

March 2014

Baylor Health

McKINNEY EDITION

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REAL PATIENTS. REAL STORIES.

Just in Time

Thanks to his wife's quick thinking, GREG CROMARTIE is living life to the fullest after surviving a heart attack

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IN CASE OF EMERGENCY
Be prepared for nearly any crisis with these tips **PAGE 4**



ASTHMA ANSWERS
How to thwart common triggers **PAGE 8**

TREND WATCH: Minimalist Running Shoes

By now, you've heard about the latest trend in running shoes—but should you buy in? “There are claims that minimalist shoes can reduce running injuries and improve performance,” says Lauren Peralez, ATC, LAT, an outreach coordinator on staff at Baylor SportsCare. “It’s hard to say whether that’s true; there hasn’t been enough research yet to back those claims.”

Want to try them? Peralez recommends gradually switching from your regular shoe to a minimalist style: Run in them just twice a week on your shortest distance days, and then gradually increase how much you wear them. “Switching without progressing can put you at higher risk of injuries,” she says.

Don’t toss your old tennies just yet. If you’re thinking of “going minimal” to help with joint pain, your first stop should be the doctor, not the shoe store, Peralez says. “A lot of people think changing their shoe will help, but oftentimes it’s their running gait that needs to change, not their shoe.”



Stride Right

If you experience joint pain while running, a sports medicine specialist can analyze your gait and help determine the cause of your pain. For a referral, visit FindDrRight.com/McKinney or call **1.800.4BAYLOR**.

Healthy Eating to Go

You need to get them to baseball practice, piano lessons and dance class, and they’re all hungry. And actually, so are you. Follow these three tips to eating healthier on the go.

→ Do it yourself.

Prepackaged snacks are more likely to have added salt and sugar. For quick snacking, make your own to-go bags of sliced carrots, orange sections or unsalted nuts.

→ **Plan ahead.** Before an afternoon of errands, pack

a cooler with bottled water, string cheese and apples.

→ **Have a plan B.** Things come up—practices get rescheduled and recitals run long. If a vending machine is your only option, choose pretzels, trail mix or reduced-fat popcorn.



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*An apple a day can help keep your stomach happy. That's because the 4.4 grams of fiber it contains aids digestion.

3 TIPS FOR A HAPPIER STOMACH

Digestive issues like gas, bloating, diarrhea and constipation can make even the best day feel bad. Have a better day with these three tips:

1 FILL UP ON FIBER. Insoluble fiber adds bulk to stool and helps speed its passage through the digestive tract. Women should aim for 25 total grams per day; men, 38. To accomplish this, build meals around whole grains, produce, beans and lentils. Still can't get there? Consider taking a fiber supplement.

2 GET GUZZLING. Water binds with your food to help it move through the digestive tract. Aim to drink half your body weight in ounces per day. Not a fan of plain H₂O? Try adding slices of orange, cantaloupe or cucumber to your glass—or even a sprig of lavender, mint or basil.

3 MOVE MORE. Physical activity like walking or jogging can stimulate your digestive tract to move, while yoga can help you deal with stress, which may contribute to constipation. Aim for 30 minutes of moderate activity five days a week.

Stomach Troubles?
For a free physician referral, visit **FindDrRight.com** or call **1.800.4BAYLOR.**



7%

A new study suggests that fish consumption may make up just 7 percent of the mercury found in the human body and that eating fish as part of a healthy, balanced diet may not present a major health risk to pregnant mothers and their growing babies.

Talk to your doctor about the right pregnancy diet for you.

In Your Genes

Have you wondered whether the same diseases that affected your grandparents or parents might be in your future, too? Genetic testing may be able to give you the answer. More than 2,000 genetic tests are available, and they can be used to do the following:

- Confirm a diagnosis in someone experiencing symptoms
 - Determine whether a person carries the gene for a disease that could be passed on
 - Predetermine which medicines are most likely to be effective
 - Test for disease, even before symptoms arise
 - Screen for diseases in embryos or test for diseases in utero
- The Affordable Care Act classifies genetic testing as preventive care, so all insurances are now required to

Know Your Risk
Visit **BaylorHealth.com/GeneticCounseling** to learn more.

cover it with no out-of-pocket cost for individuals who are considered eligible. To find out whether you might be a candidate, talk to your doctor.



