

HEALTHSMART

SPRING/SUMMER 2009

IN THE DESERT

Happy, Healthy, **ACTIVE!**

MEET DOROTHY KLOSS:
THE WORLD'S OLDEST SHOWGIRL
**PLUS: HOW LONG
WILL YOU LIVE?**

Are You Ready for the **BIG ONE?**

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SURVIVE AN EARTHQUAKE

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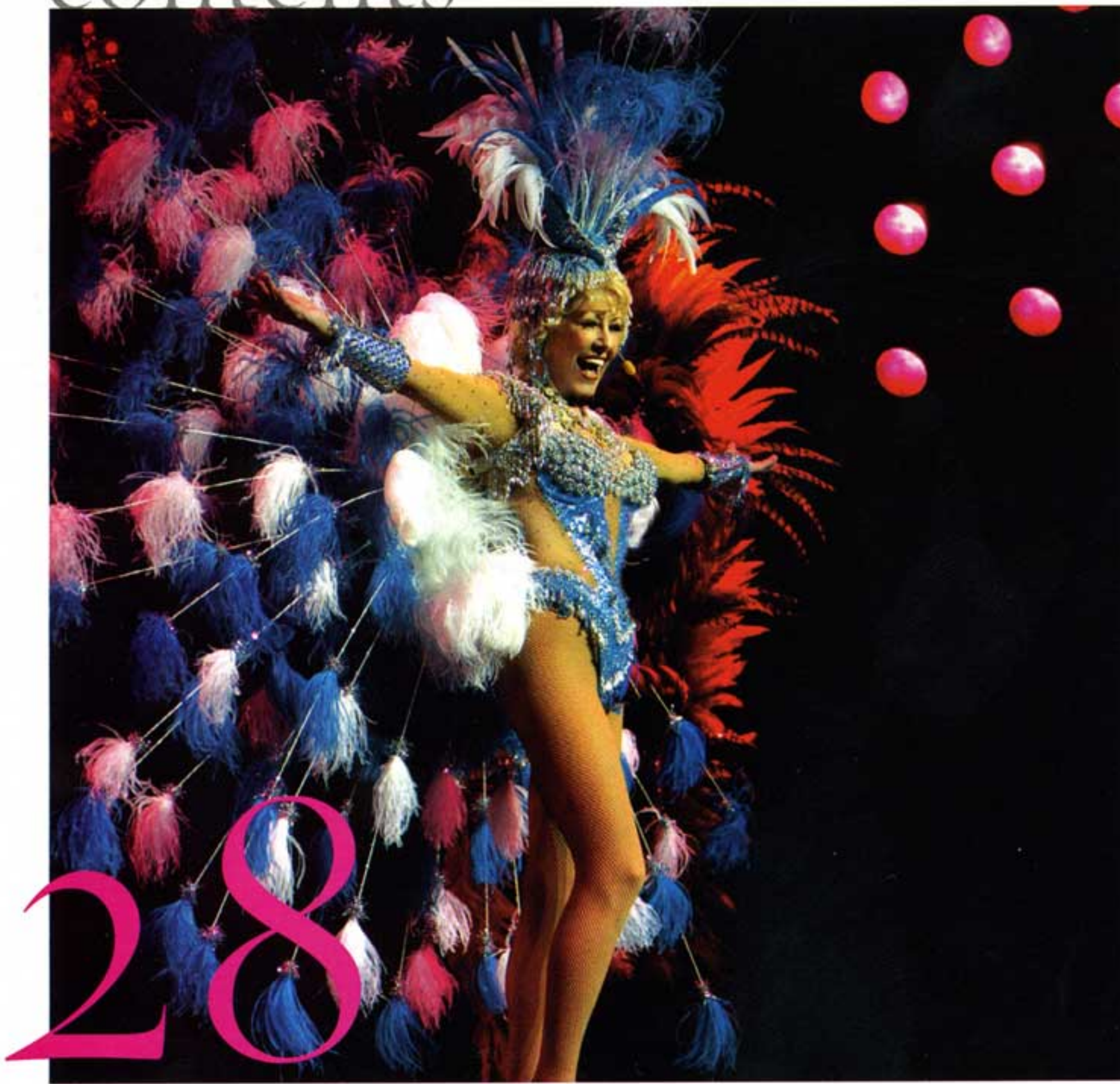
Ease Your **ACHING BACK**

DR. DAVID DUFFNER
HAS THE ANSWERS



**A GUIDE
TO OUR
DOCTORS**

BY SPECIALTY
AT DESERT REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER



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ON THE COVER
Dorothy Kloss.

Photography courtesy *The Fabulous Palm Springs Follies*.

