

Health Connection

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
MAT-SU REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Your community
hospital

Women's services

How to find the
physician you need



MAT-SU REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER

www.matsuregional.com



Do you really need a primary care physician?

Sure, most health plans require a primary care physician (PCP) for specialist referrals. But that's just one reason it's a good idea to have one dedicated clinician to oversee all your health concerns.

THE KEY TO SUPERIOR CARE

Developing an ongoing relationship with one physician who knows you and your medical history leads to a better overall outcome and lower costs. The reason? Your PCP can counsel you on healthy lifestyle choices, such as exercise options, an eating plan and other prudent lifestyle adjustments and modifications. Plus, seeing your PCP regularly makes him or her better at evaluating your symptoms than practitioners who don't know you. Additionally, a PCP provides routine health screenings, which can find diseases early—when they're easier to treat (see “Screenings your PCP may provide”). This, in turn, translates into less invasive and less expensive treatments.

A GUIDING LIGHT

If you've ever wished you could go to one place for all your health concerns or worried whether you're approaching the right physician for a particular ailment, you're in luck. A PCP can be your primary contact to address most personal healthcare needs.

The healthcare system can be intimidating—especially when you're faced with a frightening symptom. A PCP can evaluate the problem and either manage it him- or herself or arrange for the appropriate referrals. And if you need specialist care, your PCP can guide you and coordinate all aspects of your care. Plus, he or she can sort through and help explain the advice of other physicians.

Who's who in the PCP world

When picking a PCP, you can choose from many different types of healthcare professionals:

- **Family practitioners.** Physicians who care for children and adults of all ages. They may also practice obstetrics and minor surgery.
- **General practitioners.** Physicians who provide basic care for all ages.
- **Internists.** Physicians who care for adults of all ages and can treat many different medical problems.
- **Obstetricians/gynecologists.** Physicians who specialize in reproductive health. They often serve as a PCP for women, especially those of childbearing age.
- **Hospitalists.** Physicians who care for people who are hospitalized. Most hospitalists are trained in internal medicine and work with a hospitalized patient's PCP to provide the best care.
- **Nurse practitioners and physician assistants.**

Nonphysician providers of primary healthcare. Often referred to as “physician extenders,” they consult with physicians. They may see children, adults or women only and can prescribe medications and other treatments.

- **Pediatricians.** Physicians who treat newborns, infants, children and adolescents.

Screenings your PCP may provide

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> blood pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> cholesterol | <input type="checkbox"/> diabetes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> breast cancer | <input type="checkbox"/> colorectal cancer | <input type="checkbox"/> obesity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cervical cancer | <input type="checkbox"/> depression | <input type="checkbox"/> prostate cancer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> chlamydia | | |

Strength-train your brain

The mental benefits of exercise

Exercise has long been touted for its physical health benefits, such as improving metabolism, lowering blood pressure and reducing your risk of heart disease, stroke and cancer. But working up a sweat is also good for your head. Here's how:

BEATS THE BLUES

In a review of 80 studies on exercise and depression, researchers concluded that getting physical can act like an antidepressant. The analysis found that exercise decreased depression more than relaxation training (such as meditation or breathing) or engaging in enjoyable activities did. Working out may boost levels of feel-good endorphins, natural painkillers that promote a heightened sense of well-being.

TAMES TENSION

Physical activity releases muscle tension, reduces levels of the stress hormone cortisol and raises body temperature, which may have calming effects. Additionally, it can shift your attention away from anxious thoughts to something more pleasant, like your surroundings or the music that gets you moving.

AMPS UP ENERGY

Often feel drained? Inactivity is the likely culprit. Yes, working out may make you tired in the short term, but it helps increase stamina and energy in the long run. And, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, staying active may improve sleep quality, which translates into more next-day pep.

CRANKS UP CONFIDENCE

If you're nervous, working up a sweat gives you a confidence boost. How does getting sweaty raise self-worth? The effect is thought to be brought about by the sense of accomplishment that comes from meeting fitness goals or challenges.

