



*Sutter Tracy
Community Hospital*
A Sutter Health Affiliate
With You. For Life.

your health

Spring 2009 Bringing Wellness and Health News to Northern California

Community Based, Not For Profit



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Your Health from Sutter Tracy

Sutter Tracy Community Hospital is part of a health care family comprised of some of the most respected doctors, hospitals and other health professionals in Northern California. Providing care in more than 100 communities, our not-for-profit Sutter Health network is a regional leader in cardiac care, cancer treatment, orthopedics and obstetrics and a pioneer in advanced patient-safety technology. Our experts partner with one another and our patients to provide convenient, service-oriented, quality care. We're committed to bringing the very best to our patients.

For questions or comments about *Your Health*, please call Karen Mudd at 209-835-1500.

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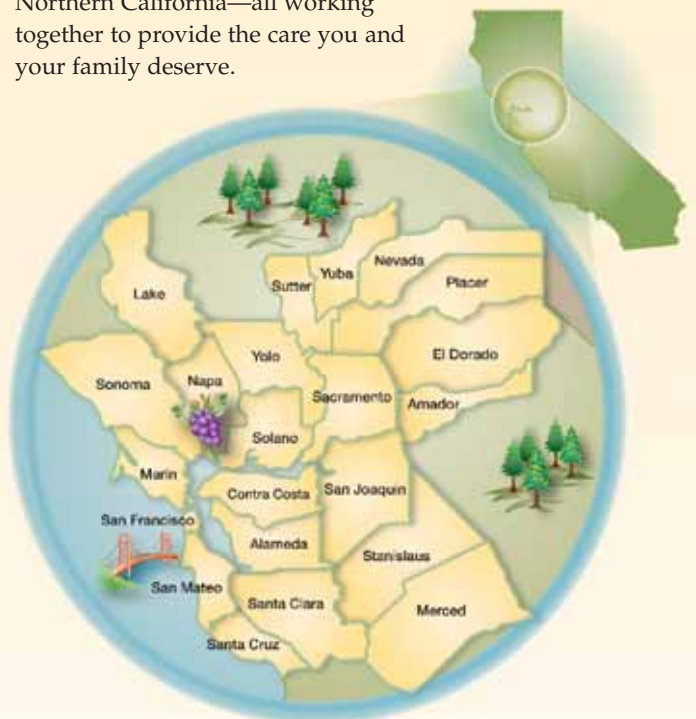


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Please note that while the information in *Your Health* is gathered from a wide range of medical experts, it may not apply to your particular situation. If you have specific questions about your health, contact your personal physician. Nothing contained in this publication is intended to be for medical diagnosis or treatment.

Your Sutter Health Network

Sutter Health includes some of the most respected doctors, hospitals and other health care providers in Northern California—all working together to provide the care you and your family deserve.



SPRING 09

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Spring Back into Shape

Has it been a while since you laced up your sneakers or hit the gym? Don't worry—it's never too late to get back into the exercise groove.

Start Up Safely

Before you launch into a workout program, talk with your doctor if you have heart trouble, high blood pressure, arthritis or other chronic medical problems. The same is true if you are older and have been inactive.

If you and your doctor decide that exercise is safe for you, start out by picking an activity that fits your lifestyle. For example, if you like to be around other people, choose a group activity or class. Also know your body's limits. If you have sore joints, consider a low-impact activity, such as swimming.

To reduce your risk for injury, start out slowly and use the first few sessions to get used to the fact that you're moving.

Everyone's body is unique, so try not to compare yourself to other people. Don't try to match your pace with someone else's, or you could overdo it.

Stick With It

If you have trouble staying motivated, consider these tips:

- **Mix it up.** Vary your activities so that you don't get bored. Some good aerobic choices include walking, biking, dancing and rowing.
- **Set realistic goals to help you stay committed.** Try to get at least 30 minutes of exercise on most or all days of the week. Reward yourself for your successes and don't get discouraged if it takes several weeks to see results.
- **Don't be too hard on yourself if you lapse.** A lot of people do. Just start up again, and you'll be back on track in no time.

Are Energy Drinks Safe?

They promise power and stamina, but do energy drinks deliver health risks instead?

