

living well

fall 2009

be healthy
obesity affects your
entire body

get ready
learn about back-to-
school immunizations

learn about
women's care at RMC

+rmc

the Regional Medical Center



New Families Make Her Place Their Place

There's nothing in the world that compares to being a parent. In fact, nothing even comes close.

This is why expectant parents from all over our area are choosing to start, or grow, their families at Her Place, the Regional Medical Center's one-of-a-kind maternity center.

Her Place helps instill confidence in nervous new parents. And it offers a comfortable home for your

first day with your new baby. It's so popular that more than 1,500 women choose to have their babies here each year.

Comfortable Suites

During your stay, you'll feel right at home in Her Place's large, fully appointed suites. The LDRP (labor, delivery, recovery and postpartum) suites are intentionally oversized to be comfortable even when family and friends stop by to see your new baby. "The suites have

Prepared Childbirth

Having a child can be as frightening as it is rewarding. Learn what to expect with our comprehensive, five-session course. It incorporates lecture, discussion and breathing exercises to give you an overview of the birthing experience. Advance registration is required. To register for the next course or for more information, call 803-395-2819. \$50

Breastfeeding Support Telephone Line

If you have breastfeeding questions or concerns, call us. Simply leave a message on the hotline and our certified lactation consultant will call you back with an answer. Calls are returned between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., seven days a week. Just dial 803-395-2177, or toll-free 800-476-3377, ext. 2177. FREE

rocking chair recliners, extra seating and even a pull-out sleeper sofa for new dads,” says Peggy Callahan, director of Maternal and Child Services.

Each suite also has its own private bath with shower. “And we just installed plasma TVs in all of these rooms. We’re proud of those,” she says.

Of course, moms’ beds are top of the line. The mattresses are air-cushion adjustable so new moms can make the mattress softer or firmer – whatever makes them more comfortable.

And comfort extends well beyond the room furnishings.

“We offer a candlelight dinner for mom and dad. They really seem to enjoy that,” says Peggy. “We take the baby to the nursery and they get to be together the next day after they deliver.” This special date night is provided free for first time parents who go through the childbirth classes. But, after having this experience with their first child, many experienced parents choose to purchase the special meal because they so enjoyed it the first time.

Education

It may seem like you’re never really prepared for the challenges of being a parent. But, our educational classes can be a big help. Her Place hosts childbirth classes throughout the year to help expectant parents understand what’s ahead of them.

“We also have a lactation consultant,” explains Peggy. “She’s a registered nurse and she’s here to help first-time moms. They utilize her a lot.” And the educational offerings extend throughout the family as well. Sibling classes teach children how to adjust to the new baby, and how to be a good big brother or big sister.

Experienced Staff

Mothers often say that some of their fondest Her Place memories involve their interactions with nurses and

staff. “We get great compliments from patients,” says Peggy. In fact, Press Ganey patient satisfaction surveys rank Her Place in the top 1 percent of maternity units. A lot of that is due to the experience of the Her Place staff, many of whom are now delivering the babies of women they delivered a generation ago.

Patient **satisfaction** surveys rank Her Place in the **top 1 percent** of maternity units.

A Higher Level of Care

There’s always the unexpected. And at Her Place, we’re ready for just about anything.

Here, new mothers can trust that a pediatrician will be in the hospital 24 hours a day, should they or their new baby need assistance. That’s not something you’ll find at every hospital.

Her Place also makes epidurals available around the clock. So, even if you go into labor at 2 a.m., we’re ready for you.

Sometimes, even a planned birth ends up being best performed as a c-section. This is why we have two custom surgical suites, exclusively for c-sections – and you don’t even have to leave Her Place to get to them.

“We also have special pre-labor suites for mothers who develop high blood pressure or are facing preterm labors,” reports Peggy. These enable both mother and baby to be monitored by physicians and staff around the clock.

If you’d like to learn more about Her Place, or schedule a free tour, call 803-395-2201.



Spacious suites help make new mothers feel right at home.

