



WELCOME LETTER

It's February and that means you're already into the second month of YOUR YEAR. Are you keeping your resolution to make good health a number one priority? Did you start exercising? Are you eating healthier? And are you taking time for yourself? If not, what are you waiting for? It's never too late to get started even if you didn't start on January 1. If you're having trouble deciding what type of exercise program to join, how to eat healthier, or ways to relax, then I recommend the following:

- Sign-up for our Integrative Medicine classes or schedule an appointment for a massage, acupuncture or reflexology therapy.
- Have yoga therapy sessions right in your office! Practitioners travel to your office when it's convenient for you.
- Treat yourself to skin care. Right now, we're offering specials on products and services. Read our article for skin care tips.
- Plan and prepare your workday meals so you can just grab and go. For snacks, I recommend using snack size baggies to help with portion control and fill them with fruits and vegetables.
- Visit your doctor for regular screenings. Cervical and breast are just two of the important screenings that you should talk to your doctor about. We are happy to work with you to help schedule your screenings and doctor's visits all in one day.

We're just getting started on 2015, so don't lose focus, hold yourself accountable and keep looking forward!

Lisa Larkin, MD, FACP, NCMP

Director, UC Health Women's Center

Associate Professor and Division Director, Midlife Women's Health and Primary Care, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Cincinnati College of Medicine

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Support the Center

Our patients aren't just women. They're mothers, daughters and sisters. They're business women, teachers and caregivers. By advancing women's health care, we're not only helping women live longer, healthier lives, we're helping those who love and depend on them.

For more information, visit:

women.uchealth.com/about-us/support-the-center



Lisa Larkin, MD, FACP, NCMP

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Everyday Ailments and Hidden Heart Problems

Contributed by **Shazia Chaudry, MD**

Everyday aches, pains, stress or illness can disrupt your life but these ailments could be damaging more than your mood. Your heart can become damaged and you may not even know it until a serious issue arises.

With heart month upon us, I'm sure you are hearing more about heart disease and the importance of taking care of your heart. Well, as a Primary Care physician, I truly encourage you to do so. Your heart is the most important muscle in your body. As women, we have a greater risk of developing heart disease—the number one killer of women and more deadly than all forms of cancer. Fortunately, understanding heart disease and knowing the unique symptoms of heart disease helps to reduce risk.

What is heart disease?

Heart disease is a result of several heart related problems, many which are related to atherosclerosis.

Atherosclerosis is a condition that develops when plaque builds up in the artery walls, causing narrowing which makes it harder for blood to flow through your body. There are several forms of heart disease including heart attack, heart failure, arrhythmia and heart valve problems. You can read more in our Health Library on uhealth.com.

High Blood Pressure, Heart Disease and Pain

High blood pressure can be a very tricky condition especially when you don't realize you have it. If you experience frequent pain – mild or severe – I recommend talking to your doctor. I encourage you, not only during heart month, but every month of the year, to make your heart health top priority. Remember, this is Your Year!

You may not have known, but pain causes elevation of blood pressure and heart rate thanks to the nervous system and the release of adrenalin. When you're in pain, your nervous system is stimulated by electrical pain signals. Pain also signals the hypothalamus and pituitary glands to release adrenocorticotropin hormone (ACTH) which stimulates the adrenal glands to release adrenalin. The release of adrenalin also causes an elevation of blood pressure and heart rate. Ultimately, these responses to pain, may cause hazardous stress on your cardiovascular system that doesn't always show symptoms until damage to your heart (heart disease) has already begun.



What is high blood pressure?

High blood pressure – also known as hypertension – is when the pressure your heart is pushing out to your arteries is higher than it should be. Blood pressure is measured as two numbers. The top (systolic) number is the pressure when the heart beats. The bottom (diastolic) number is the pressure when the heart rests between beats. Normal blood pressure for an adult is 120/80. High blood pressure for an adult is 140 or higher (systolic) and/or 90 or higher (diastolic) that stays high over time. High blood pressure usually has no signs or symptoms and affects 1 in 3 adults.



Walk-In Appointments

Did you know Women's Center offers walk-in appointments for those feeling under the weather? Patients, staff and visitors can stop by the front desk to make a same-day appointment.

