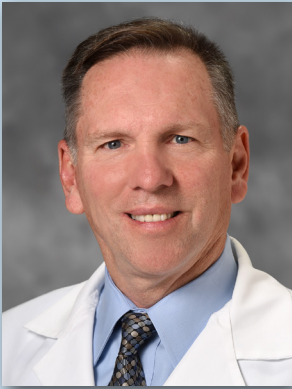




Your Henry Ford ACO News



A Message from your HFACO Chief Medical Officer



Bruce Muma, M.D.
HFACO Chief Medical Officer

SUMMER 2021

In this issue:

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- A Happiness Checklist
- Curbing Hypertension and Diabetes
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Would you prefer receiving this newsletter via email? If so, please email your name and email address to hfaco@hfhs.org.

Dear Friend,

I usually begin my message to the thousands of members of our Henry Ford Accountable Care Organization (HFACO) in a more formal way. But today, after more than a year of pandemic and all it entails, I felt a greeting of "friend" was best.

We have, after all, gone on this journey together. Maybe we are traveling on different roads and looking at different scenery, but we are all heading in the same direction: the place where this pandemic ends. A year ago, I had hoped that by now we would be looking at COVID-19 in our rearview mirror. But it is still riding along next to us, so we must continue to adjust and do what we can to keep ourselves and others safe.

In this issue of your HFACO News, you will find many topics that relate to the virus: vaccines, monoclonal antibodies, dealing with loss during this time, and more. You will also find information about "normal" health issues such as hypertension and diabetes. Those are near and dear to all healthcare professionals. Why? We have seen so many of our patients put their overall health on the backburner while they focus on COVID-19. This is a concern, especially for those who already have health issues.

Whether you go to a Henry Ford doctor or someone else, I encourage you to resume your "normal" care appointments. Healthcare facilities are some of the safest places to go, as we have very strict rules about who can enter, and we make wearing a mask and social distancing mandatory. In many ways it is safer than going to the grocery store or eating in a restaurant. But I understand you might still be unsure of walking into a medical center or hospital at this time. I have good news!

While some appointments must always be done in person (mammograms, blood draws, etc.) many check-ins with providers can be done with a virtual visit. This means on a smartphone, tablet or computer. We have many options for virtual visits at Henry Ford that allow you to connect with a doctor without leaving your house. You can schedule a video visit with your doctor, or even request a Video Visit On Demand with the "doctor on call" if you don't want to wait (these options do require a device with a camera). You can even do an E-visit, where you complete a questionnaire about your symptoms or concerns and send to a provider to answer your health issue. All of these virtual care options can save you time, money and keep you on a healthy path.

To have any type of virtual visit, you will need to set up a MyChart account. You can do this by going to www.henryford.com/mychart. Or you can email HFMyChart@hfhs.org or call 1-800-HENRYFORD (436-7936). You need MyChart for a virtual visit because it is how we make sure the visit is secure and private. If you do not have a device, you can ask a trusted family member or friend to act as your proxy to set up MyChart. Then you would need to use their device to conduct a virtual visit.

I know technology can sometimes seem intimidating, but virtual visits offer timely quality care from the privacy of your own home. It truly is an easy way to put your mind at rest because you can be seen now rather than wait. I hope you give virtual care a try. Who knows? You may actually like it!

Yours in health,

Bruce Muma, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer and President, HFACO

Dealing with the Emotional After Effects of the Pandemic

Surviving during more than a year of a pandemic is certainly something for which to be grateful. Yet, it is likely not something that many people will celebrate. That's because none of us will emerge from this time in our planet's history unchanged. Perhaps you lost a loved one, or several loved ones. Maybe you were hit with the virus but have lingering physical symptoms. Or perhaps the ongoing presence of fear and what seems like unending isolation caused you to change into someone even you don't recognize.

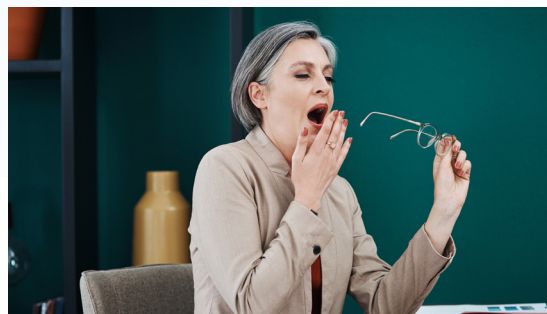
As a beneficiary of the Henry Ford Accountable Care Organization, you are likely in the 65 and older age group. This also means you were likely hit harder by this pandemic than those who are younger due to the nature of the virus. And you also may have felt the effects of the virus-mandated quarantines. You toughed it out, but it is still difficult.



"COVID-19 significantly affects the older adult population because they are the most vulnerable to complications and have the highest death rates if they contract COVID-19," said Doree Ann Espiritu, M.D., Henry Ford Health System Medical Director of the Behavioral Health Services Adult Outpatient Division. "At the core of all emotions experienced during conditions like these is the basic and primal human emotion of fear. There has been an ongoing sense of fear experienced over a prolonged period of time. Psychological reactions like anxiety, acute stress, relapse with alcohol and other substances, depression and post-traumatic stress reactions will surely follow this pandemic."

