Here’s to Your
HEALTH
Spring 2011

Bundle of Joy
Five-Star Maternity Services

Feeding Your
2-Year-Old

When Allergies Attack

CARSON TAHOE
Regional Healthcare
Here’s to your health.
With 2011 already underway, healthcare providers are tackling many issues related to the delivery and financing of services. Our task now becomes how to reduce costs while improving quality.

With the 2010 Federal Government approval of a massive healthcare bill, our government is now working toward writing the regulations by which the law will be implemented. At the same time, there is an upcoming shift in power and a great deal of discussion about repealing portions or even the entire legislation. However, the drivers of out-of-control costs, defensive medicine, and a growing and aging population will continue regardless of who is in control of Congress.

Carson Tahoe Regional Healthcare will proactively monitor the roll out of all healthcare legislation and in turn, keep you, our community, informed about any changes that affect you or your family.

On a similar note, the results of our 2010 Community Health Needs Assessment showed that we can definitely do more to affect how and where you are able to see a physician. To address your needs, Carson Tahoe has been adding to the network of access points to our healthcare system. Since October 2010, we have expanded Carson Tahoe Physician Clinics in Dayton and Minden, added a medical clinic at Walmart in north Douglas County, and added Carson Tahoe Cardiology and Great Basin Imaging to our growing list of specialists and facilities.

Not only do these additions help you, our patients, but these strategies also ensure that providers within the medical community can continue to serve patients. It is in everyone’s best interest that the excellent network of providers continues to thrive and grow to meet the health needs of our region.

Sincerely,

Ed Epperson
CEO and President
Carson Tahoe Regional Healthcare

Don’t miss an issue of Here’s to Your Health! E-mail info@ctrh.org or call (775) 445-5162 to renew your free subscription.
A major milestone was achieved in October when the Foundation, in partnership with Carson Tahoe Regional Healthcare, retired the construction loan ($12,250,000) for the Carson Tahoe Cancer Center and signed the building over to CTRH. More than half of the construction costs were raised through gifts from community members. The Foundation extends a sincere thank you to donors for supporting a facility that has provided hope and healing to thousands of cancer patients since opening in 2006.

**Fundraising Events Review**

The Foundation hosted several successful fundraising events last year. Thank you to event supporters who purchased tickets and tables, provided sponsorship revenue, and donated auction and raffle items.

- **Golfers** teed up for a good cause at the [Here’s to Your Health Golf Tournament](#) on May 14. Special thanks to Genoa Lakes Golf Club and Resort.
- **Celebrity Docs Caring for Cancer** on June 12 featured physicians serving dinner guests. Special thanks to Dick Campaign Auto Group and Glen Eagles Restaurant and Lounge.
- **The Merriner Cottages Benefit Dinner** on June 28 raised money to subsidize housing expenses for cancer patients during treatment and recovery. Special thanks to Adele’s Restaurant & Lounge.
- **The Wild about Grapes Gala** on November 6 was a wine lover’s dream. Special thanks to our title sponsor, Carson Medical Group. Thank you, too, to the businesses and community organizations that hosted third-party events on behalf of CTRH and to everyone who contributed to a successful year. We appreciate your continued support of Carson Tahoe.

If you're interested in attending events or learning about charitable giving opportunities, please call the Foundation at (775) 445-5161 or visit our website at [www.carsonthoe.org](http://www.carsonthoe.org). Here’s to giving!

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**Smart Snacking**

For many of us, snack time means eating a handful of chips, a candy bar, or some other unhealthy option. Choosing smart snacks and making sure your kids select healthy options is a perfect way to keep your family fit and happy.

Before picking a snack, keep these tips in mind:

1. **Read nutrition labels** and be wary of serving sizes.
2. **Avoid high-fat snacks**, which may encourage overeating. Grab a piece of fruit instead.
3. **If you are not hungry, do not snack.** To find out if you are really hungry, try drinking a glass of water to see if the feeling disappears.
Stamping out Springtime Sniffles

Some people associate spring showers and flowers with a sense of renewal and beauty, but certain blooms may leave you reaching for a box of tissues.

Spring allergies affect more than 35 million Americans each season. People in desert regions, including Nevada, react to regional plants and grasses, such as box elder, Arizona cypress, and red fescue. Common symptoms include itchy, watery eyes, sneezing, runny nose, scratchy throat, sinus pressure, and headaches. While you or a loved one may find yourself battling these annoyances, you can overcome and conquer allergies with proper planning and allergy-fighting tools.

