

HEALTHY Perspectives

WOMEN'S CARE PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS



Women's Care
PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS
598 E. 13th Avenue
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Women's Care Physicians in the News



Cristin Babcock, MD, spoke to the Oregon chapter of the American College of Physicians on the subject of female urinary incontinence recently.



Gary LeClair, MD, recently completed eight years as a medical staff officer at Sacred Heart Medical Center, including two years each

as chief of surgery, vice chief of staff, chief of staff and past chief of staff. He now serves as chair of the medical staff quality assurance committee, which was recently created to evaluate and sustain quality issues at Sacred Heart. He also now serves on the investigative committee of the Oregon Board of Medical Examiners, an 11-person board appointed by the governor to license and discipline medical doctors, doctors of osteopathy, podiatrists, physician assistants and acupuncture practitioners. The investigative committee is a subcommittee of the full board, and is charged with evaluating the initial investigation of these practitioners.

Women's Health News in Brief

Because we understand that knowledge is power, we encourage our patients to become informed about health issues. Here are brief news nuggets about health issues, along with Web sites for more in-depth information (FMI). It's important to note that Women's Care physicians don't necessarily endorse these findings.

Patients and doctors often overlook early symptoms of ovarian cancer. Better recognition of early symptoms and research to improve detection are key to saving patients' lives. Ovarian cancer can cause symptoms for months or years before it's diagnosed. Researchers at the University of California at Davis Medical School found that women with the disease were far more likely than those without it to have bloating, gas, abdominal pressure, or pelvic pain before diagnosis. Doctors don't usually consider ovarian cancer to be one of the possible diagnoses because there are so many other possible sources of these symptoms. If your symptoms persist, however, ask your doctor if he/she has considered ovarian cancer on the list of diagnoses being ruled out, and if a pelvic ultrasound or a blood test for the CA-125 protein might be appropriate for you.

FMI: www.womenshealthresearch.org/press/newsservice/091505.htm

Java junkies, rejoice! Drinking coffee won't increase your risk of high blood pressure. However, a possible link has been found between high blood pressure and consumption of diet and non-diet cola. Those were the findings of a study published in the Nov. 9, 2005, issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association. The research was based on data from the Nurses' Health Study, which followed 150,000 women for 12 years. None of the women who participated had medically-diagnosed high blood pressure at the beginning of the study.

"The results were intriguing because two caffeinated beverages behaved differently," said lead author Wolfgang Winkelmayr, MD, ScD, from Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

FMI: www.womenshealthresearch.org/press/newsservice/120205.htm

Financial Help Available for Breast and Cervical Cancer Screenings

The Lane County Breast and Cervical Cancer Program is part of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. The program helps financially challenged, uninsured, and medically underserved women gain access to lifesaving screening programs for early detection of breast and cervical cancers. If cancer is detected, the program may also cover treatment costs. For more information, phone the program at 541-682-6682.

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- I N S I D E**
- Workshop Planned For Women 40 and Better
 - Variety of Tools Used For Breast Imaging
 - Online Sources for Health Information
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Did You Know? Women's Care offers mammography at our Country Club Road location, so women over 40 can enjoy the convenience of scheduling their annual mammograms and physician exams at the same time. Help ensure early detection of breast cancer by doing three things faithfully: Annual physician exams, monthly breast self-exams and annual mammograms after age 40.

New 3D/4D Ultrasound Provides Detailed Images of Fetuses



3D ultrasound image of fetal face and arm.

It's become an icon of expectant parents in the modern age: A fuzzy black and white image of a cherished fetus with indistinct features proudly displayed on the refrigerator door. But thanks to new three-dimensional ultrasound technology, 'baby's first photo' is coming into clearer focus, resembling an actual photograph of a fetus with realistic features. And as an added bonus, a 'four-dimensional' capability of the new technology allows expectant parents and clinicians to actually watch the fetus' movements in real time.

Women's Care is the only obstetrics and gynecology practice in the area to offer expectant parents an astonishingly detailed preview of their child with the new 3D/4D ultrasound.

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The new version works in the same way as conventional ultrasound, but computer software allows it to create a three-dimensional view of the fetus and to show its natural movements in the uterus.

According to Women's Care physician Heather York, MD, the 3D/4D ultrasound is useful for medical and diagnostic purposes. She says that the more distinct images make it easier to detect potential problems, such as cleft lip, spina bifida, and problems with the fetus' brain, spine and heart. "For instance, with spina bifida, a 3D image of the back shows skin surfaces, rather than just the bony structure, which is what the 2D images showed," Dr. York explains. "So now we can see exactly where and how large the defect is, and can provide parents a more clear expectation."

Dr. York adds that the new technology also has important applications for gynecological patients. "We can now see a third dimension in the uterus and ovaries that we never saw before with ultrasound, providing more information about abnormalities and the location of certain pathologies." For instance, she says, it's now possible to see endometrial polyps with more certainty, and to get a precise location of fibroids in the endometrium, or lining of the uterus.

For expectant parents, though, all the conveniences and advantages pale in comparison to the incomparable joy of having a realistic sneak peek at their baby.

According to Brandy Sundberg, a diagnostic medical sonographer at Women's Care, the 3D/4D ultrasound offers many advantages. "It provides parents a realistic look at their baby, and allows them to bond. First-time parents are often apprehensive, and this lets them see clearly what their baby looks like and helps reassure them."

