

LIFE & HEALTH[®]

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO HEALTHFUL LIVING

Saving lives

MAMMOGRAPHY—
A POWERFUL TOOL
IN THE FIGHT AGAINST
BREAST CANCER

WHEN IT COMES to fighting breast cancer, we shouldn't underestimate the power of detection.

Cancer that is detected is cancer that can be treated, which is why mammograms are such a significant—and lifesaving—medical innovation.

These safe, low-dose x-rays of the breast are arguably a woman's best first line of defense. Mammograms can find breast cancer in its earliest stages—when tumors are still too tiny to feel and treatment is most likely to succeed.

Not only do mammograms help women survive a potentially deadly disease, but they also increase treatment options. Early detection allows many women to have breast-sparing surgeries rather than mastectomies.

"The triple combination of mammography, clinical breast exam and ultrasound is the gold standard of screening for breast cancer," says Kirstin Anderson, MD, Chief of Surgery at Sharon Hospital.

YOUR BEST PROTECTION

The American Cancer Society
—Continued on back page

Primary Stroke Center designation

IAM PLEASED TO announce that Sharon Hospital has been approved and designated as a Primary Stroke Center (PSC) by the Connecticut Department of Public Health. This designation recognizes our ability to care for stroke patients at the highest level for a community hospital.

Our stroke program is a model of care for patients based on state and national standards of care. Sharon Hospital's ability to provide this service is dependent upon people recognizing the signs of stroke and coming to the Emergency Department quickly.

I would like to thank and congratulate Pam Provisor, Stroke Coordinator; Co-Medical Directors Gene Chin, MD, and Jack Finkelstein, MD; members of the Stroke Task Force; and emergency physicians for their dedication to achieving such



Charlie Therrien,
President and CEO

an impressive designation in such a short time frame. We are extremely pleased to be able to provide a Primary Stroke Center for our community.



Be ready!

WHEN IT'S YOUR CALL—
ACTING QUICKLY IN AN EMERGENCY

IT'S NOT ALWAYS easy to know whether a medical situation calls for a trip to the emergency department.

Is that hacking cough a crisis? Does that cut need stitches? Are you experiencing heartburn or heart problems?

The answer might depend on who is ill or injured—the person's age, for example, or medical history. For instance, the same symptoms that are serious in a child may not be as serious for an adult, and vice versa.

headache, neck stiffness or rash; difficulty eating; or skin or lips that look blue, purple or gray.

8 minutes* to award-winning emergency care at Sharon Hospital.

*Average wait time to be seen by a registered nurse in triage.

Director, Emergency Department at Sharon Hospital.

You could drive the person to the hospital yourself. Call 911 for an ambulance if:

- You think the person's condition

However, one rule of thumb that never changes is this: Err on the side of caution. If you're not sure you have an emergency, assume you do and get help.

IS IT AN EMERGENCY?

According to the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), it's an emergency if someone could suffer significant harm or die without prompt care.

Some warning signs are:

- Problems breathing.
- Chest pain that lasts two minutes or more.
- Uncontrolled bleeding.
- Coughing or vomiting blood.
- Sudden dizziness, weakness or changes in vision.
- Severe or persistent diarrhea or vomiting.
- Confusion or other changes in mental status.

Kids and emergencies.

Warning signs in children may also include fever accompanied by sudden

ACTING FAST

"Don't hesitate to go to the emergency department if you think you or a family member is in need of emergency care," says Gene

Chin, MD, Medical

Understanding how triage works in the Emergency Department

You go to the emergency department because you believe you have an urgent medical situation on your hands.

There are no set appointments in the emergency department, so any number of people could arrive for care at the same time.

To handle this, emergency departments use a system called triage, which sorts people by the severity of their illnesses or injuries.

Those with the most serious medical conditions are seen first, while those with less severe problems may have to wait a bit.

When you arrive at the emergency department, a registered nurse will ask about your symptoms.

Your vital signs—such as blood pressure and temperature—will be checked.

