

# Physicians' Alliance

An organization of Jackson physicians  
who represent 24 medical specialties  
and practice in independent clinics

A quarterly newsletter  
Winter 2010-2011

## Mammograms detect breast cancer

*To make it easier for patients to get mammograms, the Woman's Clinic now offers screening mammograms at its clinic.*

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“Mammograms matter,” says the American Cancer Society in big letters on its website. “Getting a mammogram is one of the best things a woman can do to protect her health. This simple test can find breast cancers early, when they’re smaller, easier to treat, and chances of survival are higher.”

And that’s a major reason why the Woman’s Clinic now is offering screening mammography services onsite, said Dr. Brad Adkins, a board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist at the clinic. “After age 40, women should have a mammogram every year.”

Not every woman, though, reaches that goal. “Life is busy,” he says, “and women often make their health a low priority.”

“Most moms work. Many have to take a half day off to come to the doctor for their annual Pap smear. Ask them to do that again for a mammogram and many women can’t.” It’s not unusual for a patient to not show up at her mammogram appointment.

The Woman’s Clinic is now scheduling a patient’s mammogram to occur while she is at the clinic for her annual exam, said Dr. Adkins. It’s that convenience that was the second major reason the Woman’s Clinic invested in mammography equipment. The clinic also is scheduling mammograms for patients who just want the convenience of going to the clinic, but who do not need to schedule an annual exam. “When they call, we’ll try to get them scheduled that day.”

“One in eight women will get breast cancer,” he says. Genetic syndromes account for up to 10 percent of breast cancers; for the other 90 percent, breast cancer will be a random event.

The Woman’s Clinic is offering a baseline screening mammogram, which is done to check for breast cancer in patients who have no signs or symptoms of the disease. The screening mammogram generally involves getting two x-ray views of each breast.



Registered nurse Jenny Smith, left to right, Sally Coley, mammography technician, and Dr. Brad Adkins look at a patient’s screening mammogram at the Woman’s Clinic.

The x-rays make it possible to detect tumors that can’t be felt. They also can find tiny deposits of calcium that sometimes indicate breast cancer. “Mammograms have gotten better with digital technology,” Dr. Adkins says.

The Woman’s Clinic is working with the physicians of Jackson Radiology Associates to look at the mammogram x-rays quickly so patients don’t wait long for the results, said Dr. Adkins. “Our goal is a 24-hour turnaround; we don’t want patients worried. We want any problems addressed and taken care of as soon as possible.”

If something suspicious is found on the screening mammogram, a woman will be sent to the Imaging Center for a diagnostic mammogram, which is more detailed and requires additional views of the breast.

“Patients will still be getting the same quality of care in the reading of their mammograms

### Breast cancer symptoms

It is most important is to see your doctor right away if you notice any of these changes:

- A lump or swelling
- Skin irritation or dimpling
- Nipple pain or the nipple turning inward
- Redness or scaliness of the nipple or breast skin
- A discharge other than breast milk

But remember that most of the time these breast changes are not cancer.

(Source: American Cancer Society, [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org))

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*Dr. Charles Hertz stands in the eastern Himalayas with Bhutan's sacred Mount Chomolhari in the background. At left is a picture he took of Angkor Wat, a 12th century Cambodian temple.*

## Physician hikes in a unique, remote country

**D**r. Charles Hertz, a board-certified gastroenterologist, specializes in treating problems of the digestive system, including the gastrointestinal tract and liver. He practices at Medical Specialty Clinic, an affiliate of West Tennessee Healthcare, at 27 Medical Center Drive in Jackson.

**F**or Dr. Charles Hertz, a recent adventure to Bhutan was an opportunity to see a different culture and to return to hike in the Himalayas.

“Bhutan has been a closed society, which is just now opening up to the world,” explained Dr. Hertz, a board-certified gastroenterologist at Medical Specialty Clinic. “And they’re trying to do it very carefully, with strict controls on tourism, to preserve as much as possible their way of life, while recognizing that there is a larger world around them that they can’t simply ignore.”

Bhutan is a small Buddhist country (about half the size of Indiana) in the eastern Himalayas of Asia, sandwiched between China and India. The remote Himalayan nation got its first television in the 1990s; the capital, Thimphu, has no traffic lights. Rather than measuring and reporting their Gross National Product, they have a formula for calculating “Gross National Happiness.”

