

GOLDEN LIVING

A Publication of GoldenCare

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*Living Healthy,
Living Well*

SUMMER 2009

Remarkable things happen here.



Aging with Grace

Dear Friends,

As summer draws near and we continue to follow the activity of H1N1 (swine flu), I don't think it's too early to remind you about our annual flu shot campaign. Mark your calendar for the week of October 12-18. This fall, along with your flu shot, we'll provide a "sneak peak" tour of the new Emergency Department that will open early next year. Watch your mail for schedule details. Our goal is to see every senior receive a flu shot for the best chance of prevention.

Everywhere you turn there are ads, solicitations and study reviews of supplements. What are dietary and herbal supplements, anyway? See page 4 for the latest information.

When you're on the VMC campus, be sure to stop and enjoy the sights and smells of summer in the Healing Garden. To support the care and



expansion of the garden, we welcome your donations and have enclosed a gift envelope in this issue for your convenience. If you have any questions about the Healing Garden, or ways to commemorate the life of a loved one through a gift to the garden, please give me a call at 425.656.5318.

It is also time for our annual cat food drive to benefit the Humane Society. Please bring your donations of dry and canned cat food and/or cat toys to the GoldenCare office in Talbot Professional Center North between 9 am and 3 pm, July 13-17. The drive helps seniors reduce the cost of feeding their furry friends so they can afford to keep them.

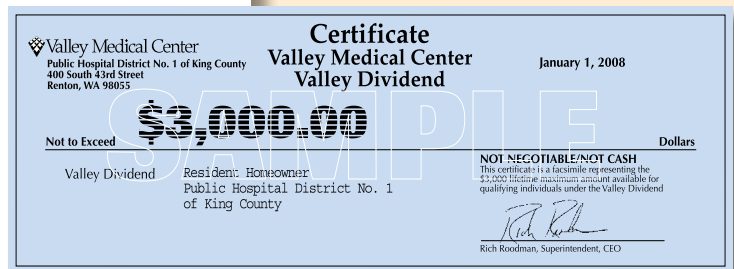
Have a fun and healthy summer!



Grace Dalrymple
GoldenCare Manager

The Valley Dividend: Did You Know?

The Valley Dividend is a unique program that offers homeowners in our tax district a credit toward necessary inpatient hospitalization at Valley Medical Center and surgical services provided by The Eye Center.



The credit, equal to a portion of qualified homeowners' property taxes paid to the district, is subject to a \$3,000 lifetime benefit for out-of-pocket expenses after all third-party and insurance payments have been satisfied. Find out if you qualify for the Valley Dividend; call 425.656.4058.

Golden Living is published by Valley Medical Center (Public Hospital District No. 1 of King County). Material contained in *Golden Living* is intended to supplement—not replace—information received from your physician or other healthcare provider. To be added or removed from the mailing list, please contact grace_dalrymple@valleymed.org or call 425.226.4653.

About GoldenCare The GoldenCare program at Valley Medical Center was started in 1986 as a way to help seniors receive personalized assistance with their medical paperwork. Today, GoldenCare is over 19,000 members strong and serves to promote senior health and wellness through health education and programs such as the annual flu shot campaign. Personal help with medical paperwork is still available today.

About Valley Medical Center Public Hospital District No. 1 of King County—Valley Medical Center—is the oldest PHD in Washington state. Our publicly elected Board of Commissioners consists of Don Jacobson, president; Mike Miller, vice president; Carolyn Parnell, secretary; Sue Bowman, and Anthony Hemstad. To learn more about VMC, or to express your views, please write to Kris Tiernan, PO Box 50010, Renton, WA 98055.

**Find the doctor
who's right for you:**

www.valleymed.org

425.656.INFO (4636)



HOW TO Love the Skin You're In

We all lament the days of our youth spent tanning without the protection of sunscreen, but it's all the more reason to be vigilant about cancer screening now. Follow the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) guidelines for examining body moles: **ABCDE (yes, the E is new)**.

Asymmetry – is one side of a mole different from the other side?

Border – are the edges uneven, scalloped or not well-defined?

Color – do shades and color vary within the mole?

Diameter – is it larger than the head of a pencil?

Evolving – have any of the above characteristics changed?

Check your skin on a regular basis. Enlist a spouse or other family member to help inspect hard-to-see places, such as your backside, behind the ears and between your toes. You can even download a “Body Mole Map” from the AAD at www.melanomamonday.org to help keep track of your moles. The ABCDEs are signs of possible melanoma and should be brought to the attention of your doctor immediately.

