



HEALTHCARE & WELLNESS

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Risk factors for developing rotator cuff-related shoulder pain

By Dr. Christie Lehman
Asheville Regenerative Orthopedics & Sports Medicine



Dr. Christie Lehman

The rotator cuff is a group of muscles and tendons around the shoulder joint, which provides stability and allows for free movement. But when this area becomes damaged or injured, it can result in shoulder pain. While almost anyone may develop this kind of pain, some people are more at risk than others.

• **Age:** As we age, our bodies become more prone to wear and tear. This is especially true for the rotator cuff, as it is constantly in use every day. The tendons in our shoulders also become weaker and less flexible, making them susceptible to injury. As a result, older individuals are more likely to develop rotator cuff problems compared to younger individuals.

• **Occupation:** Certain occupations, such as painters and carpenters, require repetitive overhead motions. These types of jobs put a lot of strain on the rotator cuff muscles, increasing the risk of injury. Additionally, individuals who work in physically demanding jobs that require heavy lifting or the use

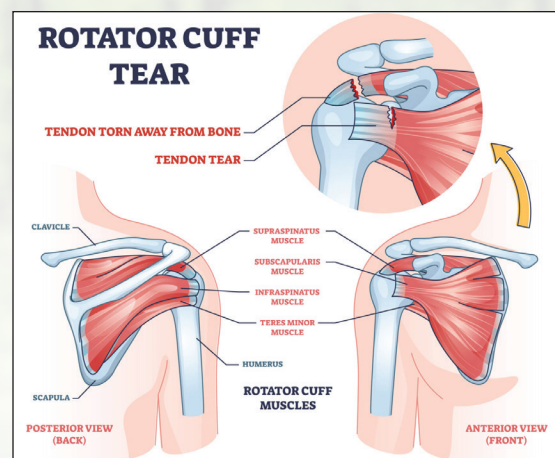
of power tools are also at a higher risk of shoulder pain.

• **Sports and activities:** Sports like baseball, tennis, basketball, golf, and swimming involve a lot of overhead movements and, therefore, put excess stress on the rotator cuff. This can lead to overuse injuries, tears, or strains in the muscles and tendons. It's important for athletes to properly warm up and stretch before participating in these activities to help prevent injury. It's also essential to use proper form and technique to avoid placing unnecessary strain on the shoulders.

• **Genetics:** Unfortunately, some individuals may be genetically predisposed to developing rotator cuff-related shoulder pain. This means that they may have inherited weaker or more vulnerable tendons, making them more susceptible to trauma. If there is a family history of rotator cuff problems, take the proper precautions and be aware of any potential symptoms.

Treatment options

Traditionally, shoulder pain can be managed with over-the-counter methods like rest, ice, and anti-inflammatory medication. Physical therapy may strengthen the muscles and improve your range of motion. However, these treatments only address the symptoms and do not the root cause. Patients can benefit from regenerative treatments like Regenxx.



Though a mild to moderate rotator cuff injury can heal by itself, it may take several months for the pain to subside. Regenxx uses your own growth factors to stimulate natural healing in the body. It can help alleviate pain and promote long-term recovery without invasive surgery or prescription medications. If you are experiencing rotator cuff-related shoulder pain, this may be the best possible way to move forward.

Contact Asheville Regenerative Orthopedics & Sports Medicine to learn more about the risk factors for developing rotator cuff-related shoulder pain. Schedule a consultation with Dr. Christie Lehman and learn about the power of Regenxx by calling 828-944-8378 or visiting avlregenerative.com.

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Registration Open for Free Wellness Program

Haywood County men and women age 18 and over are invited to participate in a no cost wellness program intended to reduce the risk of Type 2 Diabetes. **Special efforts are taken to register members of minority populations.**



The program consists of a one hour class each week for the first six months, then a one hour class per month for the remaining 6 months. Classes last 1 year. Each class includes a brief discussion of the CDC approved Prevent Type 2 curriculum and a complementary wellness incentive.

Each participant receives a free year long gym membership. Extra incentives are given to each participant, at no cost, during each class attended. Incentives include Fitbits, cooking utensils, pots and pans, wireless earbuds, Nutribullets, outdoor blankets, waterproof speakers, massage guns and much more! Outdoor events, 5K's, hikes, healthy food prep and other social events may be offered throughout the year.

"Factors such as high blood pressure, extra body weight or limited physical activity can help one qualify for the program. Being a person of minority or having a family member who is diabetic will also help individuals qualify," said Robinson.

For more information, contact Paige Robinson at paige@mountainwise.org or call 828-349-2456. To contact Ben Ross, email Ben@mountainwise.org. Let us know your name, age, and ethnicity if you leave a message.

How diabetes affects various parts of the body

Diabetes affects millions of people across the globe. Despite a growing awareness of the disease and ad campaigns designed to educate individuals about diabetes prevention, the number of people with diabetes is predicted to rise by more than 100 million by 2030 and reach 783 million by 2045.

Diabetes occurs when the pancreas does not produce sufficient insulin or cannot effectively utilize the insulin it produces. Recognizing how diabetes affects the body can shed light on just how debilitating the disease can become.

Eyes

Chronically high blood sugar from diabetes can cause damage in the retina that ultimately leads to diabetic retinopathy. That's because excessive sugar in the blood can lead to the blockage of tiny blood vessels that nourish the retina. That blockage effectively cuts off the blood supply to the retina, prompting the eye to attempt to grow new blood vessels. These new vessels do not develop properly and can leak easily.



The longer a person has diabetes and the less controlled their blood sugar is, the more likely they are to develop diabetic retinopathy, which can cause blindness.

Heart

Individuals with diabetes are at a higher risk for developing heart disease at a younger age and in a more severe form than those without diabe-

tes. This link is due to the damage that high blood sugar causes to the vessels and nerves that control the heart. In addition, people with diabetes are more likely to have high blood pressure, too much LDL, or “bad,” cholesterol in their bloodstream and high triglycerides, which is a type of fat in the blood. Each of these conditions increases a person's risk for heart disease.

Skin

Skin issue is often the first sign that a person has diabetes. That's because diabetes damages blood vessels in the skin, leading to issues such as diabetic dermopathy. Diabetic dermopathy is characterized by brown, raised patches of skin, typically on the legs. When diabetes affects the skin, this is often a sign that blood sugar levels are too high.

Kidneys

Diabetes damages small blood vessels throughout the body, including in the kidneys. When vessels in the kidneys are damaged, the kidneys cannot clean blood properly. As a result, the body retains more water and salt than it should, which produces a host of negative consequences, including weight gain and the buildup of waste materials in the blood. In addition, elevated blood sugar levels force the kidneys to work harder. Over time, all that extra work can lead to kidney failure.

How to fill your plate if you have diabetes

Diet and routine exercise are vital to managing diabetes.

Though there is no “one-size-fits-all” diet for people with diabetes, the American Diabetes Association created the Diabetes Plate Method as a simple way to help people with diabetes create healthy meals.

- Fill half your plate with non-starchy vegetables, such as asparagus, broccoli, green beans, and salad greens.

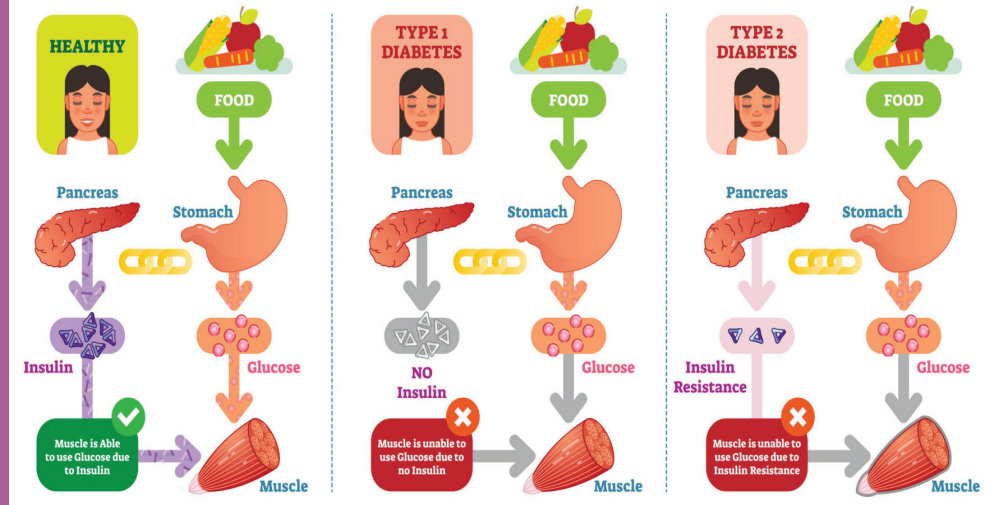
- One-quarter of the plate should be filled with lean proteins such as chicken, lean beef (cuts like chuck, round or sirloin), or fish (salmon, cod, tuna). Plant-based sources of protein also count, and these include beans, lentils, hummus, falafel, edamame, and tofu, among other foods.

