

HEALTH **U**

PARA LEER ESTA REVISTA EN ESPAÑOL,
VISITE HMHforU.org/Spanish2

IS YOUR CHEST PAIN SERIOUS?

Page 12

KNOW THE SIGNS OF HEART FAILURE

Page 14



Hackensack
Meridian Health

TAKE OUR QUIZ TO SEE IF YOU'RE MAKING HEART-SMART FOOD CHOICES

Page 35

Heart Happy



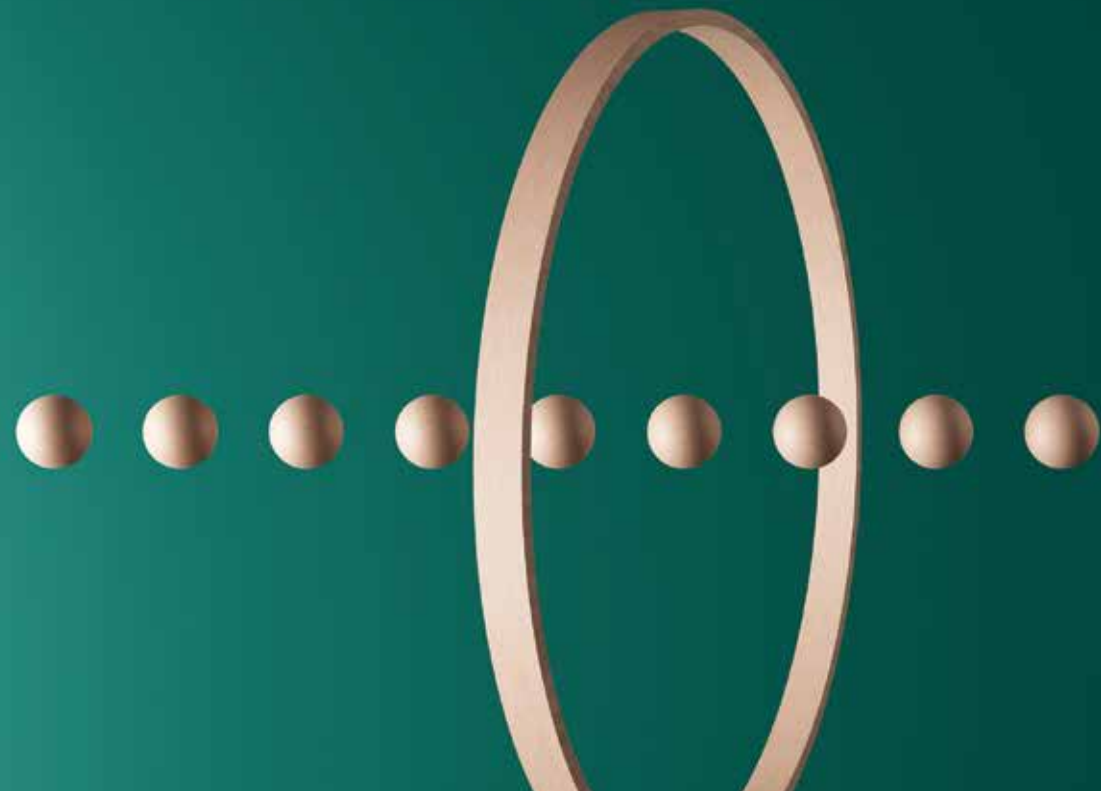
Tear out an annual visit checklist and bonus recipe. Page 18



Desprenda una lista de verificación para su visita anual y una receta adicional.

Página 18

Contents Winter 2024



30 **Innovation transforming medical research into treatments**
Right on Target
 Learn about the latest innovative radiation therapies that are targeting tumors more accurately and effectively.

04 **Hi. Welcome to this issue of HealthU**
 A message from Robert C. Garrett, FACHE, CEO of Hackensack Meridian Health.

Better U quick tips to help you live your healthiest life

05 **The Colorectal Cancer and Meat Link**
 Plus: ■ Tips to decrease anxiety ■ TikTok workout trends to try ■ Recipe for white bean and shrimp stew ■ What's trending?

Doctor Spotlight

10 **Getting to Know Farah Deshmukh, M.D., MPH**
 Internal medicine doctor at Hackensack Meridian Medical Group Primary Care—Neptune.

Spotlight on U health topics that matter the most to you

12 **Is My Chest Pain Serious?**
 How to know if chest pain is signaling a heart attack or other serious condition. Plus: Heart attack symptoms in men vs. women.

14 **Pumping the Brakes on Heart Failure**
 Heart failure can actually be reversed if treated properly. Plus: Hamilton Township man overcomes the odds thanks to new heart device.

16 **Get Screened**
 Early detection is key when it comes to cervical cancer. Plus: Five ways to prevent cervical cancer.

18 **Busy Bladders**
 If you are having trouble controlling your bladder, you might have urinary incontinence. Plus: Nurse turns to surgical solution for stress incontinence.

20 **Pickle Problems**
 Tips for avoiding injuries on the pickleball court. Plus: Can you heal a rotator cuff naturally?

22 **Ease on Down the Road**
 Tips to safely resume exercise after joint replacement.

23 **Stroke vs. Heart Attack**
 Learn the differences between these major medical emergencies.

24 **Before You Test**
 What to know about genetic testing for Alzheimer's disease. Plus: How to support a loved one with Alzheimer's disease.

26 **Snow Business**
 Take these steps to protect your children on the slopes this year. Plus: 7-year-old suffers concussion during basketball game.

28 **Filing for Sleep Divorce**
 More couples are opting to sleep separately to improve their health. Plus: How to fall asleep without a sleep aid.

Schedule event and class listings

32 **Your Calendar for Winter 2024**
 Live and virtual events and classes you won't want to miss.

Foundation meaningful gifts from U

34 **All Hands on Deck**
 A generous pledge fuels critical support programs for bariatric patients.

By the Numbers a snapshot view of an important health issue

35 **Heart Smart**
 Are you making the most heart-friendly food choices? Take our quiz to find out.

On the cover: iStock.com/myjillo

HEALTH U
ONLINE EXCLUSIVES



What does the color of your pee mean? Our urology expert weighs in at [HMHforU.org/PeeColor](https://www.hmhforu.org/PeeColor).



Can constipation be an early sign of Parkinson's disease? Find out at [HMHforU.org/Constipation](https://www.hmhforu.org/Constipation).



Our nutritionist reveals six foods that can help you achieve healthy, glowing skin: [HMHforU.org/HealthySkin](https://www.hmhforu.org/HealthySkin).



Tune in to our HealthU podcast! For more details, visit [HMHforU.org/Podcast](https://www.hmhforu.org/Podcast).

Visit [HMHforU.org](https://www.hmhforu.org) for these stories and other great health care content.

HealthU is the winner of the 2023 Content Marketing Award for Best Content Marketing Program in Healthcare, as well as a 2023 Hermes Creative Awards Platinum winner and a 2022 APEX Award winner.



Heart Strong

At Hackensack Meridian Health, we're committed to your health—not just in healing you when you're sick but also in helping you lead a healthy life and stay out of our hospitals.

Key to good health is good nutrition. But just one in 10 Americans are eating the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables, with even lower rates among low-income Americans, according to the Centers for Disease and Control Prevention. Cost is a primary barrier to consuming healthy foods.

We are dedicated to being part of the solution and to building healthier communities. We've launched the Fresh Match program that will make fresh produce more accessible to families in need. With support from a \$3 million grant from New Jersey, a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and a \$500,000 match from donors to the Hackensack Meridian Health Foundation, we are partnering with grocery retailers in seven counties to launch a nutrition incentive program.

Under the Fresh Match program, families receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits can visit a participating grocery store and receive a dollar-for-dollar match to buy fresh produce. That means if you use your SNAP card to buy \$10 worth of fruits or vegetables at a participating store, you'll receive a match for \$10 toward buying more fresh produce on



Bob Garrett with New Jersey Assemblywoman Yvonne Lopez (left) and Nicole Harris-Hollingsworth, Ed.D., MCHES, vice president of Social Determinants of Health at Hackensack Meridian Health (right)



your next visit. Learn more at HMHforU.org/FreshMatch.

Proper nutrition affects so many areas of health—not in the least, heart health. This February, we will again celebrate Heart Month and raise awareness of heart disease. A diet high in fruits and vegetables, as well as lean protein and whole grains, can improve your heart health by lowering “bad” cholesterol, raising “good” cholesterol and maintaining a healthy weight.

Check out the inside back cover of this issue to test your knowledge of heart-friendly food choices. We also offer free nutrition classes online and in person at locations across the state.

Visit HMHforU.org/Events to find one near you.

Another key component of heart health is understanding your personal risk factors for heart disease. Heart screenings, like AngioScreen and CT Calcium Scoring Scan, can reveal a person's risk level for heart disease or stroke, which helps your doctor determine what prevention or treatment options should be used. Schedule a screening at HMHforU.org/HeartScreening.

This Heart Month, make a pledge to be heart strong. Try a new form of exercise, add more fresh produce into your diet or schedule a heart screening. By making a commitment to your heart health today, you can prevent being forced to make time for it later. 🧠

Robert C. Garrett, FACHE, CEO
Hackensack Meridian Health



Chair Keith Banks **CEO** Robert C. Garrett, FACHE
Medical Advisor Elliot Frank, M.D.
Production Team Marisa Tranchina, Jacki Kronstedt, Joe Colón, Katie Woehner
Editorial & Creative Services Donovan Foote, Michelle Jackson, GLC

This free magazine is prepared by the Marketing and Communications Team of Hackensack Meridian Health. Inquiries or ideas can be addressed to HealthU@hmhn.org.
© 2024 Hackensack Meridian Health. The material provided in this magazine is intended to be used as general information only and should not replace the advice of your physician. Always consult your physician for individual care.

INSIDE THIS SECTION

- 6 Tips to decrease anxiety
- 6 TikTok workout trends
- 7 Recipe for white bean and shrimp stew

The Colorectal Cancer and Meat Link

As much as many of us love a good hamburger or steak, research has shown a connection between colorectal cancer and a high intake of red meat and processed meat.

“When heme iron, which is present in red meat and processed meat, is processed by the colon, it produces cancer-causing molecules that can increase the risk of colorectal cancer,” says Madison Schenke, registered dietician at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**. “On top of that, a diet high in red and processed meat increases your intake of dietary fat, which increases your risk of obesity, heart disease, chronic inflammation and colorectal cancer.”

Dietary Risk Factors for Colorectal Cancer

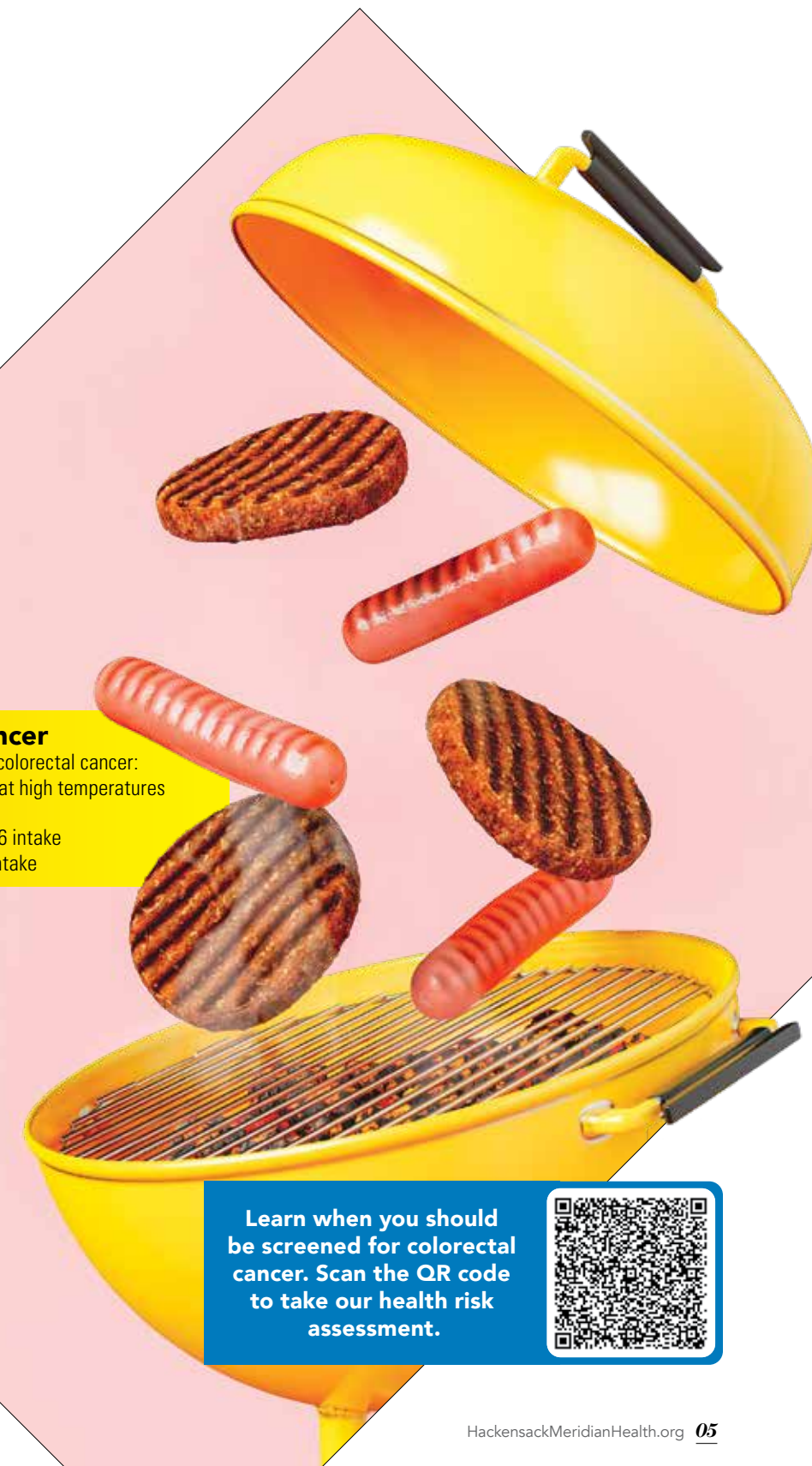
A number of dietary factors in excess can increase your risk of colorectal cancer:

- ▶ Red meat
- ▶ Processed meat
- ▶ Fatty and fried foods
- ▶ Added sugars and simple carbohydrates
- ▶ Cooking meat at high temperatures
- ▶ Low-fiber diet
- ▶ Low vitamin B6 intake
- ▶ Low calcium intake

What to Eat to Decrease Your Risk of Colorectal Cancer

“The best diet to decrease your risk of colorectal cancer is a plant-forward one that includes a variety of vegetables, beans, fruits, nuts, whole grains, soy foods and fish such as salmon,” Madison says.