For most people, it's safe to drink them occasionally. However, they may cause dehydration, so you should avoid them while you're exercising. Plus, they tend to be loaded with calories and may cancel out the benefits of your workout. Other potential side effects include:

- Rapid or irregular heartbeats
- Medication interactions
- Damage to teeth

Some energy drinks contain nearly 150 milligrams (mg) of caffeine. That's about four times as much as a can of soda and 50 percent more than a cup of coffee. Caffeine limits depend on your age, your size and other factors. But experts agree that 600 mg a day is too much.

Caffeine can cause headaches, nausea and trouble sleeping. Pregnant and nursing women, those who feel jittery, and children should limit intake.

Combining energy drinks and alcohol is particularly dangerous. You may feel less intoxicated but still be impaired.



Women and Heart Disease

The Hidden Truth

Did you know that more women die of heart disease than breast cancer?



Nearly 500,000 women in this country die of heart disease every year. That's more than all types of cancer combined, making heart disease the number one killer of women in the U.S. "Heart disease is usually thought of as a man's disease. In reality, more women than men die of heart disease," says cardiologist Diane Sobkowicz, M.D., director of the Women's Heart Program at the Sutter Heart and Vascular Institute. "The symptoms of heart disease in women are different from those in men and are often overlooked or attributed to something else. As a result, women are less likely to be diagnosed and treated early."

Common Symptoms in Women

"Women typically don't experience unbearable chest pain. It's more of a smoldering discomfort in the chest or pain in the upper back, arms, jaws or throat. The most common symptoms in women are shortness of breath and tiring easily doing simple activities," explains Dr. Sobkowicz.

Knowing what symptoms to look for could save your life. "If you find it difficult to do things you could do a few months ago or if you experience any of these symptoms, especially those that get worse with activity, see a doctor right away," says Dr. Sobkowicz.

Regular Screenings Are Vital

Many women don't experience any signs of heart disease, adds Dr. Sobkowicz, which is why it is important to know your risk factors and be screened for heart disease. Common screening tools include blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol checks. These risk factors can increase greatly after menopause and should be checked regularly. Depending on your medical history and symptoms, your doctor may order an EKG (electrocardiogram), a treadmill test or other diagnostic exams.

"Women need to be as diligent about getting screened for heart disease as they are for breast and cervical cancer," says Dr. Sobkowicz. "The good news is that women can reduce their risk for heart disease by taking control of their health and following a healthy lifestyle. It's never too late to start protecting your heart."

Know These Risk Factors

- A family history of heart disease
- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes (especially in women)
- Obesity
- Lack of exercise
- Stress and depression
- Rheumatoid arthritis, lupus and other autoimmune diseases

Where Do You Stand? To find out, click on the interactive tool "Are You At Risk for Heart Disease?" at www.sutterhealth.org/yourhealth.



Everyone Has a Story ... **Our Story Is You**



“This Is My story ... and I’m stickin’ to It!”

Sutter hospice patient Doris Jones lives out her final wishes

“Sug” (short for **“sugar”**) is the endearment 85-year-old Doris Jones uses often when speaking to family and friends. That includes the caregivers with Sutter North Hospice, where Jones is a patient. The affection is mutual.

Jones, who lives with her husband, Donnie, in Wheatland, sought hospice services last fall after being diagnosed with advanced brain cancer. Although chemotherapy was an option, Jones decided against it, opting instead to live her final days to the fullest, surrounded by her family. “I didn’t want to lose the quality of my life. I wanted to know what’s happening to me, and I didn’t want to be stuck in bed,” she explains.

Jones mentioned to her hospice team that her two wishes in life were to ride a zip line and be on TV—and soon a plan was hatched. Through philanthropic efforts, Sutter North Hospice helped make Jones’ dream a reality. Last October at Wolf Mountain Camp in Grass Valley, Jones buckled on a safety harness and then bravely stepped off a tall platform to glide smoothly down to earth. A local TV news station aired a special segment on Jones’ zip line adventure, and it can also be seen on the Sutter Health YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/sutterhealth.

Among the spectators were Jones’ hospice caregivers. “Our team pulled together and made this happen for Doris,” says Joan Journey, Sutter North Hospice’s clinical manager. “Just seeing the joy in her face and the tears in her family’s eyes—this is why we do what we do.”

“Sutter North Hospice has been so great,” says Jones’ husband, Donnie. “There’s nothing that Doris has needed that they haven’t tried to supply—and if it wasn’t available, they found a way to make it available.”