- The final quarter of the plate should be reserved for foods that are higher in carbohydrates, such as whole grains (brown rice, quinoa, whole grain pastas), beans and legumes, or even fruits and dried fruit.

More people than ever before are being diagnosed with diabetes.

People who have recently been diagnosed with diabetes should speak with a registered dietitian nutritionist to find foods that are healthy and help them feel satisfied at the end of a meal. Delaying taking action may compel people to make poor dietary choices that could make their condition worse.

Types of diabetes



What Would You Do Without Neuropathy Pain



Several years ago, I was diagnosed with cancer and underwent chemotherapy treatments. I'm now in remission and blessed to be here but in so much pain. My feet and hands were constantly burning - a tingling sensation, almost like when your leg is falling asleep," shares Barbara of Biltmore Forest

Barbara was suffering from Chemotherapy Induced Peripheral Neuropathy or CIPN. While chemo kills cancer cells, it also causes many other bodily damage. Nerves, especially those far from the brain, are among the first to be harmed. 30-40% of cancer patients treated with chemotherapy result in peripheral neuropathy.

"Standing all day was not just a challenge, and it caused me physical agony. Keeping up with my busy schedule - forget about it. I couldn't even go for walks in my neighborhood."

Barbara, like so many others, was prescribed Gabapentin to help with the pain and told there was nothing anyone could do - in their words, 'there is no treatment for neuropathy'

Then Barbara found Dr. Autum Kirgan, DACM, C.SMA, L.Ac of South Slope Acupuncture & Wellness. By blending the time-tested science of acupuncture with more modern medical technology, Dr. Autum has designed a natural solution for peripheral neuropathy.

"Acupuncture is incredible at restoring blood flow and stimulating damaged nerves, preventing them from dying off," says Dr. Kirgan. "We take our treatments a step further by integrating FSM Therapy which targets specific nerves in the body using microcurrent. FSM Therapy is like watering a plant. This treatment will stimulate the blood vessels to grow back around the peripheral nerves and provide them with proper nutrients to heal and repair.

After only four weeks of treatment Barbara is already seeing incredible improvement. "I've taken the handicap placard off my rearview mirror and I am finally back to walking my neighborhood. I can't wait to see how I feel at the end of my program! I used to think that this pain was just the price I have to pay for still being alive. Dr. Kirgan has really given me hope for a better life!"

The number of treatments needed to allow nerves to recover fully will vary from person to person and can only be determined after a detailed neurological and vascular evaluation. If you or someone you love is suffering from peripheral neuropathy (of any origin), call **828-575-5904** to schedule a consultation with Dr. Kirgan and her South Slope Acupuncture & Wellness team.

They are waiting for your call.

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What is astigmatism?

By Asheville Eye Associates

Astigmatism, unlike normal vision, occurs when the cornea is shaped like a football (more curved in one direction than the other) and often occurs in combination with myopia (nearsightedness) and hyperopia (farsightedness). This causes light to focus in more than one point on the retina, resulting in blurry and distorted vision.

Symptoms of astigmatism

Blurry, distorted vision at all distances

Causes of astigmatism

- Heredity
- Lid swellings such as chalazia
- Corneal scars
- Keratoconus

Diagnosing astigmatism

Eye doctors can conduct a refractive evaluation to determine whether your eyes focus light rays exactly on the retina at distance and near. A visual acuity test will determine your ability to see sharply and

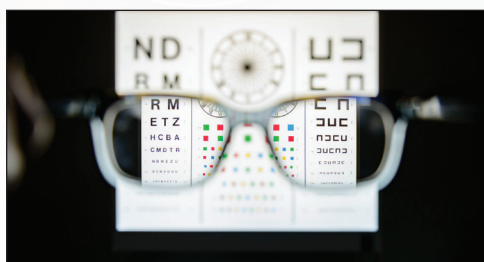
clearly at all distances. Eye doctors will also check your eye coordination and muscle control, as well as your eyes' ability to change focus.

Treatment of astigmatism

Glasses and contact lenses are used by many for the temporary treatment of astigmatism. However, there are a number of vision correction procedures that can surgically reduce or eliminate astigmatism.

Other types of refractive errors include: nearsightedness, farsightedness and presbyopia.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, visit ashevilleeye.com. In the case of an emergency or experiencing; pain, flashes & floaters, sudden changes in vision, light sensitivity, or redness call 828-623-0186.



Tips for recovering from a medical emergency

Recovering from a serious injury may leave some people feeling overwhelmed and helpless. Here are some strategies to recover and smooth re-entry into normal life.



• **Ask for a timeline:** Speak with the doctors and nurses about what recovery will entail and how long you need to be on rest or light duty.

• **Put together a support team:** Don't hesitate to rely on family members or friends during the recovery process.

• **Plan for rest:** Rest is a large part of recovery, that often requires time off from work or other responsibilities.

• **Seek professional help:** If you are feeling mentally overwhelmed from the emergency event, so

much so that it interferes with regular life, consult with a mental health expert.

• **Retrofit your home:** Some medical emergencies may require additional equipment be brought in to a home, especially when mobility has been adversely affected.

• **Exercise regularly:** When it's safe to do so, getting out and moving can be helpful. Deep breathing, gentle stretching and walking can help your body gradually reacclimate to being physically active.

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Understanding asthma as allergy season returns

For many people, allergies are a minor seasonal nuisance overcome by taking over-the-counter medications or staying indoors. However, allergies is a known risk factor for developing asthma.

Allergies and asthma often go hand in hand, with the same triggers responsible for hay fever also potentially causing asthma symptoms. These triggers, including pollen, dust mites, and pet dander, can lead to what's known as allergic asthma or allergy-induced asthma. In certain cases, allergies to skin or food can also result in asthma symptoms.

When your immune system mistakenly identifies a harmless substance, like tree pollen, as a threat, it triggers an allergic



ASTHMA TRIGGERS

response. Your immune system produces antibodies — which in turn can manifest as various allergy symptoms.

These include nasal congestion, runny nose, itchy eyes, or skin reactions. But for some, this same immune reaction can extend to the lungs and airways, causing asthma symptoms.

How to get kids more engaged in their dental health

Dental health is especially important for children. Here are ways to make dental care a more engaging activity for youngsters.

- **Use plaque-disclosing tablets:** These tablets use food-grade coloring in them, which sticks to areas with plaque accumulation. After chewing the tablets and the child smiles, they will see the spots where they need to brush more.

- **Flavored toothpastes and mouth-washes:** Kids can take active roles in their oral health by choosing the flavored products they prefer to use.

- **Electronic toothbrushes:** Electronic toothbrushes are easy to maneuver and generally considered more effective at removing plaque and keeping teeth clean.

- **Make it a competition:** Offer a prize (non-sugary, of course) to children who brush and floss daily for the required times. Extra points can be awarded for every dental wellness

check that comes back with a glowing report.

- **Make smart food choices:** Engage children in lessons and choices about which foods are good for oral health and which may be poor.

- **Practice on pets:** Children may enjoy learning dental care by keeping their animals' mouths healthy with brushing.



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Assisted living communities help seniors lead happier, healthier lifestyles

By Ardenwoods Retirement Community

Making the transition to assisted living can be a difficult choice for anyone to make — and it's OK to feel unsure or even hesitant about embarking on this next chapter of life. Is this decision right for me or my loved one? How do I know when it's time to leave the place I've felt comfortable for so long?

There aren't always clear signs that you or a loved one needs extra assistance. It's often a subtle series of changes, like increased stress or anxiety around daily tasks, that impact a person's overall health and well-being.

However, studies show that the earlier seniors seek help, the better off they are long-term.

By lifting the burden of difficult or physically taxing chores, offering personalized medication management and providing a welcoming community with ample recreation and socialization opportunities, assisted living can dramatically improve the quality of life for seniors — making a positive difference to physical, mental and emotional health.

Assisted living communities can help seniors live independently at their own pace, with personalized attention for health matters and daily routine needs, as well as beneficial socialization opportunities. According to a report from University College London, staying socially active reduces a person's risk of developing dementia by 12% when compared to those who only see friends every few months.