Women May Be at Greater Risk for Depression and Anxiety after Heart Attack

Contributed by **Umara Ali Raza, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine**

Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of both men and women in the United States, claiming a life every 33 seconds. More women die from the disease and now a new study suggests that women may suffer from depression and anxiety after a heart attack.

According to the study, women had a higher risk of depression and anxiety than the men. Researchers interviewed patients and accounted for medical history and current cardiovascular disease risk factors, such as smoking and lack of physical activity. The patients were then ranked on a scale for their level of depression and anxiety. The study also found that smoking increased the risk of anxiety, while the lack of exercise increased the risk of depression.

Depression and anxiety are also more common in women with chronic health problems. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), diabetes, arthritis, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and stroke are conditions that increase the risk of depression and anxiety. Many of my patients ask me how they can prevent heart disease. If there isn't a hereditary component, then much of it comes down to

lifestyle choices. Patients should know their numbers—meaning understand your blood pressure number and cholesterol levels and what that means to your health. It's important!

I also recommend that woman talk to their physician about a cardiology assessment and risk factors for heart disease. If you're at risk for heart disease, there is good news. Many people can take steps to significantly reduce their chances of developing heart disease. Even if you already have atherosclerosis or have had a heart attack, there's a lot you can also do to prevent future heart problems.

- Stop smoking
- Control high blood pressure
- Control high cholesterol
- Lose extra weight
- Get physically active
- Control diabetes



Sexual Health Community Seminar

Wednesday, Feb. 25
7 – 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 28
9 – 10:30 a.m.

**West Chester Hospital Plaza
Conference Room**
7700 University Drive
West Chester, OH 45069

Join us for this free seminar presented by physician specialists, including **Lisa Larkin, MD, FACP, NCMP**, Director of the Women's Center, who will discuss the physiology of sex as well as common problems that impact sexual health throughout life especially for women.

Topics will include:

- Understand the hormones important for sexual function.
- Discuss the prevalence and different types of female sexual dysfunction.

- Review the changes in sexual function across the lifespan with aging, with a particular focus of changes at midlife and with menopause.
- Discuss the impact of other medical conditions and medications on sexual function.
- Discuss treatment options available for various sexual issues.

Please register for the session that best suits your schedule by visiting **uchealth.com**. You will find the sessions listed under the events section.



Control Blood Pressure

Hold the Sugar and Salt

Contributed by **Sonal Hill, RD, LD**

You've heard for years how bad salt is for your blood pressure and that's accurate but now there may be another culprit to add to the list of things that can elevate blood pressure. No, I'm not talking about pain as my colleague Shazia Chaudry, MD mentions as a blood pressure increaser in her article, *Your Everyday Ailments May Be Causing Hidden Heart Problems*. I'm referring to sugar.

According to a new report in *Open Heart*, added sugars, particularly fructose, may increase blood pressure and heart rate. "Compelling evidence from basic science, population studies, and clinical trials implicates sugars, and particularly the monosaccharide fructose, as playing a major role in the development of hypertension," said researchers Sean Lucan of Montefiore Medical Center and James DiNicolantonio of Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute. In their study, Lucan and DiNicolantonio found that high sugar levels affect a key area of the brain called the hypothalamus which causes an increased heart rate and blood pressure. They also found that sugar may cause our bodies to produce more insulin, which also causes your heart rate to speed up.

It could be argued that most Americans consume a majority of their sugar, especially fructose, by drinking sugar-sweetened beverages such as soda. A 12 oz. can of regular soda contains on average 33 grams of sugar and empty calories which can cause several health problems including heart disease. The study found that those who consume more than 10% of their calories from added sugars have a 30% increased risk of mortality from cardiovascular disease (CVD) and those who consume 25% or more calories from added sugars increased their risk by almost three times. Researchers also discovered that consuming sugar-sweetened beverages has been directly associated with increased blood pressure. "Intake of >12 fl. oz of sugar-sweetened beverage per day can increase the risk of having hypertension by at least 6%, and it can increase mean systolic blood pressure by a minimum of 1.8 mm Hg in roughly over 18 months."

