

## New aortic valve replacement helps patients at risk for open heart surgery

**A** new minimally invasive procedure to replace the aortic valve in the heart is reducing recovery times and leaving patients with less pain and scarring.

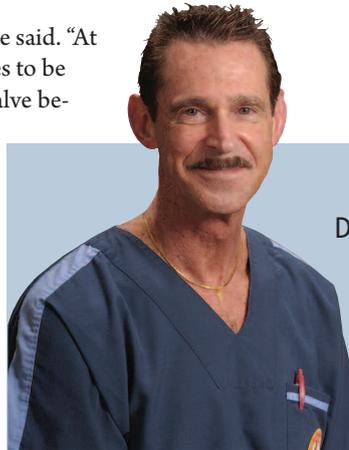
The percutaneous aortic valve repair surgery is a groundbreaking procedure that was recently introduced in Jackson, said Dr. Ronald Weiner, a board-certified cardiologist and founder of Skyline Cardiovascular Institute.

A new aortic valve is crimped on a balloon and inserted through an incision in the groin similar to a heart catheter procedure, Dr. Weiner said. The specialized catheter tubing is threaded through blood vessels into the heart to place the new valve over the diseased valve. Once the new valve is in the precise location, the balloon is expanded, inserting the new valve in place and crushing the diseased valve.

"It's a minimally invasive alternative to open heart surgery that has been producing great results among our patients," Dr. Weiner said. "The benefits include faster recovery, less pain and blood loss, and a reduced risk of infection."

Patients who undergo the procedure receive general anesthesia and, with no complications, typically spend two to three days in the hospital. The first night is in the intensive care unit.

The procedure isn't for everyone, he said. "At this point, open heart surgery continues to be the preferred way to repair the aortic valve because it is the proven technique." The new procedure, which is "very complex and very exacting," is being done with patients who are at high risk for having open heart surgery. At some point, Dr. Weiner added, he expects the new procedure will be used in the majority of cases for aortic valve replacement.



Dr. Ronald Weiner practices at Skyline Cardiovascular Institute, 111 Stonebridge Blvd. For an appointment, call 731.410.6777.

The aortic valve plays an important role. Blood flows out of the heart and into the aorta through the aortic valve, which opens to allow blood flow and closes to prevent blood from flowing backwards. When the aortic valve isn't functioning properly, blood can leak back into the heart in a condition known as aortic regurgitation or restrict blood flow in a condition known as aortic stenosis.

"Either of these conditions can require aortic valve replacement surgery," Dr. Weiner said. "Symptoms include chest pain, shortness of breath, fainting spells and congestive heart failure."

To introduce the procedure to Jackson-Madison County General Hospital, the hospital needed a physician who had done at least 100 structural heart disease procedures. Dr. Weiner had the necessary experience; he had done more than 100 aortic and mitral valve procedures over the 10 years he practiced at the Deborah Heart and Lung Center in Browns Mills, New Jersey, from 1980 to 1990.

The Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR), as it officially is called, is now being done at Jackson General by a team of surgeons, interventional cardiologists like Dr. Weiner, and radiologists.

### Take care of your heart ...

Turn to pages 4-6 of the West TN Physicians' Alliance Newsletter:

- Good eating habits
- Heart attack signs
- The difference between good and bad cholesterol
- Varicose veins
- And more ...



### More stories in this issue of the Physicians' Alliance newsletter ...

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Too many rich, spicy foods and beverages equal ...

# Holiday Heartburn

**Y**ou may wake up in the night with your chest burning. Sometimes the pain can be so severe that you think you may be experiencing a heart attack — but often that pain is heartburn.

Sixty million Americans get heartburn at least once a month. For these individuals, the pain isn't simply an inconvenience. Heartburn affects many aspects of their life, keeping them from sleeping at night and disrupting activities during the day.

"Heartburn is common during the holiday season as people tend to consume more food and beverages that cause discomfort," said Dr. Bob Souder, a board-certified gastroenterologist with TransSouth Health Care. "We all seem to go overboard during the holidays."

Heartburn is a symptom of acid reflux, when acidic contents of the stomach creep back into your esophagus and irritate or burn the lining of the esophagus.

