

# Invest in Your Health

By PacMed Medical Staff

*Everyone's looking for ways to protect their money these days, so here's a hot tip: Stay healthy!*

Investing in your health is not unlike saving for retirement. Every little "deposit" you make toward your physical and mental wellness adds up and pays off in the long-term. By maintaining a healthy weight, building strong bones, working on balance and avoiding unhealthy habits that can lead to chronic problems, you can look forward to a better quality of life and prevent large medical bills in your later years. In fact, you'll start earning "interest" right away.

On the flip side, chronic disease is expensive—both for the individual and society—in terms of rising medical and Medicare costs, and lost productivity at work or from being unemployed. According to a study published in 2005 by RAND Health, obese individuals are expected to pay \$39,000 more on health care in their lifetimes than people of normal weight and to experience higher rates of diabetes, hypertension and heart disease than the general population. The American Diabetes Association reported in 2008 that people with diagnosed diabetes have medical expenditures that are 2.3 times higher than they'd be without the disease, averaging \$11,744 per year, of which \$6,649 is attributed directly to diabetes. These are out-of-pocket amounts for people with medical coverage.

The seven most common chronic diseases in the United States today are cancer, diabetes, hypertension, stroke, heart disease, pulmonary conditions and mental illness. While nothing in life is a guarantee, every one of these conditions has been linked to behavioral and environmental factors that can be addressed—for instance, by quitting smoking. Cigarette smoking is linked not only to many chronic diseases, but also to higher medical, life and home insurance expenses—not to mention the actual cost of buying cigarettes, which is money down the drain.

So, instead of paying \$1,500 a year for cigarettes or \$600 a year to treat high blood pressure and heart disease (the approximate amount cited by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), help yourself—and those who depend on you—by putting that money toward activities and foods that reward you with increased energy and fulfillment:

- Get medical insurance and preventive care—including teeth cleanings and eye checkups.
- Find an activity you love to do—and do it: Join a gym, take dance or yoga classes, walk daily.
- Take a vacation ... or a "staycation."
- Go for therapy or join a support group if you need it.
- Get enough sleep.
- Opt for pesticide- and chemical-free foods, and do your own cooking.
- Enjoy time with the people in your life.

There is only one you. Invest in yourself so you can live your best life.

## PacMed™ Clinic Locations

### Beacon Hill

1200 12th Ave S  
Seattle, WA 98144

### Canyon Park

1909 214th St SE, #300  
Bothell, WA 98021

### Diagnostic Center for Sleep Health

10416 5th Ave NE  
Seattle, WA 98125

### Diagnostic & Wellness Center for Women

1200 12th Ave S  
Seattle, WA 98144

### Federal Way

33501 First Way S, #200  
Federal Way, WA 98003

### First Hill

1101 Madison St, #301  
Seattle, WA 98104

### Lynnwood

19401 40th Ave W, #230  
Lynnwood, WA 98036

### Northgate

10416 5th Ave NE  
Seattle, WA 98125

### Puyallup

220 15th Ave SE, Suite C  
Puyallup, WA 98372

### Renton

601 S Carr Rd, #100  
Renton, WA 98055

### Totem Lake

12910 Totem Lake Blvd NE, #101  
Kirkland, WA 98034



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