Alternatives to Sugar and Salt

There are two types of sugars in our diets: naturally occurring sugars and added sugars. Naturally occurring sugars are found naturally in foods such as fruit and milk. Added sugars include any sugars or caloric sweeteners that are added to food or beverages. The

American Heart Association recommends limiting the amount of added sugars you consume to no more than half of your daily calorie allowance. For most women, this is no more than 100 calories, or 6 teaspoons, per day and no more than 150 calories, or 9 teaspoons, per day for men. Since our bodies, don't need sugars or salt to function properly and sugar and salt can actually do more harm than good, I recommend the following to replace sugar and salt in your diet:

- **Cut out the soda and other sugar-sweetened beverages.** If you must have a beverage other than water, go with the sugar-free or low-calorie option.
- **Eat fresh, frozen, dried or canned fruits.** Choose fruit canned in water or natural juice. Fruit canned in syrup is added sugar that you don't need.
- **Add fruit to your breakfast.** Instead of adding sugar to cereal or oatmeal, add bananas, strawberries, blueberries, etc. or dried fruit such as raisins, cranberries or apricots.
- **Cut back.** Cut the sugar and salt called for in recipes by at least one-third to one-half or swap the sugar for almond, vanilla, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice or other spices or herbs to flavor food.
- **Remove sugar and salt containers from your view.** If you don't see them, you won't be as tempted to add sugar or salt to your food.
- **Select unsalted or no-sugars added foods.** It's best to avoid processed, prepared and pre-packaged foods because they are packed with salt and sugar.
- **Don't add salt or sugar before you taste it.** Taste the food with its natural flavor before adding in unnecessary salt and sugar.

Added sugars and salt are lurking in dozens of foods and beverages we enjoy eating and drinking every day. While it's not necessary to totally eliminate sugar and salt from your diet it's also not a bad idea to think twice about your food and beverage choices. Choosing healthier options can be overwhelming but don't worry; we are here to help you! We can help you navigate the information and develop a healthy eating and beverage plan. So start the new year off with less sugar and salt and better blood pressure and heart rate! Call (513) 475-UC4U to schedule an appointment with our nutrition experts.



Living Beyond Pain Through Integrative Medicine

Judy Harrod, 66, says the pain she feels can radiate throughout her body, though it mainly affects her back. It started after she suffered a kidney stone.

At one point, the discomfort was so intense it ruled the West Chester resident's life. Eventually Judy retired to concentrate on her health, but the pain persisted. Some of the pain remains, but today it is manageable due primarily to medical massage, mindfulness, restorative yoga, and acupuncture treatments.

Her Integrative Medicine physician, Lauri Erway Nandyal, MD, worked with a team of specialists to help Harrod regain some normalcy. "When I started here, even cleaning my house was extremely difficult," says Harrod. "It's still very hard, but all the different techniques I've learned help me manage my day and my routine. Little by little, I am getting a routine that allows me to focus more on life and less on the pain."

"I used to not have a routine because my body was dictating everything," she adds. "The pain was running my life. Now I feel like I am making decisions about my life and not the pain. That's huge. I'm managing the pain better. I'm not pain free all the time, but I know the things I can and can't do with the pain to make it feel better."

Harrod says her massage therapist, Joyce Cowens, LMT, has a talent for listening to her patients and tailoring sessions that fit their needs. "I had two other experiences before coming to UC Health, but they didn't get to the root of the problem," says Harrod. "There wasn't the listening. Joyce is like nothing I've ever experienced. She listens and she puts a lot of pieces together and she helps me answer a lot of questions and understands what is happening."

After several massage sessions, Cowens referred Harrod to Richard Sears, PsyD, PhD, and a specialist in mindfulness and meditation. Sears taught her techniques that helped Harrod identify precisely where the pain is coming from and then how to manage that pain through mindfulness practices.

"Mindfulness is de-cluttering the brain so you can have a blank screen to be present," says Cowens. "When you are completely present you become aware. When you are aware, you have clarity and it's easier to actively participate in your life because you are in the moment."

Harrod was also referred to Martyn Thomas, a licensed acupuncturist. "Acupuncture really helped the achy muscles relax and helped relieve tense muscles so I felt less pain," Harrod said.

