

# united hospital

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## Health care in hard times

### Four ways to help keep costs down

When tightening the purse strings becomes a necessity, there are some things you shouldn't eliminate from the budget. Health care is one of them.

Cutting corners on your medical care might actually cost you more in the long run. More important, it may put your health in jeopardy.

Still, as deductibles and copays rise and many people find themselves without health insurance, lowering out-of-pocket medical expenses may become a priority.

These steps can help you stay healthy and lower your medical costs:

- 1. Practice good health habits.** Smart lifestyle choices, such as these, are key:
  - Don't smoke, and avoid secondhand smoke. Lung disease, heart disease, stroke and cancer are just a few of the health problems associated with smoking that you might avoid by kicking your habit. For tips on quitting smoking, visit [www.unitedhospital.com](http://www.unitedhospital.com). Go to *Conditions & Treatments* at the top of the page and then *Health Topics and Resources*.
  - Eat well. High blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis and heart disease may be linked to diet. Aim for a diet filled with fruits, vegetables and whole grains. And go easy on foods and drinks that are high in calories, sugar, salt or fat.
  - Be active. Balancing your activity level with your calorie consumption will help you maintain a healthy weight—and

—Continued on the back page



## Online answers to wellness questions

Do you wish you knew your ideal weight? Are you hunting for heart-healthy cooking tips? Maybe you have questions about starting an exercise program.

United Hospital, as part of Allina Hospitals & Clinics, offers free online tips and tools for a variety of health topics including fitness and exercise, healthful eating, weight loss, and pharmacy and medicine, to name just a few. Visit [www.unitedhospital.com](http://www.unitedhospital.com), and click on *Be Healthy* at the top of the page today! ■



UNITED  
HOSPITAL

Allina Hospitals & Clinics

## Ryba becomes new president of United Hospital

Tomi Ryba joined United Hospital as its new president on Feb. 17.

Before joining United Hospital, Ryba was the chief operating officer at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Medical Center. She was responsible for improving the quality, efficiency and financial performance of inpatient and outpatient operations. She was also accountable for infrastructure, capital equipment and facilities planning.

"Some of my own priorities are to make sure our health care is of exceptional clinical quality, that it's easy to navigate and that it's all done with a priority on world-class service," Ryba says. "I'm also equally excited about working with the community leaders and thinking about what the community needs are and how we work as a community partner."

Ryba takes over after Ken Paulus, Allina Hospitals & Clinics' president and chief operating officer, served as interim president for United Hospital.

"Allina and United Hospital are fortunate, indeed, to have attracted a leader of Tomi Ryba's caliber," Paulus says. "At UCSF Medical Center, she led a five-year turnaround in operations, transforming the hospital from a loss position to a \$100 million operating margin. Through it all, she has placed patient care at the top of the center's agenda."

Ryba's extensive experience in academic medicine and the public sector also includes being president of St. Mary Medical Center in Long Beach, Calif.; chief operating officer of University of Washington's Harborview Medical Center; and chief executive officer of Riverside Regional Medical



**Tomi Ryba, president,  
United Hospital**

Center. She has been an active community leader, involved in the Alternatives to Domestic Violence, Junior League and National Charity League organizations.

On a personal note, Ryba's move to Minnesota was a bit of a homecoming for her and her family. Since they have family members in Minnesota, North Dakota and Iowa, they already "knew and loved the area." ■



## So you want to be a doctor?

United Hospital, as a part of Allina Hospitals & Clinics, is committed to a mission that reaches well beyond the bedside to improve the health status of the communities it serves.

"United Hospital is proud to not only serve the east metro community but also to call it our home," says Dan Foley, MD, vice president, Medical Affairs, United Hospital. "And because of that, we feel an even deeper commitment to further supplement the care given within the hospital. A special way we do that is to share with students what it's like being a doctor. By cultivating their interest, hopefully we're helping to develop the next generation of doctors, nurses and other medical care providers."

An Inside Look® at Being a Doctor is an intense, two-day immersion program hosted by United Hospital. The students attend lectures and also visit many areas within the hospital that may include the Emergency Department, Radiology, Rehabilitation Centers, Operating Rooms and Cardiac Catheterization Labs. Students are even able to handle pathologic organ specimens in the pathology lab and participate in hospital rounds with doctors.

