

Healthy Lifestyles

February 26, 2025

Observe Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month by getting screened and learning the facts

By Premier Medical Group
March is a significant month for health advocacy as it marks National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. This observance serves as a reminder of the importance of understanding, preventing, and detecting colorectal cancer.

As the third most common cancer diagnosed in both men and women in the United States, raising awareness about colorectal cancer is crucial in saving lives through early detection and prevention measures.

Understanding Colorectal Cancer - Colorectal cancer affects the colon or rectum, which are parts of the digestive system.

While it can occur at any age, the risk of developing colorectal cancer increases with age, with the majority of cases diagnosed in individuals over 50. However, it's essential to note that colorectal cancer isn't exclusive to older adults, as cases among younger adults have been rising in recent years.

Importance of Screening - Screening for colorectal cancer is imperative because it can detect precancerous polyps or early-stage cancer when treatment is most effective. Several screening methods are available, including colonoscopy, fecal occult blood tests (FOBT), fecal immunochemical tests

(FIT), and stool DNA tests.

The American Cancer Society recommends regular screening beginning at age 45 for individuals at average risk.

Concerns and Risk Factors - Various factors can increase an individual's risk of developing colorectal cancer, including a family history of the disease, certain genetic conditions, a personal history of inflammatory bowel disease (such as Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis), a diet high in red and processed meats, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, obesity, and a sedentary lifestyle.

Being aware of these risk factors can help individuals take proactive steps toward prevention and early detection.

Prevention and Healthy Habits - While some risk

factors for colorectal cancer, such as age and genetics, are beyond anyone's control, there are several lifestyle changes individuals can make to lower their risk.

Adopting a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains while limiting red and processed meats can significantly reduce the risk of colorectal cancer. Regular physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight also play key roles in prevention.

Regular Check-ups and Awareness - Regular visits to healthcare providers are essential for monitoring overall health and discussing any concerns or symptoms. Being proactive about discussing colorectal cancer screening with your healthcare provider, especially if you're at

increased risk, is crucial.

By prioritizing regular screenings and maintaining open



PREMIER *medical group*

March is COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Colorectal Cancer: You Can Prevent It.

communication with your doctor, you can take charge of your colorectal health and increase your chances of early detection and successful treatment.

As we observe National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month this March, it's important to remember to take proactive steps towards colorectal health by talking with your physician about your risk factors, adopting healthy habits, scheduling a screening and encouraging loved ones to do the same.

For more information or to make an appointment, please contact Premier Medical Group's Gastroenterology Division: Poughkeepsie/Fishkill # (845) 471-9410

New Windsor # (845) 562-0740

The importance of caring for the caregiver

By Brookmeade Community

In cases of emergencies or crisis, what do you do? Usually the first step is to take care of yourself so you'll be in a healthy position to take care of others. Only when we help ourselves can we effectively take care of the ones we love.

Self-care is one of the most important, and often most neglected, priorities. Caring for a loved one can be a unique experience. There's the pride and joy of knowing that your loved ones are well cared for, but there's also the stress and exhaustion, not to mention the financial concerns.

Avoiding burnout

It's common for caregivers to become sick as well; prolonged stress, the physical and emotional

BROOKMEADE SENIOR CONCEPTS

demands of care-giving, the aging process, all place a caregiver at a higher risk for health problems. Assuming the role of caregiver for a loved one while juggling their own lives will have an increased risk to experience depression and chronic illness.

The progression of a chronic illness or injury for someone in your care cannot be thwarted, however, as caregivers -we can take responsibility for our own personal health by ensuring our needs are met.

Stress

How we react to an event plays a big role in how we cope with it. Stress from care-giving is

expected, but stress may come about unexpectedly from the perception of our situation and feeling isolated in our experiences as a caregiver. Stress levels are impacted by several variables:

- Whether or not our caregiving is voluntary.
- The relationship with the care recipient
- How we cope with stressful situations
- Type of chronic illness or injury the care recipient has.
- Whether support and resources are available.
- Steps to managing stress
- Recognize and identify your

stress triggers

- Identify what you can and cannot change
- Set goals on what you'd like to accomplish in the next few months.
- Utilize stress-reduction techniques
- Address your healthcare needs
- Get proper rest, nutrition, exercise
- Seek a support system & resources for respite

Respite Care

Respite Care is a period of rest or relief. Having a substitute caregiver to give the primary caregiver a break, whether once a week or more or when that primary caregiver gets sick is important in order to avoid caregiver burnout.

