

# Healthy Lifestyles

November 9, 2022

## Vassar Brothers Hospital School of Nursing Alumnae honor Class of 1972 at luncheon

By Mary Jo Russell  
MLS, AHIP

Seventy alumnae of the Vassar Brothers Hospital School of Nursing and invited guests gathered together for the annual alumnae luncheon, sponsored by the school's Alumnae Association on Saturday, Sept. 24.

Graduates of the Class of 1972 celebrated their 50th anniversary and were honored with flowers, gifts and special recognition. This was the last class to graduate from the School, which closed when the program transferred to Dutchess Community College.

Displays of memorabilia included a nursing student uniform, photos, a nurse doll, class reunion items, a signed nurses' cap for the Class of



Members of the Vassar Brothers Hospital School of Nursing Class of 1972 celebrated their 50th anniversary during a luncheon in late September. Courtesy photos

1958, thanking Judy for her many years of service to the association and for her

As a gift to the alumnae, a VBH School of Nursing History was unveiled, compiled by Mary Jo Russell, librarian at Vassar Brothers Medical Center and the School's archivist.

In her presentation of the gift, she thanked alumnae who had answered her many questions and assisted with the compilation.

In appreciation for her efforts and for her

preservation of the history of the school, the Alumnae Association presented her with an honorary membership in the association.

A delicious luncheon and much camaraderie among former classmates made the day very special to all who came, and everyone received an Alumnae Association complimentary gift bag filled with goodies.



Alumnae Association president Judith Piplow McMichael, Class of 1958, received a commemorative plaque presented by Sallie Simmons Foster, Class of 1958, thanking Judy for her many years of service to the association and for her leadership as president since 2014.

1972, and a school of nursing timeline.

Alumnae Association president Judith Piplow McMichael, Class of 1958, received a commemorative plaque presented by Sallie Simmons Foster, Class of

leadership as president since 2014.

Judith Conklin Brandow, also from the Class of 1958, donated a pocket dictionary owned by her mother, Ruth Mead Conklin, Class of 1931, to the archives.



Displays of memorabilia included photos, a nurse doll, class reunion items, a signed nurses' cap for the Class of 1972, and a school of nursing timeline.



# Urinary incontinence and solutions for a healthy lifestyle

By Laura Baldi  
Brookmeade Community



Laura Baldi

According to the U.S. Department of Health, more than 13 million people in the United States suffer from urinary incontinence. Urinary incontinence is a significant health problem worldwide with considerable social and economic impact on individuals and society.

What is normal? The average bladder can hold about two cups of fluid before it needs to be emptied, causing the average person six to eight trips to the restroom during a 24-hour period. As we get older, our bladder capacity may get smaller and the need to pass urine is frequent, but should be no more than every two hours. Getting up

## BROOKMEADE SENIOR CONCEPTS

more than 1-2 times at night to urinate is NOT normal.

Urinary incontinence is the involuntary loss of urine. This disorder is under-recognized and under-reported. Many individuals are uncomfortable talking about incontinence, whether it be with their friends, spouses or healthcare providers. We need to lose that stigma and start the conversation about urinary incontinence in order to help alleviate its symptoms and return to an improved quality of life with less embarrassment.

Incontinence may cause people to feel embarrassment, leading them to restrict their normal daily activities and ultimately cause a decline in quality of life. There is

also an increased burden of care that comes along with incontinence: depression, decreased socialization, sleep disruptions, increased risk of falls and skin integrity compromise.

There are several types of incontinence:

- Urge incontinence - uncontrolled leakage that occurs suddenly. It is an irrepressible need to urinate. This type of incontinence increases individuals' risk of falls due to the attempt to get to the bathroom quickly.
- Stress incontinence - due to abrupt increase in intra-abdominal pressure such as coughing, sneezing, laughing, bending, or lifting.

• Overflow incontinence - dribbling of urine due to a full bladder causing constant leakage.

• Functional incontinence - due to decreased cognition or physical impairment such as dementia or Alzheimer, interfering with the ability to recognize the need to urinate or be able to find the restroom. People who are bedridden may also suffer from this due to the inability to get to the bathroom or receive help in time.

• Mixed incontinence - a person with multiple types of incontinence.

In young women, incontinence is usually low. It peaks around menopause, with a steady rise there-after, rapidly increasing at ages 70 through 80. In men, the prevalence of incontinence is much lower. Stress incontinence accounts for less than 10 percent of cases and is attributable to prostate surgery, trauma, or neurological injury. Incontinence in men also increases with age, but severe incontinence in 70 to 80-year-old men is about half of that in women.

