

Hill Health

The Magazine of
Hill Physicians
Medical Group

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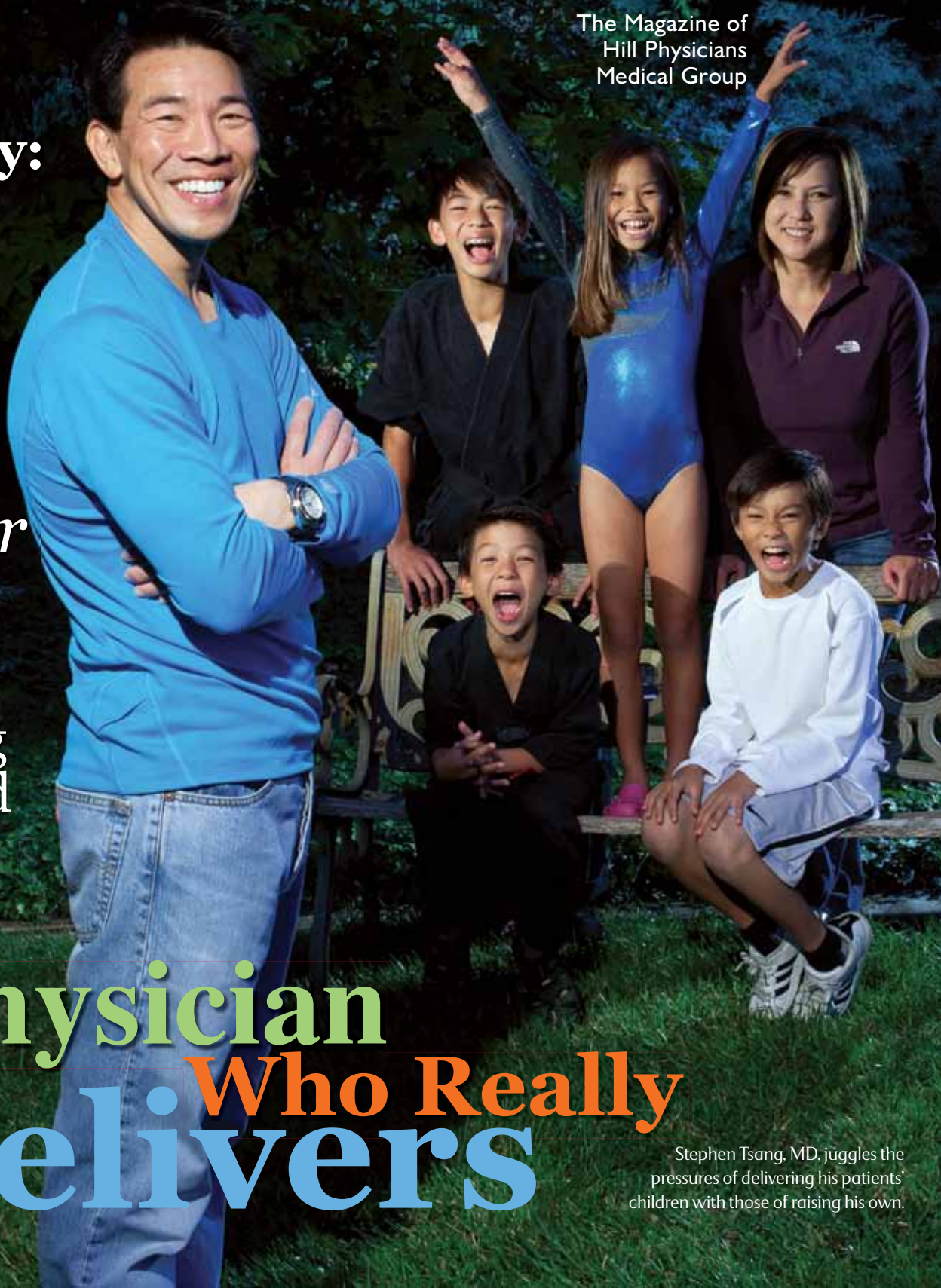
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Who Really
Delivers**

Stephen Tsang, MD, juggles the pressures of delivering his patients' children with those of raising his own.



Improving Healthcare for You

It takes more than one organization to affect the healthcare of thousands. That's why Hill Physicians works closely with multiple partners – physicians, hospitals and health plans – to provide the best medical care for our members.

Two years ago, we formed an alliance with Blue Shield of California and the Catholic Healthcare West hospital system in order to improve the

health of California state employees in Sacramento. The goal: Cut costs of healthcare and keep these members' health insurance premiums from going up while also improving medical care and increasing member satisfaction.

The partnership has been a success and earned us national recognition. One year into the program, we saved \$15 million, which helped reduce the premiums for CalPERS employees. We also introduced 22 new initiatives, which led to better health and satisfaction of these members. The improvements included:

- Enhanced patient outreach and focus on preventive care
- Improved care for key conditions and procedures, including common surgeries
- Improved pain management, including new programs and case management for people with chronic pain

- Reduced prescription costs and costs of injectable medications
- Reduced hospital admissions, length of stay in the hospital and readmissions
- Improved communication, including better technology and use of electronic health records

This year we're rolling out new programs for our CalPERS Sacramento members and expanding our most successful programs to other members and regions throughout northern California. We'll also strengthen existing partnerships and create new connections to keep improving healthcare for all our members.

