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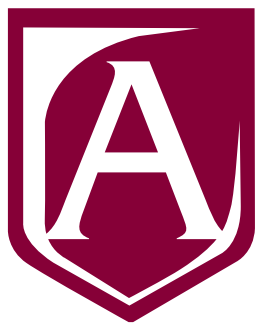


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New Book by Pittsburgh Psychiatrist May Increase Understanding, Reduce Conflict in Couples

In romance, it's been said that "opposites attract," but, with respect to romantic couples, Lester J. Bolanovich, M.D., began to suspect that there was more to the adage than had previously been written about.

Dr. Bolanovich began to notice opposite characteristics among couples. For example, early risers usually marry late risers, and one who likes the room cool often marries one who likes the room warm.

"These are programmed characteristics, which are, more likely than not, present at birth," Dr. Bolanovich said.

However, there are also less explained psychological characteristics that are also present at birth that can be more difficult to bring about compromise. For example, one spouse may have more empathy for other people and will marry a spouse with less empathy for other people. Dr. Bolanovich refers to the person with more empathy as the caretaker personality and invented the term "caretaker" personality to describe the spouse with less empathy.

The conflicts in the marriage that stem from these differences, not unusually, causes the caretaker to seek psychiatric help because he or she is overwhelmed and develops symptoms of anxiety or depression. The caretaker almost never wants to engage in psychiatric consultation.

"It's difficult to always be the caretaker in the relationship," he says. "I've seen this consistently in my patients."

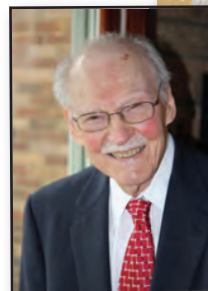
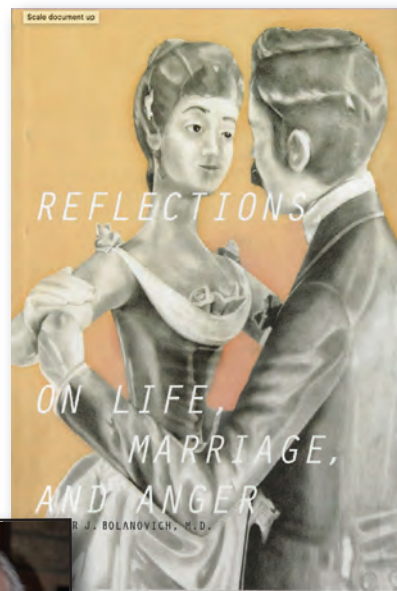
Because he has observed this phenomenon so frequently in his more than 60 years in practice, Dr. Bolanovich decided – with a great deal of encouragement and support from his patients – to put these concepts down on paper. The result is a book titled, *Reflections on Life, Marriage, and Anger*, which is available on Amazon. In his book, he relates his concepts about caretakers and caretakes in clear language that is accessible to the average person.

"This observation about caretakers and caretakes is not limited to married couples," he says. "It can also exist in the relationships

between co-workers, friends, siblings, or a parent and child."

The book is divided into two main parts. Part one is where Dr. Bolanovich lays out his theories and reflections on the subject. Part two is actual case studies from Dr. Bolanovich's practice that illustrate the theme of the book. To protect his patient's privacy and confidentiality, Dr. Bolanovich has removed names and any details that might identify someone.

"I believe this book offers a pathway to dealing with anger and the interpersonal conflicts that can arise whenever two or more people come into contact," he said. "If the book does anything, I hope it will help people understand how much we need each other and how difficult it can be to bond with each other."



Dr. Lester J. Bolanovich,

HOW TO ORDER YOUR OWN COPY!

Reflections on Life, Marriage, and Anger, can be ordered on Amazon at www.amazon.com/s?k=9780578678757&i=strip-books&linkCode=qs

Dr. Lester J. Bolanovich, a 1951 graduate of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, has practiced psychiatry in Pittsburgh for more than 60 years.

Pick the Perfect House Plant to Spruce Up Your Home

by Abi Falcioni, owner of Perrico Plant Co.

It is safe to say we have all spent a little more time indoors than we were intending to this year and many people are turning to house plants to spruce up and greenify their homes. Increased access to plants, green spaces, and nature have benefits of lowering anxiety and stress levels, increasing mood and self-esteem, and boosting creativity according to the Journal of Environmental Horticulture's Review of the Emotional and Mental Health Benefits of Plants.

Finding the perfect house plant for your space, however, might not come easily to you. Too often people pick a plant that might look interesting, but they don't have the right conditions to keep the plant happy.

If you are a beginner, notorious plant killer, or just want an easy plant-buying guide here are some steps to follow to find a plant that will work well in your home.

Lighting Needs

The first step is to assess the lighting in the room where you would like to place your plant. Plants that require high light, such as succulents and cacti, generally need to be placed on a windowsill that receives direct sunlight for a portion of the day.

Plants that need medium light, such as philodendron and calatheas, generally need to be placed within a couple feet of a window, but do not want direct sunlight. Plants that tolerate low light such as sansevieria snake plants, pothos, and ZZ plants are the most versatile.

These plants can be across the room from a window, and they do not need any direct sun to be happy. After you have found the spot where you would like to place your plant make sure you purchase plants that will thrive there.

Watering Needs

The second step is to ask yourself how much time you would like to dedicate to caring for your plants. If you know you will forget to water them for a couple of weeks, then stick with low water plants like cacti, sansevieria snake plants, and ZZ plants. If you would like to be a little more involved with your new plant roommates, then bring home some plants that require water weekly, like pothos, philodendron, and calatheas.

Following these few steps should help you gain confidence in selecting a new plant for your indoor space that fits both your lighting and watering needs. For all the pet owners out there, you can also look at the ASPCA's website to make sure plants you are purchasing are pet friendly. Buying plants is also easier than ever, and it can be done



Starfish Snake Plant



Philodendron



ZZ Plant



Snake Plant

without leaving your home by shopping on eCommerce house-plant websites that ship straight to your house.

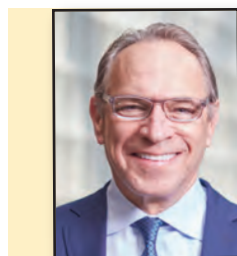
> Perrico Plant Co. is an online house plant eCommerce website and wholesaler located in Pittsburgh, offering nationwide shipping and free local pickups. To order, visit perricoplantco.com.

Your Health Care Can't Wait Do Not Delay Cancer Care and Screenings Due to COVID Concerns, Says UPMC Hillman's Dr. Stanley Marks

By Nancy Kennedy

Fear of contracting coronavirus in a healthcare facility or physician's office has led many Americans to delay or cancel medical care, including cancer screenings such as colonoscopies and mammograms. Cancer care professionals are concerned about the significant impact this is having on cancer diagnosis and treatment. According to Stanley M. Marks, MD, Chairman of UPMC Hillman Cancer Center, a recent National Cancer Institute study indicated that fewer cancers are being diagnosed due to COVID-19 fears, and enrollment in clinical trials has fallen sharply. As a consequence, there could be an additional 10,000 deaths across the U.S. within the next ten years, due to COVID-related delays in cancer diagnosis and treatment.

"There is no doubt that there will be unnecessary cancer deaths," Dr. Marks says. "Cancer screenings are elective procedures, but a delay



"Cancer screenings are elective procedures, but a delay of several months can mean the difference as to whether cancer can be cured or not."

-Dr. Stanley M. Marks

of several months can mean the difference as to whether cancer can be cured or not. Don't put off your screening tests for even a few months or think it can wait until next year. Early detection is critical."

Dr. Marks says that he and his fellow oncologists and other specialists at Hillman understand the fear and anxiety that people have about COVID-19. "We understand it, but cancer is also a big risk."

In addition, Dr. Marks encourages patients who are currently receiving cancer treatment to maintain their appointments and

avoid any disruptions in their care. "In our cancer center, most patients are comfortable coming in. In some situations, we may be able to switch a patient from an IV medication to an oral one, so that they can take it at home, but that is not always possible. Although telemedicine has been widely used during the pandemic, it is not always appropriate; we prefer to see and examine patients who are being treated for cancer."

UPMC Hillman Cancer Center reassures all patients that they provide a safe environment. "We have a comprehensive plan to protect patients and staff and we take all the precautions recommended by the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control, in every single one of our 70 locations. It may also be helpful to remember that in Allegheny County, there is low penetration of COVID in the population - just one in 400 residents have contracted it."

UPMC Hillman Cancer Center has implemented these protocols:

- Screening patients and staff for exposure and symptoms
- Expansive testing capacities
- Face mask requirement for all over age two
- Highest grade disinfectant use to clean all facilities
- Essential PPE in more than adequate supply
- Well trained staff including an Infectious Disease Prevention team
- Visiting restrictions
- And more

Dr. Marks says that it's essential to keep in mind the reason for cancer screenings: "We screen for many common cancers because, when caught early, the patient has a greater likelihood of surviving. Screenings make a significant difference. It's a question of risk versus benefit, and in regard to cancer screenings in the time of COVID, we believe the benefit of cancer screenings outweigh the risks. Get your screenings and get the care that you need."



POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS OF CANCER YOU SHOULD NOT IGNORE:

Dr. Marks reminds patients to monitor their own health and to see their PCP if they experience any of these common cancer symptoms:

- Unexplained fever or night sweats
- Unexplained weight loss
- Persistent cough or hoarseness
- A sore that is not healing
- A lump in the breast or testicle
- A change in bowel or bladder habits
- Unusual pain
- Abnormal bleeding from any site

If you are under the care of a physician for a chronic condition, post-operative care or an acute illness, it is essential that you comply with appointments and do not ignore symptoms or problems. You may be offered a virtual appointment, but if your doctor wishes to see you in person, you can rest assured that you will be given explicit instructions for your visit and you will be protected from exposure to COVID 19. All UPMC facilities are following meticulous policies for your safety. For more detailed information, visit www.upmc.com/coronavirus

To learn more about UPMC Hillman Cancer Center, visit www.hillman.upmc.com

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Lung Screening Program Opens at Washington Health System

By Kevin Brown

Smoking accounts for 80 percent of all lung cancer deaths, according to the American Cancer Society. On the bright side, the number of deaths from lung cancer is dropping because more people are quitting smoking along with an increase in earlier detection and treatment of lung cancer. However, people who quit smoking still have a risk of developing lung cancer many years after quitting.

