

Life & Health

Your Guide to Wellness

Winter 2012

WINTER SPORTS

**Safety on
the slopes**

2012 RESOLUTIONS

**Make this
your best
year ever**



Clearing snow? Put safety first

By Jana Mortellaro
*Certified Occupational and Hand
 Therapist, Barton Rehabilitation Services*

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, it's estimated that more than 5,700 emergency department visits stem from snowblower accidents each year. More than 550 of those cases have required finger amputations. Some accidents have resulted in death. Most snowblower accident cases sustain deep cuts, crushed and broken bones, joint, tendon and soft tissue injuries. And 90% of the time, the injury is to the dominant hand, according to the American Society for Surgery of the Hand. This typically involves loss of fingertips, most commonly the middle finger.

Domestic danger

We may have a healthy respect for our lawn mowers and weed-whackers and their ability to cause harm, but we have to remember a snowblower is not any less dangerous just because it throws the fluffy white stuff around instead of slicing plants away from the earth. So, before you put your snowblower into action, make sure you take the time to use it properly and safely.

Most snowblower injuries are preventable if you concentrate on the task at hand and use common sense. Here are several helpful tips to keep you safe while clearing snow:

- ▶ Read the instruction manual prior to using the snowblower.
- ▶ Never use your hands to unclog a snowblower.



"A severe hand/finger injury can be excruciatingly painful and effects all aspects of daily life – bathing, dressing, cooking, eating, writing, using the computer, driving, riding a bike, etc. Having access to hand therapy after my traumatic injury [from a snowblower] was critical. Therapy was my barometer during the healing process, and helped me to adjust, so I could attempt these daily tasks successfully."

– J. G., snowblower accident survivor and Barton Rehabilitation patient

- ▶ Wear protective clothing.
- ▶ Do not drink alcohol or use prescription narcotics before using your snowblower.
- ▶ Be sure the kids and animals are safely in the house.
- ▶ Add fuel to the tank outdoors before starting the machine.
- ▶ Watch where you're aiming the snow.
- ▶ Don't add gasoline to a running or hot engine.
- ▶ If you have an electric-powered snowblower, be aware of where the power cord is at all times.
- ▶ Don't remove safety devices.
- ▶ Keep hands and feet away from all moving parts.

- ▶ Don't leave a snowblower unattended when it is running. Turn the engine off if you need to walk away.
- ▶ Never leave the machine running in an enclosed area.

In case of clogs

- ▶ **Never** put your hands down the chute or near the blades.
- ▶ Turn it **off**.
- ▶ **Disengage** the clutch.
- ▶ **Delay/wait** after turning off the engine to allow impeller blades time to stop rotating.

For more information about Barton Rehabilitation's hand therapy program, call (530) 543-5896.



High-tech relief for acid reflux

Barton Memorial Hospital is home to the only physicians between Sacramento and Reno who perform a leading-edge, incisionless procedure to treat acid reflux – Drs. Scott Welker and Daniel Norman.

The procedure, EsophyX transoral incisionless fundoplication (TIF), is an effective alternative to medication and traditional surgery for people living with gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD).

For more information about TIF EsophyX, please call Barton General Surgery at (530) 543-5691 or visit bartonhealth.org/reflux.

Goodbye, GERD

“The TIF EsophyX procedure can significantly improve quality of life for our patients,” Barton general surgeon, Dr. Welker, said. “After the procedure, most patients can stop antireflux medications, and reflux no longer impacts their life like it previously did. If chronic GERD goes untreated, it can cause serious complications.”

