

HARRISON

SUMMER 2010

HEALTH

A photograph of a man and a young girl looking up at the sky. The man is in the foreground, smiling, and the girl is behind him, also smiling. They are outdoors with green foliage in the background.

This summer, don't feel the burn

Spare your skin from the scorching sun—
and melanoma

INSIDE INSULIN

What to know
about this hormone

ACCELERATE YOUR QUIT

Break the tobacco
habit for good

DAD ON DUTY

Prepare for the arrival
of your first child

Language lessons

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

THE MOST IMPORTANT part of your doctor visit comes when you and your doctor talk—not when your doctor reaches for a stethoscope or prescription pad.

According to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the single most important way to stay healthy is to be an active member of your healthcare team. That starts with making good doctor-patient communication a priority.

A lot goes into communicating well with your doctor—some of it even before you meet face-to-face. To make the most of your next doctor visit, keep in mind these tips from the AHRQ and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons:

Define the problem. When scheduling your visit, be clear about why you want to see the doctor. The amount of time office staff reserves for your appointment is based on the problem or problems you specify.

Make lists. Before your appointment, write down your medical history, your symptoms, the names of any medications you take, and any questions you have. This may help keep you focused and help ensure that you and your doctor talk about what's most important to you.

Be forthright. Answer your doctor's questions honestly. If you think there's something important to mention, don't wait for the doctor to bring it up. Share everything you think the doctor should know.

Keep a sharp ear. Pay attention to what your doctor tells you. It may be useful to take notes or, with your doctor's permission, to record your conversation. Some people benefit from asking for written instructions or having their doctor draw pictures to help explain things.

Ask questions. When things aren't clear, say so. If you still have questions when your appointment ends, ask if you can call the office later.



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HARRISON HEALTH

Harrison Health magazine is published by the Marketing & Communications Department as a community service for the friends and patrons of Harrison Medical Center. Material is intended to supplement—not replace—information received from your physician or other healthcare provider.

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HARRISON MEDICAL CENTER is a not-for-profit hospital and the region's largest medical center, with five locations—Bremerton, Silverdale, Port Orchard, Belfair, and Poulsbo—serving the Kitsap and Olympic peninsulas. Harrison provides the region with specialized treatment in cardiovascular services, oncology, orthopedics, obstetrics and gynecology, and pediatrics. With 400 physicians representing 40 specialties, we offer comprehensive medical and surgical services, 24/7 emergency care in Bremerton and Silverdale, as well as urgent care services 24/7 in Port Orchard and 12 hours a day in Belfair. Harrison is a Level III Trauma Center.

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harrisonmedical.org

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A new vision for a healthier future

YOU—OUR COMMUNITY members—truly motivate all that we do at Harrison. That's why patient experience and community healthcare needs form the center of our future plans.

A renewed vision. Vision 2015 is a strategy that gives us a vehicle to understand our residents' needs and helps us plan distinct services for the future. This vision also sets goals, establishes priorities, and makes certain that we maintain and grow a successful organization.



Scott W. Bosch

We asked doctors, healthcare providers, leaders, volunteers, and advocates from every segment and every locale within and surrounding Kitsap County to participate in formulating Vision 2015. These were people who had a known history of contributing to the communities in which they live and work.

We encourage you to learn more about our community's healthcare future at harrisonmedical.org/Vision2015.

Focus on youth. Through a new sponsorship agreement with the Kitsap Soccer Club, we'll be supporting the Pumas soccer team and the Pumas Pro Youth Academy and Youth Outreach

Program for the next three years. This youth soccer training program fits in well with our burgeoning emphasis on fitness and healthy lifestyle choices.

Just for dads. Creating partnerships with other local health organizations allows us to offer a wider array of services. We've coordinated a class with Kitsap Community Resources that helps new dads gain confidence and better understand their important role in their children's development. Find out more on page 10.

Vital patient safety. We've stepped up efforts to prevent the spread of infection in all of our facilities. Bright new messages throughout all Harrison campuses—"Kill A Germ. Save A Life."—urge visitors to help us in these efforts by using hand sanitizer dispensers located in every public area. Read more about hospital hygiene on page 12.

Healthcare—in its myriad forms—is all about people: patients, families, clinicians, professionals, support staff, and volunteers. We'll continue to be good stewards of our resources, strive always to earn your trust, and improve our services to meet your needs. You are our future—we look forward to caring for you.

Scott W. Bosch
President and CEO

DOCTalk

Online health tips from local docs

Now you can find health information from trusted, community doctors on Harrison's new web video feature—DOCTalk—at harrisonmedical.org.

In these three- to five-minute videos, doctors on Harrison's medical staff discuss relevant health issues and offer

information and prevention tips. Topics vary and often are coordinated with a monthly national health observance.

There is a rotating menu of health topics on the home page. More video topics are available to viewers by a simple click to the archive.