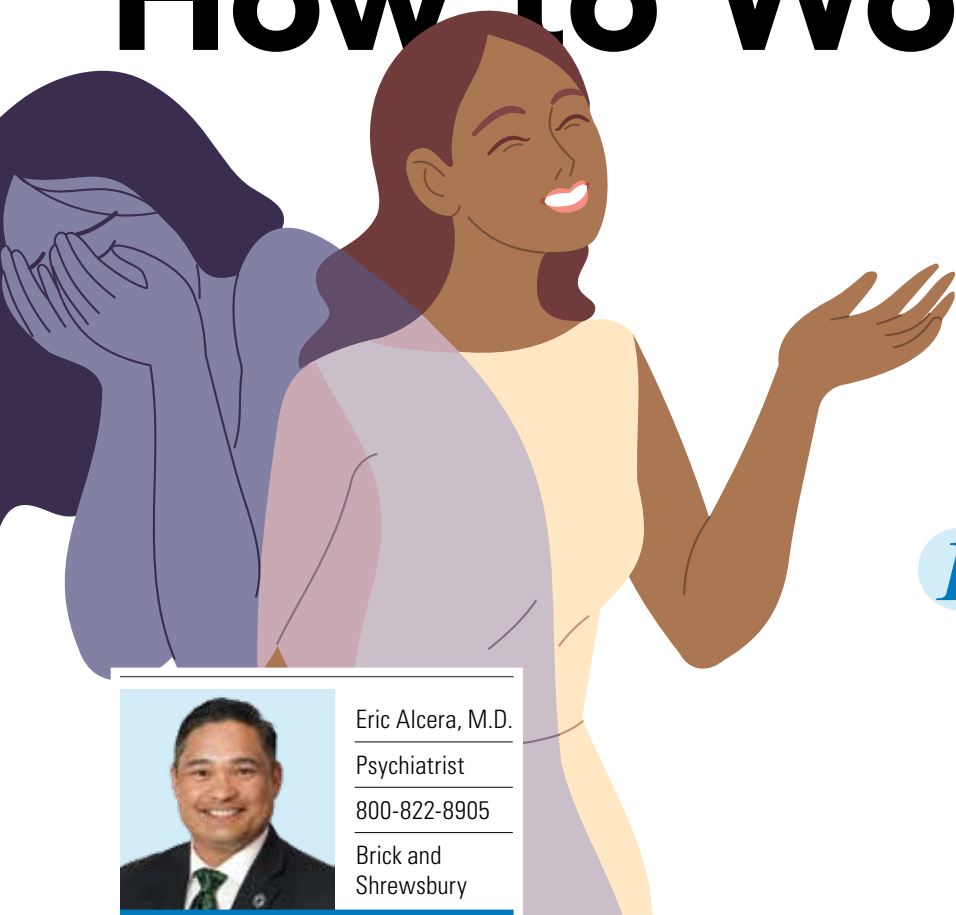
Screening is also important to prevent colorectal cancer. People at low risk of colon cancer should begin screening with colonoscopy at 45 years of age; people at high risk—those with precancerous polyps or inflammatory bowel disease, for example—should start earlier at the direction of their doctor.



Learn when you should be screened for colorectal cancer. Scan the QR code to take our health risk assessment.



How to Worry Less



Our expert offers three practical habits to help you decrease anxiety.

Anxiety is one of the most common mental health disorders in the United States. Fortunately, several effective strategies may help make your anxiety more manageable.

“Some people who experience anxiety may benefit from these practical habits, with or without therapy,” says **Eric Alcera, M.D.**, network medical director for Behavioral Health at Hackensack Meridian Health.

To decrease the effects of anxiety, Dr. Alcera suggests adopting these habits:

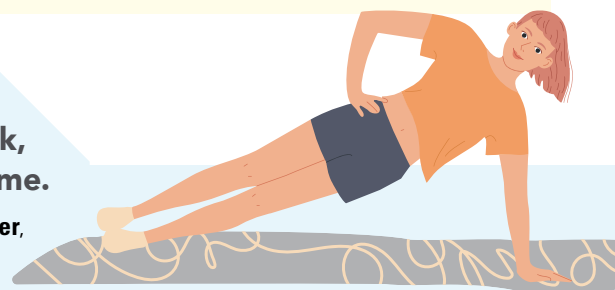


Eric Alcera, M.D.
Psychiatrist
800-822-8905
Brick and Shrewsbury

1 Adopt Healthy Lifestyle Habits

When you take care of yourself, you are more likely to cope better with stress and anxiety. These good-for-you habits should help you manage anxiety:

- ▶ **Eating a healthy diet.** Healthy whole foods provide the nutrients you need to function optimally.
- ▶ **Staying well hydrated.** Drink water throughout the day to avoid dehydration, which can lower your mood.
- ▶ **Exercising regularly.** Physical activity helps boost your mood, clear your mind and reduce anxiety.
- ▶ **Limiting your alcohol intake.** Some people drink to feel calmer, but they feel anxious when it wears off.



Now Trending on TikTok

When it comes to health and wellness information on TikTok, bad advice abounds. We’ve found the trends worth your time.

Anthony Petrosini, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**, offers three workout trends on TikTok that might be worth a try.



Anthony Petrosini, M.D.
Orthopedic surgeon
800-822-8905
Manasquan and Toms River

12-3-30 Treadmill Workout

The 12-3-30 treadmill workout first debuted in 2019, but it has grown in popularity ever since. It’s pretty simple: You walk on a treadmill at an incline of 12 and a speed of 3 miles per hour for 30 minutes.

Generally, walking is an effective low-impact exercise, Dr. Petrosini notes. But with 12-3-30 workout, you walk briskly at a steep incline, which can be a more intense activity and can work the muscles in your buttocks and legs even more.

Functional Fitness Training

Functional fitness training encompasses exercises that mimic movements you make in your everyday life. These exercises may incorporate bending, twisting, squatting, pushing and pulling—all similar movements you use when carrying a heavy item, hauling in groceries from the car or bending over to pick up a dropped item.

Dr. Petrosini says that functional fitness exercises are good for strength training, and they can also improve your ability to safely conduct everyday tasks.

2 Stay in the Present

Being “in the moment” reduces anxiety by limiting unhelpful thoughts. Try these strategies to stay focused on the present moment:

- ▶ **Count backwards, from 10 to one.** Count slowly, focusing on your breath when you need to calm down. This exercise can distract you from worrisome thoughts.
- ▶ **Interact with your pet.** Cuddling or petting a furry family member helps you relax and focus on the moment. Spending time grooming, playing with or talking to your pet should boost your mood.
- ▶ **Play a musical instrument.** If you play the piano, guitar, flute or drums, play something from your repertoire. You’ll focus on the music’s pace instead of anxious thoughts.
- ▶ **Be mindful of screen time** if it takes you away from other more social activities.

3 Challenge Your Thoughts and Feelings

It’s important to recognize that your feelings about yourself or your circumstances aren’t necessarily facts. To challenge the thoughts and feelings that make you feel anxious:

- ▶ **Think about whether your perceptions are accurate,** based on what others see and say.
- ▶ **Replace negative thinking** with positive thoughts.
- ▶ **Keep a gratitude journal,** jotting down three positive thoughts per day.
- ▶ **Read your gratitude journal** when you need reminders about the positives in your life.
- ▶ If you still need help decreasing anxiety, **make an appointment with a therapist.** Talk therapy and/or medication can help manage an anxiety disorder. “Challenging your internal thoughts sounds simpler to do than it actually is,” Dr. Alcera says. “You may need a therapist’s help to challenge your long-standing negative beliefs.”

Find a behavioral health specialist near you at [HMHforU.org/MentalHealthDoc](https://www.hmhforu.org/MentalHealthDoc).

Plank Dance Challenge

The plank dance challenge involves holding the high plank position—face down with your legs extended, toes curled to the floor and arms parallel and extended—while you do a series of movements to the beat of a song. Those movements might include lifting your arms up and down and jumping your legs in and out.

“The plank dance challenge targets core muscle groups and also engages your arm, leg and back muscles,” Dr. Petrosini says. “It’s certainly a high-intensity exercise, but the music can make it fun to do. This exercise can put a lot of stress on your shoulders, so if you start to experience shoulder pain, discontinue it.”

Find more tips on working out at [HMHforU.org/Exercise](https://www.hmhforu.org/Exercise).

iStock.com/undreyfagny_illustration/NGUYEN THI NHI



White Bean and Shrimp Stew

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 15-ounce can low-sodium cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 14-ounce can low-sodium diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 teaspoon each oregano, basil and rosemary
- 3 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 pound small frozen shrimp, thawed and peeled
- ½ cup parsley, chopped

- ④ Add chicken broth and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat and simmer until stew is slightly thickened, about 15 minutes.
- ⑤ Add shrimp and simmer just until cooked through, about 2 minutes.
- ⑥ Add parsley and serve.

Nutritional Information

Per serving: 377 calories, 37g protein, 35g carbohydrate (8g fiber), 11g fat (2g sat, 9g mono/poly), 234mg sodium

Preparation

- ① Heat olive oil in a soup pot. Add onion and garlic and cook, stirring frequently until onion softens, about 3 minutes.
- ② Stir in cannellini beans, tomatoes, oregano, basil and rosemary.

Seasoned Cook

Most white fish, like cod, can be substituted for the shrimp. Cooking time would need to be adjusted.

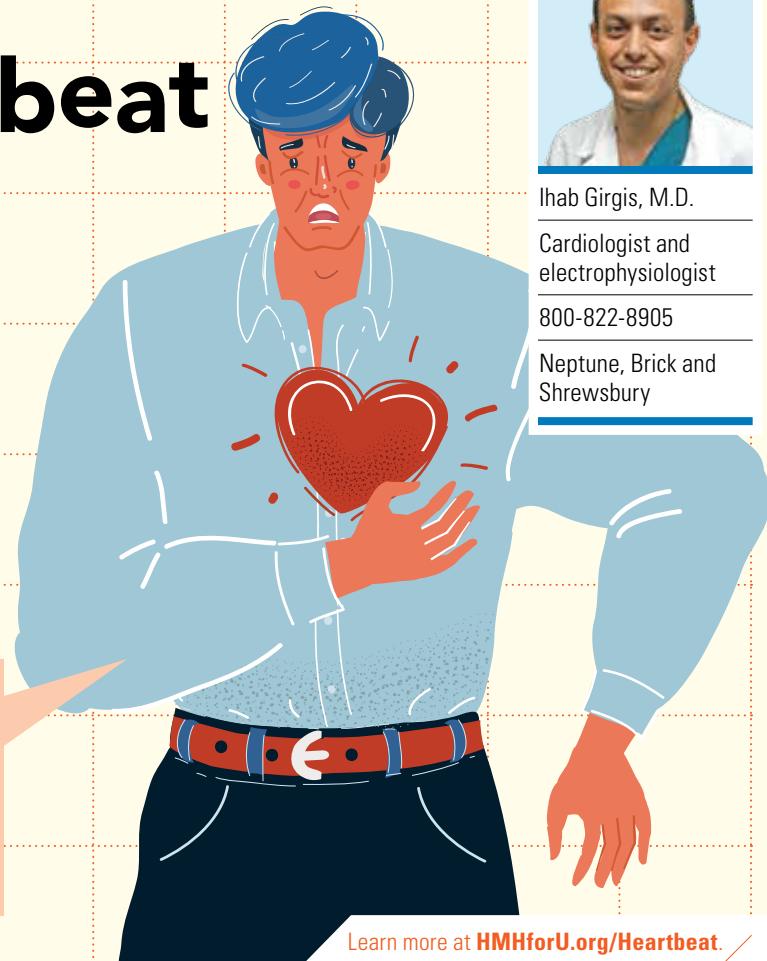
Find more recipes and tips for healthy eating at [HMHforU.org/HealthyEating](https://www.hmhforu.org/HealthyEating).

Is an irregular heartbeat dangerous?

Ihab Girgis, M.D., weighs in:

Palpitations or irregular heartbeat can be due to too much caffeine or stress but sometimes have no clear triggers. However, if the irregular heartbeat persists or is associated with other symptoms, you should seek medical care.

An irregular heartbeat, also known as a heart arrhythmia, can range from harmless to life-threatening. It is triggered when electrical signals that direct heartbeats do not function correctly, causing beats that are too fast (tachycardia), too slow (bradycardia) or irregular.