To reach Bhutan, Dr. Hertz flew to Bangkok and then into Paro, which has Bhutan’s only airport. His adventure included a nine-day, roundtrip trek to the base of Mount Chomolhari, one of Bhutan’s sacred mountains, which are not allowed to be climbed. The area, home to snow leopards and blue sheep, features forests, alpine meadows, small villages, yak herders, and medieval monasteries and fortresses.

The highest point of the hike occurred on the fifth day when his group of eight hikers, two guides, a number of support personnel (including a cook), and 22 ponies and mules were at 16,057 feet, crossing the Bhongtela Pass. Each hiker carried a backpack during

the day. “It was a tough, challenging hike at times,” Dr. Hertz says, “particularly that fifth day.”

Food, tents and other supplies, carried on ponies and mules, were sent ahead each day to prepare for that night’s stay. Temperatures ranged as low as the 20s, and it was sometimes windy; there was one snowfall during the hike. “I wore six layers of clothes at times,” he added. A “shower tent” was set up twice; the shower consisted of ladling hot water over yourself from a bucket.

To prepare for the strenuous activity, he stepped up his normal elliptical trainer workouts, and spent time climbing up and down the B-Tower stairs of Jackson-Madison County General Hospital, wearing a 20-pound backpack, 45 minutes to an hour at a time.

Dr. Hertz has been on several other adventure treks, including hiking in the Khumbu region of Nepal (including a visit to Mt. Everest Base Camp), climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania in Africa, hiking in Patagonia in the Andes of South America, and visiting Machu Picchu, once inhabited by the Incas in the mountains of Peru.

On his way home from Bhutan, Dr. Hertz stopped in Cambodia for a few days, mainly to see the famous 12th century temple of Angkor Wat, and a number of other temple complexes and sights in the area.

From the breathtaking peaks of the Himalayas to the beauty of the Cambodian temples, the three-week trip had many spectacular sites. He even saw Himalayan blue sheep, but not the elusive snow leopard. “Of course,” he said, “no one ever does, but I had hopes...”

# Vitamin supplements help patients tolerate chemotherapy better

In an effort to help patients through the chemotherapy phase of cancer treatment, one local oncologist added vitamins and minerals to his treatment plan.

He found that the supplements tended to help well beyond the course of cancer treatment.

“Generally, we treat cancer with conventional chemotherapy and radiation,” said Dr. Omar Ahmad, who founded Hematology Oncology Associates in 2007. “We follow the protocols and keep abreast of the latest treatments for cancer.”

“I started using supplements several years ago and had encouraging results. Patients seemed to tolerate chemotherapy better.”

Chemotherapy, one form of cancer treatment, uses drugs to attack rapidly dividing cells, which include not only cancer cells but some good cells, such as those in hair follicles and bone marrow. Advancements in chemotherapy treatment, including anti-nausea medications, have made the treatment more tolerable for patients.

Dr. Ahmad began encouraging patients to supplement their diets with vitamins and minerals that research had shown may help them better tolerate chemotherapy treatment. The results were encouraging and now he is recommending that patients continue the supplements even when treatment is over.

“I find this another way to help my patients,” said Dr. Ahmad. “We started using mineral and vitamin supplements several years ago. We used supplements that patients tend to tolerate well and that research has shown patients are typically deficient in due to their diets.”

Dr. Ahmad recommends adding supplements such as coenzyme Q10, L-carnitine, magnesium, calcium and vitamin D3. He noted that many people are deficient in these vitamins and minerals due to eating a lot of processed foods. “We are not eating as healthy as we should,” he said. Supplements may also help support immune symptoms compromised by chemotherapy and reduce toxic side effects.

Dr. Ahmad was encouraged by the results. Once patients started using the supplements, they reported feeling better, seemed to have more energy and better tolerated chemotherapy treatments. Once treatments were completed, he encouraged patients to continue taking the supplements.

“Even after chemotherapy is finished, I recommend they maintain the use of some supplements,” he said.

“Although the use of vitamin and mineral supplements is not a common practice, it is being used by the Cancer Treatment Centers of America as another way to help patients.”

The supplements, which can cost \$30 to \$40 a month, are not covered by insurance.

Ahmad encourages patients to order the supplements, which come in pill form, online or through catalogs to get a lower price.

“While in treatment, I encourage cancer patients to eat as much as they can and what they want,” said Dr. Ahmad. “Once they are in remission, I recommend a general diet for overweight patients that includes vegetables and lean meats (avoiding red meat). I also recommend a moderate low carbohydrate diet to maintain weight and limit the intake of dairy products.”

