

# HEALTHCARE & WELLNESS

*of Western North Carolina*

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- *Skin cancer on the rise*
- *Protect pets in hot weather*

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# HEALTHCARE & WELLNESS

*of Western North Carolina*

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## 6 HEALTH BENEFITS OF YOGA

Are you ready for warrior pose? Have you engaged in downward dog today? You no doubt understand these questions if you have an even cursory knowledge of yoga.

Yoga is an ancient, ascetic Hindu discipline comprised of controlled breathing, body positions and meditation. The goal of yoga is to attain a deep state of tranquility and spiritual insight. While people may be quick to associate yoga with popular poses, it's the complete package of breathing and reflection that does wonderful things for the mind and body.

Yoga can help tame stress, reduce pain, improve quality of sleep, and even boost immunity. But it can also provide tangible health and medical benefits, whether for those recovering from illness or surgery or those living with a chronic condition. While the scientific research into yoga's health benefits is preliminary and not extensive, certain trends have emerged.

### 1. Improves flexibility:

Even the lowest intensity styles of yoga have been shown to increase flexibility. Yoga is especially helpful for adults ages 65 and older, helping to slow age-related loss of flexibility.

### 2. Brain boost:

Gray matter in the brain can diminish as people get older. However, according to a study funded by the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, there is no relationship between gray matter and age among yoga practitioners. In fact, yoga participants showed increased volume in certain brain regions commensurate with the number of years of yoga experience and practice.

### 3. Back pain relief:

Yoga poses can help alleviate pain in var-

ious regions of the body, notably the lower back. The American College of Physicians recommends yoga as a first-line treatment for chronic lower back pain.

### 4. Alleviate joint pain:

Johns Hopkins Medicine says gentle yoga can alleviate some of the discomfort of arthritis, particularly tender, swollen joints.

### 5. Improved mental health:

A meta-analysis of 23 interventions looking at yoga to alleviate depressive symptoms overwhelmingly indicated yoga can be an effective alternative treatment for major depressive disorder. Depression is thought to be one of the most common mental health disorders in the world.

### 6. Reduced inflammation:

A study published in Biological Research for Nursing determined yoga is a viable intervention to reduce inflammation across a multitude of chronic conditions, such as rheumatoid arthritis, heart disease, Crohn's disease, and cancer.



# HOW TO PAIR FOOD WITH EXERCISE

Food pairing is often discussed in terms of which wines best complement particular dishes. But pairing food with exercise merits consideration, as it can create the balance needed for overall health.

Food plays an important role in workouts, giving individuals the energy necessary to perform at their peak. Timing meals appropriately and knowing what to eat before or after a workout can make a difference.

## Creatine benefits weight lifting

Creatine is an organic acid that is an important ingredient for short duration, high-intensity exercises, such as weight lifting. Foods rich in protein from meat, poultry and fish can help optimize stores of creatine. Creatine also may be found

in foods and beverages targeted to athletes, like protein shakes and snacks.

## Pre-workout mixes include protein and carbohydrates

A snack or mini meal one to three hours before a workout is ideal so that digestive issues don't occur during a workout when the body directs more blood to muscles than digestion. Food pairings that include a high-quality carbohydrate, like whole grain bread or oatmeal, with a protein source, such as peanut butter or milk, can be key. Blood sugar will stay steady with whole grain carbs, and the protein will help you to feel full and avoid overeating after a workout.

## Benefits of bananas

For those with limited time to grab a bite before a workout, bananas might be

the perfect option. Bananas have easily digestible carbs that will not weigh you down. The potassium in bananas also may help prevent muscle cramps during and after workouts.

## Power up with potatoes

Potatoes are whole foods, meaning they contain a balance of all the essential amino acids, despite being low in whole protein. They're also rich in vitamin B6, which is critical to protein metabolism. Potatoes also contain the right mix of sodium and potassium to maintain an electrolyte balance in the body.

## Recover right

A mix of carbohydrates and lean proteins also is ideal for exercise recovery. Mix in good fats like avocado and olive oil. Carbs will help replenish depleted levels

of glycogen and high-quality protein will help build and repair muscle. Don't forget to drink plenty of fluids to replace what was lost while working out.



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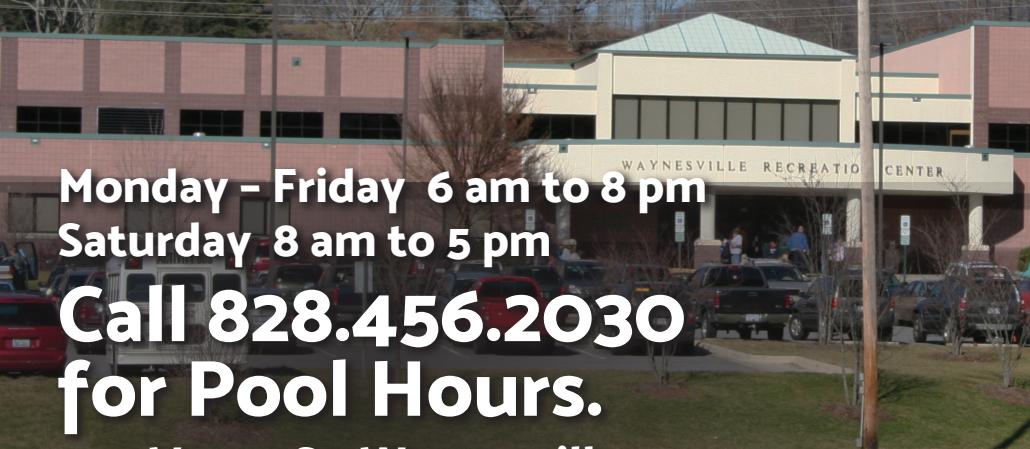
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# INTERVENTIONAL PAIN MANAGEMENT: WHEN'S THE RIGHT TIME TO SEEK HELP FROM A PROFESSIONAL?

Chronic pain is a complex — and often highly-debilitating — condition that affects millions of people around the world. While some pain conditions can be managed well with over-the-counter medication or lifestyle changes, others require a more specialized treatment approach.

This is where interventional pain management comes in!

## What is Interventional Pain Management?

Interventional pain management is a multidisciplinary approach to treating pain that uses minimally invasive procedures to alleviate or manage pain. It is a specialized field of medicine that can provide effective and sustainable relief for people suffering from chronic pain or pain due to injury or illness.

## How can a pain specialist help?

Interventional pain management specialists, like The Comprehensive Pain Consultants of the Carolinas located in Western NC, are medical professionals with advanced training specifically in pain management.

Our board-certified doctors and physician assistants have extensive experience in managing acute and chronic pain. We use a wide range of techniques to manage pain, including nerve blocks, injections, and other minimally invasive procedures.

## When is the right time to seek help from a pain professional?

If you are experiencing pain that

is affecting your quality of life, it's time to seek help from a pain professional. Pain can be caused by a wide range of factors, including injury, illness, or chronic conditions such as arthritis or fibromyalgia. Comprehensive Pain Consultants (with clinics throughout Western NC) can help uncover the root cause of your pain.

If your pain is severe, persistent, or is impacting your ability to perform daily activities, it's important to seek professional help as soon as possible. Chronic pain can be difficult to manage on your own and may require a more specialized approach to treatment. It's also critical to seek treatment quickly to avoid possible long-term issues.

### 5 Common signs that it may be time to seek help from a pain professional:

**1. Your pain is severe and persistent:** If your pain is severe and has lasted for more than a few weeks, it may be time to seek help from a pain professional.

**2. Your pain is negatively impacting your daily life:** If your pain is affecting your ability to perform daily activities, such as work or leisure activities, it may be time to seek help.

**3. Over-the-counter pain medication is not cutting it:** If over-the-counter pain medication is not providing relief, it may be time to seek help from a pain professional.

**4. You have been diagnosed with a chronic condition:** If you have been diagnosed with a chronic condition such as arthritis, fibromyalgia, or multiple sclerosis, it may be time to seek help from a pain pro-



fessional.

**5. You are experiencing undesirable side effects from pain medication:** If you are experiencing side effects from pain medication, it may be time to seek help from a pain professional.

Seeing one of our specialists is an effective way to manage pain and improve your quality of life for people suffering from chronic pain, acute pain, or pain due to injury or illness.

*If you are experiencing pain that is affecting your quality of life, call us today to schedule a new patient consultation at 828-483-4438 or visit our website at [www.cpcdoctors.com](http://www.cpcdoctors.com). Our team can help diagnose the cause of your pain and develop a customized treatment plan that addresses your specific needs. We are here to help you on your journey toward a healthy, active, and happy life.*



Is pain affecting your everyday life? It's time to live a pain-free life, seek a pain professional.

