



# overview

## Women's Health Overview

### Mohs Surgery in the Treatment of Skin Cancer

Skin cancer has reached epidemic proportions in the United States and the numbers are on the rise. In fact, there are 3 to 4 times more skin cancers each year in the US than all other types of cancer combined.

Among women, there are disproportionate increases in melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer, particularly among those younger than 45 years of age. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the number one cause of skin cancer. Social and cultural shifts in the 20th century such as paid vacation, outdoor activities, fashion trends, and cultural beauty norms have increased the overall exposure to the sun. UV exposure and burns early in life are

most associated with melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer.

Prevention of skin cancer is paramount through the use of broad-spectrum sunscreen, hats, sunglasses, and photoprotective (UPF) clothing. However, it is difficult to reverse the damage to the skin from early childhood. Thus, early detection of skin cancer through skin self-examination and whole body skin checks performed by a board-certified dermatologist improves prognosis, promotes survival, and reduces the overall burden of treatment from skin cancer.

Studies show that women are more heavily affected by a new diagnosis of skin cancer than men. When treating melanoma or non-melanoma skin cancer, it is extremely important to “do

see Mohs pg 4

### Do you know your ABCDEs?

Regular skin self-exams can help you identify potential skin cancers earlier, when they can almost always be completely cured. When checking your moles, look for these *warning signs* of skin cancer:

- A = Asymmetry – if you draw a line through the mole, both halves do not match up
- B = Border – the borders are uneven, scalloped, or notched
- C = Color – the mole is a variety of different colors, ranging from shades of brown, tan, black, and can even be red, white, or blue
- D = Diameter – usually larger than 1/4 inch, or the diameter of an eraser on a pencil
- E = Evolving – the mole is changing or evolving over time, in size, shape, color, elevation, bleeding, itching, or crusting.

source: [www.skincancer.org](http://www.skincancer.org)



# From the chairman

In this issue of our newsletter we are pleased to introduce our readers to Dr. Ashley Wysong our inaugural chair of Dermatology. Her article about Mohs surgery is timely as we enter into the summer months. In a rural state like ours exposure to sunlight is common. Protecting our skin from this sunlight is done far too little. Independent of the article the creation of a Department of Dermatology is even more significant. We take our mission of educating the state's medical workforce seriously and this fills an important gap in meeting the state's need. When compared to surrounding states we have a significant shortage of dermatologists. Creating a department, and ultimately beginning a training program, will help with the workforce shortage.

Unrelated articles in this issue and our upcoming October issue by our colleagues from the Diabetes Center discuss another important topic for the health of Nebraskans, nutrition and exercise. Without a doubt the obesity epidemic has not escaped our region and this has led to numerous health issues including diabetes and hypertension. Weight loss, nutritional counseling, and maintaining an active lifestyle may prevent Type II diabetes in those at risk and improve glucose control in those who already have it. Minimal amounts of physical activity can be extremely helpful.

Finally this year celebrates the 25th Anniversary of the Olson Center and our recent Advisory Board Meeting in May concluded successfully. We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Dr. Leland and Mrs. Dorothy Olson for their foresight in support of its creation. Their family has continued this support since their passing. Our efforts in improving the health of women will continue and we hope are in keeping with the vision created 25 years ago.

**Carl V. Smith, MD, FACOG**  
Chairman  
Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology  
College of Medicine  
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### Women's Health Overview

newsletter is published quarterly for health care professionals and the general public with special interest in women's health issues by the Olson Center for Women's Health.

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# research news

## Vitamin D May Play a Protective Role in Pregnancy

Vitamin D deficiency is a health concern for a large percentage of the population, including pregnant women. Evidence suggests that women with vitamin D deficiency have an increase in pregnancy complications, including miscarriage among women with prior pregnancy loss. Prior studies also indicate that women who have higher levels of vitamin D before undergoing in vitro fertilization have higher pregnancy rates than those with lower levels. Two recent studies highlighted below suggest that adequate vitamin D is beneficial for women attempting to conceive without assisted reproductive technologies.

