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livingwell

Diabetics can enjoy the holidays in a healthy way

Make people, not food, focus of the season

By Dr. William Alexander
Special to the Courier

The holidays are a great time for enjoying family, friends and food, but a tough time for staying healthy. That's particularly true for the more than 29 million Americans who have diabetes.

This disease affects one out of every 11 people in the United States and costs our economy \$245 billion each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In addition, 86 million Americans — about one out of every three people — have prediabetes, which means they have a higher blood-sugar level and are more likely to develop the disease.

Controlling diabetes means maintaining healthy eating habits and exercising regularly, which is challenging with the busy schedules, cold weather and sugary foods that come with the holidays.

However, if you have diabetes, it's not impossible to enjoy the holidays, eat some of your favorite foods and stay on track with your medical plan. If you plan ahead, you can make smart choices and eliminate the anxiety of trying figuring out what you should and shouldn't eat.

Here are practical tips to help you develop a smart plan for enjoying the holidays with diabetes. Most of these also are good for ev-

eryone interested in maintaining a healthy holiday season.

- Decide in advance what you are going to eat. If you aren't preparing holiday meals yourself, find out what is being served and figure out how to make it fit with your diet plan.

- Eat the same amount of carbohydrate as a normal day. Many holiday foods are high in carbs, such as mashed potatoes, stuffing, rolls, cranberry sauce and desserts. To help manage your carb intake, prioritize your absolute favorite foods and skip the others.

- Eat reasonable portions. Most holiday meals encourage large portions, so make sure you are aware of how much is on your plate. If you can't decide between your favorite foods, sample very small portions so you get a bit of everything.

- Enjoy desserts, but be smart. If you can't miss your favorite dessert, plan ahead. Most sweets have a lot of carbs, so keep portion sizes small and cut back on other carbs. If you know that pumpkin pie is coming, skip the sweet potatoes.

- Keep healthy snacks handy. To help avoid munching on high-calorie snacks, bring your own healthy foods to nibble on, like raw vegetables and a low-calorie dip or low-fat cheese.

- Revise recipes to make them healthier. Take charge of the cooking and change the recipes to make them healthier. Use sugar substitutes, replace half the butter in your recipe with applesauce, and season vegetables rather than frying them or covering them in cheese.

- Consider meal times. Many holiday meals take place

at odd times, like mid-afternoon. Plan a healthy snack at your regular meal time to keep your blood sugar normal.

- Stay physically active. Increase your activity levels if you are eating more. Take walks, plan family football games or train for a run.

- Drink in moderation. If you drink alcohol, do it in moderation and remember to eat something beforehand to prevent low blood-sugar levels. Avoid drinks that have high-sugar mixers like soda, juice and margarita mix.

- Pay attention to your travel schedule. Leaving home to visit family and friends changes routines. Plan in advance how you will take care of your diabetes on the road and check your blood sugar levels often.

- Remember your medication. It's wise to pack twice the amount of diabetes supplies you expect to need when traveling because winter weather can disrupt travel plans. If you are flying, keep your medicine and supplies in your carry-on bag.

- Don't stress out. Stress is a major cause of health problems during the holidays. By planning how you will address your medical needs in advance, you can relieve a major cause of anxiety.

- Focus on the people, not the food. Holiday foods are a delicious treat, but they are not the reason for the season. Focus your priorities on spending quality time with the special people in your life.

If you have questions about managing your diabetes during the holidays, consult your physician. By following these tips and using good judgment, you can enjoy a happy and healthy holiday season.

Alexander is the chief medical officer of Amerigroup Georgia.

Diabetics should pay special attention to their holiday travel schedules. Leaving home to visit family and friends changes routines, and patients must plan in advance how they will manage their diabetes on the road, check blood-sugar levels often and take along extra supplies.



Many holiday foods are high in carbs, such as mashed potatoes, stuffing, rolls, cranberry sauce and desserts. Those looking to manage their carb intake should prioritize favorite foods and skip the others.