Welcome, new providers

Anesthesiology
Henry Nguyen, MD

Critical Care
Christopher Carr, MD

Internal Medicine
Anjna Grover, MD
Connie Tomada, MD
Jon Rupert Tomada, MD

Obstetrics
Marilyn Gage, MD
Alford Vassall, MD

Ophthalmology
Adrian O'Malley, MD

Pathology
John Carpenter, MD
Monica de Baca, MD

Pediatric Dentistry
Marisa Reichmuth, DDS

Plastic Surgery
Sandon Saffier, MD

Primary Care
Anne LeDell-Hong, ARNP

Radiology
Dennis Lindfors, MD



GO: We can match your healthcare needs to one of our nearly 500 providers. Call our Referral and Information Center 24/7 at 866-844-WELL. Or visit harrisonmedical.org and click on "Find a Doctor."





Better beverages for **bone** health

Want something icy cold to drink? Before reaching for a soda, consider this: One study found that regular intake of cola may reduce bone density in women of all ages. So the next time you're really thirsty, water or milk might be a better option.

American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Vol. 84, No. 4



Food **diary** may aid weight loss

Keeping records of what you eat may help you lose weight.

In a study of 1,685 people, researchers set out to compare strategies for maintaining weight loss over a 30-month period.

Among those strategies were attending weekly group weight-loss sessions led by nutrition and behavioral counselors, getting moderate exercise for at least three hours per week, and following the DASH diet—a low-fat eating plan that emphasizes fruits and vegetables. Participants were also asked to maintain food and physical activity diaries.

Nearly 70 percent of those taking part lost about 9 pounds or more within six months.

People who lost the most weight attended the most group sessions, spent more time engaged in physical activity, and completed more food records per week when compared to those who lost less weight.

Writing down what they ate may have encouraged participants to eat less, researchers speculate.

American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Vol. 35, No. 2

Never ignore a head **bump**

Most kids get their fair share of bumps and bruises. And while most childhood injuries are minor, some are potentially serious, such as a concussion.

A concussion is a brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. Most concussions are mild and heal on their own. But a severe concussion can lead to long-lasting health problems and possible brain damage.

Signs and symptoms of a concussion may be apparent right away. But sometimes they may not appear or be noticed for days or weeks after the injury.

If you suspect that your child has a concussion, call your doctor right away. Signs can include:

- Headache.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Balance problems or dizziness.
- Trouble seeing.
- Sensitivity to light or noise.
- Confusion.
- Concentration or memory problems.

Be sure to remind older kids—especially if they play sports—never to ignore a bump or blow to the head. It's important that they tell someone when they hit their head, even if they feel OK.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



A concussion is a brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head.

THE NEW
SUMMER
SCHOOL

Safety 101

Are we there yet?

Traveling with kids isn't always easy. These tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics can increase your chances of happy memories when you travel this summer:

By car. Always keep infants and young children secured in car seats. Children generally aren't ready for safety belts until they're at least 8 years old.

Keep them occupied by bringing along soft, lightweight toys and favorite music for a sing-along. And break up long trips by stopping every two hours or so.

By plane. Protect your child from ear pain as the plane descends. Encourage your baby to nurse or suck from a bottle. Older children can drink juice or water from a straw.

If your child had an ear infection or ear surgery within two weeks of your trip, check with your child's doctor before flying. Also get the doctor's OK before flying with an infant that has a respiratory infection.

As when traveling by car, pack toys to amuse your youngster.

POOLS AND HOT TUBS

Stay safe, have fun

AHHH...SWIMMING: It's relaxing, refreshing, and fun. It can be easy to forget that pools and hot tubs are dangerous when not used and maintained correctly.

You can take steps to reduce the risks of two major water dangers: drowning and entrapment.

Drownings or near-drownings affect thousands of families in the U.S. every year, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

Help prevent drowning by:

- Always supervising children who are in or near the water.
- Erecting barriers—at least 4 feet high—on all sides of a pool.
- Using self-closing and self-latching gates on pool fences.
- Putting alarms on doors leading from the house to the pool.

Entrapment happens when suction from a powerful drain in a pool or hot tub holds someone underwater. It can cause serious injury or death.

To avoid entrapment, the CPSC has this advice:

- Never use a pool or hot tub with loose, broken, or missing drain covers.
- Inform a lifeguard and the pool manager if you notice a faulty drain cover.
- Teach kids to avoid drains and suction outlets when swimming.
- Have a professional regularly inspect your pool or hot tub for entrapment hazards.
- Clearly label the electrical cutoff switch for the drain pump of the pool or hot tub. If someone is entrapped, cut the power immediately.

Keep rescue equipment and a phone nearby. It's also a good idea to learn CPR.



GO: Find water safety tips at safekids.org, and find local CPR classes at seattleredcross.org.

Click on "Take a Class."