Respite Care Options:

- Home Care Agency provides a caregiver in the home setting. This provides a familiar environment and flexible scheduling
- Healthcare Facility: Care recipients can receive short-term stays at an assisted living or nursing home. Some benefits include activities and socialization with around the clock nursing care.
- Adult Day Healthcare Program: May offer medical and social programs for care recipients to take part in, receive meals and skilled nursing care. A medical model is a professional care setting in which older adults living with dementia or disabilities receive individualized therapeutic, social, and health services. To learn more about Adult Day Healthcare or Meadows Adult Day Healthcare coming soon to the Brookmeade Community please email info@brookmeadecommunity.org

Explore all the options for yourself and for your loved one so you can understand the pros and cons for your situation. Take control as a caregiver of your health. When we take care of ourselves, our loved ones will benefit too.

For more information: The Brookmeade Community, 46 Brookmeade Drive, Rhinebeck, NY; Ph: (845) 876-2071; brookmeadecommunity.org.



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Recognizing and gracefully ending unhealthy friendships



CREATIVE ARTS THERAPY INSIGHTS with Lisa Papantoniou

how can you identify when it's time to end a friendship, and how can you do so without unnecessary conflict?

Start with reflection on the friendship's dynamics. Consider if there is equality in the relationship. Are your contributions, support and care reciprocated, or do you find yourself consistently giving more? A lack of mutual trust can also be telling. If trust has been compromised repeatedly, this may signal that it's time to reassess the relationship.

Assess the quality of your interactions. Do you often find yourself censoring your thoughts to avoid negativity? Does your friend frequently redirect conversations to focus on themselves? These patterns may indicate that the friendship is more harmful than helpful. Be honest with yourself in acknowledging these dynamics.

Once you recognize that the

friendship may not be serving your best interests, it's time to consider how to end it respectfully. Here are several ways to navigate this challenging process:

Reflect and Prepare: Take time to articulate your reasons for ending the friendship.

Understanding your motivations will enable you to communicate your feelings more effectively. Journaling can help process these emotions and clarify any patterns that hinder your personal growth.

Set Boundaries: Clearly define how you envision your relationship moving forward. Whether you opt for limited communication or a complete break, establishing boundaries will help both parties adjust, supporting your emotional well-being.

Choose the Right Time and Place: Select a private and neutral location for this important conversation. Avoid public settings where emotions might escalate, leading to discomfort for both of you.

Be Honest but Kind: When discussing the end of the

friendship, express yourself honestly while remaining compassionate. Avoid placing blame, as this can trigger defensiveness. Utilize "I" statements to communicate your feelings, such as "I feel this friendship no longer supports my personal growth."

Allow for Grieving: Understand that ending a friendship can evoke a range of emotions for both parties. Give yourselves permission to grieve this loss as a natural part of the healing process.

Seek Support: Surround yourself with understanding individuals who can provide comfort during this transition. Engaging in conversations with trusted friends, family members, or therapists can offer guidance and solace.

Ultimately, ending a friendship isn't about fostering resentment; it's an act of prioritizing your mental and emotional health. By approaching the situation with empathy and respect, you can achieve closure and embrace a sense of peace as you move forward.

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

Older adults can prevent slips and falls with these tips

(StatePoint) Among older Americans, falls are the number one cause of injuries and death from injury, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Not only are seniors more at risk for falls, but when they do fall, they are at a greater risk for injuries, hospitalization and complications. Medical experts say that for people of all ages, a ground-up approach to fall prevention starts with healthy feet.

"Painful foot conditions, such as osteoarthritis, calluses, bunions, hammertoes and diabetes complications, can make it difficult to maintain balance and coordination when walking or standing," says Bryn J. Laubacher, DPM, FACFAS, a board-certified foot and ankle surgeon and Fellow Member of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgery (ACFAS). "Compounding the issue is that when you are suffering from a painful foot condition, it can be more difficult to engage in the strength and balance exercises that ultimately reduce fall risk."

