

FREE HEALTH PROGRAMS | UNRAVELING DIGESTIVE MYSTERIES | KICK THE HABIT

Winter 2011

# flourish

Penrose-St. Francis Health Services



## Heart Warming

Taking care of your  
cardiovascular  
health

## Lasting Change

Give your resolutions  
staying power



## Opening Thoughts

With **Chris Hildebrant RN, MSN**,  
Director of Women's Health

Welcome to **flourish**, a quarterly health publication developed for the women of the Colorado Springs community.

Many of you are my neighbors, my friends and my coworkers and I know you well. You lead busy lives filled with family, friends, community and work. And squeezed in between all of this, you have to find time to take care of yourself and your family—physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally.

This publication was designed with all of that in mind. Each issue, we will give you the latest health information to help you make the best decisions for your own health and that of your family.

So please, grab a cup of green tea, put up your feet and read through our inaugural issue. I promise that it will be 10 minutes well spent!

*Flourish* is published four times annually by Penrose-St. Francis Health Services. As part of Centura Health, our mission is to nurture the health of the people in our community. The information herein is meant to complement and not replace advice provided by a licensed health care professional. For comments or to unsubscribe to this publication, please email us at [flourish@centura.org](mailto:flourish@centura.org). *Flourish* is produced by Clementine Communications of Denver, Colo. Executive Editor is Jill Woodford.



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## Unraveling Digestive Mysteries

With one in every 25 people estimated to have some form of food allergy, it's easy to think that an upset digestive tract is the result of a wheat allergy. But your symptoms could be masking a much bigger problem known as celiac disease.

"A wheat allergy is actually very different than celiac disease," says Karin Cesario, MD, a gastroenterologist with Penrose-St. Francis Health Services. "Wheat allergies often show up in childhood and can be outgrown. But celiac disease is a lifelong condition that needs treatment to avoid serious consequences."

Celiac disease is a digestive disorder that creates an adverse reaction to gluten, present in wheat, rye, barley and possibly oats. It can lead to fatigue, anemia, malabsorption of vitamins and minerals, osteoporosis and even small intestinal cancer. Although the disease is quite common—about 1 in every 133 people have it—it's estimated that 50 percent of people with the disease don't know they have it, Cesario says.

Celiac disease runs in families and people of northern European descent are at highest risk.

### Wheat Allergy

Symptoms include hives, difficulty breathing and nausea.



### Celiac Disease

Often has no symptoms, but can be associated with bloating and chronic diarrhea.



## Cut the Flu Short

The flu vaccine is the best way to prevent the flu—and it's not too late to get one. Everyone over the age of 6 months—and particularly pregnant women—should get a vaccine. If you do get the flu, taking antiviral drugs can shorten the duration of symptoms and prevent other family members from getting it. But these medicines must be used within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms to be effective, says Meredith Cassidy, MD, an obstetrician with St. Francis Medical Center. If you're experiencing fever, aches, chills and fatigue, call your doctor right away.



## REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE

The average American's exposure to radiation, which increases the risk of cancer, has grown sixfold over the past 20 years. Penrose Hospital and St. Francis Medical Center are the only imaging centers in southern Colorado to offer low-dose CT scans that cut radiation exposure by 40 percent. **TO LEARN MORE**, go to [penrorestfrancis.org](http://penrorestfrancis.org) and search on low-radiation CAT.



## For the Man in Your Life

**PSA Testing:** A prostate cancer screening is a simple test, but the decision to be tested is not so simple. A screening can detect the presence of cancer, but it cannot tell whether that cancer is fast growing and should be treated. Eighty percent of men in their 80s have prostate cancer, but most die with the disease—not from it, says Jeff Ferguson, MD, a urologist with Penrose-St. Francis Health Services. And treatment can result in side effects, including impotence and incontinence. Yet, one in six men die from prostate cancer. African-American men and men with a first-degree relative who was diagnosed with prostate cancer before age 75 are at highest risk. It's not an easy decision and it's one that is unique to each individual, Ferguson says, so get your guy to talk to his doctor about his personal risk factors.



**With Toni Green, DO**  
Director of Breast Oncology at Penrose-St. Francis Health Services

### Do I Need Digital Mammography?

Digital mammography is a new technology that puts the breast image on an electronic format rather than an X-ray film, allowing radiologists to manipulate this image to get a much clearer picture. A computer system also digitally reads the scan and alerts radiologists of anything suspicious. Digital mammograms allow women to keep their records with them if they move. This new technology is appropriate for every woman, but is especially valuable for women under the age of 50 and women with dense breasts.