Doris Jones

Tell Us Your Story!

If you would like to share your Sutter network experience, visit www.sutterhealth.org/stories. If your story is selected, we will contact you to discuss how we can help tell your story in print or online, with complete respect for your privacy.



“Doris decided that she was going to have lots of fun and wasn’t going to focus on her disease and aggressive treatments. She and her family are incredible role models for how to live.”

—the Sutter North hospice team,
(pictured left to right) Daniel Raudy,
Joan Journey and Jamie Klein



You Can Count on Us

Sutter Tracy Is Here for You in an Emergency



In a medical emergency, it's comforting to know that help is always available. The Sutter Tracy Emergency Department (ED) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and records more than 2,500 patient visits a month.

While many EDs in the U.S. are feeling the effects of the financial slow-down, our ED is stronger than ever.

"EDs around the country are closing due to lack of funds, putting a greater burden on the EDs that are still open," says Sutter Tracy emergency physician Andy Su, M.D. "We've managed to handle the increased patient volume by enlarging the Sutter Tracy



ANDY SU, M.D.
Emergency Medicine
SUTTER TRACY

ED and working more efficiently. In fact, our patient turn-around time—measured from when a person registers to when he or she is released or admitted to the hospital—is among the fastest in the San Joaquin Valley."

Expert Care 24/7

Sutter Tracy's emergency physicians and nurses are available at all times to treat a wide range of problems, from heart attacks and broken bones to fevers and stomachaches.

Laboratory and X-ray technicians are also on duty 24 hours a day to perform blood tests, X-rays, CT scans and other diagnostic tests. A full-service surgical department, a family birthing center and an intensive care unit are staffed around the clock as well.

Sutter Tracy nurses Diana, left, and Marty assist a patient in the ED.

This 24-hour access to care can make emergency treatment very expensive. A visit to the ED can cost eight to 10 times as much as a doctor's appointment. But what should you do if you don't know whether your condition requires emergency treatment? When in doubt, seek immediate medical attention, Dr. Su advises.

"It's not always easy for a nonmedical person to tell whether an illness or injury is an emergency," he says. "If they're not sure, we want people to err on the side of caution and call their doctor or 911 or come in to the ED. We're trained to evaluate their symptoms, make a diagnosis and treat their conditions. On the other hand, if all they need is a prescription refill or something that can wait, they should see a doctor or clinic during regular business hours. In the ED, we treat people with the most serious problems first rather than in the order they came in."

An Ounce of Prevention

According to Dr. Su, many of the problems commonly seen in the ED can be prevented with a little forethought and education, particularly accidents.

"On the weekends, we treat a lot of patients with broken bones and serious injuries from accidents at Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area," says Dr. Su. "Many people ride their ATVs and motorcycles way too fast or recklessly and crash into each other."

Dr. Su stresses the importance of wearing proper protective gear, such as helmets.

Chronic headaches, back pain and asthma attacks are other common, preventable reasons people visit the ED. "Many people with chronic health problems could avoid a trip to the ED by learning how to better manage their condition so they don't reach the critical stage," says Dr. Su. "We always encourage patients to follow up with their personal physician and talk about things they can do. Unfortunately, many of them don't have health insurance or a regular physician they can turn to."

Healthy Solutions

Sutter Tracy offers numerous programs to help people take control of their health, including asthma management and other health education classes (see page 14). Our Healthy Connections resource center also offers a wealth of health information and services to help people who are uninsured or underinsured get the care they need.

"As a not-for-profit hospital, Sutter Tracy treats everyone who comes to our ED regardless of their ability to pay," says Dr. Su. "We're always here when people need us, but one of our main goals is to offer programs and services that help keep people healthy and safe so they don't end up in the ED."

Top 6 ED Complaints

Here are six of the most common reasons why patients visit the ED at Sutter Tracy:

- Low back pain
- Headache
- Chest pain
- Abdominal pain
- Respiratory problems
- ATV and motorcycle accidents

Free Health Care Help

Healthy Connections is your one stop for health information and support services. Come to our downtown Tracy office for the following programs and resources:

- Computer access to reliable health information on the Web
- Information on, referrals to and help accessing hospital and community resources that offer job assistance, housing, and other health and social services
- Low- or no-cost health insurance enrollment assistance for families
- Medi-Cal information and assistance
- PAPrx prescription assistance program

To learn more about Sutter Healthy Connections Resource Center, call **209-833-2420** or visit us at 35 E. 10th St., Suite A, in downtown Tracy.



