

Health Matters

YOUR GUIDE TO HEALTHY LIVING | SUMMER 2015

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Message from the CEO



Dear Friends,

Successful physician recruitment is essential for White River Health System (WRHS) to fulfill our mission of delivering quality healthcare. Physicians are the core of the team of dedicated medical professionals providing care in hospitals and clinics in the communities we serve. We are fortunate to have an excellent group of more than 100 talented physicians representing 27 medical specialties. To maintain this level of care, it is important to have a strategic medical staff development plan. Our plan is based on the demographics of the area, trends in healthcare, input from the medical community and community leaders. The medical staff development plan has broad-based support and is supported by the work of our Physician Recruiter, MegAnne Townsend.

Eight new physicians are joining WRHS in the coming months. At Stone County Medical Center (SCMC), Marie Kent, M.D., will join the SCMC ER Team. The WRMC Pain Management Clinic will welcome three new physicians in July – Dr. Lakshman Gollapalli, Dr. Neeraj Kumar, and Dr. Abhilasha Solanki. Dr. Gwenevere White, Pediatrics, will join The Children's Clinic in July. The Hospital Medicine Program at White River Medical Center (WRMC) will welcome Dr. Luis Quiel, Internal Medicine later this summer. In August, Dr. Jyoti Chaudhary, Internal Medicine, and Dr. Shailendra Singh, Rheumatology will begin their practice at WRMC. The Women's Clinic will welcome Dr. Jason Knott, OB/GYN, in November. You can expect to see more about the physicians and their practices in your local media this summer.

Even with our current success, we will continue to aggressively recruit medical professionals to our organization who share our dedication to delivering quality patient care and exceptional customer service. Please join me in welcoming these physicians to our community.

Gary L. Bebow, FACHE
CEO

Find the Sunglasses!

Find the hidden sunglasses in this issue. You could win a \$50 Wal-Mart gift card! Submit your information by Monday, July 6. Email: contest@wrmc.com

OR Mail to:

Marketing | Health Matters Contest
P.O. Box 2197
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Include your name, street address
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White River Health System Foundation received a \$33,484 grant from the Arkansas Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for its program entitled the GYM (Get Your Mammogram) Project. This project provides FREE mammograms, ultrasounds and ultrasound-guided biopsies to women or men who do not have insurance or whose insurance will not cover the cost of the procedures. The program also has arrangements with local physicians to provide clinical breast exams and referrals for the procedures for women (and men when needed) who are not under the care of a primary care provider and/or cannot afford the cost of a clinic visit.

This year marks the 21st year for the Komen organization to award grants to programs around the state who are working in the fight against breast cancer. These funds are predominantly raised through the Race for the Cure[®]; chaired in 2014 by Ashley Hurst. Also introduced was 2015 Race for the Cure[®] Chair, Jack Powell.

A total of \$917,526 was awarded. Also announced was \$275,000 raised in Arkansas that will go directly into Komen National Research grants to find a cure for breast cancer.

"We are always proud of the opportunity to help the women in our state with our grants," said Arkansas Affiliate Executive Director, Sherrye McBryde. "Our grants are a direct result of the hard work of our volunteers and the generosity of our supporters. The recipients of these funds were chosen because they reflect the commitment of the Arkansas Affiliate to assure the women of Arkansas get the vital breast health services they need. Additionally, \$275,000 has been used for breast cancer research to help find the cure."

The Komen Arkansas Affiliate first awarded grants totaling \$78,700 in 1994. This year the largest grant totaled \$159,501 and the smallest awarded was \$8,955.

"We were so pleased to be able to raise almost \$1 million dollars that will have a direct impact on the women and men of Arkansas fighting breast cancer," says Komen Arkansas Board Chair, Leila Dockery. "Whether they fight for someone they love, or fight for themselves, or for their mothers, grandmothers, aunts or children, we join them in their efforts to eradicate this disease. We worked hard to earn this money, and we are so proud to distribute to such trustworthy, valuable, impactful programs. We are also pleased to send \$275,000 to Komen National for research. Our fight continues until a cure is found."



