

Healthy Lifestyles

January 29, 2025

Tips to protect yourself from sickness surges Norovirus infections, communicable diseases are on the rise!

By Premier Medical Group

With norovirus infections on the rise and communicable diseases peaking this season, protecting yourself and your loved ones is more important than ever. At Premier Medical Group, we're here to help you stay healthy and prepared with expert advice. Here are some essential tips to guard against infections and maintain your well-being.

1. Understand the Risks

Norovirus is the leading cause of vomiting and diarrhea from acute gastroenteritis among people of all ages in the United States. Gastroenteritis is the inflammation of the stomach or intestines, often due to a bacterial or viral infection, parasite, or chemical exposure.

Norovirus—and other gastrointestinal infections commonly referred to as the “stomach flu” or “stomach bug”—can spread quickly through contaminated food, surfaces, and person-to-person contact. It's crucial to recognize the symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach pain, and take action to prevent the spread of illness.

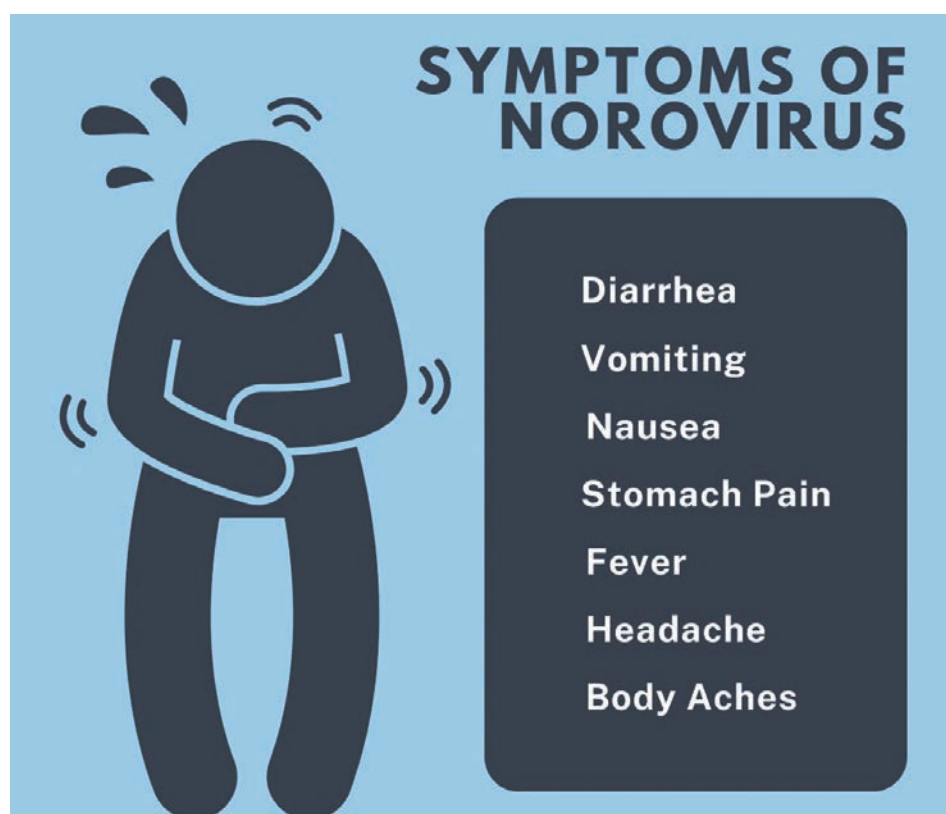
Most people who contract norovirus recover from their symptoms within 1 to 3 days but older adults, children, and people with compromised immune systems are at risk of more serious and longer-lasting infections so it's important to be vigilant when you or your loved ones are sick.

Respiratory infections also spike during the colder months and are often caused by viruses like the common cold, flu, RSV and COVID-19. Luckily, there are vaccines available to prevent several respiratory infections. While getting a vaccine doesn't guarantee that you won't get sick, it can greatly reduce your chances of contracting an illness and help keep the symptoms mild if you do.

2. Boost Your Defense

Simple every day habits can significantly reduce your risk of infection:

- **Wash Hands Frequently:** Use soap and water for at least



20 seconds, especially after using the bathroom, before eating or preparing food, and after being in public spaces.

- **Sanitize Effectively:** Carry alcohol-based hand sanitizers for times when soap and water aren't available.

- **Practice Respiratory Hygiene:** Cover coughs and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue and dispose of tissues promptly. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after using tissues.

3. Strengthen Your Immune System

A robust immune system is your best defense against infections. Make these practices part of your routine:

- **Healthy Eating:** Incorporate immune-boosting foods rich in vitamins C and D, as well as zinc into your diet.