Type 1 Diabetes:

No Cure Yet, but Plenty

“Research is advancing very quickly, and we believe that we are closer than ever to finding a cure. In the meantime, many tools are available that help make day-to-day control easier.” –G. Prakasam, M.D.

Four years ago, at age 10, Maddy Peppers-Johnson found herself in the pediatrician’s office getting her finger poked for a blood sample. She had no idea that the needle she cringed at would soon become a constant companion—and that the outcome of the test would change her life forever.

The test revealed that Peppers-Johnson’s blood sugar level was dangerously high—in fact, five times greater than normal. Yet the fourth-grader from Solano County had always been a healthy kid with a nutritious diet. That factor, combined with many other telltale symptoms—extreme tiredness, constant thirst, frequent urination and weight loss—confirmed the pediatrician’s suspicions: Peppers-Johnson had type 1 diabetes.

A Difficult, Lifelong Disease

Once known as juvenile diabetes, type 1 diabetes randomly strikes 15,000 children and teens nationwide every year. The disease cannot be prevented or outgrown—and there is no way to predict who will get it next. About 90 percent of those diagnosed have no other family members with the disease.

Though the exact trigger of type 1 diabetes remains a mystery, doctors know that it is an autoimmune disease. It develops when the body’s immune system mistakenly attacks the pancreas, killing the cells that produce insulin,



of Hope



a vital hormone that converts food into energy. Insulin is necessary for survival. People with type 1 diabetes must take multiple insulin injections daily—or receive infusions of insulin through a pump. In addition, they must check their blood sugar level many times a day by pricking a finger and testing a drop of blood.

“Hearing the diagnosis was devastating,” says Mary Peppers, Maddy’s mother. “As a parent, you try so hard to protect your child from harm—but this was a case where a life-threatening disease was here to stay. I had to accept that and help Maddy accept it, too, so that we could move forward with strength.” A referral to Sutter Medical Foundation pediatric endocrinologist G. Prakasam, M.D., started them on that journey.

A New Attitude

“I tell all my patients they must not let diabetes stop them from enjoying their childhood and doing everything that other kids do,” says Dr. Prakasam. “Managing diabetes takes extra work and extra planning, but this disease does not need to hold you back.” He adds, “Research is advancing very quickly, and we believe that we are closer than ever to finding a cure. In the meantime, many tools are

available that help make day-to-day control easier.”

Those who live with type 1 diabetes face many challenges. “Having to test your blood and give yourself insulin every time you eat is the hardest part,” says Peppers-Johnson, now age 14. “Especially when you’re in a restaurant or at school—you just don’t want to have to deal with it. You want to be like everybody else.”

But keeping blood sugar levels in the healthy range is critical. If levels drop too low or rise too high, the body reacts with symptoms that can include shakiness, dizziness, blurry vision, vomiting and loss of consciousness. Over time, the disease can lead to serious complications, such as heart attack, kidney failure, nerve damage and blindness.

Still, there is hope among families who are living with this disease. Attending a camp especially for children with type 1 diabetes and joining the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Walk for a Cure has helped Peppers-Johnson see that she is not alone in her daily regimen. “I want to tell kids like me that there are a lot of us who are going through the same thing. Don’t give up, and don’t ignore your diabetes. It’s important to stay healthy. Take one day at a time, and it does get easier.”

Kids Can Get Type 2 Diabetes, Too

Of the nearly 19,000 young people diagnosed every year with diabetes, the vast majority have type 1 diabetes. But as the number of overweight preteens and teenagers is multiplying, so is the number of cases of school-age kids diagnosed with a different and preventable form of diabetes: type 2 diabetes.

Overweight kids are at risk. Doctors used to see type 2 diabetes only in overweight adults older than age 40. Now it affects 3,700 kids annually who are overweight or obese and get little exercise. The condition is more common in kids who are African-American, Hispanic, American Indian or Asian/Pacific Islander and in kids who have a family member with type 2 diabetes.