Prepare for Battle

Allergy-combat knowledge is the key to a symptom-controlled spring. Follow these helpful tips and recommendations for a smooth, sniffle-free spring.

• Grass pollen season begins in the spring, when pollen count levels are at their highest in the evenings. Either avoid being outdoors or take proper precautions during this time of day.

• Make your home and vehicle pollen-free zones. Keep the windows closed, and ensure your air conditioning filter is clean for proper air filtration.

• If you must work outdoors, consider wearing a face mask to avoid contact with pollen.

• Watch the local weather or go online for daily pollen counts. Avoid being outdoors on days with high pollen counts.

Beyond avoidance, certain medications provide many allergy sufferers with relief. Antihistamines, nasal corticosteroids, decongestants, and non-steroidal nasal sprays may help reduce allergy symptoms. Talk with your physician about what over-the-counter or prescription medication might be right for you.

If you suffer from chronic allergies and allergy-like symptoms, consider undergoing an allergy test to learn more about the substances that trigger your symptoms. Certain allergy sufferers who have not found over-the-counter treatment options successful may benefit from allergy shots.

To find an allergy specialist or primary care physician, visit www.carsontahoe.com and click on “Find a Doctor.”

Not Just a Plant Matter

While grass and tree pollens may ignite some individuals’ allergic responses, other substances, such as mold and animal dander, also can cause symptoms that range from mild to severe.

Mild allergy symptoms include congestion, rash, and itchy, watery eyes. These symptoms do not spread to other parts of the body. Moderate reactions spread to other parts of the body and can include difficulty breathing or itchiness. Severe allergy symptoms that quickly affect the whole body, or anaphylaxis, may begin as mild or moderate and become progressively more intense. These include varying degrees of swelling, vomiting or diarrhea, and cramps. Seek immediate medical attention if you have these symptoms.
Access to Healthcare

With all the changes happening in medicine, many patients across the country and in our own region are finding it increasingly difficult to access healthcare. Carson Tahoe Regional Healthcare is committed to making healthcare as accessible as possible and, to this end, recently opened a Carson Tahoe Physician’s Clinic in the Walmart store in north Douglas County on Topsy Lane. Another way to ease access in our community is by building upon the depth and expertise of the medical staff already serving our area by welcoming these new physicians.

**Endocrinology**
Dr. Quang Nguyen
Carson Tahoe Physicians Clinic
2874 N. Carson Street, Suite 200
Carson City, NV 89706
(775) 883-9003

**Family Medicine**
Dr. David A. Johnson
Carson Tahoe Physicians Clinics
Clinic Minden
925 Ironwood Drive, Suite 2105
Minden, NV 89423
(775) 283-3096

**Family Medicine**
Dr. David H. Johnson
Carson Tahoe Physicians Clinics
Clinic Minden
925 Ironwood Drive, Suite 2103
Minden, NV 89423
(775) 445-7885

**Obstetrics and Gynecology**
Dr. Shannon Hess
Carson Medical Group
1470 Medical Parkway
Carson City, NV 89703
(775) 883-3636

**Pediatrics**
Dr. Rebecca Papez
Carson Medical Group
1200 Mountain Street
Carson City, NV 89703
(775) 885-2229

**Pediatrics**
Dr. Jenny Smokey
Carson Medical Group
1200 Mountain Street
Carson City, NV 89703
(775) 885-2229

**Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery**
Dr. Timothy Janiga
Carson Surgical Group
1375 Vista Lane
Carson City, NV 89703
(775) 828-4164

**Pulmonology**
Dr. Faisal Ahmad
Mountain Medical Pulmonary & Sleep Center
200 Bath Street, Suite 1
Carson City, NV 89703
(775) 882-2106
Delivering Precious Moments

From choosing the décor of the nursery to buying supplies for the changing table, preparing for the arrival of your baby can be an exciting time. Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center offers all the resources you need—whether education classes or five-star healthcare services—to ensure you are ready for your special delivery.

Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center is the only hospital in the greater Carson City area that delivers babies. The five-star Women and Children’s Center provides a comfortable, nurturing environment to make this life-changing event more memorable and special.

