WOMEN'S HEALTH QUARTERLY
BAYLOR PLANO

Shining the Spotlight on Women’s Hearts
PAGE 2

Diet & Diverticular Disease
How Diet Directly Affects Your Health
PAGE 2

Q&A: How Do I Choose the Right Multivitamin?
PAGE 4

CHRONIC STRESS
And How to Deal With It
PAGE 3

Plus HealthQuicks

• Track Your Workout with MapMyWalk.com
• Protecting Your Lips from Skin Cancer
• Apple Juice May Help Boost Memory
PAGE 2

BAYLOR Regional Medical Center at Plano
Diet & Diverticular Disease

Research shows that your diet directly affects your health and is linked to many health problems, including diverticular disease. Terilyn Scott-Winful, M.D., gastroenterologist on the Baylor Plano medical staff answers questions about this less familiar disease.

What is diverticular disease?
Diverticular disease is a spectrum of diseases including diverticulosis and diverticulitis. Diverticulosis is the presence of small pouches in the lining of the digestive tract, typically in the large intestine or colon. The prevalence of diverticulosis is age-dependent; it is less than five percent at age 40 and increases to 65 percent by age 85. Seventy percent of all patients with diverticulosis remain asymptomatic. Occasionally, the pouches become inflamed, leading to abdominal pain, fever, and changes in bowel habits. When this happens, the condition is known as diverticulitis. 15 to 25 percent of those with diverticulosis later develop diverticulitis.

What causes diverticular disease?
The disease is associated with consuming a diet lacking in fiber and water. The condition is less prevalent in Asia and Africa, where high-fiber vegetable diets are common.

What are the symptoms of diverticularitis?
Frequency symptoms include abdominal pain and tenderness, fever, chills, nausea, and a change in bowel habits. Symptoms usually come on rapidly and cause severe pain, but occasionally, mild symptoms will intensify over a few days.

How do you deal with chronic stress?
There are several healthy ways to deal with stress and help prevent illness down the road.

Take your pick: progressive muscle relaxation, deep breathing, prayer, visualization, meditation, relaxing music—and make it part of your life.

“I recommend yoga and Pilates to many of my patients,” adds Dr. Donley. Along with similar movement exercises like tai chi, they ease stress by developing body awareness and focusing on balance and breathing.

“My exercise is great,” she says, “because it releases those ‘feel-good’ endorphins that have a beneficial effect on both body and mind.” Dr. Donley recommends that anyone suffering with chronic stress visit their physician. Possible treatment options include biofeedback, psychotherapy and medication if appropriate.

For a referral to a physician on the Baylor Plano medical staff please visit www.BaylorHealth.com or call 1.800.4BAYLOR (422-9567).

HOW DOES STRESS AFFECT THE BODY?
“Our heart rate, breathing and blood pressure rise, we sweat, and the stress hormone cortisol releases more glucose into the bloodstream as fuel for our muscles,” says Dr. Donley. Then once the “tiger” moves off, the stress is defused and everything returns to normal.

But what if you’re not running from a tiger, you’re just running to catch the bus every day? Being under constant low-level stress is like sleeping with one eye open, says Dr. Donley. Unchecked, low-level stress can lead to physical symptoms such as:

• Decreased immune system function
• Increased cholesterol and triglycerides
• High blood pressure
• Fast heartbeat
• Increased blood glucose levels
• Digestive problems

• Loss of mental sharpness
• Sleeping problems
• Chest pains
• Fatigue
• Headache
• Back and neck pain

Stress can also lead to psychological symptoms, including:

• Anxiety
• Irritability
• Frustration
• Depression

Stress-related disease is due to excessive and extended demands on a person’s coping mechanisms. Individuals who face ongoing stress should consider seeing a physician to help avoid stress-related physical illness. “It’s important to recognize when you’re under stress so you can take steps to relieve it,” says Dr. Donley. “When you reach your breaking point, it’s because so much daily stress has been allowed to build up.”

Putting the Brakes on Chronic Stress

Although not all stress is bad, and at low levels, it can serve as a motivating force, stress is an enormous problem in the lives of Americans. Everyday annoyances—traffic, deadlines, even what to have for dinner—can do more than leave you feeling burned out. Stress can cause you to be less productive at your job and the constant strain of stress can wear the body down, so much that you may have to miss work. Stress also can contribute to minor ailments like headaches and back pain, to life-threatening conditions like heart disease.

WHAT IS STRESS?
It all goes back to our built-in “fight or flight” instinct, which came in hand when our ancestors were confronted with extremely stressful situations—such as being chased by a saber-toothed tiger. “The stress response primes the body for immediate action,” says Joan Donley, M.D., internal medicine physician on the Baylor Plano medical staff.

