

WINTER 2010

Health Connection

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT LOCK HAVEN HOSPITAL



Part ways
with pain

Get back your
get-up-and-go!
Meet our new
orthopedist

After an ER visit—
now what?

Is a stroke
in your future?

Brown-bag it for
better health



www.lockhavenhospital.com

Ease your arthritis pain

More than 40 million Americans suffer from arthritis, a condition that can make every move painful. Osteoarthritis is the most common form. It occurs when cartilage, which cushions bones in your joints, breaks down and causes irritation.

Luckily, the following lifestyle changes and remedies can help you manage the pain:

• **LOSE WEIGHT.** It's pretty basic: The more excess weight you carry, the more stress on your joints. But a healthy diet of fruits, vegetables and whole grains, paired with regular exercise—at least 30 minutes a day—can help tip the scales in your favor. Cut back on saturated fats, which may increase your body's inflammatory response, adding to joint and tissue inflammation.



• **GET OFF THE COUCH.** Inactivity is a joint's worst enemy. Exercise can strengthen and protect the muscles around the joints, preventing them from stiffening and causing more pain. Walking, swimming, some yoga poses and tai chi are easy on the joints. Also beneficial are range-of-motion exercises, such as raising your arms above your head; strengthening exercises, such as weight training; and low-impact aerobic exercises, such as bike riding. Before starting an exercise program, check with your physician. If needed, ask him or her for a referral to a physical therapist who has a program for people with arthritis.

• **TAKE A PILL, IF NEEDED.** Sometimes you need medication for the pain. Over-the-counter options include non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, or NSAIDs (such as ibuprofen and naproxen), and acetaminophen (such as Tylenol). Topical creams may provide hot or cool sensations to ease pain or contain pain medication that's absorbed into the skin. Your physician may prescribe pills or cortisone injections. Any drug you take can have side effects, so discuss them with your physician before starting a regimen.



• **REST UP.** Your body needs time to heal, so aim for eight to 10 hours of sleep every night, and avoid sitting or standing in one position for too long. Skip high-impact activities such as running. You may also want to look into stress-relievers such as meditation or yoga.

• **ASK ABOUT ALTERNATIVES.** Massage, acupuncture, heating pads, ice packs and supplements such as glucosamine and chondroitin may help reduce symptoms, though studies on the supplements have been mixed. Speak with your physician before trying any home remedies. Sometimes, there simply isn't a remedy that can effectively treat the pain. In that case, surgery to replace the joint may be an option to discuss with your physician.



Life after the ER

Following your physician's orders keeps you healthy

When you're not feeling well and you're surrounded by the hustle and bustle of an emergency room (ER), it's easy to be confused by what a physician is telling you. All you can think about is going home. That's why many people are unclear about how to handle their care when they leave the hospital.

Case in point: A small University of Michigan study found that more than 75 percent of patients didn't understand their discharge instructions or what ER physicians had just told them—although 80 percent thought they did. Some of the patients weren't even sure of their diagnosis.

Unfortunately, these misunderstandings may increase the likelihood of complications once you leave the ER. In reality, the care you receive at the hospital is just one important part of the puzzle. Knowing what to do next—and following those discharge instructions closely—is critical to getting better. Here's what you need to do for the best health care results:

➔ **SPEAK UP.** Don't be afraid to ask questions if you're unsure of your condition, what treatments you were given, your test results or something in the discharge instructions—for example, whether a medication that's been prescribed may interact with one you're already taking. It's best to ask the ER physician caring for you,

rather than having to contact the ER later, when the physician you saw may no longer be on duty.

