

Protect your skin from sun damage, cancer

The numbers are staggering. One in five of us will develop skin cancer in our lifetimes. One million new cases of skin cancer are diagnosed every year. An American dies of skin cancer every six minutes.

Some of us will wait too long to see a doctor and die of skin cancer. And many of us will continue to spend time in the sun, or worse yet — a tanning bed — without protecting our skin.

Dr. Mac Jones, a board-certified dermatologist at the Dermatology Clinic of Jackson, knows the enormity of the problem. "I diagnose a new case of skin cancer every single day," he said.

Types of skin cancer

The most common skin cancers are ...

■ Basal cell carcinoma is the most common form of skin cancer. This cancer develops in the fifth layer of cells that form the epidermis of your skin. It usually develops on skin that gets sun exposure, such as on the face, head, neck, ears, back of the hands, upper back and other areas your clothes don't normally cover. People who use tanning beds have a much higher risk of getting basal cell carcinoma. They also tend to get cancer earlier in life.

Basal cell carcinoma grows slowly and rarely spreads to other parts of the body. It can, however, grow wide and deep and destroy tissue and bone.

■ Squamous cell carcinoma, the second most common form of skin cancer, develops in the middle layers of the epidermis. Like basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell usually develops on skin that has been exposed to the sun for years and most often appears on the neck, back of the hands and face. Untreated, however, it can spread to other parts of the body.

■ Melanoma is the most deadly form of skin cancer. It can grow rapidly and spread to other parts of your body through the blood stream or through your lymph nodes. Once it spreads to



Mac Jones, M.D.

"Melanoma can kill you faster than any other cancer. That's why early detection of skin cancer is paramount."

— Mac Jones, M.D.

your lymph nodes or another internal organ, it is much harder to cure, he said.

"Melanoma can kill you faster than any other cancer," Dr. Jones said. "That's why early detection of skin cancer is paramount."

He shakes his head about patients who wait too long to seek treatment. "Too often patients seek a physician when they have pain or discomfort. You can't do that with these cancers. The patient will tell me, 'well, it wasn't bothering me.'"

If detected early and before it spreads, the five-year survival rate with melanoma is 99 percent. That rate drops to 65 percent if the

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Dr. Archie Wright and Dr. Brian Walker moved their practice to the Kirkland Cancer Center in April.

Oncologists move practice to Kirkland Cancer Center

West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance doctors Archie Wright, D.O., and Brian Walker, D.O., have joined the new Kirkland Cancer Center.

Dr. Wright and Dr. Walker are board certified in hematology and medical oncology. The new cancer center is unique to the Jackson area, Dr. Wright said. All of its cancer services, including chemotherapy and radiology, are delivered under one roof. It's also more convenient for patients.

"It is a state-of-the art cancer center with access to more resources," Dr. Wright said.

Located on the Jackson-Madison County General Hospital campus, the \$34-million Kirkland Cancer Center, which opened in December, is an 82,000-square-foot, three-level facility that integrates many aspects of care needed by patients and their families. Its third-floor medical clinic provides dedicated space for physicians and office staff.

In addition to physician offices, the center includes three linear accelerators, a spacious and well-equipped chemotherapy administration area, outdoor healing garden, chapel, café, resource library, boutique services, oncology pharmacy services, lab services and more. Officials say it was designed with patients' comfort in mind. Doctors from different clinics work together to treat patients.

"There's an emphasis on quality and efficiency in the center and collaboration with different teams," Dr. Wright said.

The Kirkland Cancer Center is the only center in the area accredited by the American College of Surgeons' Comprehensive Community Cancer Program. It's pursuing certification from the American Society of Clinical Oncology's Quality Oncology Practice Initiative, which only 10 percent of cancer centers in the country achieve, he said.

The center also is a member of the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center Affiliate Network. "That really is an avenue for patients to have access to some of the Vanderbilt trials without having to drive to Vanderbilt," Dr. Wright said.

He added that a nutritionist and a breast cancer navigator work on site. The center also plans to hire a genetic counselor.

The Kirkland Cancer Center was designed to provide a unique healing environment for patients and also to encourage a team approach to treatment, said Executive Director Gina Myracle.

"The building design allows all services housed there to work together more cohesively while offering our patients a high level of personal support, convenience and comfort," she said. "We are very excited to welcome these physicians and have them present and caring for patients in the center."

Realistic approach important to health care reform

A drop of water falls on the pitcher's mound at Boston's Fenway Park — immediately followed by two drops and four drops and eight drops. If the rate of falling water continues to double, how long will it take before water drowns the entire the stadium?

Fifty-six minutes.