Dr. Ahmad is board certified in internal medicine, hematology and oncology. In the 1990s he practiced internal medicine for two years. He completed a medical internship and residency in medicine at the University of Connecticut in Farmington. He completed a fellowship in hematology and oncology at the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center in Memphis.

He has practiced in Jackson for the past ten years. He treats all forms of cancers and has a special interest in the basic science of oncology and the pathology of tumors. His clinic includes an infusion center and lab and uses an electronic medical record system. Chemotherapy medications used in treatment are mixed at the clinic. He also sees patients at both Jackson hospitals.

Hematology Oncology Associates is located off Stonebridge drive in Jackson at 36 Sandstone, Suites A and B. The clinic is open Monday through Thursdays from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.. To schedule an appointment, contact the clinic at 731.234.2425.



*Dr. Omar Ahmad specializes in oncology and hematology: cancer and blood diseases.*

*“Generally, we treat cancer with conventional chemotherapy and radiation. “We follow the protocols and keep abreast of the latest treatments for cancer. I started using supplements several years ago and had encouraging results. Patients seemed to tolerate chemotherapy better.”*

*Omar Ahmad, M.D.*

# Jackson has some really great doctors.

## We are proud to call them members.

### Allergy

**Allergy & Asthma Care: 660-0138**

- Alan DeJarnatt, M.D.

### Anesthesiology

**Professional Anesthesia: 424-1408**

- Ben Anderson, M.D.
- Charles Freeman, D.O.
- Lauri Anne Gorbet, M.D.
- Timothy Hutchison, M.D.
- Michael Lam, M.D.
- Michael Martindale, M.D.
- Charles Poole, M.D.
- Todd Seabrook, M.D.

### Cardiology

**Adv Cardiovascular: 215-1281**

- Alexander Alperovich, M.D.

**Apex Cardiology: 423-8200**

- Henry Lui, M.D.

**Cardiovascular Clinic: 256-1819**

- Adey Agbetoyin, M.D.

**Mid-South Heart Center: 423-8383**

- Louis Cunningham, M.D.
- Tommy Miller III, M.D.

**Skyline Cardiovascular: 410-6777**

- Ronald Weiner, D.O.

### Dermatology

**Medical Specialty Clinic: 424-1001**

- Mac Jones, M.D.
- Patrick Teer, M.D.

### Family Practice

**Northside Medical Clinic: 668-2800**

- Timothy Hayden, M.D.
- Elizabeth Londino, M.D.

**Kenneth Warren, M.D.: 664-0103**

**Wellness/Family Care: 256-0526**

- Erika Creech, M.D.

### Gastroenterology

**Medical Specialty Clinic: 424-1001**

- Charles Hertz, M.D.
- Robert Hollis, M.D.
- Michael Ibach, M.D.
- Daniel Kayal, D.O.
- Ami Naik, M.D.

### General Surgery

**Jackson Surgical: 664-7395**

- Daniel Day, M.D.
- Dean Currie, M.D.
- David Laird, M.D.
- David Villarreal, M.D.

**Madison Surgical Clinic: 660-6101**

- Thomas Edwards, M.D.

### Gynecology/Obstetrics

**Jackson OB/GYN: 427-9601**

- Clarence Gooch, M.D.

**Jackson Reg. Women: 668-4455**

- Sandra Boxell, M.D.
- Keith Micetich, M.D.
- Lane Williams, M.D.

**Woman's Clinic: 422-4642**

- Brad Adkins, M.D.
- Madhav Boyapati, M.D.
- Michael Epps, M.D. (GYN ONLY)
- Paul Gray, M.D.
- Andrea Harper, M.D.
- Molly Rhenehy, M.D.
- Ryan Roy, M.D.
- David Soll, M.D.

### Hematology/Oncology

**Cancer Care Center: 668-1668**

- Brian Walker, D.O.
- Archie Wright, D.O.

**Hematology/Oncology: 234-2425**

- Omar Ahmad, M.D.

**Oncology/Hematology: 541-9561**

- Clyde Smith, M.D.

### Internal Medicine

**Eze Clinic: 661-0067**

- Gift Eze, M.D.

**Goodwin & Associates: 668-9791**

- Stephen Goodwin, M.D.

