

Maria Parham Healthbeat

A publication of Maria Parham Medical Center and The Daily Dispatch

October 27, 2010

Medical Oncology Unit about to become big in a new way

For the past 20 years, the Medical Oncology Unit in Maria Parham Medical Center's Oncology Center has been big — big in providing the highest quality cancer care, big in delivering compassion, and big in being a friend in need. The only thing that has not been big is the actual facility. However, that is about to change in a big way. The Medical Oncology Unit will nearly quadruple in size with a new facility measuring nearly 6,000 square feet.

The centerpiece for the new Medical Oncology Center will be the patient treatment area. It will provide space for up to 14 patients to receive chemotherapy at one time. The treatment area will also share a 67-foot glass wall with the center's soon-to-be developed outdoor garden. The garden will be accessible from the treatment area and will feature a colorful assortment of shrubbery and flowers. There will also be two large screen televisions in that area for the patients.

Leslie Carswell, director of the Oncology Center, has a hard time not smiling when she talks about the soon-to-be completed facility. "We are excited about every aspect of our newly expanded area, but at



PLEASE SEE **ONCOLOGY**, PAGE 10

The design for the new Medical Oncology Center will include a 67-foot glass wall looking out on a future outdoor garden.

Flu season is coming ... are you prepared?

With influenza season just around the corner, now is the time to start thinking about getting your flu shot. Every year, approximately 114,000 Americans are hospitalized and more than 36,000 die from influenza and influenza related complications. Did you know that the current national average for health-care workers who get vaccinated against the flu is only 42 percent?

Common myths about influenza

Myth: "The flu isn't a serious disease."

Fact: Influenza (flu) is a serious disease of the nose, throat and lungs, and it can lead to pneumonia. Each year about 200,000 people in the U.S. are hospitalized

and about 36,000 people die because of the flu. Most who die are 65 years and older. But small children less than 2 years old are as likely as those over 65 to have to go to the hospital because of the flu.

Myth: "The flu shot can cause the flu."

Fact: The flu shot cannot cause the flu. Some people get a little soreness or redness where they get the shot. It goes away in a day or two. Serious problems from the flu shot are very rare.

Myth: "The flu shot does not work."

Fact: Most of the time the flu shot will prevent the flu. In scientific studies, the effectiveness of the flu shot has ranged from 70 to 90 percent

when there is a good match between circulating viruses and those in the vaccine. Getting the vaccine is your best protection against this disease.

Myth: "The side effects are worse than the flu."

Fact: The worst side effect you're likely to get from a flu shot is a sore arm. The nasal mist flu vaccine might cause nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat and cough. The risk of a severe allergic reaction is less than 1 in 4 million.

Myth: "Only older people need a flu vaccine."

Fact: Adults and children with conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and kidney disease need to get a flu shot. Doctors also recommend children 6 months and



older get a flu shot every year until their fifth birthday.

Myth: "You must get the flu vaccine before December."

Fact: Flu vaccine can be given before or during the

flu season. The best time to get vaccinated is October or November. But you can get vaccinated in December or later.

Getting a flu vaccine is the single best way to protect against the flu. Flu vaccines are available now and you can get your vaccine at many places, including your local health department, vaccination clinics, doctors' offices, retail pharmacies, and some schools and workplaces. The Centers for Disease Control recommends that everyone 6 months and older get vaccinated. Flu seasons are unpredictable and can start early or run late, and the flu vaccine provides protection that lasts through a full flu season.

For more information, ask your health-care provider or call 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) or go to www.cdc.gov/flu.

Many lung diseases share common element

Many lung diseases share a common element — obstruction of the air flow leaving the lungs — and are grouped into the general category of "obstructive lung disease." Chronic bronchitis, emphysema and asthma are the three main forms of obstructive lung disease. Of these, only asthma is reversible.

