“The surgery changed everything. I got ‘me’ back.”

Carol Daude is pain-free and enjoying life after doctors straightened her spine PAGE 6

HOT! HOT! HOT! Keep your loved ones safe this summer PAGE 4
Help for Headache Sufferers

If you experience chronic, debilitating headaches, take heart. Relief is right around the corner at Scott & White Clinic – Round Rock, which recently opened a headache clinic for patients in the Austin/Round Rock area.

“The headache clinic allows us to focus exclusively on the diagnosis and treatment of adult headache disorders and facial pain,” explains Stephanie Vertrees, MD, a neurologist on the medical staff at Scott & White Hospital – Round Rock and director of the headache clinic.

At the initial visit, a physician will review your symptoms and experience with headaches, take a medical and health history, and conduct a physical and neurological exam, Dr. Vertrees explains.

“Then, we develop a personalized, comprehensive headache management plan that may include drug therapy, physical or occupational therapy, and lifestyle modifications.”

HOW’S YOUR HEAD?
The headache clinic at Scott & White Clinic – Round Rock is located at 425 University Blvd.
To schedule an appointment, please call 512.509.0200. To learn more about the causes, types of, and treatment of headaches, visit headache.sw.org today.

INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE HAS ARRIVED

Scott & White Clinic – Avery Ranch and Baylor Scott & White Clinic – Round Rock South rolled out a new integrative medicine program that includes acupuncture- and massage therapy services.

Anju Sharma, MD, ABHIM, a family medicine physician on the medical staff at Baylor Scott & White Clinic – Round Rock South, and Daniel A. Steffy, MD, ABHIM, a family medicine physician on the medical staff at Scott & White Clinic – Avery Ranch are overseeing the program. Both physicians are certified by the American Board of Integrative and Holistic Medicine.

Acupuncture and massage therapy treatments are now available and are self-pay services.
3 Steps to a Safer Crib

Your new bundle of joy will be spending a lot of time in the crib (infants can sleep 18 hours a day!), so you’d better make sure it’s the safest spot in the house.

1 It’s all about location. Position the crib away from windows—you don’t want blinds or drapes posing hazards. The same goes for large furniture that could be pulled over or used to climb on.

2 Only baby goes in the bed. Soft bedding (covers, pillows, bumper pads) and toys increase the risk for suffocation. Also, the mattress should fit snugly in the crib frame—no gaps where the infant could get caught.

3 Check the bars. Planning to use a hand-me-down crib? Make sure the bars are no more than 2 ½ inches apart. Any bigger and there’s a risk that your little one could get stuck.

PACK A BETTER PICNIC

Nothing ruins a picnic faster than spoiled food. Follow these dos and don’ts for a safer spread.

DO rethink the picnic basket. Cold foods should be stored in a cooler at 40 degrees to keep bacteria at bay. Save the basket for paper products, crackers, chips and the like.

DON’T thaw out your meat. Pack your grillables while they’re still frozen to keep them cooler longer. That includes chicken, fish and steak. And make sure they’re wrapped up tightly so there’s no chance of cross-contamination.

DO take two coolers—one for food and one for drinks. This protects your perishable items from losing coldness as folks open and reopen the cooler to grab beverages.

DON’T forget to rinse. Give fruits and veggies a good wash before packing them up.

Your Baby Questions Answered

Which crib? Which shots, and when? Your doctor can help you every step of the way. To find a physician in your area, visit FindDrRight.com today.

52%

Of all the people with high blood pressure, only about half have it under control. That’s a scary statistic because hypertension increases the risk for heart disease and stroke. Get your blood pressure checked every year, and, if it’s high, work with your doctor on a game plan. That could mean lifestyle changes or medication, or both.

NOSH ON THIS

From appetizers to main dishes, we have nutritious options for your next picnic. Visit BaylorHealth.com/Recipe to find something healthy for any course.

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Hot, Hot, Hot!