On the cover: Stacy Cook with her children Ashlyn and Gavin, who were born at Regional Medical Center’s Her Place.

obesity -

10 Things It Does to Your Body

Being overweight can affect your self-esteem. It can make you self-conscious and uncomfortable. But, that's far from the worst of it. Obesity can wreak havoc on your health. Here are just 10 things that obesity can do to your body.

1. Causes insulin resistance

As your body fat increases, your body has to produce more insulin in order to balance the levels of sugar in your blood. "Central obesity in particular causes insulin resistance," says board-certified family practice physician Frank Coulter, MD.

2. Contributes to diabetes

Insulin resistance often leads to diabetes. Your body only can make so much insulin, and if that's not enough, blood sugar will start to rise, potentially causing diabetes.

3. Raises your risk for vascular disease

"Obesity increases the risk of atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) and can interfere with how your body processes fats. Therefore, it also increases your risk for vascular disease," explains Dr. Coulter.

4. Increases your risk for stroke

According to Dr. Coulter, the three major risk factors for having a heart attack or stroke are high cholesterol, smoking and high blood pressure. There are, however, lots of other risk factors, one of which is obesity.

5. Increases your risk for heart disease

Being overweight increases your risk for developing atherosclerosis, the most common cause of a heart attack. "If you're obese, it increases your risk of developing all things associated with heart disease," he says.

6. Interferes with your hormones

Obesity in women can lead to troublesome hormone imbalances. "I know that a lot of obese women can have trouble with their menstrual cycles because of estrogen being stored in fat," says Dr. Coulter.

7. Contributes to sleep apnea

According to Dr. Coulter, obstructive sleep apnea seems to develop more often in overweight people who also snore. Apnea sufferers actually stop breathing in their sleep, which can cause a number of health problems ranging from potentially fatal heart arrhythmias to general feelings of fatigue.

Continued at right



Frank Coulter, MD

8. Contributes to narcolepsy

“Narcolepsy seems to be increased in people who are obese, too,” Dr. Coulter says, adding that narcolepsy is when you fall asleep unintentionally and uncontrollably.

9. Increases your blood pressure

“There is a direct link between obesity and blood pressure,” says Dr. Coulter. “If you’re overweight and lower your weight by 10 to 15 percent, that can lower your blood pressure.”

10. Puts your liver at risk

While obesity itself does not cause major damage to your liver, it increases the likelihood that something else will. “If you are obese and drink alcohol to excess, get a bile infection, hepatitis or other infection – that could certainly cause damage,” explains Dr. Coulter.



Immunizations – Your Child’s Best Shot for a Healthy School Year

The school year has started. In the hustle and bustle for notebooks and new clothes, have you talked to your pediatrician about your child’s immunization schedule?

Especially in the close quarters of a school, germs and viruses can spread quickly. The proper immunizations can help keep your child safe from easily transmitted and harmful diseases. This is why the state of South Carolina requires kids to have certain vaccines before they can attend classes.

Ask your pediatrician if your child is current on the following immunizations, which are required before a child can be admitted to school.

Varicella vaccine: helps prevent chickenpox, which can cause pneumonia and brain inflammation

Polio vaccine (IPV): helps prevent polio, which can cause paralysis or even death

MMR vaccine: helps prevent measles, which can cause brain infections or pneumonia; mumps, which can cause deafness and brain infection; and rubella, which can cause birth defects in babies whose mothers become infected

Hib vaccine: helps prevent the spinal cord infection meningitis; epiglottitis, a throat infection that can inhibit breathing; and pneumonia

DTaP vaccine: helps prevent diphtheria, which can lead to heart failure or paralysis; tetanus, otherwise known as lockjaw; and pertussis, also called whooping cough

Hepatitis B vaccine: helps prevent hepatitis B, which can cause severe liver damage, liver cancer and death

Some of these vaccines require more than one dose. So, it’s worth asking your pediatrician to be sure that your child has had the complete course of everything that’s required for school.

Also, if this is the year that back-to-school means off-to-college, be sure to ask the school about their vaccination requirements. It can vary from school to school, and it’s not unusual for a high school graduate to need additional vaccinations before attending college.

