



Living Well



Cancer screenings

Should they be on your calendar?



Daniel Thorogood, an AMC radiologic technologist and trained marathon runner, accepts his prize of scrub pants for winning the inaugural AMC Scrub Run. Thorogood finished the race in just over 22 minutes.

Scrub Run to fight obesity

Running a five-and-a-half-minute mile, radiologic technologist Daniel Thorogood outpaced his competitors in Atlanta Medical Center's (AMC) inaugural four-mile Scrub Run held Saturday morning, April 21.

Nearly 200 employees and community members participated in the race, running for a scrub shirt, hoping to win the matching pants, all while raising money for the Center Helping Obesity In Children End Successfully (CHOICES).

"We couldn't be happier about this turnout," says Troy Bond, AMC's chief human resources officer and leader of the Employer of Choice team that organized the event.

The Scrub Run is an effort by AMC to get to know residents of the surrounding neighborhoods, create a positive teamwork environment for its employees and raise money for a worthy health-related cause.

The idea was born, Bond says, from last year's fun run that resulted in about 40 people gathering before work early one Friday morning.

"We knew that if many people would come out to run early on a Friday, we should be able to get more involvement on a Saturday with a bigger event. Next year we're expecting even more participation," Bond says.



Nearly 200 participated in the inaugural AMC Scrub Run, a four-mile road race winding through the neighborhood streets surrounding AMC. Runners earned scrub shirts for participating; winners won the pants to match.

[Message from the CEO]



William T. Moore, CEO

Dear neighbors,

As summer begins, we're once again celebrating the people who make Atlanta Medical Center (AMC) great because we know great health care starts with great people.

Our employees have a passion for the jobs they perform because they know they're making a difference in someone's life every day. Because it is our passion to be your intown health care partner, we don't take our jobs lightly.

At every opportunity, we celebrate the

work of our employees and appreciate the chance to care for this community. We recently celebrated National Hospital Week, a time set aside to honor the work of all people who keep hospitals running. Rarely is there a clearer example of the importance of teamwork than in the hospital setting.

At the same time, we celebrated National Nurses' Week, recognizing a vital component of the hospital system. We've also joined our emergency medical services partners in celebrating National EMS Week, recognizing them for the pre-hospital care that makes a big difference in patients' outcomes once they reach the hospital.

Summer is typically hectic with activities that can sometimes lead to

injury. Please consider giving blood during the AMC summer blood drive, Aug. 21 and 22, at the medical center on Parkway Drive. It's one of the easiest, yet most needed, ways you can help.

The following pages have great advice about cancer prevention and what to do when summer accidents do happen. When you need health care, call on us at AMC. Your health is our passion, and we're committed to being your intown health care partner.

Sincerely,

William T. Moore
Chief Executive Officer

Teaming up to beat heart attacks

Although no one wants to have a heart attack, Atlanta could become the best place to have one thanks to the new Atlanta TIME (timely intervention for myocardial emergencies) project.

This one-of-a-kind initiative makes it possible for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to transmit lifesaving data to local Atlanta hospitals in order to shorten the time to treatment and increase a heart attack victim's chance of survival.

The cooperative project is sponsored by the American Heart Association and five regional hospitals, Atlanta Medical Center (AMC), Emory Crawford Long Hospital, Emory University Hospital, Piedmont Hospital and Saint Joseph's Hospital. All four EMS systems operating in Fulton County are also participating in the program.

Rapid response

"The Atlanta TIME project is the first cooperative urban program in the United States developed to provide the most rapid response to a cardiac emergency by improving every step of care from the onset of symptoms to treatment at the hospital," says Bryan McNally, M.D., emergency medicine physician at Emory University Hospital and co-director of the TIME program. "The time from the onset of the heart attack to the opening of the artery is critical in reducing heart damage and improving survival."

"Although all hospitals work on shortening the time of arrival to opening the artery, the TIME program concentrates on shortening the time from the onset of symptoms to stopping the attack with angioplasty," says Spencer King, M.D., chair of interventional cardiology at the Fuqua Heart Center of Atlanta at Piedmont Hospital and co-director of the program.