"You don't even realize the problem until the outfield is wet," said Dr. J. Michael Epps, a board-certified obstetrician and gynecologist who practices at the Woman's Clinic.

Dr. Epps uses the Fenway Park analogy to shed light on the issues the world faces regarding health care. Young people are waiting longer to marry and have children, and they are having fewer children, decreasing the birth rate. At the same time, people are living longer, and there are fewer people to take care of them.

As a nation, we are spending money we do not have, he said. And it will cost more and more money to care for the aging population.

While it's important to save for retirement and take care of yourself, that is not attainable for many people. That makes the exponential curve, which threatens social security expenditures, all the more important to address realistically.

"People may be born equally, but they don't have equal opportunities. Ranting and raving about politics isn't the answer. We're not dealing with it realistically."

When Social Security was created in this country almost 80 years ago, 20 or 30 people paid for one elderly person, he said. Today, three people pay for one.



"It's not sustainable," he said.

"You've got to do something about this. That's what's facing us."

Dr. Epps, who is a moderate conservative on fiscal issues, said the Affordable Care Act, while not perfect, was an attempt to address the looming health care crisis. It was patterned after a reasonably successful program in Massachusetts — a state that has not gone

bankrupt or fallen into the Atlantic Ocean, he said. "The Affordable Care Act is not the end of civilization as we know it."

But it does force change in the health care industry. Electronic health records, for example, require clinics to input patient information in a certain way or they won't be paid by insurance companies, he said.

Doctors are required to do more administrative work, and productivity can suffer as physicians learn a new system.

"I just want to see patients and provide an honest service," Dr. Epps said. "The transition was really hard for me."

The Affordable Care Act is shaped by big insurance companies because medicine is big business, he said. But it attempts to use evidence and statistics to determine the best treatment for patients.

Despite privacy concerns that follow the security of personal information, electronic health records — while not a magic fix — are good, he said. "Why are we doing it? Because it's more efficient. We're getting things done."

They enable the collection of massive amounts of data to guide the medical community in cost-effective medicine. For example, the national task force addressed routine mammography approximately four years ago. It correctly but poorly conveyed that low-risk women benefit from a baseline mammogram at age 50 just as well as women who receive a baseline mammogram at age 40.

"Of course, the difficulty is defining truly 'low risk,' especially when it is such an emotionally sensitive and common cancer," Dr. Epps said. "Whenever you have a medical concern, it's best to consult your health care provider."

But massive amounts of data guide us to evidence-based medicine, which improves care, he said. The evolving health care system is attempting to help the most people possible in the best and most economical way.

"This is where we are. This is where we're going. Things are changing. This is a great dilemma, and this is an issue we're going to have to address."

Ultimately, the Affordable Care Act took effect in January, and it's too early to call it a failure, he said. Instead, people should be respectful of doctors and surgeons — professionals who are passionate about practicing medicine.

There is no perfect health care system anywhere in the world, he said. And as a society, we need to work constructively to find solutions to the issue of caring for an aging population that has fewer younger people to support it.

"We are a village, and we do have to take care of each other."



Dr. Michael Epps

"We are a village, and we do have to take care of one another."

— Michael Epps, M.D.

Dr. Michael Epps practices at the Woman's Clinic with Dr. Brad Adkins, Dr. Paul Gray, Dr. Molly Rheney, Dr. Madhav Boyapati, Dr. David Soll, Dr. Ryan Roy and Dr. Lisa Harper. The clinic is at 244 Coatsland.

For an appointment, call 731.422.4642.



Dr. Carraher runs Boston Marathon after knee surgery

A year after a devastating knee injury that required surgery, Dr.

John Carraher — a board-certified urologist at Jackson Urological Associates — finished the Boston Marathon in April with a time of four hours, nine minutes.

In early 2013, Dr. Carraher was 15 miles into a 50-kilometer race on Mount Cheaha — a remote area in Alabama's Talladega National Forest — when he slipped and shattered his kneecap.

Despite completing almost 50 marathons, including some ultra marathons and the 115-mile "TransRockies Run," he couldn't walk, and he was too deep into the woods to be carried out. A rescue helicopter plucked him out of a clearing in a basket and dropped him off by the side of a nearby road where an ambulance took him to a hospital in Anniston, Ala.

From the time he injured his knee to the time he arrived at the hospital, about five hours had passed.

Dr. Carraher chose to return to Jackson for treatment. He went straight from the Alabama hospital to the house of West Ten-

nessee Bone & Joint's Dr. David Johnson, who saw him briefly and scheduled surgery the next day.

"He used screws and wire to reconstruct my kneecap," Dr. Carraher said. "It was pretty smooth — there were no problems."

And then Dr. Carraher began physical therapy: three days a week for four months, then two days a week for another two months. It was painful and required a lot of hard work, but it was a good experience, he said.

