How to talk to your doctor

Time is short for everyone these days – including doctors and their patients. Physicians must be efficient because they have many patients to see each day, but we want to be sure each patient’s needs are met before the visit ends. Here are some ways patients can help:

Tell us what you need when you call. The severity and complexity of your symptoms guides the amount of time set aside for your appointment, so tell the office everything you’re experiencing when you call.

Come prepared. The more information your physician has about your overall health, the easier it will be to diagnose your problem and treat it. Bring a list of your current medications and the dosages you take, changes to your medical condition, and any new specialists you have seen since your last appointment.

Write down your questions. You may have issues you want to raise with your physician, but in the midst of an office visit it’s easy to forget – especially if you are not feeling well. I recommend writing down your concerns and questions beforehand. When you’re with your doctor, make sure everything on the list is discussed. Keep in mind that some issues may require a follow-up appointment.

Make sure you understand the diagnosis and any medication you’re prescribed. Your doctor should explain what is happening to your body and the recommended treatment for your problem, including any medications you will be taking for it. In addition, you should get an explanation of the medication’s possible side effects, when you can expect to feel better, and what you should do if the treatment plan doesn’t seem to be working or new symptoms arise.

Don’t be afraid to speak up. Sometimes patients are reluctant to ask questions because they’re worried about symptoms they’re experiencing or they’re embarrassed. If something is worrying you, put that first on the list of items to discuss with your doctor. One thing you should never worry about: embarrassment. There are no “unique” illnesses in the world; no matter what you’re experiencing, your doctor has no doubt seen it before.

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Effective November 15, Thompson Health will become a smoke-free health system. This means that smoking will not be permitted in any Thompson facility or on its surrounding campus. With this initiative, Thompson joins the many healthcare facilities in Rochester and across the nation that are making this transition. Thompson has chosen November 15 as the launch date to coincide with the American Cancer Society’s 31st Annual Great American Smokeout, which encourages smokers to smoke less or quit to improve their health.

We recognize the impact this change will have for patients, visitors and Thompson Associates who smoke. To help with the transition, Thompson is offering services to its Associates who may be interested in quitting smoking, as well as smoking cessation classes and support groups that are free and open to the public. Visitors who are smoking on Thompson’s campus will be asked to extinguish their smoking materials. For patients’ and visitors’ comfort, we will offer a nicotine lozenge to anyone 18 years of age and older who requests it.

Thompson Health is committed to the health and healing of our community.

CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER

Thompson’s Sleep Center expands

Signs of a possible sleep disorder

- Irritability or sleepiness during the day
- Difficulty staying awake when sitting still, such as when watching television or reading
- Falling asleep while driving
- Difficulty paying attention or concentrating at work, school or home
- Performing below your ability at work, school or sports
- Often told by others that you look tired
- Memory problems, slow reaction time or emotional outbursts

Director for the center and board certified to treat sleep disorders. The center’s technicians are specially trained to analyze the complex and voluminous data collected during a nightlong sleep study. “There are a lot of people with sleep disorders, and fortunately we can help the majority of them,” Dr. Modrak says. He estimates that 85 percent of those with sleep disorders have apnea, a condition that interrupts breathing and can cause a sleeper to wake hundreds of times during the night.

A sleep disorder can contribute to high blood pressure and increase the risk for heart attack, heart failure and stroke. “Studies suggest that sleep apnea does contribute to many health problems; it can even make diabetes worse,” Dr. Modrak notes. Patients with this condition respond well to treatment once it is diagnosed.

If you are having difficulty sleeping, speak with your doctor. Many problems can be corrected through lifestyle changes; others require a consultation with a sleep specialist and perhaps a sleep study. To see how a sleep study works, go to ThompsonHealth.com.

Healthy recipe

Rosemary Turkey with Mushrooms

1 pound turkey breast tenderloin slices, all visible fat removed
1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
Vegetable oil spray
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1 teaspoon snipped fresh rosemary or 1/4 cup chopped shallots or onion
Fresh rosemary (optional)

Rinse turkey and pat dry. Set aside.

