

# Carolinas Health

Spring 2008

The magazine of Carolinas Medical Center

Healthy  
events  
for you!

Page 11

**ADVANCED  
HEALTHCARE  
CLOSER TO HOME**

**YOUR GUIDE TO  
STOMACH AILMENTS**

**YEAR-ROUND  
ALLERGIES**

4 ways to cope

**THE HIGH-HEEL  
DILEMMA**

Are your shoes  
harming your feet?



Carolinas Medical Center

# Bringing advanced healthcare closer to home

**D**id you know that the overwhelming majority of patients seen in hospital Emergency Departments (EDs) are released shortly after receiving treatment and not admitted to the hospital? In fact, studies show that in a given year, 750 out of 1,000 individuals will seek healthcare advice for symptoms or an illness, but only nine of these 1,000 will end up needing the advanced services of a hospital.

As a result, a new era of healthcare facilities is gaining national prominence—the community healthplex.

A healthplex is a state-of-the-art outpatient medical complex offering an array of outpatient services in one location. “It’s sometimes referred to as a ‘hospital without beds’ because it can include many of the services a hospital provides—except these services are provided in an

outpatient setting,” says Michael Lutes, hospital administrator at Carolinas Medical Center-Union. “So while it may have observation beds for stays of 24 hours or less, it doesn’t have inpatient beds.”

## A VARIETY OF SERVICES OFFERED

There isn’t one standard model for building a healthplex. CMC’s approach is to determine the outpatient needs in a given community and then work within state regulations to provide those services. North Carolina and South Carolina require healthcare providers to submit Certificate of Need (CON) applications prior to building new healthcare facilities.

The CMC healthplexes—both those already approved and those awaiting state approval—may include freestand-

**BUILDING FOR OUR COMMUNITY'S HEALTH:** An artist's rendering of the CMC-Waxhaw Healthplex.



## CMC HEALTHPLEX LOCATIONS


- CMC-Steele Creek—under construction
- CMC-Harrisburg—state approved
- CMC-Waxhaw—awaiting state approval
- CMC-Kannapolis—state approved

Once approved, construction times can range between 18 and 24 months.

ing EDs, full-service imaging centers, observation beds, laboratory services and physician offices. More advanced outpatient services that may also be provided include outpatient surgery, rehabilitation and physical therapy services, cancer treatments and endoscopy services.

### WHY A HEALTHPLEX AND NOT A HOSPITAL?

CMC believes in providing the right care in the right location. When healthcare services are needed, the majority of those services can be provided in an outpatient setting.

“CMC is devoting tremendous resources to bringing a broad spectrum of outpatient care into the communities we serve,” says Lutes. 

## HEALTHPLEX BENEFITS AT A GLANCE

- Exclusively outpatient; excellent access and efficiency for patients
- Goal is to promote health and keep people out of the hospital
- Hospitality—not a hospital—feel
- Less costly to construct than an inpatient facility
- Improved access to emergency care in fast-growing communities (for healthplexes with freestanding EDs)
- Hospital capacity pressures for major outpatient services are relieved

**“A healthplex can include many of the services a hospital provides—except these services are provided in an outpatient setting.”**

—Michael Lutes, hospital administrator, CMC-Union



# Looking for a doctor?

Here's how to find the right fit

**F**inding a personal physician for yourself or your family is one of the most important healthcare decisions you'll need to make. But where do you begin? Asking the following questions can help you narrow your search for the physician who's right for you and your family.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK FRIENDS, FAMILY AND CO-WORKERS:

- Is the office staff helpful?
- If you need to speak to the physician, does he or she return your phone call promptly?
- How far in advance do you have to book a routine office visit?
- Can you make a same-day appointment?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK THE PHYSICIAN'S OFFICE:

- Is the physician board certified? If so, in what? What does this mean to me as a patient?
- Does the physician have any subspecialties?
- If I need to speak to the physician, how long can I expect to wait for a return call?



