

Sunday, February 3, 2002

MEDICAL BRIEFS

Ultrafast CT Scan

Troy Internal Medicine now offers patients a diagnosis using the Ultrafast CT Scan to detect early coronary atherosclerosis. The scan identifies calcium buildup in the coronary arteries before any symptoms appear.

The Ultrafast CT Scan, manufactured by Siemens, is a non-invasive test that emits 20 percent less radiation than similar calcium scanner machines. Also, a cardiologist, not a radiologist, reads and interprets the results. Although the scan is generally not covered by insurance, it requires no prescription or referral from a primary care physician.

"In 25 percent of cases, the first symptom of heart disease is death," said Dr. James G. Henderson, medical director of Troy Internal Medicine. "In just a few months of using the Ultrafast CT Scanner, we have several success stories of early detection in patients who appeared to be in peak physical shape with minimal or no risk factors for coronary artery disease."

The scan is available at Troy Internal Medicine for \$300. For more information, call (248) 267-5000 and press 8.

Fore!

Oakland Physical Therapy, P.C. will present "Fit for Golf" 7-9 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 7, and Thursday, March 7. The free, one-evening program focuses on posture, flexibility and strengthening exercises, and prevention of common golf injuries, especially low back pain. The format will include lecture, demonstration, discussion and group participation. The objectives are to:

- Understand proper posture for the golf swing as it

Please see MEDICAL, C6

We want your health news

There are several ways you can reach the Observer Health & Fitness staff. The Sunday section provides numerous venues for you to offer noteworthy information including Medical Deskbook, upcoming calendar events, Medical News, where you can submit news items in the medical field, and Medical Briefs (medical advances, short news items from hospitals, physicians, companies). We also welcome news items for health and fitness related stories. To submit an item to our newspaper you can call, write, fax or e-mail us.

CALL US:

(734) 958-5128

WRITE US:

Observer & Executive Newspapers
(Specify Deskbook, Newsletters or Briefs)
Attn: Renee Skoglund
36133 Schoolcraft Road
Livonia, MI 48150

FAX US:

(734) 958-7279

E-MAIL US:

nskoglund@theobserver.com



Shovel snow at your own risk

By RENEE SKOGLUND
STAFF WRITER
nskoglund@theobserver.com

The winter storm that blew into Michigan this week came with a warning: Snow shoveling can clear a path straight to the hospital. A pair of ferocious snow storms with out-of-shape adults — 55 percent of Michigan adults lack adequate physical activity, according to the American Heart Association — and you have a recipe for a heart attack. The combination of sudden physical exertion and the cold increase the heart's workload, requiring more oxygen.

"In the last few days we have seen heart attacks from snow shoveling. Exertion in a cold climate puts significant stress on the heart," said Dr. Ash Gokli, chairman of emergency medicine at St. Mary Mercy Hospital, Livonia.

In a recent study, Beaumont Hospital researchers found that two minutes of shoveling heavy, wet snow can raise heart rate and blood pressure to levels equal to or exceeding the maximum aerobic workout — and it may lead to heart attack in inactive people at risk for heart disease.

Barry A. Franklin, Ph.D., Beaumont's director of cardiac rehabilitation and exercise rehabilitation and exercise, said: "Based on our research, we believe those with a family or personal history of heart problems, or who have one or more major risk factors for heart disease, should think twice about shoveling snow, or not do it at all."

Slip and fall

Shoveling snow isn't the only activity that poses a threat during a winter storm. Falls can be equally dangerous, especially for the elderly.

"The first thing to worry about in a snow storm is slipping and falling, not just the snow," said Dr. Ash Gokli, chairman of emergency medicine, St. Mary Mercy Hospital, Livonia.

"It's especially dangerous for women who have osteoporosis. The chance of a bone fracture is very high. And then there's the danger of the feet slipping forward and the person falling backwards and hitting his or her head on the floor or the pavement. Such a fall can result in bruising of the brain or bleeding in the brain. It can even cause death."

Before going outdoors, make sure you're wearing the proper, non-skid footwear, he said.

Major risk factors for heart disease include sedentary lifestyle, smoking, high blood pressure and elevated blood cholesterol.