911

If you or a loved one is suffering a medical emergency, don't try to drive to the hospital. Call 911 to ensure the fastest treatment.

In Case of Emergency

To learn more about the emergency services offered at Baylor McKinney, visit BaylorHealth.com/McKinney today.



Be Prepared

Can you be ready for every emergency? Not completely, but you can come close by taking these steps before a crisis strikes

NO ONE WANTS to dwell on the potentially catastrophic things that could happen. It's distressing to think about the what-ifs, especially when it comes to our family and friends. But spending time preparing for emergency situations that could arise is important—and could help save a life.

We asked Elizabeth Fagan, MD, medical director of the emergency department at Baylor Medical Center at McKinney, to share her suggestions for preparing for a medical emergency. Read on to learn three ways to help achieve the best outcome for you and your family.

1) HOOK UP A HOUSE PHONE

In many ways, landlines are becoming obsolete—except one. “A traditional phone is never going to get lost or lose charge, and a child will always be able to find it and use it,” Dr. Fagan says.

In addition, dialing 911 from a landline allows emergency personnel to geographically pinpoint your location, which is critical if you're unable to speak.

2) POST A LIST OF EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Display the numbers to poison control and your local police and fire departments, emergency room, doctor

and dentist in an easily visible and accessible location. Also post the names and cellphone numbers of everyone in the home and your address, as well as information about your children, including dates of birth, medical conditions and allergies.

“In an emergency, people panic and forget basic information,” Dr. Fagan says. “This can save valuable time.”

3) KEEP PERSONAL MEDICAL INFORMATION WITH YOU

This should include your name, native language, emergency contact, date of birth, primary care physician, past medical and surgical history, and any allergies you have and medications you're taking, including dosage and frequency.

“For individuals with heart problems, carry a reduced-size copy of your most recent EKG,” Dr. Fagan suggests. “And if you have any speech or hearing impairments, note that as well.”



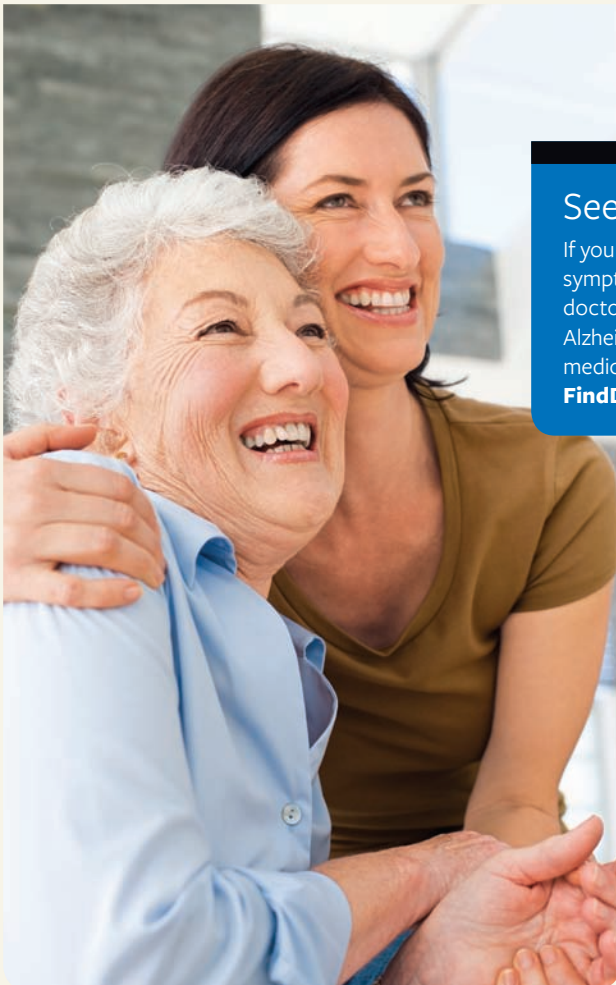
IS IT ALZHEIMER'S?

How to recognize the signs in a loved one

A FORGOTTEN LUNCH DATE HERE and a sudden mood change there might not seem like much to be concerned about. But when put together, these can be early signs of Alzheimer's disease, which affects memory, communication, judgment and quality of life.

"Getting someone with Alzheimer's disease into treatment early gives us the best opportunity to manage it and stay on top of symptoms," says Cindy Marshall, MD, medical director at the Memory Center at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas. "We have medications that can help treat symptoms like depression, irritability and agitation."