Most sufferers of frequent heartburn report that food is the primary cause of their discomfort. Though heartburn triggers may vary from person to person, certain foods and drinks have been identified as causing the reflux of gastric acid into the esophagus.

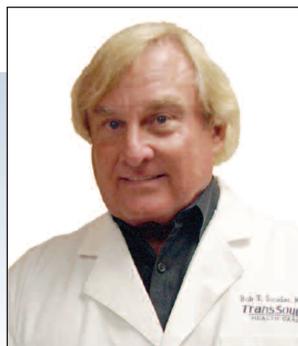
Foods that can cause problems include rich sauces, acidic foods like tomatoes and fruits, spicy foods, onions, garlic, fatty foods, minty drinks, desserts, and creamy beverages like eggnog and hot chocolate.

In addition to foods, lifestyle habits such as smoking, consumption of alcoholic and frequent drinking of caffeinated beverages can influence heartburn. Stress can also contribute to the problem.

Eating too close to bedtime, before you've had time to digest much of that food, adds to your chances of getting heartburn, Dr. Souder said.

He suggests eating more broiled or grilled foods and using more reduced fat products, such as cheese and sour cream, as ingredients for holi-

**D**r. Bob Souder is a board-certified gastroenterologist who founded TransSouth Health Care. He specializes in treating disease of the digestive tract, including the liver. For an appointment, call 731.661.0086.



## Common Heartburn Triggers

- Coffee and other caffeinated beverages
- Carbonated drinks
- Acidic foods like citrus fruits and tomato products
- Chocolate and mints
- Fried and fatty foods
- Onions, garlic and other spicy foods
- Certain medications, including aspirin or ibuprofen
- Alcohol or cigarette smoking
- Eating too much or too quickly after eating

day meals. Avoid over-eating and drinking too much.

If you experience heartburn, elevate your head when in bed. Take antacids and over-the-counter medications to temporarily assuage the discomfort by neutralizing stomach acids. Prescription drugs, such as H2 receptor blockers and proton pump inhibitors that reduce acid production, also can provide relief, as well as help heal an inflamed esophagus.

Everyone seems to get heartburn occasionally, but 20 percent of adults suffer from a more chronic disorder, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) and are more prone to flare-ups. GERD occurs when the esophageal muscle relaxes more than it should, which allow stomach acids to migrate into the esophagus.

"Everyone experiences reflux on occasion – especially during the holidays," Souder said. "However, if it is a chronic condition, you should see your doctor because it can damage your esophagus."

"Chronic use of over-the-counter medications is one indication of the need to see your physician, who may refer you to a specialist."

# Jackson Surgical Associates joins Vanderbilt Health Affiliated Network

Jackson Surgical Associates belongs to a network of health care providers that covers about 55,000 lives. The number is expected to grow to reach more than 100,000 by 2015.

Among the first in West Tennessee to partner with the Vanderbilt Health Affiliated Network, Jackson Surgical Associates strengthens the organization by giving patients more quality choices among providers.

The general surgeons at Jackson Surgical Associates are Drs. Dean Currie, David Villarreal, David Laird, Daniel Day and Garrison Smith.

For an appointment, call 731.664.7395.

Jackson Surgical Associates, P.A., has taken an important step to ensure it continues to provide quality health care and control health costs in the upcoming days of health care reform.

"We are pleased to be among the first physicians in West Tennessee to partner with Vanderbilt University Medical Center by participating in the Vanderbilt Health Affiliated Network (VHAN)," said Dean Currie, M.D., who practices at Jackson Surgical Associates.

"This affiliation allows us to partner with Vanderbilt and other hospital systems and providers to improve quality of care and help keep costs down. It's a clinically integrated network to deal with present and future health care issues."

Already 34 hospitals, including Jackson-Madison County General Hospital, and thousands of doctors have signed on to VHAN, said Dr. Currie. "It will be one of the largest networks in the country that gives patients access to high quality hospitals and physicians."

Vanderbilt is selecting the hospitals for the network; physicians go through a credentialing process before they can join. "Having physicians like those at Jackson Surgical in VHAN strengthens the network and gives patients quality choices in providers," said Michael Anctil, Director of Network Development for VHAN.

