

HEALTH CONNECTION

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR LIFE

PLAY IT
SAFE
in the
Game of Life

CHECK YOUR HEALTH —
IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

YOUR LUNGS:
AN INSIDE LOOK



BETTER LATE THAN NEVER!

VAPING: Lost in a Haze

You may have heard about people turning to vaping to help them stop smoking. Does it work? Is it safe?

Like cigarettes, e-cigarettes contain nicotine and other chemicals. So, while someone with a nicotine addiction might find relief in vaping, they won't put an end to their addiction. Others who have never smoked can become addicted to nicotine through e-cigarettes. In fact, research published in *Pediatrics* has found that teenagers who vape are more likely to smoke traditional cigarettes.

E-cigarettes themselves are not terribly safe, since they're unregulated. There's no way of being sure what chemicals they contain; poisons such as formaldehyde and antifreeze have been found in e-cigarettes. Even e-cigarettes marketed as "nicotine-free" have been found to contain nicotine, which is known to be harmful to cognitive development in adolescents. And because e-cigarettes are often flavored like fruit or candy, they're particularly attractive to younger age groups.

When it comes to vaping, the best advice is: Don't! And be sure your children and teenagers are well-informed so they can make sound decisions about e-cigarettes.



Looking for a primary care provider? Courtney Ledbetter, MPAS, PA-C, is accepting new patients. Call (618) 833-2295 to schedule an appointment.

Courtney Ledbetter, physician assistant and a member of the allied health staff at Union County Hospital, treats patients of all ages.

You didn't get your flu shot for how many years, now? No matter, because you never get the flu, right? Why not skip the 2018–19 season, too.

Sadly, this thinking isn't grounded in reality. You don't get vaccinations and screenings because you're sure to get sick without them — you get them to prevent or mitigate the rare, but very possible, chance you might get sick.

Here are some screenings and shots that people typically avoid or forget — and why they're important.

SCREENING OR VACCINATION	BENEFITS TO YOU
Cervical cancer (Pap smear)	Identifies abnormal cervical cells, precancerous lesions and early cervical cancer
Mammogram	Can reduce number of breast cancer deaths in women ages 40–74
Colorectal cancer	Can often detect and remove polyps before they become colon cancer
Tetanus	Can prevent tetanus, a disease that requires immediate medical attention
Hepatitis A	Can prevent hepatitis A, a disease that may cause liver problems and death
Pneumococcal	Can protect against pneumococcal disease that kills more than 16,000 adults age 65 and older annually

**Screening and immunization data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

LOVE and Your Health

Love helps build healthy bodies. Doubt it?

- Extreme emotional distress can cause broken heart syndrome or lead to short-term heart muscle failure.
- Getting frequent hugs may improve immune response and reduce stress.
- For men, love and support from a significant other reduces their chances of duodenal ulcer and angina.
- The quality of intimate relationships (positive or negative) can raise or lower your risk for coronary heart disease.



Favorite Things

Chocolate, citrus fruits, mints, coffee, caffeinated sodas, tea, onions, tomato products, and spicy or fried foods can cause heartburn.

HEARTBURN

A Burning Question

Heartburn, or the feeling of burning in the chest, is the body's common response to eating too much or eating certain foods. Lifestyle changes can limit your reliance on antacids for relief.



MEET DR. AITI



Tamer Aiti, M.D., FICS

Tamer Aiti, M.D., FICS, is a member of the American Medical Association, American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy and Society of Surgical Oncology.

During his training, Dr. Aiti completed fellowships in abdominal organ transplantation and surgical oncology.

In addition to his surgical skills, Dr. Aiti is known for his compassionate, personal style of care, receiving multiple patient satisfaction awards. He focuses on each patient as an individual, making sure he or she understands the condition, treatment options and details of the surgery and recovery process. Dr. Aiti maintains strong relationships with patients from their preoperative visits through surgeries to the last follow-up appointment.

Visit UCGeneralSurgery.com for more information.

Dr. Aiti is a member of the medical staff at Union County Hospital.

You may be all too familiar with the burning sensation of heartburn and having to take antacids to soothe the pain. The American College of Gastroenterology estimates that more than 60 million people in the U.S. experience heartburn symptoms at least once a month, and more than a quarter of those have heartburn daily.