Though it's easy to overlook early indications, it's important to pay attention to them and seek help. Here, we review the Alzheimer's Association's top warning signs.



See the Signs?

If you recognize any of these symptoms in a loved one, talk to your doctor about whether it could be Alzheimer's. To find a physician on the medical staff at Baylor McKinney, visit FindDrRight.com/McKinney today.

Memory loss that disrupts life.

LOOK FOR: Forgetting appointments or not recalling recent conversations.

Challenges in solving problems or planning.

LOOK FOR: Simple activities like balancing a checkbook becoming more difficult and taking longer.

Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home or work.

LOOK FOR: Struggling to prepare a favorite meal.

Confusion with time or place.

LOOK FOR: Talking about an event that occurred some time ago as if it were recent.

Trouble understanding visual images or spatial relationships.

LOOK FOR: Difficulty driving, brought on by challenges judging distance.

New problems with speaking or writing.

LOOK FOR: Trouble finding the right words for things.

Misplacing items and losing the ability to retrace steps.

LOOK FOR: Losing a wallet or a purse and believing it was stolen.

Withdrawal from work or social activities.

LOOK FOR: Disinterest in activities once enjoyed, like church and family get-togethers. "Apathy can be one of the earliest signs of Alzheimer's disease," Dr. Marshall notes.

Changes in mood or personality.

LOOK FOR: Becoming depressed, irritable, anxious or suspicious.

Decreased or poor judgment.

LOOK FOR: Responding to mail solicitations requesting money that most people would ignore.



Help Your Heart Right Now!

Greg Cromartie survived a heart attack thanks to his wife Carol's 911 call.

5 things you can do *today* to improve your heart health

When Greg Cromartie, 61, woke up in the middle of the night with cold sweats, massive pain and labored breathing, he knew right away that it was something serious. His wife, Carol, dialed 911, and within three minutes the paramedics were by his side.

“While they were getting me on the gurney, I heard them call the cath lab at Baylor Garland to let them know I had had a heart attack and we were on the way,” Cromartie says. “When we arrived, the doctors and the cath team took over immediately and reassured us that they were going to take care of me. That’s the last thing I remember.”

At that point, Cromartie’s heart stopped, but because he was already at Baylor Medical Center at Garland, they were able to get it going again and perform lifesaving surgery. Now, nearly two years later, Cromartie is keeping his heart healthy and taking full advantage of his new lease on life.

“I wasn’t terribly overweight, but I have had high cholesterol since the ’80s. I quit taking my medication years ago, though, which led up to my heart attack. Also, being from the South, I was

raised on bacon, eggs and burgers,” he says. “Now, I’m diligent about taking my full panel of medication and those indulgent foods are just an occasional treat. I’ve always tried to remain active, too, but working out is definitely a priority now.”

Thanks to the team at Baylor Garland and Cromartie’s commitment to his health, he’s able to focus on the things he loves, like spending time with his new grandchild.

Ready to make a few changes of your own? These five tips will keep your ticker in tiptop shape.

Is Your Heart at Risk?

Take our online risk assessment at BaylorHealth.com/HeartRisk to find out.

1. Hold the salt.



For the estimated one in three Americans who develops high blood pressure (a major risk factor for heart disease), excess sodium may be to blame. And it's not all coming from the saltshaker—65 percent of the salt in our diets comes from prepared foods.

→ DO IT TODAY!

Fast-food sandwiches can contain a whole day's worth of sodium, so go for a half sandwich and a salad instead. And go easy on the condiments and dressing, which sneak in extra salt.

2. Don't light that.

"If you're a smoker, the best, most immediate thing you can do is to quit," says Robert Stoler, MD, medical director of the cardiac catheterization lab at Baylor Heart and Vascular Hospital.

→ DO IT TODAY! Ask your doctor for help. Many resources and medications are available.

3. Take a deep breath.

Feeling frazzled? Your ticker feels it, too, which is why learning to control stress is key to your heart health.

→ DO IT TODAY! Taming your tension can be as simple as a few minutes of deep breathing, which can help lower your blood pressure and clear your mind.

"For long-term stress management, people should find what works best for them, whether it's exercise, meditation, golfing or scrapbooking," Dr. Stoler says.