Penrose Hospital has been designated a Breast Imaging Center of Excellence by the American College of Radiology, the only center in southern Colorado to receive this designation. **To schedule a digital mammogram, please call 719-776-8010 (Penrose Hospital) or 719-785-9000 (St. Francis Medical Center).**

## Comparing: Colorectal Cancer Tests

One out of every five Americans will develop colorectal cancer, making it the third most common form of cancer. Every adult should have regular colorectal screenings, beginning at age 50. While colonoscopies are considered the “gold standard” of screenings because physicians can remove pre-cancerous polyps during the screening, other less-invasive tests have proven to be just as reliable and much cheaper at detecting cancer.

People over the age of 50 should discuss screening options with their physicians, says James Young, MD, an oncologist with the Penrose Cancer Center. “The key to preventing cancer is not which screening you get but being screened regularly and acting on the results, if necessary.”

For a **FREE DVD** on colon cancer testing, call **719-776-5698.**

TEST	FREQUENCY	DESCRIPTION	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Fecal Blood Test	Annually	A small stool sample is analyzed	Inexpensive, can be done at home	Follow-up testing is needed if blood is detected; does not prevent cancer
Sigmoidoscopy (also called a flexi-scope)	Once between ages 50-60	Doctors use a long, flexible tube to inspect the lower colon only	Does not require sedation; faster and less expensive than colonoscopy	Only works on lower bowel, so other screens such as fecal blood test are necessary
Colonoscopy	Every 10 years	Doctors use a long, flexible tube to visually inspect the colon and remove polyps	Helps prevent cancer by allowing doctors to remove pre-cancerous polyps	Requires sedation; expensive
Virtual colonoscopy	Every 10 years	A CT or MRI scan of the bowel	Non-invasive test	Effectiveness at detecting polyps is still unclear; not covered by most insurances or Medicare

# Heart of the Matter

Knowing the risks and warning signs can help you defeat heart disease

STORY BY MICHELE CONKLIN • PHOTOS BY ELLEN JASKOL

Stephanie Hammar was 39 when she came down with what she thought was the flu. Diagnosed as “overstressed,” Hammar was never sent for a cardiac test until she collapsed and was rushed to the hospital where she had an emergency procedure to open a blocked artery.

Within three years, the avid athlete and self-professed health nut was again lying in the hospital after a massive heart attack that killed half of her heart’s function.

Her story, unfortunately, is one that is shared by thousands of women every day.

“Many people still think of heart disease as a man’s disease,” says Keathe Hanley, RN, director of cardiovascular services at Penrose-St. Francis Health Services. “Even if women know it’s a problem, they think it doesn’t apply to them.”

Heart disease kills one out of every three women. It’s the leading cause of death in women, claiming five times more women than breast cancer every year.

Despite those numbers, many women still don’t know the problem exists. Or they ignore it.

Half of all women, for instance, say they would not call 9-1-1 if they thought they were experiencing a heart attack. Other facts about heart disease that most women don’t know:

- Common heart attack symptoms in women include nausea, fatigue, and anxiety—symptoms more commonly associated with the flu.

- Stress can cause a unique type of heart attack, called Takotsubo syndrome, that almost exclusively occurs in women.
- Women are less likely to be correctly diagnosed with heart disease—and less likely to be correctly treated—than men.
- After menopause, the protective effect of estrogen disappears and the rate of heart attacks in women quickly equals that of men.

When Hammar started experiencing nausea and fatigue, heart disease never crossed her mind. She went to see her doctor when her symptoms grew worse—not once but four times—without ever being tested for heart disease. At the insistence of a friend who is a nurse, she finally tried to see a cardiologist but the referral was denied.

Her heart disease was eventually found after she collapsed and was rushed to a hospital emergency room. Doctors there found that her main artery was 99 percent blocked. Two days later, they found two additional clogged arteries—and a year later, she was back in the hospital when her stent closed.

“All I wanted for my 40th birthday was a clean bill of health,” says Hammar, who lives in Colorado Springs and worked as a social worker at the time. “Instead, I got a fifth stent.”

Until that point, Hammar’s heart had not been damaged—thanks to a lifetime of exercise, healthy eating and not smoking. But two-and-a-half years later, her luck ran out. While hiking up Pike’s Peak, she became ill and started having diarrhea. Because these are not the



Stephanie Hammar  
with her dog Chili

## Warning Signs

A heart attack doesn't always feel like a heart attack. Women can experience sharp pain in the chest, arm or back. But they are just as likely to feel symptoms more common to the flu—nausea, diarrhea, fatigue and shortness of breath. Pay particular attention if these symptoms follow several days of shortness of breath or fatigue or if you are at increased risk of heart disease. If you suspect a heart attack, don't wait it out—call 9-1-1 immediately.

normal symptoms of a heart attack, she once again thought she had picked up a bug. Within hours, however, she started feeling pain in her chest and back.

