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**Healthy Tips  
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**Low Back Pain**

**Heritage Valley  
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## To Take Safe Steps This Winter, Follow This Advice from WHS Orthopedics

By Andrew Wilson

***Some people enjoy the winter weather and others dread it. No matter which category you may fall into, there is an increased risk of being injured in a fall on a sidewalk or driveway during the winter months due to snowy or icy conditions.***

“Typically, we do see an increase in orthopedic injuries in the adult and elderly population during the winter months, especially when there is ice present on the roads and sidewalks,” said Colleen Harriger, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon for Washington Health System (WHS) Orthopedics and Sports Medicine. “The majority of injuries we see in the office during the winter months occur in middle-aged to elderly patients. We do see some young patients as well, especially from skiing, snowboarding, snowmobile accidents.”

Dr. Harriger says that the injuries commonly seen at this time of year include hip fractures, wrist and proximal humerus or shoulder fractures, and ankle fractures. Many of these injuries are related to slipping and falling on snow or ice, which can occur when leaving the house, crossing the street, or walking to your car in a parking lot.

No matter the weather conditions, when an elderly person falls, it can be very serious, often resulting in broken bones and an extended recovery time. However, the chance of a fall increases exponentially in the winter months. What can be done to decrease the possibility of a fall?

“Making sure your stairs, driveway, sidewalk, and porch are clear of ice will greatly help prevent falls at and around your home during the winter months,” said Dr. Harriger. “Walk where the ground has been cleared and salted. You can put rock salt or other chemical compounds on your own stairs, driveway, etc. Salt lowers the freezing point of ice/snow and therefore makes it harder for surfaces to freeze.”

While some of these ice-melting compounds work great to get rid of snow or ice, they may also cause problems for our four-legged friends, irritating their paws. If you have pets, Dr. Harriger advises to try to use salt labeled as pet friendly.

### **Additionally, Dr. Harriger has other tips for keeping safe in the winter:**

- Using sand outside can provide added grip or traction but use caution because sand will not melt the ice or make it harder for ice to form.
- Make use of all handrails when they are available.
- Be sure to wear supportive shoes or boots that have a good tread on them and take shorter, slow steps.
- Try to limit distractions while walking so you can concentrate on taking careful steps and avoiding icy areas.

While winter injuries can be quite painful and may even involve some sort of physical rehabilitation during recovery, for the most part – outside of hitting your head during a fall – they are usually not life-threatening.

“Generally, there are more severe trauma injuries during the summer months,” said Dr. Harriger, citing more motorcycle, dirt bike, and ATV crashes, “but there can still be some severe car accidents during winter.”

### **To be safer while driving in wintry conditions, Dr. Harriger advises:**

- Leave a larger distance between yourself and the car in front of you.
- If there is ice on the roads, give yourself a longer distance when stopping at traffic lights and stop signs.
- Be careful passing other cars on the highway or local roads. The snow/ice between lanes can sometimes cause your car to slide when changing lanes and the passing lane may not be as cleared/plowed/salted.



In spite of all the precautions that can be taken, minor injuries from slips and falls may still occur. Dr. Harriger recommends rest, ice, and elevation as the first steps to take after an injury.

“You can also use an Ace wrap or brace if you have one for some added compression if pain allows,” she said. “If there is no improvement of symptoms with these modalities, one should seek further evaluation.”

Of course, major injuries like fractures or hitting one’s head during a fall are always a possibility, and if that happens, extra precautions should be taken.

“If you see someone else fall and they appear to lose consciousness, hit their head, or they are complaining of neck pain, it would be best to not move them as they may have a neck/spine injury,” she said. “If there is an obvious head injury or fracture, call EMS to take the injured person to the hospital immediately. If the person is unable to put weight on their leg after a lower extremity injury, they may want to seek evaluation to rule out a less obvious fracture.”

The Board-Certified Orthopedic Surgeons at Washington Health System Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, are highly skilled in general orthopedics with a subspecialty in sports medicine, knee, hip and shoulder surgery. The goal is to accommodate patients promptly, in most cases with same day appointments, and provide the highest level of patient satisfaction.

For more information, please visit <https://whs.org/locations/orthopedics-and-sports-medicine/> or call (724) 206-0610.

# Don't Miss Your Flu Shot!



Influenza, better known as the flu, is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat and sometimes the lungs. Influenza viruses spread primarily through tiny droplets made when people with the flu cough, sneeze or talk.

Most people who get the flu recover without any issues. However, the flu can be associated with very serious illness and lead to hospitalization or death. The risk is especially high for seniors, young children, pregnant people, and people with chronic medical conditions. It commonly causes people to miss school and work.

Flu season typically runs from October through May, with the peak coming in February. Approximately, 3-11 percent of the U.S. population catches influenza every year — which equates to about 100,000 Allegheny County residents, annually.

While the severity of the 2022-2023 flu season cannot be predicted, it may be severe. The past two flu seasons were unusually mild because of behaviors related to the COVID-19 pandemic (masking, social distancing, working from home, and at-home school). Now, many of those behaviors have changed.

The best way to reduce your risk from influenza illnesses, hospitalizations and death is to get vaccinated every year. The

**Flu season typically runs from October through May, with the peak coming in February. Approximately, 3-11 percent of the U.S. population catches influenza every year — which equates to about 100,000 Allegheny County residents, annually.**

influenza vaccination, or flu shot, has been used for almost 80 years. Everyone 6 months and older should get a shot every flu season, with rare exception. For people 65 years and older, particular flu shots help provide even better protection. Getting the shot protects you, your family, and your community. Since the vaccine is most effective in the first six months following the shot, the best time to get it is before the end of October. Cases can occur as late as May, so even people who don't get it in October should still get it later in the season.

Finally, to protect yourself and others from getting the flu, cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, wash your hands regularly, consider wearing a mask in crowded places, and stay home if you are sick. Maintain your overall health by eating a healthy diet, getting proper rest, being physically active, and reducing stress.

➤ For answers to frequently asked questions about the flu and the vaccine, visit [AlleghenyCounty.us/Influenza](https://AlleghenyCounty.us/Influenza) or contact us at (412) 578-8062.

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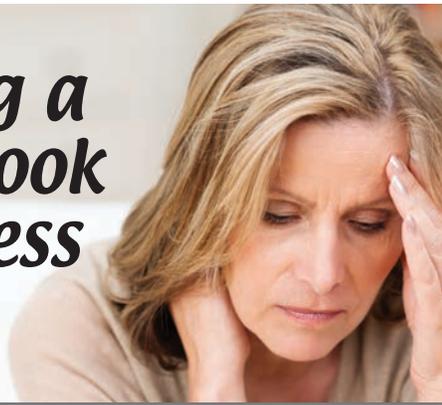
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# Taking a Calm Look at Stress



By Nick Jacobs

Recently, I had been invited to address a selective group of Deans and Directors from a local university and independent hospital. My presentation was centered on *The Role of Integrative Health and Medicine in Rural Hospitals* and it was based on my work in wellness and prevention. I defined our efforts at both Windber Medical Center (now the Chan Soon-Shiong Medical Center Windber) and then nationally with the Academy of Integrative Health and Medicine.

Because my goal was to help build a stronger commitment to preventative health and wellness at both organizations, I addressed how a combined effort between these two strong neighboring not-for-profits could foster improved health in their workplace for their employees, for their patients and university students, for the citizens in the communities they served, and finally, for the students in their local school districts.

In the book “Why Zebra’s Don’t Get Ulcers” Robert Sapolsky exposes us to the con-

# Healthy Beginnings

cepts of stress management and biology. When addressing diet and stress management, he gives the example of a young lawyer who decides that “red meat, fried foods, and a couple of beers per dinner constitute a desirable diet, and the consequences are anything but clear. Half a century later, maybe that attorney is crippled with cardiovascular disease, or maybe he’s taking bike trips with his grandkids.”

As Sapolsky stated, “We are certainly aware of the extraordinary amount of physiological, biochemical, and molecular information available as to how all sorts of intangibles in our lives can affect very real bodily events.” My presentation was directed toward the steps we, as education and healthcare professionals, can take to assist our stakeholders in their life-journey.

Because “sustained psychological stress is a relatively recent invention mostly limited to humans and other social primates, we can experience wildly strong emotions linked to mere thoughts.” These fight-or-flight emotions were originally intended to assist all mammals during their lives but especially when being chased by saber tooth tigers. (That doesn’t happen much anymore.)

The purpose of my presentation was to provide them with the tools needed to help deal with our daily ongoing stressors. It’s all about diet, moderate exercise, non-judgmental social support, and stress management via mindfulness activities. In many cases, we can decide every day in every way what should be worth dying over and, for the most part, determine what types of things knock us out of our homeostatic balance.

Inactivity can be as harmful as smoking a pack of cigarettes a day. Obesity kills as many people as smoking which is

life-ending annually for over 450,000 people in the United States alone. But stress? There’s no limit to the people who are harming their health and limiting their futures by not learning any type of mind-calming, stress management techniques. It doesn’t matter if it’s yoga, the rosary, worry beads, meditation, or calmly nurturing a pet.

Sapolsky goes on to explain the various “nuts-and-bolts factors” that will help determine which of these outcomes will occur. He explores the liver’s role in the making of cholesterol, the enzymes in fat cells, and potential congenital weaknesses. Then he hits the motherload: Personality, and how we individually deal with the stress generating problems between the mind and body.

We know that the predominant diseases we deal with today are those resulting from, as the author explains “a slow accumulation of damage—heart, cancer, and cerebral vascular disorders.” We’ve also come to learn the fact that these inflammatory diseases are fed by a “complex intertwining of our biology and our emotions.” And there is zero doubt that “extreme emotional disturbances can adversely affect us.” In other words, “stress can make us sick.”

Bottom line? Find what stops your amygdalae from pushing your emotional buttons to stop making you think that a tiger is chasing you.

My former Chief Operating Officer, an one-time emergency room physician, used to look at me when I was stressed and say, “Everything’s okay. No one died.” And, indeed, it was, and even I’m still here, stress and all.

**Nick Jacobs** is a partner with SMR, LLC and founder of the Academy of Integrative Health and Medicine, former board member of the American Board of Integrative Holistic Medicine, Jacobs maintains a website, [Healinghospitals.com](http://Healinghospitals.com).

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## Healthy Tips for the New Year

from Dr. Jessica Goddard Lucot

By Kevin Brown

***Are you determined to lose weight, eat healthy and exercise more during the New Year? Those might be the most common New Year's resolutions and perhaps the most often abandoned after a few months. If you are resolved, however, to shed the pounds, quit the junk food, and get to the gym, checking in with your primary care physician (PCP) may be one way to ensure you meet your goals.***

Jessica Goddard Lucot, D.O., who recently joined St. Clair Medical Group Family Medicine, offers sound advice for staying on track with your resolutions.

"Those are the top three resolutions I see most often," Dr. Lucot says. "The first thing you want to consider is having a reason why you want to set the goal because that can help you to stay motivated. And then, make your goal really specific," she advises.

"Instead of 'I want to eat healthier,' set your goal to increase your servings of fruits and vegetables to two or five servings per day so it is specific. You can measure progress that way, and then incorporate more as you reach that goal," she says.

Dr. Lucot recommends frequent visits to your PCP to help you achieve your goals. "Your PCP can help you make your goal more attainable, meaning that you can set benchmarks and have someone hold you accountable," she explains. "With weight loss and eating healthier, I like to have my patients keep a food log to get an idea of what they're eating and where we can make small tweaks to help them achieve larger or long-term goals."

When it comes to setting weight loss goals, Dr. Lucot advises patients not to look at losing a certain number of pounds per week but working more on the changes in eating habits. "Setting a goal is not so much about a number on the scale. It's more about eating a healthy number of calories for your weight, age, and exercise tolerance, and then adjusting that based on the goals," she says. "You can have fluctuations within the week, but you're working toward that calorie range. That's good for weight loss."

"I do a little more nutrition counseling than most physicians because I really enjoy it," Dr. Lucot adds. "Patients can always see a nutritionist or dietitian if they want, but I like to talk about nutrition and different ways to eat healthier like making healthier



Dr. Jessica Goddard Lucot



swaps. If someone's eating a breakfast sandwich every day, skipping lunch because they're busy, and then eating a lot of snacks at night, then we will work on how to incorporate a lunch meal that's quick, easy, and healthy so they're not eating more snacks at night," she explains. "It's not about never having ice cream or potato chips, but how can we fit those treats into your healthy eating plan?"

As far as exercise, Dr. Lucot recommends a sensible approach to beginning an exercise plan. "If you're a person who has been pretty sedentary or hasn't worked out for a while, I think there's a tendency to head to the gym and do as much as you can. That sets people up for failure, when they go from zero to a hundred real quick.

A better approach is to incorporate exercise slowly. If it's your goal to run more, or even just walk every day, start with three days a week for just 15 minutes a day to get used to that. Then you can increase to 15 minutes in the morning and 15 minutes at night. Starting small and working your way up is a good idea. I like patients to do cardiovascular exercise three or four days a week, which would be walking or some type of cardio that's getting your heart rate up. Then, incorporating strength training on the other days to work on resistance."