Although incontinence is more common among older individuals, it is not a normal part of aging. Incontinence may be temporary or chronic. The most common causes of incontinence are overactive bladder, pelvic muscle weakness and functional disorders. Medical diagnoses which can lead to incontinence include dementia, stroke, urinary tract stones, and prostate disorders to name a few.

Weakness of bladder wall muscles and bladder outlet obstruction can lead to urinary retention which in turn can lead to overflow incontinence due to an over full bladder. Diabetes can cause increase in volume of urine, as well as the use of diuretics. Excessive intake of caffeine or alcohol can also lead to continence difficulties. However, these should not cause chronic incontinence.

People may not mention incontinence to their doctors. If symptoms of incontinence are bothersome, interfere with normal activities of daily living, or cause you to curtail social activities, you should see a doctor. Doctors will ask about the circumstances of urine loss, including amount, time of day, any precipitating factor like coughing, sneezing, laughing, or straining.

You will be asked if you can sense the need to urinate and if so is it normal or does it come with sudden urgency. Is there pain, burning or irritation with urination, a frequent need, difficulty starting urination or a weak urine stream? It is beneficial to keep a log about habits of intake and urination for a few days to help figure out what type of incontinence may be occurring.

There are therapists that specialize in pelvic floor strengthening and bladder training. A pelvic floor therapist works on strengthening the muscles of the urinary system including the

continued on page 4

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## Alzheimer's Association to offer free events in November

The Alzheimer's Association Hudson Valley Chapter will host the following free events in November. Unless noted otherwise, programs will be virtual, and registration can be made online, searching by zip code for programs at [alz.org](http://alz.org) or by calling the Alzheimer's Association at 800.272.3900.

**Something for Alz: Creative Expression:** 10:30-11:30 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 12, with arts therapist Jayne Henderson, Join us for an interactive program for people with dementia and their family caregivers featuring creative arts activities. Have paper and something to draw with when tuning into this program.

**AlzWell Social Club:** Noon to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 12. A free virtual program for people with early- and middle-stage dementia and their caregivers to socialize and enjoy a variety of activities. Activities include: Movement to music led by a dance therapist, a support group for caregivers and people with dementia led by two art therapists, music, dancing and more. For more information and a Zoom link, contact facilitator Debbie Marks-Kahn at 914.629.4464 or [dkahn28@aol.com](mailto:dkahn28@aol.com)

**Understanding Alzheimers and Dementia followed by**

**virtual panel discussion:** 2-3:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 15: A free virtual program featuring an educational program,

Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia, followed by a panel discussion featuring three members of AlzAuthors.

**Understanding Alzheimers and Dementia** 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 15. A free virtual program in partnership with Pawling Free Library. To register, email the library's Adult Learning Program Coordinator at [adult@pawlinglibrary.org](mailto:adult@pawlinglibrary.org) Learn about the impact of Alzheimer's, the difference between dementia and Alzheimer's, risk factors, disease stages, research, treatments and Alzheimer's Association resources. To register, contact the library at 914.337.5973 or visit [www.ypl.org](http://www.ypl.org).

**Something for Alz: Telling Your Stories:** 11 a.m. to noon Wednesday, Nov. 16. Join us for a free virtual program that offers a chance to tell your story. Both the caregiver and the person with dementia are invited to join, and each will have the opportunity to be guided through this six-week program. Facilitator Nancy Kessler will help participants listen, learn and tell their stories.

**Effective Communication Strategies:** 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 16: A free

virtual program in partnership with Red Hook Public Library with information on how communication takes place when someone has dementia. Learn to decode verbal and behavioral messages delivered by someone with dementia and identify strategies to help you connect and communicate at every stage of the disease. To register, email [adultservices@redhooklibrary.org](mailto:adultservices@redhooklibrary.org)

**Effective Communication Strategies:** 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 18. A free virtual program in partnership with Red Hook Public Library about how communication takes place when someone has dementia. Learn to decode verbal and behavioral messages delivered by someone with dementia and identify strategies to help you connect and communicate at every stage of the disease.

**Virtual Visit with New York Therapy Animals:** 11-11:30 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 17. Viewing and interacting with animals can be a way to relax, interact and meet new friends.