Jennifer, a Eugene obstetrics nurse, is seven months pregnant with her second son. During her first pregnancy three years ago, she had the conventional ultrasound. With this pregnancy, she's had the 3D/4D variety. "The difference is amazing," Jennifer says. "We have a clear picture of our second baby, and because his features are so distinct, we already think he looks like our first." She says the difference between the old and new versions of ultrasound is like the difference between a child's stick-figure drawing and a Rembrandt painting. And, as an obstetrics nurse, Jennifer says patients get much more excited about their 3D/4D ultrasounds than with the old ones. She adds that, as with the traditional ultrasounds, expectant parents can request that the baby's gender be kept a surprise.

Variety of Imaging Tools Used for Breast Cancer Screening and Diagnosis

By Audrey Garrett, MD, MPH

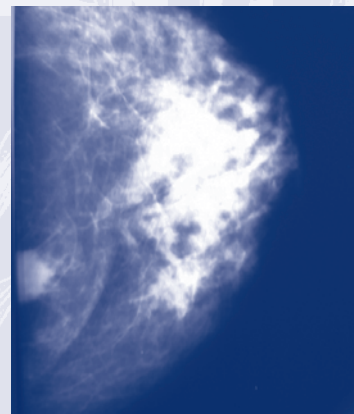
At Women's Care, we probably sound like a broken record. If so, it's only because the message is so vitally important: When it comes to breast cancer—the third leading cause of death in women—early detection is key. You can help ensure early detection of breast cancer by doing three things faithfully: Monthly breast self-exams, annual mammograms after age 40 and annual physician exams.

Fortunately for women today, mammograms and other imaging technology are available to help physicians detect, diagnose and pinpoint breast cancers. Here are a few of the imaging tools available:

MAMMOGRAPHY—Mammograms are technology's primary tool for early detection of breast cancer. They are X-ray photographs of the breast taken when breast tissue is compressed between two plates. Radiologists evaluate the X-ray for abnormalities. Abnormalities on the mammogram such as calcifications, tissue distortions or abnormal densities may be suspicious for cancer and may warrant further testing.

When used to detect and evaluate breast abnormalities in women who have no breast symptoms, the procedure is known as a screening mammogram. The goal of the screening mammogram is to find cancer when it is still too small to be felt. Finding small breast cancers early by a screening mammogram greatly improves a woman's chance for successful treatment.

Diagnostic mammograms are those done on women with problems such as a lump, pain or nipple discharge, or on women who have had an abnormality found during a screening mammogram.



This mammogram shows cancer. The cancer shows up as a whitish area on the X-ray.

During a diagnostic mammogram, more images are taken—some of them with magnification—to make a small area of suspicious breast tissue easier to evaluate.

ULTRASOUND—Ultrasound of the breast is sometimes used to evaluate breast problems that are found during a screening or diagnostic mammogram, or during a physical exam. Because ultrasound can distinguish between liquid and solid, it's useful in differentiating

fluid-filled (cystic) lesions from solid lesions. Breast ultrasound may also be used to help doctors guide a biopsy needle into some breast lesions.

Ultrasound isn't routinely used for screening. However, it has become a valuable tool to use along with mammograms, since it is widely available, noninvasive and less expensive than other options.

MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING (MRI)—A supplemental tool to mammography, MRI is usually performed when a mammogram or ultrasound of the breast is abnormal but the nature of the abnormality can't be determined. MRI can also be useful in screening a breast with an implant, or for screening younger women who have a genetic mutation that puts them at significant risk of developing cancer. Mammograms may not be useful in some of these patients because of greater density of breast tissue in younger women. This use is experimental and is currently being studied. The only screening tool currently approved by the FDA is mammography.

NEWER AND EXPERIMENTAL BREAST IMAGING METHODS—Researchers are continuing to explore other methods of breast imaging to find cancers even smaller than those detected by mammograms and to improve the ability to differentiate benign breast conditions from cancers. These methods—including nuclear medicine studies, electrical impedance imaging, thermography and other experimental imaging tests—need further study before their usefulness can be conclusively determined.

Health Information Resources

Here are some more useful information resources to help you research health issues. This list began in the previous issue of Healthy Perspectives.

(Note: This list is intended as a general reference, and doesn't imply endorsement by Women's Care physicians of these resources or of information provided by these resources.)

WOMEN'S CANCERS

<http://www.wcn.org/>

The Women's Cancer Network—Information on gynecologic and other cancer types affecting women.

PREGNANCY

www.womenshealth.gov/Pregnancy/

A health resource for before, during, and after pregnancy—from the National Women's Health Information Center.

www.marchofdimes.com/pnhc/pnhc.asp

The March of Dimes pregnancy and newborn health education center.



May Workshop Planned For Women 40 and Better

Stay fit and fabulous in midlife. Join your peers for a workshop exploring the special health concerns and considerations that affect women during the time of transition at age 40 and beyond.

Three Women's Care health care providers will make presentations on subjects of particular interest to midlife women. Dr. Doug Austin will share suggestions for self-care for women of the 'sandwich generation'—that is, those who are sandwiched between caring for aging parents as well as their own children and/or grandchildren. Dr. Melissa Edwards will discuss urinary symptoms and pelvic relaxation. And Miffy Davis, RN, will discuss breast health and provide instructions for doing a breast self-exam. The presentations will be followed by a panel discussion moderated by KVAL's Shelley Kurtz. And of course, we'll leave plenty of time for questions and answers.

At Women's Care, we understand that knowledge is power. We urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to become a powerful partner in your health care.

40 and Better: A Lively Discussion of Women's Health

Monday, May 8
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Eugene Hilton, 66 E. Sixth Ave., Eugene

Admission is free, but space is limited, so pre-registration is advised. To reserve your space, please log on to www.WomensCare.com, or phone Jennifer Ocker at 345-7756.