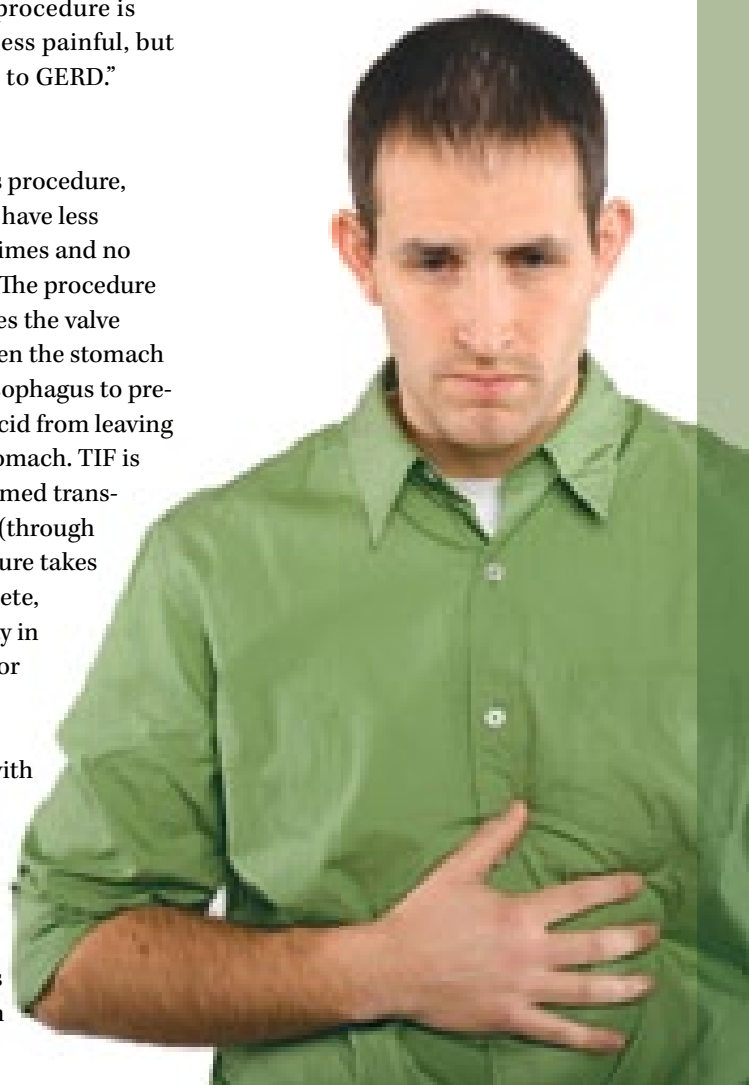
“Reflux medications like PPIs (proton pump inhibitors) can help relieve patients’ heartburn symptoms, but don’t solve the underlying problems or prevent further progression of the

disease. The EsophyX procedure is designed to provide a less painful, but very effective, solution to GERD.”

No cut is kinder

TIF is an incisionless procedure, meaning patients often have less pain, shorter recovery times and no scars. The procedure restores the valve between the stomach and esophagus to prevent acid from leaving the stomach. TIF is performed transorally (through the mouth). The procedure takes about an hour to complete, and patients usually stay in the hospital overnight for monitoring.

“With millions of Americans diagnosed with GERD, TIF offers an excellent treatment option,” Dr. Welker said. “We are very excited to be able to offer our patients the same benefits as invasive surgery, with no incisions.”



What’s your New Year’s resolution?



Check us out on Facebook, submit a creative and inspiring resolution for 2012, and be entered to win a \$25 gift certificate to a local restaurant or retailer.

Staycation

“In 2012, my goal is to experience something new in the Lake Tahoe area every other weekend. Things on the list are: snow-shoe around Fallen Leaf Lake, visit Hope Valley, hike to see the waterfalls (truly, just hike anywhere), cannonball off a boat, ride a new trail and paddleboard down one of the slow-moving rivers.”

—Katie Shea, Barton Health Nursing Administrative Assistant



Family fun: Barton Health Nursing Administrative Assistant, Katie Shea, snowboards with her son Orion at Heavenly Mountain Resort.

 facebook.com/BartonHealth



WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT ACL INJURIES

KNEES on SKIS

By Dr. Terrence Orr
*Orthopedic surgeon,
Tahoe Center for Orthopedics*

Every year, more than 200,000 people in the U.S. injure their anterior cruciate ligament (ACL), part of the system of tissue that surrounds the knee.