Sharon Hospital's average wait time to be seen by a registered nurse in triage is eight minutes.

Remember to carry with you a list of medications and dosages for reference in the event of an emergency.

At Sharon Hospital, we deliver advanced emergency care 24/7.

Source: American College of Emergency Physicians

is life-threatening or might become so quickly.

- Moving the person might require special skills or equipment.
- The ill person is you and no one is available to drive you.

When in doubt, call 911.

Ready when you need us. Remember that our emergency staff is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. ♦

Keep this number posted in case of a poisoning emergency: 800.222.1222.

A great reason to move

HOW REGULAR WORKOUTS MAY LOWER YOUR RISK OF CANCER

WHEN YOU think cancer prevention, remember to think exercise.

An active life may help prevent some types of cancer, such as cancers of the breast, prostate, colon and endometrium, which makes it a wise thing to do—right along with not smoking, watching your weight, and eating more fruits and vegetables.

Exercising even a little beats doing none at all, but moving more may be better. At a minimum, aim for 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise five or more days a week. Research suggests this amount can help reduce your overall cancer risk, says the American Cancer Society (ACS).

Perhaps an even better exercise goal is 45 to 60 minutes at least five days a week. Evidence suggests

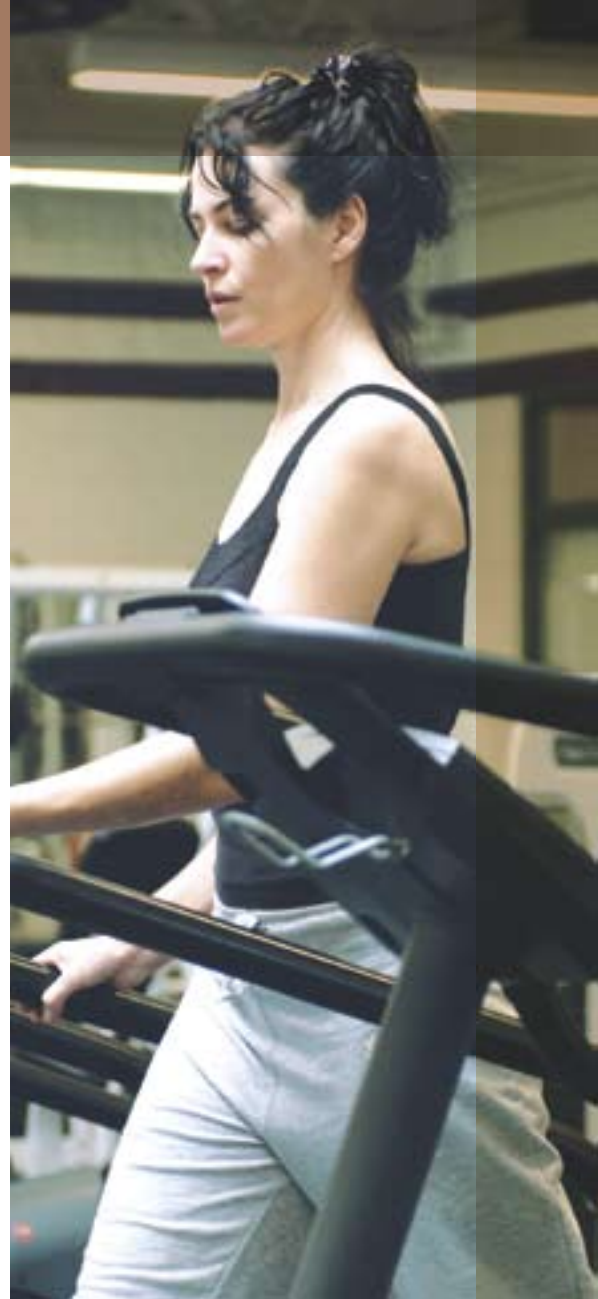
that this higher amount specifically helps protect against breast and colon cancers, notes the ACS.

