

HEALTH U



Hackensack
Meridian Health

*Is a plant-based diet
right for you?*

page 7

Stay Healthy This Fall

HOW TO
LIMIT YOUR
CHILD'S
SCREEN TIME

page 9

**ARE COLONOSCOPIES
REALLY THAT BAD?**

page 12

**GROUNDBREAKING TREATMENT
FOR PATIENTS EXPERIENCING
ESSENTIAL TREMOR**

page 26

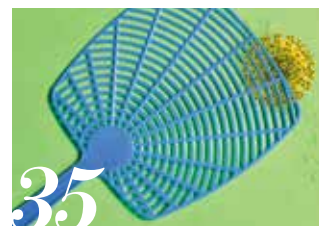
*5 things you should never say to
someone with depression or anxiety*

page 6

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REVISTA EN
ESPAÑOL, VISITE
[HMHforU.org/
Spanish2](http://HMHforU.org/Spanish2).



Contents Fall 2021



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 How to Ease Back Into a Workout
Plus: What to say to someone with depression or anxiety ■ Is a plant-based diet right for you? ■ Recipe for veggie burgers ■ What's trending?

Spotlight on U health topics that matter the most to you

10 Get Screened for Colon Cancer
Find out if colonoscopies are really that bad, and learn about Don Heddy, who was diagnosed with colon cancer at 50 years old.

13 Is It a Heart Attack or Just Heartburn?
How to know if that burning sensation in your chest and neck is heartburn or something more serious. Plus: Find out how David Henritzy is reducing his risk of stroke and blood clots thanks to a next-generation implantable device.

16 All About Cortisone Shots
Cortisone shots provide immense relief from pain and decrease inflammation, but they aren't for every person in every situation. Here's what you should know.

17 Can Lipstick Cause Breast Cancer?
What you should know about hormone-disrupting ingredients in cosmetic products and their possible link to cancer.

18 What to Do if Your Child Has a Head Injury
Plus: Learn how 2-year-old Dariel Armando Sanchez went from being an active toddler to fighting for his life after a major head injury.

20 How to Beat Brain Fog
Are you experiencing challenges with mental clarity? These tips can help you manage brain fog and improve your cognition.

22 Can a UTI Go Away on its Own?
Find out if you can treat a UTI at home. Plus: Read about Nyhia Oughterson's twist of fate after experiencing symptoms of a UTI.

24 Can Melatonin Gummies Help Kids Sleep?
What you should know if you're considering giving your child melatonin supplements to help them fall asleep more quickly.

Doctor Spotlight

29 Getting to Know Swapnil Patel, M.D.
Internal medicine specialist at Jersey Shore University Medical Center

Schedule event and class listings

30 Your Calendar for Fall 2021
Live and virtual events and classes you won't want to miss

Foundation meaningful gifts from U

34 Funding the Future
With a generous gift, Eileen Masterson, M.D., is helping a new generation of doctors become patient advocates.

By the Numbers a snapshot view of an important health issue

35 Shoo the Flu
Protect yourself this flu season.

 Hackensack Meridian Health Theatre
at the Count Basie Center for the Arts

"We are grateful for our valued partnership with the Count Basie Center for the Arts," says Robert C. Garrett, CEO of Hackensack Meridian Health. "Research suggests that experiencing music and the arts can reduce stress, relieve pain, create energy and boost moods."



26 **Innovation** transforming medical research into treatments
Breaking Ground With Tremors
Hackensack University Medical Center is the first center in New Jersey offering cutting-edge technology for movement disorders. Plus: How to prevent and treat neuro fatigue.



Should you get a COVID-19 booster shot? Find out at [HMHforU.org/Booster](https://www.HMHforU.org/Booster).



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month! Gain tips to prepare for your next mammogram at [HMHforU.org/MammoPrep](https://www.HMHforU.org/MammoPrep).



Learn when you should take your child to the doctor for a headache at [HMHforU.org/KidsHeadache](https://www.HMHforU.org/KidsHeadache).

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

HealthU is a 2021 APEX Award winner and a 2021 Content Marketing Awards finalist



BetterU

quick tips to help you live your healthiest life

A New U

This fall has provided us all with a unique opportunity to thoughtfully look back and reflect, and simultaneously look forward to better tomorrows.

In September, we commemorated the 20th anniversary of the horrific 9/11 attacks on our country. It was a time to remember those lives lost and celebrate the countless heroes who emerged that day. But it was also a time to recommit to caring for one another and finding unity where divisions are seen.

In the spirit of striving to keep getting better, we've embarked on a redesign of HealthU. When we launched the magazine in spring 2019, our goal was to provide you with the resources needed to make informed decisions about your health and well-being. While that remains our goal, we turned to a panel of readers and website data to better understand what information you want and how you prefer to receive it. The consensus was clear: more emphasis on trending health topics, and tips and educational stories featuring our doctors' advice.

Here is some of what we heard:

"It would be beneficial to get factual information. There's a lot of information on the internet that appears factual but may be more of an advertisement."

"I am more interested in learning how to better take care of myself and family."

We are listening. Starting with this issue of HealthU, we're changing the content we deliver to you. You'll find:

- ▶ A new "What's Trending?" section covering some of the most commonly asked health questions
- ▶ More tips and educational articles featuring doctors' advice
- ▶ A stronger focus on new and innovative technologies and research in health care

We hope HealthU continues to inspire your journey toward healthier living. We remain here for you every step of that journey. It's still all about the power of U. 🌟



Eli Manning and Bob Garrett had an opportunity to thank three of our EMS first responders, Debbie Quintana, Mike Welsh and Sean Reilly, who put their lives on the line 20 years ago during 9/11. We are honored to call you team members and so glad you were able to be a part of the New York Giants flag ceremony commemorating 9/11.

Robert C. Garrett, FACHE, CEO
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INSIDE THIS SECTION

- 6 What to Say to Someone With Anxiety or Depression
- 7 Is a Plant-based Diet Right for You?
- 8 What's Trending?

How to Ease Back Into a Workout

If more than a year at home has thrown off your exercise routine, here are tips to help you ease back into working out.

Start Slow

Don't feel pressured to exercise at the same level and intensity as before. "If it's been a while since you last worked out, take it easy and start off slow," says Lisa Kassenoff, D.O. Gradually increase the weights or number of reps for each workout. After a few weeks of consistency, you'll see improvement in your endurance and stamina.

Be Realistic

Set realistic fitness goals for yourself. Setting your expectations too high can lead to frustration if you are unable to meet them. Be sure you are considering that your body needs time to adjust to being active again.

Find a Place Where You're Comfortable

Find a gym that feels safe and comfortable. Wear your mask, continue to socially distance and sanitize any surface you touch. If you are still wary of going back to the gym, find workouts online that you can do from the comfort of your home. If home workouts aren't your thing, try working out in your yard or at a park.

Listen to Your Body

Don't push yourself past your limit or ignore when your body tells you it needs rest. "If you become breathless or your body is aching, take a break," Dr. Kassenoff says. Also, stretch before and after workouts.

Track Your Progress

Use your cell phone, smart-watch or fitness tracking ring to track your steps, heart rate and distance. Being able to see a visual of your gradual progress can keep you motivated.

Ease in if Recovering From COVID-19

Returning to exercise after recovering from COVID-19 can be a slow process. "It's important to watch for symptoms such as chest pain or heart palpitations, and stop immediately if you experience these," Dr. Kassenoff says. You likely will need to gradually get back into exercise and build intensity over time. If you are experiencing long-term symptoms of COVID-19, our COVID Recovery Center can help: [HMHforU.org/COVIDRecovery](https://www.hmh.org/COVIDRecovery).



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Forked River

Go Online

Find more tips for staying healthy through exercise at [HMHforU.org/Exercise](https://www.hmh.org/Exercise).

5 Things You Should Never Say to Someone With Depression or Anxiety

If a loved one opens up about their mental health, here is how you can ensure you provide comfort and reassurance.

It can be difficult knowing what to say to a loved one who's been diagnosed with depression or anxiety. While you may have good intentions, sometimes the things we say can intensify the negative feelings someone else is experiencing. It's important to know how to effectively support the people in our lives who struggle with their mental health.

Saba Afzal, M.D., residency program director at the **Ocean University Medical Center** Department of Psychiatry, provides five things to avoid saying if a loved one opens up to you about their mental health.

1 *"It could always be worse/other people have it worse."*
This can make the person feel guilty for being depressed or anxious when it is not their fault. Also, this dismissal of their feelings may make them feel like they shouldn't open up to anyone again. Instead: "I'm so sorry this is happening."

2 *"I know/understand how you feel. I was so depressed when [something trivial]."*
You don't have to understand what someone is going through to be there for them. Instead: "I'm really sorry you're going through this. I'm here for you whenever you need me."

3 *"Everything will be OK. Think happy thoughts."*
Don't try to overload the person with positivity. It's much better to empathize with them and let them know the way they feel matters to you. Instead: "You are important to me. Would you like to talk about your feelings?"

4 *"Have you tried meditating/yoga/journaling?"*
While these wellness practices may be helpful to some people, they might not work for everyone. Unsolicited advice isn't always beneficial if you are not a trained mental health professional. Instead: "What can I do to help you?"

5 *"Why aren't you in therapy/on medication?"*
Seeking out professional help is a decision that someone should make on their own. Being asked a question like this may make the person experiencing depression or anxiety feel shame or as if they are being judged for not doing so. A better way to approach this would be letting the person know that you are concerned about them. If they say they are ready to seek professional help, then you can support them in finding a mental health professional. Instead: "I've noticed you seem very anxious/sad lately. I'm concerned about you."

If you are experiencing feelings of depression or anxiety, find a mental health provider near you: [HMHforU.org/FindADoc](https://www.hmhforu.org/FindADoc).



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Is a Plant-based Diet Right for You?

A plant-based diet could help you boost your immune system and reduce risk of certain health conditions, such as heart disease.

Plant-based diets are becoming increasingly popular. But what exactly are these diets, and why might they be right for you?

What Are Plant-based Diets?
"Plant-based diet" is an umbrella term under which many diets (the Mediterranean diet, for example) may fall. A plant-based diet can be similar to a vegetarian or vegan diet, but it is not exactly the same. Those who follow strict vegan diets abstain from consuming all animal products, while vegetarians may still consume foods like eggs, milk and honey. To have a plant-based diet doesn't mean you never eat meat. Rather, you are choosing to make plant sources the central part of your meals.

Benefits of a Plant-based Diet
There are many health benefits to following a plant-based diet. Expanding the amount of plant protein in your diet can support your immune system, reduce inflammation and increase your fiber intake. Research suggests that plant-based diets may also reduce risk for certain cancers and chronic diseases.
"Those who follow a plant-based diet can lower their risk of certain health conditions such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes," says Irene Yu, MS, RDN, clinical nutrition manager/diabetes program coordinator at **Bayshore Medical Center**. "It is also a way to reduce calorie intake and could lead to weight loss."

What to Include in a Plant-based Diet
Since plant-based diets are a broad category, they can vary greatly from person to person. Most people who follow plant-based diets eat a lot of fruits, vegetables, nuts, whole grains, seeds, beans and lentils. Some who follow a plant-based diet choose to limit or avoid consuming foods like meat, seafood, dairy, sweets and refined grains, such as white pasta and white rice. Others may choose to eat meat and sweets every now and then. It all depends on the individual, but the emphasis of a plant-based diet is on using fresh, whole ingredients while reducing your intake of processed foods.

Learn about nutritional counseling at Hackensack Meridian Health at [HMHforU.org/NutritionCounseling](https://www.hmhforu.org/NutritionCounseling).



