

# carenotes

## MAMMOGRAMS: Are They Necessary?

by Carol Swindle, M.D.

Following skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women. It is also the second leading cause of cancer death in women.

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*Like any form of cancer, the earlier breast cancer is detected, the sooner it can be treated.*  
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This year alone, approximately 203,500 women in the United States will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer. About 40,000 women will die from the disease. As shocking as these numbers are, they are better than in the past. From 1992 to 1998, breast cancer death rates declined significantly. Why? Most medical experts attribute the decline as the result of earlier detection and improved treatment.

Like any form of cancer, the earlier breast cancer is detected, the sooner it can be treated. There is no argument within the medical

community that early detection and treatment improves the odds of recovery from cancer. However, there is a long-standing debate as to whether or not screening mammograms "statistically" lower the mortality rate from breast cancer.

The latest fuel for this debate centers around the recent work of Danish researchers who reanalyzed some of the original studies on mammography and breast cancer. These early studies indicated that mammography does lower the mortality rate. After reanalyzing the studies, researchers concluded that the original studies were flawed and the findings were, therefore, worthless.

After reading the findings from the reanalyzed studies, many doctors have criticized the research as also being flawed. Additionally, they point out that mammography technology has vastly improved since the original studies were performed.

Compounding the confusion, a Swedish research group recently released a report that indicated mammograms do save lives, but not as many lives as previously believed.

So, what is the answer? Should you or should you not get an annual mammogram as a screening for breast cancer? "There is no question in my mind that mammograms can and do detect breast cancer in its early stages," says Henderson & Walton's Dr. Carol Swindle. "Mammography is not a perfect tool, but it is the best we currently have at our disposal. It detects close to 85 percent of breast cancers at a stage when they can be effectively treated."

Dr. Swindle is not alone in her opinion. The overwhelming majority of medical research and health care institutions in the United States recommend the following breast cancer screening procedures:

*(Continued on page four)*



*A native of Jasper, Dr. Swindle is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Alabama where she majored in English. She received her M.D. from the University of Alabama School of Medicine, where she held the Claude E. Dorsey Memorial Scholarship. She completed her residency training at Vanderbilt University Hospital.*

*She is board certified by the American Board of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and is a Fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. She is also a member of the American Medical Association, the Jefferson County Medical Society, and the Alabama Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.*

*Dr. Swindle has two children, Andrew and Sarah Frances.*



**HENDERSON & WALTON**  
WOMEN'S CENTER, P.C.

## DR. ALISON ABERCROMBIE HEATON JOINS HENDERSON & WALTON



Henderson & Walton Women's Center is pleased to announce that Dr. Alison Abercrombie Heaton will be joining our practice in August 2002. Dr. Heaton is an Alabama native born and raised in Jacksonville. Upon receiving her undergraduate degree in biology from The University of Alabama at Birmingham, she began her graduate studies at The University of South Alabama where she received her medical degree. Dr. Heaton completed her medical internship and residency training at Indiana University Medical Center in Indianapolis, Indiana.

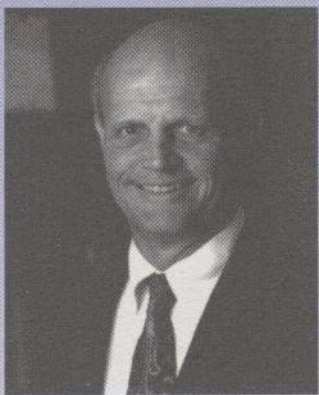
Dr. Heaton believes that the best medical care is given when patients and doctors have open and candid dialogue. She also tries to incorporate the beliefs of her Christian upbringing with the skills of her medical profession to treat the whole patient.

Dr. Heaton is a member of the American Medical Association and the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

In addition to seeing patients in our St. Vincent's location, Dr. Heaton will also be practicing in our Cullman satellite office. We have begun to schedule appointments for both of these locations. If you would like to make an appointment in our St. Vincent's office, please call (205) 930-1800 or toll-free at 1-800-264-1075. The number to our Cullman office is (256) 737-9306.

Dr. Heaton is looking forward to coming home to Alabama and beginning her private practice with Henderson & Walton Women's Center.

## DR. JOHN FAUCETTE TO FOCUS ON GYNECOLOGY PATIENTS



Dr. John Faucette will no longer see OB patients effective June 1, 2002. He will continue to see patients for gynecology visits at our office in St. Vincent's and at our Sylacauga satellite office.

Dr. Faucette began his OB/GYN career in 1973 as a resident at Carraway Methodist Medical Center and began his private practice there in 1976. He was named Head of Obstetrics for the Carraway Residency Program in 1976 and served in that position until he joined Henderson & Walton Women's Center in 1987.

During his almost 30-year career in Obstetrics, Dr. Faucette has delivered thousands of babies, including several of his own grandchildren. While ending his obstetrical practice will be bittersweet, he is looking forward to spending more time with his wife Betsy, traveling in his home state of North Carolina, and hiking the Appalachian Trail.