GYM PROJECT

For more information on the GYM Project, please call Dana Thomas at 870-262-1035.

Vascular Screenings

Provide Lifesaving Early Detection

You've probably heard that blocked or narrowed arteries are a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease. This buildup of fatty material, called plaque, doesn't just affect your heart. It can occur in arteries throughout the body, causing a host of serious health problems, including stroke, aneurysms—even amputation. Fortunately, your doctor can detect vascular diseases linked to narrowed arteries with these three readily available screening tests:



Rick Van Grouw, M.D., is a Board Certified Interventional Cardiologist on the Medical Staff at White River Medical Center. He is in private practice at WRMC Cardiology. To make an appointment with Dr. Van Grouw, call **870-793-5719**.

1. Carotid Duplex Ultrasound: This test helps find blockages in the carotid arteries. These are the major arteries in the neck that carry blood to the brain. Plaque buildup in these arteries can cause sudden stroke, if left untreated. The duplex ultrasound emits sound waves that bounce off blood cells to create an image of the artery and its blood flow. The test can rapidly determine the extent of blockage and velocity of blood flowing through the plaque. Doctors also use this painless test to determine how to treat any blockages before a stroke occurs.

This test can also be used to follow patients with minor degrees of plaque and patients who have already had surgery. Finally, in patients who undergo high-risk surgery, the carotid duplex ultrasound scan may help detect any disease in the carotid arteries. Failure to recognize carotid artery disease can lead to disabling strokes and even death, during open heart and other vascular procedures. It is important to understand that the test is likely to be more sensitive in patients who are at high risk for development of atherosclerosis. This includes patients who are older than 60, smoke, have high blood pressure, diabetes or a family history of stroke.

2. Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Screening: Aortic screenings can identify potentially fatal aneurysms in the aorta—a major artery that runs from the chest to the abdomen. Aneurysms develop here when the artery walls become weakened, causing the artery to expand like a balloon. Without treatment, the aneurysm will grow larger and potentially rupture. An aortic screening also involves duplex ultrasound. This helps doctors identify the presence of an aneurysm, as well as its size and location. The duplex ultrasound can be used to follow patients with small aneurysms, which do not require surgery.

3. Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) Scan: PAD scans check blood flow in the arteries of the legs. Any blockage in these arteries can cause leg pain and, if not promptly treated, can lead to gangrene and even amputation. The PAD scan uses Doppler ultrasound and special blood pressure cuffs to measure blood pressure in the legs and feet. This helps doctors find blockages, determine their severity and decide whether treatment is needed. The scan can also be used to follow up with patients who have undergone surgery, ballooning or stenting of their blood vessels.

Talk with your doctor about getting screened for peripheral vascular disease if you have any of the following risk factors:

- Being age 50 or older
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Tobacco use
- A family history of vascular disease



FREE SCREENING

Medicare covers a one-time Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Screening. This type of aneurysm takes the lives of about 15,000 Americans each year, and a majority of people who have it do not experience any symptoms. If the aneurysm ruptures, the survival rate is 15-20%. Men over 65 are at the greatest risk. If you are over 65 and have Medicare insurance, call **870-262-3148** to find out how to claim your FREE screening at White River Health System.



The Facts on Fibroids

There is probably little comfort when a woman's doctor mentions the word tumor. However, there is little to fear when it comes to fibroid tumors. Twenty to 80% of women develop fibroids by age 50. They're the most common benign tumors or masses in women of reproductive age.

WHAT CAUSES THEM?

Made of muscle cells and other tissues, fibroids typically grow in clusters in and around the walls of a woman's uterus. Fibroids have no known cause, but age, race, lifestyle and genetics may play a part. The hormones estrogen and progesterone may fuel their growth. Fibroids can be as small as a marble or as large as a grapefruit, but they tend to shrink after menopause, when estrogen levels fall.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Depending on their location in the uterus, fibroids can cause heavy or prolonged periods, menstrual cramps, bleeding between periods, the frequent urge to urinate, pain during sex, lower back pain, a feeling of fullness in the lower abdomen, complications during pregnancy and reproductive problems, such as infertility; yet many women with fibroids have no symptoms at all.