If you have risk factors such as heart disease, Dr. Lucot recommends checking with your doctor to be sure it's safe for you to begin an exercise program. And for the smokers out there who want to quit, Dr. Lucot advises a similar strategy of making gradual changes. "The biggest thing with smoking is to have people go slow. If they're smoking ten cigarettes a day, then cut back to nine or eight per day and do that for a week. Buy a set number of cigarettes and commit to smoking only that amount. Have someone either buy them or hold them for you."

"The key to success with health goals is to make sustainable changes," Dr. Lucot advises. "Pick things that you can stick to and that will make you healthier over time rather than a quick, fad diet that causes you to gain the weight back if you stop the diet in a month. The most common reason why diets and resolutions tend to fail is because the fad diet just isn't sustainable long-term. Changing behavior should be small steps you can stick to over time that will make a lasting impact," says Dr. Lucot.

Dr. Lucot received her medical degree from the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed a family medicine residency at UPMC. She is board-certified in family medicine.



For more information or to make an appointment with Dr. Lucot, please call **(412) 942-8570**. Her primary office is located at the **St. Clair Health Village Square Outpatient Center**, 2000 Oxford Drive, Suite 302, Bethel Park, PA 15102.



# An Excellent Experience Awaits You at Oral and Facial Surgery of Pittsburgh

By Nancy Kennedy

There's a lot to smile about at Oral & Facial Surgery of Pittsburgh (OFS Pittsburgh). This exceptionally patient-focused center for oral health and maxillofacial surgery, located in Wexford (and soon to be Monroeville), provides every patient with an excellent, individualized experience through a blend of technologically advanced care, clear communication, and a warm, humane, and personal approach to care. In a spotless, comfortable and state-of-the-art environment, OFS Pittsburgh offers safe, exemplary care that will improve your health as well as enhance your smile.

OFS Pittsburgh provides a full range of services to improve and maintain oral health and appearance, from basic preventive dental care and extractions to dental implant surgery, bone grafting and intricate facial reconstruction procedures. Richard E. Bauer, D.M.D., M.D., the founder of OFS Pittsburgh, is a highly credentialed, board-certified oral surgeon who is well regarded throughout the region for his clinical expertise, teaching endeavors and leadership in regional and national professional organizations.

Recently OFS Pittsburgh has welcomed Craig Norbutt, D.M.D., M.D., as part of the team. Dr. Norbutt is a board certified Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon who has spent the past 11 years practicing in a Level -1 Trauma Center and serving as the Associate Residency Director in the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Clinical Professor in the Department of Surgery at the Illinois School of Medicine.

"Oral health is an important aspect of overall health," Dr. Bauer explains. "This importance goes far beyond the ability to bite and chew food. The condition of your teeth affects your speech, appearance, food choices, confidence and self-esteem. It can impact your social life and your professional success. When you have bad teeth, you could feel self-conscious and avoid smiling and speaking to others. Our smile and facial expression are a part of how we present ourselves to the world."

At OFS Pittsburgh, the patient experience begins at the very first phone call. Necessary information is gathered at this point in order to schedule the patient appropriately. "By doing this upfront, we are able to spend more time with the patient and individualize their care to meet their personal needs and goals," Dr. Bauer says.

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**"New technologies are giving patients better quality and outcomes. Dental materials, radiology, and diagnostic procedures have all come very far, at a very fast pace. Now there are so many options for patients."**

*-Richard E. Bauer, D.M.D., M.D., founder OFS Pittsburgh*

ment, the cone beam CT scanner, which provides a 3D image of bone and tooth structures, with low radiation levels. This type of intra-oral scanning is far more efficient and comfortable than the old system of creating impressions with molds. OFS Pittsburgh also specializes in IV sedation for many procedures, with a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist on the staff and the most advanced anesthesia equipment on site. The OFS Pittsburgh team also includes certified surgical technicians, oral surgery assistants, and registered nurses.

Dr. Bauer, a Pittsburgh native, is a graduate of the University Of Pittsburgh School Of Medicine and the School of Dental Medicine. He completed a six-year residency in oral and maxillofacial surgery at UPMC and later served as a faculty member and the director of the residency program. Being both an MD and a DMD is a great benefit for him and for his patients, he says. "Having gone to medical school helped to formalize my medical education. The link between oral health and other diseases is significant and underappreciated. I get to practice both medicine and dentistry. This is very useful for patients with complex needs. I really enjoy what I do; I might do a jaw reconstruction

one day and the next day, a wisdom tooth extraction."

The key to oral health, Dr. Bauer says, is prevention. "Prevention helps you keep your natural teeth and avoid costly, complicated problems later. The cost of dental care can be prohibitive and access to care is getting tougher for many people. There are rising costs for equipment and staffing, and the insurance companies are not keeping up with these trends."

Nevertheless, there has been a revolution in dentistry in the past two decades, Dr. Bauer says. "New technologies are giving patients better quality and outcomes. Dental materials, radiology, and diagnostic procedures have all come very far, at a very fast pace. Now there are so many options for patients. No one should assume that they will have to live with conventional dentures; at a minimum we can put in two implants to secure a lower denture and improve function, for example."

The importance of your teeth to your social experience and self-confidence cannot be overstated, Dr. Bauer believes. "With healthy teeth, you feel more attractive and you can meet people and smile without feeling like you have to hide your teeth. It can be life changing."

 To make an appointment, visit [www.ofspittsburgh.com](http://www.ofspittsburgh.com) or call (412) 532-9720.



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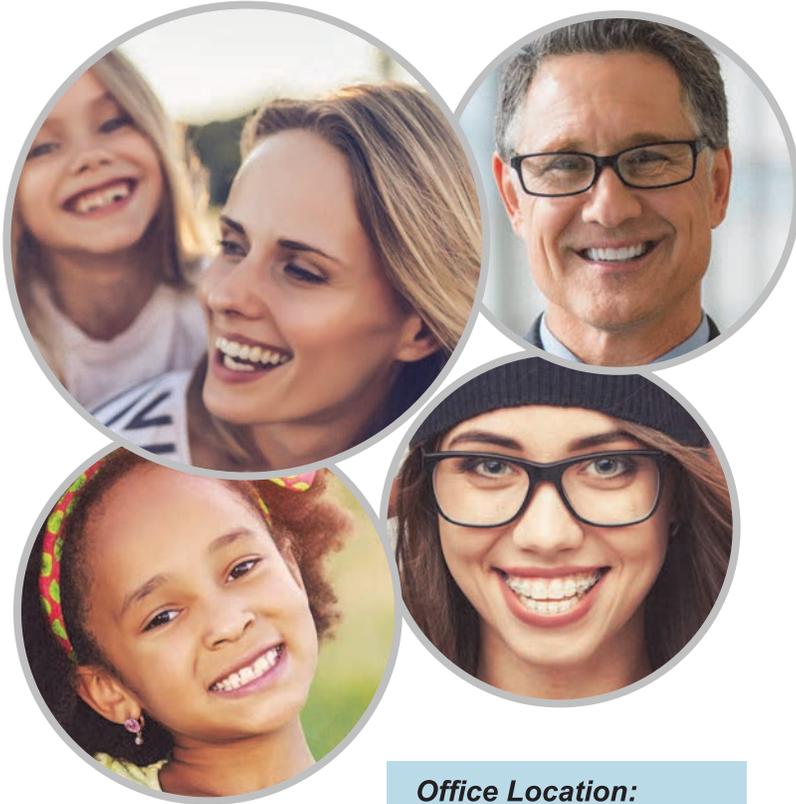
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## Gateway Rehab to Open New Treatment Program Dedicated to Women

By Nancy Kennedy

Gateway Rehabilitation Center will soon open a new treatment setting dedicated to the needs of women in recovery from addiction. The new program is modeled on Gateway's existing Ramsey Extended Services Treatment (REST) program, located at its main campus in Center Township, Beaver County. REST for Women will offer the highly skilled, compassionate, individualized treatment that Gateway is known for, in a residential environment designed to provide safety, healing and a renewed sense of well-being for women.

The REST program will serve women exclusively over a longer term residential treatment program for up to four months. It has been made possible through a partnership with the County of Beaver, which offered Gateway the use of a county building in Ohioville Borough. The program is set to open in April 2023.

Tracy Plevel, vice-president, Development and Community Relations, Gateway Rehab, says that the new program will enable Gateway to provide specialized, gender-specific treatment for women 18 and older with substance use disorder and to expand its existing programs. "With this expansion, we are able to provide gender-specific programming throughout all phases of our inpatient treatment program. This is an exciting opportunity for us; we can do unique things that make a difference in the early stages of recovery."

Plevel states that the new facility is already built to serve as a residential program, so it will require only a minimal amount of construction to prepare it to serve as a treatment setting and meet licensing requirements. It is set in a rural area, offering opportunities for outdoor experiences, while maintaining privacy, and can accommodate up to 39 women in double rooms.

Jenny Wylie Carlin, MA, LPC, NCC, serves as the director of the REST program and says that the new program will allow women to focus on themselves – something that many women rarely have a chance to do. "Women need substance use disorder treatment as much as men do but are less likely to get it, for a number of reasons. Women are so busy keeping everything going: child care, jobs, household care, feeding their families. They try to help themselves. For many, child care is a barrier to treatment; in fact, it is the number



Jenny Wylie Carlin, MA, LPC, NCC, serves as the director of the Ramsey Extended Services Treatment (REST) program

one barrier to treatment for women. The REST program will include parenting classes and extended children's visiting."

Women also need a safe, secure treatment environment, Wylie Carlin says. "A nonthreatening environment is essential for women in recovery. If a woman has a history of trauma and relationship issues with men, she isn't going to feel comfortable in group therapy with men."

The REST program offers:

- Individual, group and family therapy
- Individual trauma treatment
- Therapeutic recreation and wellness, including equine therapy
- Art and music therapy with open studio time
- Smoking cessation
- General Life Skills development
- Plus more

There are a number of amenities in the new setting that further enhance the program. This includes a wide expanse of greenspace, with places to sit in the sun, appreciate nature or enjoy the outdoors. There is a courtyard space and plans to develop a garden. A large community kitchen is available, where staff will offer cooking classes, and a small library offers novels and reading materials. The bedrooms are large, with semi-private bathrooms. Exercise is an integral part of the program, and Gateway will provide a fitness room as well as a program in adventure-based counseling.

"Few services exist that are just for women," Wylie Carlin explains. "We are doing something creative and new to this area, and we will fine tune it as we go. We'll identify unmet needs and address

*Continued on following page*



On July 1, 2022, Gateway Rehab acquired Greenbriar Treatment Center.



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# Addiction

## Fentanyl Leading Cause of Death: Help is Available

By Nancy Kennedy

In the United States, the number one cause of death for young adults aged 18 to 45 is drug overdose, surpassing suicide, vehicle accidents, and gun violence, according to the Centers for Disease Control. The drug in the center of this tragic epidemic is Fentanyl, a highly addictive, synthetic opioid prescription medication that was initially developed as an analgesic (painkiller) for surgeons to use during and after surgery to treat or prevent extreme pain.

Fentanyl is a very effective analgesic and it can create feelings of euphoria. In fact, Fentanyl is so potent that it is said to be 100 times more potent than morphine. These qualities mean that the drug's potential for addiction, abuse and overdose are very high.

Fentanyl has become the drug at the center of the illicit drug market and the tragic, soaring number of opioid overdose deaths across the U.S. and in Westmoreland County.

In the period from May 2020 to May 2021, over 100,000 Americans died from drug over-

doses, and in 64% of those deaths, the cause of death was Fentanyl or a Fentanyl analog, typically manufactured in Mexico.

Making matters worse, Covid-19 has worsened the incidence of substance abuse disorder, including opioid misuse, as people experience the isolation, anxiety and despair brought by the pandemic.

Breane Minardi, MSW, Director of Clinical and Case Management Services for Westmoreland County Drug and Alcohol Commission (WEDAC), states that Fentanyl overdose deaths increased 26% from 2020 to the present in Westmoreland County. In 2021, there was a total of 168 overdose deaths in the County, and Fentanyl was responsible for 137 of them.

Males have a higher rate of overdose, with the greatest number of deaths occurring in the 31-40 age group; for women, the highest rate of overdose is in the 51-60 age group.

Much of the misuse of Fentanyl is unintentional. People may purchase drugs on the street, or in questionable non-medical settings, unaware



that the drugs they buy contain Fentanyl in an amount that can be deadly. Fentanyl may be mixed into, or "laced" into, counterfeit narcotic pills that resemble common pain medications or into marijuana. Even the tiniest amount of Fentanyl can be deadly, so this "lacing" has been a major factor in the rising number of overdose deaths. "Any use of street drugs includes a risk of death," Minardi says.