- **Stay Hydrated:** Drinking plenty of water helps maintain bodily functions and fight off illness. If you do get sick, especially with a gastrointestinal infection, staying hydrated is one of the most important things

you should monitor since your body will be losing fluids and electrolytes at a higher rate than normal.

- **Regular Exercise:** Moderate physical activity can enhance your immune response and give you more energy. Getting outside, as the weather permits, provides the added benefit of even more vitamins via sun exposure.

• Get a Good Night's Sleep:

If you're feeling run down, chances are your immune system is too. Quality rest is essential for preventing illness. Make sure you get enough sleep, usually 7 hours or more per night, in order to keep your body running strong.

4. Minimize Exposure

Reducing your chances of coming into contact with infectious agents is key. Here are some ways that you can minimize your potential exposure:

- **Avoid Crowded Areas:** Limit visits to crowded places during peak seasons when outbreaks are more common. Consider

wearing a mask if you do have to venture into areas with many people, especially if you are sick.

- **Disinfect Common Surfaces:** Clean high-touch areas like doorknobs, light switches, and smartphones regularly.

- **Stay Home When Sick:** Protect others from getting sick by isolating yourself if you have symptoms of illness.

5. Get Vaccinated

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools to protect against preventable illnesses like the flu, RSV, and COVID-19. Keep up with your vaccinations and consult with your Premier Medical Group physician about what's recommended for your health.

6. Stay Informed

Stay updated with guidance from trusted sources such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and local health departments. Knowledge is power when it comes to navigating outbreaks.

7. The Premier Medical Difference

If you're feeling unwell or experiencing persistent symptoms, it's time to seek professional medical attention. At Premier Medical Group, our experienced providers are dedicated to timely, patient-centered care. Whether you need a diagnosis, treatment, or preventative advice, we're here to support your health.

Schedule an appointment today to ensure you're equipped to handle this season's health challenges. Together, we can keep you protected and thriving.

Premier Medical Group is a multi-specialty medical practice with locations in Poughkeepsie, Fishkill, Hopewell, Wappingers, New Windsor, Newburgh, and Kingston. To learn more about our specialties and providers, please visit premiermedicalhv.com or call #1-888-632-6099.

Vaccinations are best method of preventing flu, COVID and RSV

By Lisa O'Reilly
Brookmeade Community



Lisa O'Reilly

Winter brings with it the potential for Influenza, COVID and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). These three viruses, lead to numerous hospitalizations and fatalities during the viral season.

All three viruses have vaccinations to prevent contracting the virus.

Influenza or flu, is a potentially serious virus that can lead to hospitalizations and even death. Every flu season is different and can affect people differently. Millions of people get the flu each year. The flu can cause you to feel bad and miss work or school for a few days or it can result in a more serious

BROOKMEADE SENIOR CONCEPTS

illness, causing you to be hospitalized.

Complications of flu may include bacterial pneumonia, ear and or sinus infections and an exacerbation of chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, congestive heart failure or asthma.

The annual seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to reduce the risk of getting the flu. Some people may still get the flu even if vaccinated however; the vaccine will reduce the seriousness of the virus. The CDC recommends the Flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older. Please consult your primary provider.

Populations at higher risk:

- Over 65 years of age

• Chronic medical conditions: asthma, diabetes or heart disease

• Pregnant people

• Children under 5, but especially those under 2

Why another COVID vaccine, you may ask? COVID as per the CDC is still a foremost cause of serious respiratory illness. The updated vaccines may not prevent all COVID cases; the goal is to reduce serious illness, hospitalization and death. The CDC recommends receiving the updated 2024-25 COVID 19 vaccine, regardless of previous vaccine status. The new vaccine is developed to target the new variants (such as the KP2).

The vaccines are not designed to prevent against every SARS-CoV-2

infection, the aim is to protect against severe illness, hospitalization and death. They also restore and enhance protection from previous vaccines.

In 2023, more than 916,300 were hospitalized in the US due to COVID and more than 75,000 died. Most of those hospitalized were not vaccinated with the current vaccine. (<https://www.yalemedicine.org/news/updated-2024-2025-covid-vaccines>).

The new vaccine is not considered a Booster shot. It is an updated vaccine in anticipation of needing to provide updated vaccines annually, similar to the flu vaccine. It is a monovalent vaccine to address the virus as it evolves and is recommended for everyone over 5. If you recently had COVID you may delay the updated Vaccine by three months. Though, certain factors may be a reason to be vaccinated sooner- such as : personal risk of serious disease, risk of disease of a loved one, and local high transmission rate. Vaccine induced immunity is better than being infected with COVID as it is a safer way to gain immunity. Flu and COVID vaccines may be administered together.