To help facilitate care, full 12-lead electrocardiographic (EKG) units have been placed in each ambulance in

Fulton County. All of these units are capable of transmitting EKGs immediately to one of the five hospitals that have receiving units. The emergency physicians at the hospital read the EKG and activate the emergency catheterization team. Since the diagnosis can be made before the patient arrives, delays of registration and testing at the hospital can be avoided. Protocols have been established in each of the hospitals to streamline the movement of the patient directly to the catheterization laboratory for emergency angioplasty.

Just in time

A critical component of the program is a full-time EMS paramedic educator who works directly with emergency medical technicians to help ensure appropriate responses to cardiac emergencies.

"We know that the greatest loss of time from the onset of a heart attack to treatment occurs prior to arriving at the hospital," says Paul Douglass, M.D., medical director of cardiac services and chief of the cardiology division at AMC. "Therefore, it is imperative that

With new EKG units in every ambulance in Fulton County, emergency department physicians can diagnose patients before they arrive to help avoid delays in treatment.

"This demonstrates historic cooperation between competing cardiac hospitals for the benefit of critically ill patients with rapid, lifesaving care," says William Knapp, M.D., medical director of the cath lab at Saint Joseph's Hospital.

the public recognize the signs of a heart attack and call 911 immediately. Thanks to this unique cooperative program, a heart attack victim in Fulton County should have the best chance of survival and recovery available anywhere."



Cardiologist Paul Douglass, M.D., (far left) medical director of cardiac services at AMC, represents AMC's involvement in the metro-Atlanta TIME project that brings rapid intervention to heart attack patients.



Cancer screenings save lives

The old saying about an apple a day is, perhaps, the health advice that's most familiar to many of us. But when it comes to protecting your health, there's something far more practical: cancer screenings. Screening tests often find cancer early—before symptoms develop—when treatment is most likely to be effective.



George Fuhrman, M.D.

What's more, some screening tests can actually help you prevent cancer from developing in the first place. These tests detect precancerous changes that doctors can treat, possibly stopping cancer before it even starts.

So do yourself a favor. "Ask your doctor what screening tests you need to protect yourself from cancer—and how often you should have them," says George Fuhrman, M.D., surgical residency

program director. "If you're at above-average risk for any of the cancers these tests detect, you may need earlier or more frequent screenings."

Your doctor can recommend a screening schedule that's best for you.

In the meantime, here's general advice from the American Cancer Society (ACS) about key screening tests. But underscore the word *general*.

Breast cancer screenings

Yearly mammograms, beginning at age 40, are one of the best defenses against breast cancer. These safe, low-dose x-rays of the breast may find malignant (cancerous) tumors that are still too tiny for a woman or her doctor to feel. The widespread use of mammograms is one reason that the number of women dying from breast cancer has dropped steadily since 1990, the ACS reports.

Colorectal cancer screenings

Each year tens of thousands of Americans lose their lives to colorectal cancer. But if everyone who should be screened followed through and got checked, at least half of these deaths could be avoided, according to the ACS.

That's because colorectal testing can find existing cancer early and detect precancerous polyps—growths in the colon and rectum—that can be removed, preventing cancer.

More than 90 percent of people diagnosed with colon cancer are 50 or older, according to the ACS. Consequently,



CANCER SCREENINGS AT AMC

For more information about all the cancer screenings available through Atlanta Medical Center, call 1-888-457-5204 or visit our Web site at www.atlantamedcenter.com.

Looking skin deep: A self-exam can make the difference

Sometimes it's in your best interest to look for trouble.

That's because carefully checking your skin every month could save your life. Regular self-exams can help you find skin cancer in its earliest stages, when treatment is highly effective.

Skin cancer can show up even on skin that is not frequently directly exposed to the sun. So you should check

your entire body, including your back, scalp and underarms. Stand in front of a full-length mirror and use a hand-held mirror to view hard-to-see areas.

Look for any changes in the size, color, shape or texture of a mark on your skin. And pay particular attention to moles, especially if you have any that bleed or itch. When examining moles, watch for these signs from A to D:

» **Asymmetry.** One half of the mole looks different from the other half.

» **Border irregularity.** The mole's border is ragged or blurred.

» **Color.** The mole is a variety of colors.

» **Diameter.** The mole is larger than a pencil eraser.