Since the program's establishment, many students have returned to United Hospital as professional staff and volunteers. The course curriculum was designed by Ronald T. Sih, MD, a practicing cardiologist from the University of Minnesota, who founded a not-for-profit organization called the RTS Career Center. ■

## Emergency care services remain at full capacity during construction

It's been one year since United Hospital broke ground on its new, state-of-the-art Peter J. King Emergency Care Center, and construction remains on schedule for a 2011 opening. Even more important, emergency care at United Hospital remains in full service throughout the construction.

"We're one of the busiest emergency departments in the metro area, and there was no way we could leave the community without that vital care by closing or even temporarily closing our emergency services because of construction. We are running at full capacity; emergency staff is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week," says Jay Westwater, MD, medical director, Emergency Department, United Hospital.

### The new face of emergency care

As the largest specialty hospital in the east metro and western Wisconsin, United Hospital serves more than 200,000 people annually. In addition, United is a referral center for other area hospitals and clinics and also a receiving care center—one of the few in the metro area—for adults and adolescents with serious mental illness. As the number of patients continues to increase, so do the diversity and complexity of challenges facing emergency care. More patients are without access to medical care or health insurance. Mental illness and health issues related to aging present special challenges in the Emergency Department.



New Peter J. King Emergency Care Center at United Hospital is scheduled to open in 2011.

"The building of a new, state-of-the-art facility is also the perfect time to examine and further improve upon how we deliver care and interact with our patients. In respect to the more complex health issues we're seeing and the financial times we are in, it is even more crucial that care is focused on how patients can better navigate and monitor the health care provided to them," Westwater says.

United Hospital's Emergency Department is staffed exclusively by full-time, board-certified Emergency Department doctors. Along with life-threatening injuries and illnesses ranging from stroke to heart attack, United Hospital must be prepared for the real possibilities of terrorist threats, large-scale natural disasters and worldwide epidemics. ■



## Watch our progress online

For more information about the project, visit [www.unitedhospital.com](http://www.unitedhospital.com) and click on *Construction Cam* under *Helpful Links*.

## Camp United Youth Volunteer Program

Camp United, our successful summer volunteer program for youths ages 14 to 18, is now accepting applications for this summer. Attend one of our six two-week camps and spend those two weeks helping patients, families and friends at the hospital. It's just two weeks of your whole summer to help people, to learn about health care and to reap the benefits of volunteering.



To apply or to learn more about Camp United, visit our website at [www.unitedhospital.com](http://www.unitedhospital.com). Go to *Healthy Communities Magazine* under *Helpful Links*. ■





# Ready to meet baby

## Special preparations for your pending arrival

To be a good parent is to look out for your child's well-being.

And this is something you can start to do even before the two of you meet.

What follows are a few of the most important preparations to consider as your delivery draws nearer—things that can help give your baby the best start possible in life.

### Decisions, decisions

If you haven't already settled on a doctor for your baby, now is the time to do so. Even the healthiest babies need frequent checkups, and the first one will take place at the hospital.

Remember, too, that your doctor could potentially see your child through well-baby visits to first sniffles to—sooner than you think—adolescence. So you'll want to find a doctor you trust and feel comfortable talking to.

Before your baby arrives, you'll also want to decide if you're going to breastfeed or use formula.

Do keep in mind that breast milk:

- is the ideal first food. It contains exactly the right amounts of nutrients to help babies grow and is more easily digested than formula.
- contains natural antibodies that help protect babies from ear infections, diarrhea, pneumonia and allergies
- is free—and requires no preparation time.

## Safety first

Perhaps your most important responsibility as a parent is to keep your baby safe.

When it comes to traveling, no newborn is safe without a car seat, and you'll need one for that first ride—the one that will take your baby from the hospital to your home. Your baby should ride in a rear-facing car seat until he or she is both a year old and weighs at least 20 pounds.