Experts say that eliminating foot pain can lessen one's chances of experiencing a life-altering fall. That's why the foot and ankle surgeons of ACFAS offer these steps for keeping feet and ankles strong and healthy:

Don't ignore pain: Foot pain is not just a normal consequence of aging, so don't ignore aching and suffering or resign yourself to it. You likely have a treatable

condition. See a foot and ankle surgeon when you experience pain for proper diagnosis and treatment.

Examine your feet: Regularly inspect your feet. If you notice any bumps, lumps or other changes, make an appointment with your foot and ankle surgeon for evaluation.

Exercise: Simple stretching exercises can help you maintain strength and mobility in your feet and ankles, as well as provide pain relief. Talk to your physician about appropriate exercises for you.

Protect: Wear cushioned insoles or any special footwear you are prescribed, along with comfortable, well-fitting and supportive shoes, every day – even around the house.

Consider advanced options: Know that at times, surgery is the most appropriate treatment for a given condition. Fortunately, many surgical techniques today can be performed on an outpatient basis. There are also more options than ever before.

According to Dr. Laubacher, new medical technologies and ground-breaking surgical interventions, such as bioengineered scaffolding for reconstructive surgery, minimally invasive techniques and stem cell regeneration, are helping patients restore functionality and get back to normal faster than ever before,

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

Night-time candle rituals for quality sleep



LIFE IS BETTER WITH CANDLES

With Sonya, the Candle Lady

time so that your body develops an internal clock.

- Once you light your candle, turn off or dim the artificial light. This also includes cell phones and other electronics.
- Do other activities when burning the candle such as take a bubble bath; meditate or take deep breaths to reduce stress; read a pleasant book or write in a journal.

In no time, you will notice that your body and mind will start to relax and begin to fall asleep faster and you will feel more refreshed and energized in the morning.

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

It is best to call in advance just in case there has been a change in my hours

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

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

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You are not alone if you have difficulty falling asleep, for most of us do not get enough sleep.

First and most important, never burn candles while you are asleep! If you must have candles on while you sleep, invest in a high quality realistic flame-less candle with a timer that mimics a real flickering flame.

Here are a few suggestions in creating a night-time candle ritual:

- Light a scented candle to create a cozy and relaxing atmosphere, however, select calming scented candles such as chamomile or lavender and avoid non-natural waxes or toxic fragrance oils.

- Always go to bed at the same

Parents, it's time to prepare for special education meetings

Spring is coming in March and the educational performance of many children will be evaluated and presented at special education committee meetings to decide if they would benefit from special education services.

Parents, I hope that you have paid attention to the needs your children have had throughout the school year so that you can bring your concerns to the committees. You may also want to provide information regarding your communications and meetings with teachers. At these meetings recent evaluations will be presented.

If the committee decides that a child is eligible for special education services, an Individual Education Plan, I.E.P., will be developed. An I.E.P. is a written document, a LEGAL document created for a child who has been classified with a disability. This document gives direction for the educational needs of the child. An I.E.P. includes specific goals, objectives, modifications, and accommodations that must be implemented to help the child learn and achieve success in school. An I.E.P. is not a suggestion. An I.E.P. is a mandate and must be followed.

Parents, remember that this plan is an "individual" plan, designed for your child. Parents have told

MAKING EDUCATION WORK

with Diane Fulves

me that the I.E.P. they received was inappropriate. The goals did not indicate the specific needs of their child. There were no modifications or accommodations. That is why you must come to these meetings with adequate preparation. You do not want the discussion about your child to proceed without your ACTIVE participation. You are an integral participant in this discussion that will result in important decisions for your child.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, I.D.E.A., states the following:

"Parents have always been important players in the special education process and their involvement is vital to successful results for students. Parents are entitled to be part of their child's I.E.P. team that makes decisions regarding their child's placement."

If you have kept records throughout the school year, if you have paid attention to issues your child has experienced, e.g., homework, studying for tests, inability to recall information, attention, frustration, etc., you have a good start. The more

information you can provide the team, the better understanding the members will have regarding your child's needs.

