When you're sick, you need and want a doctor who specializes in you. You need a doctor who looks at the whole you. You need a doctor who can see your documented medical history, recognize your specific healthcare needs and tailor your treatment accordingly. When you’re well, a doctor who knows all about you is just as essential to make sure you stay well through preventive healthcare measures.

There’s no comparison to the comprehensive care that a primary care physician (PCP) provides.

In fact, studies show that establishing a medical home can lead to a variety of perks, including:
- Dramatically reduced medical expenses
- An improved quality of life
- Higher personal satisfaction with healthcare
- A stronger doctor-patient relationship
- More coordinated care

FINDING A PCP NEAR YOU IS EASY!
If you need help establishing a medical home with a PCP, call 713.222.CARE (2273). Or visit memorialhermann.org and use the Find a Physician tool.

“By establishing a relationship with a PCP, you can receive personalized, coordinated care for all stages of your life,” says Dorothy Lamping, M.D., a board-certified family practitioner affiliated with Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center.

She adds that if you need other healthcare specialists or medical services, your PCP can provide a referral and serve as the centralized base for all your care. Also, a PCP can help you be proactive in your care, thus reducing the chances of chronic problems in the future.

Dr. Lamping is a board-certified family practitioner.
How You Can Help Prevent Prostate Cancer

Some risk factors for prostate cancer are unavoidable. These include being older, having a father or brother with this type of cancer and being African-American. Fortunately, you may be able to avoid some other risk factors.

Prevention with Lifestyle Choices
Scientists don’t yet know for sure what causes prostate cancer. But some studies suggest that making the following choices may help protect you:
• Eat lots of fruits and vegetables.
• Limit fat, particularly animal fat. Some research indicates that men who eat a lot of animal fat have a greater chance of developing prostate cancer.
• Ask your doctor about aspirin. A recent review of several studies suggests that aspirin may help protect men from prostate cancer. But the authors caution that more research is needed.

The Importance of Screening
“Prostate cancer may cause no symptoms, and possible symptoms are often due to other problems, such as an enlarged prostate,” says Melvyn Anhalt, M.D., a board-certified urologist affiliated with Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center.

To be safe, Dr. Anhalt recommends you tell your doctor if you experience any of the following:
• Pain during urination
• Frequent urination, especially at night
• Pain in the upper thighs, hips or lower back
• Not being able to urinate
• Blood in the semen or urine
• Painful ejaculation

The American Cancer Society (ACS) says that beginning at age 50, men with at least a 10-year life expectancy should be offered prostate cancer screening annually. High-risk men may be offered screening even earlier, says the ACS. Ask your doctor if screening makes sense for you.
ACDF Surgery Takes the Pressure Off Your Neck

Gently press your fingertips into the back of your neck. You will notice several small, hard bumps. These are your vertebrae, or bones that make up the top portion of your back, known as your cervical spine.

Between each bone is a spongelike disc that helps your spine move. It also acts as a shock absorber to keep the bones from rubbing against each other. Over time, these discs can break down and begin to bulge out of place. The vertebrae may move closer together, causing a painful condition known as osteoarthritis.

In response, the body builds more bone, called bone spurs, to fill the gaps. Unfortunately, bone spurs may pinch nearby nerves and cause pain, numbness or tingling in the back that travels down the arm or hand.

Special Surgery Relieves Pinched Nerves
When treating this condition, skilled surgeons affiliated with Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center perform a procedure called anterior cervical discectomy and fusion (ACDF).

During ACDF, the surgeon locates the problem disc through an incision in the neck and removes it. The space between the vertebrae is restored and then filled with a bone graft – usually a small piece of bone from a cadaver. Finally, the surgeon secures the new bone in place with a titanium plate. The procedure takes about 45 minutes, and patients stay in the hospital overnight for observation.

“One of the benefits of having this surgery at Memorial City Medical Center is that we use spinal cord monitoring throughout the procedure,” says Mahmood Moradi, M.D., a board-certified neurosurgeon affiliated with Memorial City Medical Center. “Sensors placed along the patient’s spine warn the surgeon if he or she is getting too close to tiny nerves, which reduces the risk of injuring a nerve during the operation.”

