

Health Connection

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHERN
LOUISIANA MEDICAL CENTER

**Oh, that
aching belly!**

**Take charge of
your breast health**

**Hospitalists
enhance care**

**Colon cancer:
Just the facts**

**The right
physicians
for you**



**Northern Louisiana
Medical Center**

Dear friends,

Please accept this winter issue of *Health Connection* as a gift, along with our wishes for a Happy New Year. 2009 was a tremendous year for growth, not only for the city of Ruston but also for the local health care options available in Lincoln Parish. Northern Louisiana Medical Center (NLMC) expects 2010 to bring even stronger growth to health care in our city and parish, as we bring continued convenience and quality you've likely grown to expect.

Join us this year in welcoming new primary care physicians and specialists who you'll soon come to know as friends and neighbors:

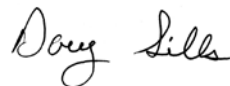
- Stacy Conville, M.D., Family Medicine
- Rose Gwan, M.D., Internal Medicine
- Leonel Lacayo, M.D., Gastroenterology
- Michael Langiulli, M.D., Cardiology
- Cynthia Larson, D.O., Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Arifa Nishat, M.D., Family Medicine

In addition, NLMC is making great strides with our

programs and medical services. Our emergency department has experienced all-time-high patient satisfaction. And, last year, \$3 million in capital expenditures brought a renovated outpatient surgery area, a new infant security system and new equipment in our obstetrical and nursery units.

As always, our commitment to you is to constantly evaluate new ways to advance the health care available. We look forward to assisting you in 2010.

Our best,



DOUG SILLS
Chief Executive Officer
Northern Louisiana Medical Center



Doug Sills
Chief Executive Officer

Prevent colon cancer



By Leonel Lacayo, M.D.
Board Certified in Gastroenterology

It's a common conception that colon cancer is a man's disease. But if you look at the numbers, you'll find an equal share of colon cancer cases in males and females after age 50.

Paying attention to symptoms is important because this information can lead to early detection and higher chances of cure. Symptoms include bowel habit changes, rectal bleeding, weight loss and abdominal pain.

EXAM TIME

The American Cancer Society recommends all persons ages 50 and older have a colonoscopy every 10 years, even if they have no symptoms. The painless exam is usually done as an outpatient procedure with intravenous sedation

and takes about 30 minutes. You can even go back to work that afternoon!

Some patients may find the preparation—taking a laxative to clean out the colon—to be the worst part of having a colonoscopy.

Fortunately, there are pills or new formulas that require less liquid for patients who can't tolerate liquid.

The good news is that if the colonoscopy is clean with no polyps or any other troubling pathology, the procedure doesn't have to be repeated for a while!

! Stay healthy

For more information about colonoscopy or other gastrointestinal conditions, call Dr. Lacayo's office, Ruston Gastroenterology Consultants, at (318) 254-1274.

Taking care of tummy troubles



By Stacy Conville, M.D.
Board Certified in Family Medicine

Oh, that aching belly! Usually, you can attribute tummy troubles to something simple, like stress or your diet.

But it's important to know when

a stomachache is potentially more serious.

PAIN, PAIN, GO AWAY

Most stomach pain can be alleviated with at-home remedies: a heating pad, acetaminophen (Tylenol) or over-the-counter (OTC) antacids. For excess intestinal gas or constipation, taking fiber supplements and OTC laxatives and drinking plenty of water will help.

If you think stomach pain may be due to excess stomach acid, eat bland foods such as crackers, which can absorb acid. If heartburn is the culprit, avoid citrus, greasy or high-fat foods, tomato products, caffeine, alcohol and carbonated beverages. If antacids don't provide relief, try an H2 blocker (Tagament, Pepcid or Zantac). However, if these medications worsen your pain, contact your physician.

Sometimes, stomach pain is a prelude to food poisoning or intestinal flu. If so, your body will rid itself of the toxins through vomiting or diarrhea. Drink plenty of clear fluids to prevent dehydration.

