



Section

Better breathing, better blood pressure

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Take a slow deep breath, then exhale just as slowly. Can you take fewer than 10 breaths a minute?

Research suggests breathing that slowly for a few minutes a day is enough to help some people nudge down bad blood pressure.

Why would that brief interlude of calm really work? A scientist at the National Institutes of Health thinks how we breathe may hold a key to how the body regulates blood pressure—and that it has less to do with relaxation than with breaking down all that salt most of us eat.

Now Dr. David Anderson is trying to prove it, with the help of a special gadget that trains volunteers with hypertension to slow-breathe.

If he's right, the work could shed new light on the intersection between hypertension, stress and diet.

"If you sit there underbreathing all day and you have a high salt intake, your kidneys may be less effective at getting rid of that salt than if you're out hiking in the woods," said Anderson, who heads research into behavior and hypertension at the NIH's National Institute on Aging.

An estimated 65 million Americans have high blood pressure, putting them at increased risk of heart attacks, strokes, kidney damage, blindness and dementia. Many don't know it. Hypertension is often called the silent killer, because patients may notice no symptoms until it already has done serious damage.

Anyone can get high blood pressure, measured as a level of 140 over 90 or more. But being overweight and inactive, and eating too much salt—Americans eat nearly double the upper limit for good health—all increase the risk. Indeed, losing weight, physical activity and cutting sodium are the most effective lifestyle changes people can make to lower blood pressure. Still, most hypertension patients need medications, too.

While they know risk factors, scientists don't fully understand the root causes of hypertension. What skews the body's usually finely tuned mechanisms for regulating the force of blood pounding against artery walls, until it can't compensate for some extra pounds on a couch potato? Understanding those mechanisms could point to better ways to prevent and treat hypertension.

Enter breathing

Meditation, yoga and similar relaxation techniques that incorporate slow, deep breathing have long been thought to aid blood pressure, although research to prove an effect has been spotty.

Then in 2002, the Food and Drug Administration cleared the nonprescription sale of a medical device called RESPIRERATE, to help lower blood pressure by pacing breathing. The Internet-sold device counts breaths by sensing chest or abdominal movement, and sounds gradually slowing chimes that signal when to inhale and exhale. Users follow the tone until their breathing slows from the usual 16 to 10 breaths a minute to 10 or fewer.

In clinical trials funded by

Please see BETTER/2B



IN RELIGION
Sherond King
spreads a message of freedom
on her new CD.

Making waves beyond the beach

Swimwear makes you look great in or out of water

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. — Dare to wear this swimwear anywhere.

Think high-waisted boy shorts that can go from beach to bar. Soccer-inspired athletic pieces or sailor-style tanks that can double as cocktail-hour corsets.

Of course, plenty of traditional tiny bikinis and revealing one-pieces also were on display this month during the second annual Miami Sunglass Hut Swim Shows, showcasing 2007 cruise and beach wear. But it was the pieces offering a bit more coverage and versatility that stood out—especially against the Miami Beach backdrop where skin is always in.

"Swimwear has evolved into pieces that are really good for layering," said Robert Verdi, host of the Style Network's Fashion Police and a spokesman for Sunglass Hut.

At the Rosa Cha show, for example, some of the pieces looked like they'd be more at home on the soccer field than on the sand, though they still incorporated sexy, lingerie-like touches. Embroidery adorned a pair of boy shorts and a hint of lace lined some sporty cover-ups.

Verdi said some of the styles reminded him of the 1940s. That is "something we have not seen in a long



INSTYLESWIMSUITS.COM

Camouflage is big this year in swimwear design.

time," he said.

A Carnival-theme song played in the background—which sounded like screaming fans at a soccer match—as models strutted in lace, lilac and light pink bikinis; one-piece suits with ultra low halter and full open backs; tank cover-ups and white doll dresses in silk and ivory.

From dainty pieces to a sporty motif, models also wore dark green and white tops; gold leather jackets; mesh details; athletic inspired tank dresses with the Brazilian flag on several suits; one-piece suits with deep V cuts; and tiny soccer-inspired shorts.

(In case you couldn't guess, Rosa Cha designer Amir Slama hails from beach-bikini-and-soccer-obsessed Brazil.)

The five-day event also

featured swimwear collections by Inca, Red Carter, Gideon Oberson, Parke & Ronen, Becca, ANK by

Mirla Sabino, Norma Kamali and Shay Todd.

Fern Mallis, vice president of IMG, which produced the fashion shows, noted that the collections demonstrated the "duality" of swimsuits for the season. For example, bikini tops that can be worn as a camisole or under a shirt.

Other key themes to look for: sailor styles and pinup girl inspirations from Red Carter, cowgirl details

See SWIMWEAR/2B

Swimwear still elicits fear in women

By Cheri F. Hodges
cheri.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

Although new swimsuits cover more skin, a survey says women still fear them.

Marshall's Department store conducted a survey asking women what they fear most and being seen in public in a bathing suit ranked right under spiders.

About 1,200 women participated in the online survey.

Twenty-nine percent of women polled said they feared heights, 22 percent get the heebie jeebies when they see a spider; 16 percent fear swimwear and 10 percent don't want to go up in the great blue yon-

der.

But 22 percent said none of that stuff scares them. Rock on sisters!

So, why don't women want to be seen in public in a bathing suit? After all when you're poolside or at the beach, isn't that the point?

