Neck Pain Explained,"** a FREE community presentation. Dr. Orndorff, Dr. Abtahi, and Dr. Rae will explain common causes of neck and arm pain, and numbness and weakness associated with degenerative changes in the upper spine. They will also describe treatments and innovative procedures that can provide relief.



When: Tuesday, February 28
5:30 p.m., hors d'oeuvres and reception
6:00 p.m., presentation

Where: San Juan College, Henderson Fine Arts Building, room 9010
4601 College Boulevard, Farmington

✚ Seating is limited. R.S.V.P. at mercydurango.org/neck-pain or call **970-764-3999**

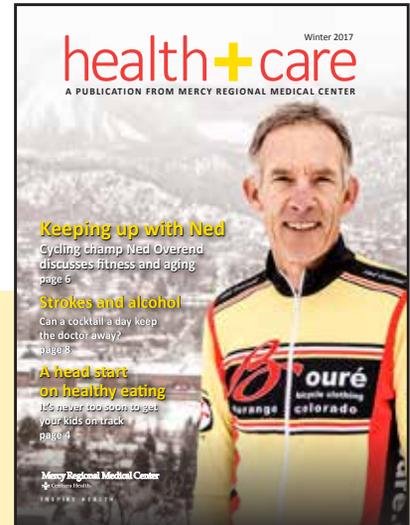


CONVENIENT CARE AT PURGATORY RESORT

Winter is a great time for fun in the high country, but unfortunately cold weather can also bring the flu, falls, and other reasons to need urgent medical care. Mercy Urgent Care, conveniently located just off Highway 550 at the entrance to Purgatory Resort, provides care for minor injuries and illnesses, x-rays, vaccinations, and more. The clinic is staffed by skilled nurse practitioners and experienced physician assistants who are supported by emergency physicians at Mercy Regional Medical Center in Durango. With virtually no wait time, the clinic is a great option for anyone who enjoys the mountains, winter or summer.

Open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
10 Purgatory Blvd., Purgatory Resort

✚ For more information, call **970-259-4553** or visit mercydurango.org.



On the Cover:
World champion mountain biker Ned Overend.

Read more on page 6.

What's Inside

- 4 Healthy eating
- 6 Keeping fit
- 8 Recognizing stroke
- 10 Healthy hearts
- 12 Sports medicine

John Peel is a contributing writer for Health+Care.

FLU AND COLD SEASON

FLU SEASON MIGHT BE IN FULL SWING, BUT DOING THESE EIGHT SIMPLE THINGS CAN HELP YOU STAY HEALTHY THIS WINTER:

1. **Get vaccinated.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older. Flu season may be half over, but it's not too late.
2. **Avoid close contact.** Avoid close contact with people who are ill, and when you're sick, keep your distance from others.
3. **Stay home.** If you do get the flu, try to stay home for at least 24 hours.
4. **Cover your mouth and nose.** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. No tissue? To reduce the chance of spreading germs, cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow, not your hand.
5. **Wash your hands often.** Use soap and water, but if they're unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
6. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.** Germs are often spread when a person touches something that's contaminated with germs and then touches their face.
7. **Clean germ surfaces.** Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs. Doorknobs, faucet handles, phones, computer equipment, and desks are great places to target.
8. **Guard your health.** To boost your immune system, get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat a healthy diet.



Soup for the Soul to warm hearts for 13th year

Join Mercy Health Foundation and Mercy Regional Medical Center on Wednesday, March 15, for the 13th annual Soup for the Soul, benefiting patients in need at Hospice of Mercy.

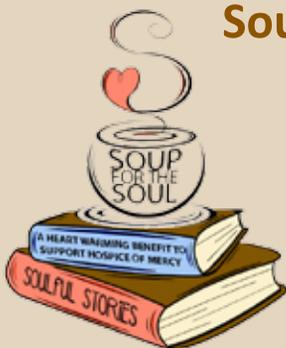
At this heartwarming annual event, guests will have the opportunity to taste soups, appetizers and desserts from some of the area's finest restaurants.

13th Annual Soup for the Soul | Wednesday, March 15, 5:30 p.m.

La Plata County Fairgrounds | 2500 Main Ave., Durango

Tickets \$60. Don't wait. This event sells out quickly, get your tickets today.

For more information or to buy tickets, please call Mercy Health Foundation at 970-764-2800.