# TAKING A VACATION? MAKE IT EASY ON YOUR FEET

Although rest and relaxation are the goals for most vacations, they usually involve a lot of walking — and a lot of walking usually involves sore feet.

"Walking is great exercise and one of the most reliable forms of trans-



Dennis Dawson, DPM, foot and ankle surgeon at Smoky Mountain Foot Clinic, PA.

portation," says Dennis Dawson, DPM, a foot and ankle surgeon with Smoky Mountain Foot Clinic, PA. "But if your feet aren't in the best shape or you don't have the right shoes, too much walking can cause foot problems."

According to Dawson, good foot



care is essential if you plan to subject your feet to long periods of walking.

Some simple foot care tips include:

- Wear thick, absorbent socks (acrylic instead of cotton).
- Dry feet thoroughly after bathing, making sure to dry between toes. Use powder before putting on shoes.
- Nails should be cut regularly, straight across the toe.
- Bunions, hammertoes or any other serious foot problems should be evaluated by a foot and ankle surgeon.

"The right shoe is also important to healthy walking," says Dawson. "The ideal walking shoe should be stable from side to side, and well-cushioned, and it should enable you to walk smoothly. Many running shoes will fit the bill."

He adds there are also shoes made especially for walking. Walking shoes tend to be slightly less cushioned, yet not as bulky, and lighter than running shoes. Whether a walking or running shoe, the shoes need to feel stable and comfortable.

Warming up exercises to help alleviate any muscle stiffness or pulled muscles are also advised before walking. Loosening up the heel cords (Achilles and calf) and thigh muscles before a walk is especially effective.

"If you're not accustomed to long walks, start slowly and rest if your feet start hurting," says Dawson. "And above all, have fun."

Contact Smoky Mountain Clinic, PA, at 828-452-4343 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

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# HOW TO AVOID REPETITIVE STRAIN INJURIES

Repetitive strain injuries can start gradually, but if unaddressed, can eventually interfere with someone's occupation and sideline their work. Though such injuries are often characterized as nuisances, for many people they're much more than a minor inconvenience.

Repetitive strain injuries affect roughly 1.8 million workers in the United States each year, according to the Data from the Occupational Safety and Health. Repetitive strain injuries affect workers in both blue-collar and white-collar fields.

They include construction workers who swing a hammer or simply use the same trigger finger to operate power tools or stylists and barbers who use the

same repetitive motion — whether it's the movement of the wrist dragging a comb through hair or the joints of fingers when using scissors.

Office workers who spend eight hours a day typing away at their computers may develop repetitive strain injuries in their fingers, thumbs, wrists and elbows. Even recreational golfers can suffer repetitive strain injuries, from their pinky fingers to shoulders.

Certain areas of the body are more vulnerable when people routinely engage in activities in which they repeat the same motions. Repetitive strain injuries most commonly affect:

- Fingers and thumbs
- Wrists
- Elbows

- Arms
- Shoulders
- Knees

Prevention of repetitive strain injuries is not always so easy, but individuals can try various strategies to reduce their risk:

- Make adjustments to your workstation: Individuals whose RSI are a byproduct of sitting at a desk and working on a computer all day long can adjust their workstations to see if this helps reduce strains.
- Consider replacing your desk and/or chair: Desks and chairs also could increase risk for RSI if they are not compatible.
- Get up and walk around: Prolonged periods of sitting can increase the risk of RSI.
- Stretch before sitting down:

Stretching may be something associated with a workout routine, but the principles of stretching also apply to sitting at a desk.

Individuals vulnerable to repetitive strain injuries can employ various techniques to reduce the likelihood that these painful and potentially debilitating conditions develop.

For more information on preventing or treating repetitive strain injuries, visit [Carolina Hand & Sports Medicine](#).



**CAROLINA HAND  
&  
SPORTS MEDICINE**

Thomas Starnes, MD joined our practice in August 2022. He has been practicing in the Asheville area since 2017 and specializes in both upper and lower extremity injuries.

Dr. Starnes is board certified with a certificate of added qualification in sports medicine. He has additional training in ultrasound-guided injections ranging from steroids to orthobiologics (PRP, etc.).

*He also offers orthopedic injury walk-in clinic hours:*

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# 5 REASONS YOU SHOULD CALL HOSPICE SOONER RATHER THAN LATER

It's a myth that Hospice is only for the final days of life. In fact, it's recommended that as soon as you are eligible for hospice, you call us, so that the time you have left is on your terms and so that we can ensure that your wishes are carried out.

Here are five reasons why calling Hospice sooner is better:

## Hospice can improve quality of life

Hospice helps manage symptoms including chronic pain, trouble breathing, anxiety, insomnia, fatigue or depression, improving quality of life. It can take some time to get symptoms under control, so calling earlier is key and may also reduce hospital stays.

In fact, studies have shown that patients who enroll in hospice actually live longer than those with similar illnesses who do not receive hospice care.

## Medicare and most insurance pay for Hospice care

Hospice Care is covered by Medicare, Medicaid, VA Benefits, and most private insurers and covers an array of hospice patient and family services. A study at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill found that enrolling in Hospice Care earlier significantly reduced costs.

In addition, Four Seasons can further help with navigating payment options and our Foundation helps provide care to those in need.

## Hospice is about your wishes

We ask our patients and families "what's most important to you?" and use those wishes as a guide to pro-

vide care that is the best fit for you.

Everyone's wishes are different. Some involve priorities for attending a family event, writing letters or visiting loved ones, prioritizing faith, hobbies or interests, or to plan advance directives and express wishes for end-of-life care. All of these wishes are captured by the Four Seasons team and included in your care plan. Involving hospice earlier means more time to carry out your wishes.

## Hospice helps you navigate and make informed decisions

Our team will help you understand the sometimes confusing journey through end-of-life care, empower-

ing you, your family, or caregivers to communicate more effectively with doctors. Our staff is available by phone 24/7 to answer a question, or provide guidance. In addition, the hospice team can coordinate with your existing providers to ensure you continue your relationships with them as well, if desired.

Calling Hospice sooner gives you more time to plan for what's next, so that your moments can be spent on more important things.

## Hospice gives families & caregivers much-needed support

Families and caregivers are some-

times overwhelmed and feel at a loss for how to provide the best care. Our Hospice not only provides care for the patient, but also resources, support, education and counseling to families and caregivers.

In addition, we provide respite care for up to five days to give caregivers much-needed rest. Starting hospice earlier helps you to establish a relationship with your hospice team, improving the caregiving experience.

Have questions about hospice eligibility or would like to request care? Call Four Seasons at 866-466-9734 or request care online at [fourseasonscare.org](http://fourseasonscare.org).





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# HOW TO ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF BOTOX AND AVOID SIDE EFFECTS

By Triveda Wellness

It is not surprising that people have strong feelings when it comes to Botox on both sides of the aisle. Before you let the naysayers keep you from the benefits that Botox has to offer, learn about some of the surprising benefits and how you can avoid the potential side effects that they tend to make into a bigger issue than they really are.

Botox isn't cheap and the beneficial effects don't last forever. But that hasn't stopped people from getting around 3 million Botox treatments every year. You cannot put a price on great looking skin and enhanced confidence. Many contribute quite a bit of their career success to their Botox treatments, as they are able to continue appearing youthful, vibrant, and self assured, which gives them a competitive edge.

Another amazing benefit is that Botox softens existing wrinkles, preventing them from deepening, and keeps other wrinkles from forming. That is good news for anyone that is seeking a veritable fountain-of-youth experience.

As for the side effects, there are a few to consider. However, there are ways to avoid many of them, and others affect a very small, almost minuscule, percentage of Botox cases and are not permanent.

For example, in rare cases (less than 1%), there can be a bit of drooping in the eyelid or eyebrow area but it will return to normal. Another potential side effect is bruising but this can be avoided by not taking any aspirin or ibuprofen for two weeks prior to your Botox treatment. You can also avoid side effects by working with an experienced Botox specialist and discussing a light treatment to enjoy benefits while maintaining a natural appearance.

At Triveda Wellness, we offer Botox treatments for both men and women who want to maintain a youthful appearance. We take the time to discuss what to expect and develop a plan that fits with your objectives. Contact 828-747-1624 or visit [trivedawellness.com](http://trivedawellness.com) to schedule a consultation at our Asheville wellness center to learn more.