You'll also need a safe place for your baby to sleep. Most new cribs and crib mattresses sold in the United States are safe. But be wary of used cribs, which may not meet crib safety standards or may have been recalled. For safety's sake, crib slats should be no more than 2 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches apart.

## Know when you're ready

Not all babies arrive on schedule.

Taking steps to prepare can help you feel confident and ready for your baby's delivery.

# Fast facts on epidurals

It's normal to have some concerns or questions about the pain of giving birth. That's why it's important to talk to your doctor about the different types of pain relief that are available to you. You'll likely discuss one of the most effective forms of pain relief: an epidural block, or *epidural* for short. If you're not familiar with this kind of pain relief, here are a few key points to consider:

- An epidural numbs the lower half of your body. It blocks pain from contractions. Even so, you'll remain awake and alert.
- It's given by injection. The numbing medicine will be injected into a small area below your spinal cord.
- You have flexibility. You can typically have an epidural shortly after your contractions begin or later in your labor. An epidural can be used for either a vaginal birth or a cesarean delivery.
- Complications are rare. Still, headaches and other side effects can occur, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists cautions. Ask your doctor to explain both the advantages and drawbacks of an epidural.

That's why it's important to know the signs that labor is near—or here:

**Lightening.** This is the feeling you get when your baby has moved lower in your pelvis. Lightening happens anytime

from a few weeks to a few hours before the start of labor.

**An increase in vaginal discharge.** This discharge can be clear, pink or slightly bloody. It can occur several days before labor or at its onset.

**Your water breaks** (a trickling or gush of watery fluid from your vagina). Labor may still be several hours away—or it may be starting now.

**Contractions.** Contractions that occur at regular intervals, become stronger and occur despite movement generally signal that labor has begun.

Now that you know the signs of labor, be sure to ask your doctor:

- After labor starts, when should I call you?
- Are there special steps I should follow when I think I am in labor? ■

# Each woman's path to motherhood is unique

The Birth Center at United Hospital is a regional center, dedicated to exceptional health care for women and infants.

- We believe the childbearing experience is a natural, healthy process.
- We recognize individuals are unique and come with a variety of beliefs and expectations that affect their needs during childbirth.
- We believe education, research and consultation should be visible and readily accessible.

- We support the concept of family-centered, individualized care in a safe and positive atmosphere.

## During your pregnancy

The Birth Center offers a variety of programs and classes to ensure your pregnancy is as healthy as possible.

Instructors are professionals from The Birth Center and include maternity and pediatric nurses, exercise specialists, and dietitians.

Tours of The Birth Center are offered each week. Just call 1-866-904-9962 to make arrangements.

## Your birth experience

Most women have uncomplicated pregnancies and births and deliver healthy babies. However, women who choose to give birth at The Birth Center can take comfort in knowing that as a level 3 perinatal center, we are prepared to handle any complication that may arise. ■

## COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION AND SUPPORT GROUPS

# united hospital

If you do not find the program or class you're looking for in this listing, call 1-866-904-9962 for information about offerings at other Allina hospitals or visit [www.allina.com/classes](http://www.allina.com/classes).

## Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers serve patients and staff and greet visitors at United. Call 651-241-8644 or visit for an application.

## CANCER

### The Breast Cancer Support Group

First Tuesday of every month  
2-3:30 p.m.

United Hospital Bentson Family  
Conference Room

Call 651-241-5360 for more  
information.

### Reach to Recovery\*

One-on-one visiting and support  
program for women with breast  
cancer. By appointment only. Call  
651-241-6408 for more information.

### Prostate Cancer Support Group

First Thursday of every month  
7-8:30 p.m.

John Nasseff Medical Center,  
Miller Room

Call 651-241-8328 for more information.

## HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

*Our Health Improvement courses are offered at the Milton M. Hurwitz ExerCare Fitness Center, located at 361 Walnut St. For more information, call 651-241-8080.*

### BOSU Balance Trainer

Mondays and Wednesdays

- Beginner, 9:45 a.m.
- Intermediate, 5:15 p.m.

BOSU integrated balance training improves strength, stability and flexibility.

## Muscle Shop

Ongoing, Mondays and Wednesdays  
3:45-4:30 p.m.

