

inspire

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR LIFE

PLAY IT
SAFE
in the
Game of Life

CHECK YOUR HEALTH —
IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

YOUR LUNGS:
AN INSIDE LOOK

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER!

VAPING: Lost in a Haze

You may have heard about people turning to vaping to help them stop smoking. Does it work? Is it safe?

Like cigarettes, e-cigarettes contain nicotine and other chemicals. So, while someone with a nicotine addiction might find relief in vaping, they won't put an end to their addiction. Others who have never smoked can become addicted to nicotine through e-cigarettes. In fact, research published in *Pediatrics* has found that teenagers who vape are more likely to smoke traditional cigarettes.

E-cigarettes themselves are not terribly safe, since they're unregulated. There's no way of being sure what chemicals they contain; poisons such as formaldehyde and antifreeze have been found in e-cigarettes. Even e-cigarettes marketed as "nicotine-free" have been found to contain nicotine, which is known to be harmful to cognitive development in adolescents. And because e-cigarettes are often flavored like fruit or candy, they're particularly attractive to younger age groups.

When it comes to vaping, the best advice is: Don't! And be sure your children and teenagers are well-informed so they can make sound decisions about e-cigarettes.



Make you and your health a priority. Talk with your doctor about ways to proactively improve your health. Don't have a doctor? Visit DeKalbAnytime.com to schedule an appointment.

You didn't get your flu shot for how many years, now? No matter, because you never get the flu, right? Why not skip the 2018–19 season, too.

Sadly, this thinking isn't grounded in reality. You don't get vaccinations and screenings because you're sure to get sick without them — you get them to prevent or mitigate the rare, but very possible, chance you might get sick.

Here are some screenings and shots that people typically avoid or forget — and why they're important.

SCREENING OR VACCINATION	BENEFITS TO YOU
Cervical cancer (Pap smear)	Identifies abnormal cervical cells, precancerous lesions and early cervical cancer
Mammogram	Can reduce number of breast cancer deaths in women ages 40–74
Colorectal cancer	Can often detect and remove polyps before they become colon cancer
Tetanus	Can prevent tetanus, a disease that requires immediate medical attention
Hepatitis A	Can prevent hepatitis A, a disease that may cause liver problems and death
Pneumococcal	Can protect against pneumococcal disease that kills more than 16,000 adults age 65 and older annually

**Screening and immunization data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

LOVE and Your Health

Love helps build healthy bodies. Doubt it?

- Extreme emotional distress can cause broken heart syndrome or lead to short-term heart muscle failure.
- Getting frequent hugs may improve immune response and reduce stress.
- For men, love and support from a significant other reduces their chances of duodenal ulcer and angina.
- The quality of intimate relationships (positive or negative) can raise or lower your risk for coronary heart disease.



What can you do to lose weight when you've tried everything else?

SLIMMING DOWN for Better Health



While as many as half of patients regain 5 percent of total weight lost two years or more after surgery, most bariatric surgery patients keep the weight off, according to the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery.

Over the years, it seems you've tried every diet out there, made significant lifestyle changes and gone to the gym for months at a time. Yet you still struggle to lose weight. Fortunately, there are other options.

With bariatric surgery, people who thought they had no hope of losing weight found themselves thinner, healthier and happier.

IS BARIATRIC SURGERY FOR YOU?

Having a desire to lose weight isn't enough to make you a candidate for bariatric surgery. To undergo bariatric surgery, you must:

- be more than 100 pounds overweight or have a body mass index (BMI, which measures body fat based on height and weight) of 40 or higher or
- have a BMI of 35 or higher and at least one related chronic condition, such as Type 2 diabetes, obstructive sleep apnea or heart disease, and
- have documented weight-loss failure, despite healthy weight-loss methods.

EXPLORE THE OPTIONS

If you meet the criteria, there are a number of options. You and your surgeon will pick the procedure for you based on your lifestyle and medical history. Here are the three most common:

Gastric band — An adjustable band is placed around the top of the stomach, creating a small pouch that causes you to feel full without needing to eat much.

Gastric bypass — After sectioning off the top part of the stomach, the lower part of the small intestine is attached to this part of the stomach, allowing food to bypass much of the stomach and small intestine, preventing nutrients and most calories from being absorbed.

Gastric sleeve — The majority of the stomach is surgically removed, leaving a banana-shaped segment that greatly limits the food you can eat before feeling full.

BETTER HEALTH POST-SURGERY

In addition to helping patients lose weight, bariatric surgery has an array of benefits. From controlling diabetes better to improving fertility, as well as reducing joint pain, undergoing bariatric surgery can have an immediate and permanent impact on the rest of your life.