## 5 FRUITS AND VEGETABLES ASSOCIATED WITH REDUCING CANCER RISK

A diet that focuses on plants and emphasizes healthy choices may not eliminate the threat of cancer, but it can be an integral component of a preventive health care regimen. The following are five fruits and vegetables associated with reducing cancer risk:

**1. Berries:** Berries contain antioxidants, which protect the body from cell damage that can contribute to various cancers, including skin cancer, lung cancer and breast cancer, among others. Blueberries, raspberries and strawberries make wonderful additions to anyone's diet.

**2. Cruciferous vegetables:** Cruciferous vegetables include broccoli, bok choy, cabbage, and brussel sprouts, among others. Studies have indicated that special plant compounds in cruciferous vegetables may protect the body from stomach cancer and cancers of the mouth, pharynx, larynx, and esophagus.

**3. Garlic:** Garlic is often linked with reduced risk for heart disease, notably the prevention of atherosclerosis, which affects the arteries through the deposition of plaques of fatty acids along the arterial walls. However, antioxidant-rich garlic also helps the body fight off harmful free radicals that can contribute to cancer.

**4. Spinach:** Colorectal cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer deaths in the United States. Studies have found that spinach inhibits the growth of colon polyps that can develop into colorectal cancer.

**5. Tomatoes:** Lycopene is an antioxidant that gives tomatoes their bright red color. According to the National Cancer Institute, though human studies have produced inconsistent results, various in vitro and animal studies have indicated that lycopene may have chemopreventive effects for cancers of the prostate, skin, breast, lung, and liver.



# SKIN CANCER ON THE RISE

It can be easy to forget to apply sunscreen when a sunny summer day beckons you to get outside and enjoy the great outdoors.

But forgetting to apply sunscreen before spending time in the sun is a potentially deadly mistake.

The number of new invasive melanoma cases diagnosed annually increased by 47% between 2010 and 2020, according to the American Cancer Society.

According to the World Health Organization, one in every three cancers diagnosed is a skin cancer. One in five Americans will develop skin cancer by the age of 70, according to the Skin Cancer Foundation.

The discomfort of a sunburn might seem relatively harmless, but

the relationship between sunburns and cancer risk is significant. Having five or more sunburns doubles your risk for melanoma, a type of skin cancer that often and quickly spreads to nearby lymph nodes.

In addition to using sunscreen daily, try to stay out of the sun as much as possible when UV rays are at their strongest, which is between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. In addition, wear clothing that offers sunscreen protection.

## Early detection

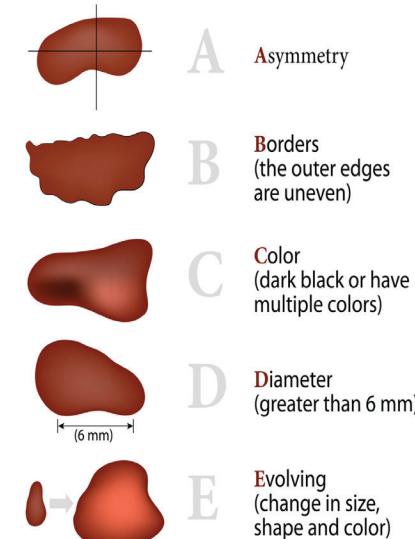
Checking the skin routinely is another way to combat melanoma. The ACS notes that certain types of moles are more likely to develop into melanoma than others. Rou-

tine self-examinations of skin can help people spot new or abnormal moles or other growths. Recognizing these abnormalities and reporting them to a physician immediately can help doctors treat them before they turn into skin cancer.

Any changes in skin should be brought to the attention of a doctor immediately. The sooner treatment begins, the better the prognosis typically is.

*In addition to complete diagnosis and treatment of skin diseases, Mountain Laurel Dermatology can provide an inventory of moles and freckles that should be monitored for changes in size shape. Contact 828-565-0560 or visit [www.mountainlaundermatology.com](http://www.mountainlaundermatology.com).*

## ABCDE rule for the early detection of melanoma



## FACTORS THAT CAN INCREASE YOUR RISK OF SKIN DAMAGE FROM THE SUN

Weekend afternoons spent on the water, on the trail or simply working in the backyard are part and parcel of many people's summers. Sun protection is paramount, as sun-related skin damage is a leading risk factors for skin cancer.

Non-melanoma skin cancer is the fifth most commonly occurring cancer in the world, while melanoma is 19th, according to the American Institute for Cancer Research.

People with fair skin tones or light skin are much more likely to suffer

from sunburns and skin damage caused by the sun's UV rays — which in turn places them at a greater risk for skin cancer. That's because fair skin doesn't have as much pigmentation and natural melanin protection from the sun.

In 1975, Harvard Medical School physician Thomas Fitzpatrick created a scientific classification system for skin type, identifying six types of skin. The Fitzpatrick Skin Type chart goes from very light to very dark. Skin types I and II face the highest risk of developing skin cancer, while types V and VI are at the lowest risk.

However, the American Cancer Society notes that no one is immune from the damage that can be caused by ultraviolet rays from the sun. That includes people with naturally darker skin who tan easily rather than burn and darker-skinned individuals of all

ethnic backgrounds also can suffer from UV-related skin damage.

Fair skin is not the only factor that can make people more vulnerable to skin-related sun damage or even skin cancer. Here are other risk factors:

- A past skin cancer diagnosis.
- A family history of skin cancer, especially melanoma.
- The presence of many moles, irregular moles or large moles on your skin.
- You have freckles and burn before tanning.
- You have blue or green eyes, or blond, red or light brown hair.
- You live or vacation at high altitudes, as UV rays are stronger the higher up you are.
- You live or vacation in tropical or subtropical climates.
- You work indoors all week and then get intense sun exposure on

weekends.

- You spend a lot of time outdoors.
- You have been diagnosed with certain autoimmune diseases, such as lupus.
- You have certain inherited conditions that increase your risk of skin cancer, such as xeroderma pigmentosum or nevoid basal cell carcinoma syndrome, also known as Gorlin syndrome.
- You have a medical condition that weakens your immune system.
- You have had an organ transplant.
- You take medicines that lower or suppress your immune system.
- You take medicines that make your skin more sensitive to sunlight.

Summer is a great time to get outdoors. But it's imperative that all people, regardless of their skin tones, take steps to protect themselves from sun-related skin damage.





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# MISSION HOSPITAL TO OPEN NEW MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER

There's nothing more important to any patient who is coming to a hospital than to receive high quality care. As Mission Hospital continues to deliver the high level of care this community has come to expect, it looks to the future with the opening of a new behavioral health hospital: Sweeten Creek Mental Health and Wellness Center.

One of HCA Healthcare's early commitments to Western North Carolina was to build a much-needed, new behavioral health hospital for the region, and construction of this significant project is nearly complete. Sweeten Creek Mental Health and Wellness Center is slated to open for patient care in August.

This 120-bed facility will bring 38 additional behavioral health beds to our region, offering advanced inpa-

tient and outpatient mental health services. There, the Mission team will care for patients ranging from pediatric (as young as four) through geriatric. The environment will feature support elements such as outdoor courtyards, an indoor gymnasium, a horticulture area, music therapy and art therapy for patients to have access to a more holistic healing process.

Recently, Mission Hospital welcomed its new Medical Director for Behavioral Health, M. Ed Kelley, MD. Dr. Kelley is currently working with the Behavioral Health team at Mission Hospital and will transition along with that team to the new campus later this summer.

"I am really excited about the new Sweeten Creek Mental Health and Wellness Center. The prospect of

being part of the team from the very start is an amazing opportunity. The whole program is exciting — from the new hospital, the opportunity to work with medical students and residents in psychiatry to the robust hospital-based behavioral health services," said Dr. Kelley.

Dr. Kelley joins Mission Hospital after spending 24 years in Lewiston, ME, where he was Chief of Behavioral Health at St. Mary's Regional Medical Center.

"I am a big believer in continuity of care — having providers in the ER, medical units, inpatient behavioral health units, Intensive Outpatient Program, and Partial Hospitalization Program really gives us a chance to support our patients no matter where they are in their journey to mental wellness," said Dr. Kelley.

Mission's new Sweeten Creek Mental Health and Wellness Center has been specifically construct-

ed with behavioral health patients in mind and is therefore equipped with all the most up-to-date safety measures. Special attention was given both to safety and to creating a bright and healing space, adding the ability to spend time safely outdoors which will be a new feature for the community.

