



Welcome to Our New Magazine
see introduction, page 2

SAINT
VINCENT


Vitals

Winter/Spring 2005 | www.saintvincenthealth.com

Information and Resources for Health and Wellness

I began
to look at men.
What did I find?
I found myself in
the presence of an
engine. The great-
est engine that
mind could
conceive.

**New Era in Neonatal Intensive
Care at Saint Vincent**
page 7

**Good News in the Fight
Against Breast Cancer**
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Doesn't Stop at Discharge**
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Body & Soul Events

Breast Health and Women of Color

When: Friday, March 18; 6 to 8 p.m.

Where: 2nd Floor of Blasco Library, Erie

Details: Features musical entertainment, dessert buffet, and the Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition breast cancer survival display, "68 Women, 68 Counties in Pennsylvania." FREE. Call **814/866-4817** to register.

Minority Cancer Awareness

When: Saturday, April 16; 4 to 6 p.m.

Where: So'Journey Expressions, 1505 State Street, Erie

Details: Features musical entertainment, food, and refreshments; presented by Saint Vincent Women's Center, American Cancer Society, and Regional Cancer Center. FREE. Call **814/452-6273** to register.

Body & Soul Spring Luncheon: Help for Headaches

When: Friday, May 13; noon to 1 p.m.

Where: McGarvey Learning Center at Saint Vincent

Details: Features musical entertainment. Talk presented by Gay Lipchik, PhD, psychologist, Saint Vincent Health Psychology Services, and nationally recognized expert on headache management. FREE. Optional box lunch available for \$7.50. Call **814/866-4817** to register.

From Our CEO

Dear friends,
As Erie's first hospital, Saint Vincent has been an innovator in health care in this region for nearly 130 years.

While we have had many "firsts" over the years—we also are proud of our "onlies." These are the services that are available only at Saint Vincent.

We are the only hospital in the region with a Neonatal Transport Team. This year, our team transported nearly twice as many infants to our Level III NICU as in 2003. It's important to note that Saint Vincent also is the only hospital in the region with two dedicated neonatologists and a certified neonatal nurse practitioner.

When a patient suffers from a brain abnormality and needs surgery, Saint Vincent is the only hospital in the region to offer a noninvasive alternative. With our new Gamma Knife technology, our expert neuroscience team is able to perform surgery without a scalpel and get patients back on their feet within 24 hours. They're also able to reach areas of the brain not accessible by any other method.

Because early detection is a vital link in

saving the lives of women with breast cancer, Saint Vincent is the only hospital in the region to offer computer-aided detection (CAD) for mammography. This digital technology helps radiologists detect certain types of breast cancer up to two years earlier, offering women the best possible chance for survival.

Our most recent "only" is the one you are holding in your hands . . . this new publication. We created *Vitals* to provide the latest information on health and wellness and to share with the region the resources and services available at Saint Vincent.

We hope you enjoy and benefit from reading it, and we wel-

come your input.

Most important, we are the only hospital in the region with a mission "dedicated to bringing God's healing love to all and committed to compassion and excellence in the delivery of a continuum of holistic care."

Sincerely,

C. Angela Bontempo, MHA, FACHE
President and CEO



Welcome to Our New Magazine!

Vitals. It is a term used by medical professionals to describe a patient's vital signs—the pulse and blood pressure. It is also the title of this new Saint Vincent publication . . . our way of keeping our fingers on the pulse of the latest information on health and wellness and communicating this news to you. *Vitals* merges our *Especially for Women*, *Senior Source*, and *Heart Health Now* publications. We welcome your input and hope you enjoy and benefit from *Vitals*.

ON OUR COVER

Each issue of *Vitals* features artwork created by an artist from the tri-state area. This issue features a glass wall sculpture created by Edward deFrece Grout of Erie. The piece, "Histology of the Bone," represents the infrastructure of the human body . . . the cells of the human bone. It is permanently installed at the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Erie.





is produced at increased levels in the dark.

What Can Help SAD

Phototherapy, a bright-light therapy, has been shown to slow down the brain's secretion of melatonin. If phototherapy doesn't work, an antidepressant drug may prove effective in reducing or eliminating SAD symptoms, but as with any drug, there are unwanted side effects to consider.

"The best treatment for SAD," according to Waldman, "is to prevent the onset of the symptoms before they begin." She suggests the following:

- Pay attention to your moods and energy levels.
- Expose yourself to as much bright light as you can. If it is sunny, go outside as much as you can. If it's gray and overcast, use as much light indoors as you can.
- Stay physically active. Try exercising for 30 minutes a day, three times a week.
- Stay involved in your social circle and regular activities.
- Seek professional help, if needed, during the winter months. ♦

For additional information about SAD, call Saint Vincent Ask-A-Nurse at **814/452-5500**. Treatment is available through Saint Vincent Behavioral Health at **814/452-5555**.

Winter Blues

Season Affective Disorder

by *Tashonda Bender*

Are you feeling a change in appetite? Do you feel a drop in energy and have a tendency to oversleep? Would you rather avoid social settings? Are you easily irritated? If you experience these symptoms during the winter months, you may be suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

Between 4 and 6% of Americans suffer from SAD. This condition is more commonly seen in people who reside in areas where seasonal changes are more extreme. Also known as the "winter blues" or "winter depression," SAD is more common in women than in men.

