



Autumn happenings at the UPMC Western Maryland Wellness Center

Free fitness class every Monday at 4:30 p.m. on the ground floor of the Allegany County Health Department. Join certified personal trainer Mike Browning for a full-body workout. There is space to socially distance. This class is for all ability levels and is a hybrid of resistance and cardiovascular training designed to burn fat and build strength.

SMART Recovery every Thursday from noon-1 p.m. on-line. This is a self-empowering addiction recovery support group. SMART Recovery can help people recover from all types of addiction and addictive behaviors, including: alcoholism, drug abuse, drug addiction, substance abuse, gambling addiction, and food addiction. This is not a spiritual based program but a self-empowering, abstinence-based, self-help support group for both men and women.

Building Better Caregivers is a seven-week course for caregivers of a loved one with dementia, PTSD, brain-related injury, and more. Registration is ongoing. Respite care funds are available to qualified participants. Please contact us for more details.

Health Coaching. Have you tried to make changes to your lifestyle only to find yourself falling back into the same routine and not-so-healthy habits? A certified health coach can help! Health coaching services are free.

Coffee with Carey is coming this October! A virtual morning mind body skills group. For more information, please contact Carey Moffatt at moffattcl@upmc.edu

A Free Yoga Class will be held each Wednesday at 11 a.m. at the South Cumberland Library. Join this beginner-friendly class to experience how gentle stretching and mindful breathing can make you feel better fast.

Stress Less for Better Health. Join Pam Jan for an eight week journey to learn ways to stay calm amidst chaos by applying breath work, meditation, guided imagery, visualization, and movement skills. Classes held Mondays from September 12 - October 31 from 2 - 4 p.m. Contact us for more details.

Chair Yoga is offered by UPMC Western Maryland every Monday at the Gilchrist Museum of the Arts at 104 Washington Street in Cumberland at 2:30 p.m. Please register to attend in person or online via ZOOM by contacting Christina Collins-Smith Nicolas at collinsmithcd@upmc.edu. Group yoga sessions for special events or regular groups are available to be scheduled as part of UPMC Western Maryland's mission to support wellness in our community.

Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) is a lifestyle change program to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. Forming healthy habits can be hard without a support system, so we are here to give you the encouragement you need to eat better, increase your physical activity, and lose weight – all of which can delay or prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes. New classes are forming.

Diabetes self management training. This program is for people living with diabetes. It can help you learn skills to manage your diabetes more effectively by checking blood sugar regularly, eating healthy food, being active, taking medicines as prescribed, and handling stress.

To register for any of these opportunities, give us a call at 240-964-8424 or Email leesm9@upmc.edu

Glorious fall

Ahh, Fall! As we embark on the last days of summer (as sad as that may be) I cannot help but find myself dreaming of all things pumpkin spice and everything nice!

The leaves will begin to change, days shorten, nights cool, and that faint smell of campfire lingers in the air.

For me, fall is a glorious time to admire mother nature's beauty, slow down just a bit, and experience letting go. Just as the trees lose their leaves, we can also lose what doesn't serve us at this time.

Taking care of ourselves is not selfish - it is essential. We cannot pour from an empty cup, so that is why self-care should never be considered selfish.

Take some time to wander in the cool breeze and crunchy leaves and dive deep within to discover what you truly need to live your life to



Jen Thomas

its fullest potential.

Perhaps you've been putting off a new hobby, reading a book that's been sitting on your nightstand, taking a road trip, calling a loved one, starting a new exercise plan, and the list goes on. I'd love to hear what you discover within.

In the meantime, please enjoy this edition full of amazing articles that cover all dimensions of health and wellness.

To keep things fresh and exciting we have added some

"It's the first day of autumn! A time of hot chocolatey mornings, toasty marshmallow evenings, and, best of all, leaping into leaves!"
- Winnie the Pooh

new articles this time. The re-ignited Wellness Ambassador program shines the light on some amazing volunteers.

If you are looking for some inspiration, be sure to check out "Heathers Story". We are gearing up this fall with LOADS of free classes and programs, so make sure to take a peek at Fall Happenings at the UPMC Wellness Center.

And, finally, if you are enjoying this newsletter, please reach out with your email address and we will add you

to our mailing list!

Wishing you an enjoyable, beautiful, and a pumpkiny-spice-nice fall season! We'll see you again in December with our winter edition!

In happiness and health,

Jen

Heather's journey

A change in habits and our diabetes prevention program paved the way

Have you been wanting to lose weight, be healthier, and feel more confident? I wanted all those things as well and I made it happen. I started my health journey a year ago because of my job. The people I work with inspired me to do better and to set a good example for my kids.

As I started to work out it was not easy. I weighed 250 lbs. and stand 5 foot 3 inches tall. This put me at a BMI of 44.3 which is dangerous. This put me in the obese category, and with a strong family history of cancer and heart disease, this put me more at risk for many issues and a higher risk of mortality at a younger age.