"Mental health needs are some of the most underserved illnesses in all of medicine. Mission Hospital's new facility will help in giving our patients the respect and dignity that they deserve. Outdoor spaces, dining halls, indoor gymnasium and gardening areas are all a huge step in giving patients a healing experience — very different from traditional inpatient hospital wards," said Dr. Kelley. "The new site has amazing natural light, improved safety features and will give our already wonderful staff an environment to truly give the care that our patients need."



Dr. M. Ed Kelley, Mission Hospital Medical Director for Behavioral Health



Mission's Sweeten Creek Mental Health and Wellness Center will feature outdoor courtyards, an indoor gymnasium, a horticulture area, music therapy and art therapy for patients to have access to a more holistic healing process.

A photograph of an elderly woman with glasses and a young nurse in a hospital room. The woman is smiling and laughing, while the nurse, also smiling, holds a large blue balloon. The background shows medical equipment and a bulletin board with notes.

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# PROTECT PETS IN HOT WEATHER

Precautions to stay safe from sun and heat during summer months is important for all members of the family, including pets. Cats and dogs are as susceptible to heat-related illnesses as their human companions.

## Recognize heat stroke

Pets can suffer from heat stroke, according to the American Red Cross. Certain breeds of dogs are highly susceptible, particularly those with short snouts, such as pugs and bulldogs. Excessive exercise in hot weather, lack of appropriate shelter outdoors and leaving a dog in a hot car may precipitate an episode of heat stroke.

It's important to get the pet out

of direct heat right away and check for signs of shock, which include seizures, a body temperature of 104 F or higher, stupor, increased heart rate, or excessive panting. Placing water-soaked towels on the pet's feet, head, neck, and abdomen can bring down its temperature.

## Be cautious of hot surfaces

Humans wear shoes on their feet for protection, but pets do not have that luxury. Think about how hot your feet can feel when you scurry barefoot across hot sand en route to the shoreline or to cross a deck to get to the pool. When the sun beats down on surfaces, those surface temperatures rise quickly.

## Provide extra water

It's likely you will need to fill your pet's water bowls more frequently in warm weather than during other times of the year. Be sure to provide constant access to fresh water, even for young puppies who may be learning to house train.

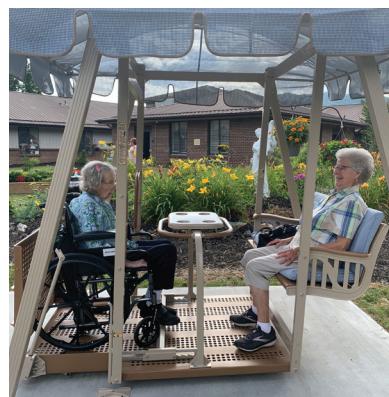
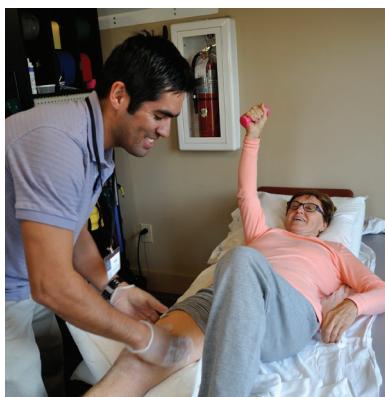
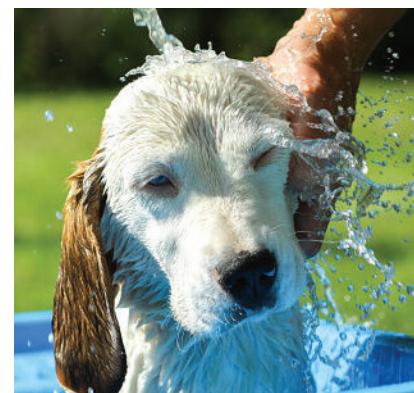
## Avoid cutting fur too short

If a veterinarian suggests a haircut may be beneficial for keeping a pet cool or comfortable, resist the urge to shave down to the skin. Having at least one inch of fur will protect the pet from sunburn.

## Outdoor hazards

Warm weather may bring out a high number of insects and wild-

life. Use a flea and tick preventative product and medication to protect against heartworm, which is transmitted through mosquitoes. Snakes, skunks, raccoons, foxes, and other animals may be roaming around, and a scuffle with your pet can result in injury.



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# SUMMER FUN FOR ACTIVE SENIORS

Seniors may have more time for leisure and recreation, and the summer months provide ample opportunities to get active.

There are plenty of ways for active seniors to meet their exercise goal and have some fun along the way. The following are some good starting points:

- **Join a walking or hiking club.** Walking is a great way to stay in shape and work the mind as well. View new sights along the way by changing the route each time you go. Walking with friends can pass the time and provide the motivation to keep going. WNC has numerous hiking clubs with weekly hikes of varying distance and skill level.

- **Catch a sporting event.** Attending a sporting event can be an entertaining way to spend several hours, and that includes amateur and recreational sports. Catch a grandchild's swim meet or a baseball game for an action-packed way to connect with loved ones and get out.

- **Be a tourist.** Be a tourist for the day, even in an area with which you are familiar. WNC is a tourist destination, so get out and explore — which means lots of walking as you stroll the quaint downtowns.

- **Spend time swimming.** Swimming is a low-impact activity that can work the body in many different ways. Devote time to doing a few laps in the pool. Or make a day

of going to a lake or another body of water to wade out and enjoy some strokes in nature. Stick to swimming areas that are monitored by lifeguards for optimal safety.

- **Tend to a garden.** Gardening is a great form of light exercise

that can produce rewarding results. If you don't have a garden or enough space for one at home, many neighborhoods have community gardens in which you can secure a plot.

Active seniors can embrace long, warm summer days to enjoy plenty of time away from home.



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# GET SERIOUS ABOUT STROKE

A stroke is a serious medical condition and a leading cause of disability in the United States. Strokes are the fifth leading cause of death in the United States, according to the American Stroke Association. However, 80% of strokes are preventable.

Sometimes called a brain attack, or a cerebrovascular accident, a stroke happens when something blocks blood supply to part of the brain or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This can deprive the brain of oxygen and cause brain cells to begin to die within minutes.

A stroke is a medical emergency. If someone is suspected of having a stroke, emergency personnel should be called immediately. Every minute counts when a person is suffering a stroke, and medical personnel can begin potentially life-saving treatment on the way to an emergency room.

## Symptoms of stroke

Sometimes symptoms of stroke can occur out of nowhere, and other times there may be subtle signs that something has been brewing. The Mayo Clinic says these are the most common signs of stroke.

- Trouble speaking and understanding what others are saying. This may include slurred words or trouble understanding speech.

- Paralysis can occur in the face, arm or leg. Numbness or weakness also may occur. This often affects just one side of the body.

- Sometimes there is trouble seeing in one or both eyes, including blurry or blackened vision.

- Headaches will come on severely, and can be accompanied by vomiting, altered consciousness or dizziness.

- Someone having a stroke may stumble or lose balance and experience coordination issues.

## Quick detection

The National Stroke Association and other organizations use the acronym BEFAST to educate the public about detecting signs of stroke.

- **B (Balance):** Ask the person to stand on one foot, or take a few steps heel-to-toe.

- **E (Eyes):** Check for blurred vision by asking the person to read something that should be visible from 10 feet away.

- **F (Face):** Ask the person to

smile and look for drooping on one side.

- **A (Arms):** Have the person raise both arms and check to see if one arm drifts downward or cannot be raised.

- **S (Speech):** Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase and check for slurring or strange sounds.

- **T (Time):** Call 911 or emergency medical help immediately if any of these indicators are present.

## Types of stroke

There are different types of stroke. Most strokes are ischemic strokes, says the CDC. Ischemic stroke occurs when a blood clot or other particles like fatty deposits block blood vessels to the brain.

A hemorrhagic stroke happens when an artery in the brain leaks blood or ruptures. High

blood pressure and aneurysms often are culprits in hemorrhagic stroke.