Alcohol often is served at holiday parties, but diabetics must remember to drink in moderation and eat beforehand to prevent low blood-sugar levels. Avoid drinks that have high-sugar mixers like soda, juice and margarita mix.



Staying physically active during the holidays and increasing activity levels to compensate for eating more is important. Take walks, plan family football games or train for a run.

Small garden can yield big results

Grow your own food in a DIY barrel for gratifying and healthy eating

By REID ARCHER
Special to the Courier

Victory Gardens is a proud collaborator with the Canyon Ranch Institute Savannah Partnership. As a co-founding partner of Victory Gardens, I had the pleasure of showing a group of CRI Healthy Garden volunteers how to build a sub-irrigation planter, or what a lot of people call a "SIP." If you have limited space, you can follow my step-by-step guide for crafting your very own SIP.

A SIP will get more water to your plants while requiring less of your attention. A SIP looks like a regular container garden but has a large water reservoir at the bottom from which organic soil mix wicks moisture upwards.

Step one: the container
Obtain a 55-gallon plastic barrel. Check with food manufacturing businesses or look for them online, such as on Craigslist. Make sure that the barrel is food grade to ensure that no toxic materials have been stored inside it in the past. Typically, these barrels are sealed at the top, so one barrel can be used make two SIPs.

Using a measuring tape and marker, mark the halfway point with dots all around the barrel. Then, with a pliable straight edge, such as a ruler or wire, connect the dots and establish a cutting guide. For cutting, you will need a power drill, a ½-inch drill bit and a jig saw.

First, drill a pilot hole centered on the line you drew around the barrel. With your pilot hole as a starting point, carefully cut along the line with the jig saw until your barrel is cut in half.

Step two: the water reservoir
Drill the drainage hole. This

drain will remove any excess water that might gather during a rainstorm and also will let you know when your reservoir is full after watering. Using the ½-inch drill bit, drill a hole that is 12 inches from the top of the barrel planter. Everything below this drain will be water storage.

Next, insert a ½-inch drip irrigation barbed coupling into the drainage hole and wrap drainage pipe filter sock material around the side of the coupling that will be inside the container. Once it is tight, seal it with a plastic zip-tie. The filter mesh will keep the drain from clogging.

Now you will need a 5-foot-long section of 4-inch perforated pipe and a drainage pipe filter sock. Slide the sleeve over the pipe and zip-tie one of the ends shut. Insert the tied end first and coil the pipe inside the bottom of the barrel. Once it fits snugly on the bottom, use a razor blade to cut a 1-inch diameter hole on the top of the other end of the pipe.

Fit a section of 1-inch polyvinylchloride (PVC) pipe that is slightly taller than the height of the barrel inside the hole of the perforated pipe. Pull the filter sock tight and zip tie it so that the entire perforated pipe is enclosed by the sock. The sock should fit snugly around the PVC pipe.

Step three: the planter

You're now getting closer to planting! Fill the bottom of the planter with 1½ bags (a half cubic foot each) of play sand until the sand just covers the perforated pipe. Put in a little extra sand because some of the sand will settle when water is added. In order to keep the plant roots out of the water reservoir and to prevent the planting mix from clogging the water reservoir, place a piece of landscape fabric over the sand.

Fill the planter with organic



Photo provided

Building a sub-irrigation planter isn't too difficult, and it's a great way to grow healthy food at home when space is limited.

planting mix, and you're ready to plant your seedlings! Insert a hose into the ½-inch pipe and fill the water reservoir until it spills out of the overflow valve. For the first watering, you will also water from the top to dampen the soil because dry soil doesn't wick water well.

Additional tips:

You can find most of the SIP materials for this project at your local hardware store. Shopping list: half-inch drip irrigation barbed coupling; 7 feet of perforated pipe sleeve; 5 feet of 4-inch perforated pipe; zip-ties; 3 feet of 1-inch PVC pipe, one 4-foot by

4-foot piece of landscape fabric, two half-cubic foot bags of play sand, and seedlings.

When it comes to soil mix, use a quality, organic planting mix from a local producer, such as Longwood Plantation. Victory Gardens offers this product in bulk.