It was five hours before Hammar reached a hospital. Once there, Hammar was in the throes of a full-blown heart attack that killed the left side of her heart. She had to quit her job and give up many of her athletic passions.

"I've worked through my anger by speaking out," says Hammar, now 44. Last fall, Hammar was nominated by Penrose's cardiac rehab program and selected by WomenHeart.org to be trained as an advocate for women's heart disease.

"Eighty percent of heart disease in women is preventable, but women—and their doctors—just don't know to look for it," Hammar says. "Because I was an athlete and so healthy, no one ever said to get my cholesterol checked. But it turned out I have high cholesterol and it was probably building up in my arteries since my teens or 20s."

While more women than men die of heart disease each year, it still remains underdiagnosed and undertreated in women. Women are less likely than men to seek help when they have a heart attack; they are less likely to be promptly diagnosed than men; and they are less likely to receive appropriate treatment, according to the American Heart Association.

"A lot of this is due to history," Hanley says. "Until the 20th century, men were more likely to smoke, have high cholesterol and work in high-stress jobs. But women have caught up and now are equal to men."

About 30 percent of heart attack patients at Penrose are female, and the hospital is seeing women as young as 30 having heart attacks.

The heart experts at Penrose encourage women to become their own advocates by following these recommendations:

- Know your family history and your risk factors.
- Modify risk factors that you can control, such as smoking, obesity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, stress and lack of physical activity.
- If you are at increased risk, be tested early and regularly for heart disease (see accompanying box).
- If you are at risk, carry an aspirin and take it if you feel symptoms.
- Call 9-1-1 at the first sign of symptoms.
- If you have symptoms and go to an ER, insist on testing.



*HeartScarves delivers handmade, red scarves—such as the one on our cover—to women undergoing heart procedures. These scarves symbolize the lifelines of caring and support between women. To learn more, including how you can knit or crochet a scarf for a woman fighting heart disease, go to [womenheart.org](http://womenheart.org) and search on "heartscarves."*

## Women's Heart Program

Learn how to manage stress and lower your risk of heart attack. **REGISTER TO WIN A FREE MASSAGE AND MORE. SEE PAGE 7.**



## Tests You Should Get

To get an accurate picture of your heart health, be sure to get these tests—especially after menopause when a woman's risk of heart disease skyrockets.

**CHOLESTEROL:** Beginning at age 45, women should have their cholesterol tested annually; start testing younger if you have a family history of heart disease or high cholesterol. Guidelines call for total cholesterol under 200 mg/dl, with LDL (bad cholesterol) under 100 mg/dl and HDL (good cholesterol) over 50 mg/dl.

**BLOOD PRESSURE:** Called the silent killer, high blood pressure does not cause any symptoms until it's too late, so get tested annually beginning at age 18. Shoot for 120/80 mmHg or below.

**WAIST SIZE:** Abdominal fat is directly linked to cardiovascular disease. Women should have a waistline smaller than 35 inches and a BMI of less than 25.

**BLOOD GLUCOSE:** One out of every three adult Americans with Type 2 diabetes or "pre-diabetes"—which more than doubles your chances of heart disease—don't know they have it. Get a fasting glucose test every year after 45; start testing younger if you are overweight, have a family history of diabetes or had gestational diabetes. A fasting glucose should be under 100mg/dl.

**CORONARY CALCIUM SCAN:** If you have a family history of heart disease or other risk factors, you should consider this simple CT scan that will measure the amount of plaque buildup in your arteries.

**EKG, ECHOCARDIOGRAM, STRESS TEST:** These tests measure the strength of the heart and are recommended only for people at risk of heart disease.





# A New You Ahead

## Find your way to lasting change

About half of Americans make New Year's resolutions, mostly about weight loss, exercise and quitting cigarettes.

And about half of those will still be on track by summer. So who's likely to succeed and who's not?

"There's actually a lot of science behind what sustains change," says Steve Tucker, PhD, manager of Profile EAP, an employee assistance program in Colorado Springs. "People commit to change and then piddle out because of where their motivation comes from."

Margaret Sabin, president and CEO of Penrose-St. Francis Health Services, calls it "finding your why." Changing your lifestyle will only be successful if you value the change and value yourself, she says.