Director Minardi wants the community to know that despite widespread substance abuse and the alarming number of opioid overdose deaths, there is help available through her agency and a comprehensive network of services.

WEDAC is a resource for individuals, families, professionals and organizations; it funds and contracts treatment programs and case management services at the local level, using state and federal funds. The agency offers in-house community prevention programs and an innovative Narcan Mail-In Request pro-

gram. "We are here to help anyone who is struggling with addiction," Minardi says. "If you are uninsured, or underinsured, we can provide access to addiction treatment. We break all the barriers. We provide Narcan to anyone who needs it."

Every home should have Narcan, Minardi believes. "An opioid overdose can happen in any home. An older adult on pain medication may accidentally take a double dose of her pain medication. An unattended child may get into the medication. A teenager visiting for a holiday could go into the bathroom and overdose. Narcan is free, easy to use and lifesaving. If you have Narcan and know how to use it, you can prevent an overdose death."

**> The Mail-In Narcan** program provides kits to anyone who wants one. It can be reached by visiting [www.wedacinc.org](http://www.wedacinc.org) or calling (724) 243-2220 extension 4450. The web site includes an instructional video.

### Gateway Rehab, Continued from previous page

those in ways that are specific to women. We have lots of support from executive management.

"The REST program will help women get stronger and restore their lives, through body, mind and spirit. At Gateway we understand that people need help, and help is available here. The staff at Gateway is skilled and caring; we know that recovery works and life can be good."

Adds Tracy Plevel, "We are grateful to Beaver County Behavioral Health and the Beaver County commissioners for making this space available. It's going to make a big difference in the lives of our patients."

**>** To learn more about **Gateway Rehab** and the REST program, visit [www.gatewayrehab.org](http://www.gatewayrehab.org).



## Westmoreland

Drug & Alcohol Commission, Inc.

To decrease overdose deaths and support individuals with substance use disorder, Westmoreland Drug and Alcohol Commission, Inc. is offering Mail-In Narcan to Westmoreland County residents, professionals, and organizations throughout the county.



You can access mail-in Narcan by visiting: [www.wedacinc.org](http://www.wedacinc.org) or calling 724-243-2220 ext: 4450

# Rehabilitation

## Choosing the Right Rehabilitative Care

After experiencing a life-changing stroke or other illness, your doctor may recommend rehabilitation as the next step in your journey to recovery—but what does that mean, and where should rehabilitation take place? These settings—known as post-acute care—include home health, inpatient rehabilitation, skilled nursing homes and long-term acute care hospitals. Should you need additional care, your care team could refer you to one of these settings based on your abilities and goals; but as a patient, you have the right to choose where you go for post-acute care.



ing facilities. This means inpatient rehabilitation hospitals are able to help individuals return to their families, their jobs and their communities more effectively and more quickly.

The services delivered at inpatient rehabilitation hospitals serve as a next step for many patients who are ready to leave the acute care hospital, but need extra rehabilitation and recovery before returning home. Doing your research and selecting the right inpatient rehabilitation hospital is a critical step for a successful recovery.

### *Your doctor said you need rehabilitation. What next?*

Independent studies show that inpatient rehabilitation hospitals are a better setting for stroke, hip fracture, and hip replacement patients. Unlike skilled nursing facilities, inpatient rehabilitation hospitals are required to provide at least three hours of therapy five days a week and will allow access to trained physicians and rehabilitation equipment and technology that may not be available elsewhere. On average, inpatient rehabilitation hospitals have a lower length of stay and discharge more patients home than skilled nursing

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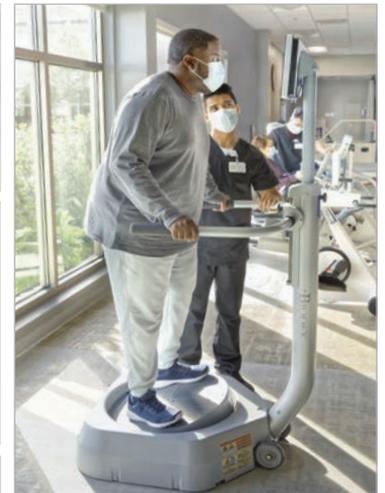


At Encompass Health, the first thing we build for our patients going through rehabilitation after an illness or injury...is trust. Here we offer advanced technologies and treatments, but what makes our programs even more powerful are the nurses and therapists who are passionate about helping patients get back to what matters most. It's why we're **the trusted choice in rehabilitation services**.



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**Low back pain:** three words that affect the lives of so many. As you are reading this right now, you or a loved one may be experiencing low back pain. If you are, you are not alone. Low back pain is one of the most common reasons for someone to seek out medical care throughout a lifetime. Whether your pain is limiting you in walking, daily activities, hobbies, or even sports, the good news is Fyzical Therapy and Balance Centers is here to help!

Physical therapy is a proven, safe, and effective treatment for both

acute and chronic low back pain. We use a combination of therapeutic exercises, manual therapies, and various other treatments to address your pain and get you back to moving and doing the things you love. Every treatment plan is individualized to you with a focus on working toward your goals. Whether your goal is to be able to get out of bed in the morning, walk your dog around the neighborhood, or be able to perform heavy squats at the gym without low back pain, we have a treatment plan for you.

Over 90% of low back pain is mechanical in nature, which means it is related to the joints and soft tissue structures in your back. Concerned that your low back pain may be due to something more serious? Physical therapists are trained to identify red flags when it comes to low back pain. If red flags appear in your evaluation, we will direct you to the appropriate provider for medical work up.

Low back pain can be very limiting to your daily activities, and sometimes debilitating. The quicker you seek out treatment after an acute injury, the better the outcome. You do not need a physician referral to be evaluated by a physical therapist for your low back pain. We are here for you.



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## With Zio, WHS Cardiovascular Care Offers New Way to Detect Irregular Heartbeats



By Andrew Wilson

A cardiac arrhythmia, or irregular heartbeat, can be tricky. It's quite common for an arrhythmia to go undetected during testing in a doctor's office but occur only when a patient attempts to do one of his or her normal daily activities.

Washington Health System (WHS) Cardiac Diagnostics has a new diagnostic tool that

records every beat of patients' hearts while they stand, walk, or sleep. Once attached to the patient, this ambulatory cardiac monitor, called Zio by iRhythm, can be worn for up to 14 days while the patient is at home, work, or enjoying a leisure activity.

The concept of recording patients' heart activity away from the doctor's office is not new. Holter monitors – a portable device that monitors the wearer's heart – have been around for decades but can be cumbersome and patients never forget that they have it on. In contrast, Zio is small, unobtrusive, and water-resistant – no bigger than a patch or a larger band-aid – and patients often report that they forgot they were wearing it. Best of all, the Zio system has a proven track record of detecting and diagnosing irregular heart rhythms better than traditional holter monitors. Data shows that 73 percent of patients who wore a Zio monitor were diagnosed with an arrhythmia vs. only 20 percent by a traditional monitor.

WHS Cardiac Diagnostics warns that arrhythmias may occur in patients of any age. Doctors may order a patient to wear a Zio monitor if the patient feels their heartbeat is too slow, too fast, or just beating irregularly. It may also be ordered if patients pass out, experience shortness of breath, or have a stroke, among other symptoms or issues.

Once an arrhythmia is diagnosed, there are a number of next steps that a WHS cardiologist may order. This may include additional, more invasive testing, medication management, or inserting a pacemaker, to name just a few. Because an arrhythmia may lead to much more serious issues, it should never be dismissed as nothing, and, if suspected, always should be mentioned to your doctor during physical examinations.

> The **WHS Heart and Vascular Program** offers a comprehensive array of diagnostic and treatment services to residents of Allegheny, Washington, Greene and neighboring counties. WHS accepts most major insurance plans. If you have questions regarding Zio or other treatments, please call (724) 579-1575

## What to Know About the Zio Monitor

There are 2 types of Zio monitors: Zio XT and Zio AT.

Zio XT is the long-term continuous monitor that is for asymptomatic or infrequent symptoms. It may be for the patient that is lower risk having palpitations, fluttering, afib management, or shortness of breath. This monitor is recording for 3-14 days and then mailed in to be analyzed. This may be ordered by a primary care physician.

Zio AT is the mobile cardiac telemetry. It is for more frequent symptoms and diagnoses such as passing out, suspect heart blocks, or stroke. This is for the higher risk patient and must be ordered by a cardiologist. This monitor is transmitted to iRhythm and monitored real-time while you are wearing it.

Zio XT is covered by many major commercial insurance providers in the US and Medicare due to its proven ability to help your doctor make confident care decisions. Zio AT may require an insurance authorization, which iRhythm will obtain. iRhythm has a team of dedicated patient advocates available at 1-888-693-2401 to answer any questions you may have about your potential cost.



## Here's how it works.

1. Your healthcare provider will prescribe a Zio monitor and schedule it at Washington Hospital or WHS-Greene Hospital. It will be applied to your chest at that appointment.
2. If you feel anything that you think might be unusual, press the top of the Zio patch. Then briefly describe it in the provided symptom log booklet or on the MyZio mobile app.
3. After your prescribed wear time, simply remove the monitor, put your log booklet, and monitor back in the same box it came in. Then drop it into any USPS mailbox.
4. Once you ship your Zio monitor back, iRhythm will review the data and typically send a report to Washington Health System within one to four business days. Your healthcare provider will let you know when they are ready to review the results with you.

> To schedule a Zio Monitor call **WHS cardiology** scheduling at (724) 579-1575.

**Data shows that 73 percent of patients who wore a Zio monitor were diagnosed with an arrhythmia vs. only 20 percent by a traditional monitor.**



## Can Alternative Therapies Treat High Blood Pressure Effectively?

By Nancy Kennedy

**Maintaining a healthy blood pressure is a key factor in the prevention of cardiovascular disease. But if you are diagnosed with high blood pressure, what is the best way to lower it and keep it at a healthy level? Is medication the only option, or are there alternatives that treat high blood pressure naturally?**

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is one of the most prevalent and serious chronic medical conditions of American adults. It affects 103 million of us, or one in three adults, and if it is untreated or ineffectively treated, it can lead to dire consequences, including heart attack, stroke, congestive heart failure, kidney failure and death. High blood pressure has been called “the silent killer” because it is usually asymptomatic; for this reason, regular monitoring of blood pressure levels is essential to detecting and treating it.

Treatment of high blood pressure is primarily a matter of taking medication prescribed by one’s primary care physician or cardiologist, and following a program of heart-healthy lifestyle practices. But some people stop taking their blood pressure medication. It may be because they find compliance with a medication regimen challenging; others may have health care access obstacles. Still others may simply prefer to try non-pharmaceutical approaches to treatment.

Can high blood pressure be effectively treated without medication? Can lifestyle modifications and treatment alternatives actually lower blood pressure, and maintain it at a healthy level?

According to Alan Bramowitz, M.D., a board-certified cardiologist with Jefferson Cardiovascular Association, blood pressure medications have been shown to reduce the incidence of heart disease, stroke and kidney failure. Can the same be said for alternative treatments? How much do these alternatives and lifestyle modifications actually lower blood pressure? Dr. Bramowitz cites the July 2021 issue of the *Journal of Hypertension*, which listed ten lifestyle modifications and other initiatives that have been claimed to lower blood pressure. They are:

- Sodium restriction
- Special diets such as DASH
- Exercise programs
- Potassium reduction
- Increased magnesium intake
- Alcohol reduction
- Stress reduction
- Transcendental meditation
- Weight loss

“The studies have shown that alternatives such as these can be helpful for persons with all levels of hypertension,” Dr. Bramowitz states. “But they are only an alternative to medication for those with



Dr. Alan Bramowitz

very low risk. For those with higher risk for cardiovascular disease, they can serve as complementary treatment to blood pressure medication.”

The intensity of treatment for an individual patient’s high blood pressure, Dr. Bramowitz explains, may be determined by the “risk score” – a ten-year, projected cardiovascular risk assessment that considers smoking, cholesterol levels, and the presence of other conditions such as diabetes.

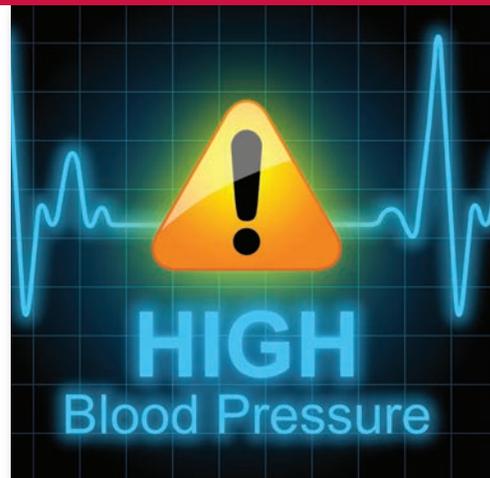
“Hypertension remains a national and global problem which is seriously undertreated,” according to Dr. Bramowitz. “Yet, increased and improved treatment in the past 50 years has resulted in decreased incidence

of stroke and cardiovascular events. Historically, and currently, Americans have been undertreated for high blood pressure. From 1976 -1980, only 51% of Americans were aware of their high blood pressure.”