The Washington Health System (WHS) is hoping to improve the survival rate of those with lung cancer through its new Lung Screening Program. Just launched, the program offers detection of lung cancer through low-dose computerized tomography (CT) scans of the chest.

Mathew A. Van Deusen, M.D., a pulmonary and thoracic surgeon at WHS, says that, "The goal of the new Lung Screening Program is to identify patients who are at high risk for lung nodules at an earlier stage and avoiding diagnosis at a later stage when treatment is much more challenging and less successful."

Low-dose CT scans of the chest have been offered for some years, usually for an out-of-pocket fee paid by the patient. What's different now is that, because of the benefits of the scans demonstrated through the National Lung Screening Trial and, with approval from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, health insurance companies are covering the cost of the scans for patients who meet the established criteria.

"From the NLST, this was men and women from 55 to 74 years of age with a history of 30 pack-years of smoking or more and including current smokers and patients who have stopped smoking within 15 years of enrollment," Dr. Van Deusen says. A pack-year is equivalent to smoking one pack a day for 30 years or two packs a day for 15 years.

Patients who believe they meet the criteria are encouraged to see their primary care physician who will verify that the patient meets the criteria, submit an order to WHS, and schedule the CT scan. The lung screening navigator will contact the patient to review his or her risk factors, enroll the patient in the protocol and confirm that the exam is scheduled.

"Once the scan is obtained, the findings will be reviewed by the radiologist and the higher risk, more suspicious patients are presented to the multidisciplinary physician group for review and decision-making regarding the next step," Dr. Van Deusen says.

"A decision can be made on the best course of action at that time whether it's more dedicated imaging such as a CT scan with contrast or a higher quality, diagnostic CT scan or potentially, a PET scan for further information," explains Dr. Van Deusen. "Beyond that, the patient could be referred to a pulmonary doctor for a bronchoscopy or an interventional radiologist for a CT-guided biopsy or perhaps a thoracic surgeon offering a surgical approach to that disease process," he says.

"It really depends on what the finding is, what the level of concern about the finding is, and then making a group multidisciplinary decision and that would include the lung doctors, the lung surgeons, the lung cancer doctors, the radiation cancer doctors, pathologists and the radiologists," Dr. Van Deusen says.

Once patients are enrolled in the Lung Screening Program, they will be qualified to receive a low-dose CT scan every year.

"For that patient who is high-risk, it's not a "one and done" type of scan," says Dr. Van Deusen. "Even in patients with low-risk findings, they are qualified for yearly, low-dose CT scans based on their risk. In patients with normal findings, this is more of a longitudinal follow-up making sure that things don't change over time while they are continuing to meet those high-risk criteria."

Melissa Zucchero, BS, CNMT, explains her role as lung screening navigator in guiding patients through the Lung Screening Program. "I coordinate the care of the patients who are enrolled in the program by communicating with the patients, the ordering providers and the multidisciplinary team reviewing patients' exams."

Melissa says that being a resource for the patient is important to the program. "To be able to pick up the phone and give me a call or to be available when they come in for their CTs - it's just an extra face, an extra person who is there to make sure they get the care they need. When they have concerns, they can call me directly and we can get to the bottom of it. If it's



"Even in patients with low-risk findings, they are qualified for yearly, low-dose CT scans based on their risk."

-Dr. Mathew A. Van Deusen

If you believe you meet the criteria for the **Lung Screening Program** or would like more information, contact your primary care physician or call Lung Screening Navigator **Melissa Zucchero at (724) 250-4594.**

not something that I can discuss, I can get them to the person who will," she says.

Smoking cessation is an important factor in risk-reduction for patients who continue to smoke and that's a part of the navigator's discussion with patients. WHS offers a smoking cessation program

called "Smoke-Free for Life" at its Wilfred R. Cameron Wellness Center.

According to Melissa, CT scans for patients in the new Lung Screening Program are being offered at WHS Washington Hospital and the WHS Diagnostic Center in Peters Township. Future plans include offering the service at WHS Greene in Waynesburg.

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At St. Clair Hospital, Pharmacogenomics Is Improving the Way Doctors Prescribe Medications

By Nancy Kennedy

St. Clair Hospital has teamed with Mayo Clinic in a new, cutting-edge program that will enable St. Clair physicians to choose the most effective and safest medications for their patients by utilizing each patient's unique genetic information.

Known as pharmacogenomics, or PGx for short, the program combines pharmacology, medicine and genetic science, (genomics), to study how a person's genes affect their response to medication. The goal of the PGx program is to help physicians select the drugs and doses that are best for each individual patient.

Although prescribing medications has often been a "one size fits all" proposition, the reality is that not everyone has the same response to the same medication. We now know that people respond to many medications according to their genetic makeup. Genetic variations determine how quickly or slowly one metabolizes medications, for example; if your genes make you a fast metabolizer, your body may process a drug before it has had a chance to work. You're taking the medication as prescribed, but you're not getting the result that you and your doctor had hoped for and expected. PGx testing can determine how your body is likely to respond to a specific medication and whether or not it will be effective as a treatment for your condition. It can also help physicians determine the most accurate dosage for you, and it can determine whether or not a medication is safe for you or likely to cause adverse effects.



"This information helps the doctor determine what will work best for the individual — the usual dose, a higher dose, or a lower dose? Your DNA can affect whether or not a drug will be beneficial for you."

-Dr. Karl E. Bushman

"PGx testing helps doctors tailor prescriptions more precisely," explains Karl E. Bushman, M.D., an internist with St. Clair Medical Services and the lead physician on St. Clair's multidisciplinary team that has been working with Mayo Clinic's Center for Individualized Medicine to develop the PGx program. (St. Clair is a member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network and, therefore, enjoys a clinical collaboration with Mayo Clinic.) "For some patients, the standard dose of a medication may not work, or it may cause an adverse reaction, and this can be due to your genes. PGx looks specifically at the genes that control liver enzymes; the liver metabolizes, or breaks down, the medications we take. PGx enables us to look at certain common medications to determine how your body will metabolize them. This

information helps the doctor determine what will work best for the individual — the usual dose, a higher dose, or a lower dose? Your DNA can affect whether or not a drug will be beneficial for you."

Pharmacogenomics is one aspect of precision medicine or individualized medicine, an emerging medical discipline that uses the patient's unique genetic profile to personalize and customize their care and treatment with unprecedented accuracy. This new approach is believed by many experts to eventually become the standard of care in the future, optimizing treatment and outcomes in many specialties. Currently, PGx testing is available for commonly prescribed cardiac medications, blood thinners, gastric reflux medications, pain relievers and psychotropic drugs, including many anti-depressants.

PGx testing requires a blood sample, taken at one of St. Clair's Outpatient Centers, a St. Clair Medical Services office, or the Hospital. The sample is sent to Mayo Clinic and analyzed. A thorough genetic report is prepared for the individual patient and is forwarded to one of St. Clair's clinical pharmacy specialists, who interpret the results for the physician and patient. The decisions about changes in medications are made mutually by the physician and patient.

"PGx testing is a powerful new tool that enables doctors to better understand your unique response to the medications you are taking, giving you the greatest possible clinical benefits, while also protecting you from adverse reactions," says Kaitlin Shotsberger, RN, MSN, CNL, Executive Director of Quality and Care Management at St. Clair. "With PGx testing, we will transition from a 'one size fits all' traditional approach to prescribing to a highly individualized one that takes one's genetic makeup into consideration. It's especially helpful for patients with multiple medical conditions and complex ones."

PGx testing will continue to advance and more drugs will be added to the testing panels. Once you have had a genetic profile created, it is yours and it can be shared with other physicians and specialists in the future as needed. Patients should always tell their doctors if they are not getting the expected result from a medication, or if they are experiencing bothersome side effects, Dr. Bushman advises. "Never make medication changes on your own. Talk to your doctor."



"It's especially helpful for patients with multiple medical conditions and complex ones."

-Kaitlin Shotsberger, RN

> For more information about PGx testing at St. Clair Hospital, please email mayo.inquiries@stclair.org.



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UPMC COVID-19 Update

By Kevin Brown

Health care providers are charged not only with treating COVID-19 patients, but also with keeping their patients and employees safe from the virus, and helping to prevent the spread of the virus in the communities they serve. UPMC is meeting those challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic on many fronts.

At a July press briefing, UPMC officials discussed their efforts in COVID-19 testing, treatment, prevention and research. Officials at the briefing included Graham Snyder, M.D., M.S., medical director, Infection Prevention and Hospital Epidemiology, Tami Minnier, chief quality officer, and Donald M. Yealy, M.D., senior medical director and chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine at UPMC.

The early summer surge in COVID-19 cases that hit the U.S. was certainly unexpected and officials at UPMC noticed a difference in those being affected.

“Our testing data and that of our partners at the county and state health departments indicate disease cases are largely linked to younger people who contracted the virus either while traveling or while socializing without masks or proper distancing. The median age of those testing positive in Allegheny County is under 30,” said Dr. Snyder.

The effects of the virus do not seem to be as severe in the younger age group, according to the officials. “We’re also not seeing the same mortality that we were seeing in the spring at the emergence of the epidemic,” Dr. Snyder noted.

Early on in the pandemic, those affected most severely by the COVID-19 virus were older adults with underlying health conditions. Preventative measures such as social distancing, masking, frequent hand-washing and other infection control techniques appeared to be effective in protecting the vulnerable age group.