WHEN TO CALL THE PHYSICIAN

Don't ignore sudden, intense or long-lasting pain, which can signal serious conditions like gallstones, an ulcer or appendicitis. Call 911 or proceed to the emergency room

! Tame the ache

For more information about stomach pain, visit www.northernlouisianamedicalcenter.com and click on "Health Resources," or call Dr. Conville at Ruston Family Medicine Center at (318) 251-8232 today.

if your stomachache is accompanied by a belly that's hard and tender; chest, neck or shoulder pain; pain in your shoulder blades with nausea; sudden, sharp abdominal pain; blood in your stool or vomit; or the inability to have a bowel movement.

Nonemergency stomach pain symptoms that warrant a call to your physician include abdominal pain that lasts a week or more; bloating that lasts more than two days; chest pain; a burning sensation during urination; frequent urination; diarrhea for more than five days for an adult or more than two days for a child; vomiting for more than 12 hours (child); a fever above 100° F; prolonged loss of appetite; or unexplained weight loss. For infants ages 3 months and younger who develop diarrhea or vomiting, contact your pediatrician immediately.

If no medical emergency exists, your physician may order a barium enema; upper gastrointestinal (GI) and small bowel series; blood, urine and stool tests; endoscopy of the upper GI tract; ultrasound; or X-rays.

Most stomach pain can be prevented by eating frequent, small, balanced and high-fiber meals; drinking plenty of water; exercising regularly; and eating your last meal of the day at least two hours before bedtime.

Knowledge is power

Lumps and bumps don't always mean breast cancer



By Cynthia Larson, D.O.
Board Eligible in Obstetrics and Gynecology

Most everyone has a mother, sister, relative or friend who's had a brush with breast cancer. Regular breast exams and mammograms are the first line of defense for breast health. Certain breast tissue changes are normal and more common as women age, but unusual symptoms should be shared with your physician.

COMMON BREAST CHANGES

According to the American Cancer Society, the most common breast changes—lumps, tenderness or discharge—are usually linked to benign conditions. The most common diagnoses related to a breast lump include fibroadenoma (a benign solid tumor), fibrocystic changes (benign breast changes), atypical hyperplasia (fast-growing abnormal cells), cysts (benign, fluid-filled sacs) or noninvasive cancers, such as ductal carcinoma in situ (cancer of the milk ducts). A lump that's also tender and warm to the touch is likely a breast infection.

Other breast changes aren't visible to the eye and show up during a mammogram. Beginning at age 40, women should have a screening mammogram once a year or as directed by a physician.

In most cases, the area in question turns out to be benign. Common mammogram findings include calcifications, a mass, fibrosis or lipoma.

Calcifications—tiny mineral deposits in the breast tissue—show up as white flecks on your mammogram film. The pattern and number of these deposits will help your physician determine whether cancer is present.

Fibrosis refers to the presence of fibrous tissue, a thickened area similar to scar tissue, which may be tender. Fibrocystic changes don't increase the chance for breast cancer, and any discomfort can be treated with over-the-counter pain relievers or diet changes, such as limiting caffeine. Fibroadenomas are benign tumors made of connective and breast tissue. They can move and are round, well-defined, painless and common in women younger than age 40.

Another benign tumor is a lipoma, or fatty tumor, which isn't tender and can occur anywhere.

Most benign breast conditions don't raise your risk of breast cancer. Depending on your diagnosis, your physician may perform imaging tests such as an ultrasound, magnetic resonance imaging or more frequent mammograms to keep a close eye on your health.

! Take charge!

For an appointment with Dr. Larson, call (318) 513-9661
or visit www.northernlouisianamedicalcenter.com.



Dedicated to your health

NLMC's hospitalist program



Hospitalists are physicians who devote their practice to the care of hospitalized patients. They see patients who have been referred to them by primary care physicians, emergency room physicians or other physicians at the hospital. Northern Louisiana Medical Center (NLMC) hospitalists will manage all aspects of your hospital stay, from admission until discharge.