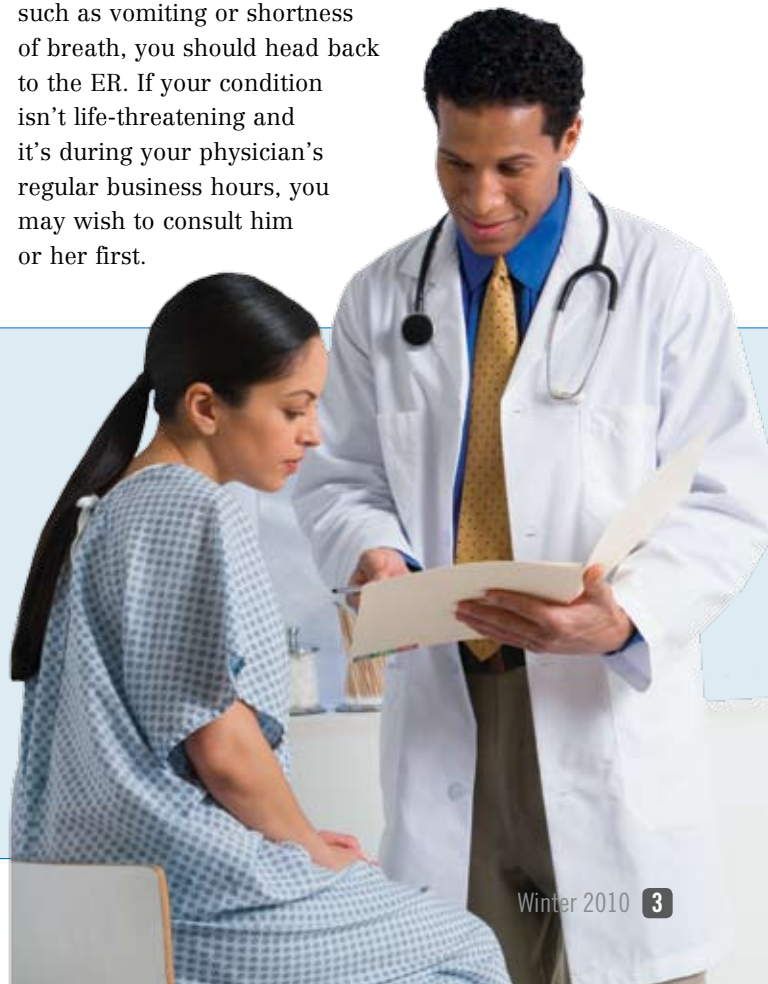
➔ **FOLLOW ALL MEDICATION DOSAGES.** Thoroughly read your discharge instructions. They should spell out what medications have been prescribed, what they treat and how often—and when—to take them.

➔ **FOLLOW UP WITH YOUR FAMILY PHYSICIAN OR A SPECIALIST.** You'll especially need to do this if you've received stitches or a cast. Your discharge instructions will tell you when to go. Double-check with your physician to make sure information about your ER visit, including test results, has been sent to his or her office before your appointment.

➔ **KNOW WHEN YOU SHOULD RETURN TO THE ER.** If your condition worsens or you're noticing new symptoms, such as vomiting or shortness of breath, you should head back to the ER. If your condition isn't life-threatening and it's during your physician's regular business hours, you may wish to consult him or her first.

How did we do?

When you check in to the ER, admitting personnel will ask you if it's OK to follow up with you once you're back home. If you agree to it, we'll try to call you within 24 hours of your discharge, asking you six questions about your visit. At that time, if you don't understand your discharge instructions or have any questions about your treatment, a nurse will call you back. This process, called **Discharge Callback Administrator, or DCA**, helps us improve the way we care for our patients and ensure that you're on the road to recovery.





So many services!

As part of his practice, Dr. Goswami accepts referrals for a variety of chronic pain conditions, including:

- degenerative disc disease
- lumbar and cervical nerve root damage
- spinal stenosis
- spinal disc pain and disc herniation
- sacroiliac joint syndrome
- bursitis (inflammation of fluid-filled sacs in the joints)
- myofascial syndrome (muscle pain and inflammation)
- piriformis syndrome, or sciatica
- spinal compression fracture treatment
- chronic extremity pain
- postherpetic neuralgia (a complication of shingles)
- occipital headache
- chronic facial pain
- osteoarthritis
- chronic abdominal pain
- chronic pelvic pain

! Stand up to pain!

Dr. Goswami is available for scheduled office appointments and hospital consultations on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call (570) 893-5437. A physician's referral is required.



Ease the pain

Our specialist can help



Amit Goswami, M.D.
Pain Specialist

More than 75 million Americans have chronic debilitating pain, reports the National Pain Foundation. Chronic pain accounts for more than 80 percent of all physician visits.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

Most pain sufferers first turn to conventional pain relief, which may include medication, physical therapy and functional restoration programs, as well as psychological behavioral interventions. But for people who have chronic pain, these remedies may not provide relief or offer only temporary solutions.

