

YOUR  
**Health**  
MATTERS

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## Health Myths: True or False?



Máire Fowler, DO, St. Francis Internal Medicine, sets the record straight about popular health hearsay.

### Is sea salt better for you than table salt?

Products such as chips, almonds and soups have stormed the market touting the health benefits of sea salt. Sea salt is salt that has been evaporated from seawater. It has a different mineral content than table salt, which can give it a different flavor.

Sea salt is not supplemented with iodine as is most table salt. Adequate iodine is necessary for proper thyroid

function. Iodine deficiency used to be fairly common. It has been virtually eliminated in the U.S. by iodized table salt. If you eat foods such as seafood and dairy, you'll generally get enough iodine.

Excess amounts of either sea salt or table salt are linked to high blood pressure. Limit your sodium intake to 1,500 to 2,500 milligrams per day.

### Does popping your knuckles lead to arthritis?

It is a myth that cracking your knuckles will lead to arthritis.

The cracking sound is produced by the gasses that are dissolved in the fluid

that surrounds our joints. When the capsule around the joint is stretched, the dissolved gasses are released, causing the cracking noise.

There is no evidence that cracking your knuckles can cause arthritis. However, there have been some reports of injuries to the ligaments and tendons that surround the joint. One study reported decreased grip strength in elderly persons who were habitual knuckle crackers.

### Does dental health impact physical well-being?

Absolutely! Periodontal disease is strongly linked with plaque buildup in the arteries. In addition, poor dental health has been linked to diabetes, peripheral arterial disease, pneumonia and more.

In a six-year study of older adults in Japan, those with the poorest dental care at the beginning of the study developed significantly worse physical and mental impairments and had a higher mortality rate than those who had the best dental care at the beginning of the study. ♦



**Dr. Fowler is accepting new patients. Call 785-270-5110 to make an appointment.**



## Satisfy Your Cravings with Room Service at St. Francis

Whether a patient wants bran flakes or buttermilk pancakes, a chicken Caesar salad or chicken fried steak, St. Francis Health Center's award-winning room service program, introduced in 2006, can satisfy just about any craving.

St. Francis Health Center recently received an Avatar Innovation award for its room service program, which garnered a five-star rating on patient satisfaction surveys.

Patients can order meals from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and breakfast selections are available all day. Each meal is prepared to order and delivered by a St. Francis hostess within 45 minutes. Guests can also order room service and pay with a credit card in the patient's room.

"Patients appreciate being able to decide when and what they will eat," says Angie Hemsath, director of Food and Nutrition. "It can provide comfort, and it's convenient for family members who want to eat with their loved one."



# Health Park Development for a Healing Environment Under Way

Photo by Mike Burley. Photo courtesy of The Topeka Capital-Journal.

Mike Schrader, president and chief executive officer of St. Francis Health Center, considers the possibilities on the Health Park campus.

has for the property adjacent to the Health Park and ongoing River Hill development, Schrader says the area will be a destination point not only for health care but also for exercise and entertainment.

“We’re confident entrepreneurs and established companies will find opportunities on the acreage surrounding our hospital footprint to offer everything from university classes and fitness opportunities to upscale eateries and novel living arrangements. It’s an exciting time for St. Francis and Topeka.” ♦

St. Francis Health Center has begun razing 20 buildings on its Health Park property to prepare for development of 132 acres of land purchased in June 2007. The Clock Tower building, originally built as a hospital by Security Benefit and later used as Menninger offices, will not be affected. Herrman’s Excavating Inc. is the contractor in charge of the demolition and removal process, which should take about four months.

St. Francis intends to develop roughly 40 acres for hospital and outpatient buildings and make the remaining acreage available for compatible businesses.

Mike Schrader, president and chief executive officer, says, “We are enthusiastic about the economic impact the Health Park’s development could have in positioning Topeka as a regional health and wellness resource. We’re planning for the next 50 years and beyond so we’re considering how to integrate best practices for patient care into an innovative campus designed to promote healing and protect the environment.”

## Keeping It Green

St. Francis will incorporate “green” elements into the planning process,

which will include components of a Plaintree model for patient care. The Plaintree concept considers the patient and his or her relationships with family members, visitors and clinicians.