Many people say they do not know where to start and I was the same. I had family that started working out more, so I asked them and some of my co-workers for advice. It was a slow process, but I kept pushing through the pain, sweat, tears, and feeling sick. I cut soda completely out of my diet, stopped eating fried foods, and started to meal prep on Sundays.

Week by week I started to see a change and my clothes were falling off me before I knew it. This was such an awesome moment in my journey, as was when my wonderful coworkers recognized me for all my hard work. I was awarded a health role model award from UPMC. I love that my journey has inspired so many to take that first step themselves.

I still had not achieved my goal of where I wanted to be, so I decided learn more about our diabetes prevention program

(DPP) that we are pushing out to the community, so I joined one of our classes.

I work at UPMC Western Maryland as a project analyst in the Population Health Department. We are part of a large initiative to create and expand diabetes education for diabetics and prediabetics. We hope to reduce obesity in the county, increase access to food, transportation, and other types of assistance.

Once I joined the DPP class I had more people to hold me accountable with my activity tracking and weigh-ins each week. It has really helped to keep me motivated, watch starch intake and extra sugars that I did not need - like in my coffee creamer.

Just like in my own journey to a healthier life, DPP emphasizes this is a lifestyle change and it takes a long time to make lasting life changes. This does not happen overnight. It is not a fad diet, it is a lifestyle change that you will stick with and improve your overall health.

I am now 8 weeks in with my DPP class and I have used what I've learned to make small changes to my routine to help me stick with it.

If you do not know your risk for diabetes but are overweight, over 40, have a family history of diabetes, or history of gestational diabetes, I encourage you to check out our site and take the prediabetes risk test. Millions of Americans today have prediabetes and one in three do not know it.

Do not wait until you cannot turn back the clock. Start your health journey now!



Heather now, above, and below, before her journey began.





The many benefits of wellness coaching

Just what is wellness coaching? This is a common question that many people have while seeking out ways to live a healthier lifestyle. It makes sense because wellness coaching is a very new health worker field. In this article I will talk about what specifically a health coach does, how they can help you, where can you find them, and what they are not.

First, I think it is important to define what is “wellness?” It’s not as easy as you may think as there are many different facets to wellness. Many people will generally think wellness is related to exercise and nutrition alone. Also, there are many models that exist if you do a simple Google search.

To simplify what wellness is we will focus on a widely accepted model that comes from the NWI (National Wellness Institute). According to the NWI, there are six dimensions of wellness; physical, social, intellectual, occupational, spiritual, and emotional. Understanding the dimensions of wellness is critical in evaluating each individual’s full potential. The goal of wellness coaching is not to achieve perfection in these areas but that each person should aim to find a balance which improves their life and happiness.

What is a Wellness Coach?

There are a growing number of organizations that are certifying wellness coaches but there is only one national certifying body which is NBHWC (National Board for Health & Wellness Coaching). The NBHWC maintains the highest standards for coach training programs and testing in the industry and a wellness coach that has obtained these credentials is referred to as an NBC-HWC (National Board Certified Health & Wellness Coach.)

Wellness coaches may come from various health field backgrounds, such as personal trainers, nurse practitioners, social workers, dieticians,



Mike Browning

health educators, etc.

Regardless of their background each coach will possess skills and knowledge in the following areas: behavior change theories and strategies, motivation, health education, accountability, and active listening, among others.

Most importantly a wellness coach understands that you are the expert of your life and helps you to create specific goals in a non-judgmental environment.

Generally, wellness coaching occurs on a weekly basis, but this can be adjusted to the needs of each client. When you begin wellness coaching you and your coach will discover your personal vision for wellness, create specific long-term goals, and make weekly plans that are relative to your personal vision.

Some common wellness goals coaches help with to create a strategy that fits your life are regular exercise, exercise planning, stress management, creating support systems, mindful eating habits, etc. Through this process you and your coach will develop a supportive professional relationship that will foster growth in your chosen areas.

Here are some typical discussions that will occur in a basic session:

- Tell me the best thing that happened to you this week and how did that impact your health and wellness?

What did you learn?

- Let’s talk about your specific goals; what was most successful?
- What were your barriers for the week and what strategies can you use to overcome them? Maybe you can’t at the moment, so is there something we can work on that fits you better right now?
- What lies in the week ahead, what can we work on that will make you feel most successful?

Wellness coaches can be useful for any person trying to maximize their full potential but there are limitations for coaches and times that coaching may not fit into your life.

Wellness coaches are typically not doctors, therapists, or dieticians. If you are struggling with a chronic condition a coach may be limited in their knowledge to help.

However, if a doctor or dietician gives you specific goals a coach may be able to work with these professionals to help you develop strategies on how to incorporate changes into your life and hold you accountable.

A coach may also be able to work with you on a week-to-week basis incorporating these changes. If you are unable to make changes due to a mental health condition such as depression or anxiety, you need to start by seeking help from a therapist or doctor.