For winter SIP gardens in Savannah, choose strawberries, rosemary, oregano, thyme, cilantro, collard greens, spinach, lettuce, arugula, kale, turnips, broccoli, or Brussels sprouts.

Archer is the co-founder of Savannah Victory Gardens.

VA Medical Center looks to help homeless vets through summit

Brunswick event slated for Jan. 12

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER
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The Carl Vinson VA Medical Center will host a homelessness summit Jan. 12 in Brunswick for veterans, their families and other stakeholders interested in the needs of homeless veterans.

The summit will be held at the College of Coastal Georgia, 1 College Drive, Brunswick, in the Camden auditorium. Registration begins at 10 a.m. and the summit starts at 11 a.m.

According to VA officials, the purpose of the summit is to enhance the mental health and well-being of veterans and their family members through increased collaboration between the VA and the community. The goal is to educate Carl Vinson VA staff and the community on available resources for homeless veterans.

Specific topics will include the VA's Mental Health Rehabilitation Treatment Program screening referral procedures and admission processes; available services and outreach programs; the Housing and Urban Development/Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD/VASH) services, including target population, referrals and screening procedures; the Veterans Justice Outreach program; and services available through the VA's vocational-rehabilitation programs.

VA officials encourage participants to bring business cards and other informational materials that will help summit attendees to network effectively. Participants are also asked to encourage other community agencies to attend.

YMCA of Coastal Georgia president to retire

Randy Bugos arrived in Savannah in 1989 and served the local association for 25 years

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER
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SAVANNAH — The YMCA of Coastal Georgia Corporate board announced recently that long time president and CEO Randy Bugos will retire April 1, 2015 after 25 years of leading the local Y through a period of unprecedented growth.

"Randy's leadership and vision has been instrumental to the wonderful growth and success that our local Y's have experienced the last two and a half decades. The Y is now as strong as it has ever been and serves more people than any time in its 159 year history," said David Mason, chairman of the board of directors for the local association. "Our entire YMCA family and the communities we serve owe him heartfelt thanks for all that he has done and the legacy he leaves behind."

When Bugos arrived in Savannah in 1989, there were two Y's in Chatham County, one on Habersham Street and one on Wilmington Island. The operating budget was \$900,000. Under his leadership, the Y now has 12 branches including six units in Chatham County and branches serving Effingham, Bryan, Liberty, McIntosh and Glynn counties. The annual operating budget now is over \$20 million.

During his tenure, the Y on Habersham has undergone major renovations and additions. The old Island Y on Wilmington Island was sold, and a larger facility was built on Whitmarsh Island. Money was raised, and new YMCAs were constructed in Pooler, Rincon, Hinesville and Richmond Hill. Two years ago, the Y acquired the YWCA facility in Brunswick.

"All of these facilities will be around to serve future generations. They are a testament to the fact that YMCAs make their communities a better place to live," Bugos said, adding that "the generosity of the businesses and individuals in these communities is what made all of this happen."

Over the past 25 years, the local Y has raised close to \$15 million to support the building and capital efforts of these facilities. In addition, a combined total of close to \$10 million has been contributed through the annual campaign and special projects to support ongoing Y programs.

"Savannah and the surrounding community really is a very philanthropic area. Our donors, supporters and volunteers are the real heroes of this story," Bugos said.

In addition to facility development, the Y is one of the largest program providers in the Coastal Empire. Last year alone, it served over 87,000 people and provided over

\$3 million in subsidies and scholarship support to youth and families. The largest program is child care, where the Y has been a provider of before- and after-school care for Chatham and Effingham counties since Bugos' arrival.

"We have established a great partnership with the local school systems to provide care for thousands of children every day and our entire Y-based child-care programs are full to capacity, which speaks highly about the Y meeting this critical community need," Bugos said.

In addition to child care, the Y has expanded its other traditional programs, such as fitness, youth sports, day camps and aquatics. However, it's the nontraditional programs the Y has become involved in that bring a smile to the face of the retiring director.

"We have been blessed to have been selected to be involved in a number of non-traditional Y programs supported by YUSA," Bugos said.

