Expert heart care, right here
Our Chest Pain Center is standing by

Get inspired to lose weight

Take control of pelvic pain
We can help

Flu facts for you!
Page 10
Acupuncture belongs to the 3,000-year-old healing art of Chinese medicine. Compared to traditional medicine, which focuses on the physical body, Chinese medicine addresses the balance of energy called qi (pronounced “chee”) and how it affects the body physically, emotionally and spiritually.

This healing art is one type of complementary and alternative medicine that’s becoming more widely accepted and used along with traditional medicine in healthcare facilities across the nation. At Carolinas HealthCare, we have our own unique facility, SouthPark Acupuncture, led by licensed acupuncturist Wenhui Li, L.Ac.

**HOW ACUPUNCTURE WORKS**

Qi flows through the body along pathways called meridians. Each meridian corresponds with a particular organ system. Acupuncture points on the meridians are precise areas where focus is directed to treat specific conditions. “In Chinese medicine, it is believed that disease is linked to excess, deficiency or obstruction of qi’s natural flow,” Li says. “Acupuncture aims to regulate the movement of qi to correct the energy’s imbalance so that the body can heal itself.”

Need proof? According to the World Health Organization, acupuncture is proven to treat conditions and chronic pain disorders such as fibromyalgia, back and neck pain, migraines, carpal tunnel syndrome and arthritis.

**WHAT TO EXPECT**

During treatment, sterile hair-fine needles are inserted at key points on your skin. You may feel a minor sensation but no pain or side effects. The needles stimulate deep sensory nerves that tell your brain to release body chemicals, such as endorphins, hormones and opioids, which act as painkillers to relieve pain and improve the body’s immune system. Afterward, most patients experience relief from discomfort and feel relaxed, calm or energized. Pain is often greatly reduced after just a few treatments.

**VISIT TODAY!**

Find out how acupuncture can help your body and mind. For a free 15-minute consultation, call SouthPark Acupuncture at 704-512-6293. Treatment packages are available for those needing six or more treatments. SouthPark Acupuncture is located at CMC-Morrocroft Medical Plaza II. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday–Friday. Visit www.southparkacupuncture.org for more information.

**ABOUT US**

SouthPark Acupuncture opened in CMC-Morrocroft Medical Plaza II in March 2008. Wenhui Li, L.Ac., a licensed acupuncturist, received his training at the Heilongjiang University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. He’s been with Carolinas HealthCare since 2001 and has more than 20 years of experience.
Recently, my wife was admitted to Cleveland Regional Medical Center for treatment and evaluation. Eventually, she was transported to Carolinas Medical Center, where she underwent surgery and further treatment.

During her stay at both facilities, my wife received the best of care and treatment. I am so thankful for the doctors, nurses, emergency and medical personnel and all of those who went beyond the call of duty to provide the excellent care they have come to be known for. Indeed, their kindness and compassion made a difference in my wife’s recovery and sets the stage for other medical facilities across the nation to follow.

I won’t forget them and what they did for my wife. May the Lord richly bless them all.

Sincerely,

Bud Press, Shelby, NC

“[Everyone’s] kindness and compassion made a difference in my wife’s recovery.”
Looking for a reason to kick the habit?

North Carolina’s 2010 smoking ban may do the trick

Efforts to create smoke-free environments are taking place across the United States. Thirty-seven states now have laws that ban smoking from workplaces, restaurants and bars. And soon, you’ll need to think twice before lighting up in North Carolina. Effective January 2, 2010, a smoking ban will prohibit puffing in public places, government-owned buildings and vehicles, and places of employment.

Why the ban? Each year, more than 430,000 people die from tobacco-related diseases, making it the leading cause of preventable death. An additional 50,000 people die from exposure to secondhand smoke, and more than 1,000 children become smokers each day. If you smoke, this ban may motivate you to kick the habit. Need more help? Read on for strategies and support.