With labor, delivery, recovery, and post-partum rooms, mothers and guests can enjoy privacy and stay in the same room through delivery and recovery. Designed similar to a home environment, each suite offers:

- Couch that converts into a sleeper bed
- Large, private bathroom with tub and shower
- Microwave and refrigerator
- Soothing décor
- Television and DVD player

The Women and Children’s facility is equipped to handle all of a mother’s needs—even in an emergency. With a complete operating suite, recovery room, and four post-Cesarean section suites, mothers can rest assured they will receive quality care without leaving the community.

“When families come in, they’re welcomed in a beautiful environment,” says Shelly Koontz, RN, IBCLC, Nurse Manager at CTRMC. “The highly trained, excellent nursing staff are ready to provide anything a patient or family may need. We want to make this a wonderful experience.”
Complete Care
The nursery is fully equipped with cardiorespiratory monitoring to deliver special care if needed. Fetal monitors are state-of-the-art and give the staff the most advanced tools.

“Each of our registered nurses is specially trained in managing labor and delivery with vaginal and C-section deliveries, as well as providing care for both mom and baby after delivery,” says Koontz. “In the event that a baby needs to be transported to a higher level of care, all nurses are prepared to stabilize and facilitate that need.”

Sharing Joy
After you welcome your new addition to the family, the Women and Children’s Center wants to continue the excitement. For participating families, you can share a picture of your new baby with family and friends online. After arriving home, mothers can utilize the unique home visit program, where two registered nurses and lactation consultants provide a follow-up at-home visit and reassurance to mothers.

Baby-Friendly Benefits
Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center’s Women and Children’s Center encourages and promotes successful breastfeeding for a healthy mother-baby relationship.

A program of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund, the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative recognizes hospitals that utilize policies and practices to enable parents to make informed choices about feeding and caring for their babies. Carson Tahoe has applied to become the first Baby-Friendly facility in Nevada.

Within the Baby-Friendly initiative, the Women and Children’s Center practices the 10 steps to successful breastfeeding, some of which include:

• Communicating the written breastfeeding policy routinely to all healthcare staff
• Informing all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding
• Helping mothers initiate breastfeeding within an hour of birth
• Practicing “rooming-in” by allowing mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day
• Encouraging breastfeeding on demand
• Fostering the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and referring mothers upon discharge from the hospital

“Breastfeeding is important to the physical, mental, and emotional health of both the mother and the baby,” says Kathy Molina, RNC, IBCLC, Inpatient Nursing Director at CTRMC. “It has a profound effect on the family, community, and future generations. For almost two decades, CTRMC has recognized the value of breastfeeding and worked diligently to create an environment that supports breastfeeding through such practices as rooming-in, education, providing lactation educators and consultants, and much more. Supporting breastfeeding is one more way to support the good health of our community.”

ABCs of Pregnancy and Parenting
If you are expecting a new addition to your family, beef up your baby knowledge through Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center’s prenatal education offerings.

Childbirth Preparation Series. A four-week series covering the labor process, childbirth options, fetal growth and development, changes to your body, post-partum recovery, labor techniques, breastfeeding, and more.

Cliff Notes – The Basics in a Day. For busy parents-to-be or families in need of a quick refresher, this course covers much of the information offered in the Childbirth Preparation Series in one day.

Breastfeeding Class. Learn the benefits and techniques of breastfeeding, and get answers to your breastfeeding questions and concerns.

Newborn Care Class. Find out the basics of infant care and ask detailed questions concerning newborn care.

To learn more or to sign up for classes at CTRMC, call (775) 445-5131.
Winning the Food War

Something funny happens the moment a child turns 18 months old. The same kid who used to chow down on broccoli and macaroni and cheese now wants nothing but mashed potatoes for two weeks straight. What can you do to feed your new picky eater?

As anxiety provoking as picky eating is for parents, it is the norm for the 18-month-to 3-year-old child. Calorie needs go way down, and pickiness goes through the roof. Even if the change is not this dramatic, all children will eat less than they did before their toddler years. But despite your worst fears, children never starve themselves. Repeat it to yourself. Tape it to the bathroom mirror. No matter how little Buster seems to eat, it will be enough to sustain his growth.

With that key thought in mind, here are some tips to make it through the terrible twos.

- **Do not load your child up on milk.** A child younger than age 2 should consume 18 to 24 ounces of whole milk a day. Any more puts the child at risk for anemia (iron-poor blood). Parents frequently swear they have to give their child more milk because they won’t eat. However, milk is pure calories and very filling. Decrease the milk to three to four cups a day and watch the appetite increase.

- **Do not make them clean their plate.** In this age of rampant childhood obesity, you never want to teach kids to eat when they are not hungry.