"The Welcoming Hispanic Families initiative, our Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation program, the Healthy Savannah collaborative, the Livestrong Cancer Survivor classes, Early Learning Readiness program for preschooler, and the Diabetes Prevention Program are all services that the Y had not even thought of 10 years ago, and they are thriving here in the Coastal Empire."

Before he came to the

YMCA of Coastal Georgia, Bugos served as a vice president with Central Florida YMCA in Orlando and previously held leadership positions with the Tuscaloosa County YMCA in Alabama. He began his YMCA career as a youth director with the Greater Peoria YMCA in Illinois. He also has served as the chairman of the State Alliance of Georgia YMCAs and chairman of the Georgia AYP chapter. He has been a

member of the Downtown Rotary Club of Savannah for 25 years.

"We have appointed a search committee of board volunteers to work diligently on identifying our next president and CEO," Mason said. "Randy's continued leadership during this transition will help ensure that the Y keeps its focus on the mission and commitment to providing quality services and programs to all who we serve."



Full-Time Heart Care For The First-Time In Jesup

New cardiologist to provide full-time service to local residents

Wayne Memorial and St. Joseph's/Candler Physician Specialty Associates are proud to extend a heartfelt welcome to cardiologist, Gary Stern, MD.

Dr. Stern offers full-time (for the first-time) cardiology services to Jesup and the surrounding areas as part of the continued partnership between Wayne Memorial Hospital and St. Joseph's/Candler.

The addition of Dr. Stern alleviates the need of local patients to travel out of town for a highly-skilled heart physician, providing access to the advanced heart care through Wayne Memorial Hospital, or through St. Joseph's/Candler for more extensive cardiac services.

Board Certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in cardiology, critical care medicine and internal medicine, Dr. Stern has specialized experience in:

- cardiovascular disease
- cardiac catheterization
- critical care medicine
- nuclear cardiology

He is a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology and a Fellow of the American College of Chest Physicians. He is also a member of the Society of Critical Care Medicine and the American Heart Association.

Dr. Stern's office is located at 111 Colonial Way, Suite 3.

For more information, or to schedule an appointment, please call 912-427-8177.

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ASU's College of Health Professions receives award

Georgia Medical Society Award honor given at annual banquet

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER
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SAVANNAH — Armstrong State University's College of Health Professions was awarded the Georgia Medical Society's Institution/Organization Award at the 14th annual Health Care Heroes Awards Banquet held Nov. 18 in Savannah. Armstrong President Dr. Linda M. Bleicken, Interim Assistant Dean of the College of Health Professions Sandy Streater, Diagnostic and Therapeutic Sciences Department Head Doug Masini and Health Sciences Department Head Robert LeFavi accepted the award on behalf of Armstrong.

The Institution/Organization Award recognizes organizations that have taken health-care initiatives outside the confines of their own institutions and into the community at large, making

demonstrable improvements in the quality of life for area residents. This prestigious award is given annually by the Georgia Medical Society, the first chartered medical society in the state of Georgia and the oldest county medical society. The society's current membership includes approximately 500 physicians practicing in Chatham, Effingham, Bryan, McIntosh and Long counties.

Armstrong's College of Health Professions is the largest undergraduate health college in Georgia, offering a range of academic programs that prepare students for careers in nursing, public health, health administration, respiratory therapy, radiologic sciences, physical therapy, communication sciences and disorders, medical-laboratory sciences and sports medicine. Currently, more than 2,400 students are enrolled in the Col-

lege of Health Professions, and the alumni base includes nearly 9,000 graduates, 6,000 of whom remain in Georgia.

Armstrong's College of Health Professions is committed to the community through public service. Communication sciences and disorders students provide free hearing screens to approximately 2,000 children each year; the RiteCare Center, supported by members of the Scottish Rite, provides speech/language therapy services to adults and children at little or no cost; nursing and public-health faculty and students provide services at St. Mary's Community Center through a \$1.5 million Health Services and Resources Administration grant for inter-professional care; and physical-therapy faculty provide free continuing education for area clinicians in orthopaedics and rehabilitation.