**Medical Clinic: 424-8922**

- Robert Dunnebacke, M.D.
- Kevin Gray, M.D.
- Conrado Sioson Jr., M.D.

**Ultimate Health: 265-1997**

- Samuel Bada, M.D.

**John Woods, M.D.: 664-7949**

### Nephrology

**West TN Kidney Clinics: 668-4337**

- Susan Alex, M.D.
- Ram Chary, M.D.
- Shirish "Joe" Joglekar, M.D.
- R. Mulay, M.D.
- Murty Narapareddy, M.D.

### Neurology

**Greystone Medical: 661-0131**

- Marcus DeSio, M.D.

### Ophthalmology

**Eye Clinic: 424-2414**

- Mark Bateman, M.D.
- Hilary Grissom, M.D.
- Bruce Herron, M.D.
- Sean Neel, M.D.
- Jason Sullivan, M.D.
- Art Woods, M.D.

**Hughes Eye Center: 664-1994**

- David Underwood, M.D.

### Orthopedic Surgery

**Sports/Orthopedics: 427-7888**

- John Masterson, M.D.
- Keith Nord, M.D.
- Timothy Sweo, M.D.
- Bradford Wright, M.D.
- David Yakin, M.D.

**West TN Bone & Joint: 661-9825**

- Harold Antwine III, M.D.
- Michael Cobb, M.D.
- John Everett, M.D.
- Doug Haltom, M.D.
- Jason Hutchison, M.D.
- David Johnson, M.D.
- David Pearce, M.D.
- Kelly Pucek, M.D.
- Adam Smith, M.D.
- Lowell Stonecipher, M.D.

### Otolaryngology

**West TN ENT Clinic: 424-3682**

- Karl Studtmann, M.D.
- Keith Wainscott, M.D.

### Pain Medicine

**Pain Consultants: 660-5116**

- Frank Jordan, M.D.

### Pediatrics

**Child Care Clinic: 664-8080**

- Kay Joglekar, M.D.

**Children's Clinic: 423-1500**

- Todd Blake, M.D.
- Bruce Maley, M.D.
- Amelia Self, M.D.
- David Self, M.D.
- Theresa Smith, M.D.

### Physical Medicine/Rehab

**EMG Clinics of TN: 664-0899**

- Ron Bingham, M.D.
- Miles Johnson, M.D.

**EMG Specialty Clinics: 668-9899**

- Remy Valdivia, M.D.

**West TN Rehab Group: 664-7744**

- Davidson Curwen, M.D.

### Plastic Surgery

**Plastic Surgery Clinic: 668-2490**

- Marshall Yellen, M.D.

### Podiatry

**East Wood Clinic, Paris: 642-2025**

- David Long, D.P.M.

**Podiatry Clinic: 427-5581**

- Terry Holt, D.P.M.

### Pulmonology/Critical Care

**Mid-South Lung Center: 422-4241**

- Ravis Curry, M.D.

### Rheumatology

**Arthritis Clinic: 664-0002**

- Jacob Aelion, M.D.
- Nimesh Dayal, M.D.
- Satish Odhav, M.D.

### Urgent Care

**Physicians Quality Care: 984-8400**

- Jimmy Hoppers, M.D.
- Melanie Hoppers, M.D.

### Urology

**Jackson Urological: 427-9971**

- David Burleson, M.D.
- John Carraher, M.D.
- Raymond Howard, M.D.
- Peter Lawrence, M.D.
- Donald McKnight, M.D.
- Scott Yarbrow, M.D.

# Alliance adds new Board member

The West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance has elected a new Board member. The Alliance has more than 100 physicians who represent 24 different medical specialties and work in their own independent clinics.



Dr. Patrick Teer

Joining the Board is **Patrick Teer, M.D.**, a dermatologist with Dermatology Clinic of Jackson.

Also on the Board are...

■ **Elizabeth Londino, M.D.**, Board president and a family practice physician at Northside Medical Clinic.

■ **Blake Todd, M.D.**, a pediatrician at the Children's Clinic.

■ **John Woods, M.D.**, an internal medicine physician at the Woods Clinic.

■ **David Yakin, M.D.**, an orthopedic surgeon at Sports, Orthopedics and Spine.

Rotating off the board are Paul Gray, M.D., an obstetrician/gynecologist at the Woman's Clinic, and Peter Lawrence, M.D., a urologist with Jackson Urology Associates.