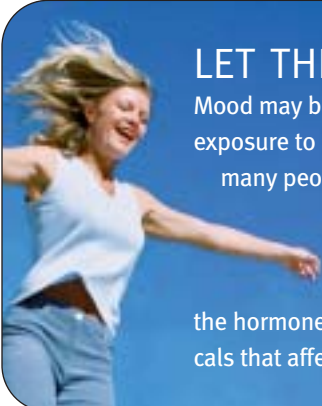
Symptoms of SAD

According to Mimi Waldman, CNS, a psychiatric clinical nurse specialist at Saint Vincent Behavioral Health, SAD symptoms include:

- sadness
- anxiety
- irritability
- mood changes and sometimes even violence
- a decrease in physical activity
- excessive sleeping (hypersomnia).

Appetite decreases, but craving for carbohydrates—particularly sugars or starches or alcohol—actually increases.

The exact cause of this condition is not known, but the influence of latitude on SAD strongly suggests that it is caused by changes in the availability of sunlight. With SAD, the lack of sunlight causes the brain to work overtime to produce melatonin—the hormone that regulates your biological clock, mood, sleep patterns and a hormone that has been linked to depression. Melatonin, a sleep-related hormone secreted by the pineal gland in the brain,



LET THERE BE LIGHT

Mood may be affected by sunshine—or the lack thereof. Regular exposure to light—natural or special light fixtures—seems to help many people with SAD.

Even if you don't have SAD, getting outdoors might lift a case of the mid-winter blahs. It also might help you sleep better. One theory is that light helps regulate the hormone melatonin, which is linked to sleep cycles. Brain chemicals that affect mood also may be involved.

**EAST HARBOR
PRIMARY CARE
WELCOMES
DR. YONKO**



Christopher Yonko, DO, has joined the medical staff of the East Harbor Family Prac-

tice, 4950 Buffalo Road. A native of Erie, he earned his doctor of osteopathic medicine degree from Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine.

In December, East Harbor announced its new Patient Promise, which is designed to make accessing family health care easier. It allows patients to:

- refill prescriptions with a special Refill Hotline—just call **814/451-8067**
- receive 24-hour lab results for most tests
- have direct access to their doctor's team with the physician's phone line. Just call **814/898-8491**
- take advantage of same-day appointments.

East Harbor continues to be the area's only "one-stop shop" for lab tests, rehab services, and a visit to your family physician, all in one location.

Dr. Yonko is currently accepting new patients. To schedule an appointment or to learn more about East Harbor Primary Care, call 814/899-7000.



Expansion + Improvement = High Patient Satisfaction in Saint Vincent Emergency Department and Fast Track

The year 2004 was a year of change and achievement for the Saint Vincent Emergency Department (ED) and Fast Track. An expansion doubled the size of Fast Track to 12 rooms. Fast Track, the area's only in-ER "express service" for patients with minor injuries or illnesses, offers care to patients faster and at a lower cost than the emergency room. The new Fast Track facility now includes a special eye treatment room and laceration rooms. Saint Vincent also extended Fast Track hours, opening an hour earlier at 9 a.m. and staying open three hours later, until 1 a.m. nightly. Other improvements included renovation of the entire facility.

"We looked at the statistics and saw that our hours for Fast Track ended at 10 p.m., which was actually the busiest time for patients coming in to register for treatment," says Emergency Services Vice President Russell Bieniek, MD. "Extending the Fast Track hours has virtually eliminated the waiting time for those with minor illness or injury who come into the ED later at night and traditionally had to wait long hours. We have a great staff at Saint Vincent that is committed to seeing patients quickly and making them comfortable. These changes

have helped them to do that."

Patients who come to the Saint Vincent ED are triaged and those with minor injuries or illnesses are sent across the hall to Fast Track. Only one registration process is necessary.

In an annual survey, conducted by The Jackson Organization, patients gave the ED and Fast Track the highest patient satisfaction scores in two years. More than 62,000 patients chose Saint Vincent as their hospital of choice in fiscal 2004 for their health emergencies, an increase of 3,702 from fiscal 2003.

In 2004, Saint Vincent also added an Emergency Medicine Residency program, which increased the number of physicians working in the ED. Plans for 2005 include another expansion of the ED to accommodate higher patient volumes. ♦



Minor emergency?
Call Saint Vincent
Ask-A-Nurse at
814/452-5500.

Gamma Knife Milestone: First Anniversary of Noninvasive Brain Surgery at Saint Vincent

During 2004, more than 70 people were spared the pain, risk, and long recovery of conventional brain surgery, thanks to the Leksell Gamma Knife,® a highly sophisticated, noninvasive technology introduced just a year ago through the Northwest Regional Gamma Knife Network at Saint Vincent. Saint Vincent is just one of 180 institutions worldwide and one of 80 in North America to have this technology. Saint Vincent neurosurgeons are performing brain surgery without a scalpel for those suffering from tumors, malformations, and functional disorders.

