What to do about pelvic floor problems – decision making is a team event

How are you? When asked that question, we often respond with: “Fine” or “Great.” Sometimes, we might offer a bit more information – “Things at work are really stressful,” or “I’m having terrible headaches.” For many women, some things can be much harder to say out loud because of embarrassment or social taboos. This often involves pelvic floor issues:

• When the uterus bulges into the vagina, or the vagina prolapses, even extending outside of the body. It can feel (like sitting on a ball or an egg).
• Incontinence, when jumping, sneezing, running, laughing and walking cause urine to leak. Or because getting to the bathroom in time is really hard.

These symptoms can be difficult – often women find exercising impossible, social and work situations risky, and they generally feel on the brink of embarrassment.

Where can women talk about these problems?

“Women feel a lot of support around childbearing, but later, there is less talk about babies, and minimal talk about these kinds of problems,” says AeuMuro Lake, M.D., a urogynecologist (a subspecialty of gynecology and urology) at Swedish.

Not everyone has a partner or good friend they can confide in. However, it can be really helpful to push past the potential embarrassment of pelvic floor prolapse and/or incontinence to talk with someone. A good start is your primary care provider or OB/GYN doctor.

Women are often referred to a urogynecologist like Dr. Lake, who helps women navigate these problems by:

• Giving emotional support and reassurance, and alleviating fears.
• Explaining all the available treatments, and the potential risks and rewards of each.
• Providing the procedure(s) a woman decides is best for her.

It’s teamwork – not one-sided decision making

Dr. Lake believes that final treatment decisions are up to her patients, and she tells them “The ball is your court.” Her role is to listen, ask questions and provide the information and expertise to help her patients decide. The surgery decision is “doctor driven,” says Dr. Lake.

A woman must consider how much the problem is disrupting her life. Having surgery to repair the problem is not a life or death decision, and doctor and patient explore non-surgical options that might be tried first:

• Physical therapy to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles.
• Being fitted at the doctor’s office with a pessary, a firm ring placed in the vagina to support the uterus or bladder and rectum.

Professional partnerships

Just as urogynecologic surgeons partner with their patients, at Swedish they also work as a team with physicians from other disciplines. In addition to physical therapists, this might include consultants with other

Where Should I Go for Care?

Paul’s 8-year-old son Joseph fell out of the family apple tree and might have a broken arm. Sarah sliced her finger while gardening. And Samuel has sudden, crushing chest pain. The big question: Where should I go for care?

Becoming familiar with Swedish’s excellent care options now can save you precious time when you have to make a decision quickly.

Your primary care clinic

Your doctor and care team are your health and wellness partners. Newborn or 95 – your total care is our priority. We provide annual physical/wellness exams and immunizations; determine when a specialist is appropriate; and teach you about preventive measures you can take to get and stay healthy – like screenings and managing chronic diseases (e.g., diabetes). Other services include:

• Allergy and immunology
• Family medicine and newborn care
• Obstetrics and Gynecology
• Internal medicine
• Mental health
• Minor surgical procedures
• Sports medicine and physicals
• Travel medicine

Appointment necessary: Yes, call or schedule online

Same day appointments: Often not available

Find a Swedish primary care provider: swedish.org/swedish-physicians

Express Care – three choices

Swedish Express Care gives you great, convenient options to see a health professional the same day when an unexpected illness or injury turns up. Here, you have access to the same quality of care as in the clinics.

1. Express Care Online – This “virtual” care is available almost immediately. Visit with a Swedish provider using secure audio and video on your computer, tablet or smartphone, with the lowest cost of all same-day visits.

Appointment necessary: No

2. Express Care Clinics – Certain convenient Walgreen locations provide same-day visits with Swedish providers and on-site lab and pharmacy. The cost is generally less than at Urgent Care.