Take steps toward prevention. “If you can keep your child from becoming obese, you will take a major step toward preventing disease—not just type 2 diabetes, but also high cholesterol and cardiovascular disease,” says Brigitte Randle, M.D., Sutter Health–affiliated pediatrician with Solano Regional Medical Group in Vacaville. “You don’t have to single out your child,” she adds. “Prevention strategies will help your entire family be healthier.”

If your child is overweight, it’s wise to take action. By encouraging healthy eating and more exercise, you can help lower the chance of your child developing type 2 diabetes.

Help Your Child Eat Healthier To make it easier for your child—and your whole family—to eat a healthy diet, visit our “Healthy Eating for Children” tips online at: www.sutterhealth.org/yourhealth.



Plastic Bottles: Are They Harmful to Your Health?

You try your best to choose healthy foods and drinks—but what if the bottles and cans they come in are toxic? Scientists are raising this question because of a chemical called bisphenol A (BPA), found in polycarbonate (hard, clear plastic) containers and the linings of soda and food cans. Some researchers believe that harmful levels of BPA may be tainting our food and drinks—and that may cause serious health problems.

Since the 1950s, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has declared BPA safe for food containers. But the agency failed to review health evidence from animal studies that show serious health effects. A panel of government scientists recently called for BPA to be reevaluated, and the FDA has agreed. Until we know all the facts about this chemical, it's wise for consumers to take steps to protect themselves. Here are some answers to common questions about BPA.

Is BPA in every plastic container?

No. BPA is only in polycarbonate plastic, which is found in hard, clear baby bottles; toddler sippy cups; reusable water bottles; and large, multigallon plastic jugs used for water dispensers. Canned food and soft-drink containers are also often lined with a thin film of material containing BPA. Meanwhile, studies show that BPA has been found in the urine of more than 90 percent of adults and children tested.



Container Caution

When heating or reheating foods in the microwave, make sure the container you use is labeled *microwave safe*. Do not reuse margarine tubs, take-out containers or whipped-topping bowls to reheat foods. These may warp or melt, which releases harmful chemicals into your food.

What harm can BPA cause?

Laboratory studies of animals suggest BPA may cause developmental problems in the brain and hormonal systems of infants and children. In human studies, new research shows that adults with a high level of BPA are about three times more likely than those with a low level to have heart disease, diabetes or liver problems.

How can I protect my family from BPA?

If you have a baby or toddler, use BPA-free baby bottles and sippy cups. Or choose glass bottles or stainless steel cups. Some manufacturers are marketing BPA-free versions of refillable plastic bottles. To help identify polycarbonate bottles, turn the container upside down and look for the number inside the “chasing arrows” symbol. Avoid bottles labeled 7, which is the category that includes polycarbonate plastic.

How do I avoid BPA in canned goods?

This is more challenging. You can buy more fresh foods, frozen foods or items packaged in glass containers. When available, choose soups and other foods in cardboard cartons.

Take Steps to Stop the Superbug

The news articles may seem like the plot of a scary movie: A new strain of hard-to-kill bacteria is spreading across the nation, triggering outbreaks of dangerous infections.

The bacteria is methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), a powerful antibiotic-resistant form of staph germs. How dangerous of a threat is MRSA? Here are the facts and what you should know to protect yourself.

A Different Kind of Germ

Ordinary staph germs often live on the skin or inside the nose of healthy people. If they cause an infection, it is easily treated with antibiotics. But MRSA is no ordinary germ, and if it enters the body and triggers infection, there is cause for concern.

“MRSA is known as a superbug because it is resistant to the antibiotics that used to work against staph,” says Infection Control Coordinator Rebecca Heffner, R.N., PHN, CIC, with Sutter Health–affiliated Memorial Medical Center in Modesto. “A MRSA infection typically starts on the skin or in soft tissues, entering the body through a cut or scrape. To treat it requires newer, stronger antibiotics, and sometimes these must be administered intravenously,” she explains. Although most MRSA infections are mild, some cases can progress into serious conditions such as pneumonia or a bloodstream infection.

How People Are Exposed to MRSA

Prevention programs such as those in the Sutter Health system are helping to control a strain of MRSA common in hospitals and other health care facilities (called hospital-acquired MRSA). But the superbug has also found its way into the community. Wherever people are in crowded settings, have close skin-to-skin contact or share personal items such as sports equipment, towels or razors, MRSA can often be found. This includes schools, locker rooms, military barracks, dorm rooms, gyms and day care centers.

