

PRMC labs receive accreditation

SALISBURY — The laboratory and arterial blood gases (ABG) lab at Peninsula Regional Medical Center have both been awarded accreditation for the “excellence of service provided” by the Commission on Laboratory Accreditation of the College of American Pathologists based on the results of a recent on-site inspection.

Laboratory administrative director Kathy Hoffman, medical director Patrick O’Reilly Jr., MD, ABG coordinator Tom Russ, medical director Jon Beacher, MD and department director Mike Hewitt were all congratulated by the on-site inspection team for being among a select group of laboratories nationwide to meet the rigorous guidelines established to help ensure the highest standards for patient care. A team of inspectors examined the records and quality control of the laboratories for the preceding two years, as well as the education and qualifications of the total staff, the adequacy of the facilities, the equipment, laboratory safety and laboratory management to determine how well each lab is serving its patients.

Breast feeding classes offered

SALISBURY — Peninsula Regional Medical Center will offer a one-time, three-hour breastfeeding class from 9 a.m. to noon on Jan. 20.

This three-hour class will

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Internet becomes a tool for wise care

By Carol Ann Boswell

Traditionally, patients make health care decisions according to their physicians’ advice: they go where their doctors tell them to go for care and follow the treatment prescribed for their diagnosis. But, that is all changing as an increasing number of health care consumers connect with the World Wide Web. According to the Pew



Carol Ann Boswell

Internet & Family Life Project, 80 percent of American Internet users surveyed in 2006 have researched health topics on the Web. That’s approximately 113 million adults.

The Internet is a bountiful source of medical and health care information. It is so appealing to healthcare consumers because they can ask questions from the comfort and privacy of their own homes. Access to documents or professionals halfway around the world is only as far away as the ends of their fingers. The research is done anonymously without the restriction of office hours or business days: no waiting for libraries or doctors’ offices to open. And message boards and posting sites allow individuals with similar medical conditions or concerns to

Web MD’s homepage offers a wide variety of help for those seeking to make health care choices.

voice their fears and share their experiences, in the manner of a cyber support group.

Yet, 75 percent of those surveyed admitted that they usually don’t check the source and data they gather for accuracy and/or validity. Established and reputable

health care organizations and medical publications provide valuable information on the Internet. But, a lot of false or misleading health information is also in circulation. Just as the anonymity of the Web is sought by health care

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Beat that diet plateau in the new year

By Dr. Victor Gong

Losing weight was never easy. You have your ups and downs, and that’s normal in the battle of the bulge. Sometimes you’re just at a standstill, and no matter what you try, nothing works. Here are some tips you can use to get stubborn scales pointing in the right direction again.

Take it slow

Don’t cut too many calories



Dr. Gong

so if you suddenly eliminate 1,000 calories a day, your metabolism will slow down to hang on to the small amount

you are taking in.

Keep eating

Waiting too long between meals can make you ravenous and more likely to binge. To avoid this, have at least three meals of 300 to 500 calories each day and keep 100 to 150 calorie snacks, such as fruit, chopped vegetables and low-fat yogurt, on hand.

Skip your evening cocktail

Research also reveals that a

drink before dinner causes you to eat more, probably because alcohol makes you feel less inhibited. If you do crave a cocktail, stick to a glass of wine (80 calories) and drink it with your meal.

Stop the bloat

Eliminate water retention by restricting salt intake. Diet plateaus are often due to fluid retention. Also, drink eight

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prepare parents for a great breastfeeding experience. Mothers are encouraged to bring support people with them, as studies show that breastfeeding is more successful when mom has loving, knowledgeable support. Join Peninsula Regional educators to learn the basics of breastfeeding, proper positioning of baby, how to avoid common problems and how to pump and store milk. Videos help to

demonstrate the proper techniques for successful nursing.

An evening class will also be held from 6 to 9 p.m. on Feb. 24. Each session will meet at the Peninsula Cardiology Building located at 400 Eastern Shore Drive, Salisbury in the third-floor classroom. The fee is \$20 for mom and her coach. Pre-registration is required. For more information, call 410-543-7126 or visit the Classes and Events section of the Peninsula Regional Medical Center Web site at www.peninsula.org for online registration.

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consumers who value their privacy, it is exploited by health industry charlatans and opportunists.

To be a wise health care consumer in the electronic age, individuals have to remember two basics:

Like a reporter, always check your source.

In the way of traditional medicine, get a second opinion – from a flesh and blood expert

at a brick and mortar institution – before making any decisions regarding treatment or self-care.

According to Pew, 51 percent of Internet users research treatments or procedures for a certain medical condition and 29 percent research information on a particular doctor or hospital. Turning to the web can be a good thing when the only other source of information in the home may be a dusty set of Encyclopedia Britannica from 1981. Web sites maintained by hospitals, research institutions, well-established insurance carriers, government agencies and trusted medical journals are a safe bet. These sites offer comprehensive information about numerous health topics.

Be wary, however, of Web sites that offer dramatic claims or those whose information is

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Reputable Web sites

Ask your physician or other health care provider for a list of web sites to turn to for reliable health information or visit the sites below:

Web MD

www.webmd.com

Centers for Disease Control

www.cdc.gov

National Institutes of Health

www.nih.gov

Maryland Health Care Commission (click on the Maryland Hospital Performance Evaluation Guide)

www.mhcc.maryland.gov

Web resource for hospital quality

www.qualitycheck.org

Maintained by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov

Maintained by Administrators in Medicine

www.doctboard.org

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glasses of water a day — this helps flush out excess salt and water.

Exercise

Vary your workout. Change your exercise routine every four to six weeks to prevent a calorie-burning plateau. For example, if you've been running daily, try cycling or swimming. Another option: Add bursts of high-intensity moves. If you jog at a 10-minute-mile pace, add a 30 second sprint every five minutes.

Divide and conquer

Slice your workouts into two 20-minute sessions. Your metabolism will stay elevated for several hours after each workout, which means you'll burn more calories overall.

Hit the circuits

Circuit training means doing eight to 10 exercises one after another, with

little or no rest in between. You are always working different muscles, so your body doesn't get used to one activity and has to work harder. In fact, research shows that circuit trainers burn around 25 percent more calories after a workout than people who lift weights with rest periods.

Have reasonable expectations

If you assume that you'll lose 15 pounds in two weeks, you're setting yourself up for disappointment. When you don't reach your unrealistic weight loss goals, you'll become discouraged, making it more likely that you'll drop off your plan temporarily and eventually hit a plateau. A good rule of thumb: Expect to lose about one to one and a half pounds per week.

These are some successful tips that have helped our many thousands of patients that we have helped combat the battle of the bulge.

Gong is medical director of the 75th Street & Doctors Weight Control & Wellness Centers.