If you are interested in making small sustainable lifestyle changes that will enhance your life, please seek out a wellness coach. At UPMC Western Maryland we have four highly qualified wellness coaches.

We work with all members of the community free of charge. You don’t need a referral, just call the Community Health and Wellness Department at 240-964-8424.

UPMC Western Maryland Diabetes and Nutrition Services

We are here to help you manage your Type 1 and 2 Diabetes

Diabetes Facts

• **Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States**

• **37.3 million U.S. adults have diabetes, and one in five don’t know they have it**

• **Diabetes is the number one cause of kidney failure, lower-limb amputations, and adult blindness**

• **People who have diabetes are twice as likely to have heart disease or a stroke**

Diabetes Self-Management Education Services, Living Well with Diabetes - Living Well with Diabetes is a diabetes self-management program with interactive group education. Individual education is also an option. In this ten-hour program participants will work with a certified diabetes educator, nurse, registered dietitian, pharmacist, and a wellness coach. The program is offered monthly and covers many aspects of diabetes self-management to promote self-care behaviors for effective self-management and blood sugar control. You are welcome to bring a family member or support person with you.

Class sessions are available in two options: one 6-hour class with two additional 2-hour classes or five 2-hour classes.

Medicare allows ten hours of Diabetes Self-Management (Education and Support) Training the initial year and two hours of training each year thereafter. It is also a covered benefit for most commercial insurances.

Medical Nutrition Therapy is provided by a registered dietitian. It is an intensive, focused, and comprehensive nutrition therapy service. It involves an individualized nutrition assessment with continued reinforcement and follow up to meet nutrition goals.

Medicare allows three hours of Medical Nutrition Therapy the initial year and two hours of training each year thereafter. It is also a covered benefit for most commercial insurance.

Diabetic Nurse Practitioner - Gelila Ritchey, CRNP can collaborate with your Primary Care Provider to help manage your medications related to diabetes. Her office is located in the Center for Clinical Resources.

Contact Us - A physician/provider referral is required to attend. For more information about our diabetes resources call the UPMC Western Maryland Center for Clinical Resources at 240-964-8787 or visit UPMCWesternMaryland.com.

Healthy Aging

Maryland Community for Life is an innovative program developed by the Maryland Department of Aging to support older adults as they age at home.

The Community for Life program provides a package of services that make it comfortable and convenient to age at home to Marylanders over the age of 60. The program’s services are designed to prevent the predictable challenges of aging that can require admittance into a high level of care facility, such as a nursing home or assisted living facility.

Three core services define the Community for Life program: home maintenance, service navigation, and transportation. Please note actual services offered may vary from juris-

diction to jurisdiction.

Individuals are required to pay a monthly membership fee in order to receive Community for Life services.

Membership fees vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Each CFLSM provider has committed to providing subsidies for residents who cannot pay the full membership fee.

For more information, contact: Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, 301-783-1770



Laughter is the best medicine!

What type of bee can’t make up it’s mind? **A may bee!**

What do you call a backwards hopping bunny? **A receding hare line.**

Why did the apple pie cry? **Its peelings were hurt.**



Leaving a legacy

When serving our patients and staff, we often hear people say, "I just wish I could do life over." So many wonder what they will be remembered for and try to impact their families while they are still healthy and able.

We can choose to be a good influence by living our lives for the Lord and trusting HIM with the results. Our fingerprints cover a wide spectrum of our lives and it may be the fingerprint of honesty or the fingerprint of prayer. Whatever character trait you are trying to teach, nothing can impact someone unless it has changed your life. You must be the one who has changed and demonstrated a life altering decision.

The Fact is true, the imprint of my life will remain for eternity. I meet people every weekend when I am speaking at churches in the community that are tired of having little to no influence in their family. They choose to leave a legacy. They choose to be driven with purpose to allow God to use their life to show love and compassion for the broken lives around us.

A blind man was once seen walking down the sidewalk at night with his flashlight shining. Someone asked him why, being blind, he carried a flashlight. "Because" he said, "I don't want anyone to stumble because of me."

What mark do you leave behind? When I do funerals, I hear the memories we share at each service and the great experiences of the loved one. Some are humorous and some are tender, but people remember their legacy.

Live while you can influence others for good. It's not about the money or the material things we leave behind, that's not the issue. Legacy is caring for broken people while we have a chance to influence them. "It is required in stewards that one be found faithful." (1 Corinthians 4:2)

God expects us to use things and appreciate and love people, not use people and love things. Maybe it's time for a life change for you. God can change your life and give you purpose. In what specific ways are you leaving behind positive or negative fingerprints in the lives of your family, friends, co-workers and community?

