

Open communication
The power of dialogue
in treating infertility

Savvy screening
The future of
mammography

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**MEDIA
PLANET**

May 2012

WOMEN'S HEALTH

3
TIPS
TO TAKE CONTROL
OF YOUR HEALTH

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TURNING PAIN INTO PURPOSE

Actress, cancer survivor, and advocate **Fran Drescher** discusses the importance of early detection.

MENOPAUSE MAP A NEW RESOURCE

The Hormone Health Network
Menopause Map

Navigate your unique journey with the Menopause Map—a first-of-its-kind, interactive resource to guide you through treatment options for your menopausal symptoms.
www.hormone.org/MenopauseMap



Hormone Health
NETWORK
Keep your body in balance

CHALLENGES

During National Women's Health Week, **and throughout the entire year**, it's important to make your health a top priority.



It's your time

National Women's Health Week (NWHW) is a reminder for the special women in our lives—mothers, sisters, daughters, neighbors, and friends—that taking care of their health is the key to living longer, healthier, and happier. This year's theme, "It's Your Time," encourages women to take time every day to do something healthy. You might try incorporating good habits such as getting more activity into your day, making smarter food choices, getting a full night's sleep, or finding a new way to keep stress under control. During NWHW, and throughout the entire year, it's important to make your health a top priority.

You're not alone

Regular visits to your doctor are also a key component of good health. They help your doctor establish a baseline about what's normal for you. If you're not sure how often you should see your doctor, especially in light of recent recommendations from medical groups supporting less frequent Pap screenings, you're not alone. Remember that there's more to women's health than just one test! Routine screenings, such as clinical breast exams and mam-

"Regular visits to your doctor are also a key component of good health. They help your doctor establish a baseline about what's normal for you."



James T. Breeden, MD
President, The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

mograms, diabetes and colon cancer screenings, and blood pressure tests, help doctors find problems early or prevent them before they occur. Regular face-to-face visits also strengthen the doctor-patient relationship and give women the opportunity to ask questions and address health concerns.

Schedule an appointment

ACOG recommends that all women visit their ob-gyn yearly for a comprehensive well-woman exam. During this visit, ob-gyns assess and counsel patients about nutrition, physical activity, sexual health and safety, sexually-transmitted disease screenings, contraception, and tobacco, alcohol, and drug use. The standard physical exam also includes height, weight, body mass index (BMI), and blood pressure. Annual breast and abdominal exams begin at age 19 and pelvic exams at 21.

Have you been to the doctor lately? Check your records to be sure. If you haven't been in the past year, try to schedule an appointment soon. And remind your friends and relatives to do the same.

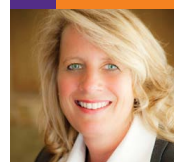
Best wishes for a healthy, happy National Women's Health Week!

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JAMES T. BREEDAN

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TIPS



Alicia Stanton, M.D.
Physician, Author, International Speaker

For your physician search:

1. Ask your friends.
2. Look on physician specialty websites for doctors in your area.
3. Call a hospital and ask for their recommendations.
4. Look at the recommendations from physician rating sites.

After finding candidates to interview:

1. Do other physicians cover for you after hours?
2. What is your policy for returning phone calls?
3. Would you discuss treatment information I find?
4. Do you take continuing education classes and attend conferences to stay up to date with new trends in medicine?

At the end of the day:

1. Do you feel comfortable with this physician?
2. Do you feel that you are being listened to and heard?



WE RECOMMEND



Margery Gass, M.D., NCMP
Executive Director, North American Menopause Society (NAMS)

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"Menopause can have a disturbing effect on sleep. Fortunately, it is a temporary effect.."

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WOMEN'S HEALTH
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INSPIRATION

TIPS



Smart Snacking

A snack is an opportunity to refuel and get nutrients between meals. It is like a mini meal—less than or equal to 200 calories, ideally consisting of a high fiber carbohydrate, a lean protein and/or a healthy fat. Some favorites are:

- 1 cup low-fat plain Greek yogurt with cup of berries
- Single-serve cheese with an apple
- ½ cup 2% cottage cheese with 1 cup melon
- Hardboiled egg and a banana
- A pear with 1 TBSP natural nut butter
- “Granola” type bar
- ¼ cup of roasted edamame
- 1 cup of low fat chocolate milk

The power of positivity

Question: How did actress Fran Drescher cope with a misdiagnosis and feeling of betrayal?