“We want to keep ties to family and clinicians intact, but we don’t want them working against each other,” says Schrader, noting that outdoor elements also will be tied to the healing environment.

“There is a sense of peace and tradition and spirituality here,” he says. “We want to enhance it.”

## Into the Labyrinth

St. Francis is working with Stan Herd, internationally renowned crop artist, to create a signature labyrinth using natural resources on the Health Park property that could be unveiled in time for its 100th birthday celebration on Oct. 17, 2009.

“With a labyrinth, you travel in a winding circle and set your mind on an issue and explore that as the labyrinth twists and turns to the middle, where you would stop and think. As you walk out, you would think of resolutions. It’s a spiritual journey.”


With the recreational plans the state’s Wildlife and Parks Department

## Integrative Medicine —A New Dimension in Care

St. Francis is the first hospital in Topeka to provide Integrative Medicine, which is shown to increase satisfaction with care and decrease length of hospitalization. The new department offers massage therapy and guided imagery (using the imagination and mental images to promote healing and relaxation). Services are available for inpatients, outpatients and employees.

“The mind’s the most powerful healing tool we have,” says massage therapist Suzanne Sullivan, who heads the new department. She also plans to add a tranquility room where people may go and meditate, pray or just think in a private, quiet setting.

**For more information,  
call 785-270-5057.**



Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD, says a Mediterranean diet can help prevent heart conditions.

## Mediterranean Baked Fish

- 1 lb. fish fillets (sole, flounder or sea perch)
- 2 tsp. olive oil
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 1 can (16 ounces) whole tomatoes, drained (reserve juice), coarsely chopped
- ½ cup tomato juice (reserved from canned tomatoes)
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 cup dry white wine
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- ¼ cup orange juice
- 1 tbsp. fresh orange peel, grated
- 1 tsp. fennel seeds, crushed
- ½ tsp. dried oregano, crushed
- ½ tsp. dried thyme, crushed
- ½ tsp. dried basil, crushed
- To taste: black pepper

1. Heat oil in large nonstick skillet. Add onion and sauté over moderate heat for five minutes or until soft.

2. Add all remaining ingredients except fish. Stir well and simmer uncovered for 30 minutes.

3. Arrange fish in 10-by-6-inch baking dish. Cover with sauce. Bake uncovered at 375° F for about 15 minutes or until fish flakes easily.

Serves 4 four-ounce fillets with sauce

Each serving contains: Calories: 178, total fat: 1 g, cholesterol: 56 mg, sodium: 260 mg, total fiber: 3 g, protein: 22 g, carbohydrates: 12 g, potassium: 678 mg

"NHLBI: *Keep the Beat—Heart Healthy Recipes*"

# St. Francis Symposium Features World-Renowned Cardiologist

*St. Francis Health Center hosted world-renowned Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD, past president of the American Heart Association and immediate past president of the World Heart Foundation, as a featured presenter at the 27th Annual Advances in Cardiology Symposium on Friday, Feb. 29, 2008, at St. Francis Health Center.*

Dr. Fuster is the only cardiologist to receive four major research awards from the top four premier cardiovascular organizations and has published more than 500 articles on the subject of coronary artery disease, atherosclerosis and thrombosis. He serves as the lead editor of two major cardiology textbooks and editor-in-chief of the *Nature* journal that focuses on cardiovascular medicine.

## Preventing Heart Disease

"We are not preventing the problem of heart disease, which is completely avoidable," says Dr. Fuster. "We've seen a four-time increase in costs in four years because of hospitalizations."

Dr. Fuster says exercise, tobacco cessation and a diet low in saturated and trans-fatty acids and low in cholesterol, like a traditional Mediterranean or Japanese diet, can aid in prevention before interventional activities even become necessary.

To emphasize his points about prevention and personal responsibility, Dr. Fuster suggests "maybe people need to have their blood pressure in an acceptable range before we allow them to get a driver's license" as an added incentive to gain compliance and underscore the seriousness of heart disease, the number one killer of men and women.