Dr. Elizabeth Londino



Dr. Todd Blake



Dr. John Woods



Dr. David Yakin

The Mission Statement of the West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance...

*"To be the leader in providing quality patient care within our tradition of excellence and developing alliances with insurance and hospital partners."*

# Mammograms detect cancer

Continued from Page 1 ...

and their followup diagnostic mammograms as they have had in the past," he said.

If the diagnostic mammogram confirms a problem, the patient will be sent to a general surgeon for a possible biopsy.

The digital mammography equipment, located in a suite



The Woman's Clinic offers screening mammography.

on the basement floor of the Woman's Clinic, was obtained in partnership with Jackson-Madison County General Hospital, which also owns the Imaging Center. Just as insurance companies will cover mammograms at the Imaging Center, they will cover mammograms at the Woman's Clinic, Dr. Adkins said.

Mammograms are just one part of the tool for early detection of breast cancer, he adds. Patients should also have a breast exam by a physician annually and then do self breast exams monthly. Dr. Adkins suggests doing the self exam the week after one's period when the breasts are not as tender and lumpy. "After performing regular self breast exams, a woman will know how

her breasts feel normally and whether there's been any change."

"Patients are tickled that we have the

screening mammography equipment," he adds. "I am excited because our patients are excited. Medically, I am also encouraged because I expect the convenience will help patients be more compliant with their screening."

"The more patients that get mammograms, the more cancer will be detected early and then treated successfully. I want us to make a difference in breast cancer."

Dr. Brad Adkins practices at the Woman's Clinic with Dr. Michael Epps, Dr. Paul Gray, Dr. Molly Rheney, Dr. Madhav Boyapati, Dr. David Soll, Dr. Ryan Roy, Dr. Andrea Harper, nurse practitioners Betsy Swindell and LaCinda Butler, and nurse midwife Holly Smith.

The Woman's Clinic is at 244 Coatsland Drive in Jackson. For an appointment call 731.422.4642.

## Physician joins Arthritis Clinic

Dr. Nimesh Dayal, a board-certified rheumatologist, is joining the Arthritis Clinic.

Dr. Dayal is originally from Johannesburg, South Africa. He received his medical degree from the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Africa. He did his internal medicine training at the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland and The Reading Hospital and Medical Center in Pennsylvania. He was a post doctorate clinical research Fellow in rheumatology at Northwestern University in Chicago and completed his training in clinical rheumatology at Emory School of Medicine in Atlanta.

Dr. Dayal is board certified in internal medicine and rheumatology. He has presented at regional and national scientific meetings of the American College of Rheumatology.

At the Arthritis Clinic, Dr. Dayal is practicing with Drs. Jacob Aelion and Satish Odhav. The physicians specialize in the treatment of rheumatological conditions, such as rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, lupus, fibromyalgia, gout, tendonitis, bursitis, and metabolic bone diseases, such as osteoporosis.

The Arthritis Clinic is at 371 North Parkway, Suite 400 in Jackson. For an appointment call 731.664.0002 or 866.564.0011.



Dr. Nimesh Dayal

# Rachel's story: Heart disease strikes all ages

As an active eighth-grade cheerleader for the University School of Jackson, Rachel Jordan was your typical Middle School student who was in good shape and in what seemed to be great health. Neither her, nor her parents, nor her pediatrician knew that a heart problem was lurking inside the active teen-ager.

When Rachel started coming home from school in the middle of the day because she did not feel well, her parents, Dr. Frank and Celia Jordan, thought it was time to see her pediatrician. After a thorough check-up, Rachel was thought to have test anxiety.

When her vision started to blur, she had an eye exam. Each time, Rachel was given a clean bill of health.

The episodes continued for the next year, many times when Rachel had not been exercising at all. By the time Rachel was a sophomore, she was experiencing these episodes on nearly a weekly basis, and they were lasting for longer periods of time.

During an episode, Rachel's heart would race, causing her to experience a range of symptoms, from nausea to dizziness to the blurred vision.

During her sophomore year, her mom woke her for a day of shopping. When she got up, Rachel's heart began to race so much that her shirt was literally dancing on her chest. Rachel, whose father is a pain specialist with Pain Consultants of West Tennessee, was rushed to her father's clinic. Dr. Jordan sent his daughter for an ECG. Rachel's heart rate was 197 and remained that way for four and half hours despite efforts to bring it down. Rachel found herself in the trauma unit of Jackson-Madison County General Hospital.

