

update

Fall 2008

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# On Your Shoulders

Because others depend on you,  
let us help you quit smoking | [page 5](#)

# The Future of Medicine

## E-health center extends patients' role in their healthcare

**P**atients at Memorial's Family Care Center have a new way to track their health with the e-Health Patient Education Center. The Center includes computers and volunteers to help patients create an electronic personal health record (PHR) and obtain reliable health information on the Internet.

"The e-health center is an extension of a multi-year project testing what's called an e-health enabled patient-centered medical 'home' called LifeSensor," says Charles B. Eaton, MD, MS, Professor of Family Medicine at Brown University's Warren Alpert Medical School and Director of Brown's Center for Primary Care and Prevention, based at Memorial.

Dr. Eaton and his colleagues have joined with a European leader in the field, InterComponent Ware, to create this secure, private PHR that is integrated with a patient's doctors' electronic medical records (EMR) systems.

With LifeSensor, you get a comprehensive medical record to access anywhere with an Internet connection and a card to give to a doctor in an emergency. The system is different from Microsoft's HealthVault PHR and others like it (which are set up by patients without direct input from their doctors) and an individual doctor's EMR system.

Memorial's system allows all your doctors to add notes to your PHR, communicate via "e-visits" and make referrals. You can use secure e-mail to request medication refills and doctors' appointments.

"The PHR also functions as an electronic medical diary where patients can record their blood pressure readings, diet, activity, moods and glucose levels, if diabetic," says Dr. Eaton. "LifeSensor has behavioral medical concepts built in, so patients can set goals and follow their progress."



The Family Care Center gets regular feedback from participants on what works well with LifeSensor, what doesn't and what they'd like added. Some patients serve as volunteer "navigators" in the e-health center to help new users, especially those who do not have a personal computer or know how to use one. These volunteers also teach others how to search for more information about a diagnosis and medications.

In this phase of the PHR project, 200 patients will be able to access information from their electronic record. Dr. Eaton hopes that eventually all the approximately 10,000 patients in the hospital's primary care practices will have access to LifeSensor. ■

### LEARN HOW TO LOG ON

For more information about the LifeSensor project, call **(401) 729-2081**. To schedule an appointment with a physician at the Family Care Center, call **(401) 729-2769**.



Update is a publication of Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island, 111 Brewster Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860. President/CEO: Francis R. Dietz; Director of Public Relations and Marketing: Louise Paiva; Update Writer and Editor: Catherine Coffin, Public Relations Department (401) 729-2459. Copyright © 2008. All rights reserved. Information in this publication is not intended for the purpose of diagnosing or prescribing. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment and/or advice contained in this publication. If you are receiving multiple copies, need to change your mailing address or do not wish to receive this publication, please send your mailing label(s) and the updated information to McMurtry Campus Center, 1010 E. Missouri Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85014, or call 1-888-626-8779.



# Community Calendar

Programs are held at Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island, 111 Brewster Street, Pawtucket, RI, and are provided at no charge unless otherwise noted.

## HEALTH SCREENINGS

### Hearing Screenings

**Dates:** Sept. 22 to 26  
**Time:** Morning and afternoon appointments to identify hearing loss  
**Info:** (401) 729-2022

### Glucose Screening

Blood sugar testing to identify undiagnosed diabetes. Fasting is not required.  
**Date:** Nov. 5  
**Time:** 11 a.m. to noon  
**Info:** (401) 729-2459

## CLASSES AND EVENTS

### Reflections of Light

Benefit for The Cancer Center at Memorial Hospital. Luminaria lighting, entertainment and reception.  
**Date:** Oct. 3  
**Time:** 6:15 p.m.  
**Info:** (401) 729-2319

### Current Diagnosis and Treatment Options for Breast Cancer

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Guy Nicastrì, MD, Surgeon-in-Chief at Memorial Hospital will discuss screening recommendations, diagnostic tests, surgical treatment options and chemotherapy guidelines. Continental breakfast provided.  
**Date:** Oct. 10  
**Time:** 9 to 10 a.m.  
**Info:** (401) 729-2459

### Baby-Sitting Workshop

Comprehensive American Red Cross course covering age-appropriate child care, accident prevention and first aid. Participants must be age 11 or older.  
**Date:** Oct. 11  
**Time:** 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
**Cost:** \$50; payment required in advance  
**Info:** (401) 729-2459

