

HEALTH U

Transforming Cardiac Care

New advancements offer more treatment options and faster recovery *Page 30*



Hackensack
Meridian *Health*

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PARA LEER ESTA REVISTA EN ESPAÑOL,
VISITE [HMHforU.org/Spanish2](https://www.HMHforU.org/Spanish2)



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Transforming Cardiac Care

Advancements in heart care provide more treatment options and faster recovery.

HEALTH **U**

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On the cover: iStock.com/Natali_Mis



Better Health for Women

Sign up for a six-week email series to guide you to better health! You will receive practical tips and information covering skin care, fitness, sleep, nutrition, managing stress and more.



When an injury happens, the next step isn't always clear. Find out when you actually need to go to the ER at [HMHforU.org/Emergency](https://www.hmhforu.org/Emergency).

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.



Care When and Where You Need It

When it comes to your health and the well-being of your loved ones, the choice of where you go for care truly matters. At Hackensack Meridian *Health*, we understand that your health care journey is personal, and we are here to support you and ensure you receive the best care every step of the way.

Our people are the heart of our success. We are proud to have a team of talented, compassionate providers who are deeply committed to the health and well-being of all who live and work in our communities. Many of our team members have been with us for years, building trust and meaningful connections with the patients and families they serve.

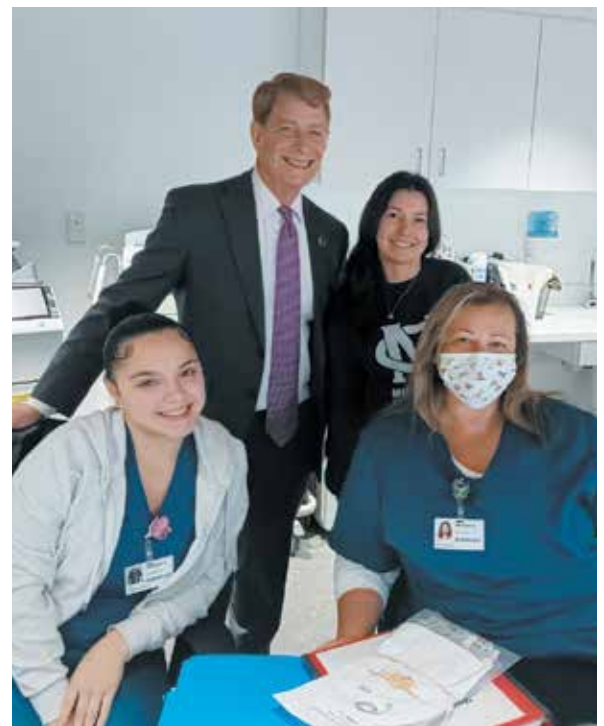
We believe that quality care should be available to everyone, no matter where they live and work or how busy they are. That's why we are making it easier than ever for patients to connect with the care they need, when they need it. Our new virtual care app, HMH 24/7, launched last fall and offers same-day virtual appointments for primary and urgent care services.

So if you can't get into an urgent care center or your regular doctor, you can use HMH 24/7 to video chat with a doctor 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. With HMH 24/7, you have access to physicians from the Hackensack Meridian *Health* network and a dedicated care team to support you before and after every visit. Spanish-speaking doctors are also available through the app. Learn more at [HMH247.org](https://www.hmh247.org).

This year, I invite you to experience the difference at Hackensack Meridian *Health*. When you choose us, you are choosing a partner that listens, innovates and works tirelessly to meet your needs. 🌟

Robert C. Garrett, FACHE, CEO
Hackensack Meridian *Health*

It's all about the team. Bob Garrett shares his pride in the Hackensack Meridian Health team as he visits with team members across the network (dogs included)!



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Better U

quick tips to help you live your healthiest life

INSIDE THIS SECTION

- 6 Tips for heart-healthy eating
- 6 Embrace a digital detox
- 7 Lentil soup recipe

Scoop Smarter, Not Harder

Smart tips for safe shoveling this winter.

Shoveling snow may seem like a routine winter task, but it can be an intense workout and pose serious health risks. Before heading out to clear your driveway, it's important to understand the potential risks and take necessary precautions. Our expert, **Shalin Shah, D.O.**, an orthopedic surgeon at **Bayshore Medical Center**, shares advice on how to stay safe this winter.

Know the Risks

Shoveling snow may increase your risk of heart attack. If you have a heart condition, you shouldn't shovel snow without checking with your doctor. If you experience chest pain or difficulty breathing while shoveling snow, stop and seek medical care immediately.

Shoveling snow may be too intense for people who are not used to a high level of exercise. Think about hiring others to clear your driveway if you're at risk for heart attack.



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Tips for Safe Shoveling
Heading out to shovel? Follow these tips:

Stretch for at least 10–15 minutes prior to shoveling. Be sure to stretch after, too.

Switch back and forth between the hand and arm you use to shovel, if able, to balance out the amount of exertion.

Stay hydrated.

Shovel with someone else, if possible, to reduce the workload.

Shovel in multiple short sessions to minimize overexertion.

Take small shovelfuls to avoid straining yourself.

Engage the core muscles when exerting during shoveling.

Bend at the knees rather than curving your back.

Seek medical advice if you develop any persistent numbness, tingling or weakness during or after shoveling.

Take small, slow, shuffling steps, bending your knees for extra stability.

Go Online
Schedule a heart screening to learn more about your risk of heart attack. Visit [HMHforU.org/HeartScreening](https://www.HMHforU.org/HeartScreening).

invincible_bulldog/Getty Images

Heart-Healthy Eating

Eating well can help you live longer, and small changes can add up to big improvements in your diet.

We all know that we should eat our fruits and veggies to promote overall well-being, but can the foods we eat really impact our hearts? And how can we use our diet to promote a healthy heart? Our expert, **Brett Sealove, M.D.**, chief cardiologist at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**, explains everything you need to know.

“Nutrition is the foundation of good health,” says Dr. Sealove. It shapes how well you think and feel and ultimately impacts how long you live. Choosing foods that preserve heart health is essential because, as Dr. Sealove explains, “The heart is the pump and engine of the body.” But unlike your car engine, which you can overhaul or replace, you only have one heart for life.

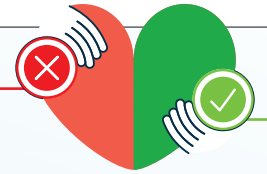


Brett Sealove, M.D.

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Eatontown, Freehold and Monroe Township



Eat This (and Not That) for Heart Health

One of the best ways to feed your heart health is to replace saturated and trans fats with unsaturated fats. “Data shows a 30 percent reduction in heart risk with reducing these fats,” says Dr. Sealove. To reduce saturated and trans fats, try limiting:

- ▶ Fried foods
- ▶ Red meat
- ▶ Processed meats and foods

And aim to eat unsaturated fats—found in foods like:

- ▶ Avocados
- ▶ Nuts
- ▶ Olive oil

EMOTIONAL HARMONY *supporting your emotional and mental health*

Resetting for the New Year

Embrace a digital detox to improve your mental health.



Thomas Priolo, M.D.

Psychiatrist

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Neptune

Screens have become an integral part of our personal and professional lives. From smartphones to computers to TVs, we are constantly surrounded by digital devices.

It’s important to understand how excessive screen time affects mental health and find ways to cut back. This new year, consider a digital detox to improve your well-being.

How Does Screen Time Affect Mental Health?

Thomas Priolo, M.D., a psychiatrist at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**, warns that prolonged screen time can lead to various mental health challenges, including:

- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Post traumatic stress disorder
- ▶ Anxiety

Am I Spending Too Much Time Online or Watching TV?

Research doesn’t point to fixed times, but there are certain signs or questions that can help you determine if you could

benefit from turning off screens. To assess if your time online could be negatively affecting your well-being, ask yourself these questions:

- ▶ Am I spending more time online or watching TV than I intended?
- ▶ Am I sacrificing important real-world activities for time online or watching TV?
- ▶ Do I feel anxious, restless, nervous or irritable when stepping away from screens?
- ▶ Am I engaging in screen time at inappropriate times, like at work or during time with family or friends?

What Are the Benefits of Reduced Screen Time?

Reducing screen time has numerous benefits for your mental health and overall well-being. Some of the main advantages include:

- ▶ Improved sleep
- ▶ Enhanced focus
- ▶ More real-life interactions
- ▶ Boosted mental health



Build Heart-Healthy Diet Habits

Changing your daily eating habits is not easy, but small steps can lead to changes you can stick to, Dr. Sealove reminds us. "Nothing is going to happen immediately. This is a long-term investment, and there will be ups and downs." Try making one small change at a time, such as:

Replacing sugary cereals with oatmeal or berries and low-sugar yogurt

Replacing one red-meat meal per week with a fish or plant-based meal

Reducing soda intake or switching to seltzer water or water with lemon

Weaning yourself off added sugar; instead of two packets of sugar in your coffee, try using one.

Swapping out white rice or pasta with brown rice or quinoa

To find a cardiologist near you, visit HMHforU.org/HeartDoc.



Portuguese Lentil Soup

Serves 6

<p>Ingredients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ½ pound spicy chicken sausage (about 3 links), sliced into ½-inch pieces 1 small onion, diced 1 cup lentils, picked over and rinsed 3 cups water 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth ½ bunch kale, collards or Swiss chard, with stems and center ribs discarded, sliced thin (about 2 cups) 1 tablespoon lemon juice Fresh ground black pepper 	<p>Preparation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 In a 3-quart heavy saucepan, brown sausage over moderate heat. Add onion and cook until soft and golden. 2 Add lentils, water and broth and bring to a boil. Simmer covered, 30 minutes, or until lentils are almost tender. 3 Add greens and simmer uncovered, about 10 minutes, until lentils are tender. 4 Just before serving, add lemon juice and sprinkle with pepper to taste.
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Nutritional Information
 Per serving: 233 calories, 16g protein, 25g carbohydrate (11g fiber), 8g fat (2g sat, 6g mono/poly), 328mg sodium

Seasoned Cook
 Take advantage of the vast array of winter greens, collards, Swiss chard and escarole in this easy-to-make soup. Make a large batch to enjoy leftovers, freeze or feed a crowd with a green salad and hearty bread.

Find more recipes at HMHforU.org/HealthyEating.



How Can I Limit Screen Time?

Regain control of your digital habits to promote balance and self-control by:

- ▶ Limiting screen time to set hours of the day
- ▶ Designating device-free zones
- ▶ Establishing a daily routine
- ▶ Using app settings on your smartphone to monitor usage
- ▶ Participating in screen-free activities, like reading, exercise and face-to-face interactions
- ▶ Separating work and personal screen time

"Make sure you're spending quality, screen-free time with family and friends," Dr. Priolo says. "Science has proven it helps enhance your mental health."

To find a behavioral health doctor near you, visit HMHforU.org/MentalHealthDoc.

non-exclusive/bortonia/KrizzDePaul/tulpahm/supanut/piyakanont/pikpicture/Getty Images

Should I be concerned about a mole?



Tarun Kakumanu, D.O.
Family medicine physician
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Tarun Kakumanu, D.O., weighs in:

What looks like a mole could be a serious melanoma skin cancer, so it's important to know what to look for.

Know Your 'A, B, C, D, Es'

When you notice a mole on your body, it is important to assess whether it may be a sign of melanoma. The ABCDE criteria provides a systematic approach to identifying suspicious lesions that may indicate melanoma and warrant further investigation, such as a biopsy:



▶ **A = Asymmetrical shape:** Noncancerous moles are typically symmetrical, with one half mirroring the other. In contrast, melanomas often have irregular, asymmetrical shapes.

▶ **B = Border:** Benign moles have smooth, well-defined edges, whereas melanomas may exhibit uneven, ragged or blurred borders.

▶ **C = Color:** Healthy moles usually display uniform coloration. Melanomas, however, can show multiple or uneven colors, including shades of black, brown, tan, white, gray, red, pink or blue.

▶ **D = Diameter:** While melanomas can vary in size, they are often larger than 6 millimeters (approximately ¼ inch) in diameter.

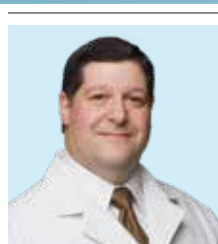
▶ **E = Evolving:** Changes in a mole's size, shape, color or elevation, or the development of symptoms such as itching or bleeding, are significant warning signs.