Butter Bean Burgers

Serves 6

- Ingredients**
- 1 15-ounce can butter beans, drained and rinsed
 - ½ cup red onion, finely chopped
 - ½ cup carrot, grated and finely chopped
 - ¼ cup celery, finely chopped
 - 1 egg, beaten
 - ¼ cup fresh cilantro, roughly chopped
 - 1 garlic clove, minced
 - ½ teaspoon dried oregano
 - 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 - ¼ teaspoon salt
 - ¼ teaspoon pepper
 - ¾ cup cooked brown rice, cooled
 - 6–12 large butter lettuce leaves
 - 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

- Steps**
- In a medium bowl, coarsely mash drained beans with a fork or potato masher.
 - Add the remaining ingredients with brown rice. Mix well.
 - Shape into 6½-inch-thick patties. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
 - Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add patties to skillet, and cook for 10–12 minutes or until heated through, turning patties once halfway through cooking.
 - Place in lettuce leaf. Top with thinly sliced red onions, cilantro and tomatoes.

Nutritional Information

Per patty: 145 calories, 6g protein, 18g carbohydrate (4g fiber), 6g fat (1g sat, 5g mono/poly fat), 230mg sodium

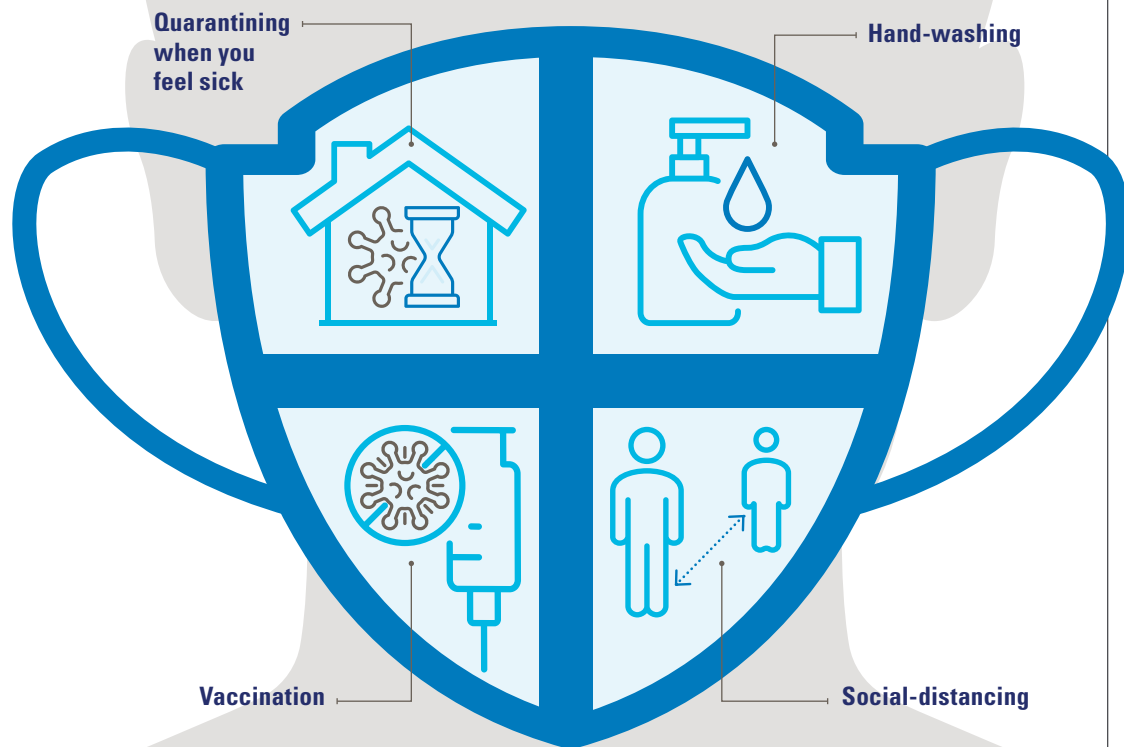
Find more recipes and tips for healthy eating at [HMHforU.org/HealthyEating](https://www.hmhforu.org/HealthyEating).

Can a mask help prevent seasonal flu?

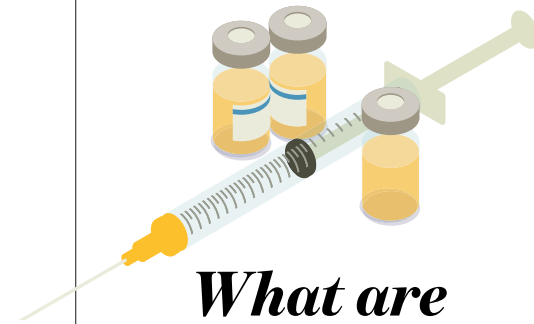
Pankaj Doshi, M.D., weighs in:

Masks can help reduce the transmission of respiratory diseases such as COVID-19 and influenza, but a mask alone is not enough. The most effective way to protect yourself from the flu every season is to get an annual flu vaccine.

Masks work together with the following precautions to prevent disease, as they did last flu season:



Read more at [HMHforU.org/Masks](https://www.hmhforu.org/masks).



What are cancer vaccines?

Andre Goy, M.D., weighs in:

Vaccines can prevent viruses that may lead to cancer or treat certain forms of cancer. For example, there is a vaccine against the human papillomavirus (HPV), which is spread through sexual contact and has been known to cause cervical, anal, throat, vaginal, vulvar and penile cancers. Additionally, vaccines can be used as part of treatment for refractory prostate cancer, skin cancer and early-stage bladder cancer. While new discoveries on cancer vaccines are exciting, the best way to improve cancer outcomes is through regular screenings. Catching cancer at an early stage offers patients the most treatment options and the best prognosis.

Read more at [HMHforU.org/CancerVaccine](https://www.hmhforu.org/cancer-vaccine).



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How do I avoid seasonal depression?

Kristen Clark, M.D., weighs in:

Although you can't stop the changing of the seasons, there are a few things you can do to combat seasonal depression.

Stay Active

Exercise is a great way to naturally combat the chemical imbalances that can contribute to depression. Pick an activity you enjoy: Gardening, walking, dancing and even playing with your kids are all good forms of exercise.

Eat Healthily

Our diets impact our mental health. A healthy diet rich in vegetables and fruits and low in highly processed foods can help curb feelings of depression by reducing inflammation in our bodies, which is a risk factor for depression.

Stay Connected

Social connections can be a great defense against depression. Whether you talk on the phone, video chat or meet in person, keep in regular contact with friends and family for a healthy and happy mind.

Get Outside

Even on a cloudy day, go outside for a walk or eat lunch at a park. Get sunlight where you can: Sit or work close to a window, open your blinds or trim trees blocking sunlight.

Read more at [HMHforU.org/SeasonalDepression](https://www.hmhforu.org/seasonal-depression).



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How can I limit my child's screen time?

Paul V. Sunkavalli, M.D., weighs in:

If your child has become accustomed to using screens for entertainment, it will likely take some time to rein in their screen time. Here's how to get started:

Set Realistic Goals

It's unlikely that you will be able to significantly reduce your child's amount of screen time overnight. Try easing down the time first by cutting it in half. Let your child know how many hours of screen time they are allowed each day, and keep track of it.

Make Screen Time Active

When your child is engaging with screens, try to incorporate physical activity into their viewing. Get them interested in motion-sensitive video games that require them to dance, jump or perform other physical movements in place.

Set No-device Zones and Times

Using screens around bedtime can disrupt sleep, so it's a good idea to make your child's bedroom screen-free. At mealtime, encourage your family to talk to one another rather than engage with phones or watch TV.

Don't Make Screens a Reward or Punishment

Offering screen time as a reward or taking it away as punishment inflates its value in your child's mind, making it harder to set limits.

Introduce Exciting Alternatives

Help kids see that screens are not their only option for entertainment by introducing them to new sports, hobbies and people. It's even better if you can participate in the activity with them.

Read more at [HMHforU.org/Screens](https://www.hmhforu.org/screens).



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Get Screened for Colon Cancer

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recently lowered the recommended age to start colorectal cancer screening to 45. Here's what you should know.

When the world lost actor Chadwick Boseman at age 43 to colon cancer, it brought to light the importance of colorectal cancer screening. In May 2021, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force shed even more light on this critical screening—lowering the recommended age to start colorectal cancer screening from 50 to 45.



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Who Should Be Screened?

The task force says all adults ages 45 to 75 should be screened for colorectal cancer. This recommendation is intended for:

- ▶ Asymptomatic people
- ▶ People with average risk of colorectal cancer
- ▶ People with no previous diagnosis of colorectal cancer
- ▶ People with no history of colon or rectal polyps
- ▶ People without a personal or family history of genetic disorders that put them at higher risk

For those who are symptomatic, have a family history or previous diagnosis, or are 76 to 85 years old, the task force recommends screening at the discretion of a doctor.

Why Screen Sooner?

According to research from the American Cancer Society, the rate at which people 65 and older are diagnosed with colorectal cancer in the U.S. is dropping. But in younger age groups, that rate is rising. In 2020, 12 percent of colorectal cancer cases were diagnosed in people under age 50. Since the 1990s, rates have been increasing in adults ages 40 to 54.

A study sponsored by the Axelrod Research Group and participated in by **Jersey Shore University Medical Center's** Department of Colorectal Surgery student program found a higher rate of stage IV colorectal cancer in patients under age 50. Additionally, the study identified higher mortality rates in patients under age 50 (24.4 percent, compared to 4.8 percent in patients ages 50 to 65).

"We don't know exactly why we're seeing a trend of colorectal cancer in younger patients. But by proper screening, we can effectively reduce the number of colorectal cancer cases and deaths in a younger population of patients," says **Thomas Lake, M.D.**, colon and rectal surgeon. "If polyps are found through early screening, they can be removed before they develop into cancer."

Types of Colorectal Cancer Screening

Several tests may be used to screen for colorectal cancer. The tests are generally divided into two categories:

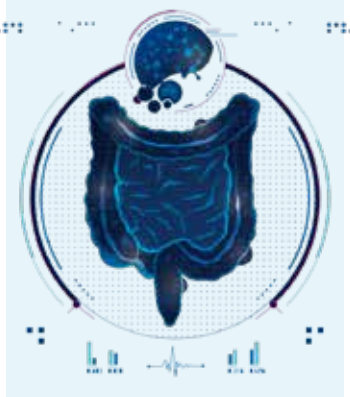
1

Tests that look for signs of cancer in your stool

2

Visual exams of your colon and rectum using a viewing scope (colonoscopy) or CT scan (virtual colonoscopy)

Stool testing is typically done annually to every three years, and visual exams are done every five to 10 years. "Each type of screening has different benefits," says **Glenn Parker, M.D.**, colon and rectal surgeon. "Your doctor can help you choose the right one for you—and tell you how often it should be repeated. Overall, the best screening test is the one that actually gets done!"



Learn more about colon cancer screening at Hackensack Meridian Health at [HMHforU.org/ColorectalCancer](https://www.hmhforu.org/ColorectalCancer).



Like Father, Like Son

When Don Hedly was diagnosed with colon cancer at age 50, he followed along the same path as his father did 10 years earlier.

When Don Hedly turned 50 in December 2019, he knew there was one thing he needed to do: Schedule a colonoscopy. Like anyone trying to stay on top of their health, he was faithful to that. But he didn't expect the outcome.

"I always thought the golden rule was to go for a colonoscopy when I turned 50, and a few weeks later in January, I was in the hospital being treated for colon cancer," Don says.

His prognosis of colorectal cancer was hereditary. His dad, Richard Hedly, a retired high school science teacher, was diagnosed 10 years earlier. Yet unlike Don, Richard was treated at a much later age, being diagnosed in his 80s. At 90, he watched his 50-year-old son follow in his footsteps down a path no parent would wish for their child.

"My doctor had suggested that all my children have a colonoscopy, but Don was the youngest," Richard says.

In Good, Familiar Hands

Both father and son received the same diagnosis at **Ocean University Medical Center**, but there were other similarities.

When Don arrived at Ocean, he was greeted by **Thomas Lake, M.D.**, the same surgeon who treated his father 10 years earlier.