### Freedom from Smoking Workshop

Eight-week self-help and support program to help smokers quit. Co-sponsored by the American Lung Association.  
**Dates:** Oct. 28; Nov. 4, 11, 18, 20 & 25; Dec. 2 & 9  
**Time:** 6:30 to 8 p.m.  
**Cost:** Free for patients of Memorial Hospital's Family Medicine and Internal Medicine practices; \$75 for others  
**Info:** (401) 729-2459

## SUPPORT GROUPS

### Breastfeeding Support Group

**Days:** First and third Wednesdays of each month  
**Time:** 10 to 11:30 a.m.  
**Place:** Ambulatory Care Center at Memorial, 89 Pond St., Pawtucket  
**Info:** (401) 729-2510

### Diabetes Support Group

**Day:** First Wednesday of each month  
**Time:** 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
**Cost:** \$5 per year  
**Info:** (401) 729-2574

### You Are Not Alone (Cancer Support Group)

**Days:** First and third Wednesdays of each month  
**Time:** 6 to 7:30 p.m.  
**Place:** The Cancer Center at Memorial Hospital  
**Info:** (401) 729-2789

## ONGOING PROGRAMS

### Cardiac Rehabilitation

Exercise, stress management, smoking cessation and nutrition counseling.  
**Info:** (401) 729-2503

### Childbirth Education

Series of four classes about labor and birth for women in the last two months of pregnancy.  
**Info:** (401) 729-2510

### Arthritis Exercise

Twelve-session program to increase strength, range of motion and conditioning/endurance.  
**Info:** (401) 729-2316

### Nutrition Education

Counseling on nutrition and weight loss by registered dietitian.  
**Info:** (401) 729-2574

## Untangling the Web: How to Find Reliable Health Information Online

There are millions of health-related Web pages, but it's not always easy to determine the quality of the information provided. Keep these things in mind as you search:

- ▶ **Use reputable sources.** Start with [www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov), [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), [www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov), or [www.familydoctor.org](http://www.familydoctor.org). Several of these sites include information in Spanish and other languages.
- ▶ **Beware of commercial sites.** The primary goal of sites with ".com" at the end of the address is to make a profit and not necessarily to provide accurate information.
- ▶ **Look for currency and credibility.** Be sure the information is no older than a few years and is written by a health professional. Look for credentials such as MD, PhD, CRNP, DDS, or RN.

For the Medical Library Association's "Top 100 List" of trusted health Web sites, grouped by health condition, visit [www.caphis.mlanet.org](http://www.caphis.mlanet.org). To learn about the accuracy and completeness of health reports in the news, visit [www.healthnewsreview.org](http://www.healthnewsreview.org).

# The Key to Quitting

## Memorial researcher uses DNA analysis to determine the best treatment

**A** smoker's ability to "kick the habit" may have a lot to do with genes. Simple blood tests may one day improve the success rate for smoking cessation. That's one of the findings of a major research study done in part at Memorial Hospital.

Sean P. David, MD, SM, DPhil, Director of Memorial's Primary Care Genetics Lab and Translational Research Center, and an assistant professor of family medicine at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, is a co-author of the report. He says, "This is the first genome-wide study of the efficacy of bupropion (Zyban) and nicotine replacement therapy for smoking cessation."

The human genome refers to all the genetic material in the chromosomes—the complete set of DNA. Genomics is the study of genes and their function.

### Current Treatments

The two most common methods smokers use to quit the habit are medications such as bupropion (Zyban) and nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) in the form of gum, a patch or nasal spray.

Bupropion does not contain nicotine. It is an antidepressant that works to curb nicotine cravings by interfering with the reward circuit in the brain, where addictions are reinforced. NRT works by weaning a smoker off nicotine gradually.

These two types of treatment work well for some smokers and do nothing for others, but there's been no way to tell in advance which one could help a specific person.

### New Targeted Strategies

The genomics research study involved investigators at Memorial/Brown University, Johns Hopkins University, the University of Pennsylvania and Duke University. They looked for clues to successful quitting in the DNA of 550 smokers who used bupropion, NRT or a placebo for several weeks.

A technique called genome-wide association scans showed that certain clusters of gene variants were present more frequently in the successful quitters. The genetic variations in those who were successfully treated with bupropion were different from those who were helped by NRT.

Everyone has some version of these genes that influence basic cell communication; other genes direct enzymes that break down bupropion in the body.