If systolic blood pressure remains above 130 with lifestyle modifications, then medication remains mandatory, Dr. Bramowitz says. If the blood pressure does not come down below 130 with one medication, then more medications may be needed to reach the target. “The number of medications is less important than the ability to keep the systolic below 130. The critical goal is to minimize the risks of kidney failure, stroke, dementia, heart failure, heart attack and sudden death. People with low risk may get by with lifestyle modification, but effective medical treatment is required for those at increased risk. Persons with high blood pressure may be best served by monitoring their blood pressure at home and working with their providers to attain and maintain levels recommended by current guidelines.”

The current guidelines of the American College of Cardiologists and the American Heart Association define normal blood pressure as a systolic reading less than 120 and a diastolic reading below 80.

The bottom line: if you have high blood pressure, take your medications exactly as prescribed and try employing the lifestyle modifications that are listed above, as a complementary treatment to your medication regimen rather than as an alternative. These lifestyle changes can help by improving your quality of life and overall health.



➤ For more information, visit [www.jeffersoncardiology.com](http://www.jeffersoncardiology.com) or call (412) 469-1500.



## Commotio Cordis:

### A Cardiologist Explains Why a 24 Year Old Pro Football Player Had a Cardiac Arrest on National TV

By Nancy Kennedy

On the evening of January 2, 2023, millions of Americans were enjoying watching the Buffalo Bills and Cincinnati Bengals do battle on Monday Night Football. But the game came to an unexpected halt when Buffalo safety Damar Hamlin, 24, suddenly collapsed on the field with no heartbeat, following a routine tackle.

As fans, fellow athletes and a national audience watched in stunned silence, a team of physicians, trainers and paramedics descended on Hamlin, rendering immediate resuscitative care including CPR. Hamlin's heart



had gone into an arrhythmia – an abnormal, often lethal heartbeat rhythm – known as ventricular fibrillation, which leaves the heart essentially quivering and failing to pump blood to the brain and vital organs. The responders used a defibrillator to try to shock his heart back into a normal rhythm. The

unconscious Hamlin, who grew up in McKees Rocks and attended Central Catholic High School and Pitt, was emergently transported to the University Of Cincinnati Medical Center to an intensive care unit where he is recovering and continues to receive state-of-the-art cardiac critical care.

What happened? Why did a healthy and perfectly fit 24-year old professional athlete suddenly go into cardiac arrest during a game?

Alan Bramowitz, MD, a cardiologist with Jefferson Cardiology Associates, explains that the physicians managing Hamlin's care immediately sus-

pected that a process known as "Commotio Cordis" had occurred. "It appeared most likely that the football player suffered a cardiac arrest due to "commotio cordis" – an extremely rare condition in which direct, blunt chest trauma results in cardiac arrest from induction of potentially fatal abnormalities of the heart's electrical system."

Commotio Cordis, from the Latin meaning "disruption of the heart," can be the result if the impact of the object happens at a precise, critical moment during the cycle of a heartbeat. Commotio cordis is

*Continued on following page*

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Monroeville, PA 15146  
(412) 373-9580

1000 Park Place, Suite 201  
Washington, PA 15301  
(412) 469-1500



# Heart Health

Continued from previous page

not an injury or a medical condition, but a process. The chest is not penetrated and the heart is not damaged.

“Energy is transmitted from the chest wall to the heart muscle, during a very specific vulnerable period in the heart cycle – a period that lasts a mere 15-30 milliseconds and represents only 1% of the cardiac cycle. That’s why this is so very rare. Commotio cordis typically occurs in youth sports as it is suspected that narrow pliable walls of the chest facilitate this energy transmission. The mean age is 13. The National Commotio Cordis Registry reports that the majority of cases involve baseball and the majority of victims are young boys. Often, the chest blows are not particularly powerful or associated with trauma to the ribs or

the heart itself,” Dr. Bramowitz says. “The heart is structurally normal.”

Commotio cordis has been known to occur in baseball, hockey, football, lacrosse, karate and other sports. Prompt defibrillation improves the prognosis. “Under the best circumstances, normal rhythm and circulation can be re-established after one shock with the defibrillator,” says Dr. Bramowitz. “There can be complications. During the resuscitation, there may be insufficient brain perfusion, which leads to concern about damage to the brain, liver and kidneys. The functioning of these organs has to be assessed.

“Certainly, the need for defibrillators at sporting events is well recognized. This event has spurred public interest in CPR training and in learning how to

use a defibrillator. Published reports indicated 15% survival in 2005, but with more available public access defibrillators and public education about CPR, survival rates more recently have been published at 58%.”

Preventive actions have been taken in youth sports, including the use of a softer baseball as well as chest protectors for baseball catchers and hockey goalies. “The question of chest protection has been raised but there is currently no evidence of benefit from them,” Dr. Bramowitz says. “Simulated experiments with pigs failed to demonstrate that chest protectors were effective in preventing arrhythmias after blunt chest trauma. However, this will no doubt continue to be explored in a national effort to improve the safety of athletic competition.”



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## How to Use an Automated External Defibrillator

In the wake of Damar Hamlin’s cardiac arrest during an NFL game, there has been a surge of interest among the public to learn the correct procedures for cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED), the device that shocks the heart and hopefully restores a normal heart rhythm.



In Pittsburgh, public access defibrillators are available in many places, including schools, restaurants, sports arenas, churches and theatres.

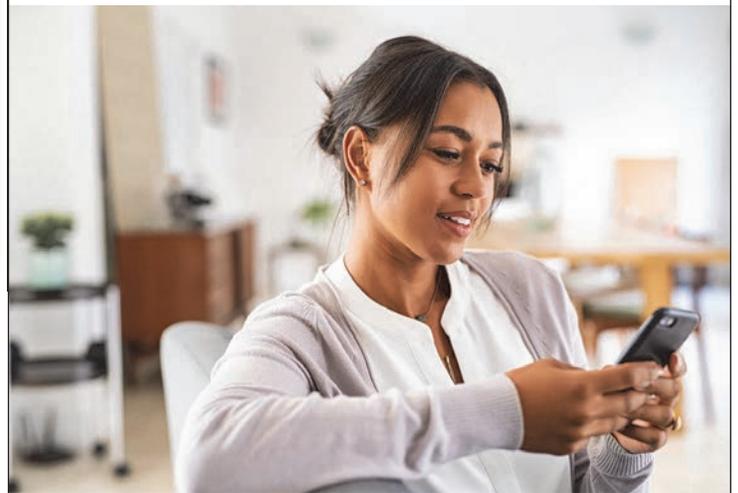
Performing bystander resuscitation within moments after cardiac arrest can greatly increase survival rates.

The Red Cross offers classes in both CPR and AED use, in many locations in the region. Visit [www.redcross.org/take-a-class/aed](http://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/aed)

A simple, straightforward youtube video offers a fast course in how to use an AED: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfiWikreGHk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfiWikreGHk)

To learn more, visit [www.callpushshock.org](http://www.callpushshock.org), a national collaborative based in Wexford that was founded for the purpose of empowering bystanders to perform CPR and use an AED when someone has experienced a sudden cardiac arrest.

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## Heart Health

# Heritage Valley Uses Innovative Approach To Treat Carotid Artery Disease

Heritage Valley offers Transcarotid Artery Revascularization (TCAR), a minimally invasive procedure designed to treat Carotid Artery Disease by clearing blockages and opening a narrowed carotid artery, thereby reducing a patient's risk of stroke. The carotid arteries are the main blood vessels that supply blood to the neck, face and brain. With Carotid Artery Disease, fatty deposits build up along the inner layer of the arteries and form plaque.

You may have heard of Carotid Endarterectomy, a traditional treatment for blockages in the carotid artery, and wonder what the difference is between it and TCAR. Carotid Endarterectomy is a more invasive surgical procedure, in which a surgeon opens the carotid artery by making a long incision in the neck to remove the plaque.

With TCAR, there is less risk of nerve damage, as the procedure requires a much smaller incision. The surgeon works through the small incision to stabilize plaque from inside the artery and restore normal blood flow to the brain. The major difference is that TCAR uses advanced technology to reverse blood flow away from the brain during the procedure, thereby lessening the chance of a stroke. The patient will also spend far less time under anesthesia and will experience a faster recovery time.



During your TCAR procedure, your surgeon will make a small incision in your neck, just above your collarbone. A tube is then placed directly into your carotid artery and connected to an advanced system that temporarily reverses blood flow away from your brain. This is done to prevent any loose bits of plaque from reaching your brain and causing a stroke. Your blood is filtered by the system and returned to your body through a second tube connected to a vein in your groin. While the blood flow is reversed, a stent will be inserted into your carotid artery. Once the stent is in place, your surgeon will stop the blood flow reversal and your blood again flows toward your brain. Patients typically go home the day after their TCAR procedure, and should plan on taking it easy for a week or so.

TCAR is a good option for patients with CAD who have a higher risk of surgical complications due to age or other health issues. Your surgeon will help you decide whether TCAR is right for you.



For more information, please visit our website at <https://www.heritagevalley.org> and search for TCAR.



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## Women and Heart Disease A Conversation with Dr. Katherine Shreyder



By **Kevin Brown**

Heart disease is traditionally thought of as impacting mostly men. But did you know that heart disease is the leading cause of death among both men and women in the United States? The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that 314,186 U.S. women, or one in five, died from heart disease in 2020. American Heart Month will be celebrated in

February to raise awareness of heart disease in the U.S. and is the perfect opportunity to increase awareness of heart disease among women.

Dr. Katherine Shreyder, St. Clair Health's newest cardiologist and the first female physician to join St. Clair Medical Group Cardiology, recently offered advice on heart disease and women.

Public education about breast cancer has helped to decrease the mortality rate among women. Dr. Shreyder believes the same is needed for cardiovascular disease. "The field of cardiovascular disease is lacking the approach taken with breast cancer education to reduce mortality rates," she notes. "We need to take the same steps to expand education, which can help to improve mortality from cardiovascular disease in females." So, let's get started by answering some frequently asked questions.

### WHAT CAUSES HEART DISEASE?

According to Dr. Shreyder, there's a large variety of cardiovascular problems throughout the lifespan. "The one that we address the most is ischemic cardiovascular disease or coronary artery disease, when plaque forms in the heart vessels," she explains. "The risk factors for coronary artery disease are high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, and obesity. These are, of course, the prevalent risk factors in both genders."

"Nowadays, additional risk factors specific to females are recognized," Dr. Shreyder adds. "They include high blood pressure or diabetes during pregnancy, preeclampsia, breast cancer, and autoimmune disorders such as rheumatoid arthritis or lupus."

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF HEART DISEASE?

Symptoms of heart disease can vary among men and women. "Many patients have what we call typical symptoms like pain in the chest or 'an elephant sitting on the chest', or trouble breathing with walking. Females tend to have some atypical symptoms like shortness of breath, excessive tightness, and maybe pain, not in the chest, but in the arm or hand. A female patient may say that she just doesn't feel right. This can shift the mind of a specialist from possible cardiovascular disease. That's why females are more likely to be misdiagnosed," Dr. Shreyder explains.

### WHAT AGE GROUP IS MOST AFFECTED BY HEART DISEASE?

"As with men, the age group among women most affected by heart disease is in the fifth and sixth decades of life. Throughout the

lifespan, however, females can have specific heart problems. Some pregnancy-related cardiovascular issues include high blood pressure, gestational diabetes, or even preeclampsia. Middle-aged females may have issues such as spontaneous coronary artery dissection or stress-induced cardiomyopathy, which happen more often in females. Occurrence of heart failure increases with age, and women of an older age are at greater risk of heart failure than men."

### HOW DO YOU TREAT HEART DISEASE?

If you've been diagnosed with heart disease, Dr. Shreyder recommends enlisting the help of your medical team. "It depends on the type of heart disease but, generally, the most important advice is to have a good and strong connection with a cardiologist and your primary care physician (PCP) to closely address all the issues related to your heart disease. Important steps include achieving a blood pressure goal, lowering cholesterol and exercising regularly to reduce the risks of progression of the cardiovascular disease," she says.

### WHAT CAN A HEALTHY PERSON DO TO PREVENT HEART DISEASE?

"Build up good habits of eating less processed food and less fatty food, as well as lowering salt intake," she advises. "Regular exercise is not just a good habit to make the body beautiful; it's an important part of preventing cardiovascular problems in the future," Dr. Shreyder notes.

Dr. Shreyder says that St. Clair Health is committed to providing women of the community with cardiovascular care. "As a female cardiologist, my interest lies in addressing the unique needs of women with a new initiative and vision to ensure that women of the community receive the full scope of cardiovascular care, including prevention, timely diagnoses, and excellent care."

A native of Moscow, Dr. Shreyder received her medical training in Russia and worked as a physician there for 13 years before immigrating to the U.S. She completed her residency at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center and a fellowship at Lahey Hospital and Medical Center in Massachusetts. Dr. Shreyder is board-certified in cardiovascular medicine.