Beyond socialization, assisted living communities offer seniors and their families peace of mind with short or long-term care options — giving residents the highest level of independence while meeting their daily assistance needs. While moving to an assisted living community can be a big change, it can also be just the life-enhancing experience needed to make the most of one's retirement years.

Heather Glen, located in Ardenwoods Retirement Community, is a 48-residence continuing care facility located just minutes from Asheville and Hendersonville. If you or a loved one have questions about assisted living options, visit heatherglenretire.com or call 828-687-7321.



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The essential link between hydration and weight loss

By Blue Ridge Weight and Wellness

Staying adequately hydrated is crucial for overall health and plays a significant role in achieving weight loss goals.

Hydration serves as a cornerstone of weight loss for several compelling reasons.

Bodily functions: Water is essential for optimal bodily functions, including metabolism and digestion. When adequately hydrated, the body can efficiently break down food, absorb nutrients, and convert them into energy. Conversely, dehydration can slow down these processes, decreasing metabolic rate and hindering fat burning.

Regulating appetite and calorie intake: The sensation of thirst is often mistaken for hunger, prompting individuals to consume unnecessary calories when they genuinely need water. By staying hydrated, one can better discern between hunger and thirst cues, leading to more mindful eating habits and reduced calorie consumption. Drinking water before meals can also create a feeling of fullness, helping to control portion sizes and curb overeating.

Supports physical performance and exercise effectiveness: Being well-hydrated enhances exercise performance, allowing individuals to push themselves further and burn more calories. Dehydration can lead to fatigue, muscle cramps, and reduced endurance during workouts, diminishing the intensity and duration of physical activity.

Eliminates toxins and waste products from the body: When dehydrated, the body may struggle to flush toxins through urine and sweat, leading to toxin buildup and fluid retention. This can result in bloating, water weight gain, and hindered progress towards weight loss goals. Staying hydrated supports the body's natural detoxification processes, promoting optimal function and aiding in weight management.

Preserves lean muscle mass while losing weight: When the body is dehydrated, it may break down muscle tissue for energy, potentially compromising muscle integrity and slowing down metabolism. Staying hydrated, individuals can preserve muscle mass, maintain strength and tone, and support a healthy metabolism throughout their weight loss journey.



Psychological factors: Dehydration can lead to mood swings, irritability, and decreased cognitive function, making it harder to stay motivated and adhere to healthy habits. Conversely, staying hydrated promotes mental clarity, mood stability, and overall well-being, empowering individuals to remain focused and committed to their weight loss goals.

Despite its undeniable importance, many individuals underestimate their daily water intake or rely on alternative beverages that may not adequately hydrate the body. It's essential to prioritize pure, clean water as the primary source of hydration, aiming for the recommended daily intake of around eight glasses for optimal health and weight loss benefits.



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Warning signs of concussions

Concussions are brain injuries that can cause temporary loss of normal brain function and caused by direct trauma to the head.

Common symptoms include:

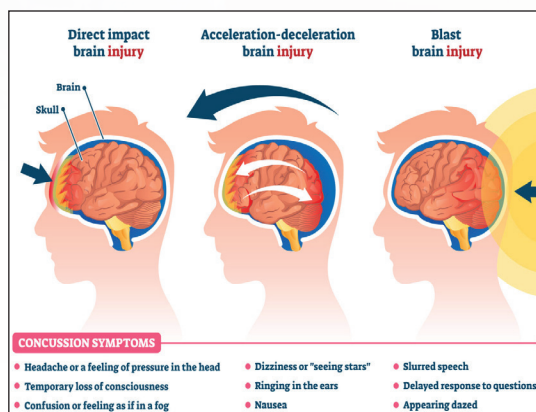
- Confusion, difficulty concentrating
- Headache
- Vision disturbances, sensitivity to light
- Dizziness or imbalance
- Nausea or vomiting
- Memory loss
- Ringing ears
- Loss of smell or taste
- Trouble falling asleep

Most people fully recover after a concussion. However, it's recommended to seek immediate medical attention if symptoms have not gone away within 10 to 14 days.

In addition, certain situations that can arise after suffering a concussion should be brought to the attention of a physician.

Contact a physician if the following arise:

- Headache worsens or does not go away
- Speech is slurred, and feelings of weakness, numbness or decreased coordination present
- Significant nausea or repeated vomiting
- Seizures
- Loss of consciousness and inability to wake up
- Symptoms worsen at any time



The health benefits of four popular teas

Various types of tea each provide their own unique health benefits.

• **White tea:** Antioxidant-rich white tea boasts anti-carcinogenic properties. It is a significant source of fluoride, catechins and tannins, ingredients that can strengthen teeth, improve their resistance to acid and sugar, and fight plaque.

• **Chamomile tea:** Chamomile tea is widely regarded as a mild tranquilizer and sleep-inducer, and has been shown to improve heart health.

• **Peppermint tea:** Peppermint calms the



muscles of the stomach and improves the flow of bile. It can help to soothe an upset stomach and conditions like constipation, irritable bowel syndrome and motion sickness.

• **Green tea:** Green tea is loaded with flavonoids, which improve heart health by lowering bad cholesterol and reducing blood clotting. Green tea is also associated with a reduced risk of stroke.



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Long-term solutions to protect joints

Joints come in many shapes, sizes and types throughout your body. They give your skeleton its shape and help you move.

Chronic joint pain can make movement and daily activities more difficult, however, whether it's chopping vegetables or doing yard work. Here's some tips to protect joints over the long haul.

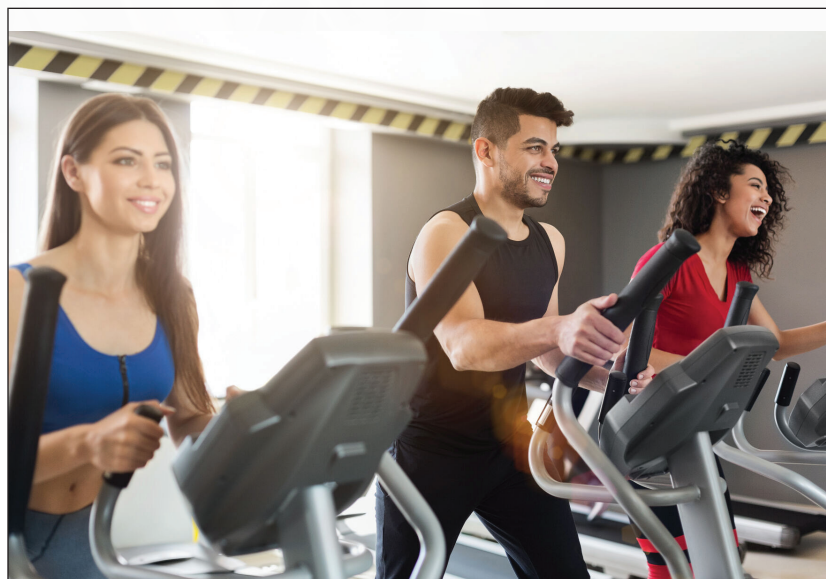
• **Focus on footwear:** Heels put added stress on the knees and increase risk for osteoporosis, three-inch heels are seven times more stressful on feet than one-inch heels. Sandals without a back strap force toes to over grip the edge of the sandal, putting needless strain on each foot and potentially causing issues with the toes.

• **Alternate between sitting and standing:** Joint stiffness and strain can develop when individuals spend lengthy periods of time sitting or standing. Take a break to stand up or sit down every 30 minutes. Profession-

als who sit at a desk all day can switch to height-adjustable desks that make it easy for them to transition from sitting to standing and still get their work done.

• **Maintain a healthy weight:** Researchers have determined that losing 11 pounds can reduce risk for osteoarthritis of the knee by 50%. On the flip side, each extra pound an individual carries puts four times the stress on his or her knees. Exercising to lose weight can provide the added benefit of preventing joint stiffness.

• **Opt for low-impact activities:** Low-impact activities like cycling and swimming are easier on the joints than fitness classes that involve high-intensity dancing and kickboxing. In addition, when choosing between a treadmill and elliptical machine, ellipticals are generally considered low-impact machines that are less stressful on the knees, hips and back than running on a treadmill or even outdoors.



Happy Places

By Kathy Foster
Deerfield Episcopal Retirement Community

The donkey brays at 6:38 a.m. It is a soft sound, barely a moan, but I hear it and it pulls me from an early morning slumber. It was Saturday, an opportunity to sleep in...a little. I waft in and out of a sleepy state, waiting for the next bray. It comes again, a little louder, accompanied by a desperate whinny from one of the horses. Time to get up. Life is busy, there is always a need to take care of, at home, at work, for someone else, for me, never ending.