HOW ARE FIBROIDS DIAGNOSED AND TREATED?

If you don't have symptoms, your doctor may feel fibroids during a routine pelvic exam. Fibroids can be confirmed with ultrasound or other imaging. If your fibroids aren't causing symptoms that are bothersome, you may not need treatment. See your doctor for regular checkups, though, to monitor the size of the fibroids. Medication is available to slow or stop fibroid growth and control heavy bleeding.

Surgery to remove the fibroids but spare the uterus, a myomectomy, is also an option. When symptoms are severe or when fibroids seem to be growing quickly, a hysterectomy may be necessary, which surgically removes the uterus and cervix and any fibroids along with them. If you think you may have fibroids, see your doctor.



Clint G. Melton, M.D., fellow ACOG, is on the Medical Staff at White River Medical Center and in private practice at the OB/GYN Center in Batesville. To make an appointment with Dr. Melton, call **870-793-4300**.



LET US HELP

Uterine Fibroids can be detected by your gynecologist during an annual pelvic exam. Visit www.whiteriverhealthsystem.com for a list of OB/GYNs on staff at WRHS. While on the site, head over to the Health Library to find more information on Uterine Fibroids.

White River Medical Center is one of 40 hospitals in the U.S. and the only community hospital voluntarily participating in a pilot project with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services called The Perioperative Surgical Home (PSH). The program was developed through the collaboration of the American Society of Anesthesiologists, the Premiere Alliance and hospitals throughout the country. The PSH describes an innovative approach to surgical care that improves care coordination, patient education and hospital processes to improve health and reduce costs.

Under the leadership of co-directors, Chris Steel, M.D., and Jeff Angel, M.D., the WRMC PSH is achieving results and sharing best practices with other hospitals in the pilot group. Additionally, Matthew Hazel serves as the business manager of the program, and Gloria Vaughn, Christina Howard, Jacquelyn Wright and Lisa Crumley work with patients who are a part of the program. Administratively, Gary Bebow, WRHS Chief Executive Officer; Tammy Gavin, Chief Clinical Officer; and Gary Paxson, Chief Quality Officer, provide leadership and administrative support. As an organization, Approve Home Medical Services, Inc., are training Health Coaches on patient education.

HOW DID IT START?

At WRMC, the project began with total knee replacement surgeries with Orthopaedic Surgeons, J.D. Allen, M.D., Jeff Angel, M.D., and Dylan Carpenter, M.D., who enthusiastically supported the project.

“This project is a perfect fit for patients choosing total joint replacement,” said Dr. Angel. “We began to see immediate results with the program. Patients experienced better pain control and a shorter hospital stay, which improved patient satisfaction. Clinically, the pre-operative education and preparation result in fewer complications and unintended hospital readmissions.”

The PSH is built around the concept that patients who accept an active role will experience a better result, and the standardization of clinical processes will improve efficiency and reduce cost. In the hospital, the PSH Team examines every part of the surgical process to develop protocols that standardize processes using evidence based best practices proven to improve patient care.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

Physicians discuss with patients their readiness for surgery and offer recommendations for how patients can better prepare, with the goal of a shorter recovery and faster return to normal activities. By using a multidisciplinary approach to care, patients have one resource for all the information related to their hospitalization. Improving communication across the continuum of care enables the physician and care team to utilize other resources that a patient may need. For example; diabetic patients may benefit from a nutritional consultation prior to surgery to learn how changes to their diet can help stabilize blood sugar after surgery.

“The PSH brings together every person involved in our patients’ care including the patient and their support system,” said Dr. Steel. “We look at their experiences as one event, rather than a series of events that result in a joint replacement or other procedure. It is exciting to be a part of a project that is making a difference for our patients. We are eager to use what we learned to improve care throughout our organization and to share with other hospitals that are a part of this important project.”



Chris Steel, M.D., is a board certified Anesthesiologist and Director of Anesthesia at White River Medical Center. Dr. Steel can be reached at **870-262-1200**.