“In early spring, our policymakers enacted broad social limits to help flatten the curve,” Dr. Yealy said. “We can avoid returning to that if we all do the simple things that are proven to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 illness or infection. Wear a mask in public



“If you’re due for a preventative care visit, like cancer screening or even a simple annual exam, don’t cancel it because you fear getting COVID-19 illness or infection.”
-Dr. Donald M. Yealy



“We’re also not seeing the same mortality that we were seeing in the spring at the emergence of the epidemic.”
-Dr. Graham Snyder



“We’re now adding drive-through testing to accommodate the additional demand for testing in Allegheny County.”
-Tami Minnier

PHOTO CREDIT: UPMC: UPMC COVID-19 Press Briefing

and wear it properly to cover your mouth and nose. Stay home when you’re sick. Wash your hands, and stay extra vigilant to protect the elderly and others who are vulnerable,” he explained.

UPMC was at the forefront of efforts to combat the pandemic through testing, according to Ms. Minnier. “When it became clear early on that we would likely see cases in our community, and there were no other options available for testing, we developed our own COVID-19 tests and provided it to our communities well ahead of anything being available commercially,” she said. “We’re now adding drive-through testing to accommodate the additional demand for testing in Allegheny County. I’m incredibly proud of the work that we began here and know that UPMC continues to do more testing than any health care facility that certainly I’m aware of, at this point in time in our region.”

Ms. Minnier also noted that UPMC has taken extra steps to ensure the safety of their patients, visitors and employees. “Our facilities are safe and clean. And we are employing the latest evidence-based infection prevention practices to give our patients the confidence that UPMC will provide them the world class care they need whenever needed,” she said.

That innovation from UPMC is also evident in research into COVID-19 treatment protocols. While there is much to be learned

about the effectiveness of medications, UPMC is involved in research into the use of hydroxychloroquine and remdesivir, among other medications. Doctors cautioned, however, about the need for completely researching medications.

“It takes time,” Dr. Yealy said. “It’s not something that you can get an answer within weeks or even a couple months. We want to do it right, not just quick.”

While healthcare providers have been resuming some patient care services that had been curtailed in the spring, Dr. Yealy advised the public to keep up with regular healthcare visits.

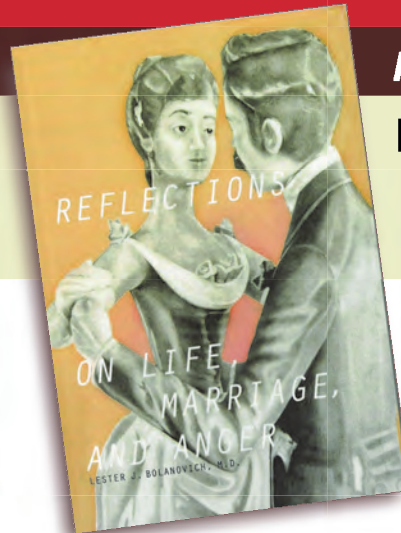
“Please don’t delay your healthcare because fears of or from COVID-19,” he said. “If you’re due for a preventative care visit, like cancer screening or even a simple annual exam, don’t cancel it because you fear getting COVID-19 illness or infection. If you think you might have a medical emergency, such as early signs of a heart attack or a stroke, or if something’s just not right with your child, go to the emergency department. Don’t hesitate. Our care sites are safe. Our staff is well equipped and well trained. Delaying care is how little issues and small problems become big issues and big problems.”

For more updates on COVID-19 from UPMC, visit www.upmc.com, or call 1-800-533-UPMC.

Local Pittsburgh Doctor and Author

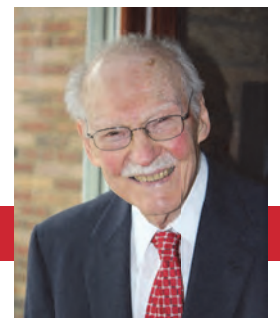
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Reflections on Life, Marriage, and Anger



Dr. Lester Bolanovich, MD, a psychiatrist practicing for over 60 years, draws upon his experience caring for patients and helping them deal with the challenges of interpersonal relationships.

In this recently published book, Dr. Bolanovich describes inborn characteristics that might hinder positive relationships, and offers advice on resolving conflicts. Part two of the book features case studies to illustrate his theories.



Dr. Lester Bolanovich sees patients in his Bloomfield/Lawrenceville office.

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Curtis Pharmacy – Offering A Better Way to Manage Medications

Medical Profiles

By Kevin Brown

For pharmacist Erich Cushey, the “Aha!” moment came one evening five years ago when he received a phone call from his 88-year-old father. Erich’s mother usually organized his father’s medications so he could easily take them. With his mother in the hospital, his father was at a loss as to which medications to take.

“You’ve heard the expression, ‘The shoemaker’s kids have no shoes.’ Well, the pharmacist’s dad didn’t know which medications to take,” Erich says.

That prompted Erich and his wife, Tina, owners of Curtis Pharmacy in Washington and Claysville, to develop medication packs customized to each patient’s medication needs. When demand for the individualized medication packs increased, they purchased an automated packaging system called RapidPakRx™ from the RxSafe company to create and label the pill pouches.

“If you are visiting your mom or dad once a week and laying out their pill boxes for them, we’re really doing that for you now with a much more robust system,” Erich says. “The pills are packaged in individual pouches that can be labeled morning, noon, evening, lunch, supper, or they can be dated if you want. It really allows us to help you manage your medications.”

Keeping to a regular medication schedule and taking the proper dosage are essential for maintaining health. An older adult on multiple medications can become easily confused about which pills to take and when to take them, leading to serious health complications.

“The nice thing about these pouches is, if you are going away for the



weekend, you can simply rip off those days’ packets and take them with you as opposed to packing all your bottles or whatever else you need to take your medications while travelling,” he says.

Anyone who is on multiple medications understands that managing the refills can be difficult since prescriptions don’t necessarily start and end at the same time. The medication management system from Curtis Pharmacy takes care of that for you with medication refill synchronization. That simply means a customer’s refills are timed to be filled on the same day each month.

“We work hard to know when you should be due for your medications based on the last time you received it,”

Erich explains. “Let’s say, for instance, you take a generic blood pressure pill or cholesterol pill and you have an inhaler. So, we’ll use the inhaler - we know that’s 30 days - and we may give you 14 days of the blood pressure pill and 20 days of the cholesterol pill to get you caught up all together. And then moving forward, based off that inhaler, we’ll know when everything is due.”

Erich says that, as a rule, Curtis Pharmacy patients almost never have to call their doctors for refills. “That’s a nice thing about us because we call customers a week to 10 days out. If there’s a medication they need refills on or an issue they need to talk to the doctor about, we’ll let them know at that point,” he says.

An additional benefit is the regular contact with customers. “People tend to talk to their pharmacist more than any other health care provider,” Erich notes. “One of our pharmacists or staff members will reach out, talk to the patient about the medications, make sure they are on track and taking what they are supposed to be taking and letting them know we are getting their next month’s medications ready. We find a lot of folks just like getting the phone call. It’s a nice touch to be able to talk to patients on a regular basis.”

Doctors appreciate the medication service from Curtis Pharmacy as well. “We get phone calls from doctors’ offices saying ‘Mr. Jones is having a really hard time taking his medications. Can we help him get set up with your program?’ We take over from there. It’s a nice tool to help doctors’ offices maintain their patients’ compliance,” Erich says.

With the COVID-19 restrictions in place, Curtis Pharmacy offers free, contactless home delivery throughout Washington County. Their pharmacy locations at 575 Henderson Avenue in Washington and at 305 Main Street in Claysville are open to customers.



To learn more about the medication management system and other services they offer, visit **Curtis Pharmacy** online at www.curtispharmacy.com, stop by one of their convenient locations, or call them at (724) 209-1582 in Washington or at (724) 245-3520 in Claysville.



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Going to the eye doctor's office provides treatments for current medical problems, but with new advancements in technology, eyecare patients can have the opportunity for greatly improved vision and an overall increase in the quality of their lives. Here is a list of some of these advancements.

Glaucoma

People who have glaucoma often rely on a traditional eye drop regimen for treatment. Although drops can be effective, many patients may have difficulty putting the drops in effectively and remembering to do them as frequently as prescribed. Also, many prescriptions come with monthly co-payments for refills which can be quite expensive.

There are two alternatives that may allow some patients to eliminate or decrease their dependency on drops - Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT) and a newly launched pharmaceutical product, Durysta. SLT is a painless laser treatment that is indicated as a primary treatment for glaucoma. It works for an average of five years and can be repeated if needed. Durysta is a biodegradable implant that provides a sustained release of medication inside the eye. Glaucoma patients should ask their eye doctor for more information.

Cataract

Cataracts are a normal aging process for the natural lens inside the eye. As we age, the lens inside the eye becomes cloudy, which can cause many symptoms including blurred vision, glare and halos, difficulty with night-time driving, and fading or yellowing of colors.

Eventually eyeglasses will no longer effectively increase vision function, and surgery is needed to restore vision. Cataract surgery involves removing the cataract and inserting a replacement lens.

Traditional cataract surgery lenses are called monofocal lenses, which provide good distance vision but require eyeglasses for near and sometimes intermediate vision.

However, as a treatment advancement, multifocal lens implants are able to provide good distance and near vision and decrease the dependency on glasses.

Dry eye

Dry eyes can cause symptoms including burning and stinging, pain, irritation, grittiness, scratchiness, sensitivity to cold air or wind, redness, watering/tearing, and blurred vision. Treatment usually hinges on artificial tear drops, but there are many exciting new treatments available for patients with dry eyes. Punctal plugs can be painlessly inserted during a regular office visit. They are designed to allow a patient's own tears work more effectively to moisturize the surface of the eye. Another treatment for dry eyes is the use of amniotic membrane grafts. These grafts have anti-inflammatory properties and can be very helpful in the treatment of many different eye diseases, including severe dry eye disease. There are also many new and exciting treatments, including both medications and devices, currently in clinical trials. Ask your eye doctor if you may be a good candidate to be involved in a clinical trial.