"Whenever I hear someone say they have to lose weight because their husband wants them to or their doctor told them to, I know they're doomed," says Sabin, a certified fitness instructor who teaches bootcamp classes at the hospital. "But when they talk to me about wanting to hike with their kids, I know they're on to something."

Does your "why" make you feel happy and hopeful? "If it's about guilt, restrictions and feelings of inadequacy, you haven't found your why," Sabin says.

Once you've found the right "why," then success depends on a plan and mastery. Women, in particular, don't like to feel incompetent, Tucker says. They can walk into a fitness class with good intentions, but if they feel awkward, they're not likely to return.

The need for mastery and competence holds women back in another way. Most women juggle a full life of work, family, social and community activities. They often become so good at this life that they have a hard time putting it aside for themselves, says Sheila Bee, MD, an internal medicine physician in Colorado Springs.

"We almost like the stress of having to be here and there and having all these roles," Bee says. Eventually, however, these choices take their toll—not just physically but mentally. "We can get bitter, wondering who is going to do something for us. And the truth is that no one is going to do it for us, we have to do it for ourselves."

## The Path to Success

Michelle Somers, a registered dietitian and health coach at Penrose-St. Francis Health Services, maps out the route to success:

- **SET A GOAL:** Write it down and establish a time frame.
- **MAKE A PLAN:** When will you exercise? When will you grocery shop for healthy foods? When will you pack your lunch or fix dinner?
- **GET A COACH OR A PARTNER:** Support gets you through the tough times.
- **TAKE ACTION:** Continual steps, no matter how small, add up.
- **CELEBRATE SUCCESS:** Often—every milestone is moving in the right direction.



# calendar winter



## HEALTH CLASSES

### Strategies to Wellness

Build and maintain a personal wellness program that makes a difference in your life and that of your family. Learn strategies to get you on a path to high-level wellness, including tips on nutrition and weight management, stress, family, safety, and financial well-being.

**Date:** Tuesday, January 25

**Time:** 5:30–6:30 p.m.

**Location:** Penrose Health Learning Center, 1644 Medical Center Point

**Cost:** \$20

**Registration:** 719-776-3600

### Reducing Breast Cancer Recurrence

Decreasing stress and increasing quality of life reduces the risk of cancer recurrence and death in breast cancer patients, according to a recent study. This program will help women learn more about the relationship between stress, exercise, diet and survivorship.

**Date:** Days vary, with program running from

February 1–April 19

**Time:** 5:30–7:30 p.m.

**Location:** Penrose Cancer Center Conference Rooms

**Cost:** FREE

**Registration:** 719-776-5311

### Spirituality as Good Medicine

More and more people are paying attention to spirituality and its relationship to healing. There is much discussion about the role of spirituality and existentialism and their relationship to disease development. Come join in the discussion of this fascinating subject.

**Date:** Wednesday, February 9

**Time:** 5:30–6:30 p.m.

**Location:** Penrose Health Learning Center, 1644 Medical Center Point

**Cost:** \$5

**Registration:** 719-776-3600

## ADDITIONAL YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Yoga
- Zumba
- Power Up!
- Tai Chi
- Body Toning
- Aquatic Classes
- Bootcamp

## FEATURED PROGRAM

### Pamper Your Heart: Stress Less Workshop



Join us for a special evening that will restore your energy and your emotions while improving your health. Learn how to use visualization, breathing, positive thoughts, exercise and nutrition to cope with life's challenges. Through this hands-on workshop, you'll learn how to de-stress your life and lower your risk for heart disease, high blood pressure and irregular heartbeats. Delicious, heart-healthy snacks will be provided.

**Register to win our R&R Basket, which includes a free massage, a month of free yoga at the Penrose Health Learning Center and other stress-reducing goodies!**

**Date:** Wednesday, February 16

**Time:** 6–8 p.m.

**Location:** Julie Penrose Health Education & Research Center at the NorthCare Building, 6071 E. Woodmen Road.

**Cost:** FREE!

**Registration:** 719-776-5052

## FITNESS CLASSES

### Bootcamp

Join Margaret Sabin, Penrose-St. Francis Health Services CEO, and ACE certified fitness instructor, for this ultimate workout! Get your weekly mega-dose of cardiovascular conditioning, muscle toning, balance, agility training and flexibility. You are guaranteed to burn fat, manufacture energy and feel great.