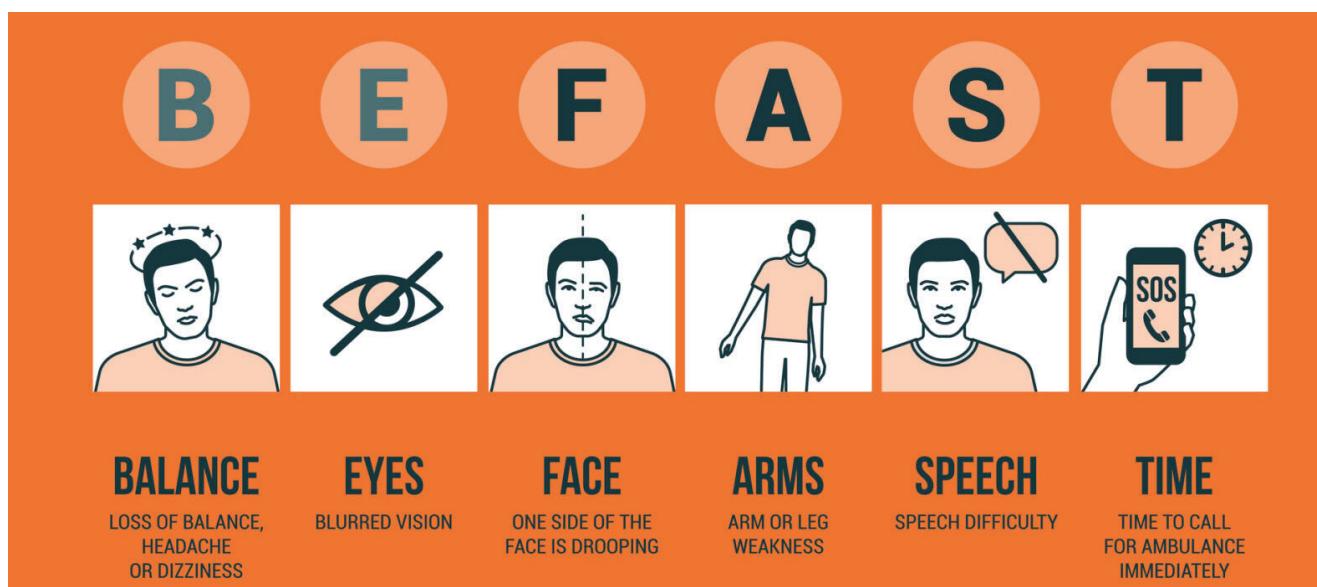
Transient ischemic attacks, also called mini-strokes, serve as warnings of a future stroke. Blood clots often cause these as well.

## Diagnosing and treating stroke

Doctors will use various imaging techniques to check for brain and blood vessel health if there is risk for stroke. Blood pressure and other general health assessments can give doctors an idea of potential risk factors for future stroke incidents.

If blood clots are present, doctors may use medication, stents and surgery to break up or address clots.

Stroke is a medical emergency. Individuals are urged to take stroke risk seriously and act promptly if symptoms are present.



# 5 GIFTS TO SHOW NURSES THEY'RE APPRECIATED

The pandemic did much to shed light on the vital role nurses play, compelling many people to realize just how valuable these talented professionals are. Patients and their loved ones often want to express their appreciation for the efforts of nurses. The following are five great gift ideas that may be tailor-made for the nurse in your life.

**1. Coffee gift card:** A morning cup of coffee is essential for most nurses, and it can be a catastrophe to open the cupboard discover the bag is empty. A gift card to a coffee shop is near the nurse's workplace is a life line to keep tucked in the glove compartment for those mornings.

**2. Insulated tumbler:** Nursing shifts tend to be long, and the drive to the doctor's office or hospital

is a perfect time for nurses to enjoy a cup of coffee prior to a long shift. An insulated tumbler can ensure that cup of coffee stays hot during the commute and even for several hours after nurses arrive at work.

**3. Aromatherapy diffuser:** Aromatherapy diffusers atomize essential oils to promote wellness, helping nurses relax after long shifts or during their days off. Many diffusers include a variety of ambient lighting options, allowing nurses to pick different colors depending on the room they're in or the ambiance they hope to create.

**4. Books:** Everyone appreciates a periodic escape from the hustle and bustle of daily life, but nurses working throughout the pandemic are especially deserving of such a

respite. Books can make for the perfect escape vehicle, allowing nurses to immerse themselves in a work of fiction or a nonfiction book focusing on a particular interest or historical era.

**5. Meal kit:** After a long shift, nurses may not have enough energy to cook meals in their kitchens.

Meal kits usually come with recipes all ready to go, requiring just a few minutes of easy preparation before they can be cooked. Such kits can make for the perfect gift for nurses who loved homecooked meals but routinely find themselves too tired or busy to cook.



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# HOW TO MAKE GRILLING HEALTHIER

Summer is synonymous with many things, including family vacations and relaxing days at the beach. For foodies, perhaps nothing evokes the spirit of summer more effectively than grilled foods.

Grilling is a beloved tradition, but it's not necessarily the healthiest way to eat. Traditional backyard barbecue fare like hot dogs and hamburgers likely won't make physicians' hearts flutter, but there are ways to enjoy the flavor of grilling without compromising a nutritious diet.

- Replace burgers and hot dogs with healthy proteins.** The occasional hamburger or hot dog won't do much dam-

age, but people who regularly grill should skip these summer-time staples and replace them with healthy proteins.

The American Heart Association reports that fish and skinless chicken breasts are healthy alternatives to hamburgers and hot dogs. Burger devotees can still enjoy their go-to grilled food, but replace ground beef with lean ground poultry, which contains less saturated fat than red meat.

- Avoid overdoing it.** Most people have overindulged at a backyard barbecue at one point or another. The relaxed, party-like atmosphere of the backyard barbecue makes it easy to snack on



**Continued on page 21**

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# TIPS TO THROW A MEMORABLE END-OF-SUMMER SOIRÉE

One last bash as summer winds down is a great way to send off a season that's synonymous with recreation and leisure.

An end-of-summer soirée also provides an opportunity to get together with friends and family before a new school year begins and families' schedules fill up.

Hosts can consider these tips as they plan a memorable send-off to summer.

## • Avoid Labor Day weekend.

Labor Day marks the unofficial end of summer in many places, but hosts may want to avoid choosing this popular three-day weekend for their end-of-summer soiree. A survey from the travel experts at The Vacationer found that roughly 137 million people had travel plans over La-

bor Day weekend in 2022.

Travel is undeniably popular on Labor Day weekend, and hosts likely won't want to contend with guests' travel plans. The weekend before Labor Day may produce a greater turnout, which undoubtedly makes for a more enjoyable affair.

## • Serve traditional fare.

Though hosts who already hosted a handful of backyard barbecues this summer might have had their fill of hamburgers and hot dogs, an end-of-summer party is the last time many people will eat such foods until next spring. So while it's alright to offer some alternatives, such as meat cooked on a smoker or grilled fish, be sure to offer the standard hamburgers and hot dogs, as well.

## Grilling Healthier Continued from page 20

chips and other unhealthy fare before moving on to burgers and hot dogs.

Hosts can do guests a favor by replacing snacks and sides like chips and potato salad with healthier fare like celery, fruit salad or chickpea salad. Keep portions of grilled fare as close to a healthy size as possible. A healthy portion of meat is around three ounces and no more than six ounces.

## • Create a salt-free rub.

There's no denying salt makes food more flavorful. But that flavor comes at a high cost. The health care experts Piedmont note that excessive amounts of

salt can contribute to inflammation from fluid retention and increase a person's risk for hypertension, or high blood pressure.

Salt may be a go-to for many grilling enthusiasts, but it doesn't have to be. A salt-free rub made with chili powder, garlic powder, paprika, and/or other spices is an effective and salt-free way to add flavor to meat, chicken and fish.

## • Grill more vegetables.

Grilled vegetables, whether they're part of kebabs or simply grilled alongside the main course, add significant flavor and provide all the health benefits of veggies cooked in more traditional ways. Coating vegetables in a healthy oil like olive oil makes it easy to grill them directly over an open flame without sticking.

• **Invite the neighbors.** It's tempting to throw a season-ending bash that lasts into the wee hours, but that can be problematic for hosts whose neighbors are within arm's length. That potentially sticky situation can be remedied by inviting the neighbors to the party. Neighbors won't be upset by a little extra nighttime noise if they're living it up as well.

## • Create a contingency plan.

Though summer storms tend to come and go in the blink of an eye, it's best to have a contingency plan in place. If possible, ensure outdoor entertaining areas can provide some respite from the elements if need be.

A well-placed pergola can keep guests and food safe from the rain and a retractable patio aw-

ning can provide an extra layer of protection. Hosts also can clear out part of their home interior and have some backup games at the ready to accommodate guests if the party has to move inside for a little while.



Ending the summer with a soiree is a great way to say farewell to the warm months with friends and family.

as healthy as it is flavorful. All it takes is a few simple strategies to make the menu at your next backyard barbecue one any doctor would love.