Learn more at HMHforU.org/Moles.

How do you know if you are experiencing hearing loss?

Thomas Brandeisky, D.O., weighs in:

There are many different degrees of hearing loss, and everyone is different in how they experience it. It's important to know you can lose hearing not just in loudness but in clarity—meaning no matter how loud words are, they just don't sound very clear. Hearing loss can develop slowly as we age, or come on suddenly for no apparent reason.



Thomas Brandeisky, D.O.
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Brick

Hearing loss can come on slowly or suddenly and be associated with balance complaints and ringing ears. By itself, people often think their hearing evaluation can wait. But the consequences of hearing loss can be long term, and early evaluation and management is always recommended.

Hearing loss can be broken down into three main types, depending on what part of your hearing is damaged. These types include:

- ▶ **Sensorineural:** The most common type of hearing loss, this is due to injury to the inner ear or disorders affecting the hearing nerve itself. It typically is not medically correctable but can be rehabilitated with hearing aids. Unlike slowly progressive hearing loss of aging, sudden sensorineural hearing loss is an urgent matter because it can be improved with medication if evaluated early.
- ▶ **Conductive:** This loss occurs when sounds can't get through the ear canal or to the middle ear;

wax impaction, middle ear fluid and infection will cause this kind of hearing loss. It's usually reversible with treatment. Treatment for this type of hearing loss depends on the condition that is causing the eardrum and ear bones not to vibrate when stimulated by sound.

▶ **Mixed:** This type happens when both sensorineural and conductive hearing loss occur at the same time. Evaluation is important to make the appropriate recommendations for follow-up, since this loss involves multiple parts of the ear.

Prolonged hearing loss robs your brain of stimulation and can lead to permanent difficulty understanding words and contribute to cognitive decline with aging. So, if you're having trouble hearing, schedule a visit with an otolaryngologist for a complete evaluation and treatment.

Learn more at HMHforU.org/HearingLoss.



Do sugar-free snacks live up to the health hype?

Krishna Chalasani, M.D., weighs in:

Many packaged foods advertise their sugar-free status, but does this mean they are healthy?

Balance is key: Sugar is essential for our bodies in the right amount. When we eat food, our bodies turn some of it into sugar. That sugar fuels our muscles, brain and organs.

If we eat more sugar than our bodies need to function, the extra turns into fat. Too much stored fat can cause health problems like heart disease and diabetes.

Stevia and Splenda products are healthy sugar alternatives. They are the best-studied sweeteners on the market with no observed long-term harmful effects. Stevia is a plant-based natural sweetener. Splenda offers natural and artificial low-calorie sweeteners.

The American Heart Association suggests limiting added sugars to no more than 6 teaspoons (25 grams) per day for women and 9 teaspoons (38 grams) per day for men.

Doctor-Approved, Sugar-Free Snacks

Choose snacks low in carbohydrates—especially if you want to lose weight. But don't just look at sugar content alone—a healthy snack should have no more than 18 grams of carbs per serving.

Try low-carb snacks, such as:

- ▶ One sugar-free popsicle
- ▶ 10 Goldfish crackers
- ▶ One string cheese stick
- ▶ ¼ cup dried fruit and nut mix (without candy or chocolate pieces)
- ▶ Two rice cakes with 1 tablespoon of peanut butter

Learn more at HMHforU.org/Sugar.

Krishna Chalasani,
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Neptune

Should I take a daily aspirin to prevent a heart attack?

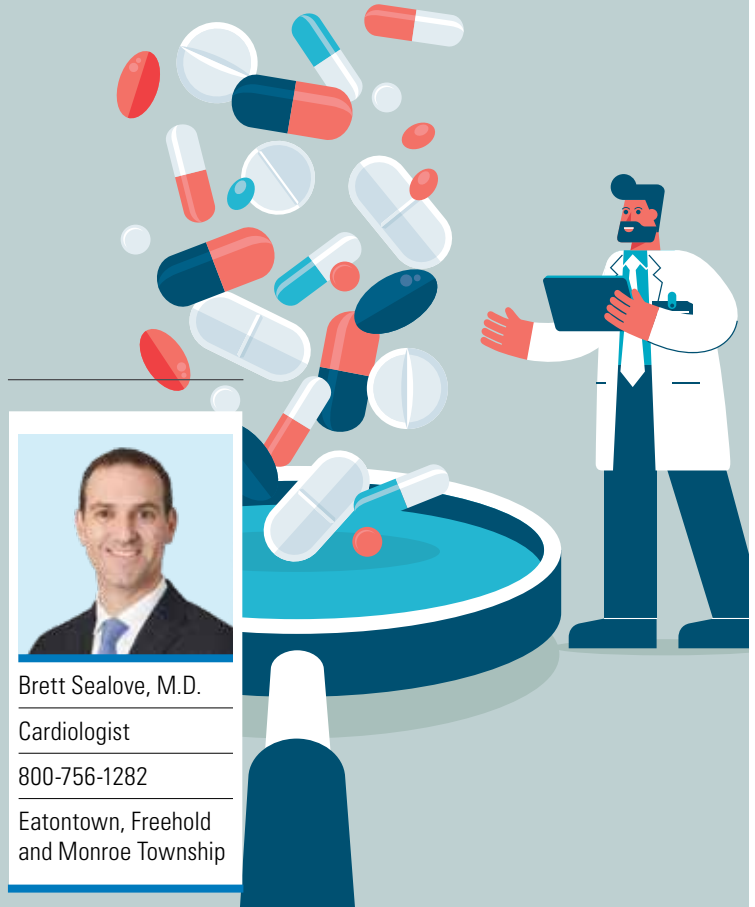
Brett Sealove, M.D., weighs in:

A few years ago, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force confidently updated its recommendations regarding the preventive use of aspirin. Adults over age 60 should no longer consider taking a daily aspirin to prevent a first heart attack or stroke. For adults age 40 to 59 with elevated risk for cardiovascular disease and no history of such conditions, the Task Force strongly recommends discussing the appropriateness of a daily low-dose aspirin with their doctor.

While aspirin effectively reduces the risk of a first heart attack or stroke, it can also pose potential risks, such as internal bleeding in the stomach, intestines and brain. The risk of these complications increases with age and can be life-threatening.

Individuals age 60 and older should not start a daily aspirin regimen unless they have already been taking it. However, if your doctor has prescribed low-dose aspirin due to a history of heart attack, stroke or other medical reasons, this guidance does not apply to you.

Learn more at HMHforU.org/Aspirin.



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Eatontown, Freehold
and Monroe Township

Doctor Spotlight

MICHAEL RAGUSO-FAILLA, M.D.

Family medicine doctor

Hackensack Meridian Medical Group – Family Medicine Center located in Little Egg Harbor

When family medicine specialist Michael Raguso-Failla, M.D., was 5 years old, his older brother developed a severe case of chickenpox that caused his throat to swell and required a major procedure and additional surgeries later on.

“Seeing the way the doctors were able to bring him to recovery left such a positive impression on me,” he says. He credits that experience with inspiring a career choice he’s still happy he made.

“I enjoy the continuity with my patients of all ages—I’ve been at our practice for 23 years now,” Dr. Raguso-Failla says. “I’ve had patients I started seeing as kids, and they make me feel like I’m part of their family.”

He practices at Hackensack Meridian Medical Group – Family Medicine Center located in Little Egg Harbor, New Jersey, and is affiliated with **Southern Ocean Medical Center.**

Dr. Raguso-Failla is married to Jean, and they have a son, Michael, and daughter, Jessica. “They are so important and supportive in my life,” he says.

Is there anything special you like to do for your patients?

I try to remember how much influence doctors can have on patients. I tell them that prevention is ideal, especially when I encourage healthy diet and exercise, and that I appreciate their active participation in their care.

We leave a certain number of appointments open each day if our patients get injured or aren’t feeling well. We prefer to see them, so they don’t have to go somewhere else, like urgent care.

It sounds like you are very happy in your practice.

Yes, I am, and part of that is because we all believe that family and time with them is



In his free time, Michael Raguso-Failla, M.D., enjoys going to concerts with his family.

important. Having time away from work and flexibility in our schedules allows me to have coached Little League for my kids, and watched my daughter play basketball, and still be excited to come to work each day.

What do you and your family do for fun?

We go to concerts and enjoy all genres of music. Recently we’ve seen the Australian pop rock band 5 Seconds of Summer, iconic singer Johnny Mathis, country star Luke Bryan, the metal band Disturbed, a symphony that featured music from the movie, “The Godfather,” and a show by the Doo-Wop group, “The Doo Wop Project.”

You have a four-legged fur-family member. Tell us more.

Yes, it’s Macie, 12.5 years old, and she’s one of the Potcake breed. These dogs originate from some Caribbean islands, mixed-breed street dogs. She’s the baby of our family and a great dog.

Who would you most like to meet and talk to, living or not?

Elvis—he was such a fascinating person, a pioneer. He really didn’t have anyone who came before him to emulate—someone who had achieved that much fame. He navigated uncharted waters of entertainment. People remember his problems, yes, but he was charitable to so many that he never knew. 🌟



Make an appointment with Dr. Raguso-Failla or a doctor near you today.

Spotlight on **U**

health topics that matter the most to you



Tread Carefully

Practice these tips to avoid slipping and falling on ice this winter.

Slipping while walking on ice is a leading cause of winter injuries that bring people to their doctors, including ankle sprains and fractures of the hip, wrist and elbow. Our expert, **Michael Cunningham, M.D.**, an orthopedic surgeon at **Bayshore Medical Center**, shares tips on how to reduce your risk of falling during the winter months.

Walk Like a Penguin

If you find yourself having to walk over ice and there is no way around it, think of how penguins walk. Keeping your center of gravity low can help maintain your balance and decrease the chance that your feet will slide out from under you. Studies have shown that walking with a "marching" technique is a safe way to traverse icy areas. Here's how:

Use short shuffling strides, lifting each leg from the thigh.

As you lift your leg, place your foot down flat rather than landing on your heel out in front of you. This will keep your center of gravity under you.

- ▶ Keep your hands out of your pockets to help you stay balanced.
- ▶ Avoid carrying heavy objects or bags while walking on ice.
- ▶ Wear proper footwear with good traction on the soles.
- ▶ When stepping into or out of your car, look where you are placing your feet and hold onto your car for support.

Learn How to Fall Safely

If you do slip on the ice, falling while keeping your body rigid increases the chance of injury, such as breaking your wrist while bracing your fall. Try to land on your side or shoulder and keep your body loose, allowing yourself to fall rather than trying to resist it. If you fall on your back, tuck your chin to keep your head from hitting the ground.



Michael Cunningham,
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Orthopedic surgeon

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Aberdeen and
Sayreville

To learn more about orthopedics at Hackensack Meridian Health, visit HMHforU.org/Ortho.

ORTHOPEDICS

Your Knee Replace

Our expert shares what to do before and after knee replacement surgery.



Anthony Costa, M.D.
Orthopedic surgeon
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Eatontown, Holmdel
and Morganville



Make an appointment with an orthopedic specialist.

ment Game Plan

Knee replacement surgery is one of the most common elective surgeries in the United States and has a high success rate.

“If you’re planning a partial knee replacement or a full knee replacement, there are steps you can take to help improve your recovery time,” says **Anthony Costa, M.D.**, a hip and knee orthopedic surgeon at **Bayshore Medical Center** and **Riverview Medical Center**.

What To Do Before Your Partial Knee or Full Knee Replacement Surgery

There are several items to coordinate and complete to make sure you have the best experience and outcomes for your knee replacement procedure.

Get a dental exam, physical exam and approval from your physician to verify that you can safely undergo anesthesia.

Attend a free preoperative education class to learn what to expect and how to ensure a successful knee replacement recovery.

Obtain pre-admission testing. If required, this appointment takes about an hour and can often be scheduled on the same day as your preoperative education class.

Line up support at home. “Designate a knee replacement ‘recovery coach,’ such as a family member or close friend who can assist at home before and after your knee replacement,” Dr. Costa says. Your coach can:

- ▶ Offer motivation and encouragement
- ▶ Help prepare your home for your safe return
- ▶ Help you understand discharge instructions and medications
- ▶ Look for signs of post-knee replacement complications or infection

Prepare your body by eating healthy, strengthening your muscles, quitting tobacco, stopping certain medications as directed by your physician and doing preoperative exercises provided by your orthopedic team.