The CDC recommendation acknowledges the increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19 in older adults and those who are immunocompromised, along with the currently available data on vaccine effectiveness and year-round circulation of COVID-19. The recommendation also provides clarity to healthcare providers on how many doses should be given per year to people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised and is meant to increase coverage of this second dose for that group.

RSV is a common respiratory virus that usually causes cold-like symptoms. However, it can be dangerous for infants, toddlers and the elderly. RSV vaccines aid in the protection of older adults 60 and older. Older adults are at an increased risk for serious complications from RSV related to weakened immune systems.

If you are pregnant you may protect your baby from RSV by being vaccinated 32-36 weeks. Always speak with your healthcare provider regarding any vaccinations.

Everyday measures to prevent respiratory illnesses:

- Stay home when sick
- Cover your face when coughing or sneezing with a tissue or cough into your elbow.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with others, such as kissing, hugging and shaking hands
- Wash hands frequently
- Clean frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs and mobile devices.

Wishing you a healthy Winter season!

Lisa O'Reilly, MSN, RN, CDON, RAC-CT is an Infection Preventionist and Clinical Support Director of Meadows at Brookmeade Community.



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Building community relationships leads to valuable connections, many positive benefits



CREATIVE ARTS THERAPY INSIGHTS with Lisa Papantoniou

In a world that often feels disconnected and chaotic, the importance of cultivating strong community relationships cannot be emphasized enough. These connections can provide vital emotional support, enhance mental health, and foster a profound sense of belonging. As society becomes increasingly fragmented, nurturing these relationships is more critical than ever.

This week I was deeply moved by a remarkable story of the power of community relationships from a remote area in India, where a father-and-son duo radically transformed the lives of local indigenous people through honey harvesting. Although the residents possessed the skills to harvest an impressive ton of honey each month, they lacked a market, leading to economic hardship.

Seeing an opportunity, the father and son set out to provide jobs in honey harvesting. Initially, the

initiative brought some financial relief, but it was the engagement of investors that proved pivotal. By facilitating honey exports, they opened international markets, significantly boosting sales and profits.

This transformative endeavor supported over 650 families, drastically improving their economic status while reinforcing the community’s social fabric. It highlights how building and nurturing community relationships can lead to collective advancement, illustrating the profound impact of collaboration.

This may not be within one’s purview though, one can start by fostering community starting in your own neighborhood. Consider the following:

- Organizing a block party or developing a community garden can encourage social interaction and help neighbors get to know one another - These activities create opportunities for casual conversations and shared experiences, strengthening social bonds.
- Create a space for neighbors to exchange items they no longer need or want - This fosters trust and cooperation as people help each other find useful items while

reducing waste.

- Share skills, whether it helps to fix a minor car repair, home repair or shoveling snow -

Offering assistance with practical tasks builds a sense of mutual support and reliance.

- Check in on those neighbors in need - Regularly reaching out to those who may need help fosters empathy and a caring community environment.

Other initiatives, such as collaborative murals, community art projects and group workshops, encourage participants to work toward a common goal. These shared experiences foster unity and instill a sense of purpose—cornerstones of lasting connections. Engaging in the creative process can be incredibly therapeutic, alleviating stress and promoting mental clarity.

Moreover, art has the unique power to bridge divides among

diverse community members, cultivating understanding and empathy.

To truly appreciate the transformative potential of community relationships, one only needs to look at the ripple effects of initiatives like honey harvesting, which not only elevate economic status, but also strengthen social ties. This example serves as a powerful reminder that fostering connections doesn’t have to be a grand, large-scale undertaking; it can begin within the familiar surroundings of our own neighborhoods.

When individuals come together through simple yet impactful activities, they lay the groundwork for a supportive atmosphere where trust and collaboration flourish. From organizing social gatherings to collaborating on creative projects, these endeavors unite people in meaningful ways, echoing the benefits seen in more extensive community efforts.

Visit *Lisa Papantoniou at Creative Arts Therapy PLLC at 33 Henry Street in Beacon or online at lisaarttherapy.com for more information.*

Fire safety gaps are a cause for alarm

(StatePoint) Learning the basics of fire safety is the first step in fighting the dangers of fire—and it just so happens to be the most important.

That’s why Kidde, a trusted leader in fire safety for more than 100 years, is on a mission to help protect every moment, for everyone. For the third year in a row, Kidde’s Cause For Alarm campaign is deploying educational materials and life-saving information to communities nationwide, including vulnerable communities at a higher risk of fire-related incidents.

Every year, fire claims thousands of American lives in homes without working smoke alarms, according to the Office of Fire Prevention and Control. Yet, far too many people think that a fire is something that would never affect their family. This mindset may be why so many households aren’t taking even the most basic precautions against fires. Data from the American Red Cross shows that only 26% of American families have developed and practiced a home fire escape plan, leaving nearly 74% of families unprepared for a fire emergency.