**Date:** Session 2 runs five Saturdays,

February 19–March 19

**Time:** 9–10:30 a.m.

**Location:** Penrose Hospital Wellness Center, 2222 N. Nevada Ave. East Tower, Basement Level

**Cost:** PSF employees: \$35

PSF volunteers: \$40

Community members: \$45

**Registration:** 719-776-3600. If you register less than 24 hours before the session begins, there will be an extra \$5 charge.

## Zumba

Zumba fuses Latin rhythms and easy-to-follow moves to create a one-of-a-kind fitness program that will blow you away while burning fat. The routines feature interval training sessions combining fast and slow rhythms and resistance training. All fitness levels welcome!

**Date:** Session 2 runs six Tuesdays, February 22–April 5 (skipping March 1)

**Time:** 4:15–4:55 p.m.

**Location:** Penrose Hospital Wellness Center, 2222 N. Nevada Ave. East Tower, Basement Level

**Cost:** PSF employees: \$25

PSF volunteers: \$30

Community members: \$35

**Registration:** 719-776-3600. If you register less than 24 hours before the session begins, there will be an extra \$5 charge.

## FAMILY CLASSES

### Support Group for New Moms

The birth of a baby can be wonderful, difficult, happy, lonely, exhausting and fulfilling—all at the same time. Join other women with new babies to share joys, concerns and learnings. Topics include recovering emotionally and physically from pregnancy and birth, adjusting to motherhood, discovering your mothering style and more. Dress comfortably and bring your baby.

**Date:** First four Tuesdays of every month

**Time:** 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

**Location:** St. Francis Medical Center (room assignment will be given at time of registration)

**Cost:** FREE

**Registration:** 719-571-3101

### Infant Massage

In this two-part class, you will learn strokes that will relax your baby, encourage restful sleep and help relieve symptoms of stress and colic. Baby should be at least three weeks old when class begins.

**Dates:** First and second Tuesdays of each month

**Time:** 10–11 a.m.

**Location:** St. Francis Medical Center

**Cost:** \$30 (for one or both parents)

**Registration:** 719-571-3101

*Additional classes in parenting, childbirth, breastfeeding, infant CPR and many others are offered through The Birth Center at St. Francis Medical Center. For a full list and calendar, please go to [penrocestfrancis.org/birth](http://penrocestfrancis.org/birth).*

Visit [penrocestfrancis.org/wellness](http://penrocestfrancis.org/wellness) for a list of additional classes and events.

# Up Your Odds of Quitting



If you're trying to stop smoking, joining a smoking cessation program can **DOUBLE OR EVEN TRIPLE YOUR CHANCES OF SUCCESS**, according to the National Institutes of Health. "Joining a support group gives people tools to quit smoking," says Emmele Nicholas, LSW, smoking cessation counselor at Penrose-St. Francis Health Services. "It also provides them with support and makes them accountable."

Penrose Cancer Center offers a four-week education program, **FRESH START**, to help people stop smoking. Individual counseling also is available as well as a weekly support group that meets on Wednesdays from 4–5 p.m.

**ALL PROGRAMS ARE FREE** and open to Penrose patients, families and employees. **FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL EMMELE NICHOLAS AT 719-776-6048.**

## 6 benefits of a smoke-free life:

1. *After 20 minutes:* Heart rate and blood pressure drops.
2. *After 2 weeks to 3 months:* Circulation and lung function increase.
3. *After 1 to 9 months:* Cilia regain normal function in lungs, reducing risk of colds, viruses and other infections.
4. *After 1 year:* Excess risk of heart disease is cut in half.
5. *After 5 to 15 years:* Stroke risk returns to normal.
6. *After 10 years:* Lung cancer death rate is cut in half.

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## CONVERSATIONS WITH WOMEN

### Be strong against osteoporosis.

Half of all women will suffer an osteoporosis-related fracture—often much younger than anticipated! But there are things you can do to prevent this shattering disease. Join our panel of experts to learn how to prevent osteoporosis with nutrition and exercise as well as understand the risks and benefits of medications and treatment options. You'll also learn about medical conditions and medicines that can cause bone loss and the best prevention and treatment options for your body.



### Get a free DEXA heel scan from PENRAD Imaging and enjoy osteoporosis-fighting foods!

**Date:** Wednesday, March 16

**Time:** FREE DEXA heel scans start at 5 p.m. Program runs 6–8 p.m.

**Location:** Julie Penrose Health Education and Research Center (NorthCare Building on the St. Francis Medical Center campus), 6071 E. Woodmen Road.

**Cost:** FREE

**To register for this FREE program and to get your free bone density heel scan, call 719-776-5052.**