"This is a good step for our clinic," said Dr. Currie, who practices with Dr. David Villarreal, Dr. David Laird, Dr. Daniel Day and Dr. Garrison Smith. "It makes us ready for new initiatives coming from CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services), pay-for-performance and accountable care organizations."

Jackson Surgical physicians are board-certified general surgeons who specialize in diseases of the breast, and surgery of the G.I. tract (stomach, colon, small intestine and gallbladder), vascular system, endocrine organs (thyroid and

parathyroid) and many other diseases.

The first group of area residents who will receive health care from providers in the Vanderbilt Health Affiliated Network will be the employees of West Tennessee Healthcare, Dr. Currie said.

At this point, VHAN covers about 55,000 lives, including Vanderbilt employees, Anctil said. "The number is expected to reach more than 100,000 people by 2015."

Clinically integrated networks may not be new around the country, but they are new in Tennessee, Anctil said. "Clinical integration is an effort among physicians, often in collaboration with a hospital or health system,

to develop ongoing clinical initiatives that control costs and improve the quality of health care services."

Over the next few years, he further explained, payers (led by Medicare) will shift toward new reimbursement models that put physicians and hospitals at more risk for cost and quality outcomes. These new payment structures include increased use of pay-for-performance bonuses; "bundles" that combine hospital and physician payment for an inpatient stay or episode of care; and shared-savings contracts that pay provider groups a portion of any cost savings achieved.

"Clinical integration like that provided by VHAN provides a framework for physicians and hospitals to proactively work together on improving efficiency, coordination, and consistency of care for success under these new payment models," said Dr. Currie.

*"This affiliation allows us to partner with Vanderbilt and other hospital systems and providers to improve quality of care and help keep costs down."*

— Dean Currie, M.D.



Dr. Dean Currie performs surgery.

# Take care of your heart: Eat healthy

**E**at better foods this holiday season and take care of your heart by following guidelines issued by the American Heart Association. Eating right will help you achieve a healthier lifestyle and fight cardiovascular disease.

- Start by knowing how many calories you consume each day. Don't eat more than you can burn with physical activity. Aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise daily to keep your weight down and increase your cardiovascular health.

- Limit foods and beverages high in calories but low in nutrients, and limit the amount of saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol and sodium you consume. Also, avoid highly processed foods or highly refined grains and carbohydrates.

- Eat a variety of fruit and vegetable servings every day. Dark green, deep orange, or yellow fruits and vegetables like spinach, carrots, peaches and berries, are especially nutritious.

- Eat a variety of grain products every day. Include whole-grain foods that have lots of fiber and nutrients. Examples of whole grains include oats, whole wheat bread and

brown rice.

- Eat fish at least two times each week. Oily fish, which contain omega-3 fatty acids, are best for your heart. These fish include tuna, salmon, mackerel, lake trout, herring and sardines.

- Eat foods low in saturated fat and cholesterol. Try to choose healthy foods, such as lean meats, fish, vegetables, beans, nuts, and nonfat or low-fat dairy products. Choose polyunsaturated or monounsaturated fats, like canola and olive oils, to replace saturated fats, such as butter.

- Read food labels and limit the amount of trans fat you eat. Trans fat raises the levels of LDL — bad cholesterol — and also lowers the levels of HDL — good cholesterol — in the blood. Trans fat is found in many processed foods made with shortening or with partially hydrogenated or hydrogenated vegetable oils. These foods include cookies, crackers, chips and many snack foods.

- Limit sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg of sodium a day, which is about one teaspoon. Choose and prepare foods with little or no salt.

- Limit alcohol intake to two drinks a

day for men and one drink a day for women.

- Limit drinks and foods with added sugar, such as soda.

Follow these suggestions for a healthier holiday season, and you'll begin the new year in the right direction.



## Alliance cardiologists ...

The West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance has six board-certified cardiologists who practice in five different clinics in Jackson. They are ...