- **Feed your children what you want them to eat.** The biggest pitfall of toddler feeding is giving children whatever they want so they will "eat something." A toddler who can come back later and get ice cream and cookies will never eat his or her vegetables at dinner. Fix things they like, but put the spinach on the plate as well. If they do not want to eat it, do not force them. But when they come back later, make sure you offer them the same food again.

  Maintain the consistency mentioned above and you will do wonders for your child’s health. There may be a few nights your child goes to bed without eating, but he or she will still be alive when you check on him or her in the morning. Teaching them that you are in charge when it comes to eating will strengthen overall discipline and set good habits until they reach the next major eating challenge: adolescence.

**New Ideas for Picky Eaters**

If your child is hesitant about trying new foods, finding ways to make food fun could make all the difference. Try some of these ideas to spice up mealtime.

- Ants on a log (celery sticks with peanut butter and raisins)
- Kebabs with vegetables and chicken
- Yogurt parfaits layered with favorite fruits

To find a pediatrician, visit www.carsontahoe.com or call (775) 445-5161 for a copy of a physician directory.
3 Keys to a Stress-Free Life

You’ve taken on too much at work; your children are struggling in school; an elderly parent has come to live with you; your health isn’t up to par—no matter what stressors life throws your way, you can take steps to overcome them.

Stress has been linked to heart disease and poor immune function, among other conditions. To keep your stress levels in check, take a little time out just for you. Even if you don’t have a significant amount of time to devote to relaxation, just a few minutes each day can make a big difference in how you feel.

To reduce your stress levels:

• Get a massage. If there’s a massage school in your area, you may be able to schedule an appointment with a student at a significantly reduced rate.

• Maintain your hobbies. Do you enjoy reading? Set aside enough time to read at least a chapter or two of a book each day.

• Meditate. Close your eyes and concentrate on your breathing. Picturing yourself in a serene location and focusing on sensory images may help you reduce stress levels even more.

If you’re feeling stressed on a regular basis, behavioral health professionals at Carson Tahoe Regional Healthcare can help. Visit www.carsontahoe.com or call (775) 445-7350 to learn more.

Keeping It Fresh: Activities for a Healthy Brain

You watch your diet and exercise to ward off the effects of aging on your body, but do you work to keep your mind young, too?

According to researchers with the United States Department of Agriculture, certain health measures may forestall aging of the brain. By eating fruits and vegetables rich in oxygen radical absorbance capacity value, you can prevent long-term memory loss, enhance your learning capacity, and prevent tissue damage.

With the right mental exercise, you may be able to reverse the effects of aging on your brain, too. Studies have shown that when a person learns, new neural pathways are forged in the brain. So by continuously stimulating your mind, you can reduce your risk for developing dementia and possibly Alzheimer’s disease in old age.

What Can You Do?

Take steps to keep your mind youthful by eating healthy, antioxidant-rich foods, such as blueberries, spinach, and strawberries, and engaging in exercises that challenge your mind to learn, such as dancing, completing crossword puzzles, and playing card games. A fit mind can be just as valuable as a fit body, so make sure to keep your brain in shape as you endeavor to age healthily.
The Dangers of Metabolic Syndrome

Metabolic syndrome is as prevalent as the common cold, affecting approximately one in every six Americans.

Metabolic syndrome is not a disease. It’s a group of risk factors that greatly increases an individual’s chance of acquiring serious health issues, such as heart disease, stroke, and Type 2 diabetes. Having metabolic syndrome doubles your risk of acquiring coronary heart disease and increases your chances of developing diabetes by five.

According to the American Heart Association and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, if you have three of the following risk factors, you may have metabolic syndrome.

**Blood Sugar: High Fasting Glucose Level**
- 100 mg/dL or higher

**Cholesterol: High Triglycerides**
- 150 mg/dL or higher
- Use of a cholesterol medicine

**Cholesterol: Low Good Cholesterol (HDL)**
- For men: less than 40 mg/dL
- For women: less than 50 mg/dL
- Use of a cholesterol medicine

**High Blood Pressure**
- 130/85 mm Hg or higher
- Use of a high blood pressure medication

**Large Waist Line**
- For men: 40 inches or larger
- For women: 35 inches or larger

**Talk to your physician about your risk factors and what you can do to live a healthier life. To find a Carson Tahoe Regional Healthcare cardiologist, visit www.carsontahoe.com or call Carson Tahoe Cardiology at (775) 445-7650.**

Trouble A-Head

Have you gone hoarse? Do you have sores in your mouth that won’t heal? Screening by an ear, nose, and throat specialist can help determine if your lingering symptoms are signs of head or neck cancer.