**Something for Alz: Creative Expression** 10:30-11:30 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 19, with arts therapist Jayne Henderson, Join us for an interactive program for people with dementia and their family caregivers featuring creative arts activities. Have

paper and something to draw with when tuning into this program.

**Something for Alz: Musical Moments:** 11 a.m. to noon Friday, Nov. 25. A free virtual interactive program for people with dementia and their family caregivers. Facilitated by music therapist Tim Doak.

**AlzWell Social Club:** Noon to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 12. A free virtual program for people with early- and middle-stage dementia and their caregivers to socialize and enjoy a variety of activities. Activities include: Movement to music led by a dance therapist, a support group for caregivers and people with dementia led by two art therapists, music, dancing and more. For more information and a Zoom link, contact facilitator Debbie Marks-Kahn at 914.629.4464 or [dkahn28@aol.com](mailto:dkahn28@aol.com)

**Something for Alz: Telling Your Stories:** 11 a.m. to noon Wednesday, Nov. 30. Join us for a free virtual program that offers a chance to tell your story. Both the caregiver and the person with dementia are invited to join, and each will have the opportunity to be guided through this six-week program. Facilitator Nancy Kessler will help participants listen, learn and tell their stories.

**Caring for someone with Alzheimer's isn't easy.**

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This advertisement is supported in part by a grant from the New York State Department of Health.

# The importance of teamwork – success happens!

When we work together as a team, success happens. When parents and teachers take the time to pay attention to our children, watch how they learn, observe challenges and frustrations and share this information with each other, we can help our children succeed.

Parents, you know your children best. You know how they behave when they return from school each day. You know if they understand homework assignments, if they can complete them without problems. You observe frustrations, anger, and sadness, as well as their excitement when they succeed.

When you check homework completion, you see where there is a need for improvement and you can give your children the support and encouragement they need before they bring the work to school the next day. Help your children understand that each assignment should be completed with accuracy and care. Neatness does count!

One important strategy you can do for yourself is to keep a daily log, particularly, if your children have problems. Consider this as part of

## MAKING EDUCATION WORK with Diane Fulves

your evening routine, just five minutes to write any problems with homework or concerns you may have. You may write a note to the teacher and be sure to keep a copy of this note. Think of this as a daily dose of preventive medicine!

This log will provide important information when you meet with teachers. It will also demonstrate that you are an involved and watchful parent who pays serious attention to the education of your children. If you see problems, do not hesitate to make an appointment with the teachers. With your help, they can assess specific needs and address them appropriately.

### Working with parents

The importance of teamwork was clearly demonstrated a few years ago. I was asked to offer a workshop in a local school district. A parent in attendance stated that she was angry and did not want to

come to the meeting. Several parents spoke of the problems their children were experiencing in school. I decided to change my approach, put my plans aside and discuss the problems these parents were having with their children and ways to change failure to success.

By the end of the workshop, the angry parent's attitude had changed completely. She said that this was the best thing she had ever done for herself. But she did not stop there. She took the behavior modification plan I had distributed and revised it for her child's needs. The next day she gave the plan to the teacher and asked her to use it to motivate her son. The teacher agreed. Almost immediately, this little boy began to improve. This is the result of teamwork!

Parents and teachers must trust each other. Teachers must be able to trust that children will come to school prepared to learn, with

homework completed, notes and tests signed and returned, and ready to work through the day because they have had a good night's sleep.

Parents must be able to trust that their children will be taught the way they learn. They must know that there is acceptance of their children's differences and willingness to adapt assignments and teaching techniques to help children achieve.

When we listen to each other, we can find a way to help our children and lead them to success. When we educate, we lead our children into wisdom and knowledge. We must not fail in this. Their future is in our hands.

*Diane Fulves, M.A., M.S. Ed., is a learning specialist and advocate for children and parents who is located in Millbrook. She is director of "Empowering Our Parents," which offers information and support to parents. She is the director of Nurture the Spirit and Shakespeare Odyssey, programs that enrich children with the magic of the arts. For more information, please contact her at dee076@verizon.net*

## Urinary incontinence

continued from page 2

abdomen, back and buttock. This in turn helps strengthen the pelvic floor reducing episodes of incontinence, enhancing an individual's quality of life.

### Exercises can help

There are exercises to help strengthen the pelvic floor muscles and help reduce the symptoms of incontinence. These exercises are meant to be used as a general guide only. If you have specific questions, please discuss them with your local continence enhancement therapist.