What To Do After Your Knee Replacement Surgery

“Most of our patients get discharged directly to their home and start the next phase of recovery with either outpatient rehabilitation or home care,” says Dr. Costa. “Your clinical team will identify the most appropriate setting and services to help with your knee replacement recovery.”

Use assistive equipment. Your discharge planner (Care Management) will help you arrange for any necessary assistive equipment you may need, such as a walker, cane or crutches.

Don’t drive. While there is no specific time frame to begin driving after surgery, four to six weeks is average. So, you’ll need to coordinate transportation until your doctor gives you the go-ahead.

Follow your surgeon’s pain management instructions. As you have less knee pain and discomfort, you’ll decrease how many pain pills you take and how often you take them. Eventually, you will no longer need pain medication. Applying an ice pack to your knee for 20 minutes several times per day can also help ease the discomfort.

Line up a rehabilitation facility (if necessary). Your surgeon or provider will evaluate your progress and discuss whether you would benefit from rehabilitation services at a facility.

Complete outpatient physical therapy. A physical therapist will continue to focus on improving your knee’s motion, strength and mobility.

The ultimate goal is to help you live your healthiest life and get back to an active lifestyle, doing the things you love. 🌀

Should You Schedule a CT Calcium Scan?

CT calcium scans aren't for everyone. Here's how they work and how to determine if you should get one.



Jasrai Gill, M.D.

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Manahawkin, Neptune and Toms River

Understanding someone's heart health requires using a mix of tools, says **Jasrai Gill, M.D.**, an interventional cardiologist at **Southern Ocean Medical Center**. Common tests to help understand heart health include cardiac stress tests and PET scans, he says. But an additional tool used in conjunction with these other tests is the CT calcium scan.

How Does a CT Calcium Scan Work?

CT calcium scans are painless imaging procedures. They take about 10 minutes to complete. They are outpatient procedures that do not use contrast dyes. An electron beam detects and measures the amount of calcium in the heart's arteries.

The results of the scan are given as a score. The more calcium that is present and evidence of artery thickening, the higher the score. A higher score

indicates a greater likelihood of developing heart disease or having a heart attack or stroke. For example, a score of zero means no calcium is seen in the heart; a score greater than 300 is a sign of severe disease and heart attack risk.

The body needs calcium to remain healthy, but calcium in the heart's arteries can be an indicator that plaque is building up in coronary arteries and causing narrowing or blockages, which can increase the risk of heart attack or stroke.

Who Should Get a CT Calcium Scan?

CT calcium scans may not be beneficial for everyone. The people who benefit most from them have a moderate level of risk for heart disease. Common risk factors for heart disease include:

- ▶ Family history of heart disease
- ▶ Elevated cholesterol levels
- ▶ High blood pressure
- ▶ Diabetes
- ▶ Smoking
- ▶ Obesity
- ▶ Age

CT calcium scans are not recommended if you have few or no risk factors for heart disease, are at high risk for or already have heart disease, or have had a heart attack, stroke, bypass surgery or stents.

What Are the Benefits of a CT Calcium Scan?

"These tests help us understand if we need to be more aggressive with our approach, either via cardiac catheterization or medical therapy," Dr. Gill says.

CT calcium scans provide additional information for physicians and patients to use to make better personal care decisions, which is ultimately beneficial for long-term health, well-being and patient costs. 🌟

Learn more about heart screening options at [HMHforU.org/HeartScreening](https://www.HMHforU.org/HeartScreening). Call **800-756-1282** to make an appointment.



Exposing Hidden Risks

Thanks to a comprehensive heart and vascular screening called AngioScreen®, GERALYN FOGARTY discovered blockages in her neck and heart that put her at increased risk for heart attack and stroke. She was able to take action to reduce her risk.

AngioScreen® findings may have prevented heart attack and stroke for GERALYN FOGARTY thanks to an annual family tradition.

When former Brick resident GERALYN FOGARTY, now 67, retired from her career in nursing, she thought she was done spending time in hospitals. She felt great, enjoyed running half marathons and working out regularly, and was transitioning to full-time living in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Her extended family has a tradition of completing age-appropriate health screenings together every year. In 2022, they decided on AngioScreen®, a comprehensive heart and vascular screening.

AngioScreen Results Require Further Investigation

GERALYN'S AngioScreen results showed a blockage in her carotid artery. After a visit with her primary care provider, she made an appointment with **FRANK SHARP, M.D.**, a vascular surgeon she had worked with at **Ocean University Medical Center** and who had treated her parents for years.

Dr. Sharp ordered more imaging and determined her carotid blockage was serious at 85

percent. He asked her to get further testing with cardiologist **ALI MOOSVI, M.D.**

"As a vascular surgeon, I fix arteries and veins everywhere except for the heart," says Dr. Sharp. "When I find atherosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries, I can look for more elsewhere in the body, but a cardiologist needs to look at the heart."

Further testing uncovered additional areas of atherosclerosis. GERALYN had three blockages in her heart, including a dangerous one in her left anterior descending artery.

"She had what is popularly called the widower's blockage," says Dr. Moosvi. "Because she experienced no symptoms, it might have been found later if she began having chest pains, or not until she had a potentially fatal heart attack."

Clearing the Blockage

Soon after, GERALYN had an outpatient angioplasty with a stent insertion to open the blocked cardiac artery.

Then, after reducing GERALYN'S risk of heart attack by clearing the blockage in her heart, it was time to reduce her risk of stroke by clearing the blockage in her neck.

Dr. Sharp performed an endarterectomy to open her carotid artery. In this procedure, he opened the artery through GERALYN'S neck, cleaned it out and closed it. Due to the severity of the blockage, he had ruled out watchful waiting or stenting as solutions.

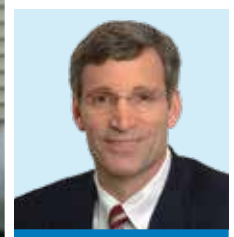
After one night in the hospital, GERALYN went home with instructions to take blood thinners for one year and daily aspirin indefinitely, along with a plan to reduce her cholesterol in the long term. Her doctors are keeping an eye on the other two cardiac blockages for now.

Lifesaving Screening

GERALYN and her doctors are convinced that AngioScreen may have saved her life. They stress that the screening is meant for people without reason to suspect vascular disease—it's a preventive measure designed for people with low or average risk.

GERALYN is grateful she went along with her family's plan to get their AngioScreens together.

"I was always in good shape, but I failed the genetic lottery," she says. "I could literally be dead right now if I didn't get that AngioScreen. That's why I'm so ecstatic about spreading this news."

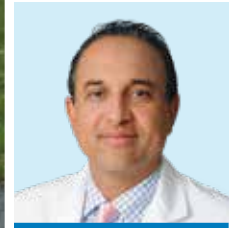


Frank Sharp, M.D.

Vascular surgeon

800-756-1282

Brick



Ali Moosvi, M.D.

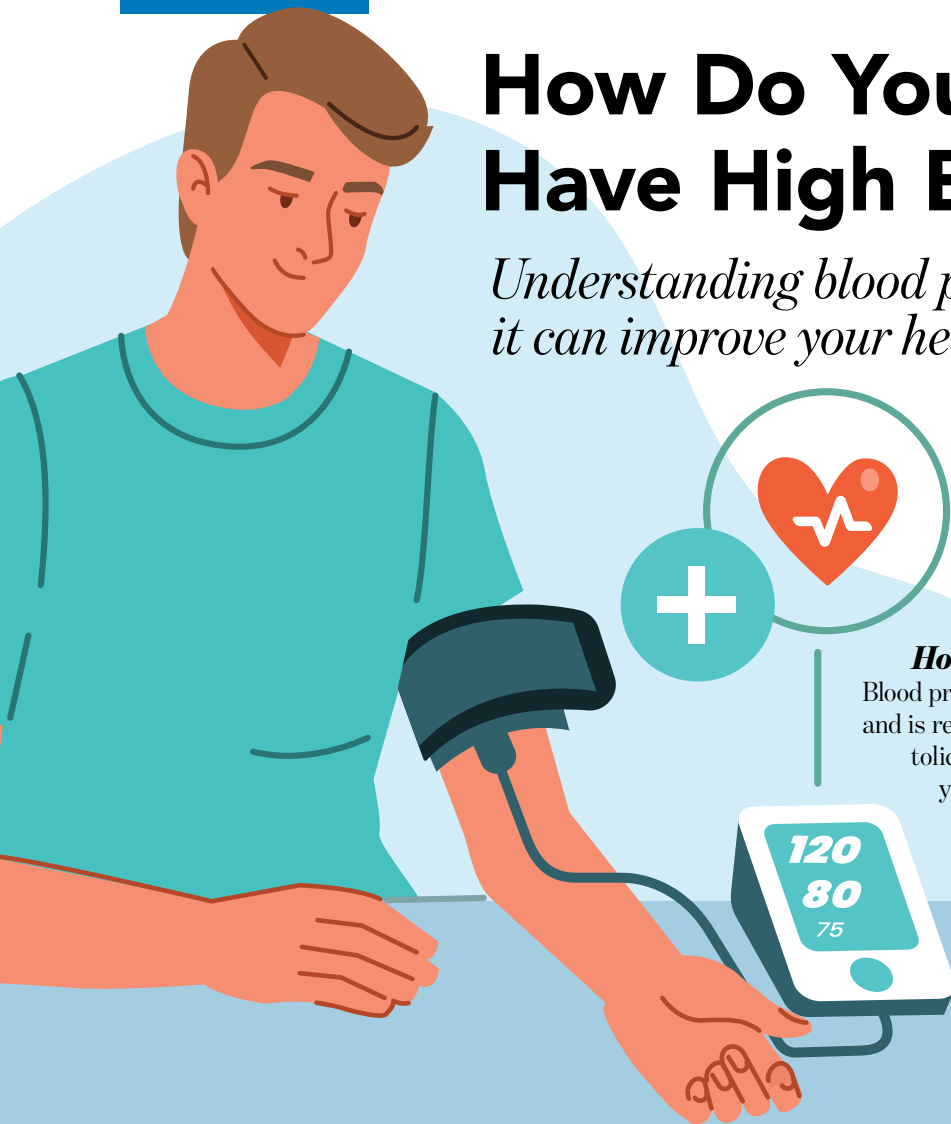
Cardiologist

800-756-1282

Brick, Jackson and Neptune

How Do You Know If You Have High Blood Pressure?

Understanding blood pressure and how to manage it can improve your heart health.



Blood pressure is a vital indicator of your overall health. It's the force exerted by circulating blood against the walls of your arteries. Abnormal blood pressure that is either too low or too high can lead to serious health issues.

How to Read Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is measured in millimeters of mercury (mmHg) and is recorded as two numbers: systolic and diastolic. The systolic number (displayed on top) represents the pressure in your arteries when your heart beats. The diastolic number (displayed on the bottom) measures the pressure in your arteries when your heart rests between beats.

What Is a Healthy Blood Pressure?

Regular monitoring is key to properly classifying and controlling blood pressure. Blood pressure categories help patients and doctors understand the risk levels associated with various readings. This can help guide recommendations for interventions and lifestyle adjustments.

Getting an Accurate Blood Pressure Reading at Home

If you've been diagnosed with hypertension, or high blood pressure, you know it's a condition you can't take lightly. If not closely monitored, high blood pressure can result in a wide variety of dangerous health conditions like blood clots, kidney failure and stroke.

"With advice from your doctor, you will be better able to find a blood pressure monitor that will give you important—and accurate—readings to help keep your hypertension in check," says **Aristotelis Vlahos, M.D.**, a board-certified cardiologist.

What to Look for in an At-Home Monitor

According to the American Heart Association, automatic (non-pump) cuff-style bicep monitors are recommended when you take your blood pressure at home.

A good home blood pressure monitor will also have the seal of approval from a variety of unaffiliated, third-party groups, ensuring that the device is safe and accurate. Check the packaging to see who has approved the device before buying and using it.