A MRSA infection may look like a pus-filled pimple, cut, boil or spider bite. (MRSA is not caused by spider bites.) The surrounding area is usually red, swollen, painful and warm to the touch. See your doctor promptly for any wound like this. It needs to be expertly treated so that it doesn't get worse. Do not attempt to drain the infection yourself, as it may spread.

To avoid a MRSA infection, follow these tips from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases:

- Wash hands frequently. Soap and water is best, but hand sanitizers are a good second choice.
- Protect cuts by covering them with a clean, dry bandage.
- Do not share personal items such as clothes, helmets, towels or washcloths. Avoid contact with used bandages.
- Wash sheets, towels and clothes with detergent, using hot water and bleach, if possible. Dry clothes in a hot dryer.
- Use antibiotics only when your doctor recommends. Take all your medicine. Improper use has led to antibiotic-resistant bacteria.



Sutter Health Is Looking Out for You

Each hospital within the Sutter Health system has an infection control preventionist who oversees programs that include educating personnel in preventing all types of infections in patients, including MRSA. To learn how you can prevent skin infections, visit www.preventinfection.org.



Saluting Our Supporters

We wish to acknowledge all the friends of Sutter Tracy Community Hospital who have made contributions and pledges through the Tracy Hospital Foundation. Gifts and pledges were received from Sept. 6 through Dec. 19, 2008, to support Foundation projects. We are mindful of these generous donors and honor their commitment to the many programs that benefit the hospital and the community. Please call us at 209-832-6052 with any corrections.

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Dr. and Mrs. Sunil Patel

Families enjoyed a winter wonderland at the Tracy Hospital Foundation's 14th annual Festival of Trees on the weekend of Nov. 21, 2008. The funds raised at this event help support community health and wellness programs.



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Sutter Tracy Community Health Educ

▶ General Health Education

Look Good . . . Feel Better!

- ▶ This class helps cancer patients realize that looking good can help you feel better. Meet specially trained cosmetologists to learn more about skin care, wigs, scarves and make-up techniques. Classes meet from 6 to 8 p.m. on the third Tuesday of every month. For more information, call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345.

Diabetes Education Class

- ▶ This free four-week series is offered once every quarter. Nursing, dietary, rehabilitation and pharmacy staff cover a variety of different topics. Classes meet on Thursdays at 6 p.m. Call 209-833-2405 for class dates and to register.

Free Senior Safety Home Inspections

- ▶ To ensure that seniors in Tracy live in a safe environment, free home safety inspections are offered to anyone older than age 65 regardless of income. A certified inspector will identify any safety hazards in the home. For more information, call 209-833-2420.

Break Free from Smoking!

- ▶ This free seven-week course meets on Wednesdays, from 7 to 9 p.m. Trained facilitators use behavior-modification tools to help smokers quit for good. A strong student support network helps everyone become tobacco-free. Series dates are Jan. 7 to Feb. 18, Apr. 22 to June 3, Jul. 8 to Aug. 19, and Sept. 23 to Nov. 4. To register, call 209-832-6047.

Asthma Classes (NEW)

- ▶ Learn how to effectively manage asthma so that you can enjoy an active lifestyle. You'll receive a free peak-flow meter and personalized asthma action plan. Free classes meet on Feb. 25, July 15 and Oct. 21. Call 209-832-6516 for more information or to register.

Hospital Education Calendar

▶ Childbirth Preparation

Preregistration is required for the following classes. To register, call 209-833-2321, e-mail borgesr@sutterhealth.org or visit www.suttertracy.org.

Childbirth Education

- ▶ Four-week series meets Wednesdays, Apr. 29 to May 20, and July 1 to 22, from 7 to 9 p.m.
 - ▶ A one-day Saturday class is available on Mar. 7, Apr. 18 and May 9, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Fee is \$50—waived for those delivering at Sutter Tracy.

Childbirth Review

- ▶ This free one-day class is for couples who have already had a child. Join us on Wednesday, Apr. 8, June 3 or July 29, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Sibling Preparation

- ▶ This class helps big brothers- and sisters-to-be welcome a new baby to the family. Classes meet Mar. 10, May 12 and June 9.

Breast-Feeding

- ▶ This free class, led by a lactation consultant, meets Mondays, Feb. 23, Apr. 13 and May 18, from 7 to 9 p.m.

