

Mature Health

A COMMUNITY WELLNESS PROGRAM FOR ADULTS

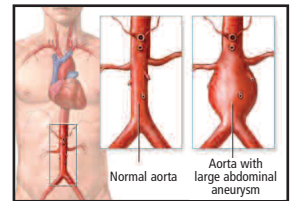
SUMMER 2007

The Welcome To Medicare Physical Now Offers a Free, One-Time Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening

Medicare now offers a one-time, free screening for Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) to qualified seniors as part of its Welcome to Medicare physical. This physical must be conducted within the first six months of enrollment in Medicare. Men who have smoked at least 100 cigarettes during their life, and men and women with a family history of AAA qualify for the Medicare screening. Evanston Northwestern Healthcare also offers reduced price (\$45) screening to all who do not meet these criteria.



Your vascular system, made up of your veins and arteries, allows life-giving blood to flow to your vital organs. Blood flows freely when this system is open, but



as we age, our arteries tend to thicken, get stiffer, and narrow. To maintain an active lifestyle during our senior years, we need to make certain there are no weak areas or blockages in our vascular system. Medicare offers a free screening process to check for one of the vascular diseases, Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA). Qualified seniors are eligible for a one-time AAA ultrasound screening as part of their Welcome to Medicare physical. Cases may be severe enough to cause death if not treated. This Medicare screening benefit is expected to save thousands of lives.

AAA is an enlargement or “bulge” that develops in a weakened area within the largest artery in the abdomen. The pressure generated by each heartbeat pushes against the weakened aortic wall, causing the aneurysm to enlarge. If the AAA remains undetected, the aortic wall continues to weaken, and the aneurysm continues to grow. Eventually, the aneurysm becomes so large, and its wall so weak, that rupture occurs. When this happens there is massive internal bleeding, a situation that is usually fatal. The only way to break this cycle is to find the AAA before it ruptures.

“As most people feel no symptoms, they are unaware that they have an abdominal aortic aneurysm and that they are at risk for rupture and death,” says Nancy Schindler, MD, Chief, Division of Vascular Surgery at Evanston Northwestern Healthcare. “Men

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What is GERD?

Your stomach is filled with acid. Its purpose is to help digest the food you eat. Believe it or not, this acid is the same acidity as battery acid.

Your stomach is built to handle the acid it produces. However, your esophagus isn't. So when acid backs up into your esophagus, it can cause the burning sensation known as heartburn.

"Almost everyone has occasional heartburn. But if these symptoms occur two or more days a week for at least three months, you may have Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD), or acid reflux disease," said Mick Meiselman, MD, Gastroenterologist at Evanston Northwestern Healthcare and Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine for Northwestern University. "Then it's time to see a doctor because GERD is a chronic condition that may lead to more serious medical conditions."

What triggers acid reflux?

Your lifestyle doesn't cause GERD, but it may make your symptoms worse. Triggers for acid reflux include:

- Certain foods or drinks
- Smoking
- Being overweight
- Eating too much
- Bending over after eating
- Lying down less than 3 hours after meals

Lifestyle changes may help to relieve the symptoms of GERD. Most medical treatments for GERD are aimed at decreasing the acidity of the stomach's contents.



GERD Symptoms

The most common symptom of GERD is heartburn, a burning pain that rises from the stomach or lower part of the chest towards the neck. Regurgitation, which occurs when stomach acid washes into the esophagus and up into the mouth, causing a bitter or sour taste, is another symptom of GERD. Another common symptom is difficulty swallowing, also called dysphagia.

GERD has other, less common symptoms. Water brash is the sudden appearance in the mouth of slightly sour or salty fluid that happens when the salivary glands are stimulated by acid reflux. GERD has been associated with non-cardiac chest pain, asthma, hoarseness, and chronic cough.

Symptoms of GERD:

- Heartburn
- Regurgitation
- Difficulty swallowing
- Water brash

Some people who have GERD may not experience any symptoms. This may happen because these people are not very sensitive to the acid and do not experience pain even though they are having reflux.

How is GERD Treated?