A HEALTH HAZARD

The negative health effects of smoking are countless. “Cigarette smoke damages the airways and lungs,” says John D. Doty II, MD, a pulmonologist at Carolinas Medical Center. “Over time, smokers may develop chronic bronchitis, a condition where the lungs produce excessive, thick mucus; or emphysema, in which normal lung tissue is destroyed, making it difficult for the lungs to take in oxygen and eliminate carbon dioxide.” It is possible to prevent this and other smoking-related illnesses, though—make the commitment to quit smoking today.

TAKE ACTION

Once you’ve decided to quit, it’s important to first visit your doctor to make sure you’re on the right track. Here are some suggestions that may help you along the way:

PREPARE TO QUIT

Step 1

▸ Write it down. Jot down your personal reasons for wanting to quit. Reflecting on these reasons can motivate you down the road.

▸ Pick a quit date. If you smoke mostly on weekends, choose a weekday. If you take frequent smoke breaks during the workday, try quitting on a weekend.

▸ Know your barriers. If your partner or co-worker smokes, or if you’ve quit before but started smoking again,

TRYING TO QUIT?

Call 704-512-3820 for information about participating in a smoking-cessation class.
you’ll feel more confident if you have coping strategies (such as taking a walk, chewing gum or phoning a friend) in place ahead of time to fight any temptations.

- **Get support.** Let your family and friends know about your plan. They can lend a sympathetic ear and give you encouragement if you’re having a tough time. Also, ask them not to smoke around you.

**USE PROVEN TOOLS**

- **STEP 2** Some people go cold turkey using sheer determination to quit, while others need help. But remember, support is always within your reach. Sign up for a smoking-cessation class (see “Trying to quit?”) or check out the American Lung Association’s Freedom From Smoking® program at [www.ffsonline.org](http://www.ffsonline.org).

There are many quit-smoking products available to help ease your cravings:

- **The patch** delivers controlled amounts of nicotine through your skin each day.
- **Nicotine gum** contains a dose of nicotine. After chewing it briefly, it’s placed against the cheek so the nicotine is absorbed through the skin in your mouth.

  - **Nasal spray** delivers nicotine into nasal passages, where it’s absorbed.
  - **An inhaler** contains nicotine that you inhale like a cigarette.
  - **Bupropion** (sold under the brand names Zyban and Wellbutrin), is a nicotine-free prescription medication that mimics the effects of smoking on the brain.

**STAY SMOKE-FREE**

Getting through the first few weeks of not smoking can be challenging. But keeping away from cigarettes is crucial. “The average person tries to quit several times before they’re able to remain smoke-free,” Dr. Doty says. So, if you start smoking again, figure out what made you relapse and try to quit again.

**IT’S NEVER TOO LATE**

No matter how long you’ve smoked, the positive effects that quitting has on your body are measurable. In fact, according to the American Lung Association, within minutes of quitting, a smoker’s body begins renewing itself:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME SINCE LAST CIGARETTE</th>
<th>HEALTH BENEFITS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>20 MINUTES</strong></td>
<td>Blood pressure and pulse rate are lowered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EIGHT HOURS</strong></td>
<td>Carbon monoxide level in blood drops, while oxygen level increases to normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>24 TO 48 HOURS</strong></td>
<td>Chance of heart attack decreases, nerve endings start regrowing and ability to smell and taste is enhanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TWO TO THREE MONTHS</strong></td>
<td>Lung function increases, circulation is boosted and walking is easier; sinus troubles, fatigue, shortness of breath and coughing decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ONE YEAR</strong></td>
<td>Risk of coronary heart disease is lowered to half that of a smoker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FIVE YEARS</strong></td>
<td>Stroke risk is reduced to that of a person who has never smoked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10 YEARS</strong></td>
<td>Risk of lung cancer drops to one-half that of a smoker; risk of mouth, throat, esophageal, bladder, kidney and pancreatic cancer decreases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>15 YEARS AND BEYOND</strong></td>
<td>Risk of coronary heart disease is the same as someone who never smoked; risk of death returns to nearly the level of someone who never smoked</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Conventional wisdom for someone who’s having chest pain is to get to the nearest hospital as quickly as possible, but other considerations can make a crucial difference in a life-or-death situation. The good news is that if you or a loved one ever needs emergency cardiac care, Carolinas Medical Center-Pineville has the expertise and technology that’s close by.