If you do spot a suspicious skin change, tell your doctor right away.

Source: American Academy of Dermatology

men and women in this age-group should protect themselves with regular screenings.

Several colorectal tests exist, from stool tests that check for hidden blood, a possible sign of cancer, to a colonoscopy, a test that allows doctors to view the rectum and entire colon. Ask your doctor which one is right for you.

Cervical cancer screenings

A Pap test can find the earliest signs of cervical cancer, a common cancer in women, and detect treatable precancerous changes.

Women need their first Pap test about three years after they first have sex, but no later than age 21. Sexual history matters because the main cause of cervical cancer is a sexually transmitted virus. The recommended frequency of Pap testing hinges on several factors, including your test results.

Prostate cancer screenings

Doctors can detect early prostate cancer in two ways: with a digital rectal exam or a PSA (prostate-specific antigen) blood test. Prostate cancer screening is controversial, as it may detect small, slow-growing cancers that may never cause problems.



Thus it may put men at risk of complications from unnecessary treatments.

If you're nearing 50, ask your doctor about the pros and cons of prostate cancer screenings.

» For more information about cancer and screening tests, go to the ACS Web site at www.cancer.org.

[AMC cancer events]

Cancer is a scary thing, and whether you have been diagnosed, are being treated or want to reduce your risk, we have programs that can help.

Look Good...Feel Better

Call for dates and times

A monthly class, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, about how to apply cosmetics during or after treatment.

Project Serenity

Last Thursday of every month, 11 a.m.

An art-based support group in which patients tell stories with paints, pencils and pastels.

Breast Cancer Screening: July 25 and Aug. 15, noon

An educational lecture and free mammograms for women 40 and older. After age 40, screenings should be done every year.

Prostate Cancer Screening: Sept. 26, noon

Prostate screenings for men 50 and older or beginning at age 40 for those with risk factors.

Camp Bluebird: Sept. 18 to 20

A camp where adult cancer survivors can be surrounded by nature and an atmosphere of creativity, learning, sharing and support.



To learn more, call 1-888-457-5204 or visit www.atlantamedcenter.com and click on "Find an Event."

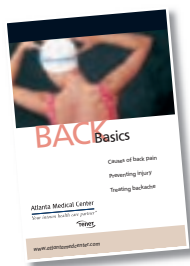
Stabilizing your spine

NEWER PROCEDURES MAY EASE THE PAIN OF COMPRESSION FRACTURES



Compared to broken bones in the wrist or hip, fractured vertebrae—bones of the spinal column—have traditionally been more difficult to treat.

Compression fractures of the vertebrae, which are often related to osteoporosis, can be very painful and can affect your quality of life. These fractures occur when weakened vertebrae collapse. If several vertebrae are affected, loss of height and stooped posture may result.



FREE HEALTH BOOKLET! Don't live with back pain. Learn the basics about back health in this free booklet from AMC. Request your copy today by calling 1-888-457-5204.

Because surgery on the spine is difficult and risky, it has typically not been used to treat osteoporosis-related vertebral fractures. A brief episode of bed rest, pain medication and a back brace can sometimes offer sufficient relief.

When these treatments aren't enough, however, one of two fairly new procedures may provide an answer. Vertebroplasty and kyphoplasty are treatments that stabilize fractured vertebrae.

Back to health

Vertebroplasty is a minimally invasive treatment for compression fractures that's been widely available in this country since 1997, according to the Society of Interventional Radiology. A more recent procedure, called kyphoplasty, is similar to vertebroplasty but adds an extra step that can help restore lost height.

In both procedures a surgeon accesses the spine through one or two small

incisions. Then, he or she injects a quick-drying cement into the fractured vertebra.

Kyphoplasty is unique, however, in that the procedure involves inserting a small balloon into the fractured vertebra and then inflating it, creating a gap. Before the cement is injected, the balloon is removed.

Benefits and risks

Both vertebroplasty and kyphoplasty may effectively relieve pain, and you can usually go home the same day of the surgery.

But the procedures also carry potential risks, including infection, bleeding and problems related to cement possibly leaking from the fracture area.

Your doctor can provide more information about whether one of these treatments may be right for you.

