

Health & Fitness

Eye surgery may correct vision without glasses

It is estimated that 60 million people worldwide suffer from nearsightedness or astigmatism...common vision problems typically corrected with glasses or contact lenses. But in the United States alone, over 750,000 people have discovered an alternative. It's called Radial Keratotomy...an innovative surgical procedure that reduces or eliminates the need for corrective lenses.

RK, as it is commonly called, was introduced in the Wyoming Valley by Dr. Thomas G. Sharkey of Savage, Sharkey & Reiser Eye Care Consultants. Dr. Sharkey performs RK, and Astigmatic Keratotomy (a procedure to correct astigmatism) on an outpatient basis. A topical anesthetic is used to numb the eye prior to surgery, and a mild sedative is administered to insure that the patient is relaxed and comfortable. A series of very fine radial incisions are made in the outer portion of the cornea. This flattens the central portion of the cornea, enabling light rays entering the eye to focus on the retina, resulting in a clearer image.

The exact number, depth and

location of the incisions are calculated with a computer to determine the desired flattening and optical correction. The surgery usually takes less than five minutes to perform, and patients can normally see an improvement in their vision immediately, although several days are sometimes necessary to achieve the maximum vision correction. Patients can usually return to their normal lifestyle very quickly, with only a few minor restrictions.

As a result of Dr. Sharkey's work, RK has given many Northeastern Pennsylvania residents a new outlook on life. For Andrea, a Wilkes-Barre banking officer, it meant doing away with corrective lenses after 22 years of use. "It's amazing to wake up in the morning and see my alarm clock," she says, "without having to rely on glasses or contacts." Dr. Sharkey shares in his patients' enthusiasm. "As a surgeon, I would say RK is one of the most satisfying procedures I perform," says Dr. Sharkey. "It is enhancing the quality of life for our patients, enabling them to enjoy things they couldn't before."

Vitamin, mineral labels soon will be different

By May 8, most packaged foods will carry a new nutrition label called Nutrition Facts. "Study the new label closely, because the listing of vitamins and minerals has changed."

says Dr. J. Lynne Brown, associate professor of food science in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires only two vitamins and two minerals to be listed on the label. The vitamins are A and C, and the minerals are iron and calcium.

"On many foods these will be the only vitamins and minerals listed," says Brown. "However, because food processors and manufacturers may have the option to list up to 22 more vitamins and minerals, some food packages will have additional ones listed. Also, if a manufacturer fortifies a food with a vitamin or a mineral, that nutrient must be listed on the Nutrition Facts label."

Vitamins and minerals listed on the label have a percentage next to them, called the Percent Daily Value. This is the percentage of recommended daily intake provided by one serving of food. The recommended daily intake is the amount most people need to eat daily to maintain good health.

"Over the course of a day you should eat a variety of foods so that the daily value of each of these four vitamins and minerals add up to 100," says Brown.

The Percent Daily Value can be used to compare the nutrient content of foods. "For instance, you can examine the label on two different juices and learn which one contains the higher daily value of vitamin C," says Brown. "And you can compare two types of canned beans and see which contains the greater daily value of calcium."

"If you compare the daily value of iron and calcium in foods for a while, you will gradually learn what foods are good sources of these two important minerals. Women especially need to pay attention to this because of the role these two minerals play in their health."

Infant CPR seminar March 28

Wyoming Valley Health Care System, Inc., will present an educational seminar for families of newborns and young children titled "Infant and Child CPR" on Monday, March 28 from 6 to 10 p.m. in the TPS Medical Pavilion Auditorium, 468 Northampton St., Edwardsville. Certification for the course is from the American Heart Association. Class size is limited and the fee is \$10 per person.

Free child care services, refreshments and convenient parking will be available.

Registration forms can be obtained by calling Health Enhancement at 283-7851. Checks can be mailed with completed registration to 61 Poplar Street, Kingston, PA 18704.



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Business travelers can eat healthy on the road

By **KAREN BIRD**
Registered Dietician
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Is it possible to eat out and eat right?

That's an important question for Northeastern Pennsylvania executives who regularly do business over lunch or dinner at a restaurant or hotel.

Typically, the menu features dozens of high-fat foods such as well-marbled steak, deep-fried fish and sugar-glazed baked ham. Even vegetables get the high-fat treatment: they're usually swimming in butter, creamy dressings or heavy sauces.

As you may know, a high-fat, high-cholesterol diet is a major contributor to the development of heart disease, cancer, obesity,

diabetes and other afflictions. Conversely, a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet that is rich in nutrients can actually prevent many diseases and add years to a person's life.

All right then, how do you gain control of your diet if you're frequently at the mercy of restaurant chefs and a hectic schedule?

First, realize it's okay to ask for specially prepared food in a restaurant. Although the majority of diners do not believe they have that right, about seven out of every 10 restaurant managers say diners do have the right to choose, according to a recent MasterCard Restaurant Poll. Among the options you can ask for are these:

- Baked or broiled entrees instead of fried ones.
- Margarine instead of butter.

- Whole-wheat bread instead of white bread.
- Salad with dressing served on the side.

- Salt substitute instead of salt.
- Unsweetened orange juice.
- Plain, unbuttered vegetables.
- Decaffeinated coffee or tea.

Second, if you haven't seen your physician recently, make an appointment now to have a physical that includes a check for diet-related problems. For example, if the physical reveals you have high blood pressure, it could be a sign that you need to reduce salt intake. If you suffer from excessive stress or "edginess," it could mean you should cut down on - or cut out - caffeinated coffee. If you have an elevated cholesterol level



KAREN BIRD


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