Understanding the dangers of heat exposure

Too much exposure to hot weather isn’t good for anyone. But certain age groups are prone to particular heat hazards. Learn how to keep your family, friends, neighbors and pets safe this summer.

KIDS AND PETS: Get Out of the Car
It doesn’t take much heat to be life-threatening—especially when you’re talking about children in vehicles.

The temperature inside a vehicle parked in direct sunlight can rise 20 degrees in just 10 minutes. When it’s 100 outside, the interior can be 172. And yet 14 percent of parents admit to leaving a young child alone in a parked vehicle despite knowing about the dangers of heatstroke (when body temperature is 104 degrees or higher), according to a 2014 study by Safe Kids Worldwide.

“That’s why it’s so important to never leave your kids in the car and to prevent them from getting in the car when you don’t want them to,” says Susan Burchfield, trauma injury prevention outreach coordinator at Baylor Scott & White Health. “Keep the vehicle locked when it’s parked at home and store keys out of reach of children.”

And don’t forget Fido: Never leave your pet alone in the car, either.

TEENS: Play It Safe
For teens playing in the summer heat, hydration is key.

“They need to be drinking water often throughout the day,” Burchfield says. “Coaches and athletic trainers need to build that into the schedule.”

It’s also critical to know the signs of heatstroke, such as confusion, dizziness or fainting, dilated pupils, headache, nausea and weakness. Seek immediate medical care if your child experiences any of these symptoms.

ADULTS: Work Smart Outdoors
People working outside, such as roofers and road construction workers, should take a water break at least every 15 to 20 minutes. Burchfield also recommends they use misters and fans and seek shade as frequently as possible to prevent sunburn.

“Everybody needs to be watching out for each other, so that if you are developing heatstroke symptoms, someone is aware and can get emergency help for you,” she says.

SENIORS: Avoid Prescription Problems
Older adults are at greater risk for heat-related illnesses because their bodies can’t adjust to sudden temperature changes like when they were younger and because they are more likely to take certain prescription medicines.

“There are medications that can change the way that the heart beats, for example, so people need to be asking their health care providers if their medication will affect how they handle hot weather,” Burchfield says.

You can help keep the seniors in your family and around your neighborhood safe by ensuring they stay hydrated and have a place to cool off.

Keep Your Family Safe
Visit swchildrens.org/safety to get injury prevention tips for swimming, medication interaction, extreme heat and more.
For many people, the familiar twinge of an impending headache can spoil the best of days. Maybe it doesn't have to be that way. The two most common headache types—tension and migraine—can be relieved and possibly prevented by addressing three major contributors: stress, sleep and diet. Chaouki Khoury, MD, medical director of the Comprehensive Headache Center in Dallas, offers these tips for tempering the pain in your temples.

1. Manage your stress. Bypass a full-blown headache with stress management techniques like yoga, meditation, Pilates, acupuncture and massage therapy.

2. Get your ZZZs. Regular sleep can decrease the frequency of migraines. “Try to keep your sleep schedule on the weekends as close as possible to your sleep schedule during the week,” Dr. Khoury says.

3. Stay hydrated. Dr. Khoury recommends drinking plenty of water, and not just when you’re thirsty. Set a goal of at least eight 8-ounce glasses daily.

4. Keep clear of tobacco smoke. Firsthand and secondhand smoke can trigger or exacerbate headaches.

5. Limit your screen time. All those hours fixed to TVs, computers, tablets and smartphones can cause headaches and disrupt sleep-wake cycles. Dr. Khoury recommends switching off screens an hour or two before bedtime.

6. Sidestep food triggers. “Not everybody has a food trigger, but if you see a connection between something you’re eating or drinking and your migraines, you want to avoid it,” he says. The most common culprits are alcohol, artificial sweeteners and nitrates in cured meats.

7. Avoid medication overuse. “Though many people need over-the-counter medications, if they are taken 15 days or more a month they can worsen your headache,” Dr. Khoury says. If you rely on over-the-counter medication most days and also have headaches, talk to your doctor.