Ihab Girgis, M.D.
Cardiologist and electrophysiologist
800-822-8905
Neptune, Brick and Shrewsbury

If you experience any of these symptoms, it's important to call your doctor or seek medical help:

- ▶ Chest pain
- ▶ Fluttering in the chest or palpitations
- ▶ Shortness of breath
- ▶ Racing heartbeat
- ▶ Slow heartbeat
- ▶ Lightheadedness
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Fainting, near-fainting or dizziness
- ▶ Chest pounding

Learn more at [HMHforU.org/Heartbeat](https://www.HMHforU.org/Heartbeat).

Are edibles safe?

Eric Alcera, M.D., weighs in:

The truth is, there are many unknowns about marijuana edibles. There is no way to know the potency of edibles, so I recommend extreme caution when considering ingesting them. **Before you consume an edible, keep in mind these points:**

Edibles are not federally regulated, so manufacturers are not required to provide ingredients, warnings or nutritional information. While New Jersey requires marijuana edible labels to list ingredients, the potency can vary greatly.

Edibles have a delayed effect, so people often consume multiple edibles. By the time they feel the effect later, they may have consumed too much.

Like vaping, edibles—especially gummies—are attractive to kids because of their color, fun shapes and sweet smell.

Edibles must be stored securely to protect both kids and pets from accidentally ingesting them and getting sick.

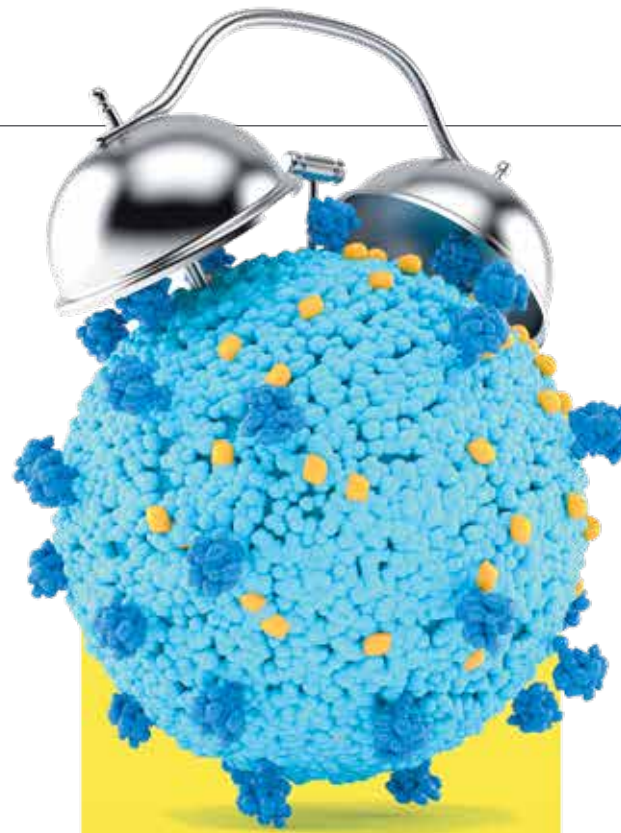
Emergency department visits from edibles are on the rise. These visits are often a result of psychiatric symptoms and cardiovascular issues.



Eric Alcera, M.D.
Psychiatrist
800-822-8905
Brick and Shrewsbury

Learn more at [HMHforU.org/Edibles](https://www.HMHforU.org/Edibles).

iStock.com/cosmaa/LeslieLauren
iStock.com/Tajaj/alekseymartynyuk



How quickly can you get COVID after exposure?

Pankaj A. Doshi, M.D., weighs in:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), COVID has a long incubation period of up to 10 days. However, with newer strains, research has shown that the window of exposure time is getting smaller and smaller.

But even with shorter incubation periods, the CDC still recommends you wear a mask for a full 10 days, starting from as soon as you discover you were exposed, even if you don't have symptoms. Start counting from day one, which is defined as the first full day after your last exposure.

- ▶ **If you develop symptoms at any time:** Isolate yourself immediately and get tested.
- ▶ **If you have been exposed but experience no symptoms:** Test at least five days after your last exposure, because testing too early can lead to a false-negative result.



Pankaj A. Doshi, M.D.
Infectious disease specialist
800-822-8905
Holmdel

Learn more at [HMHforU.org/COVIDExposure](https://www.HMHforU.org/COVIDExposure).

Who should get an RSV vaccine?

Moses Olorunnisola, M.D., weighs in:

Older adults are more likely to develop severe respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and need hospitalization. For that reason, **adults over age 60 should talk with their doctor about getting an RSV vaccine.** This single-dose shot is most effective when given at the beginning of RSV season, usually in the fall or early winter.

Expectant mothers should talk with their doctor about getting this vaccine, as well, to help protect their babies from severe RSV disease.

Mild symptoms of RSV include:

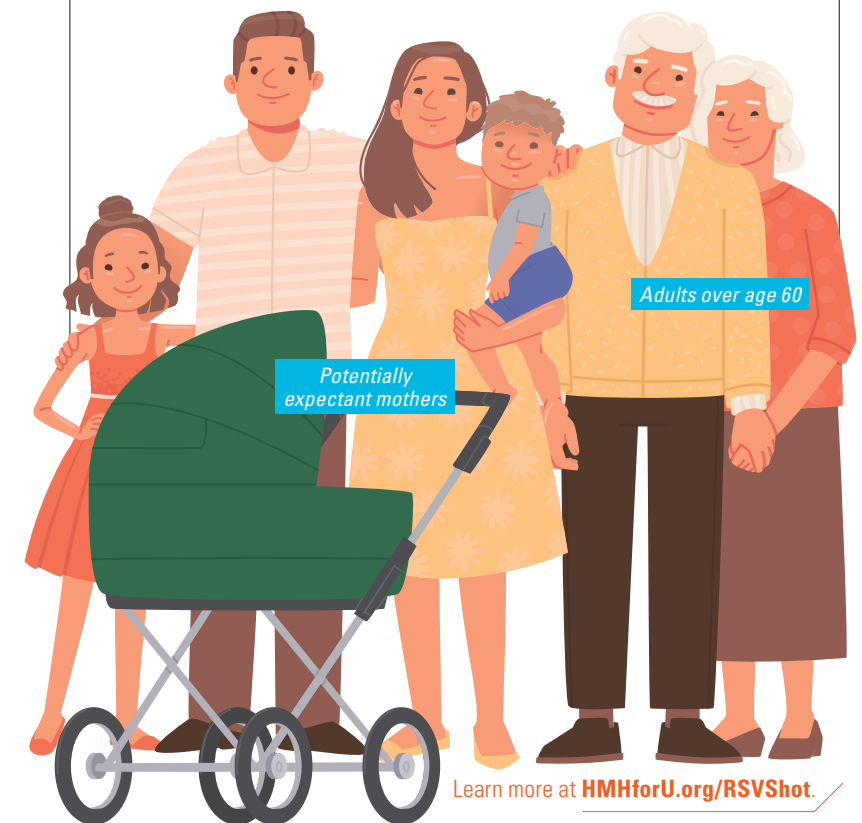
- ▶ Congested or runny nose
- ▶ Dry cough
- ▶ Low-grade fever
- ▶ Sore throat
- ▶ Sneezing
- ▶ Headache

Signs of severe RSV disease include:

- ▶ Fever
- ▶ Severe cough
- ▶ Wheezing
- ▶ Rapid breathing or difficulty breathing
- ▶ Bluish color due to lack of oxygen



Moses Olorunnisola, M.D.
Pediatrician
800-822-8905
Forked River



Learn more at [HMHforU.org/RSVShot](https://www.HMHforU.org/RSVShot).

Doctor Spotlight

FARAH DESHMUKH, M.D., MPH

Internal medicine doctor
Hackensack Meridian Medical Group
Primary Care—Neptune

As the director of the new Obesity Medicine and Weight Management Program at Hackensack Meridian Health, Farah Deshmukh, M.D., MPH, is excited about the possibilities for her patients and her career. She practices out of Jersey Shore University Medical Center, with an office in Neptune, and specializes in internal medicine and obesity medicine.

"So many patients tell their doctors, 'I need help with my weight,'" says Dr. Deshmukh. "I believe we primary care doctors can do so much more for patients' lifestyle change needs. Many doctors simply refer our patients to registered dietitians for nutrition advice, but I think we, as doctors, also can support our patients with dietary counseling—a perception that can be changed."

Dr. Deshmukh likes to set a separate appointment for patients to talk about weight management. She's passionate about educating her patients on common nutrition myths and misinformation. "I spend time with my patients to understand their diet, sleep and exercise regimen, and I educate them about each of these important yet often overlooked factors," she says.

How did you come to live in New Jersey?

I was born in India, grew up in Kuwait and attended medical school in China. I returned to India to work as a full-time doctor before coming to the United States for an internship in Houston, Texas. I then completed my residency and my obesity medicine and nutrition fellowship in New York. I had lived in New Jersey prior to that and am happy to be back seeing patients at Hackensack Meridian Health!

What do you hear frequently from patients who want to lose weight?

Most of my patients have a busy life involving work and family, and I can really relate. I can also relate to the difficulty of finding time to exercise. It's hard for my patients to find the time to incorporate physical exercise sessions—maybe they do shift work or have family commitments. We are all human, dealing with the good and the bad. I encourage my patients to try to do as much as they can, but not to beat themselves up if one day is a "bad day."

With my work schedule and watching my toddler after work, it is a challenge to incorporate

exercise into my schedule every day. I am very open about this with my patients because it helps me relate to them when they juggle a work-life balance. There are good days and bad, but on most days, I try to get at least 15–20 minutes of walking. This may be a walk from my car to the office, depending on where I park, or a stroll outside in the community.

What do you do for fun?

I watch movies and take long walks in the city with my husband, and I enjoy art and reading books to my baby. I even wrote a short one for him about nutrition and hope to write another one for him. ❄️

In her free time, Farah Deshmukh, M.D., MPH, loves spending time with her husband and baby. She even wrote a book for her young son.

Spotlight on U

health topics that matter the most to you

Cut Through the Clutter

Why does it feel good after cleaning out a closet or decluttering a junk drawer in your home? Decluttering your living space or organizing your home can provide a number of mental health benefits.

Decrease stress and anxiety.

Clutter can cause stress and anxiety. By decluttering your space, you create a more calming environment that can improve your overall mood.

Increase focus.

It can be difficult to focus when clutter is all around you. By decluttering and organizing your space, you create a more peaceful environment that helps you stay focused and productive.

Boost creativity.

When you have too much stuff, it can be overwhelming and stifle your creativity. By decluttering, you can open up space for new ideas and creative expression.

Improve sleep quality.

A bedroom that is cluttered with clothes and objects can be disorienting and negatively impact your ability to relax and get quality sleep.

Enhance self-esteem.

When you declutter your living space, you can gain a sense of accomplishment and control over your environment, which can positively impact your self-esteem.

istock.com/ArnikkaMcFarlane/koiaie

For more health tips and inspiration, visit [HMHforU.org](https://www.HMHforU.org).

Is My Chest Pain Serious?

Chest pain can be associated with a myriad of medical conditions other than a heart attack, so how do you know when it is serious?

The experience of chest pain is alarming but common. Chest pain is responsible for more than 8 million emergency department (ED) visits every year in the United States, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Chest pain can be associated with many other conditions besides a heart attack, says **James Orlando, M.D.**, a cardiologist at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center, Southern Ocean Medical Center, Ocean University Medical Center and Riverview Medical Center.** So how do you know when chest pain is serious?



James Orlando, M.D.
Cardiologist
800-822-8905
Manahawkin, Toms River and Neptune

Causes of Chest Pain

While chest pain can be a tell-tale sign of a heart attack, it can also be a symptom of various other issues, including:

- ▶ Acid reflux
- ▶ Gallstones
- ▶ Muscle strain
- ▶ Panic attack
- ▶ Asthma
- ▶ COVID-19
- ▶ Peptic ulcers
- ▶ Pulmonary embolism

Chest pain can also be a sign of serious heart conditions other than heart attack, including:

- ▶ Myocarditis
- ▶ Aortic dissection

Noncardiac Chest Pain

Chest pain is different from person to person, so it can be difficult for an untrained person to determine if the situation is serious based on the chest pain alone.

However, you are most likely NOT experiencing chest pain due to a heart problem if:

- ▶ The pain recedes after a few moments.
- ▶ The pain occurs when you make particular movements.
- ▶ The pain is localized to one spot.
- ▶ The pain happens during deep breaths or coughing.

“But if you commonly experience chest pain, even in passing, you should follow up with your doctor because you may need medical attention even if it isn’t life-threatening,” Dr. Orlando says.