The Leksell Gamma Knife® is not a knife at all. It is a unique technology designed to control tumor growth and abnormal tangles of blood vessels in the brain through the use of more than 200 low-density radiation beams. Each beam by itself is too weak to damage healthy tissue on its way to the target area, but

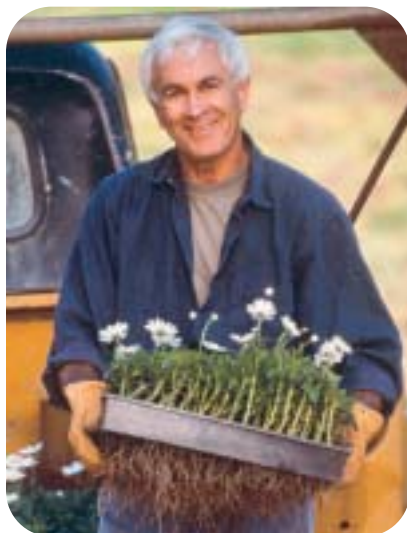
together the beams are very powerful as they simultaneously merge at a single focal point. The gamma rays are silent and invisible as they

pass through the scalp to their target. The patient never feels the radiation.

An average Gamma Knife surgery lasts 30 to 60 minutes. By comparison, conventional brain surgery takes about five hours with weeks of recovery time. Gamma Knife patients sometimes stay at the hospital overnight for observation, but most are discharged the same day and can usually go back to their regular activities

within 48 hours. There are virtually no side effects and very little discomfort associated with this noninvasive procedure. ♦

For more information on the Gamma Knife, please visit www.saintvincenthealth.com or call the Northwest Regional Gamma Knife Network at Saint Vincent at 814/454-0674.



DR. HILL JOINS SAINT VINCENT MEDICAL STAFF



Hank C. Hill, MD, has joined the medical staff at Saint Vincent, as

a surgical oncologist.

In addition to serving on the staff of Saint Vincent, he will be associated with the Regional Cancer Center of Erie for surgical oncology and endoscopy. He also holds an academic appointment at Gannon University, where he will serve on the adjunct research faculty for cancer cell biology and malignant diseases in the College of Engineering and Health Sciences.

Prior to joining the Saint Vincent medical staff, Dr. Hill was attending physician for Surgical Oncology and Surgical Endoscopy at Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

He is a member of the American Medical Association, the National Medical Association, the Society of Black Academic Surgeons, the Society of Surgical Oncology, the American Society of Clinical Oncology, and the American Association for Cancer Education.

Dr. Hill's office is located at 145 West 23rd Street, Suite 202. Call 814/451-8008 for an appointment.

Take the Eyestrain Out of Computer Use

When using the computer at home, work, or school, try these tips to help reduce eyestrain:

- Give your eye muscles a break every hour by focusing on something in the distance. Take a moment to gaze across the room or out the window.

- Lower your monitor—or raise your chair—so that the top edge of the computer screen is slightly below eye level. Sit so your head is 18 to 24 inches from the screen.
- Keep a bottle of artificial tears, which are available over the counter, in your desk. Computer tasks that require intense concentration cause people to blink less. This can dry out eyes.
- Reduce the glare from overhead lights by turning some off or removing some of the bulbs.
- Consider positioning a glare filter, available at office equipment stores, over the computer screen. ♦





Saint Vincent Neonatal Experts Bring **Infants** Through the **Storm**



For additional information on the Saint Vincent Center for Neonatal Intensive Care, call 814/452-5853.

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On Sunday, January 16, a blizzard hit the tri-state area, making travel of any kind hazardous. At the same time, at WCA Hospital in Jamestown, NY, a crisis of another kind was unfolding. A mother had given birth to triplets at 26 weeks—nearly 14 weeks premature. Because the hospital is not equipped with its own neonatal intensive care unit, doctors called upon the experts at Saint Vincent for help.

Three neonatal transport nurses and a respiratory therapist who are members of The Saint Vincent Neonatal Transport team—the only team in the region trained to transport premature and critically ill infants—braved the elements and boarded three Emergycare

ambulances to make the treacherous journey to Jamestown. Through white-out conditions, they brought the three infants to the Saint Vin-

cent Center for Neonatal Intensive Care, where they received the care they needed from the region's only dedicated team of neonatologists and a neonatal nurse practitioner. Tragically, one of the infants was too ill to survive, but the two other babies continue to progress at Saint Vincent.

In more ways than one, the neonatal experts at Saint Vincent brought the

babies through the storm. Perhaps that's why twice as many infants have been transported to the center in 2004 than in 2003 and why physicians have entrusted the care of more critically ill infants to the experts at Saint Vincent. ♦

This case shows how the Saint Vincent Neonatal Intensive Care Center team offers the region excellent care for premature infants. They offer exceptional responsiveness, top medical expertise, and professionalism. The physicians, nurses, and transport team are a very valuable asset to our babies and to hospitals and pediatricians in the tri-state area.

—Jerzy Przygodzki, MD,
pediatrician

Good News in the Fight Against Breast Cancer

Especially for

women

Earlier detection. It's one of the best tools a woman can use in the fight against breast cancer. And the Women's

Center at Saint Vincent is the only organization in the region to offer the technology capable of detecting breast cancer up to two years earlier. Radiologists at the Women's Center are now using a revolutionary new technology called the R2 ImageChecker®. It's the first FDA-approved computer-aided detection

system for screening mammography. Think of it as a kind of spell checker for medical images. It digitizes the mammogram, scans it for any abnormalities, and places a marker on anything it finds. Often, it locates an abnormality so small, it is barely visible to the human eye.