WHY IS A HOSPITALIST CARING FOR ME?

Your primary care physician has requested that a hospitalist be in charge of your care during your stay at NLMC. You benefit by being seen by a physician whose practice is entirely focused on the care of hospitalized patients. Additionally, this enables your primary care physician to be more available to you and other patients during office hours.

The hospitalist will be in charge of your inpatient care, seeing you every day to direct your care. The hospitalist will be available to answer any questions you may have and to discuss your care. The hospitalist works full time at NLMC to provide for your care and attend to any emergencies.

IS THERE CONSTANT COMMUNICATION?

Your primary care physician provides information about your past health history to the hospitalist, and the two physicians discuss significant findings. At admission and discharge, the hospitalist prepares a detailed report and treatment plan that's sent to your primary care physician. Communication continues between the hospitalist and your primary care physician throughout your stay at NLMC. Your physician is welcome to check on you and discuss your care with the hospitalist at any time during your hospital stay.

Your hospitalist will arrange for any necessary consultations from other physicians. If you've already been

seeing other physicians at NLMC or elsewhere, let us know so we can keep them informed about your stay.

WHAT HAPPENS AT DISCHARGE?

Upon discharge, you'll continue care with your primary care physician. You may be asked to make an appointment with your primary care physician soon after leaving the hospital. The hospitalist will make arrangements for any prescriptions you may need. You're welcome to contact the hospitalist at this time if you have questions about your hospital stay.

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A REGULAR PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN?

The NLMC hospitalist or any other staff at the hospital can help you find a physician to see after leaving the hospital. Records from your hospital stay can be sent to this physician.

! Questions?

To speak with a hospitalist while you or a member of your family is in the hospital, ask the nurse caring for you to page the physician. Otherwise, you can call (318) 254-2100. To find a physician who's right for you, visit www.northernlouisianamedicalcenter.com.

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The information contained in this publication is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice. If you have medical concerns, please consult your health care provider.

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www.northernlouisianamedicalcenter.com

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PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

The dedicated, experienced physicians of Northern Louisiana Medical Center (NLMC) can help keep your family healthy. We'd like to introduce one of them to you.



**MICHAEL
LANGIULLI, M.D.**
Board Certified in
Interventional Cardiology

Ruston Cardiology Associates
Ruston

Michael Langiulli, M.D., board certified in interventional cardiology, joined our medical staff in January. Dr. Langiulli looks forward to providing much-needed medical services to you and your family.

Dr. Langiulli calls Ruston home for personal and professional reasons. He chooses NLMC as his professional home because of the opportunity to use his noninvasive and interventional cardiology skills in a strong economic and health care community. Dr. Langiulli also enjoys Ruston because it's a safe, family-friendly area that's a great place to raise a close family.

A member of the American College of Cardiology, Dr. Langiulli brings unique experience and training. Dr. Langiulli received his medical degree from the University of New York Health Sciences Center in Brooklyn, N.Y., and completed his internal medicine residency at Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, N.Y., where he served as chief resident. Dr. Langiulli then completed fellowships in cardiology and interventional cardiology at Westchester Medical Center.

Dr. Langiulli is thrilled to come to the city of Ruston with his wife, Dayanni Langiulli, D.O. (who's currently finishing her pediatric residency), and his children, Jaiden, age 5, and Alyssa, age 1. The Langiullis look forward to becoming part of the Ruston community and becoming your new friends and neighbors.

Make an appointment!

To schedule a cardiovascular consultation with Michael Langiulli, M.D., call our switchboard operator at (318) 254-2100.

Find a physician!

The medical staff at Northern Louisiana Medical Center (NLMC) offers a wide range of specialties. With the NLMC online physician directory, choosing a physician is now easier than ever. Visit www.northernlouisianamedicalcenter.com today!