Rachel was referred to Vanderbilt Children's Hospital where she was diagnosed with Wolff Parkinson White Disorder (WPW), a condition that is related to many unex-

plained deaths in teen-age athletes. A patient with WPW has extra conduction pathways in the heart that cause the electrical signals from the atria to arrive at the ventricles too soon, and this can result in a rapid heart rhythm (tachycardia).

Not all patients have symptoms such as the ones Rachel experienced, but it can put a patient at a higher risk for a stroke or heart attack, her parents said.

WPW can be detected on an electrocardiogram

February is Heart Month: A time to focus on heart disease and prevention and highlight ways we can all live healthier lifestyles.

Cardiologists in the West Tennessee Physicians Alliance are active in promoting a better awareness of heart disease. They are Dr. Alex Alperovich, Advanced Cardiovascular and Vein Center; Dr. Henry Lui, Apex Cardiology, P.C.; Dr. Adey Agbetoyin, Cardiovascular Clinic of West Tennessee; Dr. Ron Weiner, Skyline Cardiovascular Institute; and Dr. Louis Cunningham and Dr. Tommy Miller, Mid-South Heart Center.

For more information about heart disease, visit [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org).

where it's recognized by certain changes in the heart's electrical activity. The ECG will show that an extra pathway or shortcut exists from the atria to the ventricles.

Rachel underwent a procedure called a cardiac ablation, the most common procedure used to interrupt the abnormal pathway. A flexible tube, a catheter, is guided to where the problem exists and then the tissue is destroyed with radio frequency, stopping the electrical pathway. After the six-hour procedure, Rachel's condition was 100 percent cured. Rachel, now a freshman at the University of Mississippi, has not had an episode since.

Rachel has become an advocate for raising awareness about WPW and helping young people learn how to better articulate their symptoms. She has been active with the American Heart Association, participating in heart walks, and was featured as a local survivor at the 2010 Go Red for Women event. Since she's away at college, she will be missing out on this year's event, but her sister, Shelby, a junior at USJ, will be modeling in the fashion show.

"We are fortunate that we found Rachel's heart disorder," said Dr. Jordan. "That is not always the case, especially in active young teens. Heart disease can be devastating for the young as well as old. It has no gender or population that it leaves untouched. We should always be attentive to its symptoms, even in children, for those losses can be prevented."



Frank Jordan, M.D.



Rachel Jordan, above, who discovered she had a heart disorder her sophomore year in high school, is now an advocate of raising awareness about heart disease. A graduate of the University School of Jackson, she is a freshman at Ole Miss.

# Go Red events highlight heart disease

Heart disease is still the No. 1 killer of women, taking the life of one in three women each year, says the American Heart Association. To increase awareness, the Heart Association launched Go Red for Women. National 2011 Wear Red Day is Friday, February 4.

The local American Heart Association's Go Red 2011 event will be 6:30-8:30 p.m. Thursday, February 10, at the Carl Perkins Civic Center.

West Tennessee Healthcare and the Tennessee Heart and Vascular Center sponsor the event. For ticket information and reservations, contact Rosy Roberts with the Heart Association at [rosy.roberts@heart.org](mailto:rosy.roberts@heart.org) or 731.298.6767.

West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance cardiologists will be supporting Go Red in various ways. Cardiologist Dr. Henry Lui's son will provide piano entertainment during the event; either Dr. Louis Cunningham or Dr. Tommy Miller from Mid-

South Heart Center will model in the show; and Cathy Weiner, wife of cardiologist Dr. Ron Weiner, also will model. Dr. Lui founded Apex Cardiology; Dr. Weiner founded Skyline Cardiovascular Institute.

At Regional Hospital of Jackson's Go Red event on Friday, February 4, Dr. Cunningham will speak about heart attack symptoms for women. One of his patients will share her testimonial about having a heart attack.

The talk and testimonial are part of Regional Hospital's Healthy Women Luncheon, which begins at 11:30 a.m. in the hospital's Lower Level Conference Center. For more details or to RSVP to the luncheon, visit the Healthy Women section of the hospital's website: [www.RegionalHospitalJackson.com](http://www.RegionalHospitalJackson.com) or call Lisa Ragsdale, Director of Physician and Community Relations/Marketing, at 731.661.2161.

West Tennessee Healthcare also plans a Day of Heart, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, February 12, at Old Hickory Mall.