We may not have had the benefit of today's excellent sunscreen products, but we can protect our grandchildren's skin. Cover those adorable heads with sun hats and baseball caps. Then slather all exposed skin with a sunscreen product labeled SPF 30 or greater—and don't forget to apply sunscreen to the ears and tops of the feet! Reapply frequently during a day of sports or swimming. Kids may not be concerned now but they will thank you later.

Enjoy your summer. ***And don't forget the sunscreen!***

Is Caffeine a “Cell Terminator?”

Do you enjoy your morning coffee? Some day you may also wear it—as sunscreen. A recent study at the University of Washington in Seattle showed that caffeine interrupts a protein and causes human skin cells damaged by ultraviolet (UV) rays to die. Damaged cells that could turn cancerous over time instead self-destruct. While drinking tons of coffee or tea won't prevent cancer, it's nice to know there is yet another reason to continue to enjoy this humble beverage.



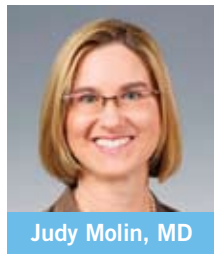
Dietary Supplements

By Judy Molin, MD

If you choose to take them, remember—
they are meant to supplement, not replace, a healthy diet.



Controversy abounds over dietary supplements. For years we were told how beneficial they were. Today, supplements are maligned as unnecessary at best and possibly even harmful, with a couple of notable exceptions.



Judy Molin, MD

What are dietary supplements?

Dietary supplements are vitamin, mineral or herbal preparations taken to improve nutrition or prevent or improve health issues such as arthritis or insomnia. They do not require a

doctor's prescription—and they are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This means there is no government oversight ensuring purity, safety, quality or efficacy (do they do what they say they'll do) of these products. Some supplements can be toxic in large amounts and some may interact with prescribed medicines. It is very important to tell your doctor about any supplement products you choose to take. Include this information on your medication list.

Should I take any dietary supplements?

The general consensus today is probably not, with the possible exception of vitamin D, and certainly not without discussing your current diet with your doctor first. If your regular diet lacks some nutrients, your doctor may work with you to help boost your intake naturally, or may suggest you take a simple multivitamin with high amounts of vitamin D. Generally, remaining active and eating a varied diet low in fats and rich in vegetables and fruits is your best bet for preserving your good health—and your pocketbook.

What about herbal preparations?

The same cautions hold true for herbal supplements—there are no regulations governing these products. Many can have undesirable side effects or interact with other drugs you take. In particular, if you take anti-coagulation drugs (blood thinners), or drugs for cancer, heart conditions, high blood pressure, diabetes or depression, it is extremely important not to take any dietary or herbal supplement without first discussing it with your doctor.

Judy Molin, MD, is board certified in Family Medicine and practices at Cascade Primary Care. Call 425.656.5400 to schedule an appointment.

Melatonin for Sleep?

Melatonin is a hormone produced naturally in the brain by tryptophan, an amino acid. Synthetic melatonin as a supplement has been shown to help reduce jet lag and shows some promise as a sleep aid to reduce insomnia, especially in older people. It is also thought melatonin may help reduce seizures and at high doses may decrease intraocular pressure and could be useful in treating glaucoma, but these are speculative and controversial claims; further research is needed.

Generally thought to be safe at the recommended dosage (0.5 to 50 mg, taken at night, for just days to weeks only), melatonin can have side effects and cause drug interactions. People taking blood thinners, or medications for blood pressure or seizures, should not take melatonin. Possible side effects, especially at higher doses, may include disorientation, daytime sleepiness, mood changes, and problems with walking and balance. As with all medications and supplements, discuss melatonin with your doctor before use. If quality of sleep is an issue, ask your doctor about a sleep study at The Sleep Center.

