



CAPSULES

Health System hosts blood drive

A blood drive is scheduled for Thursday at the Southeast Georgia Health System, 2415 Parkwood Drive, Brunswick.

The drive will be held in the Linda S. Pinson Conference Center, located on the first floor, from 1-6 p.m. Free valet parking is available until 5 p.m. Bring a photo ID.

For more information, call (912) 466-5160 or email bfitzgerald@sghs.org. For a complete listing of upcoming Health System events, classes, and seminars, visit the online calendar at www.sghs.org.

Alzheimer's forum coming to St. Marys

The Alzheimer's Association Coastal Regional Office will present a "Docs and Desserts" program on May 22 at 6:30 p.m. at Cumberland Inn and Suites, 2710 Osborne Road, St. Marys.

The program is designed to give people with questions regarding Alzheimer's disease and dementia an open forum.

Dr. Neill Graff-Radford of the Mayo Alzheimer's Disease Research Center will answer questions.

For information on the program, call Jenny House at (912) 920-2231 or (800) 272-3900.

Watch salt content in spice blends

Are commercial spice and herb blends good choices when trying to cut down on salt? Check labels, because these blends can vary widely. A quarter teaspoon of salt contains about 580 milligrams of sodium - over a quarter of the recommended maximum for the day (2,300 mg). While some herb or spice blends provide essentially zero sodium, this is not true of all brands. Even within the same brand, sodium content can vary.

One blend may supply from 0 to 45 mg of sodium in a quarter-teaspoon while another packs 150 mg to 180 mg in the same serving size. If you don't see sodium content listed, check the ingredient list. If salt is first or second on the list (as it is for some of these seasonings) you know sodium content will fall at the upper end of the range.

Even flavored milk does a body good

Go ahead and urge your child to drink milk - even chocolate or strawberry milk. A new study, published in the April Journal of the American Dietetic Association, finds that children who drink milk, either plain or flavored, tend to have "superior" overall nutrient intakes compared with children who don't drink milk.

The study, funded by the National Dairy Council, compared nutrient intakes and body measures among 7,557 children and teens drinking flavored milk, plain white milk or no milk.

Those who drank flavored milk reported higher total milk intakes than children who drank white milk. The Body Mass Index (a reference measuring height and weight) of milk drinkers were comparable or lower than BMI measures of non milk drinkers.

- The Brunswick News and Copley News Service



Michael Hall/The Brunswick News

Dr. Stephen Kitchen shows an ultrasound machine used during a cutting-edge type of varicose vein surgery.

Procedure can bring relief

Cutting edge technology helps treat varicose veins

By ANDREW SMITH
The Brunswick News

For 18 years, Herbert Prince dealt with the pain and discomfort of severe varicose veins.

Prince, like 25 million other Americans faced the condition, also known as venous reflux disease. It occurs most commonly in women, the elderly, obese and individuals who must stand for work.

"When vein walls get stretched, valves in the veins can no longer pump blood back to the heart," said Dr. Stephen Kitchen. "Because of gravity, it collects in the leg and will never improve by itself."

As the years passed, Prince, a pipe welder by trade, found it hard to walk, stay on his feet for very long and even get out of bed.

"Sometimes I'd be standing at work all day," Prince said. "I was in constant pain."

He eventually developed an open sore known as a stasis ulcer on his left leg. Prince's condition was so bad, he thought about getting the leg amputated to improve his quality of life.

The 6-foot-6-inch man was being taken down by his own veins.

Then last fall, Prince was referred to Kitchen, a board certified surgeon in Brunswick, who was utilizing cutting-edge technology to seal varicose veins and eliminate the pain.

"The Vnus system and the ClosureFast technology allows me to seal the veins from the inside using low frequency microwaves," Kitchen said of the procedure, which is approved by the Food and

Drug Administration.

After nine separate procedures for nine different varicose veins, Prince said he's improved "300 percent."

"I hardly experience any pain now," Prince said. "It was like I had three nails in my leg before. It's great to not be in pain."

Because venous reflux disease isn't always visible on the surface, ultrasound is used to identify the corrupted veins.

In the procedure, a catheter the width of pencil lead is inserted into the vein. The microwaves emitted at the tip of the catheter warm and seal the length of the vein.

No anesthesia is needed for the outpatient surgery, which typically requires an hour long visit.

Sealing the veins permanently is not detrimental to overall circulation, Kitchen said. The body will adapt and use alternate routes to return blood to the heart.

Of all the 500 surgeries Kitchen performs, the surgeon

said the procedure provides the most immediate and obvious results to patients.

"This is what you go into medicine for," Kitchen said. "Especially giving a patient relief for something that has bothered them for years."