Making the Grade
An important distinction is that CMC-Pineville’s emergency department (ED) is now accredited as a Chest Pain Center (CPC) by the Society of Chest Pain Centers. The department follows national guidelines to identify and care for a person who may be experiencing a heart attack. In particular, the ED staff works to reduce a patient’s time-to-treatment during the critical early stages of a heart attack, when treatment is most effective.

Getting the Right Treatment
As a CPC, CMC-Pineville works with local emergency medical services (EMS) to care for a person who has chest pain. (If you or a loved one has chest pain, experts recommend calling 911 and traveling to a hospital by ambulance, not by car.)

Most EMS personnel are trained to use electrocardiograms, providing confirmation of a suspected heart attack. CMC-Pineville can also prepare for a patient’s immediate referral to a catheterization lab for lifesaving treatment. That’s important, since bringing a patient to a hospital that’s fully equipped to treat heart attacks means he or she won’t have to be moved to another facility. And through improved monitoring, the ED staff ensures a patient isn’t sent home early or admitted to the hospital unnecessarily.

Are You at Risk?
Take our quick and confidential risk assessment to determine if you may have heart disease. Visit www.cmc-pineville.org/heartaware.

CMC-Pineville is working to meet the healthcare needs of our expanding region and to better care for our families. A 335,000-square-foot expansion and renovation project should be completed by 2011, allowing us to provide open-heart surgery and interventional cardiology services. This will make CMC-Pineville the only tertiary medical center in south Charlotte.

A Network of Expert Cardiac Care
Carolinas Medical Center, the region’s only Level I (highest level) trauma center, was the first hospital in North Carolina to obtain Chest Pain Center accreditation in 2003.

What’s new, according to Lee Garvey, MD, medical director of CMC’s Chest Pain Evaluation Center, is that Carolinas Medical Center-Pineville, Carolinas Medical Center-Mercy, Carolinas Medical Center-NorthEast, Carolinas Medical Center-Union and Carolinas Medical Center-University have also earned CPC accreditation.

“Our goal is to enhance the level of care available at all of our emergency treatment centers,” Dr. Garvey says.
What’s behind your pelvic pain?

Pain is your body’s way of saying something isn’t quite right. When it comes to pelvic pain, it can be difficult to pin down exactly what’s wrong. And because you may be accustomed to some monthly pelvic discomfort, you might not realize that your symptoms are different.

“Make an appointment with your doctor if your pain changes, worsens, affects your daily life or comes with new symptoms,” says Stephen Bale, MD, a gynecologist with Piedmont GYN/OB. Some common causes of pelvic pain include:

- **Endometriosis.** When endometrial tissue grows outside of the uterus on your ovaries, fallopian tubes or other pelvic structures, it may cause pain, cramping and painful periods with heavy bleeding. You may also have back or abdominal pain; pain with bowel movements or urination; or pain during intercourse.

- **Fibroids.** One in four women with these benign uterine tumors experiences symptoms including pelvic pressure or pain, heavy or prolonged periods, spotting, frequent urination, constipation and back or leg pain.

- **Ovarian cysts.** If you have ovarian cysts, you may feel a dull ache that radiates to your lower back and thighs, heaviness in your abdomen or pressure on your rectum or bladder. Most cysts disappear after a few menstrual cycles, but sometimes one will continue to grow and may rupture or twist, causing sudden, sharp or worsening pelvic or abdominal pain.

- **Pelvic inflammatory disease.** This bacterial infection may cause pain in your lower belly, a fever, irregular bleeding, an unusual vaginal discharge or pain during intercourse.