Tips for Using Your At-Home Monitor

When it comes time to take your blood pressure at home, here are some tips to help you get accurate results:

- ▶ **Get the right cuff size.** Before purchasing a blood pressure monitor, measure your bicep to ensure that the cuff will fit properly around your arm. Everyone is different, and people with larger- or smaller-than-normal arms may have to look for a monitor with proper cuff size. Check the packaging for sizing information.
- ▶ **Plan ahead.** The American Heart Association advises not to smoke, drink caffeine or exercise within 30 minutes before taking your blood

- ▶ **Normal blood pressure:** Less than 120/80 mmHg
- ▶ **Elevated blood pressure:** 120-129 systolic and less than 80 diastolic
- ▶ **Hypertension stage 1:** 130-139 systolic or 80-89 diastolic
- ▶ **Hypertension stage 2:** 140 or higher systolic or 90 or higher diastolic

How to Lower Blood Pressure

If you have high blood pressure, working to lower it is an essential step in reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke.

Achieving a healthier blood pressure involves making lifestyle changes and, in some cases, incorporating medication. While medication can be an effective tool, you can significantly influence your blood pressure by adopting these habits:

- ▶ **Eat a balanced diet.** Lower your sodium intake and avoid processed foods.
- ▶ **Exercise regularly.** This helps lower blood pressure with strength and aerobic exercise.
- ▶ **Maintain a healthy weight.** This helps lower blood pressure and reduce your risk of developing high blood pressure.
- ▶ **Manage stress.** Use relaxation techniques like yoga to prevent sustained elevated blood pressure.
- ▶ **Avoid smoking and using tobacco.** This helps prevent high blood pressure and other cardiovascular conditions.
- ▶ **Limit alcohol and caffeine.** Both substances can elevate blood pressure when frequently consumed. ⚙️

Go Online

Schedule a cardiovascular screening today at HMHforU.org/HeartScreening.

pressure. It also suggests taking your blood pressure reading at the same time each day.

- ▶ **Use proper form.** Sit upright with your feet flat on the floor. Do not cross your legs. For best results, you should support your arm on a flat surface, and the middle of the cuff should be placed around the upper arm at heart level.
- ▶ **Don't let clothing restrict your measurement.** Make sure you are wrapping the cuff around a bare arm when measuring your blood pressure.
- ▶ **Take multiple readings and record the results.** Each time you measure, take two readings about a minute apart. Keep a detailed log of the numbers to show your doctor when you go back in for visits. This can help your doctor have a better idea of your day-to-day fluctuations and devise a proper plan for treating your hypertension.

Can High Blood Pressure Cause Headaches?

High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, may not have noticeable symptoms. Although it isn't common, some people do experience symptoms.

It's better to learn that you have hypertension before you notice signs of it. Symptoms, such as headaches, often arise when the condition has been present for a long time or is uncontrolled.

Adil Niaz, D.O., a neurologist and headache medicine specialist at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**, says there are various external factors that may cause someone's blood pressure to rise. Common possibilities include:

- ▶ Eating food that's high in salt
- ▶ Getting angry
- ▶ Forgetting to take blood pressure medication
- ▶ Experiencing stress or pain, such as migraine pain

While it isn't common for hypertension to cause headaches, sometimes headaches arise when there's a change in blood pressure in patients with hypertension. Additionally pain from migraines can cause blood pressure to rise in response.

"Once your blood pressure returns to normal, the headache should fade," says Dr. Niaz. "If the headache persists, contact your doctor."

For tips on managing your blood pressure, visit HMHforU.org/BloodPressure.



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Neurologist and headache medicine specialist

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Eatontown and Neptune



Aristotelis Vlahos, M.D.

Cardiologist

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Freehold, Keyport and Shrewsbury

Why Is Prostate Cancer on the Rise?

Prostate cancer diagnoses are on the rise after decades of decline. What's causing this shift, and what can you do to protect yourself?

The number of new prostate cancer cases is projected to double across the globe by 2040, according to a recent report in *The Lancet*. This follows an ongoing increase in the U.S. with rates climbing by 3 percent annually since 2014. So, what's behind this resurgence after years of declining numbers?

An Aging Population

The prostate, a small gland located near the bladder, is a common site for cancer in men. In fact, one in eight men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime.

“A major reason for the increase in prostate cancer is the aging population,” says **Scott Wheeler, M.D.**, a urologist at **Southern Ocean Medical Center**. “Baby boomers, who make up a large share of the population, are the most at-risk group. Assuming they live long enough, it's common for men to get prostate cancer.”

As medical advancements extend lifespans, more men are reaching the age where prostate cancer becomes a concern. Regular screenings are recommended for men starting at age 55.

Screening Controversy

Dr. Wheeler also points to a controversial 2007 study that questioned how effective prostate-specific antigen (PSA) tests are for screening. This led to a decline in screenings, which has had lasting consequences.

“Although the study is highly criticized by the cancer community, it has led to delayed diagnosis for many people,” says Dr. Wheeler. “Detection is now on the rise because most physicians are getting back



to proper screening. And the cases we are seeing are commonly more advanced because of this delay, highlighting the importance of screenings for early detection.”

Take Charge of Your Prostate Health

Although there's no guaranteed way to prevent prostate cancer, maintaining a healthy lifestyle and balanced diet can support your overall health. Regular screening and early detection are also key to living a long and healthy life.

“Prostate cancer screening is key to improving survival rates,” emphasizes Dr. Wheeler. “Despite ongoing debates about screening guidelines, men within the recommended age range should discuss PSA tests and rectal exams with their doctor.”



Scott Wheeler, M.D.

Urologist

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Manahawkin

Go Online

Talk your primary care provider about prostate cancer screening. You can find a primary care provider near you at [HMHforU.org/PrimaryCare](https://www.hmhforu.org/PrimaryCare).

Can't Slow Him Down



Priti S. Patel, M.D.
Radiation oncologist
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Brick, Neptune and Red Bank

After CyberKnife treatment for prostate cancer, Graham (left) enjoys a full and busy life with his family by his side.

When Graham Mulholland was diagnosed with prostate cancer, he chose CyberKnife treatment for its minimal side effects, so he could go about his busy life.

While undergoing CyberKnife radiation for prostate cancer in August 2024, Graham Mulholland didn't let the cancer treatment get in the way of his work. As a senior mechanical supervisor for a local utility company, he learned that a storm and a raccoon had independently teamed up to wreak havoc on an electrical transformer, causing a major power outage. He supervised his crew one night after treatment as they repaired the damage.

For Graham, 63, of Belmar, New Jersey, undergoing a stress-free, five-day protocol for intermediate-risk prostate cancer was absolutely the right thing to do.

Graham's cancer journey began with his annual physical in April 2024, when routine blood work revealed a rise in his prostate specific antigen (PSA). He was referred to a urologist who performed a biopsy confirming prostate cancer.

Graham was then referred to radiation oncologist **Priti S. Patel, M.D.**, at **Riverview Medical Center**, who ordered CT scans and an MRI, among

other diagnostics, to determine if there was any spread of cancer. Thankfully, there was not.

A 'Bump in the Road'

For the optimistic Graham, his cancer journey was just another bump in the road, he says.

Graham underwent five CyberKnife radiotherapy radiation treatments, "going in at 8 a.m. and back at work by 10 a.m.," he says. He tolerated the treatment very well, with no side effects until a few days after he completed his last round.

The CyberKnife treatment is designed to deliver minimal impact on a patient's life, including on urinary and bowel function, says Dr. Patel. It is nonsurgical and noninvasive, she says.

A mold of the patient's body is made to help keep them in the same position for each treatment. "Cameras in the room 'lock on' to the prostate, and they sense if it moves even a little due to, for example, gas in the rectum or urine in the bladder," she says.

"This means that stereotactic body radiation therapy or SBRT is delivered accurately, precisely and spares surrounding tissues, while accounting for real-time motion," says Dr. Patel.

Happy to Manage a 'Curable' Cancer

Today, Graham is enjoying his full life. He and his wife have traveled internationally to Europe and Egypt. He relishes riding bikes and playing pickleball with his family. A member of the Catholic faith, he's working to become a deacon in his church and pursuing his master's degree in theology.

"I most remember Dr. Patel using the word, 'curable' when talking about my cancer, especially since I am the same age that my father was when he found out he had cancer," says Graham. "She and her team did all the right things, explaining so much, in such detail. It made this experience so much easier."

A Clean Slate

Learn how to maximize your health benefits in the new year.

The start of each year is a great time to review your health benefits before your schedule gets busy with other commitments. Read on for three ways to get the most out of your health insurance plan this year.

1

Prioritize Preventive Care

An annual physical with your primary care physician is a critical tool for monitoring your health. It is a great opportunity to identify any potential medical problems early on, when they're most treatable.

The best part—your annual wellness visit is often “free” and covered by your medical plan. Now is a good time to make sure you get your annual wellness visit on the calendar for this year.

Additional preventive screenings that are often covered as part of your health benefits each year include:

- ▶ Blood pressure, diabetes and cholesterol tests
- ▶ Many cancer screenings, including breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screenings
- ▶ Counseling on topics such as quitting smoking, losing weight, eating better, treating depression and reducing alcohol use
- ▶ Routine vaccines for diseases such as measles, polio or meningitis
- ▶ Flu and pneumonia shots

2

Spend Your Flexible Savings Account (FSA)

An FSA is a handy way to save money, tax-free, for some health care expenses. The catch is, unlike a health savings account (HSA) that never expires, you usually have to use the money you put in your FSA by the end of the year.

Throughout the year, you can use your FSA to pay for things like:

- ▶ Doctor visit, hospital and ambulatory surgical center copays
- ▶ Dental care
- ▶ Vision care
- ▶ Over-the-counter products like cold and flu medicines, pain relievers, bandages and allergy medicines for which you have a doctor's note confirming your need
- ▶ Prescriptions

3

Double Check the Fine Print

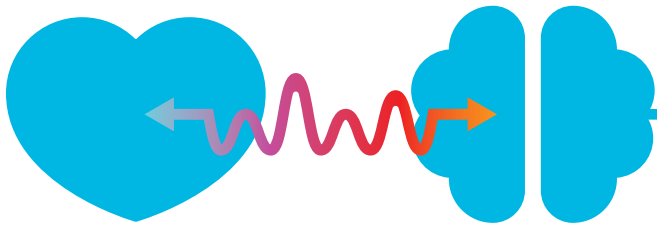
Reading your health insurance policy and explanation of benefits is an important step toward understanding how to make your health plan work for you.

If you have questions, don't hesitate to call your insurance provider. They have dedicated support members to help you understand what's included in your plan.

If you've had the same plan for a while, check to see if any benefits have changed. You might find that there are new limits on certain charges. ❄️

Go Online

Hackensack Meridian Health offers online appointment scheduling. Visit [HMHforU.org/Appointment](https://www.hmhforu.org/Appointment) to book an appointment for your health care needs.



Coping with Chronic Pain

Chronic pain can negatively impact your quality of life. Our expert offers five tips to manage your pain.

No one wants to hurt, but almost 21 percent of American adults experience chronic pain, defined as lasting more than three months, whereas acute pain lasts three months or less. Everyone's experience with pain is different and can be described in many ways such as throbbing, stinging, shooting, burning or aching.

These five tips may help you find relief from chronic pain, says **Mike Mizrahi, D.O.**, a specialist in physical medicine rehabilitation and pain management at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**.



Mike Mizrahi, D.O.

Physical medicine and rehabilitation physician and pain medicine specialist

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Neptune

1 Understand what type of pain you have.

"How we treat chronic pain depends on the underlying cause of the pain," says Dr. Mizrahi, who cites these main categories of pain:

- ▶ Musculoskeletal
- ▶ Nerve or neuropathic
- ▶ Visceral or internal organ pain due to inflammation, disease, damage or injury
- ▶ Psychosomatic due to stress, anxiety or depression
- ▶ Cancer pain

A person may have any combination of pain types, such as neuropathic and musculoskeletal, he says.



Find a pain management specialist near you.

2 Determine the source and underlying cause of your pain.

A thorough medical history and physical exam are the most important tools to determine the cause of your pain and should assess how the pain affects your function and quality of life. Dr. Mizrahi says doctors may recommend diagnostic imaging tests, such as X-ray or MRI, to confirm the diagnosis and guide treatment.

3 Consider conservative and nonsurgical treatments first.

Prior to taking medications, these steps may help:

- ▶ Adjust diet to lose weight
- ▶ Exercise
- ▶ Acupuncture
- ▶ Reiki
- ▶ Cupping
- ▶ Physical and occupational therapy
- ▶ Mindfulness

Taking medication may also be helpful in some cases.