Another advantage? “Memorial City Medical Center has some of the most skilled surgeons and anesthesiologists in the state,” says Dr. Moradi.

Who Needs Surgery?
In addition to problems that occur with age, patients may need surgery because of repetitive-use injuries. For instance, a hairdresser who is constantly looking down may experience a pinched nerve.

“We recommend surgery when pain, numbness or tingling affects patients’ quality of life and makes it difficult for them to carry out everyday activities, such as cooking or driving,” says Dr. Moradi.

ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM SEVERE NECK PAIN? Talk with your doctor about the ACDF procedure. For a physician referral, call 713.222.CARE (2273) or visit memorialhermann.org.

Dr. Moradi is a board-certified neurosurgeon.
Care for Children with Heart Defects

Narrowing of heart valves. Holes in the heart. Missing heart valves. These are just a few of the heart defects that can happen while a fetus is growing. Most birth defects block or misdirect blood flow to and from the heart.

Some infants are born with such a mild defect that it isn’t detected until later in childhood. Some of the signs parents and doctors may notice in a child include:

- Chest pain
- Trouble breathing when playing
- Fatigue
- Blacking out
- Irregular blood pressure

Infants with a severe defect have more noticeable symptoms when they’re born, such as:

- Trouble feeding
- Bluish skin
- Difficulty breathing
- Irregular heartbeat
- Enlarged heart

Causes for the Defects

Congenital heart defects can result from a number of factors. The risk rises if:

- The mother has diabetes or a family history of congenital heart disease
- The mother contracts a virus, such as German measles, early in her pregnancy
- The expectant mother is exposed to alcohol, certain medications or illegal drugs

But most of the time, the cause of these heart defects remains a mystery.

Special Care for Infants and Children

Different kinds of defects require different kinds of medical attention. A child’s doctor will recommend the best course of action.

“Because their hearts are working harder, infants with heart defects tend to burn more calories than those without a heart problem,” says Steven Lorch, M.D., a board-certified pediatrician and fellowship-trained pediatric cardiologist affiliated with Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center. “It’s important to work with a doctor to make sure these infants are getting enough food. Infants and children with heart defects may also have weaker immune systems. So vaccinations are important.”

Some minor heart defects are OK if left untreated and may even disappear on their own. But others are likely to get worse without medication, surgery and lifelong treatment. Some defects need to be surgically repaired as soon as the baby is born. Other problems can wait until the child is older.

Many children who are diagnosed with mild congenital heart defects can enjoy physical activities, including sports such as tennis, baseball and cycling. But others may have to limit their participation in athletics and gym classes.

“Babies with congenital heart disease may grow more slowly during infancy and childhood,” says Dr. Lorch. “Still, these babies will probably sit up, walk and talk at about the same time other children do. If a child gets the right treatment for the type of defect, he or she has a good chance of growing up strong and healthy.”

Dr. Lorch is a board-certified pediatrician, fellowship-trained in pediatric cardiology.
Beyond Glucose Control: Good Diabetes Care

Keeping glucose levels where they belong is important – but it’s just the beginning of managing your diabetes. Here’s what you need to know about taking care of yourself from top to bottom.

Heads-Up
Get an eye exam once a year even if your sight seems fine. The doctor should dilate your pupils to see the back of the eye. High blood glucose and high blood pressure can damage tiny blood vessels there. Pregnant women with diabetes should see an eye doctor during the first three months of pregnancy.

Floss and brush teeth and gums daily with a soft brush. Also, brush after each meal and snack. Keep false teeth clean, too. High blood glucose makes it easier for bacteria to grow, which in turn can lead to gum disease. Call your dentist if you have red, sore or bleeding gums. Get teeth checked and cleaned twice a year.

The Heart of the Matter
Diet and exercise are the keys to a healthy cardiovascular system. Together, they can lower your blood glucose and blood pressure, keep your cholesterol in check and help you lose pounds or maintain a healthy weight.

“Good nutrition means getting a balanced amount of carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins and minerals each day,” says Melissa Jorge, a registered and licensed dietitian affiliated with Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center.

Jorge offers the following tips in creating a healthy meal plan:
• Eat more whole grains, fruits and vegetables.
• Cut back on foods high in fat and cook with less fat.
• Use less salt in cooking and eat fewer processed foods.
• Choose smaller portions and never skip meals.
• Limit sugar-sweetened beverages and drinks high in sugar, including fruit juices and fruit-flavored drinks.

