

Health



COMING TUESDAY
Parents share the dream with their kids of growing up to be president

C
INSIDE
People2
Advice.....2
Comics3

Monday, November 3, 2008

HEALTH NOTES

Tidbits of information about staying healthy and fit



Hospice tree trimmers

This holiday season Gaston Hospice offers three commemorative holiday ornaments that can be inscribed with the name of someone to be honored or remembered and/or the year. The 2008 ornaments include: a decorative, white, handmade snowflake ornament from JS Pottery in Stanley and beautiful handmade porcelain bells and balls from Barking Spider Pottery in Penland.

■ For details, see story page 2C

Alzheimer's Awareness event

A candlelight service in observance of National Alzheimer's Awareness Month takes place 5:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Neisler Life Enrichment Center, 222 Kings Mountain Blvd., Kings Mountain. The center welcomes anyone who has family members, friends, or neighbors with dementia to participate in a short service that includes lighting a candle as a person's name is called. Call 704-739-4858.

Advice to college students

1. Quit smoking.
2. Turn off the computer.
3. Go to bed.

It could improve your grades. A University of Minnesota study matched grade point averages with the typical health problems such as smoking, drinking and stress reported by nearly 10,000 Minnesota college students. They found a clear connection between student health and academic success. What affects grades the most? Stress (lots of it), excessive screen time, binge drinking and gambling.

Ask Dr. Gott

Q: When I have a cold, I wear a surgical mask when I am out in public. This causes people to look at me like I'm from Mars and children point at me. Am I wrong, or do people need to be educated that this is something they should do?

A: Face masks are common in some areas, especially Asian countries. They are harmless and do help prevent the spread of viruses. There is no harm in your habit, but it is not necessary unless you spend a lot of time around people with compromised immune systems.



Dalton Horney gets his eyesight checked by Dr. Barbara Marcussen

Corneal molding

BY FRAN FARLOW | Gazette Correspondent
GAZETTE PHOTOS BY JOHN CLARK

Dr. Barbara Marcussen has been making her patients see clearer without their glasses or contacts, and surgery is not required.

How? Wavefront Corneal Molding is a procedure where a special mold — similar to a contact lens — is placed on the eye at bedtime and the patient wears it all night. In the morning, the mold is removed, and the patient's vision is restored to clear with their naked eye. The vision will stay clear for the next 24 to 72 hours. It is a safe option, Dr. Marcussen says, because no tissue is removed from the eye as is required in vision correcting surgeries.

HOW IT WORKS

Some form of corneal molding has been in use for more than 40 years.

The new system of Wavefront Corneal Molding works by reading 14,000 points of each person's cornea that are measured by a special topographer - the same type of instrument used when having Wavefront guided LASIK surgery.

These readings can then be analyzed and used in the design of a mold by Dr. Marcussen. The corneal mold is designed based on the patient's specific corneal surface, size and shape factors as well as pupil diameter and glasses prescription.

"I really liked the idea of creat-

ing a unique mold as individual as a fingerprint for each person's cornea," said Dr. Marcussen. "It creates such an exact mold for the eye that it allows clear comfortable vision usually within 24 hours even for my patients with astigmatism and higher amounts of nearsightedness."

One of the advantages of molding the eye is that there are fewer prescription changes. The mold prevents changes in the cornea so the prescription does not change as greatly year after year.

KID FRIENDLY

Dalton Horney underwent Wavefront Corneal Molding more than two years ago. His

NEW EYE TREATMENT OFFERS ALTERNATIVE TO SURGERY, GLASSES OR CONTACTS



Marcussen watches as Bob Weigand puts in a corneal molding contact lens.

mom, Kathleen, was looking for something that would slow down how rapidly his eyes were changing. His prescription had been doubling in strength each year at his eye exam visits and he had to get stronger and stronger glasses. Kathleen knew Dalton had inherited his nearsightedness from her since she had needed stronger glasses each year as a child.

Dalton now sees 20/20 in both eyes without his glasses all day long. He can play baseball without his glasses. He can put his helmet on and off quickly to catch the ball at home plate without worrying about jerking his glasses off in the process. His mother enjoys not having to buy Dalton stronger glasses each year.

HELPING OTHERS

Bob Weigand, 46, who had Wavefront Corneal Molding in

2005, enjoys the ability to ride his motorcycle without having to worry about the wind drying out his contacts or blowing off his glasses. He has found the molds to be comfortable, and they allow him clear unaided vision.

Sam McCombs works on a computer at her job and experienced dry eye symptoms despite using rewetting drops. She often said her eyes felt tired and got red from being so dry. She decided to have Wavefront Corneal Molding as an alternative to her contacts. Now she sees clearly during the day due does not experience dry eyes.

The treatment allows the freedom to participate in sports without worrying about losing a contact lens. "Some of my happiest patients are mothers of children who can now see their children in the pool clearly and aren't worried about losing their contacts," said Dr. Marcussen.

Let's Talk Fitness



Mary E. NEIL

Gastonia Jazzercise instructor Mary E. Neil writes a weekly column for Health and Fitness. You can e-mail her at maryeneil@earthlink.net.

Feeling your 'inner' warrior

Do you feel like increasing your stamina and expressing your inner fierceness? Try the yoga Warrior pose. Because so many yoga poses are similar to the dance moves I do in my fitness class, I never took the time to investigate this ancient fitness program in detail.

The other day I came across information from Dr. Andrew Weil, and what fascinated me were all the benefits this one Yoga pose — like strengthening legs and ankles, increasing stamina, relieving backaches, to name just few.

The Warrior Pose was named in honor of an incarnation of Shiva, a fierce warrior described as having a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet, wielding a thousand clubs and wearing a tiger skin. But don't be afraid. There is no threat like that in my classes except perhaps when I say, "use it or lose it." My Jazzercise Lite class is designed for

no-impact exercise and incorporates jazz dance moves, as well as Yoga and Pilate, with the security of a chair nearby. The benefit for all ages 55 plus is you can jump as high as you want or don't jump at all. No intimidation involved as it is a follow-me program and everyone is so busy watching the instructor they are not watching anyone else. The program also works on balance, coordination as well as dance patterns for mental benefits. Wow, just what everyone needs. Right?

You are picturing aching muscles. If you have ever worked harder than your present physical condition can stand, you know what I am talking about. Here are tips to reduce muscle soreness from your workout.

Eat right. You need five to seven daily servings of fresh fruits and vegetables that contain antioxidants, which are known to repair muscle fiber damage

from your workout.

Drink up! Get plenty of fluids before, during and after your workout. Hydrate before you feel thirsty.

Add variety. Get out of your exercise rut and try different fitness routines.

Timing is everything. Rest 48 to 72 hours between training muscle groups.

Stretch. Utilize stretching during your strength-training routines. Hold your stretches and never bounce. Hold until you feel your muscle "give or relax", which will reduce soreness.

The hardest part of all this is you have got to get off the couch. But from the American Heart Association comes this quote: "This is the day to get fit. For each hour of regular, vigorous exercise - or more movement than you are used to - you could gain two hours of life expectancy." Boy, as a fitness instructor at almost 78 years of age, that is good news.