In a small bowl, stir together broth, cornstarch, salt and pepper. Set aside.

Spray a large skillet with vegetable oil. Place over medium-high heat.

Add half the turkey to hot skillet. Cook about 2 minutes on each side, or until turkey is tender and no longer pink. Repeat with remaining turkey.

Remove skillet from heat; remove turkey from skillet and keep warm.

Add vinegar and rosemary to skillet, stirring to scrape up brown bits from bottom of pan. Return skillet to heat and add mushrooms and shallots or onion.

Over medium heat, cook and stir until mushrooms are tender, about 5 minutes. Stir broth mixture and add to skillet. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly, about 3 minutes. Cook 2 minutes more, stirring constantly.

Serve sauce with turkey.

Serves 4; 1/4 pound turkey and 2 tablespoons sauce

Calories: 169 kcal
Protein: 28 g
Carbohydrates: 5 g
Total Fat: 4 g
Saturated Fat: 1 g
Polyunsaturated Fat: 1 g
Monounsaturated Fat: 1 g
Cholesterol: 67 mg
Sodium: 137 mg

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CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER

‘Targeted therapy’

Lung cancer

Avastin – when added to chemotherapy improves its effectiveness in advanced cases of non-small cell lung cancer.

Tarceva (erlotinib) – This oral drug targets the EGFR protein inside the cell to slow cancer growth. It is most effective in non-smoking women with adenocarcinoma, a type of non-small cell lung cancer.

Kidney cancer

Until recently, even the best treatment produced tumor shrinkage in only 10-15% of patients with advanced (metastatic) disease. Two new oral agents, Sutent and Sorafenib, have benefited approximately 50% of patients with usually mild side effects and the convenience of oral dosing.

Risks and side effects

Although generally well tolerated, these new targeted treatments do have some side effects in most patients. These are usually mild, such as fatigue, rash or diarrhea, which can be controlled with dose reduction or medication. Avastin can delay wound healing and in rare occasions lead to bleeding or blood clots. Only an experienced and knowledgeable medical oncologist can help a patient select the most appropriate treatment.
Digital technology enhances cardiology services
EKG, ECHO tests are faster, results more accessible

FF. Thompson Hospital's Cardiology Department has enhanced its service to doctors and their patients by acquiring state-of-the-art digital equipment to perform electrocardiograms and echocardiograms. Digital technology provides the most accurate imaging possible, cuts turnaround time for tests and produces results that are easily shared among consulting physicians.

An electrocardiogram, also known as an EKG or ECG, is a test that measures the electrical activity of the heartbeat. An echocardiogram uses sound waves to create a moving picture of the heart. Both tests are valuable in detecting and diagnosing heart disease. Traditional analog technology had some disadvantages, such as paper output for EKG tests. It was difficult to store and, if faxed to another doctor, could be difficult to read. Echocardiograms were recorded on videotapes, which degrade in quality over time.

Thompson's new digital equipment produces test results in a digital format, so they can be stored electronically, retrieved quickly and shared with a patient's other physicians easily. Test results can even be recorded on a Magneto Optical Disk (MOD) so patients can carry their heart test results with them when they are traveling. This is potentially life-saving for patients; having a baseline test available aids a physician in making a diagnosis and recommending appropriate treatment.

Even better, digital technology provides a sharper image for echocardiograms; physicians viewing a moving picture can freeze the image, change grayscale values, smooth tough-to-read sections of the picture and zoom in on areas of interest. Test results are available more quickly and because images are sharper, there is less need for repeat tests or supplementary procedures due to inconclusive results.

One of Thompson's echocardiogram devices is fully portable, so technicians can take it to the Emergency Department, patient rooms and Continuing Care Center residences – anywhere a patient needs an exam. This offers patients the convenience of being tested where they are, without the need to be transferred to the Cardiology Department.

Digital technology enhances the image quality of an echocardiogram test, which uses sound waves to create a moving picture of the heart.