## YOUR SEARCH STARTS HERE!

**T**o find a physician who can help your family stay well, call **704-355-7500**.

- What are your office hours?
- Do you offer Saturday appointments?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK THE PHYSICIAN:

- What preventive exams and screenings do you suggest for a man/woman of my age and health status?
- Do you involve patients in decision making?
- When lifestyle changes are an appropriate treatment option, how do you assist patients who have to make those changes? 🌍

## MEET OUR DOCTORS

**J**oin us as we welcome the following physicians who have recently joined our growing family. To find a physician near you, call **704-355-7500** or visit [www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org).

**LAKSHMI CHALAVADI, MD**  
Dove Internal Medicine

**WILLIAM B. DAWSON, MD**  
Carolina Neurological Clinic

**USHA DAYAL, MD**  
Carolina Neurological Clinic

**ANDREA L. DIEDRICH, MD**  
Carolina Neurological Clinic

**ARNOLD S. GRANDIS, MD**  
CMC Department of OB/GYN

**ERIKA HALES, MD**  
Palmetto Pediatrics

**JAMES D. HECKAMAN, MD**  
Carolina Neurological Clinic

**RENE HERLONG, MD**  
Sanger Clinic

**STEVE KARNER, MD**  
Carolina Neurological Clinic

**MARK LETICA, MD**  
Carolina Neurological Clinic

**JOHN MARTINIE, MD**  
CMC Department of Surgery

**TERESITA Y. NELSON, MD**  
Carolina Neurological Clinic

**STEVEN F. PUTMAN, MD**  
Carolina Neurological Clinic

**REBECCA TAKAHASHI, MD**  
University Pediatrics

**RACHEL WIESE, MD**  
Charlotte Pediatric Clinic

# FOR EVERY SEASON, A SNEEZE

How to cope with year-round allergies

**S**pringtime may be justly famous for allergies, but for many people the misery of sniffles, sneezing and watery eyes doesn't end with the summer solstice. If you suffer from allergy symptoms throughout the year, chances are you have multiple allergies to irritants both indoors and out.

Take these steps to help you cope:

- **Consider the culprits.** See whether you can manage mild or occasional symptoms by using over-the-counter medications and avoiding environmental triggers. Dust, pets and mold are the biggest indoor offenders. If your symptoms are seasonal, however, you may be allergic to certain pollens. In the spring, the prevalent allergen is tree pollen. Summer brings grasses, and in the fall, weeds abound.

- **Explore over-the-counter treatments.** Nonprescription antihistamines curb the body's actual allergic response and

work best when you take them routinely. Decongestants may improve breathing. Nasal drops and sprays are for occasional use only. Don't use them for more than three days because longer use may cause more harm. Eye drops can provide some temporary symptom relief.

- **Determine whether you have an allergy or a cold.**

While both can cause a runny nose, coughing and sneezing, allergies usually have a clear discharge and don't cause aches, pains or fever. Allergies may come on suddenly, but symptoms tend to linger through a season or more. Colds usually run their course within a week.

- **See your doctor.** If over-the-counter remedies and self-care measures don't offer enough relief, your symptoms worsen or you develop asthma-like reactions such as wheezing, see your healthcare provider for an evaluation and prescription medications. You may need to see an allergist for skin testing or further treatment. 🌐

## CONTROLLING ENVIRONMENTAL TRIGGERS

**R**educing your contact with indoor and outdoor allergens may help make your symptoms more manageable. Try these measures:

- Limit contact with pets.
- Avoid carpets, which can trap dust and animal dander.
- Use a vacuum with a HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filter.
- Run a HEPA cleaner in your bedroom.
- Make sure basements, bathrooms and kitchens are well ventilated and cleaned frequently.
- Use a dehumidifier in damp basements.
- Keep windows closed and use air conditioning during peak pollen months.
- Stay indoors during peak pollen hours (5 a.m. to 10 a.m.).
- Make your home a smoke-free environment.



## WHY KNOT ... PREVENT INTESTINAL PROBLEMS?

Ask your doctor about the comprehensive range of services offered by Carolinas Gastroenterology Centers, or call 704-512-6161.