Keep in mind this level of exercise should be on top of those activities you usually do throughout your day—like walking from your parking spot to your work or doing daily chores.

Kick it up!
Choose moderate to vigorous activities.

All kinds of activities can count as workouts. Take a brisk walk, go for a bike ride with friends or take the kids in-line skating—all moderate forms of exercise. Vigorous activities include running, swimming or playing soccer.

If you're not active now, start slowly and add minutes as you improve your fitness. Men older than 40, women older than 50 and people with health conditions should check with their doctors before starting a vigorous exercise program, advises the ACS. ♦



Nationally Recognized Emergency Department Year After Year | Short Wait Times

Award Winning Emergency Care When You Need it Most.

Whether you need stitches, suffered a broken bone, or are having symptoms of a heart attack or stroke, our emergency medical team is here when you need us. The new emergency department at Sharon Hospital. Continuing our tradition of high patient satisfaction. Delivering advanced emergency care 24/7.



50 Hospital Hill Road | Sharon, CT | 860.364.4141 | sharonhospital.com

HIS

HEALTH SCREENINGS

STAYING HEALTHY CAN MEAN PUTTING YOURSELF TO THE TEST—YOUR GUIDE TO WHO NEEDS WHAT

YOU CARE about your health and that of the significant other in your life. You want to take steps to help stay healthy and prevent problems. It's important for both of you.

That's where health screenings can come in. Having the recommended screening tests is one of the best steps people can take to help protect their health.

Consider:

- Screenings can help spot diseases such as cancer early, when they're often easier to treat.
- Some tests can even help prevent cancer by finding precancerous problems that can be treated.
- Screening can alert you and your doctor to controllable health conditions, like diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Controlling health conditions now can protect your future health.

For these and other reasons, getting screened is a smart strategy for men and women. While some screenings are just for women, others are just for men. Most, however, are valuable for both of you.

WHAT TESTS ARE NEEDED?

By working with your doctor, you can find out what screenings are needed and when. When you

need to be screened can depend on things like your age, lifestyle, and personal or family health history.

What follow are some screenings that medical authorities recommend. Keep in mind that this information applies to people at average risk. If you have certain risk factors, you

may need some screenings earlier or more often or you may need more extensive types of testing. Check with your doctor about a specific schedule that's right for each of you.

Need a physician?
Call Sharon Hospital at
860.364.1637.

FOR BOTH OF YOU

Blood pressure tests. Have your blood pressure checked at least every two years—a yearly checkup should take care of this.

Cholesterol checks. Starting at age 20, have your cholesterol levels checked at least every five years.

Diabetes testing. Starting at age 45, ask your doctor if you need a blood sugar test to check for diabetes. These are typically recommended every three years for people 45 and older.

Colon screenings. Generally people 50 and older should be screened regularly for colorectal cancer and abnormal growths (polyps) that can be removed before they may become cancerous. A number of tests may be used alone or in combination.



Save the dates for these events

MEN'S HEALTH EVENT

Tuesday, Sept. 30, 4 to 6 p.m.;
colorectal lecture, 6 p.m.

Stop by for a cardiology screening, stroke risk assessment, postural assessment, skin cancer screening and more. Prostate screenings are at no out-of-pocket cost. Call 860.364.1637 to register. Visit sharonhospital.com for more information.

HER



POISED FOR PREVENTION: Here stand Sharon Hospital's Kirstin Anderson, MD, Chief of Surgery, and Marc Legris, MD, Internal Medicine and Pediatrics.

Skin cancer checks. Check your skin monthly for changes such as a new growth or a mole that changes in size, shape or color. Your doctor can also examine your skin.

JUST FOR HER

Breast exams. Starting at age 40, have a mammogram every one to two years to screen for breast cancer. Check with your doctor about what's best for you. Women should also have clinical breast exams performed by a doctor; you may also choose to do monthly self-exams.