"They just did a great job of answering questions and telling me what was going to happen."

Despite his medical training, Dr. Carraher said his injury was not a common one and therefore difficult to gauge his progress and compare himself to other athletes.

"What happened to me is a freak accident that not many people have."

He worked hard in physical therapy to get better, and he has come a long way. He began running again five months after the accident, and he finished Jackson's Fall Back Half Marathon in November.

"You really have to stay focused and have goals to get through any type of injury," he said.

Dr. John Carraher, practices at Jackson Urological Associates with Drs. Scott Yarbrow, David Bursleson, Don McKnight, Ray Howard and Peter Lawrence.

The clinic is at 28 Medical Center Drive. For an appointment, call 731.427.9971.

Dr. David Johnson practices at West Tennessee Bone & Joint with Drs. Lowell Stonecipher, Michael Cobb, Kelly Pucek, Harold Antwine III, David Pearce, Jason Hutchison, Adam Smith, Doug Haltom, Michael Dolan, Eric Homberg and John Everett.

The clinic is at 24 Physicians Drive in Jackson. For an appointment, visit www.wtbj.com or call 888.661.9825.



Dr. Carraher, above, recovers after shattering his kneecap last year. His injury occurred deep in the woods, at top, and he was rescued by helicopter. He recovered and finished the Boston Marathon in April in just over four hours.

Anesthesiologist now board certified in sleep medicine

Dr. Michael Lam is one of only two physicians in Tennessee and 21 in the United States, who is board certified in both Anesthesiology and Sleep Medicine.

He has been practicing anesthesiology in Jackson since 2004 and joined Professional Anesthesia Associates in 2008. He practices at Jackson-Madison County



Dr. Michael Lam

General Hospital, its affiliated surgery and endoscopy centers, and at Physicians Surgery Center.

Dr. Lam sees sleep disorder patients on a limited basis at the Sleep Disorders Center of Jackson-Madison County General Hospital.

He is a graduate of Georgetown University Medical School and trained in anesthesiology at Vanderbilt Medical Center.

At Professional Anesthesia Associates, he practices with Drs. Ben Anderson, Charles M. Freeman, Lauri Anne Gorbet, Timothy N. Hutchison, Michael Martindale, Chuck Poole and Robert Seabrook.

Protect your skin

Continued from Page 1

melanoma has traveled to the lymph nodes and 15 percent if it appears in another organ of the body.

Detecting skin cancer

When it comes to skin cancer, it pays to be vigilant. "Skin cancer can appear without warning, and it can develop most anywhere on the body," Dr. Jones said. "The most common location is the upper back."

You should see a dermatologist if you have ...

- A rapidly growing mole.
- A skin lesion that changes colors, becomes ulcerated or bleeds spontaneously.
- A skin lesion with an asymmetrical or irregular border or a diameter greater than a pencil eraser.

Though basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma are the most common forms of skin cancer, Dr. Jones said, "the incidence of melanoma has steadily increased over the past 30 years. It's on the rise." Since 1992, he said, there's been a 3.1 percent increase annually in non-Hispanic Caucasians.

He has been collecting other data about this growing problem.

- The increases in recent years are more rapid in young women.
- Melanoma is the most common form of cancer for young adults, ages 25 to 29. It is the second most common cancer in people between the ages of 15 to 29.

■ Skin cancer has had a 3.8 percent increase in men who are over the age of 65.

■ Caucasians with fair skin, particularly those with red or blond hair, blue or green eyes and more than 50 moles on their bodies, have the highest risk of getting



skin cancer, Dr. Jones said. People with a blood relative who had melanoma also are at high risk.

Though the increase in skin cancer in older people can be attributed to years of skin exposure to the sun, Dr. Jones attributes the increases in younger people to the use of tanning beds.

Besides the risk of cancer, too much sun exposure also damages the skin. "You often don't see the effect until years later," he said.

You don't need to seek the sun to get Vitamin D, he explained. "Ten to 15 minutes of sun exposure every day is enough to produce the Vitamin D that you need. Many people get that with just a walk to the mailbox."

Remember to wear sunscreen when outdoors, Dr. Jones said. Apply water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 about 15 to 30 minutes before you go outside. "Apply it generously to all exposed areas of your skin," he said. "Then reapply it every two hours."

"Meanwhile, If you have any suspicious spots on your body, see your dermatologist," Dr. Jones urged. "We're trained in problems of the skin."

"For your peace of mind, get it checked out."

Dr. Mac Jones practices with Dr. Patrick Teer at the Dermatology Clinic of Jackson, 1320 Union University Drive.

For an appointment, call 731.422.7999.