Patient results may vary. Consult your doctor about the benefits and risks of any surgical procedure or treatment.

MIND-BODY CONNECTION

Because bariatric surgery is a tool that requires a lifelong commitment, losing weight is about more than just the surgery itself. To help every patient obtain an optimal outcome, potential surgical candidates must first be evaluated for mental fitness.

During this presurgery phase, patients are evaluated to determine whether they have the necessary mindset to help their surgeries be a success. Engaging in substance abuse, not controlling psychological conditions and showing a lack of follow-through are all red flags that can prevent a surgery from happening.

Once a candidate undergoes surgery, support is provided by the surgical team from that day forward to ensure optimal health and outcomes throughout life.



Your weight-loss journey is personal, and our care is, too. Start with a consultation to see if a weight-loss procedure is right for you. Call (256) 397-5048. Same-day appointments are often available.

SAFETY *Checkup*

Are you up to date on the latest safety precautions? Check out these tips to help safeguard your family's health.

Burn Notice

Fire is not the only household burn hazard. Burns can also be caused by chemicals, steam, hot liquids, gases, friction or electrical current.



First-degree burns damage the top layer of skin, causing redness, swelling and pain.



Second-degree burns damage the outer skin and the dermis, the underlying skin layer.



Third-degree burns destroy both layers of skin and damage the tissue below. These serious burns require immediate emergency medical care.

COOL, COVER, COMFORT

For minor burns, apply cool — not cold or icy — water. Bandage loosely with sterile gauze or a nonstick bandage. If needed, use over-the-counter medications, such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen or naproxen, to relieve pain.



WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

Most minor burns will heal on their own, but call 911 or head to the emergency room if the skin is broken or charred, the burn is larger than three inches across, or is located on the face, hands, feet, genitals or a major joint such as the knee or shoulder.

True or False?

- Q:** Applying butter soothes a burn.
- A: False.** Greasy substances such as butter and oil do not make burns feel better and may increase the risk of infection.

STEER CLEAR OF TROUBLE

Just about everyone knows that the safest course of action is to avoid using a cell phone while driving. Yet in a recent AT&T-sponsored survey, 61 percent of drivers admitted to texting, 28 percent reported surfing the internet and 17 percent said they take selfies behind the wheel.



ARE YOU FLYING BLIND?

According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, texting drivers take their eyes off the road for an average of 4.6 seconds. At 55 miles per hour, that's the length of a football field.



To check the laws in your state, visit the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) website at GHSA.org/State-Laws.

Concerned state lawmakers are taking action to curtail these hazardous behaviors. While no state currently prohibits all cell phone use by all drivers, new and increasingly strict legislation is being added to the books every year.



WOMEN ARE DIFFERENT FROM MEN

Ladies, watch for these less-common signs of heart attack, including:

- dizziness, light-headedness or fainting
- nausea or vomiting
- pain in the jaw, neck, back or stomach
- sudden indigestion, heartburn or persistent belching
- sweaty, clammy or chilled feeling
- unusual fatigue

Women are more likely to experience these signs of stroke:

- fast or fluttering heartbeat
- persistent hiccups
- nausea or vomiting
- shortness of breath
- overall weakness



COMMON STROKE SYMPTOMS INCLUDE SUDDEN:

- confusion
- coordination problems, such as stumbling or losing balance
- difficulty seeing, such as blurriness or double vision
- severe headache
- trouble speaking or understanding others
- weakness or numbness on one side of the body

TWO SIDES TO SAFE SLEEP

When it comes to the safest sleeping conditions for baby, there are two sides to the story.

According to new recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the safest sleep environment for baby is:

- a crib with only a tight-fitting sheet, no soft bedding, bumpers, pillows or toys
- in the parent's bedroom on a separate surface for at least the first six months and preferably the first 12 months of life
- on his or her back on a firm sleeping surface such as a crib or bassinet



SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

Quick treatment for heart attack or stroke can save a life. Know the signs and call 911 right away.

COMMON HEART ATTACK SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

- chest discomfort (pain, pressure, fullness or squeezing sensation)
- pain in one or both arms
- shortness of breath

What's the Difference?

Heart attack occurs when blood flow to the heart is blocked and heart muscle cells begin to die. Restoring blood flow quickly stops the damage and preserves heart function.

Stroke occurs when blood flow is blocked to the brain. According to the National Stroke Association, two million brain cells die every minute during a stroke, making fast treatment essential to survival and recovery.



