

Executive Health Notes

Mayo Clinic Executive Health Program

A Clean Bill of Health. . .

Whirlpool executive finds surprising diagnosis and better health at Mayo Clinic



Dave Shellito took charge of cleaning up his health.

It seemed the optometrist could never quite get Dave Shellito's eyeglass prescription correct. Now they both know why: diabetes.

Diabetes can wreak havoc with eyesight, as well as most of the body's systems. At 46, it wasn't until a few years ago and at the persistence of Dr. Robert Orford of the Mayo Clinic Executive Health Program, that Shellito found out he had the disease, as well as a potential heart attack in the making.

"I'd had some questionable blood sugar tests that seemed like flukes and a marginal one that caused my family physician to tell me I was fine," says Shellito. "One visit with Dr. Orford and he was very blunt about my prognosis — he said, 'you have diabetes and you're going to have a heart attack if you don't make some changes.'"

Shellito has been coming to the Mayo Clinic Executive Health Program in Scottsdale for the past

four years; the last two exams have been with Dr. Orford. The Whirlpool Corporation offers a preventive health benefit to its employees and Shellito took advantage of it, after several years of living abroad. He chose Mayo Clinic because of its reputation and Scottsdale because of its great location — and a desire to someday relocate.

One of the things Dr. Orford asked of Shellito was that he lose 50 pounds, on top of the 10 he'd so proudly lost prior to his exam.

Recalls Shellito, "I told him that was crazy and besides, I'd played college basketball at 220. He marched me down to the Bod Pod to measure my body fat and then told me, that was muscle, this is fat. It was obvious that excuses weren't going to work. I have to admit, it was motivating!"

So motivating, that Shellito made the necessary dietary changes and began running every single day. About eight months later, his weight had gone from his initial high of 250, down to a comfortable 190.

Shellito is Whirlpool's vice president of local product development, the group that designs and develops washing machines and dryers. He frequently travels to tech centers around the world in China, Brazil, Mexico, India and the United States. It was this travel that made his adjustments more challenging.

"The running part is easy. I bring my shoes and I can run anywhere," he says. "The diet part is more

difficult because I'm often entertaining and in situations where I can't control what I'm served. I believe in moderation. I've not eliminated sugars completely, but I've drastically cut back. I find I have more energy and my blood sugar is now completely constant."

At his follow-up visit, he'd taken off the weight, was able to drop one medication and his coronary scans were much improved.

Shellito is hoping his healthy habits will serve as a good example for his three children, ages 16, 15 & 11. It's been a big adjustment for the family, which went from eating pasta seven days a week while living in Italy, to just once a week now.

Quips Shellito, "I still get to have pasta, but my wife serves it to me as a side dish, not a main entrée!"

"It was obvious that excuses weren't going to work. I have to admit, it was motivating!"

— Dave Shellito

He advises others that nothing is impossible, even when it seems change is impossible. "Take that first step and give it a month or so to become habit. Soon, you'll find that your day just isn't the same without exercise and that eating a healthy diet will be as natural as brushing your teeth."



Dear Executive Health Program Participant:

Diabetes mellitus affects 18 million Americans (six percent of the population) and the prevalence is increasing in proportion to the increase in people's weight. As our cover story illustrates, many people (five million in the United States) have the condition but do not know it. Often the condition is picked up in a doctor's office, as it was here. Others see a doctor when they develop symptoms of increased thirst and urination, fatigue, blurred vision or persistent sores or infections.

Diabetes is preventable. In the early stages, blood sugar is most effectively managed through diet, weight loss and physical activity. For those whose blood glucose is not manageable by diet and exercise alone, oral diabetes medications or insulin injections may be used.

Although I am not diabetic, I recently "took the plunge" and had a body composition analysis in our program's Bod Pod. My body fat turned out to be 28.7 percent. This is almost precisely the average for the executive health population seen at Mayo Clinic. As Ghandi said, "you must be the change you wish to see in the world." So I have written myself a weight prescription to lose five to ten pounds over the coming year.

I received a photo recently from an executive who had lost over 20 pounds — a picture of his feet on the scale with his new and lower weight displayed. In between his feet was the weight prescription I had given him. Many of you have similarly lost weight after coming through our program. I salute your efforts and your success!