Symptoms of gastritis include upper-abdominal discomfort, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. In most cases, symptoms are mild, pass quickly and have no long-term effects. Antacids usually ease symptoms.

**2 Indigestion**, also called dyspepsia, isn't a disease but rather a word used to describe a variety of abdominal symptoms, including heartburn (see below), nausea and sensations of bloating and fullness.

Some people experience indigestion only when they eat certain foods or when they overeat at a meal. Others have symptoms daily. Over-the-counter medications may be used to relieve symptoms when they occur.

**3 Heartburn** is the term used to describe a burning sensation in the chest accompanied by regurgitation of sour or bitter-tasting material into the throat and mouth. Normally, a valve called the

esophageal sphincter keeps food from refluxing (moving back up) into the esophagus once it has entered the stomach. In some people, however, this valve becomes slack and allows some contents of the stomach, which are now acidic because digestion has begun, to travel back up into the esophagus. The acidity of the refluxed material irritates the esophagus and causes the discomfort associated with heartburn.

Liquid antacids can reduce symptoms of heartburn for most people, and some simple habit changes can help them avoid heartburn altogether. If lifestyle changes don't bring relief, your healthcare provider might prescribe a medication that blocks acid production in the stomach or one that increases the strength of the esophageal sphincter. 

# Your guide to stomach ailments

Think of your stomach as a holding tank. Everything you eat or drink arrives there via the esophagus after you swallow it. Although generally hardy, your stomach can be the source of many uncomfortable symptoms, including heartburn, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain or burning, some of which are potentially serious. These symptoms can signal a host of gastrointestinal problems, including these three common stomach ailments:

**1 Gastritis** is an inflammation (swelling) of the lining of the stomach, which may be caused by infection, injury or irritation. Acid-induced damage to the stomach lining can cause gastritis, as can smoking, heavy alcohol consumption and certain medications (such as aspirin).

# The high-heel dilemma

By Michael Richardson, MD

Spring fashions are tiptoeing into the office—literally. Each spring, my female patients all seem to get taller. I could never stand on my toes with pencil-thin platforms hoisting my heels in the air and hope to maintain any shred of dignity or balance. I don't know how they do it.

I like sturdy, comfortable shoes. As a slowly graying physician, father of an 18-year-old daughter and husband of a woman who worked professionally for years, I've given up all hope of understanding that torture instrument of women's fashion—high-heeled shoes.

In the interest of medical science, the next time you're at the beach take time to study the motion of a young woman walking. The gentle side-to-side motion of the waist places each hip in the perfect position to bear weight and support the leg. Hips rotate effortlessly, and the knees gently pump with the rhythm. The ankle bends to lift the toes as the foot swings forward. As the heel strikes the ground, the ankle extends to lay the foot gently on the sand. The ankle then slowly flexes to keep the foot and toes on the ground as the body moves forward until the toes thrust off the sand to repeat the cycle. The ankle provides strength and flexibility and absorbs most of the impact and shock of walking.

High heels ruin all of this by permanently extending the ankle and strapping it into place so that it no longer functions to absorb the trauma of walking. A natural glide turns into a staccato walk that sends forces directly to the knees and hips. With prolonged use, the heel cord (Achilles tendon) actually shortens, and normal ankle motion is lost.

Each year, more than 300,000 knee replacements are performed in the United States with an increasing



## THE AGONY OF DE-FEET

High heels significantly increase the pressure on the forefoot, promoting poor posture and other ailments.

### Pressure increases on forefoot when wearing:

1-inch heels	+22%
2-inch heels	+57%
3-inch heels	+76%

demand for these procedures in women. I place the blame largely on high-heeled shoes and the fashion industry.



My advice: Kick those high heels off, stretch out your Achilles and bring back your lovely natural walk. 🌍

*Dr. Richardson is a physician with Charlotte Medical Clinic and a clinical professor of medicine at the UNC School of Medicine at Chapel Hill.*



Main view of front façade.