The damage that leads

to chronic bronchitis and emphysema is permanent; the progression of the disease, however, can be limited. With proper treatment, the lung damage can be stopped and the efficiency of the remaining lung tissue improved.

Since smoking is the primary cause of obstructive lung disease, stopping smoking is imperative if

you hope to save your lungs. Your doctor can give you helpful advice and tips, recommend a smoking cessation program, and prescribe medicines. Still, quitting is mostly up to you.

An exam and a lung function test will determine how well your lungs are working. A lung function test can pick up lung disease before symptoms develop or wheezing

begins. It is also the best way to follow the effectiveness of treatment and the rate of decline of lung function. If the rate of loss per year is greater than normal, more aggressive treatment is needed.

Treatment begins with inhalers that help dilate the airways. Other types of

PLEASE SEE LUNG DISEASE, PAGE 3





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Hip joint replacement may be the answer to severe pain

After years of work and play — and sometimes injuries or illnesses — some joints just wear out. The years of wear and tear on joints can lead to arthritis and the pain and disability that go along with it.

The joints that bear the most weight are usually the ones to wear out first. The hips carry a great deal of pressure across the joint because of the leverage action of the thigh muscles.

When a person's doctor has determined that the joint damage is great enough and the symptoms severe enough, he may suggest a hip joint replacement. Usually, a person must have significant disability or uncontrollable

pain before the operation is considered.

Hip joint surgery involves replacing the surfaces of the joint. A polyethylene socket is placed into the hip socket and the ball of the hip is replaced with a metal ball that is stabilized by a spike extending several inches down the thigh bone.

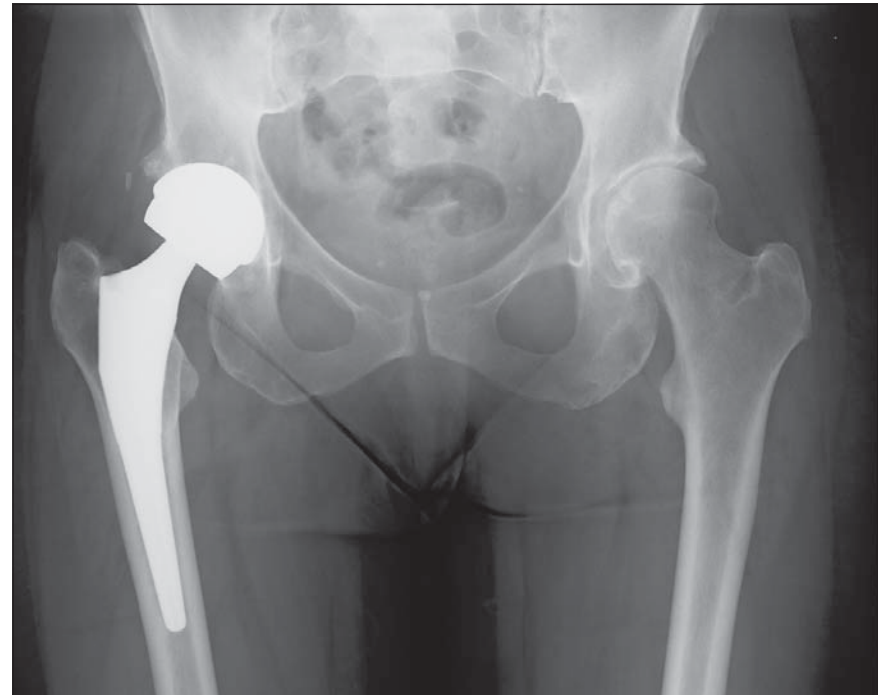
After surgery, the person must be careful how he sits. He should not cross his legs for six weeks or there is a possibility of dislocating the joint.

Although the period of recovery and rehabilitation will take several months, the pain of arthritis improves quickly with the surgery.

After surgery, a person can do almost anything he wishes, but in moderation. Repetitive or vigorous activities, such as running and jumping, are discouraged because the prosthesis has the risk of loosening over 10-15 years if a person puts excessive stresses on the prosthesis.