Stop melanoma on the spot

YOU MAY KNOW that melanoma is a serious form of skin cancer. But you might not know these three key things about the disease:

1 Since melanoma occurs on the surface of the body, it can be spotted fairly easily and often at a beginning stage.

2 When melanoma is detected and treated early, it is highly curable.

3 One of the biggest risk factors for melanoma—sun exposure—also is the most preventable one.

“Early detection is vital when it comes to recognizing and treating melanoma,” says Christina Hardaway, MD, a board-certified dermatologist with The Doctors Clinic and the medical staff at Harrison Medical Center. “This type of skin cancer develops in the cells that give your skin its color, called melanin. You can prevent many melanomas by simply protecting yourself from sun exposure.”

The alphabet

The American Academy of Dermatology recommends that you know the ABCDEs of melanoma. Look for these possible warning signs of the disease in your moles (new or existing ones), freckles, and age spots:

A **symmetry.** One half is not like the other.

B **order.** Irregular, scalloped, or poorly defined edges.

C **olor.** Variations in color from one area to another; shades of black, tan, brown, white, red, or blue.

D **iameter.** Size of pencil eraser or larger (although melanomas can be smaller).

And experts now have added one more important letter to the melanoma detection alphabet:

E **volving.** Any mole or lesion that is changing in size, shape, or color or one that looks different from the rest.

Check your skin regularly. Examine your entire body, including the soles of your feet, the areas between your toes, and the palms of your hands. Use a hand mirror or ask a loved one to help you check your scalp, back, and buttocks.

Note any new spots as well as existing moles that are changing, itching, or bleeding. Tell your doctor about them.

Prevention pays

Exposure to too much ultraviolet (UV) light is one of the most preventable causes of skin cancer. To help protect your skin:

■ Use a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. It should provide protection from both UVA and



UVB rays. Be sure to use it year-round. And even use sunscreen on cloudy days, because 80 percent of UV rays penetrate the clouds, Dr. Hardaway says.

■ Avoid the sun when it is strongest, between 10 am and 4 pm. Seek shade if you are going to be outside.

■ Cover up. Opt for long pants, long-sleeved shirts, wide-brimmed hats, and sunglasses.

■ Don't use tanning beds or sun lamps. They emit UV light, just as the sun does.

■ Get vitamin D safely through your diet or oral supplements, Dr. Hardaway recommends. Dietary vitamin D is just as effective as UV radiation but doesn't cause skin cancer or wrinkles.



Featured expert:
Christina Hardaway, MD

DOCTalk

VIEW:

Dr. Hardaway talks about skin cancer detection and prevention at harrisonmedical.org.

Teens and tanning beds

If your teens are looking for a safe tanning alternative, they won't find it in a tanning salon. Indoor tanning beds use skin-damaging ultraviolet (UV) light to tan the skin. Just 15 to 30 minutes in a tanning bed is the equivalent of spending an entire day in the sun. And use of a tanning bed before age 30 increases the risk of developing melanoma by 75 percent.

As a parent, you can help protect your teens. Start with the three E's:

Explain the dangers of tanning, indoors or out. Remind your teen that there is no safe UV light—it all damages the skin.