Abby Silvernail, age 8, loves tomatoes.

A head start on healthy eating

IT'S NEVER TOO SOON, EXPERTS SAY

Want to do someone you love a really big, life-lasting favor? Teach your child healthy eating habits.

The real challenge here? You have to be the role model, and you have to be persistent.

Although Colorado is one of the healthiest states, nearly 10 percent of Coloradans have diabetes (more than one-fourth are undiagnosed), and the disease continues to grow “at an epidemic rate,” according to the American Diabetes Association. Genetics is a factor, but staying active and eating well can help keep diabetes away.

When it comes to food preferences, it's important to get your child started off right. Here are some methods to apply, courtesy of Marge Morris and Marissa Kleinsmith, dietitians with Mercy Diabetes Education and Nutrition Therapy.

YOU CAN'T START TOO EARLY

Even during pregnancy you can begin the process of exposing children to flavors through amniotic fluid, research shows. After birth, flavors new mothers consume are transferred through breast milk, making children more likely to accept those flavors as they grow. A varied diet exposes children to a panoply of flavors.

This might come in handy, for example, if you want your child to eat bitter-tasting vegetables such as broccoli or Brussels sprouts, or garlic or curry. Eat them, and introduce them through breast milk.

Before age 2 is a good time to expose children to healthy foods, because they are just starting to develop preferences and haven't established a group of "safe" foods. Kleinsmith says she made a liver pâté for her then-6-month-old daughter, who gobbled it down. Her daughter also chowed down gladly on homemade sauerkraut.

"Kids will like those flavors if they're exposed early," Kleinsmith says. "Kids don't know they're not supposed to like things like liver."

ROLE MODELING

It's up to you to set a good example by serving and eating healthy foods, Morris states. It might help to let them get a little hungry – then they'll be more likely to eat the healthy foods that you are eating.

If kids adapt to a high-sugar, high-salt, high-fat diet now, it will be difficult to make changes later, even as adults, when they could be diagnosed with diabetes or pre-diabetes, or their teeth go bad from the sugar exposure.

"These things stay with them a long, long time," Morris says.

REPEATED EXPOSURE

You may have to offer a certain food several times before your infant or toddler tries it. A study of picky eating that appeared in *Frontiers in Pediatrics* showed it can take as many as eight to 15 exposures, which can include role modeling or a child simply touching and even spitting food out.

"A lot of times parents give up before then," says Kleinsmith.

Without early exposure, kids will reject some healthy foods because they don't taste good, Morris says. They can even begin to fear trying new foods. This is a phenomenon that diet scientists have dubbed "food neophobia," and becomes prevalent around age 2, studies show. At that point it takes more exposures for a child to try something.

But they will. So be persistent, and don't automatically turn to the macaroni and cheese when your child doesn't immediately go for broccoli.

"It's really easy to become a short-order cook for kids," Kleinsmith says. "You're going to really regret that once you start."

THEY WON'T STARVE

If a child misses a meal because they don't eat the healthy food that's on their plate, they won't starve. Just continue providing timely meals and snacks, and they'll be fine. They're going to get hungry, and they'll learn to eat what's available.

"That's a really hard thing, and I know from experience," Kleinsmith says.



Sarah Silvernail gets her 1-year-old daughter Eleanor to try kale.

✚ For more information, contact Mercy Nutrition Therapy at **970-764-3415**.

Try this easy "veggie full" recipe with your family.

Maple-Mustard Roasted Chicken with Squash and Brussels Sprouts

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon pure maple syrup
- 4 (10-oz.) bone-in, skin-on chicken breasts
- 4 cups butternut squash, (about 1 lb.) cubed and peeled
- 3 large shallots, peeled and quartered
- 1/2 acorn squash, seeded and cut crosswise into slices
- 8 ounces Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved (about 2 cups)
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, divided

How to make it:

1. Place a large rimmed baking sheet in oven; preheat oven to 425°F (leave pan in oven as it preheats).
2. Combine sage, mustard, and syrup in a small bowl; brush evenly over chicken breasts. Carefully remove pan from oven. Add chicken to pan; bake at 425°F for 20 minutes. Remove pan from oven. Discard any juices from pan.
3. Add butternut squash, shallots, acorn squash, and Brussels sprouts to pan with chicken. Top vegetables with butter, oil, 3/4 teaspoon salt, and 3/4 teaspoon pepper; toss. Spread in an even layer around chicken. Sprinkle chicken with remaining 3/4 teaspoon salt and remaining 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Bake at 425°F for 20 minutes or until chicken is done. Remove and discard bones from chicken before serving.