8. Cut out caffeine. “Drinking daily caffeine has a similar effect on headaches as medication overuse,” he says. Caffeine also disrupts sleep and causes dehydration, which contribute to headaches, too.

9. See your doctor or a headache specialist if these techniques don’t work or if headaches increase in frequency or intensity.
MOVED TO TAKE ACTION

It got to the point where Daude's family planned everything around managing her back problems. "I'd have to lie on the floor at least twice a day to try to relieve the pain," Daude says. "My kids [sons Willie and Joshua and daughter Whitney] just got used to talking to me that way."

Finally, Daude decided it was time for surgery. A team at Scott & White performed the 11-hour procedure in 2009. Because her spine was twisted like a candy cane, Daude says, the surgeons removed five sets of vertebrae and built a titanium cage with rods that aligned her spine. Although it would be months before Daude could return to routine activity, she was walking within days of her operation, which was the only physical therapy she needed.

"It was really a best-case scenario, because now the pain is gone," says the 52-year-old Daude. "The surgery changed everything. I have quality of life again."

WHAT PAIN CAN TELL YOU

Not everyone with lower-back pain has scoliosis or needs major surgery, says Mark D. Rahm, MD, chair of the Department of Orthopedic Surgery and an orthopedic spine surgeon at Scott & White Memorial Hospital–Temple. But the location of the discomfort can help doctors get to the right diagnosis and treatment.

Lower-back pain is common. Scoliosis is one culprit, which usually begins in adolescence but can develop in adulthood, too. Pain can also be caused by injuries like muscle strains and sprains, or by wear and tear on the spinal disks due to the normal course of aging and activity.

Pain in the lower back will often go away on its own, maybe with the help of ice, heat, over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medicine or therapeutic exercises. But if it doesn't get better after about three months—or if there is numbness in the legs or trouble moving arms or legs—then a closer look is warranted. Using MRI and lower-radiation 3-D imaging, specialists can identify the source of the problem.

EXPLORING TREATMENTS

Although many kinds of surgery can help, Dr. Rahm recommends nonsurgical approaches first. "There is a long list of things we can try, including losing weight, chiropractic treatment, physical therapy, prescription medications and spinal injections," he says. If surgery is needed, there are many options depending on the underlying cause of the back pain, including spinal fusion or decompression surgery. Many of these procedures are minimally invasive and can be done on an outpatient basis. Others, like Daude's surgery, are more complex.

"Surgery to fix spinal deformities is probably one of the biggest procedures we do to help with back pain," Dr. Rahm says. "It shouldn't be the first thing you try, but once folks get through the surgery and recovery, they are happy."

Doctors pinpoint the cause of back pain and offer a wide range of options for relief

Back pain wasn’t anything new to Carol Daude. The wife and mother of three had lived with it for years, figuring it was a normal byproduct of an active, busy life.

But the situation was getting progressively worse. Daude had a burning sensation in her hip. It was so bad that she’d ask her husband, Michael, if her hip was red because it felt as though it were “on fire,” she says. Then shooting pain would travel down her leg, making it numb, and eventually her entire back and neck hurt because she was always trying to compensate.

“Chronic pain steals your sleep, your energy and your joy,” Daude says.

About seven years ago, the Killeen resident was diagnosed with scoliosis, an abnormal curving or deformity of the spine. Her doctor told her she was a candidate for surgery that would realign her spine and stop the pain.

Like most people, Daude tried other options first, working with pain management experts at Scott & White Healthcare. Massage therapy, medications and spinal injections worked for a while but never resolved the issue.

REAL PATIENTS. REAL STORIES.

Back on Track

Doctors pinpoint the cause of back pain and offer a wide range of options for relief

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5 ways to ease joint pain
Joint pain may slow you down, but it doesn’t have to stop you. Consider these tips from Andy McDonnell, PT, supervisor of outpatient physical therapy at Scott & White Clinic – Round Rock and Scott & White Clinic – Pflugerville, for easing yours.