He advises physicians to stress the importance of diet and exercise in relation to reducing weight, lowering blood pressure and blood cholesterol and controlling blood glucose to prevent heart attacks and strokes. He underscores the importance of physicians taking their own advice as an example to their patients.

Dr. Fuster also emphasizes the importance of stress reduction in a fast-paced society. "In a world of pressure and competitiveness, how do you stop eating, smoking and drinking? We live in a world that makes people crazy, and we are stressed out. The future of wellness is the promotion of physical and mental health."

Rajya L. Malay, MD, FRCPC, a cardiologist with Cardiology Consultants of Topeka PA, another presenter at the cardiology symposium, says, "What I like most about Dr. Fuster is that he brings the most important issue of prevention to the table and also gives us hope and direction via new channels on understanding and treating the root cause of heart disease. His contribution to the discipline of cardiology as a researcher and clinician is unparalleled. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention projects the cost of heart disease and stroke for the year 2008 to be more than \$440 billion, including health care expenditures and lost productivity from death and disability. The importance of patient education regarding



Bob Bowles, EdD, director of physician education and recruitment (left), and Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD, visit at the St. Francis 27th Annual Cardiology Symposium.

prevention of cardiovascular disease cannot be overemphasized. Basic lifestyle modifications made today can have a positive impact on generations to come.”

### Physician Symposia at St. Francis

The St. Francis Physician Symposia series features nationally recognized lecturers from across the country and local experts to share with area physicians the latest developments in treating patients for cardiovascular needs, pain management, obesity, gastrointestinal problems and more. The Physician Symposia series offered by St. Francis nine times a year began in 1981 as a way to bring physicians together to engage in dialogue about new treatment techniques and to enhance their ability to provide the highest-quality care to patients in northeast Kansas. Physicians who attend receive continuing education credit.

Bob Bowles, EdD, director of physician education and recruitment at St. Francis, says, “We were extremely fortunate to host Dr. Fuster because he truly is the foremost cardiology authority in the world. Our primary care physicians and cardiologists had a unique opportunity to glean additional insights from a physician who has shaped the practice of cardiology in countless ways.”

Other presenters at the cardiology symposium, in addition to Dr. Fuster and Dr. Malay, included:

Stephanie Blanken, MD, cardiothoracic surgeon, St. Francis Cardiothoracic Surgery; Raymond Dattilo, MD, FACC, cardiologist, Cardiology Consultants of Topeka PA; Ernie Podrasky, MD, Cardiology Consultants of Topeka PA; and Diane Wilkins, ARNP, Cardiology Consultants of Topeka PA. ♦

## St. Francis Cardiac Services Make the Grade

A HealthGrades study of hospital quality ranks St. Francis Health Center among the top 10 hospitals in Kansas for cardiology services. HealthGrades also recognized St. Francis Health Center for its five-star-rated treatment for heart attacks, the only Topeka hospital to receive this designation.

According to HealthGrades, patients admitted to five-star hospitals such as St. Francis Health Center have, on average, a 71 percent better chance of survival than those admitted at one-star hospitals, across 18 procedures and conditions.

“We have a dedicated team and first-rate technology to treat cardiac patients,” says Mike Schrader, president and chief executive officer. “Patients can be diagnosed with a heart attack by ambulance personnel even before they arrive at the Health Center. Our state-of-the-art cath labs, experienced heart team staff, cardiologists, emergency physicians and cardiothoracic surgery program all contribute to our excellent outcomes.”

The 2008 HealthGrades ratings for all hospitals nationwide are available, free of charge, on the organization’s consumer Web site, located at [www.healthgrades.com](http://www.healthgrades.com).

## St. Francis Recognized for High-Quality Cardiac Care

St. Francis Health Center has been awarded the UnitedHealth Premium Cardiac Specialty Center designation for 2007 to 2009 in recognition of high-quality care.

To receive this designation, St. Francis Health Center met extensive quality and outcomes based on nationally recognized medical standards and expert advice. The criteria incorporate measurements of breadth and depth of care, staff experience, emergency care, quality and outcomes reporting.

Sam Ho, MD, executive vice president and chief medical officer at UnitedHealthcare, says consumers who

require cardiac care need to know they are getting quality treatment. “The UnitedHealth Premium designation signals to all consumers that St. Francis Health Center meets or exceeds nationally recognized standards of care.”