Other forms of surgery or medical treatment may also be appropriate. Discuss all the options with your doctor.

For a list of orthopedic surgeons in the area please, check out Maria Parham Medical Center's website, www.mariaparham.com or call (252) 436-1800 to request information.



The years of wear and tear on joints can lead to arthritis and the pain and disability that go along with it. Hip joint replacement can relieve the pain.

LUNG DISEASE, FROM PAGE TWO

medicines or inhalers that decrease inflammation in the airways may also be prescribed.

Breathing techniques

and an exercise program to improve physical condition is also very important. Oxygen may be needed to decrease shortness of breath with activity. During sleep, oxygen helps to protect against strain on the heart from pulmonary hypertension. A flu shot should be taken each year, and a pneumonia

shot should be taken at least once.

Talk to your doctor if you have questions about chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. For help finding a physician in this area, call Maria Parham Medical Center at (252) 436-1800 or visit www.mariaparham.com for a listing of medical providers.



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Eating breakfast will often prevent the hunger which causes snacking between meals.

Breakfast: the most important meal of the day

Breakfast is the easiest meal to miss. Everyone is in a hurry in the morning to get to school or work. Or perhaps a person is dieting and he or she is not hungry at breakfast, so it seems like a good time to "cut down on calories."

Yet, for a variety of reasons, breakfast is the most important meal to eat.

According to a University of Iowa study, children do much better in school and behave better when they eat a good breakfast. Also, children who normally skipped breakfast showed an improvement in their schoolwork when they began eating breakfast. A good breakfast was also associated with less susceptibility to infections and fatigue.

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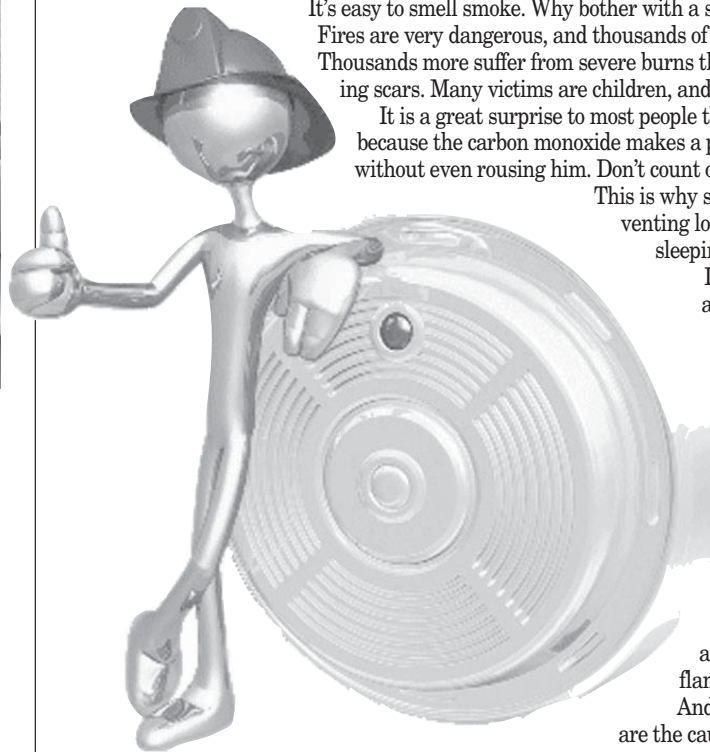
snacks, a child eats a better lunch with foods that are less fattening than most snacks. These better eating habits help prevent childhood obesity.

This holds true for adults, too. Eating breakfast sets a person up for eating regular meals, while skipping breakfast will likely promote eating snack foods or over-eating at dinner at the end of the day when fewer calories are needed and the excess calories are stored as fat.

Eating a good breakfast should become a habit. Any nutritious food can be eaten for breakfast, especially if it contains protein and complex carbohydrates.