## SPOTLIGHT ON HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS DEPARTMENT



If your physician has recommended surgery or an inpatient admission, the Henderson & Walton Hospital Admissions Department is designed to assist you in this process. Prior to your admission, our associates will verify your insurance coverage and handle precertification for all surgeries and deliveries. Our associates are also available to answer any questions you may have about scheduling your upcoming admission or surgery and will provide information on how to prepare for your procedure. You may reach Hospital Admissions at (205)930-1806 or toll free at 1-800-264-1075.

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## HINTS FOR A HEALTHY SUMMER

Help protect yourself and your family from the summer sun by following these simple guidelines:

- Stay in the shade or make your own shade with an umbrella or tarp.
- Choose a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher and apply at least 30 minutes before heading outdoors. Once outside reapply sunscreen often, particularly after swimming or perspiring.
- Choose sunglasses that protect against UVA and UVB rays.
- Be careful. Water, sand, and concrete can reflect and even increase the sun's burning rays
- Wear clothing that protects against the sun.
- Be sure to wear a hat.
- Try to avoid the sun for extended periods of time, especially between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. when the sun's rays are most dangerous.
- Don't be fooled by cloudy days. You can get a sunburn through clouds, fog, or haze.



## HENDERSON & WALTON NOW HAS THREE NURSE PRACTITIONERS

Nurse practitioners are registered nurses with specialized advanced education and clinical competency. They provide health and medical care for diverse populations in a variety of primary, acute, and long-term care settings. Nurse practitioners have had training in pathophysiology and pharmacology that prepares them to diagnose and treat patients.

Henderson & Walton Women's Center is pleased to have three nurse practitioners working in our practice: Patty Piper, CRNP; Belinda Lester-Isley, CRNP; and Cassandra Ridgel, CRNP.

Patty Piper works with Dr. Carol Swindle and Dr. Cynthia Lassiter. Belinda Lester-Isley works with Dr. Elizabeth Snowden. Cassandra Ridgel works with Dr. Brenda Taylor. Each of our nurse practitioners works under the direct supervision of the physician in providing care to our patients.

If you are interested in seeing one of our nurse practitioners, please ask the Central Scheduling representative to place you on one of their schedules. If you have any questions regarding the role of a nurse practitioner in your health care, please ask your physician.

## HENDERSON & WALTON DIAGNOSTIC AND COUNSELING SERVICES

A woman's health care needs are different from a man's. At Henderson & Walton Women's Center, we understand those differences. We're committed to providing women the highest possible quality care in a warm and personal atmosphere. Our comprehensive diagnostic and counseling services include the following.

- Mammography
- Bone Density
- Ultrasound
- Nonstress Testing (NST)
- Infertility Services
- Laboratory Services
- Nutrition Counseling
- Personal Counseling



(Mammograms continued from page one)

- Women age 20 to 39 should perform a breast self-exam at least once a month and have a clinical breast exam every three years.
- Women age 40 and older should perform a breast self-exam at least once a month, have a clinical breast exam once a year, and have a mammogram once a year.

If you are under 40 years of age and have a family history of cancer or other concerns about your health, please discuss your concerns with the health care

professionals at Henderson and Walton Women's Center, P.C.

Even though you feel great today, just being a woman and growing older puts you at risk for breast cancer. Getting checked regularly, which should include a mammogram, can give you peace of mind. More importantly, detecting cancer early can save your life.

## SATELLITE LOCATIONS

### *Anniston*

Dr. Dan Hudson

### *Alabaster*

Dr. Charles Hudson

Dr. A. Elizabeth Snowden

### *Cullman*

Dr. Cindy Lassiter

Dr. Charles Svensson

Dr. Alison Heaton

Jill McCool, Counselor

### *Gadsden*

Dr. Lauren Britt

Dr. A. Elizabeth Snowden

Dr. Jeffery Gunnells

### *Jasper*

Dr. Carol Swindle

Dr. John Edwards

### *Sylacauga*

Dr. John Faucette

Dr. Cindy Jones

### *Tuscaloosa*

Dr. Marian McCord

Dr. Brenda Taylor

Dr. Charles Svensson



### **HWWC - Central**

806 St. Vincent's Drive, Suite 500  
Birmingham, Alabama 35205

(205) 930-1800

1-800-264-1075

FAX: (205) 930-1818

### **HWWC - Alabaster**

644 2nd Street, N.E., Suite 101  
Alabaster, Alabama 35007

(205) 663-0013

FAX: (205) 663-0372

### **HWWC - Anniston**

1525 Leighton Avenue, Suite A  
Anniston, Alabama 36201

(256) 236-7541

FAX: (256) 236-7575

### **HWWC - Cullman**

111 4th Ave., NE

Cullman, AL 35055

(256) 737-9306

FAX: (256) 737-9307

### **HWWC - Gadsden**

105 Church Street, Suite A  
Rainbow City, Alabama 35906

(256) 442-7740

FAX: (256) 442-7741

### **HWWC - Jasper**

1009 7th Avenue  
Jasper, Alabama 35501

(205) 221-4221

FAX: (205) 221-4222

### **HWWC - Sylacauga**

9 South Western Avenue  
Sylacauga, Alabama 35150

(256) 249-4032

FAX: (256) 245-5655

### **HWWC - Tuscaloosa**

Riverside Medical Center  
535 Jack Warner Parkway, N.E.,  
Suite H-2

Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35404

(205) 554-0572

FAX: (205) 554-0573