John Joliff, MD, FACC, Cardiology Consultants of Topeka PA, says, “The United HealthCare Speciality Center designation underscores commitment to excellence in cardiac care at St. Francis. The collaborative efforts of the medical staff, the Emergency Department, Cath Lab and Cardiology inpatient floors have made this all possible.”



## Get Motivated with a Friend

It doesn't matter whether you want to lose weight, get in shape or quit smoking—it helps if you don't have to do it alone. Try these tips:

- Find a friend who wants to get healthier with you.
- Pick a small goal to work on together. For example, "Let's walk for 10 minutes, three times this week."
- Set a plan for how you will fit this goal into your lives. Figure out how you will deal with obstacles that might get in your way.
- Encourage each other to stick with it.
- Reach a goal? Set another and keep going!



Mike Schrader, president and chief executive officer of St. Francis Health Center, will serve as the Topeka Heart Walk chair at the event on Saturday, Sept. 13, 2008, at Reynolds Lodge at Lake Shawnee. Registration begins at 9 a.m., the walk begins at 10 a.m. and the event concludes by 1 p.m.

# Get Your Fitness in Gear with Biking

**W**hether you're riding outdoors or pedaling on a stationary bike in your living room, cycling is smart exercise. For example, a 150-pound woman who covers six miles an hour can burn 240 calories. And regular biking—like other varieties of exercise—may cut your risk for heart disease, diabetes and some cancers.

Dan Wilson, MD, medical director of the St. Francis Rehabilitation Services inpatient unit and an avid cyclist, advises new cyclists to consider several factors before beginning a program.

"First, if you have not been active, get a physical," says Dr. Wilson. "Start slow until your muscles are warmed up. Include cycling in your fitness routine but also consider adding weight-bearing exercise like jogging, tennis and weights to help bone density."

Convinced? If you're ready to start or intensify a biking fitness program, follow Dr. Wilson's tips:

- Always wear a helmet if you're cycling outdoors regardless of the distance.
- Hydrate before and on rides, especially during hot summer days.
- Ease into your workout. Start slowly with 15- to 30-minute rides. Then gradually increase your riding time each day, aiming for at least 30 minutes of biking or exercise on most—or all—days of the week.
- If you are overweight or have back pain or balance problems, try riding a reclining stationary bicycle or a recumbent bike as Dr. Wilson does for better support.

- Ride with friends or family members who pedal at the same pace you do.
- Share the road.
- Ride single file and announce to fellow cyclists traffic and road changes.
- Avoid busy roads and roads without adequate shoulders.

"Most of all, have fun," says Dr. Wilson. "It's not the destination but the journey that counts. Life is about relationships."

Dr. Wilson recommends the following list of necessities to ensure a safe, productive biking experience:

- Helmet
- Water
- Chamois butter for your backside
- Mosquito repellent
- Sunblock
- Energy bars
- Rain gear
- Tire-changing kit
- Bandages
- Over-the-counter pain reliever
- Pepper spray
- Good sunglasses with rearview mirror attachments. ♦

Dan Wilson, MD, rides a recumbent bike for better support.



Photo by Ashton Martin. Photo courtesy of Topeka Magazine.

# Childhood Clues May Predict Adult Diabetes and Metabolic Syndrome

**P**redicting—and protecting—your child’s future health may not require a crystal ball. In a new study published in the *Journal of Pediatrics*, researchers found that parents can reduce their child’s risk of later developing two serious health problems: type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome.

## Signs of Serious Health Risks

People with type 2 diabetes have blood sugar that is too high, which can damage the heart, kidneys and other vital parts of the body. People with metabolic syndrome have three or more of the following health problems, which put them at risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease:

- A large waistline or abdominal obesity
- High blood pressure
- High triglycerides, a type of fat in the blood
- High blood sugar
- Low “good” cholesterol or high-density lipoprotein (HDL)

## What Researchers Found

The study followed 814 youngsters, ages five to 19, for 25 years. Of those who’d had metabolic syndrome as children, 69 percent had metabolic syndrome as adults and 16 percent had type 2 diabetes as adults. Of those who didn’t have metabolic syndrome as children, only 24 percent had metabolic syndrome as adults, and 5 percent had type 2 diabetes as adults.