Appointment necessary: Yes

Make appointment: Online

3. Express Care at Home – Swedish provides services that come to your home, office or hotel, in certain zip codes only.

Appointment necessary: Yes

Make appointment: Online

To learn more, visit: swedish.org/expresscare

Urgent Care

Urgent Care facilities are a good resource for illnesses or injuries that do not require hospitalization, but do need direct and immediate attention.

Appointment necessary: No

To learn more, visit: swedish.org/services/urgent-care

Emergency Room visits

There are seven excellent Emergency Rooms (ER) in the Swedish system, all with state-of-the-art equipment and multi-disciplinary ER teams with access to on-call experts in all specialties. We treat our ER patients as quickly as possible, and have access to your medical history.

Appointment necessary: No

To learn more, visit: swedish.org/services/emergency-services

The ER is the place to go for:

• Severe burns – heat, chemical and electrical
• Severe cuts where the bleeding won’t stop after 10 minutes of direct pressure
• Sudden or severe shortness of breath, or no breathing and no pulse
• Pain, fullness or pressure in the chest
• Stroke symptoms – see stroke article on Page 2

(Continued on page 2)
We often associate stroke with older people – an elderly friend of the family, a parent, grandparent or partner. Though the average age for experiencing a stroke is 65, younger people are not immune. According to Dr. Navin Shah, a neurologist at the Swedish Neuroscience Institute, strokes in your 20s – even those in their early 20s and 30s – are on the rise.

Physiology of a stroke
When a person has a stroke: People call it a stroke or a "brain attack" – but whatever you call it, blood carrying oxygen and nutrients can’t get to a section of the brain, and cells can die.

• An ischemic stroke is the most common type of stroke. There are two types: embolic stroke and thrombotic stroke. Ischemic strokes occur when there is some type of blockage (blood clot or plaque fragments) in arteries that deprives the brain of oxygen.
• A hemorrhagic stroke is caused when a blood vessel bursts in the brain. Blood spills into or around the brain and creates swelling and pressure.

Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA): A TIA is a very serious warning sign with symptoms that mimic a stroke, but only last from just a few minutes to under 24 hours. Dr. Shah says a TIA can indicate that a stroke is on the way, as soon as within a day or month.

Recognizing a stroke and getting help FAST
It doesn’t matter if a person has one of the following symptoms or many, whether it is a stroke or a TIA, call 9-1-1 and get them to the Emergency Room immediately:

• Numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg
• Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
• Trouble seeing
• Dizziness, trouble walking or loss of balance or coordination
• Severe headache with no known cause

A three-hour window of opportunity: Note down the time your or a loved one’s life started having symptoms.

Acting fast and getting to the hospital quickly increases the chance that medication can be used dissolve a clot and restore blood flow in the brain.

Important risk factors
Lifestyle, medical conditions and sometimes heredity determine your risk for stroke. And having a first stroke is a risk factor for having another.

• Risk factors you CAN control:
  • Age – risk increases with age.
  • Gender – more women than men suffer strokes.
  • Ethnicity – Hispanics and African-Americans are at higher risk.
  • Heredity – a close blood relative with history of stroke (parent, grandparent, sister, brother).

Risk factors you CAN control:
• High blood pressure
• High cholesterol
• Diabetes
• Smoking & other tobacco use, secondhand smoke
• Being overweight
• Physical inactivity

• Excessive use of alcohol
• Other medical conditions like atrial fibrillation, peripheral artery disease, sickle cell anemia
• Existing foods high in saturated fat, trans-fats, cholesterol, sodium

Resources at Swedish
The Swedish Stroke Team shares a single goal: Those on the team provide high-quality, coordinated stroke care from the moment the patient enters the emergency room, through their recovery and rehabilitation. The Stroke Team includes emergency physicians, neurosurgeons, neurologists, nurses, therapists, laboratory and pharmacy staff, radiologists and patient transporters. Each member is specially trained and has a specific responsibility to respond quickly and completely to the needs of a stroke patient.