While sitting upright with good posture, tighten your pelvic floor muscles. You should feel the muscles lift upward toward your core. Imagine you are on a road trip and have to use the bathroom but the next road stop is 30 miles away. The muscles you need to squeeze to hold your urine till the next stop are the muscles you will be targeting. There are two type of muscle contractions:

- Long hold contractions, contract your pelvic floor muscles, squeeze and lift up and in, and hold for ten seconds. Release fully between contractions for four second.
- Quick contractions contract quickly and strongly for two seconds, Release fully and relax muscles down and out in between contractions for two seconds.

Do not hold your breath during any exercises; you can count out loud or sing in order to avoid breath holding.

Repeat each of these exercises for 15 repetitions for a total of two or three sets approximately 30-40 repetitions per day. Do these exercises every day, at different times during the day to gain better control over your bladder.

Perform the following exercises in multiple positions for example, sitting and standing.

- One to two sets per day in the sitting position: Sit in a firm chair with good posture, place both feet on the ground.
- One to two sets in the standing position: Stand with your feet shoulder width apart or a little closer. Keep your low back in a relaxed and neutral posture.

### Watch your intake

Urinary urgency, frequency, or leakage may also be related to foods or drinks that you consume. Keep track of your bladder symptoms and what you drink and eat, to see if there is an association. Some foods can cause bladder irritation and cause increased urgency of urination. Keep a log or diary of your input and output, so you and your therapist can determine an individualized plan of care.

In general, foods and drinks that are acidic, carbonated, or are high in caffeine content are potentially irritating to the bladder. Alcoholic beverages, citrus juices and acidic fruits, artificial sweeteners, caffeine, carbonated drinks, highly spiced foods, milk products, tomato based products, vitamin B complex and vinegar may cause bladder irritation.

It is important to maintain recommended fluid intake. Depending on your body size and environment, drink 4-8 cups (8 oz. each) of fluid per day unless otherwise advised by your doctor. Plain water should account for about half of the fluid that you drink each day.

Not enough fluid concentrates urine making it more irritating. Limit the amount of caffeine and citrus fruits that you consume as these

foods can be associated with increased urinary urgency and frequency. Limit the amount of alcohol that you drink. Alcohol increases urine production and also makes it difficult for the brain to coordinate bladder control. Avoiding constipation by maintaining a balanced diet of dietary fiber and drinking enough water daily will also help alleviate signs and symptoms of incontinence.

It is also important to practice good toileting habits and encourage fully emptying the bladder. One should sit completely on the toilet with relaxed legs, leaning forward bending slightly at the hips, do not hold your breath or bear down, completely relax allowing urine to come out on its own. It can be beneficial to perform double voiding by standing up then sitting back down and repeating the process in order to be sure you have completely emptied the bladder without any urine retention.

An urge to urinate is a signal that you feel as the bladder stretches to fill with urine. Urges can be felt even if the bladder is not full. Urges are not commands to go to the toilet. Urges are a signal from the bladder to the brain and can be controlled. The urge will peak then dissipate over time. If you have an urge to urinate after you have recently urinated, or before you can get to a bathroom, try these strategies.

- Breathe and stay calm, try not to panic or get upset and nervous.
- Distraction: Keep mind busy with a task to stop thinking about your bladder. Try meditation for relaxation, or some type of distraction such as counting backwards.

Urge Suppression Techniques:

- Do a 5-10 quick strong contractions of the pelvic floor muscles to signal the bladder that it is not time to urinate yet, and to reduce the bladder contraction

- Sit on the edge of your chair and raise your heels up and down at least 10 times.

- Sit down: pressure on your bottom may calm the bladder until the urge decreases

Good bladder habits that will help maintain a healthy continent lifestyle. Take your time when emptying your bladder. Don't strain or push to empty your bladder. Allow your bladder to empty each time you pass urine. Do not rush the process. Avoid going to the toilet "just in case" or more often than every two hours, especially if you are having leakage or urgency. It is usually not necessary to go when you feel the first urge. Try to go only when your bladder is full. Retraining the bladder and spacing your fluid intake throughout the day can improve urgency and frequency of urination. Consistently ignoring the urge to go (waiting more than 4 hours between toileting) may be convenient, but is not healthy for your bladder and may contribute to urine leakage.