Pap tests and pelvic exams. To screen for cervical cancer and to help find treatable precancerous changes, have a Pap test every one to three years if you've been sexually active or if you're older than 21. Annual pelvic exams are advised.

Osteoporosis tests. Starting at age 65, bone density tests are recommended to screen for the bone-thinning disease osteoporosis.

JUST FOR HIM

Prostate checks. Discuss with

your doctor the pros and cons of prostate cancer screening. A prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test and digital rectal exam may be used to screen men 50 and older.

Testicular exams. Men may want to do monthly self-exams to check for lumps that may be signs of cancer. These exams may also be part of a general checkup.

A SCREENING SCHEDULE THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

Remember, your doctor can help you decide which tests are appropriate and when they may be needed. Your doctor may suggest other screenings, such as tests for sexually transmitted diseases, hearing or vision problems, or depression.

He or she can also answer questions about other ways men and women can help stay healthy, such as eating right, exercising regularly and quitting smoking.

Together, you and your doctor can take charge of your health. ❖

Sources: American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH WALK-IN* EVENTS:

■ **Thursday, Oct. 16, 5 to 7 p.m.**

■ **Friday, Oct. 17, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

Take some time to care for your whole being: Mammograms, clinical exams, manicures and massages.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS LECTURE SERIES

"The Importance of Breast Health—Caring for the Whole Being"

Thursday, Oct. 16, 7 p.m., Four Trees Cafe

This roundtable discussion includes hors d'oeuvres and is presented by a panel of specialists in Obstetrics/Gynecology, General Surgery, Radiology, Oncology, Internal Medicine and Nutrition. Sharon Hospital is proud to participate in initiatives that provide for medically underserved women. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call **860.364.4468**.

*No appointments needed. Call ahead for program qualification. Visit sharonhospital.com for more details.



Eat what you love

PURSUE AN ENJOYABLE WAY TO LOWER YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

WHEN YOU THINK about changing your eating habits, do you think mostly about what you need to give up, like high-calorie treats or fatty favorites?

What if you could do your blood pressure some good simply by eating more of foods you enjoy?

Berries mixed in yogurt or steaming pasta topped with a savory tomato sauce and roasted vegetables. Maybe you need a good excuse to order the grilled salmon or to have a little dark chocolate.

GOOD STUFF

We hear so much about avoiding certain foods that it's easy to miss the importance of adding others.

According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), foods that are rich in nutrients such as potassium, magnesium and calcium can lower your blood pressure—in as little as two weeks. Some other substances in foods that may play a role are protein, fiber, omega-3 fatty acids and antioxidants found in red grapes, tea and chocolate.

When you focus on foods you enjoy, adding nutrients into your diet is far from a chore.

Consider this advice from the NHLBI and other health experts: ■ Make your meals colorful with produce. The more color on your plate from these foods, the more nutritious the meal. Serve a rainbow of fruits and veggies—like broccoli, purple cabbage, oranges and strawberries.

■ Go for whole grains. Add foods such as whole-wheat bread and

pasta, brown rice, oatmeal, and popcorn to your daily diet.

■ Get your dairy foods daily—yogurt, milk, cheese—but make them low-fat.

■ Season your foods with lemon, lime, vinegar, herbs or salt-free seasoning blends.

■ Snack on a few nuts. Almonds, peanuts, walnuts and other nuts supply protein, fiber and other nutrients.