As I stand in the paddock the horizon captures my attention. The sun creeping up at the edge of the tree-lined hill, about to spill onto the meadow, the cows slowly making their way across the slope. I listen to the birds singing, the variety of

sounds is a glorious symphony. I can only throw my hands into the air with a heart filled with gratitude as I look to the sky feeling blessed, feeling at peace. My happy place.

In a world that feels full of uncertainty, divisiveness, and demands that we are not sure we can meet, moments like these are lifesavers: our happy places. For some people it is a physical location, for some it is a mental state achieved through meditation, or brain or body exercise, and for others a memory that they store within themselves to pull out in a time of need.

Although Elizabeth, a sixty-one-year-old equine business owner, collaborates with individuals and groups in her barn, she also finds peace there. This special place with horses offers a peace she loves to

share with others, but time alone in her barn with a horse or the family dog becomes a space where she can focus on herself.

Ranice is in her seventies and shares, "It is actually heat, preferably a sauna or steam room; I think it's the only time that my body relaxes entirely, and my mind follows into a kind of silent peace. It is my Zen place."

Robert, a Baby Boomer and retired engineer, finds his happy place on his deck watching the stars at night, or immersed in brain exercise opportunities, like Quordle, Duotrigordle, and even Worldle. I have not imbibed in the "ordles" and can imagine there is no room for worry when engrossed in such brain exercises, but I know that the vastness of the night sky can diminish the worries of this earth.

And when the happy place is not at your fingertips? Julie, who is in her fifties, is a wife, mother, and scientist. The family vacation home is in another state. She says "I imagine myself on our dock in Maine, early in the



morning when the sun is just rising, and the water is calm. I close my eyes as I face the sun, and I can feel the air move and the day begin." She carries her happy place within her.

So, when you are feeling a little agitated or weary from life's demands, remember that there is a happy place, attainable in many forms, for you too.

Kathy Foster is the director of marketing at Deerfield Episcopal Retirement Community.

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How to unlock your golf potential

By Mary Curtis McCracken, Physical Therapist
Smoky Mountain Sports Medicine & Physical Therapy



It's that time of year again. The smell of freshly mowed grass, beautifully flowered trees, and big open fairways are waiting — are you ready?

We all want to be able to hit the ball long, play a round without fatigue, and do it all pain free. And let's also not forget the friendly competition on the course. Who

Mary Curtis McCracken doesn't want to win?

To increase your golf potential, you must consider your golf fitness level.

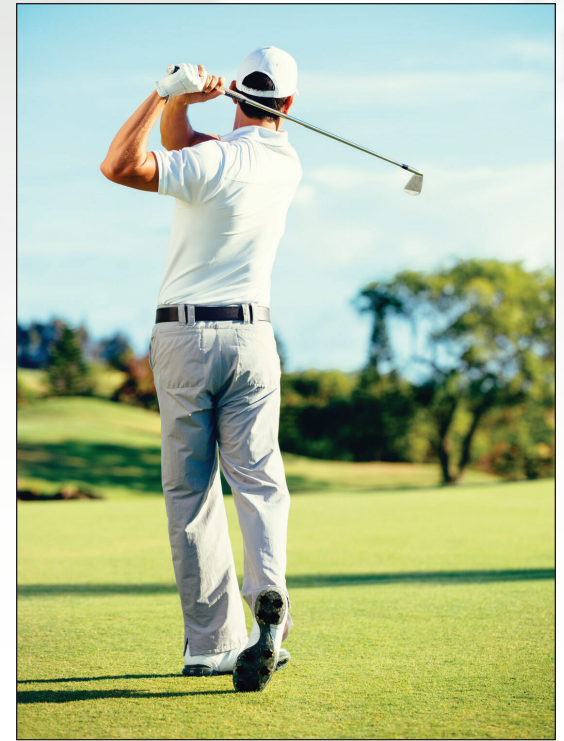
Golf requires mobility, power, stability, and motor control. If you sit at a computer a good bit of the day at work you will likely be limited in all of these and as we age they all decline. But the good news is you can work on golf specific training and get your body equipped to elevate your game.

Spine, hip, shoulder, knee and ankle mobility are necessary to swing a golf club. When any of these are limited, your mechanics may be altered and could result in less efficiency in your golf swing. Power, strength, stability, and motor control are required throughout your shoulder, spine, abdomen and hips to decrease risk of injury and increase longevity on the golf course.

So get moving in the gym. It doesn't have to be a commercial gym — you can do fitness training in your own home. Most professional golfers on the PGA Tour have a regimented workout that they do regularly, the same can apply to the rest of us.

If you don't know where to start, see a physical therapist who can identify your individual deficits and develop a golf specific training program for you. A proper training program will allow you to unlock your golf potential and enjoy long days on the course for years to come.

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Affordable Care Act Health Insurance Updates

Access to healthcare has never been easier in North Carolina, thanks to the expansion of Medicaid — known as MDX.

If you have applied for Medicaid before and were not eligible, you should apply again. The new MDX is based on a higher monthly income than the traditional Medicaid of previous years, as well as household size.

What are the new income limits?

The income limits for MDX are based on being below 138% of the Federal Poverty Level. New income limits as of April for people ages 19-64 for Medicaid Expansion are:

- Single: \$1,732/month or less
- Two person: \$2,392/month or less
- Three person: \$2,969/ month or less
- Four person: \$3,588/month or less
- Each additional person: add \$597/ month

How do I know if I'm eligible?

The federal healthcare marketplace and EPASS are the two ways to determine eligibility for this type of Medicaid.

Anyone submitting an application for federal marketplace at Healthcare.gov will automatically be informed if they qualify for MDX. To see if you are eligible via Healthcare.gov, you must update your marketplace application.

Some consumers can enroll in marketplace plans year-round, with a special enrollment period for a qualifying life event.

You need to cancel your marketplace plan if you receive a MDX plan.

What if I need help figuring it out?

Navigators working for Mountain Projects 'Get Covered WNC' and the North Carolina Navigator Consortium are available year-round to assist with eligibility screening through the marketplace application.

Navigators are required by law to provide free, unbiased, impartial assistance on all plan options available on the Marketplace. Please contact 828-452-1447 or 828-492-4111 or visit ncnavigator.org to schedule an appointment. Mountain Projects is a proud member of the North Carolina Navigator Consortium and is also supported by Dogwood Health Trust and Haywood Healthcare Foundation.

What if I got a letter saying I'm losing my Medicaid?

During the Covid pandemic, those receiving Medicaid kept on getting it without having to renew their eligibility. Those pandemic benefits are now ending for those who may no longer qualify.

If you receive a letter from the Department of Health and Human Services that says you may be losing your Medicaid, do not ignore it, contact the local DSS office. You could be part of the "Medicaid unwinding" group.

People lose Medicaid during unwinding either for making more than the income limit or because they did not follow procedure and get the requested documents back to the state as required. Even if you lose the Medicaid you had during the pandemic, you could be eligible for Medicaid Expansion, the Marketplace, or Employer-Based Coverage.

Finally, if you believe you were enrolled in a Marketplace plan without your knowledge, or your electronic tax return was rejected because you were unaware you needed a form 1095-A, contact Mountain Projects or one of our agency partners.

The project described was supported by Funding Opportunity number NAV-CA210405-02-00 from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of HHS or any of its agencies.

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You may be able to get free health insurance through Medicaid expansion, even if you didn't qualify before. The Marketplace can now determine eligibility for both Medicaid expansion and special enrollment periods.

Navigators will be on site to assist with the application process

MORE INFO: (828) 452-1447

Sponsors:



This project is supported by the Dogwood Health Trust & the Haywood Healthcare Foundation. The project described was supported by Funding Opportunity number NAVCA210405-02-00 from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The contents provided are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of HHS or any of its agencies.

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Those who are grieving have a place to go

By Colton T. Sankey
Haywood Hospice & Palliative Care



Colton T. Sankey

On the second Wednesday of every month at 3:30 p.m. when the Coffee Cup Café closes, the doors reopen to welcome a community of people who have been brought together through their shared loss.

A grief group organized by chaplain, Patrick Davis and his staff from Haywood Hospice and Palliative Care, meets and the healing begins.

I was invited to the group to observe for a school project and was astonished by the sense of community and compassion that I experienced.

Upon entering the Coffee Cup Café there's a sense of familiarity, almost a feeling of coming home that came over me. The feeling came from the warmth of the people gathered to share this space.

The opening ceremony joined everyone in gentle sound and movement.

I then had the honor of listening to individuals who



had gathered there that day explain who they had lost and where they are in their journey through that loss.