Vitamins & Minerals, Naturally

Vitamin/Mineral	What it Does	Recommended Daily Amount	Foods to Choose
		How Much is Too Much	
Vitamin B6	Helps form red blood cells, supports nervous and immune system health, helps protein metabolism	1.7 mg (milligrams) for men; 1.5 mg for women	Bananas, potatoes, chicken breasts, fortified cereals
Vitamin B12	Helps keep nerves and red blood cells healthy	2.4 mcg (micrograms)	Fortified cereals, animal products (fish, meat, poultry, eggs, milk)
Vitamin C	Antioxidant; needed to form collagen for healthy skin, cartilage, bones, teeth; needed for tissue repair and healing wounds	90 mg for men; 75 mg for women	Citrus fruits, peppers, tomatoes, broccoli, white and sweet potatoes, strawberries
Calcium	Needed for good bone mass; heart, muscle and nerve functioning	1200 mg 2500 mg	Milk and milk products, canned fish with soft bones (sardines, salmon), dark green, leafy vegetables like spinach and kale; baked beans
Vitamin D	Needed to absorb calcium; bone growth and remodeling	400 IU (International Units) or 10 mcg age 51-70; 600 IU or 15 mcg over age 70; New recommendations suggest 800 IU to 1000 IU may be optimal for most adults, especially if they live in the upper two-thirds of the U.S. 2000 IU or 500 mcg (40 IU=1 mcg)	Sunshine (15 min/twice a week or more), fortified milk and milk products and cereals, egg yolks, fatty fish such as salmon, cod liver oil
Vitamin E	Antioxidant; helps blood flow and tissue repair, helps body use vitamin K	15 mg (22.4 IU) 150 IU	Fish, wheat germ, nuts, oils (canola, olive), broccoli

Did You Know?

- Vitamin C does not prevent colds, heart attack or stroke.
- Vitamin E does not protect against Alzheimer's disease, heart disease, prostate or other cancer.
- Folic acid, of great importance to childbearing women to prevent birth defects, may increase the risk of colon and other cancers.
- High doses of antioxidants such as vitamin C and vitamin E may even interfere with the benefits of exercise, preventing the increased insulin sensitivity that results from exercise.

Sources: FamilyDoctor.org; MedlinePlus; National Institute on Aging; Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences; National Institutes of Health: Office of Dietary Supplements





Understanding Essential Tremor

By Don Thai, MD



Don Thai, MD

Do your hands shake when you read the newspaper or bring a glass of water to your lips?

Tremor, or unintentional shaking, is a normal occurrence that can be brought on by fatigue, anger or simply too much caffeine. However, in about five percent of people over age 60, this “shakiness” is a benign movement disorder known as *essential tremor (ET)*.

It tends to run in families and can make itself known at any age, although onset is commonly after age 40. About 90 percent of the time, symptoms involve the hands, although essential tremor involves the head (with either a “yes-yes” or “no-no” shaking motion) in about 40 percent of patients. Less frequently, ET affects the voice or legs. While considered harmless, essential tremor

can affect quality of life—making it difficult to write, eat or drink—and can produce psychosocial stress.

How is essential tremor different from Parkinsons tremor?

Parkinsonian tremor is caused by damage to parts of the brain that control movement. In essential tremor, there is no visible damage to the brain, although new research is pointing to the cerebellum as a source of dysfunction. Essential tremor is almost certainly a genetic disorder, but there is no DNA test for ET at this time.

How is essential tremor treated?

If you suspect you or a loved one has essential tremor, talk to your doctor

about your symptoms. Treatment of ET depends on the severity of the disorder. If it is mild, nothing need be done. However, for more serious cases, your doctor may refer you to a neurologist for an evaluation.

Essential tremor can often be managed with a combination of prescription drugs known as beta blockers, most commonly propranolol (Inderal); and an anti-convulsant called primidone (Mysoline). For patients with severe symptoms who don't tolerate or respond well to medication therapy, neurosurgical interventions may help.

Don Thai, MD, is a board-certified neurologist at the Washington Neuroscience Institute (WNI): 425.656.5566.

Valley Fitness Center Class Schedule

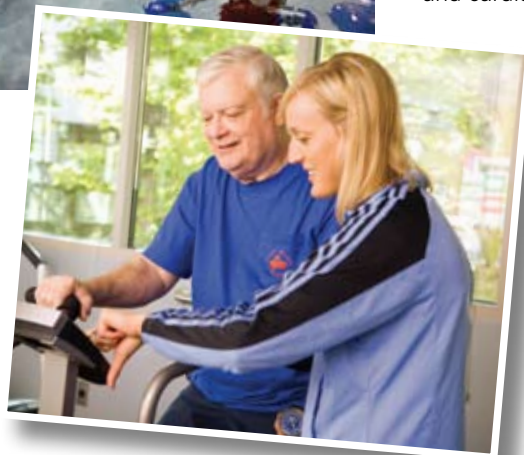
Call 425.656.4006 to register. All classes are \$5 each and held in Valley Fitness Center unless otherwise noted.