He said ClosureFast has rendered other venous procedures like laser closure or vein stripping - in which the veins are literally pulled from the body - obsolete.

"The difference with the Vnus technology and laser surgery is the temperature," Kitchen said. "Vnus operates at about 220°F while the laser works at about 900°F. It's far less traumatic for the patient."

With other varicose surgeries, there can be serious pain requiring a month-long prescription of pain medication and sometimes even scarring.

"I tell my patients to take Tylenol the night after surgery," Kitchen said. "As for scarring, the most I'll leave is a needle stick where I introduce the catheter."

Estrogen linked to breast lumps

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Add another risk to hormone therapy after menopause: Benign breast lumps.

One type of hormone therapy — estrogen plus progestin — already is well-known to increase the risk of breast cancer. But a major study of women able to use estrogen alone didn't find that link.

Last week, researchers reported a new wrinkle: Those estrogen-only users doubled their chances of getting non-cancerous breast lumps. That's a concern not only because of the extra biopsies and worry those lumps cause, but because a particular type — called benign proliferative breast disease — is suspected of being a first step toward developing cancer 10 years or so later.

About one in five women undergo a breast biopsy within a decade of starting annual mammograms, and most are of those abnormalities turn out to be benign.

Yet under a microscope, there are different types, from simple fluid-filled cysts to what's called proliferative breast disease because it's made of growing cells.

The latest work, published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute, re-examines data from the landmark Women's Health Initiative that found a variety of health risks from long-term hormone therapy.

Only women who have undergone hysterectomies are able to use estrogen-only therapy, and the WHI originally included more than 10,000 of those women.

Danger to bees has wider health implications

By ANDREW SMITH
The Brunswick News

For thousands of years, the importance of the honeybee has been known to man. The ancient Egyptians maintained movable frame hives, and today many of the crops grown in America rely on pollination from the honeybee.

"One-third of everything we eat can be attributed to bees," Ted Dennard said to a gathering of about 30 members of the Cassina Garden Club last Thursday. "The world without bees would be a much different place."

Dennard, a St. Simons Island native, has been working with bees since he was 12 and is now the president of the Savannah Bee Company.

In his talk, Dennard chronicled his own beekeeping and a new and serious issue that has affected many in the beekeeping and all associated industries.

Colony Collapse Disorder, or CCD, is a mysterious occurrence that could very well decimate the American wild and kept bee population, he said.

While the cause is not known, suggested factors could be environmental



Michael Hall/The Brunswick News

Ted Dennard talks to the Cassina Garden Club about the affects a dwindling honey bee population has on gardening.

change, malnutrition, pathogens, mites, pesticides, cell phone radiation and genetically modified crops, among others.

The most likely cause seems to be new or adapted virus or a chemical insecticide. Even before the appearance of CCD, the honeybee was suf-

fering because of microscopic mites that infested their airways. By the mid-1990s, the Department of Agriculture estimated that 90 percent of wild honeybees had been wiped out.

Dennard noted that honeybees play a crucial role in fertilization of flowering fruits

like apples and oranges along with natural plants.

Honey has been used for centuries as a staple for nutrition and their other byproducts like honeycomb and propolis have health and medical benefits.

"Everything they do is beneficial — they are a keystone of

the natural world," Dennard said. "Through pollination, they make fruits larger and the seeds more propable. Almost every basic nutrient we need to survive is present in their pollen."

Because of the CCD problem, beekeepers and crop owners have devised a new way to circumvent the natural bee shortage.

"People have begun migratory bee keeping where bees are shipped by truck across the country," Dennard said. "Bees can go from pollinating orange trees in Florida one week to pollinating almond trees in California the next."

Dennard said one way to help the bee population is by growing bee friendly plants, including sunflowers, geraniums, roses as well as fruits and berries.

Cassina Garden Club president, Marie W. Dodd, said that this past year she planted a bee friendly garden but had little luck attracting the helpful insects.

"I grew all the right plants, but there were no bees to be found," Dodd said. "I think it's because they are being shipped all over the country to pollinate instead of pollinating naturally."

Sleep, obesity linked

A recent study has found that babies and toddlers who sleep fewer than 12 hours daily are at greater risk for being overweight in preschool, indicating that the link between sleep and obesity may affect even very young children. **3C**



Infant sleep and health

Study questions mumps vaccine

A recent study questions the effectiveness of a two-dose vaccination for the mumps — as opposed to three — after an outbreak in colleges in the Midwest. **2C**

New data found on dyslexia

According to recent research, dyslexia affects different parts of the brain depending on the language children are raised to read **2C**