In skiing, knee injuries occur at a rate of 1 every 1,000 skier days, and roughly one-third of those injuries are ACL tears. That means on average, for every 3,000 people skiing on any day, one person will blow out his or her knee.

The big question is: How do you keep from becoming a statistic?

Get in shape

Skiing and snowboarding are demanding activities. Strength, flexibility and agility are required. Go into the season strong and you will see the benefits. You will not only decrease your risk of injury, but also become a technically better skier/rider.

Biking, hiking and running are great activities to strengthen your legs. Check out the QR code for some pre-season conditioning exercises that will help get you ready to hit the slopes. (If you don't have a smart-phone handy, you can also see the exercises at bartonhealth.org/winter_conditioning.)



Get your equipment in shape

Be sure to get your equipment tuned, adjusted and properly fitted to

Which is better: Hot tub or ice bath?

By Kris Terrian
*Athletic trainer,
Tahoe Center for Orthopedics*

What sounds better after a long powder day: icing your knees or hopping in the hot tub? The majority of skiers and snowboarders would prefer the hot tub. And though this sounds like the perfect place to get warm, meet up with your buds and kick back and relax, the hot water could hinder your next day's skiing or boarding performance.

Hot tubs are great for warming up muscles before activity. Heat opens your blood vessels, allowing more blood to flow into the muscles. But after a great day on the mountain, your muscles are fatigued and have built up pools of lactic acid – causing


soreness over time. Cold therapy vasoconstricts, which means it helps reduce the blood flow into the muscles. This is very beneficial to help keep the soreness and aches away, especially if you plan on shredding the pow the next day.

Cooling down properly gives your body a chance to deal with the lactic acid before it makes you sore. What your legs really need after exercising is a cool-down period where either ice or snow is applied to aching muscles to calm them down and stop the excess blood flow.

Remember, if you're planning on a great week or weekend of powder shredding, don't get in the hot tub until after you've cooled down. Even better, save it for the next morning.

See you on the mountain!

To avoid sore muscles, try 10 to 20 minutes of heat therapy before activity and 20 to 30 minutes of cold therapy after.



your size and ability. Your bindings need periodic checks by a professional because if a ski binding fails to release during a fall, the ski will transmit a huge force through the boot into your lower leg and knee. It can catch on obstacles in the ski run and turn a simple fall into a dangerous all-out tumble.

Know the terrain

Jumps, bumps and trees are not forgiving. Look before you leap. And beware of changing snow conditions.

Use good technique

Avoid the ACL injury profile. Red flags that you might be skiing unsafely are:

- ▶ Your uphill arm is back.
- ▶ You're off-balance to the rear.
- ▶ Your hips are below your knees.
- ▶ Your uphill ski is unweighted.
- ▶ Your weight is on the inside edge of

the downhill ski.

- ▶ Your upper body is facing the downhill ski.

Be kind to your fellow man

On crowded slopes, and even on quieter days, collisions happen all too often. It is the responsibility of everyone on the slope to watch out for others and stop only in areas where you can be easily seen from above. Stay in control, and be prepared to slow or stop for inexperienced skiers who have lost control.

Have a great winter!



Visit TahoeOrthopedics.com for more information and tips.



**OFFICIAL MEDICAL
PROVIDER**



From physical endurance to equipment, orthopedic surgeon Dr. Terrence Orr knows knees. Dr. Orr has served as

the head physician for the Men's U.S. Alpine Ski Team since 2000. From 1988 to 2009, he served as a team physician for the U.S. Ski Team. In addition, he was a member of the medical staff for the Winter Olympic Games in 2002 and 2006 and provided coverage of international ski competitions, such as the Alpine Skiing World Cup Finals and the World Alpine Skiing Championships. Dr. Orr has provided medical treatment for additional outdoor sports, such as the World's Toughest Triathlon, the Death Ride, and the Lake Tahoe Marathon, in addition to local high school and college sports programs.