Remember these lyrics by Steve Green:

"After all our hope and dreams have come and gone, And our children sift through all we've left behind, May the clues that they discover and the memories they uncover become the light that leads them to the road we each must find; O may all who come behind us find us faithful; May the fire of our devotion light their way. May the footprints that we leave lead them to believe, And the lives we live inspire them to obey. O may all who come behind us find us faithful.

Living to impact others,
Pastor Bruce



Bruce and Judy McBride

Self-care with Carey

September is National Suicide Prevention Month

Suicide Myths and Facts

Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in the United States. Talking about suicide helps eliminate misunderstandings and reduces the stigma associated with suicide. Removing myths is one way to help everyone recognize those who are at risk and provide the help that is needed.

Myth: If you ask a person if they are suicidal, you could put the idea in their mind.

Fact: The opposite is true. This is one of the most harmful myths. Talking openly and expressing concern allows the person experiencing suicidal thoughts to feel less lonely and/or isolated. Also, this opens the door for planning for safety and support.

Myth: People who talk about suicide are seeking attention and are not serious about killing themselves.

Fact: Suicidal thoughts must be taken seriously. Often this is a cry for help and an opportunity to offer a lifeline.

Myth: I cannot do anything for someone who is suicidal.

Fact: You can do a lot, starting with your openness, your behaviors, and your language. A person with suicidal thoughts or attempting suicide may not see any other solution from intense emotional pain. They may not be thinking clearly. Learn the facts and the five-step action plan to offer life-saving help. Please see the flyer below for more information.

Sometimes, first aid is not a **bandage**, or **CPR**, or the **Heimlich**, or calling **911**.

Sometimes, first aid is **YOU!**

Someone you know could be experiencing a mental illness or crisis. You can help them.

You are more likely to encounter someone — friend, family member, coworker, neighbor, or member of the community — in an emotional or mental crisis than someone having a heart attack. Mental Health First Aid teaches a 5-step action plan to offer initial help to people with the signs and symptoms of a mental illness or in a crisis, and connect them with the appropriate professional, peer, social, or self-help care. Anyone can take the 8-hour Mental Health First Aid course — first responders, students, teachers, leaders of faith communities, human resources professionals, and caring citizens.

Sometimes, the best first aid is you. Take the course, save a life, Strengthen your community.

UPMC Western Maryland offers a free Mental Health First Aid course. The next training is on Wednesday, September 14th from 8am to 4:30pm. The training will take place online. For more information, please call Carey Moffatt at 240-964-8418 or email moffattcl@upmc.edu.

NEVER FORGOTTEN

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND MEMORIAL WALK

WE WALK in memory.
WE WALK for hope.
WE WALK for change.
WE WALK for awareness.
WE WALK because we care.
WE WALK to honor or support a loved one.

Sunday, September 25, 2022
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Rocky Gap State Park

Schedule of Events:
1:00 p.m. Opening Ceremony/Speakers
1:30 p.m. Optional Walk
2:15 p.m. Closing Ceremony

Pre-registration is preferred.
Contact UPMC Western Maryland Community Health and Wellness at 240-964-8424.

Sponsored by Allegany County Local Behavioral Health Authority, Consumer Advisory Board, UPMC Western Maryland, and Rocky Gap State Park.

Sounding the alarm

Most of us know exercise and good nutrition are key factors in living a healthy life. A third component of healthy living, sleep, is ignored much of the time.

I've written about sleep before, but recently became intrigued to take a deeper dive when sleep deprivation crept into my life, and I found the same is true for many of my clients.

Starting with the basics, I wanted to know how much we need, what makes a good night's sleep happen and what are our brains up to while we sleep?

The amount of sleep we need to achieve our greatest performance depends on our age. Some people function well on the lower end of ranges while others need every minute and maybe a little more.

Believe it or not, a good night's sleep begins when we awake in the morning. That may sound counterintuitive but our internal circadian timing system (CTS), or sleep cycle, is impacted by the amount of sunlight we get during the day. The



Pam Jan

more we get the better we sleep.

This circadian timing system (along with the scheduled release of hormones it regulates), helps control digestion, immune system function, blood pressure, fat utilization, appetite, and mental energy.

It is regulated by a small group of nerve cells found in the hypothalamus (master gland of the hormonal system) which is located in our brain.

Acting as the master clock, the hypothalamus controls our hunger, thirst, fatigue, body temperature and sleep cycle.

How does it work? Going a little deeper, but staying

out of the weeds, sunlight is the signal for your hypothalamus and corresponding organs and glands to "wake up" and be alert.

Hormones serotonin, melatonin and cortisol are big hitters in keeping rhythms in sync and sunlight is critical to their functioning. Serotonin, the feel-good hormone, is mostly located in our gastrointestinal tract and is influenced by diet, exercise and magically the natural sunlight we get. It sets us up for a good night's sleep. Melatonin doesn't actually put you to sleep, but it does improve our sleep quality and is heavily affected by light exposure. Cortisol naturally increases in the morning, peaks mid-day, and lowers in the evening, setting us up for sleep.