# HAYWOOD REGIONAL LAUDED FOR CARDIOLOGY

Haywood Regional Medical Center's cardiac cath lab has been recognized for its expertise and commitment in treating patients by The American College of Cardiology.

The Cardiac Cath Lab accreditation recognizes Haywood Regional's ability to evaluate, diagnose and treat patients who undergo diagnostic catheterizations and percutaneous coronary intervention procedures.

"We would like to thank our physicians, front-line staff, quality team and our leadership in pursuing and achieving this accreditation," said Dr. Michael Miller, an interventional cardiologist at HRMC. "As the community's heart center, we are constantly challenging

ourselves to continually improve our quality and our outcomes. Being home to an accredited cath lab is just another way that Haywood Regional demonstrates its commitment to our community's heart health."

Hospitals receiving Cardiac Cath Lab Accreditation with PCI from the ACC must take part in a multi-faceted clinical process that involves a rigorous onsite review and monitoring for sustained success. Facilities that achieve accreditation meet or exceed an array of stringent criteria and have organized a team of doctors, nurses, clinicians, and other administrative staff that earnestly support the efforts leading to improved patient outcomes.

"Haywood Regional Medical Center has demonstrated its commitment to providing the community and surrounding area with excellent heart care," said Deepak L. Bhatt, MD, MPH, FACC, chair of the ACC Accreditation Management Board.

According to the ACC, hospitals that have proven exceptional competency in treating patients who require cardiac catheterization have a standard assessment process to ensure quality and patient safety.

They ensure that care in the procedure room for sedation, infection control, radiation safety, universal protocol, and time out procedures is fully coordinated; and have mastered the appropriate transfer to a cath recovery unit to better monitor and track complications, enhance physician-to-patient communication, patient family communication, discharge instructions

and follow-up information. Improved methods and strategies of caring for patients include streamlining processes, implementing guidelines and standards, and adopting best practices in the care of cath lab patients.



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# BEAT THE HEAT

## TIPS TO STAY COOL AND HAVE A SAFE AND HEALTHY SUMMER

With summer in full swing, many of us are taking full advantage of this fun time of year, whether it's hitting the road for a family vacation, getting out on the water, organizing pick-up games in the park or taking an early evening neighborhood stroll. However you choose to enjoy this season, following some key safety tips can help you ensure that this summer is a safe and healthy one.

### Heat Safety

Did you know that heat is the number one weather-related killer in the U.S.?

"It's essential that we stay heat smart," says Dr. Anna Mooney, pediatrician, Haywood Regional Medical Center. "Heat overexposure is especially dangerous for children and seniors, and it is crucial that we all know how to protect ourselves from the sun's rays at all times of the year."

Fortunately, there are some simple steps we can take to help prevent heat-related illness as we enjoy the outdoors. Beat the heat with these cool tips:

- Be aware of temperature and humidity levels and modify your activity accordingly.

- Always use an SPF-15 or higher sunscreen that protects against both UV-A and UV-B rays.

- Wear sunglasses when outside to protect your eyes from the sun's rays.

- Limit outdoor activities when temps are at their highest (typically mid-day).

- Stay hydrated and drink plenty of low to no-sugar fluids (water is best!).

- Search out cooler areas outside, and when the temp rises above 90, switch to an indoor activity.

- Avoid enclosed places like cars or garages.

- Never leave children or animals in a car unattended.

- Dress for comfort, with loose-fitting, lightweight and light-colored clothing.

- Take breaks when exercising.

- Limit or avoid adult beverages (alcohol can impair your body's ability to self-regulate its temperature).

### Water Safety

Nothing beats the sweltering sum-

mer heat like a dip in the water. Be it poolside, lakeside or beachside, these tips from the American Red Cross are key to ensuring a fun, safe time for all.

- Only swim in designated areas supervised by lifeguards.

- Always swim with a buddy.

- Never leave a child unattended near water or trust a child's life to another child.

- Make sure young children and inexperienced swimmers wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets around water.

- Don't play around drains and suction fittings in the pool.

- Always be cautious around natural bodies of water — currents and underwater hazards can make falling into the water dangerous.

- Wear a life jacket when boating (most boating fatalities actually occur from drowning).

- Avoid alcohol use around pools and bodies of water.

- If you have a pool or hot tub, or live near a body of water, keep reach-and-throw equipment, a cell phone, life jackets and a first aid kit nearby.

*This article was provided as a community health service by Haywood Regional Medical Center.*



## A FEW PRECAUTIONS TO HELP ENSURE SAFE SUMMER TRAVELS

Summer is a great opportunity to hit the open road or the friendly skies for some quality time away with family or friends. You can help make your vacation stress-free and safe with these helpful hints.

- Never post travel plans on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or other social media.
- Have all home deliveries like mail

and newspapers stopped for the duration of your time away, or have a trusted neighbor or friend collect them for you.

- Take minimal cash with you and use credit cards and traveler's checks on your trip.

- Set up automatic timers in your home to switch lights and the television or radio on and off throughout the

day.

- Double check that your doors and windows are closed and locked before hitting the road (and set your home alarm if you have one).

- Observe stairwells and fire exits when you check into your hotel.

- Ask the front desk clerk or hotel concierge if there are unsafe areas you should avoid while touring.

- When you leave your hotel, take only what you need for the day and avoid displaying large amounts of cash when purchasing items.

With these tips, you'll be ready to have a safe, healthy summer and make memories to last a lifetime.

*This article was provided as a community service by Haywood Regional Medical Center.*

# THE LINK BETWEEN DIRTY CONTACT LENSES AND INFECTION

Contact lenses are a great solution for people with impaired vision who don't like the look or feel of eyeglasses. Those with stronger prescriptions often find contacts correct their sight better — since they conform to the eye and provide peripheral vision.

But unlike eyeglasses, contact lenses require daily maintenance. Without some TLC, contact lenses can become dirty, which can lead to serious infection.

Physicians typically emphasize the importance of proper contact lens care upon prescribing lenses. That's because of the link between dirty lenses and infections. Such infections are often avoidable.

## Infections and bacteria

Roughly 80 to 90 percent of contact lens-related eye infections are bacterial. The bacteria *staphylococcus aureus*, also

known as "staph," is linked to many cases of contact lens-related eye infections. *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria are resistant to common antibiotics, which underscores the importance of cleaning contacts to reduce the risk of infection.

*Pseudomonas aeruginosa* is another type of bacterial infection that can affect individuals who wear contact lenses. This fast-growing infection is possibly the most severe. It can lead to a hole in the cornea and there's a significant chance of permanent scarring and vision loss.

## Fungal infections

Poor contact lens hygiene also can lead to fungal infections. Fungi such as *aspergillus* or *fusarium* pose a threat to vision and infection can occur if lenses are not properly and routinely cleaned.

## What causes contact lens-related infections?

The American Academy of Ophthalmology reports that, in addition to bacteria and fungi, various things can cause contact lens-related infections. Those factors include:

- Using extended-wear lenses
- Sleeping in contact lenses
- The buildup of microbes under the lens
- Herpes virus
- Parasites
- Reusing or topping off contact lens solution
- Failure to keep lenses clean

## What are the signs of contact lens-related eye infection?

Serious vision loss or blindness can result from contact lens-related infections. However, less severe symptoms may present themselves before the infection

progresses to the point of vision loss.

- Blurry vision
- Unusual redness of the eye
- Pain in the eye
- Tearing or discharge from the eye
- Extra sensitivity to light
- The feeling that something is in the affected eye



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# 5 HABITS THAT WILL RUIN YOUR TEETH

Do you brush your teeth every morning and night and floss every day? Excellent! But to enjoy optimal oral health, you also need to avoid getting into a certain number of harmful habits, including the following five.

**1. Eating or drinking lots of unhealthy foods.** Soft drinks (which are highly acidic) and sticky candy (which stays in the mouth for a long time), among others, should always be consumed in moderation.

Try to remember to drink a glass of water after drinking wine, tea or coffee to clean off your teeth and keep them looking nice and white.

**2. Using your teeth as a tool.**

Opening packaging or bottles, for example, with your teeth can cause cracks and breaks.

**3. Brushing too hard.** Brushing

your teeth with too much force will eventually lead to gum recession and tooth sensitivity. Make sure to brush gently with a soft-bristled toothbrush.

**4. Smoking.** It's no longer a secret that tobacco use significantly increases the risk of developing periodontal disease and oral cancer. It also causes bad

breath and yellow teeth.

**5. Eating too much sugar between meals.**

Do you have something of a sweet tooth? To prevent cavities, get your fix of candy or soda during mealtimes. This is when the production of saliva, which helps neutralize acidity in the mouth, is at its peak.