Maple-Mustard Roasted Chicken with Squash and Brussels Sprouts

How to KEEP UP with Ned

Can you go as fast as Ned? Well, probably not. But can you remain physically fit – like the legendary local cyclist – as you reach middle age and beyond? Absolutely.

World mountain bike champion Ned Overend, now 61, has remained a fitness marvel. At 59 he won the National Fat Bike Championships. Closer to home a few months later, he captured the overall Iron Horse Bicycle Classic title.

A Durangoan since 1980, Overend offered to share some of his secrets for staying fit.

KEEP ACTIVE

Overend says he used to let himself go a bit during the offseason. Because of his age, he doesn't dare let five or ten pounds sneak onto his frame now, fearing he won't return to the same fitness level. Even if you're not a top-notch athlete, the advice is relevant.

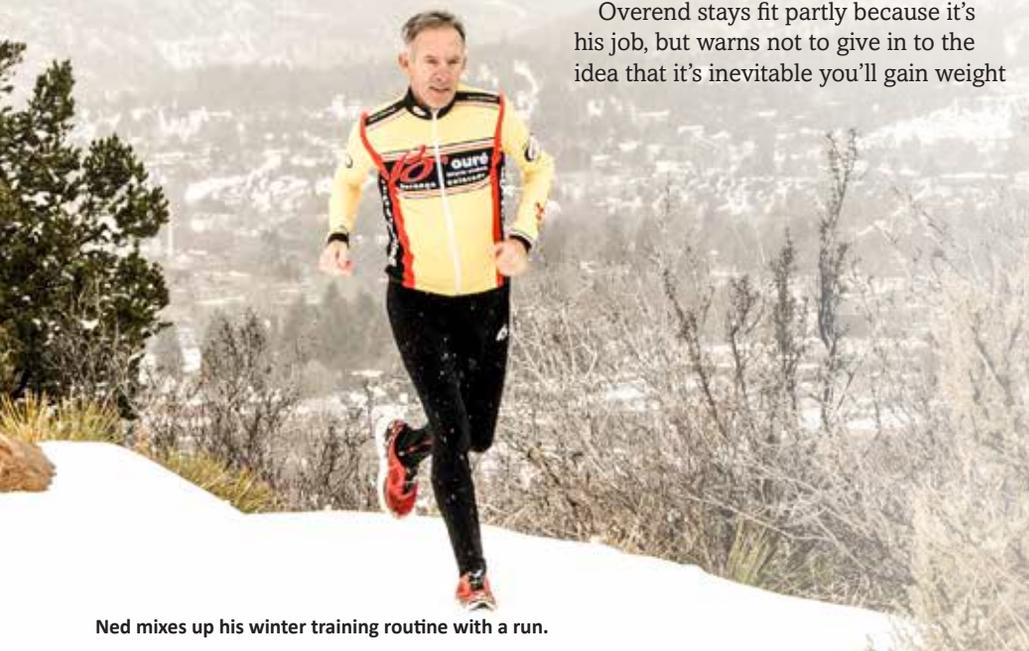
Overend stays fit partly because it's his job, but warns not to give in to the idea that it's inevitable you'll gain weight

and lose mobility as you age. Says Ned: "These will be self-fulfilling prophecies if you really believe them." As a psychological boost he rides with younger folks – people who aren't focused on the physical infirmities that come with aging.

RECOVERY

Work out hard, but let your body bounce back. He follows intense workouts with recovery days, whether it's "active recovery," such as a quick ride on the bike path, or even the rare rest day.

Training at a moderate level all the time "is one mistake that keeps a lot of people from getting in better shape." This makes even more sense when combined with the next tip.



Ned mixes up his winter training routine with a run.



Ned is interviewed after winning the 2015 Fat Bike National Championships.

TALK TO THE EXPERT:



Physical therapist Phil Rambo, MPT

Phil Rambo, physical therapist at Mercy Integrated Physical Therapy, recommends three exercises to keep those reaching middle age, and even seniors, strong and mobile, especially during the winter season when it may be harder to get outside: Squats, bird dogs, and a standard lunge. These exercises keep individuals working on their postural muscle strength, balance, and functional movement.