**WE CAN HELP**

Don’t put up with pelvic pain. “See your doctor for a thorough exam during which he or she may also check for bladder or other infections, pregnancy, irritable bowel syndrome or nerve disorders. The sooner you seek treatment, the sooner you’ll enjoy relief,” says Dr. Bale.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

J.D. Power and Associates has recognized Carolinas Medical Center-Pineville for providing an “Outstanding Patient Experience” in maternity services for a third consecutive year. To schedule a free tour of the Maternity Center, call the CMC-Pineville Baby Line at 704-341-2500.

**LOOKING FOR A DOCTOR CLOSE TO HOME?**

Piedmont GYN/OB has board-certified physicians and certified nurse midwives at three convenient locations. Visit [www.piedmontgynob.org](http://www.piedmontgynob.org) for more information.

- **Ballantyne**
  15110 John J. Delaney Drive
  Suite 100
  Charlotte, NC
  704-512-5100

- **Rock Hill**
  200 S. Herlong Ave.
  Rock Hill, SC
  803-324-7606

- **Fort Mill**
  704 Gold Hill Road
  Suite 215
  Fort Mill, SC
  803-835-0434
Tony Austin had visions of the future, of taking grandchildren fishing and hunting. But at his weight, the 49-year-old York, S.C., resident knew there was no way he was going to be around to see his son get married and start a family. Without really realizing it, he had packed on the pounds, he says. He didn’t have any weight-related health problems and was never short of breath. But Tony found himself at a crossroads: Keep going down the same unhealthy path, or lose the weight. He chose the latter.

MAKING GOOD ON A PROMISE

Ask Tony what he weighed, and he won’t tell. It’s too embarrassing, he says. But this is what he will say: In seven months, he dropped 110 pounds. And he’s only 10 or 15 pounds away from his goal weight.

His life changed the day his employer, MacLean Power, brought Carolinas Medical Center Corporate Health’s On-site Medical Management Program on board. The on-site clinic is staffed with either a nurse practitioner or a physician assistant. It’s run by CMC Corporate Health, which works with employers to identify health risks among employees, and to treat employees for chronic health conditions such as obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure. The clinic supports employees in working toward healthier lifestyles (see “The key is prevention”). To motivate workers to lose weight, CMC Corporate Health also ran a “Biggest Loser Weight Loss Challenge,” which started in February 2009. In this contest, Tony saw his opportunity to turn his life around.

“Tony had a lot working against him,” says Heather Shiflett, PA, the physician assistant who works for CMC Corporate Health and created the contest. “You burn the most fat while you’re sleeping, so if you work nights like Tony does, you tend not to do as well with weight loss.” Shiflett says she was inspired to create “Biggest Loser” by her own family’s struggle with obesity and her days spent as a teacher, when she saw first-graders who weighed more than her 120 pounds.

During the 15-week challenge, Shiflett offered nutritional advice to Tony and the other MacLean employees. “Many people really didn’t trust me when I told them all the things they could eat and still lose weight,” she laughs. “They were afraid to eat that much.”

Besides his family, Tony says Shiflett was a big source of motivation for him to lose the weight. He learned to follow a low-carbohydrate/high-protein diet.
“It didn’t really feel like a diet,” Tony says. He also drank 60 to 80 ounces of water a day and weighed in every week. At the end of the contest, he was crowned the “biggest loser” out of 15 MacLean contestants, after dropping more than 65 pounds through diet alone. He went on to lose 45 more pounds. It was just something he felt he had to do, and he’s reaped the rewards—more energy and self-esteem.

**KEEPING AT IT**

Like almost everyone who lost weight through the contest, Tony has maintained his weight within a few pounds. He plans to start an exercise program to shed those last few pounds, but he won’t say when. He believes setting deadlines just sets you up for failure.