This will also help in the development of the I.E.P. if the decision is made to provide special education services. Be specific when speaking about the problems. Let the committee know if your child does not understand homework assignments or if they can't keep up with the teacher's presentation. They may have trouble copying from the board. This is your opportunity to share your concerns and it will help the members understand the issues.

Then be prepared to ask questions and expect answers. If your child is classified with a disability and receives an I.E.P., you want to know which modifications and accommodations will be included. Will homework and class assignments be modified? Will small group instruction be provided? Will alternate assignments be offered when necessary? Will more time be provided to complete assignments and tests?

Parents, you want to know that this document contains the specific direction to help your child succeed.

One of the members of the committee will be a special education teacher who will develop the academic portion of the I.E.P. More than likely, this teacher does not know your child except for the information provided at the meeting. You may want to leave some notes for this teacher. When I sat on committee I took notes to be sure that I chose goals, modifications, and accommodations that met the specific needs of each child. This is the purpose of an INDIVIDUAL Education Plan.

Once you receive the document examine it carefully. If you have any questions, contact the appropriate person immediately. Don't wait. This is your child's plan for success.

Diane Fulves is an educator 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.

Strategies for improving well-being before, during and after menopause

By Iris Douglas

HV Holistic Healing Center

“Vital Women from Washington



Heights Living in Dutchess County” is a podcast that brings to light the personal experiences of its hosts, Iris Douglas and

Ivette O’Sullivan. Their stories, shaped by their upbringing in the Heights during the 1980s, form the program’s backbone.

The podcast reflects on their lives and addresses essential life lessons, mental health challenges, and the journey through menopause. As engaged community members, they understand the significance of their contributions. They identify as “I & I,” a term that symbolizes their commitment to fostering a culture of openness and empathy.

Sharing their challenges and triumphs creates a safe space for women to share their experiences. They aim to empower and uplift women within their community.

Iris, the owner of Hudson Valley Holistic Healing Center, collaborates with Ivette, a social worker and menopause coaching expert, to explore strategies for improving well-being before, during, and after menopause.

February is recognized as “Heart Health Month,” a time to focus on overall health and well-

being, particularly relevant to menopausal women. Menopause brings about considerable transformations in both physical and emotional states. It is entirely natural to experience stress during this period of rapid change.

I, Iris, remember feeling a decline in energy levels and a shift in my appearance during menopause. These changes can create challenges in maintaining a sense of inner happiness when external appearances are shifting. Addressing healing before menopause is crucial, as our bodies carry memories of past negative emotions and traumatic experiences, often linked to the histories of our maternal ancestors. Acknowledging this connection is vital. Understanding our patterns and identifying what we need to release can lead to meaningful improvements in our well-being.

Self-awareness is not just critical; it’s a vital asset before menopause begins. Understanding that you can handle the changes during this time can empower you. It’s helpful to have a plan for this transition. By figuring out how to deal with your experiences, you take control. Recognizing your triggers is key, as everyone has unique experiences. It’s important to acknowledge these triggers and create ways to cope. Staying calm and realizing that every woman encounters difficulties during this time can be beneficial.

Menopause can bring about significant emotional changes. Here are some helpful ways to cope with these shifts:

- 1. Understanding Menopause:** Gaining insight into how menopause impacts physical and emotional well-being can enhance the ability to navigate these changes. Being knowledgeable can reduce anxiety and equip one for the future.
- 2. Engage in Mindfulness and Meditation:** Meditation and yoga promote mental clarity, reduce stress, and enhance emotional regulation. Dedicating just a few minutes each day to deep breathing can significantly improve one’s sense of calm and stability during times of transition.
- 3. Engaging in Physical Activity:** Regular exercise is not just about staying fit; it’s about enhancing mood and boosting energy levels. This can encompass a variety of activities, such as aerobic exercises, strength training, and flexibility routines. Enjoyable alternatives may consist of walking, swimming, or dancing. The key is to find something you enjoy that makes you feel good.

4. Healthy Diet: A balanced diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins can do more than nourish your body. It can improve your mood. Add foods high in omega-3 fatty acids, like fish and nuts, as they benefit our emotional well-being. During this transition, nourishing the body with a healthy diet can make one feel cared for and supported, both physically and emotionally.