Here’s how you can better protect your home and the people you love:

1. Ensure you have working smoke alarms in your home and discuss with your children what to do when the smoke alarm sounds.
2. Learn more about fire safety and how you can help protect your family by visiting CauseForAlarm.org. The site features English- and Spanish-language activities, worksheets, a children’s book, a kid-friendly podcast and shareable resources, including a memorable jingle for children titled “Beeps That Last, Get Out Fast.”
3. Share the “The Living Jingle” on social media, tag @KiddeFireSafety and use #CauseForAlarm to help raise awareness.

Art Fully Living



Creative Arts Therapy With Lisa Papantoniou LCAT, ATR-BS

Lisa integrates the deep understanding of both art therapy and conventional psychotherapy to deliver comprehensive mental health support. Specializing in trauma-informed care, we address critical issues such as life transitions, depression and anxiety with sensitivity and expertise. Her holistic approach seamlessly blends artistic expression with therapeutic practices, creating a supportive environment where clients can safely explore and process their emotions.

- Practical strategies to manage life stressors
- Enhance emotional resilience
- Boost self-awareness
- Cultivate healthier coping mechanisms.



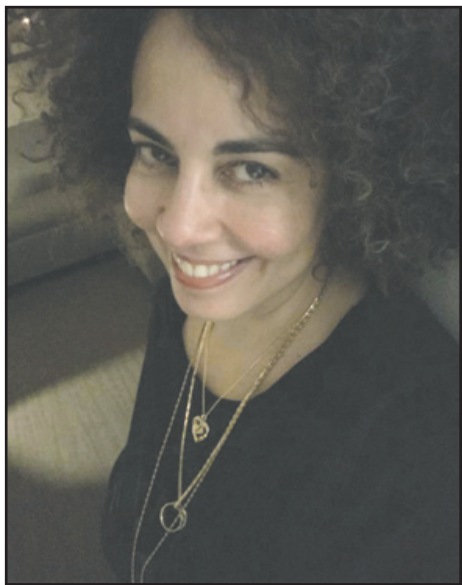
Clients may choose to engage in art-based activities or talk therapy that encourages reflection and insight, empowering them to navigate their feelings and foster a more positive outlook on life. Discover new pathways toward healing and personal growth!

**Art Fully Living
Creative Arts Therapy PLLC
33 Henry St.**

Beacon, New York 12508

Visit - lisaarttherapy.com for more information

Celebrating your wedding with candlelight



LIFE IS BETTER WITH CANDLES

With Sonya, the Candle Lady

Valentine’s Day has always held a special significance for many couples as a day dedicated to celebrating love and romance. It also makes it a perfect time for couples to get engaged on Valentine’s Day.

When it comes to weddings, there’s nothing more romantic than candlelight. It’s the most effective way to create a romantic atmosphere and set the mood for your wedding.

Candles at all the dinner tables - A candlelit dinner is a romantic way to begin your reception. The candlelight can be used in the venue or outdoors,

depending on the weather. Candles can be placed in glass holders or lanterns to create a warm, intimate atmosphere. It’s important that you choose a candle that is unscented and that it burn all evening such as a tall pillar with a wide base.

Wedding Invitation Style & Guests Favors – Your invitations should match the style of your wedding – Mail the invitations no later than two weeks before the event but not more than 3 months before the wedding. Personalized candles can be given as gifts to your bridal party, guests and parents. For an extra touch have the candles made with the names or initials of the people they’re meant for on them, making them perfect keepsakes of your wedding day.

Floating Candle Centerpieces - Floating Candles are a great way to safely decorate your tables and create an elegant effect. They can be placed in bowls or vases for a

romantic glow to the centerpieces. This idea is especially great if you’re having an outdoor wedding where there aren’t any electrical outlets or it’s windy.

You can never have too many candles! - If you want your wedding to be filled with romance, set up candles in every corner and nook of your reception venue. Candles are a very romantic way to light up the night and create a wonderful atmosphere for people to enjoy. You can use a combination of real and flame-less so place them everywhere!

Planning a wedding can be stressful, but you can make it easier by using candles. A romantic atmosphere makes everyone feel relaxed and in a good mood. They are also very budget friendly and you can get creative with different styles and candle holders for your special day.

I can be of assistance to you with planning your wedding with ceremony and reception candles and with wedding invitations. You may view and order wedding invitations at:
candlehousegiftshoppe.carlsoncraft.com

Safety - Always practice safety when burning candles. Never leave unattended and keep away from children and pets. Never burn a candle for more than 4 hours and trim the wick to ¼ inch before lighting to promote proper flame height. Additionally, keep candles away from drafty areas to avoid flame flickering and the wax pool free of debris, it should stop black marks from forming on the sides of the candle holder.