*The importance of brushing and flossing*

*Brushing and flossing ensure the removal of plaque and bacteria, which are culprits in tooth decay and gum disease.*

*Periodontal disease is caused by a buildup of such bacteria and plaque. Brushing removes materials from the surface of the teeth, while flossing gets in between teeth where toothbrush bristles cannot reach.*

*Brushing and flossing also can make dental cleanings and examinations go smoothly. Plaque is the precursor to tartar and is sticky, but soft and pliable. By removing plaque before it has had a chance to harden into tartar, people can reduce time spent in the dentist's chair.*

*Furthermore, those who clean their teeth and gums regularly will have a lower risk for gingivitis, which is inflammation and bleeding in the gums.*

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# TOOTHBRUSH TIPS: GET THE MOST OUT OF BRUSHING

### By Gillespie Dental

For many of us, toothbrushing is such an automatic activity that we don't put much thought into it. Our teeth deserve our best effort, and the new year is a great time to re-visit the fundamentals of proper brushing habits.

### Brush for two minutes twice daily

Americans brush their teeth for an average of 45 seconds. Proper brushing takes a minimum of 120 seconds to ensure all surfaces of the teeth are cleansed. Most of us have a smart phone nearby, so set the timer for two minutes, brushing each quarter of the mouth for 30 seconds. Remember to floss before brushing!

### Choose a soft-bristled toothbrush that fits you

Toothbrushes come in many shapes, sizes, and bristle hardness. The head should fit easily in your mouth and you should be able to grip the handle well. Gentle brushing with a soft or medium hardness brush is recommended. Healthy gums don't bleed and aggress-

sive brushing is not advised.

### Store your toothbrush properly

Your toothbrush should be allowed to dry completely between uses. Place it upright in a cup or toothbrush holder in an open area with good airflow.

Storing your toothbrush in an enclosed area will allow it to stay damp and encourage growth of germs. Never leave your toothbrush in the shower!

### Replace your brush quarterly

Toothbrush bristles can become worn and frayed, affecting the ability to clean properly. Changing your toothbrush every 3-4 months will ensure cleansing efficiency.

It is also recommended that you replace your toothbrush after a cold or flu episode in order to prevent becoming re-infected.

*Dr. Michael Gillespie has practiced dentistry in Waynesville for 29 years. The office is located at 611 S. Haywood St. in Waynesville, and can be reached at 828-456-9007.*



# WHAT IS DRY NEEDLING? A INNOVATIVE PHYSICAL THERAPY TREATMENT

**By Ben Stephenson**

Physical Therapist, Smoky Mountain  
Sports Medicine

Myofascial trigger point dry needling is a physical therapy treatment used to help reduce pain and improve function.

Dry needling is used to treat myofascial pain related to trigger points, or muscle knots, that develop in muscle tissues throughout your body. These points develop for various reasons including but not limited to poor postures sustained throughout the day or following a musculoskeletal injury. Trigger points present as

taut bands within the muscles that are typically tender to touch and can cause referred pain (pain that affects another part of the body).

Certified dry needling clinicians push thin, solid needles through the skin into the trigger points to get directly to the site of dysfunction. Nothing is injected with the needle. The needle insertion leads to a rush of blood flow to the area and aids in muscle relaxation. This response from your body to the needle helps to eliminate the trigger point, decrease pain, and restore the tissues back to their normalized state.

Patients may experience varying side effects from dry needling including muscle soreness and an involuntary muscle twitch. These are considered positive effects of dry needling and helps to stimulate a healing response from your body.

Dry needling is just one component of a larger physical therapy treatment plan and usually takes only 10-15 minutes. Research indicates patients see the best results when combining dry needling with manual therapy, exercise, and education when compared to utilizing dry needling alone.

If you are interested in dry needling, reach out to a physical therapy clinic and request a clinician certified in dry needling. Whether it is getting back to swinging a golf club, running your next race, or walking around town, dry needling may be an

appropriate intervention to help keep you moving and doing the things you love.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact Smoky Mountain Sports Medicine at 828-550-3923.



Ben Stephenson a Physical Therapist at Smoky Mountain Sports Medicine.



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**Waynesville:** 270 North Haywood Street, Waynesville, NC 28786

**Phone:**  
828-550-3923

**Fax:**  
828-354-0209

# TIPS FOR CARING FOR YOUR HEARING AIDS IN THE SUMMER

Summer poses unique challenges for individuals who rely on hearing aids. Increased humidity, perspiration, and exposure to water can potentially damage these devices.

To ensure optimal performance during the summer months, here are some essential tips for taking care of your hearing aids:

## 1. Shield from moisture:

Use a hearing aid dehumidifier or drying kit to remove excess moisture and prevent corrosion. Consider using hearing aid sleeves or covers for added protection against sweat, rain, and splashes.

## 2. Keep them clean:

Regularly wipe your hearing aids with a soft, dry cloth to remove debris. Avoid harsh chemicals and consult your audiologist for recommended

cleaning techniques.

## 3. Protect from sunscreen and insect repellent:

Prevent these substances from coming in contact with your hearing aids, as they can damage the device's casing or components. Remove your hearing aids before applying them.

## 4. Be mindful of water activities:

Unless waterproof, always remove hearing aids before swimming or participating in water-based activities. Invest in waterproof cases or pouches for safe storage.

## 5. Proper storage:

Store your hearing aids in a cool, dry place, away from direct sunlight and extreme temperatures. Use a protective case or container to prevent dust, moisture, and accidental damage.

By following these tips, you can protect your hearing aids from summer-related hazards and ensure their longevity. With proper care, your hearing aids will continue to

provide clear and crisp sound quality throughout the summer season.

For personalized advice, call Gant Hearing Care at 828-338-2004.



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# MUSIC IS MAGIC

**By Michelle Wooley**

Director of Philanthropy, Deerfield

Episcopal Retirement Community

You know that magical moment?

You hear a song and something inside of you wakes up? It may happen during a seemingly mundane trip to the grocery store, while cleaning the living room, or at the best possible time — a wedding reception, when breaking out in wild dance is expected.

Music has the power to transport me back to early childhood. I hear the song, “I’d Like to Teach the World to Sing (in Perfect Harmony),” made popular by the early ’70s Coke ad, and I’m three years old, in my older sister’s bedroom, legs dangling over the edge of a dormer window,

fearless with the summer sun on my freckled face.

Recently, I became curious about Music Therapy and how it contributes to wellbeing. Having worked in hospice, I’ve seen patients, regardless of pain, light up when invited to sing along to a beloved favorite.

Last week I attended a music therapy group to better understand what music can offer in a long term care setting. I discovered it used as a tool to help connect to feelings, memories, and one another. Participants were each given a tambourine and asked to use the instrument to illustrate their current emotion. They clearly expressed joy, frustration, relief, and malaise.

Later, the music therapist sang

“Carolina in the Morning,” a Top 10 hit in 1923, to a woman celebrating her 100th birthday. The smile on the birthday girl’s face lit up the room and everyone in it!

Music therapy can lessen the effects of dementia, reduce pain and

stress, improve communication capabilities for those on the autism spectrum, increase motor function for people navigating Parkinson’s and similar diseases, and much more.

Also, music is good for all of us! Turn it on, turn it up, and enjoy!



Did you know Music therapy can lessen the effects of dementia? It can also reduce pain and stress, improve communication capabilities for those on the autism spectrum, increase motor function for people navigating Parkinson’s and similar diseases, and much more.

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A photograph of a woman with curly hair, wearing a blue vest over a green shirt and a black helmet. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is filled with vibrant red and orange autumn leaves.

# CHILDREN'S GRIEF RESOURCES TAKING SHAPE IN HAYWOOD COUNTY

By Patrick Davis

Chaplain for Haywood Hospice and Palliative Care

The death of a family member, friend or other significant person is a life-long loss for all of us. For children who are grieving, the old saying, "children should be seen and not heard" does not apply.

Today there are a growing number of children's books, resources and programs that specifically address death and grief from a child's perspective. These tools give young people a way to be both "seen and heard" as they recover from a death in their family.

Many well-meaning adults avoid talking about the deceased person in

fear that doing so will exacerbate the grief children are experiencing. In doing so, children might feel as though talking about or even expressing their grief is not acceptable. Also, many children feel like they are the only person who has experienced the death of someone in their life, even though there might be other friends experiencing similar circumstances.