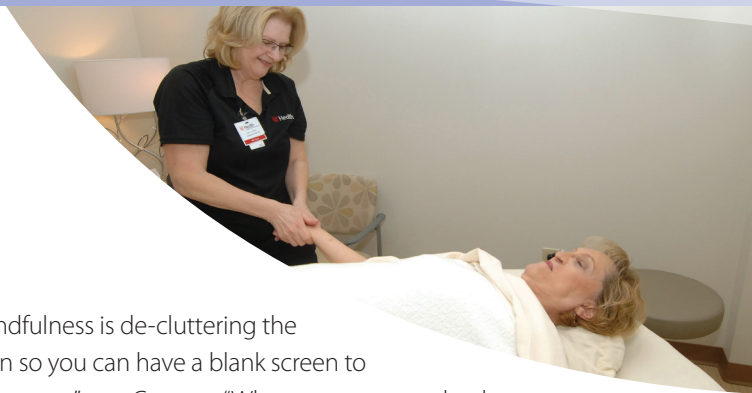
Harrod found another great listener in Megan McCliment, a UC Health restorative yoga teacher, who helped ease some of her fears about the practice of yoga. Harrod tried physical therapy prior to working with the Integrative Medicine team, and it aggravated her pain.

"I had a lot of fear and I wondered if I could make restorative yoga work," says Harrod. "Megan and I spoke on the phone prior to my first class and she helped ease my fears. During the class she explained each movement, guided and encouraged me." My confidence in accomplishing certain movements was strengthened!"

In restorative yoga, props such as blankets or blocks are used to support the body so a patient can hold poses longer, allowing ligamentous tissue to open at its own pace, reset nerve endings and release endorphins to help relieve pain. Along with the restorative yoga, Harrod completed a six-week series of Yoga for Chronic Pain with Geraldine Wu, MD.

Harrod says her sessions with members of the Integrative Medicine team continue but are fewer and indicate progress.

Cowens agrees, noting that Harrod's muscles are stronger and better able to move her skeletal system. "If the muscles are weak, you fatigue and when you fatigue you go into pain. Now the durations of pain are farther away and if she does have an episode, the fatigue or pain won't last as long because she knows how to get out of it."



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Delaying Repeat Bone Screening Is Okay for Some Postmenopausal Women

Contributed by **Ruchi Bhabhra, MD, PhD, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Endocrinology**

The National Osteoporosis Foundation has always recommended that all women over age 65 and post-menopausal women with at least one risk factor for osteoporosis undergo a bone density test. Now, new analysis using data from the Women's Health Initiative says this test can be delayed in younger postmenopausal women, age between 50-64 years.

Researchers report in an article published in *Menopause* that the risk of osteoporotic bone fracture (hip, vertebrae, wrist or arm) is low enough in women aged 50 to 64 years with normal bone mineral density (BMD) that they can safely delay a repeat test for up to 10 years. Researchers found that there was no benefit in frequent rescreening with DXA scans for women less than 65 years old and without a history of osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis and Menopause

Osteoporosis is a disease of the bones. It can affect all bones in the body, making them weak. Unfortunately for women, there are several risk factors that raise your chances of developing osteoporosis. Some factors you can control such as smoking, alcohol use, lack of exercise. Some you can't control such as being female, aging, menopause and a family history. Out of the uncontrollable risk factors, menopause

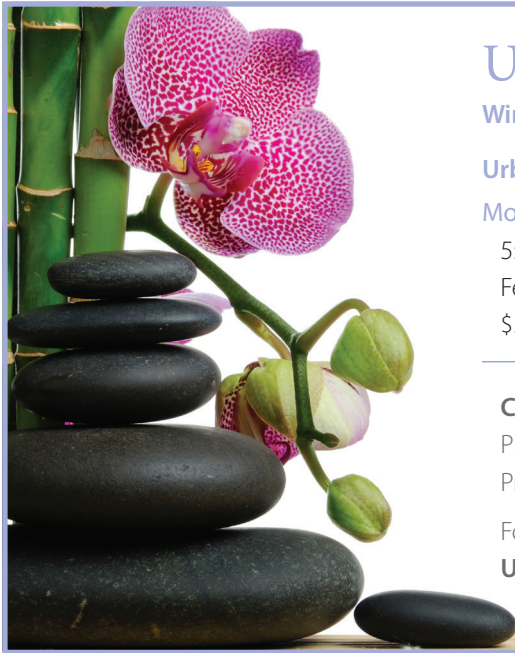
is the biggest risk factor for developing osteoporosis because of hormonal changes that disrupt your body's natural bone building process. During menopause, you lose estrogen, which helps preserve calcium in the body and prevent bone breakdown. Once estrogen loss and the aging process begins, our bones slowly breakdown.