"One of the first things Dr. Lake said was, 'How is your dad?' He knew right away who I was," recalls Don. "That's when I knew I would be alright. The fact that he treated my father put me more at ease."

Don says having his father, the survivor, alongside made all the difference in his outcome. "[My dad] helped keep me positive," he says.

Radiation and chemotherapy treatments were followed by surgery with Dr. Lake. Since Don's surgery was 10 years after Richard's, advances in technology made his process even smoother. While Richard had a traditional open resection, Don had a robotic resection. The advancement made recovery quicker and left less of a scar.

"I so appreciate the folks at Ocean. They were on top of everything and a tremendous help in making the process easier," adds Don.

Appreciative and Cancer-free

Don is now cancer free along with Richard. The past year has given him a larger appreciation, not just of life, but of his father, now 91.

"We gained an appreciation for anyone who has had to fight through any kind of cancer," says Richard. "It's not an easy journey."

In scheduling his colonoscopy, Don took measures that many tend to delay as long as possible. This action may have saved his life. Now, as more people are suffering from colon and colorectal cancer at a much younger age, and with the U.S. task force announcing new recommendations that lower the age of colorectal cancer screenings to 45, both Richard and Don recommend not putting off screenings.

The duo now have plans to get back to activities they love to do together, mainly fishing.

5 Things to Know About Colonoscopies

There are probably a few things you dread about hitting your middle-age years, and getting a colonoscopy might be high on the list.

The recommended age to start colorectal cancer screening is 45. Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the U.S., but it's generally a slow-growing cancer that is treatable if caught early enough. Colonoscopies and other tests help doctors find the cancer early and begin treatment.

"The earlier we are able to catch this cancer, the better chance we have at treating it effectively," says **Robert Aaron, M.D.**, gastroenterologist at **Bayshore Medical Center**.

Knowing what to expect when getting a colonoscopy can help calm your nerves and get you through the exam with minimal discomfort.

Here are answers to five of the top questions about colonoscopies that will help you determine if they're really as bad as you think.

1 Does It Hurt?

Most patients are sedated through conscious sedation or twilight sleep and don't feel anything during the exam. Many patients don't even remember they had a procedure. Some doctors prefer patients to be a bit more awake through the procedure and conduct the exam with minor sedation and pain relievers. Ask your doctor about what kind of sedation is right for you.

2 What Is the Prep Like?

"To have a successful colonoscopy, your bowel must be completely clear so that your doctor can see your colon and assess for polyps or other signs of disease," notes Dr. Aaron.

There are different types of prep strategies, but they generally cover diet and drinking bowel-cleansing liquids. Your doctor will give you complete instructions, including information about certain types of food and medications to avoid for about two weeks before the exam.

- ▶ A few days before the procedure, start eating a low-fiber diet. You'll have to avoid whole grains, nuts, seeds, dried fruit and raw vegetables.
- ▶ The day before, you'll switch to a liquid diet. Be sure to stock up on clear broth, black coffee or tea, clear juices, sports drinks, popsicles, etc.
- ▶ The afternoon or evening before your

procedure, you'll begin drinking the bowel-clearing liquid. Bowel movements usually start within one to three hours of taking the prep. Mixing the prep with a clear liquid, like your favorite sports drink, will make it go down easier. You will likely experience high-volume and high-velocity diarrhea. Plan to be near a bathroom, with plenty of reading material and toilet paper. Pick up medicated wipes and a skin-soothing product to apply after bowel movements to prevent irritation.

- ▶ The day of the colonoscopy, you will be told not to eat or drink anything before the procedure. Ask your doctor about taking any daily medication or supplements.

3 How Long Does It Take?

A colonoscopy generally takes 20–30 minutes to complete. The doctor will examine the colon using a flexible camera that's inserted into the anus. The goal is usually to find any cancer at an early stage, so your doctor can provide treatment options for the best possible outcome. This can include removing precancerous polyps before they turn into cancer. Doctors also perform colonoscopies to diagnose symptoms like weight loss, changes in stool and rectal bleeding.

4 How Is Recovery?

After the exam, it takes about an hour to recover from the sedatives. You'll wake up in a recovery room for observation and stay there until you're ready to go home. You may feel some cramping or bloating, but this should go away quickly; walking around helps. Avoid alcohol, driving and operating heavy machinery for 24 hours after the procedure. If you had polyps removed or biopsies taken, you might see light bleeding for a few days. Your doctor will tell you when it's safe to start taking blood thinners again.

5 When Will I Know Results?

It can be scary waiting to hear about medical test results. "Your doctor may be able to tell you basic findings about the appearance of the colon and if any biopsies were taken right away," Dr. Aaron says.

If biopsies or polyps were removed, it may take a few days to learn more about the samples. Follow-up appointments are usually recommended to go over the findings.

So, despite what your friends might say, or what you read on the internet, colonoscopies really aren't that bad. The prep is usually the worst part, but it's all necessary and a worthwhile sacrifice when it comes to protecting your health. ⚙️



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Holmdel

Go Online

Are you due for colorectal cancer screening? Find a doctor near you at [HMHforU.org](https://www.hmhforu.org)/FindADoc.

Is It a Heart Attack or Just Heartburn?

If you're unsure whether that burning sensation in your chest is heartburn or a heart attack, ask yourself these questions.

You've just polished off a large beef and cheese burrito, and suddenly it hits: a burning sensation, right around your chest and neck. It's heartburn, right? Or could this be something much more dangerous, like a heart attack?

It's easy to confuse the two events because the symptoms can feel very similar. "Depending on where the heart attack is happening, the type of pain can mimic heartburn and vice versa," says **Deepak Singh, M.D.**, cardiothoracic surgeon at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**.

If it is a heart attack, it's critical that you address it as soon as possible. "If a heart attack is treated promptly, the damage done to the heart muscle can be minimized or even avoided," Dr. Singh says. "Time is critical when it comes to heart attack."

Emergency Care When and Where You Need It

When you are faced with a life-threatening situation, superior emergency care is available from Hackensack Meridian Health all across New Jersey. In Neptune, the Level II Trauma Center at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center** treats more than 1,600 trauma patients a year and offers a team of experts who specialize in traumatic injury. In Holmdel, a brand-new, state-of-the-art Emergency Department at **Bayshore Medical Center** provides increased outpatient services for the community and is staffed by a full-service team of emergency medicine clinicians.

Learn more about the new Emergency Department at Bayshore at [HMHforU.org/BayshoreED](https://www.hmhforu.org/BayshoreED).



Keep in mind that the movie version of a heart attack (chest clutching, difficulty breathing) and a real-life heart attack may look and feel very different. Add to that, heart attack symptoms can vary from person to person, including factors such as gender, and even from heart attack to heart attack.

So how do you know if it's heartburn or a heart attack? Here are a few questions to ask yourself:

Did you just eat? Heartburn often strikes after a fatty or spicy meal. The pain tends to get worse if you lie down or bend over. You also might have a sour taste in your mouth when stomach acid travels up to your esophagus.

Do you have chest pain and discomfort? These are the most common symptoms of a heart attack, for both men and women, young and old. But there are other symptoms to look out for, as well. Women are more likely to experience heavy, continuous pressure; shortness of breath; a squeezing, aching or sharp pain



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in the chest or arms that may spread to the neck, back or jaw; unexplained nausea; heartburn; vomiting; sweating; fatigue; irregular pulse; lightheadedness; or sudden dizziness.

Do you have any risk factors for a heart attack? If you do, a heart attack may be more likely. These factors include high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, obesity, smoking and a family history of heart disease. Also, heart disease is more common in men

over 45 and in women over 55.

The bottom line is this: If you think you may be having a heart attack, call 911. "If you're thinking about it enough, that should answer the question," says Dr. Singh, adding that doctors would much rather see you and diagnose you with heartburn than have you die of a heart attack at home.

One more important tip to keep in mind: Don't ever try to drive yourself to the hospital. Call 911. "While the ambulance is en route, they can get your EKG, send it to the hospital and have everyone ready to treat you the minute you reach the emergency room," Dr. Singh says. ❄️



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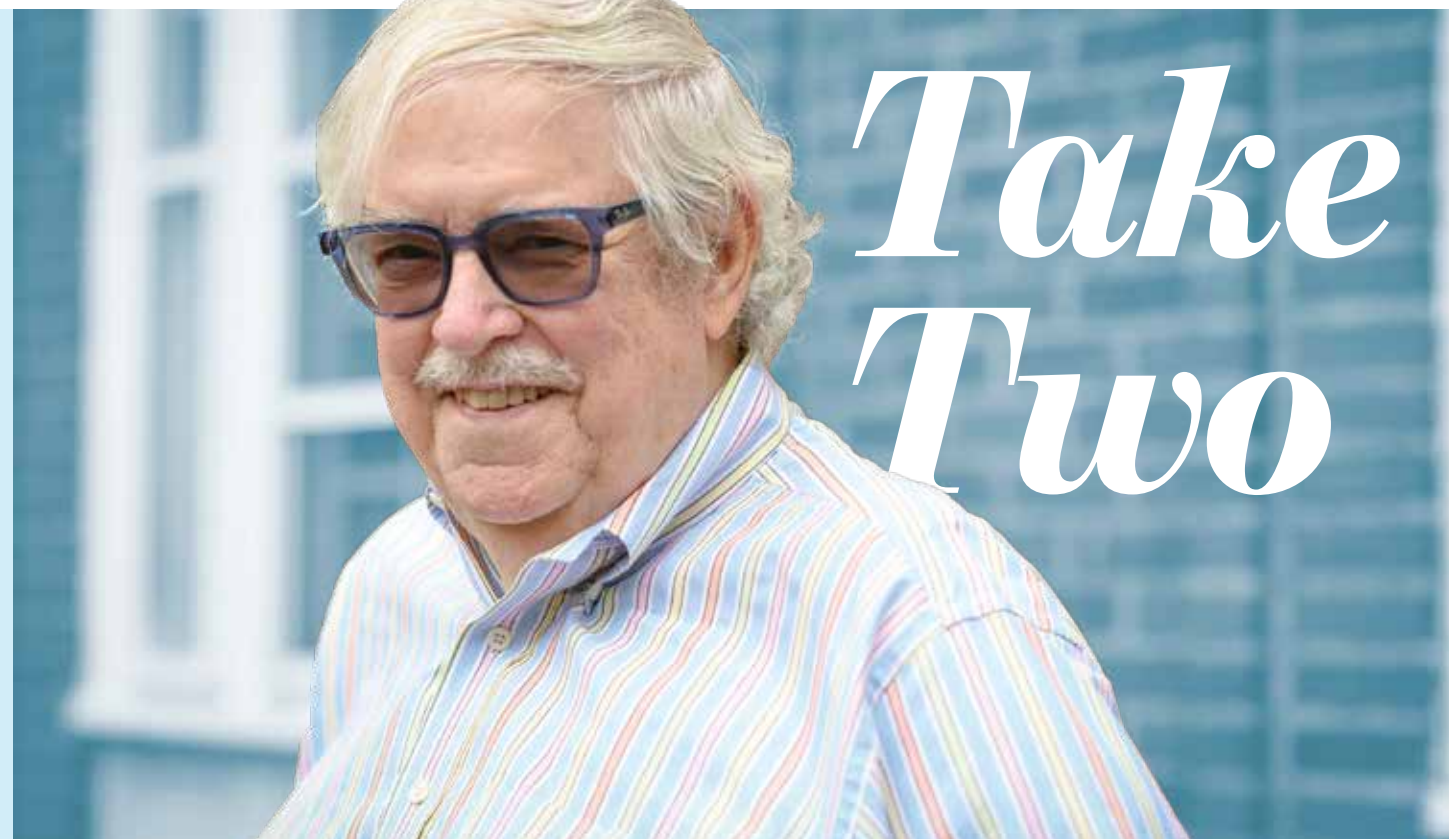
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Find out more about comprehensive cardiac care near you at [HMHforU.org/Heart](https://www.hmhforu.org/Heart).