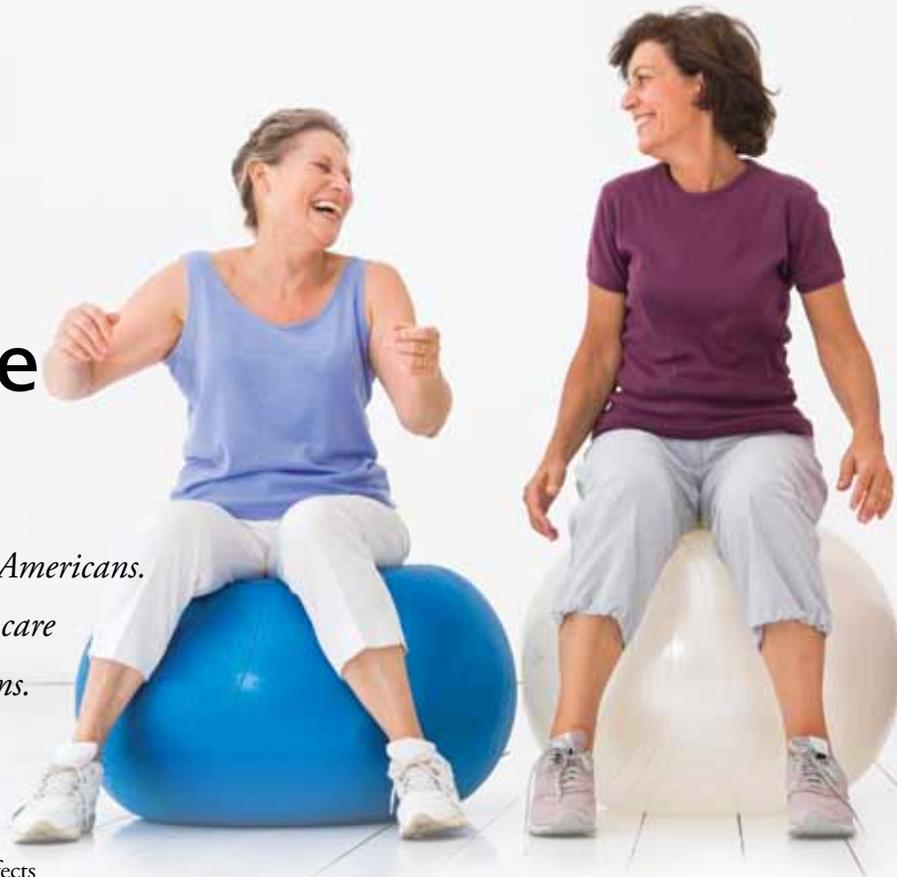


Jeff Angel, M.D., is a board certified Orthopaedic Surgeon and a member of the Medical Staff at White River Medical Center. He is in private practice with his partners J.D. Allen, M.D., and Dylan Carpenter, M.D., at MPOC Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Clinic. To make an appointment, call **870-793-2371** or toll-free **1-800-585-2371**.



A Better Kind of Surgical Care

How to Manage Osteoarthritis



This type of joint disease affects millions of Americans. If you're one of them, learning how to take care of yourself can help you control the symptoms.

Osteoarthritis (OA), or degenerative joint disease, affects 27 million Americans. There's no cure, but you can manage the symptoms through treatment and proper self-care.

OA has no single known cause. Even so, research has identified risk factors that can increase your chances of developing the disease.

They include:

- Getting older
- Being overweight—every excess pound adds 3 pounds of pressure to your knees and 6 pounds to your hips
- Overusing or injuring a joint
- Having a family member with OA
- Having muscle weakness around the knees

SYMPTOMS

OA can affect people differently. Still, knowing the common symptoms can alert you to see a doctor for a diagnosis.

OA symptoms usually come on slowly, and pain levels can vary from moderate to severe. Intense pain can seriously hamper your ability to walk, work or sleep. The usual symptoms of this disease include:

- Sore joints following overuse or inactivity
- Stiffness following inactivity
- Stiffness after waking up that improves in 30 minutes
- Joint pain that is tolerable in the morning and worse in the evening
- Impaired coordination, posture and gait due to chronic pain and stiffness

TREATMENT

In early OA, treatments that work include physical therapy, lifestyle changes and medications to reduce inflammation and reduce pain.