The unit works as a second set of eyes to spot the smallest abnormalities and help detect breast

cancer as early as possible. Saint Vincent is the only provider in the region to offer this important new technology. Mammograms taken at the Saint Vincent Outpatient Center at Union City and Westfield Memorial Hospital are read using Saint Vincent's CAD technology.

How important is early detection? According to the National Institutes of Health, if breast cancer is identified early, when it is confined to the duct or local area of the breast, the patient's chances for survival are dramatically higher. ♦



“Use of the ImageChecker could result in earlier detection of up to 23.4% of the cancers currently detected with screening mammography in those women who had a prior screening mammogram 9 to 24 months earlier.”

—FDA Approved Claim

When it's time for your next mammogram, ask your physician to schedule at the Women's Center at Saint Vincent. The Women's Center is located across from the hospital at 311 West 24th Street. For more information, call **814/452-5228**.

A New Era in Neonatal Intensive Care at Saint Vincent

Saint Vincent announced recently that it is expanding its neonatal intensive care services and facilities to accommodate dramatically increased patient volumes and significant increases in referrals from hospitals in the tri-state region.

The changes include the addition of the latest technologies in neonatal care, the establishment of new private patient rooms and a new name, The Saint Vincent Center for Neonatal Intensive Care.

Saint Vincent has also initiated a national recruitment effort for a perinatologist or maternal/fetal medical specialist to provide care to mothers with high-risk pregnancies throughout the region. Saint Vincent recently became the first hospital in the region to add two important new technologies to its center, including nitric oxide for term infants with Meconium Aspiration Syndrome and other infants from high-risk deliveries, and an Air-Shields/Minolta JM-103 Jaundice Meter, a non-invasive bedside device designed to assess the risk of jaundice in newborns. ♦



Factoring in Male Fertility

Q. What can impair a man's fertility?

A. Lifestyle factors such as smoking can decrease fertility. Also, fertility naturally begins to decline in men in their 30s. Some men, however, are born with fertility problems. Others can develop them after an injury or illness.



Q. What can help boost the chances of pregnancy?

A. The following tips may help:

- Quit smoking, if necessary.
- Avoid exposure to lead, certain pesticides, and other toxins.
- Take time to de-stress with exercise or a favorite hobby.
- Keep the scrotum area cool by avoiding tight underwear, hot baths, and sitting down for long periods of time.

Surgeries and other treatments are available to help improve the quality and number of sperm in men with existing fertility problems.

Women age 35 and older and their partners should seek medical help after six months of trying to conceive without success. Your doctor can help determine if medical intervention is necessary—and suggest options.

Breast Milk Is Best But for How Long?

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that most infants be fed only breast milk for the first six months. Breastfeeding should continue until infants are at least 1 year old, according to the AAP, as it can help babies' immune systems and protects against ear, respiratory, and intestinal infections.



Feeding infants only breast milk for the first several months also may help protect them from allergies. This is particularly true of food allergies.

But the health benefits are not limited to preventing infections and allergies. In one study, children only breastfed for three or four months were less likely to develop insulin-dependent diabetes.

In another study, babies who were fed only breast milk for the first four months were more advanced in their physical and social development.

The Saint Vincent Lactation Center offers information, resources, and support for nursing mothers. For more information, call 814/452-7732.



Is Your Friend Being Abused?

Abuse comes in different forms. Physical abuse might include hitting, kicking, burning, or biting. Instead of or in addition to physical abuse, some women experience emotional abuse. This can be in the form of threats, criticism, accusations, or the withholding of money or privileges such as going out. Sexual abuse also can occur.

Domestic abuse usually happens in a cycle. First, tension builds. Then the abuser erupts in a violent attack. Afterward, a display of affection may convince your friend she should stay with her abuser. But abuse usually worsens over time.

More than nine out of 10 abused women never tell their doctors they are being mistreated. So friends and family members must step in to offer help.

How can you tell if your friend is being abused? Suspect abuse if she:

- has bruises, cuts, or marks on many different areas of the body such as the face, throat, neck, chest, or abdomen
- receives many injuries at different times

- avoids seeing the doctor for injuries
- abuses alcohol or drugs
- appears depressed
- threatens suicide.

Here are some ways you can help an abused friend:

- Explain your concern for her safety.
- Tell her the abuse will not go away.
- Assure her that the abuse is not her fault and that she does not deserve it.
- Respect her right to make her own decisions. ♦

If you or a friend are a victim of abuse, know that **the Saint Vincent Emergency Department has the region's only certified forensic nursing team.** Victims of sexual

assault are treated swiftly and within a safe, private setting inside the Emergency Department by nurses specially trained to meet their needs. Forensic nurses, empowered with special training, insight, and sensitivity to the needs of abuse victims, not only help treat victims, but also gather physical evidence and are trained to work with law enforcement and testify in court.

SAFENET: an Erie agency that provides advocacy, counseling, shelter, and help with legal issues. Call 814/454-8161 24 hours a day.