Some had lost spouses, children or parents, siblings or other loved ones, but what mattered most was that they felt the same thing deep down. They were grieving the love and time they had lost with their cherished ones but luckily, they didn't have to do this alone.

I had the pleasure of speaking with a woman who had been attending regularly since its inception a year

ago.

Although nothing could replace the loved one she had lost, she had found a new sense of belonging within this group. She had made lifelong friends who truly understood her when she thought nobody could again. She explained that she still experiences her grief every day but knowing that her community is there by her side makes the struggle possible and worthwhile.

It's my hope that writing this piece brings some attention to the good work being done by some deeply caring individuals in our community.

I also hope that anyone reading this who is grieving without support considers contacting this group to find some solace and companionship.

If you are grieving you may feel alone now, but I implore you to reach out and find your community because you need them and they need you.

For more information on hospice services, contact Haywood Hospice at 828-452-5039.

Healing from grief and trauma: Equine therapy, art therapy and movement therapy

Whether you are grieving the death of a loved one, facing a health challenge or the stress of being a caregiver, there are several new programs to offer support and healing in Haywood County.

These programs provide resources and options to ensure no one dies or grieves alone and that caregivers are valued and supported. They are an initiative of the Haywood End-of-Life coalition in collaboration with Haywood County Hospice.

• **Movement and book therapy:** Leigh Ann Mertens is one of the local hospice volunteers who began sharing her expertise.

She offers a "Book Club for Grief and Loss" that meets at Grace Church in the Mountains in Waynesville weekly. Additionally, she also offers a free restorative yoga and movement class that will be returning in a couple months. If

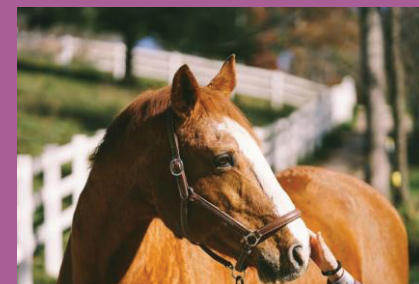
interested, contact Leigh Ann at: 828-606-4123.

• **Art therapy:** Studio3 offers a space for caregivers and griever to come together to share their experiences and craft a piece of jewelry in a nurturing environment.

Owner Sherri Burch has been silversmithing and teaching jewelry arts for over three decades. She is a certified drug & alcohol counselor, as well. Upcoming programs will be offered in August and November. Register at studio3jewelry.com/creative-healing-2024/

• **Equine therapy:** Healing Hearts is a new therapy support group for children. Through interaction with horses — known as equine therapy — to help them recover from grief and trauma. The program is hosted on a local horse farm.

If you are interested in any of these projects, contact Patrick Davis at 402-933-9393 or via e-mail at: patrick-davis@me.com. All these programs are free and made possible thanks to funding support from the Haywood Health Foundation.



CREATIVE HEALING— Participants of Studio3's "Keys to My Heart" create a key chain memento as a reminder that grief is love with nowhere to go.

The effects of chronic stress on overall health

Stress poses a significant public health problem. Though work is often cited as a primary cause of stress, socioeconomic issues also cause a spike in stress levels, which serves as proof that there's no shortage of potential stressors.

Stress is more than an inconvenience. Though the human body is well-equipped to handle stress in small doses, chronic stress poses an entirely different problem, affecting various parts of the body.

Musculoskeletal system

Muscle tension is almost a reflex reaction to stress. However, muscle tension for long periods of time can trigger a host of problems, including tension-type headache and migraine headaches, which are each associated with chronic muscle tension in the shoulders, neck and head.

Work-related stress in particular has been linked to musculoskeletal pain in the lower back and upper extremities.

Respiratory system

Stress can present problems affecting the respiratory system as well. Shortness of breath and rapid breathing can occur when a person is feeling stress. This is often not a problem for people without respiratory disease, but it can exacerbate breathing problems for people with preexisting respiratory conditions, including asthma and COPD.

Cardiovascular system

Chronic stress can contribute to long-term problems affecting the heart and blood vessels, which the APA notes are the two elements of the cardiovascular system that work together to provide nourishment and oxygen to the body's organs.

Chronic stress has many hallmarks, including a consistent and ongoing spike in heart rate. As a result, long-term ongoing stress increases a person's risk for an assortment of cardiovascular problems, including hypertension, heart attack and stroke.

Gastrointestinal system

Hundreds of millions of neurons in the gut are in constant communication with the brain. This is why feelings of nervousness or anxiety often produce the sensation of butterflies in the stomach.

When a person is dealing with chronic stress, that can affect communication between the gut and brain, potentially leading to pain, bloating and other discomfort in the gut.

Stress is a public health problem that affects people from all walks of life. Individuals feeling excess levels of stress are urged to speak to their physicians.



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The different types of service dogs

Service dogs are highly trained to help people who have psychiatric or physical disabilities get through each day safely and comfortably.

Assistance dogs can help open doors, pull a wheelchair, alert individuals to sounds, pick up objects, or even detect the onset of seizures or other health effects. Here's a look at some different types of assistance dogs and the tasks they can perform.

- **Guide dog:** A guide dog was one of the first service animals on record, tracing back to the 1700s. Guide dogs assist people who are visually impaired. They help their handlers get around in public. Guide dogs have the unique skills to accept commands but also make choices based on situational assessments.

- **Seizure alert dogs:** Seizure alert dogs can recognize often elusive signs that a seizure is imminent, helping

their handlers with epilepsy get into safe positions. These dogs also are capable of alerting others that their owners need help.

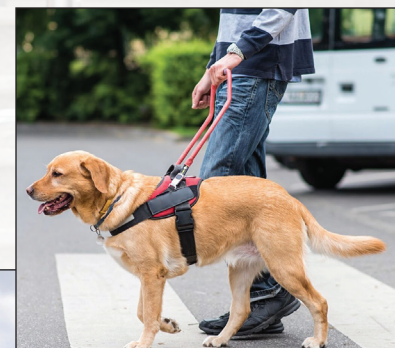
- **Diabetic alert dog:** Dogs' olfactory receptors are more abundant than humans' — roughly 300 million compared to the six million human beings have. Some dogs can smell things like chemical changes in the body, including changes in blood sugar, which helps people with diabetes avoid critical drops.

- **Hearing dogs:** Hearing dogs serve as ears for people who cannot hear. They are trained to alert their handlers to doorbells, knocks, fire alarms, crying babies, and much more.

- **Mobility assistance dogs:** Service dogs can fill the void for individuals who do not walk or have other impairments. They may bring objects to their owner, like phones or utensils. They

also may help move wheelchairs or provide support while getting around.

- **Psychiatric support dogs:** Individuals with post-traumatic stress disorder,



depression, anxiety, or other psychiatric conditions can benefit from psychiatric support dogs that provide comfort

and perform tasks that make handlers feel safe and secure.

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Stroke Awareness Month: 3 steps to manage your stroke risk

By Howard Palay, MD
Haywood Regional Medical Center



Howard Palay, MD

May is National Stroke Awareness Month. Someone in the US suffers a stroke every 40 seconds, and for these patients, timely treatment can mean the difference between successful recovery and long-term disability.

The most common type of stroke is an ischemic stroke, occurring when a blood clot blocks the flow of nutrients to the brain, causing brain cells to die rapidly.

Here's what you can do to stay healthy:

Build healthy habit

According to the Centers for Disease Control, 80% of strokes are preventable. While some

stroke risk is genetic, much of it comes down to controllable factors. Make sure to eat a balanced diet, full of whole grains and leafy greens and light on sugar and red meat. Exercise regularly, with a plan to move your body for 150 minutes each week. Finally, quit smoking. Cigarette usage is linked to many health problems, and stroke risk is one of them.

Know your risk

Even with a healthy lifestyle, no one is completely safe from stroke. Those over the age of 65 are at a greater risk. Risks may change based on gender, ethnicity, family health history, and other preexisting conditions. People with high blood pressure or cholesterol levels are also at higher risk of stroke.

Prepare to BE FAST

Do you know what a stroke looks like? Knowing these signs is vital for timely treatment — patients who get emergency care immediately upon first symptoms tend to recover much more successfully.

Remember common stroke symptoms with the acronym BE FAST:

- Balance loss, confusion or dizziness
- Eyesight changes, such as blurry vision
- Facial drooping, especially on one side of the body
- Arm weakness, especially on one side of the body
- Speech difficulties, such as slurring or mumbling
- Time to call 9-1-1. Don't wait to get treatment!

Even if these symptoms disappear quickly, the danger isn't over. Every stroke can cause lasting damage, and every stroke patient should seek emergency care right away.