Beaumont researchers monitored heart rate, blood pressure and oxygen consumption during snow removal in ten apparently healthy, sedentary men (average age 32 years). Each participant cleared two four-inch high tracts of

heavy, wet snow using a shovel, then an electric snow thrower. The results were compared with the same measurements taken during maximum leg and arm fitness testing using a treadmill and an arm-cranking device.

The researchers found that peak heart rates during shoveling, arm cranking and treadmill testing were comparable, exceeding 170 beats-per-minute. After only two minutes of shoveling, heart rate exceeded the upper limit commonly prescribed for aerobic exercise training. Heart rate continued to increase throughout the 10-minute bout of shoveling, failing to reach a plateau. Study participants with the lowest level of aerobic fitness had the highest heart rates during shoveling.

The study also found that shoveling increased blood pressure to a much higher level than treadmill testing, arm testing or using an electric snow thrower.

The study detailed five factors that may contribute to the excessive demands of snow shoveling on the heart: upper body exercise, upright posture, isometric exertion, breath-holding; and the inhalation of cold air, which may further constrict the heart's blood vessels. In a person with the hidden or known heart disease, these factors may lead to myocardial ischemia (inadequate oxygen supply to the heart muscle, angina pectoris (chest pain) or potentially dangerous arrhythmias (irregular heart rhythms).

Safe shoveling tips

The American Heart Association wants you to clear your driveways and sidewalks in safety. They offer the following tips for shoveling snow safely:

- Before picking up a shovel, bundle up properly. It's important to wear several layers of clothing instead of one heavy layer, so the layers can be removed as the body heats with exertion. Wear a hat because most heat is lost through the top of the head.

- Protect ears and hands in cold weather because they are susceptible to frostbite.

- Start slow and take frequent rests. Avoid sudden, strenuous movements.

- Push snow rather than lift and throw it. Use your arms and legs to lift the shovel when needed. Maintain good posture and bend at the knees, not at the back.

- Don't drink alcoholic beverages before going outside or while out in the cold. Alcohol gives an initial feeling of warmth, caused by expanding blood vessels in the skin. Heat is then drawn away from the body's vital organs.

People with coronary heart disease often suffer attacks of chest pain called angina pectoris when they are outside in a snowstorm. Some studies suggest that cold weather itself may increase a person's risk of heart attack, especially during physical exertion.

Another danger of cold weather is hypothermia. Hypothermia is a drop in

Please see SHOVELING, C6

Oakwood Annapolis offers new laser prostate surgery

Oakwood Annapolis Hospital has announced it is the first hospital worldwide to begin using the revolutionary Niagara PVP laser photo-selective vaporization procedure (PVP) for benign

prostatic hyperplasia (BPH).

The 20-minute procedure, performed under local anesthetic, reduces recovery time from weeks to days, is virtually bloodless, and is almost half the cost of traditional invasive surgery. The procedure yields immediate results with almost no complication or negative sexual side effects.

Dr. Mahmood Hai, Oakwood Annapolis Hospital urology specialist and clinical advisor of the system, said: "This is the most effective and significant treatment I have ever used in my 25 years of treating BPH. This will become the 'gold standard' for treatment of BPH."

Oakwood Annapolis Hospital's breakthrough Niagara PVP system and KTP/632nm laser were developed by California-based

Laserscope in consultation with Dr. Hai.

Oakwood Annapolis Hospital is the first and the only hospital in the world to perform the Niagara PVP procedure and own a KTP laser machine. Dr. Hai has performed over 50 procedures with the new laser since December 2000. He confirms its effectiveness in his training sessions.

"Niagara PVP allows a much less invasive, and, therefore, a much safer surgical experience for BPH patients. We expect the Niagara PVP procedure to completely replace existing BPH procedures in the next several years."

Because of its unprecedented high power, the KTP laser pulses, delivered through a fiber the thickness of a hair inserted in

the urinary passage, completely vaporize obstructive prostate tissue. The laser seals the surrounding area, creating a virtually bloodless procedure. The procedure generally takes around 20 minutes and is generally done under local anesthetic. Recovery time is reduced from three weeks to two days. Patients can return to work the day after the operation.

More than 13 million men in the United States are diagnosed each year with BPH, and over 2 million seek treatment. Half of all men age 60 have BPH, and the incidence of the disorder increases steadily with age so that by age 80, more than 80 percent of men have BPH.