### Alexander Alperovich, M.D.

Advanced Cardiovascular & Vein Center, 172 West University Pkwy, Suite A, 731.215.1281

### Henry K. Lui, M.D.

Apex Cardiology, P.C., 327 Summar Drive, 731.423.8200

### Adey Agbetoyin, M.D.

Cardiovascular Clinic of West Tennessee, 2968 North Highland Ave., 731.256.1819

### Louis E. Cunningham, M.D.

### Tommy Miller, M.D.

Mid-South Heart Center, 48 Medical Center Drive, 731.423.8383

### Ronald Weiner, D.O.

Skyline Cardiovascular Institute, 111 Stonebridge Blvd., 731.410.6777

For more information about the cardiologists in the Physicians' Alliance, visit the website: [www.wtpa.com](http://www.wtpa.com).



# The good and the bad about cholesterol

**H**igh cholesterol is one of the major controllable risk factors for coronary heart disease, heart attack and stroke. As blood cholesterol rises, so does the risk of coronary heart disease. Other factors — high blood pressure or diabetes — increase the risk even more.

But cholesterol itself isn't bad. Everyone has it, and it's an essential part of managing the risk of coronary heart disease.

Cholesterol can't dissolve in the blood. It has to be transported to and from the cells by carriers called lipoproteins. Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) is known as bad cholesterol. High-density lipoprotein (HDL) is known as good cholesterol. These two types of lipids, along with triglycerides and Lipoprotein(a) cholesterol, make up your total cholesterol count. A blood test determines your cholesterol levels.

## LDL cholesterol

When too much LDL cholesterol circulates in the blood, it can slowly accumulate along the inner walls of arteries that feed the heart and brain. Together with other substances, it can form plaque — a thick, hard deposit that can narrow arteries and make them less flexible. This condition is known as atherosclerosis. If a clot forms and blocks a narrowed artery, a heart attack or stroke can result.

## HDL cholesterol

About one-fourth to one-third of blood cholesterol is carried by high-density lipoprotein. HDL cholesterol is known as good cholesterol because high levels of HDL seem to protect against heart attack.

Inversely, low levels of HDL increase the risk of heart disease. Medical experts think HDL tends to carry cholesterol away from the arteries and back to the liver, where it's passed from the body. Some experts believe that HDL removes excess cholesterol from arterial plaque, slowing its buildup.



## Triglycerides

Triglyceride is a form of fat made in the body. Elevated triglycerides can be the result of obesity, physical inactivity, cigarette smoking, excess alcohol consumption and a diet high in carbohydrates. People with high triglycerides often have a high total cholesterol level, including a high LDL level and a low HDL level.

## Lipoprotein(a) cholesterol

Lipoprotein(a) — Lp(a) — is a genetic variation of bad cholesterol. A high level of Lp(a) is a significant risk factor for the premature development of fatty deposits in arteries.

Source: American Heart Association

# Don't ignore varicose vein problems

**W**hen you hear the words "cardiovascular disease," you may think of the heart and arteries. But veins, the blood vessels that return blood to the heart, are often overlooked.

What's more, varicose veins — a common condition in women — are often dismissed as a cosmetic problem. "In reality, varicose veins can cause serious complications, such as pain, swelling and, in advanced cases, skin ulcers," said Dr. Adey Agbetoyin, a board-certified cardiologist.

## When veins fail

A system of deep veins far below the skin and superficial veins closer to the surface carry blood back to the heart. But a variety of factors — including obesity, pregnancy, heart failure, high blood pressure, age and genetics — can cause the valves in superficial veins to fail and blood to pool, leading to varicose veins.

"If you have unsightly varicose veins, swelling

in the legs, discolored skin, or feelings of cramping, heaviness, tingling or itching in the legs, it's worth seeing a doctor for a simple, noninvasive ultrasound assessment," says Dr. Agbetoyin. "This condition will not improve, but will likely worsen without treatment."

## Outpatient options

Wearing compression stockings may help mild cases of varicose veins. In most cases, however, medical intervention is needed to address the underlying cause of the veins you see on the surface. The older method of surgically stripping problem veins has largely been replaced by a catheter-based laser procedure performed within the vein.