GERD is a treatable medical condition. If you are experiencing symptoms of GERD, or if acid-suppressing medications provide only temporary relief or cause side effects, Evanston Northwestern Healthcare (ENH) has a solution. Doctors at ENH provide a spectrum of treatment for acid reflux disorders, ranging from endoscopy to minimally invasive surgical techniques. In fact, ENH physicians have been pioneers in the area of minimally invasive surgery. Also, ENH is one of the few medical centers across the nation to be named as an investigation site for a pioneering approach called Endoscopic Fundoplication.

For information on GERD specialists at Evanston Northwestern Healthcare, please call (847) 492-5700 (Ext.1174).

Charitable Gift Annuity: A Healthy Investment with Reliable Returns

Grateful for the care he has received at Evanston Northwestern Healthcare (ENH), particularly at Glenbrook Hospital, Alan Dworkin made a planned gift to support programs within ENH.

“A charitable gift annuity is an ideal way for me to express thanks to an organization that has played a big role in my life and to secure a future ongoing income,” Dworkin said. “I hope my gift helps ENH make a significant impact where the need is greatest.”

A charitable gift annuity pays you (and an additional annuitant, if desired) a predetermined amount on a regular basis for life. This planned giving option is available to people age 50 and older, has a rate of return that is dependent on the donor's age, and can be established with cash, securities or property.

Gift annuities offer several advantages. Donors receive an income tax charitable deduction for a portion of the gift. Capital gains tax on appreciated stock or property can be mitigated and the donor's estate reduced by the amount of the gift. Donors receive a rate of return that is substantially higher and more stable than returns from non-charitable plans or Certificates of Deposit. As a charitable organization, ENH will make payments for the rest of an individual's lifetime, with a portion of the income also tax free.



Alan and Annette Dworkin

“When I found out ENH offered this option for planned giving, I decided to invest my resources there because of the doctors who have helped me and my family,” Dworkin said. “And it makes good financial sense.”

To receive a free booklet explaining Charitable Gift Annuities, please contact Karen Lerner at the ENH Foundation, (224) 364-7228 or klerner@enh.org.

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening

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over 60 who have ever smoked—some of the primary recipients of Medicare—are at a much higher risk for having the condition than the average person.” Those with symptoms describe them as a pulsing feeling in their abdomen, an unexplained, severe pain in their abdomen or lower back, or pain, discoloration, or sores on their feet, though this is a rare symptom.

According to the American Vascular Association, more than 15,000 Americans die of ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysms each year. “Preventive screening exams to detect a bulge in the aorta,” Dr. Schindler adds, “could quite literally mean the difference between life and death for some people.”

Most people feel no symptoms, and an AAA is often detected when tests are conducted for other unrelated

reasons. Evanston Northwestern Healthcare offers an ultrasound screening that is a painless, safe, and accurate way to detect AAA. If your test indicates there is an AAA, see a vascular surgeon. As physicians who can perform all the treatment options available, including medical management, minimally invasive endovascular angioplasty and stent procedures, and open bypass surgery, vascular surgeons are best equipped to advise you on proper care of an aneurysm. “Our vascular surgeons have vast experience in the treatment of aneurysm disease and are prepared to discuss all options for care including the newest, minimally invasive and life saving techniques” says Dr. Schindler.

For more information about ENH's AAA screening, please call (847) 492-5700 (Ext. 1173).

To find an ENH physician near you:

www.enh.org/findadoctor

(847) 492-5700 Ext. 1181

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Alternative Adult Day Program of Highland Park Hospital

The Alternative Adult Day Program provides older adults with cognitive or functional impairments [such as confusion, short term memory loss, or inability to perform daily activities] the opportunity for positive socialization, peer interaction, and assistance in restoring or maintaining functional abilities. Qualified staff include licensed nurses, therapists, and aides who provide therapeutic programming for adults requiring supervision, support, and stimulation. Activities include reminiscence, music, and art therapy, as well as, exercise, reality orientation, and recreational activities to stimulate and maintain a level of independence. Adults may attend the Program on a regular basis or intermittently for a day or even a half-day.

The Alternative Adult Day Program is located at 1936 Green Bay Rd., Highland Park, IL. For more information regarding the Alternative Adult Day Program or to schedule a tour of the facility, please contact Sharon Anderson, RN at 847-480-3899.