Are you a Hill Physicians member? Then you're one of our valued partners, too. Email us at health@hpmg.com if you have a suggestion for improving the quality of your healthcare.

HillHealth WINTER 2012

The magazine of Hill Physicians Medical Group Hill Physicians is the largest independent medical group in northern California, with more than 3,000 physicians and other healthcare providers who contract with HMO health plans to provide your medical care.

Contact Hill Physicians

■ Customer Service
(800) 445-5747
Email: customerservice@hpmg.com

■ Member Health Improvement
(855) 644-4764
Email: health@hpmg.com

■ Hearing Impaired
TTY to Voice (800) 735-2929
Voice to TTY (800) 735-2922

■ Contact Your Health Plan
Your health plan's phone number can be found on your health plan identification card.

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We hope you enjoy our award-winning magazine. If you receive duplicate copies or no longer wish to receive Hill Health, please email health@hpmg.com or call (855) 644-4764. Because many members have similar names, provide your full name, address and phone number.

For additional health information, visit www.HillPhysicians.com/YourHealth

New Video: Yoga for Your Health

Many people who want to improve their health and prevent illness turn to complementary practices such as yoga, a 5,000-year-old healing art. The goal of yoga is to improve physical, mental and emotional health and to support a feeling of oneness in mind, body and spirit.

Yoga combines breath, meditation and various poses to stretch and strengthen the body. The health benefits of consistent yoga practice include:

- Stress reduction
- Healthier blood pressure
- Decreased muscle tension
- Improved strength and flexibility
- Increased emotional wellness

Try our online free, beginning-level yoga video *Yoga for Your Health* at www.HillPhysicians.com/Yoga, and discover the valuable mind and body benefits for yourself. While you're there, check out our other videos, podcasts and tip sheets to help you stay healthy and live well. Visit www.HillPhysicians.com/Videos or www.HillPhysicians.com/Yoga to learn more. Hill Physicians members can receive a discount on yoga classes. Visit our website's Your Health tab to find an instructor or call (855) 644-4764.



A Physician Who Really Delivers

Stephen Tsang, MD, a Hill Physicians obstetrician-gynecologist in Tracy, grew up watching his father work as a surgeon. Dr. Tsang went on to study biomedical engineering, and then spent time as a surgeon himself. While he enjoyed the work, Dr. Tsang soon realized that he didn't want to focus on illness throughout his career. So he moved into his current specialty.

"I love delivering babies. It's a miracle every day," Dr. Tsang says. "Through all those billions of cell divisions, it makes this little person who comes popping out nine months later."

Dr. Tsang still performs some surgeries as part of his private practice. He says he enjoys getting to know patients, and appreciates the opportunity to address sensitive issues and improve their lives.

Interestingly, the busy physician also says his real job begins after his office hours end. Dr. Tsang and his wife, Thuxoan, have been married for 19 years and have four children. Their oldest son, 13-year-old Preston, holds a third-degree black belt in tae kwon do and participates in fencing and hip-hop dancing. Their 10-year-old son, Hudson, plays tennis and has earned his first-degree tae kwon do black belt. Romi, the Tsangs' 9-year-old daughter, is a competitive gymnast, and 7-year-old son Ronin also takes tae kwon do lessons. Thuxoan's mother lives with the family as well, and they frequently travel to San Jose to see Dr. Tsang's parents.

Despite such busy schedules, members of the Tsang family make time to play and travel together. When Hudson took up tennis, for example, Dr. Tsang picked up his own racket and joined him on the court. The whole family often takes skiing and hiking trips. Other times, they just head to the beach to relax for a day.

"Some of us will swim and some won't, but we're all together. That time is so precious. It's probably the most important thing in life," says Dr. Tsang, who also calls being a husband and father "the greatest adventure ever."

He regularly reminds his patients that wellness plays an important role in the quality of life.

"Staying healthy is mandatory," Dr. Tsang says. "You only have one body."

Watch a video about how Dr. Tsang balances a busy practice and family wellness at www.HillPhysicians.com/HillHealth