Lifestyle factors can increase your personal risk for cancers of the head and neck. According to the National Institutes of Health, alcohol consumption and use of tobacco—both smoking and smoke-less—are linked to 85 percent of these cancers. Compared to national statistics, this type of cancer appears to be on the rise in Nevada.

**Signs of Damage**

All cancer begins with cell damage—formerly healthy cells that no longer repair themselves. The most common type of head and neck cancer is found in the mucous membranes lining the mouth, nose, and throat.

The human papillomavirus, which also causes sores in the mouth, can be a precursor of this type of cancer.

“Don’t ignore mouth sores that don’t heal, white plaque that won’t go away, or difficulty swallowing,” says Michelle Thomas, RN, OCN, Outreach and Education Nurse at Carson Tahoe Regional Healthcare. If you are experiencing these symptoms, check with your physician to rule out the possibility of cancer. “If you have been diagnosed with head or neck cancer, we have the resources at Carson Tahoe to help.”

The Carson Tahoe Cancer Resource Center will host screenings for head and neck cancer in March.

**For more information about screening opportunities, call the Carson Tahoe Cancer Resource Center at (775) 445-7500.**
A New Face on the Front Line of Care

If you have an earache, sprained ankle, or an allergy attack, you probably want to see your physician soon. But what do you do when he or she can’t see you until the end of the week?

More and more care clinics across the country are bringing on board valuable additions to their medical teams—nurse practitioners and physician assistants. These providers offer an alternative to the doctor when you need to be seen right away. Surprisingly though, they aren’t a brand-new addition—rather, just a growing one.

“The roles of nurse practitioners and physician assistants have been in place in the healthcare community for the past three decades,” says Jim Hiney, Director of Carson Tahoe Physician Clinics. “In the last five years, these midlevel care providers have truly increased in numbers and are playing a vital and prominent role in the medical field. At our clinics, we now have seven midlevel practitioners working with our physicians.”

A Team for Better Care
The beauty of having nurse practitioners and physician assistants on board and available to care for patients’ acute care needs, such as strains, aches, and even follow-up visits, is that they work directly with physicians.

“Our midlevel providers are mentored by our physicians,” explains Hiney. “Each nurse practitioner or physician assistant works directly with one physician, learning the way of that physician’s practice. This way, the midlevel care providers become extensions of their physicians, filling the gap and providing a vital link to service for our ever-growing patient population.”

Developing New Bonds
If you have not yet seen a nurse practitioner or physician assistant, when you do, you’ll likely find it’s no different than seeing your doctor. In fact, many patients of Carson Tahoe Physician Clinics have developed a strong care relationship with their doctors’ midlevel providers.

“Our physician assistants and nurse practitioners work on a first-name basis with their patients, much like nurses do,” adds Hiney. “They aren’t concerned with titles or labels. They are focused on enhancing patients’ care and their physicians’ medical practices, so everyone benefits.”

Need a new primary care physician or a clinic where you, too, can take advantage of seeing the nurse practitioner or physician assistant? Call Carson Tahoe Physician Clinics at (775) 883-9003.

“I have no doubt that the role of physician assistants and nurse practitioners is going to evolve and continue to be extremely important in the future. More than 30 million new patients are projected to enter the healthcare system in the next three years as healthcare reforms roll out. There are not enough primary care physicians to handle that load, which makes the extension of care through midlevel care providers vital.”

– Jim Hiney, Director of Carson Tahoe Physician Clinics
Getting to the heart of the matter

Carson Tahoe Cardiology Services
Serving Carson City, Douglas County, Lyon County and Lake Tahoe

Caring for the heart begins with caring from the heart.
Carson Tahoe’s Five-Star Cardiology Program provides the experience, services and dedication patients and their loved ones need through every stage of care, from prevention to diagnosis to treatment and recovery. With a skilled network of healthcare professionals and cutting-edge technology to draw from, Carson Tahoe is delivering comprehensive heart and vascular care every day – close to home.

1470 Medical Pkwy., Suite 160  •  Carson City  
925 Ironwood Drive, Suite 2107  •  Minden  
2133 South Ave.  •  South Lake Tahoe

775-445-7650