Remember, it's important to understand your personal level of fitness. If at any time an exercise causes pain, stop and speak with a physical therapist about the best way to proceed.



Bird Dog (3 sets of 10 repetitions daily): Begin on all fours, with your arms positioned directly under your shoulders. Straighten one arm and your opposite leg at the same time, until they are parallel to the floor. Hold briefly, then return to the starting position. Make sure to keep your abdominals tight and hips level during the exercise.

HIGH INTENSITY, LOW VOLUME

During the winter, Overend rides five to six hours per week, and in the summer that increases only to eight to ten hours. “It’s not a lot of hours on the bike,” he admits. So this – are you ready? – is his key:

“What has worked for me for maintaining my fitness throughout the years has been a little more focus on higher intensity, and less volume.”

Which means it can take less time to stay fit—if you push harder. Overend says his training graph has large peaks and valleys: lots of intensity, followed by quality recovery time.

ALTER YOUR WORKOUTS

Doing different activities can not only keep workouts interesting and fun, but also means you’re working various muscles and staying balanced. Overend makes sure, particularly in the fall and winter, to run, swim, Nordic ski, and work out at the gym.

“If you’re only riding, it’s kind of working your muscles in one plane,” he says. “You tend to be hunched over the handlebars, so it can be hard on your back. Varying your workouts actually helps prevent injury on the bike.”

STAY HEALTHY

This, too, seems like common sense.

However, it takes some discipline. If a body part is aching, don’t push it to the point of injury. Give it time to get well.

Overend says one of his longevity keys has been to keep training momentum – avoiding colds and flu, staying injury-free. The older the body, the longer it takes to heal. One temptation we face – even Ned – is to train beyond our ability in order to keep up. “You can’t have as much machismo,” he laughs. “People have to know their limitations.”

NED’S READING TIPS

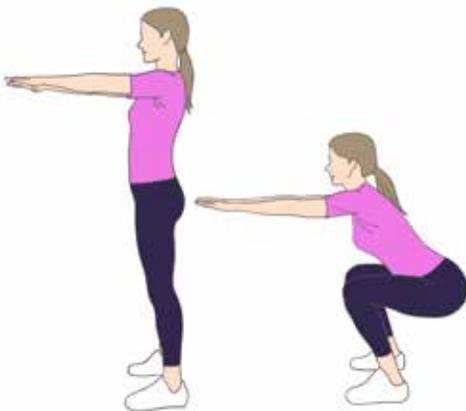
Want more on aging gracefully? Overend recommends a book called *Fast After 50* by Joe Friel, a leading endurance sports coach. Overend was among several top endurance athletes who contributed. Or check out *Spring Chicken: Stay Young Forever (Or Die Trying)*, by Bill Gifford.

Remember, before starting a new exercise regimen, make sure to consult your physician to make sure you’re healthy enough for physical activity.

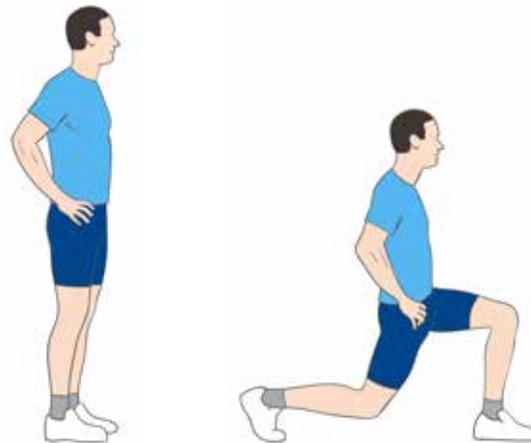


Ned wins the 2015 Fat Bike National Championships in Ogden, Utah.

Fat Bike Championship photos courtesy of Philip Beckman.