When to Go to the Hospital or Call 911

You should seek immediate medical attention if you experience prolonged and/or intense chest pain. You should also receive emergency care if you have any of the following in conjunction with chest pain:

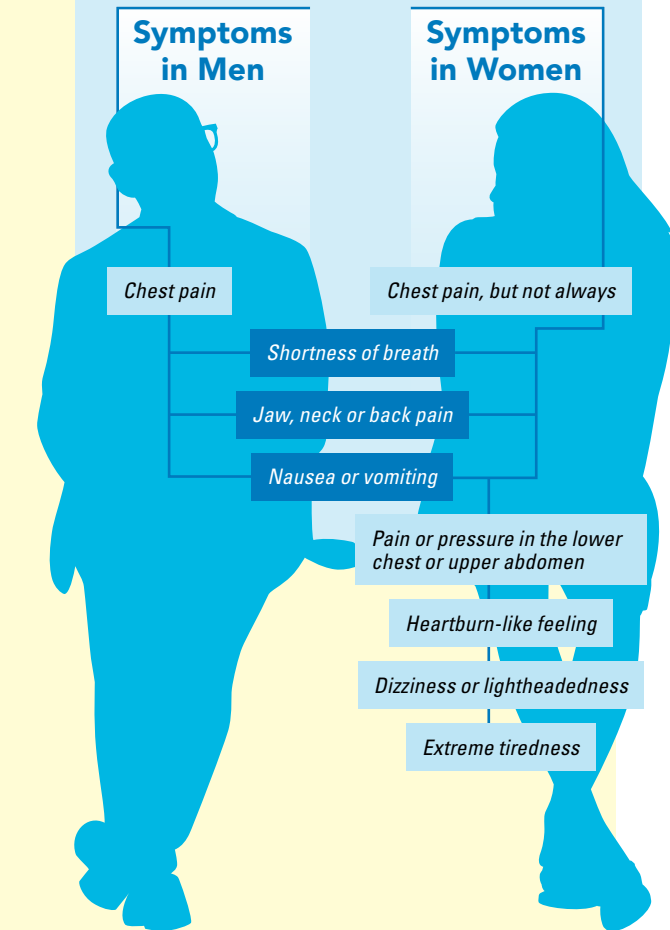
- ▶ Shortness of breath
- ▶ Pain in the arms, shoulders, neck, back or jaw
- ▶ Irregular heartbeat
- ▶ Feelings of squeezing, tightness or crushing
- ▶ Sweating
- ▶ Lightheadedness, dizziness or confusion
- ▶ Nausea/vomiting
- ▶ Weakness

“Remember that while chest pain may not mean a heart attack, it could be another serious condition that could have severe consequences. So if the chest pain is acute or presenting with any other symptoms, seek help,” Dr. Orlando says. “Also, people experience heart attacks differently. So just because you aren’t experiencing all of the symptoms listed here, or your symptoms are different than what someone else who had a heart attack felt, that doesn’t mean that you aren’t having a cardiac event.”

Spot the Difference

Learn the distinct differences between how men and women may experience heart attacks.

When it comes to heart attacks, there is a common misconception that symptoms are the same for everyone. While many of the most common heart attack symptoms are the same in men and women, women often experience additional and less obvious warning signs.



When in Doubt

If you experience chest pain and are unsure of its cause, do not ignore it. Even if it turns out to not be serious, it’s always better to be cautious. Even noncardiac chest pain causes may need to be addressed before they turn into more serious problems. 🌀



Scan the QR code to schedule a heart screening near you.

HEART HEALTH

Pumping the Brakes on Heart Failure

Heart failure can actually be reversed if treated properly. Our expert shares warning signs and how to help.

While many think heart failure means the heart stops beating, it actually means the heart is unable to pump blood and oxygen effectively throughout the body.

The disease can begin suddenly after an injury, illness or due to a medical condition that damages the heart. However, most often it develops over time, and it can be a debilitating disease if not properly treated.

Jesus Almendral, M.D., Advanced Heart Failure Center director at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center** and **Ocean University Medical Center**, shares what heart failure looks like and how it can be treated.

What Heart Failure Looks Like

Symptoms of heart failure include:

- ▶ Shortness of breath at rest or during an activity
- ▶ Fatigue or inability to exert energy
- ▶ Coughing or wheezing
- ▶ Swelling and weight gain from fluid buildup in the ankles, lower legs or abdomen
- ▶ Nausea or loss of appetite
- ▶ Difficulty sleeping while on your back
- ▶ Swelling in the veins of the neck
- ▶ Needing to urinate often

If you or a loved one is experiencing any of these symptoms, you should consult your doctor immediately.

Do not hesitate to call 911 if you or a loved one is experiencing:

- ▶ Difficulty breathing
- ▶ Chest pain
- ▶ Fainting, sudden dizziness or loss of consciousness

These can be symptoms of heart attack and require immediate emergency care.

Treating and Reversing Heart Failure

The good news is that heart failure doesn't always get worse and can even be reversed.

There are several prescription medicines that your doctor may prescribe to treat heart failure, but there are also several steps you can take to help fight the disease, including:

- ▶ Quit smoking
- ▶ Reduce sodium (salt) intake
- ▶ Increase physical activity (especially aerobic exercise)
- ▶ Find ways to manage your stress
- ▶ Lose weight

Throughout your treatment, make sure to keep your doctor informed of your progress and how you are feeling. Together you can develop a plan to ensure you have the best protocol in place to fight heart disease. 🌟



Jesus Almendral, M.D.

Advanced heart failure cardiologist

800-822-8905

Neptune

Go Online

Find a heart health specialist near you at [HMHforU.org/HeartDoc](https://www.hmhforu.org/HeartDoc).



istock.com/Nerthuz/Mlenny



Tomas Marrero is back to doing what he loves—boating and spending time with family—thanks to a pacemaker-type device that is improving his quality of life.

A Second Chance

Tomas Marrero was told that his congestive heart failure gave him just a year to live. Doctors at Jersey Shore University Medical Center found a better solution.

Tomas Marrero, 76, from Hamilton Township, New Jersey, is an active person who enjoys boating and spending time with his family. But in his early 70s, the congestive heart failure (CHF) that he'd been living with for nearly 20 years started to become significantly worse and get in the way of the things he loved to do.

"I was in the hospital every two months," says Tomas. He would be out of breath after just a few steps, and fluid would fill his lungs. His doctors told him he had only a year left to live. His daughter, Jocelyn Marrero Cabrera, wasn't going to give up. She felt there had to be more options.

Better Options for Treating CHF

Jocelyn took it upon herself to start researching CHF, hospitals and treatment options for her dad. Through this research, she realized that her father's symptoms didn't match symptoms of someone in the final stage of CHF, and the aggressive treatment that was greatly limiting

Tomas' life wasn't working. She finally came across something called Barostim.

"Barostim is a pacemaker-type device that is implanted on the carotid artery. It helps control heart rate and blood pressure," says **Jesus Almendral, M.D.**, Advanced Heart Failure Center director at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center** and **Ocean University Medical Center**. Barostim may be appropriate for patients diagnosed with advanced heart failure who are not suited for treatment with other heart failure devices.

Because Barostim is a fairly new device, many people and even some doctors aren't aware of the benefits it can provide. Jocelyn initially contacted the device manufacturer to see if Tomas would qualify for a clinical trial. That inquiry eventually led her to make the trip to Jersey Shore and to Dr. Almendral.

After numerous tests, Dr. Almendral thought Tomas would be a candidate for the Barostim device. "I thought that it could help relieve the symptoms and improve his quality of life," Dr. Almendral says.

Back to Normal With Barostim Device

Tomas' procedure to implant the Barostim device was performed in 2022. Since then, his symptoms have practically disappeared.

Tomas feels great and isn't limited in his daily activities. "I do everything I can," he says.

Dr. Almendral is also impressed with the results: "Tomas is doing much better. Last time we spoke, he was able to do more and his heart was not slowing him down."

Jocelyn and Tomas believe it wasn't just the Barostim device that made the difference, but also the entire team at Jersey Shore. "Everyone was in unison, from the doctors to the nurses to the administrative team members," says Jocelyn, adding that previously, she and her father didn't feel like they were heard at other hospitals.

"Patients often are apprehensive, so we take our time and listen. The most important things are open communication and making sure everything is patient-centered," Dr. Almendral says.

Get Screened

Early detection is key when it comes to cervical cancer. Learn about screening options, including Pap smears and HPV tests, and when you should get screened.

Cervical cancer is most commonly found in people over age 30, but anyone can get it. One of the main causes for it is long-term infection with certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV).

The best way to treat cervical cancer is to find it early. Most cases found early respond to treatment effectively and allow you to lead a longer and healthier life. By taking precautions, you can help get ahead of a cervical cancer diagnosis, says **Mark E. Borowsky, M.D.**, gynecologic oncologist at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center** and medical director of Gynecologic Oncology, Southern Region, Hackensack Meridian Health. Precautions include getting an HPV vaccine and attending regular screenings.



To schedule a cervical cancer screening, scan the QR code.

Types of Screenings

It is important to get screened early because once symptoms start, the cervical cancer may have already begun to spread, making treatment more complicated. Cervical cancer that is caught early is typically easier to treat.

There are two main types of cervical cancer screenings that can provide an early diagnosis and lead to better treatment outcomes:

HPV test: Checks for infection with high-risk HPV types that are associated with cervical cancer.

- ▶ HPV virus can cause changes in the cervix that can lead to cancer

Pap smear: Also known as a Pap test, used to check cervical cells for changes caused by HPV that can lead to the development of cervical cancer if left untreated.

- ▶ Can find precancerous cells as well as cervical cancer cells
- ▶ Also can be helpful in discovering noncancerous conditions such as infections or inflammation

When Should I Get Screened?

The frequency of your screenings can depend on many factors, including your age and health history. These are the screening recommendations by age group:

21 to 29 years old: You should get your first Pap smear at age 21. If your results are normal, your doctor may recommend waiting three years before your next Pap smear.

- ▶ Even if you are sexually active, you do not need a Pap smear before age 21.
- ▶ For this age group, it is normal to get tested approximately every three years.

30 to 65 years old: There are multiple recommended methods for this age group, so talk to your health care provider to determine which method of testing is best for you.

- ▶ HPV test every five years
- ▶ HPV/Pap smear co-test every five years
- ▶ Pap smear every three years

65 years old and older: Discuss your options with your doctor and see if cervical cancer screenings are still necessary for you.

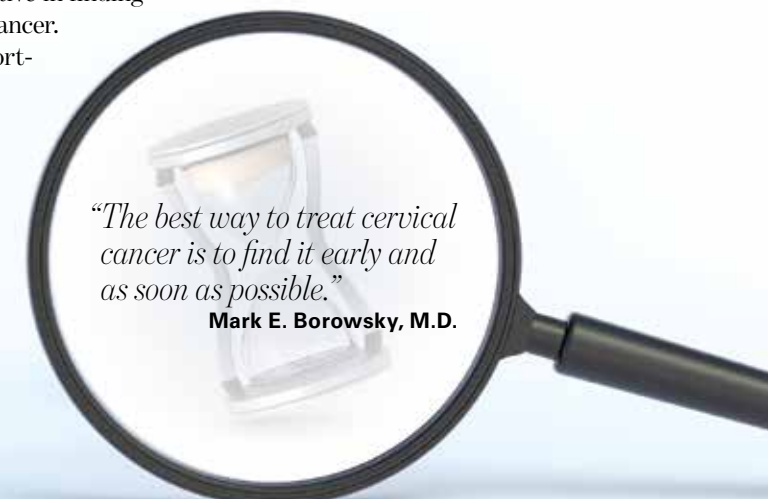
- ▶ For those who have screened regularly and gotten normal test results, your doctor may tell you that you no longer need to have regular screenings.
- ▶ If you have not been screened regularly or have received abnormal test results, your doctor may recommend continued screening.

“Many women may recall having a Pap smear done every year. However, studies have shown that extended interval screening that includes testing for HPV DNA or RNA is as effective or even more effective than doing an annual Pap test alone,” Dr. Borowsky says. “Since cervical cancer typically takes years to develop and nearly always involves long-term infection with high-risk strains of HPV, cervical cancer screening is now initiated at age 21 instead of 18, and the screening interval can be safely increased as long as highly sensitive HPV testing is a part of the screening.”

How Do These Tests Work?

Both the HPV test and the Pap smear can be conducted in a doctor’s office or clinic, often during a pelvic exam. They can be done at the same time (known as a co-test) or alone depending on your doctor’s recommendations, availability or preference. Each test is effective in finding cancer and pre-cancer.

The most important thing to remember about cervical cancer testing is that you should be getting screened regularly no matter which test you get. ⚙️



Mark E. Borowsky, M.D.

Gynecologic oncologist

800-822-8905

Neptune, Jackson and Brick

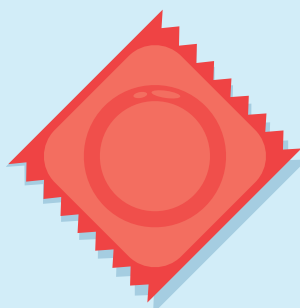
5 Ways to Prevent Cervical Cancer

Cervical cancer is preventable, but this is only true if you remain proactive. Here are five key prevention tips.



1 Get vaccinated: Since HPV is the most common cause of cervical cancer, getting vaccinated against it is a main way to help prevent the disease. It’s recommended that women and men (both of whom can have HPV) get the HPV vaccination before their teenage years. Specifically, it is common to administer the HPV vaccination to adolescents between the ages of 11 and 12. If you’re a woman who has never been vaccinated against HPV and are 45 years old or younger, you should speak to your doctor about getting the vaccine to help prevent cervical cancer.

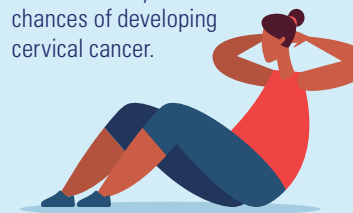
2 Use condoms: HPV is contracted through unprotected sex, so it’s especially important to use protection when having sex, especially if you have not been vaccinated against HPV.



3 Don’t smoke cigarettes: Studies have shown that smokers have an increased rate of developing cervical cancer when compared to their nonsmoking counterparts. What’s more, this risk increases when the number of cigarettes smoked per day increases.