4 Ask about injections to decrease your pain.

Types of injections for chronic pain include:

- ▶ Trigger point injections
- ▶ Joint injections
- ▶ Nerve block
- ▶ Epidural
- ▶ Radiofrequency ablation

5 Discuss surgical options for pain relief.

"Nothing can eliminate all pain forever," Dr. Mizrahi says. Therapy, medications and injections are not typically permanent solutions. "Generally, our goal is to improve pain by 50 percent or more for at least three months, and to ensure patients remain as functional as possible."

It may be time to consider surgical options if pain is unmanageable despite these less invasive treatments, especially if a patient presents with neurological deficits (weakness, balance or bowel/bladder incontinence) regardless of pain, Dr. Mizrahi says. 🌟

Life After Ozempic

What you need to know about the decision to stop using weight loss injectables.

The list of programs, diets and methods of weight loss is endless. The latest trend is injectable medications.

The results can be remarkable, but weight loss drugs like Ozempic might not be something you want to take forever. Our weight loss expert explains what to expect when you stop taking Ozempic and how to maintain your new healthy weight.



Karl Strom, M.D.

Bariatric surgeon

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Glen Ridge, Holmdel
and Manahawkin

Healthy Hunger Hacks

You don't need to eat processed foods to feel full.

Robert Hildebrandt, MBA, RDN, CDCES, a dietitian with the Diabetes Management Center of **Southern Ocean Medical Center**, shares healthy yet satisfying ways to ward off hunger and keep you feeling full longer.



Is Snacking Good or Not?

"In a perfect world, all you need are three meals," Robert says. But if you have diabetes or take diabetes medicine, you may benefit from light, healthy snacks between meals. Blood sugar is less likely to spike if you strike a balance between three types of nutrients:

- ▶ Protein to satisfy your appetite
- ▶ Healthy fats for pleasure that won't fade fast
- ▶ Fiber to add bulk and slow transit time

Almonds Are a Superfood

Almonds are loaded with calories. But that's not all. Just 1 ounce yields:

- ▶ 6 grams of protein
- ▶ 3.54 grams of dietary fiber
- ▶ 76 mg of bone-boosting calcium

What Other Healthy Foods Can Make You Feel Full?

Try soybeans, black beans, black-eyed peas and legumes.

Robert suggests buying them frozen, cooking them in advance and throwing them in meals—including salads. Navy beans or chickpeas add nuttiness while green peas add sweetness. All deliver a fuller feeling.

For more healthy eating tips, visit [HMHforU.org/Nutrition](https://www.HMHforU.org/Nutrition).

What Is Ozempic, and How Does It Work?

Ozempic is an injectable originally approved for those with diabetes. One positive side effect of the medication is weight loss.

"Ozempic mimics a gastrointestinal hormone called GLP-1, which helps to reduce hunger and cravings," says **Karl Strom, M.D.**, medical director of bariatric surgery at **Bayshore Medical Center** and bariatric surgeon at **Southern Ocean Medical Center**. "It also regulates insulin response."

What Happens When You Stop Ozempic?

Ozempic is injected once a week. So about a week after stopping the medicine, you will start to notice that your hunger and cravings will return. You won't feel as full for as long.

While Ozempic doesn't usually have withdrawal symptoms, people with type 2 diabetes may experience high blood sugar levels. This may lead to symptoms like:

- ▶ Excessive thirst and urination
- ▶ Fatigue
- ▶ Headaches
- ▶ Blurry vision

Due to the return of hunger and cravings, you may experience what has been called "Ozempic rebound." This is when you start to regain the weight you lost.

According to one study published in *Diabetes, Obesity and Metabolism*, stopping Ozempic or other weight loss



Thinking about weight loss surgery or medical weight management? Take our health risk assessment to find out if you might be a candidate.

drugs led to most of the weight being regained within one year. Studies like these show that obesity is a chronic disease that may need continued treatment.

But this rebound effect is not unique to Ozempic. It can happen with any weight loss tool you suddenly stop using.

Why Would You Stop Ozempic?

Ozempic has positive and proven results, so why would someone stop using it? Dr. Strom says there are generally three reasons you may need to stop using Ozempic:

- ▶ **Side effects.** About 15 percent of people have significant side effects. These generally include nausea, constipation or abdominal pain.
- ▶ **Shortage.** Ozempic is popular. The manufacturer cannot meet demand, so some pharmacies are running out and unable to fill prescriptions for it.
- ▶ **Achieved weight goal.** Once you've achieved your weight goal, you may no longer need the medication.

How to Maintain Post-Ozempic Weight

Just because you stop Ozempic doesn't mean you will gain the weight back. While Ozempic may feel like magic, you need to put the work and effort in while you're on it, so when you stop, you can maintain a healthy weight. Try preparing by eating healthy foods and anticipating that you will feel more hunger and cravings. ❄️

GENERAL WELLNESS

5 Balance Exercises

Try these simple, effective exercises to improve your stability and reduce your risk of falls.

We tend to think of good balance as a nice perk and not something that is vital to overall health. However, as we age, our balance deteriorates, and this can lead to health concerns. The good news is that just doing a few simple exercises can help keep you upright and steady.

Why Balance Matters

“Changes with age that make us unsteady include loss of muscle strength, vision, posture and overall decreased reaction speed,” says Jill Jordan, APTA, a credentialed balance and falls specialist at Johnson Rehabilitation Institute at **Ocean University Medical Center**. This loss of muscle strength and lack of stability increases the likelihood of a fall, which could lead to serious health consequences, such as a broken hip or head injury.

How to Improve Balance

You can improve your balance by working on balance and stretching exercises twice a week. You should do about 150 minutes a week of moderate exercise (for example, 40 minutes of exercise four days a week) or 75 minutes of intense exercise (for example, 20 minutes four days a week). This should include strength training.

Strength training will also improve your bone density. Hip and ankle strength are important for balance.

However, balance-specific exercises can be done daily.

Here are five exercises Jill recommends to help improve your stability:

Closed Stance

Holding on to the back of a chair, stand as tall and straight as possible with your feet together. See how long you can keep your balance in this stance. The goal is to increase the time.

Weight Shifts

Holding on to the back of a chair, stand with your feet about hip width apart, and shift your weight from side to side.

Single Leg Stance Hold

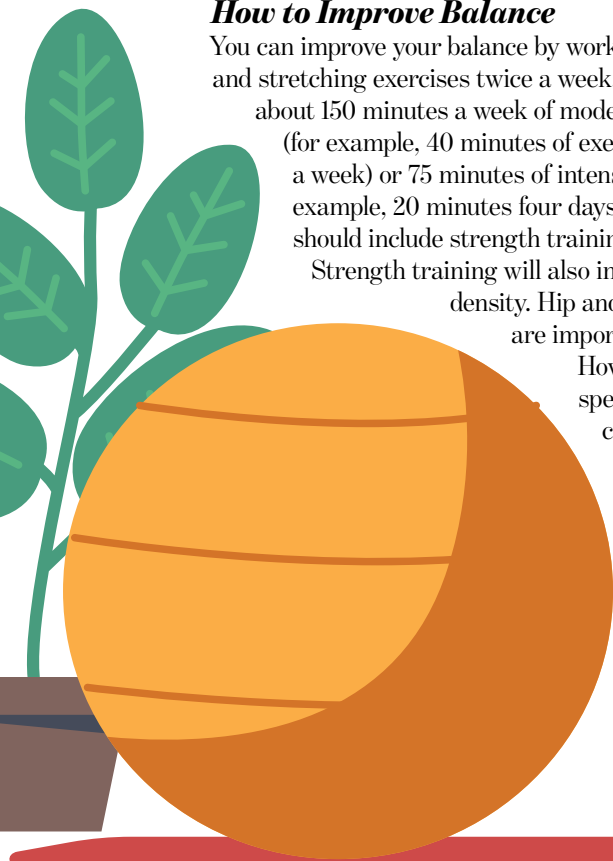
Holding on to the back of a chair, shift your weight onto one foot as you lift your other foot off the floor. Hold for a few seconds, then place your foot down and repeat on the other side. Work up to holding each lift for 30 seconds or more.

Heel/Toe Raises

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. You can start holding on to the back of a chair. Raise up on your toes, then roll back on to your heels. This is best performed with your back to a corner.

Standing with Eyes Closed

Hold on to the back of a chair with your feet about shoulder width apart, and close your eyes. See how long you can keep your balance in this stance. The goal is to increase the time.



for Seniors

How to Exercise Safely

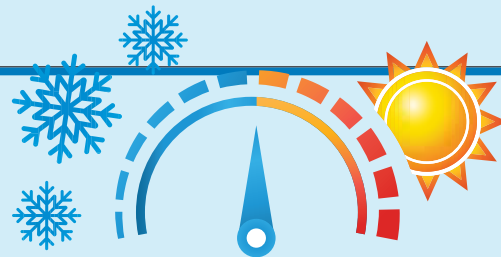
Working to improve your balance is great, but it needs to be done in a safe environment.

- ▶ Have a clean, clear space. There should be nothing nearby in any direction for about three feet.
- ▶ Standing with your back to a corner of the room with a chair in front of you will provide a safety net for a loss of balance.
- ▶ Use the back of a chair or a countertop for support.
- ▶ It's best to do these exercises on a hardwood floor.
- ▶ Wear supportive shoes with rubber soles—no slippers.

Additionally, talk to your doctor about any new exercise program you want to begin. If you are having balance issues, your doctor can verify that your problem isn't caused by medication or vision problems. Consider a referral to a physical therapist for a comprehensive balance assessment and individualized exercise program. ❄️

Go Online

To learn more about geriatric medicine at Hackensack Meridian Health, visit [HMHforU.org/Geriatics](https://www.hmhforu.org/Geriatics).



Pain Relief: Hot vs. Cold

Find out which at-home remedy works best for muscle strains.

Muscle strains can derail a fun run, pickleball match or playtime with grandkids. If you've strained a muscle, you likely want to stop the pain as soon as possible, but what's the best way to find relief—heat or cold therapy?

Cold Therapy

Putting ice on a muscle strain can ease discomfort. "This treatment is most effective immediately after an injury," says **Gregory Roehrig, M.D.**, an orthopedic surgeon at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center, Riverview Medical Center** and **Ocean University Medical Center**.

Apply ice for five minutes, then remove it for five minutes. Repeat for 30 minutes, twice daily. Never place ice directly on your skin because it can cause numbness or irritation.

Heat Therapy

A heating pad can soothe and loosen tight muscles and reduce spasms. Heat allows blood vessels to expand, which stimulates circulation and supports the body's natural recovery.

When applying heat, only use a heating pad intended for injuries. Remove the heating pad after five or 10 minutes, then repeat five minutes later. Don't put a heating pad directly on the skin to avoid the risk of burns. Never fall asleep with a heating pad on. It's a fire hazard, and you may get burned.



Gregory Roehrig, M.D.

Orthopedic surgeon

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Freehold, Manasquan
Red Bank and Toms River

To find an orthopedic specialist near you, visit [HMHforU.org/OrthoDoc](https://www.hmhforu.org/OrthoDoc).