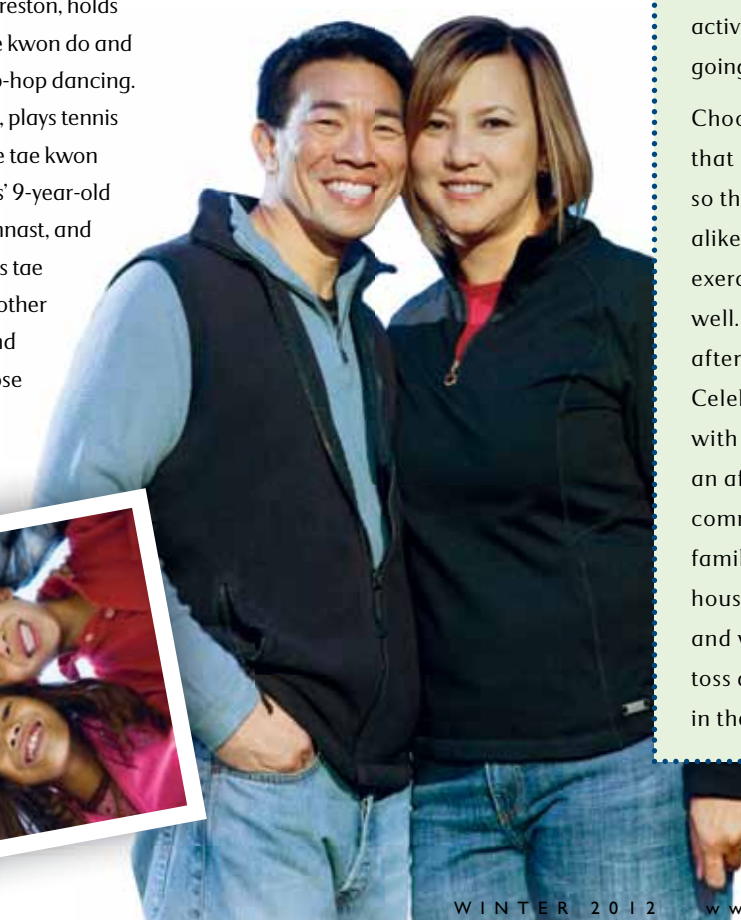


Family Fitness

Families juggling busy work, school and after-school schedules often struggle to set aside time for fitness. Making exercise a family priority, however, promotes healthy choices and stronger personal connections for all involved.

"Pick something the whole family enjoys," suggests Stephen Tsang, MD. "Find one thing that can be your core activity – that activity, that's always going to pull you together."

Choose recreational opportunities that accommodate all fitness levels, so that youngsters and grandparents alike can participate. Incorporate exercise into your daily routine, as well. Walk around the neighborhood after dinner. Bike to the library. Celebrate birthdays and anniversaries with a hike, a game of catch or an afternoon in the park. Enter a community fun run and train as a family. Involve everyone in physical household chores, such as sweeping and vacuuming, or take time out to toss a Frisbee, hula hoop or skip rope in the backyard.



Getting a Good Night's Sleep

While fitful sleep is normal from time to time, chronic lack of sleep can contribute to weight gain, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other problems. In addition, studies show sleep-deprived students are more susceptible to risky behaviors.

For help getting a better night's sleep, follow these eight steps:

1. Maintain a regular sleep/wake schedule, even on weekends.

This helps train your brain and body to more consistently fall asleep and wake up.

2. Keep your bedroom cool, dark, quiet and comfortable.

Remove televisions and computers. Consider

eye masks, earplugs or white noise machines to block distracting light and sound.

3. Regular exercise promotes better sleep. But avoid working out within a few hours before bedtime.

4. Designate time during the day to address anxieties. Keep a notebook by your bed to jot down worries that surface at night.

5. Avoid caffeine and alcohol for several hours before bedtime, and give up nicotine products entirely.

6. Start your day with a nutrient-rich breakfast. Choose light, less spicy foods for dinner. Finish heavy meals a few hours in advance of bedtime, and consider a light snack to curb hunger before bed.

7. Create a relaxing pre-bedtime routine that includes meditation, muscle relaxation, reading or a warm bath.

8. If you wake up at night, or struggle to fall asleep in the first place, get out of bed after 15 to 30 minutes. Try stretching, reading or doing something relaxing until you're sleepy.

Visit the online sleep center at www.HillPhysicians.com/Sleep for additional tips and a helpful sleep podcast series.



Relaxation and Guided Imagery

Guided imagery helps you to focus your thoughts and senses on scenes and pleasant memories that allow you to relax. Whether you listen to recordings, an instructor's voice or follow your own guided imagery exercises, this mind-body technique promises stress-reducing power. Once it brings calm to the emotional control center of the brain, the practice's benefits also extend to your nervous, immune and endocrine systems.



In addition to promoting relaxation, guided imagery plays a role in pain relief and healing. Research indicates that using guided imagery can help ease migraine headaches, muscle tension and back pain. It also decreases heart rate and blood pressure. In several studies, patients who practiced guided imagery before and after surgery experienced less anxiety and pain

than non-practicing individuals. Plus, these patients needed less pain medication and left the hospital earlier than those relying on traditional treatments.

Are you ready to try guided imagery? Visit www.HillPhysicians.com/Podcasts to download podcasts that address specific health conditions.

If You Have Questions, We've Got Answers.

Call Member Health Improvement at (855) 644-4764 (toll-free) or email us at health@hpmg.com if there's a health question or topic you'd like to see in a future issue of *Hill Health Magazine*.

Your Geography Could Be Your Destiny

When there is more than one safe and effective choice to treat a condition, which treatment you get can depend a lot on where you live! For example, a man with an enlarged prostate living in Napa County is almost twice as likely to have his prostate removed as is a man living in Contra Costa County. Women who live in Berkeley deliver vaginally after having had a cesarean section 30 percent more often than the state average rate. And even though a lumpectomy and mastectomy are equally effective choices for treating most early breast cancer, when compared to women living in San Francisco, twice as many women in Sacramento have the full breast removed.

Your physician's beliefs and experiences combined with the standard of what is considered "usual" care by other physicians and patients living in your community can influence your healthcare. When you have more than one good choice (also called having a "preference-sensitive diagnosis"), it is especially important to share your concerns, values and preferences with your physician and family members before making a final treatment decision.

How do you know you have a preference-sensitive diagnosis?

Get started by asking your physician:

- * What are all my treatment alternatives? What are the risks and benefits of each?
- * Can I make lifestyle changes to better manage this condition?
- * Is it important for me to make this decision immediately, or is there time to think about it?