Low-fat milk, fruit juices and hot cereals are good, but pre-sweetened cereals and sweet rolls should be avoided because of the high sugar content.

Fire and smoke detectors prevent many deaths every year



It's easy to smell smoke. Why bother with a smoke detector?

Fires are very dangerous, and thousands of people lose their lives in accidental fires each year. Thousands more suffer from severe burns that heal slowly, cause great pain and leave devastating scars. Many victims are children, and often fires occur when they are asleep.

It is a great surprise to most people that smoke will not wake a person up from sleep. It is because the carbon monoxide makes a person sleepier, and the smoke asphyxiates a person without even rousing him. Don't count on the smell of smoke to wake you up!

This is why smoke detectors with loud alarms are so useful in preventing loss of life from house fires. They should be placed near sleeping areas where they will be heard easily if they go off.

It is also important to make sure that the batteries are fresh and functional. It is all too common that the batteries are "borrowed" to run a toy or some other device, but a person often forgets to replace them, and is left with a false sense of security. This is an excellent reason for having more than one smoke detector in your house. Be sure to check the batteries monthly when you pay your bills.

Besides using smoke detectors, there are many other things you can do to cut down on the risk of house fires. Maintain your furnace and heaters. Besides being safer, they will be more efficient and cost less to run. Do not leave matches or lighters where children can get a hold of them, and warn children against playing with fire. Keep flammable material safely locked away.

And most importantly, do not smoke cigarettes — they are the cause of thousands of house fires.

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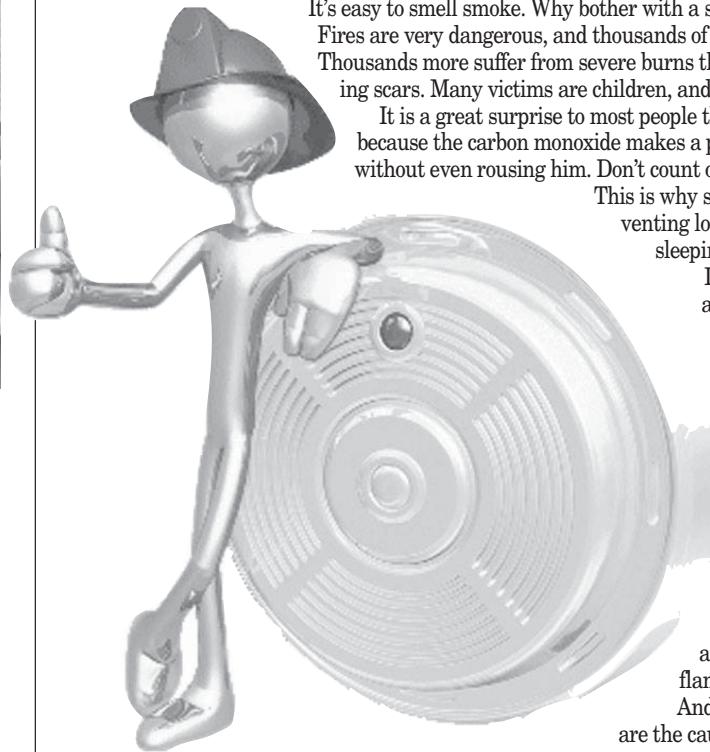
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Don't underestimate the importance of handwashing

Think about your last hospital or doctor visit. Did you wash your caregiver wash his/her hands prior to the visit? How about after the visit?

Maria Parham Medical Center wants you to have the very best health care available — and that includes making sure that your health-care provider properly cleanses his/her hands prior to caring for you. If you are not sure if the care provider did, simply ask.

Proper hand hygiene is the single most important factor in preventing the spread of communicable diseases and antibiotic resistance in health-care settings.

- Every year in the United States, nearly 2 million people contract a health-care associated infection.
- Approximately 80,000 of those

people will die from the infection.