Physical activity is important, too. Aim for at least 30 minutes of aerobic exercise over the course of a day, most days of the week. For example, take a 10-minute walk after each meal. Talk with your doctor before starting an exercise program if you’ve been inactive.

Full Body Checkup
“See a doctor at least twice a year for a physical exam and important screenings,” says Ankur Doshi, M.D., a board-certified internal medicine specialist affiliated with Memorial City Medical Center. “Get your blood pressure, weight and feet checked, as well as your glucose levels with an A1c blood test. Once a year, get your cholesterol checked, and have urine and blood tests to show how your kidneys are functioning.”

We Can Help You Eat Healthier
Our Outpatient Nutrition Services offer one-on-one counseling and education to help individuals plan healthy, nutritious meals designed for their lifestyles, schedules, preferences and special needs. Services include medical nutrition therapy for adults and children older than age 2. Our dietitians are registered by the American Dietetic Association and are licensed by the state. A physician’s referral is required and necessary for insurance purposes. Coverage varies depending on insurance and diagnosis. Start eating healthier today. Call Outpatient Nutrition Services at 713.242.3698.

Dr. Doshi is board-certified in internal medicine.
Abnormal bleeding and pelvic pain are common and can have many causes. One possibility is uterine fibroids.

“Uterine fibroids are noncancerous tumors that grow within the muscle of the uterus,” says Michael Hold, M.D., a board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist affiliated with Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center. “They are especially common in women of childbearing age. Fibroids can cause heavy periods, bleeding between periods and pain during intercourse.”

Many Treatments Available
There are many therapies available to treat fibroids. These include medicines that can help reduce bleeding and ease pain. Endometrial ablation can slow or stop heavy bleeding. It involves removing a thin layer of the uterine lining. But it’s not for women who want more children. Another procedure that can help control symptoms is uterine fibroid embolization. This nonsurgical procedure reduces the size of fibroids, stops their growth in the uterine wall and provides relief from painful symptoms and bleeding. During the procedure, an interventional radiologist makes a painless incision smaller than the tip of a pen in the groin area. A small tube is placed in an artery and guided to the uterus where the growths are located. The doctor then injects tiny beads through the tube into the arteries that supply blood to the fibroids. These beads stop the flow of blood to the fibroids, which causes them to shrink.

“Embolization is very effective, relieving symptoms in about 90 percent of patients,” says Dean Chauvin, M.D., a board-certified interventional radiologist affiliated with Memorial City Medical Center. “It requires no general anesthesia.

Patients stay in the hospital just one night. And most women are back to their normal activities in less than a week. This procedure is not typically performed in women who plan to become pregnant.”

If Surgery Is Needed
When pelvic pain or abnormal bleeding is severe, or when other treatments fail, a woman may choose to have surgery, such as a myomectomy or a hysterectomy.

During a myomectomy, a doctor removes only the fibroids, leaving the healthy areas of the uterus in place. Less-invasive options of this procedure are available, including robotic-assisted and laparoscopic. Myomectomy can preserve a woman’s ability to have children.

A hysterectomy removes the uterus. There are different types of hysterectomies. Some involve an incision through the abdomen, while others are performed through an incision in the vagina. The operation also may be done with smaller incisions and less-invasive techniques. After a hysterectomy, a woman stops having her period and cannot become pregnant. She also may have menopausal symptoms, such as hot flashes.
do you suffer from pelvic pain or abnormal bleeding? Talk with your doctor about the possibility of fibroids. For a physician who specializes in fibroid treatment, call 713.222.Care (2273).

memorialhermann.org/memorialcity  September 2010

community calendar

For more information on any of the below events, or to register, call 713.222.CARE (2273), unless otherwise noted.

EVENTS AND SCREENINGS

Girls’ Night Out
Sept. 22, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Not tonight, I have a headache! More than 45 million Americans suffer from chronic headaches. Join us for a fun-filled evening and learn about headache causes and treatments. Location: West Pavilion, Main Conference Center. Registration is required.