When there is no urgent risk, gather more information before making an important decision. Hill Physicians has written materials, online decision guides, DVDs and online videos to assist you in thinking through your choices related to treating dozens of preference-sensitive conditions from treatment of **insomnia, arthritis, menopause, or depression** to choosing to **have procedures such as an angiogram, a PSA test, or cataract or weight-loss surgery.** (See right.) Consider including family members or friends when reading or viewing video information about your condition. Doing so can help you be certain



that the treatment you choose is aligned with your values and your day-to-day and long-term lifestyle goals. Get started by visiting www.HillPhysicians.com/Decisions or call toll-free (855) 644-4764.

Get Help Making "Preference-Sensitive" Decisions

- Back pain treatments
- Knee or hip surgeries
- Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) and prostate cancer care
- Breast cancer treatments
- Abnormal uterine bleeding treatments
- Uterine fibroid treatments

Go to www.HillPhysicians.com/Decisions to learn about these health topics and **dozens** more.

A Tale of Two Decisions

Both John and Bob have had ongoing back pain from spinal stenosis that they have been managing without surgery. This year both of them worsened. John and Bob both watch a shared decision making (SDM) video about this condition with their family members and read the SDM materials. Both learn that

(laminectomy), people who have surgery and those who do not have about the same ability to perform daily functions. Both discuss this and other information about their conditions with their physicians and their families. John's back pain flares when he sits for more than two hours. It hurts to play with his grandkids, and he has trouble coping

with the pain. John is comfortable with more aggressive treatment and has time to recover from a laminectomy, so he opts to have surgery to improve his pain and function. Bob generally prefers conservative treatments. He decides to work with a physical therapist to stretch and do strengthening exercises, and with his doctor

to use medication to reduce his inflammation and pain. Who made the right choice? BOTH! John and Bob participated with their physicians in their treatment decisions. Each is satisfied and functioning better and is happy with his choice.

Health Improvement Guide

Aches & Pains

Back Pain Resources Online | Free

We've got the resources to alleviate your back pain, including three web videos on back care. Find it all at

www.HillPhysicians.com/BackPain

Migraine Resources Online | Free

For relief from migraines, go to

www.HillPhysicians.com/Migraines and access web videos, audio podcasts and the latest on migraine self-care.

Self-Acupressure Podcast Online | Free

Learn a self-acupressure sequence to reduce muscle tension and relax. Visit

www.HillPhysicians.com/Podcasts

Mindfulness-Based Stress

Reduction (MBSR) | Copay

Use mindfulness techniques to reduce pain and manage stress. Groups include orientation plus eight weekly sessions. Call Community Psychiatry at (888) 737-7712 to learn more.

Oakland, Roseville, Sacramento

NeuroBehavioral Pain Management

(NBP) | Free for Hill Physicians members

This four-week program teaches a mind-body technique for reducing or turning off pain and managing stress. Starts the first Tuesday of each month, 6:30-8:30 pm in Sacramento. Contact Member Health Improvement to register. NBP is also available by phone with a physician's referral.

Advance Directive

Advance Directive for Healthcare | Free

Document your preferences for the medical care you would like if you become too ill to communicate your wishes. Call for a copy or go to www.HillPhysicians.com/AdvanceDirective

Asthma

Asthma Education | \$25

Learn the latest treatment options and how allergies and infections relate to asthma.

For pediatric education, children must be at least 5 years old and accompanied by a guardian. **Mercy Hospital (916) 453-4268** (Sacramento area only.)

Blood Pressure

Paced Breathing Podcast Online | Free

Daily use of guided breathing can reduce blood pressure. This podcast uses musical tones to cue breathing, tapping into the body's tendency to match external rhythms. Visit

www.HillPhysicians.com/Podcasts

Cancer

Breast Cancer Resources | Free

If you've been diagnosed with breast cancer, see www.HillPhysicians.com/BreastCancer for treatment and medication information, decision guides, support group listings and more.

Cancer Support Services | Free

The Wellness Community offers a comprehensive program of cancer support groups, educational workshops and stress management classes.

Walnut Creek, The Wellness

Community (925) 933-0107

Diabetes

Diabetes Pathway Packet | Free

(For Hill Physicians members only.) A guide to your first year living with diabetes; it includes helpful tips and checklists. Call Member Health Improvement toll free at (855) 644-4764 or email health@hpmg.com for a mailed packet.

UCSF Diabetes Support

Study | Stipend

Do you have type 2 diabetes? If so, you might be eligible for a study providing phone education and support to patients with diabetes and their spouses or partners. For more information, call UCSF toll-free at (866) 774-7761.

Diabetes Management

Classes | Fees may apply

Learn to control your blood sugar, eat and exercise well, and manage your medications. Content, number of sessions and cost varies by location.

Alameda County

Classes in multiple locations and languages.

(510) 383-5185

Alameda, Alameda Hospital

Call the Bay Area Diabetes and Wellness Center.

(510) 922-8208

Berkeley, Alta Bates Summit

Diabetes Center

A covered benefit for Hill Physicians members. Medical copay might apply.

(510) 204-1081

Castro Valley, Eden Medical Center

(888) 445-8433

Concord, Mt. Diablo Center for Diabetes

(925) 674-2077

Folsom, Mercy Hospital

(888) 637-2956

Sacramento, Mercy Hospital

Multiple class offerings include

Getting Started and *Eating Well*.