LOW DOWN ON YOUR ESOPHAGUS

The sensation occurs when the acidic liquid from your stomach backs into the esophagus. A ring of muscle prevents this from happening, unless other factors loosen the seal.

Pregnant women are more at risk for heartburn due to hormones that slow digestion, according to the Office on Women's Health. People who have a hiatal hernia — part of the stomach is pushing through the diaphragm — or are obese or overweight are more at risk for heartburn symptoms as well.

Heartburn pain can last a few minutes or for hours. For many, spicy food,

overeating, wearing tight clothes or lying down too soon after eating is the cause.

PREVENTING HEARTBURN SYMPTOMS

The best treatment is prevention. To curb heartburn symptoms, try these lifestyle changes:

- Avoid wearing tight belts or clothing.
- Choose high-protein, low-fat foods.
- Don't eat a lot of spicy food.
- Eat several hours before lying down.
- Limit coffee, alcohol and carbonated drinks.
- Quit smoking if you do smoke.
- Reach and maintain a healthy weight.
- Stop eating when you are pleasantly full.

FEELING BETTER

For occasional heartburn symptoms, taking an over-the-counter antacid can manage discomfort. According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, raising the head of your bed six to nine inches can help reduce your risk for acid reflux when you sleep.



If you've made lifestyle changes and still suffer from frequent heartburn, call (618) 833-2872 to schedule an appointment with one of our experienced general surgeons.

Patient results may vary. Consult your doctor about the benefits and risks of any surgical procedure or treatment.

SAFETY *Checkup*

Are you up to date on the latest safety precautions? Check out these tips to help safeguard your family's health.

Burn Notice

Fire is not the only household burn hazard. Burns can also be caused by chemicals, steam, hot liquids, gases, friction or electrical current.



First-degree burns damage the top layer of skin, causing redness, swelling and pain.



Second-degree burns damage the outer skin and the dermis, the underlying skin layer.



Third-degree burns destroy both layers of skin and damage the tissue below. These serious burns require immediate emergency medical care.

COOL, COVER, COMFORT

For minor burns, apply cool — not cold or icy — water. Bandage loosely with sterile gauze or a nonstick bandage. If needed, use over-the-counter medications, such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen or naproxen, to relieve pain.



WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

Most minor burns will heal on their own, but call 911 or head to the emergency room if the skin is broken or charred, the burn is larger than three inches across, or is located on the face, hands, feet, genitals or a major joint such as the knee or shoulder.

True or False?

- Q:** Applying butter soothes a burn.
- A: False.** Greasy substances such as butter and oil do not make burns feel better and may increase the risk of infection.

STEER CLEAR OF TROUBLE

Just about everyone knows that the safest course of action is to avoid using a cell phone while driving. Yet in a recent AT&T-sponsored survey, 61 percent of drivers admitted to texting, 28 percent reported surfing the internet and 17 percent said they take selfies behind the wheel.



ARE YOU FLYING BLIND?

According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, texting drivers take their eyes off the road for an average of 4.6 seconds. At 55 miles per hour, that's the length of a football field.



To check the laws in your state, visit the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) website at GHSA.org/State-Laws.

Concerned state lawmakers are taking action to curtail these hazardous behaviors. While no state currently prohibits all cell phone use by all drivers, new and increasingly strict legislation is being added to the books every year.



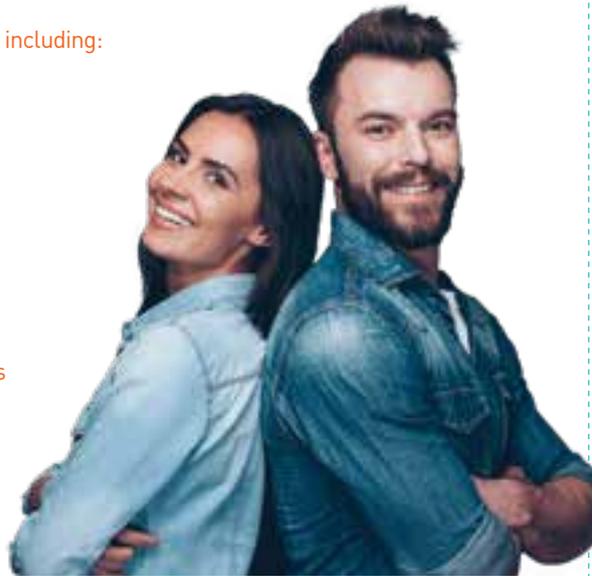
WOMEN ARE DIFFERENT FROM MEN

Ladies, watch for these less-common signs of heart attack, including:

