

# NEWS *Line*

A Publication of Monmouth Medical Center's Senior Health Services

## Breaking Silence on Common Health Problem Women with Pelvic Organ Prolapse Finding New Solutions to Stay Active in Later Years

For generations, women have silently accepted the loss of urinary control and other related pelvic problems in their later years as the "inescapable cost of motherhood or being a woman."

But rather than living with the embarrassment, discomfort and declining self-confidence caused by a condition called pelvic organ prolapse, a growing number of women today are seeking treatment so that they can stay active well beyond menopause.



Female pelvic medicine specialist Daniel Kim, M.D., is trained in the medical and surgical treatment of pelvic organ prolapse.

"Pelvic organ prolapse is a common but rarely talked about female health problem, affecting approximately one in every three women age 45 and older," says Daniel Kim, M.D., a urogynecologist who recently joined Monmouth Medical Center's Division of Female Pelvic Medicine and Pelvic Reconstructive Surgery (see page 4).

The condition results from the weakening, breaking or stretching of the connective tissue, muscles and nerves comprising the pelvic floor. "This weakening allows the uterus, bladder or rectum to drop, bulge or prolapse into the vagina," Dr. Kim explains.

Causes for this condition include childbirth, repetitive strenuous work, chronic coughing or straining, or an inherited weakness of tissue.

Women with pelvic organ prolapse may experience a range of symptoms, including pressure in the pelvic area, sensation of a bulge, urine leakage, difficulty in urination, constipation or painful

*continued on page 4*

## PINPOINTING PELVIC PROBLEMS

The Division of Female Pelvic Medicine and Pelvic Reconstructive Surgery at Monmouth Medical Center offers a full range of services for women with pelvic floor disorders.

"The pelvic floor is the muscles, ligaments and nerves that support and control the bladder, uterus, vagina and rectum. It can be damaged by childbirth, excessive straining or lifting, chronic disease or surgery," says urogynecologist Sandra Greco, M.D., who leads the division.



"At Monmouth Medical Center, we work with patients and their physicians to develop the best course of

treatment to relieve the problems and symptoms caused pelvic floor disorders."

Dr. Greco and Monmouth Medical Center colleague Daniel Kim, M.D., are among some 500 U.S. physicians, including a select group in New Jersey, fellowship trained in female pelvic medicine and pelvic reconstructive surgery.

They are highly skilled to determine whether pelvic floor disorders are causing the following conditions:

- **Urinary incontinence:** Loss of bladder control or leakage of urine.
- **Prolapse:** Descent of pelvic organs, including the bladder, uterus, vagina or rectum; vaginal bulge or pressure.
- **Bladder pain and hypersensitivity:** Pelvic discomfort or burning associated with the bladder.
- **Overactive bladder:** Frequent need to void; bladder pressure; urgency or difficulty holding a full bladder.

To assess a patient's condition, the division is equipped to provide comprehensive

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## Safeguarding Your Joints Lessens 'Wear and Tear' of Osteoarthritis

By Mutahir Abidi, M.D.

Medical Director

Center for Arthritis and Rheumatologic Disorders  
Monmouth Medical Center



Of the more than 100 different types of arthritic conditions, osteoarthritis is the most disabling disease among older adults because of its "wear and tear" impact on the hands, feet, spine and large weight-bearing joints, such as the hips and knees.

Osteoarthritis results from the breakdown of the cartilage of one or more joints. It starts with minor breaks in the cartilage — the substance that serves as a "shock absorber" between the bones of the joints.

Through the repetitive use of the joints over the years, the cartilage becomes irritated and inflamed, causing joint pain and swelling, and limited joint mobility. Eventually, cartilage begins to degenerate by flaking or forming tiny cracks. In advanced cases, there is a total loss of the cartilage between the joint bones.

Arthritic joint pain is often described as a dull ache that is occasionally sharp with sudden movements. It usually worsens later in the day, causing swelling, warmth and creaking of the affected joints. Pain and stiffness also can occur after long periods of inactivity, such as sitting or lying in one position.

Since there is no specific way to halt cartilage degeneration or to repair damaged cartilage, treatment is aimed at:

- Reducing joint pain and inflammation.

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## Lifetime and Estate Planning

Tuesday, April 4 • 10-11:30 a.m.

PRESENTED BY: LAURA TENENBAUM, SAINT BARNABAS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM FOUNDATION DIRECTOR OF PLANNED GIVING

Monmouth Medical Center, 300 Second Avenue, Long Branch. To register, call 1-888-SBHS-123.