5. Maintain Connections: Maintaining connections with friends and family is essential. Exchanging thoughts and experiences with supportive individuals can improve wellbeing and a sense of companionship.

6. Consider Professional Support: When we feel overwhelmed by our emotions, reach out to a mental health

expert. Therapy can provide ways to cope and a safe environment to share feelings.

7. Establish a Routine: A daily routine can bring order and consistency, which might reduce feelings of confusion or stress during this change.

8. Explore Relaxation Techniques: Progressive muscle relaxation, guided imagery, and aromatherapy can lower stress and improve emotional health.

9. Limit Caffeine and Alcohol: Both substances can worsen mood swings and anxiety. Cutting back on them might help one feel more stable.

10. Prioritize Sleep: Good sleep habits are essential. To enhance sleep quality, one should establish a relaxing bedtime routine and ensure that one’s sleeping space is cozy, making one feel cared for and rested.

11. Journaling: Expressing one feelings and experiences through writing can be a healing activity. This habit can help one understand one’s emotions and notice trends as time progresses.

12. Seek Out Resources: Look for support groups or community resources focusing on menopause. Connecting with others experiencing similar changes can create a feeling of togetherness and empathy, making one feel connected and supported during this transition.

Emotional changes during menopause are a natural part of life. Implementing these strategies allows us to navigate this transition and maintain emotional well-being, reassuring you that these changes are normal and manageable.

Iris Douglas is the owner of Hudson Valley Holistic Healing Center and Ivette O’Sullivan is a social worker and certified specialist in menopause coaching. Visit the Hudson Valley Holistic Healing Center at 51 Springside Avenue in Poughkeepsie. Call 845-849-0838 or visit hvhhealingcenter.com

Tips to support digestive health

(StatePoint) Ever have that feeling of sluggishness that you can’t seem to shake? Did you know that it could be because your digestive system isn’t working optimally? For better digestive wellness, consider the following tips:

Hone Your Diet: Eat a diverse diet and limit processed foods and added sugars. A well-rounded diet that prioritizes whole foods is typically high in fiber and other nutrients that promote a healthy gut. Some great choices include beans, seeds, fruits, broccoli, kimchi and avocados.

Stay Hydrated: As you increase your fiber intake, be sure to drink plenty of water to support regularity and keep everything moving through your system. Your digestive system will thank you!

Get Moving: Daily activity is a natural digestive aid. Exercise boosts circulation to deliver blood and oxygen to your digestive tract, helps you maintain a healthy metabolism, and keeps your digestive muscles strong. For greater digestive wellness, be sure to incorporate some

movement into your routine.

Manage Stress: The mind-body connection is powerful, and poor digestive health is just one of the many potential side effects of too much stress. Common stress management techniques include meditation, self-care, exercise and reaching out to loved ones.

Get Quality Sleep: High-quality sleep is needed to keep all the systems of your body in tip-top shape, and your digestive system is no exception. The Mayo Clinic recommends that adults get more than 7 hours of sleep per night.

Get a Massage: According to research, abdominal massage is a safe, easy remedy for occasional constipation that most people can do themselves.

Take Fiber Supplements: Less than 10% of Americans get enough fiber from diet alone, making a fiber supplement an excellent way to boost your intake. One great option to consider, which is associated with a number of wellness benefits, is Metamucil 4-in-1 Lemonade Flavored Psyllium Fiber Supplement Powder.

Hudson Valley Holistic Healing Center



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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!

Let's get moving - and prevent chronic conditions

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.

The second edition of the "Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans," reports that approximately 80 percent of U.S. adults and adolescents are insufficiently active. As a result, many Americans currently have or are likely to experience chronic diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and depression.

The good news is that regular physical activity can prevent and improve many chronic conditions.

BODY KNOWLEDGE

America, it's time to get moving!

According to the guidelines, the following is recommended:

- **Preschool-aged children** (ages 3 through 5 years) should be physically active at least for three hours, if not more. Adult caregivers should encourage active play that includes a variety of activity types and limits sitting-around time, such as screen time.
- **Children and adolescents** (ages 6 through 17 years) need at least 60 minutes or more of activity a day. This includes activities to strengthen bones, build muscles, and get the heart beating faster.
- **Adults** should do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week, and at

least two days for muscle-strengthening activities. Adding more time provides further benefits.