Physicians WEIGHT LOSS Plan

Fed up with diets and weight-loss gimmicks that don’t work? Join our Physicians WEIGHT LOSS Centers® program. Under the guidance of a board-certified physician, licensed nurse and certified staff, you can achieve and maintain a healthier weight.

- One-on-one support
- Weekly monitoring
- Behavioral guidance classes
- Pre-program evaluation and planning
- Goals development and analysis
- Physical exam

Call today to start on a healthy path to weight loss!

Physicians WEIGHT LOSS Centers®
at HealthPlex
Orangeburg, 803-395-4117



Get Comfortable with Mammograms

Statistically speaking, one out of every eight women in our area will develop breast cancer in her lifetime. In fact, Orangeburg County ranks eleventh in our state for new breast cancer cases and number seven for breast cancer deaths.

Many of these deaths could easily be prevented. When it is diagnosed in the earliest stages, the breast cancer survival rate is much higher. Early detection is the key, all it takes is a few minutes and a simple exam – mammography.

Unfortunately, too many women go without their annual mammogram. Many believe that it hurts, or that it could in itself cause breast cancer. But, these are mammography myths.

“Mammography should never hurt. It may be a little uncomfortable, but it should never hurt,” explains Becky Hejl, lead mammographer at Regional Medical Center’s Breast Health Center. “And, over the past several decades, the radiation exposure from mammography has been reduced to an absolute minimum.”

Digital mammography, today’s gold standard for early breast cancer detection, is provided in a warm, comfortable environment at the Breast Health Center. “We do digital mammography exclusively,” explains Becky. “It’s the best tool for detecting breast cancer, especially in younger women.”

The Breast Health Center staff also makes the experience as comfortable as possible. “We have soft music playing, photographs of our families, and we try to put people

at ease,” says Becky. “We get women in and out quickly, but we never rush anyone.”

The Breast Health Center staff also tries to make mammograms convenient. Becky says that if a woman is coming to Orangeburg to see her physician, the center will work her in while she’s in town, even without an appointment. “We’ll never turn anybody away,” she promises.

If you have any questions about your breast health, talk to your OB/Gyn or family doctor. **If you’d like to learn more about the Breast Health Center at the Regional Medical Center, call Becky Hejl at 803-395-2841. Becky is available to talk to community groups about breast cancer and the importance of early detection.**

Schedule your mammogram today

The National Cancer Institute recommends that women have a screening mammogram every one to two years **beginning at age 40**. Ask your doctor if this is right for you.

If you’ve seen your doctor in the last year, you can simply call the Breast Health Center for an appointment at **803-395-2841**.

If you do not have an OB/Gyn doctor, we’ll be happy to help you find one. You can start by visiting the physician area of our website at **www.trmchealth.org**, or by calling **803-395-4631**.



Patient Success Story

The Wound Center

helps James Brant get back on his feet.

When James Brant came to the Regional Medical Center he was mistaken about what was wrong with him. But, he was definitely in the right place.

It turned out that what he thought was a broken bone actually was an ischemic ulcer caused by severe vascular disease. Fortunately, the Wound Center experts had seen hundreds of ulcers like his. In fact, they treat more patients than any other wound care center in the entire state. So, they knew just what to do.



John Samies, MD,
FSHEA, CWS

“We’re clearly one of the largest centers in the southeast and the largest in SC,” explains John Samies, MD, director of the Regional Medical Center’s Wound Center and hospital

epidemiologist and infectious disease physician. “We draw patients from essentially all over this state and Georgia.”

In Mr. Brant’s case, they began by referring him to the Regional Medical Center’s vascular surgeon, who used stents and balloons to restore the circulation to Mr. Brant’s feet.

After the surgery, the staff continued to use some of the nation’s most progressive wound care treatments to help Mr. Brant heal.

“We have experience with a lot of modalities that are not used in a lot of centers,” explains Dr. Samies. “We were early adopters of ultrasound for wound cleaning and cell stimulation. We also use bioengineered tissues which are an advanced modality that save a lot of feet that would otherwise be lost.”