Do you have questions about the safety checkup? Talk with your primary doctor for more information. Don't have a doctor? Visit DeKalbAnytime.com to schedule an appointment.

PACK YOUR BAG

You can never predict when an emergency will occur. However, be prepared. Keep an emergency room (ER) go-bag in an easy-to-find location. Be sure to pack:

- copies of legal documents pertaining to your care, such as a healthcare proxy
- names and phone numbers for all current doctors
- insurance information and identification card
- names and phone numbers of anyone else who may need to be contacted
- a list of all medications, including over-the-counter medications and natural supplements
- a notebook and pen to keep track of important information, especially medication and discharge instructions
- a list of allergies
- a record of all medical conditions, diagnoses and any recent test or imaging results

Any medications you may need to take while at the ER, and important personal items, such as glasses and hearing aids, can be added when you leave for the hospital.



Approximately 9–21 percent of women and 24–31 percent of men have sleep apnea, according to the American Sleep Apnea Association, and most don't know it. Get tested if you don't enjoy restorative sleep.



More Than SNORING

Could that annoying snoring indicate sleep apnea?

A condition that affects more than 22 million Americans, sleep apnea causes the sufferer to stop breathing for 10 or more seconds while sleeping. In severe cases, breathing starts and stops as many as 30 times per hour, and, if left untreated, can be fatal.

Fortunately, if you talk with your doctor, he or she can discuss your risk factors and detect sleep apnea, and you can get the treatment you need to sleep easy.

RISKY BUSINESS

While sleep apnea can affect anyone, it is more likely in those with the following risk factors:

- being an older male
- being obese
- having a family history of sleep apnea
- living with congestive heart failure or having a personal history of stroke
- smoking
- having nasal congestion from chronic allergies or anatomical abnormalities
- using sedating/tranquilizing medication or alcohol

SLEEPY SYMPTOMS

The best-known signs of sleep apnea are snoring and frequent gasping for air during sleep. These may have to be confirmed by your bed partner, but you may experience other symptoms that indicate sleep apnea.

Feeling constantly tired during the day and experiencing decreased motor skills, memory or attention span may all point toward sleep apnea. Someone with sleep apnea may even wake frequently to urinate during the night, experience headaches or dry mouth when waking and have a decreased sex drive.

Because sleep apnea can lead to increased blood pressure, heart failure and stroke, diagnosis and treatment is vital. With treatment options such as a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) device or surgical removal of tissue blocking the individual from breathing, sleep apnea can be addressed for lasting results.

If you or a loved one snore heavily, constantly struggle to stay awake during the daytime or experience other sleep apnea symptoms, talk with your doctor about undergoing a sleep study.

Patient results may vary. Consult your doctor about the benefits and risks of any surgical procedure or treatment.



Gary Mellick, D.O.

Gary Mellick, D.O., specializes in the treatment of neurological conditions of the brain and spinal cord; headaches; many sleep disorders, including obstructive sleep apnea, insomnia and restless legs syndrome; as well as acute and chronic pain syndromes. Dr. Mellick is board certified by the American Osteopathic Board of Neurology and Psychiatry and the American Osteopathic Board of Sleep Medicine.