**The National Domestic Violence Hotline:
1/800/799-7233**

**The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence:
1/800/537-2238**

It's Hip to Have Mobility:

Minimally Invasive Hip Replacement

Smaller incisions. Less risk of infection. Saint Vincent orthopedic surgeons are cutting some of the risk and discomfort for hip replacement patients by doing less cutting and effectively using a combination of medications and anesthetics. Hip replacement helps relieve pain and increase mobility for people with severe arthritis. Using a technique known as minimally invasive hip replacement, Saint Vincent orthopedic surgeons insert an artificial hip through a much smaller incision than previously used.

"We strive to make the incision as

small as possible, in addition to making the procedure less painful for the patient," says Saint Vincent orthopedic surgeon, Thomas Fessler, MD. "We believe that

nerve blocks and medications taken before and after surgery can significantly reduce discomfort."

The same prosthetic hip implants used in the traditional surgery are used with the technique; just the surgical instrumentation is different.

"Our goal continues to be great results with as few complications for patients as possible," adds

Dr. Fessler. ♦

To learn more, call
814/866-4819 or
1/800/326-8080

to register for
a **FREE** seminar
(see page 10)
or to receive
a **FREE** brochure.

Senior
SOURCE



The Saint Vincent Total Joint Center offers a full range of joint services, from the simple to the complex.



AARP Driver Safety Program

Risk assessment, reaction time, backing up, skidding, aggressive drivers, antilock brakes, entering a freeway: These are just some of the topics that are covered in the eight-hour AARP Driver Safety Program.

The program is a two-session classroom refresher course designed especially for drivers 50 and older. The class will meet Tuesday and Wednesday, March 22 and 23, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the classroom of the Saint Vincent Women's Center, 311 West 24th Street.

Evening classes, which have become

increasingly popular, are scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, March 28 and 29, and again on Monday and Tuesday, April 25 and 26, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., also in the Women's Center. See additional dates on page 10.

Cost is \$10, which is payable to AARP. Evening participants may park in the Professional Building lot, but daytime participants must pay a fee to park in the nearby ramp. ♦

To register and for more information, call Ask-A-Nurse at **814/866-4817**.

Health Happenings



Unless otherwise noted, call **814/866-4817** to register.

Pilates (a six-session class)

When: Wednesdays, March 16, 23, April 6, 20, 27, and May 18; 6:30 p.m.
Where: McGarvey Learning Center
Cost: \$20

Pilates II (a six-session class)

When: Wednesdays, March 16, 23, April 6, 20, 27, and May 18; 7:30 p.m.
Where: McGarvey Learning Center
Cost: \$20

Yoga (a six-session class)

When: Thursdays, March 17, 24, April 7, 21, 28, and May 19; 7 p.m.
Where: McGarvey Learning Center
Cost: \$20

General Fitness for Diabetics

When: Tuesdays, April 5, 12, 19, and 26; 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$5 per session

How to Circuit Train at Home

When: Wednesday, April 13; 4:15 to 5 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$5

Conditioning for Your Favorite Sport

When: Wednesday, June 1; 6 to 7 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$5

Postnatal Fitness for Weight Reduction

When: Wednesday, April 27; 6 to 7 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$5

Fitness Ball

When: Tuesdays, May 3, 10, 17, and 24; 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$5 per session

Wellness and Exercise Tips for Baby Boomers and Beyond

When: Wednesday, May 25; 6 to 7 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$5 per session

General Fitness to Build Bone Density

When: Tuesdays, August 9, 16, 23, 30; 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$20

Light Aerobics, Weight Training, and Fitness Ball

When: Tuesdays, March 1, 8, 15, and 29; 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$5 per class

Ensure Core Strength to Decrease Back Pain

When: Wednesday, March 23; 6 to 7 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$5

Free Breastfeeding Support Group

When: Wednesdays, March 16, April 20, May 18, June 15, July 20, and August 17; 7 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom

For Mothers and Daughters: On Growing Up

When: Saturdays, April 16, May 28, and July 30; 9 a.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$15 per mother/daughter couple (\$5 for each additional daughter)

AARP Driver Safety Program (a two-session driving class for seniors, presented by AARP)

When: March 22 and 23, 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.; March 28 and 29, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.; April 25 and 26, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.; June 27 and 28, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.; July 26 and 27, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.; August 29 and 30, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$10

Tips for Training on the Road

When: Wednesday, June 22; 6 to 7 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$5

Enjoy Life Without Hip and Knee Pain

When: Thursday, April 21, 10 a.m.; Wednesdays, July 27 and August 24, 10 a.m.; Thursday, May 10, 1 p.m.
Where: McGarvey Learning Center
Cost: FREE; call **1/800/326-8080** for reservations.

Free Ostomy Support Group

When: March 15, April 21, May 19, June 16, August 18; 6:30 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom

Free Cardiac Support Group

When: April 26 and July 13; 7 p.m.
Where: McGarvey Learning Center

Shoulder Pain?

When: Thursday, April 28, 10 a.m.; Tuesdays, June 28 and August 9, 1 p.m.
Where: McGarvey Learning Center
Cost: FREE; call **1/800/326-8080** for reservations.



Beautiful Beginnings Classes

Expecting? Sign up for our Beautiful Beginnings Classes. To schedule your class dates, call Saint Vincent at **814/452-5664**.