Bladder health is important in maintaining a good quality of life. Be able to enjoy shopping, restaurants and time with your friends and families without touring every bathroom along the way. Reach out to your local continence specialist to improve your pelvic floor health and get back your life.

*Laura Baldi is the Director of Rehabilitation at Meadows at Brookmeade Community which provides long-term care, sub-acute rehabilitation, palliative care and Out-Patient Rehabilitation.*



# Get moving and 'feel' the benefits of exercise!

By Christian Campilli PT, DPT



Christian Campilli

Most Americans don't move enough despite proven benefits, such as reduced risk of cancer and chronic diseases, and improved bone health, cognitive function, weight control and overall quality of life.

Regular physical activity is one of the most important things people can do to improve their health. Moving more and sitting less have tremendous benefits for everyone, regardless of age, sex, race, ethnicity, or current fitness level. Individuals with a chronic

## BODY KNOWLEDGE

disease or a disability benefit from regular physical activity, as do women who are pregnant. The scientific evidence continues to build—physical activity is linked with even more positive health outcomes than we previously thought. And, even better, benefits can start accumulating with small amounts of, and immediately after doing, physical activity.

### Key guidelines for adults

- Adults should move more and sit less throughout the day. Some physical activity is better than none. Adults who sit less and do

any amount of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity gain some health benefits.

- For substantial health benefits, adults should do at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) to 300 minutes (5 hours) a week of moderate-intensity, or 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) to 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity. Preferably, aerobic activity should be spread throughout the week.

- Additional health benefits are gained by engaging in physical activity beyond the equivalent of 300 minutes (5 hours) of moderate-intensity physical activity a week.

- Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities of moderate or greater intensity and that involve all major muscle groups on two or more days a week, as these activities provide additional health benefits.

*This information is published in the 2nd edition of Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. For more information, visit [centerforphysicaltherapy.com](http://centerforphysicaltherapy.com) or call 845-297-4789.*

# Foods taste better with the ambiance of candles

By Sonya, the Candle Lady

Here are some tips on how to create the right ambiance with candles:

- Only light unscented beeswax drip-less tapers (dinner candles). There are some individuals who have allergies to scents and you

## LIFE IS BETTER WITH CANDLES

accent to add when you decorate with candles, however, allow at least 3 inches of separation between the candle ring and the flame.

*Sonya, the Candle Lady has established herself as a trusted source for soy and beeswax candles when she opened Ye Olde Candle & Gift Shoppe in 2015. She's featured in The Hudson Valley Magazine's Face of Soy & Beeswax Candles for*

*2022. She believes that candles provide comfort in times of sadness; are the perfect complement in celebrations; scent your space and enable you to relax. Sonya offers weekly candle making classes. You may e-mail her at [sonya@yeoldecandlehousegiftshoppe.com](mailto:sonya@yeoldecandlehousegiftshoppe.com)*



also do not want candle scents to interfere with the aromas of the food.

- If you are expecting large groups or children, tea-lights may be a good choice to place in deep jars making it difficult to reach by children or knocked over by guests.

- Another good choice is a votive candle because they are short and will not interfere with sight lines across the table. You do not want your guests having to stretch their necks when they are trying to talk to each other.

- Candle rings are the perfect

- If you want to place candles in other areas of your home that will be unattended, consider LED flame-less pillars that mimic a real flame.

- A fall colored garland, table runner or a Thanksgiving themed platter will accentuate your candles in all areas of your home.

Enjoy the warmth of the candlelight.

Remember to always practice safety when burning candles. Never leave unattended and keep away from children and pets. Never burn a candle for more than four hours and trim the wick to ¼ inch each time it is relit.

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# We're celebrating 43 years strong at All Sport!

By Sean Kammerer  
All Sport Health and Fitness



Sean Kammerer

Now, more than ever, it is important to keep active and moving to help strengthen your immune system.

All Sport, an 80,000-square-foot facility on a 10-acre

campus, is a “one-stop-shop” for the community. They offer members the largest and most diverse activities and equipment

## HEALTH TIPS

for everyone, regardless of their fitness level or age.

Included with every membership is access to more than 70 Group Exercise classes each week. This includes Yoga, Barre, Pilates, Zumba, and so much more!

All Sport also has an Indoor Pool, Hot Tub, Sauna, Steam Rooms, two Basketball Courts, Pickleball, and Racquetball. Additional offerings include Small

Group Training and Personal Training, which help accelerate your fitness goals.