BOOSTS BRAIN POWER

Regular physical activity can help keep your thinking, learning and judgment skills sharp as you age. In one study of 62- to 70-year-olds, those who were still working and retirees who exercised sustained their levels of cerebral blood flow and performed better on cognition tests than inactive retirees. What's more, in a few studies of subjects older than age 65, those who worked out for at least 15 to 30 minutes three times a week were less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease.



How much is enough?

If you have a physical disability, talk with your physician before exercising. Once you get his or her OK, do the following activities to reap the mental and physical benefits:

- A minimum of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity (like brisk walking) each week. If you're just getting started, break your workout into three brisk 10-minute walks a day, five days a week. Not into walking? Do water aerobics, go for a bike ride, play doubles tennis or mow the lawn—anything that gets you moving.
- Muscle-strengthening activities that target all major muscle groups on two or more days a week. Try heavy gardening (digging, shoveling), yoga, lifting weights or other weight-bearing moves like push-ups or sit-ups. Aim for eight to 12 repetitions per activity.

Women's services close to home

Mat-Su provides birthing and surgical services

Mat-Su Regional Medical Center offers a full range of women's services conveniently located right here in the Mat-Su Valley. Whether you need labor and delivery care, inpatient or outpatient surgery or advanced diagnostic imaging services, Mat-Su Regional provides these services in one convenient location for women of all ages. A team of Mat-Su Regional's specialists is trained and ready to provide comprehensive service and care for you, unlike the staff available at many freestanding diagnostic imaging and outpatient surgery centers and privately operated midwifery practices.

Mat-Su Regional classes, support groups and resources

Enjoy any of these classes taking place at Mat-Su Regional Medical Center:

- Preparation for Childbirth
- Breastfeeding Success
- Baby Care and Safety

Call (907) 861-6351 for schedules or information.

Take advantage of these other resources available:

- Healthy Cooking classes
- Diabetes Education
- American Cancer Society support group
- Certified car seat technician
- Certified lactation consultants
- American Red Cross Baby Safe infant CPR

Call (907) 861-6849 for schedules or information.



SURGICAL SERVICES

Mat-Su Regional surgeons perform specialized women's procedures, including gynecologic, breast and plastic surgeries. Your specialist may determine you're a candidate for minimally invasive surgery, which means you can be back on your feet faster than with traditional surgeries, or may prescribe more extensive surgery that requires an overnight stay. Either way, you and your family don't have to travel far from home to receive advanced quality women's care.

"If a woman comes to us for surgical removal of a suspicious lump in her breast, her surgeon, the radiologist and oftentimes the technologist who performed the diagnostic tests are working together under the same roof where they're able to discuss the best approach to remove the lump before the procedure begins," says Curtis Bowmer, director of diagnostic imaging at Mat-Su Regional. "This collaboration and communication consistently provide better outcomes for the patient."

FAMILY-CENTERED BIRTHING

Mat-Su Regional's Birthing Center is proud to offer a family-centered approach to labor and delivery. The Birthing Center has its own private entrance and



Cook up a storm with Mat-Su Regional!

Learn the latest in healthy cooking techniques and food choices with these classes given through The Cancer Project at Mat-Su Regional. Classes meet on Tuesdays in the Mat-Su Regional cafeteria from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Register with Delisa or Charlie Renideo at (907) 373-1526.

- Fueling Up on Low-Fat Foods, Sept. 29
- Favoring Fiber, Oct. 6
- Discovering Dairy Alternatives, Oct. 13
- Replacing Meat, Oct. 20
- Cancer-Fighting Compounds and Immune-Boosting Foods, Oct. 27
- Maintaining a Healthy Weight, Nov. 3



spacious child-friendly lobby for your family and guests. Generously sized hotel-style labor, delivery, recovery and postpartum (LDRP) rooms provide comfortable space and advanced technology for your baby's birth. The rooms are large enough for Dad and newborn to room-in and enhance family bonding. And a team of trained professionals is ready to step in wherever and whenever they're needed, all in an area with advanced security measures to protect your child.

! We care for you and baby!