(916) 733-6341

San Francisco, St. Mary's Medical Center

(415) 750-5513

Stockton, St. Joseph's Medical Center

(209) 461-5061

Tracy, Nutrition Studio

(209) 832-3432

Diabetes Support Group | Free

Learn healthy habits for diabetes self-care and share your successes and challenges with others. Group typically meets first Monday of the month from 5-6 pm.

San Leandro Surgery Center

(510) 351-1193

Diabetes One-on-One Education | Copay

(For Hill Physicians members only.) Receive one-on-one diabetes counseling with a registered dietitian or certified diabetes educator. Ask your physician for a referral or call us toll-free at (855) 644-4764.

Discounts

Massage and Yoga | Cost varies

Hill Physicians members receive a 15 percent discount on massage and yoga services. To locate a participating massage therapist or yoga class near you, visit

www.HillPhysicians.com/Discounts

En Español

Charlas en Español de Diabetes | Gratis

Guía de información y apoyo para personas con diabetes. Variedad de temas incluyen: ¿Qué significa tener diabetes? Introducción de cómo y cuándo hacerse la prueba de azúcar en la sangre. Guía de nutrición para preparar comidas saludables. Información sobre los medicamentos. Un plan de acción para cuando se está enfermo. Están invitados el segundo viernes de cada mes.

Stockton, St. Joseph's Medical Center

(209) 461-3251

Diabetes en Español | Gratis

Aprenda que hacer para bajar su nivel de azúcar sanguíneo, cuál es un nivel normal de azúcar en su sangre, síntomas de nivel alto/bajo de azúcar sanguíneo, qué son los carbohidratos, cómo crear un diario de los alimentos que usted come.

Woodland, Woodland Healthcare

(530) 662-3961

La Biblioteca Virtual de Salud | Gratis

La guía de salud práctica de Healthwise® en español tiene más de 225 artículos

Contact Member Health Improvement for more information.

Call us toll-free at (855) 644-4764 or email health@hpmg.com

pertinentes a temas comunes de salud además de proporcionarle información específica acerca de más de 3.000 medicamentos. Visite la página

www.HillPhysicians.com

Heart Health

Heart Health Resources Online | Free

Learn about your risk factors and how to prevent or treat heart problems. Get heart-healthy recipes, tip sheets and audio podcasts at www.HillPhysicians.com/HeartHealth

Heart Health CHAMP Class | Free

For people with heart failure and their families or friends to better understand and manage this condition. Classes are held the second Thursday of each month from 8:30-11:30 am. Registration is required.

Sacramento, Mercy Heart & Vascular

Institute (916) 564-2880 or (866) 775-7791

Nutrition & Weight Loss

Nutrition Counseling | Copay

(For Hill Physicians members only.) If you have been diagnosed with a chronic or dietary-related condition, you're eligible for one-on-one nutrition counseling. Ask your physician for a referral or contact Member Health Improvement.

Nutrition Resources and Web Videos | Free

Check out www.HillPhysicians.com/Nutrition for the latest on healthy eating and weight loss. For help making smart food choices, watch our Nutrition Fit web videos.

Stop Metabolic Syndrome | Fees may apply

If you have an apple-shaped body and unhealthy blood pressure, cholesterol, triglycerides or insulin, consider this fun, eight-session holistic wellness program, which includes food sampling, recipes, movement and stress management.

Carmichael Internal Medicine & Wellness

Therapies Medical Offices

(916) 481-4389

Pregnancy & Parenting

Preconception Planning | Free

Contact Member Health Improvement to request a copy of *Are You Ready? A Guide to Planning a Healthy and Happy Pregnancy*.

Prenatal Education Packet | Free

Topics include prenatal checkups, healthy pregnancy, labor and how to care for yourself and your baby after delivery. Available in English and Spanish.

Postpartum Counseling

May require copay

For help with postpartum emotional issues, call your health plan (the number is on your health plan ID card) or Member Health Improvement toll-free at (855) 644-4764. A referral from your physician is not required.

Children's Temperament

Video Online | Free

Have you ever wondered why your infant or child behaves in certain ways? Learn more about your child's temperament, complete a temperament assessment and receive parenting tips at www.HillPhysicians.com/Temperament

Family Fit Videos Online | Free

Visit www.HillPhysicians.com/Videos to learn how to make fitness a part of your family's routine.

Smoking Cessation

Smoking Cessation

Resource Guide | Free

For classes, programs and community resources to help you quit smoking go to www.HillPhysicians.com/QuitNow or call to request a mailed copy of the guide.

California Smokers Helpline | Free

Free phone counseling helps you quit.

English: (800) 662-8887

Cantonese: (800) 838-8917

Spanish: (800) 456-6386

Korean: (800) 556-5564

Vietnamese: (800) 778-8440

Hearing Impaired: (800) 933-4833

Smokeless Tobacco: (800) 844-2439

No Ifs, Ands or Butts: Smoking Cessation

\$60 for Hill Physicians members; \$70 for nonmembers; get half back after quitting smoking

Develop a plan; use behavioral techniques; manage stress, weight and exercise; and quit for good. This six-session program meets Thursday evenings. Call Mercy Hospital at (916) 453-4268 for more information. (Sacramento area only.)