LIVING WITH CHILDREN

Moms enable kids, perpetuate cycle

Q: My buddy's wife walks their 11-year-old into the classroom each day. Then she takes out his assignments and helps him get ready. We're talking about a very capable kid who has no "issues" at all. My buddy says other mothers at his son's school are also doing the same thing. My wife has heard about this and wants to start walking our very capable son into his 4th grade room. What are your thoughts?



JOHN ROSEMOND
Parenting columnist

A: I think there may be children who, because of some developmental problem or medical issue, might need a parent to walk them into school, but that practice is unnecessary otherwise, and not just unnecessary but something Shakespeare might have had lots of fun with.

My first thought is that this is a symptom of what is and has been happening in American mother culture for some time now. One mother ups the ante on the other mothers by taking enabling to a new level and it spreads like wildfire by some psychic transmission force that men have no aptitude for.

My second thought is that today's moms generally seem to think that raising a child is all about nurturing; therefore, the more a mother nurtures, the better

a mother she must be. This was not the case 60-plus years ago, when mothers could strike fear into the hearts of their kids with no more than a sideways glance. Now children strike fear into their mothers, who do not have a firm grasp of the fact that unless nurturing is balanced by an equal portion of authority, it turns into a toxic thing called enabling.

My third thought is that when I say stuff like this, some women think I'm — as one put it recently — "ragging" on women. No, I'm trying to help women understand what they have allowed themselves to become caught up in and swept along by. This is not about women, obviously, because women of my mother's generation and before did not come close to fitting this description. Since then, we have gone from men demeaning women to women demeaning themselves.

My fourth thought is that we seem to have misplaced a sense of purpose when it comes to raising children. The purpose is to help them become adults, and it should be self-evident that the more quickly they become adults and take on adult responsibilities, the better off they are. Walking a competent 11-year-old into class every day and helping him get situated significantly raises the likelihood that this child, 20 years from now, still

will be living at home, being waited on hand and foot by his mother. But perhaps this will be normative by then and no one will give it a second thought. People may even regard the successfully emancipated child as an oddity and wonder what went wrong.

My fifth thought is that these mothers have too much time on their hands. Lacking modern conveniences — having to wash clothes and dishes by hand and sweep and mop rather than fire up a vacuum cleaner — my mother and her peers did not have time to bring perfection to every aspect of their children's lives. In fact, their callous disregard of our fragile psyches included making us wash, sweep and mop along with them. A mom who has the time to walk her 11-year-old into school every day and arrange his work for him needs to get out and volunteer with people who really and truly need her help. She's eminently qualified, obviously.

My last and, hopefully, most sobering thought is that these moms are going a long way toward ensuring that their male children grow up with no respect whatsoever for women. Respecting and expecting are incompatible.

Rosemond, a family psychologist, answers questions at his websites, johnrosemond.com and parentguru.com.

Give the gift of life this holiday season

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER
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This holiday season, the American Red Cross encourages individuals to give a gift that means something — a blood or platelet donation. This simple, potentially lifesaving act can give patients in need another holiday season with family and friends.

"The need for blood is constant during the winter months, but donations can slow — especially around the holidays," said Jerry J.K. Tillery of the Red Cross Alabama and Central Gulf Coast, Puerto Rico and Southern Blood Services Regions. "Long holiday weekends,

like Thanksgiving, pose an extra challenge when many donors are traveling to be with family and friends. Therefore, we encourage people to make an appointment to donate blood and help ensure a sufficient supply for patients in need."

Donors of all blood types — particularly O negative, A negative and B negative — are needed. Platelet donors also are urged to schedule appointments. To encourage donations around the holidays, presenting blood and platelet donors from Nov. 26-30 received a Red Cross potholder stuffed with unique recipes from celebrity chefs Mario Batali, Rocco DiSpirito, Alex Guarnaschelli and Mike

Isabella.

Eligible donors can learn more and schedule appointments to give blood by going to redcrossblood.org, calling 1-800-733-2767 or by downloading the Blood Donor App.