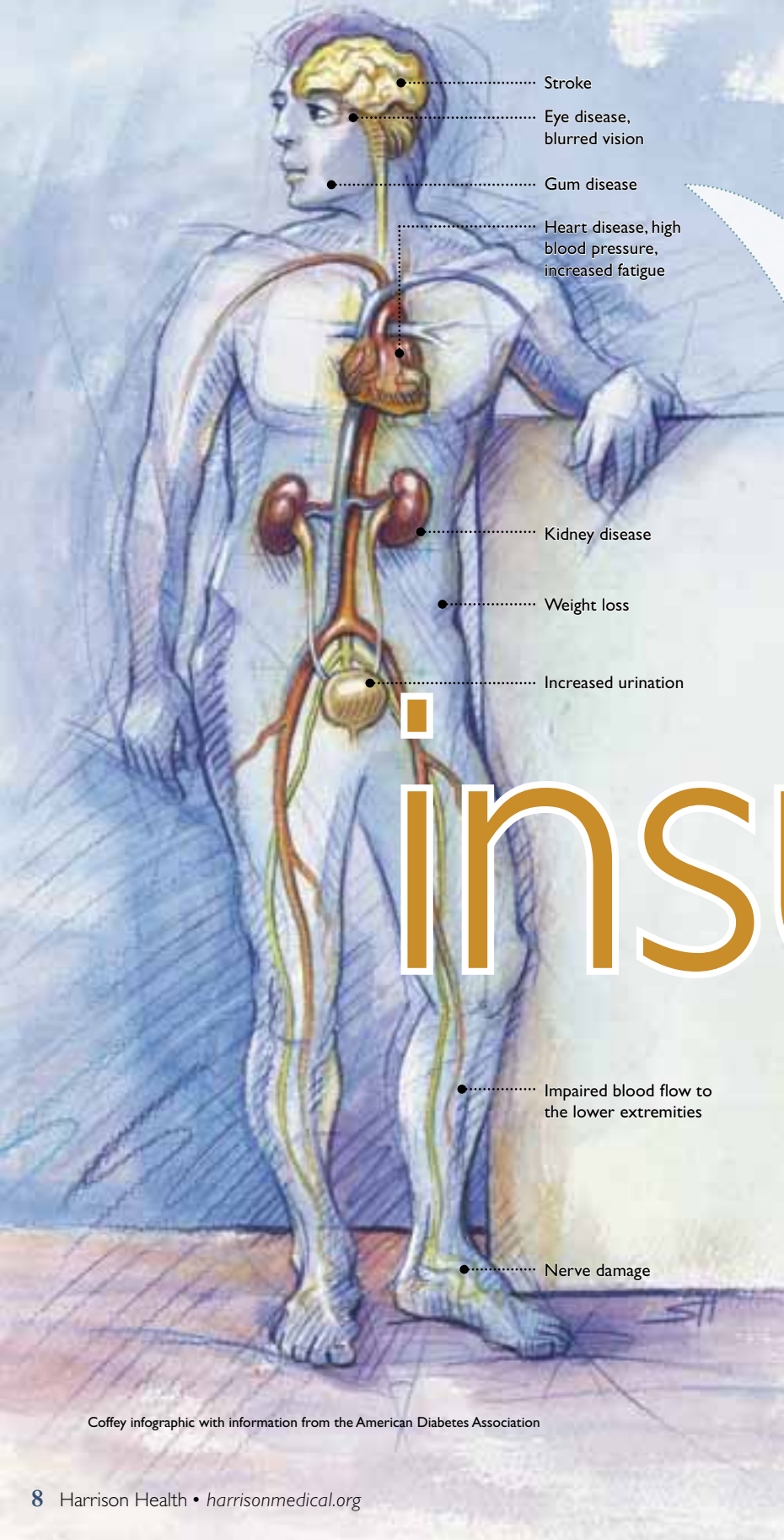
End visits to the tanning salon. Make a no-tanning rule for the entire family, grown-ups included.

Encourage sunless tanning options. A variety of bronzers and tinted moisturizers can safely impart that golden glow.

American Cancer Society

Possible complications of diabetes

Diabetes can affect the whole body



What
to know
about

insulin

FOR PEOPLE WITH diabetes, insulin is a lifeline.

This hormone secreted by the pancreas is essential for the body's cells to use the glucose they get from food to produce energy.

But people with diabetes either lack insulin because their pancreas doesn't make it (type 1 diabetes) or their bodies don't properly use the limited amount of insulin they do produce (type 2 diabetes).

While people with type 1 must use insulin to manage the disease, those with type 2 are often treated with oral medicines, though they may need insulin as well.

Fortunately, synthetic insulin made in laboratories can be substituted for natural insulin.

Coffey infographic with information from the American Diabetes Association

Pumps: Another option for getting insulin

Daily injections aren't the only way to get insulin when you have diabetes—you can also use an external insulin pump.

External pumps are about the size of a deck of cards and weigh about 3 ounces. They can be worn on a belt or carried in a pocket. The pump connects to a tiny plastic tube with a very small needle on the end, which is inserted under

the skin. Insulin is pumped from the device, through the tube, and into the body.

The pump is set to provide insulin throughout the day and night at a level your doctor prescribes. It can also be programmed to release an extra dose (called a bolus) at meals and at other times when blood glucose, or blood sugar, is too high. Or you can simply

touch a button to release a bolus when you need it.

According to the American Diabetes Association, a pump delivers insulin more accurately and evenly than injections. It can also reduce episodes of severe low blood sugar.

On the downside, pumps can be expensive. Also, if your pump connection is accidentally disconnected for

an extended period of time, you may develop a life-threatening condition called diabetic ketoacidosis.

Ask your doctor for more information. He or she can help you decide if an insulin pump is right for you.



At least 20 types of synthetic insulin are available in the U.S., reports the American Diabetes Association (ADA).

How to use insulin

Insulin must be injected under the skin, a technique that allows it to get into the bloodstream.

Insulin can be injected into the abdomen, upper arm, thigh, or buttocks by means of a syringe, an insulin pen, or an infuser. An external insulin pump is another option for shots.

Your doctor or diabetes educator can help you decide which injection method to use, and he or she will determine how much insulin you need to take. Some people with diabetes require insulin two, three, or four times a day to reach their blood glucose targets. Others manage on a single shot.

If you carefully follow the insulin routine your doctor prescribes, it should keep your blood glucose level near normal. And you should be able to carry on with your usual activities.

