

NEWS *Line*

A Publication of Monmouth Medical Center's Senior Health Services

Newly Accredited Chest Pain Center Aims to Reduce Heart-Related Deaths

Early Diagnosis of Symptoms Key to Effort

Chest pain is the reason why more than 5 million Americans arrive at hospital emergency departments each year. For 1.25 million of those patients, the problem is caused by cardiac distress, ultimately claiming 600,000 lives from heart disease.

As part of a national effort to reduce the number of heart-related deaths, Monmouth Medical Center recently joined a distinguished group of 141 acute care hospitals across the United States — and the first facility in Monmouth County — to attain national accreditation as a chest pain center.



Following Monmouth Medical Center's recent designation as a nationally accredited chest pain center, Emergency Medicine chair Jennifer Waxler, D.O., from right, discusses the care and treatment of patients experiencing early signs of a heart attack with Lynn Gonnello, clinical director of Monmouth's newly established chest pain observation unit, and Patricia Gaughran, program director for emergency services.

What is Chest Pain?

Chest pain or discomfort is characterized as being crushing or squeezing, feeling like a heavy weight on the chest. It is a major warning sign of a heart attack — the leading cause of death in the United States.

Acute myocardial infarction (AMI) is the medical term for what is commonly known as a heart attack. It occurs when a part of the heart muscle dies because of sudden total interruption of blood flow to that area.

Symptoms of AMI include varying degrees of chest pain or discomfort that usually is accompanied by:

- Weakness, dizziness or faintness
- Sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea and vomiting

MMC was among seven Saint Barnabas Health Care System affiliates to earn the highly regarded designation from the Society of Chest Pain Centers after successfully completing a rigorous accreditation process designed to improve performance in heart attack care.

"Chest pain centers provide a comprehensive management strategy for the evaluation, triage and appropriate treatment of chest pain patients by providing a facility where patients come in with the earliest symptoms, are evaluated in a calm environment and receive prompt, appropriate treatment," says Jennifer Waxler, D.O., chair of Emergency Medicine at Monmouth.

Working within emergency departments, chest pain centers provide highly trained specialists to evaluate and treat patients who present with chest pain, distinguishing them from the emergency departments that have a more trauma-oriented focus.

Chest pain centers seek to reduce the death and disability currently associated with acute myocardial infarction (AMI) by educating the community about symptoms to improve patient response to chest

continued on page 4



Older Adults Should Keep Watchful Eye on Changing Food-Drug Interactions

By Tulay Ersan, M.D.
Monmouth Medical Center
Director of Geriatrics

Older patients are not only more likely to be on multiple medications, but the effects of these medications are frequently altered because of the normal aging process.

As a result, physiologic changes associated with age can affect drug absorption, distribution, metabolism and excretion, as well as drug action. Restrictive diets and alcoholism also may increase the potential for these interactions in many people.

Additionally, drug actions and risks can be affected by certain age-related factors, such as decreased stomach emptying and intestinal motility, a decreased ratio of lean body weight to body fat, and decreased kidney and liver function. Therefore, the older population is at particularly high risk for food-drug interactions, as the ingestion of certain foods may reduce, increase, delay or accelerate drug absorption.

The quantity and quality of food also is influential. Today's popular high-protein, low-carbohydrate diets can accelerate the liver metabolism of several drugs; alcohol can have similar effects. Milk and other products containing calcium can interact with some drugs (such as antibiotics

continued on page 2

When Food, Drugs Don't Mix

Here are examples of some common medication-and-food interactions:

- **Amiodarone (for heart disease):** Increased absorption with grapefruit juice, causing high blood levels, side effects and toxicity.
- **Aspirin:** Decreased absorption with food, causing diminished effect.
- **Diazepam or Valium, carbamazepine, trazodone (for anxiety disorders, seizures and depression):** Increased absorption, significantly enhances effects and toxicities.
- **Digoxin (for heart disease):** Decreased absorption with high-fiber products, causing decreased effect.
- **Fosamax, Actonel (for osteoporosis):** Complete nonabsorption if taken with food; should be taken only with water on an empty stomach.
- **Glipizide, metformin (for diabetes):** Decreased effect with food.

continued on page 2

Surgical Options for Weight Loss

Wednesday, October 5 • 7-9 p.m.