Learn more about the Swedish Primary Stroke Centers:
www.swedish.org/stroke

What to do after pelvic floor problems (Continued)
specialists who treat areas such as the upper urinary tract (kidney, ureters) or rectal prolapse.

Pre- and post-op time is in the patient’s control
If you decide to have surgery, the next step is asking for help, something many women have trouble doing. Your new mantra will be “Don’t overload it.” So beforehand, do some recovery planning. Freeze some meals, arrange for other meal coverage and someone who can shop and do other chores. Make child care arrangements if necessary, and discuss with your employer, clients or colleagues the amount of time you will need to take off.

The upside of surgery and recovery
“After surgery, a woman’s organ function is improved because her anatomy is better aligned,” says Dr. Lake.

For many, it is the end of isolation and secrets. Women can return to their life with renewed safety and confidence. “The problem no longer occupies their mind all day or determines their actions,” says Dr. Lake. “In short, they get a sense of self back in their everyday life.”

Hear Dr. AeumUwo Lake Speak
“Symptoms Kep Secret, the truth about vaginal bulging and leakage of urine,” a Swedish Medical Center pelvic health lecture presented by urogynecologist AeumUwo Lake, M.D.
Date: Tuesday, May 29, 2018
Time: 6 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.
Where: The Lytle Center
747 Broadway, Seattle, WA
Who: This event is free
For more information or to RSVIP, visit www.swedish.org/classes and click on Health & Wellness Classes

Where Should I Go for Care? (Continued)

• Loss of balance or coordination; and sudden, severe headache with no known cause
• Loss of consciousness
• Poisoning (if possible, call the poison control center first 1-800-222-1222) and ask how to treat the problem at home. Early home treatment could save your or a loved one’s life

Call 9-1-1 if:
• The person’s condition is life-threatening or could become so on the way to the hospital.
• Moving yourself or another requires the skills and/or equipment of paramedics.
• Distance or traffic conditions could cause a delay in getting to the hospital by car or taxi.
CANCER EDUCATION

The Swedish Cancer Institute offers a variety of ongoing classes for those diagnosed with cancer. Visit www.swedish.org/classes or call 206-388-2502 (unless otherwise noted) to register for the following classes, see a full list of classes at all Swedish campuses or search by class region. Class information is subject to change.

Swedish Ballard: 5300 Tallman Ave. N.W., Seattle 98107
Swedish Cherry Hill: 500 17th Ave., Seattle 98122
Swedish Edmonds: 21651 76th Ave. W., Edmonds 98026
Swedish First Hill: 747 Broadway, Seattle 98122

Swedish Issaquah: 751 N.E. Blakely Drive, Issaquah 98029
Swedish Mill Creek: 13020 Meridian Ave. S., Everett 98208
Swedish Orthopedic Institute: 601 Broadway, Seattle 98122
Swedish Redmond: 18100 N.E. Union Hill Rd, Redmond 98052

DIABETES EDUCATION

The Swedish Diabetes Education Center offers resources, classes and individual programs to help you successfully manage your diabetes and reduce complications. Physician referral is required. Visit www.swedish.org/diabetes or call 206-215-2440 (First Hill and Issaquah) or 425-640-4395 (Edmonds).

DIABETES EDUCATION

Prediabetes
This class will explain risk factors and how to lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes by up to 65% through lifestyle changes. Participants are welcome to bring a support person for no additional charge.

Fee: $40 (includes one support person)

First Hill: Thu., June 7, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Wed., July 5, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Thu., Aug. 2, 10:30-12:30 p.m.

Issaquah: Wed., July 11, 10 a.m.- Noon; Wed., Aug. 8, 10 a.m.-Noon

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Gentle Yoga
This easy alternative to regular yoga chair is a great way to help in transitioning from and to the floor for certain traditional exercises. For more information or to register, please call 425-640-4140. New patients please come to class 5 minutes early for first session. Fee: $15/class or $130 for a 10 class card, payable in class by check or cash only.

Edmonds: Mondays, 8:15-9:30 p.m.