- **Older adults (ages 65 and older)** should do at least 150 minutes of aerobic activity a week and include muscle-strengthening activities 2 days a week. You should also add components, such as balance training as well. If you have limitations due to preexisting conditions, consult with a health care provider and be as physically active as your abilities allow.
- **Pregnant and postpartum women** who were physically active before pregnancy can continue these activities during pregnancy and in the postpartum period, but they should consult

their health care provider about any necessary adjustments.

- **Adults with chronic health conditions and disabilities**, who are able, should do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity a week. You should consult with a healthcare provider about the types and amounts that are appropriate for you.

Physical therapists are movement experts who improve quality of life through prescribed exercise, hands-on care, and patient education.

You can contact a physical therapist directly for an evaluation. You do not need a physician referral.

*Adapted from APTA and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

For more information, visit centerforphysicaltherapy.com or call 845-297-4789.

David Lubarsky, MD, begins tenure as WMCHHealth President, CEO

David Lubarsky, MD, MBA, FASA, a nationally recognized healthcare leader, returns to his Westchester roots as he assumes the role of President and Chief Executive Officer of the Westchester Medical Center Health Network (WMCHHealth). Dr.

Lubarsky, who previously served as CEO of UC Davis Health, brings a track record of expanding access to care, advancing innovative technologies, and strengthening healthcare delivery systems driven by a patient-first mindset.



A graduate of Edgemont High School in Scarsdale, Dr. Lubarsky began his medical career as an internal

medicine intern at Westchester Medical Center. His return is not only a professional milestone, but a personal one, reflecting a deep commitment to the communities that shaped his values.

"While I wasn't actively seeking a new role, I was open to considering an opportunity where I could make a real impact on patients' lives – especially in a place that holds personal significance," Dr. Lubarsky said. "I have always admired WMCHHealth's mission – delivering top-tier, specialized medical care while staying deeply connected to its communities. Returning to WMCHHealth is incredibly meaningful to me, this is where I began my career, and I'm honored to have the opportunity to give back to a community that was so formative."

With more than 12,000 employees, nearly 3,000 attending physicians, and 1,700 inpatient beds across its hospitals, WMCHHealth is the Hudson Valley's leading healthcare provider. The network offers a full spectrum of care, including Level I (adult and pediatric), Level II, and Level III trauma centers, the region's only acute care children's hospital, multiple community hospitals, specialized institutes and centers, Comprehensive and Primary Stroke Centers, state-of-the-art outpatient care, including the Ambulatory Care Pavilion in Valhalla, skilled nursing facilities,

and one of the largest mental health systems in New York State.

Dr. Lubarsky, who was recognized by Becker's Hospital Review as a 2024 CEO Influencer to Know, will guide WMCHHealth through a new era of strategic expansion and innovation, with key priorities including:

- **Strengthening the Network and expanding access to care** – ensuring that patients recognize the world-class care and specialized treatment available right in their communities by strengthening WMCHHealth's entire Network of facilities, including its nine hospitals across seven campuses.

- **Enhancing integration at WMCHHealth's facilities** – so that every patient, at every facility, experiences seamless, high-quality care, benefitting from the strength of the entire Network.

- **Advancing AI-driven healthcare** – to enhance patient care and provider efficiency while keeping the human touch at the center.

- **Optimizing system operations** – to support seamless care delivery and financial sustainability.

Dr. Lubarsky also joins WMCHHealth as it advances major capital initiatives, including the new state-of-the-art Critical Care Tower at Westchester Medical Center. This project will significantly enhance intensive care capabilities and reinforce WMCHHealth's role as a leader in advanced medicine. Construction began in July 2024 and is expected to be completed in 2026.

Dr. Lubarsky succeeds Michael D. Israel, who led WMCHHealth for nearly two decades and last year announced his retirement.

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Norovirus: What it is and how to avoid it

By Tina F. Fakhoury, FNP
Family Medicine, Nuvance Health



Tina Fakhoury, FNP

Do you think you have a stomach virus or bug? This could be a norovirus and its symptoms are very unpleasant.

