

# EXECUTIVE HEALTH NOTES

Winter 2007

ENTRUST YOUR HEALTH TO THE NAME YOU KNOW

## When Taking a Look Leads to Saving a Life

### *Florida Executive Reaps the Benefits of Early Detection*



*"I'm on the side of wanting to know. Knowledge is power."*

– Carlos Genardini

Carlos Genardini believes in the value of the executive health physical because it literally saved his life.

For more than 14 years, Genardini and his wife, Susie, who live in Boca Raton, Fla., made the trip to Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville for their annual Executive Health Program checkup. Going through the many tests had always given them the peace of mind that comes with having a thorough assessment and getting a clean bill of health.

"There's the constant debate about if you would or wouldn't want to know if there's something wrong with you," says Genardini.

"I'm on the side of wanting to know. Knowledge is power."

During their annual trip in September 2004, Genardini got a little more knowledge than he bargained for following his screening colonoscopy. Otherwise healthy with no significant symptoms, Genardini, who was then 58, thought he was home free. He had recently retired and had gotten into a structured exercise routine, consistently working out with a personal trainer and taking care of himself better than ever before. He had never felt better in his life.

During the screening, doctors discovered and biopsied a half-inch tumor in his ileum, the tail end of the small intestine where it meets the colon. The small growth was tucked away in the folds of the bowel, silently growing. It turned out to be a neuroendocrine tumor, a rare but slow growing malignancy.

"This wasn't your standard, run-of-the-mill cancer," says Heidi Chua, M.D., the Mayo Clinic colon and rectal surgeon who performed Genardini's surgery. "This type of tumor produces enzymes that can affect normal body function. They are also difficult to find

because they're small and there's no good screening test for them."

Eight weeks after the diagnosis, Genardini had a laparoscopic colectomy – a minimally invasive surgery to remove the growth. The benefit of laparoscopic surgery over its traditional counterpart is that it's done with smaller incisions, which means less pain and recovery time, as well as fewer infections and scar tissue. Genardi's recovery was quick and today he remains cancer-free.

"This shows how effective colonoscopy is at detecting early tumors," says Jeffrey Humbarger, M.D., Genardini's Executive Health physician. "Carlos had had a colon x-ray just a few years prior. Either the tumor wasn't there at the time of the x-ray or colonoscopy really is that much better at detecting tumors. When I'm talking to patients and telling them about the power of early detection, I'll tell them stories like this to drive the point home. This is a perfect example of a cancer caught early, a relatively easy recovery thanks to non-invasive surgery and, most importantly, a good outcome."



## DEAR EXECUTIVE HEALTH PROGRAM PARTICIPANT:

One of the strengths of Mayo is the fact that its Executive Health Program is offered at all three Mayo Clinic locations – in Arizona, Florida and Minnesota. If an executive is seen at a site different from their previous examination, their records will be instantly accessible electronically and they will have a similar clinical experience, with medical and allied health staff members who not only have common values and share a common culture, but who also communicate and work together virtually every day. Mayo Executive Health physicians number nearly 20, and they are only part of a strong collaborative group of physicians who exemplify the integrated group practice established by the Mayo brothers nearly a century ago.

During a visit to Mayo, former Health Secretary, Donna Shalala told the story of a visit she had made to Japan when she was Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin at Madison. She was visiting a Japanese politician whose home had a wonderful garden. She asked him if she could borrow his gardener to take back to her home in Madison, Wisconsin to make her grounds so lovely. He replied that it could not be done. To make the garden so beautiful had taken over one hundred years. And so it is with Mayo.

Over the past three years, physicians and administrative staff members have collaborated to help unify the look and feel of Mayo's Executive Health program across our three locations. This has worked well and we now have a standard clinical protocol, a common Mayo Executive Health Web page, shared appointment availability among sites and a redesigned program brochure and page in the US Airways magazine. As we continue to work together, we would value your advice in further strengthening the Mayo Executive Health Program and would encourage you to share your views with us.

### Robert R. Orford, M.D.

Chair, Division of Preventive, Occupational and Aerospace Medicine

# For Your Information...

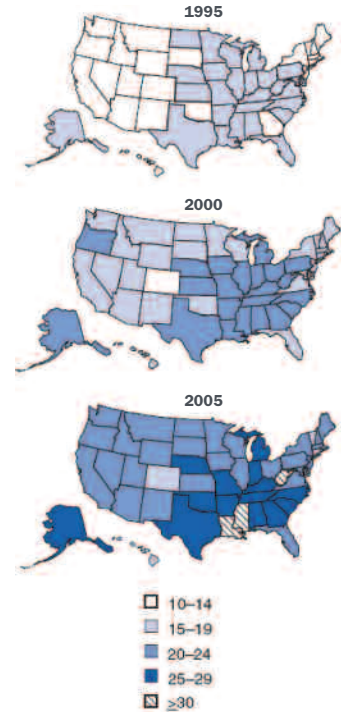
■ A new study published in the July 2006 issue of the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* examines 25 recommended preventive services and ranks them based on their ability to provide health benefits and value for the health care dollar. According to the study, the three most valuable preventive health services that can be offered in medical practice today are:

- 1) discussing daily aspirin use with at-risk adults to prevent cardiovascular disease;
- 2) immunizing children; and,
- 3) intervening with smokers to help them quit.