PRESENTED BY: FRANK BORAO, M.D., DIRECTOR OF LAPAROSCOPIC SURGERY AT MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER, AND GREGORY GRECO, D.O., PLASTIC AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

Monmouth Medical Center, 300 Second Avenue, Long Branch.

Registration required; call 1-888-SBHS-123.

Stress-Free Workshops

Tuesday, October 11 and November 8 • 7-9 p.m.

\$10/person

OCTOBER'S TOPIC: "Natural Healing Ways"

NOVEMBER'S TOPIC: "Getting a Good Night's Sleep"

Monmouth Medical Center, 300 Second Avenue,

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

Hearing and Balance Disorders: Facts vs. Fiction

Free hearing screenings for program participants following lecture

Wednesday, October 19 • 1 p.m.

PRESENTED BY: BRAD BUCHHOLTZ, CLINICAL AUDIOLOGIST AT THE BALANCE DISORDERS CENTER AT MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER

Long Branch Senior Center (age 60 and over), 85 Second Avenue.

Registration and free membership required; call 732-571-6542.

IN OBSERVANCE OF BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

What You Should Know About Breast Health and Breast Self-Exams

Wednesday, October 19 • 1-3 p.m.

SCAN Learning Center (age 50 and over), Monmouth Mall, Eatontown.

Registration and SCAN membership required; call 732-542-1326.

55 Alive: Mature Driving

Presented in association with the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)

Monday, October 24 and Tuesday, October 25

10 a.m.-3 p.m.

\$10/person (made payable to AARP)

Monmouth Medical Center, 300 Second Avenue, Long Branch. Registration

required; call 1-888-SBHS-123.



Food and Drugs continued from box on page 1

■ **Levothyroxine** (for hypothyroidism): Decreased effect and thyroid hormone with food.

■ **Lithium** (for psychological disorders): Increased effect with food and low salt intake.

■ **Sildenafil, Viagra** (for erectile dysfunction): Substantial increased absorption and cardiovascular side effects with grapefruit juice.

■ **Sinemet** (for Parkinson's disease): Decreased effect with food, especially high-protein meals.

■ **Statins** (for cholesterol management): Increased absorption, significantly increased effect and toxicity (muscle aches) with grapefruit juice.

■ **Warfarin, Coumadin** (for heart disease): Decreased absorption and decreased effect with food, especially vegetables high in vitamin K.

Depression: Recognizing the Signs and Seeking Treatment

Wednesday, October 26 • 1-3 p.m.

PRESENTED BY: MICHELE AMATE, M.S.W., LCSW, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

SCAN Learning Center (age 50 and over), Monmouth Mall, Eatontown.

Registration and SCAN membership required; call 732-542-1326.



Living Wills and Advance Directives

Wednesday, November 2 • 1-3 p.m.

PRESENTED BY: BARBARA EKLUND, DIRECTOR OF HOSPICE SERVICES AT MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER

SCAN Learning Center (age 50 and over), Monmouth Mall, Eatontown.

Registration and SCAN membership required; call 732-542-1326.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Conference

Co-sponsored by Monmouth Medical Center and the New Jersey Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Association Inc. (NJCFSA Inc.)

Saturday, November 5 • Noon-5 p.m.

\$30/person (made payable to NJCFSA Inc.)

Sheraton Conference Center, Route 35, Eatontown.

Registration required; call 609-219-0662.

Free Blood Pressure Screening

Conducted by health care professionals from Monmouth Medical Center

Wednesday, November 9 • 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Long Branch Senior Center (age 60 and over),

85 Second Avenue. No registration required.

Gratitude Workshop: Count Your Blessings

Wednesday, November 16 • 1-3 p.m.