**Dr. Shreyder** sees patients at offices at the St. Clair Health Village Square Outpatient Center in Bethel Park, St. Clair Health Peters Township Outpatient Center in Canonsburg and Dunlap Family Outpatient Center in Mt. Lebanon. To make an appointment, call **(412) 942-7900**.

**St. Clair Health** has been recognized with a number of awards for its cardiac care and was named a Blue Distinction Center for Cardiac Care for its best practices and standards of care. For more information, visit [www.stclair.org/cardiology](http://www.stclair.org/cardiology).

# Coffee Break with Judy's Java Joint

By Lois Thomson

More and more people are starting to travel again – some to faraway places. If any of those travelers are coffee drinkers, they may be interested in exploring some of the following destinations:

Brazil is the world's largest producer, supplying about one-third of the world's coffee. Plantations are located mainly in the southeast, where the environment and climate are ideal for growing the plant. Coffee lovers flock to Sao Paulo – considered to be Brazil's premium city for coffee – for new and exciting flavors and styles.

Colombia needs no introduction to coffee lovers. Visitors shouldn't miss Eje Cafetero, the lush region known as the "coffee zone of Colombia." It's home to numerous farms that produce the delicious coffee loved by people all over the world.

Coffee is native to Ethiopia and the first recorded evidence of coffee growing there may date back to the 6th century. It is a leading exporter and, understandably, has a lively coffee culture. Most coffee strains come from Ethiopia, and some varieties have spices and sweeteners, producing a distinct flavor.

Japan has a surprisingly vibrant coffee culture, partly because it can offer so many different flavors and roasts. It places third on the list of countries that import coffee, and the Japanese take pride in the different ways they make their beverage.

Austria – particularly Vienna – is practically synonymous with

coffee, and is one of the world's most traditional coffee destinations. Vienna has a park dedicated to the founder of its first coffee house, Johannes Diodado, and also hosts the annual Vienna Coffee Festival.

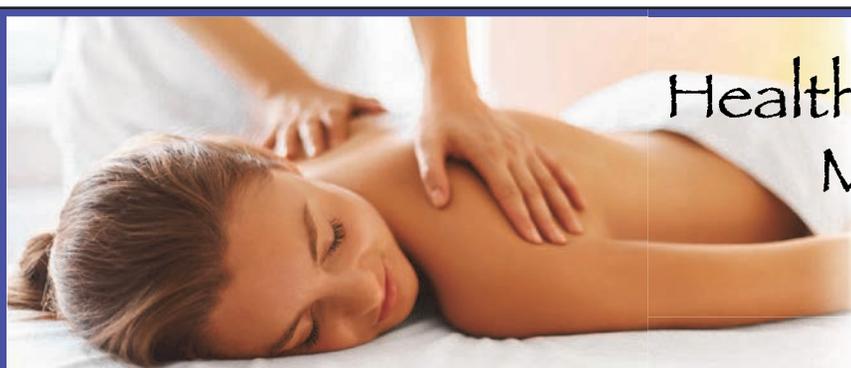
Like Austria, Turkey is unquestionably one of the most traditional countries for coffee, and has been enjoying the beverage since the 16th century. However, Turkish coffee is prepared quite differently. The bean must be dark roasted and finely ground, and the powder is mixed with water until it boils in a kettle. Because Turkish coffee is unfiltered, coffee grounds remain at the bottom of the cup, so you should stop drinking before you reach the bottom!

However, if your travels don't take you overseas, you can head to the Northwest. Seattle is considered to be one of the world's top coffee roasting centers and is the birthplace of Starbucks, the world's largest and most famous coffee shop chain.

Happy travels and happy sipping!



Judy's Java Joint is a family-owned local coffee shop located in the Ruthfred Shopping Center, 3400 South Park Rd., Bethel Park. Enjoy our cozy shop to do work (free Wi-Fi), meet with friends or just relax with a great cup of coffee. We have everything you might be craving: gourmet coffee and tea, espresso drinks, smoothies, frappes, hot chocolate, chai tea, protein frappes, pastries and more! 412-833-5282; judysjava.com



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Dr. Katich attended medical school at Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine. He then went on to complete his residency in Urological surgery at Charleston Area Medical Center in Charleston, WV. Prior to medical school, Dr. Katich received his undergraduate degree in English Literature locally, at Washington & Jefferson College. He is excited to be back in this familiar region, being able to treat this community that he considers home.

When not at work, Dr. Katich's favorite thing to do is spend his time with his family. He also enjoys reading and Pittsburgh sports.

To make an appointment call **(724) 229-2424**



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# Living Well With A Disability

## DON SERVICES ... A Home Care Agency and So Much More

DON Services is a home care agency with a mission to assist people with disabilities to live how and where they choose by providing Home and Community Based Services in several counties across southwestern Pennsylvania. There are other agencies that would be considered similar providers; however, DON is unique and offers many benefits and opportunities which other companies do not.

Consumers and the community are at the center of everything DON does. For example, DON Enterprises Inc., administers a USDA Home Preservation grant that has provided more than \$62,260 in home repair funding to low-income homeowners with disabilities living in Westmoreland County. Disability Options Network, a Center for Independent Living (CIL), is a disability rights advocacy agency that supports anyone with a disability living in Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Lawrence, Mercer, or Westmoreland counties. The Network helps consumers to navigate barriers a person may be facing, even creating solutions for needs in the community.

For example, the Network used grant funding to launch a temporary modular aluminum ramp rental program to assist people who are waiting on home modifications through their Medicaid Long Term Services and Supports program.

Recently, the CIL also launched DON Connect, a virtual web-based program that was created to provide a central web-based platform focused on improving the health and well-being of consumers. Anyone can use the platform by scanning the QR code with the camera of a smart device and access a variety of content focusing on eight dimensions of wellness. An added benefit of the program is a commitment to help those with disabilities navigate any barriers to accessing COVID vaccinations or boosters. Disability Options Network, supported by DON Services, will help consumers explore this program and, moving into the second half of 2023, is looking to offer social connections for those with similar interests in various community activities.

DON provides free one-on-one support to any person needing guidance through the often complicated enrollment process for Medicaid in order to help that person age in place at home – thereby avoiding a nursing home. A Medicaid Community Health

Choices waiver can cover paid caregivers providing support with daily activities, such as shopping assistance; helping with activities in the home such as meal assistance, light housekeeping, or assistance with laundry; or even personal care. DON Services strives to be person centered by connecting consumers to other services that might be able to meet additional needs.

If you are already caring for a loved one, DON can help you explore if it is possible for you to get paid for the assistance you are already providing.

DON focuses on empowering individuals with disabilities to live as independently as they choose and is always seeking employees that want to make a difference and get involved, both in the life of an individual and in helping that individual get connected with their community.

> Call **DON** at **1-866-652-5121** to learn about programs or even explore employment opportunities. DON has offices located in Donora, Greensburg, New Castle and Pittsburgh.



Interested in working with people in your community who need help with daily living activities?



Scan the QR code or visit our website at [www.doninc.org](http://www.doninc.org) for a list of opportunities!

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# Living Well With A Disability

## Good Advice On How to Adapt to Life With A Disability

By Nancy Kennedy

ACCORDING TO THE U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC), ONE IN FOUR AMERICANS LIVES WITH A DISABILITY. This disability can take many forms and may be the result of injury, illness, accident or a congenital condition. The “official” definition of a person with disability, defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), (1990), is “someone who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of their major life activities.”

Adapting to life as a person with a disability may be daunting. Sometimes, a disability happens in slow increments as a disease

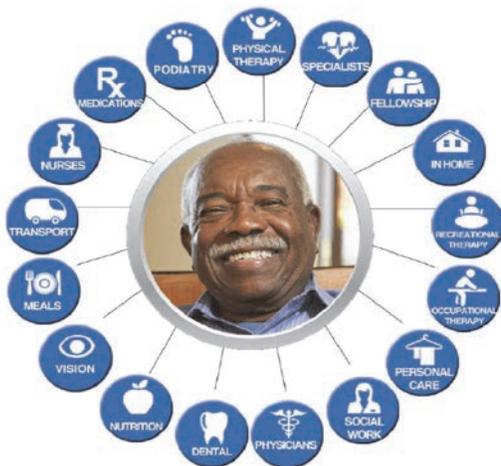


such as arthritis or cancer progresses; other times, it happens suddenly and unexpectedly, as a consequence of an accident. In either case, there is likely to be grief and sadness at the loss of certain abilities and capacities, such as mobility or independence. But there also are numerous ways to ease the transition to a different way of life. Modifications, resources and supports abound and can make life healthy, manageable and rewarding.

*Continued on following page*

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[www.lifepittsburgh.org](http://www.lifepittsburgh.org)

412-388-8050 TTY:711

# LIVING WELL WITH A DISABILITY

Continued from previous page

## Educate Yourself

Learn as much as you can about your condition and treatment. Being informed makes it easier to act as your own advocate, with medical professionals, therapists and government agencies. Keep up with the latest research about new medications or findings. Online support groups provide much sharing of new information.

## Accept Reality

Although it is normal to feel sadness and grief as you experience the losses associated with a change in your health or abilities, it is also essential that you face the reality of any new limitations. Look forward as much as possible and focus on those things you are still able to do.

## Ask for Help

Asking for help is difficult for many people. But you may not be able to meet all of your daily living needs on your own. Disability can be very complex, with physical, emotional and financial dimensions that require professional help. Managing your home environment may no longer be possible without assistance. Help can come from family and friends, from peer support groups, from caregiver agencies and from therapists.

## Figure Out Your Financial Needs

This is not often discussed, but disability can be very expensive. Medication costs, special equipment, vehicle modifications and parking fees for numerous trips to physicians and therapists add up. Finding ways to manage this helps to relieve the economic stress that can impact overall well-being.

## Practice Good Self Care

Persons with disabilities face twice the risk of developing serious chronic conditions such as depression, diabetes, stroke, obesity and heart disease, plus early death, according to the World Health Organization.

Persons with disabilities often have difficulty accessing specialty services including gynecologists and dentists. The challenges associated with these services can be daunting, but you should not neglect your health because of them. Again, be your own advocate and insist that you are accommodated in whatever way is necessary.

If you are going to see a new physician, call first to find out about access to the facility – are there ramps and elevators? What is the parking situation – do they have valets? Let the office know ahead of time if you have special needs.

Prepare for your appointments by making a list of questions and concerns. Make a copy for the doctor. Sometimes, even with preparation, it is difficult to recall everything that the doctor tells you. If you can, take a friend or relative to be a second set of ears. Write down the doctor's answers.



## Cultivate a Social Life

A person with a disability may find that it is difficult to participate in social events, and as a result, may become socially isolated. Stay in touch with family and friends and let them know if you are feeling lonely, sad, anxious or unusually tired. Learn to ask for what you need.

Depression is a common illness, and a very treatable one. Tell a friend and your physician if you are feeling hopeless or having thoughts of self-harm. There is help available. If these thoughts are urgent, call 911 or go to the nearest ER.

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# Living Well With A Disability

## VFI Waiting for 'Missing Part'

By Lois Thomson

The completion of the new VFI/TRPIL facility in Washington, Pa., is contingent on one part: the HVAC unit. Unfortunately that part is not available, so finalization of the construction is temporarily on hold. As a result, according to Steve Johnson, "We're optimistic that we're looking at late April, in terms of a grand opening."

Johnson is director of marketing for Voices For Independence (VFI) in Erie and Transitional Paths to Independent Living (TRPIL) in Washington, Pa., and he further explained, "It's all contingent on the finalization of the HVAC unit, which I believe is due to a supply chain issue, but we've been able to work with the contractors – Building Systems, Inc. – to get essentially everything else done in the meantime."

The facility is TRPIL's new program and community center at 42 West Maiden St., which will provide an expansion of the services offered at the previous site on Beau St. TRPIL and VFI serve the community as Centers for Independent Living, assisting with information, referrals, skills training, support, and transition services, among others.

Once completed, the new center will also offer accessible areas where consumers can receive help in learning how to adapt to independent living – for example, an accessible training kitchen. Johnson said, "We've been able to secure all the appliances to be installed, and the kitchen will allow both caregivers and con-

sumers to learn cooking skills in a setting they can incorporate at home."

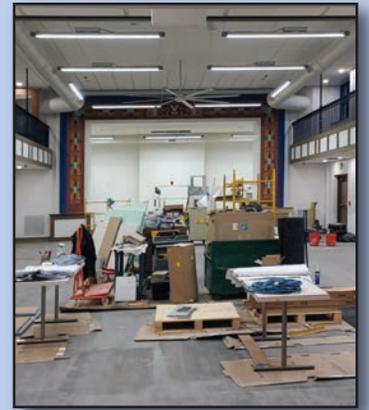
An assistive technology area will allow consumers to use the internet and familiarize themselves with technology they may not have at home, with staff who are familiar with assistive technology on hand to provide guidance.