Uses weights, bands and other equipment to tone all major muscle groups. Moderate intensity; no impact.

## Pilates

Pilates strengthens the core by developing pelvic stability and abdominal control.

## Yoga

This 75-minute class includes instructions for components of yoga postures, breathing techniques, relaxation and guided imagery.

## HEART

### HeartSaver/CPR Class

- Tuesdays, Aug. 11, Nov. 10
- FREE

A 2½-hour (noncertified) course for patients and families to learn CPR and the use of AEDs. To register, call Allina Class Registration at 1-866-904-9962.

### The Women's Heart Center

Two-part appointment, \$95

A personalized assessment for women to determine risk for heart disease. To register, call Jodi Denker at 651-241-8108.

## NEUROSCIENCE

### Brain Tumor Support Group\*

Second Monday of every month  
7-8:30 p.m.

Dinner provided: 6-7 p.m.

Education and support for people whose lives have been affected by brain tumors. For more information, call 651-241-8575.

## ORTHOPEDECS

### Total Knee and Hip Replacement Program

The three-hour program is offered twice each month to help you learn about preparing for surgery and recovery afterward. For more information, call 651-241-5390.

## CHILDBIRTH AND PARENTING

*United offers a variety of pregnancy, birth and parenting classes and support groups. Registration is required. Call Allina Class Registration at 1-866-904-9962, or visit us online at [www.allina.com](http://www.allina.com).*

### All About Babies

- Saturdays, April 18, May 16, June 13, July 11, Aug. 29
  - Sundays, April 19, May 17, June 14, July 12, Aug. 30
- 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

One-session class for parents or grandparents about how to care for a newborn.

### Breastfeeding Preparation

- Mondays, May 4, June 1, July 6, Aug. 3, Aug. 31
  - Wednesdays, April 22, May 20, June 17, July 22, Aug. 19
- 7-9 p.m.

This is a one-time session.

*\*Programs co-sponsored by the American Cancer Society.*

## Childbirth and Parenting Preparation

### Weekday classes (five-week series):

- Mondays, June 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; July 13, 20, 27, Aug. 3, 10; Aug. 24, 31, Sept. 14, 21, 28
  - Tuesdays, May 19, 26, June 2, 9, 16; June 30, July 7, 14, 21, 28; Aug. 11, 18, 25, Sept. 1, 8
  - Wednesdays, May 13, 20, 27, June 3, 10; June 24, July 1, 8, 15, 22; Aug. 5, 12, 19, 26, Sept. 2
- 7-9 p.m.

### Weekend classes:

- Fridays and Saturdays, May 8 and 9, June 5 and 6, June 19 and 20, July 17 and 18, July 31 and Aug. 1, Aug. 14 and 15, Aug. 28 and 29

Friday classes: 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Saturday classes: 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Prepares expectant parents for birth and newborn parenting.

### Expectant Father

Mondays, June 8, Aug. 3  
7-9 p.m.

One-session class for fathers-to-be.

### Expectant Grandparents

Tuesdays, May 19, July 28  
7-9 p.m.

One-session class to learn about changes in prenatal care, labor and birth, and parenting.

### Expecting Multiples

Mondays, June 1, 8, 15, 22, 29;  
July 27, Aug. 3, 10, 17, 24  
7-9 p.m.

Five-session birth preparation class for parents expecting more than one baby.

### Father and Baby

Mondays, July 6, 13, 20  
7-8:30 p.m.

Three-session class for fathers and their newborns.

### Infant and Child CPR

- Thursdays, May 14, June 11, July 9, Aug. 6, 7-9:15 p.m.
- Saturdays, May 16, June 13, July 11, Aug. 8, 9:30-11:45 a.m.

Learn resuscitation methods for infants and children younger than 8 years old.

### Infant Massage

Thursdays, May 7, 14, 21  
1:30-3:30 p.m.

Three-session class designed for parents and children from 3 weeks to 4 months old.

### New Brother/New Sister

- Tuesdays, May 5, Aug. 4
- Thursdays, June 18, July 23  
6-7:30 p.m.

One-session class to help children ages 2½ to 10 understand what it's like to have a new brother or sister.