Healing Garden makes rehab Garden
The Healing Garden at the M.M. Ewing Continuing Care Center was renamed the Phyllis Ehmnn Healing Garden on August 8 to honor the former Thompson Guild president and Foundation Board member, who was an early and devoted supporter of the project.

Digital technology enhances the image quality of an echocardiogram test, which uses sound waves to create a moving picture of the heart.

CAREERS IN HEALTH CARE
Thompson Volunteers program a great career start

If you’re a teen interested in a health care career – or if you just want something impressive to put on your first resume – consider Thompson Health’s Volunteers program. For more than a decade, high school and college-age students have started their careers by working with the professionals at FF. Thompson Hospital and the M.M. Ewing Continuing Care Center.

Volunteers spend a few hours a week at Thompson during their summer vacation; some find the experience so rewarding, they volunteer throughout the school year. The benefits of the experience are many: teens acquire new job skills, learn from medical professionals and enjoy the rewards of helping patients and residents.

Students new to the program help by providing clerical support or transporting patients within the hospital and Continuing Care Center. More experienced, college-age volunteers who have some medical training hone their skills in specialty areas, such as Cardiology, Diagnostic Imaging and the Emergency Department.

“Thompson is a good place to start learning about medicine,” says Jim Pelton, Director of Volunteer Service and Visitor Service. “We are a community hospital and the close contact between patients, caregivers and volunteers is an advantage.”

Students who aren’t leaning toward a medical career also find the program helpful. The Volunteers program enables students to fulfill the community service hours that many schools and colleges require. Students also gain a sense of responsibility and confidence, Pelton says.

Volunteer Alex Spillane of Bloomfield, 16, works in the Continuing Care Center. Alex wants to be a math teacher, and says volunteering has given him people skills that will be useful in his professional life. Another plus? “I didn’t realize old people were that cool – I look at them and think, ‘That’s gonna be me someday.’ I’d recommend this (Volunteers) for anyone who likes getting to know people.”

Kaylan Porter, 14, of Bloomfield, wants to be a surgeon and says being in a medical environment has taught her a great deal and will be a plus on her resume. To fellow teens who might want to try volunteering, she has this advice: “Go for it! It’s so much fun. It’s really great.”

If you are interested in volunteering at Thompson, apply online at ThompsonHealth.com.
New option for vision enhancement

Implantable lenses can improve vision at all distances

Adults in their 40s and beyond might miss a few things about their youth — including the ability to see things at a distance, up close and in between, all without eyeglasses. Who wouldn’t like to have their “20-year-old eyes” back? A new lens that’s implanted into the eye is making this option possible for many people.

Up to now, adults who wanted to improve their vision without the use of glasses or contact lenses were often directed towards LASIK surgery, which uses a laser to reshape the cornea. LASIK does a great job of addressing nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism, but does not address presbyopia (the inability to focus from distance to near).

Another treatment option has recently been introduced — the premium Intraocular Lens (IOL), which provides adults with an option that addresses presbyopia.

The most common type of IOL is the monofocal, or fixed-focus lens, which is designed to give clear vision at one distance. To see at other distances, glasses or contact lenses are needed. Premium IOLs allow the eye to adjust to different distances, reducing or eliminating the need for glasses or contacts. A multifocal IOL has several rings of different powers built into the lens; the eye gets accustomed to looking through the different parts of the lens depending on the distance of vision desired. An accommodative IOL is hinged to work in coordination with eye muscles. This design allows the lens to move forward as the eye focuses on objects up close, and to move backward as it focuses on objects far away.

Premium IOLs are an option for the patient who has little tolerance for eyeglasses or contact lenses; is undergoing cataract surgery and wants to correct vision at the same time; and/or is not good candidate for LASIK surgery.

The IOL is implanted in an outpatient surgical procedure that takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes. Several facilities in the greater Rochester area perform the IOL procedure; The Eye Care Center is the only provider in Ontario County to offer the service. Sungjun J. Hwang, M.D., the first surgeon in the Finger Lakes area to perform LASIK laser vision correction, performs the procedure at Thompson Hospital’s Surgical Care Center. To find out if IOLs are right for you, contact your eye care provider for more information.