

BRIEFS

PRMC conducts childbirth classes

BERLIN — Peninsula Regional Medical Center's next series of "Preparation for Childbirth" classes in the Berlin/Ocean City area will begin March 21 and run for three consecutive weeks. The class will meet each Saturday morning from 8 a.m. until noon. The exact location of the class will be confirmed when reservations are made. Diane Parana, certified childbirth educator, will lead the sessions.

The fee is \$50 for the full session. Participants are asked to bring a blanket and two pillows.

Call Peninsula Regional Medical Center's Education Department at 410-543-7126 or visit www.peninsula.org for online registration.

Temple Bat Yam to hold health fair

BERLIN — Temple Bat Yam and Atlantic General Hospital will present "Keeping Our Community Healthy" on Sunday, March 29, from 1 to 5 p.m. at the temple Temple on Worcester Highway in Berlin.

This third annual Toni Jaffee Health Fair is open to the community and will offer information from associated medical and alternative services.

Featured this year is eye identification for children presented by the Worcester County Sheriff's Office and Carlos the Juggler, who will teach children about the three pillars of health.

Call 410-641-1660 or log onto templebatyam-oc.org.

PERDUE GIVES TO AGH



Submitted photo

Atlantic General Hospital recently received a \$15,000 matching grant from the Arthur W. Perdue Foundation for the expansion and renovation of the Atlantic Health Center. Pictured from left are Atlantic General Hospital Foundation Chairman Todd Hershey, Vice Chair Laura Deeley Bren and Jim Leighton, foundation member and senior vice president of operations and supply chain management at Perdue Farms.

Little ways to change eating habits

By Dr. Victor Gong

Most diet plans and weight-loss programs are like a prison sentence. But you can escape



Dr. Victor Gong

from your current diet prison; a little behavior modification is the key that sets you free. Change your eating habits, change your lifestyle and soon you'll be changing into a slimmer set of clothes.

Before you begin

Establish a clear commitment to your weight loss program by identifying your motives for losing weight. Keep daily food records. Pay attention to where, when and how much you are eating. Monitor your weight only once a week. Focus on overall health versus the number of pounds lost. Identify a person or system of support. You need it. Changes in lifelong habits are not easy.

Choose an exercise routine you will enjoy and do on a

consistent basis. Set reasonable, realistic and measurable goals based on behavior, not only on pounds lost.

Eating styles

To set some boundaries for your eating environment, consider:

- Slowing down by laying down your fork between bites, drinking your beverage before you eat, using chopsticks, or setting a timer for 20 minutes.

- Leaving a bite of food on your plate at each meal.

- Choosing one specific place at home or work to do all your eating.

- Eating only when seated.

In the kitchen

Get all high-risk foods out of the house. If some culprits must remain, store them out of sight. Avoid tasting while cooking by brushing and flossing your teeth or wearing a surgical mask.

Store leftovers in opaque containers and then take the light bulb out of the refrigerator.

Modify recipes by cutting down the amount of fat by at least one-fourth.

Close the kitchen after dinner and enter only as a fire escape route.

Shopping strategies

The ideal way to shop is after a meal, armed with your grocery list that corresponds to the week's menus. Bring only enough money for your purchases.

Walk past the free food samples. Avoid the ready-to-eat food aisles. Read the labels, compare ingredients, amounts of fat and price. Put grocery bags in the car trunk or back seat for the trip home, and put away groceries the minute you get home.

Restaurant strategies

Choose a restaurant that offers a wide variety of foods. Call ahead and get their suggestions for low fat dining.

Don't arrive hungry. Request low-fat cooking modifications or substitutions. Order salad dressing and other sauces or gravies on the side. Choose several appetizers for your meal instead of the full course.

Monitor your liquid calories in the form of alcohol; they

add up quickly. Share a dessert.

Celebrations, parties and holidays

Rehearse the word "no" before joining a crowd when food will be served. At buffets, survey the selections and remember foods that end up on your plate will in all likelihood be eaten.

Schedule time for exercise. Plan ahead and set a goal to maintain your weight before the big event.

Finally, it's important to keep a proper perspective. Be flexible with yourself. Special events are temporary.

As you apply any of the suggested strategies, it is important that you reward your achievements every step of the way. You must be your best support person.

For more information on weight loss and other health tips, see www.75thstmedical.com.

Gong is medical director of 75th Street Medical and Doctors Weight Control and Wellness Center in Ocean City.