Therapeutic Flow Yoga
Yoga provides stress relief, exercise, stretching and strengthening, balance and peace of mind. For beginning and intermediate students. For more information or to register, please call 425-640-4140. New patients please come to class 5 minutes early for first session. Fee: $15/class or $130 for a 10 class card, payable in class by check or cash only.

Edmonds: Mondays, 2:45-4:35 p.m.

Lifestyle Management
This is a medically supervised exercise and nutrition education program for individuals living with, or at risk of developing, heart disease. Individuals with heart disease, prediabetes and high blood pressure or cholesterol will benefit from the program, which focuses on controlling risk factors and making positive lifestyle changes. For more information and to register, call 425-640-4330. Fee: $90 for 16 Sessions

Edmonds/Cardiovascular Rehab Department

Pain and Beyond
This class teaches coping techniques for people with pain-limiting conditions. Topics include an overview of the anatomy and physiology of pain, stress management, pacing, goal setting and styling, home therapies, nutrition and supplements, and hope and happiness and healing. Guided imagery, relaxation and gentle exercise are also covered.

For more information or to register, please call 425-640-4400.
Chi: $10 for class.

Edmonds: Fridays, 3:45-4:35 p.m. by appointment for first class.

Fall Prevention/Steady on Your Feet
This class includes recommendations for maintaining good balance and performing daily activities safely, home and community safety tips, and community resources for staying fit.

Edmonds: Thursdays, 1:30-2:45 p.m.

NUTRITION

The TLC Diet: To Quiet Inflammation
The TLC Diet focuses on our personal relationships with food and the important role that plays in health and weight loss issues.

One of this diet’s key features is the lack of calorie restrictions and portion control. For more information or to register, please visit www.toucetintflammation.com.

Fee: $180 for the 5-class series

ORTHEPADOLOGY

Need hip- or knee-replacement surgery? Swedish offers a one-stop resource to guide you in taking the next steps and learning about your treatment options. Visit www.swedish.org/joint-seminars

Total Joint Replacement: Is this the Right Choice For Me?
If you have arthritic joint pain and are considering joint replacement surgery, you’ll want to attend this important class. One of our premier orthopedic surgeons will discuss hip and knee replacement surgery. There will be an open Q&A session to discuss any questions you may have been wanting to ask.

First Hill: Thu., June 14, 6-8 p.m.
Ballard: Wed., June 13, 6-7:30 p.m.
Issaquah: Wed., June 26, 6-8 p.m.

PARENTING

Breastfeeding and Returning Back to Work
Returning to work or school while breast feeding can be a stressful transition. This class will help you develop a plan to meet the unique needs of a breastfeeding family. Some topics include: feeding schedules, maintaining milk supplies and developing plans around breastfeeding and other commitments. Babies in arms and partners/companions are encouraged to attend. Fee: $45/couple

Conscious Fathering
This class is for expectant and new dads or father figures. The course empowers new fathers with the tools, hands-on skills that they can immediately use to help bond and care for their new baby. Some topics include meeting baby’s five basic needs, supporting your partner and defining what kind of father you want to be. Class can be taken at any time, but we recommend one to four months before baby arrives. Fee: $45/dad & baby

Growing Up: All About Puberty
This class provides a perfect opportunity to build a bridge with your 9- to 12-year-old to demystify the challenges of puberty. The focus of this fun, interactive class is to open and enhance communication between parents and preteens and explain the physical and emotional changes ahead. Fee: $25 per family (includes two adults and one child); $10 fee for additional children. Each class is $10 per class.

Edmonds: Mondays, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

FIRST HILL: Sat., May 12, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

May is Maternal Mental Health Month
Mood and anxiety disorders are the most common complications of childbirth. You are not alone. Learn more or get help at the Swedish Center for Perinatal Bonding and Support. Call 206-320-7288 or visit www.swedish.org/bondingsupport.
New Swedish Redmond Surgery Center Coming Soon!