In a study reported online in *The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology* (May 2018) investigators found that women with adequate levels of vitamin D were 10 percent more likely to become pregnant and 15 percent more likely to have a live birth. This study performed a secondary analysis of a large, well-controlled clinical trial

called “Effects of Aspirin in Gestation and Reproduction (EAGeR) trial”, which was performed to determine if daily low-dose aspirin could prevent miscarriage in women with a history of pregnancy loss. In this study women aged 18-40 years with one to two previous pregnancy losses were recruited from multiple clinical sites. Blood levels of vitamin D were tested for roughly 1,200 women before pregnancy and again at the eighth week of pregnancy. Women who had adequate preconception vitamin D concentrations were 10 percent more likely to become pregnant and 15 percent more likely to have a live birth, compared to those with inadequate concentrations of vitamin D.

In another study published May 2018 in *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* researchers looked at whether prenatal screening was effective at helping to optimize vitamin D levels and further prevent complications of birth. This study performed a

randomized control trial on a group of 800 pregnant women. Women who were screened and found to be either moderately or severely vitamin D deficient were given vitamin D supplements until time of delivery. The researchers found that 53% of women receiving vitamin D supplements achieved adequate vitamin D levels. This group also experienced greatly reduced incidence of pregnancy complications such as pre-eclampsia, gestational diabetes mellitus, and preterm delivery. While these studies do not prove cause and effect, they do indicate that screening and providing adequate vitamin D may play a role in preventing pregnancy complications.

**Contributed by John S. Davis, PhD**  
UNMC Department of Ob/Gyn

Mohs *continued from pg 1*

it right the first time". When skin cancer recurs, studies show that it is often more aggressive and can be deadly. The highest cure rate for the treatment of skin cancer is with Mohs micrographic surgery. Mohs surgery is a specialized surgical technique performed in clinic under local anesthesia. There are three main steps to Mohs Surgery:

1. The Mohs surgeon numbs the skin with local anesthesia, then surgically removes the visible portion of skin cancer and a thin layer of tissue immediately surrounding the cancer. This is called a Mohs "stage". Mohs surgery is unique in that a very small amount of tissue can be removed keeping the wound as small as possible.
2. The tissue is then processed in the pathology lab and examined under the microscope by the Mohs surgeon. Mohs surgery utilizes "complete margin assessment" meaning that under the microscope the surgeon can evaluate 100% of the skin edges all the way around and underneath the tumor. So if even a single tumor cell is remaining in the skin it can be identified and removed in subsequent Mohs "stages".
3. The Mohs surgeon will repeat steps one and two until the cancer is completely removed and will then discuss the options for the best cosmetic healing. This will typically involve reconstruction with stitches by your Mohs surgeon, or if needed a plastic or oculoplastic surgeon.



While no one can guarantee a 100% chance of cure of skin cancer, using Mohs surgery, the percentage of success is very high often 97-99%. In addition, Mohs surgery minimizes the size of the surgical scar caused by skin cancer and allows for optimal cosmetic results.

**Contributed by Ashley Wysong, MD, MS**  
*Department of Dermatology*

*Plan to attend the upcoming Omaha Women's Health & Wellness Conference on Fri., Oct. 12th. Dr. Megan Arthur of the Department of Dermatology will address additional skin concerns. Call 402-559-6345 for a conference brochure or go to [omahawomenshealthandwellness.com](http://omahawomenshealthandwellness.com).*

#### *Mission Statement*

The Mission of the Olson Center for Women's Health is to provide a national comprehensive health science center at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Based in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the center enables UNMC to make distinctive strides in education, research, and service through innovative approaches to women's health issues.

#### *Want More Information?*

Visit our website: **OlsonCenter.com**

Learn more about our healthcare providers, services, and programs available at the Olson Center for Women's Health. Our website also offers women's health information.