Do you need a doctor? For a free physician referral, call (404) 265-DOCS (265-3627).

[Bone up on your bone health: Get tested]

It might be hard to think of your bones as things that live and grow, but they do. They can grow stronger, but they can also grow weaker.

Osteoporosis is a disease of weakened bones. Your risk for osteoporosis increases as you age, and it occurs in women more often than men.

Other risk factors include: » Being thin and small. » Having a family history of the disease. » Having low estrogen levels if

you're a woman or low testosterone levels if you're a man. » Eating a diet low in calcium and vitamin D. » Smoking. » Not exercising.

You can have your bone health checked with a bone mineral density (BMD) test. The National Osteoporosis Foundation recommends talking to your doctor about BMD screening if you are a woman who is: » 65 or older. » Postmenopausal and younger than 65 with one or more risk factors listed here. » Postmenopausal and has had a fracture.

Be ready for an emergency

Many of us lead predictable lives, whether as parents, students or employees. Sometimes, though, unexpected events force us to play unfamiliar roles.

Would you know what to do if chance put you at the scene of a medical emergency?



Know when it's an emergency

"The first, vital step is recognizing which situations may be life-threatening emergencies," says

Toni Colvard-Groover, R.N., Atlanta Medical Center's emergency

department manager. It's important to get medical help fast when someone experiences any of these warning signs:

» Pain or pressure in the chest or upper abdomen.

- » Uncontrolled bleeding.
- » Sudden or severe pain.
- » Coughing up or vomiting blood.
- » Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath.
- » Fainting, sudden dizziness, weakness or change in vision.
- » Severe or persistent vomiting or diarrhea.
- » Confusion or changes in mental status.
- » Unusual abdominal pain.
- » Difficulty speaking.
- » Suicidal feelings.

While waiting for help to arrive, provide whatever first aid you can. Depending on the situation, you may need to apply direct pressure on a badly bleeding wound, perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), keep a shock victim warm and comfortable, or put a splint on a broken bone. But you should never perform a medical procedure if you're not sure how to do it, cautions Colvard-Groover.

Prepare and prevent

Taking a first aid class can help you

stay calm and improve your performance during an emergency.

You can prepare for the unexpected by organizing your family's medical information so that it's easy to find. This information should include lists of medications and dosages and any allergies your family members may have, especially to medications.

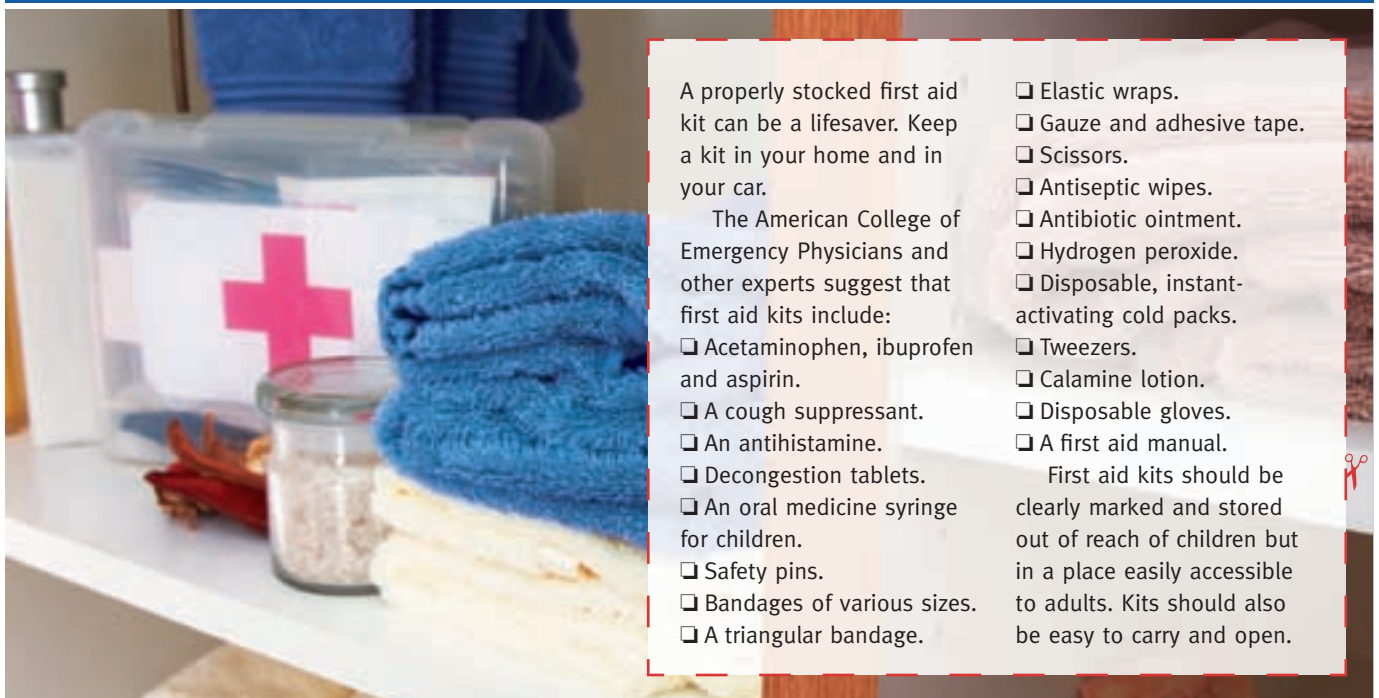
Of course, it's also important to do what you can to prevent emergencies from happening in the first place. For example, keep medicines and poisons out of reach of children, wear a seat belt when you're in a vehicle, and get regular medical checkups so that you can find health problems early and get treatment.