Smokers with genes that more efficiently code for bupropion breakdown responded better to the drug, while people with genetic variants that improve cell communication had an easier time overall in quitting. That makes sense, because addictive behaviors such as

## IN THE KNOW

To learn more about clinical research studies at the Center for Primary Care and Prevention, visit <http://bms.brown.edu/CPCP>.

smoking are deeply ingrained in the brain, and the nerve cell connection that develops is difficult to break.

The study's findings explain why different people respond differently to smoking cessation treatments.

"The ultimate goal," says Dr. David, "is to identify a genetic profile that's predictive of successful quitting on one drug or another and be able to test for this with a simple blood test."

Raymond Niaura, PhD, professor of psychiatry and human behavior at Brown, was the principal investigator for the Rhode Island component of the study, which was supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Cancer Institute.

The research team next will study what happens when treatments are assigned based on patients' genetic profiles. They also will do similar genetic analyses with patients taking another smoking-cessation medication, varenicline (Chantix), which works by blocking nicotine from binding to receptors in the brain. ■

## START TO STOP

For information about nicotine replacement therapy and other medications to quit smoking, go to [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov).



# Setting an Example

## Memorial Hospital promotes better health by going tobacco free

**W**e care about your health. That's why Memorial Hospital, together with eight other hospitals in Rhode Island, will implement a tobacco-free policy on November 20, 2008.

The American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout, traditionally held the Thursday before Thanksgiving, is the day that millions of Americans commit to quit smoking. It's also the day chosen by member institutions of the Hospital Association of Rhode Island (HARI) to become totally tobacco free.

### Why We're Quitting

Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of premature death in the U.S. Memorial Hospital recognizes its leadership role for the community in this important health issue. The new policy will heighten awareness and further promote education on the risks of tobacco use.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 1,700 adults in Rhode Island die each year from smoking; 80 to 240 nonsmokers die from exposure to secondhand smoke. Nationally, smoking is responsible for nearly one in five deaths. Oral tobacco products contain 28 cancer-causing agents and increase the risk of cancer of the mouth.

In March 2005, Rhode Island became the seventh state to eliminate smoking in all indoor public places. The voluntary decision by the HARI hospitals to become tobacco free will make Rhode Island an even healthier place to live. Providing a tobacco-free environment is part of Memorial's continuous

efforts to improve community health and to enhance the quality care expected by patients.

### What Tobacco Free Means to You

The new tobacco-free campus policy applies to all areas at Memorial's main hospital and its affiliates in Pawtucket (Women's Health Care Specialists, the Primary Care Center of Quality Hill, the Neurodevelopmental Center and Memorial Hospital Home Care), in Central Falls (Notre Dame Ambulatory Center), and in Plainville, MA (Southeastern Medical Center). Tobacco will not be allowed in any buildings, entrances, walkways, outdoor areas or parking lots. There will no longer be any designated smoking areas on hospital property.

The policy applies to all inpatients, outpatients, visitors, volunteers, and students, as well as all employees and medical staff. It also eliminates exposure to secondhand smoke, which is especially harmful to children and causes the deaths of an estimated 3,400 non-smoking adults from lung cancer and 46,000 from heart disease each year.

### Let's Clear the Air

The hospital is not forcing anyone to stop using tobacco. We are working to provide a healthier environment for everyone and are committed to providing support for those who want to quit smoking entirely, or to control their nicotine dependence while they are at the hospital.

Quitting can be difficult. However, studies have shown that when smoking is banned in workplaces, smokers are more likely to quit. Patients will be informed about the tobacco-free policy during the registration and admission process and offered educational information, smoking cessation programs, and other support.

We trust that all patients, visitors and staff will respect the new policy's effort to provide quality healthcare in a safe and healthy environment. ■



## Before the Big Day

The American Cancer Society and others offer these tips to quit smoking:

- ▶ Talk with your doctor about using bupropion (Zyban) or nicotine replacement therapy.
- ▶ Seek support. Join a stop-smoking group and try the American Lung Association's self-help program at [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org).
- ▶ Learn the four Ds to fight the urge: Delay, Deep breathing, Drink water, and Do something else.
- ▶ Stock up on sugarless gum and hard candy to substitute for a cigarette.
- ▶ Exercise to relieve tension and reduce your urge to smoke.
- ▶ Don't be discouraged. You can do it!

## KICK YOUR HABIT

Sign up for the Freedom from Smoking program that begins October 28. The workshops are free for patients of our primary care practices, and \$75 for others. For more information, call (401) 729-2459.