## Stress-Free Workshops

Tuesday, April 11 and May 9 • 7-9 p.m. • \$10/person

APRIL'S TOPIC: "Finding Joy"

MAY'S TOPIC: "Meditation for Inner Calm"

Monmouth Medical Center, 300 Second Avenue, Long Branch. To register, call 1-888-SBHS-123.

## Protecting Yourself from Lyme Disease

Wednesday, April 19 • 1-3 p.m.

PRESENTED BY: MUTAHIR ABIDI, M.D., RHEUMATOLOGY SCAN Learning Center (age 50 and over), Monmouth Mall, Eatontown. To register, call 732-542-1326.

## Diabetes Update

Wednesday, April 26 • 1-3 p.m.

PRESENTED BY: BERNARD SHAGAN, M.D., ENDOCRINOLOGY AND INTERNAL MEDICINE SCAN Learning Center (age 50 and over), Monmouth Mall, Eatontown. To register, call 732-542-1326.

## Health and Fitness Expo

Friday, April 28 • 3-7 p.m.

Saturday, April 29 • 9 a.m.-7 p.m.

As part of the New Jersey Marathon Weekend, Monmouth Medical Center will be a sponsor of this Health and Fitness Expo, featuring health care professionals who will provide health information, screenings and more.

Ocean Place Resort and Spa, Long Branch.

Be sure to bring your grandchildren to our Doll and Teddy Bear Clinic.

## Count Your Calcium

Wednesday, May 3 • 1-3 p.m.

SCAN Learning Center (age 50 and over), Monmouth Mall, Eatontown. To register, call 732-542-1326.



THESE PROGRAMS ARE BROUGHT TO YOU BY  
**The Center For Kids & Family at Monmouth**

### Osteoarthritis continued from page 1

- Improving and maintaining joint function.
- Avoiding further cartilage loss.

### A Conservative Approach to Treatment

Here are several simple steps that can be taken to effectively manage osteoarthritis by focusing on the joints:

- Even modest weight reduction can decrease arthritic symptoms of the large joints, such as the knees and hips.
- Rest the joints by simply reducing the intensity and/or frequency of activities that consistently cause joint pain.
- When performed at levels that do not cause pain, exercise can strengthen the muscular support around the joints, prevent the joints from "freezing up," improve and maintain joint mobility, and help in losing weight and promoting endurance.
- Swimming is particularly effective because minimal impact stress is placed on the joints. Other popular exercises include walking, stationary cycling and light weight training.

## Hypnosis for Weight Loss

Thursday, May 11 • 7-9 p.m. • \$35/person

## Hypnosis to Stop Smoking

Thursday, June 8 • 7-9 p.m. • \$35/person

Monmouth Medical Center, 300 Second Avenue, Long Branch.

To register, call 1-888-SBHS-123.

## Communication Skills for Stressful Situations

Friday, May 12 • 9:30 a.m.

Marlboro Township Community Center, 1996 Recreation Way.

Senior Program membership and registration required; call 732-617-0100.

## Speaking Out on Urinary Incontinence

Tuesday, May 16 • 11-11:45 a.m.

PRESENTED BY: DANIEL KIM, M.D., FEMALE PELVIC MEDICINE (See cover story for more information on this common, yet unspoken health problem among older women.)

Howell Senior Center (age 60 and over), 251 Preventorium Road.

Free membership and registration required; call 732-938-4500, ext. 2554.

## Dementia

Wednesday, May 31 • 10-11 a.m.

PRESENTED BY: JESSICA ISRAEL, M.D., INTERNAL MEDICINE

As part of Marlboro Township Senior Health Day, Community Center, 1996 Recreation Way. Senior Program membership

and registration required; call 732-617-0100.



## Is the Medicare Prescription Drug Program Right for You?

Friday, April 21 and Tuesday, May 9

10-11:30 a.m. To register, call 1-888-SBHS-123. As an affiliate of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System, Monmouth Medical Center is collaborating

with Aetna Medicare to offer free educational workshops on the new Medicare Prescription Drug Program, which took effect this year.

Participants will be given an overview of the program, including a description of available options for 2006.\*

COMPLIMENTARY INFORMATION KITS AND LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED.

\*You have until Monday, May 15 to register for the federal Medicare Prescription Drug Program without a penalty.

