

Have a Healthy New Year!



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THYROID UPDATE: WHAT IS GRAVES' DISEASE?

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This Autoimmune Disorder Can Affect the Eyes and Legs as Well as the Thyroid Gland

Graves' disease is the most common form of hyperthyroidism, an overactive thyroid gland, according to the Mayo Clinic. It is an autoimmune disorder caused by stimulation of the thyroid gland by an antibody called thyroid stimulating immunoglobulin.

The immune system mistakenly attacks the thyroid gland, and sometimes it also attacks tissue behind the eyes or skin on the lower legs, causing swelling. Graves' disease occurs in women eight times more frequently than in men. Its onset is typically after age 20, although it can be diagnosed in children and older patients.

Graves' disease is diagnosed by a physical exam and confirmed with blood tests to assess thyroid function and to measure thyroid antibodies. For patients with eye symptoms, an

imaging test is used to examine the eyes and eye sockets.

Medications, surgery, and radioiodine therapy are effective treatments for Graves' disease, according to the Mayo Clinic. Radioiodine therapy is taken orally. It destroys thyroid tissue that may be left after thyroid surgery and it also can be used to treat thyroid cancer that has spread beyond the thyroid gland.

Visit www.HealthMart.com to learn more about thyroid health.



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KIDS' HEALTH

Football, Basketball, Baseball... Take Care of Kids' Sports Injuries Right Away

Got a kid who plays sports? Listen to his or her body, says Tony Breitbach, Ph.D., assistant professor and director of athletic-training education at Saint Louis University. Take scrapes, pains, and aches seriously, and if your child is hurt, make sure the injury gets immediate medical attention. Scrapes need to be cleaned and covered to avoid potentially dangerous staph infections, he says.

If your child is ill or has been injured, make sure that the play-or-no-play decision is made by a medical professional. "They're really the ones who are qualified to make that call. A parent or youth coach isn't," Breitbach says.

Cervical Cancer

Do You Know These Facts?

Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles wants to share these important facts about cervical cancer:

- A pap smear is the best way to screen for early cervical cancer.
- Cervical cancer is very curable if caught early.
- A vaccine, called Gardasil, can effectively prevent some causes of cervical cancer associated with certain viral infections. It is recommended for girls ages 9 through 26.
- Risk factors include cigarette smoking, early age of first intercourse, HPV

infection (genital warts), and multiple sex partners.

Signs to look for:

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding or discharge
- Low back pain
- Blood in your urine
- Pelvic pain
- Swelling in one leg
- Unexplained weight loss or gain

If you notice any of these signs, talk with your doctor.

HEALTHY EATING

Bulimia, Binge Eating Respond to Talk Therapy

Although most people with bulimia and binge-eating disorders wait years before seeking help, a new study shows that psychological treatment can make a large difference, and that cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is the most effective talk therapy for these disorders. CBT works by helping patients change the way they think about their behavior.

People with bulimia experience cycles of disordered eating behavior in which they overeat and then purge, often by self-induced vomiting or taking laxatives. Binge-eating disorder includes bouts of overeating, but without purging, and researchers have linked it to obesity.

Eating disorders are most common in women, with bulimia affecting about 1% of women and binge-eating disorder affecting 2 to 5%. Although bulimia rates appear stable, binge-eating-disorder rates appear to be on the rise.

The review included 48 studies with 3,054 participants and strengthened earlier findings in favor of CBT. It found that 37% of people completely stopped binge eating when given CBT focused on bingeing — while 3% of those assigned to a waiting-list control group stopped binge eating.

Want more information on healthy eating? Visit www.HealthMart.com.



SUPPLEMENT UPDATE

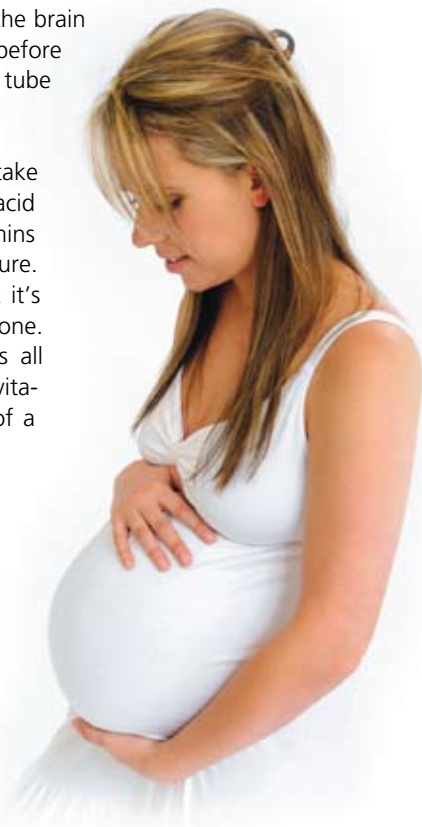
Folic Acid

Take It Before You Get Pregnant

Folic acid is a naturally occurring B vitamin. It helps a fetus' neural tube develop properly. The neural tube is the part of a developing baby that becomes the brain and spinal cord. Folic acid must be taken before and during early pregnancy, when the neural tube is developing.