Avoid displaying candles where they will be directly exposed to sunlight or strong indoor lighting because they will fade or melt. Store candles in use in a cool, dark and dry place and use dust protectors or lids to keep them free of dust and preserve the scent. If you have a candle holder with old wax? Place the candle holder in the freezer for 30 minutes. The freezer will cause the wax to shrink and separate from the glass.

Sonya, the Candle Lady established herself as a trusted source for soy and beeswax candles when she opened Ye Olde Candle & Gift Shoppe in 2015 at Pleasant Valley with late husband, Dominick and relocated to Eastdale Village in 2020.

Ye Olde Candle & Gift Shoppe had transitioned from storefront to focus on candle-making workshops; art galleries, local libraries, restaurants and schools. However, you can now visit her new showroom suite at:

The Carriage House at 42 Catharine Street, Suite C108 in Poughkeepsie.

Wednesday, Thursday & Friday: Noon to 6PM

Saturday: 9AM to 1PM

Sunday, Monday & Tuesday: Closed

To set up appointments to visit or to inquire about candle-making workshops, call (845) 818-6280

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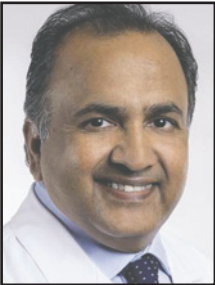
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What you need to know about Atrial Fibrillation

By Sankar Varansi, MD



Sankar Varansi, MD

Imagine your heart suddenly starts racing, skipping beats or fluttering uncontrollably. These unsettling sensations could be more than just

stress—they might signal atrial fibrillation (AFib), a common yet potentially serious heart condition.

Whether you're at risk or simply curious, understanding AFib is crucial for protecting your heart health. Let's explore why knowing the signs, risks and treatments of AFib could make all the difference in maintaining a strong, steady heartbeat.

At least 2.7 million Americans have AFib, a quivering or irregular heartbeat that can lead to heart-related complications including stroke, heart failure and blood clots.

A normal heart contracts and relaxes to a regular beat, but in AFib, the upper chambers of the heart, called the atria, beat irregularly, impeding the heart's ability to effectively move blood into the ventricles. Because of this, a clot can form resulting in a stroke.

Between 15 and 20 percent of stroke patients have heart arrhythmias. In fact, AFib is associated with a five-fold increased risk for stroke. Despite these statistics, many people are unaware AFib is a serious condition.

What are the symptoms of AFib?

While there are people with AFib who have no symptoms, some may experience one or more of the following: General fatigue, Rapid and irregular heartbeat, Fluttering or "thumping" in the chest, Dizziness Shortness of breath and anxiety, Weakness Faintness or confusion, Fatigue when exercising, Sweating and Chest pain or pressure.

While some of these symptoms are like other heart problems, including cardiac arrest, fluttering and palpitations are the key signals of AFib.

Who Gets AFib?

There are several risk factors associated with AFib. These factors can increase the likelihood of developing the condition:

Age: The risk of AFib increases with age, particularly after age 65.

PATIENT FIRST

High Blood Pressure:

Hypertension can cause your heart to work harder, increasing the risk of AFib

Heart Disease: Conditions like coronary artery disease, heart valve issues and heart failure are strongly linked to AFib

Diabetes: Diabetes increases the risk of developing AFib

Obesity: Excess weight is a significant risk factor for AFib

Family History: A family history of AFib can increase your risk

Thyroid Disorders: An overactive or underactive thyroid can contribute to AFib

Sleep Apnea: Obstructive sleep apnea is associated with a higher risk of AFib

Chronic Conditions: Chronic conditions such as kidney disease and lung disease can increase risk

Alcohol Consumption: Heavy drinking or binge drinking can trigger episodes of AFib

Smoking: Smoking is another risk factor for AFib.

Stress and Anxiety: High levels of stress and anxiety may contribute to the development of AFib

Physical Inactivity: A sedentary lifestyle can increase the risk of AFib, though extreme physical activity can also be a risk factor.

Managing these risk factors through lifestyle changes and medical intervention can significantly reduce the likelihood of developing AFib. In addition, if you have a family history of AFib, it's important to be aware of the other risk factors and discuss your potential risk with a healthcare provider.

What are the treatments for AFib?

The treatment for AFib starts with a visit to a cardiologist who can properly diagnose you through an in-depth exam that will likely include an electrocardiogram (EKG or ECG). While treatments may vary depending on the length, severity and cause of your AFib, generally the goal is to reset the heart's rhythm or control the rate and prevent blood clots.