For more information, visit [www.prevent.org](http://www.prevent.org).

■ Keep track of your medications and help your health care providers give you the best possible care by visiting [www.themedform.com](http://www.themedform.com). This form helps you keep track of both prescription medications and over-the-counter herbals and vitamins. The form was developed by the Arizona Partnership for Implementing Patient Safety, the Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association, Safe & Sound (an Arizona Patient Safety Initiative) and the Arizona Medical Association. The Med Form has been touted by the *Wall Street Journal* as valuable in preventing medication errors and has been recognized by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Save 100,000 Lives campaign.

■ Ever wonder how your state stacks up amongst the nation's heavy-weights? Look no further than the following chart, from the Centers for Disease Control, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). The overall results are startling!



Percentage of adults aged >18 years who were obese,\* — Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, United States, 1995, 2000, and 2005

\*Persons with a body mass index (BMI) of >30.0; self-reported weight and height were used to calculate BMI (weight [kg]/height [m<sup>2</sup>]).

## The Shrinking American Vacation

Americans are taking advantage of technology like never before. Whether you're in the office or not, answering phone calls and e-mails is simply not a problem. You can work from wherever you are. At first blush, it might seem this would add to productivity and that Americans would actually be working less hours. Nothing could be further from the truth. The pressure to work harder, keeps many employees from taking a "real" vacation.

### Consider these statistics:

- Some estimates indicate that vacation time has shrunk from an average of more than seven days (25 years ago) to only four days (last year).
- The average employed American sacrificed three days of vacation this year. That's up 50% from the two days they gave up in 2003.
- Thirty percent of employed adults give up vacation time they have earned, resulting in a total of 415 million unused vacation days in 2004, according to a survey by Harris Interactive.

Contrast this with our counterparts abroad. In many European countries workers get five weeks of vacation. Laws mandate a minimum of two weeks vacation in Canada and Japan.

## Mayo Clinic Specialty Building Opens



### Mayo Clinic Specialty Building

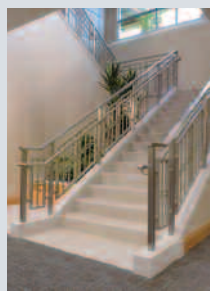
Executive Health Patients may now be visiting specialists in the new Mayo Clinic Specialty Building (MCSB), a 172,775 square foot outpatient clinic connected to the northeast corner of the Mayo Clinic Hospital. The MCSB was built thanks to the generosity of Mayo Clinic benefactors and includes 133 new patient exam rooms, state-of-the-art diagnostics and outpatient treatment rooms.

Of particular interest to Executive Health Patients, the MCSB has wireless capability for those wanting to access laptops or cell phones. Please note that if you do have an appointment scheduled at this new facility, the time allotted may be

a bit longer than typical to account for travel time between the Executive Health Program offices in Scottsdale and the MCSB in Phoenix.

If time allows, you may want to visit the Healing Garden which can be accessed from the lower level of the MCSB. Benches throughout the garden were designed by four Native American artists affiliated with the Heard Museum of Native Cultures and Art. The benches in the Healing Garden are grouped by themes, all suggested to the artists during their consultations with Mayo Clinic staff and patients. Throughout the garden you'll see thematic groupings of the benches representing water, celebrating life, balance and harmony and natural environment.

We encourage you to relax and reflect in the Healing Garden and also to learn about Arizona's Native American culture.



## Executive Health Earns 5-Stars!

As part of the 2005 Patient Perception Awards, the Executive Health program earned the highest five-star ranking. The awards are especially noteworthy because they are based on patient interviews - the most important type of feedback we can get.

## Work Can Be a Pain in the Neck...and in the Thumbs!

### Tips for Relieving Work-Related Aches and Pains

With the advent of handheld computing devices, more on-the-go executives are using their thumbs to type e-mail messages. As a result, physicians and therapists are seeing more complaints of pains in the thumbs and in the tendons on the side of the wrist. These tendons are very sensitive to repetitive motions such as typing on a very small keyboard. This is just the latest in the list of ergonomic concerns related to computer use.

To keep yourself ache-free, follow these tips for relieving stress to the back, neck and thumbs!

- 1) Adjust your chair.** When sitting at a desk, adjust the height so your feet rest comfortably on the floor. Adjust the seat so your knees are level with your hips.
- 2) Reposition your computer monitor.** Position your monitor so it's at arm's length from you. The top of your screen should be at eye level or below so you look down slightly at your work.
- 3) Avoid resting your wrists on sharp edges.** Avoid resting your wrists on the edge of your desk. Repeated, direct contact with sharp edges may cause wrist discomfort or numbness in the hands and fingers.
- 4) Answer later.** You don't need to respond to every e-mail remotely. If you need to type a long response, wait until you get back to the office.
- 5) Take breaks.** If you must answer e-mails on your handheld device, take frequent breaks and don't work on it for more than 10 minutes at a time. Frequent stretching breaks are also a good idea in the office.
- 6) Avoid the thumbs.** Rather than typing with your thumbs exclusively on your handheld, try tapping the keyboard with a stylus, the end of a pencil or another finger.
- 7) Prevent squinting.** You can develop eye-strain from viewing information displayed on very small screens. See if your handheld device enables you to make the type font larger and thus easier on the eyes. Also, consider getting a 21 inch or larger landscape type screen for your desktop.