If you would like to speak to a provider about your risk of stroke, Haywood Regional Medical Center can help. Call 800.424.DOCS (3627) or visit the "Find a Doctor/Provider" tab at MyHaywoodRegional.com to schedule an appointment today. In the event of a stroke-related emergency, call 9-1-1. Minutes matter, and acting quickly may save a life, including your own.

To keep your life in motion

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What to know about eating before a workout



Food provides energy for the body, so it makes sense to eat before a workout. Here's some helpful tips on the dynamic between eating and exercise.

Why eat before exercise?

It's recommended to eat before exercise if it's been two or more hours since your last meal or snack. Doing so can help to restore energy stores prior to an intense or lengthy workout. This approach is especially beneficial for those who work out early in the morning, before lunch or after school or work — times of day when it's typically been awhile since a person has eaten.

How much should I eat before exercising?

It's unlikely anyone is going to want to eat a large meal before a workout. Doing so will undoubtedly affect performance in a negative way. The general guideline around eating and exercise is:

- A full meal three to four hours before exercising
- A higher carbohydrate snack two hours before exercising and/or a small, easily digested carbohydrate right up until the start of a workout

What makes for a good pre-workout snack?

If you won't be eating a full meal before a workout, various mini snacks can provide energy without adversely affecting performance. Pre-workout snacks that are low in fat and fiber are ideal, as the body can digest such foods quickly.

Half a banana, a small serving of applesauce or a handful of crackers or pretzels are a good pre-workout mini snack. A larger snack eaten a little further away from a workout can include some hummus or peanut butter. Yogurt, a fruit smoothie or a low-fat granola bar also make good pre-workout snacks.

Should I eat during a workout?

It can help to consume some carbs during workouts that last 60 minutes or longer. Doing so can help individuals prolong their endurance and can even help with their timing and concentration.

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The health benefits of hobbies and pastimes

Maintaining physical and mental health often requires a multi-faceted approach. Eating well, exercising and reducing stress are part of a healthy regimen, but those are not the only components of a healthy lifestyle.

Hobbies can have a positive effect on overall health. Hobbies can seem like ways to simply pass the time or alleviate boredom. But a deeper exploration could shed light on just how healthy hobbies can be. In fact, it is essential to carve out time for hobbies because they can be so beneficial.

Participation in leisure activities positively influences self-perceived well-being and depressive symptoms. Participation in activities that bring out a creative side leads to an increased sense of well-being that is good for long-term health. They also can reduce cortisol levels. Cortisol is known as the stress hormone, and it can negatively affect energy, mood and sleep.

While most leisure activities regularly engaged in can have positive effects on health,

those that focus on a combination of physical and mental stimulation are most beneficial.

• **Reading:** Reading is a rewarding activity that can greatly benefit seniors and provide an engaging pastime for those with limited mobility. Many assisted living facilities offer



activities that are designed to foster communication between residents and a book club can do just that.

What's more, reading every day may be especially valuable for people age 65 and older. A study published in the journal JAMA Psychiatry found that dementia risk was considerably lower among men and women 65 and older who participated in intellectual activities like reading than it was among seniors who did not engage in such pursuits.

• **Art therapy:** Art therapy is a creative form of therapy designed to help older adults with memory loss or those experiencing mental or physical stress. Recent research has indicated that engaging in creative activities may be more effective at delaying cognitive decline than merely appreciating creative works. A study found that retirees who painted and sculpted had greater improvements in spatial reasoning and emotional resilience than a similar group who attended art appreciation classes.



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AG132617

Find a Healthier You: Community Wellness Programs

By YMCA of WNC

Discover the benefits of community wellness programs for all ages. Whether you're a seasoned fitness enthusiast or just starting your journey, there is something for everyone. It's an ideal time of year for water adventures, add variety with group fitness classes, and stay motivated by connecting with a supportive community. Movement can boost joy and productivity. Here are a few ways to stay focused on a healthier, happier life!



Here are five ways to stay active all summer:

Fun in the water: Dive into the joy of swimming! We are heading into the time of year when swimming can be more than exercise, it's a fun activity. Whether you find a local park to swim or register for programs. Swimming is for all skill levels, from beginners to advanced swimmers. Water workouts are easy on the joints and invigorate the spirit.

Keep kids active: Join a team or summer camp to keep children – of all ages- active. Encourage your kids to explore sports, teamwork, and healthy habits. Youth programs don't have to be competitive, they can be for recreation too. Being a part of a team fosters physical activity, confidence, and lifelong friendships.

Try something new: Variety is key! Look for a place with group classes—whether it's dance, yoga, or circuit training. Sweat it out, laugh, and feel the positive energy of exercising together.

Community Connection: Find your home away from home, where you are more than just another participant; you're part of a supportive community. Share stories, celebrate milestones, and find encouragement in every step.

Active Aging: Embrace life at every age with purpose. There are so many programs to help you focus on maintaining strength, flexibility, and balance. From gentle movement classes to mindfulness sessions, there's truly is something for everyone.

Bonus ideas:

Personalized Coaching: Get expert guidance tailored to your needs.

Virtual Workshops: Access online resources for mental and physical health.

Ask for support: Wellness should be accessible to all. Find organizations like the YMCA where membership options are income-based.

The YMCA has seven gym and recreation locations that offer fun and engaging exercise environment. Visit ymcawnc.org/locations.



Foot pain? You may have diabetes

By Smoky Mountain Foot & Ankle Clinic



Do you ever feel burning, tingling or numbness in your feet and toes? A foot and ankle surgeon warns against

ignoring those symptoms. They could be a warning sign of diabetes.

Dr. Robert DelBene DPM, says those symptoms may be caused by a condition called diabetic peripheral neuropathy, or nerve damage. Neuropathy in the feet can lead to permanent numbness, deformities such as bunions and hammertoes, and dry skin that cracks open and

won't heal.

"Diabetic peripheral neuropathy is not only painful but dangerous," says DelBene, a Fellow of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons with offices in Waynesville & Asheville. "It's a leading contributor to foot ulcers in people with diabetes."

Burning, tingling and numbness in toes can also be symptoms of thyroid problems, nutritional deficiencies, back problems and pinched nerves in the ankles. In the United States, diabetes is the leading cause of peripheral neuropathy and can lead to further foot complications.

Out of the 23 million Americans with diabetes, one in four has not been diagnosed. Some people learn

they have diabetes only after seeing a doctor for burning, tingling and numbness in their toes and feet. Many people already diagnosed with diabetes are not familiar with neuropathy's symptoms.

Medications can treat pain caused by neuropathy. However, nerve damage cannot be reversed.

"When you have diabetes, especially diabetic neuropathy, a minor cut on your foot can turn into a catastrophe," says DelBene. "The statistics on diabetic ulcers are sobering."

Twenty percent of diabetes patients who develop ulcers will require an amputation. Half of all people with diabetes who have a toe or foot amputation die within three years. The annual cost for

diabetic ulcer care in the U.S. is estimated at 5 billion.

For more information on foot problems such as diabetic peripheral neuropathy, contact Smoky Mountain Foot & Ankle Clinic at 828-452-4343 or visit smokymountainfootclinic.com.



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The link between oral health and overall well-being

By Dr. Michael Gillespie
Michael D. Gillespie, DDS Family Dentistry



In the whirlwind of our daily lives, it's easy to overlook the profound connection between our oral health and our overall well-being. Yet, emerging research continues

Dr. Michael Gillespie to highlight the intricate relationship between the health of our mouths and the health of our bodies.

Numerous studies have shown that poor oral health can contribute to a host of systemic health issues, including heart disease, diabetes, and even Alzheimer's disease. Conversely, maintaining good oral hygiene can help reduce the risk of these and other chronic conditions.