The best way to get enough folic acid is to take a multivitamin with 400 micrograms of folic acid in it and to eat a healthy diet. Most multivitamins have this amount, but check the label to be sure. You also can get folic acid in your diet, but it's hard to get enough every day through food alone. That's why the March of Dimes encourages all women of childbearing age to take a multivitamin containing folic acid every day as part of a healthy diet.

Want more information on having a healthy pregnancy?
Visit www.HealthMart.com.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Parents can help protect their children from burns by setting the water-heater thermostat to no higher than 120 degrees Fahrenheit, keeping kids away from the stove, locking up chemicals, and covering unused electrical outlets. Parents should prohibit young children from operating microwaves or other electrical appliances, preparing hot food or drinks, and playing near the kitchen during food preparation.

— Source: *Nationwide Children's Hospital, Columbus, Ohio*



- Are you a smoker? Want to kick the habit (with a little help)? Call the American Cancer Society Quitline at 800.227.2345 to speak with a trained counselor and to receive free, confidential counseling.

— Source: *American Cancer Society*



Is It an Ulcer, Doc?

Breath Test Detects Ulcer-Causing Bacteria in the Stomach

Testing for the bacterium that causes most stomach ulcers, and some forms of stomach cancer, can be as easy as blowing into a bag, say doctors at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

In fact, the "breath test" for the bacterium *Helicobacter pylori* is not only the easiest but also the most accurate test, says Waqar Qureshi, M.D., associate professor of medicine and chief of endoscopy at BCM. More traditional ways of diagnosing *H. pylori* require endoscopy (putting a scope down a person's esophagus to obtain a sample of the stomach lining for study).

Patients start by drinking a liquid that is broken down by *H. pylori*. This breakdown results in the release of a substance that is detected in breath. After 20 minutes, the patient blows into a specialized bag, which is then tested for the infection.

If a person is diagnosed with *H. pylori*, there is a higher chance his or her family members also have the bacteria. Doctors usually test people with a family history of stomach ulcers or cancer, or those with a medical history suggestive of ulcers, for this infection. Treatment can cure the infection in about 90% of cases and can prevent further complications.



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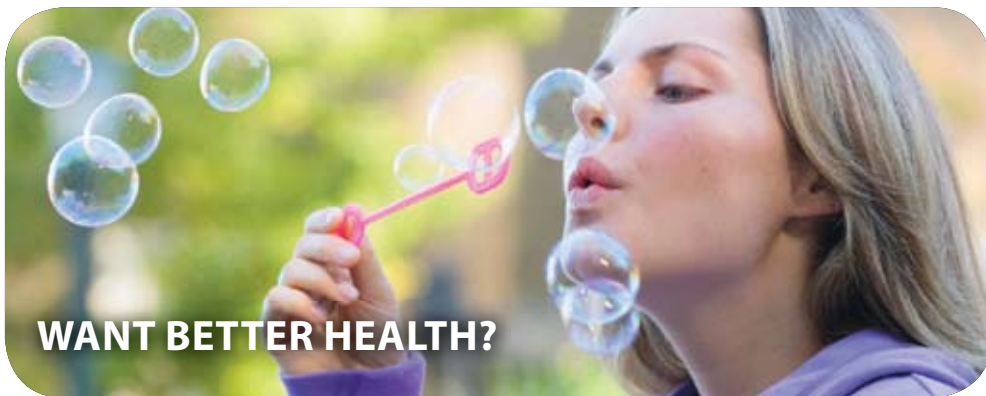
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* Health Mart Pharmacy received the highest numerical score among chain drug store pharmacies in the proprietary J.D. Power and Associates 2009 National Pharmacy StudySM. Study based on 12,215 total responses, and measures 7 chain drug stores. Proprietary study results are based on experiences and perceptions of consumers surveyed in June 2009. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com.



WANT BETTER HEALTH?

Go Have Some Fun!

Taking time for leisure activities, apart from the demands of work and other responsibilities, helps people function better physically and mentally. In fact, the more time spent doing different types of enjoyable activities, the better a person's health tends to be, according to a new study.

“People who are engaged in multiple enjoyable activities are better off physically and psychologically,” says study co-author Karen Matthews, Ph.D., a professor of psychiatry, epidemiology, and psychology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. The study appears online in the journal *Psychosomatic Medicine: Journal of Biobehavioral Medicine*.

For the study, 1,400 adults reported how often they participated in a variety of leisure activities, including spending time unwinding, visiting friends or family, going on vacation, going to clubs or religious activities, or playing sports.

Adults with higher scores — indicating the most time spent in different leisure activities — had lower blood pressure, waist circumference, body mass index, and cortisol measurements, all markers of good health.

Want more information on dealing with stress? Visit www.HealthMart.com.

HEALTH TIP



Why Give Blood?

January is National Volunteer Blood Donor Month. According to the American Red Cross, someone in the U.S. needs blood every two seconds. But only 5% of the eligible U.S. population donates blood in any given year. Healthy donors are the only source of blood. There is no substitute. Call 800-GIVELIFE (800.448.3543) today to find out where to go to donate.

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