Stress & Emotions

Emotional Wellness Web Videos | Free

Visit www.HillPhysicians.com/Videos to learn how to incorporate emotional wellness strategies into daily life. Topics include meditation, healing and forgiveness.

Relaxation Podcasts Online | Free

Each podcast focuses on a different type of relaxation or stress-reduction technique,

and lasts about 10 minutes. Go to www.HillPhysicians.com/Podcasts

Stress Relief Web Videos | Free

Visit www.HillPhysicians.com/Videos to learn eight fun ways to relieve stress and how to cope in difficult times or with chronic illness.

Behavioral Health Services | Cost varies

To find out if you have behavioral health benefits and to schedule appointments, contact the behavioral health organization chosen by your health plan. Call your health plan or Member Health Improvement toll-free at (855) 644-4764 for more details.

Surgery

Pre-Surgery Class | Free

Prepare for your upcoming surgery at Mercy General. Classes run every Monday at 10 am in the hospital greenhouse. For more information or to register call (916) 736-8054. (Sacramento area only.)

Surgery Podcasts | Free

Use guided imagery and affirmations to prepare for your surgery and recovery. Go to www.HillPhysicians.com/Podcasts to listen to *Preparing for Surgery and Healing from Surgery*.

Hip and Knee Pre-Surgery Class | Free

The Total Joint Class prepares you for joint surgery and recovery and reduces anxiety about your procedure. Call for details and registration. (Sacramento area only.)

Mercy San Juan

(916) 537-5057

Mercy Methodist

(916) 681-1672

Mercy General

(916) 453-4553

Mercy Folsom

(916) 817-8669

Bariatric Post-Surgery Meetings | Free

Seminars, diet classes and support groups are available for people who have had weight-loss surgery at Mercy Methodist. Call (916) 423-5909 or email rondi.crowley@chw.edu

Lap Band Surgery Support Group | Free

Support group meetings are available for patients who have had lap band surgery at Mercy Methodist. Call (916) 423-5909 or email rondi.crowley@chw.edu

If You Drink Up, Think About Slowing Down



You might have seen studies that show some health benefits of drinking alcohol. A study suggests that moderate alcohol consumption could prevent about 26,000 heart attacks, strokes or diabetes deaths annually. On the other hand, the same study reports that 90,000 people die unnecessarily each year from alcohol-related problems, such as liver disease and traffic accidents.

How much is enough?

If you drink, “right sizing” the amount is the best way to be as healthy as possible.

For adults under age 65, the limit should be:

- Two drinks a day for men
- One drink a day for women
- One drink is 10 ounces of beer, 4 ounces of wine or 1.25 ounces of most hard liquors
- If you're over age 65 and are healthy, the National Institutes of Health recommend limiting alcohol to seven or fewer drinks a week with no more than three of those drinks on any one day

Want to slow it down?

Here are some tips:

- Take notes. Just the act of writing down what you drink or what you plan to drink can help you make changes.
- Sip slowly. Limit yourself to one drink an hour.
- Have a glass of water before your first drink.
- Have a “spacer,” a nonalcoholic drink after every alcoholic drink.
- Rehearse your options. Practice saying “no, thanks,” or “I’d love a diet drink instead.”
- Get help. Your health plan’s behavioral health benefit might include services for drug or alcohol dependency. Visit our website at www.HillPhysicians.com/AlcoholHelp

Many people use alcohol to relax or as a pleasant addition to social occasions. The more you drink the more you might need to drink to feel the same effects; so it’s easy to gradually slip into overindulging. Not sure if you have a drinking problem? Denial is normal! Test yourself using our interactive tool at www.HillPhysicians.com/AlcoholUse

Migraine: You Don’t Have to Just “Tough It Out”

Migraine headaches can last up to three days. But even three hours can take you away from family, work and activities you want to do.

Medicines are one option to treat migraines. But changes in lifestyle, nutrition and certain activities can help you limit how many, how long and how severe your migraines are.

Your healthcare team at Hill Physicians offers online information to help you create a personal plan to stop or prevent migraines. Visit www.HillPhysicians.com/Migraine

- * How to identify and avoid what triggers headaches
- * Self-care podcasts and videos about “guided imagery” and other ways to help you reduce muscle tension, swelling and pain
- * An overview of “complementary” therapies, such as biofeedback, acupuncture and muscle relaxation
- * Benefits and risks of different medicines

It might take some time to find your personal solution. Work with your physician to get relief from migraines but as you do, know that you don’t just have to “tough it out.”



Cheaper, Effective Care for Migraines.

Headache experts have long prescribed nondrug therapy such as, relaxation training and hypnosis to help people with migraines. New research now shows these can be about \$500 cheaper each year, compared to drugs. To learn more about how to manage migraines, visit www.HillPhysicians.com/Migraine



End-of-Life Care: Four Resources to Know About NOW

Though conversations about death and dying are difficult, the best time to make end-of-life care decisions is when you are healthy. Depending on your age and stage, here are options to consider:

Advance directive: Completing an Advance Directive for Healthcare allows you to inform your physician and loved ones about what measures you would like should a serious injury or illness occur leaving you unable to speak for yourself.