Take Two



With a brand-new, next-generation implantable device, David Henritz is reducing his risk of stroke and blood clots.

It was over a decade ago when David Henritz, a Methodist minister, first experienced extreme heart pain. He had just left a meeting at his church in New York, where he was living at the time, and quickly made his way to the hospital. There, he was diagnosed with non-ischemic cardiomyopathy, a disease of the heart muscle, and atrial fibrillation, an irregular heart rhythm that can lead to blood clots, stroke and heart failure.

"I didn't have a heart attack per se, but symptomatically it resembled a heart attack," says David, who is now 77 years old.

Since 2005, **Dale Edlin, M.D.**, cardiologist at **Riverview Medical Center**, has treated David to help prevent congestive heart failure and other complications. David underwent a procedure for an implantable cardioverter-defibrillator (ICD), a battery-powered device placed under the skin that monitors and regulates heart rate. "Should his heart get out of rhythm in a way that would be potentially dangerous or life-threatening, the device will shock the heart back to normal," says Dr. Edlin.

Second Chances

An ongoing challenge in David's care has been reducing his risk of blood clots from atrial fibrillation. The traditional treatment for this is blood thinners or anticoagulants, but because David also suffers from recurring urinary bleeding, he would be at greater risk of bleeding from some other part of the body.

Dr. Edlin referred David to **Riple Hansalia, M.D.**, a cardiac electrophysiologist at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**, to look at the possibility of implanting a permanent device called the Watchman™, which can prevent blood clots from forming and eliminates the need for blood thinners or anticoagulants. David previously underwent a procedure in New York to implant the device, but because his anatomy and the size of the Watchman device were not compatible, the procedure was unsuccessful.

There was an opportunity on the horizon. The second generation of the Watchman device was being released and was expected to be a

better fit for David. "Our institution was one of the first to switch over to the second-generation Watchman device," Dr. Hansalia says.

A New Outlook

In November 2020, David underwent a third procedure with the Watchman. This time, Dr. Hansalia successfully inserted the device.

Six weeks later, David returned for a follow-up with Dr. Hansalia, who confirmed that the Watchman was in the correct position and operating as expected. "He was doing extremely well, and we were able to successfully take him off the blood thinners," says Dr. Hansalia.

David is feeling great and appreciates the peace of mind the Watchman has brought him. "I've experienced no sensation whatsoever of it being in my heart," he says. "But it's improved my optimism and outlook on life because I know it's there and that it's taking care of business."

Learn more about comprehensive cardiac care close to home: [HMHforU.org/Heart](https://www.hmhforu.org/Heart).



All About Cortisone Shots

Cortisone shots provide immense relief from pain and decrease inflammation, but they aren't for every person in every situation. Here's what you should know.

Many people have had cortisone shots—sometimes called steroid shots—to relieve pain and improve function for sports injuries like tendinitis and meniscus tears, as well as chronic conditions like arthritis, bursitis and carpal tunnel syndrome. These injections can provide immense relief from pain and promote healing, but they aren't for every person in every situation.

Joseph Bogdan, M.D., hip and knee orthopedic surgeon at **Ocean University Medical Center**, breaks down what you should know.

How do cortisone shots work?

Cortisone is a powerful, focused inflammatory medication. When an injury occurs to a joint that includes swelling, cortisone shots can provide intense localized relief without systemic effects and possible side effects that over-the-counter products can cause.

How long before you get relief from pain?

Cortisone can take up to several days to provide relief. Because of that, Dr. Bogdan and other physicians often include a local anesthetic in the shot to provide immediate relief until the cortisone kicks in.

How long does the relief last?

The relief provided by the cortisone can last anywhere from a few weeks to several months.

What are the possible side effects of cortisone shots?

Complications are exceedingly rare if the shot is done by an experienced doctor, but cartilage damage, bone death, joint infection and nerve damage are possible. More common but still rare side effects



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Brick and Freehold

can include temporary facial flushing, a temporary flare of pain and inflammation in the joint, and temporary skin lightening when the shot is near the surface and the person has dark skin tones. In addition, a temporary increase in blood sugar can occur, especially in patients who have poorly controlled diabetes. Fat necrosis can also occur, a benign condition where fat is damaged and may be replaced by a cyst or scar tissue.

Do cortisone shots work for everyone?

Some patients respond better than others, and in some cases, there is no noticeable improvement from the treatment. Obesity and end-stage arthritis may limit the benefits of corticosteroid injections.

Do you have to be a certain age to get cortisone shots?

Younger people and children will often heal without these shots, so cortisone is probably not an appropriate way to get them back into sports before they heal. Older patients who are not candidates for surgical treatment of their injury or chronic condition may benefit from one shot or a series of shots.

After an injury, should I get a cortisone shot right away?

A lot of things get better on their own within a couple of weeks. If you are in pain, give it a few weeks to heal on its own. If you are in a lot of pain, consult your doctor about which treatment options are the best for your situation.

How often should I get a cortisone shot?

It's recommended that a joint not be injected any more than three times a year. ⚙️

Go Online
Learn more about care after a sports injury at [HMHforU.org/Sports](https://www.hmhforu.org/Sports).

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Can Lipstick Cause Breast Cancer?

What you should know about hormone-disrupting ingredients in cosmetic products and their possible link to cancer.

We know what we put in our bodies—junk food, cigarette smoke and alcohol, for example—directly impacts our health. But what about what we put on our bodies?

“Lipstick, foundation and other beauty products can contain preservatives that have hormone-like properties and can act as hormone ‘disruptors,’ altering our hormonal environment,” says **Harriet Borofsky, M.D.**, medical director of breast imaging at **Riverview Medical Center** and **Bayshore Medical Center**. “Over time, these disruptors could potentially affect how estrogen and other hormones function in the body. In cases of large doses, these ingredients could theoretically promote tumors, including breast cancer.”

What Should You Do?

That doesn't mean you have to throw out all the contents in your makeup bag. While cosmetic products are made of a number of ingredients, a few chemicals are being studied for possible links to breast cancer:

- ▶ **Parabens** are a preservative used to prolong the shelf life of makeup products. “Parabens can disrupt hormone function by mimicking estrogen,” Dr. Borofsky says. “We know excess estrogen after menopause can promote the growth of tumors and breast cancer.”
- ▶ **Phthalates** hold color in cosmetic products. While phthalates don't mimic estrogen, they can change the balance of hormones that interact with estrogen.

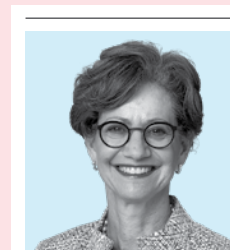
“Some women choose to limit their exposure to these chemicals and look for products that are paraben- and phthalate-free, including mineral makeup,” Dr. Borofsky says.

Screening to Reduce Breast Cancer Risk

When it comes to breast cancer, screening is key to early detection. The American Cancer Society recommends women at average risk of breast cancer should start annual mammograms in their 40s:

- ▶ Women between age 40 and 44 have the option to start annual mammograms.
- ▶ Women age 45 to 54 should get mammograms every year.
- ▶ Women age 55 and older can switch to a mammogram every other year or choose to continue annual mammograms.

For women with a family history of breast cancer or genetic tendency for breast cancer, earlier screening may be needed, including breast MRI. “Your doctor can talk to you about your individual risk of breast cancer and the best screening plan for you,” Dr. Borofsky says. ⚙️



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For a breast imaging location near you, visit [HMHforU.org/BreastCancer](https://www.hmhforu.org/BreastCancer).



What to Do if Your Child Has a Head Injury

How to know when a child's head injury is serious enough to require medical help.

Parents know how common it is for kids to bump or bang their heads. But how do you know when a head injury is serious enough to require medical help or when it should be managed at home?

When to Provide Care at Home
For minor head injuries, you might notice:

- ▶ Your child was temporarily agitated or confused right away but is now alert
 - ▶ Your child might have vomited, but just once
 - ▶ Your child might have minor bruises or cuts on their head
 - ▶ Your child is acting, speaking and moving normally
- “In these cases, continue observing your

child at home, but if you're worried about them, you should always call your doctor to get a second opinion,” says pediatric physiatrist **Nicole Marcantuono, M.D.**

When to Seek Care Immediately

“If your child has hit their head and experiences any severe symptoms of a head injury, you should seek medical care right away. That might include calling 911 for an ambulance,” says Dr. Marcantuono.

Severe symptoms include:

- ▶ Loss of consciousness
- ▶ Drowsiness
- ▶ Dazed state
- ▶ Confusion, memory loss or loss of orientation
- ▶ Bleeding that is difficult to stop

- ▶ Vomiting more than once
- ▶ Seizure or convulsion
- ▶ Visual disturbance
- ▶ Weakness in arms or legs
- ▶ Slurred speech

“A child can develop symptoms over several days after a head injury,” says Dr. Marcantuono. “So it's important to continue watching for new ones. But the good news is most children recover well after mild injuries. If your child has any symptoms following a head injury, evaluation by a medical provider is necessary.”

Go Online

Learn more about our pediatric care for concussion and head trauma: [HMHforU.org/HeadInjury](https://www.hmhforu.org/HeadInjury).

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In an Instant

In one afternoon, 2-year-old Dariel Armando Sanchez went from being an active toddler to fighting for his life in the hospital.

April 7, 2021, started out like any other day for the Sanchez family, but in an instant, it turned into every parent's nightmare. Two-year-old Dariel Armando Sanchez was with his family at a neighbor's house in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, when he suddenly ran after a friend. He opened a door to the house, ran toward the street where cars were passing and was hit by a car.

Worried an ambulance would take too long, his mother, Doris left for the hospital with her son in a police car. “Dariel was breathing but could not speak or cry,” she says. He was taken to the closest hospital, **Raritan Bay Medical Center**, where he arrived unconscious and having trouble breathing. Doctors inserted a tube through his mouth and into his airway, and placed him on a ventilator to help him breathe.

After a few hours, he was taken by ambulance to **K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital at Jersey Shore University Medical Center**.

Extensive Injuries Requiring Specialized Care

Dariel suffered multiple injuries to his head, knee and kidney. He fractured his skull bone, and an MRI showed he had a subdural hematoma, a condition that is serious and needs to be monitored closely in order to prevent further brain damage. He also had other concerning MRI findings. Given such abnormalities, Dariel was at risk for neurologic complications.

In addition, Dariel had a seizure and was at risk for having more. Luckily, the Children's Hospital is a Level III Epilepsy Center, which means it is accredited to provide high-quality, specialized seizure care.

Pediatric neurologist and seizure expert **Roopal Karia, M.D.**, came to see Dariel in the pediatric intensive care unit. She placed him on a video EEG test, which continuously monitors and records brainwaves, to pinpoint where the seizure was coming from.

“Video EEG testing is important for patients who are having seizures, or for patients who have waxing and waning responses after trauma and for those who are not having overt seizures. It can show us the brain function at any given time,” Dr. Karia says.

The video EEG allowed Dr. Karia to tailor Dariel's treatment. He started an anti-seizure medication to prevent more seizures.

“This was a complex case because it involved a head trauma, fractures, seizure and abnormal MRI findings,” Dr. Karia says. Dariel benefited from a talented, versatile care team that included trauma, pediatric intensive care led by **Matthew McCarrick, M.D.**, and pediatric neurosurgery led by **Lawrence Daniels, M.D.**

Happy Homecoming

On April 16, after nine days in the hospital, Dariel was discharged home.

“Today, he is doing much better, thank God,” says Doris. “He wants to run all the time like any 2-year-old, but he falls a lot.” Sometimes, Dariel will touch the back of his head and tell his parents that his head hurts. He continues physical therapy and follow-up visits with Drs. Karia and Daniels.