GENERAL WELLNESS

Rest Easy

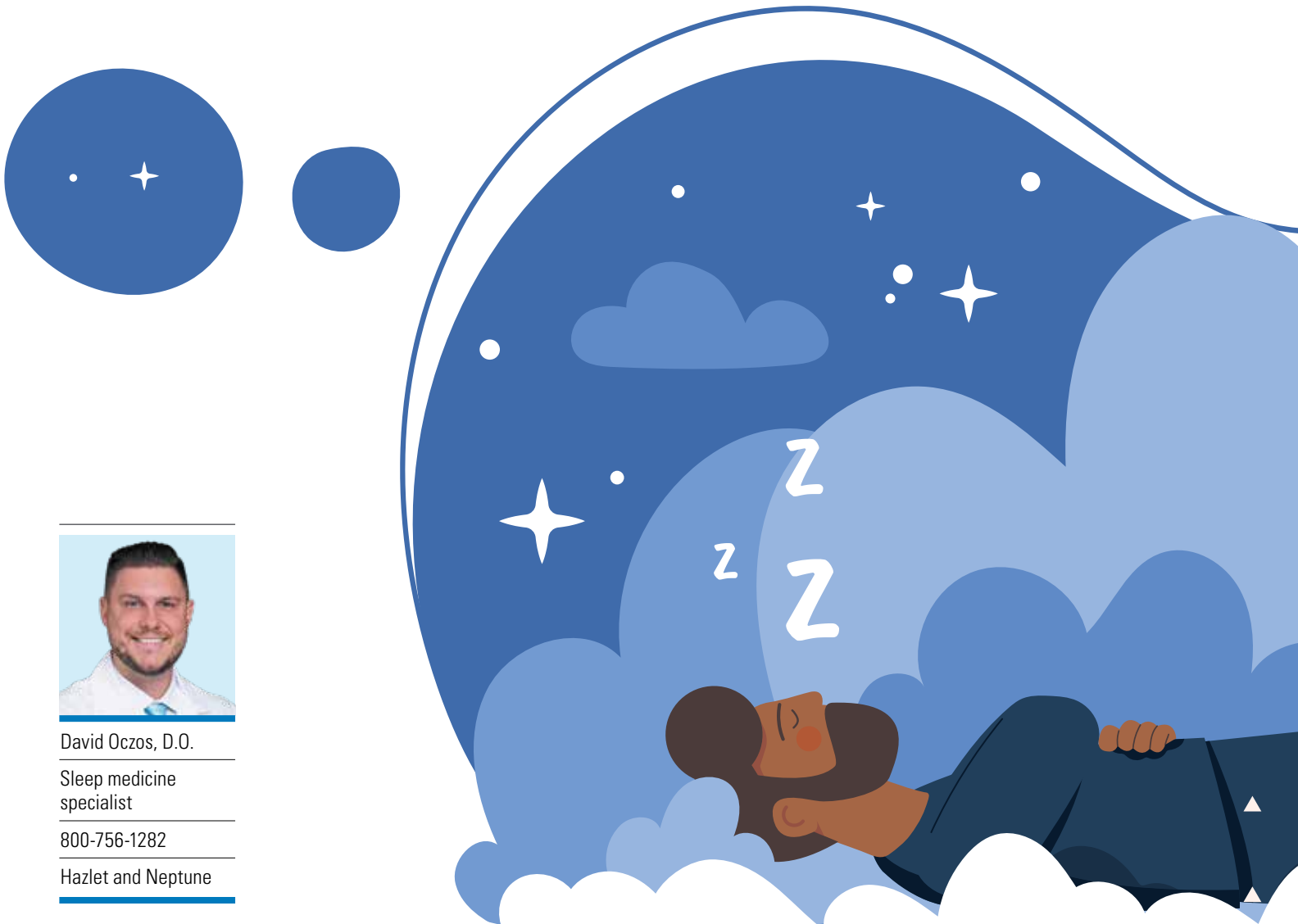
Can a simple melatonin supplement really help you get better sleep? Our expert details its effectiveness as well as its safety.

Sleep can evade even the best of sleepers on occasion. But for those who struggle regularly, can melatonin supplements help? And more importantly, are they safe?

Our expert **David Oczos, D.O.**, a sleep specialist at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**, explains everything you need to know.

What Is Melatonin?

“Melatonin is a hormone that is mainly involved in helping circadian rhythm,” says Dr. Oczos. The production of natural melatonin is your body’s response to darkness. Exposure to light at night can reduce your melatonin production. Some people who struggle with sleep may have low levels of melatonin.



David Oczos, D.O.

Sleep medicine specialist

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Hazlet and Neptune

Do Melatonin Supplements Work?

While everyone responds differently to supplements, Dr. Oczos says, “They do work, particularly for patients who have trouble falling asleep.” Melatonin supplements can also improve overall sleep quality by helping people get the extra sleep they have been missing.

Two study reviews, one in 2019 and another in 2021, showed that taking melatonin can decrease the time it takes to fall asleep as well as increase sleep quality and duration.

Are Melatonin Supplements Safe?

Melatonin supplements are generally well-tolerated and considered safe. Dr. Oczos says they may cause a few side effects, including:

- ▶ Daytime sleepiness
- ▶ Headaches
- ▶ Gastrointestinal (GI) tract issues

While melatonin supplements aren’t addictive, Dr. Oczos advises that they should only be used in the short term. Currently, there is no data on the effects of long-term use.

Melatonin vs. Prescription Sleep Aids

“Melatonin is not as strong as prescription sleep medications, which are heavier and more sedative,” says Dr. Oczos. But using one is not necessarily better than the other, he adds.

Some people who struggle with sleep aid side effects do well with melatonin supplements. What works best for you depends on your specific circumstances and needs.

When to See a Doctor About Sleep Issues

If you experience any of the following, you may want to consider speaking with your doctor:

- ▶ Trouble falling asleep
- ▶ Waking up tired
- ▶ Needing daytime naps
- ▶ Waking up during the night

While we all have occasional bad nights, you don’t need to wait weeks or months before you seek help because sleep is so important. “At the first sign that something out of the ordinary is happening with your sleep, you should see your doctor,” Dr. Oczos advises.

There are many things that can cause sleep issues—from stress and anxiety to other physical medical conditions—so you may need medications or medical interventions other than a sleep aid.

Set Yourself Up for Success

If you are someone who suffers from insomnia, make sure you have good sleep hygiene practices. Dr. Oczos recommends:

- ▶ Establishing a bedtime routine to help you wind down
- ▶ Keeping your bedroom temperature cool
- ▶ Going to bed and waking up at consistent times
- ▶ Also, use your bed only for sleeping.

Do not:

- ▶ Scroll on your phone or play games
- ▶ Watch TV
- ▶ Do any work, such as sending emails
- ▶ Read (even for pleasure)
- ▶ Lounge in bed awake for long periods of time

If you find yourself still awake after 20–30 minutes, Dr. Oczos says, “Get out of bed, and do something boring to get yourself sleepy before heading back to bed.”

Even if you have good sleep hygiene habits, you may have periods of struggle, and melatonin supplements may help in those instances. But Dr. Oczos reminds, “It’s a great tool for the short term.” 🌙

Go Online

Make an appointment with a sleep specialist near you at [HMHforU.org/SleepDoctor](https://www.HMHforU.org/SleepDoctor).



Caring for Cuts

Small nicks and scrapes can carry big risks if you have diabetes. Our expert shares how to properly treat minor wounds.

If you have diabetes, even a minor cut or scrape can turn into a serious problem. Here's how to treat a wound properly to protect your health.

"Diabetes impacts white blood cell function, reducing the body's ability to fight bacteria and close wounds," says **Asaad H. Samra, M.D.**, director of the Center for Wound Healing at **Bayshore Medical Center**. In addition, people with uncontrolled diabetes may develop poor circulation, making it difficult for the body to deliver nutrients to injured areas, which hinders the healing process.

That's why it's crucial for people with diabetes to correctly treat any wound, no matter how minor it seems. Here's some advice from Dr. Samra:

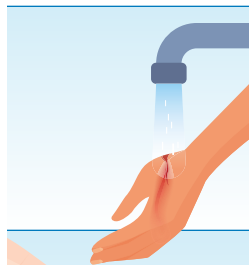


Asaad H. Samra, M.D.

Plastic surgeon

800-756-1282

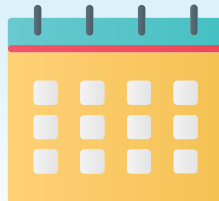
Holmdel and Old Bridge



Wash the wound thoroughly. Use an antibacterial soap and warm water to clean out the wound. Then pat dry with a clean cloth and apply over-the-counter antibacterial ointment.



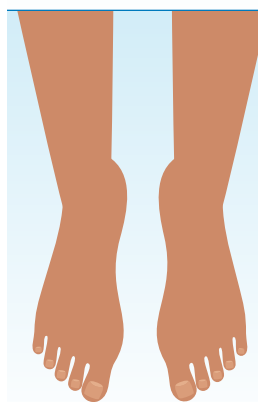
Cover the wound. Use a bandage to keep the wound clean, moist and protected. "It's now considered old, inaccurate information to let a wound dry out," says Dr. Samra.



Redress it daily. Take off the bandage and make sure nothing has significantly changed since the last time you saw the wound. Use soap and water to wash away the old ointment, then pat dry and apply a fresh coat. If, after a few days, you feel the wound is healing well, you can stretch the redressing to every other day.



Inspect it every time you change the bandage. If you don't see improvement over the course of a week, or if any redness or foul smell develops, call your doctor. Also contact your doctor if the wound fails to heal within four to six weeks.



Check your feet daily. Diabetes can lead to neuropathy, which limits sensation in the extremities. "So someone with diabetes could have an injury on their foot and not even know it," says Dr. Samra. This, plus poor blood flow, puts you at risk for developing an infection from a foot sore. Be on the lookout for any cuts, sores, blisters, swelling or any changes to the skin or nails. Don't forget to check the bottom of your feet (use a mirror). And never go barefoot, even inside your house. ❄️

Go Online

To make an appointment with a doctor near you, call **800-756-1282** or visit **HMHforU.org/FindADoc**.

Recognizing the Signs

Quick diagnosis is key to treating sepsis. So what exactly is sepsis, and how is it diagnosed?

Let's say you wake up feeling a bit off. Maybe you're feverish, sweaty and dizzy. You think it's just a bug, but as the day goes on, you gradually feel worse.

Later, you go to the emergency room because you're struggling to breathe, your heart is racing and you're scared. Little do you know you might be battling something much more serious than the cold or flu—you might have sepsis.

Every year, around 1.7 million Americans get sepsis, which is the third leading cause of death in U.S. hospitals. Nearly 270,000 people die from sepsis each year.

What Exactly Is Sepsis?

Think of it like this: Your body is a fortress, and it's always on guard, ready to defend against invaders like bacteria or viruses. Sometimes, those germs breach your body's defenses and enter your bloodstream, triggering an immune response. That response can spiral out of control, leading to sepsis—a condition where your body's defense mechanism becomes more harmful than the invader itself.

During sepsis, the body's immune response to an infection triggers widespread inflammation. This inflammation can lead to:

- ▶ Blood vessel dilation
- ▶ Increased blood vessel permeability
- ▶ Blood clots
- ▶ Weak blood flow to vital organs

Without enough oxygen and nutrients, your organs start shutting down. That's why sepsis is such a serious (and dangerous) condition that requires a fast diagnosis and treatment.

The Urgency of a Sepsis Diagnosis

In an ideal scenario, you can catch signs of an infection before it turns into sepsis. Your body often gives warning signs that something's not right. Keep an eye out for the earliest warning signs of an infection, such as:

- ▶ Cough
- ▶ Fever or chills
- ▶ Feeling achy all over
- ▶ Feeling more tired than usual
- ▶ Having trouble concentrating
- ▶ Sore throat

If your immune system goes into overdrive and sepsis sets in, you might experience more serious symptoms, such as:

- ▶ Confusion
- ▶ Feeling lightheaded or dizzy
- ▶ Very high or low body temperature
- ▶ Racing heart

- ▶ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

"Often we can diagnose a person with sepsis just by looking at them," says **Eric Costanzo, D.O.**, pulmonologist affiliated with **Jersey Shore University Medical Center, Riverview Medical Center and Ocean University Medical Center**. "When a patient comes to the emergency department with a fever and they look very ill, we can presumptively diagnose them within seconds and start treatment."

And that's important because sepsis is a medical emergency where every minute counts. Left untreated, it can wreak havoc on your body, leading to organ failure, septic shock and death within hours.

The faster sepsis is caught, the earlier treatment can begin and the less damage it does to the body. The only way for that to happen is to pay attention to what your body is trying to tell you. 🌀



Eric Costanzo, D.O.