People approach him all the time, asking how he lost so much weight. “I tell them you have to figure out your motivation, you have to want to do it,” he says.

He knows his motivation.

At one point during the weight-loss challenge, he was discouraged when more than a week went by and he had only lost one pound. He texted his wife: “Why am I doing this?” His son picked up Mom’s phone and texted back, “Dad, don’t forget, like you’ve always told me, ‘Hang in there.’ You’ve got to keep going.”

“I still have that message,” Tony says.

**THE KEY IS PREVENTION**

Heather Shiflett, PA, has seen the benefits of CMC Corporate Health’s On-site Medical Management Program. Some participants have been able to stop taking their blood pressure medication. Others have reduced the amount of insulin they need to take.

Companies also see the benefits of the program, like lower health insurance premiums, fewer absentee employees and higher levels of productivity. CMC Corporate Health’s On-site Medical Management Program is offered at several Charlotte-area locations.

**CMC CORPORATE HEALTH OFFERS:**

- Wellness programs:
  - Health risk assessments.
  - Biometric assessments that measure blood pressure, blood sugar, body mass index, cholesterol and triglycerides. Employees receive a confidential personal health analysis.
  - One-on-one counseling. Medical professionals such as nurses, dietitians and health educators work with employees to set personal goals to make healthier lifestyle choices.
  - Regular progress reports for employers.
  - Occupational medicine services (workers’ compensation, drug and alcohol screening and physical exams)
  - Health fairs
  - Smoking-cessation assistance
Cooler temperatures herald seasonal changes like crisp, flavorful apples, pumpkins on doorsteps—and the start of the cold and flu season. And this year, we’re battling both the seasonal flu and H1N1 flu.

What you don’t know about the flu can be enough to make you sick—literally! Read on for some common questions and answers about the flu.

**Q. What is influenza (flu) and how does it spread?**

**A.** Flu is a serious viral, respiratory illness that is contagious to other people, passed by coughing or sneezing.

**Q. What is 2009 H1N1 flu?**

**A.** H1N1 flu is a new virus strain that has spread worldwide and is infecting millions of people. H1N1 can spread very quickly because many people have not built up immunity to it.

The symptoms of H1N1 are similar to the seasonal flu:
- fever (higher than 100° F)
- shortness of breath
- chills
- fatigue
- headache
- vomiting
- cough
- diarrhea
- sore throat

**Q. When should I seek medical attention?**

**A.** If you experience the following symptoms, seek emergency medical assistance immediately.

For children:
- trouble breathing
- bluish gray skin color
- severe or constant vomiting
- pain or pressure in the abdomen

For adults:
- trouble breathing
- dehydration
- dizziness
- confusion
- severe or constant vomiting

If you have any questions, talk to your doctor.

**Q. Who should receive the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine?**

**A.** Anyone 6 months old or older should be vaccinated. Groups recommended to receive the vaccine first include:
- people between ages 6 months and 24 years old
- pregnant women
- people 25 to 64 years old with chronic medical conditions such as heart or kidney disease, diabetes, sickle cell anemia or asthma
- healthcare personnel and those who care for infants younger than 6 months old

**Q. How can I prevent the seasonal and H1N1 flu?**

**A.** Take these actions to stay healthy:
- Get a seasonal flu and H1N1 flu vaccine.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand cleaners.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue as you cough or sneeze, and throw away used tissues.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Stay home if you get sick.

**STOP THE FLU!**

For more information about flu and flu-related policies, visit [www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org/flu](http://www.carolinasmedicalcenter.org/flu).

In an effort to safeguard patients, staff members and adult visitors this flu season, CMC, along with all of the greater Charlotte area hospitals, is restricting individuals ages 17 and younger from visiting the hospital, unless they are seeking medical care.
Carolinas Medical Center is committed to improving the health and wellness of your family by participating in a wide variety of community health events, educational seminars and wellness classes. To view a complete list of upcoming events and classes, visit www.carolinasmédicalcenter.org for more information.