Robert R. Orford, M.D.
Director, Executive Health Program
Mayo Clinic
Scottsdale, Arizona

Mayo Clinic in the News

Targeted Radiotherapy Treatment for Prostate Cancer

Patients with prostate cancer stand to benefit from new imaging techniques that ultimately allow for concentrated radiation therapy specific to the site of the cancer. Administration of this targeted therapy means that healthy surrounding tissue could be spared — a technique called intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT).

The new technique could underscore an evolution in targeting and treatment of prostate cancer. Mayo Clinic researchers are performing a clinical trial which uses a new scan, called ProstaScint, fused with CT images of the pelvic region, to target "hot spots" within the prostate. The rationale is to use the CT-derived data to localize the prostate and ProstaScint scan to localize the tumor cells within the prostate to better deliver concentrated radiotherapy to the tumor itself. The ProstaScint scans also appear to improve the accuracy of the staging process for prostate cancer. The integration of newer imaging techniques will be key to improving radiotherapy for many cancers.

Nation's First Portable Radiation Oncology Facility

Mayo Clinic has announced the opening of the nation's first portable/modular radiation oncology facility at its Phoenix campus near 56th Street and the Loop 101 freeway.

The new facility has the potential to increase the number of patients who can receive therapy under the careful guidance of Mayo Clinic radiation oncology physicians who work specifically with various disease sites. This sub-specialization offers patients a greater degree of experience and knowledge in the evaluation and treatment of their specific cancer type.

The Mayo Clinic Cancer Center is the only National Cancer Institute (NCI) designated comprehensive cancer center in the Phoenix metropolitan area and is also the NCI's only multisite cancer center (including Mayo Clinic's locations in Rochester, Minn., and Jacksonville, Fla.). The NCI designation recognizes Mayo Clinic as demonstrating clinical excellence in treating cancer patients and scientific excellence in research programs. More than 16,000 new cancer patients come to Mayo Clinic Cancer Center for treatment every year.

ASU and Mayo Clinic Team Up to Fight Today's Most Challenging Diseases

Arizona State University (ASU) and Mayo Clinic are jointly funding five ambitious projects to:

- 1)** develop an early diagnostic test for Alzheimer's disease;
- 2)** better understand the aging process and several human diseases at the molecular level;
- 3)** develop a quantitative assessment of recovery of hand functions after surgery and physical rehabilitation for carpal tunnel syndrome;
- 4)** improve the effectiveness of Parkinson's disease treatment; and,
- 5)** assess the effects of air pollution on healthy individuals and those with lung disease.

The projects are supported through a joint ASU-Mayo seed-grant fund, established as part of a broader agreement between the two institutions to collaborate on medical research and education.

Welcome, Dr. Stepanek!



Dr. Jan Stepanek

Beginning June 1, patients will see a new name on the roster of Mayo Clinic Executive Health Program physicians. Dr. Jan Stepanek will be joining the staff, coming from the Executive Health Program at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn.

Dr. Stepanek, whose first name is pronounced “yan,” was raised in Switzerland and went to medical school at the University of Basel in that country. He came to the United States in 1993, completing residencies at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston and NASA Johnson Space Center in Aerospace Medicine and at Mayo Clinic in Rochester in Internal Medicine. He also served a fellowship as a chief resident in Internal Medicine at Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

It was during a training rotation in Scottsdale, that he met his wife, Maureen. The two are looking forward to coming back to Arizona and introducing their two children, Nicole (5) and Ian (2) to the ways of the desert Southwest.

Dr. Stepanek is board certified in internal medicine and aerospace medicine. The

latter deals with the health and safety of pilots, flight crew members, and the flying public, regarding issues caused by the many stressors of the flight environment such as altitude, acceleration, time zone changes, etc. His role includes helping disabled airline pilots get back to work after facing medical issues and helping private pilots handle FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) and JAA (European Joint Aviation Authorities) medical certification issues. His interests include the emerging field of civilian spaceflight and the medical certification of passengers and crews for safe participation in such endeavors. He is a senior aviation medical examiner for the FAA and JAA with specific interest in the needs of the corporate pilot community.

“Arizona has very active and successful corporate and airline operations in the greater Phoenix area and I’m looking forward to getting even more immersed in my subspecialty and to address the needs of executives and their flight crews,” he says. “It’s an exciting time of growth for Mayo Clinic and I couldn’t be more excited about joining an outstanding team and being able to work and live in such a wonderful environment.”