To learn more about Mat-Su Regional's Birthing Center, call (907) 861-6645 or visit www.matsuregional.com.

Dear neighbors,

We live in a spectacular place where hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world vacation. If you've hosted guests, you've probably showed them our impressive views and helped them experience the best of our beautiful Mat-Su Valley.



Kerry Aguirre
Public Relations Director

A TALENTED TEAM FOR YOU

You may have read about Mat-Su Regional Medical Center being on a recent list as one of the most beautiful hospitals. But we're more than bricks and mortar; we're a team of nurses, technicians, support staff, other talented professionals and volunteers focused on making our hospital a great place to receive care. Together, with the skilled physicians on our medical staff, we welcome babies; care for thousands of emergency patients and inpatients each year; and offer advanced diagnostics and surgeries, so you can get the care you need, right here at home.

We're proud of the range and quality of services at Mat-Su Regional. You're an important part of the successes we've accomplished, and your support will help us continue to grow to meet our community's needs.

This publication is one of the ways we share our news so you can get to know us better. We hope you enjoy reading about our services, expansion and events. We want Mat-Su Regional and our quality care to always be one of the reasons we're all proud of our Valley. Have a warm, safe autumn.

Sincerely,

KERRY AGUIRRE
Public Relations Director
Mat-Su Regional Medical Center

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about breast cancer?

Take this quiz to find out.

- 1** Your risk of developing breast cancer is increased by which of the following?
 - a. radiation exposure to the chest as a child or a young adult
 - b. first pregnancy after age 30
 - c. use of estrogen and progesterone to treat menopausal symptoms for four or more years
 - d. all of the above
- 2** Which is not a risk factor for developing breast cancer?
 - a. having a family history of the disease
 - b. being overweight
 - c. antiperspirant use
 - d. excessive drinking
- 3** Symptoms of breast cancer typically don't include:
 - a. changes in the size or contour of the breast
 - b. breast pain
 - c. an indentation of the nipple
 - d. a clear or bloody discharge from the nipple
- 4** Which of the following is not true about male breast cancer?
 - a. One in five men with breast cancer has a close male or female relative with breast cancer.
 - b. The average male is 60 to 70 years old at diagnosis.
 - c. Being overweight doesn't increase breast cancer risk.
 - d. Health conditions that affect the testicles may increase risk.
- 5** An annual mammogram once you turn 40 is important because:
 - a. your chance of being diagnosed with breast cancer increases with age
 - b. you may have a small cancer that won't show up until your next annual screening
 - c. the sooner you're diagnosed with breast cancer, the easier it is to treat
 - d. all of the above

ANSWERS: 1. (D), 2. (C), 3. (B), 4. (C), 5. (D)



Living with heart disease

Being diagnosed with heart disease can be scary. You may wonder: Will I still be able to do the things I love? By making a few adjustments, you can control your condition and enjoy life to its fullest. Here's how:

Master your medications. If your physician prescribes cholesterol- or blood pressure-lowering pills, tape a note to your mirror, set an alarm—whatever's necessary—to ensure you take them as directed every day.

Learn food math. Don't worry: You can still eat delicious meals. But you'll have to learn to read labels and keep tabs on your daily intake of certain foods. The basics:

- Keep total fat to less than 35 percent of your calories (saturated fat should equal just 7 percent).
- Limit cholesterol to 200 mg a day.
- Restrict sodium to 2,400 mg or less a day.
- Eat just enough calories to maintain or achieve a healthy weight.

Move more. Joining a gym is great (if you'll go), but it's not a requirement. Cleaning your house, walking your dog briskly and biking to the store are all examples of valid activity. Just 30 minutes a day will help protect your heart—even if you do only 10 minutes at a time. Of course, always check with your physician before beginning any exercise program.

If you follow these recommendations, you'll drop any extra pounds slowly, which means your weight loss is more likely to stick. The great news: Losing even 5 to 10 percent of your current weight can reduce your risk of heart attack and improve your overall health.