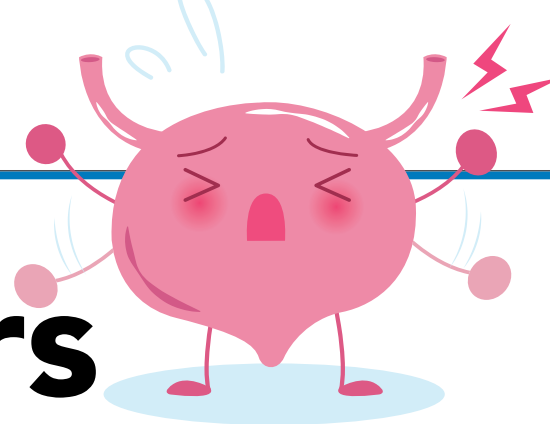
4 Maintain a healthy diet and exercise routine: Studies have shown a connection between a diet that’s low in fruits and vegetables and an increased likelihood of getting cervical cancer. Keeping active and maintaining a healthy weight can decrease your chances of developing cervical cancer.



5 Don’t skip your regular screenings: Women should get their first screening at age 21 and every three years if results are normal.



Busy Bladders



If you have trouble controlling your bladder, you might have urinary incontinence. Learn why it happens and how to treat it.

Urinary incontinence is the medical term for urine leakage. Urinary incontinence happens when a person leaks urine by accident or without control.

“It is a common condition that tends to get worse with age, and can affect a person’s quality of life,” says **Nina P. Bhatia, M.D.**, urogynecologist at **Bayshore Medical Center** who specializes in treating pelvic floor conditions in women.

Causes of Urinary Incontinence

Several issues can cause incontinence, including:

- ▶ **Damage to nerves** that control the bladder from diseases such as Parkinson’s disease, diabetes and multiple sclerosis
- ▶ **Weakened** or bladder or pelvic floor muscles
- ▶ **Pregnancy** and childbirth
- ▶ **Diseases** such as arthritis or difficulty with mobility, which prevent one from going to the bathroom in time
- ▶ **Urinary tract infections**
- ▶ **Vaginal infections** or irritations
- ▶ **Overactive bladder muscles**
- ▶ **Pelvic organ prolapse**
- ▶ **Constipation**



Nina P. Bhatia, M.D.
Urogynecologist
800-822-8905
Old Bridge and Monroe Township

What Are the Types of Urinary Incontinence?

The types of urinary incontinence are defined by their cause and symptoms:

Functional incontinence

- ▶ **Symptoms:** Having trouble getting to the bathroom in time due to something getting in the way, having a condition such as arthritis or the inability to walk unassisted
- ▶ **Who’s affected?** Older people who have normal bladder control

Urge incontinence

- ▶ **Symptoms:** Having a sudden urge to urinate and cannot control or hold in urine long enough to get to the bathroom
- ▶ **Who’s affected?** Men and women of all ages, with or without any other medical conditions; people with diseases such as diabetes, Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, multiple sclerosis or who have experienced a stroke

Overflow incontinence

- ▶ **Symptoms:** Having a bladder that is always full, causing small amounts of urine to leak
- ▶ **Who’s affected?** Women with prolapse who cannot empty their bladder; women with diabetes, MS, spinal cord injuries or other nerve-related conditions

Stress incontinence

- ▶ **Symptoms:** Pressure on the bladder due to exercise, coughing, laughing, sneezing or lifting heavy objects
- ▶ **Who’s affected?** Younger or middle-aged women affected from pregnancy or childbirth; women who are going through menopause

What Are the Treatment Options?

Treatment can vary depending on the type of incontinence you have and how serious it is. Talk to your health care provider to diagnose your incontinence type and find the best treatment that fits your lifestyle. ⚙️



Find a urogynecologist near you at [HMHforU.org/UrogynDoc](https://www.HMHforU.org/UrogynDoc).

iStock.com/Lin Shao-hua



Gina O'Donnell can hike and bike freely without worrying about bladder leakage.

Finding Freedom

After years of suffering in silence, Gina O'Donnell turned to a surgical solution for stress incontinence.

For years, Gina O'Donnell, 52, a surgical nurse at **Bayshore Medical Center**, suffered quietly from stress incontinence, believing it was the natural result of having four kids and working on her feet for decades.

“If I sneezed, coughed or ran—anything of that nature—I was leaking. But I figured it was manageable. I had all these tricks and things that I did so no one else would know but me,” she says.

Then in late 2021, when caring for a patient of urogynecologist **Nina Bhatia, M.D.**, Gina realized there might be hope for her, too. “The patient was going in for surgery, and her symptoms were not nearly as severe as mine. The light bulb went on that maybe I would be a candidate, as well.”

Making a Plan to Find Relief

Gina immediately made an appointment to see Dr. Bhatia. She was tested for urinary infections and had a bladder scan to see if she was able to empty her bladder. She also underwent

urodynamic testing, a noninvasive procedure done in Dr. Bhatia’s office, to see how her body was storing and releasing urine.

“Dr. Bhatia was reassuring from the beginning, telling me that she could absolutely help me. I was thrilled,” says Gina.

For Gina, Dr. Bhatia recommended a retro-pubic sling, which gives significant support in cases of severe stress incontinence. “We tell patients to expect about 90 percent improvement over their lifetime. We can’t guarantee a 100 percent improvement, meaning there might be a few instances where you leak a small amount—but nothing compared to what you had before you had the sling put in,” says Dr. Bhatia.

The procedure is done as a day surgery, requiring mild sedation and taking about 20 minutes. Dr. Bhatia details how it works.

First, a small incision is made in the vagina that corresponds to where the urethra is. Next, the sling is placed. Finally, the bladder is tested under anesthesia to see if the sling can support

the urethra to the point that the patient is no longer leaking.

Gina’s surgery took place in the department where she works at Bayshore, which made for a unique experience for her. “One of my coworkers took care of me, and it was strange to be lying in one of those beds. But it was a comfort to be there,” Gina says.

‘It’s So Freeing’

The difference the sling has made to Gina’s life is enormous.

“I can hike and bike again and do my exercise classes without wearing printed exercise pants with my sweatshirt tied around my waist. I don’t need to keep extra scrubs in my locker. It’s so freeing,” says Gina.

She hopes that sharing her story will help other women who were suffering in silence like she was. “No one wants to talk about stress incontinence, but there’s help out there, and Dr. Bhatia is the surgeon to see. She’s just wonderful.”

Pickle Problems

5 tips for avoiding injuries on the pickleball court.



Pickleball, a dynamic blend of tennis, badminton, and ping pong, has taken the sports world by storm, emerging as the fastest-growing sport globally. It's an inclusive game suitable for individuals of all ages and skill levels, offering an enjoyable way to stay active and engaged. However, with its exhilaration comes the need for caution, as pickleball can lead to common injuries.

Players often face lower extremity and shoulder injuries, ankle sprains, and muscle and ligament pulls, says **Bruce Stamos, M.D.**, sports medicine, shoulder and elbow orthopedist at **Ocean University Medical Center**.

To ensure your time on the court is injury-free, follow these five proactive measures:

1 **Ease into play.** Avoid leaping into intense play. Instead, ease into the sport progressively. Gradual adaptation helps your body adjust to the physical demands of pickleball, reducing injury risk.

2 **Prioritize physical fitness.** Prepare your body by staying in shape before hitting the court. Engage in regular workouts to enhance strength, endurance and flexibility, which are crucial to prevent injury.



Bruce Stamos, M.D.
Sports medicine, shoulder and elbow orthopedist
800-822-8905
Brick

3 **Incorporate dynamic warm-ups.** Warm up to prime your muscles and joints, making them less susceptible to strains and sprains during play.

4 **Play in moderation.** While enthusiasm is commendable, overexertion can lead to trouble. Strike a balance between intensity and rest to avoid overuse injuries and fatigue.

5 **Listen to your body.** Pay close attention to any discomfort or strain during play. If you experience worsening discomfort that limits your physical abilities, consult your doctor for proper care and guidance.

Know When to Seek Help

"Mild discomfort may simply be soreness that subsides in a few days. However, if you notice discomfort worsening over time and restricting your abilities, it's wise to consult a health care professional," Dr. Stamos says.

The world of pickleball brings joy, competition and community, but it's vital to prioritize safety and well-being. By embracing a balanced approach, listening to your body and seeking help when needed, you can fully enjoy the exhilarating sport of pickleball while protecting your health for many games to come. 🧊

iStock.com/skodonnell/VectorMine/Andrei Prosz

Go Online

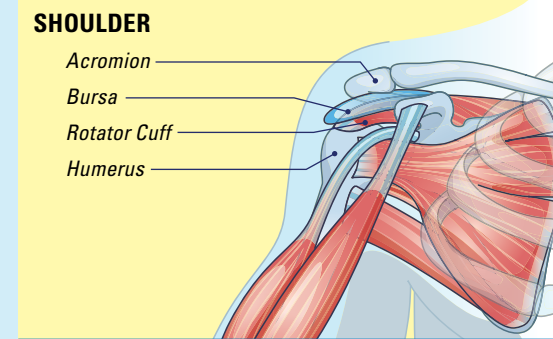
Find an orthopedic specialist near you at [HMHforU.org/OrthoDoc](https://www.HMHforU.org/OrthoDoc).

Can You Heal a Torn Rotator Cuff Naturally?

If you have pain in your shoulder or you can't move your arm very well, a rotator cuff tear or strain might be the culprit.

The shoulder is made up of a ball and socket that moves around, allowing a wide range of motion. In order to keep that joint from sliding out of place, a group of four muscles and tendons form a cuff around the ball to initiate range of motion and provide dynamic stabilization.

When these muscles are strained or torn, they do not normally heal on their own. But just because you have a torn rotator cuff doesn't mean surgery is the only solution.



There are several steps to try to reduce pain and inflammation:

- ▶ **Activity modification:** Allowing the shoulder to rest and recover can reduce pain.
- ▶ **Over-the-counter anti-inflammatories:** Pain management is important, particularly at night in order to sleep.
- ▶ **Home exercise program:** This can help stretch and strengthen surrounding muscles.
- ▶ **Physical therapy:** If home exercises don't seem to help, working with a physical therapist can help safely strengthen the muscles around the shoulder to relieve the burden on your rotator cuff muscles.
- ▶ **Cortisone injections:** Cortisone injections can help diminish the inflammatory response and provide pain relief.

If these measures are unsuccessful and you continue to have pain and weakness, you may need surgery, usually a last resort when people do not see improvement with other methods. Additionally, people with full thickness tears—when the tendon is completely detached from bone—need surgery. These only get worse with time and need more aggressive treatment.

Ease on Down the Road



Our expert shares tips for safely easing into exercise after a joint replacement.

Joint replacements, where damaged joints are replaced with artificial ones, can sometimes require lengthy recovery times. Physical therapy and exercise are the key components to a successful recovery.

People in post-surgery may experience balance issues and exhaustion, both of which may hinder post-op exercise. That is especially true for patients who previously did not do much exercise because of joint pain, says Patrick Welsh, PT, DPT, physical therapist at **Ocean University Medical Center**. However, he notes, that's even more reason to start exercising: Joint rebuilding and overall health can only improve from here.

Exercises to Try After Joint Replacement

Regular exercise can aid in recovery by increasing mobility and restoring strength. Building muscles around the new joint is essential to recovery, and this can be done with a combination of physical therapy and exercise.

The proper exercise regimen should include activity for balance, strength and flexibility, and these activities must be targeted to affect the joint.

In the first few weeks, any type of cardiovascular activity may be difficult, and assistance likely will be needed. You may need an assistive device after a joint replacement to aid with walking. Your doctor or physical therapist will recommend the appropriate device to ensure safe mobility.

Physical therapy intervention can help with early stages of recovery to improve strength to aid in walking and mobility. After about six weeks, however, slightly more intense activity can begin.

Aerobic Activity

Aerobic activities increase heart rate. Some good options can include:

- ▶ Walking
- ▶ Biking
- ▶ Swimming
- ▶ Using an elliptical machine

Strength Training

Following a joint replacement, strength activities can target specific areas of the body:

- ▶ Quadriceps (the four muscles in the front of the thigh)
- ▶ Gluteals (three muscles in the buttocks)
- ▶ Hip abductors (muscles that allow the thigh to move to the side)

These exercises include straight leg raises, ankle pumps, knee straightening and knee bends. Hamstring and heel cord stretches are useful exercises to do to improve flexibility and balance.

Combination Exercises

Some exercises, such as swimming, dance and yoga, encompass aerobic, flexibility, strength and balance activities. These exercises can be fun and may be a good choice for people who don't love traditional exercise.

Safety Considerations Post Joint Replacement

Running is not recommended until one is fully recovered from joint replacement. Generally, a doctor or physical therapist should be consulted before attempting high-impact activity; modifications may be possible based on a health professional's judgment and expertise.

If there is any pain or swelling after exercise, such as in the knee or hip, the affected body part should be iced and elevated.

Patrick notes that physical therapy and exercise are important pieces of recovery. If you're unsure of which activities are appropriate for you, your physical therapist can help guide an appropriate exercise plan for your body. 🧊



Are your hips and knees healthy? Take our health risk assessment to find out.

istock.com/vatrushka67

Stroke vs. Heart Attack

Learn the differences between these major medical emergencies.

Strokes and heart attacks are both medical emergencies involving blood vessels. Are they different terms for the same thing, like “couch” and “sofa”? In short, no.

What Happens When Someone Has a Heart Attack or Stroke?

Heart attack: Plaque can narrow the arteries leading to the heart, limiting or blocking blood flow. Without oxygen-rich blood, part of the heart muscle becomes damaged or dies.

Stroke: Blood vessels supplying oxygen to the brain may develop blockages or rupture. Without access to oxygen-rich blood, areas of the brain become damaged or die.

“The location within the body is different, but the mechanism of action is comparable,” says **Ghasan Ahmad, M.D.**, neurointerventionalist at the Hackensack Meridian Neuroscience Institute at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**.

Similarities Between Heart Attacks and Strokes

Although strokes and heart attacks affect different organs, the process causing damage is similar.