- Apply local heat before and cold packs after exercise to affected areas of the body.
- Use support devices, such as splints, canes, walkers and braces, to reduce stress on the larger joints. For the hands, splints can support individual joints of the fingers, and paraffin wax dips, warm water soaks and nighttime cotton gloves also can be beneficial.
- Spine symptoms can improve with a neck collar, lumbar corset or a firm mattress, depending on what areas are involved.

In the next issue of NewsLine, Dr. Abidi will explore how certain medications and new surgical techniques can alleviate the symptoms of osteoarthritis.

If you have a question on arthritis that you would like Dr. Abidi to address, please call 732-923-7550.

## "To Your Health"

**MONTHLY SHOWCASE** • 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

PRESENTED BY: MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER AT MONMOUTH MALL, EATONTOWN (near the food court in front of the Sony Theatre).

**Wednesday, April 12** • 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

*In Recognition of Minority Health Month* Information that promotes healthy lifestyle choices among minority populations will be available, focusing on such topics of interest as maternal, infant and child health, cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

**Also Free Blood Pressure Screenings**

**Wednesday, May 10** • 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

**Cholesterol and Blood Pressure Screenings**

Following guidelines by the National Cholesterol Education Program, the cholesterol screening involves a simple "finger stick" blood test and does not require fasting before it is performed.

**\$10 fee for cholesterol screening.**

**Also Free Blood Pressure Screenings**

**Wednesday, April 12 and May 10**

**Free Blood Pressure Screenings**

10:30-11:30 a.m.

Long Branch Senior Center (age 60 and over), 85 Second Avenue. **No registration required.**

### Open Dialogue on Arthritis

**Mutahir Abidi, M.D.**, medical director of the Center for Arthritis and Rheumatologic Disorders at Monmouth Medical Center, will explore timely issues related to arthritis during two upcoming programs for seniors.

On **Tuesday, April 11**, Dr. Abidi will lead an 11 a.m. presentation on the differences between osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis at *Howell Senior Center, 251 Preventorium Road*.

He will explain the causes, symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of these two common forms of arthritis.

**Registration and free membership are required; call 732-938-5400, ext. 2554.**

During **Marlboro Township Senior Health Day** on **Wednesday, May 31**, Dr. Abidi will explore the relationship between certain forms of inflammatory arthritis and osteoporosis, which causes bones to become fragile and more likely to break.

His presentation, which begins at 1:15 p.m., will focus on the signs, symptoms and treatment options for both conditions.

**Senior Health Day** will be held at the *Marlboro Community Center, 1996 Recreation Way*. **Registration and membership are required; call 732-617-0100.**

## SUPPORT GUIDE FOR SENIORS

**M**onmouth Medical Center sponsors or hosts a wide variety of support groups that are led by professionals in their field. Sessions are held regularly, bringing people together to discuss concerns and share ideas.

*Unless otherwise indicated, sessions are held at Monmouth Medical Center, 300 Second Avenue, Long Branch.*

*Here's a list of groups of particular interest to seniors, including meeting times and telephone numbers. For more information, call The Center For Kids & Family at Monmouth at 732-923-6990.*

### GENERAL HEALTH

#### Bariatric Surgery Support

For persons who have undergone bariatric surgery for weight management or for those considering the procedure.

**Fourth Thursday, 7-9 p.m. • 1-888-SBHS-123**

#### Bereavement Support

For persons who have lost a loved one in the past year.

**Six-week program meets periodically.**

**Call 732-923-6463 for availability and registration.**

#### Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

For persons with this serious, often disabling syndrome, which is characterized by unrelenting exhaustion and unexplained fatigue that lasts more than 24 hours, and their family members.

**Third Tuesday, 7-8:30 p.m. • 732-923-6990**

#### Diabetes Support

For persons with diabetes, their family members and friends to learn how to be self-sufficient in the daily management of the disease.

**Third Wednesday, 7:30-9 p.m. • 732-923-6990**

#### Monmouth Easy Breathers

*Adult Pulmonary Support*

For adults with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema, chronic asthma, asthma or bronchitis and their family members.

*Co-sponsored by the American Lung Association of New Jersey.*

**First Tuesday, 2:15-3:30 p.m.**

**732-923-6990**

*Long Branch Senior Center, 85 Second Avenue, Long Branch.*

#### Smoke-Free Support

For persons who have recently quit smoking, are struggling in their attempts to quit or contemplating stopping the habit.