When giving, a blood-donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age (16 with parental consent in some states), weigh at least 110 pounds and generally are in good health may be eligible to donate blood. High-school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.



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MUMC awarded Mattel Children's Foundation grant

\$15,000 will support the Savannah hospital's healing power of play program

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER
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SAVANNAH — The Mattel Children's Foundation, together with the Children's Hospital Association, has awarded The Children's Hospital at Memorial University Medical Center a \$15,000 grant. The funds will be used

to bring the healing power of play to hospitalized children through the creation of The Parent Infant Play Program. The Children's Hospital is one of 11 children's hospitals across the country to receive a Mattel Play Grant.

"We are excited and honored to have been selected as one of the Mattel Play Grant

recipients," said Bill Lee, vice president of The Children's Hospital and chief strategy officer at Memorial Health. "With this generous gift, we can create a unique, age-appropriate play program for children from birth to age 2 and their parents. The program will help very young children and their families

cope with a range of issues including illness, hospitalization, and surgery."

"One of the difficulties children face during an extended hospital stay is maintaining the joy of childhood through the many procedures and treatments they undergo," Children's Hospital Association President and

CEO Mark Wietecha said. "The Mattel Children's Foundation Play Grants will support children's hospitals in their quest to create healing environments that allow children to engage in play and, frankly, just be kids."

The Mattel Play Grants program builds on the success of a nine-year partnership between the Children's Hospital Association and the Mattel Children's Foundation that has delivered a half million toys to pediatric patients at children's hospitals. For more information regarding the Mattel Play Grants program, go to www.childrenshospitals.net/corporatealliances.

Blocking blood-vessel dysfunction may help diabetics

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER
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AUGUSTA — One of diabetes' dangerous consequences is dysfunction of the single-cell layer that lines blood vessels.

Too much circulating sugar and fat can leave the endothelial lining inflamed and unable to dilate properly, driving blood pressure up, which multiplies the problem and sets the stage for vascular disease, according to Dr. Eric Belin de Chantemele, physiologist at the Medical College of Georgia at Georgia Regents University.

Now researchers suspect a protein that already is a hot therapeutic target for the prevention of obesity and diabetes also may help disable the potentially deadly endothelial dysfunction.

A new one-year, \$100,000 grant from the Diabetic Complications Consortium of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases is funding a study of human arteries and veins removed during heart surgery to help determine if they're right.

A major factor in the vascular dysfunction that can result from diabetes, obesity and hypertension is reduced production of nitric oxide by the endothelial cells that line blood vessels. This short-lived gas, which also is produced by automobiles and plants, is the body's most powerful blood-vessel dilator, enabling the 60,000-mile vasculature to dilate, instantaneously enabling increased blood flow.

Nitric oxide also decreases excretion of cytokines, immune cells that promote inflammation, so less of it means increased blood flow turbulence, which promotes cytokine secretion. Rather than just attacking invaders like bacteria, larger numbers of the immune cells are attacking the blood vessel lining, helping lay a solid foundation for vascular disease.

That's why blocking PTP1B may help, Belin de Chantemele said. It's known that PTP1B expression is increased in the fat, muscle and livers of people with diabetes. Medical College of Georgia scientists were looking at the effect of PTP1B on the whole body when they noted that mice missing it had higher blood pressure but not the endothelial dysfunction they would expect. They also found that when they induced type 1 diabetes in mice missing the protein, the mice also didn't experience endothelial dysfunction.

"We know that diabetes increases PTP1B expression in all those tissues, the muscle, the liver, fat and what we want to see now is if diabetes also increases PTP1B in endothelial cells and if that increased expression leads to the endothelial dysfunction," Belin de Chantemele said.

With the help of segments of human saphenous veins, used to bypass diseased coronary arteries, and tiny aortic puncture biopsies, taken from where the bypasses

are placed by MCG Cardiovascular Surgeon Dr. Vijay Patel, the scientist is looking for the first time at PTP1B expression in the endothelial cells of patients with diabetes versus those without it. He's also measuring markers of a stressed out endoplasmic reticulum, or ER, a fundamental organelle inside those cells.