1. Keep moving. “Joint pain can make you feel like you should move less, but inactivity can actually increase stiffness and weakness,” McDonnell says.

2. Stay strong. By strengthening the muscles that protect the joint, you can increase stability and enhance shock absorption.

3. Be flexible. “When the muscles around the joint are tight, it compresses the joint surface, which can increase pain,” McDonnell says. “Stretching as part of your fitness routine can help.”

4. Exercise wisely. McDonnell recommends choosing low-impact activities like the elliptical, bicycling or swimming instead of running or high-impact aerobics.

5. Listen to your body. “If you experience a flare-up of pain and inflammation over and above what’s normal for you, use the RICE [rest, ice, compression and elevation] technique,” McDonnell says. “If your pain isn’t alleviated after a few days, talk to your health care professional.”

Healing starts here
To learn more about physical therapy services at a Scott & White facility in your area, visit physicaltherapy.sw.org today.
Everyone in the family has a role. As a parent, you’re the coach of the decisions that most affect your team’s health: diet, exercise and doctor appointments.

Although each family member may have specific health needs, there are certain plays you can make that will keep everyone in the game.

**KEY PLAY 1: EAT HEALTHY (MOSTLY)**

Unless your family has special dietary needs, healthy eating can be simple. You don’t need to have a master’s degree in nutrition. Just aim to eat meals made with natural foods—whole fruits, vegetables, grains and proteins—most of the time.

“We often think about and are concerned with the side effects of medication,” says John Joseph, MD, a family medicine physician at Scott & White Clinic – Killeen. “But very seldom do we take a look at the side effects of the food and drink we put in our body two, three, four times a day.”

**KEY PLAY 2: BE ACTIVE TOGETHER**

Physical activity is essential at every age. But rather than trying to squeeze a trip to the gym into an already hectic day, why not simply be more active as a family?

“When your kids go out to play, go with them,” Dr. Joseph suggests. “It not only sets a good example, but you’ll also bond as a family.”

The next time your kids complain that there’s nothing to do, break out the bikes, head to a park or start a game of capture the flag in the backyard. You’ll cure boredom and set a positive example of fitness at the same time.
CONCUSSIONS: PLAY IT SAFE

Every season, up to 20 percent of high school and college athletes in contact sports suffer a concussion—many of which go undiagnosed. If these athletes return to sports before they fully recover, a second blow could cause catastrophic brain damage or even death.

Fortunately, there’s a new way to protect your child against these kinds of head injuries. Scott & White Healthcare’s concussion program now offers ImPACT (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing), a noninvasive, 20-minute test that measures memory, concentration and reaction time. If your child suffers a concussion, these baseline test results can be used to evaluate the injury and facilitate a safe return to play.

Texas law now requires that any athlete who has experienced a past concussion be evaluated and cleared by a physician before returning to play. If your child plans to play sports this fall, make an appointment to have an ImPACT screening completed before school starts.

KEY PLAY 3: SEE THAT EVERYONE GOES TO THE DOCTOR

That means you, too, parents. It’s easy to put off doctor visits when you’re an adult and you feel well, but they’re too important to skip. You don’t fall behind on your child’s checkups—why would yours be any less significant?

“Annual visits are all about prevention,” Dr. Joseph says. “It’s much better to prevent disease than to treat disease.”

Mark your calendar for yearly exams for everyone in the family. You might even make a day of it, when the whole family goes to the doctor in the morning and then does something fun together in the afternoon as a reward.

KEY PLAY 4: GET IMMUNIZED

If you follow the previous play, this one should be a gimme because your doctor will recommend an immunization schedule. Of course, it’s up to you to follow it. And don’t let the immunization debate of recent years deter you.