“I would recommend this hospital to anyone without hesitation,” says Doris. “The attention to my baby's needs was very thorough—not just expert but caring. And it wasn't just the attention to his needs but to ours, too.” She credits the team with helping her and her family get through an incredibly tough time.

“Dariel's family support was indispensable,” says Dr. Karia. “They were always there, always available to answer questions. It makes a difference when the family is there, involved in their loved one's care, working with us as one team.”

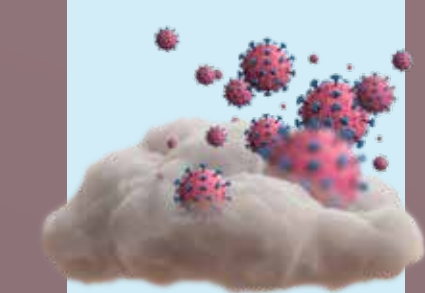
Learn how our pediatric experts have specialized training in caring for children with concussion or head injuries at [HMHforU.org/HeadInjury](https://www.hmhforu.org/HeadInjury).

How to

Beat

Brain Fog

Are you experiencing challenges with mental clarity? These tips can help you manage brain fog and improve your cognition.



Are you experiencing long-term brain fog after recovering from COVID-19?

Our COVID Recovery Center can help. Learn more at [HMHforU.org/COVIDRecovery](https://www.HMHforU.org/COVIDRecovery).

What is brain fog? While it's not a medical term, brain fog describes a feeling that you don't have full mental clarity—maybe you're having trouble remembering something or difficulty focusing on a thought or idea. This can happen to anyone and can be caused by lack of sleep, increased stress, certain foods in your diet or, in some cases, a medication or medical condition.

“Cognitive impairment, also known as cog-fog or brain fog by patients, is estimated to affect more than half of multiple sclerosis patients during the course of their illness,” says **David Duncan, M.D.**, director of the Multiple Sclerosis Center at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**. “This can include difficulty multitasking, paying attention, understanding conversations and recalling memories. Early and aggressive treatment for MS is key in trying to slow down or prevent this problem from significantly impacting patients’ lives.”

Regardless of the source of brain fog, you can help combat it. Here are a few tips for managing brain fog and improving your cognition.



David Duncan, M.D.

Neurologist

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Neptune

Get More Sleep

One of the most common causes of brain fog is lack of sleep or poor sleep hygiene:

- ▶ Aim to get 7–9 hours of sleep each night.
- ▶ Keep a regular sleep routine.
- ▶ Go to bed at the same time every night.
- ▶ Avoid screens before you go to bed.



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Challenge Yourself

Treat your brain like a muscle and make sure it gets its exercise. This can take the form of traditional mind-sharpening puzzles and games, but it can also extend to your daily life. Read and learn about a topic you are interested in, whether it's something that will help you in your work or a hobby. Staying engaged and learning stimulates your brain cells and keeps them active.

Repeat, Repeat, Repeat

If you are having trouble with memory in particular, repetition can be a useful strategy. Repeating something will strengthen your memory of it. For example, when you're having a conversation with a new person, repeat their name back to them. Or after you have made an appointment, write it down.

Don't Forget the Physical

Staying physically active and keeping a good diet have many health benefits, and that is no different when it comes to brain fog. Studies have shown that getting regular exercise and eating a diet high in vegetables, lean proteins and whole grains can reduce cognitive decline. These behaviors not only have cognitive benefits, but they can also improve your sleep, benefiting your mind even more.

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Learn about our comprehensive lineup of neuroscience services at [HMHforU.org/Neuro](https://www.HMHforU.org/Neuro).

Can a UTI Go Away on its Own?

Know when to seek care for a UTI and when you can treat it at home.

Urinary tract infections (UTIs)—when bacteria gets into your urine and travels up to your bladder—are the source of 8.1 million visits to health care providers each year, according to the Urology Care Foundation. In fact, UTIs are so common that about 60 percent of women and 12 percent of men will have at least one UTI during their lifetime.

UTIs are common, but can they go away on their own, or do they always require medical attention and antibiotics? The answer isn't so simple.

Urologist **Mark Perlmutter, M.D.**, says a UTI can go away on its own—but not every type of UTI and not every time.

“Yes, a UTI could go away on its own, but some infections are different than others,” he says. “And if left untreated, a UTI may linger longer.”

UTIs are classified into two main categories: uncomplicated, also known as cystitis; and complicated, which may be catheter-associated or happen during pregnancy. In most cases, UTIs are caused by *E. coli* bacteria normally found in the bowels.

When to Seek Care

In general, UTIs bring these symptoms:

- ▶ Pain and burning during urination
- ▶ Frequently feeling like you need to urinate
- ▶ Frequently feeling like you need to urinate after you just did
- ▶ Urine that is cloudy
- ▶ Urine with a strong odor
- ▶ Pressure and cramping in the lower belly
- ▶ Feeling weak or shaky

The sooner you can address these symptoms, the more likely you'll prevent a UTI developing into a kidney infection.

Though some people have beaten uncomplicated UTIs with fluids and supplements, like cranberry pills, Dr. Perlmutter says it's best to call your doctor, get a urine culture and, if deemed necessary by your doctor, start a round of antibiotics.

“There's really no need to delay treatment since the majority of the time, fluids and antibiotics will easily knock out a UTI,” he says.

If a UTI is treated early, there will likely be no lasting effect on your urinary tract. However, UTIs can cause complications if not found and treated quickly.

Twist of Fate

When Nyhia Oughterson experienced symptoms of a UTI, she had no idea it would uncover a large, problematic cyst on her kidney.

When Nyhia Oughterson began feeling lower-back pain and burning during urination after several days of pelvic pain, she was concerned but thought things would clear up on their own.

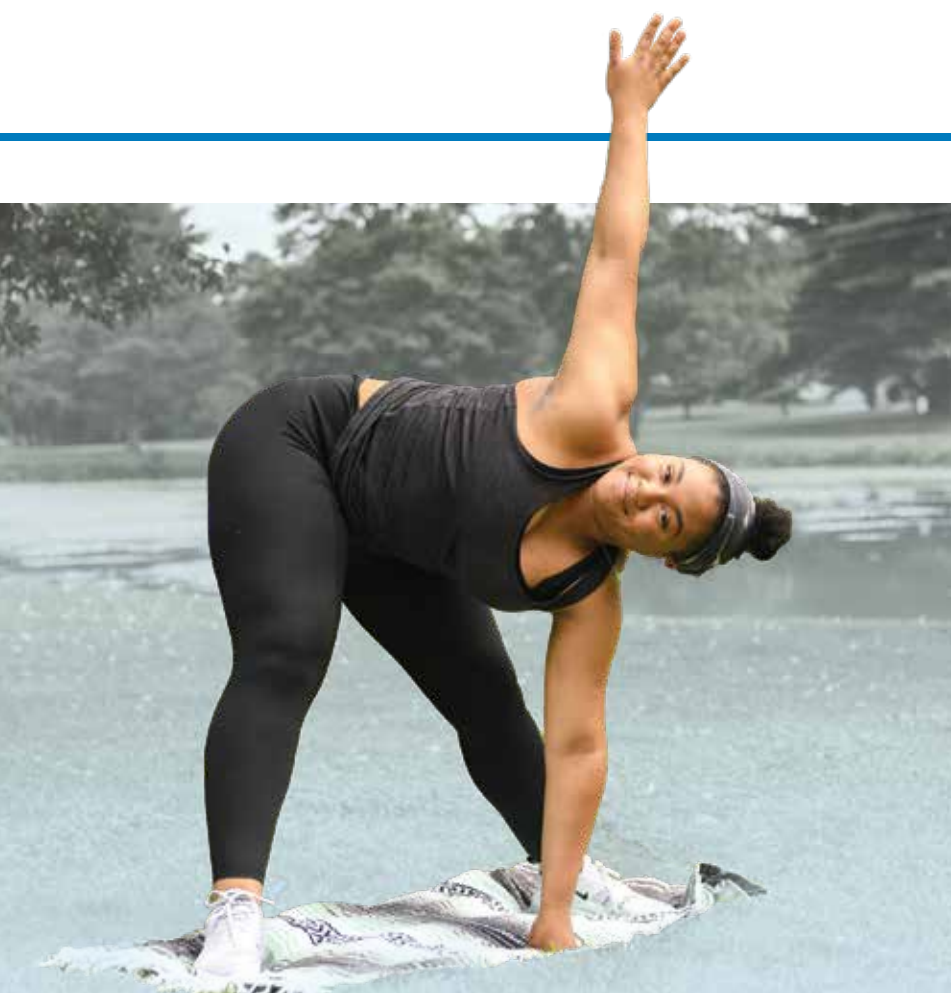
“I'd never had a UTI before, so I didn't know what to do,” says Nyhia, a 20-year-old college student from Eatontown, New Jersey. “I did a little research and bought some cranberry juice and supplements hoping that would knock it out.”

But a few days later, during a trip home for Thanksgiving, things worsened. She had fever and chills, was unable to eat, and began vomiting and sweating profusely.

“At one point in the night, I had to fall out of my bed just to get myself to the bathroom. I was in that much pain,” she says.

At her mother's insistence, Nyhia finally went to an urgent care clinic, where a doctor told her she had a severe UTI and needed to go to the hospital for testing.

Nyhia went to **Jersey Shore University Medical Center** where



doctors performed a scan of her kidneys and found a 9-centimeter cyst on her left kidney. “It was almost as big as my kidney,” she says.

Robotic Surgery for Quicker Recovery

Before urologist **Mark Perlmutter, M.D.**, could remove the cyst from her kidney, Nyhia would have to heal from the UTI or risk infection during surgery.

“A cyst like that in such a young person is unusual,” Dr. Perlmutter says. “When they do develop, they're usually smaller. We don't know how or why she got it, other than bad luck. The cyst was so large that it was partially compressing and at risk of obstructing her ureter and kidney drainage system. It was putting her at risk for recurrent significant urine and kidney infections in the future.”

After the UTI cleared up with a 10-day antibiotic, Dr. Perlmutter performed robotic surgery on Nyhia at **Ocean University Medical Center** to remove the cyst from her kidney.

With robotic surgery, the procedure only required five tiny incisions in her abdomen.

“There are many advantages to robotic surgery, especially in the kidney area,” Dr. Perlmutter says. “The incisions are barely noticeable, and the process creates minimal bleeding, which means people feel better sooner after surgery.”

Three days after surgery, Nyhia says she was standing up, moving around and feeling much better.

“I feel totally fine now, like it didn't affect my life at all,” she says. “If I hadn't gotten the UTI, I may have never known the cyst was there.”

In January 2022, she will get a repeat CT scan to make sure the cyst hasn't grown back, but otherwise, she will require no long-term care.

“Nyhia was unlucky to have this cyst, but the great thing is now that the cyst is removed, her problem is completely gone,” Dr. Perlmutter says. “Now she can go about her life like nothing ever happened.”



Mark Perlmutter, M.D.

Urologist

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Manasquan, Jackson and Brick

Call your doctor if you experience any of the following symptoms, as they could be signs of larger urinary tract problems:

- ▶ Blood in your urine
- ▶ Fever
- ▶ Nausea/vomiting
- ▶ Lower back pain
- ▶ Decreased urine production

How to Prevent a UTI

To prevent UTIs, stay hydrated, properly clean yourself after sexual activity, wipe from front to back (for women) and urinate when you feel the urge rather than holding it in for long periods.

“Cranberry tabs have been shown to guard against *E. coli* infection,” Dr. Perlmutter says. “And the more you can prevent a UTI, the better.”

So while it's possible for a UTI to go away on its own, is it really worth waiting? 🌀

Go Online

Learn more about innovative care for urologic disorders and conditions at [HMHforU.org/Urology](https://www.HMHforU.org/Urology).

Can Melatonin Gummies Help Kids Sleep?

What you should know if you're considering giving your child melatonin supplements to help them fall asleep more quickly.