# A Family Affair

## Parents have the power to help prevent childhood obesity

**D**on't touch that remote! Every day in the U.S., children ages 8 to 13 spend almost 6 hours watching TV or movies, playing video games, or using a computer. Two-thirds of all children and teens have a TV in their bedroom and they spend even more time in front of the screen.

"For every hour of TV a child watches each day, the risk of being overweight increases 10 to 15 percent," says Marjorie Nasin, MD, Director of Memorial's Pediatric Primary Care Center. "And, they aren't getting the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity," she adds.

### The Bad News

Since 1980, obesity has more than doubled among children ages 2 to 5 and more than tripled for those 6 to 19. Approximately 17 percent of today's 2- to 19-year-olds are overweight.

In addition, overweight children are more likely to become overweight adults. "An obese 8-year-old has a 50 percent chance of becoming an obese adult. At 12 years old, the chance is 80 percent," says Dr. Nasin.

### What's a BMI?

For children 2 years and older, the Body Mass Index (or BMI) is a calculation based on weight and height. Your child is considered overweight if the BMI is at or higher than the 85th percentile, which means your child's body mass is greater than 85 percent of children of the same age, sex and height. Obesity is defined as at or above the 95th percentile.

Adult conditions, such as high cholesterol, cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes, now show up in children. These kids may also suffer from depression, low self-esteem and sleep problems. Dr. Nasin says, "If current trends continue, one-third



of all children born in 2000 will have type 2 diabetes in their lifetime."

### All in the Family

Parents and families have a big impact on shaping the behavior of children. If you eat right and are physically active, there is a good chance your children will make these choices too.

If your child is overweight, it is important to be supportive and for both of you to share your concerns. Focus on gradually changing the entire family's physical activity and eating habits so your child does not feel singled out. Get started with these ideas:

- ▶ **Involve younger children in decisions.** Every weekend have your child pick one physical activity for the whole family to do. Bring your child to the grocery store to pick out some new healthy foods to try.
- ▶ **Have older children make decisions.**

Ask teens what they want to do, rather than tell them what they should be doing. Provide healthier snacks and let them know you trust them to prepare something nutritious when they're hungry.

▶ **Make dietary changes slowly.** If you normally drink whole milk, buy two percent low-fat milk instead. After a few weeks, try one percent low-fat milk.

▶ **Eat at home.** Children who eat dinner made at home with their families most or all nights of the week are 15 percent less likely to be overweight. They are also more likely to eat fruits, vegetables and smaller portions.

▶ **Emphasize the benefits.** Children don't care that a healthy diet can help prevent certain diseases, or that being physically fit can reduce the risk of heart disease. However, they are likely to care about growing tall and strong, doing well in school, or being good at sports.

▶ **Create opportunities for active family time.** Train together for a charity walk. Work in the garden or wash the car by hand.

▶ **Limit screen time.** Keep TV-watching and non-homework computer use to two hours a day.

▶ **Speak out.** Encourage schools to provide adequate physical education. Speak out against fast food and vending machines. ■

## MAKE IT FUN

For an online game and other materials to help children 6 to 11 years old make better food choices, visit [www.pyramid.gov/kids](http://www.pyramid.gov/kids). To schedule an appointment for your child at the Pediatric Primary Care Center, call **(401) 729-2582**.

# Making a Difference

## Rehabilitation center inspires patients to heal and community to help



Memorial employee Susan Albin stands next to her tile on the Wall of Honor.

**S**pend a few minutes with Memorial's Chief of Rehabilitative and Restorative Care, Bruce Lazarus, MD, and it won't take long to understand that this is a man who is passionate about his work.

"The emphasis in rehabilitation is working with patients to maximize their independence and realize their potential," he notes. "Through a collaborative approach, each member of our team focuses on helping patients meet their individual goals and get back to their lives," he adds.

### Better Outcomes

Dr. Lazarus heads an experienced staff of dedicated rehabilitation nurses; licensed physical, occupational and speech therapists; and a neuropsychologist. Together, they're making a difference for patients whose functional ability has been affected by a recent illness, stroke, injury or disorder. They provide patients with the skills they need to return home to their previous activities.

"We have a consistent record of strong outcomes," notes Dr. Lazarus. "Patients at our Center for Rehabilitation are well prepared to return to their lifestyle."