Health and wellness are important to the kids, too. The club continually offers Youth Programs, such as Swim Lessons, Dance Classes, Circuit Training, Tumbling, Cycle, and even Musical Theatre.

All Sport is so much more than just a gym. The club has created a

wellness community that focuses on both physical and mental health and looks forward to keeping the community healthy all year round.

This month, we are celebrating 43 years strong in the community and want to inspire everyone to get moving to improve their overall quality of life.

Join All Sport in November for just \$19.79! We look forward to seeing you at the club.

For more information about All Sport's Membership, offerings, and job opportunities, please visit [allsporthealthandfitness.com](http://allsporthealthandfitness.com).

## Research suggests flu shots can help to protect your brain from dementia

By Alzheimer's Association  
Of the Hudson Valley

The flu season is here and it's the time when many people consider getting a flu shot. In addition to protecting you from the flu, the shot may also help protect your brain.

A study released this summer found that getting an annual flu vaccination was associated with a 40 percent decrease in the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease over the next four years. The same researchers, who are from The University of Texas' McGovern Medical School, conducted an earlier study presented at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference that found that a single flu vaccination could reduce the risk of Alzheimer's by 17 percent and additional vaccinations in a lifetime reduced it even more.

“Our study suggests that regular use of a very accessible and relatively cheap intervention — the flu shot — may significantly reduce risk of Alzheimer's dementia,” said Dr. Albert Amran, who was involved in the research at The University of Texas.

The newer study included more than 2 million people over age 65. Previous studies were smaller and often focused on people with chronic health conditions. By including a more general group of older adults, the new study's results add weight to the idea that a flu shot could reduce Alzheimer's risk.

### Your memory & infections:

#### Know your risk

Prior studies have found that infections — including the flu, pneumonia, urinary tract infections, gum disease, and COVID-19 — are associated with the onset and worsening of memory and thinking problems.

It's not surprising then that researchers have also found an association between vaccinations and a decreased risk of dementia. A study at Duke University's Social Science Research Institute found that getting a vaccination against pneumonia between the ages of 65 and 75 reduced Alzheimer's risk by up to 40 percent. Similar results have been found in recent studies of people who received tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap);

hepatitis; or shingles vaccinations.

“These findings are important because anything we can do to decrease the number of people with Alzheimer's has vast benefits. Preventing or delaying the progression of Alzheimer's lowers the burden on family caregivers, and on our state's health systems,” said Doris Saintil Phildor, MPH, the New York Health Systems Director at the Alzheimer's Association.

To learn more about risk factors for Alzheimer's and ways to reduce

your risk, visit the Alzheimer's Association website.

### About the Hudson Valley Chapter

The Hudson Valley Chapter serves families living with dementia in seven counties in New York including Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster and Westchester. To learn more about programs and services offered locally, visit [alz.org/hudsonvalley](http://alz.org/hudsonvalley).

## Pain management options for youth sports injuries

(StatePoint) Youth sports are an important part of a child's social and emotional development and fuel a healthy and active lifestyle. However, sports can result in injuries that may leave players sidelined. As parents, it's important to be prepared before an injury happens—and that includes being informed about opioid risks.

A child or teen might be prescribed opioids—oxycodone, hydrocodone, morphine, etc. — to manage pain after an injury, or

following surgery or another procedure to treat their injury. In fact, sports-related injuries are often one of the first times children and teens are exposed to opioids. Opioids have side effects like nausea and dizziness, and can also lead to addiction and dependence. As millions of children face sports-related injuries each year, the risk of opioid exposure increases — underscoring the need for education and awareness of non-opioid options and a plan for how to talk to providers.

Fortunately, there are safe and effective non-opioid options available for children that can help reduce, or eliminate the need for opioids after surgery. In fact, 94 percent of surgeons agree non-opioid options can positively impact recovery and the ability to return to normal function following surgery.

Recently, the National Safety Council and Pacira BioSciences, Inc., which sponsored this article, partnered to launch Connect2Prevent, a program that aims to educate employees and their family members on the importance of preventing opioid misuse. The curriculum is focused on identifying opioid misuse, safe storage and disposal, stigma, talking to providers, refusal skills, harm reduction and more. Programs like Connect2Prevent and informative discussion guides can help prepare families for these important conversations. To learn more, visit [nsc.org](http://nsc.org).

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# As the season changes, how do our bodies respond?