Eyeglasses

The amount of digital screen-time people experience has greatly increased. Digital screens emit a blue-violet wavelength light that has been shown to be disruptive to sleep cycles, increase eye strain and fatigue, and may have a potentially harmful effect to the retina and macula inside the eye.

Fortunately, **eyeglasses can now be made with blue-light blocking technology** that can increase eye comfort, improve quality of vision, improve sleep quality, and may offer better protection of the retina.

These are just some of the many new and alternative treatment options available for patients by their ophthalmologist. Ask your eye doctor about new and alternative treatment options that may improve your quality of life, and if they are able to provide the most up-to-date and advanced treatment options available. To schedule an evaluation, visit www.scottandchristie.com or call (724) 772-5420 Cranberry or (412) 782-0400 Fox Chapel.

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TOBACCO FREE ALLEGHENY: Changing Community Norms About Tobacco



By Kevin Brown

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable disease, disability, and death in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Further, the United States spends nearly \$170 billion each year on medical care to treat smoking-related disease in adults.

Tobacco Free Allegheny, one of eight regional primary contractors statewide for the Pennsylvania Department of Health Tobacco Control Program, is working to eliminate the use of tobacco in Allegheny County and save some of those costs.

“Our mission is to change the community norms surrounding tobacco, making it uncommon to see, use, or be negatively affected by tobacco or tobacco smoke pollution,” says Tiffany Babinsack, MPA, TTS, program manager for Tobacco Free Allegheny.

“We have three main areas of focus: prevention, education and cessation,” Tiffany explains. Under



Tiffany Babinsack, MPA, TTS,
Program Manager
Tobacco Free Allegheny

prevention and education, Tobacco Free Allegheny works with schools, colleges and universities, employers, health care facilities, communities and others to offer programming to reduce or eliminate the use of tobacco. Tobacco Free Allegheny refers tobacco users to the Pennsylvania Free Quitline – an evidence-based, no-cost cessation counseling service offered through a partnership with National Jewish Health. They also work with a number of local providers for in-person and virtual cessation services.

Tobacco Free Allegheny not only targets adults for tobacco control, but they offer special programming for teens and young adults through schools and on college campuses.

Tiffany explains that most tobacco users start as teens so they focus part of their efforts on teaching teens as well as parents and teachers about the dangers of e-cigarettes and tobacco use.

“We partner with a lot of the local schools to do evening parent and teacher education,” she says. “For middle and high schools, we focus on e-cigarettes and vaping in addition to combustible cigarettes. We’ll teach a couple of high school classes during their health period about prevention just to make sure they know what these products are and the implications of using them.” she says.

Federal law prohibits the sale of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, to those under 21. Tobacco Free Allegheny is authorized to conduct compliance checks on all retailers of tobacco products in Allegheny County.

“We have a free toolkit on our website, and we send out retailer education packets to remind the licensed sellers what the laws are, proper methods of checking IDs, etc. We also have FDA-commissioned officers including adults and minors who will go into stores and attempt to make purchases,” Tiffany says.

“We check every single tobacco retailer in Allegheny County at least two times per year so they know we’re out there,” she notes. Retailers that sell tobacco products to minors can be fined and lose their tobacco retail license according to Tiffany.

On college campuses, Tobacco Free Allegheny uses a three-prong approach including education, guidance in rewriting policies for tobacco use, and smoking cessation support.

“We attend health fairs to talk to students and some of us will teach classes,” Tiffany says. “We meet with their committees to make sure that tobacco use is high on their priority list. We also work with administration and committees to rewrite their policies in a comprehensive way, so it’s not just ‘We don’t smoke here,’ but more like ‘We don’t accept donations from tobacco organizations.’ Finally, we make sure they have the infrastructure in place to provide quitting support to those who use tobacco

products.”

At the community level, Tobacco Free Allegheny works with local governments to implement tobacco control measures through programs like Young Lungs at Play which provides smoke-free support and signage for parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, basketball courts and other recreational facilities where youth gather.

“Any municipality within Allegheny County could contact us and we would help them get community buy-in, write their policy, attend town council meetings and talk to council members and the community to make sure it’s best suited to their needs. Once they vote that policy into law for the municipality, we provide them with all the Young Lungs at Play signage for free,” notes Tiffany.

Other groups among Tobacco Free Allegheny’s market are employers, multi-unit housing, hospitals, and treatment centers. “Behavioral health facilities are a big one for us,” says Tiffany. “People with behavioral health concerns typically smoke about 50 percent more and at a higher rate.”

Cessation support remains an important part of Tobacco Free Allegheny’s mission. “Quitting is very difficult,” Tiffany says. “The best, most effective way to quit using tobacco is a combination of behavioral counseling and nicotine replacement therapy like the patch, gum or lozenge. Traditionally, those are very expensive, especially for people who are underinsured. We can provide both of those aspects at no cost through 1-800-QUIT-NOW and our contracted cessation service providers.”

While COVID-19 restrictions have temporarily affected access to schools and other groups, Tobacco Free Allegheny remains committed to achieving their mission and the goals of the PA Tobacco Control Program. Many prevention and training services have continued through the use of virtual platforms, as well as telehealth cessation. Tiffany notes that, as restrictions are lifted, they will resume activities and events that have been curtailed.

To learn more about Tobacco Free Allegheny’s work or to seek help with tobacco use, visit their website at www.tobaccofreeallegheny.org, contact Tiffany at tbabinsack@tobaccofreeallegheny.org, or call their office at (412) 322-8321.

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MEDITATION: SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

By Nick Jacobs



A few months ago, the magazine rack of the local grocery store displayed a veritable explosion of publications promoting the practice of Mindfulness. There was even one devoted to Mindful Coloring!

Clearly there is a growing interest in this practice, which has been shown to have physical, psychological and social benefits. While there are many avenues to pursue Mindfulness, I have always had a particular interest in meditation.

Meditation was introduced to me at a young age through religious practice, when the nuns taught a class of seven- and eight-year-olds to pray the rosary. I was never sure what was going on as I recited those prayers over and over again, but did know it gave me a feeling of inner peace. Not long after that, the Beatles arrived from Liverpool, bringing their unique sound and, eventually, a heightened interest in Transcendental Meditation. Back then, TM was a bit out of my reach,

both financially and culturally.

It wasn't until I turned 49 and had my first heart intervention that I was introduced formally to meditation as a means of focus, relaxation and even inner discovery. As a senior marketing executive for a local health system, I thought my stress-filled treadmill of appeasing, supporting and promoting about 150 different hospital departments and modalities might someday short-circuit my existence here on Planet Earth. So not long after my first step down "stent alley," I decided to enter a program in California run by Dr. Dean Ornish. One of Dr. Ornish's instructors introduced us to meditation. It changed my life so much I vowed to bring Dr. Ornish's program to the small hospital where I had just been named president, Windber Medical Center.

One problem: our little facility couldn't afford the formal program. So I sought out legitimate medita-

tion, yoga and exercise instructors, then found a local church willing to host, free of charge, our modified, unsanctioned version of a coronary artery disease reversal program in a little town in the middle of coal country. Six months later, Highmark Blue Cross legitimized our effort and we soon became one of the first, most active and successful hospital sites for the Ornish Program in Western Pennsylvania.

"We mounted an awareness campaign to inform the community that yoga was kind of like stretching and meditation could incorporate rosaries, or simple mental repetition of religious or nonreligious words of their choice.

Dr. Barry Kerzin, a frequent visitor to Pittsburgh, is an American-born Buddhist monk and the personal physician to the 14th Dalai Lama. He is the founder and president of the Altruism in Medicine Institute and the author of "No Fear, No Death: The Transformative Power

of Compassion."

According to Dr. Kerzin, if someone is doing a regular, even five minutes a day meditation, it will be much easier for that person to stay in the present moment (Mindfulness) when needed. By concentrating on breathing, perhaps while also focusing on an object (a flame, a leaf flickering in the wind), meditation teaches us to center our mind and our thoughts where we need them to be, in the here and now.

While meditation or Mindfulness is not a panacea, they are valuable items to have in our health toolbox. Americans generally live in a swirl of stress and distraction, which overtime can ruin our health and erase the simple joys of life.

Scientifically speaking, practicing Mindfulness decreases activity and the size of the amygdala—an area of the brain that determines our levels of stress. It also increas-

Continued on page 23



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Speech Tips from The Early Learning Institute

By Diane Wolfe, Speech and Language Pathologist

Bubble Time - a Fun Way to Develop Speech Skills

Summer is a great time of year to get outside and blow bubbles! And bubbles can encourage speech development in a fun way!

1. Encourage your child to try blowing and popping them and say “POP” and “Bubbles” while playing.

2. Ask your child to pop the bubbles with different parts of their body and say the word like “Foot”, “Knee” or “Elbow”.

3. Put the lid back on the container and hand it to your child so they have to make a request to ask for help, open or say more words to be able to play again.

Try these activities to help your child explore language through “hands-on” activities!

1. Squirt a small amount of shaving cream on the kitchen table and drive small cars through it and make “Vroom” sounds.

2. Draw or sing “Wheels on the Bus” song which drawing with your fingers in the shaving cream making circles for wheels, and up



Find more activities for you and your child at www.telipa.org.

and down for the windows opening and shutting and encourage your child to imitate your movements and speech.

3. Add jello powder for texture or coloring and have your child identify the colors!

Encouraging Speech and Language through Art Activities

Does your child enjoy art activities? If so, here are some suggestions on speech and language development you can try while



they are involved in an art project.

1. **Offering Choices** – When using art materials, offer your child choices of 2 items. For example, “Do you need the red or blue paint?”, “Do you want the glue or scissors?” Sometimes a child is more inclined to answer when given a choice. Get some stickers out and let them decorate their picture, making choices of which sticker they want next,” Do you want the car or the bear?”