The ER helps ensure cells contain proper levels of calcium, which is essential to cell function, and controls protein folding, which is essential to protein function. In the case of the protein PTP1B, it appears to be a reciprocal relationship, because Belin de Chantemele thinks PTP1B may regulate ER function.

Much like the rest of the body, the ER is stressed by the high blood-glucose levels of diabetes. While endothelial cells have mechanisms to protect this important organelle, the sustained activation that occurs in diabetes can instead prompt cell death: too much of a good thing ends up being lethal

rather than protective to endothelial cells and probably other cell types.

"It could just be a consequence, but we really think it's a player," Belin de Chantemele said. In fact, it's already known that diabetes has increased ER stress, but the PTP1B connection is new.

MCG scientists are finding when they remove PTP1B from this scenario, at least in their animal model, it improves ER function and cell survival.

"The cells are still viable," Belin de Chantemele said. "We probably are often exposed to ER stress, but our system is able to cope with it. You eat candy, you have too much glucose, and you will stimulate endoplasmic reticulum stress, but your cells are in good shape and can fix themselves. But if they are chronically stimulated and stressed, the cells will not be able to fix themselves, and they will die."

Drug companies are having trouble developing PTP1B inhibitors because of side effects from blocking

the multipurpose protein. Belin de Chantemele hopes his lab's additional findings about the roles of PTP1B will aid development of a more targeted inhibitor.

The protein's laundry list of functions includes controlling the body's sensitivity to insulin and leptin — known as the satiety hormone. Although inhibitors cause the body to make less of both, it becomes more sensitive to both. As an example, PTP1B blocks the action of insulin, which basically tells your fat, liver, and muscle to take up circulating glucose so it can be used for energy later. When that doesn't happen as it should, high glucose levels circulating throughout the body damage cells. That's why PTP1B inhibitors likely will be effective with weight loss and diabetes: people will take up more glucose and have more energy.

"If you have more leptin secretion and your brain is less sensitive, you will continue to eat and become more obese," Belin de Chantemele said.

Coastal Area Agency on Aging announces new lab

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER
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The Coastal Area Agency on Aging, in partnership with Georgia Tech's Tools for Life Program, recently announced the grand opening of Coastal Ability Solutions, an assistive-technology lab serving Coastal Georgia. The project was funded by the Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services and is Georgia's first assistive-technology lab housed at a regional commission.

The lab is set up like a small apartment and will feature both high- and low-tech solutions aimed at assisting people who are faced with a disability. It will showcase solutions to mobility issues, communication problems, vision and hearing loss, dementia and other disabilities. There are thousands of items and applications that can help someone with a disability lead a more independent

life. Staff will help a person explore these options through individual consultations and through a variety of classes that support individuals with disabilities and their caregivers.

The public is invited to an open house from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 11 at the Coastal Regional Commission, 1181 Coastal Drive SW in Darien. Expert staff from Georgia Tech's Tools for Life program will be available for private consultations, and a variety of demonstrations will be conducted throughout the day to give people firsthand experience using items that can allow them to live, work and play at their highest potential.

Normal lab hours will be from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. For more information about the lab or to set up an individual appointment, call the Coastal Area Agency on Aging at 1-800-580-6860.

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Enrolling is easy!

- During registration, patients will be asked to sign a consent form and provide an email address in order to receive enrollment instructions for the Patient Portal.
- Anyone who has received care at Liberty Regional may request enrollment in person at any time.
- An email will be sent to each patient with instructions on how to set up your personal account in the Patient Portal.
- Once your account has been successfully created, you may begin accessing your available health information.

Now you can access your personal health information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!
Whenever you need it. Wherever you are.

LIBERTY REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
www.libertyregional.org

To enroll in our Patient Portal, you must be 18 years of age or older and have received care at Liberty Regional Medical Center.

For more information on how to enroll in the Liberty Regional Patient Portal, please call Health Information Management (Medical Records) at 912-369-9454