Answer: She turned pain into purpose.

Fortunately for Drescher, her cancer was still stage one when it was finally treated, but she still faced a full hysterectomy. She survived, but lost the ability to bear children. “I felt betrayed by my body and betrayed by the medical profession,” Drescher says.

It’s a movement

In order to gain a sense of control over a difficult situation, Drescher wrote Cancer Schmancer. While on the book tour, she discovered that millions of other women faced the same problems she had—and many weren’t as lucky as she was. She responded by founding The

Cancer Schmancer Movement, an organization designed to turn women from patients into medical consumers.

“...above all, don’t ignore the early warning whispers that something is wrong.”

Speaking up

Drescher hammers the message of early detection and prevention, but as you expect from Drescher, she isn’t timid when discussing the situation. “We live in an unhealthy, toxic nation,” she says. “Detox your home, your personal care items, your food. Organic, organic, organic. Less from animals, more

from plants. More water. Avoid all that processed, toxic garbage our nation is full of. And above all, don’t ignore the early warning whispers that something is wrong.”

“When life bites us on the ass,” Drescher says, “we always say ‘why me?’ But then we have to stop saying that and turn pain into purpose.” And that is exactly what she has done with The Cancer Schmancer Movement.

Even though life has chomped on her rear end more than once, she hasn’t lost her energy, and she is surprisingly optimistic. “I’ve seen a conscious-shift in the last few decades, and that keeps me inspired.”

AVERY HURT

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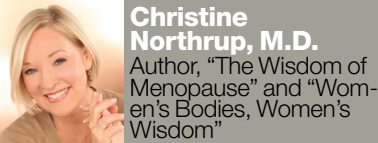
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PANEL OF EXPERTS



Question 1:
What hormonal changes occur during menopause?



Christine Northrup, M.D.
Author, "The Wisdom of Menopause" and "Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom"

Estrogen rises while progesterone falls due to skipping ovulations. Testosterone sometimes rises or falls depending on the health of the adrenal glands, which produce DHEA – the building block for steroid hormones. Estrogen and testosterone decrease to about the level of a 10 year old girl!



Alicia Stanton, M.D.
Physician, Author, and International Speaker

Progesterone decreases early in menopause. Later, estrogen decreases. The early symptoms are caused by an imbalance between progesterone and estrogen. Progesterone is also a building block for the stress hormone, cortisol. Therefore, high stress levels can make early symptoms worse. Low estrogen causes later symptoms.



Tori Hudson, N.D.
Clinical Professor
Medical Director,
A Woman's Time

Four to seven years prior to menopause, perimenopause, estrogen levels are in the normal range. Six to twelve months before actual menopause, estrogen definitively drops. After menopause, a hormone called androstenedione drops by 50%, testosterone production decreases by 25% and, in the subsequent decade after menopause, circulating levels of DHEA are 70% less.

Question 2:
Are there different forms of hormones for menopause? What is the difference?

There are many different forms. The three basic hormones that may or may not need supplementation are estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. The healthiest form of the hormone is one that exactly matches what the female body naturally produces – thus the term "bioidentical."

Bioidentical hormones have the same shape and structure as the hormones our bodies make. They can fit completely into our hormone receptors giving us the effects we expect. Non-bioidentical hormones have different shapes and structures than ours do so we don't get the same effects.

Bioidentical hormones are a confusing aspect of menopause management. Extracts from soybeans or the Mexican Wild Yam are manufactured to create hormones that are biochemically identical to those the body produces. These "compounded" bio-identical hormones are often in a dose, combination, or delivery that is not offered by other pharmaceutical companies.

DON'T MISS!



Margery Gass, M.D., NCMP
Executive Director,
North American
Menopause
Society (NAMS)

Menopause can have a disturbing effect on sleep. Fortunately, it is a temporary effect, though quite annoying. It is most bothersome to women who find themselves waking up in drenched sleepwear and damp sheets and pillow cases.