- dizziness, light-headedness or fainting
- nausea or vomiting
- pain in the jaw, neck, back or stomach
- sudden indigestion, heartburn or persistent belching
- sweaty, clammy or chilled feeling
- unusual fatigue

Women are more likely to experience these signs of stroke:

- fast or fluttering heartbeat
- persistent hiccups
- nausea or vomiting
- shortness of breath
- overall weakness



COMMON STROKE SYMPTOMS INCLUDE SUDDEN:

- confusion
- coordination problems, such as stumbling or losing balance
- difficulty seeing, such as blurriness or double vision
- severe headache
- trouble speaking or understanding others
- weakness or numbness on one side of the body

TWO SIDES TO SAFE SLEEP

When it comes to the safest sleeping conditions for baby, there are two sides to the story.

According to new recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the safest sleep environment for baby is:

- a crib with only a tight-fitting sheet, no soft bedding, bumpers, pillows or toys
- in the parent's bedroom on a separate surface for at least the first six months and preferably the first 12 months of life
- on his or her back on a firm sleeping surface such as a crib or bassinet



SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

Quick treatment for heart attack or stroke can save a life. Know the signs and call 911 right away.

COMMON HEART ATTACK SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

- chest discomfort (pain, pressure, fullness or squeezing sensation)
- pain in one or both arms
- shortness of breath

What's the Difference?

Heart attack occurs when blood flow to the heart is blocked and heart muscle cells begin to die. Restoring blood flow quickly stops the damage and preserves heart function.

Stroke occurs when blood flow is blocked to the brain. According to the National Stroke Association, two million brain cells die every minute during a stroke, making fast treatment essential to survival and recovery.



Union County Hospital is an accredited Chest Pain Center and emergent stroke ready hospital. Visit UnionCountyHospital.com for more information.

We work diligently to have you initially seen by a medical professional within 30 minutes of your arrival in the ER.

PACK YOUR BAG

You can never predict when an emergency will occur. However, be prepared. Keep an emergency room (ER) go-bag in an easy-to-find location. Be sure to pack:

- copies of legal documents pertaining to your care, such as a healthcare proxy
- names and phone numbers for all current doctors
- insurance information and identification card
- names and phone numbers of anyone else who may need to be contacted
- a list of all medications, including over-the-counter medications and natural supplements
- a notebook and pen to keep track of important information, especially medication and discharge instructions
- a list of allergies
- a record of all medical conditions, diagnoses and any recent test or imaging results

Any medications you may need to take while at the ER, and important personal items, such as glasses and hearing aids, can be added when you leave for the hospital.



Approximately 9–21 percent of women and 24–31 percent of men have sleep apnea, according to the American Sleep Apnea Association, and most don't know it. Get tested if you don't enjoy restorative sleep.



More Than SNORING

Could that annoying snoring indicate sleep apnea?

A condition that affects more than 22 million Americans, sleep apnea causes the sufferer to stop breathing for 10 or more seconds while sleeping. In severe cases, breathing starts and stops as many as 30 times per hour, and, if left untreated, can be fatal.

Fortunately, if you talk with your doctor, he or she can discuss your risk factors and detect sleep apnea, and you can get the treatment you need to sleep easy.

RISKY BUSINESS

While sleep apnea can affect anyone, it is more likely in those with the following risk factors:

- being an older male
- being obese
- having a family history of sleep apnea
- living with congestive heart failure or having a personal history of stroke
- smoking
- having nasal congestion from chronic allergies or anatomical abnormalities
- using sedating/tranquilizing medication or alcohol

SLEEPY SYMPTOMS

The best-known signs of sleep apnea are snoring and frequent gasping for air during sleep. These may have to be confirmed by your bed partner, but you may experience other symptoms that indicate sleep apnea.