Preparation for Labor (a three-session class)

When: Mondays, March 7, 14, and 21; 6:30 p.m.
Tuesdays, April 5, 12, and 19; 6:30 p.m.
Mondays, May 9, 16, and 23; 6:30 p.m.
Tuesdays, June 7, 14, and 21; 6:30 p.m.
Mondays, July 11, 18, and 25; 6:30 p.m.
Mondays, August 8, 15, and 22; 6:30 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$30

Saturday Preparation for Labor (a two-session class)

When: Saturdays, March 5 and 12, April 2 and 9, May 7 and 14, June 4 and 11, July 9 and 16, August 6 and 13; 9 a.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$30

Childbirth Refresher Course

When: Saturday, May 21; 9 a.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$20

Newborn Care

When: Thursdays, March 3, April 7, May 5, June 2, July 7, or August 4; 6:30 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$15

Breastfeeding

When: Thursdays, March 10, April 14, May 12, June 9, July 14, or August 11; 7 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$15

Working and Breastfeeding

When: Thursdays, March 24, May 26, or July 28; 7 p.m.
Where: Women's Center Classroom
Cost: \$15

Sibling Preparation

When: Tuesdays, April 5, June 7, or August 2; 6:30 p.m.
Where: Families meet at the Information Desk in main Health Center lobby; meeting takes place in First Floor Conference Room
Cost: \$10 for one child, \$5 for each additional child



Chautauqua County Health Happenings

The following classes are presented by Westfield Memorial Hospital. When dates are not listed, please call the phone number noted for class information and registration.

Shoulder Pain?

When: Thursdays, May 12 and July 14, 11 a.m.
Where: Westfield Memorial Hospital Cafeteria
Cost: FREE; call **1/800/326-8080** for reservations.

Blood Pressure Screenings

When: First Monday of month—Westfield Memorial Hospital, main lobby
First Thursday of month—Mayville VFW (for seniors)
Second Tuesday of month—Westfield YWCA
Third Thursday of month—Westfield Episcopal Church Community Kitchen
Last Monday of month—Brocton Legion (for seniors)
All clinics are at 11 a.m.
Cost: FREE

Enjoy Life Without Hip and Knee Pain

When: Thursdays, April 14, June 16, and August 18; 11 a.m.
Where: Westfield Memorial Hospital Cafeteria
Cost: FREE; call **1/800/326-8080** for reservations.

Diabetes/Wellness Education

716/793-2211

Smoking Cessation

716/793-2258

Baby 'N Me Tobacco Free

716/793-2211

Breastfeeding Moms' Club

716/793-2264

Childbirth Preparation Classes

716/793-2264

"US TOO" Prostate Cancer Support Group

716/793-2258

Cancer Support Group


716/793-2258

Infant Care Class and Infant Massage and Yoga

716/793-2264

Yoga Series at Studio Panterra

Sponsored by WMH
716/326-3993



For more information
about pacemakers,
call the Saint Vincent
Pacemaker Clinic at
814/452-7741.

Pacemakers

The Beat Goes On

Most people take their heartbeat for granted. But to keep that vital beat going, more than 1 million people in the United States need an electronic pacemaker.

“At Saint Vincent, we place more than 400 devices per year, both pacemakers and defibrillators,” says Saint Vincent electro-physiologist David T. Borowski, MD. “The need has been rising rapidly over the past few years and will continue to do so as the population ages.”

Q. What is a pacemaker?

A. A pacemaker is a small device that is

surgically implanted in the body. Weighing about an ounce and a half, it contains a battery enclosed in a lightweight metal case. Flexible wires, or “leads,” extend from the case and are connected to the heart.

Q. How does a pacemaker work?

A. A pacemaker sends an electrical impulse to stimulate the heart to beat. Some pacemakers regulate the beat at a constant rate, while others send an impulse only when the heart slows or misses a beat. Still other types adjust the heart’s rate to meet special demands such as those imposed by exercise or stress.

Q. What medical conditions are treated with a pacemaker?

A. Pacemakers are used to treat heart rhythm disorders, such as:

- an abnormally slow or irregular heartbeat
- an upper heart chamber that does not pump in an organized rhythm
- problems with the electrical impulse from the upper to the lower chambers of the heart.

Though most people who have pacemakers are older than age 65, the devices can be implanted in younger adults, children, and even infants.

Q. How is a pacemaker implanted?

A. A surgeon implants the pacemaker through an incision below the collarbone. The procedure is usually performed under local anesthesia and causes only minimal pain.

Q. Does the battery wear out?

A. Battery life spans generally range from 10 to 15 years.

Q. Are there special precautions that people with pacemakers must take?

A. Most pacemaker wearers can enjoy some exercise each day as long as they follow their physician’s guidelines and stop before they become fatigued. Anyone with a pacemaker should avoid contact sports altogether.

Other precautions:

- Avoid high-voltage electrical lines.
- Avoid medical tests such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).
- Don’t hold a cellular telephone too close to the chest.

Contrary to popular belief, microwave ovens do not affect pacemakers. But anti-theft systems, such as those used in supermarkets and other retail outlets, *may* interfere with pacemakers—as may metal detectors, such as those used in airports and government buildings. To be on the safe side, experts advise wearers to tell security personnel that they have a pacemaker. The best advice for people with pacemakers, however, is to talk to their doctor about any other special precautions that may be appropriate. ♦

Heart Care Doesn't Stop at Discharge

“How do I avoid another heart attack without completely compromising my lifestyle?” As you can imagine, this is one of the most common questions asked by heart attack patients. However, many hospitals do not fully address the personal needs of heart attack patients throughout the entire continuum of their care.