2. **Action Words** – A lot of chil-

dren know nouns such as people, places, things, their Mom, Dad, siblings’ names, or their favorite toys. Often children are missing verbs, or action words from their vocabulary. Art is a great way to incorporate those words. When playing with playdoh, imitate the child’s actions or play beside the child and show them a new action. Take little figurines and let them “jump” and “walk” making footprints in the playdoh. Roll cars through the playdoh making tire tracks and model “go” and “stop”.

3. **Puppet Role Playing** – Make tongue depressor puppet of your family members, friends and pets by cutting their faces out of a photograph and pasting them on the end of a popsicle stick or tongue depressor. Place the opposite end of the stick into a ball of play dough for a base if needed. Encourage your child to talk “for” the puppets and “to” the puppets. Make up a story with all the family members included and make motions acting out the story.

The Early Learning Institute is an early intervention provider with over 60 years of experience.

The Future of Youth Sports

by Dr. Ned Keteyer

Author and founder of Changing the Game Project, John O’Sullivan, reimagines youth sports in a post-COVID-19 world. He says a major rethink is in order, especially for kids 12 years old and under. The pandemic has created hardship for everyone, especially children who may be super-eager to return to their sports programs. O’Sullivan expects these thoughts will be running through parent’s minds the closer we get to the “new normal”:

1. We just had family dinners night after night for the first time in years. I want my kids to go back to playing sports, but do we really want to be running around with our heads cut off 7 nights a week?

2. My child is feeling healthy and well rested for the first time in years because he/she had some time off. Perhaps we should cut back a bit on the number of sports practices and training load.

3. My child is enjoying the time-off and pursuing other passions. He/she is also getting better practicing on his/her own for the first



time, or playing unorganized sports with siblings.

4. This has been a tough hit financially for our family. Perhaps there is a better, less expensive local sports option.

5. We already live in an area with millions of people, why do we need to travel by bus and plane to get games when we can get plenty of games close by?

6. The virus has settled down in our area, but not in other places. I am not sending my child to play games against teams where the virus is not under control.

O’Sullivan believes that “every youth sports organization that

wants to thrive in a post-pandemic world must put character and personal development at the forefront of their mission.” That responsibility, he says, is on coaches who volunteer their time to teach skills and develop young athletes. They will need to be educated and their coaching skills developed first:

[W]e must train every single coach not simply on the Xs and Os, but on connecting with kids, winning the relationship game, and understanding the social, emotional and cognitive development of the children they are coaching.

Involving parents more is also mandatory:

Our parents can be our biggest assets, so connect with them, teach them how they can help their children and support them on and off the field.

Maybe when activities are allowed to commence again, families will want a little more balance in their lives:

[Families] have just spent a few months having free time, game night, and family dinners, and watched their family connections grow. I am not saying that they won’t want any sports, but will they want a full sports takeover of their lives again? Full time? I am not so sure.

It should be clear to practically everyone that “back to normal” is not the direction we are currently headed. Our kids need to stay active and fit, and physically interact with their peers. While sports are an effective and fun avenue for athletic development, it is character development that coaches and parents would be wise to emphasize in a post-pandemic world.

**excerpt from original post published on The PediaBlog (www.thePediaBlog.com) June 29, 2020*

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Empowering Families Through Behavioral Health

Consistent with their ongoing commitment to serve children and families who have the greatest needs, The Children's Institute of Pittsburgh has been expanding outpatient behavioral health services in the Greater Pittsburgh region.

In recent months, the rapid development of telehealth delivery has accelerated their reach. By employing therapeutic interventions to reduce symptoms of stress, alleviate anxiety and depression, decrease sleep disturbances, and improve behaviors, they are helping children function better at school, with their families, and in other relationships.

"We are a support system for our young clients to gain self-awareness and achieve personal goals," explains Casey Harvilla, MA, ATR-BC, LPC, an outpatient behavioral health therapist at The Children's Institute. "Our work fosters emotional resilience, builds self-esteem, and enhances coping and social skills."

The Outpatient Behavioral Health Clinic, with a full-time

licensed team of five professionals, provides a safe space for children, teens, and young adults to express their emotions and develop abilities that enable future success. Team members employ a variety of theoretical interventions, including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Trauma-Focused CBT, Art Therapy, and Play Therapy. Skill building in the following areas are often a focus of treatment: emotion regulation, social skill development, mindfulness, and stress reduction. Individual therapy sessions can be delivered through telehealth or in-person appointments.

Therapists work in partnership with parents to identify and maximize family strengths, and in collaboration with team members across the organization's physical health, educational, and family/social service lines. The Children's Institute is well-equipped to help children and youth manage the impact of trauma, including trauma responses related to the COVID-19 pandemic.



"Living through the uncertainty of this pandemic is traumatic, especially for children and families who were vulnerable prior to its onset," explains Dr. Wendy Pardee, president and CEO of The Children's Institute. "With the continuing stressors of the current climate, we are certainly seeing an upward trend in the need for outpatient behavioral health services. Growing these services was already a core component of our Vision 2023 strategic plan. In response to increasing demands and by quickly onboarding telehealth opportunities, The Children's Institute is increasing our capacity to serve kids and families through a com-

prehensive array of behavioral health services."

"In life, everyone will encounter unexpected and challenging circumstances," Harvilla said. "By working on skills like identifying and learning how to appropriately express emotions, especially those related to fear, anger, and sadness, we gain the tools to better manage all kinds of life situations."

An Amazing Resource:

Outpatient Behavioral Health appointments can be scheduled by calling **The Children's Institute at (412) 420-2447**. To make a gift to support these behavioral health initiatives, visit amazingkids.org/giving.

Ask an EXPERT

EXPERT: Terese LaVallee, Director, Highmark Caring Place
A Center for Grieving Children, Adolescents and Their Families

What advice can you offer to families of children struggling with the loss of a loved one?

Terese LaVallee, Director: This is a stressful time for all families. Children are experiencing disrupted daily routines, the uncertainty of what the next day might bring, scary-sounding news updates, and an underlying mood of tension or concern in the adults around them. All of this understandably brings up feelings of worry, anxiety or fear in children. If children have also experienced the death of a loved one on top of this, they could easily be feeling this stress even more than most.

The following are some simple things that families can do to help their children in this stressful time:

- Set up new routines as much as possible. The predictability and structure of routines can help children to feel safe.

- Connect with some of the supportive people or positive outlets that the children might be missing right now. For example, they might e-mail a school counselor or take a virtual art class.

- Offer brief, honest and age-appropriate information, answering questions honestly and correcting any misinformation that they might have heard.

- Even more important sometimes than providing facts is exploring what children are thinking, wondering, or imagining about what is going on. This can be done by asking their question back to them, truly wanting to know what they think about the issues they bring up.

- Communicate to children that their feelings are normal and to be expected in times like this. Maybe they feel multiple feelings at once, which is OK too.

For families who are grieving the death of someone special, whether that death occurred years ago or a few days ago, I would point them to the Caring Place website, and especially our COVID-19 page. Many resources are available there which can help both children and adults as they cope with grief in a difficult time.

In addition, families can stay connected with us on social media. There they can find further resources, while linking up with a larger community of families who have gone through similar experiences.

At the Caring Place, we begin and end every group with our Pledge, which we all say together: "I am here for you. You are here for me. We are here for each other." We are here for each other

Visit www.guidetogoodhealth.com for the continuation of this story
"The Highmark Caring Place: Finding New Ways to Care During COVID-19"

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- Outpatient Therapy Services
- Outpatient Behavioral Health Services
- Care Coordination Services
- Telehealth appointments



The Children's Institute

Amazing Kids. Amazing Place.





Laura Crooks

By Laura (Crooks) Greco, RN

Since COVID-19 came roaring to life you have undoubtedly experienced a range of emotions, maybe anger, fear, anxiety, grief, resentment, confusion, relief, disappointment, gratitude, hopelessness, and frustration. Your mindset affects how you manage your emotions and behavior. In fact, your mindset affects your life, thoughts, actions, and achievements.

Our mind and body are powerfully connected and constantly sending each other information about our internal and external environment. When we are calm and relaxed our pulse and breathing are slower than when we are stressed or excited. If we can consciously slow our heart rate or breathing, we send a message to our brain to calm down. If we can think peaceful or solution focused thoughts, we can calm our body.

Below are some thoughts and tips on managing emotions and shifting our mindset toward positivity.

- Know that experiencing a wide range of emotions during stressful times is normal.
- You are responsible for managing your emotions.
- You can choose which thoughts to focus on more than others.
- Your brain will find more examples of whatever you think about most. (If you perseverate on the bad, negative, and scary events you will tune in to more of those. If you dwell on your strengths in handling stress and positive events you will notice more of those.)
- **Seemingly conflicting emotions can co-exist.** (You can enjoy having no commute while working from home and worry about the stability of your job and miss your coworkers.)

- **Take 3 slow belly breaths.** Inhale and exhale through your nose, letting the exhale be longer. Make each breath slower and more purposeful than usual.
- **Name the emotion(s) you are feeling.** Try phrasing negative emotions to identify them, not to embody them: “I am feeling ___”, as opposed to “I am ___.”
- **Practice self-compassion.** Place your hands over your heart and say, “This is hard”, or “I am doing my best.” We tend to be harsh and judgmental with ourselves; talk kindly to yourself as you would to a friend.
- **Practice gratitude.** Identify several things for which you are grateful (sunshine, children’s laughter, your pet’s whiskers against your cheek, friends, spotting a fun/unique mask...).
- **Perform random acts of kindness.** Hold the door for

someone, let someone merge, give a compliment, check in on a neighbor.

• Ask: what can I learn from this?

Changing how you perceive a situation changes your neurochemicals and stress levels. From there your mood, energy and sense of wellness can change. You can shift your mindset!

If your emotional health is significantly affecting your quality of life, please work with a qualified practitioner.