Here is what you need to know about norovirus, including signs you might have it, when to see your primary care doctor and ways to prevent spreading the virus.

What is norovirus?

Norovirus is commonly referred to as a stomach virus or stomach bug. It is a highly contagious virus that affects all ages and can make you feel very uncomfortable. The virus triggers inflammation in your stomach and intestines, otherwise known as gastroenteritis. It ranks among the most common causes of food-borne outbreaks worldwide. It spreads quickly in crowded areas such as local restaurants, schools, offices and cruise ships.

How can you tell if you have norovirus? Norovirus symptoms can make you feel uncomfortable and downright miserable.

You might experience the following if you have norovirus: Nausea and vomiting, Diarrhea, Stomach pain, Fever, Headache, Body aches and/or Fatigue.

Symptoms of the stomach virus usually appear within 12 to 48 hours after exposure and can stick around for one to three days. If you're starting to feel better, don't think you're out of the woods just yet. You

PATIENT FIRST

are most contagious during the first few days after feeling better and can remain contagious for at least two weeks.

How do you get norovirus?

Norovirus spreads through vomit or the fecal-oral route, meaning the virus is in the feces of someone who is infected. When proper hygiene measures aren't followed, particles from vomit or feces can contaminate food, water, objects or surfaces. You can become infected by consuming contaminated food or water or by touching contaminated surfaces or objects and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes.

When should you go to the doctor if you have norovirus?

While most people recover without complications, there are times when you should seek medical help from your primary care physician. Depending on the severity of your symptoms, your doctor may be able to accommodate a telehealth visit.

You should make an appointment with your primary care doctor or go to an urgent care if the following norovirus symptoms last more than a few days:

- Signs of dehydration such as dry mouth, decreased urination or lightheadedness.
- Bloody stools.
- High fever (above 101.5 degrees).
- You have a weak immune system or underlying medical conditions.

Elderly adults and young children are more susceptible to becoming dehydrated, so be

sure to keep a close eye on them.

How can you avoid catching and spreading norovirus?

Practicing good hygiene is crucial in situations where norovirus spreads easily like after using the restroom, before eating or preparing food and after being in contact with someone who is infected.

Wash your hands. Rub your hands together with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. Wash your hands are soiled but especially after: Using the restroom, Changing diapers, Shaking hands, Touching common surfaces, Caring for people who are sick, Eating or handling food and Before giving yourself or someone else medicine.

Use hand sanitizer. While hand sanitizer should not replace washing your hands with soap and water, it is a good alternative.

Don't touch your face.

Avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes as these are common entry points for the stomach virus.

Handle and prepare food safely. Wash your fruits and vegetables and cook meats and shellfish to proper temperatures.

Clean and disinfect surfaces. Regularly clean and sanitize kitchen utensils, counters and surfaces as well as high-traffic areas like doorknobs, refrigerator handles and TV remotes. Disinfect surfaces contaminated with norovirus immediately. Wear disposable gloves, clean the area with bleach, wipe it up

with paper towels, take out the trash and then wash your hands when you are done.


Do your laundry: Clothing soiled with vomit or feces should be washed immediately. Wash the items with hot water and detergent and then dry them at the highest heat setting. Wear disposable gloves and then wash your hands after.

How do you get rid of norovirus? Unfortunately, there is not a medication to treat people with norovirus; you must let it run its course. Your body fights norovirus on its own without any specific treatment. But hydration is key, so drink plenty of fluids to avoid it. Consider drinking water, herbal teas or broths to stay hydrated. Squeezing fresh lemon in your water or tea can provide vitamin C, hydration, healthy digestion and support your immune system.

Drinking clear broths like chicken or vegetable are gentle on your stomach and provides essential nutrients your body needs. For replenishing lost fluids and essential minerals, consider sipping on sports drinks with electrolytes. These measures can help alleviate discomfort and support your body's recovery.

The bottom line: If you have norovirus, there are ways to manage your symptoms and prevent spreading. Stay hydrated by drinking fluids rich in electrolytes, wash your hands with soap and water, regularly disinfect high-traffic areas and avoid touching your face.

For more information, visit nuvancehealth.org.



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