4. Have a good laugh.

Sometimes laughter really is the best medicine. The chemical process associated with laughter protects the heart by reducing inflammation, dilating the vessels and preventing the formation of plaque. Plus, its effects have been found to last 24 hours.

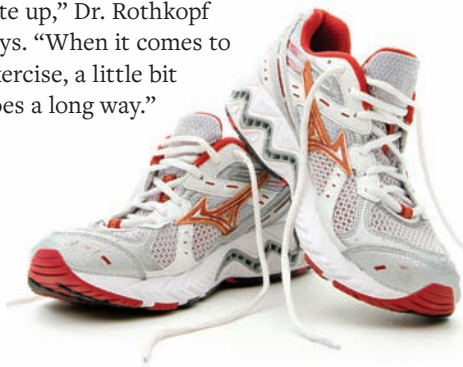
→ DO IT TODAY! Listen to comedy radio during your commute, follow your

favorite comedians on Twitter or pull up the latest laugh-out-loud video on your smartphone—for your heart's sake.

5. Stand up.

Are you an 8-to-5 desk jockey? Sitting for long periods can put you at higher risk for heart disease, says Michael Rothkopf, MD, medical director of cardiology at Baylor Medical Center at Irving.

→ DO IT TODAY! Incorporate short bursts of movement. Squeeze in a 10-minute walk at lunch or take a turn around the block when you get your mail. "Do your best to get your heart rate up," Dr. Rothkopf says. "When it comes to exercise, a little bit goes a long way."



Heart Disease Isn't Just a Man's Disease

Maybe it's Hollywood's fault, but somehow we've gotten the idea that heart disease only happens to men. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women in the U.S., causing one in three deaths each year.

It's time to get real about heart disease.

You don't need to have symptoms. Sixty-four percent of women who died suddenly of heart disease never experienced symptoms. "And when women do have symptoms, they aren't always the classic symptoms," says Molly Szerlip, MD, an interventional cardiologist on the medical staff at Baylor Medical Center at McKinney. "Educate yourself on the symptoms women are most likely to experience."

Young women are at risk, too. If you take birth control pills and smoke, your risk is increased by 20 percent. Talk to your doctor about ways to lower the odds.

Your mom had it, but that doesn't mean it's inevitable. "You can still prevent heart disease by eating right, exercising regularly, getting regular screenings and avoiding smoking," Dr. Szerlip says.





What's Your Trigger?

A closer look at the **top asthma instigators** and how to avoid them

When it comes to asthma, getting the diagnosis and finding the right medication is only the first step to breathing easier. The next step is to find out what's triggering it.

"A trigger is anything that brings on the symptoms of asthma—shortness of breath, chest tightness, wheezing and coughing," says Mark Millard, MD, medical director of the Baylor Martha Foster Lung Care Center at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas. "Some are just irritants, which usually trigger milder attacks, but others are allergens, which cause initial symptoms and worsening airway inflammation."

We share the top triggers, where they're hiding and what you can do about them.



ALLERGEN TRIGGERS

➤ DUST

"People are actually allergic to dust mite proteins, which are found in dust," Dr. Millard says.

Find It: In your bed, mostly. "And that's where we spend a large part of our day," he adds.

Avoid It: Use sheet protectors and pillowcase covers specifically for dust-mite control.

Wash and dry bedding at high temperatures. And put down hardwood or tile in lieu of carpet.

➤ POLLEN

"You can't be a prisoner to pollen counts, but know when you might have problems," Dr. Millard says.

Find It: Outdoors, mainly in spring and fall.

Avoid It: Pretreat with a quick relief inhaler if you are going out.

➤ MOLD

"There are hundreds of molds that you can be allergic to, and it's really hard to avoid them, especially outdoors," Dr. Millard says.

Find It: Both indoors (especially in humid areas)

Are You at Risk for Asthma?



Of more than 25 million Americans living with asthma today, at least 7 million are children. “In fact, most people with asthma are first diagnosed during childhood. A second peak time of onset is around middle-age,” says Matt Morgan, MD, an allergist on the medical staff at Baylor Medical Center at McKinney. “Your overall risk is a complex combination of genetic susceptibility and environmental factors throughout life.”

Those at higher risk for the condition include those who: **HAVE ALLERGIES.** “Most people with asthma also have allergies, particularly nasal allergies,” Dr. Morgan says.

HAVE CLOSE RELATIVES WITH THE CONDITION.