> Laura (Crooks) Greco, RN, is a wellness coach and speaker who helps professionals eliminate burnout, manage stress, create life balance and rekindle their sense of purpose and joy. She is the author of *Wellness Made Simple*. For more information, visit www.YouBloomWellness.com.

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A thermal scan is different than other diagnostic tests such as a mammogram or ultrasound. Thermal scans are a test of what is occurring at the cellular level. Thermal screening or thermography looks for physiological changes in our bodies by analyzing temperature and vascular patterns. Other diagnostic tests, such as a mammogram, ultrasound or MRI, look for a structure that is present in the body – like a tumor.

Everyone has their own unique thermal pattern. Changes to these patterns can indicate early stage abnormalities that accompany breast pathology, whether it is cancer, fibrocystic disease, an infection or a vascular disease. This is why it is important to keep a close eye on subtle changes to the temperatures and patterns that are unique to us.

Thermograms (the medical image that is produced) can aid your doctor in planning accordingly and developing a program to further diagnose and/or monitor your health. Thermography screenings are a great preventative screening tool to add to your health plan. Not only are they radiation-free, compression-free, and have no adverse effects, the test is something you can schedule on your own. You can then provide the

results to your physician.

If you are looking for a safe proactive screening tool to monitor your health or to receive a screening before you are eligible for standard diagnostic testing, thermography is an option to explore.

Utilizing a combination of diagnostic tools increases your chance of detecting abnormalities at an earlier stage. These methods include:

- ▶ Annual breast thermography screening for women of all ages
- ▶ Mammography when considered appropriate by a physician
- ▶ A regular breast examination by a health professional
- ▶ Monthly breast self-examination
- ▶ Personal awareness for changes in the breasts
- ▶ Readiness to discuss quickly any changes in breast health with a doctor

These guidelines should be considered along with your background and medical history.



(2015). Early Detection Guidelines. Retrieved from http://www.thermologyonline.org/Breast/breast_thermography_detection.htm



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Why Seniors Should Consider Medical Marijuana

By Daniel Casciato

In the midst of the current coronavirus pandemic, if you're a senior, you may be feeling a bit anxious or depressed. That's perfectly normal but you may still want help alleviating your anxiety.

Medical marijuana, or cannabis, may provide you with the relief you need, according to Shelly Hutchison, also known as Nurse Shelly. Shelly is the founder and owner of Medical Marijuana Specialists which educates the community, patients, and healthcare professionals on all aspects of the medical marijuana certification



"The majority of our patients are using it for chronic pain and to decrease their dependency on prescription medications."

-Shelly Hutchison

process.

"The majority of our patients are using it for chronic pain and to decrease their dependency on prescription medications," she says.

Medical marijuana can be found in various forms and its health benefits is growing. Cannabis contains CBD, a chemical that impacts the brain, making it function better without giving it a high along with THC which has pain relieving properties. Some of the health benefits of cannabis include:

- Relief from chronic pain
- Losing weight
- Fighting cancer
- Treating depression
- Alleviating anxiety

Pennsylvania's medical marijuana program provides access to medical marijuana for patients with specific medical conditions such as: anxiety disorders, cancer, epilepsy, glaucoma, multiple sclerosis, neurodegenerative diseases, Parkinson's disease, and more.

Nurse Shelly and her team of highly knowledgeable staff of doctors and nurses will review your medical record, educate you on the science and benefit of medical marijuana and thoroughly answer any questions you may have regarding your journey, and help you obtain your card.

The process to obtain your card is simple, Nurse Shelly explains.

Anyone can get their Medical Marijuana ID Card in as little as one week and they can do most of the work.

"All you need to do is to provide one form of documentation of your diagnosis," she says. "Usually, you can find that on your online patient portal through your health system. If you send us this documentation, we can take care of the rest. We can register you with the state and then get you certified. When you hang up the phone with us, you just have to wait for your card in the mail."

Once you get the card, you can go into any dispensary in the state to get what you need.

"We recommend that you start low and go slow," says Nurse Shelly. "What we don't want to happen is for you to take any cannabis product and not like how you feel, set it aside and say you won't use it. Maybe it's your first time and it's not a good experience. You want to start with a low dosage and reach

Continued on following page

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"Everyone was very helpful, kind and friendly. The process was easy and they walk you through everything you need to know. I had a wonderful experience here and recommend Medical Marijuana Specialists to anyone in the area who qualifies for medical marijuana. Thanks again!" - Julia R. - Google Review

5 STAR VERIFIED CUSTOMER REVIEW RATINGS

THREE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD CONSIDER TAKING CANNABIS

1. Cannabis is safer than most prescribed medications

Most seniors take prescription drugs daily. The “side effects” of cannabis are insignificant compared to the side effects of many prescription drugs.

2. Marijuana is not physically addictive

Many seniors worry about becoming addicted. However, you can use marijuana daily and then stop “cold turkey.” Discontinuing the use of cannabis is similar to quitting the consumption of coffee.

3. Marijuana can reduce and possibly replace many prescription medications

A major complaint of seniors is that the first pill often causes side effects that the second one is supposed to “fix.” For example, opiate based painkillers are enhanced when marijuana is used at the same time, often resulting in a reduction of pharmaceutical medicines.

your sweet spot. This is the point where you’re finding relief from your chronic pain but not going overboard where you don’t like how you’re feeling.”

Medical Marijuana Specialists is now offering certifications and renewals via telemedicine to all Pennsylvania residents and a free nurse hotline for questions. People can call or sign up on their website and be connected virtually instantly with a professional.

> For more information, visit www.getyouridcard.com.
For Ask Nurse Shelly LIVE, visit www.getyouridcard.com/ask-nurse-shelly/.

Meditation: Something To Think About

Continued from page 11

es the activity in the prefrontal cortex, which regulates our emotions, decision-making, planning and abstract-thinking. It also can limit a host of stress-related illnesses, including heart disease, chronic pain, obesity, some infections, depression, anxiety and risks related to cancer.

Meditation and other forms of Mindfulness can be practiced on many levels, from the simple to the complex. It’s easy to get started: If you can breathe, you can meditate. Start by sitting quietly, paying attention only to your breath as it flows in and out of your body. If you wish, you can add to this by thinking of something pleasant—a song, a memory, a prayer—or focus on an object. Dr. Kerzin has often suggested simply looking at the tip of your nose. Doing this for just a few minutes a day will eventually provide positive results.

Of course, much more can be said and learned about Mindfulness and meditation. Countless books, website and, as I said before, magazines are available. But it need not be complicated or expensive.

As for my story, after Stent No. 7, I decided to re-engage more completely in meditation and I signed up for a TM course being taught locally. Meditation continues to help me focus better, it improves my creativity and it enables me to perceive life in ways I would not have thought possible. It might not be for everyone but, as the old saying goes, you never know until you try. I do know it has been life-changing for many people, me included.

> **Nick Jacobs** is a partner with SMR, LLC. He is a founder of the Academy of Integrative Health and Medicine, former board member and officer of the American Board of Integrative Holistic Medicine and served on the Executive Committee of the Integrative Health Policy Consortium. Jacobs maintains a website, Healinghospitals.com.



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Wesley Family Services:

Helping People Understand Medicare and Other Health Insurance Benefits

By Daniel Casciato

As a 501(c)(3) organization, Wesley Family Services provides a diverse range of quality healthcare and therapeutic support services to more than 30,000 individuals throughout Western Pennsylvania annually. The organization operates more than 50 healthcare and therapeutic programs, has outpatient facilities in five counties, one elementary/middle school in Upper St. Clair Township and one high school in Whitehall Borough, 19 single-family homes for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and provides educational support services to 50 school districts throughout the region.

“Our mission is to empower children, adults, and families by providing transformational care and meeting their individual needs throughout the lifespan,” says Jody Dickey, Allegheny County APPRISE Coordinator, Wesley Family Services.

One of the programs that Wesley



The APPRISE program is open to any individual who is soon to be eligible for Medicare, currently a Medicare beneficiary, and any family members, caregivers, etc. that are helping the Medicare beneficiary.

-Jody Dickey, Allegheny County APPRISE Coordinator

Family Services manages in the region is the APPRISE program, Pennsylvania’s State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) which is overseen by the PA Department of Aging. There is an APPRISE program available for every county in PA. APPRISE is a free and confidential service that helps Medicare beneficiaries, their families or caregivers understand Medicare and other associated health insurance benefits so they can make informed decisions about their health care options.

“Certified counselors work with Medicare beneficiaries individually to determine their health care needs and preferences, compare health

insurance options, screen for financial assistance programs, and assist in enrolling in Medicare and health coverage that fits their lifestyle and budget,” says Dickey. “In Allegheny County the APPRISE program is operated by Wesley Family Services in partnership with the Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging.”

The most common questions and concerns they tend to hear break down into four categories:

- An individual is new to Medicare and would like more information about Medicare, how Medicare coordinates with other coverage they may have, selecting Part D (prescription drug) coverage, and the pros and cons of delay-

ing enrollment into Medicare.

- An individual needs help paying for Medicare or prescription drugs. APPRISE counselors can screen the individual for financial assistance programs they may be eligible for and help them apply.

- An individual has a service or coordination issue with their Medicare, Medicare Advantage plan or prescription coverage. APPRISE counselors can assist the person by helping to identify the problem, the most effective course of action, and can assist with that process (for example, filing an appeal) if appropriate. APPRISE counselors can also make referrals

Continued on following page



DO YOU NEED HELP?

- Do you need help with Medicare?
- Are you struggling to pay for your Part D prescription drugs or other healthcare costs?
- Do you need help understanding your coverage?

The APPRISE Program can help people with Medicare by screening them for assistance programs, such as:

- Extra Help Program – which helps lower the cost of Part D prescription drug costs
- Medicare Savings Programs – which covers the payment of the Medicare Part B premium

APPRISE can also help you understand your Medicare coverage, preventative benefits, and give you free, accurate, unbiased advice.

call APPRISE at 412.661.1438 or visit wfspa.org/service/apprise

APPRISE is the Pennsylvania State Health Insurance Assistance Program and works in partnership with the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Area Agency on Aging.