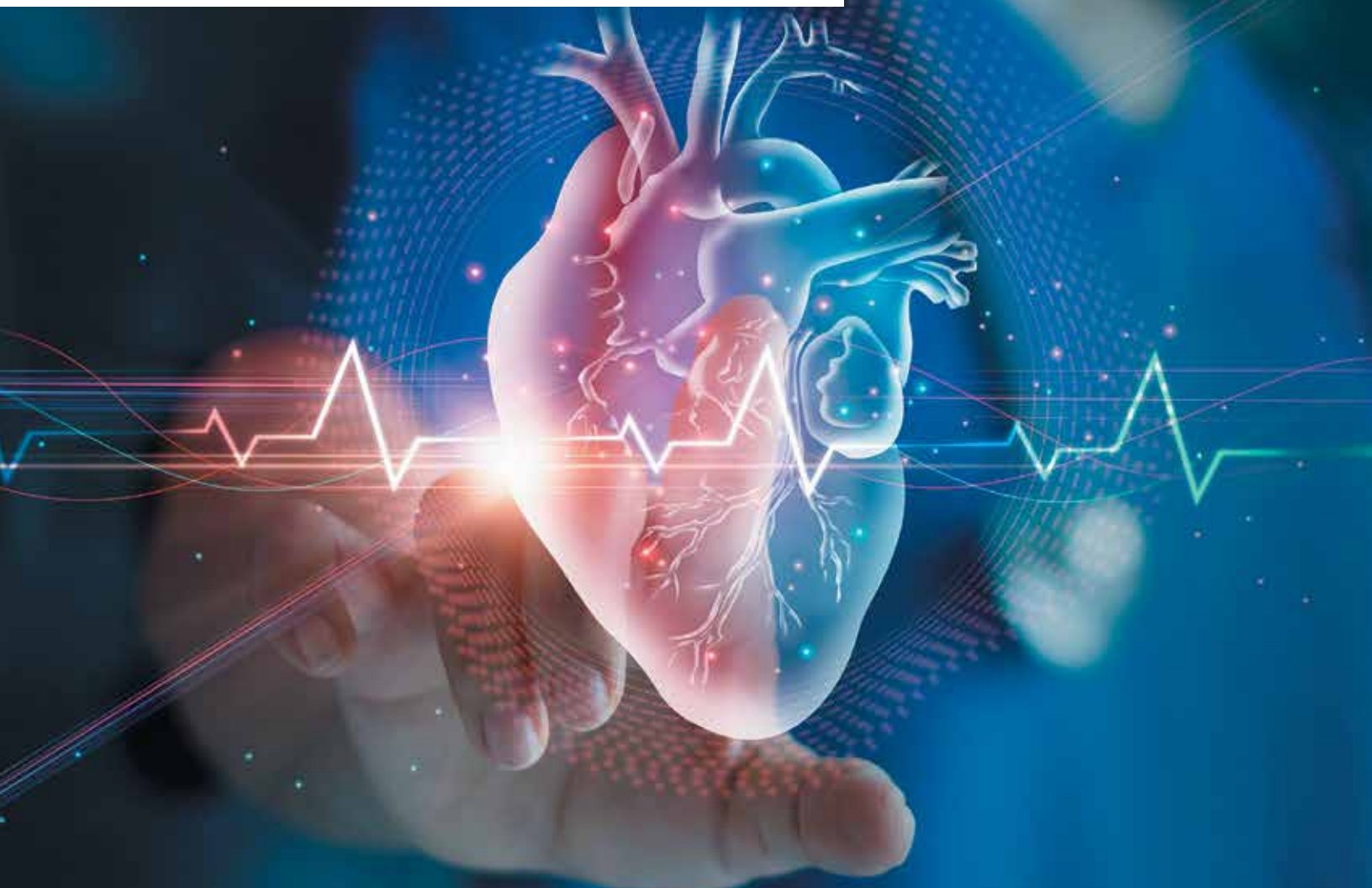
Pulmonologist

800-756-1282

Brick, Ocean and Rumson

Go Online

Find an emergency room or urgent care location near you at [HMHforU.org/UrgentCare](https://www.HMHforU.org/UrgentCare).



Transforming Cardiac Care

*Advancements in heart care provide more
treatment options and faster recovery.*

Across New Jersey, Hackensack Meridian *Health* is advancing cardiovascular care—offering new minimally invasive procedures, technology and clinical trials that improve patient outcomes.

“With three high-volume cardiac care hubs across the state, including **Hackensack University Medical Center**, **JFK University Medical Center** and **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**, everyone can access leading-edge cardiac care closer to where they live and work,” says Elizabeth A. Maiorana, MBA, MSN, R.N., vice president, Cardiovascular Care Transformation Services, Hackensack Meridian *Health*.

Leading New Jersey in Cardiac Surgery Options and Expertise

Hackensack University Medical Center has a longstanding reputation as one of the region’s highest-volume centers for minimally invasive cardiac surgery. The team’s experience and expertise have expanded into robotic cardiac surgery. This less-invasive technique for valve replacement or repair, and coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery, provides new treatment options for patients with valvular heart and coronary artery disease.

“We evaluate each of our patients to determine whether they might be a candidate for minimally invasive cardiac surgery,” says **Mark Anderson, M.D.**, chair of cardiac surgery at Hackensack University Medical Center. “Research has shown that with minimally invasive and robotic cardiac procedures, patients experience less trauma to the

body, which results in improved mobility and a faster recovery after surgery.”

Hackensack University Medical Center cardiac surgeons are leveraging the hospital’s robust robotic surgery capabilities and its history of early adoption and innovation to now offer robotic CABG and valve procedures for their cardiac surgical patients.

New Hope for Tricuspid Valve Disease

Until recently, the only treatment option for people with tricuspid valve disease was open heart surgery to repair or replace their valve. Patients who were too ill or frail to have open heart surgery—or who didn’t want to have an invasive procedure with a lengthy recovery—had no options at all.

In 2024, Hackensack Meridian *Health* began offering TriClip—a tiny clip inserted through a small incision that can now repair your tricuspid valve, avoiding open heart surgery. The procedure is offered at Hackensack University Medical Center and Jersey Shore University Medical Center.

In 2025, Jersey Shore University Medical Center and Hackensack University Medical Center will be among the first hospitals in the nation to offer the new EVOQUE device, which replaces the tricuspid valve using catheter-based techniques.

“As high-volume centers with extensive experience in catheter-based mitral valve repair and replacement, Jersey Shore University Medical Center and Hackensack University Medical Center were selected as

two of only a few sites in the U.S. to be part of the early commercial launch of EVOQUE,” says **Matthew Saybolt, M.D.**, medical director of the Structural Heart Disease Program at Jersey Shore. “Our programs have the technology, capacity and infrastructure to support this innovative

new treatment option, and we are proud to be able to offer it to our patients before it becomes widely available.”

Renal Denervation: A New Frontier in High Blood Pressure Management

People who have high blood pressure that has not responded to other treatments now have access to a new treatment option called renal denervation (RDN).

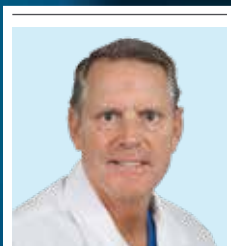
Recently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Symplicity Spyral™ RDN system is a minimally invasive procedure that targets nerves near the kidneys that can become overactive and cause high blood pressure. The procedure—also known as the Symplicity™ blood pressure procedure—is approved for use as an additional treatment in patients with high blood pressure when lifestyle changes and medications do not provide adequate control.

Hackensack University Medical Center cardiac experts treated their first patient with the Symplicity blood pressure procedure on July 30, 2024, and was the second hospital in New Jersey to provide the procedure. JFK University Medical Center performed its first case in November 2024, and Jersey Shore University Medical Center has launched its program.

“The Symplicity blood pressure procedure is clinically proven to help reduce hypertension, which can lower the risk of serious health problems,” says **Saleem Husain, M.D.**, director of the Cardiac Cath Lab and Chest Pain medical director at JFK University Medical Center. “After mild sedation, we insert a very thin tube into the artery leading to the kidney. Then, we use radiofrequency energy to damage overactive nerves connected to the kidney before removing the tube, leaving no implant behind.”

“We look forward to offering an interventional therapy to help patients lower their blood pressure in addition to medicines, and perhaps help patients decrease their medication burden,” Dr. Saybolt says. 🌟

Learn more about our heart and vascular services at [HMHforU.org/HeartCare](https://www.HMHforU.org/HeartCare).



Mark Anderson, M.D.

Cardiac surgeon

800-756-1282

Hackensack and Edison



Matthew Saybolt, M.D.

Interventional cardiologist

800-756-1282

Eatontown, Freehold and Monroe Township



Saleem Husain, M.D.

Interventional cardiologist

800-756-1282

Plainfield



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 800-756-1282.

SchedUle

Here are just a few of the events & classes this January 2025 through May 2025

Bayshore Medical Center 727 North Beers St. Holmdel	Carrier Clinic and Blake Recovery Center 252 County Rd. 601 Belle Mead
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Diabetes

Take Control of Your Health: Diabetes Free six-week evidence-based program.

Wednesdays, Feb. 5–Mar. 12, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m., Freehold YMCA, 370 E. Freehold Rd.



Special Events

February is American Heart Month, which raises awareness about heart disease. Join us for our programs, and learn how you can take steps to improve your heart health.

Joyful Heart Tea Learn how heart disease affects women differently than men, as well as signs, symptoms, risk factors, prevention and treatment options.

Feb. 11, 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., SCAN, Monmouth Mall (basement level next to Mall Management), 180 Rte. 35 South, Eatontown

AngioScreen® Learn your risk for heart attack and stroke. Special rate: \$49.95. Registration required. Call for dates, times and locations.

Heart-Healthy Eating Join our chef and registered dietitian as they serve up some heart-healthy recipes that can help your heart health. Samples and recipes provided.

Feb. 24, 11 a.m.–noon, Ocean University Medical Center

Stress, Diet & Your Heart Join Marian VanDyck-Acquah, M.D., as she discusses 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

Community of Lifesavers Program provides lifesaving skills, hands-only CPR, how to use AED and more. Participation card provided. Must be 13 or older.

Feb. 4, 6–8 p.m. & Feb. 11, 9–11 a.m., 1350 Campus Pkwy., Wall

Feb. 6, 9–11 a.m. & Feb. 12, 6–8 p.m., 44 Nautilus Dr., Manahawkin

Feb. 20, 6–8 p.m., 1686 Rte. 88, Brick

Managing Hypertension and Cholesterol Do you know what your cholesterol level is and what the number means? Learn the difference between good and bad cholesterol, risk factors and treatment options. Health screenings provided.

Feb. 27, 1–2 p.m. lecture, 2–4 p.m. screenings; Surf City Firehouse, 713 Long Beach Blvd., Surf City



Pediatrics

Parent/Guardian Talks

Let's Sleep! Join Chee Chun Tan, M.D., Pakkay Ngai, M.D., and Stacey D. Elkhatib Smidt, M.D., and learn how to survive different sleep distractions such as daylight saving time, holidays, technology and more.

Feb. 27, noon–1 p.m., virtual event

► **Headaches and Seizures: What You Need to Know** Join Felicia Gliksman, D.O., and Rachel Penn, M.D., and learn about headaches and seizures, when to worry and how to get help. Mar. 27, noon–1 p.m., virtual event

► **Understanding Applied Behavior Analysis for a New Autism Diagnosis** Feb. 4 & Apr. 1, noon–1 p.m., and May 6, 7–8 p.m., virtual events

► **Maternity/Parenting Classes** To learn more, visit HMHforU.org/MaternityEvents.

► **Safe Sitter** Visit HMHforU.org/Events for upcoming dates. Fee \$40.

► **Safe at Home by Safe Sitter** Visit HMHforU.org/Events for upcoming dates. Fee \$15.