Now those patients have access to Amit Goswami, M.D., interventional pain management specialist, who practices on the second floor of Lock Haven Hospital.

Dr. Goswami, a board-certified pain specialist and diplomate of the American Board of Anesthesiology, completed his interventional pain medicine fellowship at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center in New York, N.Y., and his cardiothoracic anesthesia fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Cleveland, Ohio.

Severe pain can interfere with every part of your life: your health, your work and your daily activities. If you've tried a conventional approach to pain and have been unsuccessful, it may be time to seek advice from the pain management team at Lock Haven Hospital.

Get back in the game with orthopedic care



Apostolos
Dimitroulias, M.D.
Orthopedist and
Orthopedic Surgeon

Broken bones, bad hips and knees, sprains or joint injuries can occur at any time, but this doesn't mean you have to stop doing the things you love. Lock Haven Hospital welcomed Apostolos Dimitroulias, M.D., an orthopedist and orthopedic surgeon, to the medical staff in December, enhancing orthopedic services for area residents.

BETTER YOUR BODY

Orthopedics focuses on disorders of the musculoskeletal system—the bones, joints, ligaments, tendons and muscles of your body that allow you to work, move and be active. Dr. Dimitroulias treats patients of all ages and conditions from tendinitis to osteoporosis, sports injuries, on-the-job injuries, car accidents and at-home accidents.

Diagnostic X-ray, MRI and CT scanning are available at Lock Haven Hospital for prompt and accurate diagnosis. Dr. Dimitroulias is backed by Lock Haven Hospital's experienced operating room staff, anesthesia department members and surgical team. In addition, our inpatient staff is trained and skilled in all areas of orthopedic services. We have advanced equipment and offer a coordinated, team approach to recovery, including pre-op classes, pain management services, physical therapy, exercise programs, swing beds and a closely monitored after-hospital recovery program.

! Take charge of your health!

Dr. Dimitroulias is available to see patients at Lock Haven Surgical Associates, 24 Cree Drive, Suite A, in Lock Haven. Office hours are Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information about orthopedic services at Lock Haven Hospital or to make an appointment, call (570) 893-5330.

About Dr. Dimitroulias

Apostolos Dimitroulias, M.D., received his medical education from Albert Szent-Gyorgyi Medical University in Szeged, Hungary, and his postgraduate training from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Medical School in Thessaloniki, Greece. Dr. Dimitroulias also received postdoctoral clinical fellowship training in orthopedic trauma from the University of Pittsburgh Department of Orthopaedic Surgery in Pittsburgh, and postdoctoral clinical fellowship training in adult reconstruction from Duke University Medical Center in Durham, N.C.

Dr. Dimitroulias is a member of various medical associations such as the Hellenic Medical Association, General Medical Council, Specialist Register in Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery and Piedmont Orthopedic Society.

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about **obesity**?

Take this quiz to find out.

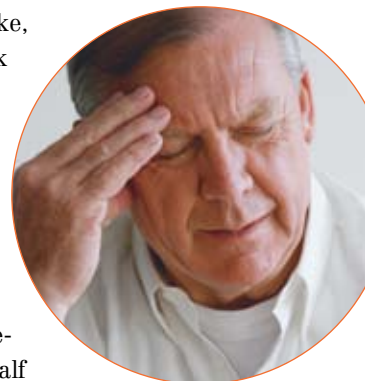
- 1** What percentage of American adults are overweight or obese?
 - a. 25
 - b. 33
 - c. 50
 - d. 66
- 2** Which of the following has not been linked to obesity?
 - a. hyperthyroidism
 - b. cancer
 - c. gallbladder disease
 - d. infertility
- 3** Obese children have a higher risk of:
 - a. asthma
 - b. early puberty
 - c. skin infections
 - d. all of the above
- 4** One problem with body mass index (BMI)—a calculation that assesses obesity—is that:
 - a. It doesn't take height into account.
 - b. It doesn't measure muscle, so a muscular person can have a high BMI.
 - c. It doesn't factor in age.
 - d. none of the above
- 5** How much excess weight do you usually have to be carrying to be considered for weight-loss surgery?
 - a. 30 pounds for women, 50 for men
 - b. 50 pounds for women, 70 for men
 - c. 80 pounds for women, 100 for men
 - d. There's no minimum weight requirement for weight-loss surgery.