Alan Christianson, best-selling author, states, "Cortisol is an adrenal hormone that manages your body's daily rhythm. Think of it as your built-in coffeepot. You wake up in the morning because your adrenals just made a fresh batch of it.

You fall asleep at night because they shut it off." How about we all start drinking ours in the sunshine!

While we sleep, our brains are hard at work cleaning up what came in during the day. Scientists have found that our brain has its own unique waste disposal system called the glymphatic system. Like the lymphatic system in our bodies, it is responsible for removing waste to make room for new growth and development. Removing/recycling dead cells, toxins and waste is critical to brain function and sleep deprivation is harmful to the process.

I hope you are starting see how your body's circadian timing system works and the important role it plays in keeping you healthy.

When it comes to sleep, you literally must have your head in the game! Join me this winter for part two of this feature when I'll dive into the value of sleep and consequences of sleep deprivation.

Until then... I wish you sweet dreams!

Do you LOVE Real Well?

Send us your email address so we can add you to the mailing list!

Shoot Jen a message at thomasj39@upmc.edu

You will receive the quarterly edition delivered straight to your inbox!



Fall
-in-
LOVE

with these
fun recipes



Interested in working
with a dietitian like
Rachel Sproat? Call 240-
964-8416 to schedule an
appointment.

As the leaves begin to change and you start to pull out sweaters and flannels from the back of your wardrobe, it is time to change up your menu too! The fall season is the perfect time to enjoy the abundance of fresh and deep colored fruits and vegetables (like apples, pears, sweet potatoes, and squash). Try these fall inspired recipes that reflect the beautiful colors and warm flavors of the season.

Savory Sausage and Sweet Potato Breakfast Hash

Perfect for weekend brunch or weekday breakfast prep! I am a big fan of the plate method and this is often overlooked with breakfast. This meal is an excellent example of that with all the food groups.

Ingredients

- 1 lb ground sausage (We love our local pasture-raised pork from Hickory Nut Gap)
- 1 sweet potato, large, diced
- 2 bell peppers, deseeded and diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 bunch kale, destemmed and chopped • Can also use frozen kale
- Handful fresh basil, chopped
- 1 bunch green onion, for garnish
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Optional: Egg and avocado

Instructions

1. Start by cooking sausage in a large skillet over medium heat, breaking up into small crumbles as it cooks. Once fully cooked, remove from skillet and set aside in a bowl.
2. Add oil to skillet if needed (I just left some fat from the sausage), then add in diced onion and saute for 2-3 min until translucent. Add in minced garlic and saute for an additional minute.
3. Add in remaining veggies (except green onion); cook until softened (~10 min), stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.
4. Add cooked sausage back to skillet, stir everything together and garnish with green onion before serving. (Optional: Top with egg and avocado)

<https://claranorfleet.com/recipe/savory-sausage->



Butternut Squash Pumpkin Soup

This healthy, creamy soup features autumn produce with a hint of sweetness from cinnamon & nutmeg. Easily made dairy-free, and makes great leftovers!

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil • 1 medium yellow onion (chopped)
- 1 Tbsp minced garlic • 20 oz frozen butternut squash (or ~3 lb butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cubed) • 1/2 cup pumpkin puree
- 1 Tbsp ghee (or butter, or olive oil) • 1 cup low sodium broth (vegetable or chicken broth) • 1/4 tsp cinnamon • 1/8 tsp nutmeg (plus additional for topping) • 1 Tbsp maple syrup • 1/4 tsp salt (plus additional to taste)
- 1.5 cup oat milk (or unsweetened almond milk, or milk of choice)

Instructions

1. Add 1 Tbsp of extra virgin olive oil to a large dutch oven over medium heat and add chopped onion and minced garlic. Cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring until garlic is fragrant and onion is translucent.
2. Add butternut squash (okay to add frozen), pumpkin puree, stir and cook for another 2-3 minutes.
3. Add ghee, broth, maple syrup, cinnamon and nutmeg, salt and stir. Continue to cook over medium/medium-high heat and simmer for about 5-8 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Let mixture cool for about 8-10 minutes before transferring to a large blender or large food processor. Blend until smooth or reaches desired consistency.
5. Add back to dutch oven and continue to cook over low-medium heat. Add oat milk and stir, cooking for an additional few minutes.
6. Remove from heat, and serve immediately. Sprinkle with a dash of nutmeg and fresh cracked sea salt on top. I recommend serving with some toasted French bread / baguette. Enjoy!