POLST: If you already have a serious illness, a POLST (Physician Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment) form also should be completed, *signed by both you and your physician and placed in your medical record.*

Hospice: While designed to provide comfort care, family support and special free services in the the last six months of life, hospice programs also will provide a visit in advance of that time to get to know you or your family members and to explain the services. Many wait too long to contact hospice and miss help when they need it most.



Palliative care: This is another option for individuals with chronic or serious conditions, such as cancer, Alzheimer’s and heart disease, to discuss with their physicians. Unlike hospice, palliative care can be administered at any point from diagnosis through treatment and recovery. Like hospice, palliative care aims to manage pain, improve quality of life and support family members with emotional needs and caretaking duties.

Visit www.HillPhysicians.com/AdvanceDirective for conversation-starting suggestions and printable advance directive forms. For POLST forms, help understanding or accessing palliative care or hospice contact Hill Physicians Case Management at (855) 726-4764.

Find Out the Hands-Down Best Way to Stay Healthy This Winter

Washing your hands is the single best way to prevent colds and many other diseases this winter. Try this quick quiz with your family and friends to spread the word – instead of germs – when it comes to good hand-washing:

1. True or false? Water temperature doesn’t matter much to get hands clean.
2. How many seconds of scrubbing with soap and water will do the job?
3. Which is best: Patting dry or using a hand air dryer?

4. True or false? Gels and waterless sanitizers are good alternatives to soap and water.

Answers:

1. True, according to research.
2. It takes 20 seconds.
3. The verdict is still out on that one, researchers say. Just be sure to dry your hands well either way.
4. True and false: Soap and water are still best before eating and after visiting

the bathroom. But sanitizers with 60 percent or more alcohol can kill many types of germs (but can dry your skin). Avoid “antibacterial hand sanitizers that are NOT alcohol-based as they could aid the development of resistant forms of bacteria.

Researchers agree with moms: Wash up! That simple act is one of the very best ways to keep healthy.

Healthy Birthday to You!

As important as hand-washing is, most people don’t wash long enough. As a timer, sing the “Happy Birthday” song through twice while you wash up. Try a “healthy birthday” verse the second time around, to remind you of why you’re standing there in front of the sink for so long.



Exercise for All

When work leaves you too tired for the gym or arthritis stiffens you with pain, the temptation to skip exercise can be strong. At these times, however, activity is especially important. Studies show that even small amounts of exercise improve mood, combat soreness and reduce disease risk.



The American Heart Association reported that people participating in 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity per week cut coronary heart disease risk by 14 percent. Many arthritis patients find gentle range-of-motion, strengthening and aerobic exercises helpful in relieving joint pain and increasing flexibility and strength. Physical activity also contributes to weight control, builds bone density, promotes better sleep and protects against type 2 diabetes and some cancers.

Incorporating exercise into your day, even if you don't have time for a full workout, is one of the best things you can do for your health. If the treadmill doesn't appeal, try swimming, dancing, yoga, hiking, biking or simply taking long, brisk walks. Register for a few personal training sessions if equipment seems intimidating; you might be motivated by the process of outlining fitness goals and getting a tailored workout plan, too. When time is an issue, break activities into 10-minute chunks. Take the stairs instead of elevators, walk an extra lap around the mall or do pushups during the commercials of your favorite show.

Those new to exercise, or individuals with arthritis and other health conditions, should start slowly, focusing on low-impact activities and increasing workout times as they build strength. If your health permits it, make a commitment to do some exercise in the next 24 hours!

The 10 Percent Rule for Weight Loss

Losing weight sets you up for improved overall health, extra energy and decreased stress – plus reduced risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, certain cancers, type 2 diabetes and other conditions. While the basic formula for shedding pounds is straightforward – burn more calories than you take in – the reality isn't always that simple.

The 10 percent weight-loss rule says that once you've dropped 10 percent of your body weight, your body naturally starts conserving energy to prevent starvation. Since your slimmed-down system operates more efficiently, you'll also burn fewer calories.

To prevent hitting a weight-loss plateau after shedding that first 10 percent, build more calorie-burning muscle by adding strength training to your routine. Add extra minutes or more intense activity to your cardiovascular workout. And continue choosing a balanced, nutrient-rich diet of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean protein and low-fat dairy over sweets, sodas and empty calories.



Exercising with Walking Poles.

Hiking or trekking poles can make walking safer while easing pressure on knees, hips and feet. The stabilizing effect of the poles protects you from falling, and moving the poles engages your upper body in the workout. You can buy adjustable poles at sporting goods stores or online. Besides being a good alternative to canes, walkers or nothing: Poles look cool!

MANAGING HEART DISEASE

Is there an option to surgery for coronary artery disease?

An individual with coronary heart disease experiences narrowed or blocked blood vessels. The result is decreased blood flow to the heart, brain and body – and in more serious cases, heart attack or stroke.

Physicians often address heart disease by prescribing a combination of aspirin and/or blood thinners, statins, beta-blockers,

angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors or omega-3 fatty acids. If you've been diagnosed, talk to your physician about these treatment options before considering surgery. For many patients, the proper medications can prevent more invasive procedures, such as angioplasties or stent placements. If you do have surgery, continue with follow-up appointments and prescriptions to protect your long-term health.

Lifestyle changes can lower your risk of complications from coronary artery disease, whether or not



you've been diagnosed with heart disease. Fill your plate with fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins, rather than high-fat and high-sodium foods. Exercise at least 30 minutes a day most days of the week. If you smoke, quit. Work to control your weight, cholesterol and blood pressure. Reduce stress, manage diabetes and floss regularly, as well.