To reduce night sweats: avoid comforters, wear clothing that wicks moisture away, keep the room cool with a fan, and use special bed linens and pillows for hot flashing.

If nothing practical works, hormone therapy can be discussed with your provider. In most cases, night sweats gradually disappear and women are left with the sleep pattern changes that occur with aging.

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PAMELA WARTIAN SMITH, M.D., MPH

Author: Pamela W. Smith, M.D., MPH
Co-director, Masters Program in Medical Sciences, University of South Florida College of Medicine

A Guide to Solving Your Weight-Loss Puzzle

WHY YOU CAN'T LOSE WEIGHT

WHY IT'S SO HARD TO SHED POUNDS AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

PAMELA WARTIAN SMITH, M.D., MPH

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The journey to parenthood



“Don’t ignore infertility.” That was the message heard loud and clear during National Infertility Awareness Week in April. It was a message that urged people to pay attention to their own fertility and to treat those dealing with infertility with sensitivity.

One in eight U.S. couples of child-bearing age is diagnosed with infertility. For these 7 million Americans, the journey to parenthood can be emotional, isolating, and expensive. According to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, you should seek the care of a specialist if you are unable to achieve pregnancy after 12 months of unprotected intercourse and the woman is under the age of 35; six months if the woman is more than 35 years of age. You should also seek the care

of a specialist if you have had more than one miscarriage.

Because infertility often involves major personal life issues and decisions, it is often experienced as a private matter. The personal nature of infertility can cause people to ignore the signs, deny the possibility, and even keep their concerns to themselves during medical appointments.

“At RESOLVE, we empower women and men with infertility to speak up,” said Barbara Collura, Executive Director of RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association. “We encourage people to ask their doctors for medical advice and provide forums for the infertility community to support each other. We want couples to remain hopeful in their journey through infertility. It’s important to take action by visiting a fertility specialist early-on and getting the

support and help that you deserve.”

A poster commented on one of RESOLVE’s online communities during National Infertility Awareness Week: “I was surprised and embarrassed when we didn’t have a baby after that first year of trying. I’m grateful my ob-gyn referred me to a fertility specialist, and I’m glad I had a support group to help me through my treatments. But most of all, I’m thankful for my baby!”

Kelli Harrington is another American woman who took charge of her own healthcare and chose In Vitro Fertilization treatment, commonly referred to as IVF. IVF is the process of fertilization by manually combining an egg and sperm in a laboratory dish. When the IVF procedure is successful, the process is combined with a procedure known as embryo transfer, which involves physically placing the embryo in the

uterus.

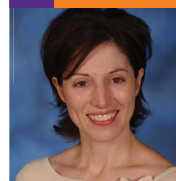
Kelli was 39 when she married her husband in 2009, and knew that time wasn’t on her side as a woman’s fertility halves at the age of 35. They started trying to have a child straight away but after 6 months there was still no positive pregnancy test. After her doctor suggested IVF, Kelli researched and pursued treatment. Kelli is now 26 weeks along and the couple is eagerly awaiting its new arrival on August 23rd.

Reproductive health and infertility should not be ignored. Being aware of the possibility, the signs, and the treatment options of infertility, will increase sensitivity and hope for those people struggling to make their dreams of a family a reality.

NELLY NITRAN

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Elise Berman, M.D.
Division Chief of Breast Imaging, Fairfax Radiological Consultants

Who should have a breast tomosynthesis exam?

Tomosynthesis (3D mammography) is approved by the FDA for breast cancer screening and diagnosis.

While this technology is likely to benefit all women, we recommend it as a screening tool to be performed with your annual screening mammogram. Breast tomosynthesis may be particularly important for women with a strong family history of breast cancer or for women with dense breast tissue. Tomosynthesis is also proving useful for women who have had breast surgery or irregular breast tissue.

WHERE WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE IVF?

Available on the App Store

Having IVF treatment can be a very stressful experience so why not give yourself the best chance of success?

Studies have shown that stress has a very negative effect on fertility, and by trying to juggle your IVF appointments around work does not leave you feeling very calm and relaxed.