<https://wellnessforthewin.com/butternut-squash-and-pumpkin-soup/>



Apple Nachos

This easy, no bake recipe is a great after school snack or after dinner treat. Pick your favorite apple and get creative with the toppings! Other ideas besides what is listed below includes shredded coconut or slivered almonds

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon lemon juice • 2 medium apples, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoon sunflower seeds, unsalted and shelled • 1/4 cup dried cranberries or raisins, unsweetened • 1 tablespoon mini chocolate chips • 2 tablespoon creamy peanut butter
- 1 and 1/2 tablespoon honey

Instructions

1. Add lemon juice to sliced apples to reduce browning.
2. Spread apple slices on a plate.
3. Top apple slices with sunflower seeds, dried cranberries, and mini chocolate chips.
4. Combine peanut butter and honey in a small, microwaveable safe container. Microwave 20 seconds and stir until smooth. Be careful when removing from microwave.
5. Drizzle peanut butter sauce over apple slices.

<https://eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu/eat/recipes/apple-nachos>





Warm up to safely heating your home

Soon, the leaves will begin to fall, and we will feel a definite chill in the air. Furnaces will be turned on, and fireplaces and wood stoves will be placed in service for another heating season.



Sue Lee

Now is a good time to check your home heating systems and other heating equipment to make sure they are in safe and efficient operating condition.

The National Fire Protection Association recommends the following safety tips to keep you and your family safe while enjoying the warm comfort of your home.

- Heating equipment and chimneys should be cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Hire a qualified professional to install heating equipment according to local codes, regulations and manufacturer's instructions.
- All fuel burning equipment (such as wood burning stoves) should be installed by a qualified professional and should be vented to the outside to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Keep combustible materials at least

- three feet away from any heat source.
- Maintain a three-foot "kid-free-zone" around open fires and space heaters.
- Always turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or before you go to bed.
- Use the appropriate fuel specified by the manufacturer for fuel burning space heaters.
- Ensure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container, and the container should be stored a safe distance away from your home.
- Test smoke alarms at least once a month.
- Install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms to avoid CO poisoning.
- Columbia Gas of Maryland advises if you smell gas, don't smoke, light a match, open the windows, or do anything that could cause a spark (like use a phone, light switch, appliance or flashlight). Do not start your car or use your garage door to exit your home. Leave your home immediately and call 9-1-1 and the gas company. The emergency contact number for Columbia Gas of Maryland is 1-888-460-4332.

Have a happy and safe Autumn season!

Facts about high blood pressure

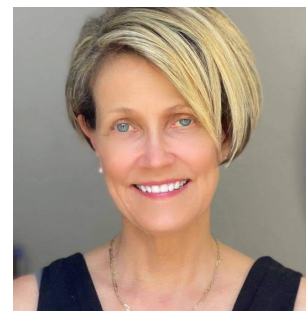
High blood pressure is a major risk factor for stroke. If you have high blood pressure, you are not alone. Nearly half of American adults have high blood pressure and many don't even know they have it. The best way to know if you have high blood pressure it is to have your blood pressure checked.

How Can I Control my high blood pressure?

- **Don't smoke and avoid second-hand smoke**
- **Reach and maintain a healthy weight**
- **Eat a healthy low in sodium and saturated and trans-fat.**
- **Eat fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, poultry, fish, and nuts.**
- **Be physically active for at least 150 minutes per week.**
- **Take all medicine as prescribed.**

Active meditation

In these majestic Allegany Mountains, the crisp fresh air of autumn cleans and refreshes, clearing the mugginess of summer, offering a sense of renewal and balance as we begin to reappoint our focus on the final months of the year.



Christina Collins-Smith Nicolas

It is a beautiful time for active meditations like walking - treating all our senses to the variant hums of nature - the sounds of the birds, curious deer, darting rabbits, whistling trains - the variegated orange, red, and yellow leaves first heralded from treetops drop to blanket the earth and urge us further on to embrace what is to come.

And, oh, the loveliness of being able to be in the moment! To simply walk - to be a present witness - to be in that space of active breath, savoring it like a precious gift.

It is in these moments, walking or sitting quietly, that we are able to engage in active meditation - a conscious refreshment for the mind that can, even if just for a few moments, help to calm our energy and refocus the mind with a little treat that will ultimately make the rest of the day more balanced, productive and, yes, happier.

The fact is, that while we cannot control everything, we can control much of how we feel and act. Making the choice to practice self-care can mean many things - being mindful about what we eat, when we sleep, how we exercise, as well as the relationships we nurture, the careers we choose, the way we accept gifts and challenges, the way we react to blessings and grief.

Meditation is a life skill that can help to "quiet the mind." This does not mean mysteriously emptying our head of all thoughts, but simply allowing the noisy busyness of the day to gently wait, allowing those thoughts to step away from present concern for a few moments of relaxation, renewal, and a sense of calm awareness that can help to bring everyday tasks and long-term goals together in a more connected and balanced way.

When we give ourselves this gift of centered focus we create a sense of wellbeing - an opportunity to recharge our energy and go forward in our day and seasons with an ability to be less stressed, happier and more

healthy.