Anne Paxton wrote on Brazilian Bikinis.org that once summer hits, women are forced to remember the pizza they ate and frappuccinos they drank during the winter.

"I've been guilty of buying into the bikini body ideal," she writes. "More than once I bought a bathing suit that didn't fit but swore to myself that I would fit into it by summer. You can guess how suc-

cessful that was."

To alleviate the fear of striking out in public in your bathing suit, here are some tips to make sure you look good:

- Do not compare yourself to swimsuit models.
- If you have a large bust buy a suit with a built-in bra.
- Women with long torsos should opt for a tankini.
- Pear shaped women should buy suits with a built-in tummy tuck.
- Choosing a suit with Lycra or spandex and a high cut leg will shave 10 pounds off your appearance.

Source www.e-interest.com

Whatever happened to Atlantic Beach S.C.?

By Cheri F. Hodges
cheri.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

This past weekend I took a trip to South Carolina's coast with my sister and her kids. She had the bright idea of showing them Atlantic Beach where the annual Black Bike Rally takes place every year. Since she's the oldest, I went along with the plan, even though I really wanted to head to Myrtle Beach to hit the Pavilion Beach since it's closing this year.

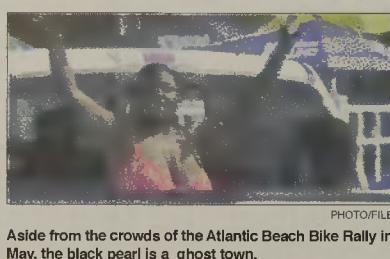
When we arrived at the famed beach, it was so barren. Unlike the shores of Myrtle Beach or even North Myrtle Beach, there were no vendors, no smells of hot dogs roasting, funnel cakes frying or even someone hawking umbrellas and chairs. It was just dirt and the ocean. Turning down the

street that gives you access to the beach is like turning into a ghost town filled with dilapidated buildings and dirt driveways. Granted, there was less traffic and that was a good thing.

I can appreciate that Atlantic Beach, according to the town's web site is one of two oceanfront properties owned by African Americans. That fact alone makes me swell with pride. But looking at the "Black Pearl of The Atlantic" makes me sad.

The great history of the beach is gone. When I returned to Charlotte, I hopped on the internet to see what Atlantic Beach used to be. According to the town's web site, this used to be a great place.

Town of Atlantic Beach was formed of mostly



Aside from the crowds of the Atlantic Beach Bike Rally in May, the black pearl is a ghost town.

Gullah/Geechee people, descendants of slaves who lived for 300 years on the Sea Islands from Wilmington, North Carolina to Jacksonville, Fla.

In the early 1930's, defying Jim Crow laws in the segregated south, debunking black stereotypes, and broadening the enterprises of the Gullah/Geechee peo-

ple, black men and women opened hotels, restaurants, night clubs, and novelty shops in Atlantic Beach. They would travel along Interstate 95, Highway 17 and South Carolina Highway 9, coming from North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia to Florida, where racial segregation took its toll.

Please see WHAT/2B

IN RELIGION
Sherond King
spreads a message of freedom
on her new CD.



Childhood asthma

Asthma, a life threatening medical condition, affects approximately 11 percent of African Americans.

It is increasingly prevalent among African American children. African American children with asthma are more likely than non-minority children to require emergency medical treatment. Could your child be one of them?

What causes asthma?

Asthma is a chronic condition in which narrowing of the passages from the lungs to the nose and mouth (airways) leads to difficulty breathing. These changes commonly occur in response to changes in the environment, including weather, allergens (such as dog or cat hair, mold, or dust), tobacco smoke, foods, or respiratory infections (colds). It often runs in families. Allergies are not the same as asthma, but children with allergies can also have asthma.

What causes asthma?

In people with asthma, the airways that run from the nose to the lungs are overly sensitive. Asthma is the excessive response of these airways to a "trigger" such as dust in the air. It involves swelling and inflammation of the airways and reversible tightening of the tiny muscles that surround the airways. Children with asthma may be able to breath normally most of the time. When they encounter a trigger, however, an attack (exacerbation) can occur. Common asthma triggers include tobacco smoke, dust, pollen, exercise, viral infections such as the common cold, animals (hair or dander), chemicals in the air or in food, mold, changes in weather (most often cold weather), strong emotions, and some medications.

Children's airways are narrower than those of adults. So, triggers that may cause only a slight response in an adult can be much more serious in children. In children, asthma can appear suddenly and cause severe wheezing and shortness of breath. For this reason, it is important that asthma be diagnosed and treated correctly. In some cases, this may mean taking daily medication even during times when the child is not having any symptoms.

How do I know if my child has asthma? The symptoms of asthma include shortness of breath, wheezing, and/or coughing. This cough is usually a dry cough; sometimes you can hear a little wheeze at the end of the cough. Depending on the trigger, the symptoms can occur during the day, the night, or both the day and the night. These symptoms may initially be confused with a common cold or the 'flu' but in children with asthma they recur over several months or even years. So, it's also important to recognize a pattern or history of symptoms.

Other indicators of a more serious episode include rapid breathing, prolonged exhalation, or exaggerated use of the muscles in the chest and neck to assist breathing. It's important that parents and caregivers are able to recognize promptly the onset of asthma symptoms.

Please see RISKS/3B