- Transmission of health-care associated pathogens most often occurs via the contaminated hands of health-care workers

- According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), if all health-care personnel washed their hands, nearly one third of all hospital-acquired infections would vanish

- Improved hand hygiene is one of the strategies employed by the Institute for Health-care Improvement (IHI) in its 100,000 lives campaign.



Alcohol-based foam

Your health-care provider may use an alcohol-based foam to cleanse his/her hands prior to or after the visit. Alcohol-based foam is being used more in the health-care field for hand hygiene. The advantages of alcohol-based foams include:

- kills more germs than washing with soap and water
- requires less time
- reduces bacterial counts on hands
- improves skin condition

- is more accessible than sinks

Washing hands with soap and water is appropriate when your hands are visibly contaminated, after using the bathroom, before eating, or after caring for a patient with diarrhea (keep the sink area clear).

It is also important to make sure that all visitors, clergy and others who come in contact with a patient or their belongings to observe proper hand hygiene.

Proper hand hygiene should not end after your hospital or doctor visit. Washing your hands is an important tool to prevent illness at home and when you are in public. Always wash your hands after using the restroom — especially a public facility. Do you remember your mom telling you to wash up before you eat? Mom was most definitely right!



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Want to quit smoking? Then pick your date

Deciding to quit smoking is easy. Deciding when is the hard part. "One of these days I'll quit," we all say. But "one of these days" is hard to find on the calendar.

One of the main reasons people are not successful in quitting is that they never really decide when to quit. It is always hard to take that first step. But over 40 million people have already successfully quit smoking. You can, too.

It is always good to cut down gradually, but that has its limitations and failures, too. A person should try to cut down gradually to under a pack a day before quitting (but do not let that milestone keep you from picking a date).

The key is to actually pick a date. And stick to it.

There are several great days you can choose. One is the Great American Smoke Out in November. Join thousands of other smokers on this special

day for quitting. Another is Thanksgiving, a great time to start improving your sense of taste and smell.

If you need more time, make it your Christmas gift to your spouse or children or make it your New Year's resolution. Then there are always birthdays, anniversaries and other special days.

You can pick any day to quit, but special days are easier to remember



and give you a greater incentive to succeed.

If you need help in quitting, discuss it with your doctor, and consider the smoking cessation classes provided by various organizations. Your doctor can also provide information on nicotine or clonidine patches and other medicines as possible adjuncts to quitting.

For more information or help to quit smoking, contact

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Early care during pregnancy results in healthy babies

In spite of the excitement of becoming pregnant, many women do not seek medical care as soon as they should. However, there are many reasons for seeing your doctor as soon as possible.

It is very early in the pregnancy that the major risk of complications occur. These complications include both accidental harm to the developing baby — such as from exposure to x-rays, infections or medicines — and the unavoidable complications, such as miscarriages and tubal pregnancies. Your doctor

can advise you about the risks of medicines, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine and other substances. These can be harmful, especially if taken in the first few months of the pregnancy.

Early in the pregnancy, the doctor will prescribe vitamins which will provide extra nutrition to the mother and the developing baby. Iron is important, and folic acid helps prevent the risk of defects of the brain and spinal cord.

Many medical problems which may affect a pregnancy can be discovered early and treated to help avoid the