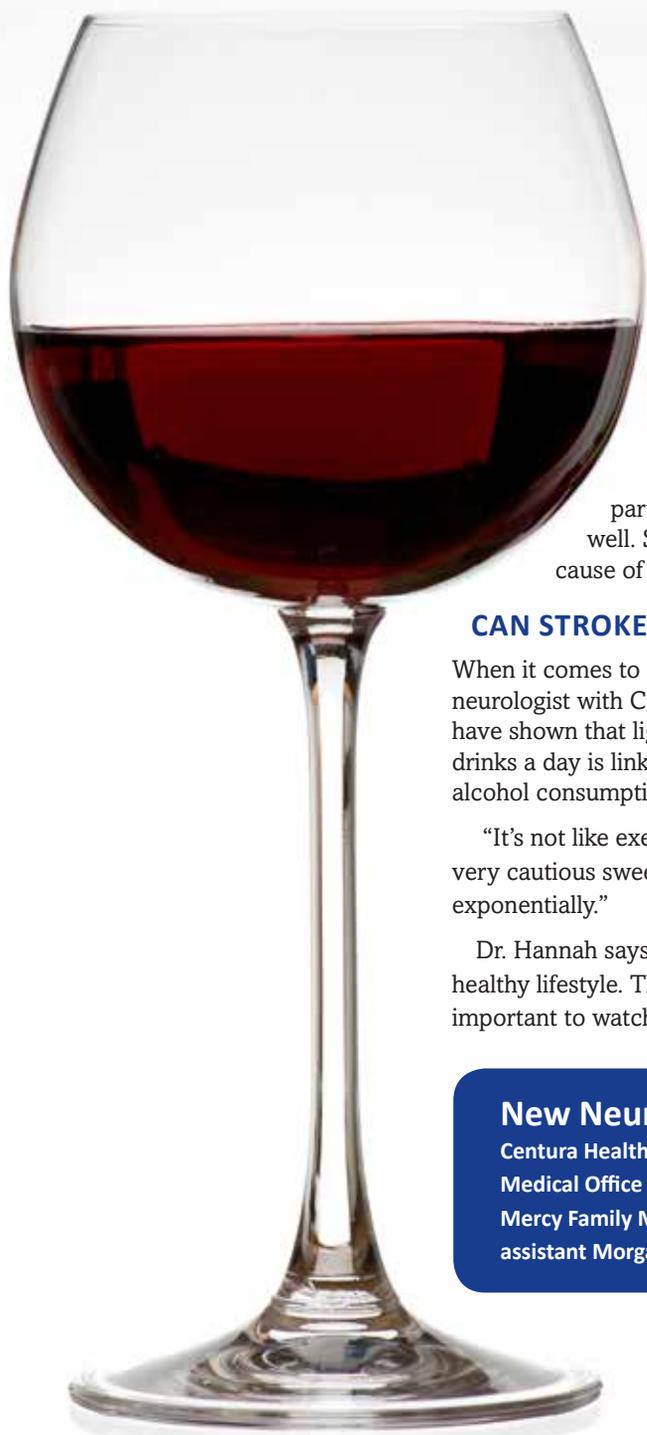
Squats (3 sets of 10 repetitions daily): Begin in a standing upright position, with your feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart. Squat, bending at the hips and then knees until your knees are close to a 90 degree angle, then straighten and repeat. Make sure to keep your back straight and do not let your knees bend forward past the toes.



Standard Lunge (3 sets of 15 repetitions daily): Keep your upper body straight, with your shoulders back and relaxed, and chin up. Step forward with one leg, lowering your hips until both knees are bent at about a 90-degree angle. Make sure your front knee is directly above your ankle and make sure your other knee doesn’t touch the floor. Keep the weight in your heels as you push back up to the starting position. Repeat alternating which leg steps forward.

Strokes & alcohol

Recent studies show that moderate alcohol consumption may lower the risk of stroke.



WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke occurs when the supply of blood to the brain is interrupted. If this supply is stopped for more than five minutes, permanent brain damage results. There are two types of stroke, the most common (87 percent) being ischemic, when a blood clot travels from the heart and lodges in a blood vessel in the brain. The other is hemorrhagic (13 percent), in which a blood vessel weakens or bursts, causing bleeding in the brain. The part of the brain not getting blood will be damaged.

Obviously a stroke can have serious consequences, leaving a person with partial paralysis, vision problems, memory loss, or unable to communicate well. Strokes led to 140,323 deaths in 2015 in the U.S. and were the fifth-leading cause of mortality.

CAN STROKES BE PREVENTED?