Of course, even a practiced meditator will have those pesky busy thoughts try to invade such quiet moments. When they do, simply acknowledge them, let them go and gently refocus your mind on your breath. Follow it's inhale and exhale through the body. Notice how it feels in the moment. Be consciously aware of the gift of breath, then continue this flow noticing all your senses. How

does your skin feel in the breeze of the environment? Are there distinct smells tickling your nose? What do you hear - the tick of a clock, the whir of a fan? Can you hear the sound of your own heartbeat? You might raise your arms in a stretch, give yourself a hug, and smile.

As is often said with yoga and meditation is that it is "a practice not a perfect." There really is no wrong way to meditate. It is always beneficial, even if brief. So, if you are already tapping into this powerful, free life skill - wonderful! If not, do yourself a favor and try it. You might find that you feel more focused and less stressed throughout the day and may even sleep a bit better at night.

If you are looking for direction regarding meditation, there are several excellent public apps that are easy to access. Here are a just a few of many: mindoasis.org, calm.com, headspace.com.

Also, stay tuned to UPMC Western Maryland's Real Well, and look for the new beWellnessArts.net site to launch this September, which will list many local opportunities for onsite and digital meditations and yoga sessions.

Remember that a moment of meditation can be just that - a moment to reconnect with yourself in the middle of a busy day, or it can be longer - a 15-minute walk in nature, relaxing in a comfy chair, or laying on a yoga mat focusing your mind on a simple thought that brings a sense of serenity to ground you. If you have any questions about meditation, please contact me at collinssmithcd@upmc.edu. I would enjoy hearing from you! Meantime, I wish you a beautiful autumn season, and many lovely moments of meditative refreshment.

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)	and/or	DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 - 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 - 139	or	80 - 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

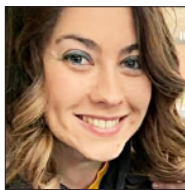


Let's be grateful this fall!

We are entering that time of year again – the kids go back to school and we are so GRATEFUL! Other people get to chase and corral them for most of the day now! But, as we sit back and drink our coffee in peace, transitions can be hard for kids and they may need some help settling back in to a regular routine.

One way to help create a routine and give kids a positive way to start the day is to create a gratitude jar. Encourage them to think of things they are grateful for and add one to it every morning before heading to school.

Being grateful and sharing these things



Brittany Friend

with ourselves and others can help us to release negative toxins from our bodies and develop more positive outlooks on life. It can help us to be happier in general and create better social support systems. This can be especially helpful for kids who are facing new classrooms, new teachers, and new subject matter.

By focusing each day on one thing they are grateful for, they can start the day with a positive mood and go to school ready to have a great day!

So how do you make a gratitude jar? Here are some easy steps to follow.

1. Find any canning jar, spaghetti sauce jar, candle jar etc. The bigger, the better.
2. Find magazines, draw pictures, write words. This is the time for kids to be creative. They can cut out pictures, or just draw a word. If your kid is a notoriously late-starter, we recommend doing this step the night before.
3. When they wake up, they take that picture, word, drawing, etc. and tape it to the inside of the jar.
4. After it's inside the jar they can say, "I am grateful for _____," or "_____ makes me so happy!"
5. Every day they add a new item they are grateful for to the jar until it's completely filled. Then, they can use the jar to collect all

of your loose change, their beads that they've spilled all over the floor, Legos – you name it, it can go in the jar!

If they fill up the jar, no worries! Get another one, or transition it to a "Gratitude Board" by getting a piece of poster board and hanging it up in their room!

Take it further: As the Thanksgiving Holiday rolls around, ask everyone to bring their jar or board to the table and share with their family some of the things they are thankful for so far that year! Make sure you have tissues – kids have a way of getting you in those moments!

Wellness ambassador spotlight

This month we are shining the spotlight on Amy Wendricks – a brand new wellness ambassador that has literally hit the ground running! This is what Amy shared with us upon reaching out:

"I attended the Wellness Ambassador virtual information session on May 11, 2022. I am interested in this and am looking forward to learning more about this opportunity.

When I saw the information session announcement on Facebook I was immediately interested as a community member. I was born and raised in Oldtown and I still have family there. I now live in Fort Ashby.

"During the information session I quickly realized that this would also be beneficial professionally. I work for a non-profit agency called The Coordinating Center, which is based in Millersville, Md. in Anne Arundel County.

The mission of The Coordinating Center is to partner with people of all ages and abilities and those who support them in the community to achieve their aspirations for independence, health, and meaningful community life.