Stroke Symposium
Oct. 16, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Learn more about stroke care, symptoms and prevention. A continental breakfast will be served with presentations from four doctors. Following the presentations, there will be a health fair and hors d’oeuvres. Location: Omni Hotel, Galleria Area. Registration is required.

New Start Weight-Loss Surgery
Webinars
Oct. 20 and Nov. 18, noon to 1 p.m.
Register at memorialhermann.org.

In the Pink of Health Luncheon
Oct. 26, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Join us for a luncheon benefiting the Bobetta Lindig Breast Center with speaker Kelly Corrigan. For more information, or to purchase a ticket, call Gayle Kinnie at 713.704.5249.

OB/Maternity Facility Tours
Tours of the facility are held regularly on Sundays. Registration is required.

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Baby Care Class
Teaches prospective parents the fundamentals of infant care. Cost: $30 per couple.

Breastfeeding Class
Teaches expectant parents techniques to make breastfeeding a successful, satisfying experience. Cost: $30 per couple.

Infant CPR Class
Teaches basic techniques used in the event of foreign-body airway obstruction (choking) in infants. Cost: $15 per couple.

FREE NewStart Weight-Loss Surgery
Seminars
Sept. 22; Oct. 13, 20 and 27; Nov. 10, 16 and 17
For people morbidly obese with a body mass index of 30 or higher who are interested in learning about metabolic and weight-loss surgery. To register, call 713.242.4600.

Prepared Childbirth Class
Prepares expectant parents for their childbirth experience. OB tour is included. Cost: $70 per couple.

Sibling Class
Teaches children ages 4 to 12 how to deal with a new sibling. Cost: $5 per child.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Alzheimer’s
Meets the third Sunday of every month at 2 p.m. For more information, call 713.934.8844. Location: West Pavilion, Second Floor, Classroom A.

Better Breathers
Meets the third Thursday of every month at 3 p.m. Call 713.242.3555 or 3190 to learn more.

Beyond Birth
For women suffering from postpartum depression. Meets every Saturday, 10 to 11 a.m. Call 713.242.3530 or 713.254.4140. Location: West Pavilion, Main Conference Center.

Breast Cancer
Meets the third Tuesday of every month, 6 to 7:30 p.m. For more details, call 713.242.3395. Location: West Pavilion, Main Conference Center.

Cancer
Meets every Monday, 7 to 8 p.m. To learn more, call 713.242.3564. Location: Medical Plaza 2, First Floor, Suite 152.

Diabetes
Meets the second Thursday of the month, eight times per year, 7 to 8:30 p.m. For more information, call 713.242.3890. Location: West Pavilion, Frostwood Boardroom.

Mended Hearts
Meets the fourth Tuesday of every month, 6 to 7:30 p.m. To learn more, call 713.242.3440. Location: West Pavilion, Main Conference Center.

Stroke
Meets the second and fourth Thursdays of every month, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Call 713.242.2906. Location: East Tower, Fourth Floor, Neuroscience Conference Room.

Weight-Loss Surgery
Meets the first Wednesday of every month, 7 to 9 p.m. Call 713.242.4600. Location: West Pavilion, Main Conference Center.
Dr. Dorothy Lamping is a board-certified family practitioner. She attended medical school at The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas. She completed her residency at The University of Texas Medical School at Houston.

Dr. Andrew Selzman is a board-certified urologist. He attended medical school at The University of Texas Medical School in San Antonio, Texas. He completed his residency at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio.

Dr. Melvyn Anhalt is a board-certified urologist. He attended the University of Alabama School of Medicine in Birmingham, Alabama, and completed his residency at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas.

Dr. Mahmood Moradi is a board-certified neurosurgeon. He attended medical school at Texas Tech University School of Medicine in Lubbock, Texas. He completed his residency at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas, Texas.

Dr. Steven Lorch is a board-certified pediatrician. He attended medical school at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia. He completed his residency at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas, and his fellowship in pediatric cardiology at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.

Dr. Ankur Doshi is board-certified in internal medicine. He attended medical school and completed his residency at The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas.

Dr. Michael Hold is a board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist. He attended medical school and completed his residency at The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas.

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FIND A DOCTOR NEAR YOU. For a physician directory, call 713.222.CARE (2273).