When it comes to stroke, it's all about risk reduction. According to Dr. Jessica Hannah, neurologist with Centura Health Physician Group Southwest – Neurology, recent studies have shown that light to moderate alcohol consumption of up to one (women) or two (men) drinks a day is linked with a lower risk of ischemic stroke. There was no evidence that light alcohol consumption helped prevent hemorrhagic stroke.

“It's not like exercise, where it's more is better,” Dr. Hannah cautions. “There's a very cautious sweet spot. If you drink even a little bit more, the stroke risk goes up exponentially.”

Dr. Hannah says that the primary way to lower the risk of stroke is through leading a healthy lifestyle. This includes regular exercise, a healthy diet, and not smoking. It's also important to watch cholesterol levels and blood pressure.

New Neurology Clinic

Centura Health Physicians Group Southwest – Neurology recently moved locations in the Mercy Medical Office building. The offices are now located on the second floor in suite 290, directly above Mercy Family Medicine. Other members of the CHPG-Southwest Neurology care team are physician assistant Morgan Manulik, registered nurse Sheila Witmer, and medical assistant Janice Walker.

+ Call **970-764-9225** for more information or to make an appointment.

Stroke Awareness

KNOW THE FACTS AND ACT F.A.S.T.

GET CARE QUICKLY, DON'T WAIT.

If you're exhibiting the signs of stroke, then it's time to call 911. Time is critical. A medication called a TPA (tissue plasminogen activator) can be administered by a physician, but only within 3-4 hours of occurrence.

SENIORS AREN'T THE ONLY ONES

While the stroke rate among those 55 and older has decreased, it's actually rising steeply among younger people, up 147 percent in the 35-39 age group from 1995-99 to 2010-14. The cause is likely an increase in hypertension and diabetes. Regular medical checkups are one way to win this battle. Health screenings can show if you need to make lifestyle changes that can reduce the risk of stroke.

REGULAR CHECKUPS

You can't get help if you're not seeking it. You don't feel high blood pressure, and you don't feel high cholesterol, Hannah says. She's seen patients with hypertension, diabetes and pre-diabetes go untreated for years. It's important to get primary care regularly to address health issues like these early and help prevent more serious conditions.

✚ For more visit www.strokeassociation.org



Physician assistant Morgan Manulik and Dr. Jessica Hannah.



Strokes are often diagnosed through Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI).

RECOGNIZING STROKE SYMPTOMS

The American Stroke Association touts the acronym "FAST" as a warning mantra that a stroke is occurring.

F – Face drooping or numb.

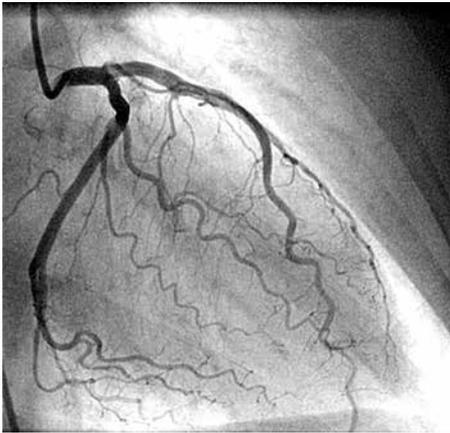
A – Arm weak or feels heavy.

S – Speech slurred or incomprehensible.

T – Time to call 9-1-1.



THE HEART: Don't skip a beat



The Mercy Catheterization Lab uses angiocardiography to assess a heart blockage.

“TIME IS MUSCLE.”

Dr. Frank Torres, interventional cardiologist at Mercy Cardiology Associates, isn't being melodramatic when he says this. He's simply explaining the reality. If you're having a heart attack, the Mercy team's goal is to begin treatment within 60 minutes. That's under the national guideline of 90 minutes.

“We're racing against the clock,” Dr. Torres says. “Time saves heart muscle.”

WHAT IS A HEART ATTACK?

Coronary arteries supply oxygenated blood to the heart. Arteries can become thicker and harder from a buildup of cholesterol plaque. If plaque ruptures or breaks, blood can clot in the area and block the flow of blood to the heart – the beginning of the heart attack. Without oxygenated blood, heart muscle begins to die, and the damage increases the longer the artery remains blocked. Once heart muscle dies, it's gone forever.