Abs and Back Clinic

Strong abdominal and back muscles help prevent injuries and pain, and improve physical performance. Learn how to safely and effectively train these core muscles. This is a hands-on class, so wear comfortable clothing. June 15, 1-2 pm.

Strength Training in the Water

The water is an excellent environment to safely develop muscular strength, endurance and balance. Learn how to target the major muscles through various exercises using wavewebs, paddles, noodles or no equipment at all. This class is held in the pool so please wear your swim suit or a t-shirt and shorts that can get wet. July 16, 6-7 pm.



Beginning Weight Training

New to weight training or need a refresher course? Learn the basis for a well-rounded weight-training program in a comfortable setting. July 20, 1-2 pm.

Hiking Conditioning Class

Want to safely hike in the beautiful Northwest this summer? Learn the 10 essentials to take on a hike, plus tips on hydration, sunscreen, nutrition and more. July 27, 5:30-6:30 pm.

Balls and Bands Class

Learn simple exercises you can do at home using the body ball and exercise bands. We will explain correct ball size, proper exercise form, and how to use exercise bands. August 7, 1-2 pm.

Golf Conditioning Class

Improve your game by learning how your flexibility and muscle strength affect your swing. You will also learn specific exercises designed to help you develop a better, more efficient golf swing. August 17, 5:30-6:30 pm.

Thirty-Minute Circuit at Home

No time to exercise? Now there's no excuse! Learn to do a fun and exhilarating 30-minute workout. The circuit will be a combination of resistance and cardiovascular exercises. Wear comfortable clothing. We recommend that you take Beginning Weight Training prior to attending this class. August 24, 1-2 pm.

Programs & Events

Diabetes Education Program

Valley Diabetes Center offers a variety of classes and individual appointments at convenient times. Our programs are recognized by the American Diabetes Association and taught by certified diabetes educators, registered nurses and registered dietitians. These classes include:

- Diabetes self-management educational series
- Diabetes review
- Nutrition education class to help reduce cholesterol, high blood pressure and prevent diabetes
- Management of diabetes during pregnancy

Classes are covered by most insurance providers. Call 425.656.5377 to register.

Cardiac Rehab

Cardiac Rehab offers EKG-monitored programs for people who have had cardiac problems. Covered by many insurance companies. Call 425.228.3440 ext. 4991 to register.

Free Health Seminar: Joint Replacement Surgery

See back cover for details.

CancerLifeline

In association with Valley Medical Center, Cancer Lifeline provides emotional support, resources, classes and exercise programs serving all people living with cancer—patients, survivors, family members and friends. All programs and services are free of charge.

Advance registration is required.

For information or to register, call 206.297.2500 or 800.255.5505, or visit www.cancerlifeline.org.





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Board of Commissioners Meetings

VMC Board of Commissioners meetings are open to the public and we encourage you to attend. We strive to be a transparent organization and welcome insights and suggestions from the community members we serve. Meetings are held on the first and third Mondays of each month at 3:30 pm in the Boardroom in the Northwest Pavilion on the VMC campus, unless changed by public notice. Meetings that fall on a holiday (Martin Luther King Day, Presidents' Day, Labor Day) are held the next business day.

Contact the Board

- **Email:** CommissionersEmail@valleymed.org
- **Phone:** 425.228.3440 ext. 5312
- **Mail:** Valley Medical Center
Board of Commissioners
PO Box 50010
Renton, WA 98058-5010

BE WELL

These events will be held in the First Floor Auditorium of VMC's Medical Arts Center. For more information or to register, call 425.656.INFO (4636).



Cholesterol and Blood Sugar Screens

Friday, July 10

- 8:30-noon
- Results available immediately
- Call to schedule your appointment

Screenings for total cholesterol, triglycerides, and blood sugar will be available to GoldenCare members for just \$20. For proper results, fast after midnight the night before, and refrain from drinking alcohol for 48 hours before your test.

Free Health Seminar: Joint Replacement Surgery

Thursday, August 20

- 5:30 pm Registration and refreshments; 6-7:30 pm Seminar
- Dr. William Barrett, Medical Director of the Joint Center

Does joint pain prevent you from doing the things you enjoy? Imagine the difference joint replacement surgery could make in your life. The Joint Center at VMC is ranked in the top five percent nationally by HealthGrades.