**Fourth Tuesday, 7-9 p.m.**

**732-923-6990**

### CANCER SERVICES

#### Early-Stage Breast Cancer Support

**Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7:15-9 p.m. • 732-923-7711**

#### Metastatic Breast Cancer Support

**First and third Tuesdays, 1-2:30 p.m. • 732-923-7711**

#### Colorectal Cancer Support

**First Wednesday, 7:30-9 p.m. • 732-923-7711**

#### Us TOO: Prostate Cancer Support

**First Thursday, 7-9 p.m. • 732-923-6575**

### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

#### Adult Attention Deficit Disorder Support

**Fourth Thursday, 7:30-9 p.m. • 732-842-4553**

### IN THE SPOTLIGHT May is National Stroke Awareness Month

*Co-sponsored by Monmouth Medical Center and the Rehabilitation Hospital of Tinton Falls, the Shore Area Stroke Survivors is a support group for stroke patients, their families and friends, featuring monthly speakers on stroke-related topics.*

**Second Wednesday, 2-4 p.m.**

**732-460-5377**

*Rehabilitation Hospital of Tinton Falls cafeteria, 2 Centre Plaza.*

## Pelvic Organ Prolapse

*continued from page 1*

intercourse. "Fortunately, most women with mild prolapse have no symptoms at all or can manage the problem without surgery," Dr. Kim says.

For these women, nonsurgical treatment options are effective, including performing Kegal exercises to strengthen the pelvic muscles or having a flexible pessary device inserted to support the pelvic area.

"But when symptoms become moderate to severe and begin to limit a woman's physical activity and quality of life, pelvic reconstructive surgery is the only definitive treatment," explains Dr. Kim, adding that by age 80, one in every 10 women will have undergone surgery for prolapse.

Through Monmouth Medical Center's Division of Female Pelvic Medicine and Pelvic Reconstructive Surgery (*see story at right*), recent advances in minimally inva-

sive surgery techniques are reducing the need for traditional surgery, which usually requires a three- to four-day hospital stay and six weeks of recovery from an abdominal incision.

"Newer procedures are now less invasive, avoiding the need for abdominal incisions," Dr. Kim says. "They often require the use of mesh material to repair or replace the damaged connective tissue. The mesh material is similar to what is used in hernia repair, but specifically designed for use in female pelvic floor surgery."

Women undergoing these pelvic reconstructive procedures can now expect an overnight hospital stay and a return to normal daily activities within two weeks, although they are still advised to avoid heavy lifting or straining for three months.

**Pelvic Problems** *continued from page 1* diagnostic services that include urodynamic testing of bladder and urethra function, electrodiagnostic testing of the pelvic floor nerves, potassium sensitivity testing of the bladder and cystoscopy for the evaluation of stones, inflammation or tumors of the bladder.

Working in consultation with a patient's physician, a treatment plan is developed that may include fluid and dietary management, pelvic floor muscle exercises and strengthening, biofeedback and electrical stimulation, medication or pessary devices to manage prolapsed pelvic organs, as well as surgical techniques that can range from minimally invasive outpatient procedures to inpatient vaginal reconstructive procedures.

*For more information on the Division of Female Pelvic Medicine and Pelvic Reconstructive Surgery, call*

## Profiles in Senior Health

DANIEL KIM, M.D. • FEMALE PELVIC MEDICINE AND PELVIC RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY



**F**emale pelvic medicine specialist Daniel Kim, M.D., holds expertise in the latest techniques for the medical management and surgical treatment of female urinary incontinence and pelvic floor dysfunction.

He joins Monmouth Medical Center's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology from Long Island College Hospital, Brooklyn, where he served as the director of female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery.

At Monmouth, he works closely with Sandra Greco, M.D., chief of the Division of Pelvic Medicine and Pelvic Reconstructive Surgery.

Board certified in obstetrics and gynecology, Dr. Kim earned his medical degree from Northwestern University, Chicago, and completed the obstetrics and gynecology residency program at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia. He completed a fellowship in female pelvic medicine and pelvic reconstructive surgery from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

*The material in this newsletter is designed to inform the community of senior programs and services of Monmouth Medical Center, an affiliate of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System. It is intended for general purposes only. Always consult a physician for individualized medical advice.*

*If you wish to have your name removed from future mailings of NewsLine, please write to the Department of Public Relations and Marketing, Monmouth Medical Center, 300 Second Avenue, Long Branch, NJ 07740.*

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