“Asthma is strongly genetic and is much more likely in people with affected parents or siblings,” Dr. Morgan says.

HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO TOBACCO SMOKE.

“Children who are raised around cigarette smoke or whose mothers smoked while pregnant are more likely to develop asthma,” Dr. Morgan says. “Tobacco smoke also increases the risk for later onset asthma.”

But here’s the good news: Medications and other therapies can help children and adults with asthma live full, healthy, active lives. Talk to your doctor about developing an asthma management plan.

IRRITANT TRIGGERS

CHEMICAL FUMES

“Chemicals irritate the lining of the airways, which can trigger an attack,” Dr. Millard says.

Find It: Fresh paint, perfumes, aerosols and plug-in air fresheners.

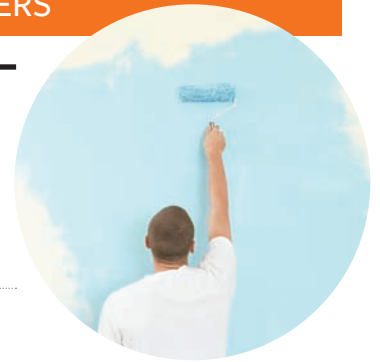
Avoid It: A simple dust mask won’t help with these types of irritants, Dr. Millard notes, so steer clear.

SMOKE

“Though smoke is not a true allergen, it presents a much more serious challenge to the airways by causing inflammation that can invoke permanent damage,” Dr. Millard says.

Find It: Burning wood, leaves or tobacco.

Avoid It: Don’t smoke and avoid being around smoke in general.



EXERCISE

You’re not allergic to exercise, but exercise can trigger an attack if your asthma is not well controlled.

Find It: Outdoors. “Exercising in cold, dry air or on days when pollen or mold counts are high is more likely to cause problems,” Dr. Millard says.

Avoid It: Exercise indoors on these kinds of days, and circumvent an attack by pretreating with your inhaler.

WEATHER FRONTS

“We don’t understand why weather changes do this,” Dr. Millard says. “Possibly because wind blows pollen and, if it’s associated with rain, increases mold counts.”

Find It: Outside, on excessively windy, cold or humid days.

Avoid It: Stay indoors on days when weather systems are changing rapidly.

of your home, such as the bathroom) and outdoors (think wet leaves).

Avoid It: Air conditioners can remove indoor humidity, which reduces indoor mold.

PET DANDER

Though it seems the obvious answer is to not have a pet, many people still opt to share their homes with a furry companion. “There’s a saying that patients will get rid of their allergist before they’ll get rid of their cat,” Dr. Millard says.

Find It: Cats and dogs.

Avoid It: Cat dander is water soluble, so if you can, give

your cat a weekly bath. In addition, keep all pets out of the bedroom.

COCKROACH OR MICE DROPPINGS

Eww, right? No one wants to think they’re sharing their home with these creepy crawlers, but you very well might be, Dr. Millard says.

Find It: Kitchens, in particular, or wherever there’s food and moisture.

Avoid It: Don’t leave food out, seal cracks and remove clutter in your home; and seek a pest control expert’s help to rid your home of pests.

Breathe Better

For a referral to an asthma specialist on the Baylor McKinney medical staff, visit FindDrRight.com/McKinney or call 1.800.4BAYLOR.



We Need Your Help

Visit **BaylorHealth.com/AdvancingMedicine** to learn about research trials at Baylor that are seeking participants.

Immunology Research, and clinical researcher Joyce O'Shaughnessy, MD, Celebrating Women chair of breast cancer research at the Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas, have combined their respective immunological and patient expertise for this potentially groundbreaking study.

"This vaccine could help counteract the negative effects of the immune system that exist in this type of breast cancer and unleash its powerful, positive effects to improve the success of standard treatments," Dr. O'Shaughnessy says.

A FIGHTING CHANCE

Participants in the study will receive a series of seven vaccines during the course of their breast cancer treatment—which includes preoperative chemotherapy, surgery and six weeks of radiation—and then have follow-up visits every three months for three years.

"Our hope is that the patients who receive the vaccine will have no adverse effects and experience a lower rate of breast cancer recurrence as compared to historical data from patients who don't," Dr. Palucka says.