It is helpful to children when adults in their lives provide opportunities to acknowledge the grief everyone is feeling. It is also helpful when children are able to gather with peers grieving similar situations. When children feel understood by family and friends and when they have

the opportunity to express their grief in their own unique way, they feel less alone and in turn, fare better than they would otherwise.

Haywood County currently has programs that serve the needs of adults, parents, and caregivers, and there is a growing movement to begin forming local children's grief programs. Many communities currently offer grief centers and programs that work with grieving children and teens as a way to prevent behavioral problems, addictions, crime, mental illness, and teen pregnancy.

Grief facilitators Patrick Davis and Leigh Ann Mertens co-facilitate a monthly "Grief Gathering" at the Coffee Cup Café in Clyde on the second Wednesday of every month at 3:30 p.m. During one of these monthly discussions, a young parent shared resources on different children's books that he reads to his four-year-old son. While this father reads to his son, they find ways to talk about the death of his wife and his son's mother.

Partially inspired by the needs identified by parents like this one, local volunteers are meeting to organize resources and support for grieving children and

teens. In some communities, these approaches take many forms that include specialized summer camps or support groups that focus on different age-appropriate activities.

For more information or to register, visit the Haywood Hospice or Wells Events Center Facebook page or call 452-5039.

Patrick Davis, MA, serves as Chaplain for Haywood Hospice and Palliative Care. He has over 30 years' experience in Hospice and Grief Counseling. Patrick is also an educator, offering innovative educational programs that address the emotional and spiritual needs of the community.

## Fundraiser event

Haywood Hospice and the Haywood Healthcare Foundation is sponsoring a fundraiser to support children's grief programs called Christmas in July: The Spirit of Giving. Featuring a concert with Darren Nicholson and others, it will be held at the Wells Events Center on Saturday, July 29, and includes a silent auction and photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the concert begins at 7:30 p.m.



**Christmas in July**  
THE SPIRIT OF GIVING

FEATURING  
An Evening With  
Darren Nicholson

A fundraising concert for  
Children's Grief Programs  
with Haywood Hospice

Saturday, July 29

WELLS EVENTS CENTER  
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WAYNESVILLE, NC

DOORS OPEN AT 6 PM FOR SILENT AUCTION  
AND PHOTOS WITH SMOKEY MOUNTAIN SANTA  
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# IMPROVING MOOD IS TRULY A MIND-BODY JOURNEY

By Dr. Michael Hogan

Blue Mountain Chiropractic Center  
of Waynesville

Mental health. What a valuable concept that has so many different meanings to so many different people. It has been said that anxiety is fear of the future, and depression is fear of the past. As Master Oogway from Kung Fu Panda states: "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, but today is a gift. That is why it is called the present."

Yet feel good notions from animated adventures can be short lived, when the stresses of life come crowding into our consciousness. Regarding consciousness, during the time of the 'enlightenment', Aristotle began the quest for a more logical form of free will. The idea that one could influence their life circumstances by changing their thinking was a new form of being. The logical materialism that Aristotle developed became the basis for much of western civilization both science and philosophy.

So... what does modern science say regarding mental health? According to the National Institutes of Health, "Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act as we cope with life." Biology, brain chemistry, family history, life experiences, and lifestyle all impact our mental health state.

These concepts help, yet it feels so big and unsatisfactory at times because of the broad range of possible solutions. What does really help, what can we do?

Obviously, dissatisfaction with our lives must be at an all time high when you look at the drug and alcohol addiction rates. Some of these problems begin with a medical issue such as back pain, and then becomes addiction. Pain, too, can be a significant factor regarding mental

health. In addition, the psychosomatic connection is very real — mental stress and physical stresses significantly impact each other. Physical symptoms such of gastrointestinal imbalance is common with mental stress.

The surgeon general recently came out with the long-awaited official stance on social media. And, yes, as we all inherently know, social media fuels anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. The majority of us have fallen victim to the 'meme mind', with short quipped conversations with no real solution or meaning.

## Science behind the mind-body connection

The longest nerve in our body, known as the vagus nerve, connects the brain to nearly every organ system of the body, helping regulate the heart, lungs, and gastro-intestinal system. It reveals much regarding psychosomatic connection, as the purpose of the nerve is to relax the body and mind, activating the release of acetylcholine in the body. This neurotransmitter has the opposite affect of adrenaline, or stress hormone.

Research suggests activating the vagus nerve may improve mood. The nerve 'tones' the opposite of fight or flight, known as "rest and repair mode," or "wine and dine" if you will.

BJ and DD Palmer, developers of chiropractic, wrote extensively on the concept of nerve 'tone'. This concept, which they pioneered over 100 years ago, is now becoming scientifically validated. Chiropractors use the concepts of thoughts, traumas, and toxins in order to enter the 'platform' of the nervous system to maximize health and well being.

## Tips to improve mental health

What can we do? We are all stressed

out and need help. It is an era now where we are truly viewing health more holistically, meaning from within. What can we change in our lives to improve our physical and mental health? How can we 'tone' our bodies for health 'good' mood?

Mindset work can be helpful, but also very challenging with so much info coming through the brain. It is often more effective to begin with a physical or nutritional approach. Researchers are now more than ever suggesting simple solutions to balance our bodies biochemistry.

Start every day with a room temp or warm glass of water with a pinch of sea salt or squeeze of lemon to get electrolytes and hydration. Go outside or somewhere the sunlight will enter the eyes. This will set the 'melatonin' or circadian clock in your brain for later in the evening. Melatonin is a valuable health giving neurotransmitter.

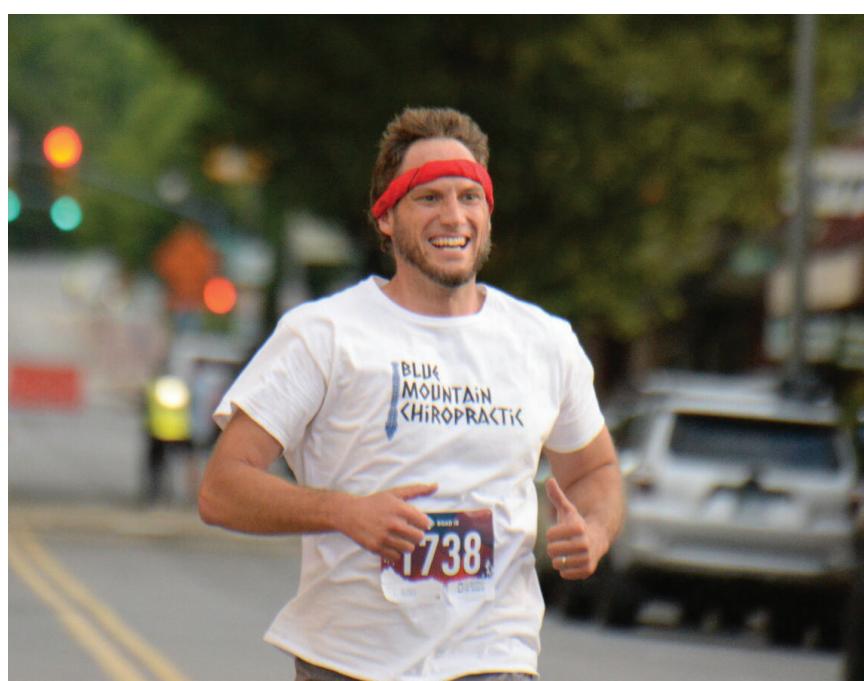
Move your body through posture exercises or walking. Sun salutation is a very easy yoga sequence. You must acti-

vate the 'stress system' or fight or flight system before your body can enter relaxation completely. Meaning, plan your exercise time, so that you work out the cortisol in your body in a healthy way.

Dedicate time on your calendar to yourself, your mental and physical well being depend on it. If you are in pain, dedicate time to physical therapy, chiropractic, personal training, acupuncture or some type of somatic therapy.

This will support the body's natural healing systems, rather than suppress with drugs. In ancient Chinese medicine they regard the human as Body, Energy, and Spirit. They regard Spirit as the most important of the 3 Treasures. Mental health is the combination our entire being. Let us take time every week, to make moments to Lift our Spirits!

*There is so much to share regarding wellness and natural health. Please visit us at Blue Mountain Chiropractic Center in Waynesville or contact 828-246-9555 to schedule a consultation.*



Dr. Michael Hogan boosts his mood with physical activity, witnessed by this grin as he comes through downtown Waynesville in the Main Street Mile.

**WARNING** Did you know these drugs can cause vitamin deficiencies?

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\***Muscles Relaxers:** Decreases Calcium levels

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