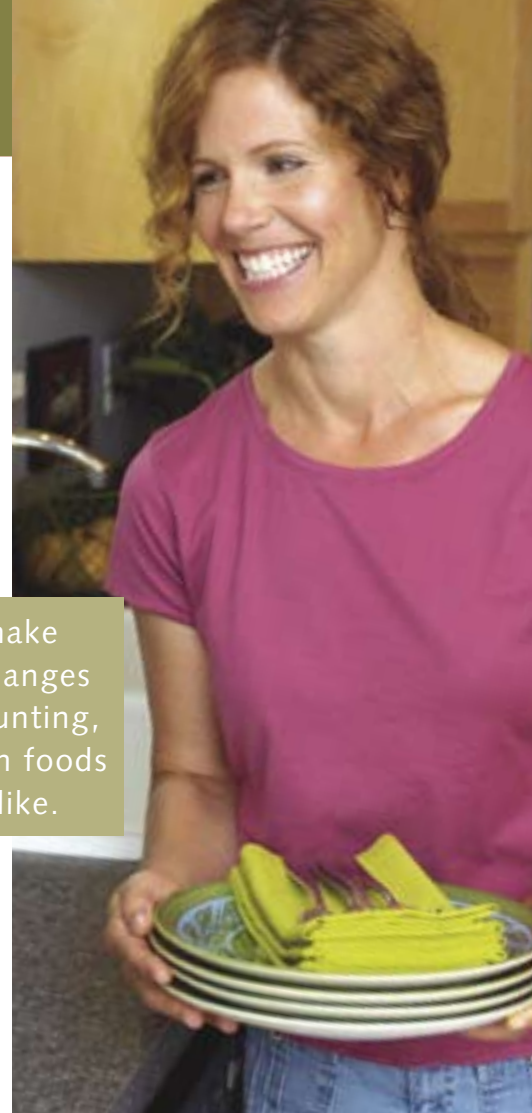
■ Grill some fish. Salmon and trout are especially rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Roasting or broiling work too, but avoid frying.

■ Treat yourself to some dark chocolate, but keep the portion small. Research suggests that just 6 grams (about one-sixth of a 40-gram bar) of dark chocolate contain enough antioxidants to make a difference.

A RECIPE FOR HEALTH

Eating these healthy foods can do more than lower your blood

To make diet changes less daunting, focus on foods you like.



pressure. Combined with exercise and not smoking, they can help you reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some cancers.

So don't wait. Your next chance to start lowering high blood pressure—or preventing it—is your next meal. ❖

Sweet! Strawberry Kiwi Smoothie



This recipe from the American Institute for Cancer Research offers up fruit and dairy all in one yummy, quick concoction.

- 1 cup 100 percent apple juice
- 1 container (8 oz.) strawberry nonfat yogurt
- 2 whole kiwi fruit, peeled and chopped
- 1 package (10 oz.) frozen unsweetened strawberries
- 1 teaspoon almond extract

In blender, place apple juice, yogurt and kiwi. Blend until smooth. Add strawberries and almond extract. Blend again until smooth and thick. Serve immediately. (Unused portions may be frozen.) Makes 4 servings.

Per serving: 111 calories; less than 1g total fat (0g. saturated fat); 32mg sodium; 26g carbohydrates; 3g dietary fiber; 3g protein



Getting back to your life

**DEPRESSION IS A TREATABLE ILLNESS—
KNOW WHEN IT'S TIME TO REACH OUT FOR HELP**

YOU KNOW you've been down, but does this bleak state of mind never seem to stop? Is it affecting your relationships and day-to-day life? You could be in more than a bit of a funk; you could have a medical illness—depression.

Depression is never normal, but it is common. Men and women, people of any age—from teens to senior citizens—and people from every walk of life can experience this dismal condition. The consequences can be long-lasting.

Depression is not like the blues, which come and go, or like sadness and grief, which usually pass with time. True depression can last for months or years, causing serious disruptions in family and work life.

At its worst, depression can lead to suicide.

Fortunately, depression is very treatable—even in severe cases, the American Psychiatric Association reports. However, you must first reach out for help.

RECOGNIZE THE SYMPTOMS

Common signs of depression are a deep feeling of sadness or a marked loss of interest or pleasure in things you used to enjoy. You might also experience:

- Changes in appetite with unintended weight loss or weight gain.
- Insomnia or oversleeping.
- Loss of energy or outright fatigue.

- Restlessness or irritability.
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt.
- Difficulty thinking, concentrating or making decisions.
- Thoughts of death or suicide.