When your child has trouble falling asleep, you may wonder if a kid-friendly version of melatonin supplements would be safe to offer on occasion. Melatonin may help some kids fall asleep more quickly when it's used properly, and it comes in gummy varieties that may appeal to children, but you shouldn't dispense it like candy.

"It's ideal to teach kids to fall asleep on their own rather than relying on sleep aids, including dietary supplements like melatonin," says **Chee Chun Tan, M.D.**, pediatric sleep medicine specialist at **K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital at Jersey Shore University Medical Center**. "Teaching healthy sleep habits can be tricky, but the rewards pay off for a lifetime."

What do melatonin supplements do?

People produce the hormone melatonin in the evening as a signal to the body that it's time to go to sleep; higher levels of melatonin make people feel tired and ready for bed. If you give your child melatonin at the right time during the evening, it may make it easier for them to fall asleep.

Some research suggests it may also be helpful for kids with ADHD or autism who struggle with sleep when used for short periods. However, long-term use of melatonin supplements as sleep aids hasn't been well-studied in children.

Because melatonin is a type of dietary supplement, its production isn't regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. This means that any melatonin gummies you purchase may contain more or less of the active ingredient than the label says.

Always do research first and make sure to purchase supplements from reputable manufacturers that are lab-tested. Consult your child's doctor for advice. According to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, U.S. consumers should look for the "USP Verified" mark, which indicates the product's makeup meets the requirements of the U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention, an independent global testing organization.

Some experts recommend against giving melatonin gummies to children and teens on a regular basis because melatonin is a hormone and may impact their development or puberty.

Melatonin guidelines for kids

Don't incorporate melatonin into your child's bedtime routine permanently; only use it on a limited basis (or based on the direction of your doctor). If your child can't swallow pills, consider melatonin gummies. Read the ingredients label because some gummy supplements contain a lot of sugar or corn syrup.

Before deciding to use melatonin for your child's sleep, speak with a pediatrician or sleep medicine specialist, who can advise you on:

- ▶ What age you can start giving your child melatonin
 - ▶ The best time and frequency to give your child melatonin (typically anywhere from 30 minutes to four hours before bed)
 - ▶ The dosage that's appropriate for your child (likely between 1 mg and 5 mg)
 - ▶ Any reasons why your child should not take melatonin
- Keep melatonin hidden and out of reach, so that any children in your home who enjoy gummy candy aren't tempted to snack on the supplements.

Teach your child healthy bedtime habits

Whether you choose to give your child melatonin as a sleep aid on a limited basis, having a regular bedtime routine should make it easier for your child to fall asleep.

Try these ideas:

- ▶ Establish a set bedtime, so your child expects to go to sleep at the same time every night.
- ▶ Have a set wakeup time each day, so your child is tired at bedtime.
- ▶ Put away smartphones and tablets an hour before bed, and keep devices out of the bedroom.
- ▶ Create a relaxing bedtime routine—bathing, reading and listening to music are good options.
- ▶ Keep your child's bedroom cool and dark (night lights are OK)
- ▶ Expose your child to bright light (daylight) in the morning.

If your child often has trouble falling asleep, talk to your pediatrician about possible causes of the problem rather than giving your child melatonin gummies regularly. ⚙️



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Neptune

Go Online

Learn more about specialized pediatric care for kids at Hackensack Meridian Health: [HMHforU.org/Kids](https://www.hackensackmeridianhealth.org/kids).

Breaking Ground With Tremors

Hackensack University Medical Center is the first and only center in New Jersey offering cutting-edge technology for movement disorders.



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North Bergen, Nutley
and Montvale

Dezso Balint relied on steady hands every single day of his 45-year career in construction. But after retiring several years ago, the 70-year-old grandfather of two developed tremors so violent he could no longer sign a check or drive a car.

Medications didn't work well to control his essential tremor, a nervous system disorder characterized by involuntary and rhythmic shaking. Month after month, Dezso's condition progressively worsened, making even feeding himself an impossible task. "He was very sad, emotional and depressed," recalls his wife, Anna.

That all changed in June 2021, when neurosurgeons at **Hackensack University**

Medical Center began treating Dezso and other tremor patients with a leading-edge therapy that can erase disabling shaking, restoring independence and confidence. Hackensack recently became the first and only hospital in New Jersey—and one of only a few in the United States—to offer a noninvasive, MRI-guided technology called focused ultrasound.

The treatment is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for essential tremor or tremor-dominant Parkinson's disease. "People who suffer tremors can't hold a cup of coffee without spilling it," says **Hooman Azmi, M.D.**, chief of the Center for Functional and Restorative and Image-guided Neurosurgery at Hackensack. "Sometimes they have a hard time brushing their teeth or buttoning shirts. Cognitively they're fine, but they need help performing many daily activities."

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How Focused Ultrasound Works

Medications are the first-line treatment for essential tremor and Parkinson's, but they don't always work and some patients experience burdensome side effects such as sleepiness, brain fog, dry mouth or light-headedness, notes Dr. Azmi, associate professor of neurosurgery at Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine.

"One alternative option is surgery, called deep brain stimulation, which works extremely effectively—but it is surgery," Dr. Azmi says. "Focused ultrasound is an incredibly good option for patients having medication side effects who don't want to undergo surgery. Now we have the option of non-invasively treating the tremor with sound waves."

Focused ultrasound uses sound waves that travel through the skin and skull, and the procedure can be performed without any incisions. MRI guidance helps doctors precisely focus the sound waves on a targeted area deep in the brain. These sound waves create heat that disrupts the abnormal brain signals that cause tremor.

"We know there are circuits in the brain that give rise to tremor," Dr. Azmi explains. "With MRI to see the areas involved in that circuit, we aim sound waves onto one particular spot we know will have the best response. If we're getting positive results, we make the effect of the sound waves permanent."

Changing the Lives of Patients

Since surgical incisions aren't involved, focused ultrasound treatment boasts several added benefits:

- ▶ No overnight hospital stay is typically needed.
- ▶ Patients can quickly return to everyday activities.
- ▶ Potential complications are minimal and typically short term, including balance issues or a pins-and-needles sensation in the hands, face or tongue.

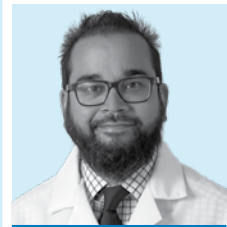
Dezso, whose right-hand tremor virtually disappeared, hopes to also have his left-hand tremor treated in the near future.

The Paramus, New Jersey, father of two grown sons weeps when recalling

Fact or Fiction: Essential Tremors

Any person can have a tremor. Anxiety, excess caffeine, skipped meals, medications, alcohol and stress can all cause a slight shake of the hands. However, there are also a number of neurological disorders that can cause a tremor, says **Shabbar Danish, M.D., FAANS**, chairman of neurosurgery at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**.

"Shaky hands may often be mistaken for Parkinson's disease, but one of the most common causes is benign essential tremors. Essential tremor is a neurological disorder that causes involuntary, rhythmic shaking," shares Dr. Danish, who helps us separate the facts and fiction of essential tremor.



Shabbar Danish, M.D.,
FAANS

Neurosurgeon

800-822-8905

Neptune

FACT

The cause of essential tremors is unknown.

"Unfortunately, since the cause of essential tremors is unknown, it's not something you can actively prevent," says Dr. Danish. "While it can spontaneously occur for some, essential tremor may run in families." Essential tremors can occur at any age and often start as early as age 20.

Anxiety or caffeine can make tremors worse.

"Anxiety or anything with caffeine can make tremors worse. For example, if someone has an essential tremor and they are in a situation that's making them anxious, their tremor can become more pronounced," says Dr. Danish.

It's important to consult a movement disorder specialist if you notice a tremor. They can determine the cause. If it's an essential tremor, or if it's associated with another condition like Parkinson's, your neurologist will work with you to determine if a treatment plan is needed to help minimize your symptoms.

FICTION

An essential tremor only presents as hand shaking.

While tremors most commonly affect the hands, they can also affect the head, voice, arms, tongue, legs or even trunk.

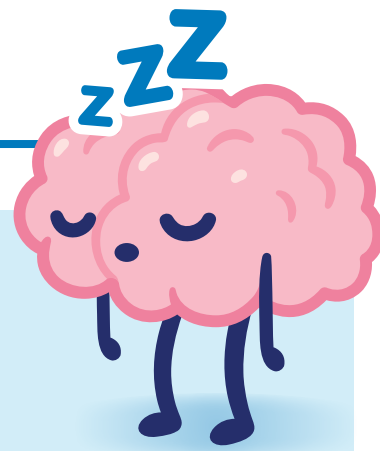
If you have a tremor, you have Parkinson's disease.

"A tremor can be a symptom of Parkinson's disease, but it does not mean you have Parkinson's," Dr. Danish says. "It could be an essential tremor."

Symptoms of Parkinson's include tremors, slowed or impaired movement, speech changes, and gait or balance problems. With essential tremors, you may experience tremors but not all of the other symptoms that go along with Parkinson's."

To learn more about our comprehensive lineup of neuroscience services for stroke, spine injuries, concussion, epilepsy, brain tumors, movement disorders, memory and more available across New Jersey through Hackensack Meridian Health, visit HMHforU.org/Neurosciences.

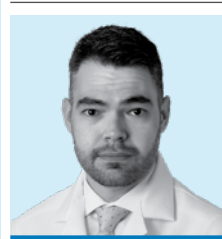




What Is Neuro Fatigue?

Neuro fatigue is a phenomenon most people have no idea exists unless they've experienced it personally or know someone who has.

We all know what physical fatigue is: a tired, weak and listless feeling that leaves us longing to stay on the couch and do nothing. But a lesser-known type called neuro fatigue—or mental fatigue—specifically occurs in patients who have neurologic illnesses.



Eduardo Correia, M.D.

Neurologist and neuro-oncologist

800-822-8905

Neptune

"We function based on different circuits in our brain," Dr. Correia explains. "If we have a neurological disorder that affects the function of our brain, the circuits that keep us awake are affected. So there's no question that neurological disorders affect our states of arousal and that people with these disorders can be tired."

How to Treat and Prevent Neuro Fatigue

Easing neuro fatigue can be approached from two angles: treating the underlying disease that's prompting it or treating the symptom of fatigue itself. For instance, the most effective medications for MS or Parkinson's disease can also reduce the feeling of fatigue in affected patients.

Fatigue-preventing measures include:

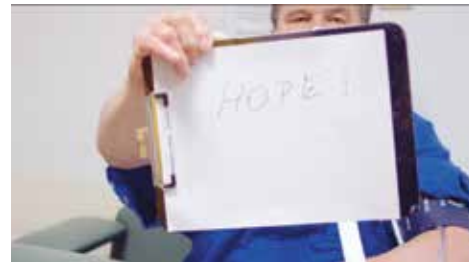
- ▶ Exercise
- ▶ Mindfulness training
- ▶ Being aware of how much physical and mental energy it takes to go about your day and making adjustments to conserve energy
- ▶ Ranking the importance of planned activities and carrying out more pressing ones first
- ▶ Alternating between "heavy" and "light" tasks
- ▶ Breaking tasks into stages
- ▶ Pacing yourself

Neuro fatigue strikes those with neurologic conditions such as multiple sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's disease, traumatic brain injury, post-polio syndrome, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and stroke. Other chronic illnesses, including heart disease, cancer and various forms of arthritis, can also trigger fatigue.

"With these and other neurologic disorders, fatigue is a large part of what people suffer," says **Eduardo Correia, M.D.**, neurologist and neuro-oncologist at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**.

What Causes Neuro Fatigue?

It's clear just how limiting fatigue can be, even stopping us in our tracks when all we want to do is keep up with our normal activities. But scientists still don't fully understand why fatigue occurs in most health conditions. With neuro fatigue, the brain can be overtaxed by the demands of a brain-based illness.