ACTIVELY PURSUING THE HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITY

Wild winter adventures in Lake Tahoe

Besides all of the great ski and snowboard resorts, Lake Tahoe offers even more for the outdoor enthusiast to explore. Here are just a few of the great winter experiences in the beautiful Tahoe basin that will warm your heart and create fantastic memories.

Hook, line and sinker

Yes, you can **fly-fish** in the winter! Troll, drift and jig year-round on Lake Tahoe. Depending on the season, mackinaw (lake trout), rainbow trout, brown trout and Kokanee salmon may be biting at your line. Enjoy the spectacular views of Lake Tahoe as you catch your next meal, and reel in the memories of exciting and enjoyable moments on the Lake. Fly fish on the Truckee River and take in the great sights. Be sure to check out Red, Caples and Blue lakes in Hope Valley for some ice fishing.

Trekking in the winter wilderness

Gear up! Anywhere you can walk in the summer, you can **snowshoe** in the winter. Snowshoers favor the sport because they have an appreciation for the environment. Snowshoe adventures are

similar to mountaineering, cross-country running or a nice walk. It all varies depending on how deep the snow is or how long you go – you decide. Be sure to visit Hope Valley, Kirkwood, Fallen Leaf Lake and Tahoe Meadows for some winter snow hiking.



2012 Barton Health & Wellness Lecture Series

Attend any four of Barton's 2012 wellness lectures, and receive an attendance "punch-card" – you'll automatically be entered to win a 2012–2013 season pass to a Lake Tahoe ski/snowboard resort or other great prizes. For more information, please call **(530) 543-5656** or visit bartonhealth.org/lecture.

February

Wednesday, Feb. 1, 6 to 7 p.m.

"Cardiovascular Risk Factors & Heart Health"

Dr. David Young

Kahle Community Center,

236 Kingsbury Grade, Stateline, NV

March

Wednesday, March 7, 6 to 7 p.m.

"Hip Arthroscopy – An Alternative to Hip Replacement"

Dr. Robert Rupp

Lake Tahoe Community College,

1 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe

Wednesday, March 21, 6 to 7 p.m.

"Hip Arthroscopy – An Alternative to Hip Replacement"

Dr. Robert Rupp

Incline Village, NV

April

Wednesday, April 4, 6 to 7 p.m.

"Musculoskeletal Ultrasound – A Nonsurgical Approach to Sports Injuries"

Dr. Jonathan Finnoff

Lake Tahoe Community College,

1 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe

May

Wednesday, May 2, 6 to 7 p.m.

"Suffer from Reflux? New Treatment Options"

Dr. Scott Welker

Kahle Community Center,

236 Kingsbury Grade, Stateline, NV

Barton Health Grants awarded to Tahoe community programs

The Barton Foundation and Barton Health's Community Advisory Committee (CAC) gave \$25,000 to 10 South Lake Tahoe nonprofit organizations in November to help fund health-related services. The programs awarded addressed some of Lake Tahoe's most pressing health needs, such as nutrition, physical fitness and mental health.

South Tahoe High School (STHS) received the largest of the health grants: \$7,700. Margaret McKean, district nurse for Lake Tahoe Unified School District (LTUSD), wrote the grant on behalf of the STHS Culinary Arts Program's Healthy Choices – Eat Right nutrition program.

"It's about being healthy," McKean said. "And you don't learn if you don't feed your brain. The message is: **Eating healthy helps you think and feel better.** With the Culinary Arts Program, the kids are able to develop their own curriculum, grasp the concept and teach the other kids."