When a blockage occurs, most victims will begin to feel symptoms: Crushing

chest pain, sweating, and perhaps nausea and vomiting. Sometimes these symptoms can present differently in women. For example, they can feel shortness of breath, dizziness or fainting, pain in the lower chest or upper abdomen, and upper back pressure. This is an emergency situation, Dr. Torres says, and it's time to call 9-1-1 and get immediate help. The paramedics can begin treatment, and once at the hospital, Mercy's cardiology team takes over.

Mercy's team approach includes not just the cardiologists, but, just as important, the highly trained nurses and technicians who can administer diagnostic heart tests around the clock and swiftly determine the exact problem.

“We have a great cath[eterization] lab. These people really make a difference,” Dr. Torres says.

EMERGENCY TREATMENT

Once a diagnosis is made, treatment begins. Mercy's specially trained interventional cardiologists can thread a tiny wire into the blocked artery and use a technique called balloon angioplasty to break a clot, or place stents to prop open arteries blocked by plaque. If the patient needs a more involved heart surgery, such as an emergency bypass or valve replacement, Mercy calls on its partnership with Centura Health's Penrose-St. Francis Health Services in Colorado Springs.

“We have a seamless process for transferring individuals to get them the highest possible level of care,” Dr. Torres says.

ON TO CARDIAC REHAB

Treatment doesn't end when the heart emergency does. Mercy's on-site

Wellness Center provides cardiac patients with medically monitored exercise, customized exercise plans, education, and dietary instructions.

And from their cardiologist the patient receives not only the necessary medications to help reduce future blood clotting, but also individualized attention and ongoing care. “We're rooting for them,” Dr. Torres says. “All of us are gratified when they have good outcomes.”

WANT TO SKIP ALL THIS?

If possible, of course, you'll want to avoid the emergency. Dr. Torres laid out a simple primary prevention plan:

- Regular exercise. Emphasize “regular.” That means 30 minutes of aerobic exercise, which could be as simple as brisk walking, five to six times a week.
- A healthy diet. High on Dr. Torres' list of recommendations is a Mediterranean diet, which is low on fatty cheeses, beef and butter. It's especially big on highly pigmented vegetables and high-nitrate vegetables and herbs (think arugula and basil), and on olive oil, poultry, and fish. Studies continue to show a modest intake of alcohol, such as a daily glass of red wine, can also help reduce risk of heart attack.
- Control risk factors. Don't smoke, keep blood pressure low, control diabetes and lower bad cholesterol. And did we mention not smoking? It's the biggest contributing factor for heart disease, Dr. Torres says.

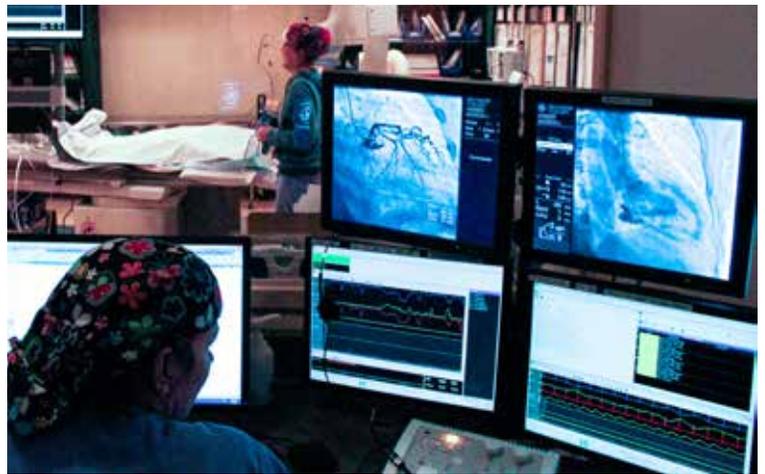
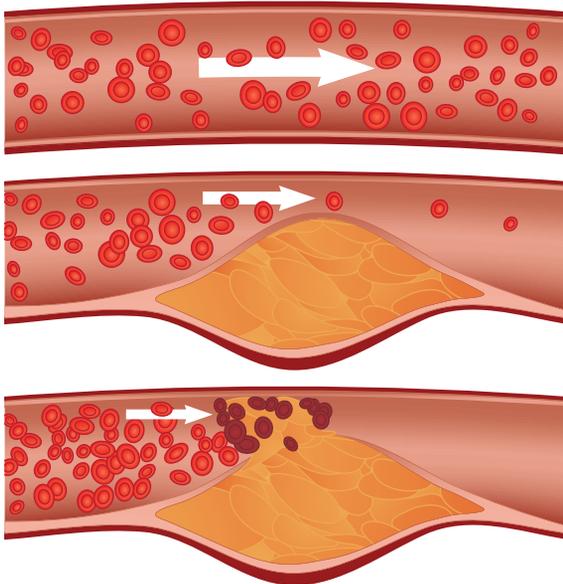
Get to Know Your **AMAZING** Heart