Keeping little athletes safe



Kids love sports, and we love watching them play. But each year, more than 3.5 million children under age 15 are treated for sports-related injuries, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). That number is on the rise. One reason: Many kids now play the same sport year-round, resulting in overuse injuries such as chronic muscle strains, stress fractures and tendonitis. Plus, some sports have gone more extreme. Cheer-leading alone injured almost 70,000 children in 2007. So how can you keep your child out of the ER?

- **Don't start too soon.** Don't let your child join a team until he or she is at least 6 years old, says the AAP.
- **Get a pre-season checkup.** Visit your pediatrician to make sure your son or daughter is indeed sports-ready.
- **Gear up correctly.** Make sure your child doesn't compete without the right sporting shoes, helmet and safety equipment.

- **Teach the wisdom of warming up and cooling down.** Insist that young athletes exercise lightly for at least three minutes, then stretch the muscles to be used for at least 30 seconds each before practice or a game.
- **Fill 'er up.** Make sure your child carries a water bottle and knows the importance of drinking frequently, even if he or she isn't thirsty. Dehydration can cause fatigue and sickness.
- **Watch carefully.** Discourage participation in just one sport. If your child shows sign of strain or injury, insist he or she stop playing immediately—then see your pediatrician.

Healthy eating on the run

You're out and about when hunger pangs hit. Stopping at the nearest fast-food joint, you order a cheeseburger, fries and a soda and quickly wolf it all down in your car. Minutes later you feel sluggish, bloated—and guilty.

The good news: Your healthy diet doesn't have to suffer just because you're racing from one obligation to the next, spending the day running errands or hitting the road for a family vacation. Be prepared with these smart-snacking tips:

- **Always take water with you.** If it's too

bland, add a slice of fruit or a splash of juice.

- **For an on-the-run breakfast,** grab low-fat string cheese and a piece of fruit.
- **Fill an insulated lunch box with fresh fruit,** carrots, celery sticks, walnuts, yogurt or peanut butter on 100 percent whole-wheat bread for snacks during the day. Keep protein bars or snack bags of almonds or raisins in your purse, glove compartment or tote bag for hunger attacks.
- **If you must hit the drive-through,** opt for a kid-sized meal with fresh fruit or a side salad (with low-fat dressing) instead of fries, and a grilled chicken sandwich instead of one that's breaded and fried. Skip the mayo and other fatty spreads.
- **Need a coffee break?** Order the low-fat, sugar-free version of your favorite frozen coffee or latte and skip the whipped cream and caramel drizzle.



Health Connection is published as a community service of Mat-Su Regional Medical Center. There is no fee to subscribe.

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

Copyright © 2009 Mat-Su Regional Medical Center

FALL 2009



Convenient care for you

Family medicine and obstetrics services available in Eagle River



Heather Jones, M.D.
Family Physician/
Obstetrician

Mat-Su Regional Medical Center is proud to announce an expansion of our services into the Eagle River Community.

Eagle River Medical Plaza provides a spacious and comfortable facility for our medical staff to conveniently visit with their Eagle River patients. Stop in to say hello to the newest of Mat-Su Regional's referring physicians, Steve Parker, M.D., and Heather Jones, M.D., both board certified in family medicine and obstetrics and practicing at Capstone Family Medicine. The practice is located at 17025 Snowmobile Lane in Eagle River. Call (907) 694-9553 for an appointment.

Mention that you read about Drs. Jones and Parker in *Health Connection* when you stop by, and you'll receive a free gift!



Steve Parker, M.D.
Family Physician/
Obstetrician



Women: Join us!

On Saturday, October 10, join Mat-Su Regional Medical Center from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. for our free Healthy Woman Fair. Take advantage of free health screenings, important education and interactive exhibits, all designed to support a healthy body, mind and spirit at every stage of a woman's life. Open to the public, the fair will be held at Mat-Su Regional at 2500 S. Woodworth Loop. Call (907) 861-6849 or visit www.matsuregional.com for details.

! Get the care you need!

If you're new to our community or just need to find a physician, visit www.matsuregional.com. Click on "Physicians" and search by name or specialty. You can also e-mail us your request for a referral at our Web site or call (907) 861-6849. We want to help you find the physicians you need!