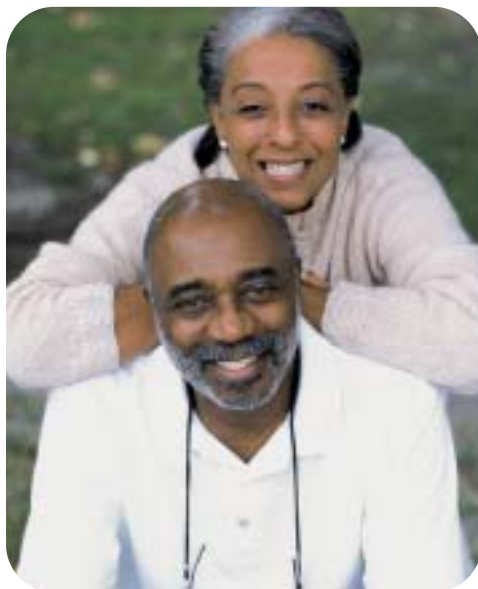
Not so at Saint Vincent. The Saint Vincent Heart Center offers a revolutionary approach to care for heart attack patients called Guidelines Applied in Practice (GAP). The GAP initiative helps ensure that physicians, nurses, and patients are in agreement on the key priorities of care, from admission to discharge and beyond. That's right. The experts from the Saint Vincent Heart Center are watching over you even after you leave the hospital. They developed a specially designed tool kit that includes reminders, checklists, standardized care

plans, and educational materials to help ensure that you and your heart care team stay focused on the American College of Cardiology's national heart attack guidelines and, most important, your personal needs.

Simply put, the implementation of the GAP initiative, backed by the power of state-of-the-art information technology resources, means fewer deaths among heart attack patients. In fact, mortality rates among heart attack patients decreased to a low of 3% during a 12-month period at Saint Vincent—well below the national averages of 7%—after Heart Center physicians and associates introduced the GAP initiative.

But it's not about numbers. At the Saint Vincent Heart Center,

it's all about you. Your care. Your comfort. Your recovery. Saint Vincent is committed to introducing quality-care initiatives to enhance your quality of life. ♦



For personalized assistance with your questions about the Saint Vincent Heart Center, please call **814/452-7243.**

Area Organizations Invited to Join Heart Start Network

For Pete Adams, 38, having a heart attack in 2003 was one of the worst things that could happen. Having a heart attack while he was at work was one of the best.



Adams' employer, The Steris Corporation, Erie, Pa., is one of more than 170 organizations in the tri-state area that have partnered with Saint Vincent Heart Center in Project Heart Start, an effort designed to provide affordable portable Automated External Defibrillators (AED) to companies, organizations, and public facilities throughout the region.

When Adams had his heart attack on the job and went into cardiac arrest, the AED device was nearby and six coworkers who were trained in operating the AED were able to save his life.

Having an AED available at a place of business or a public area may be the only hope for a person whose heart has

Have a Heart: Saint Vincent Cardiac Support Group

Saint Vincent has assembled a group of caregivers who are dedicated to the enhancement of education, satisfaction, support, health, and well-being of cardiac patients and their loved ones. Please join us for an informal group meeting on July 13 at 7 p.m. at The Saint Vincent's Women's Center to learn more about how to live life to the fullest.



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AREA ORGANIZATIONS INVITED TO JOIN HEART START NETWORK

stopped. About 250,000 Americans die each year from cardiac arrest, when the heart suddenly stops pumping blood. The only treatment is to shock the heart back into a regular beat with a defibrillator, but each minute spent waiting for paramedics reduces the chance of survival by 10%.

Through Project Heart Start, Saint Vincent Heart Center is able to facilitate the placement of AEDs in the community. In addition, due to a special purchasing agreement with an AED manufacturer, we can enable businesses or individuals to obtain units at a substantially discounted cost.

The discounted cost for the Project Heart Start AED package is about \$2,100.

In addition, Saint Vincent is a certified training site through the American Heart Association for AED training and will provide training classes at a discounted rate of \$40 per person for classes held on-site at Saint Vincent.

Companies, schools, and organizations wishing to explore the possibility of having an AED on-site can contact Schuyler for more information by calling 814/452-7732.



How to Get the Most Out of Cardiac Rehab

Cardiac rehabilitation can be lifesaving. One study, for example, found that heart attack survivors who participated in cardiac rehab programs lived longer.

Concerned with the quality—as well as the quantity—of your days? Here, too, these programs can offer an edge. Research credits cardiac rehab with improving exercise capacity, allowing people to climb stairs and carry groceries again, and enhancing a sense of well-being.

Who Benefits?

Cardiac rehab can help many different types of patients avoid future cardiovascular problems. These include heart attack survivors; people with chronic stable angina, heart failure, or congenital cardiovascular disease; patients who have had angioplasty, bypass surgery, or transplantation; and pacemaker recipients.

What Does Cardiac Rehab Involve?