To reset the heart's rate and rhythm to normal, doctors may prescribe medications to control your heartbeat. Doctors may also opt to conduct a cardioversion procedure. There are two types of cardioversion: electrical, where an electric

shock is delivered to your heart with paddles or patches on your chest, and/or prescribing medications to slow the electrical signals in your heart.

There are times, however, when cardioversion or medications do not work. If that's the case, a doctor may recommend catheter or surgical ablations. In a catheter ablation, a doctor inserts long, thin tubes (catheters) into your groin and guides them through blood vessels to your heart. The catheter's tip produces cold or heat to destroy areas of the heart tissue causing the rapid and irregular heartbeats.

Surgical ablation requires open heart surgery and is generally reserved for patients who don't get better with other treatments or are having cardiac surgery for another reason.

Are there other types of irregular heartbeats?

Besides AFib, there are several types of irregular heartbeats, also known as arrhythmias. Each type affects the heart's rhythm in different ways:

Atrial Flutter: Similar to AFib, atrial flutter involves a rapid but regular heartbeat. The atria beat quickly, but the rhythm is more organized than in AFib.

Premature Ventricular Contractions (PVCs): These are extra heartbeats that originate in the ventricles. They often feel like skipped or missed beats.

Ventricular Tachycardia (VT): This is a fast heart rate that starts in the ventricles. It can be life-threatening if it lasts long, as it may lead to ventricular fibrillation.

Ventricular Fibrillation (VF): This is a severe and life-threatening arrhythmia where the ventricles quiver instead of contracting properly, leading to a lack of effective blood circulation. Immediate treatment with defibrillation is required.

Supraventricular Tachycardia (SVT): This is a rapid heartbeat that starts above the ventricles, in the atria or AV node. It can cause episodes of palpitations and dizziness.

Bradycardia: This is a slower-than-normal heart rate, often defined as fewer than 60 beats per minute. It can be normal in well-trained athletes but may cause symptoms like fatigue or dizziness in others.

Sick Sinus Syndrome: This condition occurs when the sinus

node, the heart's natural pacemaker, doesn't work properly, leading to irregular heartbeats, including both bradycardia and tachycardia.

Heart Block: This occurs when the electrical signals that tell the heart to contract are partially or completely blocked. There are different degrees of heart block, ranging from mild to severe.

Wolff-Parkinson-White (WPW) Syndrome: This is a type of SVT where an extra electrical pathway in the heart causes a rapid heartbeat.

Atrial Tachycardia: A type of SVT that originates in the atria and results in a fast heart rate that is typically regular but faster than normal.

These arrhythmias can vary in severity, and some may require medical treatment to prevent complications. If you experience any symptoms of an irregular heartbeat, it's important to seek medical advice for proper diagnosis and treatment.

Can AFib be prevented?

Because AFib patients are at increased risk of developing blood clots that can lead to stroke, your doctor may prescribe blood-thinning medications to prevent clotting.

Lastly, for both patients with AFib and those looking to reduce their risk of getting it, maintain a heart-healthy lifestyle that includes:

- Regular physical activity (at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise on most days)
- Follow a heart-healthy diet that is low in salt, saturated fats, trans fats and cholesterol
- Avoid excessive amounts of alcohol and caffeine
- Don't smoke
- Maintain a healthy weight and cholesterol level

The Bottom Line

Atrial fibrillation is a manageable condition, but it requires awareness and timely intervention. By recognizing the symptoms, understanding your risk factors and exploring treatment options, you can take proactive steps to protect your heart and improve your overall health. Don't ignore the signs—your heart's well-being depends on it.

Dr. Varansi is an electrophysiologist with The Heart Center, a division of Hudson Valley Cardiovascular Practice, P.C., that is part of Nuvance Health Medical Practices. He sees patients in Poughkeepsie.

Children learn differently – we need to make adjustments

February is almost here, the second month of a new year. Now is a good time to review our children’s progress and find some solutions if any problems still persist.

Many of these problems must be addressed in the classroom, however, I want to reiterate the necessity of sufficient sleep and a nutritious breakfast to help children concentrate throughout the school day. Sleepy, hungry children have difficulty learning. They are distracted and inattentive and sometimes they do fall asleep in class. I always had a large container of mixed nutritious cereals in my room and gave a full cup to each student in the morning to give them a little energy.

I have heard both parents and teachers say that a child is just lazy. Not so fast. There are many reasons why a child may not be completing work. Let’s take a look at some of the issues children may have and possible solutions.

Attention – Is your child able to pay attention throughout the school day? If not, why not? A good night’s sleep helps children maintain attention. Teaching

MAKING EDUCATION WORK

with Diane Fulves

children with appropriate materials and strategies will also help children focus because they can understand their assignments and complete them correctly. They will also have a sense of pride in their achievement which is a great motivator.