Feeling constantly tired during the day and experiencing decreased motor skills, memory or attention span may all point toward sleep apnea. Someone with sleep apnea may even wake frequently to urinate during the night, experience headaches or dry mouth when waking and have a decreased sex drive.

Because sleep apnea can lead to increased blood pressure, heart failure and stroke, diagnosis and treatment is vital. With treatment options such as a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) device or surgical removal of tissue blocking the individual from breathing, sleep apnea can be addressed for lasting results.

If you or a loved one snore heavily, constantly struggle to stay awake during the daytime or experience other sleep apnea symptoms, talk with your doctor about undergoing a sleep study.

Patient results may vary. Consult your doctor about the benefits and risks of any surgical procedure or treatment.

TOP SLEEP KILLERS

Sleep apnea isn't the only reason you aren't feeling well-rested every morning. Here are the other threats to your good sleep.

INSOMNIA — An inability to fall or stay asleep, insomnia is a complaint of one in three people, according to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, and can be treated by instituting good sleep habits, treating any underlying causes and undergoing specialized therapy.

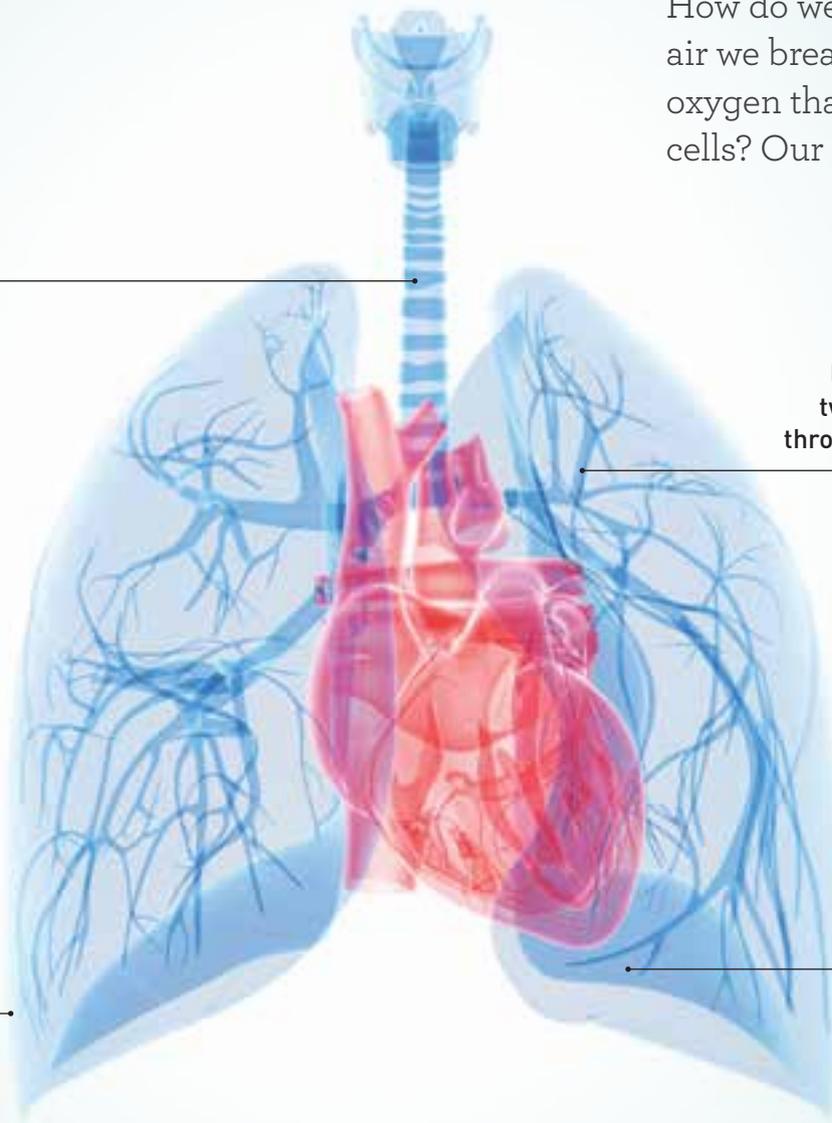
NARCOLEPSY — Causing excessive sleepiness or the sufferer to fall asleep at any time, narcolepsy is found in one in 2,000 Americans, according to the National Sleep Foundation. Treatment involves appropriate medication and lifestyle changes.