"It's a minimally invasive, quick, and effective way to close diseased veins," Dr. Agbetoyin explains. "Blood flow is redirected to healthier veins, and you are up and returning to regular activities immediately after treatment. Follow-up treatment might include sclerotherapy, in which injected medication closes smaller, poorly functioning veins."



## Clinic CEO named Administrator of the Year

**D**onna W. Klutts, who was recently named chief executive officer of West Tennessee Bone & Joint Clinic, P.C, was selected as Tennessee's 2013 Administrator of the Year.

The award from the Tennessee Medical Group Management Association and State Volunteer Mutual Insurance Company is given to administrators who demonstrate exceptional leadership management and proficiency. It also recognizes administrators who enhance effectiveness in the delivery of health care in their practice and community through individual excellence, dedication and noteworthy achievements.

Klutts is committed to the medical profession and has mentored others in advancing the American College of Medical Practice Executives' missions and goals. She was nominated by her superiors and colleagues.

Klutts has worked in health care for 25 years. Since joining West Tennessee Bone & Joint Clinic in 2000, she has overseen all aspects of the organization, from strategic planning to the daily practice management by



working with physicians, staff and patients.

She also has been in charge of the clinic's growth with the addition of physical and occupational therapy, MRI, computerized radiology, electronic health records, ambulatory surgery center and two expansions at the main location. West Tennessee Bone & Joint Clinic is now the largest orthopedic clinic between Memphis and Nashville, and it is one of the largest clinics in Central West Tennessee.

Klutts is a member of the American College of Medical Practice Executives, Medical Group Management Association, American Association of Orthopaedic Executives and American Health Information Management Association. She and her family live in Lexington, Tennessee.

The physicians at West Tennessee Bone & Joint Clinic are Dr. Lowell Stonecipher, Dr. Michael Cobb, Dr. David Johnson, Dr. Kelly Pucek, Dr. Harold Antwine III, Dr. David Pearce, Dr. Jason Hutchison, Dr. Adam Smith, Dr. Doug Haltom, Dr. Mike Dolan and Dr. John Everett.

## When a heart attack strikes ...

**S**ome heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most heart attacks start slowly, with only mild pain or discomfort. As a result, people often aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help.

And women can experience different symptoms than men. They are more likely than men to suffer a heart attack without chest pain.

It's important to learn the signs of a heart attack and get checked out by a doctor if you experience any — even if you're not sure.

Don't wait more than five minutes to call 9.1.1 if you think you're having a heart attack. It's the fastest way to get life-saving treatment. Emergency medical staff can begin treatment when they arrive, which could be up to an hour sooner than getting to the hospital by car.

Patients with chest pain also usually receive faster treatment in the emergency room when they arrive by ambulance.

### Signs of a heart attack

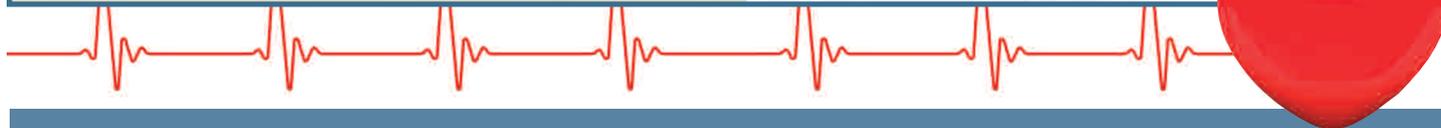
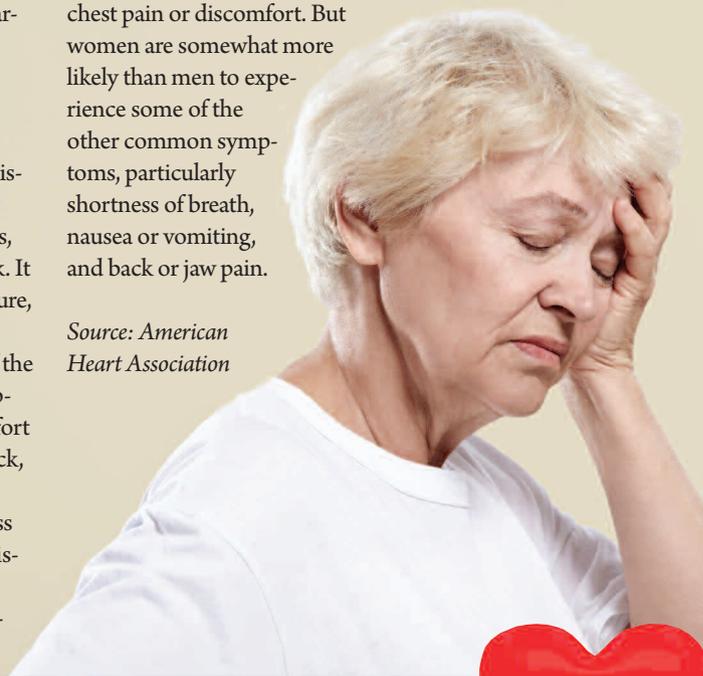
Chest discomfort is a classic sign. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.