Distraction – Is your child distracted, particularly during large group lessons? Perhaps your child cannot keep up with the pace of the lesson. He would probably benefit from instruction in a smaller group. This also gives teachers the opportunity to provide alternate strategies and more review and reinforcement. In a small group she can focus on individual problems which will benefit other students who may have the same problem.

Modifications – Modifying class and home assignments makes good sense, particularly, when students are struggling with their assignments. Assigning fewer questions helps children focus on

each item without rushing through the assignment in order to finish in time to hand it in. Helping children locate information is crucial. This is a skill that is often taken for granted, but many children need specific instruction to learn how to do this. Reviewing vocabulary in all subject areas will help insure that children can read their assignments with ease, confidence, and accuracy.

Accommodations – Many children need accommodations in certain areas. Can your child see the board? Can he hear the teacher clearly and follow the discussion. If you have any questions about this, ask the school nurse to check vision and hearing. If there are hearing issues, ask the nurse about implements that can help your child hear the lesson clearly.

If you think that your child needs to sit in the front of the class, closer to the teacher and away from distractions, let the teacher

know this. Parents, you know your child best so don’t be afraid to ask for the accommodations that will help your child learn.


There are some people who think that it isn’t fair to give some children alternate strategies and modifications. What is not fair is to teach every child in the same way with the same materials if we know that they learn differently and will benefit from these changes.

When we find the best way to help our children receive and process information and hold on to it, they can achieve successfully. They will be able to complete their assignments with competence and confidence and feel smart. Remember, SUCCESS is the only option!

Diane Fulves is an educator and advocate for children and parents.. 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.

Exercise for arthritis: What you should know

By Christian Campilii PT, DPT



Do you have stiff, achy, painful joints? You’re not alone.

An estimated 54 million adults are living with this chronic condition. It is called arthritis.

Arthritis steals movement. It sometimes keeps you from doing the things you love. But with a bit of effort, you can restore some movement and regain your ability to enjoy activities.

Regular exercise (physical activity) is one of the best ways to improve pain, stiffness, and

BODY KNOWLEDGE

range of motion, the common arthritis symptoms.

It also can benefit your physical, mental, and social health. It even can prevent or improve many chronic conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity, depression, and some cancers.

Many people with arthritis think exercise will be painful — probably because they’ve tried, and it was. But we know through research that people with arthritis can exercise without worsening their pain. Plus, regular physical

activity can decrease arthritis pain and improve walking activities.

The trick is doing the right exercises, in the right way, at the right time.

It isn’t easy. Arthritis is a complicated condition. Once arthritis moves into a joint, the muscles surrounding the joint become weakened. This leads to a ripple effect of joint pain and muscle weakness.

If you’ve tried to exercise and stopped because of pain, consider seeing a physical therapist. They can work with you to develop a safe and effective strengthening and conditioning program to help reduce your pain, not add to it. In the process, you also can improve your mobility and function. The bottom line: exercise shouldn’t hurt if you have arthritis.

People with arthritis need to increase their exercise routines more gradually than those without it. Walking, cycling, and swimming are great forms of cardiovascular exercise. Strength training and stretching are equally important. A physical therapist can teach you how to exercise with the correct form and posture. They also will help you exercise for the right amount of time and intensity.

If you have questions about how physical activity can help address your arthritis symptoms, a physical therapist can help.

Physical therapists are movement experts. They improve quality of life through hands-on care, patient education, and prescribed movement. You can contact a physical therapist directly for an evaluation



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Hudson Valley Holistic Healing Center plans ‘Mindful Talk’ to help healing, awaken potential

Join us at the Hudson Valley Holistic Healing Center for a transformative discussion titled “Mindful Talk: Exploring Conscious and Subconscious Connections.” The event will be held from 1-2 p.m. and from 2-3 p.m. Please note that there is a cost associated with the event, and the location details will be provided. We are limiting the guest count to 30-40 participants.

This event will delve into the art of living consciously and tapping into your subconscious mind. Our conversation will explore techniques to unlock emotions that trigger unwanted feelings and to develop a heightened awareness of your surroundings.

Key Themes:
1. Better Conversations: Engage in deeper and more

meaningful dialogues about living consciously. Learn how to transform within, awaken your spirit, and create a better version of yourself for a fulfilling life experience.

2. Mindful Talk and Conscious Conversations: Reconnect with your inner thoughts by exploring fears, overcoming negative emotions and engaging in shadow work for personal growth. Emphasize mindful living through intentional actions and practices.

3. Transformative Spiritual Healing: Harness the power of prayer, love, and universal energy connection through practices such as Reiki, focused meditation, intentional breathing, and yoga. Release tension, align your chakras, and elevate your spirit with affirmations.