Researchers also found that having a parent with a history of type 2 diabetes increased the risk for both of these conditions in adulthood.

## How to Reduce Children’s Risk

Have your pediatrician evaluate your child for metabolic syndrome. Also let the doctor know if you have a family history of diabetes.



Some causes of metabolic syndrome, such as genetics and growing older, can’t be controlled. But you can manage others, such as being overweight and lack of physical activity. To reduce your child’s risk of developing metabolic syndrome and adult type 2 diabetes:

- Ask your pediatrician about an exercise program for the entire family. Include activities your family enjoys, such as basketball, jumping rope, swimming and bicycling. Make these part of your daily routine.
- Help your child make healthy food choices. Stock up on fruits, vegetables, and non- or low-fat dairy products. Avoid fried foods.
- Include foods rich in magnesium in your child’s diet. Studies

show this mineral reduces the risk for metabolic syndrome. Whole grains, nuts, pumpkin seeds, spinach and beans all are good sources. ♦

## Sports Performance Camps

Be a part of St. Francis Sports Medicine’s Sports Performance Camps. Improve speed, agility, power and strength this summer.

**WHEN:** July 7 - Aug. 7  
Monday/Tuesday/Thursday  
Group 1: 2:15 - 3:30 p.m.  
Group 2: 3:15 - 4:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** Topeka Collegiate School  
2200 SW Eveningside Drive

**CONTACT:** Michael Ramirez  
michael.ramirez@sftks.net  
1-877-STF-EDGE  
(1-877-783-3343)

**WHO:** St. Francis Sports Medicine  
and YOU!

[ everyday saints ]



**St. Francis  
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# healthyhighlights

## Vitamin E: The Key to Active Aging?

Eating foods with vitamin E could help you stay vital as you get older. According to the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, older people with the lowest levels of vitamin E were about 60 percent more likely to lose some ability to move freely as they aged. The researchers said the antioxidant vitamin E might protect against free radicals. These substances can damage cells in the nerves and muscles.

You need 15 milligrams of vitamin E each day. Snack on 24 almonds and you'll be halfway there. Other foods with vitamin E:

- Two tablespoons of smooth peanut butter (4 mg)
- A ¼ cup of sunflower seeds (8 mg)

## CAN THE ACAI BERRY POWER UP YOUR DIET?

The juice from a tropical berry called acai might help fight disease and signs of aging. That's because acai juice is loaded with antioxidants, according to early research.

Acai juice could pack the same antioxidant punch as cranberry juice or black cherry juice, according to a recent study in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*.

Stop by Java City in the St. Francis Health Center lobby for a creamy acai smoothie or 100 percent whole fruit smoothie to reap the benefits. Java City is open from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday.

You also can look for acai juice in the refrigerated or frozen juice section of health food stores.

## TURN IT OFF FOR A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Ever wondered whether watching TV before bed affects your sleep? A new study suggests that it might. More than 3,000 people were asked about sleep and media use, including Internet, TV and phone. Almost half of those who said they had insufficient sleep cited media use as the cause. As length of time using the Internet or watching TV before bed increased, so did the odds of reporting not enough sleep. Those who used the Internet for three or more hours before bed were five times as likely to report not getting enough sleep than those who used the Internet for less than half an hour before sleep.

## ACT FAST WHEN A STROKE STRIKES

The clot-busting drug TPA can reduce a stroke's aftereffects. But TPA works only when begun within three hours after the most common kind of stroke. So, experts agree, stroke patients should get to the hospital quickly. To move FAST, remember these tips:

**F** is for facial weakness. Your face feels numb or frozen, especially on one side.

**A** is for arm weakness, especially on one side.

**S** is for speech problems. You can't speak or understand properly.

**T** is for time; the faster you get treatment, the less damage to your brain. Phone **911** or have someone call an ambulance for you immediately, even if your symptoms disappear. You could be having a transient ischemic attack, or ministroke, which also needs treatment.

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