The three-story Christa A. and Reece A. Overcash Atrium serves as the 'town center' and main entrance.

# A closer look at **LEVINE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**



An abstract view of glass panels.



The fourth floor Rehabilitation Pavilion offers 24-hour rehabilitation nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, recreational therapy and cognitive education.





The Children's Discovery Garden is an indoor/outdoor space that serves as a place of diversion and healing for young patients. It features a play area constructed in a garden setting that offers outstanding views of the tree-lined streets below.



The atrium houses a multipurpose auditorium, a performance stage, a gift shop and this colorful family café.

Levine Children's Hospital opened its doors in October 2007. This new children's hospital combines the medical expertise the community already relies on with a spectacular state-of-the-art facility designed to care for the physical and emotional needs of children and their families.

We invite you to get to know us better by viewing a virtual tour at [www.levinechildrenshospital.org](http://www.levinechildrenshospital.org).



Spacious patient rooms are large enough to accommodate children and their families.



The Diagnostic Center offers state-of-the-art imaging capabilities and a dedicated pediatric MRI suite.



The mezzanine level includes a Family Resource Center that houses the latest pediatric health information and Internet-connected computers.

# A new approach to living well



In a partnership thought to be unique on a national basis, Carolinas Medical Center and the YMCA of Greater Charlotte have joined forces to improve the health of the greater Charlotte community. The two organizations are offering a new series of workplace-based wellness programs through *LiveWELL Carolinas!* Corporate Health.

The effort is part of larger goal shared by both organizations to control healthcare costs by improving the overall level of public health, thereby decreasing use of costly hospital facilities and services.

Sue Dissinger, senior director of health and wellness at the YMCA, notes that increased public focus on the obesity epidemic has been a positive development, but not enough is being done to address root causes. “We don’t have an obesity epidemic as much as we have an epidemic of unhealthy eating and lack of movement,” Dissinger says. “Those factors can cause obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and a host of other serious health conditions.”


These unhealthy trends tend to be aggravated by the sedentary nature of work environments as Charlotte’s corporate workforce continues to grow. According to Dissinger, the best way to address the problems is to convince employers of the value of promoting employee health as a fundamental workplace responsibility.

“Corporate wellness programs are a growing part of the service mix offered by CMC,” says Betsy Hayden, director of Corporate Health for CMC. “For many years, we’ve gone into workplaces with such

on-site services as flu shots, blood pressure screenings, cholesterol screenings and workshops on health-related topics. But we recognize the need to promote wellness on a larger scale, in addition to providing healthcare services to our corporate partners.”

A sampling of services that are available as part of the new corporate program include:

- waiver of first-time YMCA joining fees
- free YMCA trial memberships
- employer-subsidized YMCA dues
- health fairs and wellness seminars
- discounts on team-building programs and on-site exercise classes
- immunizations
- health screenings and health risk assessments
- personal counseling and access to diet and nutritional information

Employers interested in the program should contact CMC’s Corporate Health Department at **704-446-8411**. 

## ABOUT THE YMCA OF GREATER CHARLOTTE

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte is comprised of 15 branches and many more program sites in Charlotte, Lake Norman, Lincoln County, Matthews and Mooresville, as well as Camp Thunderbird, the Hemby Activity Center and Camp Harrison at Herring Ridge. Visit the YMCA online at [www.ymcacharlotte.org](http://www.ymcacharlotte.org).

# Mark your calendar



LiveWELL  
Carolinas!  
Work. Eat. Learn. Live.

**C**arolinas Medical Center is committed to improving the health and wellness of your family by offering a wide variety of community health events, educational seminars and wellness classes. To view a complete list of upcoming events and classes, visit [www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org) for more information.

## MALL WALKERS PROGRAM

Join us to hear physicians and healthcare professionals speak about various health and wellness topics. All programs are free to attend, and a continental breakfast is provided.