SCAN Learning Center (age 50 and over), Monmouth Mall, Eatontown.

Registration and SCAN membership required; call 732-542-1326.



THESE PROGRAMS ARE BROUGHT TO YOU BY

The Center For Kids & Family at Monmouth

Food, Drug Interactions continued from page 1

ciprofloxacin and tetracyclines), impairing their absorption. Dietary fiber can impair the absorption of penicillin.

Water Helps Drugs Flow through Body

As a rule, drugs are more promptly absorbed when taken with water. Inhibition of absorption can occur with some drugs when they are taken with acidic fruit juices, vegetable juices, carbonated beverages or caffeine.

When conditions such as congestive heart failure and urinary incontinence require fluid restriction, drug dissolution and absorption may be delayed.

It is helpful to keep in mind that at least one-half cup of water needs to be taken with medications to help ease potential stomach or esophageal irritation, as well as improve absorption.

Adverse interactions involving drugs and foods have

"To Your Health" Monthly Showcase

PRESENTED BY: MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER AND MONMOUTH MALL
10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

Wednesday, October 12

In recognition of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a representative from Monmouth Medical Center's renowned Jacqueline M. Wilentz Comprehensive Breast Center will be available to answer questions, while a registered nurse from The Center For Kids & Family will provide free information marking the observance of Healthy Babies Month. Free blood pressure screenings also will be offered.

Monmouth Mall, Eatontown (near the food court in front of the Sony Theatre).

Wednesday, November 9

■ Free Cholesterol Screenings

This simple "finger stick" blood test does not require fasting before it is performed. Since the screenings are limited to the first 80 registrants, call 1-888-SBHS-123 to reserve an appointment time.

■ Volunteer Opportunities at Monmouth Medical Center

Discover how you can make a difference as a hospital volunteer, assisting in the delivery of patient care or lending your expertise to a specific department.

■ And There's More ...

Marking both American Diabetes Month and National Hospice Month, the showcase also will feature information on both topics. In addition, a representative from Saint Barnabas Hospice and Palliative Care Center at Monmouth Medical Center will answer questions about its wide array of services.

Monmouth Mall, Eatontown (near the food court in front of the Sony Theatre).

become an important public health issue, particularly among older adults who are more at risk because of normal age-related changes. These events have been shown to cause hospitalizations, significant morbidity and even death.

It is always recommended to take medications exactly as instructed, and ask your physician or pharmacist when uncertain.

If you have a senior health topic you'd like Dr. Ersan to address, please call 732-923-6632.

SUPPORT GUIDE FOR SENIORS

Monmouth 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

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 Sunday, 1:30-3 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 Monday, 1:15-2:30 p.m. • 732-923-6990

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

Shore Area Stroke Survivors

For stroke patients and their family members and friends, featuring monthly speakers on stroke-related topics.

Second Wednesday, 7 p.m.

732-460-5377

Rehabilitation Hospital of Tinton Falls cafeteria, 2 Centre Plaza.

CANCER SERVICES

Hope, Survival and Strength

For newly or recently diagnosed cancer patients and their loved ones.

First Thursday, 6-7:30 p.m.

732-923-6727

Early-Stage Breast Cancer Support

Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7:15-9 p.m., and

second Wednesday, 2-3:30 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 (third Thursday in November), 7:30-9 p.m. • 732-842-4553

IN THE SPOTLIGHT *Are you participating in the* **Great American Smoke-Out** *on Thursday, November 17?*

If so, you can follow up on your pledge to quit smoking by joining the **Tuesday, November 22** session of Monmouth Medical Center's Smoke-Free Support Group. Opened to persons who have recently quit the stubborn habit, are struggling in their attempts to quit or contemplating smoking cessation, the group meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month from 7 to 9 p.m.

For more information, call 732-923-6990.