On average, a woman loses 10% of her bone mass during the menopause transition.

Preserve Your Bone Density

You can do a lot to preserve your bone density – and even increase it – in the years leading up to menopause, during and following it just by taking control of the risk factors. I highly recommend the following to help:

Add nutrients. When estrogen levels decline so does your vitamin K, which is essential to bone health and vitamin D, which helps absorb calcium. Make sure you're getting enough calcium, vitamin D & vitamin K to ensure you keep your bones as healthy as possible.



UC Health Integrative Medicine 2015

Winter 2015 Classes

Urban Zen Restorative Yoga:

Mondays

5:30 - 6:45 p.m.

February 2 - March 23

\$30 per class; \$210 for the entire series

Tai Chi:

Thursdays

Noon – 1 p.m.

February 5 - March 26

\$15 per class; \$105 for the entire series

Classes are by pre-registration only.

Please contact us at **(513) 475-UC4U (8248)** to schedule your appointment.

Private yoga/pilates classes by appointment only.

For more information, including a list of condition-focused classes, visit:

UCHealth.com/IntegrativeMedicine

You can add vitamin K & vitamin D to your diet by eating plenty of fruits and vegetables and at least 2-3 servings of dairy everyday. You may also buy over-the-counter vitamin supplements to help with maintaining healthy bones.

Exercise. Exercise can help you regain bone by building muscle. Even if you've already begun or went through menopause, you can still add BMD with weight bearing exercises. Walking, swimming and biking are great forms of exercise to build muscle. Yoga and Pilates also help build muscle and BMD, just not as fast as other forms of exercise.

Reduce physical and emotional stress. When a woman goes through menopause, her body undergoes a lot of physical and emotional stress. When we stress, we release cortisol, which weakens our bones if enough of it is released over time. I recommend that you find ways to relax such as yoga, Pilates, tai chi, acupuncture, massage therapy, or reflexology. We offer all of these Integrative Medicine services and more right here at the Women's Center. Visit uhealth.com/women for more information.

No smoking. Smoking can increase your risk for osteoporosis so you can help your bones by avoiding smoking.

Bone Density Screening

There are tests available to determine bone density and how strong or fragile your bones are. One of the more common tests is called a dual-energy absorptiometry – more commonly known as – DXA scan. A DXA scan takes X-rays of your bones and gives you a score based on your age, gender, weight, and ethnic or racial origin. Bone density screenings are painless and take very little time to complete.

Since bone density varies from women to women, it's important to talk to your doctor about your bone health and when it's appropriate for you to have a bone density test. You may also take our osteoporosis risk assessment for women featured in our UC Health library at uhealth.com. The assessment will help tell you your risk for developing the disease but I encourage you to still talk to your doctor about any concerns you may have. And remember; don't wait for a problem to make bone health a priority!

UC Health Women's Center promotes industry-leading health care solutions, resources and education focusing on women's primary care and specialty services. The newsletter is published monthly by UC Health and offers health education, news and stories centered on academic based, discovery-driven health care. It is not a substitute for a consultation with a physician. UC Health Women's Center is located at 7675 Wellness Way, West Chester, Ohio 45069. For information, call (513) 475-UC4U (8248) or visit UCHealth.com/women. If you wish to be removed from our mailing list, please email WomensCenter@UCHealth.com.



Helping Care for Your Skin

Our cosmetic and aesthetic services include a wide range of safe and effective treatments to help care for your skin and make you look and feel younger. Best of all, these non-surgical procedures are performed by highly trained medical professionals in the office and often require little or no downtime.

Our aesthetic/cosmetic services include:

- Dermaplaning
- Microdermabrasion
- Medical-grade chemical peels
- Micropigmentation
- High frequency facial treatments
- Galvanic facial treatments
- Specialty treatments
- Medical Grade Skin Care products

Monthly Skin Care Special

* 20% Off Sunscreen

* Buy Two, Get One Free Chemical Peel

(513) 475-UC4U (8248)

Gift Certificates Available

Purchase a gift certificate for services like massage, acupuncture, tai chi, or private yoga sessions.

To purchase gift certificates or schedule an appointment, please call (513) 475-UC4U.