Follow these tips and you may find work to be a little less stressful!

## Who to Contact:

### New appointments and general information

480-301-8088

Shelly Zausmer

Lee Hebenstreit

### Fax Number

■ For patient questionnaires:  
480-301-9644

■ For prescription refills:  
480-301-7569

### E-mail

mcs.exechealth@mayo.edu

### Web Address

[www.mayoclinic.org/executive-health](http://www.mayoclinic.org/executive-health)

### Billing Questions

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### Physicians and Administrative Assistants

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■ Ellen Remenchik, M.D.  
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Marci Green, Assistant

■ Jan Stepanek, M.D.  
480-301-4481

Marci Green, Assistant

# MAYO CLINIC IN THE NEWS



Scottsdale, Arizona



Jacksonville, Florida



Rochester, Minnesota

**Arizona:** *Mayo Clinic Marks One-Year Anniversary Performing Heart Transplantation...* Prior to the Mayo Clinic heart transplant program, Valley patients had to travel to Tucson, Ariz., or out-of-state for a heart transplant. During its first year, Mayo Clinic completed 18 heart transplants. The first heart transplant patient, Scottsdale resident Priscilla French has regained much of her energy, takes walks with her dog and devotes time to visiting and encouraging other patients awaiting a heart transplant. Approval to begin heart transplantation was granted to Mayo Clinic by the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) in September 2005, less than one month before the first transplant was performed. In addition to heart, Mayo Clinic also performs kidney, liver and pancreas transplants, as well as blood and marrow transplantation.

**Florida:** *Mayo ENT surgeons performing new, minimally invasive surgery to open sinuses...* If drug therapy can't open blocked sinuses, sufferers now have a new option. Mayo Clinic ENT surgeons have adapted the angioplasty technique long used to open clogged arteries to help clear the sinuses. The procedure, called balloon sinuplasty, is a minimally invasive solution to more radical sinus surgery. If treating the condition with medications fails, doctors may

recommend surgery to enlarge the sinus passages. The balloon sinuplasty procedure, causes less bleeding, tissue trauma and post operative pain than the commonly performed endoscopic surgery. Patients recover and typically go home the same day. They may experience immediate symptom relief and resume normal activities within 24 hours.

**Minnesota:** *Normal aging of breast tissue lessens breast cancer risk...* As most women get older, and especially after menopause, the milk-producing glands (lobules) shut down - a process known as involution. Since breast cancer is thought to originate in the lobules, their reduced size and number decreases the chance of cancer formation. Women who experience complete involution have half the risk of developing breast cancer of those who do not, according to a new study by Mayo Clinic Cancer Center researchers published in the November 2006 issue of the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*. The investigators found that among women with benign breast disease and little or no breast tissue involution, risk for developing breast cancer was twice that of women whose breast glandular tissues had been replaced completely with connective and fatty tissue (53 percent had complete involution as they aged beyond 70 years).

## Preventive Medicine Update

Curious about the latest in preventive medicine? Here's a brief summary of recent research that might be of interest to you.

- **New vaccines.** Tdap (Adacel®) has been licensed by the FDA for people between the ages of 11 and 64 to protect them against pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus and diphtheria. The FDA has also approved Zostavax®, a new vaccine used to prevent shingles in people older than 60. Both are available at Mayo Clinic. Talk to your doctor to see if they might be of benefit to you.
- **Second hand smoke.** The latest report issued by the Surgeon General finds that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. The report, titled "The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke"

confirms that second hand smoke is a cause of lung cancer and heart disease and has immediate adverse effects on the cardiovascular system.

- **Smoking cessation.** A new drug is available to help people stop smoking. Varenicline or Chantix™ helps by reducing nicotine withdrawal symptoms and diminishing the sense of satisfaction associated with smoking.
- **Homocysteine and the heart.** Observational studies had suggested that lowering homocysteine levels in the blood may prevent cardiovascular disease. Vitamins B12, B6 and folic acid decrease homocysteine levels; however, two recent randomized five-year prospective studies

showed no benefit in preventing heart disease from their use. Routine screening for homocysteine is therefore considered of little value.

- **Mercury in commercial fish.** For most people, the risk of elevated mercury levels from eating fish and shellfish is not a health concern. However, pregnant women and children are at risk for adverse health effects and should avoid eating fish containing high levels of mercury. Detailed information on this topic is available at [www.oceansalive.org](http://www.oceansalive.org).

\*Reference details are available upon request.



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