One of the few hospital-based inpatient rehabilitation centers in Rhode Island, Memorial's Center for Rehabilitation continues a tradition of excellence that began nearly 30 years ago. It is accredited by both the Joint Commission and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.

### More Like Home

The bright, spacious Center, located on the first floor of the hospital's Richardson Building, can accommodate 18 patients in 8 private and 5 semi-private rooms. There is a large communal area designed for recreation and dining, which also serves as the site for many of the themed lunches and events the staff hosts for patients.

Patients appreciate the privacy, comfort and amenities at the Center that allow them to concentrate on recovery. One patient recalls, "Although I was in a hospital, it felt more like home, so, I was more relaxed and able to focus on my therapy and getting better."

### Giving Back

Sharing the desire to make a difference in patients' care and lives are many people from the community who give their time and support to the Center. They're friends, business owners, former patients and their families, medical staff and employees, such as Susan Albin, Controller in the Accounting Department.

"Having spent a lot of my career in the Blackstone Valley, I've always known the importance of Memorial Hospital," she says. "As an employee, I feel that giving to the hospital is an important way to show my appreciation for its services."

That sense of appreciation took on new meaning for Susan when her husband Jeffrey, a mechanic and an avid boater and motorcyclist, was a patient.

Sadly, he passed away in December 2007.

"Jeffrey and I valued the quality care and consideration that he received at Memorial. He said he always felt like he was put first when he was a patient here."

Giving to Memorial is important to Susan because she wants to help ensure "that the best possible care continues here for all patients."

Susan is one of the contributors recognized on the Wall of Honor in the Center for Rehabilitation. This special display consists of brightly colored tiles handcrafted by a prominent Rhode Island artist. Each tile serves as a permanent reminder of support for the Center's services and represents a donation of \$1,000 or more. The contributions directly benefit hundreds of rehabilitation patients each year. ■

## ADD YOUR SUPPORT

To learn how you can contribute to the Center for Rehabilitation or support Memorial Hospital in other ways, visit [www.mhri.org](http://www.mhri.org) and select "Support Memorial," or call the Fund Development Office at **(401) 729-2319**.



*Roland Riendeau of Pawtucket, one of Memorial's dedicated volunteers*

# We Want You!

Volunteers are an important part of a hospital, and you could be one of them. Experts say that people who donate their time not only help others, but also gain new skills, make new friends and improve their own health.

“Memorial Hospital is a great place to volunteer because there is such a range of opportunities for people with various interests, skills and schedules,” says Lynn Foster, Volunteer Coordinator. “You can help transport patients, deliver books or flowers, or assist a physical therapist. If you have difficulty moving around, you might enjoy helping with paperwork or assisting staff at the information desk.”

Volunteers at Memorial receive training, free parking, a meal stipend in the cafeteria, and participate in various events throughout the year. They gain pride and satisfaction from knowing that by sharing their time they have contributed to their community hospital and the lives of others in a meaningful way.

## GETTING STARTED

To learn about volunteering at Memorial, go to the “Join Our Family” section at [www.mhri.org](http://www.mhri.org), write to [Lynn\\_Foster@mhri.org](mailto:Lynn_Foster@mhri.org) or call (401) 729-2325.

## Did you wash your hands?

According to the American Society for Microbiology, only 60 percent of people wash their hands thoroughly after using a public restroom.

This fact is alarming, since hand washing is one of the best ways to avoid catching and spreading infections, such as stomach viruses, colds, flu, and the antibiotic-resistant MRSA bacteria.

Remember to also wash your hands:

- ▶ before you eat, drink, or prepare food
- ▶ after outdoor activities
- ▶ after you change diapers or touch pets
- ▶ after you blow your nose
- ▶ before and after visiting anyone who's sick

Using plain soap and warm water, rub your hands together for 15 to 20 seconds and scrub all surfaces, including under your fingernails. Dry your hands thoroughly, preferably with a disposable towel. If possible, use the towel to turn off the faucet.

If soap and clean water are not available, rub an alcohol-based hand gel all over both hands, including the fingernails. Give your children a small bottle of gel to keep in their school backpacks.

Good hand hygiene reduces hospital infections. If you're unsure whether a doctor or nurse has done so, feel comfortable to ask, “Did you wash your hands?” before exams and procedures.



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Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island is a 294-bed community hospital serving the Blackstone Valley of Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts. Memorial is a teaching affiliate of The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University.

