

Healthy Living



Early detection important in fighting AAA

There are no warning signs and by the time of the first symptom, it's usually too late. The "it" is an abdominal aortic aneurysm or AAA.

The first symptom, often a rupture, results in death about 75 percent of the time, according to Peter H'Doubler, MD, a vascular surgeon with The Vascular Institutes of Georgia at the Saint Joseph's Specialty Center at Cowles Clinic in Lake Oconee.

"The key to survival is early detection through screening," says Dr. H'Doubler. "AAA is

the 13th leading cause of death for men over 50 and there is a strong familial predilection for the problem." An ultrasound can detect an aneurysm and a free abdominal aortic aneurysm screening is being offered by LifeLine Screening on Friday, June 10th at the Saint Joseph's Specialty Center at Cowles Clinic. People at risk for AAA include men who are 60 years and older, women 65 and older, past and present smokers and those age 50 and over who have cardiovascular disease,

A 10, to 15 minute screening can save a life because most people experience no warning symptoms.

pulmonary disease or a family history of abdominal aortic aneurysm. An appointment is required and can be made by calling 1/800-772-8390.

Smokers are five to six times more likely to develop

an aortic aneurysm, says Dr. H'Doubler.

The aneurysm is an enlargement in the lining of the main artery leading from the heart to the stomach and may show up as a hard lump or protrusion just above the abdomen.

Over time, the lining of the main artery weakens and the force of normal blood flow through the artery can cause the aneurysm to rupture.

"A 10 to 15 minute screen-

ing can save a life because most people experience no warning symptoms," says Dr. H'Doubler. "And, if detected and treated early, a person's life expectancy remains as if there had been no aneurysm at all."

Don't wait.

Call for an appointment at 1/800-772-8390. Saint Joseph's Specialty Center at Cowles Clinic is located at 1000 Cowles Clinic Way, Cypress Bldg., Suite C-300, Greensboro, GA.