People who fail to gain relief from these therapies may consider surgical options. Minimally invasive surgery can remove bone spurs or fragments in the affected joint. More extensive procedures can realign bones, fuse joints or replace joints.



John M. Akins, M.D., is an Orthopaedic Surgeon in private practice at White River Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Clinic inside Ozark Orthopaedic and Hand Surgery Center and a member of the Medical Staff at Stone County Medical Center. He can be reached by calling **870-269-7610**.

SELF-CARE

Useful self-care steps include:

- Moderate exercise to make joints more flexible and muscles stronger
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Taking breaks to avoid stress on your joints when sitting, standing or being physically active for a long time
- Using good body mechanics and assistive devices to protect your joints and go about your daily tasks

Through pacing and planning your activities, following your doctor's treatment advice and embracing effective self-care, it's possible to live well with OA.

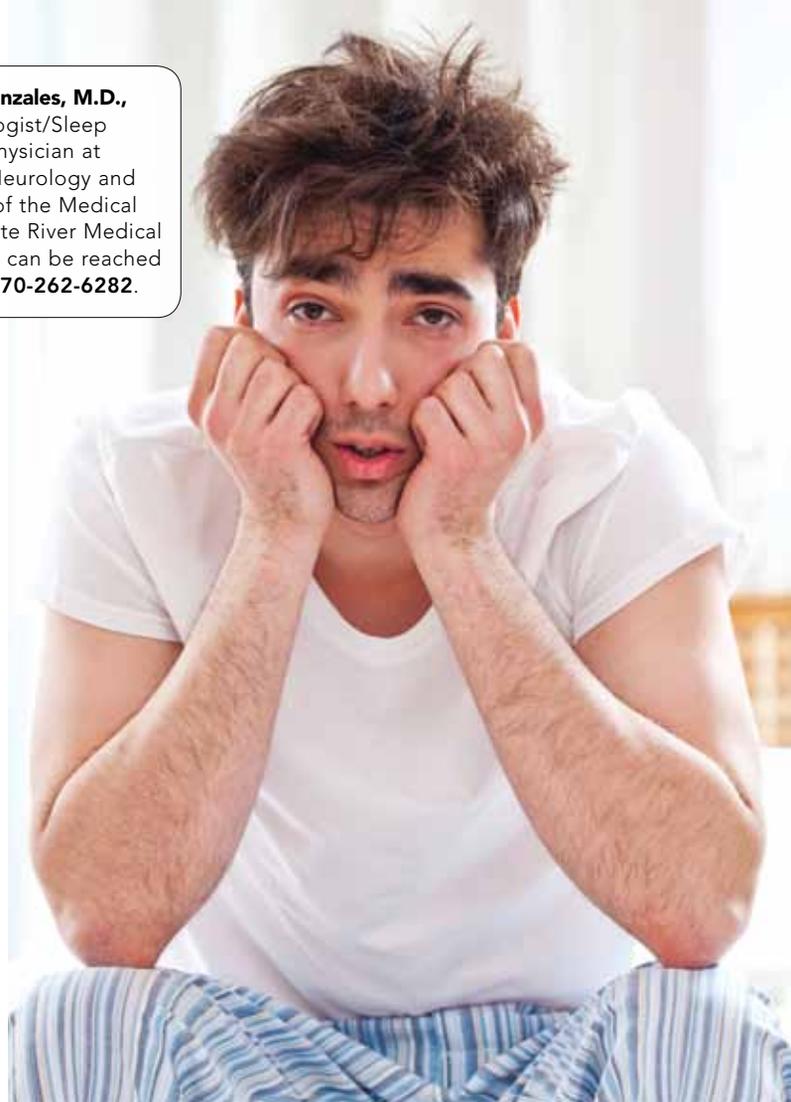


White River Health System has Orthopaedic Surgeons seeing patients in Batesville, Mountain View, Calico Rock, Cherokee Village, Heber Springs, Melbourne and Salem. Call **870-262-6149** and request a free physician directory to see if you can receive specialty care closer to home. To find out more about osteoarthritis, visit the White River Health System Health Library at healthlibrary.whiteriverhealthsystem.com.