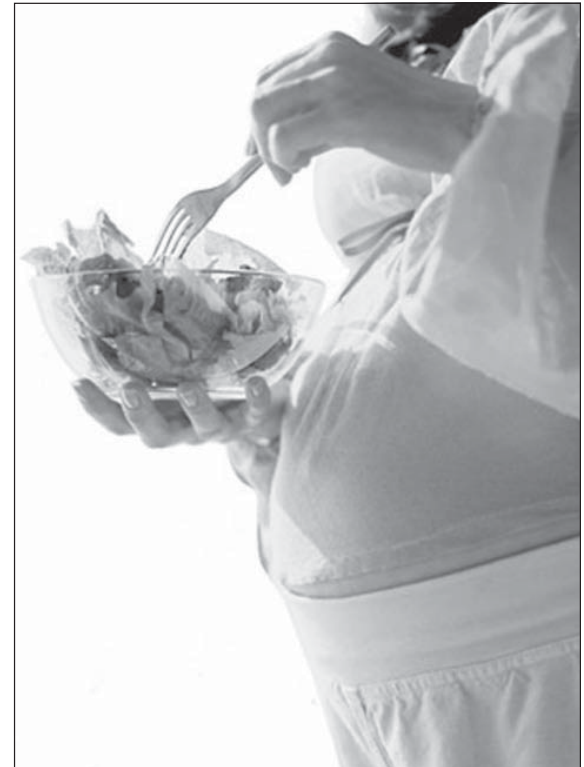
potential complications they carry. These illnesses include diabetes, anemia, high blood pressure and hereditary illnesses.

Genetic counseling may be important for couples who are likely to be carriers of certain genes that can cause birth defects or miscarriages. Also, if a woman is over 35, she may benefit from genetic studies.

Early and regular prenatal care will give you the healthiest baby possible. It is even wise to have an exam and discuss potential risks with your doctor before conceiving.

It is very important to consult with your physician as soon as you find out your pregnant or even suspect that you may be pregnant. For a listing of family physicians in the area, please go to Maria Parham Medical Center's website at www.mariaparham.com or call (252) 436-1800 for additional information.

The Granville-Vance Health Department can also be of assistance for mothers-to-be. The important thing is to take care of your unborn child as soon as you can.



Early and regular prenatal care will give you the healthiest baby possible.

Coping with colic can be trying for new parents

Having a colicky baby can take much of the fun out of being a new parent. Attempting to soothe a baby that cries for a couple hours after feedings and flails his arms and legs about is a trying experience. Nothing seems to calm the baby for more than a few minutes.

Dozens of possible causes have been suggested, but no single cause is well-accepted. Everything, from allergies to colon spasms and family tension to faulty feeding techniques, has been blamed. It is difficult for the new parents, who begin to doubt their ability as parents and feel like failures. Also, the physical and mental exhaustion can be a real stress on the family.

Fortunately, colic is self-limited and will improve with time no matter what you do. These babies are often good feeders who grow well. They are plump and healthy and there are no long-term effects or health problems for these babies.

There is no medical cure for colic, although many physicians will prescribe

antispasmodics or sedatives to help the symptoms. An exam is always important to make sure that there is not another cause for the crying, such as hernias, thrush, or infections.

It is useful to try feeding the baby more slowly and in an upright position with frequent burping. Giving smaller feedings is often helpful. Breast-feeding mothers should eliminate milk products from their diets and formula-fed babies may try a soy formula.

If efforts to comfort the

baby do not help in 30 minutes, leave the baby alone for 20-30 minutes. Remember, the most important treatment is giving the baby time to develop — the colic will eventually go away.

You baby's pediatrician can help you if you have questions about colic. For help finding a pediatrician in this area, call Maria Parham Medical Center at (252) 436-1800 or visit www.mariaparham.com.

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What causes urinary tract infections?

Bladder infections are one of the most common infections, especially in women. There is a constant battle between the body's defenses and the bacteria's tendency to spread to new areas. The bacteria often win the battle.

Women have many more infections than men because of the short distance from the outside of a woman's body, where the bacteria normally live, to the inside of the bladder, which should be sterile.

The lining of the urethra and bladder protect against infections by producing antibodies which kill or inhibit bacteria. Women who lack these protective antibodies will get infections much more easily. This antibody protection is determined by genetics. A woman's immunity may also be suppressed by diabetes or other chronic illnesses.

Use of bubble baths is another factor which may contribute to infections, but careless hygiene is not as significant a factor as was once thought.