In fact, this dedication to being at the forefront of care has brought a lot of attention to the center. Dr. Samies and Marie Gehling, RN, BSN, CWON, have spoken throughout the country about the Wound Center’s treatment successes.



James Brant

They’ve also been extensively published and participate in research studies that yield vital information to advance wound care as a field of medicine. Maybe that’s why people come from around the country to learn from the Wound Center staff. “Our nurses here are part of the faculty for MUSC’s program on wound care, and at Emory University also,” says Dr. Samies. “And we get people literally from all over the country. We had someone from Alaska not too long ago.”

What does Mr. Brant think of all of this? He’s always quick to praise their expertise. “Dr. Samies and the Wound Center nurses, they did things I didn’t think could be done. I was with them a lot and I’d recommend them highly to anybody.”

To learn more about the Wound Center at the Regional Medical Center, call 803-395-2471.

Hospital News Corner

Dr. Delaney elected SCMA chairman of the board of trustees

Gary A. Delaney, MD, was recently installed as the 2009-2010 chairman of the board of trustees of the South Carolina Medical Association.

Dr. Delaney, a board-certified anesthesiologist at the Regional Medical Center, is past-president of the Edisto Medical Society and past-president of the South Carolina Society of Anesthesiologists.

As a member of the SCMA, Dr. Delaney has served as a trustee for his

district, executive committee member at large and vice-chairman of the board of trustees. In addition to his SCMA membership, Dr. Delaney is also



Gary A. Delaney, MD

where he currently holds the position of councilor.

a member of the American Society of Anesthesiologists, the International Anesthesia Research Society, the American Medical Association and the Southern Medical Association,

Regional Medical Center Recognized by National Publication

The Regional Medical Center was recently recognized in *Marketing Health Services*, a national trade magazine published quarterly by the American Marketing Association. The article, titled Words Matter, highlighted the excellent results of the Regional Medical Center’s discharge phone call program.

The article states that patients who received a discharge phone call are more satisfied with home care instructions and overall nursing care. The Regional Medical Center’s call data was used as an example of how these calls can improve the patient experience.

Living Well is published as a community service by the Regional Medical Center. The Regional Medical Center is located at 3000 St. Matthews Road in Orangeburg, SC, online at www.trmchealth.org and available by phone at 803-395-2200.

Contact the Regional Medical Center Marketing Department at 803-395-2319.

If you have specific concerns about your health, please contact your doctor.

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of Orangeburg and Calhoun Counties

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Seven Simple Steps to Take Before You're Pregnant

There's so much to do when you're having a baby. And plenty you should do even before you're pregnant. Here are seven pre-pregnancy pieces of advice from Richard Richardson, MD, board-certified OB/Gyn and chairman of the Regional Medical Center's Obstetrics and Gynecology Department.



Richard Richardson, MD

Visit your doctor. Get a checkup and let your doctor know what you're planning. Talk about the medicines you take and what you may need to change. Discuss your diet, exercise regimen and ways to manage stress. This single visit can help start you on the right path.

Don't smoke, drink alcohol or take drugs. This seems obvious, but it's worth remembering.

Avoid toxins. These could include X-rays, lead, paint or glue fumes, secondhand smoke and pesticides.

Take a daily multivitamin.

Folic acid may prevent some birth defects, especially neural tube defects like spina bifida. So, choose one that has 400 micrograms of folic acid and no more than 100 percent of the recommended daily allowance (RDA) of other nutrients.

Avoid caffeine. Or, at least limit yourself to one serving a day.

Avoid exposure to high temperatures.

Long hot baths during the first 30 days after conception can damage a child's developing nervous system. During this time, you may not know that you're pregnant. So, it's best to play it safe.

Let someone else take care of the cat.

Toxoplasmosis, a parasite infection, can cause mental retardation and blindness in babies. The parasite is found in cat feces, in raw and undercooked meats and on unwashed fruits and vegetables. So, keep cats off kitchen counters, tables and wherever you prepare food. And have someone else change the litter.