How insulin works

The various synthetic insulins work in different ways to control blood glucose. Your doctor will choose the type of insulin that works best for you based on characteristics such as:

- How long it takes before the insulin starts

to lower your blood glucose after you take it. Some insulins begin working in five minutes; others take up to an hour.

- The time before the insulin reaches the point of maximum effectiveness. Peak times range from 30 minutes to 12 hours.

- The length of time the insulin continues to work to lower blood glucose. Some insulins work for as little as two to five hours; others continue to work for 20 to 26 hours.

Insulin comes in a variety of strengths. The most commonly used strength in the U.S. is U-100, which stands for 100 units of insulin per milliliter of fluid.

However, countries in Europe and Latin America use U-40. Talk to your doctor about managing your insulin if you plan to travel abroad.

Storing insulin

According to the ADA, manufacturers recommend refrigerating insulin. However, injecting cold insulin sometimes can make the injection painful. To counter this reaction, many healthcare providers suggest storing the bottle of insulin you're using at room temperature.



GO: Find all the basics, more in-depth information, and links to resources about diabetes at diabetes.org.

Harrison diabetes support

Harrison's Outpatient Nutrition and Diabetes Center offers:

- A diabetes self-management program (group classes and individual counseling).
- Insulin pump and continuous glucose monitoring instruction.
- Gestational diabetes education.

Call **360-744-6910** for information and to make an appointment.



Baby on

Try these tips to care

New dads learn a thing or two

BILL COOK WAS 19, just out of high school, when he became a father.

“I was overwhelmed,” he says. “I’d never been around a baby.”

So he understands the uncertainty that draws new dads to his “Conscious Fathering” class, in which he teaches infant care and promotes a dad’s active involvement from day one. Cook is now the father of three grown children.

The free, federally funded class debuted this spring as a partnership between Harrison Medical Center and Kitsap Community Resources, using a curriculum created in 1999 by program founder Bernie Dorsey, of Seattle.

Participants learn about a father’s important role in cognitive and behavioral development and get an overview of an infant’s developmental milestones. They also learn how to respond to an infant’s crying—and how to handle their

own frustration when the crying becomes prolonged.

Classes are limited to 11 students, so every dad can hold, feed, and diaper his own lifelike training doll. Every doll is anatomically correct and the size of an average 8-week-old baby.

Aaron Anderson, a nurse at Harrison who took the class to prepare for his own firstborn, says he had been around hundreds of babies, but the class taught him a new burping technique—more massage than pat—and reinforced his ambition to be a part of his newborn’s life. “Not just take a seat until the child is more enjoyable and fun to play with,” he says.

Join the class!

Registration is required but also will be accepted on the day of class. Pizza is provided, and participants receive a free copy of the book *The Happiest Baby on*

the Block: The New Way to Calm Crying and Help Your Newborn Baby Sleep Longer by Harvey Karp, MD.

Moms and other family members are welcome to enroll, too.

‘Conscious Fathering’

Register for this free class:

■ Harrison Silverdale, Iris Room
1800 NW Myhre Road
Wednesdays, Aug. 11 and Sept. 8,
6 to 8 pm

Preregistration required.
Call 360-744-6765.

■ Kitsap Community Resources
1201 Park Ave., Bremerton
Tuesdays, July 20 and Aug. 24,
5:30 to 8 pm
Call 360-473-2082.

What you need to know about baby-safe medicines

Taking medication during pregnancy might be cause for confusion. Here are some tips.

First, talk with your doctor about the risks and benefits of any medications and supplements.

Most herbal remedies have not been evaluated well enough for use during pregnancy. All over-the-counter drugs, however, have information specifically for pregnant women on the drug facts label.

The labels on some drugs—such as ibuprofen, naproxen, and aspirin—will

say that they aren’t to be used by pregnant women.

Prescription drugs are different. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration assigns these drugs a letter category—A, B, C, D, or X—from the safest (A) to the most dangerous (X). The category is based on studies of the drug’s effect on human or animal pregnancies.

Some drugs are considered safe for use by pregnant women (A, B). Other drugs are not well-studied or are known

to pose a slight risk to a fetus (C, D).

Some medications (X)—such as isotretinoin (for acne) and thalidomide (for skin disease)—should never be taken during pregnancy, as they can cause birth defects.

U.S. Food and Drug Administration



the way?

for mom and baby

Prenatal care matters

Immunize early

Sometimes the simplest steps are also the most important. A good example is getting immunized against potentially harmful diseases—an especially important thing to do if you're planning to become pregnant.

Some diseases that can harm your baby if you get them while you're pregnant—such as German measles—can be prevented if you have the right immunizations ahead of time.

Talk to your doctor if you're thinking about having a baby. Your doctor can make sure you're up-to-date with your vaccinations. Some vaccines, such as the flu shot, can be given safely during pregnancy. But others, such as the chickenpox vaccine, need to be given several weeks before you become pregnant.