Some symptoms of the condition include: Difficulty in urination; reduced flow rate; frequent

urination; and incomplete urination, which can cause leaking, burning, or other discomfort while urinating.

Prior to the Niagara PVP procedure, drug and invasive surgical treatments resulted in negative side effects that included dizziness, urinary tract infections, incontinence, and even impotence.

Oakwood Annapolis procedure produces minimal side effects, and unlike previously used procedures for BPH, patients are not required to wear a catheter and can return to their normal lives within two days.

For more information about PVP, contact the Oakwood Healthcare System at (800) 643-WELL.

MARVIN'S GARDEN INN

Romance in one of our Jacuzzi rooms this

Valentine's Day for only

\$139.99

\$99.99 • King \$159.99
\$89.99 • Double for our deluxe
\$79.99 • Single Jacuzzi Room

Take an extra 10% off

When you book by February 12 and prepay at booking
(cash or credit card)

- Beautiful granite ballrooms, featuring power showers, with massage settings, some with body sprays
- Complimentary Coffee, Tea, Fruit Drinks, Capuccino's and Donuts - starting at 7 am

Easy access to all Major Freeways & Highways

27650 Northwestern Hwy. • Southfield

Reservation Line

1-888-200-5200

Phone: 248-353-6777

Fax: 248-353-2944

Arthritis Today

JOSEPH J. WEISS, M.D. RHEUMATOLOGY
18829 Farmington Road
Livonia, Michigan 48152
Phone: (248) 478-7860

ULNAR NERVE ENTRAPMENT

You are familiar with carpal tunnel syndrome. In this condition, the median nerve to the first three digits of the hand and half of the fourth digit is compressed at the wrist. The result is numbness in the hand.

The other main nerve to the palm of the hand, the ulnar nerve, can become the victim of entrapment, causing an ulnar nerve entrapment syndrome. The features of this condition are a numbness of the inner half of the fourth digit and all of the fifth finger digit. In addition, because the ulnar nerve controls the muscles of the hand, entrapment causes a weakness in the hands and in fine movement such as writing.

Carpal tunnel syndrome is worse at night when you are resting, but ulnar nerve entrapment causes numbness often more noticeable during the day. The reason for the difference is that compression at the wrist increases at night when your hand usually is down. Ulnar nerve entrapment occurs at the elbow, at a narrowing of the trait the ulnar nerve takes as it goes from the arm to the wrist and hand. During the day using the arm and forearm causes muscles about the elbow to enlarge and further narrows the space available for the ulnar nerve at the elbow.

Furthermore, circumstances can occur when both the median and the ulnar nerve are compressed. Hand surgeons refer to this situation as a "double crush". Treatment for carpal tunnel syndrome includes wrist splints, injection, or operation. In ulnar nerve entrapment, the only intervention that works is surgery to free up the ulnar where the nerve traverses the ridge of the elbow.

www.drjjweiss.yourmd.com

SPOTLIGHT ON

Orthodontics

by Josephine Finazzo, D.M.D.

OVERLY CONCERNED

In the minds of many, the malocclusion (bad bite), known as an overjet may be regarded the same as an overbite, but there is a difference. Technically known as a Class II malocclusion, and popularly called "buck teeth," an overjet can be described as having the lower front teeth either directly under or to the rear of the upper front teeth. In the lower front teeth, leaving the upper teeth to protrude in front of the lower ones. While this type of malocclusion is hereditary in nature, an excessive retainer is vertical in nature. That is, it can be described as the lower jaw closing too deeply under the upper jaw, possibly resulting in the lower teeth being completely hidden. While the classification of malocclusion

may be a matter for the orthodontist, the best patients are those who are directly involved in their treatment. This column has been brought to you by THE ORTHODONTIC GROUP. We hope to provide you with interesting and beneficial information regarding orthodontics. If you would like to find out more about your teeth, call us at 442-8885 and our friendly staff will make you an appointment. We are located at 19850 Middlebelt. Day and evening appointments are available, and no referral is necessary. We would be glad to explain orthodontic equipment such as the Twin Block, the Invisalign system, the palate expander, and the retainer. Payment plans and terms are available. Look for our next article in two weeks.

THE ORTHODONTIC GROUP

19850 Middlebelt • Livonia • (248) 442-8885