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

HOSPITAL LOCATIONS

Riverview Medical Center
1 Riverview Plaza
Red Bank

Southern Ocean Medical Center
1140 Route 72 West
Manahawkin

Heart Health

Mediterranean and DASH Diets Join our registered dietitian and learn the key components of both diets, antioxidants you can include in your diet, eating healthier fats and long-term healthy eating. *Feb. 19, 3:30–4:30 p.m., Middletown Library, 55 New Monmouth Rd.*

- ▶ **Improving Heart Health with the DASH and Mediterranean Diet** *Feb. 3, 2–3 p.m., Ocean County Library, Brick Branch, 301 Chambers Bridge Rd.*
- ▶ **Eating Better for Your Heart** *Feb. 10, 11 a.m.–noon, Ocean County Library, Manchester Branch, 21 Colonial Dr.*
- ▶ **Living with Heart Failure: Practical Tips for a Healthier Life** *Speaker: Jesus Almendral, M.D. Feb. 19, 5–6 p.m., virtual event*

Cancer Care

Colon Cancer Awareness Month
How Healthy Is Your Colon? Glenn Parker, M.D., will discuss the risk factors and treatment options for colon cancer and how early detection can save your life. Free at-home colorectal screening kits available when you register.
Mar. 18, 6–7 p.m., virtual event

- ▶ **Pancreatic Cancer** *Speaker: Gregory Tiesi, M.D. Feb. 13, noon–1 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Fresh Start Smoking Cessation** *Four-session program. Mar. 11, 13, 18 & 20 and May 13, 15, 20 & 22, 6–7 p.m., Ocean University Medical Center, East Wing Conference Center*
- ▶ **Stop Smoking with Hypnosis** *Mar. 12 and May 14, 7–8 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Hereditary Cancers** *Speaker: Elias Obeid, M.D. Mar. 24, noon–1 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Head and Neck Cancer Awareness** *Speaker: Matin Imanguli, M.D. Apr. 7, noon–1 p.m., virtual event*



Neuroscience

Understanding Memory Loss vs. Alzheimer's Disease Learn the difference between normal and abnormal memory loss vs. Alzheimer's disease and tips to help keep your mind sharp. Memory screenings provided.
Feb. 11, 12:30–1:30 p.m., Ocean County Library, Long Beach Island Branch, 217 S. Central Ave., Surf City

- ▶ **Stroke: Am I At Risk?** *Feb. 6, 2–3 p.m., Ocean County Library, Lacey Branch, 10 East Lacey Rd., Forked River*
- ▶ **Getting a Good Night's Sleep** *Mar. 5, 2–3 p.m., Ocean County Library, Lacey Branch, 10 East Lacey Rd., Forked River*



General Wellness

Free Health & Wellness Screenings Blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose, pulse, body mass index and stroke risk assessment (all non-fasting).
Feb. 26, Mar. 26 & Apr. 23, 10 a.m.–1 p.m., Lunch Break, 121 Drs. James Parker Blvd., Red Bank
Feb. 27, Mar. 27 & Apr. 24, 10 a.m.–1 p.m., St. Peter's Church, 33 Throckmorton St., Freehold



Importance of Dental Health Join our dental health experts and learn why oral hygiene is important for the rest of your health.
April 29, 2–3 p.m., Ocean County Library, Brick Branch, 301 Chambers Bridge Rd.

- ▶ **Stop the Bleed** *Mar. 5, 2–3 p.m., Ocean County Library, Manchester Branch, 21 Colonial Dr.*
- ▶ **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.*

Gratitude in Action



After losing both of her parents to cancer, Lisa Silber established a nursing scholarship fund in their names to honor their legacy. She's pictured here with her mother and family (at left).

After physical therapist Lisa Silber lost her parents to cancer, she chose to honor their legacy of service and generosity with a scholarship for nurses at Hackensack Meridian Health.

Lisa Silber remembers curling up next to her mother as a child and peppering her with questions about her day as an intensive care unit nurse. Always curious about her parents' work, the **Ocean University Medical Center** senior physical therapist shadowed other health care providers in the hospital where her mother worked and looked up to her father, a pharmaceutical professional, before deciding to pursue degrees in biological sciences and physical therapy.

"My mom was the type of person who would do anything for anyone in need," Lisa says. "Not only was she an extremely caring and compassionate nurse, but she was also an amazing friend and family member." Lisa recalls her mother's talent as a seamstress and the masks she sewed for family and friends during the pandemic.

Turning Loss Into Legacy

Sadly, Lisa lost both her parents to cancer—her father in 2021 after a short battle with pancreatic cancer and her mom in 2023 after a brief fight with endometrial cancer. Fueled by her parents' generosity and giving spirit, Lisa decided to help others by providing a significant gift that will help the **Jersey Shore University Medical Center** Nursing Scholarship Fund.

"With the gift my parents left me and my family, I wanted to do something they would be proud of. I could not think of anything that would suit

them more than to begin a scholarship in their name to help nurses looking to advance their skills and degree," says Lisa, who celebrated her 10-year anniversary at Hackensack Meridian Health in September 2024.

Lisa also notes: "My daughter was 10 days old when my dad passed, and my mom passed a week after her second birthday. I wanted to do something my kids could also see with this scholarship too as they get older, to remember them by."

Paying It Forward

Lisa's gift is part of a larger nursing philanthropy initiative at Hackensack Meridian Health.

Launched in 2022, the effort advances exceptional patient care by giving patients and their families a way to harness their gratitude in support of new programs and resources to help nurses achieve professional and educational excellence.

"This gift represents my gratitude to all the amazing nursing and hospital staff who took care of my parents in their final hours," says Lisa. "This was my way to honor them as well.

"Despite the heartache and sadness of losing my parents," says Lisa, "I am grateful they gave me this gift that I am able to share in their memory, and in that way, they live on in others' lives as well." ❄️



Be the Difference. In 2024, the Hackensack Meridian Health Foundation launched the Be The Difference campaign, with a \$1 billion goal to transform health care to meet the needs of the patients of today and tomorrow. Make a gift to Be The Difference and support high-quality care for your family, friends and neighbors. Every dollar helps.

Finding Your Balance

Maintaining a balanced lifestyle takes intention. Use these tips to set health and wellness goals for the year ahead.



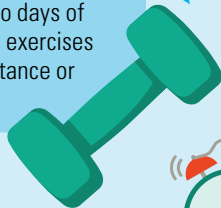
30 Minutes of Exercise

Adults should complete at least **30 minutes** of physical activity, five days per week, or **150 minutes weekly**.

3 Moderate-Intensity Activities to Try

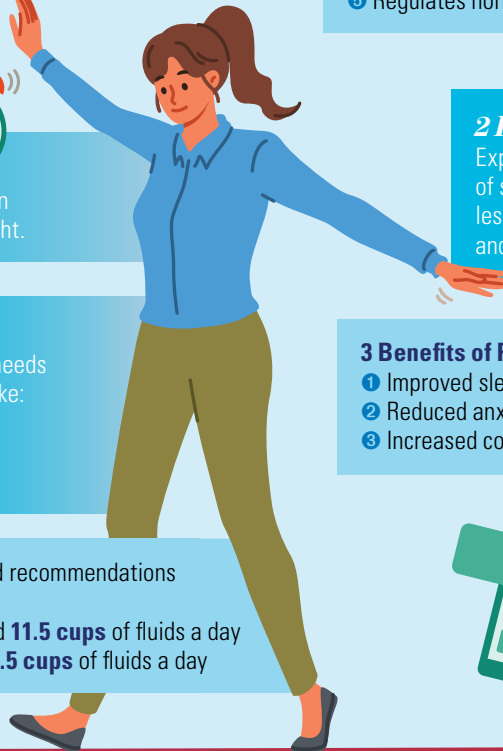
- ▶ Walking
- ▶ Swimming
- ▶ Biking

For a balanced workout routine, try adding at least two days of muscle strengthening exercises a week, such as resistance or weight training.



Rest and Recharge

The amount of sleep each person needs depends on their age. Adults should get **7 or more hours** a night.

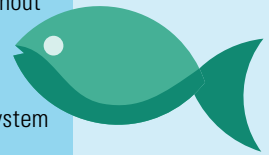


1-2 Servings of Protein

Try to eat one to two servings, or **5 ½ ounces**, of protein a day. Get creative with eggs, chicken, fish, beans and low-fat yogurt.

5 Functions of Protein

- 1 Builds and repairs bones, tissues, hair and skin
- 2 Carries nutrients throughout the body
- 3 Aids digestion with enzyme creation
- 4 Supports the immune system
- 5 Regulates hormones



2 Hours of Screen Time

Experts recommend, at most, **two hours** of screen time a day outside of work, and less is better. Try using screen-time limits and reminders built into your devices.

3 Benefits of Reduced Screen Time

- 1 Improved sleep
- 2 Reduced anxiety and depression
- 3 Increased concentration



Fill Up on Fluids

How much water your body needs depends on various factors like:

- ▶ Activity level
- ▶ Environment
- ▶ Health

However, standard recommendations are as follows:

- ▶ **Women:** Around **11.5 cups** of fluids a day
- ▶ **Men:** Around **15.5 cups** of fluids a day



Go Online

Timely health screenings are an important part of the wellness equation. Find a convenient time to get age-appropriate screenings with one of our primary care providers at [HMHforU.org/PrimaryCare](https://www.HMHforU.org/PrimaryCare).



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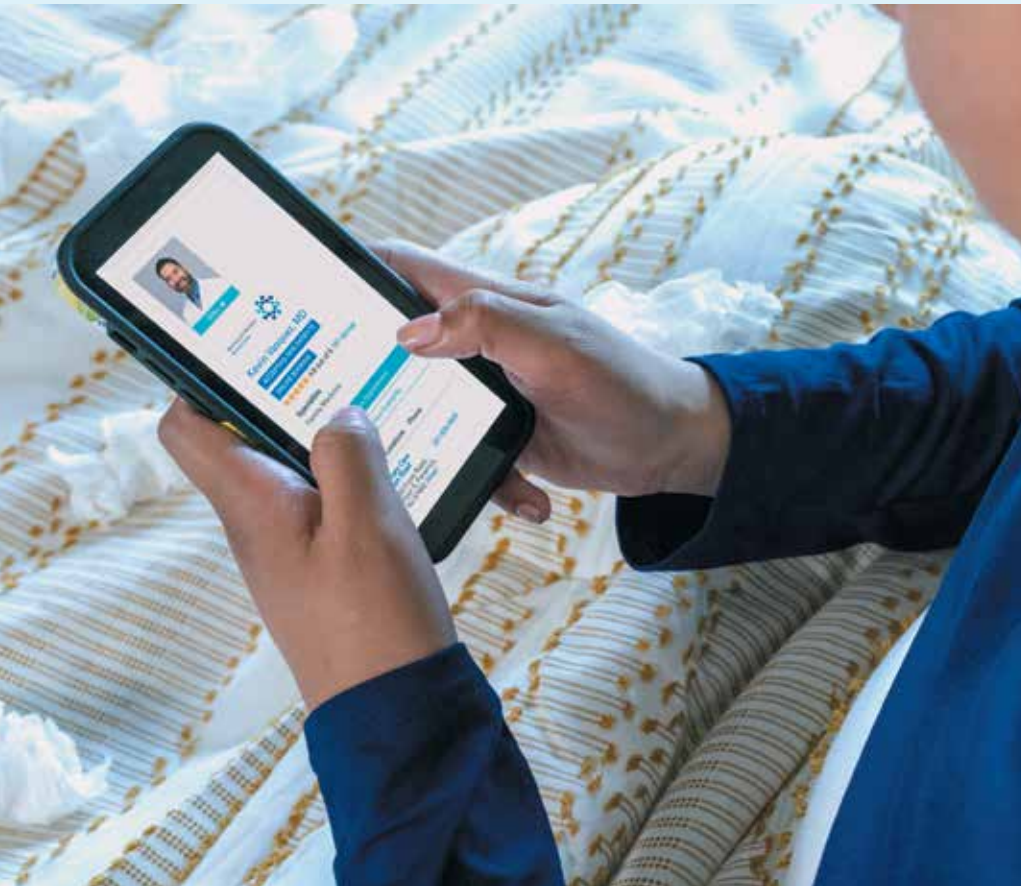
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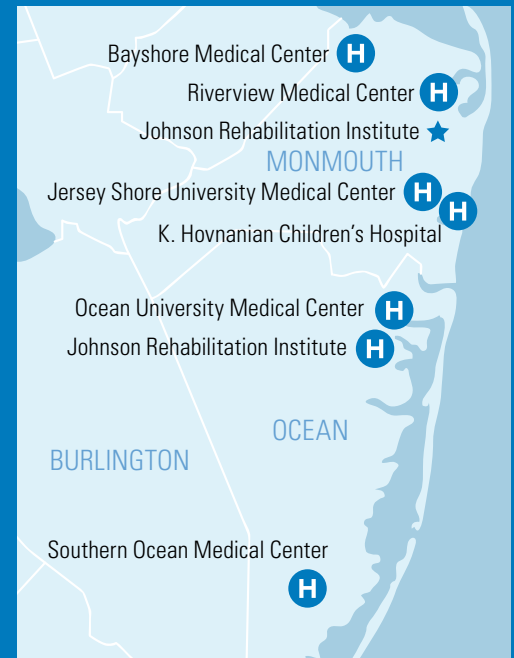
SCHEDULING ON YOUR SCHEDULE FEELS BETTER.

Online appointment scheduling now available.



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.

FEEL BETTER NOW
SCAN TO SCHEDULE
YOUR APPOINTMENT



Hackensack
Meridian Health
KEEP GETTING BETTER

Stock.com/smartboy10/Ivan Leonov