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

YOU'VE CHECKED and double-checked—and then checked again just to be sure. And all the home pregnancy tests agree: You're pregnant.

Now it's time for a flurry of phone calls to share the news with family and friends. Just be sure at least one of those calls is to your doctor's office—it's time to make an appointment for your first prenatal checkup.

The best start

Prenatal checkups are essential for both you and your baby. Getting regular prenatal care can:

- Help you have a healthy baby.
- Decrease your risk of premature birth.
- Help your doctor find and treat potential problems early.

In general, you'll have about one prenatal checkup per month for the first several months of pregnancy. As you get closer to your due date—or if you have any health conditions that need to be monitored more closely—you'll need more frequent checkups.

During prenatal visits, your doctor may:

- Determine the baby's due date.
- Check the baby's heartbeat and growth.
- Check your weight and blood pressure.
- Check you for problems, such as anemia, infections, and gestational diabetes.
- Talk to you about essential healthy habits, such as eating well, getting enough folic acid, and not smoking or drinking during pregnancy.
- Answer your questions and concerns.

Start now

Ideally, prenatal care starts even before you get pregnant, with a preconception checkup.

During this checkup, your doctor can help identify any potential health problems, make sure you're up-to-date with your immunizations, and suggest other ways you can be at your best before getting pregnant.

If you are already pregnant, prenatal care is best started right away. Call your doctor for an appointment as soon as you think you're pregnant.

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; National Institutes of Health; March of Dimes



GO: Let Harrison help you prepare for your little one:

- Find a doctor: Call Harrison's Referral and Information Center at 866-844-WELL.
- Take a class: Harrison offers many childbirth education classes for new moms and families. Call 360-744-6765, or visit harrisonmedical.org and click on "Events Calendar."



How we help prevent infections

BACTERIA AND VIRUSES that cause infections—such as pneumonia, colds, or strep throat—threaten people outside the hospital every day.

But when you're in the hospital, you may be at a higher-than-normal risk for some infections. Your immune system may be weakened by illness or certain treatments. In addition, other people in the hospital may carry dangerous germs.

That's why the risk of healthcare-associated infections (HAIs)—those acquired in a healthcare setting—is a concern.

Five to 10 percent of patients who have been treated in a U.S. hospital get an HAI, estimates the American Hospital Association.

The goal is that all patients stay infection-free. So at Harrison Medical Center, we take special steps to prevent infections.

"Keeping patients safe is our highest priority," says Joseph Herman, MD, who is board certified in infectious diseases and the medical director of Infection Prevention at Harrison. "Prevention is the best way to do that. We also provide the most thorough treatments and care possible to every patient with an infection—regardless of whether that infection was acquired in the hospital or elsewhere."



**Featured expert:
Joseph Herman, MD**

Preventive measures

"We follow all guidelines published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in addition to the latest state and federal regulations, to reduce and prevent infections from spreading among our patients, staff, and visitors," says Cathy McDonald, director of Infection

Hospital visit safety tips

When you're visiting someone in the hospital, consider bringing along get-well wishes and cheerful stories. But leave the germs outside.

People in the hospital can be vulnerable to infection, so it's important that visitors take precautions:

- Stay home if you're sick or have had symptoms of illness within the last three days.
- Check with hospital staff before bringing food, flowers, or children to the patient's room.
- Look for, read, and follow any instructions posted outside the patient's room.
- Do not sit on the patient's bed or handle hospital equipment.
- To help prevent carrying germs in or out of the room, wash your hands with soap and water before and after visiting. Also wash your hands if you use the bathroom, eat or drink, sneeze, cough, or touch your nose or mouth while visiting.

You'll find hand sanitizer dispensers conveniently located for your use at every Harrison campus.

Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology

Prevention at Harrison.

Harrison also takes special care to keep rooms and equipment clean and sterile.

To prevent HAIs during surgery, staff members:

- Clean their hands and arms up to their elbows just before surgery.
- Use electric clippers (not a razor) to remove hair from patients before surgery.
- Wear hair covers, masks, gowns, and gloves.
- Give patients antibiotics about an hour before surgery starts.
- Clean the skin at the surgery site with germ-killing solution.

If a person has or develops certain types of infections, our hospital will take further precautions:

- When possible, the patient does not share a room, except with another person with the same infection.
- Signs will be posted outside the patient's room with specific instructions for staff and visitors.
- Caregivers and visitors are expected to wear protective gear, such as gowns, masks, or gloves, when with the patient.



GO: To view Harrison's infection rate data, go to harrisonmedical.org, click on "Quality & Safety," and then click on "DOH Infection Rate Reporting."

Finding peace after pregnancy loss

HOPE program helps families grieve

MELISSA VAIRA WAS seven weeks from her due date when she felt a sense of unease: Her unborn baby was ominously still. A hospital checkup showed nothing amiss, however, and her baby quickly resumed the usual late-term gymnastics.