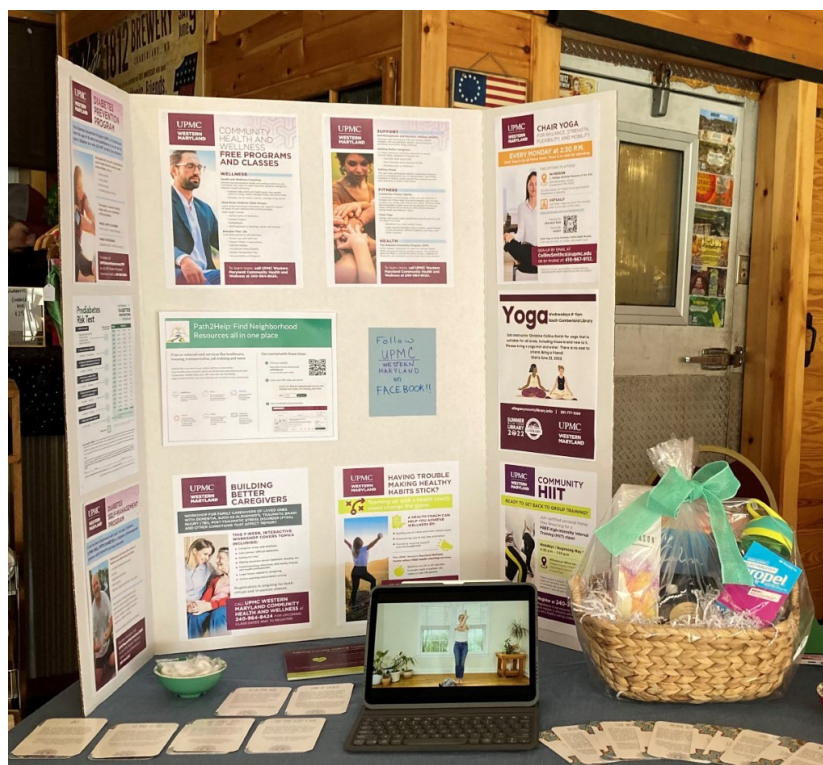
"I am a Clinical Care Coordinator for participants in the Maryland Medicaid Rare and Expensive Case Management (REM) Program. I work with families in Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties.

"I have benefitted from UPMC Wellness programs and classes over the years and want to pay it forward. I am excited to be a part of the Wellness Ambassador program! It feels good to share information about the wonderful things that are happening in our community."

Amy has volunteered at the Oldtown Summerfest and has already recruited a new ambas-

sador, Becki Sacchetti. Together they set up a table at the 1812 Brewery Farmer's market which was a success. They handed out UPMC Western Maryland flyers, Stress Less cards, Yoga info and UPMC wellness YouTube videos on the iPad. The also raffled off a wellness basket. Way to go ladies!

Wellness Ambassadors play an important part of creating a culture of health and wellness throughout our region and addressing social determinants of health by linking individuals with resources, education, and social support. To learn more about becoming a Wellness Ambassador, please call Brittany Friend, Health Promotion Specialist, at 240-964-8421 or email: milbournefriendb@upmc.edu



Amy Wendricks and Becki Sacchetti recently set up this wellness display at the 1812 Brewery farmers market.

Things to do this fall

Brought to you by our friends at Allegany County Tourism

September:

3M Bike Challenge – September 10 – Downtown Cumberland

Think you have what it takes to cycle faster than the train? A timed challenge between cyclists and the train locomotive, the 3M Challenge will follow a 15.3 mile stretch of the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP Trail) alongside the WMSR railroad tracks, from Cumberland to Frostburg.

National Public Trails Day – September 24 – Rocky Gap State Park. Join Rocky Gap State Park to meet Park Rangers and the trail crew for a day outdoors and breaking ground on some of Rocky Gap State Park's newest trails.

Appalachian Festival – September 15-17, 2022 – Frostburg.

A three-day celebration of the cultural, traditions, and heritage of Appalachia.

Dragons by the Lake – September 24 – Rocky Gap State Park.

A fundraiser for the Cumberland YMCA, participants compete in unique dragon-style boats at Lake Habeeb.

October:

Rocky Gap 25K, 50K and Relay – October 15 – Rocky Gap State Park

EX2 Adventurers is proud to present Rocky Gap 25K, 50K, and relay trail running races.

GAP Relay Presented by UPMC Health Plan – October 14-15 – GAP Trail

Mark your calendars for October

14-15 and get your team together to run the greatest adventure relay race EVER!

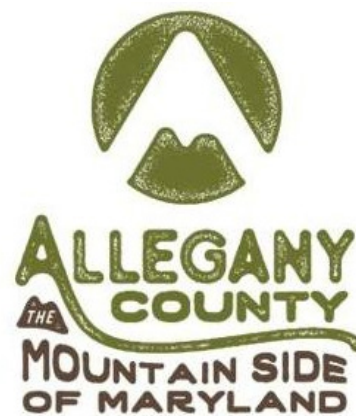
Frostburg Fall Arts Walk – October 1 – Downtown Frostburg

A myriad of artists and talent, including live demos, performances, vendors, business specials and more.

November:

Cumberland Christmas Tree Lightings and Holiday Kick-Off – November 25 – Downtown Cumberland

Frostburg Christmas Tree Lightings and Holiday Kick-Off – November 27 – Downtown Frostburg



Visit mdmountainside.com for more information!