ANSWERS: 1. (d), 2. (a), 3. (d), 4. (b), 5. (c)

{ MINI-STROKES }

Heed the warning

It may not be a full-blown stroke, but a transient ischemic attack (TIA)—also called a mini-stroke—is your warning that one could be just around the corner. TIAs produce symptoms similar to strokes, but they usually only last a few minutes and don't cause damage. About a third of people who have TIAs will subsequently have a stroke, and about half of them will have it within a year.



INSIDE A TIA

A TIA occurs when a blood clot briefly blocks an artery, cutting off part of the brain's blood supply. Like a stroke, symptoms arise without warning. They include:

- sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg—usually on one side of the body
- sudden confusion, speech problems or trouble comprehending
- sudden problems walking, dizziness and loss of balance or coordination
- sudden severe headaches
- sudden vision problems such as loss of sight in one eye

If you suffer any of these symptoms, call an ambulance or have a friend take you to the ER right away. Physicians usually have to make a diagnosis based on your medical history.

IS A TIA IN YOUR FUTURE?

You're at higher risk for a TIA if you:

- have a family history of TIA or stroke
- are 55 years or older
- are a man
- are African-American

Those are things you can't control, but you can help change other risk factors:

- blood pressure 140/85 mm Hg or higher
- high cholesterol
- heart disease, carotid artery disease and peripheral artery disease
- obesity
- cigarette smoking
- heavy drinking
- physical inactivity
- diabetes
- a high-fat, high-sodium diet

Sending out an SOS:

Texting can be bad for your health

It's not uncommon to see people crossing busy streets or even driving with their cell phone or BlackBerry® in hand, dashing off a quick message. Texting shifts your focus away from the task at hand and can be downright dangerous.

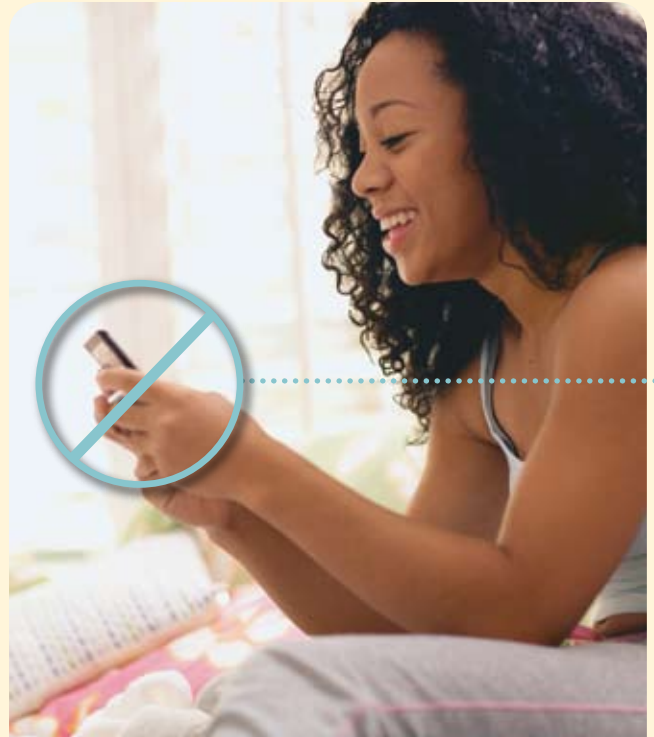
While no hard numbers exist, the American College of Emergency Physicians has reported an anecdotal rise in serious and fatal injuries involving texting—especially among teens and young adults. That includes face, chin, mouth and eye injuries for those who trip and fall while texting, and fatal trauma stemming from car accidents. Texting has also been linked to medical phenomena like “BlackBerry thumb” and “teen texting tendonitis”—catchphrases for conditions that result from the repetitive thumb motions of texting. These conditions can cause pain and numbness in the thumbs and joints of the hand.

BE TEXT SAVVY

Steer clear of texting troubles by following a few guidelines:

- Avoid texting while doing things like walking and driving. Turn your phone off to avoid temptation.
- On the road, pull over if you need to text immediately.
- Set a good example behind the wheel: Don't engage in distracting behavior in front of your kids.