Still currently at the Beau St. facility is the fully accessible wellness center, but Johnson said that will be relocated when everything is finished. "We didn't want to take that away from anyone while this construction was going on. So our fitness and wellness staff are still working out of that building to provide one-on-one workouts, and training and nutrition sessions."

Johnson said all of these services are available at the VFI facility in Erie, and added, "This is the kind of relationship that we hope to cultivate in Washington – one where consumers can visit frequently, enjoy the services and amenities on a regular basis, and grow as individuals – whether through learned skills, gained independence, or growth within social circles and the community."

"Once we're able to finally open to the public, the fruits of our labor will truly be recognized, and that's what this is all about – to provide a new avenue for consumers and caregivers alike to come in and utilize our facility for whatever they might need."

> For more information, call (724) 223-5115 or visit [www.vficil.org](http://www.vficil.org).



Steve Johnson said renovations on the auditorium in TRPIL's Maiden St. building – the former YWCA – are more than 90 percent completed. The contractors were able to find the original molding that frames the stage and have it recast in the same colors, and also kept the ironwork that surrounds the balcony. "It's like a piece of history incorporated into this historic auditorium; it has touches of the past woven into this brand new center with all of the modern amenities."



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www.childshomepgh.org  
Childs Way is a daycare for medically fragile children housed within The Children's Home & Lemieux Family Center.

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DON Services is a licensed home care agency that provides in-home, non-medical care and other approved support services to individuals who choose to live in their home or community setting rather than in a nursing facility.

### DISABILITY RESOURCES

#### TRPIL (Transitional Paths to Independent Living)

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#### UPMC Disability Resource Center- Forbes Tower -

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### DEVELOPMENT/ EARLY INTERVENTION

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### MEDICAID

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### TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

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# Senior Guide

## Hearing Loss is Associated with Dementia – Get Your Hearing Tested!



Forty million Americans suffer from hearing loss, and nearly half of these people have never had a hearing test. Hearing loss is associated with dementia, and it can lead to social isolation and depression as well.

Anyone can get a telephone-based hearing assessment from the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) – even non-members. AARP has an online Hearing Center where you can sign up for the National Hearing Test. It's free for members!

The AARP Hearing Center has lots of good information, including signs of hearing loss and information on how your daily personal habits may be contributing to your changing ability to hear.

Hearing loss is NOT an inevitable part of aging! Get a hearing test this year.

## Seasonal Affective Disorder: Don't be SAD

You can counter effects of winter darkness with strategies that anyone can employ. Don't give in to the inertia and moodiness that SAD can cause.

Antidotes to seasonal affective disorder:

- **Light** – turn on your indoor lights. Don't sit in the darkness. If a sunny day comes along, take advantage of it – go for a walk, step outside, take a ride somewhere. Follow the sun!
- **Go to nature** – surround yourself with nature whenever possible, even in winter. Go to Phipps Conservatory, the National Aviary and the Pittsburgh Botanical Garden.
- **Seek community.** Get together with others, in your neighborhood or maybe at church. Many libraries have social programs. Or, volunteer!
- **Movement!** Walk, exercise, get busy. If you have to stay home, find a TV exercise program, Tai Chi, yoga, chair exercise – there are many options.
- **Find the beauty in winter.** Snow can be dangerous and inconvenient, but it is also beautiful and a source of great fun. Appreciate the beauty and peace that a snowfall can bring.



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## GO Westmoreland Offers Seniors and Disabled Transportation Services

The face of seniors is changing in Westmoreland County, and GO Westmoreland recognizes this with their continued effort to assist older adults with active aging and independent living. The GO Westmoreland Senior Shared-Ride Program is a feasible alternative to driving. Trips can be taken for any purpose, such as going to the grocery store, a medical appointment, or even the hair salon. Riding with GO Westmoreland allows older adults to confidently get to their destination, no matter the occasion. GO Westmoreland riders are required to schedule their trips in advance, share the vehicle with other passengers, and make stops along the way before being dropped off at their destination. Funding for this door-to-door program is provided by the Pennsylvania State Lottery. Once enrolled in the program, older adults 65+ may travel at a discounted rate using the GO Westmoreland Senior Shared-Ride Program. They would also be able to travel on any fixed-route public bus service in the State for free.

Additional discounts for the Senior Shared-Ride Program are available through the Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging (AAA). When an adult 65+ registers with the AAA for their Priority Transportation Program, an extra 10% is deducted from their copay when traveling to certain destinations. Some eligible trips are medical appointments, Senior Centers, Senior Center based shopping, AAA Adult Day Care, and AAA Vision Care.

GO Westmoreland doesn't just provide transportation to seniors. They also provide transportation for persons receiving medical assistance. With the Medical Assistance Shared-Ride Program, trips can only be taken for medical purposes, but are done so completely free of charge. Funding for this program is made possible through the Department of Human Services.

Disability Transportation is another valuable service provided by GO Westmoreland. The Americans with Disabilities Program (ADA) and Persons with Disabilities Program (PWD), provides transportation for those who cannot cognitively and/or physically utilize fixed-route public bus services. Trips can be taken for any purpose with this program. Many riders use it to go to work, school, and play! This program is available to riders under the age of 65 and does require a copay.



> To learn more about the transportation options offered by **GO Westmoreland**, visit their website at [www.westmorelandtransit.com/go-westmoreland/](http://www.westmorelandtransit.com/go-westmoreland/) or call (724) 832-2706.

Westmoreland County

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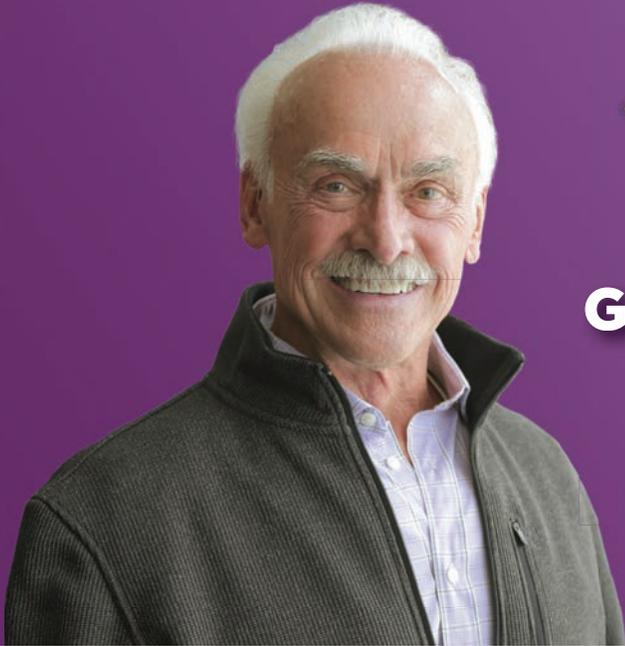


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By **Randy Hebert, MD**

The Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) is a model of care focused on maintaining the ability of our most vulnerable citizens to live in the community. The model is founded on the belief that the well-being and dignity of seniors with chronic illness is maximized by preserving independence in their homes for as long as possible.

To qualify for PACE, a person must be age 55 or over and be certified by the state as needing nursing home level of care. The typical participant is 80 years old, has eight chronic medical conditions, and limitations in three activities of daily living. In addition, most are low income and enrolled in both Medicare and Medicaid (i.e. dual eligible). Nearly half have been diagnosed with dementia. Nonetheless, despite these high care needs, 90 percent of participants are able to live in the community.

PACE can successfully provide care because the care team focuses on a small number of people (e.g. a national average of approximately 110 participants per medical provider) while using the expertise of a multidisciplinary team to anticipate and address the continuum of participants physical, psychosocial, spiritual, and practical needs.



## PACE Preserves Independence at Home

### Services include:

**Health and Wellness Center:** PACE programs are often centralized in a center that houses a medical suite, pharmacy, day center, a dining area, showers for participants, and laundry facilities.

**Medical Care:** is coordinated by a primary care provider with expertise in the care of the frail elderly, with the support of nursing, physical and occupational therapy, home health care, hospice, audiology, dentistry, optometry, podiatry, and specialist services as needed.

**Social services:** key members of the interdisciplinary team include social workers, transportation staff who drive participants to the center and medical appointments, day center staff, clergy, recreational therapists, and music therapists.

These services come together in a “typical day” for a participant who will be picked up at home by a PACE van and driven to the day center. When at the center, the participant will have meals and laundry provided as needed. They will spend some time socializing with other participants, may see physical and occupational therapy who will assess and develop a plan to maximize their ability to live safely in the community, and see the medical providers and other team members as needed and on a scheduled basis. When not in the center, participants will be called and/or seen at home by staff. This model of care is associated with fewer hospitalizations, readmissions, and nursing home placements at lower costs than seen in comparable patient populations.



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> **Dr. Randy Hebert** is Medical Director at **Community Life**.  
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## Choosing Hospice to Enhance Quality of Life



By **Evalisa McClure**

Knowing when to pursue hospice care can be a difficult decision. Whether you are a patient or a family member, having the correct information about hospice services can help you decide whether this care is appropriate. Hospice is for people with advanced illness, no matter their age, culture, beliefs, or cause of illness. Hospice care supports people near the end

of life by providing individualized plans focused on each patient's goals and wishes.

### What You Should Know About Hospice Care

Hospice is for patients who have 6 months or less to live according to their physician. This can be extended when needed. Patients can leave, or "revoke their hospice status," at any time. They can also come back to hospice at any time, as long as they meet hospice eligibility guidelines. There is no time limit a patient can remain on hospice.

Also, most hospice patients do not have any out-of-pocket expenses. Medicare Part A covers up to 100% of the cost of hospice care related to a hospice-eligible patient's illness, with no deductible or copayment. Private or employer-provided health coverage can vary by provider. Medicaid provides hospice coverage, but it varies by state.

### Why Hospice? Improving Quality of Life

Hospice is a service that comes to a patient in the place they prefer to be for end-of-life care. Patients at home feel better surrounded by those faces and things they love. To ease pain, hospice doctors try to give just enough medicine to manage the symptoms and comfort level of the patient. Hospice also provides home medical equipment and supplies related to the cause of the illness.

With support and expertise from the hospice team, family and friends are a hospice patient's primary caregivers. For patients who live in assisted living communities and nursing homes, the hospice team works together with the facility staff.

After a patient dies, hospice addresses the emotional and spiritual pain suffered by loved ones for more than a year.

### Support As You Consider Hospice

Hospice is not an easy decision, though it may be the right one for you or your loved one. VITAS® Healthcare offers hospice services designed to surround patients, their families, and caregivers with support that elevates quality of life, manages their symptoms and pain, and ensures comfort and dignity during one of life's most difficult - but meaningful - periods.

**> Evalisa McClure** is the general manager of **VITAS® Healthcare in Pittsburgh**. For more information about VITAS hospice services, call **(800) 723-3233** or visit **VITAS.com**.

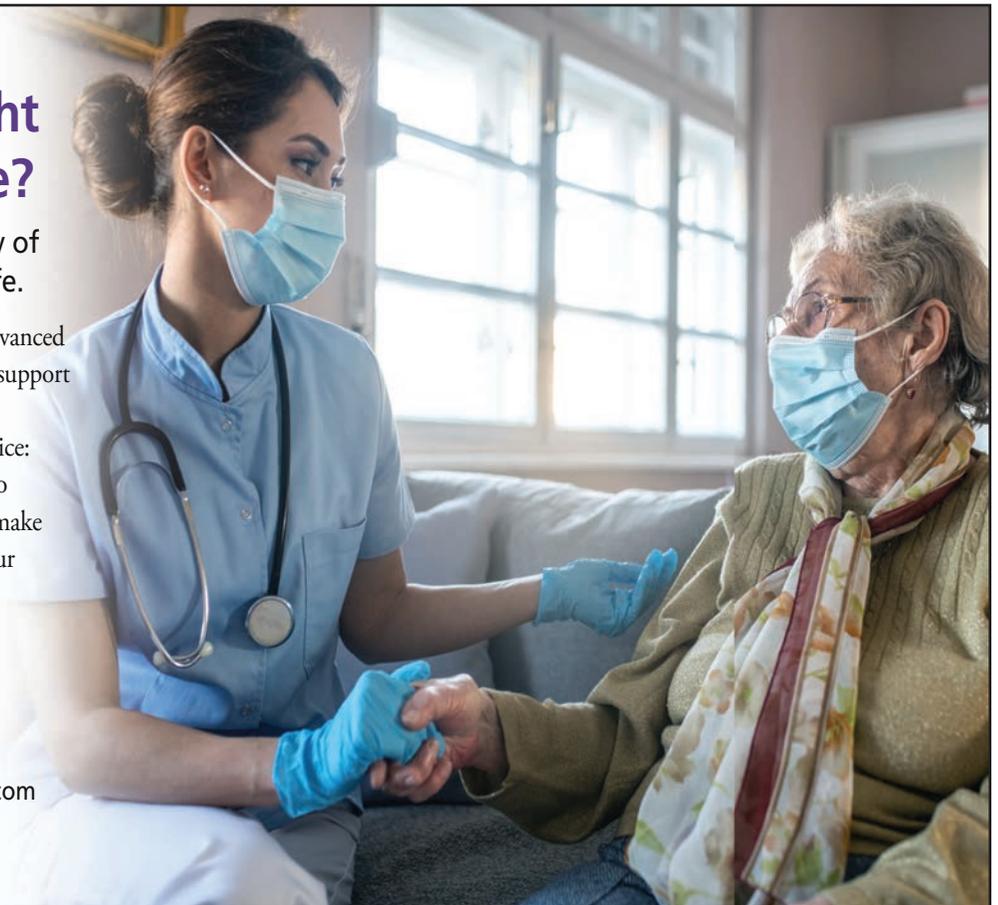
## Is Hospice Care Right for Your Loved One?