Watch a video of Dezso's progress after his focused ultrasound treatment: [HMHforU.org/Dezso](https://www.hmhforu.org/Dezso).

the stark improvement in his right hand within moments after his focused ultrasound treatment was completed. Before the three-hour procedure, Dezso was asked to write the word "hope" on a piece of paper. He was then asked to repeat the task just afterward.

The first handwriting attempt was barely legible, while the second was far clearer to read and much easier to write. He's also back to easily signing checks, driving and doing jobs around the house that require hand dexterity.

"The difference was enormous right away," Dezso says. "It was day and night. It's a miracle what this procedure did for me."

Most hand-tremor patients who undergo focused ultrasound can expect immediate and life-altering results like Dezso did.

"Only a limited number of centers across the globe have the ability to offer this incredible technology," Dr. Azmi says. "It emphasizes the expertise and innovation at Hackensack Meridian Health for the treatment of neurological disorders, particularly movement disorders." 🧠

Go Online

Learn more about our comprehensive, state-of-the-art Center for Functional and Restorative and Image-guided Neurosurgery at Hackensack University Medical Center: [HMHforU.org/Tremor](https://www.hmhforu.org/Tremor).

Doctor Spotlight

Swapnil Patel, M.D., with his son.

SWAPNIL PATEL, M.D.

Internal Medicine

Jersey Shore University Medical Center

Meet Swapnil Patel, M.D., an internal medicine doctor who loves professional basketball as much as he loves woodworking.

Before the Los Angeles native relocated to the Northeast in his 20s, **Swapnil Patel, M.D.**, an internal medicine doctor at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**, had never downloaded a weather app onto his smartphone.

"I didn't need one because it was always 70 degrees and sunny where I was," says Dr. Patel, who went coast to coast—earning his bachelor's degree at University of Miami and joining Jersey Shore after graduating from medical school in 2017.

Acclimating to New Jersey weather has certainly been an adjustment, but many parts of Dr. Patel's LA life have endured, especially his obsession with the city's sports teams and famed athletes. It's a passion he's passing down to his toddler, who already owns a mini basketball jersey.

When he's not focusing on his wife and son, the Long Branch, New Jersey, resident spends time on several quirky hobbies. A former DJ during his college years, he plays classical Indian drums called tabla and hopes to learn piano in the future.

If you could have dinner with a celebrity, past or present, who would it be?

Michael Jordan or Kobe Bryant, my idols. Michael Jordan had the story where he didn't



make the varsity basketball team when he was young, but he outworked everybody. It was the same for Kobe Bryant. They seemed like invincible figures when I was growing up. I would love to pick their brains about their work ethic and drive.

One of your hobbies is building things. Why?

My parents got into the hotel business when I was very young. Since I grew up in the hospitality field, I helped fix things around the hotel with my dad. I also took woodshop class in seventh grade. Now I build small things out

of wood, like small furniture pieces and shelves. It's therapeutic.

Why did you become a doctor?

I got inspired to go into medicine during a trip to my motherland, India, when I was 17. I went to a charity hospital and saw how doctors dedicated their time to nurse others to good health. The amount of poverty and lack of resources there really struck me. I was able to see how much people appreciated getting health care they otherwise might not have. I felt it would be something very fulfilling for my life. 🧠

To make an appointment with Dr. Patel or a doctor near you, call 800-822-8905 or visit [HMHforU.org/FindADoc](https://www.hmhforu.org/FindADoc).

SchedUle

Events & classes November 2021 through January 2022

					HOSPITAL LOCATIONS		
Bayshore Medical Center 727 North Beers St., Holmdel	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	Raritan Bay Medical Center 530 New Brunswick Ave. Perth Amboy	Old Bridge Medical Center 1 Hospital Plaza Old Bridge	Riverview Medical Center 1 Riverview Plaza Red Bank	Southern Ocean Medical Center 1140 Route 72 West Manahawkin

Special Events

Mitchell Vassar Vision Awareness Day Join inspirational keynote speaker Christine Ha as she guides you to uncover your full potential to lead a more fulfilling life. Donald J. Parker, president, Behavioral Health Care Transformation Services, Hackensack Meridian Health, will discuss resiliency.

Nov. 18, 11 a.m.–noon, virtual event



Behavioral Health

Stress and Depression Around the Holidays

Do the holidays make you stressed or feel blue? Our behavioral health expert will discuss strategies on how you can cope during the holiday season.

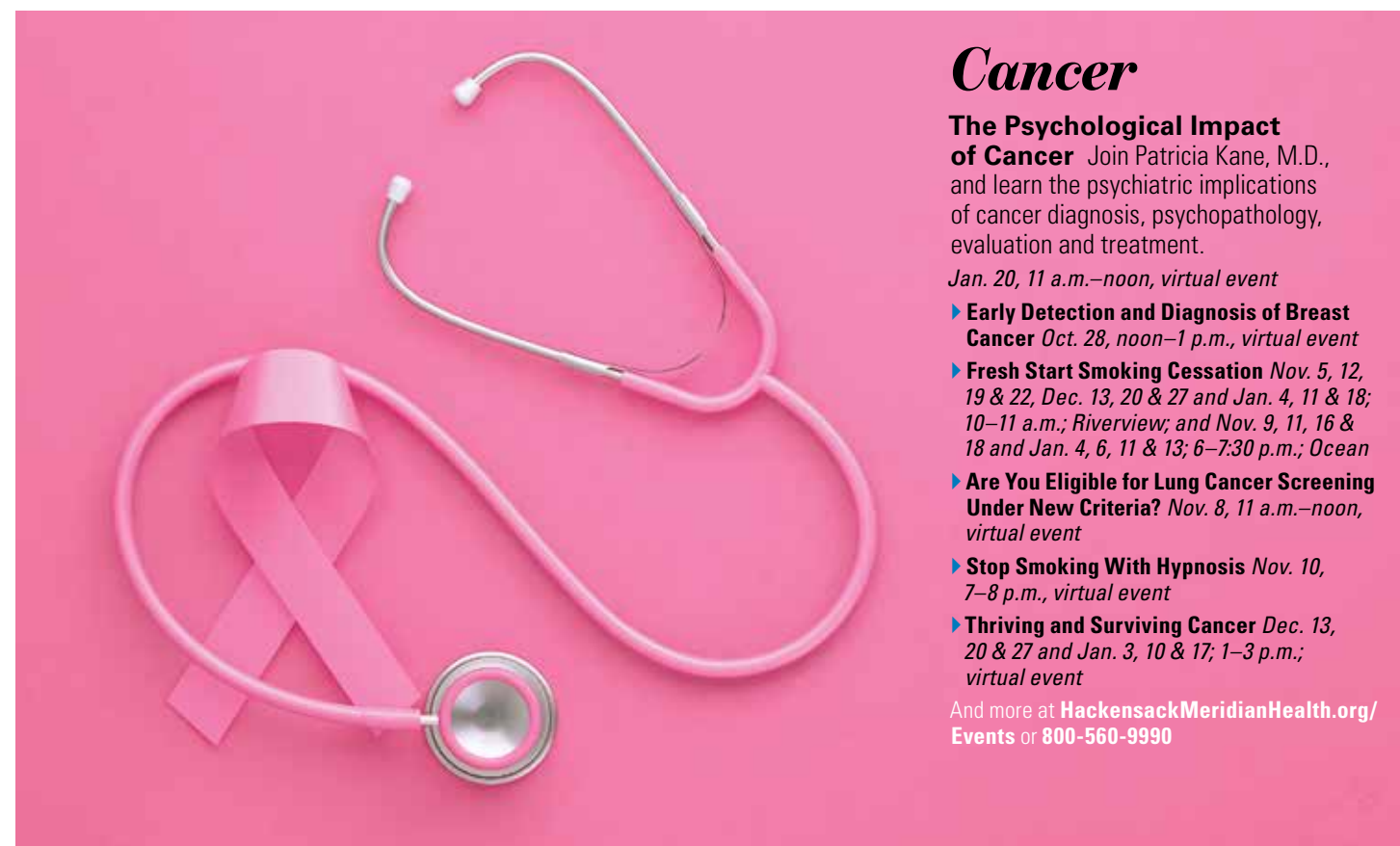
Dec. 8, 6–7 p.m., virtual event

And more at [HackensackMeridianHealth.org/Events](https://www.hackensackmeridianhealth.org/Events) or 800-560-9990

HPV, Cervical Cancer & the Importance of Speaking Up

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the cause of most cases of cervical cancers. Join cervical cancer survivor Amanda Tanay as she shares her personal journey with HPV and cervical cancer, as well as her thoughts on the importance of asking questions and being your own best advocate when it comes to your health.

Jan. 8, 11 a.m.–noon, virtual event



Cancer

The Psychological Impact of Cancer

Join Patricia Kane, M.D., and learn the psychiatric implications of cancer diagnosis, psychopathology, evaluation and treatment.

Jan. 20, 11 a.m.–noon, virtual event

- ▶ **Early Detection and Diagnosis of Breast Cancer** Oct. 28, noon–1 p.m., virtual event
- ▶ **Fresh Start Smoking Cessation** Nov. 5, 12, 19 & 22, Dec. 13, 20 & 27 and Jan. 4, 11 & 18; 10–11 a.m.; Riverview; and Nov. 9, 11, 16 & 18 and Jan. 4, 6, 11 & 13; 6–7:30 p.m.; Ocean
- ▶ **Are You Eligible for Lung Cancer Screening Under New Criteria?** Nov. 8, 11 a.m.–noon, virtual event
- ▶ **Stop Smoking With Hypnosis** Nov. 10, 7–8 p.m., virtual event
- ▶ **Thriving and Surviving Cancer** Dec. 13, 20 & 27 and Jan. 3, 10 & 17; 1–3 p.m.; virtual event

And more at [HackensackMeridianHealth.org/Events](https://www.hackensackmeridianhealth.org/Events) or 800-560-9990

Diabetes

Pre-diabetes: Stopping Diabetes Before It Starts Can making changes prevent you from getting diabetes? Join us for this informative program, and find out the early warning signs and symptoms and changes you can make.

Nov. 9, 11 a.m.–noon, Community Outreach Conference Center, Brick

- ▶ **Complications of Diabetes** Nov. 8, 6–7 p.m., virtual event
- ▶ **Your Thyroid: What Does It Really Do?** Jan. 12, 6–7 p.m., virtual event
- ▶ **Take Control of Your Health: Diabetes** Oct. 25, Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29; 1–3 p.m.; virtual event

And more at [HackensackMeridianHealth.org/Events](https://www.hackensackmeridianhealth.org/Events) or 800-560-9990



Bayshore Medical Center 727 North Beers St., Holmdel	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	Raritan Bay Medical Center 530 New Brunswick Ave. Perth Amboy	Old Bridge Medical Center 1 Hospital Plaza Old Bridge	Riverview Medical Center 1 Riverview Plaza Red Bank	Southern Ocean Medical Center 1140 Route 72 West Manahawkin
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Heart Health



Angioscreen® Learn your risk for heart attack and stroke. Includes carotid artery ultrasound, heart rhythm, blood pressure and screening for abdominal aortic aneurysm and peripheral artery disease (PAD). Receive a color report of your findings, educational materials and a consultation with a registered nurse. Special rate: \$49.95. Registration required. To register, visit HackensackMeridianHealth.org/Events or call 800-560-9990.