### New Parent Connection

Tuesdays, 1:30-3 p.m.

Offers education and support for parents and babies up to 4 months. For more information, call the instructor at 651-241-6204.

### Postpartum Depression Support Group

Wednesdays, 1:30-3 p.m.

Please call 612-863-4770 before first visit or for more information concerning group and location.

### Pregnancy After a Loss Support Group

First and third Mondays of every month  
5-6:30 p.m.

#### Garden View Medical Center

Call 651-241-6206 before your first visit or for more information.

### Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support Group

Second and fourth Mondays of each month  
5-6:30 p.m.

For parents who have experienced miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death. Please call 651-241-6206 before your first visit or for more information.

### Refresher Birth and Parenting Preparation

Saturdays, May 9, July 18  
9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

One-session class for those who have given birth within the past five years. Fee includes "New Brother/New Sister" class.

### The Birth Center Tours

- Mondays, noon
  - Two weekend tours a month, 1:15 p.m.
  - One evening tour a month, 7 p.m.
- Call Allina Class Registration at 1-866-904-9962 for more information.

## REHABILITATION

### Stroke

Second Thursday of every month  
2-3:30 p.m.

#### Garden View Medical Building

The Sister Kenny® Rehabilitation Institute offers support groups for stroke survivors and their families. For more information, call 612-863-4996.

## WEIGHT LOSS

### Weight-Loss Surgery Information

- Classes: Thursdays, May 21, June 18, July 16, Aug. 20
- Support groups: Mondays, May 18, June 15, July 20

#### FREE

Materials are \$20 (personal check or cash only).

Weight-loss surgery is for people more than 100 pounds overweight. Register with Allina Class Registration at 1-866-904-9962. ■





**UNITED  
HOSPITAL**

Allina Hospitals & Clinics

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# Health care

—Continued from front page

lower the risk of diabetes, heart disease and osteoarthritis. Exercise can also strengthen lungs and muscles and may ward off depression. Aim for at least 2½ hours of exercise each week. Don't worry about joining a gym or purchasing exercise equipment. A brisk daily walk can be beneficial.

- Be safe. Wearing seat belts in vehicles and helmets on bikes reduces your risk of injury.
- Practice prevention. Wear sunscreen to prevent skin cancer, and wash your hands often to keep germs at bay.
- Manage stress. Stress can be toxic to your body and contribute to a host of health problems, reports Mental Health America. To combat stress, try to balance work with play and make time for relaxation. Always get adequate sleep.

**2. Have a primary care doctor.** Seeing a doctor regularly can help keep your immunizations up-to-date. This may enable you to avoid illnesses such as influenza and shingles.

Regular appointments also provide opportunities for screening tests. These tests may catch health problems early, when they might be easier—and possibly less expensive—to treat.

**3. Know when to seek help.**

According to the American College of Physicians, many minor medical problems correct themselves or improve with home or over-the-counter remedies. These treatments may be worth a try before seeking medical help.

For instance, if you sprain an ankle, many doctors recommend the R.I.C.E. approach to treatment—rest, ice, compression (wrapping the ankle in a bandage or an elastic wrap) and elevation (raising the ankle to prevent swelling from getting worse). If you have a cold, your doctor cannot offer a cure, but getting rest, drinking fluids and using over-the-counter remedies—such as an oral decongestant—may help you feel better.

However, if your condition fails to get better or if you're not sure whether you need assistance, you should seek professional advice. And you should

always get immediate help for a medical emergency.

**4. Ask about generics.** Generic medicines have the same purity, strength and quality as their brand-name counterparts, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. But they're less expensive than brand-name medicines.

## Be active to maintain a healthy weight.

Patient assistance programs may be available if you can't afford your medicines. Ask your pharmacist for details.

Whatever you do, don't decide on your own to stop taking your medicine in order to save money. If you're worried about the cost of a medicine—or any other aspect of your care—talk to your doctor.

Together, you can work to keep costs under control while staying on top of your health. ■



**We're here to help**

For more information about Allina Financial Assistance Services, visit [allina.com](http://allina.com). On the main page, go to *Quick Links* and select *Allina Financial Assistance*.