WHAT CAUSES STRESS?
Stress affects people differently. “Events that may be stressful for some people may not create the same negative tension in you, so it’s important for you to know your stress trigger points,” says Dr. Donley. “Knowing your stress capacity will help you learn to react appropriately and make changes to your life when necessary.” Those who have a high-stress threshold tend to have personality traits that reinforce their ability to deal well with stress. They tend to believe in their job or the task at hand, believe they have some influence in their situation, and recognize change as a positive opportunity instead of a threat.

Studies suggest that women and men react to stress differently too. According to a Harvard Medical School study, women worry about more on a daily basis than men, who only average worry about three things, including their immediate family, job and money. The average women worries about twelve things, including the same areas men worry about, but they also tend to worry about their extended family, the home, the social and academic abilities of their kids, social ties to neighbors, friends and more.

The workplace is often a major source of stress. Long-term, intense stress levels on the job can lead to a loss of interest in one’s job and eventually lead to burnout. “One way to help prevent burnout is to strive to achieve balance and growth by not becoming too invested in one area of your life,” says Dr. Donley.

Putting the Brakes on Chronic Stress

Although not all stress is bad, and at low levels, it can serve as a motivating force, stress is an enormous problem in the lives of Americans. Everyday annoyances—traffic, deadlines, even what to have for dinner—can do more than leave you feeling burned out. Stress can cause you to be less productive at your job and the constant strain of stress can wear the body down, so much that you may have to miss work. Stress also can contribute to minor ailments like headaches and back pain, to life-threatening conditions like heart disease.

WHAT IS STRESS?
It all goes back to our built-in “fight or flight” instinct, which came in hand when our ancestors were confronted with extremely stressful situations—such as being chased by a saber-toothed tiger. “The stress response primes the body for immediate action,” says Joan Donley, M.D., internal medicine physician on the Baylor Plano medical staff.

WHAT CAUSES STRESS?
Stress affects people differently. “Events that may be stressful for some people may not create the same negative tension in you, so it’s important for you to know your stress trigger points,” says Dr. Donley. “Knowing your stress capacity will help you learn to react appropriately and make changes to your life when necessary.” Those who have a high-stress threshold tend to have personality traits that reinforce their ability to deal well with stress. They tend to believe in their job or the task at hand, believe they have some influence in their situation, and recognize change as a positive opportunity instead of a threat.

Studies suggest that women and men react to stress differently too. According to a Harvard Medical School study, women worry about more on a daily basis than men, who only average worry about three things, including their immediate family, job and money. The average women worries about twelve things, including the same areas men worry about, but they also tend to worry about their extended family, the home, the social and academic abilities of their kids, social ties to neighbors, friends and more.

The workplace is often a major source of stress. Long-term, intense stress levels on the job can lead to a loss of interest in one’s job and eventually lead to burnout. “One way to help prevent burnout is to strive to achieve balance and growth by not becoming too invested in one area of your life,” says Dr. Donley.
How do I choose the right multivitamin?

Choosing the best multivitamin can be challenging thanks to dozens of options, hard-to-decipher labeling and plenty of advertising. Charles Kasbarian, M.D., family medicine physician on the Baylor Plano medical staff gives us some advice on choosing the right multivitamin.

- Look at the percent of daily values list on the bottle label. A lot of the vitamins may say they have 100-percent of all the necessary vitamins and minerals but that would be difficult to accomplish in one vitamin and may not be the vitamin you want.
- Keep in mind when reading the labels that no more than 150-percent of any vitamin should be listed. Consuming large amounts of vitamin A could be toxic to your liver so make sure not to exceed 100-percent of the daily recommended amount.
- Watch out for fancy marketing claims. Don’t be enticed by claims that the vitamins are from China or Japan or that they’re derived from organic products.

On the Research Front

The Baylor Scoliosis Center is pleased to now offer clinical studies with Baylor Research Institute. The Center is committed to research in the areas of pain, spine fusion, genetics, and possible scoliosis biomarkers are being investigated. One such study is the Isometric Shoulder Study, designed to assess the chronic pain that both surgical and non-surgical scoliosis patients experience as a result of their curvature. Patients who participate in this study undergo several exercises which measure their range of motion of their shoulder and cervical regions. These measurements are used to quantify the pain patients experience, which will help physicians make better decisions regarding their treatment. For more information on the Baylor Scoliosis Center please visit thebayscoliosiscenter.com.

Sign-up for our Electronic Newsletter

at BaylorHealth.com: click Plano, click Women’s Health.