But what exactly is the link between oral health and overall well-being? One key

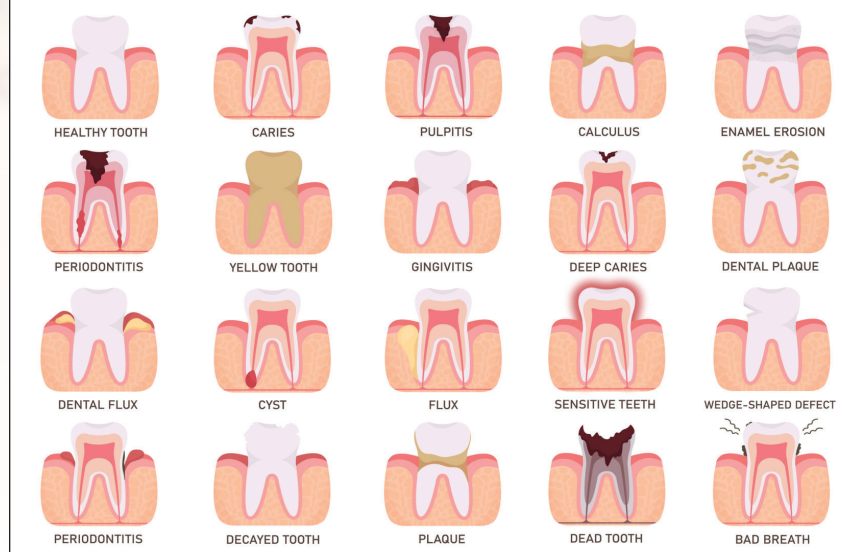
factor is inflammation. Gum disease, a common oral health concern, is characterized by inflammation in the gums. This inflammation can spread throughout the body, contributing to inflammation in other organs and tissues, which is a risk factor for various diseases.

Additionally, the bacteria that cause gum disease can enter the bloodstream and travel to other parts of the body, potentially causing infections and inflammation elsewhere. This can exacerbate existing health conditions or increase the risk of developing new ones.

Furthermore, poor oral health habits, such as neglecting regular dental check-ups and skipping daily brushing and flossing, can indicate broader health behaviors and attitudes. Individuals who prioritize their oral health tend to prioritize their overall health as well, leading to better lifestyle choices and outcomes.

In essence, our mouths serve as a gateway to our bodies, and caring for

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our oral health is a crucial component of maintaining overall wellness. By recognizing and addressing the link between oral health and overall well-being, we can take proactive steps towards a healthier, happier life.

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What to look for if you're concerned about melanoma

Fun in the sun is part of what makes the great outdoors so enjoyable. However, it's important that people exercise caution when spending ample time in the sun. A lack of caution when soaking up

some sun can increase individuals' risk for skin cancer, including melanoma.

Melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer. Melanoma affects pigment-producing cells called

melanocytes, which give the skin its color. Melanomas can develop in various parts of the body, but most originate on sun-exposed skin.

Rates of the disease are rising rapidly, and that's especially so among younger individuals. Melanoma can spread widely to other parts of the body, which is not typical of other skin cancers.

Melanoma is unique among skin cancers, but it produces some common signs. Learn the ABCDEs of melanoma, which is a simple system of characterizing symptoms that can help people recognize what to look for.

• **A (Asymmetrical):** Moles or growths that are asymmetrical or uneven may be indicative of melanoma and should be discussed with a physician immediately.

• **B (Border):** Moles or growths indicative of melanoma will have an irregular border.

• **C (Color):** Moles or growths resulting from melanoma exhibit changes in color.

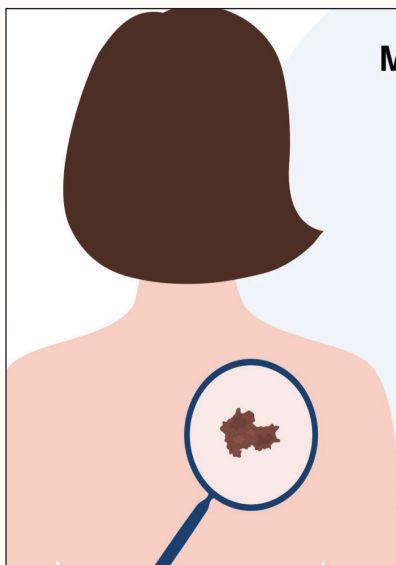
• **D (Diameter):** A mole or growth that develops because of melanoma may have a diameter larger than the size of a pencil eraser.

• **E (Evolved):** Moles or growths resulting from melanoma evolve in size or thickness.

Many people are familiar with the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale "The Ugly Duckling." That beloved story is one to remember when thinking of melanoma. A mole that does not look like the rest of the moles on an individual's body could be indicative of melanoma.

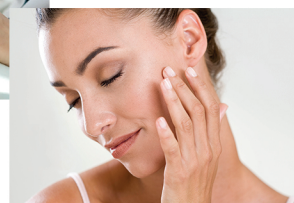
MELANOMA WARNING SIGNS

- **A**symmetry
Asymmetrical shape, two very different-looking halves
- **B**order
Irregular, notched or scalloped borders
- **C**olor
Many colors or an uneven distribution
- **D**iameter
A mole larger than 6 millimeters
- **E**volving
Grows in size



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How to thank caregivers

Caregivers work tirelessly for the benefit of a person in need, although the job often proves humbling and even overwhelming.

It is important for them to know their efforts are appreciated. Here's some ideas to express your gratitude for caregivers.

- **Say "Thank you":** One of the easiest ways to show appreciation to caregivers is to thank them outright. A simple "thank you" can transform a person's day in an instant. Knowing they are appreciated may help them stay motivated when the going gets a little tough.

- **Say it with food:** Caregiving requires sacrifice. That means certain things may be put on the back burner, such as time allotted to prepare home-cooked meals. Give thanks with some delicious meals that are ready to go and can

be easily heated up. Gift cards to a favorite restaurant or a gift basket full of delicious treats is also a good option.

- **Write a heartfelt note:** Offer a card thanking the caregiver on your own behalf and on behalf of person who is on the receiving end of the care. Personally thank all of the people who lend a hand with notes that explain how they are offering invaluable assistance.

- **Provide a day off:** Assisted living facilities and skilled nursing homes may have "respite care" services. This means an individual who is being cared for by others can stay a few days at the facility while the caregiver gets a respite.

- **Offer a soothing gift:** A caregiver may enjoy relaxation-based gifts such as a massage therapy appointment, spa pedicure, hair cut, or



another type of pampering.

- **Pitch in:** Whenever possible, lighten the load of the caregiver by

offering as much assistance as you can. Many hands can make light work of any situation.

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Exercise ideas for people with mobility issues

Physical activity is vital to overall health, even for older adults and those with chronic conditions or disabilities.

Individuals with limited mobility due to age or preexisting medical conditions may wonder how they can exercise. Those with chronic pain or illness sometimes find that exercising for more than a few minutes can be challenging. Even brief periods of exercise can pay dividends, however, and there are various approaches people can take to work around mobility issues.

• **Explore chair exercises:** Seated chair exercises can work various muscle groups. Seated arm rows, tummy twists, overhead arm raises, hand squeezes with a tennis ball, inner thigh squeezes, leg lifts

and extensions, and many other exercises can be customized to be performed in a chair.

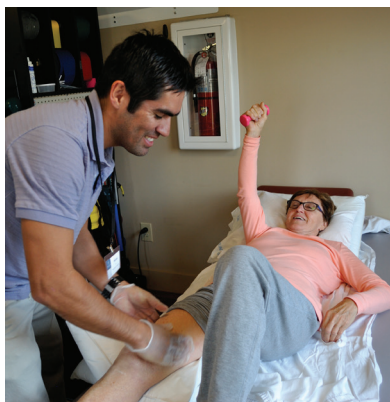
• **Use resistance bands:** Resistance bands are like giant rubber bands that can be used to build up strength and flexibility. Resistance bands are effective, low-cost gear that can offer high-impact results for building muscle, staying fit and increasing mobility. Resistance bands can be used in lieu of hand weights for many exercises and can also be used while sitting in a chair — for both arm and leg muscle.

• **Mind-body exercises:** Exercises like Tai Chi and yoga are good for those with limited mobility. These exercises integrate awareness of body movement with the exercise through coordinated breathing. The exercises encourage people to

focus on slow, fluid movements and deep stretching.

Exercise regimens can be started gradually and altered to become

more vigorous as the body acclimates to exercise. Increase duration and frequency as strength and endurance builds.



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Trending health products

Looking to improve your health and wellness? Consider these trending health products.

Collagen supplementation

Collagen is a family of proteins that serves as the structural component of most connective tissues in the body. Collagen production wanes as people age, but it also can drop quickly due to excess sun exposure, smoking, lack of exercise, and excess alcohol consumption.

Many people are interested in maintaining adequate levels of collagen, which is vital to giving skin a youthful appearance and helps to maintain healthy joints. According to Google Trends, online searches for collagen have increased steadily since 2014. Collagen has become a top-selling supplement to improve hair, skin and nails.

Though human studies that prove collagen supplementation efficacy are lacking, some randomized controlled trials have found

that collagen supplements improve skin elasticity and joint mobility and reduce joint pain. Collagen supplements are thought to be safe, but people should discuss supplementation with a doctor first.