**WHERE:** SouthPark Mall Food Court

**WHEN:** First Tuesday of each month, 8:30 a.m.

**WHERE:** Carolina Place Mall Food Court

**WHEN:** Last Wednesday of each month, 8:30 a.m.

**WHERE:** Northlake Mall Food Court

**WHEN:** First Wednesday of each month, 8 a.m.

## YOGA WITH RAHA

Join certified yoga instructor Rasheeda Hassan for a yoga class designed for all levels. This slower-paced class bridges breathing, movement and techniques for centering to help you feel refreshed, empowered and focused. Please wear loose fitting clothes and bring a yoga mat.

**WHEN:** Every Saturday, 10:45 a.m.–noon

**WHERE:** LiveWELL Carolinas! at Northlake Mall

**COST:** \$12 per person

## NEW BEGINNINGS

This early pregnancy class for new parents is taught by a registered nurse and offered once a month at Carolinas Medical Center. We suggest taking this class during the first or second trimester. The class is free.

**CALL:** 704-355-BABY for more information

## BOOT CAMP FOR NEW DADS

Taught by fathers, this class enables new dads to step up to the challenge of being a dad and feel confident bringing the new baby home. Topics include breastfeeding, diaper changing and supporting mom.

**WHEN:** Please call for class schedule

**WHERE:** Carolinas Medical Center and CMC-Pineville

**COST:** \$10

**CALL:** 704-355-BABY for more information

## QUEST—CANCER WELLNESS PROGRAM

QUEST is a free, eight-week cancer wellness program that includes education, support and a personalized exercise program.

**WHEN:** Call for start dates

**WHERE:** CMC Health Centers at the Harris, Dowd, University, Siskey and Simmons YMCAs

**CALL:** Lori Modzik, RN, at 704-617-2715

## INFANT/CHILD CPR CLASS

Carolinas Medical Center offers CPR classes for parents, grandparents and caregivers who want to learn lifesaving skills for their new baby and/or older child. Classes include information for newborns to children 8 years of age. All classes are taught by certified CPR instructors.

**WHEN:** Please call for class schedule

**COST:** \$10

**CALL:** 704-355-BABY for more information

## B.A.B.Y. CLASSES

Join us for "Beginning A Beautiful Year," a class where parents support other parents.

**WHERE:** Morehead Medical Plaza, 1025 Morehead Medical Drive

**WHEN:** First and third Monday of each month, 1:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** CMC-Northcross, 16455 Statesville Road

**WHEN:** Last Wednesday of each month, 6 p.m.

**CALL:** 704-355-BABY for more information

## CHOLESTEROL SCREENINGS

Tests include total cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL and HDL ratio and glucose level. All tests require a 12-hour fast (nothing to eat or drink except water). Open to the public. Visit [www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org) for a complete schedule of upcoming health screenings.

## LIVEWELL FOR LIFE DAY OF FITNESS AND HEALTH

Come out and take advantage of free health screenings, educational seminars, healthy cooking demonstrations and an excellent fitness routine by fitness guru Nettie Reeves from N Shape with N.

**WHEN:** Saturday, April 5, 10 a.m.

**WHERE:** CMC-University

# When minutes count

Count on us for heart care

**N**o one ever wants to be rushed to the hospital with chest pains, but if you experience symptoms of a heart attack, you'll be glad to know that Mecklenburg County is one of the best places in the country to survive a heart attack. That's because Carolinas Medical Center's Level I emergency department (ED) in Charlotte is an Accredited Chest Pain Center and has a special protocol that's designed to whisk patients through the ED to the cardiac catheterization lab much faster than the national average. This protocol is called Code STEMI.

## WHAT IS CODE STEMI?

STEMI is an acronym for ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction—the "S" and "T" sections of an EKG are elevated, which is a telltale sign of a massive heart



attack. “Time is of the essence in this case,” says Mason Ellerbe, vice president of Carolinas Heart & Vascular Institute. “Unless an artery can be opened up quickly, the heart muscle will deteriorate rapidly due to the lack of oxygenated blood.”