Dr. Stepanek is a reservist in the Swiss Air Force and has worked as a flight surgeon at the Swiss Air Force Institute of Aviation Medicine. More recently he has been working collaboratively with NetJets, Flight Safety International and NASA through his work with Mayo Clinic. He is an assistant professor of Medicine at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine.

To make an appointment with Dr. Stepanek, call (480) 301-4481.

Going Exotic? Think First!

More and more people are taking vacations to more obscure destinations, further into Mexico, India, Africa and tropical points beyond such as Costa Rica and Malaysia. Remember, most diseases are contracted from food and water. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American College of Emergency Physicians offer these tips:

- Use goggles, nose plugs and ear plugs when swimming and don’t swallow water.
- Shower before and after swimming.
- Don’t swim in stagnant or polluted water or after a heavy rainfall.
- When on the beach, make sure to wear sandals or flip-flops to protect yourself from parasites that can burrow into the skin.
- Wash cuts and scrapes with clean water and soap.
- Drink only canned or bottled beverages or those made with boiled water.
- Don’t use ice.
- Dry the outside of wet cans or bottles before drinking from them.
- Don’t let your guard down on the flight home. Food on the plane usually comes from the country you visited, not where you are going.

Who to Call

Appointments, Questions/Concerns, General Information

480-301-8088

Fax Number

To return your patient
questionnaires by Fax:

Dr. Mariano's and Dr. Stepanek's
patients - 480-301-9644

Dr. Orford's, Dr. Covalciuc's and
Dr. Palumbo's patients - 480-301-7569

Web Address

www.mayoclinic.org/executivehealth/scottsdale

Billing Questions

480-301-8165

Laura Stodolak,
Financial Services Coordinator

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480-301-6616

Andrea Knapp

Physicians and Administrative Assistants

Dr. Robert Orford - 480-301-7379

Kim St. John, Assistant

Dr. Michael Covalciuc - 480-301-8285

Laura Taylor, Assistant

Dr. Connie Mariano - 480-301-4481

Maddy Williams, Assistant

Dr. Pasquale "Pat" Palumbo

480-301-7379

Kim St. John, Assistant

Dr. Jan Stepanek - 480-301-4481

Maddy Williams, Assistant

Preventive Medicine Update

Curious about the latest in preventive medicine? Here's a brief summary of recent research that may be of interest to you. Reference details are available upon request.

Aspirin Therapy Alert

New research from the Journal of the American College of Cardiology has shown that discontinuing aspirin therapy may lead to new coronary events in patients with heart disease. If you've been taking aspirin, consult with your physician before stopping "cold turkey."

Vitamin E May Increase Risk of Death

An article in the January 4, 2005 issue of the Annals of Internal Medicine found that people taking more than 400 International Units of vitamin E each day were at an increased risk of death when compared to patients on placebo or no treatment.

The Truth about Health Hoaxes and Rumors

Do antiperspirants cause breast cancer? Does HIV spread through the air? Do bananas cause necrotizing vasculitis? No, no and no. Find out the truth on the CDC Web site. Go to www.cdc.gov and type "hoaxes" in the search box to find the truth about the latest health hoaxes and rumors.

Not Such A Bad Egg

A recent Yale study, funded in part by the American Egg Board, reported in the International Journal of Cardiology that eating two eggs a day for six weeks did not increase cholesterol levels or adversely affect endothelial function, an indicator of cardiac risk.

Automated External Defibrillators Now Available OTC

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently approved over-the-counter sale of an automatic external defibrillator designed specifically for lay users. Such devices have been available in aircraft, airports, and large buildings for some time, but this is the first time the device has been approved for use in a home or office without a physician's prescription.

Log on. . .

Looking for information on a particular disease? Wanting to know more about a medication's side effects? Trying to make an important health-related decision? The answers may very well be as close as www.mayoclinic.com which has a wealth of information about virtually every known topic on health.

If you want to find out about things a little closer to home, try www.mayoclinic.org. Under the Arizona site, you'll find specific information about the latest news, treatment protocols and more on the Executive Health Program. You can even read up on your Executive Health physician by taking a quick read of the bios!



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