The Healthy Choices – Eat Right program will involve students from STHS culinary, drama, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) and technology classes. The students will be given the challenge to develop projects emphasizing healthy choices and how those choices affect energy, fitness, academics and long-term health and is set to be launched this spring.

"The money will go toward portable equipment, food stations, buses for presentations, food and other necessary items," McKean said.

2012 Barton Health Grant applications will be available in April. For more information, go to bartonhealth.org/grants or call Kindle Craig at (530) 543-5612.



2011 Barton Health Grants

Recipient	Purpose	Amount
South Tahoe High School (STHS)	Healthy Choices – Eat Right	\$7,700
El Dorado County Jail	Healthy Education Addiction Recovery Through Self-Responsibility (HEARTS)	\$3,200
The Drug Store Project	Prevention of teen drug use	\$3,000
Family Resource Center	Heart Health workshops for Latinos	\$2,100
Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)	Support of abused and neglected children	\$2,000
Bijou Community School	Exercise circuit course	\$2,500
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)	Funding for medications provided to mentally ill patients	\$1,500
Tahoe Youth & Family Services	Nutrition programs/Little Latinas	\$1,000
Sports Connection	Funding for local youth to participate in athletics	\$1,000
American Youth Soccer Organization (South Lake Tahoe AYSO 282)	Scholarship fund	\$1,000



▲ Helping kids eat healthier: (from left) Michelle Feeny, F.N.P., Barton Health, Chairperson, Barton Community Advisory Committee; Margaret McKean, R.N., District Nurse, Lake Tahoe Unified School District; Julie Regan, Chairperson, Barton Foundation Board of Trustees



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Have you heard the news?

By Danielle Knowlton
Barton Audiologist

A common myth is hearing loss only affects “old people” and it is merely a sign of aging. The majority (65%) of people with hearing loss are under 65. There are more than 6 million people in the U.S. between the ages of 18 and 44 with hearing loss, and nearly 1.5 million are school age. Hearing loss can affect all age groups.

Did you know that untreated hearing loss can not only affect your ability to understand speech, but can also negatively impact your social and emotional well-being and ultimately decrease your quality of life?

The signs of hearing loss can be subtle and may emerge very slowly, or can be quite significant and come on suddenly. In either case, there are common indications. Possible **social** and **emotional** indications of hearing loss include:

- ▶ Requiring frequent repetition and having difficulty following conversations.
- ▶ Thinking words and voices sound muffled or hearing mumbling.
- ▶ Having difficulty hearing in noisy situations like restaurants, malls or crowded rooms.
- ▶ Answering or responding

inappropriately in conversations.

- ▶ Having trouble hearing people with higher-pitched voices.
 - ▶ Hearing ringing in your ears.
 - ▶ Reading lips or intently watching people’s faces when they speak to you.
 - ▶ Feeling stressed from straining to hear what others are saying.
 - ▶ Feeling embarrassed about meeting new people or misunderstanding what others say.
 - ▶ Feeling annoyed at other people because you can’t hear or understand them.
 - ▶ Withdrawing from social situations because of hearing difficulties.
- Physically**, many things can contribute to hearing loss:
- ▶ Having a family history of hearing loss.
 - ▶ Taking medications that can harm the hearing system (ototoxic drugs).
 - ▶ Having diabetes or heart, circulation or thyroid problems.
 - ▶ Exposure to very loud sounds over

a long period or a single exposure to explosive noise.

In children, hearing issues can cause obstacles with speech and language development and cognitive thinking skills, especially if hearing loss occurs at birth or before speech and language are acquired. They may develop emotional difficulties and low self-esteem. Learning and behavior

If you or a loved one shows signs of hearing loss, make an appointment with Barton Audiology at (530) 543-5815.



problems may arise at school. While most children are screened for hearing loss at birth, hearing loss can occur later, so if there are any concerns, they should be retested.

If you notice any of the signs above, call Barton Audiology or see your primary care physician for a referral. It may just be the best news you’ve “heard” all day.