**HEART OF A WOMAN SUPPORT GROUP**

Join us to hear speakers address a variety of important healthcare topics (to be announced). A light dinner will be served.

- **WHERE**: CMC-Myers Park, First floor conference room, 1350 S. Kings Drive, Charlotte
- **WHEN**: Tuesday, Jan. 12 and Tuesday, March 9, 6–7:30 p.m.
- **COST**: Free
- **CALL**: 1-888-852-5422 or visit www.HeartofaWoman.org to register

**CBCC BLOOD DRIVES**

Your 30- to 45-minute blood donation at one of these Carolinas HealthCare hospitals can save up to three local lives. Walk-ins welcome.

- **WHERE**: CMC-University
- **WHEN**: Tuesdays, Dec. 8, 11:30 a.m.–4 p.m. and March 9, 11:30 a.m.–4 p.m.
- **WHERE**: CMC-Pineville
- **WHEN**: Monday, Jan. 4, 10:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

**GROCERY STORE TOUR WITH A DIETITIAN**

Join Alicia Fogarty, MS, RD, LDN, for a free tour of Trader Joe’s grocery store. Reservations required. Eight participants maximum.

- **WHERE**: Trader Joe’s (Midtown), 1133 Metropolitan Ave., Charlotte
- **WHEN**: Thursday, Jan. 14, 10 a.m.
- **CALL**: 704-512-3820 to reserve a space

**OPERATION MEDICINE DROP**

Drop off your unused prescription medications for safe disposal.

- **WHERE**: Harris Teeter locations
- **WHEN**: March and April (dates will vary by county)
- **VISIT**: www.levinechildrens hospital.org/injuryprevention for details

**My CMC Health News: Current Health News, Personalized for Your Family**

If getting healthy—or staying healthy—is your goal, *My CMC Health News* is just what the doctor ordered. Simply choose the health topics that are of most interest to you, and we’ll customize your e-newsletter to provide you with targeted, timely and up-to-date news about healthcare for you and your family. For more information or to sign up, visit www.carolinasmédicalcenter.org.

Getting older just got better!

Looking for an enjoyable way to learn how to stay healthy and fit? Want the chance to see friends and make new ones? It’s all available through *Prime Club*, a new, FREE membership group designed for adults ages 55 and better. Members enjoy:

- free 24-hour access by phone to a registered nurse
- presentations about relevant health topics, Medicare drug coverage, living wills, and healthcare powers of attorney
- discounts and special offers at more than 25 local participating businesses, including restaurants and retail stores

Visit www.carolinasmédicalcenter.org/prime to join today and take advantage of these special offers!
You can rest easy. Because we never do.

CMC-Steele Creek is the first of its kind in our region – a healthcare pavilion offering immediate access to a freestanding 24-hour emergency department with rapid triage, advanced diagnostics and helicopter transportation for high-level trauma patients. The healthcare pavilion also features highly-skilled physicians from some of the community’s most trusted physician practices – Charlotte Pediatric Clinic, Mecklenburg Medical Group and Piedmont GYN/OB – to meet your family’s medical needs with convenient service and personalized care.

The future of comprehensive, community-based healthcare has arrived. Right here in Steele Creek and the surrounding communities.

**Healthcare Pavilion Services**

- 24-HOUR EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT
- CHARLOTTE PEDIATRIC CLINIC
- MECKLEBURG MEDICAL GROUP (INTERNAL MEDICINE)
- PIEDEMONTE GYN/OB
- ADVANCED DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING (CT SCAN, ULTRASOUND, X-RAY)
- LABORATORY SERVICES
- CMC RX (RETAIL PHARMACY)
- PERSONALIZED CARE

**Corner of Steele Creek Road (HWY 160) and South Tryon St. (HWY 49)**

13640 Steelecroft Parkway
Charlotte, NC 28273
704-512-5500

CMC-Steele Creek

Uncompromising Excellence. Commitment to Care.