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When a family member is struggling with advanced illness, hospice care can offer compassionate support during this difficult period. With the VITAS comprehensive guide, *Thinking About Hospice: Discussion Guide for Families*, you'll begin to understand available options and be able to make well-informed decisions about the care of your loved one.

Download the discussion guide at [HospiceCanHelp.com](https://www.HospiceCanHelp.com).

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**St. Augustine Plaza**  
230 Thirty-Sixth Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15201  
412.683.6155



**Sto-Rox Plaza**  
731 Chartiers Avenue  
McKees Rocks, PA 15136  
412.331.4112



**Alexis Manor**  
10100 Old Perry Hwy  
Wexford, PA 15090  
724.935.7411



**Germaine Harbor**  
100 Germaine Drive  
Bethel Park, PA 15102  
412.833.9818



**John Paul Plaza**  
1005 Herron Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
412.683.5850



**St. Joseph Terrace**  
45 Plum Street  
Weedville, PA 15868  
814.787.8772



**St. Ambrose Manor**  
1235 Yetta Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212  
412.322.2111



**Leo Meyer Manor**  
1015 Church Avenue  
McKees Rocks, PA 15136  
412.331.8000



**Gilbert Straub Plaza**  
620 Reamer Avenue  
S. Greensburg, PA 15601  
724.832.2280



**Clairvaux Commons**  
100 Clairvaux Drive  
Indiana, PA 15701  
724.349.2920



**Fox Township Manor**  
108 Irishtown Road  
Kersey, PA 15846  
814.885.6855



**St. Thomas More Manor**  
1000 Oxford Drive  
Bethel Park, PA 15102  
412.833.2410

We invite you to join us and experience the enriched joy of Senior Living.

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All the Comforts  
of Home!*

Christian Housing, Inc.  
3898 Old William Penn Highway  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Visit our website at [www.christian-housing.org](http://www.christian-housing.org) or call (412) 646-5193



## What Life Enrichment Looks Like in a Memory Care Community

Families who need assistance with the care of a loved one who is living with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia are relying on memory care communities for support.

Anthology of McCandless in Pittsburgh, PA, designed its Virtue Memory Care Neighborhood to help residents thrive in mind, body and spirit. Daily programming is customized around each resident, offering flexible schedules and activities designed to instill meaning, assurance and purpose. Families are welcome to visit and join in activities in the memory care neighborhood. Caregivers engage with you and your loved one to learn all they can about family history, careers, hobbies and values, playing a key role in helping ensure that residents' lives remain vibrant and meaningful.

Anthology of McCandless provides social, cultural and recreational activities, including art and music programs for memory recall through musical events, self-expression and a personalized digital jukebox. A multitude of on-site activities, such as yoga classes, crafts and mindfulness programs, are all part of the robust calendar of events. With on-site amenities like a fitness center and an enrichment program for relaxation through essential oils, aroma-



therapy, healing touch and pet therapy, residents feel relaxed and happy.

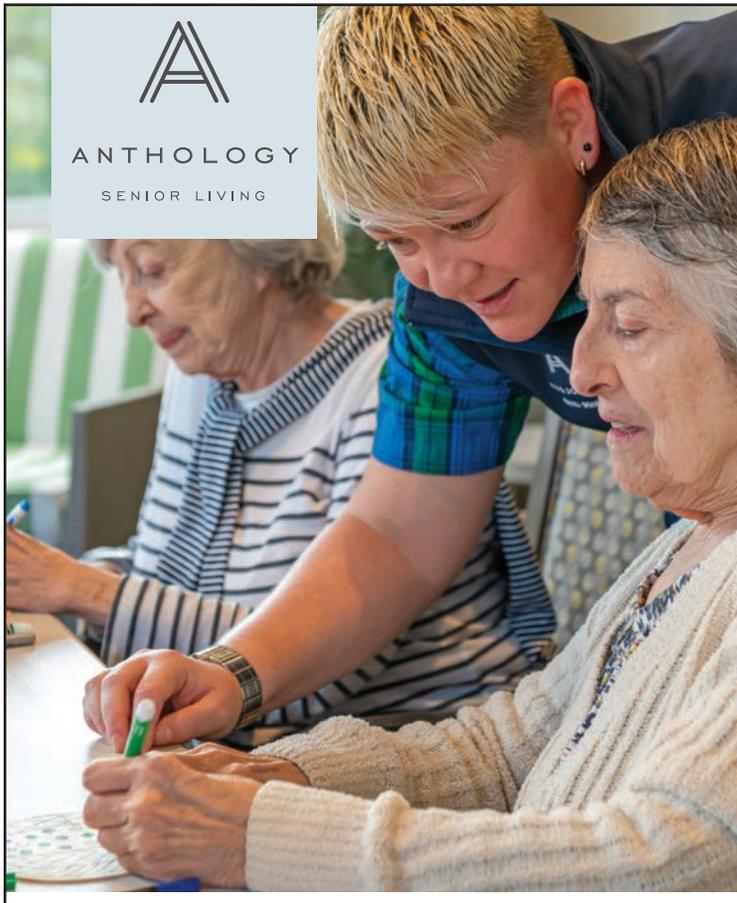
Even the dining experience is designed for familiarity by creating the residents' favorite foods in an appealing way. Three daily gourmet meals supervised by a registered dietitian and prepared by in-house chefs are a highlight of residents' days. The social interaction that takes place in the community's restaurant-style dining room fosters a sense of belonging and encourages residents to engage with their neighbors, which helps

improve emotional health.

Highly certified caregivers at Anthology of McCandless receive rigorous, specialized training in dementia care, plus additional mandatory training each year. Families feel peace of mind knowing their loved ones are receiving seamless care for moderate to late-stage dementia, including care for behaviors such as wandering and exit-seeking.

Offering both personal care and memory care, Anthology of McCandless is continually evolving to deliver an aspirational lifestyle.

> For more information, call **Anthology of McCandless** at **(412) 336-8371** or visit **www.AnthologyMcCandless.com**.



## CHANGE OF CARE CAN BRING PEACE OF MIND

### Anthology Memory Care

When someone you love is living with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia, we're at your service. Our memory care neighborhood brings your loved one a sense of belonging while you gain peace of mind.

PEACE OF MIND IS A  
PHONE CALL AWAY:  
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ANTHOLOGY OF MCCANDLESS

8651 Carey Ln. / Pittsburgh, PA

Personal Care / Memory Care

**AnthologyMcCandless.com**





# HERITAGE VALLEY SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY



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**30-32 Heckel Road • Kennedy Twp., PA 15136 | [heritagevalley.org/services/senior-living/](http://heritagevalley.org/services/senior-living/)**



## *Beautiful Senior Apartments Near You!* *“ More than just a place to live! ”*

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2850 East Carson Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15203  
**412-481-0700**

**Munhall Retirement Residence**  
1000 Andrew Street  
Munhall, PA 15120  
**412-462-3200**

**South Hills Retirement Residence**  
125 Ruth Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15211  
**412-481-8100**

**Carnegie Retirement Residence**  
200 Railroad Avenue  
Carnegie, PA 15106  
**412-276-0102**

**Plum Retirement Residence**  
620 Repp Road  
New Kensington, PA 15068  
**724-339-2925**

**Summit Retirement Residence**  
125 South Sixth Street  
Duquesne, PA 15110  
**412-466-7755**

**Emerald Hills Retirement Residence**  
5785 Saltsburg Road  
Penn Hills, PA 15147  
**412-793-3339**

**Retirement Residence of Glassport**  
220 Erie Ave.  
Glassport, PA 15045  
**412-999-1051**

**The Oaks Retirement Residence**  
2967 Jacks Run Road  
White Oak, PA 15131  
**412-675-0412**

**Morningside Crossing**  
1808 Jancey Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15206  
**412-441-1140**

**Ross Hill Retirement Residence**  
7500 Ross Park Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237  
**412-847-0161**

**Woodcrest Retirement Residence**  
1502 Woodcrest Ave.  
Moon, PA 15108  
**412-264-0918**



**[www.cmshousing.com](http://www.cmshousing.com)**

**TDD (800) 545-1833**



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- 2 Bedrooms, 2 Baths.... \$1,350

**All utilities included!**

- Huge floor plans with sunken living rooms and large bay windows
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- Easy access showers available in two bedroom units
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Office (412) 831-9454 • Fax (412) 831-5733

Email: [brightwoodplaza@verizon.net](mailto:brightwoodplaza@verizon.net)



# SENIOR GUIDE

## New Biomarker Test Can Detect Alzheimer's Neurodegeneration in Blood

A group of neuroscientists led by a University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine researcher developed a test to detect a novel marker of Alzheimer's disease neurodegeneration in a blood sample. A study on their results was published in *Brain*.

The biomarker, called "brain-derived tau," or BD-tau, outperforms current blood diagnostic tests used to detect Alzheimer's-related neurodegeneration clinically. It is specific to Alzheimer's disease and correlates well with Alzheimer's neurodegeneration biomarkers in the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF).

"At present, diagnosing Alzheimer's disease requires neuroimaging," said senior author Thomas Karikari, Ph.D., assistant professor of psychiatry at Pitt. "Those tests are expensive and take a long time to schedule, and a lot of patients, even in the U.S., don't have access to MRI and PET scanners. Accessibility is a major issue."

Scientists hope that monitoring blood levels of BD-tau could improve clinical trial design and facilitate screening and enrollment of patients from populations that historically haven't been included in research cohorts.

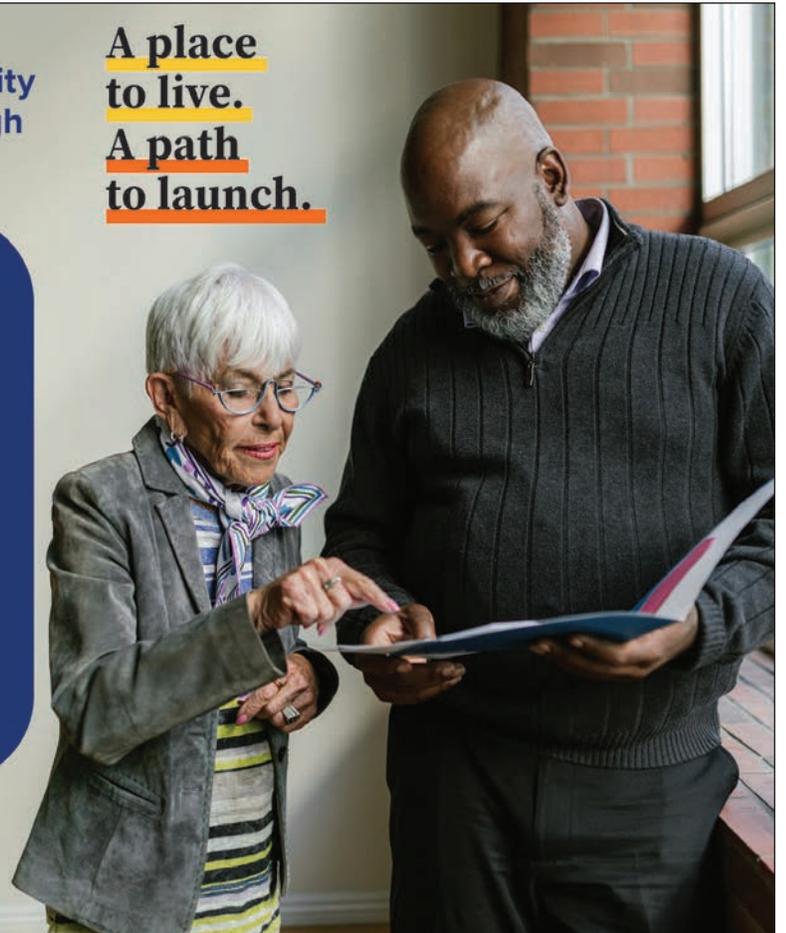


Executive Director  
Caster D. Binion

**A place to live.  
A path to launch.**

The Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (HACP) offers seniors safe housing and a high quality of life. With benefits and amenities like security cameras, appliances, digital literary services, tenant council events and more, HACP's senior housing is a great place to call home.