Many couples in the USA are discovering the most relaxing and effective way to undergo treatment is to take a short flight to the beautiful island of Barbados in the Caribbean. Here the team at Barbados Fertility Centre work hard to ensure you are at your optimum of relaxation to undergo IVF treatment.

This JCI accredited centre of excellence has been helping couples achieve their dream of having a family for the last 10 years with excellent success rates - 72% for women under 35.

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INSPIRATION

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Edward R. Lipsit, M.D.
President,
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Detecting breast cancer

What are the differences among 3D, digital and film mammography?

A mammogram is a safe, low-dose x-ray picture of the breast. Mammography is currently the most effective method of detecting breast cancer in its earliest, most treatable stages. Film mammography records the image on film that is viewed by the radiologist on a "light box." Digital mammography produces a 2D electronic image that is viewed on a special (diagnostic) computer. 3D mammography (breast tomosynthesis) utilizes multiple low dose digital images to create a three dimensional view of the breast tissue.

Many insurance companies allow a woman to choose where she gets her mammogram. Look for a high volume site and ask to be screened on the latest equipment.

EDWARD R. LIPSIT

editorial@mediaplanet.com

Winning the battle against breast cancer

TIP

3

HAVE AN OPEN
DIALOGUE WITH
YOUR DOCTOR

Paulla Miller was 28 and she knew something was wrong, but it would take seven years before doctors diagnosed her breast cancer. By then Paulla's cancer was stage 3 and chemotherapy, a double mastectomy, radiation and breast reconstructive surgery followed.

Although Paulla knew something wasn't right her doctors believed she was too young for breast cancer and they could not feel a lump during a breast exam. After much lobbying, Paulla's doctor finally agreed to a mammogram, which clearly showed three tumors.

Early detection

Breast cancer still is the leading cause of death among women ages 35-65 in the United States. But, when cancer is found early, before it has a chance to grow or spread, the survival rate is over 90 percent. In most cases, a mammogram can identify an abnormal lump as early as two years before it can be felt.

Recently, there has been a great



Paulla Miller
Underwent chemotherapy, a double mastectomy, radiation, and breast reconstructive surgery after a mammogram revealed stage 3 breast cancer.

PHOTO: PAULLA MILLER

deal of discussion about the right age for a woman to get her first mammogram. Most women who get breast cancer have no family history or other known risk factors for the disease. For women with no known risk factors, the American Cancer Society, American College of Radiology, American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and Susan B. Komen for the Cure recommend annual mammograms starting at age 40.

Advancements in detection

In 2000, 2D digital mammography

began replacing film-screen mammography for breast cancer screening. In a digital mammogram, X-rays are still used, but they are turned into electric signals that are stored in a computer as opposed to film. This is similar to the way digital cameras take and store pictures. Today, digital mammography is the standard for breast cancer screening. Over 83 percent of all mammography facilities in the United States have at least one digital system.

Although film and 2D digital mammograms are very effective, some research suggests that they may miss between 10 percent and 20 percent of breast cancers.

In February 2011, the FDA approved a new 3D imaging technology for breast cancer screening and diagnosis in the United States—breast tomosynthesis. Breast tomosynthesis acquires low-dose images of a breast at multiple angles during a short scan. Tomosynthesis virtually eliminates detection challenges associated with overlapping tissue in the breast, which is the primary drawback of conventional mammography. Breast cancer screening with

tomosynthesis has a higher cancer detection rate than conventional 2D mammography. But, equally important, tomosynthesis gives radiologists the confidence to significantly reduce recall rates when a patient is asked to come back for additional screening.

Tomosynthesis has been available in Europe and other countries recognizing the CE mark since 2008.

Too many women die from breast cancer. An annual screening mammogram can make a difference in treatment and even survival. Talk to your doctor about when to have your first mammogram. Most women should start at age 40 and have a mammogram yearly. Ask for a digital mammogram and consider a 3D mammogram if it's available. Don't put off getting a mammogram if 2D digital mammography or 3D mammography is not available in your area. All forms of mammography are effective, and early detection is key.

MARY FEELEY

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