Once the bacteria get into the bladder,

the body still has mechanisms to clear the infection. The body secretes pus cells to fight the bacteria, and the bladder empties frequently, which limits the number of bacteria present.

However, these mechanisms do not work well if there are bladder abnormalities, such as a diverticulum or reflux of urine back up to the kidneys. If there is a catheter or bladder stone present, infections cannot be totally cured.

One of the main factors causing infections is intercourse. Bacteria can be forced up the urethra and start an infection. It is always wise to empty the bladder after intercourse, and if a woman gets recurrent infections, she can see her doctor about taking a prophylactic antibiotic after intercourse.

For more information about urinary tract infections, talk to your physician. For help finding a physician in this area, call Maria Parham Medical Center at (252) 436-1800 or visit www.mariaparham.com for a listing of medical providers.

Protecting your hearing is a life-long process

Hearing damage from noise can take place so gradually that a great deal of damage can be done before it is noticed and a person begins using protective measures. Protecting your hearing is a life-long process. Damage done in early life stays with you forever!

Any hearing loss is important. Even what is considered a mild hearing loss of 20 decibels makes it much more difficult to understand conversations, especially in a crowd.

Protecting your hearing merely takes a little care and common sense. Here are some ways to help protect your ears:

- Several different types of ear protectors are available. The simplest ones are small sponge-like plugs that are compressed and inserted into the ear canal where they re-expand to fill the canal. There are several types of these simple plugs. They are inexpensive, easy to use and disposable. Always keep a supply on hand.

- Ear molds are another type of plug that are specially fitted for a person and work well to decrease the intensity of sound. They are most useful for low frequency noise. The molds are made from forms taken of your ear and ear canal by an audiologist.

- A third kind of protection for the ears is an earmuff. This covers the whole ear and is very protective, especially for high frequency noise. They are most useful around airplane traffic, chain saws, and other machinery. Ear plugs and earmuffs used together give maximum protection.

Avoid excessive noise whenever possible, but when you can't, be sure to use some form of ear protection.

Talk to your doctor if you have question about your hearing. For help finding a physician in this area, call Maria Parham Medical Center at (252) 436-1800 or visit www.mariaparham.com for a listing of medical providers.

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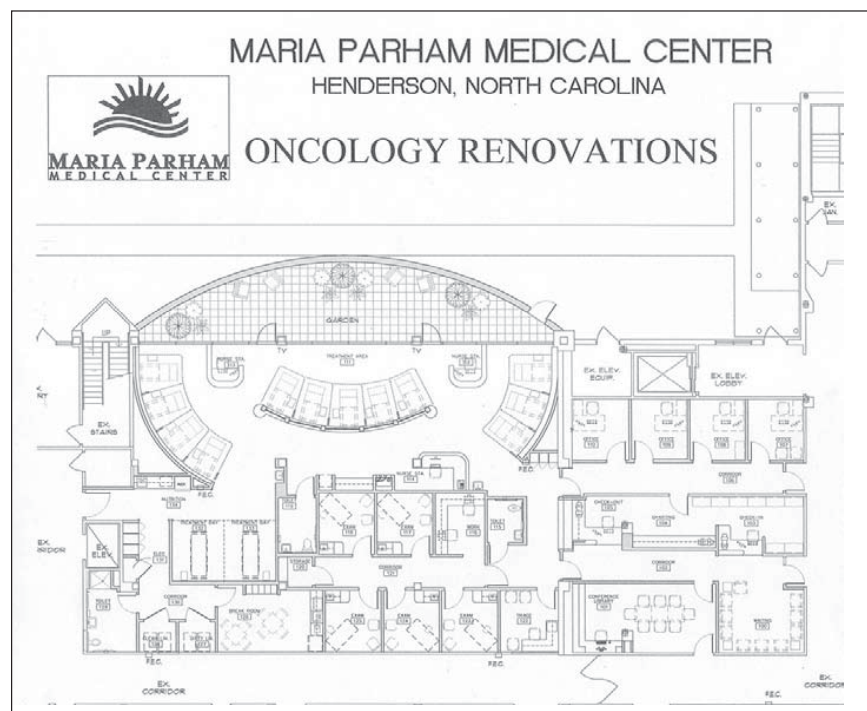
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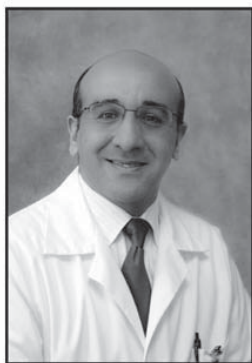
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The new Medical Oncology Unit will measure approximately 6,000 square feet, nearly quadruple the size of the current facility.