▶ Support Groups and Classes

Alzheimer's Support Group

- ▶ This group meets on the second Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m. Call 1-800-540-3340 for more information.

Bereavement and Grief Support

- ▶ An informal support group meets on Thursdays, from 10:30 a.m. to noon, and Tuesdays, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. For more information, call Rev. Becky Cameron at 209-833-2475.

Down Syndrome Support Group (NEW)

- ▶ Relatives, caregivers and teachers of those with Down syndrome are invited to join this informal group. It meets on the second Tuesday of every month, from 7 to 8:30 p.m., at Sutter Healthy Connections Resource Center. Call Raquel O'Keefe at 209-830-1712 for details.

Fibromyalgia Support Group

- ▶ This informal group meets the first and third Tuesday of every month. Call Juanita McHugh at 209-321-9396.

Stroke Support Group

- ▶ This group meets the third Thursday of every month, from 3 to 5 p.m. Call 209-830-2137 to learn more.

Tracy Area Cancer Support Group

- ▶ This group meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month, at 6:30 p.m. Call 209-833-2338 for more information about this group and other services offered through Tracy Cancer Support Services.

NAMI

- ▶ National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Recovery Support Group offers support for people with mental illness and their family members. Meetings are held every Monday, at 7:30 p.m., at Sutter Healthy Connections. Call Karen at 209-834-2313 or Rose at 209-835-1341.

Mommy and Me

- ▶ This free group provides a place for mothers of children from birth to age 2 to talk, share ideas and ask questions. It meets at Sutter Healthy Connections and is led by a lactation educator and social worker. To learn more, call 209-833-2420.

Parent and Me Playgroups

- ▶ Sutter Healthy Connections offers two free playgroups for parents and their children ages 5 and younger. Jump Start is for children from birth to age 2, and Leaps and Bounds is for kids ages 3 to 5. These interactive, parent-involved groups offer a fun learning environment that both children and parents enjoy. Call 209-833-2420.

P.R.I.C.E. Parenting Class

- ▶ This free class is for parents with children ages 12 and younger and meets at Sutter Healthy Connections. Learn strategies to help you become a more effective parent. These strategies include encouraging children to do their best, changing behavior through appropriate consequences, focusing on having positive attitudes, and more. To register, call 209-833-2420.

Women Take Center Stage at MyLifeStages.org

You deserve prompt, reliable answers for your health and wellness questions. You'll find them at Sutter Health's new, free Web site just for women: www.mylifestages.org. Log on and register for customized information, advice, solutions and links to Sutter Health doctors, hospitals and programs in your area. Visit us today!



6081M

Coming Soon!

New State-of-the-Art MRI Close to Home

It won't be long now until Sutter Tracy unveils its new digital magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine. The top-of-the-line, \$2 million Signa Horizon HDx system from General Electric will replace the MRI machine that we bought seven years ago.

"The new MRI is more powerful than the older model and has many new features, which will enable us to offer new services, such as breast MRI," says David Bowlsby, imaging services manager. "In the past, women had to travel to Stockton or Sacramento for a breast MRI."

How It Works

MRI machines use magnets, radio waves and special computer software to create detailed images of the inside of the body. Totally painless, MRI can be used on most parts of the body, including the brain, spinal cord, circulatory system, internal organs and joints.

"This is one of the most advanced MRI systems on the market," says T. Tejpal Singh, M.D., medical director for Sutter Tracy's radiology department. "We will be able to see much smaller and clearer structures than ever before, which will help physicians make more accurate diagnoses. The new MRI is faster and less sensitive to movement, which makes it easier to get high-quality images of children and other people who have trouble lying still."

A Wide Range of Services

Expected to be up and running this spring, our new MRI machine is one of the many state-of-the-art imaging services we offer at Sutter Tracy. These include digital X-ray, computed tomography (CT), mammography and stereotactic breast biopsy.



What Can MRI Do?

MRI can be used to evaluate:

- Atherosclerosis, blood clots and other circulatory problems
- Brain aneurysms and stroke
- Breast lesions
- Causes of joint pain
- Causes of pelvic pain in women, such as endometriosis
- Conditions of the head and spinal cord
- Diseases of the liver, pancreas, gallbladder and other organs
- Soft tissue and nerve damage
- Spinal column and disc problems
- Tumors in the brain, chest, abdomen and pelvis