ARE CAFFEINATED DRINKS Safe for My Child?

“Energy drinks” are a lucrative business, and their manufacturers have invested many resources to influence your purchasing habits. Advertising campaigns utilizing popular athletes are trying to encourage young adolescents to consume these caffeinated beverages. Some of these drinks can contain as much caffeine as 14 cans of soda.

The American Academy of Pediatrics encourages children to avoid food or beverages with such high doses of caffeine. The stimulants in these products can be dangerous and may interact with some medications.

Teach your children how to handle “low energy” by trying the following:

- * Find out why your children think they need these “energy drinks.” Stimulants can actually cause fatigue in the long run. They may lead to insomnia and interfere with clear thinking. Perhaps they just need some more sleep.
- * Discuss the difference between “sports” and “energy” drinks. Sports drinks may be helpful in replacing water and

electrolytes after a very strenuous workout. They do contain extra calories, but often without any added caffeine.

- * Talk about the importance of good nutrition and how the appropriate snacks can provide some needed energy and focus. Good choices include a small serving of unsweetened yogurt with low-fat granola, a few slices of turkey with whole-wheat bread or crackers, or a small handful of almonds.

- * Remember to keep well hydrated. Water is the healthiest option.



Sports Drinks and Exercise.

Sports drinks can help replenish electrolytes lost during exercise, and because they contain sugar, they can also give you a boost of energy. Kids or adults participating for at least one hour in very high-intensity activities with nonstop movement in hot weather might benefit. For the rest of the time, drink water.

How to Stretch Your Food Budget and Fatten Your Wallet

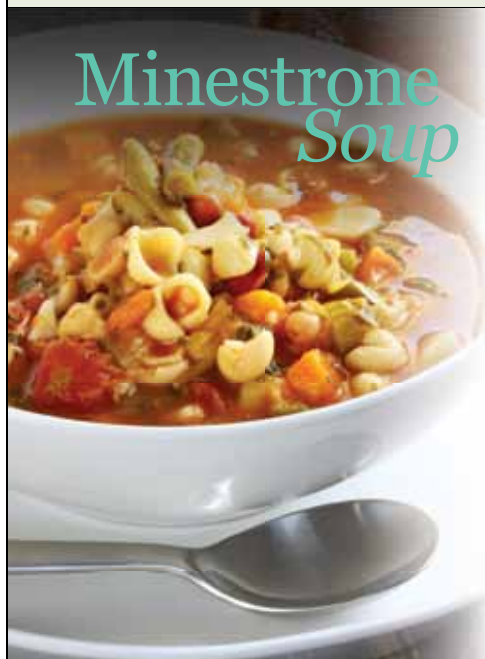
Researchers last spring found that junk food is getting cheaper, and the cost of healthier foods is rising. But when you eat poorly, what you save in cash, you gain in calories, fat, pounds and many other risks to your good health.

Experts now say we should fill half of our plates with fruits and vegetables. Since these can be costly, we're sharing some tips to stretch your food budget and keep your cash in your wallet:

- **Plan to save.** Plan your meals and snacks for the week based on sales and coupons from the produce aisle.
 - **Freshen up.** Buy what's in season, and check out your local farmer's market. But buy only what you can use in a couple of days (unless you plan to can or freeze).
 - **Stock up.** If you can buy fresh foods and dried beans in bulk, you'll usually save a bundle.
- Cook them up and freeze in one- to three-cup bags. Use these for soups, sides and even salads.
- **Look down.** The cheapest foods at your grocer are often on the lower shelves. The most expensive are right at eye level. Shop for store brands, too.
 - **“Easy” can really mean “costly.”** Foods that are ready-to-eat, boxed up and processed are usually more

expensive, compared to fixing the same food from scratch. And when you buy whole foods to prepare a dish, you can leave out the extra fat, salt, preservatives and other unhealthy ingredients.

- **Don't toss it out.** Freeze single-portion leftovers. Or use them in a stew or soup later in the week.



Minestrone Soup

Who doesn't enjoy a steaming bowl of hearty soup on a cold winter's night? Pea, lentil, bean, and vegetable soups are both nutritious and inexpensive. Serve alone or as a full meal along with fresh bread and salad greens.

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 6 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 cup cabbage, sliced thin
- 2 large celery stalks, sliced
- 2 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 1 28 oz. can low-sodium tomatoes, chopped with liquid
- 15 oz. of cooked chickpeas (rinsed if canned)
- 15 oz. of white beans or other beans (rinsed if canned)

Preparation

In a large pot, heat oil and cook garlic and onions until translucent. Add broth, cabbage, celery, carrots, and tomatoes, and cook for 40 minutes. Then add chickpeas and beans. Simmer for 20 more minutes.

Serves 4

Option: Sprinkle with a small amount of grated cheese to add calcium and more protein, but also more fat and calories.

Nutrition Facts

Calories: 121; Fat: 5.5 g; Cholesterol: 0 mg; Sodium: 1185.8 mg; Carbohydrates: 9.2 g; Fiber: 2 g; Protein: 8.3 g

Tip: Replace canned ingredients with fresh tomatoes and prepared dry beans to reduce sodium.