CMC, which implemented Code STEMI in 2004, was one of the first hospitals in the country to design a rapid-response team approach to heart care, says Hadley Wilson, MD, chief of cardiology at Sanger Clinic and medical director of the catheterization lab at CMC.

Here’s how it works: Paramedics in the field are trained to get an EKG and transmit the results to an ED physician, who confirms that a heart attack is occurring. If so, the Code STEMI team—which includes emergency and cardiology physicians, nurses and support staff, as well as those in ancillary services—is alerted and ready to take care of the incoming patient within minutes.

“The team approach is similar to an ED trauma team,” says Lee Garvey, MD, medical director of the chest pain evaluation center. “But it’s a little unusual because in this case, it’s in the patient’s best interest to go directly to the cath lab rather than being treated in the ED itself.”

### FAST ACTION SAVES LIVES

Once in the cath lab, balloon angioplasty is used to open up the blocked artery, and then a stent is usually inserted into the artery to keep it open so that blood can continue to flow unobstructed. The national goal of the American College of Cardiology is to restore blood flow to the heart within 90 minutes in 75 percent of patients. “The national average is about 50 percent,” Dr. Garvey says, “but 93 percent of our patients have their arteries opened up and blood flowing within 90 minutes.”

In fact, Dr. Wilson adds, the median treatment time for CMC heart attack patients is 51 minutes. “For every 10 minutes saved, a patient has a 1 percent higher survival rate,” he says. “And this has proved to be the case for us—while the hospital mortality rate

### WHEN TO CALL 911

To increase your chances of surviving a heart attack, know the symptoms and get help immediately, says Lee Garvey, MD, medical director of the chest pain evaluation center.

While chest discomfort or pain is a key warning symptom of a heart attack in most people, it isn’t always present. There may be other signs instead of—or in addition to—chest pain. These include difficulty breathing, a feeling of exhaustion, nausea and neck or back pain. Women more frequently exhibit some of these more subtle symptoms, Dr. Garvey says.


The American Heart Association advises people to call 911 right away—even if you’re not sure it’s a heart attack—because every second counts. Dr. Garvey says calling 911 is better than transporting yourself to the hospital, since paramedics can begin caring for you on the way to the ED.



for heart attack patients nationally is 6 percent to 7 percent, our mortality rate is only 2 percent to 4 percent.”

### LEADING THE WAY

Dr. Wilson says CMC is working with other leading institutions in the country to develop an accreditation program—similar to the Level I trauma designation—that would recognize hospitals with aggressive heart attack treatment plans like Code STEMI. One of the projects underway is known as D2B, or Door to Balloon, a project sponsored by the American College of Cardiology that seeks to reduce treatment time.

The hospital is also actively involved in other innovative heart care procedures, Dr. Wilson says, including the latest trials to evaluate stents and their safety. CMC also ranks second in the country in using the mitral valve clip, a less invasive way to repair mitral valve leakage than open-heart surgery. 

# Home is where the heart (and the care) is



**N**ot surprisingly, many people being treated for cancer agree there's no place like home. After all, home offers the comfort of familiar surroundings as well as the nearness of family members or friends. If you're undergoing cancer treatment at home, several strategies will help your care proceed smoothly.

Before you begin cancer treatment, ask your physician for important information about:

- **Your medication.** For each drug your doctor prescribes, ask these questions: What is it for? When should you take it? How long should you take it? Is there any special way you should take it (for example, with food or plenty of water)? What are the side effects and what can you do to control them? For instance, if a pill may cause nausea, your doctor can tell you if it's best to take it before or after meals.

- **Emergencies.** Ask your doctor for a list of emergency symptoms and keep a list of emergency numbers near the telephone, including a number where your doctor can be reached when his or her office is closed.

- **Administering treatments.** You may arrange for a home-care nurse to come regularly to give treatments such as intravenous (IV) medication and monitor your condition. If you plan to self-administer or have a family member perform any other tests or treatments, such as subcutaneous (under the skin) medication therapy, ask the nurse to show you exactly how this is done.