**By Premier Medical Group**

With the arrival of autumn, we begin to notice the beauty in the shifting leaves outside and the crisp chill that signifies the end of summer. We may even take note of the seasonal arrival of pumpkin flavored treats in our local coffee shops. But, as we shift from shorts and swimsuits to sweaters and scarves, it is important to recognize the ways in which our bodies adjust to the seasons internally. Bare branches and orange leaves scattered about the grass make the changes in our external environment obvious, but our physical response to the shift in seasons is often much more subtle.

**Seasonal forecast:  
Your skin will be dryer**

The most common response to fall's return is drier skin. Many of us find ourselves reapplying lip balm more frequently and maybe even using a stronger moisturizer. This can be attributed to the decrease in temperature and humidity, which forces the skin to work harder to maintain hydration. According to dermatologists, the skin thrives most in consistent conditions. This means that every seasonal shift and change in weather acts like a shock to the system, disrupting the typical chemical balance of our skin and causing dryness and sometimes severe acne.

**Exercise helps boost  
a sluggish metabolism**

Another consequence of seasonal changes that many people experience is increased weight. Like many other mammals, humans are known to store fat during the winter months. On a scientific level, this is due to the fact that, during the seasonal change between late summer and early fall, our bodies increase their insulin resistance. This causes our livers to increase fat production so that we can store fat in our tissues and be better prepared for the winter. The best way to combat fat build-up is through diet and exercise. Aerobic exercise, like



## PREMIER *medical group*

swimming and running, is especially effective at stimulating the metabolism and burning calories.

**Shining a bright light on  
Seasonal Affective Disorder**

Unfortunately, the changing of the seasons can have even more serious repercussions than dry skin and weight gain. For example, seasonal affective disorder, or SAD, can cause major depressive episodes, usually beginning in late fall or early winter. The journal Archives of General Psychiatry found that SAD causes individuals to secrete the hormone melatonin for longer periods during winter nights than during summer nights. This implies that SAD drives people to sleep more during the winter even when their bodies are fully rested.

Similarly, the Journal of Psychosomatic Research published a study in which participants slept nearly three hours more each day in October than any other time of year. They linked the results of this study to the fact that hypersomnia, the medical term for excessive daytime sleepiness, sometimes occurs when the air starts to crisp up as it does in the fall.

Depressive episodes and excessive amounts of sleep can severely impact one's daily function and inhibit our ability to accomplish essential tasks. For this reason, it is important to remain attentive to changes in your general well-being during winter months. If you feel you have SAD, speak to your doctor about using a light-therapy box. It's important to be sure that the light therapy approach will help your condition and not negatively affect any other disorders.

**Take special care of  
Your body, heart**

Even though our bodies have response mechanisms set in place to ease the shock of seasonal changes, harsh winters sometimes bring with them the threat of serious health complications. Researchers found that there is a higher rate of heart attacks during the winter than any other season. One cause for this is that, paired with a weakened immune system and higher blood pressure, strenuous outdoor activity can place serious strain on the heart, leaving individuals at a much higher risk for a heart attack.

**Don't forget flu,  
pneumonia vaccines**

Scientists note that colder temperatures create a friendlier environment for cold and flu viruses. Unfortunately, this leaves individuals particularly susceptible to illness during the fall and winter

months. For this reason, it is imperative that you remain up-to-date on your vaccinations. If you have not received your flu or pneumonia shot yet, call your primary care provider today to schedule an appointment.

**Be prepared for foul weather,  
be sure you have  
enough medications**

Living in the northeast, storms sometimes affect our routines. Be sure to check that you have all your medications for up to 10 days and that your physician has given you renewals that you may need.

This fall and winter, as you feel the air become more crisp and watch the trees shed their leaves, make sure you are just as aware of the ways in which your body is changing. Doing so may allow you to take preemptive measures regarding your physical and mental health, preventing the development of more serious conditions further down the line.

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# There's more than one vaccine - it's time you got your flu shot

## Partner with Premier's Primary Care team

Flu vaccines have been widely available since 1945 and they save thousands of lives and prevent tens of thousands of hospitalizations each year. The Primary Care team at Premier Medical Group strongly recommends that you get yours for lots of important reasons. If you get the flu vaccine, your risk of having to see us for the flu is reduced by 40 to 60%. If you have a heart or lung disorder or a chronic illness like diabetes, it's essential you avoid catching the flu. Protect yourself and those around you from the risk of flu, partner with Premier Medical Group.



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