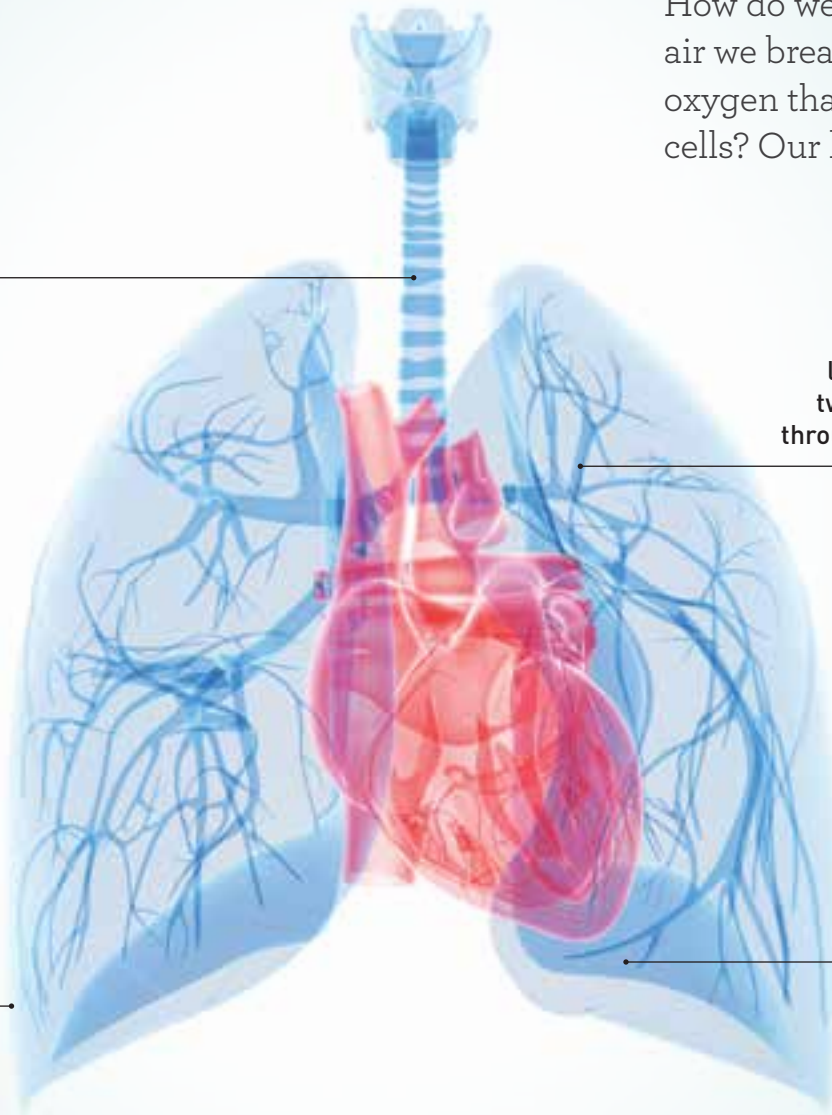
Dr. Mellick is a member of the medical staff at DeKalb Regional Medical Center.



For an appointment with a board-certified neurologist or to learn more, call DeKalb Neurology & Sleep Center at (256) 813-9524.



TRANSFORMATIONAL ORGANS: YOUR LUNGS



How do we turn the air we breathe into the oxygen that powers our cells? Our lungs!

1. Air enters our lungs through the trachea.

Each lung has a branched structure that provides plenty of surface area for oxygen to be taken from air and carbon dioxide to be released back into the air. The small “cells” that form the branches are called alveoli. Each alveolus is wrapped with tiny blood vessels, and this is where the oxygen/carbon dioxide exchange takes place — in the hemoglobin of the red blood cells in these vessels.

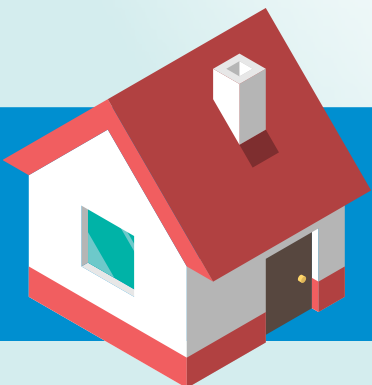
3.

Bronchi and bronchioles look like branches and twigs and carry air throughout the lungs.

2.

The movement of the diaphragm muscle works the lungs like a bellows, moving air in and out.

4.



The total absorptive surface area of the respiratory system including the lungs is between 70 to 100 square meters. That’s as big as the floor space of a small house!



Do you have question about your lung health? Talk with your doctor for more information. Don’t have a doctor? Visit DeKalbAnytime.com to schedule an appointment.

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This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your doctor before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.



Emergency care. Recognized nationally. Available locally.

Ashley Cole, M.D.*

Board-Certified in Emergency Medicine • Emergency Department Medical Director

When you have an emergency, turn to the emergency department at DeKalb Regional Medical Center with confidence.

- The **30-Minute Pledge** means we will work diligently to have you initially seen by a medical professional within 30 minutes of your arrival.
- As an **American College of Cardiology Accredited Chest Pain Center**, we have achieved a higher level of expertise when caring for patients who arrive with heart attack symptoms.
- We are **Stroke Ready**, as designated by the Alabama Department of Public Health. It means that we have complied with stringent criteria in providing emergency care for stroke patients.

All this, plus specialists in **Cardiology, General Surgery, Orthopedics, and Neurology**, means we are at our best when you need us most.

Current Average ER Wait Time
DeKalbRegional.com


DEKALB REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER

200 Medical Center Dr. SW • Fort Payne, AL 35968

If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 911.

Specialists are Employed and Independent Members of the Medical Staff at DeKalb Regional Medical Center.

*Independent Member of the Medical Staff at DeKalb Regional Medical Center.