5 Common Sleep Disorders



Carmela Gonzales, M.D., is a Neurologist/Sleep Medicine Physician at Batesville Neurology and a member of the Medical Staff at White River Medical Center. She can be reached by calling **870-262-6282**.



Do you view sleep as a luxury? If so, you might need a wake-up call. Studies show that sleep is vital to our health. It benefits our bodies in countless ways, from allowing our nervous system to work its best to preventing disease. What if good sleep escapes you despite your best efforts? You might be suffering from a sleep disorder. Read on to learn five of the most common ones:

1. CHRONIC INSOMNIA

Have you ever had trouble falling asleep? If so, you may have experienced short-term insomnia. Chronic insomnia lasts for a month or longer. The condition, which involves consistent problems falling or staying asleep, is usually a symptom of another problem. It can happen because of certain medical conditions, medications or even other sleep disorders.

2. SLEEP APNEA

Has your loved one complained that you snore loudly or seem to stop breathing for short periods during sleep? Do you wake up multiple times at night? If so, you may have sleep apnea. Millions of people suffer from sleep apnea and may not even know it. The disorder causes the airways to collapse during sleep and interrupt breathing. In addition to causing excessive daytime sleepiness, snoring and unrefreshing sleep, sleep apnea can lead to high blood pressure, atrial fibrillation and other problems.

3. NARCOLEPSY

Imagine suddenly falling asleep in the middle of dinner or during a work meeting. These concerns are real for people with narcolepsy. The disorder causes *sleep attacks*, in which people fall asleep at unusual times or places in the middle of being completely awake. These attacks can occur regardless of how much sleep they had the night before.

4. RESTLESS LEGS SYNDROME (RLS)

Is it difficult for you to keep your legs still, especially in the evening? If so, you may have restless legs syndrome. This sensory disorder causes an irresistible urge to move the legs that is exacerbated by inactivity. Some describe a prickly, crawling or creeping sensation in one or both legs. These sensations can interfere with getting adequate sleep.

5. PARASOMNIA (ABNORMAL BEHAVIORS IN SLEEP)

When we think of sleep, visions of lying in bed quietly with eyes closed come to mind. For people with parasomnia, that's not always the case. These disorders cause people to act in unusual ways during sleep, such as walking, talking or eating. Often, they are unaware of these behaviors and have no memory of them when they wake up.

SEEKING HELP

If you think you might have a sleep disorder, talk with your doctor. Sleep disorders are almost always successfully managed if diagnosed correctly. There are a number of therapies available to help overcome

sleep problems—from medications or light therapy to continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machines. Treatment is tailored to the person and specific condition.

GET YOUR ZZZZZS

It's always important to practice good sleep habits. Try to go to bed and get up around the same time each day. Keep your bedroom dark and at a comfortable temperature. Take time to wind down at night by relaxing with a book or other activity. And make sleep a priority. Remember, most adults need seven to eight hours of sleep every night. Sweet dreams!

A sleep study can help your physician accurately diagnose your condition and prescribe a treatment plan to successfully manage your condition. For more information on the benefits of a sleep study, or to find out how to arrange a referral, call Batesville Neurology Clinic at **870-262-6282**.



Are you feeling unexplainable tiredness during the day? Maybe you have a sleep condition preventing your body from getting the rest it needs. White River Medical Center has a Sleep Center where overnight sleep studies provide the information doctors need to diagnose a sleep disorder and prescribe a treatment plan. Call Batesville Neurology Clinic at 870-262-6282 for more information.