Brain or heart damage may occur during strokes and heart attacks because of:

- ▶ **Plaque.** Fatty buildup known as plaque may stick to the inside of the arterial wall lumen throughout the body. Small pieces that become dislodged may block blood vessels in the brain or heart.
- ▶ **Blood clots.** When plaque breaks away from a blood vessel, sometimes a blood clot forms, which in turn can break free and block blood flow in the heart or brain.

If you think you're having a stroke or heart attack, call 911 immediately. In both cases, getting prompt medical treatment may be life-saving or limit disability.

“Even if you're unsure that it's a heart attack or stroke, call 911 right away,” says **Matthew Saybolt, M.D., FACC**, medical director of the Structural Heart Disease Program at Jersey Shore. “With both of these life-threatening conditions, it's better to be safe than sorry.”



Ghasan Ahmad, M.D.

Neurointerventionalist

800-822-8905

Neptune



Matthew Saybolt, M.D., FACC

Interventional cardiologist

800-822-8905

Eatontown, Monroe and Freehold

Differences Between Heart Attacks and Strokes

Heart attacks and strokes cause different life-threatening problems within the body. They also have different symptoms.

Common symptoms of stroke include:

- ▶ Paralysis or drooping on one side of the face
- ▶ Numbness on one side of the body (such as an arm or leg)
- ▶ Weakness on one side of the body
- ▶ Slurred speech
- ▶ Difficulty speaking or being understood
- ▶ Difficulty understanding what others are saying
- ▶ Loss of balance or coordination
- ▶ Confusion
- ▶ Dizziness
- ▶ Vision loss in one or both eyes
- ▶ Sudden, severe headache

Common symptoms of heart attack include:

- ▶ Chest pain that suddenly appears and remains constant or comes and goes
- ▶ Uncomfortable pressure on the chest
- ▶ Pain radiating down one or both arms
- ▶ Back or shoulder pain
- ▶ Jaw or neck pain
- ▶ Stomachache
- ▶ Shortness of breath
- ▶ Sweating
- ▶ Nausea and/or vomiting
- ▶ Indigestion
- ▶ Feeling lightheaded
- ▶ Fatigue
- ▶ A feeling of impending doom 🌀



Learn tips to prevent a stroke at [HMForU.org/StrokePrevention](https://www.HMForU.org/StrokePrevention).

Before You Test

Should you consider genetic testing to understand your risk for Alzheimer's disease?



Alzheimer's disease affects more than 10 percent of Americans 65 and older, according to the Alzheimer's Association. As the population ages, more people are considering genetic testing to understand their risk for Alzheimer's disease.

Less than 1 percent of Alzheimer's disease cases are linked to specific inherited gene mutations that cause Alzheimer's disease. For the remaining 99 percent, genetic testing cannot predict whether a person will get the disease.

On the other hand, individuals carrying the apolipoprotein E (APOE e4) gene, a common variant of the gene coding for the protein called apolipoprotein, have a significant risk for developing the disease, says **Robert Stern, M.D.**, psychiatrist at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**. Specifically:

- ▶ About 25 percent of people carry one copy of the APOE e4.
- ▶ Two to 3 percent of people carry two copies of APOE e4.
- ▶ Individuals with one copy of the APOE e4 gene have a 15–20 percent chance of developing Alzheimer's disease by age 75.

- ▶ Those with two copies of the APOE e4 gene have a 35 percent chance of developing Alzheimer's disease by age 75.

Who Might Consider Genetic Testing?

While a person can develop Alzheimer's disease without any family history of the disease, people who have a parent or sibling with the disease are more likely to develop it. Having more than one first-degree relative with Alzheimer's further increases that risk. When Alzheimer's runs in families, genetics may play a role.

Dr. Stern recommends that people with a strong family history of Alzheimer's disease consider getting tested for the APOE gene, under the supervision of their doctor, to assess their risk factors. That is particularly true if the person is experiencing memory problems or any other early symptoms of Alzheimer's disease.


Until about two years ago, there were no major treatments to slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease, but emerging treatments have made testing more relevant. Specifically,

8 Ways to Help a Loved One With Alzheimer's

When a loved one has Alzheimer's disease, you may not know what to do. While there's no cure and few treatments, you can still help improve their life.

- 1 Educate yourself.** Read about Alzheimer's so you know what to expect as the disease progresses. Join support groups to learn about local resources you may need.
- 2 Make their home a safe living space.** Walk around the house to look for potential dangers. Throw rugs can be trip hazards, and alcohol or guns should be locked away.
- 3 Expect things to take longer.** Your loved one with Alzheimer's may move more slowly while going about their activities. When you must be somewhere, build in buffer time so you'll be less stressed.
- 4 Be compassionate instead of angry.** You may feel frustrated when your relative forgets things, misunderstands you or imagines things. Remember, Alzheimer's caused these changes, so you should be patient and kind, not annoyed.
- 5 Maintain conversations.** Your loved one may not remember everything, but they still need emotional connections. Focus on their feelings, not facts they've forgotten, to be a reassuring presence.
- 6 Keep things simple.** Do effortless activities together, like folding laundry or listening to music. Try not to argue, and use humor to diffuse situations when you can.
- 7 Prioritize your basic needs.** Make sure you sleep enough, eat healthily and exercise on a daily basis. This should help you be at your best to support your loved one.
- 8 Take breaks from caregiving.** Read books or engage in hobbies when you have free moments. Find ways to keep being you while you're managing your loved one's health.

Caring for someone with Alzheimer's can be challenging, but kindness and patience help. Remember, your loved one is the same person you've always known and loved, so treat them accordingly.

Robert Stern, M.D.
Psychiatrist
800-822-8905
Neptune and Brick

lecanemab (Leqembi), is a newly approved monoclonal antibody IV infusion therapy for treatment of early Alzheimer's disease.

"Based on published data, people who are APOE e4 homozygous—meaning they have inherited two copies of the APOE e4 gene—are less likely to benefit from treatment with lecanemab and have the highest rates of complications from it," Dr. Stern says. "When considering treatment with lecanemab, APOE gene testing is very relevant, since I wouldn't offer this medicine to APOE4 homozygous patients."

Before You Test

Dr. Stern does not recommend random screening for genetic risk, particularly if a person does not have a family history of Alzheimer's disease and is not experiencing any symptoms. "I feel that, most often, random testing provides little actionable information for people," he says. "There's also the risk that it can make some individuals extremely anxious."

Some people experience psychological distress associated with learning about their own personal health risks as well as potential risks for family members. For this reason, counseling services should always be considered with any sort of genetic testing. A genetics counselor can help you understand the potential emotional impact of test results as well as possible implications of the test.

"If you believe you may be at risk for developing Alzheimer's disease, share your concerns with your doctor, who can advise you on how to proceed," Dr. Stern says. "It's always best to do genetic testing in conjunction with your doctor, who can clarify the goal of testing, the benefits and what you can do with this information." 🧠

Go Online
To learn more, visit [HMHforU.org/MemoryCare](https://www.HMHforU.org/MemoryCare).

Snow Business

Winter sports like skiing and snowboarding make the snowy season fun. Take these steps to ensure your children stay safe and healthy this year.

The season for winter sports is here, and many kids are clamoring to get outdoors to enjoy skiing, snowboarding and sledding. But with winter sports comes the potential for injury as a result of low temperatures, slippery surfaces and fast speeds. Our experts answer common questions about keeping kids safe and healthy.

What Age Is Appropriate to Begin Winter Sports?

“The general consensus is that winter sports can begin at the age of 3,” says **Paul T. Haynes, M.D.**, a pediatric orthopedic surgeon at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**. However, he notes, every child is different.

“Make sure your child has the physical mobility and can understand and respond to basic instructions and commands,” says **Nicole M. Marcantuono, M.D.**, division chief of Pediatric Physiatry at Jersey Shore.

How Should I Dress My Kids?

How your children dress for their day on the slopes or snow hills is extremely important:

- ▶ **Dress in layers.** “Kids should dress in layers and cover all exposed skin,” Dr. Haynes says.
- ▶ **Choose appropriate fabrics.** Wet or thin clothes can quickly ruin the fun. “Avoid clothing that loses heat, such as denim, and instead wear a waterproof outer layer,” says Dr. Marcantuono.
- ▶ **Secure loose strings.** Secure any drawstrings on sweatshirts and coats that could be hazardous particularly on ski lifts.
- ▶ **Always wear a helmet.** Proper fit is key. “Your child’s helmet should come down over the forehead and cover the base of the skull,” says Dr. Marcantuono. “The chin strap should be securely under the chin, and the helmet should not move.”

Are Ski Leashes and Harnesses Helpful?

Safety harness and leash devices can be helpful tools to teach children to ski, but only if they are used appropriately. If an adult holds the leashes too tightly—or if they let the child pull them violently—they can lead to injuries, Dr. Marcantuono says.

What Signs of Concussion Should I Be Aware of?

No matter how much we prepare, accidents happen. If your child hits their head, look for signs of concussion:

- ▶ Headache
- ▶ Vomiting
- ▶ Balance problems
- ▶ Blacking out
- ▶ Sudden tiredness

“If you suspect that your child may have a concussion, get them off the slopes and stop activity until you can get them medical attention,” Dr. Marcantuono says.

“If you see any of these signs, take them to the nearest emergency department for evaluation.”

Keeping Your Child Safe Outdoors

While safety gear is essential for protecting heads and limbs, other factors can pose dangers, so take breaks and check the following:

- ▶ **Temperature:** Low temperatures can pose a real danger. “Children get colder faster than adults,” Dr. Haynes says. Look for these signs that your child might be getting too cold:
 - ▶ Pink or icy fingers
 - ▶ Shivering
 - ▶ Bright pink cheeks, nose or ears
 - ▶ Wet clothing
- ▶ **Hydration:** It may be cold outside, but winter sports are still vigorous activities and hydration remains important. Be sure your child drinks plenty of water before they hit the slopes, then grab water each time they go indoors for a bathroom break, for a meal or to warm up.
- ▶ **Fatigue:** As you become tired, vigilance can wane. Take frequent breaks and be prepared to adjust your plans and expectations for the day based on your child’s needs.

“Children always learn by example, so it’s important for adults to wear appropriate gear, as well,” says Dr. Haynes. ❄️

Scan the QR code to schedule an appointment with a pediatric specialist near you.



Paul T. Haynes, M.D.

Pediatric orthopedic surgeon

800-822-8905

Ocean, Bernegat and Monroe Township



Nicole Marcantuono, M.D.

Pediatric physiatrist

800-822-8905

Neptune and Jackson



Colette received the OK from her doctor, Nicole Marcantuono, M.D., to return to sports after experiencing a concussion.

Back in the Game

Two days after hitting her head during a basketball game, 7-year-old Colette started experiencing symptoms of a concussion.

In February 2023, 7-year-old Colette was laser focused on the basketball she was chasing in an indoor court in Toms River, New Jersey. She was so intent that she didn’t notice how close she was to an unpadded section of the wall in the court. Colette ran into the wall face first. Initially, she iced her face, but as she was seemingly uninjured, she returned to play.

After the game, Colette went to a birthday party and jumped on a trampoline. She continued to feel fine. But the next morning when she woke up, she complained to her parents that she had a headache and felt dizzy. She was brought to her pediatrician, who recommended she see a pediatric neurologist due to her symptoms.

Customized Treatment Program for Concussion

Within a week, Colette and her parents met with **Nicole Marcantuono, M.D.**, division chief and pediatric physiatrist at **K. Hovnanian Children’s Hospital at Jersey Shore University Medical Center**.

Dr. Marcantuono diagnosed Colette with a concussion, which affected her vestibular

system, the part of the brain responsible for balance and spatial orientation. Colette couldn’t balance, and the movement of her eyes was jumpy and jerky.

“It was heartbreaking,” says Colette’s mom, Nicole. “Sometimes I tear up about it because I didn’t know how bad it was until that initial visit. With no facial injuries and no pain or other symptoms when she slammed into the wall, we didn’t think anything of her hitting her head.”

Sometimes children with concussions don’t show symptoms right away. “That’s one of the things that’s challenging about concussion,” says Dr. Marcantuono. “It can occasionally take hours for concussion symptoms to fully develop because the metabolic changes that are happening in the brain take place over a period of time.”

Because every child’s concussion will look different in terms of the symptoms, exam findings and recovery, Dr. Marcantuono says it’s important to see a doctor who can individualize a treatment program and has a specialty in brain injury/concussion.

Colette began her treatment program with brain rest—no schoolwork, no physical activity and limited screen time and reading. Over a

period of two-and-a-half months, she took medication for her headaches, saw a physical therapist and gradually was reintroduced to activities.

She needed accommodations at school because she initially struggled with the loud, bright and busy environment. “I couldn’t go to the lunch room or to the playground,” Colette says.

Nor could she have friends over to play at her home. Normally active and social, Colette found being inactive and not being able to play with friends really tough, her mom says.

Ready to Return to Sports

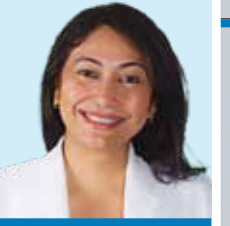
Little by little, though, Colette started seeing improvements. By fall, she was back on the soccer field and basketball court after getting the OK from Dr. Marcantuono to return to sports.

Once someone has had a concussion, the risk for another is greater, says Dr. Marcantuono, because it takes less force to cause injury.

But now, Colette’s parents are aware of what precautions to take to avoid a head injury and, if she does hit her head again, what to look out for and how to test for a possible concussion.



Filing for Sleep Divorce



Rana Ali, M.D.

Pulmonologist and sleep specialist

800-822-8905

Ocean, Manasquan and Rumson

Sleep divorce—when a couple decides to sleep separately to improve their sleep health—is becoming increasingly popular. Here’s what you need to know.