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STILL KICKIN'

AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

At 85, Dorothy Kloss feels great performing
with *The Fabulous Palm Springs Follies*.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY THE FABULOUS PALM SPRINGS

HOW LONG WILL YOU LIVE?

THESE PREDICTORS HELP YOU PROJECT YOUR LONGEVITY.

Would you like to live to be at least 90 years old and enjoy good health during those years? That was the focus of the latest report of the Physicians' Health Study. Looking back over 25 years on the lives of 2,357 healthy men who reached the age of 90 or older, researchers asked, "What were the best predictors of reaching old age and still feeling good?" Here is what they found, in order of importance:

➤ **Quit smoking.** Smokers were more than twice as likely to die before reaching 90 years of age. (If you smoke, the Comprehensive Cancer Center at Desert Regional Medical Center can help you quit. Call 760-416-4800.)

➤ **Maintain a healthy blood sugar level** with good diet, appropriate weight, and physical activity. Those with high blood sugar were nearly twice as likely to die during the study. (The Wellness Center at Desert Regional Medical Center provides free blood sugar checks along with classes and assistance for people with high blood pressure and diabetes. Call 760-323-6881.)

➤ **Maintain a healthy weight** with good diet and physical activity. In the study, those who gained weight and became obese increased their mortality rate by 44 percent. (Desert Regional Medical Center offers weight-loss programs through its Wellness Center. Call (760) 323-6881. For those 75 pounds or more overweight, Desert Regional offers a Center of Excellence weight-loss surgery program. Call (760) 323-6346.

➤ **Exercise regularly.** The men in the study not getting exercise were 28 percent more likely to die early.

➤ **Maintain a healthy blood pressure** — through smart food choices, a healthy weight, and regular physical activity. Men who developed high blood pressure were 28 percent more likely to die early. (Desert Regional's Wellness Center offers free blood pressure checks and educational and treatment programs. Call 760-323-6881.)

➤ **Men who fulfilled all five** of these good-health indicators had a 54 percent chance of living to the age of 90 or older.

➤ **Men who fulfilled three** indicators had 22 to 36 percent chance of reaching age 90 (depending on which risks they had).

➤ **Men who fulfilled none** of the indicators had less than a 4 percent chance of reaching age 90 — a 13-fold difference compared to men with all five good-health indicators.

Those men who had healthy lifestyles (fulfilling at least four indicators) and who reached the age of 90 or older had a lower incidence of chronic disease, better late-life physical function, and better mental well-being scores than those with poorer lifestyles.

More than two-thirds (68 percent) of those 90 or older with a healthy lifestyle reported their health as "very good" to "excellent." Only 8 percent reported their health as "fair" or "poor."

This illustrates that investing time and effort to maintain good health can greatly increase your odds of living a long life and enjoying good health. ■

Liberace, The Mills Brothers, Mel Torme, Cantinflas, Howard Keel, Kay Starr, Frankie Laine, and Chico Marx and was accompanied in her routines by noted Big Bands such as those of Ray Noble, Skinnay Ennis, Les Brown, and Shep Fields (and his Rippling Rhythm).

In 1946, Kloss became the hostess and dance instructor for Chicago's WBKB and performed the first tap numbers on television.

She still does tap solos in her 14th season with *The Fabulous Palm Springs Follies*. Kloss isn't shy about what inspired her to audition at 70 for the *Follies*. "Money, success and fame," she laughs. "Two out of three ain't bad."

And she doesn't worry about her feet and body aching after a performance. "I soak them," she quips mischievously, "in vodka."

The most challenging experience of her life was being diagnosed with colon cancer two decades ago and making a full recovery after surgery. "I never thought about it," she says. "I just changed my thinking and my eating habits." ■



Dorothy Kloss today.

Dorothy Kloss in 1933 at age 10.

Y ou are as young as you feel, and many people in their 70s and 80s feel great. The secret is to take care of yourself: exercise, eat right, and control your blood sugar and weight. Keep your heart healthy, and never retire from life. Stay active, involved, and motivated.

Dorothy Dale Kloss, 85, is billed in the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the world's oldest performing showgirl. She began dancing when she was 3 years old. As a precocious Chicago teenager, she taught a young Bob Fosse how to tap dance, won a tap contest herself at the renowned Miss Abbott's Dance School, and catapulted to stardom at the age of 15 with her own act in the Empire Room of the Palmer House.

She was paid \$35 for the first week of the Empire Room gig and still has the canceled check. She used the money to buy a dress for her mother, who created her costumes.

She performed with the famed Eddy Duchin orchestra until his band members were drafted during World War II and then danced for the USO. Touring the United States and Mexico, she was on stage at various times with