- Contact your cell-phone provider if you're worried about your child's texting habits. Some companies now offer services that ban texting at certain times of the day.



A healthy lunch is in the bag!

Every day at noon, workers around the country run to the corner deli for a sandwich, hit a local eatery with co-workers or order in. But if you're watching your waistline—or your wallet—packing your own lunch is a smarter solution. A homemade lunch is more nutritious and economical, as long as you pack it correctly. The recipe for a healthy lunch includes:

- **PROTEIN** Try lean turkey, ham, roast beef, tuna or a bean-based entree, such as hummus or a black bean burrito.
- **GOOD GRAINS** Pack whole-wheat pasta salad and sandwiches made on multigrain bread.
- **FRUITS AND VEGGIES** The deeper the color of the vegetable or fruit, the more vitamins and minerals it contains. Slice up baby carrots, peppers, broccoli, apples, blueberries and oranges.



- **CALCIUM** Slip fat-free yogurt, cottage cheese or string cheese into your bag.
- **H₂O** Water has no calories, so it's a perfect choice, but if you need a little more flavor, try adding a squeeze of lemon, lime or orange. Watch out for fruit juices, energy drinks and sodas, which are loaded with sugar.
- **FLAVOR APPEAL** Switch it up a bit by adding interesting items, like walnuts in a salad or horseradish spread on a roast beef sandwich.
- **MINIMAL SODIUM** Thinking of one of those “healthy” frozen meals? Watch out for sodium. Total daily intake for a healthy individual shouldn't exceed 2,300 milligrams (mg), and some frozen meals can contain a big portion of your day's allotment. Follow the FDA's recommendation for a healthy frozen meal by choosing one that has 480 mg of sodium or less per serving.

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The information contained in this publication is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice. If you have medical concerns, please consult your health care provider.

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WINTER 2010



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Welcome our new staff member



Jerome Ellis, M.D.
Emergency
Department Medical
Director

Lock Haven Hospital is pleased to welcome Jerome Ellis, M.D., as emergency department medical director. “The emergency department here has a tremendous record for quick patient turnaround and providing quality medical care,” Dr. Ellis says. “The challenge now is to build on those strengths and continue to grow our patient services.”

ABOUT DR. ELLIS

A native of the Harrisburg area, Dr. Ellis attended Northeastern University in Boston, Mass., where he graduated summa cum laude. He received his medical degree from Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston and was named to the Alpha Omega Alpha medical honor society. He completed his residency at the University of Rochester in Rochester, N.Y.

He also recently attended the national meeting of the American College of Emergency Physicians, seeking ways to bring advances in patient care to Lock Haven.

Dr. Ellis is board certified in both internal medicine and pediatrics. “To be board certified in both adult and children’s care required a particularly rigorous residency,” says Cindy Segar-Miller, CEO of Lock Haven Hospital. “Dr. Ellis brings exceptional training and experience to the key role of medical director in our emergency department.”

5 steps to less stress

Uncontrolled stress can lead to serious health problems including fatigue, depression and insomnia. But with better time management and coping skills, you’ll improve your health and regain time for loved ones and yourself. This New Year, try taming stress by:

- 1 LETTING GO.** Reliving long-ago arguments or holding grudges only adds to stress and fuels anger. A perfect world is unrealistic.
- 2 EATING WELL.** Choose a low-fat diet that features lots of fruit, vegetables and grains. Limit salt in the foods you buy and in preparing meals. Your daily intake should be no more than 2,000 milligrams a day. Too much salt raises blood pressure. Watch your sugar, too. It can intensify mood swings.
- 3 PLANNING.** Tomorrow, instead of hitting the ground running, take a few moments to plan your day. That way, you’ll spot and avoid future time-wasters.
- 4 IMPROVING.** First, quit smoking. It raises your blood pressure and your cancer risk every time you light up. Then start exercising. A minimum of 30 minutes of exercise three days a week boosts energy and works off tension. Go to bed at the same time each night and get eight hours of restorative shut-eye.
- 5 RELAXING.** Studies show that calming skills such as deep breathing, stretching, yoga, prayer, a pastime or a leisurely walk lower heart rate, blood pressure and muscle tension.



! Time for a new you!

To get more health tips this New Year, visit www.lockhavenhospital.com and click on “Health Resources.”