“Immunizations are incredibly important, and the recent outbreak of measles stresses just how important,” Dr. Joseph says. “Not only do immunizations protect your child and yourself, but they also help protect those who are medically unable to be immunized.” Staying on top of immunizations includes annual flu shots for everyone 6 months and older.

“The flu vaccine is one of my favorite ones,” Dr. Joseph says. “I strongly encourage it. Why allow your child to suffer with an illness you can easily prevent?”

KEY PLAY 5: KEEP SAFETY IN MIND

You learned after watching your toddler continually talk on his pretend cellphone that kids model what their parents do. So set a safe example whenever you can.

Wear helmets when you ride bikes. Always buckle up, no matter how short a distance you’re traveling. And take the proper time to heal after you get hurt. Be on the lookout for injuries in your children, too, particularly concussions.

“Concussions are more detrimental than what we originally believed,” Dr. Joseph says. “Don’t ever try to hide a concussion. Get treated and wait the required period of time before returning to sports. It could save your child’s life.”
The Spice of Life

A component of turmeric could help improve the effectiveness of chemotherapy for people with colon cancer

If you’ve ever had the pleasure of enjoying Indian cuisine, you’ve probably tasted turmeric. This fragrant, golden spice is made from the roots of the turmeric plant and is commonly found in Indian dishes. But its benefits extend far beyond the kitchen.

Turmeric has been used in medicine for thousands of years, and it is purported to have both antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

In the past few decades, researchers have taken a special interest in the spice, specifically a substance found in it called curcumin.

“Studies have been done on curcumin for almost every disease you can think of, and the vast majority have found it to be beneficial,” says Ajay Goel, PhD, director of the center for gastrointestinal cancer research and the center for epigenetics, cancer prevention and cancer genomics at Baylor Research Institute.

“AIDING EXISTING TREATMENTS
But if you ask Dr. Goel, the most exciting use for curcumin is its potential to help treat cancer. Last fall, he and his colleagues completed a one-year study that looked at curcumin as a treatment for colon cancer in combination with a traditional chemotherapy program.

“Part of what makes advanced colon cancer so difficult to treat is a process that allows cancer cells to migrate through the bloodstream and spread to other parts of the body,” Dr. Goel explains.

In this two-part study, the Baylor Research Institute team administered curcumin to colon cancer cells along with chemotherapy, first in live cultures and later in animal studies. “What we found,” he says, “is that when curcumin was administered, the cancer cell migration was inhibited, making chemotherapy much more effective in these experimental models.”

GREAT PROMISE
The results of the study were published in the February online edition of the journal Carcinogenesis, and Dr. Goel says he’s hopeful these findings will be used to help develop more effective colon cancer treatments in the near future.

“We’ve known for a long time that curcumin is beneficial, but with this study we’ve finally shown one of the most important mechanisms behind how it works,” he says. “I believe the next generation of cancer treatments will target and influence the way genes express themselves, and curcumin has shown great promise for possible use in these kinds of treatments.”

ABOUT THE STUDY
Exploring Curcumin as an Adjunctive Treatment for Colon Cancer
When combined with chemotherapy, curcumin (found in the spice turmeric) may help stop colon cancer from spreading, enhancing the effectiveness of treatment.

Key Researcher: Baylor Research Institute

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Advancing Medicine

Colon cancer may be more effectively treated with chemotherapy when a component of turmeric is also administered. A spice commonly used in Indian dishes, turmeric contains a substance called curcumin, which is known for its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. In recent studies, researchers have shown curcumin can inhibit cancer cell migration and, along with chemotherapy, help prevent cancer cells from spreading.

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In these kinds of treatments, the curcumin added to the traditional chemotherapy program improved the effectiveness of enhancing the treatment. The component from the spice turmeric (called curcumin) found in the roots of the turmeric plant and is made from the spice, specifically taken a special interest in experimental models. "Part of what makes advanced cancer so difficult to treat is the prevention and cancer will target and influence the way genes express themselves, and curcumin has been shown great promise for possible use in these kinds of treatments."

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