From allergy to urology, our physicians meet all of your healthcare needs.

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- 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

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- Alexander Alperovich, M.D.

Apex Cardiology: 423-8200

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- Henry Lui, M.D.

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- Dean Currie, M.D.
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For an appointment with one of our physicians, please call the physician's clinic.

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- Keith Micetich, M.D.
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Woman's Clinic: 422-4642

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- Madhav Boyapati, M.D.
- Michael Epps, M.D. (GYN ONLY)
- Paul Gray, M.D.
- Andrea Harper, M.D.
- Molly Rheney, M.D.
- Ryan Roy, M.D.
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West TN Bone & Joint: 661-9825

- Michael Dolan, M.D.

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Podiatry Clinic: 427-5581

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- Raymond Howard, M.D.
- Peter Lawrence, M.D.
- Donald McKnight, M.D.
- Scott Yarbro, M.D.



West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance: A leader in providing affordable, quality care

If you are reading this, chances are you or someone you love is sick. You are probably sitting in the waiting room of a doctor's office passing the time surrounded by an assortment of other sick people and out-of-date magazines.

You've probably resigned yourself to what you think will happen next — being ushered into an exam room where you'll do more waiting, eventually pleading your case to an over-stressed physician who will breeze through the door and anxiously scribble notes for five, maybe 10, minutes before bombarding you with information.

Yet, in the end, you'll leave with more questions than answers, more anxiety than comfort. You'll be uneasy, you'll be confused, and you'll still, more than likely, be sick.

This is what many of us have been conditioned to expect from a doctor's visit — hurriedness, chaos and inefficiency. From individual experiences at a hospital or clinic to the national debate surrounding the Affordable Care Act, health care has perhaps never been so confusing, so cumbersome or so difficult to navigate.

However, my hope is that you come to expect an altogether different experience when you visit any of the doctors or clinics of the

By **Dustin Summers**
Executive Director,
West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance

West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance (WTPA).

Our goal is to change that perception, to change that experience, and to deliver affordable quality care in the city of Jackson and the surrounding counties of West Tennessee.

Comprised of more than 100 physicians practicing in 27 medical specialties at 35 clinics in Madison County, the WTPA represents the full spectrum of health care coverage.

As health care continues to change, we are committed to finding innovative ways to deliver affordable, quality care in Jackson — not Nashville, not Memphis, but right here at home.

I grew up in Paris, Tenn., and Jackson was always the place we went for our Christmas presents, for our biggest baseball games, and, when necessary, for our medical care. Many other communities in West Tennessee view Jackson in a similar light. If you ever doubt the health care resources that are available right here in Madison County, simply take a trip to Walmart or Applebee's or Kroger and count the number of individuals you see wearing medical scrubs.

We are rich in terms of health care capacity and resources, and I hope that you will turn to one of our physicians when you or a member of your family needs care for a sore throat or a sprained ankle or any other injury or illness.



Dustin Summers

The uncertainty that currently envelops the health care world creates opportunities for growth, for improvement and for adaption that will serve to improve the individual and collective health care experience.

I believe that the WTPA is capable of serving as a health care leader in our region and throughout the state of Tennessee. The strength of our organization lies in the individual clinics and physicians that comprise the WTPA.

If you are in need of medical care, we hope that you will visit us soon. If you are already here, seated in one of our waiting rooms, surrounded by our not-so-out-of-date periodicals, I hope that your experience is indicative of what the future of health care holds.

Dr. Alhaddad joins Apex Cardiology

Mohsin T. Alhaddad, M.D., recently joined Dr. Henry Lui at Apex Cardiology, PC.

He completed his medical school training in Kenya. His country then nominated him to receive the Association of Commonwealth Universities Scholarship, which he used to complete part of his medical training in Ottawa, Canada.

He was awarded one of only 20 Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarships worldwide and used it to pursue a



Dr. Mohsin Alhaddad

Masters in Clinical Pharmacology at the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary University of Aberdeen in Scotland.

He then completed his internal medicine training at Indiana University and cardiology at the University of Louisville in Kentucky before finally completing his interventional cardiology training at the University of Texas in San Antonio.

Apex Cardiology is at 327 Summar Drive. For an appointment call 731.423.8200.

Dr. Fakorede joins Mid-South Heart Center

Dr. Faluso Fakorede joined Dr. Louis Cunningham at the Mid-South Heart Center.

Dr. Fakorede, who is a board-certified cardiologist, completed his residency at New York Presbyterian Hospital. He received his medical degree from Robert Wood Johnson Medical School at Rutgers University. Dr. Fakorede specializes in cardiovascular disease.

The Mid-South Heart Center is at 48 Medical Center Drive. For an appointment call 731.423.8383.



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