MAKE THE CALL

If you have symptoms of depression for two weeks or more, Mental Health

America recommends calling your doctor or a mental health professional.

A doctor can check for medicines or medical conditions that could be causing the symptoms of depression. You may be referred to a psychiatrist or a psychologist.

Treatment plans for depression

typically include antidepressant medicines, counseling (talk therapy) or both. It can take time to notice improvement.

When it's an emergency. If you feel suicidal, don't wait to get help. Go directly to the hospital or call 911. ❖

Concerned about depression?
Call the Behavioral Health
Center at 860.364.4403.

Healed emotions, healthy lives

The Adult Intensive Outpatient Program at Sharon Hospital's Behavioral Health Center offers specialized treatment to people ages 50 and older who are coping with mental health and emotional issues.

"Our goal is to help our patients revitalize and recover emotionally so that they can lead healthy lives," says Christine Naungayan, MD, Medical Director of the program. "Our clinical team conducts a thorough evaluation to determine the cause of the patient's distress and formulates a plan of care. Communication is maintained with the patient's doctors, therapists and family members to facilitate optimum care with minimum disruption to the patient's life."

This level of care provides a necessary step down from hospital inpatient care and a step up from traditional outpatient care when a more intense, structured program is needed. Preadmission assessments are free and are always confidential. For more information or to schedule an assessment, call 860.364.4403.

Saving lives

—Continued from front page

(ACS) recommends that most women have regular mammograms beginning at the age of 40.

However, if you have a heightened risk of breast cancer—for instance, if breast cancer runs in your family—you may need to start screening earlier, Dr. Anderson says. You may be a candidate for additional tests, such as a breast MRI (magnetic resonance imaging), which is available at Sharon Hospital. Ask your doctor what is best for you.

“It is important for women to understand that annual mammograms are the key to early detection,” says Victor Gaines, MD, Medical Director, Radiology at Sharon Hospital. “Even if your most recent mammogram was normal, annual screenings are vital.”

Do alert your doctor if you notice a change in your breast, such as a lump,

puckered skin or nipple discharge.

Mammograms are not 100 percent accurate. Occasionally they miss abnormalities.

Don't be unnerved if a mammogram shows something unusual. About 10 percent of women who have a mammogram need additional tests—often ultrasound or another mammogram. However, most of these tests have normal results, with only two to four mammograms out

of every 1,000 resulting in a cancer diagnosis, says the ACS. Still, be sure to follow through—in a timely manner—with any extra tests suggested.

Schedule a mammogram today. Call Women's Imaging at 860.364.4468.

ADVANCING TECHNOLOGY

As a technology, mammography is constantly evolving. While technology explores even more ways to detect early breast cancers, traditional mammograms are effective, Dr. Gaines says. “Quite simply, mammograms save lives.” ♦

Welcoming Dr. Legris



SHARON HOSPITAL welcomes Marc Legris, MD, to its medical staff.

Dr. Legris is board-certified in both Internal Medicine and Pediatrics and is a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

He has held clinical teaching positions for both the Yale University and University of Connecticut medical schools.

Dr. Legris has spent the past 10 years developing and serving as medical director for Housatonic Internal Medicine and Pediatrics, a primary care practice in New Milford.

Dr. Legris joins a comprehensive team of board-certified physicians at Sharon Hospital. We're pleased to announce that he began accepting patients at 29 Hospital Hill Road, Suite 1800, in Sharon, on July 1.

To schedule an appointment, call 860.364.7029. ♦



Marc Legris, MD

SAVE THE DATE | Sharon Hospital's 15th Annual

RUN, WALK & ROLL
COMMUNITY DAY @ Lime Rock Park
September 28th

Visit sharonhospital.com for details.



SHARON HOSPITAL
at the center of caring

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We invite your feedback on LIFE AND HEALTH, a quarterly journal devoted to healthful living. Please let us know if you have any questions or suggestions for topics you would like us to cover in future issues. E-mail us at lifeandhealth@sharonhospital.com or call 860.364.4444.

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