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MEDICAL CENTER**

ONCOLOGY, FROM PAGE ONE

the top of the list is having much more space for our patients and our clinicians. In recent years, we have experienced a greater patient load, and now feel that we can better accommodate our patients and their families in this much bigger facility." Carswell looks forward to the special touches that were designed with the patient in mind. She adds, "The garden with natural light coming through the windows will

certainly provide a peaceful view."

The center will also have a conference room and library where both the local Tumor Board and the staff can meet. In addition, there will be five examination rooms and a large triage room to meet the ever-growing patient volume. Offices, staff areas and a large waiting room are also included in the plans.

The Maria Parham Oncology Center partners with the experts from Duke Medicine to provide the best possible care for cancer patients. The team offers a full range of

services that blend state-of-the-art technology for diagnosis and treatment with compassionate and knowledgeable care. One of the biggest advantages of the Maria Parham/Duke partnership is the ability to provide world class research, technology and care to the patients in our own community. Medical and radiation oncology are both offered, along with related services such as counseling and nutrition. Education is available through an on-site Cancer Resource Center, a joint effort of The American Cancer Society and the medical center.

Loves to cook
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But her patients inspire her most

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Depression in the elderly can be treated with medication



Depression is not the same as grief or sadness.

Depression in the elderly is more than a minor problem and inconvenience. It is a common illness that has serious ramifications. And too often it is overlooked by family, friends and even doctors.

Depression is not the same as grief or sadness. These are normal emotions when there has been a loss. Depression is more a feeling of hopelessness, and this is not normal.

The symptoms of depression are easy to overlook in the elderly or explained

away as just "growing old." These symptoms include fatigue, difficulty sleeping, eating poorly, and lack of pleasure from one's usual hobbies or interests.

There are not many illnesses where a person feels worse than with depression. He has no energy and feels no enjoyment. Just existing feels painful. This is why there is such a high rate of suicide in elderly persons with depression.

It is easy to confuse depression with dementia, but they are not the same.

In dementia, a person is confused and is unable to answer questions correctly. With depression, a person is likely to answer, "I don't know," but if encouraged, he is able to give the right answer. If the early stages of depression are not treated, it is not uncommon for the person to end up in a nursing home. This is unfortunate, since the illness is treatable.

Depression is caused by a deficiency of certain chemicals in certain areas of the brain. Medicines will help restore the level

of these chemicals, called neurotransmitters. With today's wide variety of antidepressant medicines, most people can be treated quite easily. It is very important to treat depression since there will be a remarkable improvement in a person's health and happiness.

For a list of physicians in the area who can help you live a healthier life, check out Maria Parham Medical Center's website, www.mariaparham.com or call (252) 436-1800 to request information.

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We can help you put your life and your family back together.

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- Marriage and Family Counseling
- Life Coaching
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WE CAN GET YOU BACK ON COURSE.



Sam Brummitt understands how a stroke can alter your life – he suffered one in 2008. Sam also knew that he wanted to get back to the things he loved, like traveling with his wife Ruth and playing golf. That's why he chose Maria Parham's Rehabilitation Services. Thanks to his determination and the stroke care experts at Maria Parham Medical Center, Sam's life got back on course.



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