Women across the country — mothers, sisters, friends — are dying at the rate of one per minute, the Heart Association says. "Together, we can make a difference."

Don't forget to wear red on Friday, February 4.



## Patients with congestive heart failure have better survival rate

### ...From Back Cover

prolonging your life if you have heart disease, Dr. Alperovich says. It's time to see your doctor if you are experiencing any of these conditions ...

- Shortness of breath
- Swelling and fluid retention
- Rapid weight gain
- Low energy level, decreased ability to exert yourself
- Chest pain
- A racing heartbeat or a slow heartbeat
- Dizziness or fainting

"Imaging technology continues to improve and today's new modalities, such as CT scans and MRIs are available for a more accurate diagnose," he says. "Genetic testing and chemical tests of the blood also are more advanced and more precise in identifying heart disease."

"Once congestive heart failure is diagnosed, the next question is to find out what caused it," he says. For some causes, such as coronary artery disease, treatment with medications, along with lifestyle changes, such as better diet and more exercise, are very important.

Better interventional and surgical techniques make it easier on patients. "For example, we can patch holes or put new valves in the heart without open heart surgery," Dr. Alperovich says. "The much less invasive surgery is easier on the body and allows us to treat people whom we couldn't treat in the past."

One example that allows cardiologists to avoid open heart surgery and save a patient's life is a device

that can be inserted into the body to help the heart as it pumps blood. This keeps the patient alive and stabilized while the cardiologist corrects the heart condition, said Dr. Alperovich.

Simple, new medications that treat heart disease also prolong life and the quality of life. "People are able to do more," he says; "they are not bedridden."

Medicine also has seen advancement in devices used to treat heart disease, he added. "Pacemaker defibrillators not only monitor the heart rate and provide a shock when necessary, they also can re-synchronize with the heart to optimize its performance."

From better diagnostic equipment to improved medicines, devices and surgical techniques, "we have good news for patients with heart disease," Dr. Alperovich says. "They have a better chance to not just live longer, but also have a better quality of life."

Patients have heard it before, but they also can take steps to increase their chances of avoiding and/or fighting heart disease. "It starts with a healthy diet and exercise," he says. "A lifetime of exercise keeps your heart muscle young. It's true; you use it or lose it."

After practicing in Jackson for two years, Dr. Alex Alperovich founded the Advanced Cardiovascular and Vein Center in January 2010. A native of Lithuania, he is board certified in internal medicine, cardiovascular disease and interventional cardiology.

He completed an interventional cardiology fellowship at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center; his internal medicine residency and a cardiovascular medicine fellowship were at Beth Israel Medical Center, an affiliate of Mt. Sinai School of Medicine in New York City.

Dr. Alperovich's clinic is at 172 West University Parkway, Suite A, which is across University Parkway from Jackson's north Post Office. For an appointment, call 731.215.1281 or visit [www.acvcenter.com](http://www.acvcenter.com).

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*Dr. Alex Alperovich  
examines a patient.*

## Patients with congestive heart failure have better survival rate

**I**t wasn't too long ago that being diagnosed with congestive heart failure was a death sentence. Seventy to 80 percent of the patients would die within five years.

Today, thanks to better diagnostic equipment, new medications, new and more aggressive surgical techniques and new devices, the survival rate is now 70 to 80 percent, said Dr. Alex

Alperovich, a board-certified interventional cardiologist.

"Five years ago, the survival rate for patients with congestive heart failure was dismal, worse than from having cancer. Only 20 to 30 percent survived the five-year mark. Today, those people are alive and have active lifestyles. The five-year mortality rate has been reduced to 30 to 40 percent."

Congestive heart failure has seen the "fascinating" field of cardiology dramatically change in the 15 years Dr. Alperovich has been practicing. "We are taking

care of sicker patients who in the past would not have survived."

Congestive heart failure is the failure of the heart muscle to pump blood correctly, Dr. Alperovich explained. This can occur when the heart muscle is weak, when heart valves are leaking or are narrowed, or when a heart may be strong, but too stiff to work efficiently.

Congestive heart failure has many causes, including...

- Coronary artery disease, which weakens the strength of the muscle, leading to a heart attack
- Poorly controlled or untreated high blood pressure
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- A viral infection
- Genetic conditions
- Diseases, such as diabetes, hepatitis and sickle cell anemia
- Aging of the heart

Early diagnosis starts the process of

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