- ▶ **Having Chest Pain? Is It Really a Heart Attack?** Nov. 3, 11 a.m.–noon, Community Outreach Conference Center, Brick
- ▶ **Hypertension and You** Nov. 11, 11 a.m.–noon, Community Outreach Conference Center, Manahawkin
- ▶ **Joyful Heart Tea** Dec. 1, 2–3 p.m., Hackensack Meridian Health Village, Jackson
- ▶ **Heart-healthy Eating** Dec. 7, 11 a.m.–noon, Community Outreach Conference Center, Manahawkin
- ▶ **Fitness: Exercising the Right Way** Dec. 13, 1–2 p.m., Community Outreach Conference Center, Brick; Jan. 12, 2–3 p.m., Bayshore
- ▶ **Living With Heart Failure** Jan. 19, 11 a.m.–noon, virtual event

And more at HackensackMeridianHealth.org/Events or 800-560-9990



General Wellness

Take Control of Your Health Six-week evidence-based workshop developed by Stanford University where you will learn practical skills for chronic disease, setting goals, problem solving, meal planning and more. Oct. 29, Nov. 5, 12, 19 & 26 and Dec. 3; 1–3 p.m.; virtual event

- ▶ **You Are What You Eat** Nov. 3, 2–3 p.m., Bayshore
- ▶ **Kundalini Yoga** Nov. 4, 11 a.m.–noon; Dec. 9, 5–6 p.m.; virtual event
- ▶ **Septicemia** Nov. 5, 1–2 p.m., virtual event
- ▶ **Living With Arthritis** Nov. 15, 1–2 p.m., Hackensack Meridian Health Village, Jackson
- ▶ **Weight Loss With Hypnosis** Dec. 1, 7–8 p.m., virtual event
- ▶ **Can Exercise Help Osteoporosis?** Jan. 13, 11 a.m.–noon, Community Outreach Conference Center, Brick
- ▶ **Weight-loss Surgery** Visit HackensackMeridianHealth.org/WeightLoss for a seminar near you.
- ▶ **Support Groups** Visit HackensackMeridianHealth.org/SupportGroups for dates, times and locations.

And more at HackensackMeridianHealth.org/Events or 800-560-9990

Neuroscience

Are You Getting a Good Night's Sleep? Learn about sleep disorders, and gain tips on how to get a better night's sleep, including the latest technologies. Speaker: Adrian Pristas, M.D.

Dec. 7, 6–7 p.m., virtual event

- ▶ **Stroke: How Do I Know if I am at Risk?** Dec. 2, 11 a.m.–noon, Community Outreach Conference Center, Brick
- ▶ **Looking Beyond the Surface: Multiple Sclerosis Care in the Context of Race and Gender Identity** Dec. 4, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., virtual event
- ▶ **Memory Loss vs. Alzheimer's Disease** Dec. 7, 11 a.m.–1 p.m., Bay Avenue Community Center, Stafford
- ▶ **Cannabis and Parkinson's Disease: Is It a Healthy Relationship?** Dec. 9, 10–11 a.m., virtual event
- ▶ **Advances in Multiple Sclerosis** Jan. 21, 11 a.m.–noon, virtual event

And more at HackensackMeridianHealth.org/Events or 800-560-9990



Pediatrics

Safe Sitter Babysitter training for boys and girls ages 11 to 14. The class includes handling emergencies, childcare skills and first aid. Must attend both sessions. Fee: \$25.

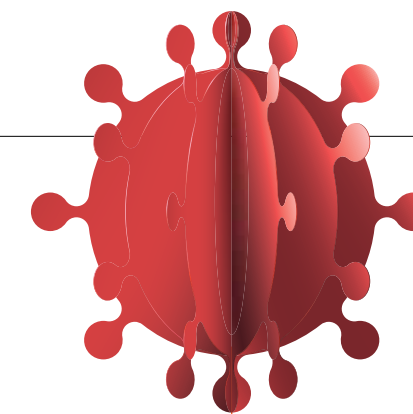
Nov. 13 & 20 and Dec. 28 & 30, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.; and Jan. 18 & 20, 4–6:30 p.m.; virtual event

▶ **Safe @ Home by Safe Sitter** Nov. 4, Dec. 29 & Jan. 15; 10–11:15 a.m.; virtual event

▶ **Kids and Anxiety** Dec. 7, 1–2 p.m., virtual event

▶ **Dangers of Teens and Vaping** Jan. 18, 12:30 p.m., virtual event

And more at HackensackMeridianHealth.org/Events or 800-560-9990



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are taking proactive measures and postponing some of our events. Please visit HackensackMeridianHealth.org/Events or call 800-560-9990 to confirm programs are still on before showing up.

Eileen Masterson, M.D. (left), with David Kountz, M.D. (right).



Funding the Future

With a generous gift to the Jersey Shore University Medical Center Foundation, Eileen Masterson, M.D., is helping a new generation of doctors become patient advocates.

On January 1, 2020, geriatric medicine specialist **Eileen Masterson, M.D.**, celebrated an important milestone: After more than 30 years of service, she retired from the medical staff at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center**. As she was ending her career, however, she couldn't help but think of the young doctors who were just beginning theirs.

Anxious to give back, Dr. Masterson resolved to spend part of her retirement helping medical students, with whom she'd worked closely during her distinguished career. Specifically, she wanted to help them prepare for their national medical exams alongside internist **David Kountz, M.D.**, co-chief academic officer and vice president, academic affairs, at Jersey Shore. Then the pandemic happened. Unable to volunteer with students in person, Dr. Masterson had to find another way to support them.

"On discussing my financial situation with my advisor, I realized I didn't need the income I would be required to take from my IRA as a required minimum

distribution in 2022," recalls Dr. Masterson, whose advisor suggested taking that as a qualified charitable distribution to the charity of her choice. "I wanted to do something that would benefit residents at Jersey Shore, since I know many of them have a large student debt at a time when they are also supporting growing families. I reached out to Dr. Kountz about how to help these young doctors."

So was born the Eileen Masterson, M.D., and David Kountz, M.D., Scholarship Fund, which, beginning in 2022, will award a \$10,000 scholarship every year to four first-year residents at Jersey Shore following the successful completion of their first year of training. During her lifetime, the scholarship will be funded with an annual distribution of \$40,000 from Dr. Masterson's IRA; after her lifetime, the IRA's full contents will pass to the Jersey Shore Foundation, to which Dr. Masterson has pledged a grand total of \$1.1 million.

"I have had the good fortune to work with residents of all disciplines—medical,

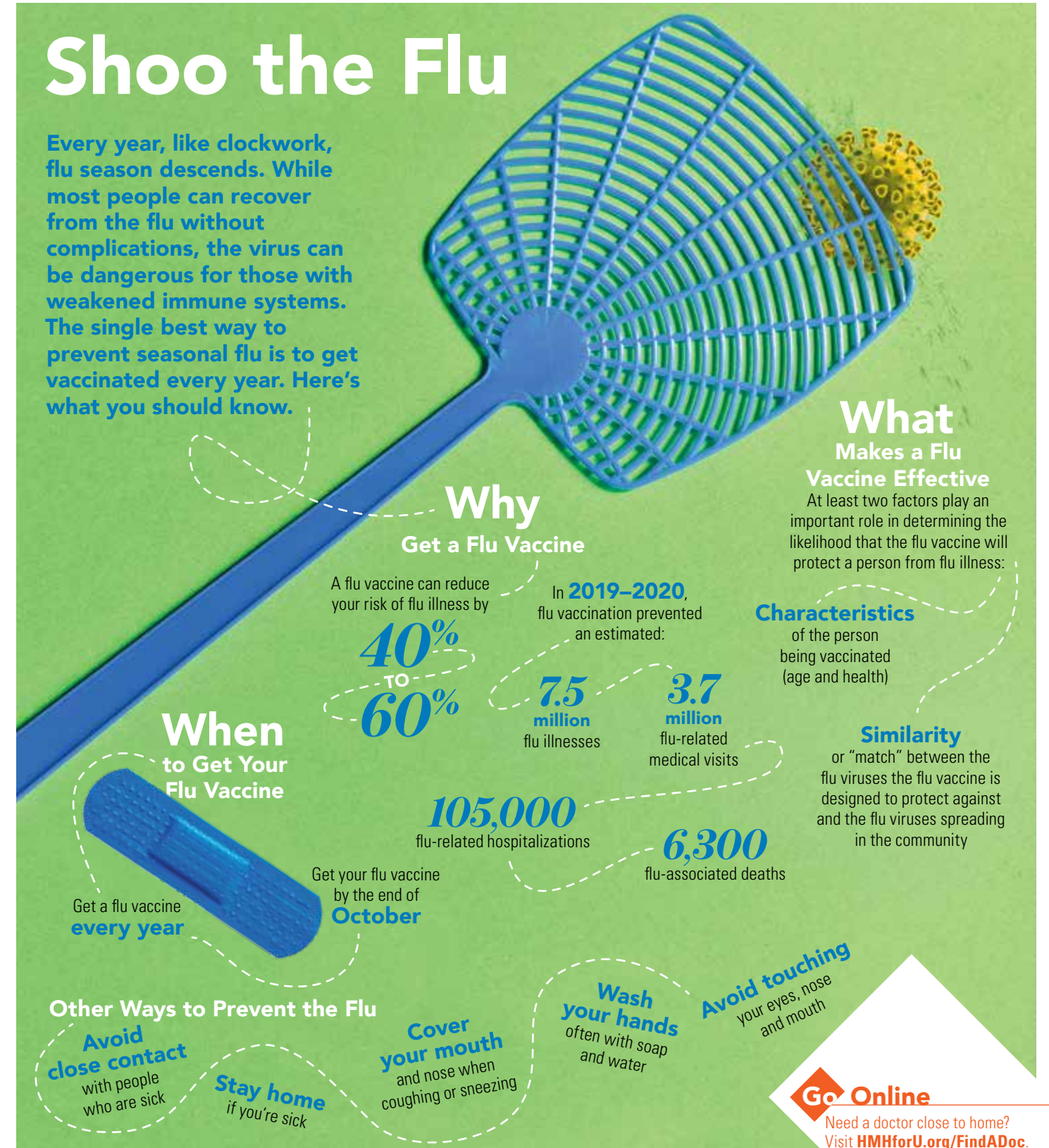
pediatric, dental, OBGYN and surgical—during my years at Jersey Shore, and I know they are dedicated to patient care. The residency program makes this hospital great," Dr. Masterson says. "I can help now and into the future."

"Dr. Masterson embodies humanism and professionalism," says Dr. Kountz, who donated \$10,000 to the scholarship fund. "This scholarship is a wonderful testament to a great physician and teacher to encourage more young physicians who complete their training at Jersey Shore to follow in Dr. Masterson's footsteps."

Jackie Bartley-Oxley, vice president of gift planning for Hackensack Meridian Health Foundation, adds: "We are extremely grateful to Dr. Masterson for her wonderful generosity and for allowing us to celebrate her philanthropic spirit today while knowing that her legacy will impact so many generations of medical residents in the future. We hope that Dr. Masterson's creative giving through a retirement asset might inspire others to do the same. She is an extraordinary person." 🌟

Shoo the Flu

Every year, like clockwork, flu season descends. While most people can recover from the flu without complications, the virus can be dangerous for those with weakened immune systems. The single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get vaccinated every year. Here's what you should know.



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Source: Centers for Disease and Control Prevention



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COVID Recovery Center

Our COVID Recovery Center provides medical support to the hundreds of thousands of recovered COVID-19 patients in New Jersey and the surrounding tri-state area as they continue on their path to health. If you or a loved one needs medical support after recovering from COVID-19, call **833-565-0405** to schedule a physician screening and receive a customized treatment plan. Learn more at [HMHforU.org/COVIDCenter](https://www.hmhforu.org/COVIDCenter).

What to Know About COVID-19 Vaccine Boosters

COVID-19 booster shots are now being offered. Hackensack Meridian *Health*'s chief physician executive, **Daniel Varga, M.D.**, explains who may need a booster, what it means to be immunocompromised and what type of booster you should get at [HMHforU.org/Booster](https://www.hmhforu.org/Booster).



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As the state's largest, most comprehensive health network, Hackensack Meridian *Health* is made up of 7,000 physicians, 17 hospitals and more than 500 locations. For a complete listing of our hospitals, services and locations, visit [Hackensack-MeridianHealth.org/Locations](https://www.hackensack-meridianhealth.org/Locations).