Continued from previous page

to other agencies for issues that lie outside our scope of expertise, for example SNAP benefits.

• During the **Medicare Annual Open Enrollment Period of October 15th through December 7th** APPRISE counselors help Medicare beneficiaries with plan changes and help them compare their existing health plan to the new health plans available for the upcoming year. There is no fee for APPRISE counseling services, notes Dickey.

“As long as an individual resides in Allegheny County, we are able to schedule an appointment and help them with any Medicare related questions they may have,” she says. “Additionally, anyone wishing to support the Allegheny County APPRISE program may make a tax-deductible donation to Wesley Family Services.”

The APPRISE program is open to any individual who is soon to be eligible for Medicare, currently a Medicare beneficiary, and any family members, caregivers, etc. that are helping the Medicare beneficiary.

A consultation can be for a variety of reasons, but the most common is a consultation to select a health plan or compare a current health plan the individual has to what is becoming available. To maximize the safety of both beneficiaries and counselors, the Allegheny County APPRISE program is conducting counseling sessions by phone or video-conferencing at this time. To prepare for an appointment about selecting an insurance product, a person will need to bring their Medicare card if they have Medicare, any other insurance cards, a list of any medications they currently take to ensure the medications are covered, and a list of their providers and hospitals, to ensure their preferred providers are in-network.

“The counselor will discuss and compare the options and benefits between different health plan types so the Medicare beneficiary can make an informed decision based on their needs and budget,” says Dickey. “Every beneficiary is screened for financial assistance programs, and if they seem to qualify, the applications are completed during the appointment. The appointments take about an hour and the APPRISE program can provide a summary of all the plan information reviewed during the session by email or postal mail.”

➤ For additional information on all of **Wesley Family Services'** programs and services, visit www.wfspa.org. For details on the **APPRISE** program, call **(412) 661-1438** or email APPRISE@wfspa.org.

Volunteers Welcome

The APPRISE program is always welcoming new volunteers who are interested in receiving training on Medicare and learning how to be a counselor or presenter to help others understand their Medicare benefits.

Free Virtual Presentations

APPRISE offers free virtual presentations about Medicare and related topics for organizations or groups.

Medicare Toolkits available

We are also providing “Medicare Toolkits” to beneficiaries. The tool kits were created by the PA Department of Aging and are a great resource to help people become more familiar with Medicare. Readers can receive a tool kit via email or by postal mail.

Call or email today!

For more information on volunteer opportunities, our free virtual presentations, or to receive your “Medicare Toolkit!”, call or email Jody Dickey at **(412) 661-1438** or APPRISE@wfspa.org.



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The Summer of 2020: Fewer Visits to Grandma and Grandpa

The summer of 2020 will be one to remember as vacations, activities and even visits between grandparents and grandchildren have been rethought or put on hold because of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

COVID-19 is a complex virus. The fact that so many people are without symptoms (asymptomatic), yet have the virus, puts them at risk for unknowingly infecting others.

Adults over age 65 have the greatest risk for serious illness if they contract COVID-19. Until there is a vaccine for COVID-19, the steps we can take to keep ourselves – and particularly the older adults in our lives – safe, are simple. The key is practicing all of four steps together.

Wear a Mask

Research shows that wearing a mask helps reduce the risk of spreading the virus. Both the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) strongly recommend wearing a mask in public. COVID-19 is transmitted through droplets from our nose and mouth that get into the air when we laugh, talk, sneeze, sing, etc. Wearing a mask so that it covers both the nose and the mouth reduces the number of droplets that we put into the air. Remember, your mask protects me, and my mask protects you.

Wash Your Hands and Don't Touch Your Face

Our hands come into contact with so many surfaces, individuals or pets throughout the day. Each of these transmit germs. Plus, it's estimated that we touch our face at least 16 times an hour. This is how viruses, like COVID-19, are transmitted. All health authorities recommend frequent handwashing with a disinfectant soap for at least 20 seconds and avoid touching your face. Hand



sanitizer also is effective when soap and water aren't accessible.

Clean Surfaces and High-Touch Areas

Regularly clean surfaces and high-touch areas like doorknobs, light switches, phones, remote controls and cabinet handles. Use soap and water to clean an area prior to using a disinfectant surface cleaner. This combined effort is recommended by the CDC and will help reduce the spread of disease.

Social Distance, Stay Outdoors and Avoid Large-Group Gatherings

The spread of COVID-19 takes place among people who are in close contact with one another (within six feet) for as little as 15 minutes. The closer the physical proximity to an infected person, the greater the chance of exposure to the virus. With the potential for the virus to circulate in the air, the risk is higher indoors particularly with poor ventilation. So, when visiting, try to stay outdoors six feet apart from others, and avoid large-group gatherings where social distancing is challenging.

Practiced together, each step works in combination with another to reduce the risk of contracting or transmitting COVID-19. At Presbyterian SeniorCare Network, our utmost priority is everyone's health and well-being.

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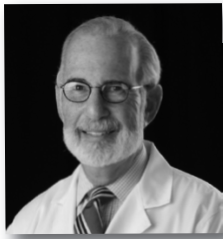
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Why Rehabilitation is Important After A Stroke



By Richard C. Senelick, MD

You never expected to get sick or injured, but now you find yourself in the hospital after experiencing a stroke. Your right side is weak, and your speech is a bit slurred. How will you ever get home and get your life back on track?

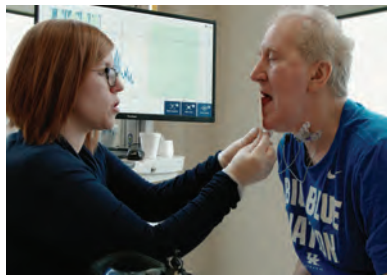
We never think we will need rehabilitation, yet there are more than 50 million people with disabilities in the United States. Rehabilitation is the key to getting back to your community and the activities you love.

Just like school

Going for therapy and rehabilitation is kind of like going back to school later in life. You may have to relearn information that you had previously acquired. You may need to learn to walk again, speak clearly or improve your memory. Like school or learning a new skill, there are certain principles that make a difference.

Dose matters

When we take a medication for a medical problem, we carefully adjust the dose. Too little or too much antibiotic and the infection worsens or never goes away. The same is true of rehabilitation. The intensity and amount of therapy you receive matters. Typically, an inpatient rehabilitation hospital will provide at least three hours of therapy a day, five days a week.



Function matters

If you want to learn to play a piano, you need to practice on a piano and not just read about it. The same is true for rehabilitation. If you had a stroke and have lost the use of your right arm, you will need to do tasks and therapy that require the use of your right arm. Performing these tasks will help rewire your brain.

Know the guidelines

According to the adult stroke rehabilitation guidelines released by the American Heart Association, whenever possible, stroke patients should be treated at an inpatient rehabilitation hospital, such as Encompass Health rehabilitation hospital, rather than a skilled nursing facility.

By using an interdisciplinary team approach, which includes physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, physicians, case managers, pharmacists and dietitians, clinicians at Encompass Health rehabilitation hospitals work together to create a customized care plan designed with each patient's unique goals at the center.

Dr. Richard Senelick is a neurorehabilitation physician and editor of Encompass Health Press.



To learn more about **Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Sewickley**, visit encompasshealth.com/sewickleyrehab. To learn more about **Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Harmarville**, visit encompasshealth.com/harmarvillerehab.



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Tips for Safe Grocery Shopping During COVID-19

By Kate Safin,
East End Food Co-op

Does the thought of stepping into the grocery store stress you out? It is possible to shop for groceries safely during the coronavirus outbreak. Here are some tips to help you tackle this essential task.

Be prepared

The best way to keep yourself safe is to minimize the time you spend in the store with others. Shopping quickly and efficiently will get you in and out of the shared space of a store. Shop the stores you are most familiar with so you know where to find things. Make a shopping list and try organizing it by aisle to prevent doubling back to get items you forgot.

Minimize trips

Shopping once a week or once every other week will minimize your exposure. Purchasing shelf-stable and frozen items will ensure what you purchase stays fresh longer.

Timing is everything

Most stores have special hours set aside for seniors and at-risk shoppers. You can call or go online to see if the store you are shopping is taking this extra precaution. Mid-morning and late afternoon usually present lulls in shopping and may be less crowded.

Keep it clean

Many stores have stepped up their safety and sanitation processes to help keep both workers and shoppers safe during daily interactions. This includes adding plexiglass barriers at checkout lanes, and wiping down high-touch surfaces, sanitizing carts, baskets, and check out lanes between each use. You should see visual clues to store cleanliness when you visit.

Wear a mask or face covering

Protect yourself and others by wearing a mask, scarf, bandana, or face shield when shopping.

Keep your distance

Maintain 6 feet of distance from other shoppers and staff members during your trip. Most stores have



markings on the floor, so you'll know where to wait. Six feet is the length of about two shopping carts.

Hands off!

Avoid touching your face while you're shopping, and don't touch items unless you intend to purchase them. Be aware of things you are contacting that may need sanitizing later (did you check your phone or make a call?).

Wash your hands

Proper hand hygiene is essential. Sanitize your hands when you leave the store, wash them when you arrive at home, and before you

prepare or eat any food. It is not necessary to wipe down the items you purchase before putting them away.

Try delivery of curbside pickup or send a neighbor!

If you feel shopping is too high-risk, try delivery or curbside pickup for your groceries. When you use these services, someone (usually a store employee) will do your shopping. You'll need to submit your list and payment information online or via an app. If technology is a barrier, make a detailed list and send a friend or neighbor to shop. We're all in this together!



East End Food Co-op is the last natural foods co-op left in Pittsburgh. The Co-op offers all of the products of a full-service grocery store, but with a natural and local touch. For more information, visit the website www.eastendfood.coop.