4. Awakening Your Highest Potential: Believe in yourself and cultivate self-affirmation. Embrace your journey, let go of oversensitivity and self-pity, and renounce egotism. Stay focused on your goals and trust in the effectiveness of asking for what you need.

Recommendations:
• **Books/Media:** The Secret by Rhonda Byrne; Works by Dr. Joe Dispenza on rewiring the mind
• **Practices:** Breathe with the intention of clearing out toxic energy. Focus on your breath, close your eyes, and move your energy around; Meditate with purpose, planting seeds of intention and observing their growth from a distance; Create an action board to visualize and take control of your personal landscape.

• **Healing Techniques:** Engage in Reiki for emotional healing and chakra realignment, integrating mind, body, and spirit; Practice yoga to stretch and move beyond pain, facilitating relaxation and tension release.

In conclusion, we aim to cultivate a beautiful universal space, sharing radiance, strength, and abundance. Remember that everything is interconnected, and your innate capabilities hold immense power. Join us on this journey of exploration and healing!

Visit the Hudson Valley Holistic Healing Center at 51 Springside Avenue in Poughkeepsie. Call 845-849-0838 or visit hvhhealingcenter.com

5 prep tips to brace your home for the winter cold

(StatePoint) With temperatures dropping nationwide, it’s essential that your home and yard are prepared to face the challenges freezing temperatures and snowstorms can bring.

Store and Secure Your Outdoor Living Space

If left unprotected, patio sets, lawn decorations and outdoor equipment can face rusting from water exposure, and breakage from large amounts of snow and ice. To prevent these issues, invest in waterproof patio covers for larger items like tables and grills. Store smaller objects such as chairs, children’s toys, outdoor pillows, planters and decorative signs away in dry areas like garages, sheds or basements.

Protect Pipes

While snow and ice might look magical, that thought quickly fades when pipes burst or spring a leak. When water freezes, it can expand and put pressure on pipes, increasing the chance of them bursting. Having weak or corroded pipes increases this risk. Proactively protect your plumbing through a smart leak detection device, such as the Moen Flo Smart Water Monitor and Shutoff. This innovative product connects directly to the home’s main water line and constantly monitors water flow rate and pressure to identify potential problems. If an issue is found, like low flow rate or high

pressure, which can indicate a frozen pipe, it will alert you in real-time via the smartphone app so you can take action. It can even be set to automatically turn off the water before damage occurs. As a bonus, some insurance companies offer discounts for installing a smart leak detection device, helping you save money and providing peace of mind.

On top of protecting plumbing with smart leak detection, don’t forget to check on sprinklers and exterior hoses. Properly shut off water supplies to these areas and drain any existing water to eliminate the chance they’ll cause a frozen or burst pipe.

Beat the Chill - Check Doors, Windows

Properly sealed windows and doors can act as a vital barrier against winter’s harsh conditions. By preventing heat loss and maintaining consistent indoor temperatures, proper sealing helps reduce heating and energy costs while enhancing comfort. Determine where better insulation is needed by feeling around for cold drafts coming in through windows, doors and even unexpected areas like electrical sockets. To block the chill, do easy upgrades like weatherstripping around windows and doors, covering windows entirely with shrink film, adding covers around electrical sockets and using slide-on draft blockers at door bottoms.

Prep Heating and Alarm Systems

A home’s heating system gets a workout in the colder months. Hire a professional to do a checkup and install a fresh air filter. Getting your furnace in top shape will help maintain a comfortable temperature, keep utility bills steady and help prevent fires. Don’t leave out carbon monoxide and smoke alarms. Having functional alarms can be life-saving if a space heater catches fire or there’s a leak from your gas furnace.


Your Home’s Exterior

Providing a little extra love and care to your home’s exterior and lawn can ease stress. To avoid a

roofing collapse or leaks from heavy snowfall, check your roof – or have a professional check it – for any prior damage and address it as soon as possible. Clean out gutters to remove debris buildup and trim tree branches that may pose risks for falling if piled with heavy snow or ice. Don’t forget to take inventory of snow removal tools, and stock up on supplies like snow shovels and salt to be ready for when bad weather hits.

A comprehensive winterization checklist can be a significant factor in how much wear and tear winter storms cause on the home – and help ensure a stress-free cold weather season.

Hudson Valley Holistic Healing Center





51 Springside Ave.
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
(845) 849-0838
hudsonvalleyhvhc@gmail.com
www.hvhhealingcenter.com

The Hudson Valley Healing Center is a space for the community to experience the essence of whole body wellness. Services offered are meant to rejuvenate the mind, body, and spirit. Some of these services include an immersive salt cave, a therapeutic infrared sauna, Reiki, yoga classes, breath work workshops, meditation groups and more--children/families welcome!



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