HEART DISEASE IN THE USA:

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S. Almost 2,000 Americans die of heart disease each day. There is 1 death every 44 seconds in the United States caused by heart disease.

A LOOK AT A HEART ATTACK FROM INSIDE THE ARTERY

Cholesterol plaque can form in arteries over time. Once the plaque ruptures, it blocks the flow of blood to the heart, causing a heart attack.



Mercy's cardiac team provides lifesaving care in the catheterization lab.

YOUR HEART:

 Beats about 100,000 times in one day and about 35 million times in a year. During an average lifetime, the human heart will beat more than 2.5 billion times.

 Pumps 1.5 gallons of blood each minute, 1,900 gallons per day, almost 700,000 gallons per year, or 48 million gallons by the time you're 70 years old.



Give a tennis ball a good, hard squeeze. You're using about the same amount of force your heart uses to pump blood out to the body. Even at rest, the muscles of the heart work hard—twice as hard as the leg muscles of a person sprinting.



Your circulatory system of blood vessels — arteries, veins and capillaries — is over 60,000 miles long. That's long enough to go around the world more than twice!



Blood takes about 20 seconds to circulate throughout the entire vascular system from the time it leaves the heart to the time it returns.



KEEP YOUR HEART STRONG:

- Your activity level is the greatest potential risk factor for heart disease. People with low fitness levels have double the risk of heart disease.
- 80 percent of heart disease is preventable with healthy lifestyle choices and management of risk factors.
- Depression increases your risk for a heart attack, especially in women under 55.
- Excessive amounts of sitting have been linked to an increased risk of heart disease. You may have heard that sitting is the new smoking.

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mercydurango.org

Keeping area athletes active

NEW SPORTS REHAB FACILITY OPENING SOON

It's well known that the Four Corners region is a mecca for active people of all ages. From hockey to hiking, skiing to soccer, and biking to basketball, the choices for athletes of all ages and abilities are virtually limitless—as long as one's body is in good working order. That caveat is the driving force behind a new facility for athletes: Mercy Sports Medicine and Rehab.

It will be a resource for all active people, not just athletes. “We're here for anyone who wants to be more active, become a better athlete, develop better balance, be more agile, recover from surgery or an injury, or who just wants to physically feel better in general,” said Luke Angel, DPT, physical therapist and manager of Mercy Integrated Physical Therapy and Mercy Sports Medicine.

In addition to the full spectrum of physical therapy services, the facility will offer other services, treatments, and even group classes to promote wellness, prevent injuries, and optimize physical activity. Mercy's concussion-related services, including baseline testing and post-concussion rehabilitation, will also be offered there. “Multiple resources will be available in one convenient location,” said Angel.

Angel says massage therapy, yoga, personal training, orthopedic care, and chiropractic care are some possible additions to the mix. “There are a lot of talented people in the community, and we're considering inviting some who share our vision to join us at the new facility.”

There's plenty of room to share in the 7,000-square-foot facility, including 740-square-foot enclosed studio; a 2,100-square-foot gym; six treatment rooms; and a multipurpose room that can be used for orthopedic exams, massage therapy, chiropractic or other modalities, and more.

One of the most unique pieces of equipment planned for the facility is the Alter G “anti-gravity” treadmill, which uses technology originally developed by NASA.

A special waist harness on the treadmill can support up to 80 percent of a person's body weight while they exercise on the treadmill, allowing them to walk or run while bearing only a fraction of their actual weight. It can be very beneficial for those recovering from foot, ankle, knee or leg injuries or surgery because it allows them to begin exercising sooner than if they had to wait until they can support their full body weight. It's also great for athletes who want to maintain cardiovascular fitness while recovering from an injury.



Physical therapist Ben Fordhal with Mercy Integrated Physical Therapy works with Durango resident Kacey Mallow on building strength and balance.