Two days later, the stillness returned—and this time the outcome was tragic.

“They couldn’t find a heartbeat,” Vaira said. And with that, the Vairas’ happy expectations turned to crushing loss.

As they sat in shock with their toddler son, Owen, Vaira and her husband, Quentin, faced difficult decisions about delivery and its aftermath. But they didn’t face them alone.

At their side was HOPE companion Susan Crow, a certified obstetrics nurse at Harrison Medical Center trained to support parents through the perinatal loss experience.

“We initially try to just let them talk,” Crow says. “One of the first questions we ask is, ‘Do you know if you’re having a boy or girl—and have you chosen a name?’” This puts a face on their loss and honors the existence of a family member who will never be forgotten.

The Vairas, who named their baby Lucy, were among the first to benefit from HOPE (Harrison Offering Peaceful Endings). The program launched in January 2008, thanks to a Harrison Foundation grant, which provided training and education. The nursing team now includes four HOPE companions and two trainees available 24/7.

Pregnancy loss is tragic but rare, affecting 1 percent of the 2,000 babies delivered annually at Harrison Silverdale.

“Unfortunately, sometimes babies die,” Crow says, “and we don’t know why.”

Warm and maternal, with a Texas drawl, Crow lost twins through miscarriage 28 years ago, when such misfortunes were often swept under the rug. HOPE, an expansion of Harrison’s previous bereavement support, grew from her belief that families deserve a more humane path through their grief.

Making memories

Each HOPE family receives a keepsake box of photos and mementos—a gold baby ring, a tiny layette, a poem, footprints, and handprints. Only one family has declined, and the box is available should they reconsider.

Although Melissa Vaira’s first instinct was to reject reminders of that surreal day, she now draws comfort from these tangible ties to her daughter.

Hope lived on for the Poulsbo couple, and a year later, Vaira was back at Harrison giving birth to a healthy boy named Jonah. At her side was an extraordinary labor and delivery nurse—Susan Crow.

“I was so excited to walk into the room and have her standing there,” Vaira says.

“It was very special,” Crow says. “It was like we had come full circle.”

HOPE nurses strive to help families put a face on their loss and honor the existence of a family member who will never be forgotten.



LEARN MORE: Contact Harrison’s HOPE program by calling 360-744-8896.



Ease hospital fears with cuddly friends

A hospital visit can be overwhelming for our littlest patients—especially when they’re hurt and confused. But a huggable friend can help. Donations of a new stuffed animal will bring a smile to any Harrison Medical Center patient who needs a dose of warm and fuzzy. As rising emergency visits deplete toy supplies, hosting a stuffed-animal drive is a great way to share the love.

For patient safety, animals must be new and unused, small- to medium-size, and still bearing their tags. Donations can be dropped off weekdays at the Harrison Medical Center Foundation office at 750 Lebo Blvd., in Bremerton. Please call ahead to 360-744-6760 to ensure that staff will be available to accept your donation.

We thank you for your gift

Each year, people in our community designate monetary gifts to Harrison through their wills. Some we are aware of; others come as a surprise.

While all are welcomed, we would love the opportunity to recognize and thank these donors—whether privately or through membership in our Harrison Heritage Society.

If you have designated a gift that you would like us to know about, call the Harrison Foundation at **360-744-6760**.

For those considering or in the process of drawing up a will, we have a free will kit available that contains information that can assist with will planning and preparation. Call **360-744-6760** to request a kit.



Break the smoking habit for good

Ready to break free from tobacco addiction? A three-hour workshop—“Accelerate Your Quit”—will start you on the road to success. This workshop offers practical tools, resources, and hands-on activities to prepare you for the mental and physical challenges of smoking cessation.

You’ll learn about helpful websites and medications that can reduce nicotine cravings. And you’ll uncover some surprising resources—such as the Washington State Quit Line. Did you know you can talk on the phone—for free!—with a trained coach who will help you design a personal quit plan?

Kicking the habit isn’t easy, but it’s worth the effort. In just 24 hours, the risk of heart attack declines. Within three months, lung function increases up to 30 percent. And it only gets better with time.

Save the date: Saturday, July 10

The “Accelerate Your Quit” smoking-cessation workshop will be from 1 to 4 pm in the Auditorium at Harrison Bremerton, located at 2520 Cherry Ave. The cost is \$25. Advance registration required; call **360-744-6765**.



mark your calendar

HARRISON MEDICAL CENTER

Here's a glimpse at Harrison's support groups, classes, and events. Find a complete listing at harrisonmedical.org. Classes are free unless otherwise noted.

EVENTS

Blood Drive

■ Friday, Aug. 27, Nov. 5, 11 am to 1 pm and 1:45 to 5 pm
Auditorium, Harrison
Bremerton
360-744-6920

SUPPORT GROUPS

Alzheimer's Caregivers

■ First Monday of each month, 1 to 2:30 pm
Harrison Annex,
750 Lebo Blvd.,
Bremerton
360-744-6920
For those caring for someone with memory loss.

