

A Happy, Health New Year

By Katie Ford Hall
Cincinnati Woman Magazine

It's time again for New Year's Resolutions. Usually weight loss tops most everyone's list. This year, look beyond the number on the scale and think about the possibility of a healthier new you. There are new treatments in the Tri-State area that can help you reach the goal of good health. Resolve to do something healthy for you, and stay healthy long after those unrealistic resolutions fall away.

Healthy Knees

Timothy E. Kremchek, M.D. of Beacon Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine, serves as the Cincinnati Reds Medical Director and Chief Orthopaedic Physician. Whether professional athlete or weekend warrior, many come to his offices with the complaint of knee pain. Often a patient will have been active and then begun experiencing knee symptoms and stop exercising altogether. Without healthy knees, it is difficult to maintain good aerobic health.

From a young age, it is important to take precautions for the health of your knees. "If you run," says Kremchek, "be smart. Wear the proper shoes and inserts and don't run on cement every day." But if you do start experiencing some of the symptoms, don't delay seeing your doctor. "It's better to be proactive and nip problems in the bud before they become difficult to deal with. You can see a physician for short period of time and realize a long gain." The doctors at Beacon work with patients to find new ways for a patient to maintain aerobic health with less wear on their knees, like using the bicycle and swimming.

Dr. Kremchek believes we should watch for changes in our knees. In particular, he warns patients to look for the following symptoms:

1. Persistent pain
2. Consistent pain after activity
3. Swelling
4. Stiffness

Dr. Kremchek points out that there are treatments available to treat a range of problems, from the earliest signs of arthritis to more advanced issues. In their early stages, Kremchek says doctors can help patients develop an exercise program which strengthens the muscles around the knee. Also, a doctor might advise a patient not to run every day and to avoid running on hills. There are also supplements available to help lubricate the joint. In more advanced arthritic cases, there is arthroscopy to clean out

the joint. Sometimes a partial or total knee replacement may be needed.

No matter what the diagnosis, Dr. Kremchek believes that the doctor/patient relationship is a partnership. "The approach we take is that there are many tools we can use so that the whole person can stay healthy. That is what I call the art of sports medicine. We find out what the patient wants to do and we find a way to do it. The person can stay healthy and aerobically in shape to keep the whole body healthy."

Beacon Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine
www.beaconortho.com
513-354-3700

Healthy Weight

The medical profession determines weight categories by calculating Body Mass Index, or BMI. A person is considered morbidly obese if the BMI is 40 or higher. While there have been disagreements on the best treatments, there is no doubt that obesity is a health problem and adds a financial burden to our health care system. Dr. Dirk Rodriguez, Medical Director of the Deaconess Surgical Weight Loss Center, is a board-certified surgeon, a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and a member of the American Society for Bariatric Surgery. He debunks many myths about weight loss.

Dr. Rodriguez says that people who are morbidly obese have a "less than 5% success rate from diets." He stresses that "morbid obesity is a real medical condition like diabetes, and the safest, most effective treatment is surgery. People have problems accepting that and think that surgery should be the last option, but why should a patient suffer for five to ten years of failed diets?" Dr. Rodriguez believes that surgery should be considered early for those who suffer from morbid obesity and also for those with a BMI as low as 35 if other medical conditions, such as diabetes or high blood pressure, exist. "Obesity is like cancer," he says. "The sooner you treat it, the better it is. The purpose is to improve a person's health regardless of how he or she got there."

Dr. Rodriguez suggests seeking out a clinic designated as a Center for Excellence by the American Society of Metabolic and Bariatric Excellence. These Centers have the best safety records. Additionally, a patient must consider the costs, which can range from \$16,000 to \$19,000 depending on the type of surgery. Doctors who

recommend this surgery and the patients who stand to benefit from it are often at odds with insurance companies. But despite all of the challenges, Dr. Rodriguez finds his job very rewarding. "The goal of the surgery is to make the person healthy, not to treat the weight."

Rebecca Erdman, RD, LD, Bariatric Registered Dietitian and Support Group Facilitator at Deaconess Surgical Weight Loss Center, works with her team to individualize plans for patients based on their individual



medical conditions. They try to keep in touch with patients for as long as possible; at least five years. She offers the following tips for anyone considering a weight loss program:

1. See a physician before trying any weight program to identify medical conditions
2. Have to have realistic goals, both long and short term, based on medical conditions and where you need to be
3. Develop a good healthy eating plan
4. Engage in healthy activity level realistic to medical conditions

She stresses the importance of keeping a food journal, both to keep you accountable and to help your health care provider identify trends in your eating habits. Most of all, she warns to stay away from fads and to always seek out the sound advice of a medical professional.

Deaconess Surgical Weight Loss Center
http://www.deaconess-healthcare.com/weightloss_home.php
513-559-2100

Healthy Hormonal Balance

As we age, the balance of hormones changes in our body, and changes our body. Dr. Bruce S. Worrell with The Center for Optimal Vitality in Mason offers a program that can assist with those changes. Board certified in internal medicine, Dr.



Worrell offers bio-identical hormone replacement therapy, customized to the individual's needs. According to practice administrator Gina Worrell, people come to their office with a variety of symptoms including:

1. Anxiety, irritability