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# SENIOR RESOURCES



## HEARING

### Rametta Audiology & Hearing Aid Center

Tarentum - 724-604-4006  
Vandergrift - 724-571-2224  
Squirrel Hill - 412-422-8006

## HOME CARE

### Gallagher Home Care Services and Gallagher Home Health Services

412-279-7800 • www.Gallagherhhs.com

## LIFE Pittsburgh

412-388-8050 • www.lifepittsburgh.org

## Seniors Helping Seniors of Southwestern PA

412-944-2470 • www.swpaSeniorCare.com

## HOSPICE

### VITAS Healthcare

800-723-3233 • VITAS.com

## INCONTINENCE

### Tri-Medical

800-541-0734 • www.trimedonline.com

## MEDICARE/INSURANCE

### UPMC Health Plan Medicare Advantage Programs

1-844-443-7927  
Seven days a week 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
TTY: 1-800-361-2629  
upmchealthplan.com/medicare

## RESPITE CARE

### Seniors Helping Seniors of Southwestern PA

412-944-2470  
www.swpaSeniorCare.com

## SENIOR LIVING

### Anthology of McCandless

Personal Care | Memory Care  
8651 Carey Lane, Pittsburgh, PA  
412-336-8371  
AnthologyMcCandless.com  
*You want the best for your loved one and so do we. Join us to get a glimpse of how we empower connections and practice smart compassion.*

### Brightwood Plaza Apartments

4940 Brightwood Rd, Bethel Park  
412-831-9454  
brightwoodplaza@verizon.net

### Christian Housing, Inc

412-646-5193  
www.christian-housing.org  
*Safe, comfortable, community living for adult seniors and persons with disabilities at 15 facilities throughout Pittsburgh area, as well as Greensburg, Elk County and Indiana, PA.*

## CMS Housing

800-545-1833 • www.cmshousing.com

## Heritage Valley Senior Living

412-331-6139  
https://www.heritagevalley.org/services/senior-living/  
*Independent Living; Personal Care, Memory Care*

## Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh

412-961-1651 • www.hacp.org  
*Offers seniors safe housing and a high quality of life. Amenities such as security cameras, appliances, digital literacy services, Tenet Council events and more.*

## Quemahoning Towers

814-467-5041 or 814-467-5423  
klivengood@shms-actionhousing.org

## SENIOR SERVICES

### Community Life

1-866-419-1693 www.commlife.org

## LIFE Pittsburgh

412-388-8050  
www.lifepittsburgh.org

## Peoples Gas

### Dollar Energy Fund

1-800-400-WARM (9276)  
peoples-gas.com/help

## Seniors Helping Seniors of Southwestern PA

412-944-2470  
www.swpaSeniorCare.com

## SKILLED NURSING & REHABILITATION

### Westmoreland Manor

724-830-4022  
www.westmorelandmanor.org

## SUPPORT GROUPS

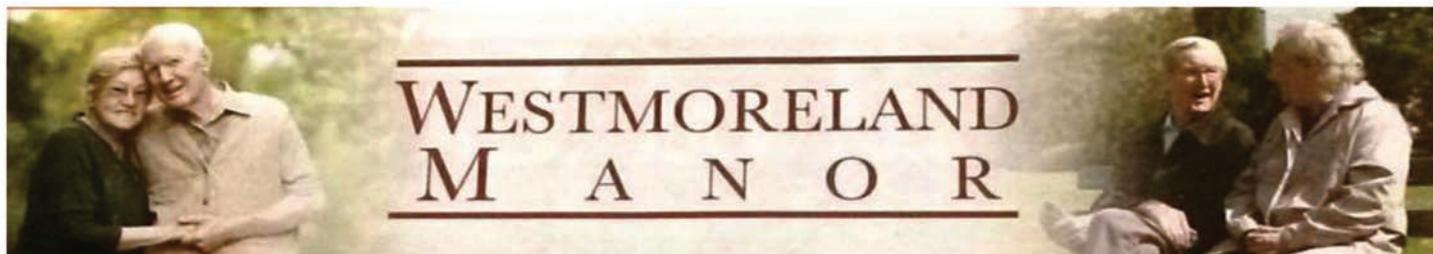
### VITAS Healthcare Family and Caregiver Support

800-723-3233  
VITAS.com

## TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

### Westmoreland Transit

1 (800) 221-9282  
*Door-to-door service to older adults 65+ and people with disabilities. Older Adults 65+ ride FREE, Commuter service to Pittsburgh*



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- Comprehensive Respiratory Care including Tracheostomy & Non-Invasive Ventilation
- Respite and Hospice Care
- Surgical Recovery

Dr. Thomas DeGregory, Medical Director

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[www.westmorelandmanor.org](http://www.westmorelandmanor.org)

**We also offer the Eagle Tree  
Independent Living Apartments  
in a Protective Environment**



# Healthcare DIRECTORY



*In order to choose a health professional who is right for you, you need information. The following guide is a good place to start.*

## **ADDICTION/SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

**Gateway Rehab**  
1-800-472-1177  
gatewayrehab.org

**Westmoreland Drug & Alcohol Commission, Inc.**  
724-243-2220  
www.wedacinc.org

## **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADULT**

**Heritage Valley Adult Behavioral Health**  
Beaver 724-773-4525  
Heritage Valley Adult Behavioral Health Unit – Kennedy 412-847-7510  
Heritage Valley Geriatric Behavioral Health Unit – Kennedy 412-777-6420  
Staunton Clinic Outpatient Services 412-749-7330 or 412-749-7341  
www.heritagevalley.org/services/behavioral-health

## **CARDIOVASCULAR**

**Greater Pittsburgh Vascular Medicine**  
412-469-1500  
www.greaterpittsburghvascular.com

**Heritage Valley Health System**  
724-773-4502  
HVMG Health & Vascular Center– Beaver  
HVMG Heart & Vascular Center – Calcutta/East Liverpool  
HVMG Heart & Vascular Center – Ellwood City  
HVMG Heart & Vascular – Kennedy 412-777-4386  
HVMG Heart & Vascular Center – Leetsdale  
John “Tito” Francona Heart & Vascular Center - Beaver  
www.heritagevalley.org/services/cardiology/  
www.heritagevalley.org/services/cardiiovascular-services/

**Jefferson Cardiology Association**  
412-469-1500  
www.jeffersoncardiology.com

**St. Clair Health**  
412-942-4000 • www.stclair.org

**WHS Cardiovascular Care**  
724-225-6500  
whs.org/cardiiovascularcare

## **CAREERS IN HEALTHCARE**

**Washington Health System School of Nursing**  
whs.org/schoolofnursing  
724-223-3167

## **DENTAL**

**Valley Brook Dental**  
Joseph L. Gurecka, DMD  
724-942-8982 • valleybrookdental.com

## **DISABILITY RESOURCES**

**DON Services**  
866-652-5121  
www.doninc.org

## **FLU VACCINATION**

**Allegheny County Health Department**  
425 1st Ave, 4th Floor Pittsburgh, PA 15219 412-578-8062  
*Get your vaccine today. For more information, visit AlleghenyCounty.US/Influenza*

## **HEALTH, WELLNESS AND FITNESS CENTERS**

**The Community & Recreation Center at Boyce Mayview Park**  
412-221-1099  
www.twpusc.org/crc/cre-home

**WHS Wilfred R Cameron Wellness Center**  
724-225-WELL • wrcameronwellness.org

## **HOSPITALS**

**Advanced Surgical Hospital**  
724-884-0710 • www.ashospital.net  
*Orthopedic Surgery Hospital  
Onsite MRI and PT/OT Services*

**Heritage Valley Health System**  
HeritageValley.org • 1-877-771-4847  
Heritage Valley Beaver 724-728-7000  
Heritage Valley Kennedy 412-777-6161  
Heritage Valley Sewickley 412-741-6600

**St. Clair Health**  
412-942-4000 • www.stclair.org

**WHS Washington Hospital**  
724-225-7000 • www.whs.org

## **IMAGING**

**St. Clair Health Diagnostic Imaging Services**  
www.stclair.org  
*Diagnostic imaging services at St. Clair Outpatient Center – Bethel Park and Peters Township; and MRI Center on Broughton Road.*

## **MASSAGE THERAPY**

**Honor Your Body**  
412-212-0231  
www.honoryourbodywellness.com

## **MEDICAL EQUIPMENT**

**Sleep Pittsburgh**  
Lift Chairs • 412-462-7858  
www.SleepPittsburgh.com

## **ORTHOPEDICS**

**Advanced Orthopaedics & Rehabilitation**  
1-800-828-CAST (2278)  
www.advancedorthopaedics.net

**Heritage Valley Orthopedics**  
Heritage Valley Beaver 724-775-4242  
Heritage Valley Kennedy 412-787-7582  
Heritage Valley Sewickley 412-262-7800  
www.heritagevalley.org/services/orthopedics/

**St. Clair Hospital Center for Orthopedics**  
412-942-4000 - stclair.org

**WHS Orthopedics and Sport Medicine**  
724-206-0610 • whsdocs.org

## **ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY**

**Oral & Facial Surgery of Pittsburgh**  
Dr. Richard E. Bauer and  
Dr. Craig S. Norbutt  
412-532-9720  
info@ofspittsburgh.com  
www.OFSPittsburgh.com

## **ORTHODONTICS**

**Good Orthodontics**  
Washington 724-225-1114  
Mount Lebanon 412-344-4663  
Pleasant Hills 412-655-4660

## **PEDIATRICS**

**WHS Washington Pediatrics**  
724-250-6001 • www.whs.org

## **PHYSICAL THERAPY**

**Fyzical Therapy & Balance Centers**  
McMurray, Bethel Park, Cecil  
724-941-7070  
www.fyzical.com

**WHS Outpatient Rehabilitation**  
724-250-6280 • whs.org/rehab

## **PHYSICIANS**

**Heritage Valley Robinson Township Medical Neighborhood**  
HeritageValley.org  
*Home to a variety of services and physician practices.*

**HVMG Park Manor Medical Associates**  
2201 Park Manor Blvd  
412-749-6920 • HeritageValley.org  
*Same Day Sick Visits, Self scheduling at cms.hvhs.org/carelink/*

**Dr. Richard E. Bauer and Dr. Craig S. Norbutt**  
Oral & Facial Surgery of Pittsburgh  
412-532-9720  
info@ofspittsburgh.com  
www.OFSPittsburgh.com

**St. Clair Medical Services**  
www.stclair.org

**Washington Physician Hospital Organization Provider Network**  
whs.org

## **REHABILITATION**

**Advanced Orthopaedics & Rehabilitation**  
1-800-828-CAST (2278)  
www.advancedorthopaedics.net

**Encompass Health**  
THE TRUSTED CHOICE  
encompasshealth.com/pittsburghrehab  
*Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Harmarville*  
320 Guys Run Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15238  
877-937-7342  
*Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Sewickley*  
351 Camp Meeting Road  
Sewickley, PA 15143  
412-749-2396  
*The nation's largest system of rehabilitation hospitals and the trusted choice of medical professionals.*

# Need Help With Your Gas Bill?

## Use Peoples' Online ProgramFinder for Assistance

At Peoples, we understand it can sometimes be difficult to pay your gas bill. We're here to help you find the best solution to keep you safe and warm.

Customer support programs including LIHEAP, CAP and Dollar Energy Fund are available if you're in need of financial assistance. Start by visiting Peoples' ProgramFinder at [www.peoples-gas.com/help](http://www.peoples-gas.com/help). This is an anonymous and confidential tool that can help you find out which assistance programs for which you may be eligible.

"At Peoples, we understand it can sometimes be difficult to pay your natural gas bills, especially during the winter season," said Rita Black, director of community assistance programs for Peoples, an Essential Utilities company. "We are dedicated to helping our customers in need find the best possible solution to keep them safe and warm, and educate them about the various assistance programs available to them."

**Don't forget to check off these boxes:  
Your "Save Money, Keep Warm" Checklist:**

- **ProgramFinder**  
Visit [www.peoples-gas.com/help](http://www.peoples-gas.com/help) to find out if you're eligible for Peoples' customer support programs
- **Dial: 800-400-WARM (9276)**
- **Apply for CAP**  
An affordable bill based on household income  
Earn monthly credits to reduce your balance faster
- **Apply for Dollar Energy Fund**  
A grant that helps you pay your gas bill
- **Learn about LIHEAP**  
A federally funded grant program that provides a grant directly to your gas bill account

**If you or someone you know is experiencing financial hardship with winter heating bills, Peoples is here to help. Visit [www.peoples-gas.com/help](http://www.peoples-gas.com/help) or call 1-800-400-WARM.**

### DO YOU NEED HELP WITH YOUR GAS BILL?

Dollar Energy Fund provides grants up to \$500 to households experiencing hardship. Call us at **1-800-400-WARM (9276)** or visit [peoples-gas.com/help](http://peoples-gas.com/help).

**WE'RE HERE TO HELP.**





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# Best.

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Mary J. Sims, M.D.

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