Here are a few topics:

- Breastfeeding
- Breast Health & Disease
- Cardiovascular Health
- Gastrointestinal Health
- Gynecologic Health
- Reproductive Endocrinology/Infertility
- Pregnancy
- Wellness
- Incontinence

#### *Newsletter Committee*

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# Fitness Apps Can Make the Difference

Fitness apps are becoming just as common as the fitness equipment that many of you are familiar with - but just like a treadmill, you still need to do the work to get the most out of them. Apps can aid as a great way to boost your workout experience by providing feedback, motivation and support during your sessions. So the next time you slip on your sweatpants, consider trying one of the many fitness apps out there.



## Benefits of using a fitness app:

### Set goals:

Apps help you set SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely) goals. It is an objective way to keep an eye on the day-to-day results so you can look back to see if your regimen is working for you or identify your barriers.

### Get free workout ideas:

Humans are creatures of habit. Many of us have our "favorite" treadmill or "go to" workout routines. But research suggests we change our workout about every six weeks, be it frequency, intensity, or time in order to have the best results. Many apps feature live videos of creative exercises that are fun and push us to venture out of our comfort zone.

### Develop a tailored plan:

Like Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (French philosopher) once said, "A goal without a plan is just a wish." Many fitness apps give you a workout schedule to follow based on your self-driven goals.

Whether you're a gym buff, an at-home workout fanatic, or training for a race,

there's an app out there to help you exercise better and more efficiently.

### Fitbit Coach (Android, iOS: Free)

*Fitbit Coach* functions as your personal digital training coach, adapting exercise routines to match your physical capability, as well as tracking your daily activity with the Fitbit fitness tracker. Workouts are carefully calibrated to be challenging, without being too difficult. The app even provides guided video workouts, with varied routines, step-by-step guidance, and accompanying workout playlists to provide music that complements your workout. A premium subscription unlocks an even greater variety of workouts, along with expanded features.

### Moves (iPhone, Free)

Need an app that tracks your movement where you can set it and forget it? Just keep your iPhone in your pocket and *Moves* automatically records your daily movement in the background of your iPhone. An added benefit is that it will provide you a friendly nudge if you stay seated for more than an hour.

### Map My Fitness (Android, iOS: Free)

Under Armour's *Map My Fitness* logs more than 600 different fitness activities and syncs with more than 400 devices to give users a complete picture of their athletic performance. Users can search for nearby running routes or share their favorite routes. *Map My Fitness* saves data on pace, distance, and calories burned for GPS-based workouts; you can use this data to set new personal goals. Through the *Map My Fitness* community, users can join challenges as well as motivate friends. Also compatible with Android wear devices and the Apple watch. Premium versions of the app offer personalized training programs and the ability to monitor heart rate zones.

Contributed by Kristina Janousek, MPH, CDE

Nebraska Medicine Diabetes Center

*Next Issue:*  
Watch for a review on which nutrition apps to use to develop healthy dietary habits.

21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL  
*Omaha Women's*  
Health & Wellness Conference



save the date

All About You –  
Shaping Your Wellness Perspective

FRIDAY, OCT. 12, 2018  
8 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M.

LA VISTA CONFERENCE CENTER  
12520 WESTPORT PARKWAY  
LA VISTA, NE



Call the Olson Center for Women's Health at 402.559.6345 or go to [omahawomenshealthandwellness.org](http://omahawomenshealthandwellness.org) for more information.

Cost for the conference is \$59 general registration and \$89 nursing registration.

The University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing Continuing Nursing Education is accredited with distinction as a provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. This activity is provided for 5.0 contact hours under ANCC criteria.



## OLSON CENTER FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

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## *Fast Pass provides earlier appointments*

The Olson Center for Women's Health is currently piloting a new One Chart | Patient feature called **Fast Pass**. Fast Pass provides the opportunity for patients to be seen earlier than originally scheduled.

The Fast Pass feature will automatically send patients that have been added to a "wait list", a text and/or email message to notify them of a sooner appointment offering. Upon receiving the message, patients can then log into their One Chart | Patient website or One Chart | Patient mobile app and accept the offer to come in for a sooner appointment or decline the offer to keep their original appointment. The patient can also decline the earlier appointment offering by ignoring the text or email.

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