Fermented foods

More research is showing a connection between digestive tract (gut) health and immunity, and people concerned with boosting their immune systems are paying attention. The immune system has evolved to maintain a symbiotic relationship with microbiota in the gut. Accordingly, when operating optimally, this immune system-microbiota alliance allows the induction of protective responses to pathogens.

Naturally fermented foods may help strengthen the gut microbiome by supplying it with healthy probiotics. Pickles, Korean kimchi, sauerkraut, and other foods can be beneficial. Consumers should look for product labels that say “naturally fermented,” which use live organisms for the fermenting process.

CBD and hemp products

Even though medical marijuana and recreational marijuana use is now legal in



many parts of the country, CBD is widely being harnessed in its own right. Cannabidiol oil is a chemical found in marijuana and hemp plants. CBD doesn't contain THC, the psychoactive ingredient found in marijuana that produces a high. CBD has been studied as a treatment for a wide range of conditions like Parkinson's disease, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, and anxiety. The only CBD product currently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is prescription Epidiolex for epilepsy.

Since hemp oil is high in essential fatty acids, it may produce anti-inflammatory effects and improve brain function. It is widely used in beauty products like skin creams as well. Always speak to a doctor before using CBD and related products.

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Outdoor activities benefit kids mentally and physically



Modern amenities and indoor comforts have made life easier in many ways, but they've also helped to fashion a generation who spend

much of their time inside.

There are distinct advantages to engaging in more outdoor activi-

ties. Here's a look at some of them.

- **Improved mood and reduced risk of depression:** Children who go outside and get ample exposure to sunlight may experience a more positive mood and renewed energy.

- **Lower risk of obesity:** Outdoor play can help reduce obesity in today's youth. Children can enjoy self-directed physical activity that also stimulates awareness of one's surroundings.

- **Improved vitamin D levels:** Vitamin D has been dubbed the "sunshine vitamin" because sunlight hitting the skin prompts the liver and kidneys to create vitamin D in the body. A deficiency in vitamin D can lead to depression, heart failure and may compromise the immune system. Children can improve current and future health

by maintaining adequate vitamin D levels through healthy exposure to sunlight.

- **Lower stress levels:** Students of all ages are faced with stressful situations that come at them from every angle. Outdoor exercise offers mental health benefits that exceed those gleaned from indoor exercise. Spending time in a green space can result in improved mood and self-esteem.

- **Better focus:** A dose of nature may help children diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder improve their concentration levels. A study found that children with ADHD demonstrated greater attention performance following a 20-minute walk in a park as compared to a residential neighborhood or downtown area.



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IMPACT
HEALTH



IV Therapy and Intramuscular Injections for your wellness and health goals

By Joanna Massie

Studio J: Medical Aesthetics, Wellness, IV Therapy



In the pursuit of enhanced health and vitality, IV therapy and intramuscular injections have emerged as popular choices. Recognized for their safety and efficacy, these treatments offer a targeted approach to bolstering

wellness and addressing specific health concerns.

IV Therapy

IV therapy has gained traction among individuals seeking to fortify their immune systems, boost energy levels, and prevent illnesses. Studio J offers tailored IV vitamin therapy, delivering a potent blend of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants to promote overall well-being. Common infusions include amino acids, ascorbic acid, glutathione, and B vitamins, each contributing to addressing diverse health needs.

Intramuscular Injections

Intramuscular injections, administered directly into muscle tissue, serve therapeutic and cosmetic purposes. Vitamin shots, such as vitamin B12 and biotin, address nutritional deficiencies and support skin, hair, and nail health. Other injections, like immunity enhancers and lipotropic injections, aid metabolism, immunity, and weight loss efforts.

Rapid Nutrient Absorption

Both IV therapy and intramuscular injections ensure rapid absorption of nutrients, bypassing potential limitations of oral supplementation. This makes them particularly beneficial for individuals with compromised digestive systems or those who have undergone gastric surgeries.

Safety

In health and wellness, safety and reliability in nutrients are vital. FDA-approved manufacturers of supplements from trusted facilities en-



sure quality, giving consumers peace of mind. Personalized dosages, guided by qualified healthcare professionals, are key for optimal outcomes. Whether IV therapy or injections, choosing a reputable provider is crucial for patient safety and efficacy. Trusted establishments prioritize personalized treatments under experienced supervision, enabling clients to pursue health goals safely and effectively.

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Feeling 1% better can make a 100% difference

By Dr. Michael and Tara Hogan
Blue Mountain Chiropractic Center



Doctors Michael and Tara Hogan of Blue Mountain Chiropractic.

On the first spring break we've taken in a long time, we had the pleasure of renting an RV from a local company, Leonard's RV, and driving our family up to Shelbyville, Indiana to see the total eclipse.

It was quite the journey, stopping in Kentucky at Bone Lick State Park and figuring this RV thing out...hoping that it didn't turn out to be like that Robin Williams movie or a Chevy Chase "National Lampoon" knock off.

Though, of course, being a dad of an American family — there's gonna be some Chevy Chase moments.

One of the greatest things about the RV camping world is meeting and closely interacting with your temporary neighbors, who are usually people willing to help you at the drop of a hat. This trip was a great reminder that there are so many people in this great land of America willing to lend a helping hand.

And I would be remiss not to mention that traveling across the country was also a reminder that we live and one of the greatest places in the world — or even in the Universe, as far as we know.

I would often reflect back on the eclipse event in 2017. I was able to watch the total solar eclipse with my family, sitting on a paddle board with my 3-year-old and 6-year-old boys.

It was an epic moment and a great memory in my life.

I wanted to relive this experience as our family has expanded to include two teenagers, a 10-year-old, 4-year-old and a baby — what an adventure.

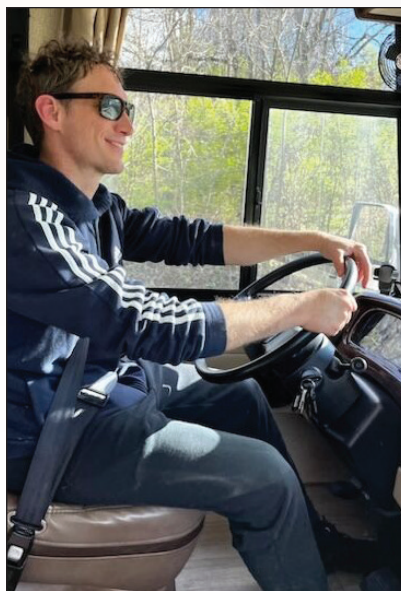
Our camp host in Shelbyville owned and trained 40 race horses, so we experienced the eclipse in the beauty of a half-mile racetrack with a lake in the middle of it and beautiful horses everywhere.

While observing the eclipse, up until the very last moments before totality, it was still very difficult to view what was happening to the sun without eclipse glasses. Our 4-year-old could even tell she needed the glasses to see what was going on.

Even with the sun being covered by the moon at 99% a person could not discern what was going on in the sky except for the unusually dim surroundings. Incredibly, the sun even at 1% is so bright you cannot look at it straight on.

In our minds, we thought this was a great example for health.

When we apply tiny 1% corrections to our body it can create huge impacts on how we function, think, and perform day to day. Examples of this might be adding a bit of the right type of magnesium to your diet, changing



Dr. Michael and Tara Hogan of Blue Mountain Chiropractic take an RV road trip with their five children on a solar eclipse quest for totality.

your bedtime by an hour, or getting a chiropractic adjustment.

A slight change toward spinal alignment can cause inflammation levels to decrease in the body, allow the nervous system to self regulate, and foster overall feelings of wellbeing and energy. When joints that have been stiff or stuck for long periods of time get adjusted, it can increase mobility and give the joints a chance to heal and move normally. In addition to this, when joints are moving normally without inflammation the adjacent nerves can function better and healing can take place on a deep level.

When a person can function just 1% better daily or for weeks, months or years...IMAGINE what that has the capacity to do for someone, their

Dr. Michael Hogan on an RV road trip in search of eclipse totality discovers that just a 1% change in direction changes the course of the journey.

family, and their community.

Just like shifting one degree on a compass completely changes trajectory of path of direction, adding in slight adjustments to your lifestyle here and there can make momentous impacts on health.

At Blue Mountain Chiropractic it is our mission to uplift our community by helping you find those 1% and one degrees so that you can pivot towards health.

Blue Mountain Chiropractic Center offers x-ray specific and data driven spinal adjustments and detailed, personalized nutrition consultations. Services include family care (pregnancy, pediatric, infant and breastfeeding concerns); sports injuries and recovery; and pain and ailments (including Medicare). Visit Blue Mountain Chiropractic Center in Waynesville or contact 828-246-9555 to schedule a consultation.

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