

Q & A

Have a question for our doctors? Drop us a line at editor@utsouthwestern.edu and we may address your query in a future issue.



Q Can tobacco use damage my bladder?

A “You might not think there’s a connection between smoking and the bladder, but any use of tobacco products increases your risk for bladder cancer by more than 400 percent. No matter how you use tobacco, the carcinogens are excreted from the body in urine. That means the lining of the bladder is exposed to the carcinogens. Because of the cumulative effect of tobacco exposure, bladder cancer can develop even years after you stop smoking. And because there aren’t many symptoms, most bladder cancer isn’t diagnosed until it’s in later stages.”

Watch for: Blood in the urine. It’s the main symptom of bladder cancer. If you notice it, see your doctor, especially if you’ve ever used tobacco.



Yair Lotan, M.D.
Professor of Urology

Q Can I catch up on missed sleep over the weekend?

A “Sleeping in on the weekend doesn’t help you get a fresh start on the Monday workweek. It just makes you sleepier come Monday morning. Your daily, or circadian, cycles guide your body’s internal clock. Sleeping in one hour or more over the weekend can delay your body’s internal clock up to an hour. Sleeping in both weekend days can delay the brain’s circadian clock up to two hours. That makes it tough to get to sleep Sunday night and even harder to wake Monday morning. If you’re really sleepy, turning in earlier is more effective than sleeping later. When we’re really sleepy, our brains rest more efficiently, allowing us to recover lost sleep in one or two nights of sleeping eight hours.”

Do: Get eight hours of sleep daily to maintain your internal clock.

Don’t: Drink alcohol or work on your blue-enriched computer monitor just before bedtime.



Gregory Carter, M.D.
Associate Professor of
Neurology and Neurotherapeutics

Q Should I use a neti pot for sinus cleansing?

A “Most allergists or ear, nose, and throat doctors have few concerns about neti pots, a nasal irrigation and cleansing tool that originated in India. Neti pots can be highly effective for sinus cleansing when used correctly. But they do require special care. Their safety was brought into question after users cleaned their pots with straight tap water. For effective cleaning, neti pots should be sanitized only with a saline solution made with distilled water or cooled water that has been boiled for one minute. They can occasionally be washed in the dishwasher or with soap and water.”

Neti pot care: Mix one cup of water, one teaspoon of a 3-to-1 mixture of iodide-free salt (such as pickling or canning salt, not table salt), and baking soda. After cleaning, empty the neti pot and allow it to air-dry.



Bradley Marple, M.D.
Vice Chair and Professor of
Otolaryngology–Head and
Neck Surgery

Orthopaedics

WOMEN AND ACL TEARS:

Why they occur, and how to avoid them

First comes the pop, then comes the pain. For those who play sports, the sound and sight of a torn anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) is a too-common experience. And, as it turns out, much more common in women than men, with an occurrence rate eight times as high.

That’s because women have wider hips and tend to land in a knock-kneed position when they jump or cut, says Katherine Coyner, M.D., Assistant Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery. “Women also have stronger quadriceps in relation to their hamstrings than men. This leads to an imbalance that makes landing properly with a bent knee more difficult.”

Specializing in a single sport can emphasize one set of muscles over another and increases the risk of injury to the ACL, which connects

the upper and lower leg bones and helps stabilize the knee.

“People become **one-muscle dominant at the expense of other muscles**, and that can apply too much force on the knee,” Dr. Coyner says.

To help create a well-rounded athlete and reduce the likelihood of ACL injury, Dr. Coyner and other experts recommend training programs that work muscles throughout the body.

Try this: 11+, a 20-minute warm-up program developed by FIFA, soccer’s international governing body. It’s designed for use before practices and games and strengthens core and leg muscles through running, jumping, and balance exercises. (See fifa.com.)

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Coyner, call 214-645-8300.



Katherine Coyner, M.D.

Breast Cancer

What you should know if you find a lump

You’ve discovered a lump in your breast. Now what?

First of all, don’t panic, says Phil Evans, M.D., Director of the UT Southwestern Center for Breast Care and also President of the American Cancer Society.

“Roughly **80 percent to 90 percent of lumps women find on their own are noncancerous**,” he says. “They could be benign fibrous tumors of the breast, fluid-

filled cysts, or just dense breast tissue. The important thing is that you consult a doctor if you notice anything suspicious or any changes in your breast.”

Did you know? The American Cancer Society recommends yearly mammograms starting at age 40.

What happens next:

- ▶ Your doctor will conduct a physical exam, then perhaps send you for a mammogram or sonogram.
- ▶ If a spot on a mammogram or sonogram is suspicious, you may have a needle biopsy, which draws tissue from the affected area to be examined.
- ▶ If tests prove there’s cancer, you would then see a surgeon about having the cancerous area removed.