Exercise, though key, is not the only component of cardiac rehabilitation. Most programs also emphasize practicing an overall healthy lifestyle to cut the risk of future heart problems. In addition to exercise training, a typical cardiac rehab

program might include:

- stress reduction techniques
- education on practical ways to manage your individual risk factors, including diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, smoking, and obesity
- a physical examination, stress test, and detailed evaluation of your health history
- treatment, if necessary, for depression or anxiety.

How Can I Maximize My Benefits?

These heart-healthy strategies can help make your rehab program most effective:

- **Turn exercise into a daily habit.** Take the stairs instead of the escalator. Park at the far end of the parking lot.
- **Concentrate on what you *can* eat.** Heart-healthy foods include

lean meats, whole-grain products, vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds, and low- or non-fat dairy products. Ask your doctor, nurse, or dietician for tasty ways to prepare these foods.

- **Keep track.** Using a diary to record your exercise and eating habits could help you stick with healthy changes.
- **Get support.** For example, support groups can help you quit smoking or lose weight. ♦

**To learn more,
call the Saint Vincent
Outpatient Cardiac
Rehab Center at
814/452-7847.**

Health Briefs

Relaxation Methods Ease Pain and Insomnia

According to the National Institutes of Health, the following techniques can ease chronic pain or insomnia: thinking of a peaceful place, tensing and relaxing muscles, deep breathing, meditating, hypnosis, biofeedback, and therapy where people learn to change negative thoughts into healthier ones.

The group found that relaxation methods could ease the pain that comes with certain conditions, such as cancer. Hypnosis also was helpful in treating pain from cancer, stomach problems, and tension headaches.

The group found biofeedback and other calming methods to be useful in helping people sleep.



APPLES GET “A+” FOR ANTIOXIDANTS

Apples are a good source of antioxidants, substances that may help the body fight disease.

One small, red apple was found to have as many antioxidants as 1,500 milligrams of vitamin C. But keep the skin on: There are more antioxidants in the skin than in the flesh.



AN UNLIKELY BACTERIA BUSTER: CILANTRO

A COMPOUND DISCOVERED IN THE LEAVES AND SEEDS OF FRESH CILANTRO—A COMMON INGREDIENT IN SALSA—RECENTLY WAS FOUND TO KILL SALMONELLA BACTERIA. THIS NASTY BUG IS ONE OF THE MOST FREQUENT FOOD POISONING CULPRITS. SCIENTISTS ARE EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING THE COMPOUND INTO A FOOD ADDITIVE THAT SOMEDAY COULD PREVENT FOODBORNE ILLNESSES.



Escalator Safety Tips All aboard...the escalator. But remember these precautions: Look forward and hold on to the rail. Tie loose shoelaces—so the steps don’t “eat” them. Keep an eye on scarves, mittens, and drawstrings, too. Hold your child’s hand.

WARNING SIGNS OF WORKOUT OVERLOAD

When it comes to exercise, there can be too much of a good thing. If you constantly feel exhausted, your muscles are always sore, you don’t sleep well, and you keep getting colds, chances are you’re overdoing it.

See your doctor to find out if there are other causes of your symptoms. If not, your doctor may advise you to switch to a lighter workout—or no workout at all—for at least two weeks. Eat well, get plenty of rest, and try massages or whirlpool baths to ease symptoms.





Saint Vincent Sports Medicine Celebrates Third Anniversary

The First Freestanding Sports Medicine Facility in Region

Saint Vincent Health Center's Sports Medicine Center marked its third anniversary recently. The freestanding facility is the first of its kind and remains the only physician-driven sports medicine program in the Erie region to offer primary care, sports medicine, and orthopedic specialization.

Since its opening on November 19, 2001, patient volumes have doubled to more than 5,100. More important, patient satisfaction scores have continually increased. The staff's care and expertise earned patient satisfaction scores at the 90th percentile in a recent national survey. This year alone, Saint Vincent Sports Medicine providers performed more than 1,000 pre-participation physicals for area

high school and college athletes.

Saint Vincent Sports Medicine was established to address the needs of area athletes as well as the thousands of weekend warriors who require the specialized care of a sports medicine program to treat their injuries, while managing their primary care.

To learn more or to make an appointment, call 814/866-3466.

Located within Family First Sports Park, the program features comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation all in one location, including:

- on-site X-ray
- a physical therapy gym staffed by

HealthSouth Rehabilitation

- a weekly foot and ankle clinic
- IMPACT baseline concussion testing.

Sports medicine providers serve as team physicians to Penn State Erie, The Behrend College; Mercyhurst College; and Edinboro University of Pennsylvania and several area high schools. In addition, Greg Coppola, DO, serves as a national consultant to Brooks Running Shoe Company and as a health and wellness advisor to Birkenstock USA. Current providers include primary care sports medicine specialists Greg Coppola, DO; Laura McIntosh, MD; Jonathan McKrell, MD; Andrew King, MD; Timothy Pelkowski, MD; Matthew McElroy, DO; and orthopedic surgeons Mark Bloomstine, MD; Mark Buseck, MD; and Thomas Fessler, MD. ♦

Saint Vincent Health Center
We Know How to Treat People.
 232 West 25th Street
 Erie, PA 16544

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Monica Lewis, Editor
Carole Wunner, Contributing Editor
Stacy Knapp, Contributing Editor

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