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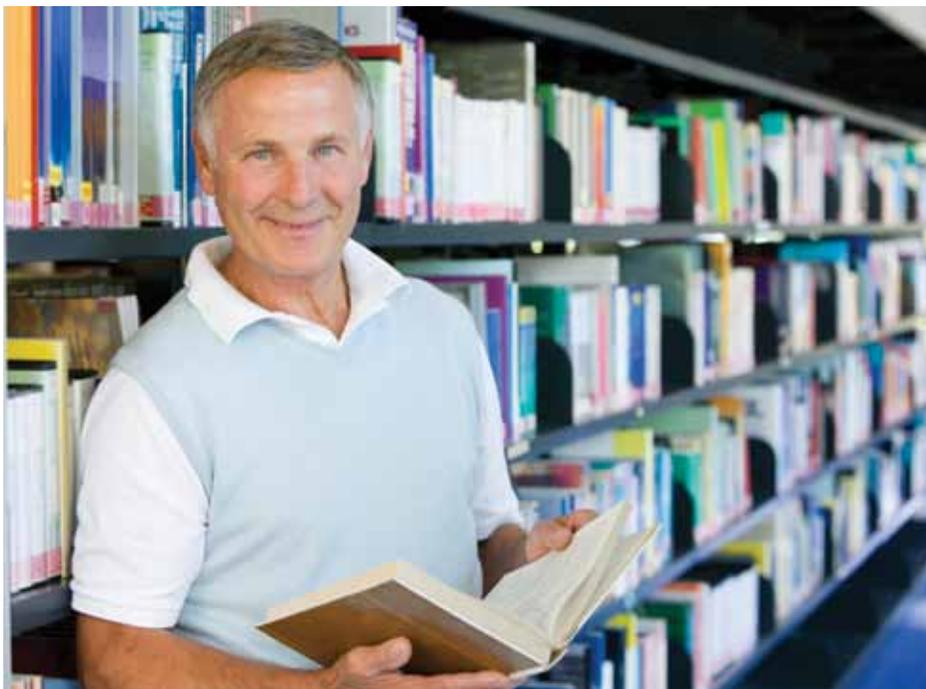
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For Seniors: You Can Beat the Heat

After age 65, your body can't adjust to changes in air temperature—especially heat—as quickly as it did when you were younger. That puts you at risk for heat-related illnesses.

You also may be at greater risk for heat-related illnesses if you have a chronic health condition or take certain medications that interfere with normal body response to heat. Some medications also restrict the body's ability to sweat. Fortunately, you can enjoy a safe summer by taking a few precautions when it gets hot, says the National Institute on Aging (NIA).

WAYS TO KEEP COOL

If you can't afford air conditioning:

- Open your windows at night.
- Create a cross breeze by opening windows on opposite sides of the room or house.
- Cover windows when they're in direct sunlight. Keep curtains, shades or blinds drawn during the hottest part of the day.
- Dampen your clothing with water and sit in the breeze from a fan.
- Spend at least 2 hours a day (the hottest part, if possible) in an air-conditioned place like a library, senior center or friend's house.

Ask your local Area Agency on Aging if there's a program that gives window air conditioners to seniors who qualify. If you can't afford to run your air conditioner, ask your local Area



Robert Baker, M.D., is a Family Medicine Physician in practice in Batesville. He is on the Medical Staff at White River Medical Center. He can be reached by calling **870-793-1126**.

Agency on Aging or senior center if they know of programs that can help you with cooling bills.

Heat stress, heat tiredness, heat cramps and heat exhaustion are all forms of hyperthermia, the general name for a range of heat-related illnesses, says the NIA. Symptoms may include headache; nausea; skin that is dry (no sweating), hot and red; muscle spasms and extreme tiredness after exposure to heat.

If you suspect someone is suffering from a heat-related illness, the NIA says you should do these things:

- Get the victim out of the sun and into a cool place—preferably one that is air-conditioned.
- Offer fluids, but not alcohol or caffeine. Water and fruit and vegetable juices are best.
- Encourage the person to sponge off with cool water.
- Urge the person to lie down and rest, preferably in a cool place.
- Seek emergency medical attention if you suspect heat stroke.



Visit healthlibrary.whiteriverhealthsystem.com for more tips on beating the summer heat.