Amputee Support

■ Third Tuesday of each month, 7 to 8 pm
Aspen Room, Harrison
Bremerton
360-830-4432

AWAKE

■ Thursdays, Sept. 16, Dec. 16, 7 to 9 pm
Harrison Annex,
750 Lebo Blvd.,
Bremerton
360-475-6737
For people living with sleep disorders and for their families.

Better Breathers

■ Meets quarterly; Wednesdays, Aug. 18, Nov. 17, 1:30 to 3 pm
Rose Room, Harrison
Silverdale
360-744-6686
For those with chronic respiratory disease.

Brain Injury Support

■ Second Thursday of each month, 3 to 4:30 pm
Rose Room, Harrison
Silverdale
■ Fourth Wednesday of each month, 4:30 to 6 pm
Harrison Annex,
750 Lebo Blvd.,
Bremerton

Cancer Support

■ Breast Cancer
■ Cancer Caregiver
■ Cancer Caregiver
Brown Bag Lunch
■ Cancer Education
■ Kids Care
■ Ovarian/Gynecological Cancer
For dates and times, call **866-844-WELL** or e-mail cancersupport@harrisonmedical.org.

Hearing Support

■ Third Saturday of each month, 1 to 4 pm
Iris Room, Harrison
Silverdale
360-871-0997
Led by the Hearing Loss Association of Kitsap County.

Look Good... Feel Better

■ First Monday of each month, 1 to 3 pm
Oncology Conference Room, Harrison
Bremerton
Registration is required.
800-227-2345
Helps women overcome appearance-related effects of cancer and treatment.

Lupus Support

■ First Saturday of each month (no July or August meeting), 1 to 3 pm
Auditorium, Harrison
Bremerton
360-443-2086

Parkinson's Disease

■ First Tuesday of each month, 1:30 pm
Canterbury Manor,
703 Callahan Drive,
Bremerton
360-895-6220

Stroke Support

■ Wednesday, July 21, Sept. 15, Nov. 17, 12:30 to 2:30 pm
Garden Room, Harrison
Silverdale
360-744-8980
Open to those who have sustained a stroke, their caregivers and family, and the public.

CLASSES

Infant Massage

■ Saturday, July 10, Sept. 11, Nov. 13, 10 am to noon
Iris Room, Harrison
Silverdale
\$20 per family
Registration is required.
360-744-6765
Learn the benefits of touch. Led by a certified infant massage therapist, this course is designed for infants not yet crawling.

Lap-Band®

■ Second and fourth Mondays of each month, 5:30 pm
Orchid Room, Harrison
Silverdale
Registration is required.
866-722-6363
Lap-Band® is an FDA-approved minimally invasive surgery. Attend this seminar to learn more.

Orthopedic Surgery

Total joint surgery
■ Tuesdays or Thursdays, noon to 2 pm
3 West, Harrison
Bremerton
Registration is required.
360-744-6695
For those considering hip or knee replacement surgery.

Spine surgery

■ Wednesdays, July 7, Aug. 4, Sept. 1, Oct. 6, Nov. 3, 11 am to noon
3 West, Harrison
Bremerton
Registration is required.
360-744-6695
For those considering spine surgery.

Preparing for Baby

For a listing, call **360-744-6765** or visit harrisonmedical.org. Many classes are offered whether you're first-time parents or seasoned pros.

Safe Sitter

■ Saturdays, Aug. 7 and 14, Oct. 2 and 9, 9 am to 3 pm
Iris Room, Harrison
Silverdale
\$65, includes a backpack, safety kit, and CPR instruction
Registration is required for this two-day class.
360-744-6765



HARRISON MEDICAL CENTER
2520 Cherry Ave.
Bremerton, WA 98310
Referral and Information
866-844-WELL

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Tacoma, WA
Permit No. 948



Surviving Strong

CANCER CARE & SUPPORT AT HARRISON POULSBO HEMATOLOGY & ONCOLOGY

When the physical changes and emotional upheaval of your cancer diagnosis take a toll, you want to be home, near your support network of family and friends. Why spend valuable time worrying about ferry schedules or arranging a long commute? Excellent oncology services, treatment options, specialists, and fully coordinated care are right here in your own community.

harrisonmedical.org/oncology

Poulsbo Hematology & Oncology
19500 10th Ave. NE, Suite 100
360-598-7500
8:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday
After-hours call service available to patients

Experts—Here for You

- Medical Oncologists
- Oncology Nurse Practitioners
- Oncology Nurses
- Patient Navigators
- Oncology Social Workers

Wellness—Free to You

- Complementary Therapies
- Therapeutic Yoga
- Therapeutic Exercise & Movement
- Nutritional Guidance
- Support Groups

HARRISON
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