HEALTH TIP

Atlanta Medical Center is a Level II trauma center that takes care of your big, and even small, emergencies. Find out more about our emergency services at www.atlantamedcenter.com or by calling 1-888-457-5204.

[Your first aid kit checklist for quick care]



A properly stocked first aid kit can be a lifesaver. Keep a kit in your home and in your car.

The American College of Emergency Physicians and other experts suggest that first aid kits include:

- Acetaminophen, ibuprofen and aspirin.
- A cough suppressant.
- An antihistamine.
- Decongestion tablets.
- An oral medicine syringe for children.
- Safety pins.
- Bandages of various sizes.
- A triangular bandage.

- Elastic wraps.
- Gauze and adhesive tape.
- Scissors.
- Antiseptic wipes.
- Antibiotic ointment.
- Hydrogen peroxide.
- Disposable, instant-activating cold packs.
- Tweezers.
- Calamine lotion.
- Disposable gloves.
- A first aid manual.

First aid kits should be clearly marked and stored out of reach of children but in a place easily accessible to adults. Kits should also be easy to carry and open.



Emergency medical care is right in the neighborhood.

Don't wait for an emergency to figure out where you should go for care. You should have a plan and that plan should include Atlanta Medical Center's Level II trauma center.

MAJOR CARE FOR EVEN MINOR EMERGENCIES.



www.atlantamedcenter.com

ATLANTA'S TRAUMA CARE

Ohio community says thanks

Thank you. That's the heartfelt message Bluffton University officials brought to our community in person some six weeks after a tragic bus accident on I-75 killed eight people and injured more than 20 others.



Bluffton University President James Harder (far left) presents a plaque of thanks to AMC CEO William T. Moore and the emergency department team.

On March 2 a bus carrying 35 student athletes, coaches and a bus driver was traveling through Atlanta on its way to scheduled baseball games in Florida. The early morning accident killed the bus driver, his wife and six of the university's student athletes. Atlanta Medical Center (AMC) cared for seven of those injured.

On April 16, Bluffton University President James Harder and other university officials visited AMC to meet staff members from the emergency department, intensive care units, trauma services and pastoral care who played key roles in treating the injured.

Dr. Harder presented a plaque of gratitude to AMC during the visit,

acknowledging that having quick access to trauma care in Atlanta made a positive difference in the recovery of many players. He praised AMC, both for its medical care and for the outpouring of compassion from its staff toward the players.

"Beginning with the tragic bus accident of March 2, 2007, the Atlanta community has responded with offers of assistance and prayers for our student athletes, their families and the university. Bluffton is a resilient community made more so by this outpouring of support," Dr. Harder read from the plaque. "On behalf of Bluffton University and our students, faculty, staff and alumni, thank you."

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