## REMEMBER YOUR NEEDS ...

- Eat frequent, small, nutritious meals and try to drink three quarts of fluid a day. A frozen citrus bar or Popsicle also can help keep you hydrated between meals.
- Let your doctor know if you're feeling fatigued. Often, underlying medical reasons for fatigue can be easily treated.
- Rest when you need to. You may find it helpful to take several catnaps a day.
- Exercise when you can. This will boost your energy.
- Delegate tasks. Ask family and friends to share household chores and paperwork. 🌱

## SUPPORTING PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

**A**t Blumenthal Cancer Center, an important part of our mission is to help cancer patients and their families through counseling, support groups and educational programs that promote understanding, hope and healing. Our services include:

- individual and family counseling
- cancer support groups
- pastoral care
- educational programs
- a patient and family information room (books, resources, videos and brochures to be read and borrowed)
- patient care coordinators

For more information about support services offered at Blumenthal Cancer Center, call **704-355-2884** or visit [www.blumenthalcancercenter.org](http://www.blumenthalcancercenter.org).

**W**ith warm weather approaching, there's nothing your children will want to do more than play outside. Just make sure they do it safely. Whether you and your family are hiking, biking, skating or playing contact sports, take these precautions to guard against injuries.

#### BEFORE YOU START

Make sure you give your muscles a good stretch before jumping into action. Do neck rotations, touch your toes, reach for the sky. (If your kids are young, disguise the warm-up as a game of Simon Says.)

#### GEARING UP

Just as you make sure they have their seat belts on before you pull out of the driveway, provide your kids with the proper protective gear before they hit the field or the court. (Don't forget to protect yourself, too!)

Helmets are the most important piece of safety gear for almost all outdoor sports. With biking alone, a properly-fitted safety helmet reduces your chance of serious head injury by 85 percent. Helmets also should be used when in-line skating, riding a scooter, ATV or moped and playing football, baseball, hockey or other contact sports.

For the best protection:

- Helmets should meet or exceed the safety standards set by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission or those developed by ASTM, ANSI or Snell.
- Helmets should sit on the top of the head in a level position, without rocking in any direction.
- Helmet straps must always be buckled; when they are, the top of the helmet should lay an inch or less above the eyebrows.
- When appropriate, all children should wear wrist, elbow and knee pads and mouth and shin guards.

For more information about choosing a helmet based on the activity, visit the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Web site at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).



**SPRING**  
into action—  
**SAFELY!**

#### WHY IS INJURY PREVENTION IMPORTANT?

**U**nintentional injury is the leading cause of death and disability in people ages 1 to 44. Many of these injuries are preventable. To learn more about protecting your family, visit [www.carolinasinjuryprevention.com](http://www.carolinasinjuryprevention.com).

#### GAME ON!

No matter the chosen activity, make sure everyone is familiar with the rules. When you or your children are participating in an individual activity, such as biking or skating, review the “law” of the land: For biking, that includes obeying all traffic laws; riding on the right side of the road, with traffic, not against; stopping at all stop signs and lights; using hand signals; and looking both ways before entering the street or passing a driveway. 🌿

[www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org)



It's no secret who nurtures a family.

It's no surprise who nurtures the region's women.

We nurture your health by conducting more clinical trials to provide hope in the fight against cancer, and win more awards for quality care than anyone else in the region. In fact, our uncompromising excellence and commitment to care give you more of everything. It's who we are at Carolinas Medical Center.



Carolinas Medical Center

*Uncompromising Excellence. Commitment to Care.*

Carolinas Health Magazine  
c/o CHS Marketing  
PO Box 32861  
Charlotte, NC 28232-2861

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Lebanon Junction, KY  
Permit 19

**Carolinas**  
**Health** Spring 2008

The magazine of Carolinas Medical Center

1000 Blythe Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28203

*Carolinas Health* is published for Mecklenburg County residents as a community service of Carolinas Medical Center. There is no fee to subscribe.

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

Copyright © 2008 Carolinas HealthCare System