“With the rise of technology and increasingly busy lifestyles, we’re not getting as quality of sleep as we used to,” says **Rana Ali, M.D.**, sleep medicine specialist at **Bayshore Medical Center, Riverview Medical Center, Ocean University Medical Center** and **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**. “Some couples are exploring sleep divorce. By sleeping separately, each partner can take control of their comfort while maintaining an intimate relationship.”

How to Fall Asleep Without a Sleep Aid

If you’re having trouble falling asleep, you may instinctively reach for a sleep aid. But sleeping pills should only be used occasionally, not as a permanent solution.

If you’re tired of tossing and turning, adopt some or all of these habits:

- ▶ Wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends.
- ▶ Get at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise every day.
- ▶ Have an early dinner, so you finish eating two to three hours before bedtime.
- ▶ Stop using your smartphone, tablet or other screens an hour or two before bed.
- ▶ Avoid napping, even if it feels good at the moment.
- ▶ Steer clear of alcohol if you’re having sleep problems; alcohol disrupts sleep rhythms.
- ▶ Right before bedtime, listen to soothing, calm music or read a book with paper pages (not a cell phone or tablet) by lamplight.

If none of these solutions work, find a sleep medicine specialist. They may diagnose a sleep disorder or help treat your insomnia.

Benefits of Sleep Divorce

Dr. Ali says sleep divorce can benefit couples in a number of ways, including:

Increased comfort: “When couples sleep in separate rooms, they’re able to control the temperature and environment of their own sleeping area, which can lead to greater overall comfort while getting a good night’s rest,” she says.

Less sleep disruption: If one partner snores or has different sleep patterns than the other, sleeping in separate beds or rooms can help reduce disturbances during sleep cycles. “Uninterrupted sleep is important because it allows our bodies to rest and recharge, giving us the energy and focus we need to tackle the day,” Dr. Ali says. “Getting quality sleep can boost the immune system and lower the risk of certain diseases.”

Improved mental health: Restful sleep is linked with better mental health outcomes, reduced stress and improved moods. “When a couple gets adequate amounts of uninterrupted restful sleep, it’s easier for them to feel connected emotionally and physically,” says Dr. Ali.

Enhanced intimacy: Sleeping in separate beds does not have to adversely affect the intimacy between partners. “In fact, sleep divorce could make couples feel more intimate by allowing each person individual space and freedom while still supporting one another,” says Dr. Ali. “But clear communication is essential to ensure that both parties understand the reasons and goals behind the decision to sleep separately and to maintain a strong emotional and physical connection.”

Signs Sleep Divorce May Be Right for You

While the decision to sleep separately is an individual one, Dr. Ali provides a few reasons couples might consider it:

- ▶ One person snores loudly and disrupts the sleep of the other.
- ▶ The couple maintains very different bedtime and wake-up times.
- ▶ One person needs a quiet space for sleeping, while the other needs white noise.

- ▶ Each partner prefers a different room temperature for sleeping.
- ▶ Each partner has a different preference for mattress softness/firmness or type of blanket or sheets.
- ▶ One partner has different sleep rhythms that are disruptive when trying to get adequate rest in the same bed.

Before You Get Sleep Divorced

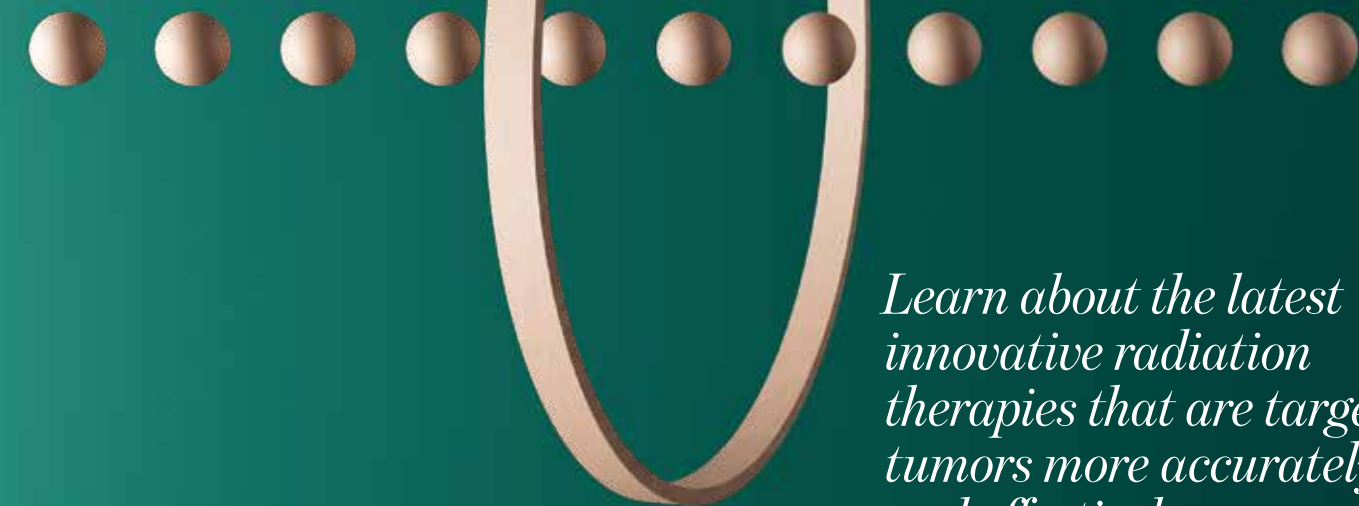
Keeping communication lines open and maintaining an emotional connection are key to making sleep divorce work. Often, couples who choose to sleep separately need to create a consistent routine to spend time together outside of the sleeping arrangement. This could include planning a regular date night, cooking together or sharing morning coffee, for example.

“Couples should establish clear reasons for sleep divorce, discuss their individual sleep needs and preferences, and work together to come up with a plan that works for both parties,” says Dr. Ali. “It is essential to communicate your intentions and ensure that your partner understands that the goal is to create a better sleep environment and not to distance each other emotionally.”



Find a sleep specialist near you at [HMForU.org/SleepDoc](https://www.HMForU.org/SleepDoc).

Right on Target



Learn about the latest innovative radiation therapies that are targeting tumors more accurately and effectively.

Losing a loved one to cancer can have a profound impact on a person. For twin brothers **Shabbar F. Danish, M.D.**—chair of the Department of Neurosurgery at Hackensack Meridian Neuroscience Institute at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**—and **Adnan Danish, M.D.**—attending physician at John Theurer Cancer Center and chief of Radiation Oncology at St. Joseph’s Health, in partnership with Hackensack Meridian Health—the devastating loss of their father to leukemia when they were in high school inspired each of them to pursue a career dedicated to fighting cancer.

Shortly after their father’s leukemia diagnosis, Dr. Adnan Danish was diagnosed with testicular cancer, which he ultimately beat.

Today, the two doctors are working to ensure other families don’t have to experience the loss that they suffered as teenagers. At Hackensack Meridian Health, they are employing the latest and greatest technologies in radiation therapy to treat cancer and tumors.

Here, we spotlight two of those advancements.

ZAP-X and Synaptive MRI: Increasing Efficiency and Accuracy

Precision is paramount when treating tumors, nerve disorders and other challenging and life-altering conditions inside the brain. But it’s even more extraordinary when treatment can be performed in a noninvasive, painless and safe manner, allowing patients to seamlessly return to everyday living.

istock.com/taagansayni/Sy/fida

Thanks to the incredible generosity of Mrs. Mary Ellen Harris and the Golden Dome Foundation, Jersey Shore now has this life-changing technology: the ZAP-X® Gyroscopic Radiosurgery® with Synaptive’s Brain-only Silent MRI.

The Dr. Robert H. and Mary Ellen Harris ZAP-X Center for Noninvasive Neurosurgery at the Hackensack Meridian Neuroscience Institute at Jersey Shore has the world’s first team to combine ZAP-X Gyroscopic Radiosurgery with Synaptive’s Brain-only Silent MRI thanks to Mrs. Harris’ belief and investment in the inspiring work of Dr. Shabbar Danish and the outstanding neuroscience and oncology teams at Jersey Shore.

Bringing these technologies together provides the most precise, accurate and rapid treatment possible for benign and malignant brain tumors, including brain metastases, meningiomas, pituitary adenomas and vestibular schwannomas. They also are used for other intracranial disorders such as trigeminal neuralgia and arteriovenous malformations.

How it works:

- ▶ A linear accelerator (a machine that uses electricity to create a stream of fast-moving subatomic particles) creates a combination of beams and positions that reduce radiation exposure to healthy brain cells as well as sensitive areas such as the optic pathways, brain stem and, if needed, previously treated areas.
- ▶ By integrating Synaptive’s Brain-only Silent MRI, clinicians are able to obtain planning imaging within a day or two of treatment, allowing the treatment team to create the plan almost immediately after image acquisition.
- ▶ After patients are placed on the treatment table, real-time images are taken to confirm the treatment accuracy.

“The combination of these tools allows us to point the radiation at just the target tumor or lesion, avoiding almost all surrounding tissue,” says Dr. Shabbar Danish.

Benefits of ZAP-X and Synaptive MRI technology:

- ▶ Lower risk of side effects.
- ▶ Little to no recovery time compared with open surgery.
- ▶ Fewer planning appointments before treatment.
- ▶ Added comfort since patients do not need head frames used with other types of brain radiation.
- ▶ No anesthesia, scalpels or incisions required.

“With this machine, we can literally sit next to the patient. They can hear and see me, so they feel a lot more comfortable,” Dr. Shabbar Danish says. “Patients can even play music.”

Biology-guided Radiotherapy: Precision and Accuracy

Oncologists at **John Theurer Cancer Center** at **Hackensack University Medical Center** are employing a new way to make radiation therapy even more accurate: biology-guided radiotherapy (BGRT).

“BGRT is a more sophisticated and effective treatment option,” says Dr. Adnan Danish.

BGRT uses biological emissions from the patient’s own cancer cells to guide the radiation treatment. It is approved for patients with cancers in the lung or bone cancers, including bone metastases.

How it works:

- ▶ Before patients lie down to be treated, they are given a small amount of a radioactive drug (primarily made up of sugar), known as a tracer.
- ▶ Tumors rapidly consume the tracer (much faster than healthy cells) and then produce emissions, thus essentially illuminating the cancer, signaling its exact location.
- ▶ The technology can immediately detect the emissions and respond in real-time with a beam of radiation that travels directly to each tumor and destroys them.

Benefits of BGRT:

- ▶ More precision—doctors know exactly where the cancerous tumor is located within the body at all times.
 - ▶ More comfort for patients—often, during treatments for lung or breast cancer, patients are asked to hold their breath so the radiation beam can hit its target, not the surrounding healthy tissue, and this treatment avoids that.
 - ▶ Fewer radiation treatment sessions—with previous technology, multiple treatment sessions are needed to target more than a few tumors.
- “With BGRT, the cancer essentially destroys itself,” Dr. Adnan Danish says. “The key differentiator is the biology-guided radiotherapy and the continuous, live feedback from the tumor itself. It is designed to enable delivery of a tracked radiation dose to multiple tumors in the same session by making the tumors themselves continuously signal their location.” 🌟

Scan the QR code to schedule a cancer screening near you.



Shabbar F. Danish, M.D.
Neurosurgeon
800-822-8905
Neptune



Adnan Danish, M.D.
Radiation oncologist
800-822-8905
Hackensack



We offer a number of programs to help keep our communities healthy. Topics range from general wellness to heart health, stroke, cancer care, women's health and more. View some featured events below.

For a full listing or to register, visit HMHforU.org/Events or call 800-560-9990.

SchedUle

Here are just a few of the events & classes this January through April 2024

Special Events

Celebrate Heart Month
February is Heart Month
Join us for webinars that focus on heart and vascular health!

Can You Live a Normal Life With Congestive Heart Failure? Kanika Mody, M.D., will discuss how to live well while living with heart failure.
Feb. 8, 11 a.m.–noon, virtual event

Debunking 6 Women's Heart Health Myths Join Sheila Sahni, M.D., as she debunks common myths about women's heart health and provides strategies for proactive heart health management.
Feb. 22, noon–1 p.m., virtual event

Stress, Diet and Your Heart Brett Sealove, M.D., will discuss how stress and diet can affect your heart and what you can do to make sure you are living a heart-healthy lifestyle.
Feb. 20, 6:30-7:30 p.m., virtual event

When to Worry About Varicose Veins and Leg Pain Join Scott Cluley, M.D., as he discusses varicose veins and learn whether they are a cosmetic issue, need medical treatment or could be related to another condition.
Feb. 21, 6–7 p.m., virtual event

Angioscreen Special rate: \$49.95. Registration required. Call for dates, times and locations.
▶ For a full list of Heart Month events, HMHforU.org/HeartEvents.