A state-of-the-art facility close to home
It’s almost time to celebrate! The new Swedish Redmond Surgery Center, a Swedish and Prolocal Surgeon joint venture, will be opening this summer. Comfortable and efficient, the surgery center will offer surgeries and procedures in the areas of gastroenterology, colorectal surgery, orthopedics, plastic surgery, and more, says Heidi Aysworth, Chief Strategy Officer at Swedish Medical Center. The 12,407-square-foot facility completes the Swedish Redmond campus, located at 18100 N.E. Union Hill Rd., which opened in 2011. It will join other services at Swedish Redmond, including primary care, specialty care, medical imaging, Urgent Care and the Emergency Room.
The surgery center will include the latest equipment in its three state-of-the-art operating suites – one of them dedicated to gastroenterology cases. Following surgery and procedures, patients will be moved to one of the comfortable, private recovery rooms.

Designed with care: Ranam Menon, M.D., a colorectal surgeon at Swedish, is very enthusiastic about the new surgery center. As board members, he, three other doctors and a nurse executive have been involved in every step of the design and final touches, ensuring that the space is optimized for both patients and provider.

Location, comfort and efficiency: Convenience is one of the star features of the new medical center, allowing patients to arrive for care quickly, easily find parking and avoid navigating the enormous of a hospital to get to the right department. “We will be able to fit a patient’s need with the right facility,” says Dr. Menon. The new center will be both comfortable and efficient. A certified anesthesiology professional generally will monitor patients during procedures, leaving the doctor free to focus entirely on their role as a surgeon. The surrounding community will benefit enormously from the new facility.

HIGHLIGHT: Colonoscopies at the Swedish Redmond Surgery Center
Aramnath Ramakrishnan, M.D., a gastroenterologist at Swedish, who does many colonoscopies and endoscopic biopsies, anticipates that a large number of patients coming to the center will be having colonoscopies, a procedure that could be life saving. During the procedure, surgeons remove pre-cancerous polyps before they become deadly, or refer people for timely treatment if cancer is found.

What people worry about: Dr. Ramakrishan explains the three most common things patients worry about when having a colonoscopy.

• Preparation prior to the procedure: A combination of a liquid diet and laxatives that patients consume to empty out the colon for better viewing.

• Discomfort during the procedure: A safe sedative keeps you asleep and comfortable during the procedure and more awake right afterward. You can communicate well with your doctor and better understand your post-op information. Patients often wake up saying, “Is that it? You’re already done?”

• Getting a cancer diagnosis. They call colonoscopies preventive because the doctor can remove polyps before they become cancerous. If cancer is discovered, you can quickly be referred for treatment at the Swedish Digestive Health Institute.

Discussing sedation: The pre-surgery call with the Anesthesia Center reassures patients by helping them understand the sedation process. They also discuss each patient’s health issues, such as cardiac problems. As a result, only those patients without risk factors will be seen at the Redmond Surgery Center.

One hour equals piece of mind: Once a colonoscopy patient has completed their preparation, there is still that uneasy dash to arrive at the hospital without an embarrassing in middle of the night. Once a colonoscopy patient has completed their preparation, there is still that uneasy dash to arrive at the hospital without an embarrassing in.

For addresses, visit: www.swedish.org/primarycare.

General Information
Swedish Medical News
206-386-6707
HealthWatch Editor
206-386-6707
Class Registration
206-386-2000
Community Health Education
206-386-2000
Central Surgery Center
206-386-6707
Factoria Clinic
206-386-4000
Snoqualmie Clinic
425-888-2016
Renton Clinic
425-391-5700
Pediatrics Clinic - West Seattle
206-320-5780
www.swedish.org/primarycare

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swedish.cancerinstitute
facebook.com/swedishpediatrics

youtube.com/swedishhealth
swedishblog

Create a Healthier Tomorrow
Your Swedish support patient care, research and education throughout Swedish. For more information visit: swedishfoundation.org

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