In addition, half of the patients in the study will also receive anakinra, an adult rheumatoid arthritis medication. Researchers hope that the medication will reduce inflammation, allowing the vaccine and chemotherapy to work together even more effectively.

Though results won't be available for a few years, Dr. Palucka says that she is excited about the potential for the vaccine.

"It has taken us several years to get to this point," she says. "If this treatment works like we think it will, it will offer great hope to patients with this type of aggressive breast cancer."

A Shot at a Cure

Could a new vaccine help prevent breast cancer recurrences? Baylor researchers investigate

WE KNOW THAT VACCINES have the power to prevent deadly diseases, but could they also prevent cancers from recurring? In a small but promising pilot study, Baylor researchers are investigating whether a vaccine made from a patient's own immune cells could help prevent breast cancer recurrences in women at high risk.

PLAN OF ATTACK

The vaccine is made by teaching a

patient's cells to recognize certain proteins in the tumor, explains Maren Levin, MS, research project coordinator.

"When we inject the cells back into the patients, the cells will hopefully attack the tumor, and keep it from growing back," Levin says.

Bench researcher Karolina Palucka, MD, PhD, director of the Ralph Steinman Center for Cancer Vaccines at the Baylor Institute for

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 **TIPSHEET**

BUILD A BETTER BREAKFAST

Sugary cereals and toaster pastries aren't going to cut it. Download our tipsheet at [BaylorHealth.com/Tipsheet](https://www.baylorhealth.com/Tipsheet) to discover the ingredients to a healthier morning meal.

PLUS
Pin this recipe!



 **RECIPE**


Wake Up and Smell the Frittata

Need a healthy breakfast idea? This Potato and Spinach Frittata is light on the cheese and heavy on the veggies. Go to [BaylorHealth.com/Recipe](https://www.baylorhealth.com/Recipe) to get the recipe.




QUICK TIP
Strength training, whether you use resistance bands or weights, builds muscle and helps protect your joints.

Staying Active with Arthritis


 **PODCAST** If you have osteoarthritis, physical activity can actually help lessen your pain. Visit [BaylorHealth.com/Podcast](https://www.baylorhealth.com/Podcast) to discover the three types of exercises you need to incorporate into your routine today.

Know Your Antibiotic Etiquette

 **QUIZ** Do antibiotics work on viruses? Do you really need to take them as long as prescribed? Get the answers to these questions and more by taking our interactive quiz at [BaylorHealth.com/Quiz](https://www.baylorhealth.com/Quiz) today.



Chat Us Up!

 **CONNECT** Are you looking for a physician or a support group? Would you like to register for a class or an event? Our online advisers can help. Chat with one today by visiting [BaylorHealth.com](https://www.baylorhealth.com) and clicking "Let's Chat" at the bottom.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

March & April 2014

Registration required for all events unless otherwise indicated. Call **1.800.4BAYLOR** to register.

CHILDBIRTH AND FAMILY EDUCATION

Prepared Childbirth encompasses three weekly sessions beginning March 4 and April 1, 6:45 to 9:30 p.m. No charge.

Basics of Baby Care teaches infant care and development. March 6 and April 3, 6:45 to 9:30 p.m. No charge.

Breastfeeding is designed to discuss the many benefits of breastfeeding your baby. March 13, March 27, April 10 and April 24, 6:45 to 9:30 p.m. No charge.

Infant Safety and CPR teaches basic skills but is not a certification course. March 8 and April 12, 9 a.m. to noon. \$35



Mom with baby ©Getty Images/iStockphoto

Is it time for your “tune-up”?

A colonoscopy can keep you at peak performance...



SCHEDULE YOUR COLONOSCOPY TODAY.

You could be at risk.

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer diagnosed in the United States. The disease often grows with no symptoms until it's at an advanced stage. But when detected in its earliest stages, colorectal cancer is treatable.

That's why getting a screening colonoscopy when you're 50 or older is so important to your health. In fact, a colonoscopy may even help prevent cancer by allowing your physician to find and remove polyps that might become cancerous.

A colonoscopy is a simple procedure that can keep you healthy for many years to come. Check with your primary care physician to confirm if it is “*your year*” to schedule a colonoscopy.

Take a quick online assessment to see if you are at risk for colon cancer at BaylorHealth.com/ColonRisk.

For a physician referral or for more information about cancer care services, call **1.800.4BAYLOR** or visit us online at BaylorHealth.com/McKinney.

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