RESTLESS LEGS SYNDROME (RLS) — Found in 10 percent of the population, RLS causes an uncontrollable urge to move the legs. It is treated through medication and lifestyle changes.



Do you snore? Are you sleepy or tired during the day? Union County Hospital's Sleep Center may be able to help. For more information, please call (618) 833-1030.

TRANSFORMATIONAL ORGANS: YOUR LUNGS



How do we turn the air we breathe into the oxygen that powers our cells? Our lungs!

1. Air enters our lungs through the trachea.

Each lung has a branched structure that provides plenty of surface area for oxygen to be taken from air and carbon dioxide to be released back into the air. The small “cells” that form the branches are called alveoli. Each alveolus is wrapped with tiny blood vessels, and this is where the oxygen/carbon dioxide exchange takes place — in the hemoglobin of the red blood cells in these vessels.

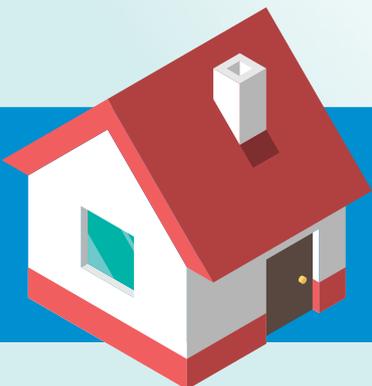
3.

Bronchi and bronchioles look like branches and twigs and carry air throughout the lungs.

2.

The movement of the diaphragm muscle works the lungs like a bellows, moving air in and out.

4.



The total absorptive surface area of the respiratory system including the lungs is between 70 to 100 square meters. That’s as big as the floor space of a small house!



At our Convenient Care Clinic, you can find walk-in primary care. For more information or if you prefer to schedule an appointment, call (618) 833-2295.

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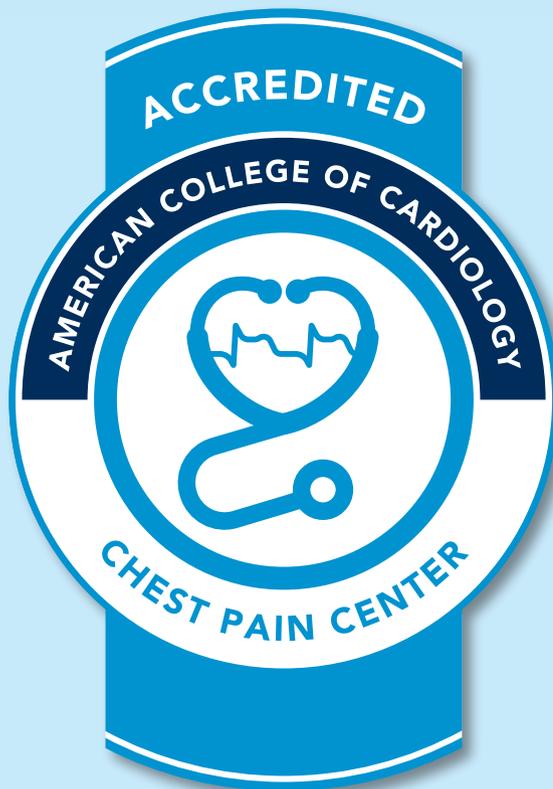
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ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al (618) 833-4511 (TTY: (800) 526-0844).

UWAGA: Jeżeli mówisz po polsku, możesz skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej. Zadzwoń pod numer (618) 833-4511 (TTY: (800) 526-0844).

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This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your doctor before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.



Accredited Chest Pain Center

As an American College of Cardiology Accredited Chest Pain Center, Union County Hospital has achieved a higher level of expertise when dealing with patients who arrive with symptoms of a heart attack. Our protocol-driven approach to heart care allows us to reduce time-to-treatment during the critical first stages of a heart attack.

Designated Emergent Stroke-Ready Hospital by IDPH



517 North Main Street, Anna
UnionCountyER.com

If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 911.