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Make Wellness Your Priority

By Kalli Musto, MS, RDN, LDN, Wellness Coach for Highmark Inc.

This summer and Fall 2020 is shaping up to look different than years past, which may stir up many emotions as we think about our seasonal rituals and routines. It's important to try to reframe any negative thoughts and use this time to prioritize wellness. By focusing on the physical, nutritional, social and emotional aspects of health, you can develop new routines and rituals, and even strengthen bonds with your loved ones.

SET AN ACTIVITY GOAL

Is there a fitness goal you've always wanted to achieve or an activity you've been itching to try? Perhaps you've always wanted to run a 5K, learn a new sport, or improve your basketball skills. Having a set goal to focus on is a great way to engage in friendly competition and improve physical health. The goal should be straightforward and reflect on what you want to accomplish. After your goal is set, track your progress from the very beginning of the season so you can see how far you have come by the end of summer.

CREATE A FAMILY ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Finding new things to do each day may be difficult, but using a calendar to plan ahead can provide some variety in your day-to-day routine. Let your family help pick the activities so that each day of the week has something for everyone.

TRY NEW WAYS TO COOK YOUR FAVORITE FOODS

Embrace the warm weather and try grilling something new, such as peaches or pineapple. Grilling brings out different flavors in food and can transform a boring side dish or entrée into something new and exciting.

BE MINDFUL FOR YOUR WELLNESS

Mindfulness is the practice of purposefully focusing one's attention, thoughts, feelings and sensations on the present moment and accepting them without judgment. Any task or moment is an opportunity to practice mindfulness, whether you are eating, walking, playing with your children, talking to a spouse or friend, or reading a book. Bringing your attention to the moment involves using all of your senses to notice the pleasurable and memorable elements that may otherwise be missed. Wandering thoughts to the past or future can derail our present experience; mindfulness allows us to be more present in life so we can truly experience the moments. It invites us to experience our lives more purposefully and fully.

Try to use this time of year as an opportunity to focus on embracing your health and living your best life.



> Kalli Musto, MS, RDN, LDN, is a Wellness Coach for Highmark Inc.



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LIVING WITH A DISABILITY

Residential Care in the Time of COVID

According to the Centers for Disease Control, nearly 24 percent of adults (18+) in Pennsylvania live with some type of disability. For many, the COVID-19 pandemic has required a change in the delivery of services to ensure the safety of both consumer and professional. In some cases, telemedicine or other remote options have been employed to promote safe distancing. But other service locations like day programs for instance, have had to temporarily suspend their operations.

For individuals with disabilities living in a residential program, remote care is not an option because it is insufficient for ensuring the safety and well being of residents. Direct support professionals (DSPs) provide 24-hour care in residential settings and are one of many essential workers in the community handling critical duties during the current pandemic. Typically, DSPs working in a residential program engage in activities ranging from preparing meals and giving medications to assisting with daily life activities, teaching new life skills, and taking residents on outings, walks, or visits with family and friends. With the COVID-19 restrictions in place, DSPs have gone above and beyond their usual duties to ensure that individuals can still connect with their friends and family (through video chats), can get out into the community (by taking a drive



"The Direct Support staff have been amazing, and their dedication to the people we serve in our group homes is remarkable. They are truly the heart and soul of Arc Human Services."

-Ed Picchiarini, CEO, Arc Human Services

and their dedication to the people we serve in our group homes is remarkable," says Ed Picchiarini, CEO. "They are truly the heart and soul of Arc Human Services."



For additional information on **Arc Human Services** or how you can become a part of our dedicated team of DSPs, visit www.archumanservices.org or contact Heather Klein, HR Department, at (724) 745-3010 ext. 145 or email klein.heather@archumanservices.org.



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Coping with Loss and Grief During a Crisis



By **Evalisa McClure**,
VITAS®
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Grief is a natural response to loss, and feelings of loss can be compounded during a crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic. Sometimes, grief-related pain and symptoms—which can be emotional, physical, cognitive, and spiritual—can feel overwhelming, especially for people who are already mourning the death of a loved one.

Bereavement experts at VITAS Healthcare remind us that grieving during non-crisis times is a highly individual experience. The nation's leading provider of end-of-life care knows there is no right or wrong way to grieve, no "normal" timetable for grieving. Healing happens gradually and cannot be hurried.

In times of crisis, however, key

factors and reactions can intensify your grief and hinder your ability to heal and recover from it.

These include:

- Heightened anxiety
- Heightened sense of loss
- Increased isolation and intensified grief

If you are in mourning, the intensity of your reactions will vary, depending on the nature of the loss and its meaning in your life, the nature of your relationship with the person who has died, other life stressors, and your personality, coping style, and life experiences.

How to Care for Yourself and Get the Support You Need

Calming your anxiety begins with learning how to process grief during a crisis. Consider these self-care tips:

- Minimize watching, reading or listening to news that causes you to feel anxious or distressed. Seek information only from trusted sources.

- Avoid unhelpful coping strategies and substances, such as tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs.

• Be careful with "what if" thoughts. Manage your worst-case scenario thinking.

- Engage in personal self-care activities that bring joy (e.g., phone/virtual communication with friends and family, reading, listening to podcasts, watching comedy).

- Practice relaxation, meditation and self-expression via books, apps and online videos (e.g., yoga, mindful meditation, relaxation, writing, music, art, dance).

- Stay in the present. Take one day at a time.

- Utilize spiritual faith resources.

- Consider telehealth for mental health support (online consultations, teletherapy).



VITAS offers a variety of remote bereavement support groups, free of charge. Led by VITAS bereavement specialists, these phone and Zoom groups provide resources and guidance to those experiencing grief and loss. Sign up today or find additional bereavement support at **VITAS.com/grief**.

- Eat sufficient and healthy food. Exercise when you can.

- Monitor yourself for prolonged sadness, difficulty sleeping, hopelessness.

- Remind yourself how you coped with past life challenges and enact those coping strategies today.

- Call 911 for any health emergencies or if you have thoughts of harming yourself or others.



Evalisa McClure is general manager for **VITAS Healthcare in Pittsburgh**. For more information about end-of-life care services, call the nation's leading provider at **(866) 759-6695** or visit **VITAS.com**.

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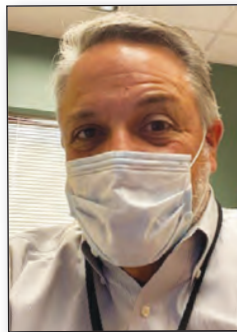
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Ask an EXPERT

Impact of COVID-19 at UPMC Senior Communities EXPERT: MARK BONDI, President

Mark Bondi is the president of UPMC Senior Communities, which includes 30 facilities that are home to 3,000 residents. In this Ask the Expert feature, he answers questions about how COVID 19 is impacting the residents, staff and operations of UPMC Senior Communities.



The UPMC senior facilities admit patients who are post-COVID, for recovery and rehab? Do you have a separate unit for these patients?

We have and do care for COVID-19 positive residents. The symptoms vary from non-existent or asymptomatic, to others with mild symptoms, to others needing oxygen support and/or select therapies. These residents are placed in rooms or units that have been specifically outfitted to care for them while protecting other staff and residents. This may mean private rooms, special barriers or air handling equipment or just enhanced personal protective equipment. It really depends on the specific situation and we follow the advice of our medical directors and infection control experts.

How is the staff morale as they deal with the pandemic on a daily basis?

It is stressful for staff no doubt. I have been amazed and impressed at their dedication and empathy. I have read that tough situations don't develop character, but rather reveals character, and our staff members have revealed their very strong character. We have increased the communication to the staff and have found that facts and good science from our medical experts really helps allay fears.

Do you have staff shortages?

We screen staff for symptoms daily and ask staff to stay home if they feel sick. As a result, we've had more staff than usual off work. We typically staff

at levels that exceed the mandated licensed levels. Because of our higher staffing, we've been able to remain well within the licensed requirements.

Have you experienced any problems in obtaining PPE?

Fortunately, because UPMC Senior Communities is part of UPMC, we have a strong supply chain system. They closely track the allocation of supplies making sure our facilities have enough to properly care for our residents and protect our staff.

How are you supporting the residents as they experience social isolation, separation from families, and reduced activities?

We know this is a difficult time for our residents and their families. We've implemented strategies to maintain a sense of normalcy by facilitating activities that still adhere to the necessary safety and infection prevention protocols. These include virtual visits with family members, a television channel with games, puzzles and bingo, virtual readings to residents – anything to prevent extreme feelings of isolation. We're doing everything we can to ease their fears and care for them, treating them with compassion and kindness every day. We increased our psychiatry services available to residents through our contract with UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital to assist with feelings of depression that may occur.

What do you most want the community to know about how UPMC Senior Communities have responded to COVID?

We want the community to know we're working tirelessly and doing our best to make sure their loved ones are safe and protected. We are very focused on keeping their spirits lifted. Our staff serves the role of their surrogate family during these difficult times.



For more information visit www.upmc.com/Services/senior-communities

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Laura Crooks, RN

Wellness coach and speaker who helps professionals eliminate burnout, manage stress, create life balance and rekindle their sense of purpose and joy. She is the author of *Wellness Made Simple*. For more information, visit her website www.YouBloomWellness.com.

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St. Clair Hospital Diagnostic Imaging Services

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PHYSICIANS

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Washington Physician Hospital Organization Provider Network

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REHABILITATION

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SPEAKERS

Laura Crooks, RN

www.YouBloomWellness.com

Wellness coach and speaker who helps professionals eliminate burnout, manage stress, create life balance and rekindle their sense of purpose and joy. She is the author of *Wellness Made Simple*. For more information, please visit her website www.YouBloomWellness.com.

To be included in this Directory, call (412) 877-5321 or email goodhealthmag@aol.com.

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brightwoodplaza@verizon.net

CMS Housing - www.cmshousing.com

UPMC Senior Communities

1-800-324-5523

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SENIOR SERVICES

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LIFE Pittsburgh

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