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## **Cardiovascular News Update**

Dear Colleague,

Westside Medical Associates of Los Angeles (WMALA) in conjunction with Westside Medical Imaging (WMI) would like to provide you with this weekly update on important new developments in cardiovascular care.

**Pediatric metabolic syndrome may lead to early heart disease, stroke** "Overweight children with high cholesterol, blood pressure, and sugar levels are much more likely than children with normal readings to have heart disease or strokes by their 30s and 40s," according to a study reported in *Pediatrics*. "The report tracks children for the longest time span so far -- until they were 38 on average -- to look for a link between early red flags for cardiovascular disease and adult health problems." According to study leader John Morrison, a professor at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, "About one out of five children with" pediatric metabolic syndrome "have heart disease or strokes by their 30s or 40s, compared with one out of 67 who" do not have the condition.

**Only 80 percent of patients follow up on doctors' referrals to specialists.** "About 20 percent of patients don't follow up on their doctor's referrals to specialists," according to research reported in the July/August issue of the *Annals of Family Medicine*. Lead researcher Dr. Christopher B. Forrest, from the department of pediatrics at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, and a team of researchers "collected data on 776 patients cared for by 133 doctors in 30 states." They discovered that, "among the 132 patients who did not see a specialist, 47.5 percent said the medical situation had resolved itself; 37.3 percent said they didn't have the time, and 26.5 percent said they had disagreed with their doctor's advice." The researchers reported that "92.4 percent of those who requested a referral saw a specialist, compared with 81.9 percent of the patients whose doctor suggested the referral." An additional "aspect that influenced whether or not a patient was likely to see a specialist was their relationship with their primary care doctor," as "patients are more likely to go to a specialist if their primary care doctor makes the appointment," according to Forrest. Also, "insurance coverage was...a factor in whether or not patients saw a specialist." The study found that "patients on Medicaid were less likely to follow through on the referral and more likely to be denied coverage by their health plan."

**Early detection saves lives. That's what we do. Find out more at Westside Medical Imaging's website at [www.westside-medimaging.com](http://www.westside-medimaging.com)**

**Study finds that many Americans suffer "whispering" strokes.** "A surprisingly high number of Americans may suffer 'whispering' strokes -- attacks whose symptoms are so mild that they often go ignored but can nevertheless cause physical and mental harm," according to research reported in the August 3 issue of *Stroke*. George Howard, of the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health, and colleagues determined that about "18 percent of the almost 22,000 older adults in the study reported having such symptoms." Moreover, study



participants "who experienced these symptoms had lower-than-normal scores on tests of physical and mental functioning." The participants "filled out standard questionnaires on their mental and physical status and a separate form asking if they had experienced symptoms of a stroke." Thinking the symptoms were not important enough to warrant medical treatment, more than "3,400 participants said they had experienced such symptoms but had not been diagnosed with either a stroke or a transient ischemic attack." Nevertheless, "damage had been done to these people," according to the researchers. The "questionnaires showed a 5.5-point lower score on physical functioning and a 2.7-point lower score on mental functioning compared to people with no such symptoms."

**Neck muscles may play a roll in controlling heart rate.** "A University of Leeds chance discovery in a British laboratory shows why a chiropractic adjustment for a pain in the neck may do wonders for blood pressure," according to research published in the *Journal of Neuroscience*. Study leader Jim Deuchars "found pathways between the neck and the brain to show how the neck muscles could play a crucial role in controlling blood pressure, heart rate, and breathing." The study offers the "first evidence that these connections from the neck can influence brain regions which control [such] body functions...as breathing and blood pressure."

**Research suggests laser printers may emit potentially hazardous particles.** Some laser printers "could be emitting high levels of potentially hazardous particles, according to a study published" in the journal *Environmental Science and Technology*. The authors said that "some printers released almost as many ultra-fine particles as a smoldering cigarette." Study author Lidia Morawska, a physicist at Queensland University of Technology in Australia, said, "Inhaling fine particles can cause health problems ranging from respiratory irritation to cardiovascular problems and cancer, depending on the particle composition."

**Westside Medical Associates of Los Angeles (WMALA) and Westside Medical Imaging (WMI) are premier centers in cardiac diagnosis and treatment.**

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