Chest Pain Center *continued from page 1*

pain, improving diagnosis and reducing the time it takes to start treatment (*see related story on cover*).

“Historically, patients have waited too long after the onset of symptoms of an AMI before seeking medical care,” Dr. Waxler says. “On average, a patient arrives in the emergency department more than two hours after first noticing symptoms. In fact, a small number of people wait more than 24 hours before seeking medical attention.

“If a patient with an AMI is treated within 70 minutes, damage to the heart can be minimized; but after delay, substantial heart damage can occur, minimizing the benefits of medical treatment,” she adds.

The Society of Chest Pain Centers notes that studies also indicate that significant delays can occur between the time the patient arrives in the emergency department and when the physician makes the diagnosis of AMI and initiates treatment.

“Recent advancements in heart attack treatment have greatly reduced deaths, but successful treatments are time dependent and so must be administered quickly,” Dr. Waxler says. “For a good outcome, the patient must quickly recognize the signs and symptoms of a heart attack, and

the physician must quickly diagnose it and start treatment.”

One goal of a chest pain center is to significantly reduce the time it takes for a patient experiencing symptoms of a possible heart attack to see a physician, thus reducing the time to treatment during the critical early stages — when treatments are most effective.

Another is to provide a specialized observation setting in which physicians are better able to monitor patients when it is not clear whether they are having a coronary event. Such observation helps ensure that a patient is neither sent home too early nor needlessly occupying a cardiac care unit (CCU) bed.

At Monmouth Medical Center, all patients with chest pain are admitted for a 23-hour stay to a newly established observation unit, where they undergo a battery of cardiac diagnostic procedures. Patients who are determined to be suffering a heart attack are admitted to the CCU.

To learn more about the Chest Pain Center at Monmouth Medical Center, call 732-923-7311.

Profiles in Senior Health • PAUL HASER, M.D., GENERAL AND VASCULAR SURGERY



Vascular surgeon Paul Haser, M.D., has joined Monmouth Medical Center’s Medical and Dental Staff.

Board certified in both general surgery and vascular surgery, he holds expertise in the diagnosis, minimally invasive intervention including endo-

vascular alternatives and surgical treatment of circulatory system disorders.

Dr. Haser has also been named assistant program director of Surgery at Monmouth. In that academic position, he plays an integral role in the academic and clinical training of resident physicians in its five-year general surgery residency program.

Dr. Haser earned his medical degree from Northwestern University in Chicago and received his general surgery residency training at The Brookdale University Hospital Medical Center in Brooklyn, N.Y.

He completed a two-year fellowship in vascular

surgery at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ)-New Jersey Medical School, Newark, where he participated in the state’s first endovascular implant procedure to treat an abdominal aortic aneurysm. The type of aneurysm, most common in men age 50 or older, is a bulge that forms in a weak spot of the aorta, the body’s largest blood vessel.

Before joining Monmouth Medical Center, Dr. Haser served at UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School in two capacities — as a clinical assistant professor of surgery and director of endovascular surgery.

An associate fellow of the American College of Surgeons, he holds professional memberships in the Vascular Society of New Jersey, American Heart Association, Society of Vascular Ultrasound and the Society of Vascular Surgery.

Dr. Haser actively participates in several national clinical trials in advanced vascular surgery, and his research work has been extensively published in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Vascular Surgery*.

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.



Newsline is published by the Department of Public Relations and Marketing at Monmouth Medical Center, an affiliate of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System

Frank J. Vozos, M.D., FACS

Executive Director, Monmouth Medical Center

Kathleen M. Horan, Director of Publications

Mary K. Heintz, Creative Services Manager

Cathy A. Goetz/Words Count, Editor

Jeffrey D. Burke and Danny Sanchez, Photography

We invite your comments by calling

732-923-6632 or writing us at

Department of Public Relations and Marketing

Monmouth Medical Center

300 Second Avenue, Long Branch, NJ 07740

www.sainbarnabas.com



Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 108
Long Branch, NJ
07740