Discomfort in other areas of the upper body is another sign. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.

Other signs include shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort, breaking out in a cold sweat, and nausea or lightheadedness.

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea or vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

Source: American Heart Association



# 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

**Dermatology Clinic: 422-7999**

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

### Family Practice

**Northside Medical Clinic: 668-2800**

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

**Patient Centered Care: 215-2888**

- Kim Howerton, M.D.

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

### Gastroenterology

**TransSouth Health Care: 661-0086**

- Bob Souder, M.D.

### General Surgery

**Jackson Surgical: 664-7395**

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

**Madison Surgical Clinic: 660-6101**

- Thomas Edwards, M.D.

### Gynecology/Obstetrics

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

- Sandra Boxell, M.D.
- Pam Evans, 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 Rheney, M.D.
- Ryan Roy, M.D.
- David Soll, M.D.

### Hand Surgery

**Plastic Surgery Clinic: 668-2490**

- Marshall Yellen, M.D.

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

- Michael Dolan, M.D.

### Internal Medicine

**Eze Clinic: 661-0067**

- Gift Eze, M.D.

**Goodwin & Associates: 668-9791**

- Stephen Goodwin, 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.

### Oncology/Hematology

**Cancer Care Center: 668-1668**

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

**Hematology/Oncology: 234-2425**

- Omar Ahmad, 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

**Craig Orthopedic Clinic: 661-0061**

- Jim Craig, M.D.

**Sports/Orthopedics: 427-7888**

- Scott Johnson, M.D.
- 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.

### 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.

### Rheumatology

**Arthritis Clinic: 664-0002**

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

### Spine Surgery

**Adv. Spine Institute: 506-4607**

- Robert Talac, 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 Yarbrough, M.D.

## Physicians' Alliance Executive Director to retire



Tom Reed

**T**om Reed, Executive Director of the West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance, will retire in early 2014 after 30 years as head of the organization.

Reed helped found the alliance with a core group of about 25 Jackson-area doctors in 1984. Today, the alliance has about 110 doctors practicing in more than 40 clinics throughout West Tennessee.

"It's just grown steadily since then to where we are now," Reed said. "I'm proud that we've been able to pull together a group of very independent-minded physicians and very independent-minded practices and clinics so they could succeed collectively over a long period of time."

Many clinics in the alliance began as one- or

two-physician practices and have grown into practices with several doctors and a significant presence in the region.

Reed said the alliance has always worked to meet the needs of primary care physicians and their patients, particularly in rural areas.

"We've been very responsive to the marketplace and very responsive to our doctors," Reed said.

The alliance is interviewing candidates for a new executive director. Reed will remain with the organization for a brief transitional period after a replacement is found.

And then, Reed — an accomplished author — plans to regroup and write more books. He also plans to travel to visit his children and their families.

*Time to see a doctor?*

WEST TENNESSEE  
Physicians'  
Alliance

*Our physicians treat your whole family*



The West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance represents more than 100 Jackson physicians who practice 24 different specialties in independent clinics.

Check us out at [www.wtpa.com](http://www.wtpa.com).

For an appointment call your doctor's clinic.

Doctors and clinics are listed on Page 6 of this newsletter.

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your family.*  
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