					HOSPITAL LOCATIONS			
Bayshore Medical Center 727 North Beers St. Holmdel	Carrier Clinic and Blake Recovery Center 252 County Rd. 601 Belle Mead	Jersey Shore University Medical Center and K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital 1945 Route 33 Neptune	JFK University Medical Center 65 James St. Edison	Ocean University Medical Center 425 Jack Martin Blvd., Brick	Old Bridge Medical Center 1 Hospital Plaza Old Bridge	Raritan Bay Medical Center 530 New Brunswick Ave. Perth Amboy	Riverview Medical Center 1 Riverview Plaza Red Bank	Southern Ocean Medical Center 1140 Route 72 West Manahawkin

Behavioral Health

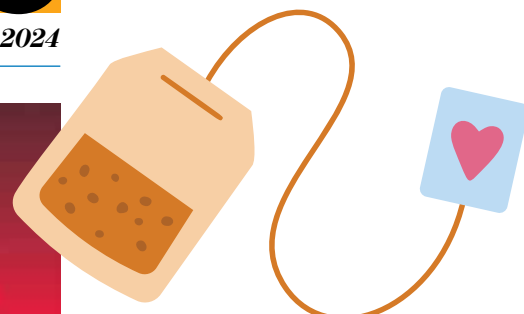
Depression: Better Days to Come Join us for an overview of depression, including signs, symptoms, treatment options and the different types of depression.
Speaker: Vedavani Tiruveedhula, M.D. Feb. 7, 6–7 p.m., virtual event
Speaker: Stacy Doumas, M.D. April 11, 1–2 p.m., virtual event

Pediatrics

Parent/Guardian Talks Coping With Loss Children may experience different losses in life: divorce, friendships, moving, sports injuries, death of a family member or friend. Join Heather Grossman, M.D., and Sonali Tatapudy, M.D., as they discuss the different types of loss, the impact it may have and how to support the child.
Feb. 29, noon–1 p.m., virtual event



- ▶ **My Child Can't Concentrate** *Speakers: Harshasu Barot, D.O., and Natalie Riggio, Ed.M, BCBA, Jan. 25, noon–1 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Safe Sitter** *Mar. 23, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m., Community Outreach Conf. Center, 1686 Route 88, Brick; April 3, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m., Life Support Training Center, 1944 Route 33, Neptune. Visit HMHforU.org/Events for more upcoming dates, or for groups of six or more, email COeventinquiries@hmhn.org for more information. Fee \$40.*
- ▶ **Safe at Home by Safe Sitter** *Visit HMHforU.org/Events for upcoming dates, or for groups of six or more, email COeventinquiries@hmhn.org for more information. Fee \$15, virtual event*



Heart Health

Women's Heart Health: Joyful Heart Tea Join Monica Bais, M.D., and learn how heart disease affects women differently than men, as well as signs, symptoms, risk factors, prevention and treatment options.
Feb. 7, 1:30–2:30 p.m., Senior Citizens Activities Network (SCAN), Monmouth Mall (basement level next to Mall Management), 180 Route 35 South, Eatontown

- ▶ **Hypertension and Cholesterol: What You Need to Know** *Jan. 16, 2–3 p.m., Upper Shores Lavallette Library, 112 Jersey City Ave.*
- ▶ **Hypertension and Cholesterol: What You Need to Know** *March 14, 10–11 a.m., Stafford Library, 129 N. Main St., Manahawkin*
- ▶ **All About Your Heart** *April 30, 11 a.m.–noon, Stafford Library, 129 N. Main St., Manahawkin*

Diabetes

Pre-Diabetes Can making changes prevent me from getting diabetes? Join us and learn about early warning signs, symptoms and changes you can make.
March 19, 2–3 p.m., Upper Shores Lavallette Library, 112 Jersey City Ave.

Neuroscience

- ▶ **Understanding Memory Loss** Join Robert G. Stern, M.D., and learn the difference between normal and abnormal memory loss vs. Alzheimer's disease and tips to help keep your mind sharp. Memory screenings available.
April 9, 10:30–11:30 a.m., Neptune Senior Center, 1607 Rte. 33
- ▶ **Memory Loss vs. Alzheimer's Disease** *Memory screenings available. April 16, 11 a.m.–noon, Stafford Library, 129 N. Main St., Manahawkin*

General Wellness

Healthy Eating on a Budget Join our registered dietitian and learn how to shop smart on a budget, as well as meal planning, shopping wisely, making a list and creating a food budget.
Feb. 6, 10:30–11:30 a.m., Neptune Senior Center, 1607 Route 33



DASH and Mediterranean Diet Learn about foods that can help your heart health and about long-term healthy eating style, including sources of antioxidants and eating healthier fats.
April 11, 2–3 p.m., Upper Shores Lavallette Library, 112 Jersey City Ave.

- ▶ **Exercising the Right Way** *March 14, 2–3 p.m., Upper Shores Lavallette Library, 112 Jersey City Ave.*
- ▶ **New Year, New You: Today's Weight-loss Strategies** *Jan. 25, noon–1 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Weight Loss With Hypnosis** *Feb. 14 & April 10, 7–8 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Weight-loss Surgery** *To learn more about weight-loss surgery, attend a free seminar. Find a seminar near you at HMHforU.org/WeightLoss.*
- ▶ **Support Groups** *Hackensack Meridian Health offers regular support group meetings. Learn more at HMHforU.org/SupportGroups.*

Cancer Care

The Power of Your Fork Learn evidence-based strategies to choose foods that maximize your health. Our integrative nutritionists will guide you through label reading and meal planning, and offer practical, time-efficient ways to increase your intake of plant-forward foods without compromising taste.
Feb. 29, noon–1 p.m., virtual event



- ▶ **What's the Deal With Colorectal Cancer?** *Speaker: Michael L. Caparelli, M.D., March 13, 1–2 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Stop Smoking With Hypnosis** *March 13, 7–8 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Fresh Start Smoking Cessation** *Four-session program, March 12, 14, 19 & 21, 6–7 p.m., Ocean East Wing Conf. Center*

All Hands on Deck



Rick Kolber's successful weight-loss surgery inspired him to give back to others to achieve the same results and enhanced quality of life.

A generous pledge to the Center for Comprehensive Weight Loss at Bayshore Medical Center fuels critical support programs for bariatric patients.

Richard "Rick" Kolber already had a deep commitment to philanthropy and community stewardship when he decided to undergo bariatric surgery at **Bayshore Medical Center**. After he lost a tremendous amount of weight from the procedure—which also eradicated his severe obstructive sleep apnea—Rick, a trustee of Bayshore Medical Center Foundation since 2017, decided to give back once more.

In March 2023, Rick generously pledged \$50,000 to the Center for Comprehensive Weight Loss at Bayshore, which performs about 250 bariatric surgeries each year and is designated a Bariatric Center of Excellence. It was the second such gift he made to the Center, funding vital programs to support the success of fellow bariatric patients who often face ongoing challenges to improve their health and lifestyle after surgery.

Bariatric surgery is often covered by medical insurance, but dietitian-led support groups, and sometimes nutritional counseling, are not, says Marisa Medina, executive director of Bayshore Medical Center Foundation. "The infrastructure and support system beyond surgery helps patients be successful in the long term," she says. "That's why Rick's gift has been so critical. Without the support of donors, these additional services might not exist."

Rick is no stranger to the importance of supporting Hackensack Meridian Health hospitals. In addition to his service on the Bayshore Medical Center Foundation Board, Rick's father is chairman of Riverview Medical Center Foundation. On top of that, his mother has been instrumental in funding women's health initiatives.

"Rick understands that we're a not-for-profit community hospital and that many services and programs would not be that possible without donors," Marisa says. "He's been very intentional about how he chooses to support the hospital and other charities. We are grateful that he thinks carefully about the impact he wants to make and how his investment can help programs like this one."

Rick hopes his support for the Center for Comprehensive Weight Loss prompts a chain reaction in people who undergo bariatric surgery to embrace a healthier future. "They can do better with their lives, and hopefully help other people do better with theirs," he says. "If you could give the gift of health, you would. What you do with it, that's up to you. But at least I can set the table so someone else can take their health into their own hands again."

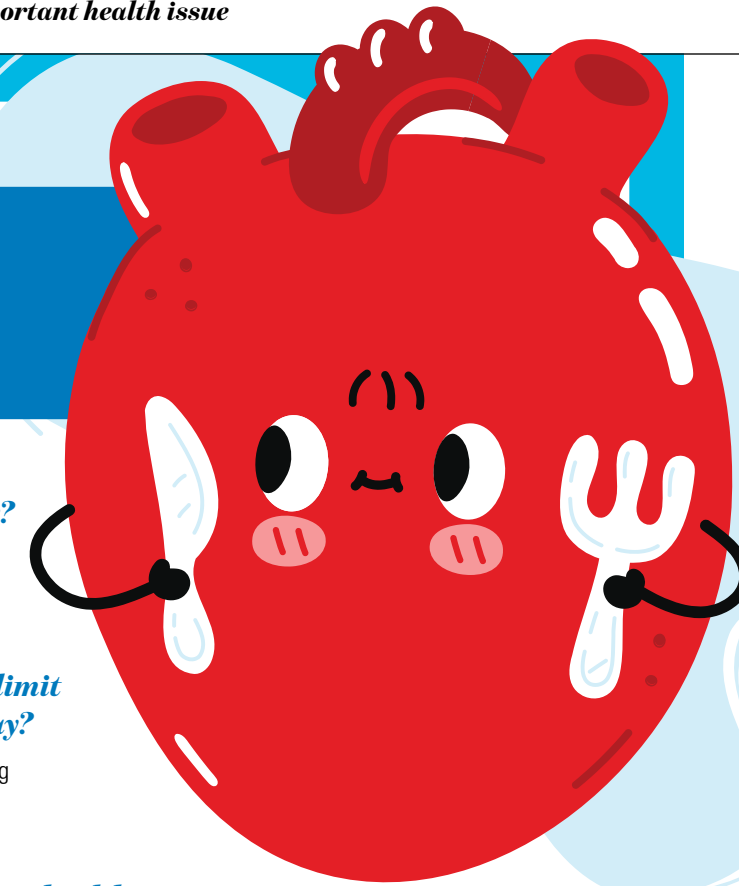
Hear from Rick and other Bayshore bariatric patients about what weight-loss surgeries meant for them at [HMHforU.org/RicksWeightLoss](https://www.hmhforu.org/RicksWeightLoss).

Every gift helps. To learn more, contact Hackensack Meridian Health Foundation at giving@hmhn.org or 848-308-5000.



Heart Smart

Are you making the most heart-friendly food choices? Take our quiz to find out.



1 Which type of fat is considered heart-healthy?

- Saturated fat Trans fat Monounsaturated fat

2 What is the recommended daily limit of sodium you should get each day?

- 1,500 mg 2,500 mg 3,000 mg

3 Which type of protein is healthiest for your heart?

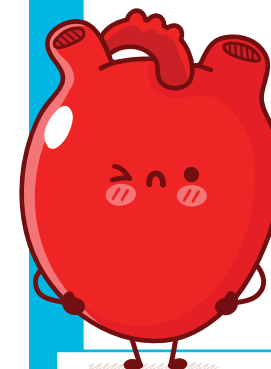
- Red meat Chicken with skin Fish

4 How many servings of fruits and vegetables should you consume each day for heart health?

- 1–2 servings 4–5 servings 7–8 servings

5 Which cooking method is healthier for your heart?

- Frying Baking Deep-frying



Answers—hey, no peeking!

- 1. Monounsaturated fat**
Saturated and trans fats raise levels of the "bad" cholesterol, while monounsaturated fats are good for your heart.
- 2. 1,500 mg**
The American Heart Association recommends no more than 2,300 mg a day but ideally a limit of 1,500 mg of sodium daily.
- 3. Fish**
Fish—especially tuna and salmon—is one of the best proteins to help prevent heart disease.
- 4. 4–5 servings**
The American Heart Association recommends getting four to five servings of fruits and vegetables a day to increase heart health.
- 5. Baking**
Frying usually involves flour, salt and fat, which aren't good for your heart. Instead, try baking, broiling or steaming.

Scan the QR code to schedule a heart screening near you.





Hackensack
Meridian Health

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Hackensack
Meridian Health

343 Thornall St.
Edison, NJ 08837-2206

HMH-070_S



Care Centered Around You

The Hackensack Meridian Health & Wellness Center at Eatontown is a convenient, easy-to-access location for health services that are centered around you. Primary care and urgent care, lab testing and specialists for everything from cardiology to neurology to rheumatology are all under one roof, ready when you are.

Conveniently located at 135 Route 35 in Eatontown

Learn more and meet our doctors at HMHforU.org/Eatontown.



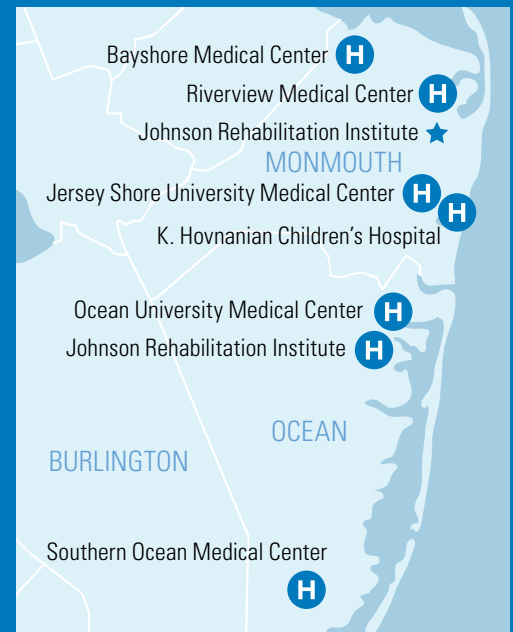
How Well Do You Know Heart Health? Take our interactive quiz to test your knowledge of all things heart health: HMHforU.org/HeartQuiz.



5 Easy Steps to Remember CPR Be ready to respond in an emergency with these five steps to remember CPR: HMHforU.org/CPR.

As the state's largest, most comprehensive health network, Hackensack Meridian Health is made up of 7,000 physicians, 18 hospitals and more than 500 locations.

Our hospitals near you:



★ An acute comprehensive inpatient rehabilitation facility at Riverview Medical Center

For a complete list of our hospitals, services and locations, visit HMHforU.org/Locations.



Hackensack
Meridian Health

KEEP GETTING BETTER