Dr. Espiritu said those in the 65-plus age group have something very important in their back pocket to power them through: wisdom. Resilience among the older population, she said, has been seen and documented during previous natural calamities such as hurricanes, floods, other infectious disease epidemics and even after man-made disasters such as 9/11. For those who have never experienced depression before, here are some of the most common signs:

- Sleeplessness
- Sadness
- Poor appetite
- Low energy
- Poor concentration and memory
- Feelings of guilt
- Relapse of alcohol or drug use (including prescription drugs)



"These symptoms can be considered natural reactions to the pandemic," Dr. Espiritu added. "These symptoms start to get better as one finds healthy ways to cope and adjust to the 'now normal.' If these symptoms start to affect your ability to function, or especially if they become severe enough that you start having thoughts about giving up or dying, please seek help immediately or tell a love one that you need professional help.

"Whether you have suffered from this before or not, it is important to your physical health to take care of your mental health. That is because it is proven that those who have depression, anxiety, loneliness or have problems with relationships have impaired immune functioning and are, therefore, more vulnerable to infections."

If you believe you need to see a professional to help you get on track with your mental health, please reach out. Should you choose to connect with a Henry Ford mental health professional, you can call 800-422-1183.

Your Happiness Checklist

We all know perky people who seem to handle adversity better than most. They put a positive spin on setbacks, find joy in things as simple as the sun peeking out from behind the clouds and they don't get troubled by delays or schedule changes. Do you find these people annoying? If so, perhaps they have something you want.

If you're tired of feeling like Charlie Brown or Eeyore, summer is a great time to make a shift and become one of those annoyingly positive people you know. Or, at the very least, a little less pessimistic. Here are some starting points:

- ❑ **Take one minute to think of three things for which you are grateful.** Now sit with those thoughts for 60 seconds. If you have never done this, it may seem a bit hokey. But it's only one minute. Most people feel a subtle and positive shift in their mood and energy. Do this every day. Again, it's only one minute!
- ❑ **Get up and move.** When we sit with our negative thoughts there is nothing to stop them from spiraling. When you get up and move your body, you engage different parts of your brain. This can help you snap out of your doldrums. And going for a walk can help release hormones that stimulate your happiness response.
- ❑ **Watch your sugar intake.** Sugar, whether in the form of candy or a sugary drink causes your insulin level to spike. Then it drops quickly and with it goes your energy level and, likely, your mood. If you want a blast of sweet, try some cantaloupe or an apple or orange. The natural sugar will enter your body more slowly, preventing a sugar crash.
- ❑ **Do something nice for someone else.** This can be as simple as a phone call to someone going through a tough time, buying a dear friend a small bunch of flowers or helping a neighbor with some outdoor chores.
- ❑ **Smile.** It really does feel good.
- ❑ **Get enough rest.** Respect your body by giving it the sleep it needs. If not, you will be known as a "cranky-pants." No one wants to be that person.

Effective Treatment for COVID-19

Monoclonal antibodies. It's a mouthful to say, but this treatment is our best defense to help prevent serious side effects in those recently diagnosed with COVID-19. You may have recently heard about this treatment – also called a therapeutic. Here are some quick facts about monoclonal antibodies, which we call *mABs*:

What is mAB? It is a medication given to people in the early stages of COVID-19 infection to help fight off the virus. Symptoms must only be mild to moderate. It is not used in patients already experiencing serious side effects. The medication alerts your body to make even more antibodies to fight the virus. This helps reduce your symptoms, sometimes within hours after the infusion.

How does the medicine get into your system? mABs get into your body through an IV, directly into your blood stream. It takes about 20 minutes to receive the IV. You are then monitored by a healthcare professional for about an hour to make sure you are feeling good.

How quickly does mAB work? Patients have reported feeling much better within hours after getting the infusion. It continues to work for days and weeks after receiving it.

Why should I get mAB if it is offered to me? You will only be offered mAB if you have an early stage (first 10 days) COVID infection and meet other requirements. This medicine is the best treatment we have available to help keep the infection from landing you in the Emergency Room or in the hospital. It can also reduce the long-term effects of COVID infection.

How do I get an mAB infusion? Please contact your primary care provider immediately if you get a positive COVID-19 diagnosis and ask if you are a candidate to receive mAB. If you do not have a primary care doctor, you can call 1-313-874-7575 and someone will help you.

Henry Ford Health System is partnering with the Federal Department of Health and Human Services to administer mAB in the Southeast Michigan community. There is likely a mAB infusion site near you.

Time to Manage Hypertension and Diabetes

It's safe to say that pretty much everyone was thrown off their game over this past year. But for those with existing or new health issues, it's just not OK to ignore them.



Stephanie Bazydlo, RDN,
CDCES

As we continue to reach a more normal life again, it's time to take a look at how we're doing. For those with high blood pressure/hypertension and diabetes (two conditions that often go together), this past year has been especially challenging. That's because management of both of these health concerns largely depends on proper diet, exercise and lower stress levels. And if ever there was a time for comfort food, binge watching television and heightened stress levels it was 2020 and the early part of this year. But now it's time to turn that trend around.

We called on Stephanie Bazydlo, RDN, CDCES, our medical nutrition therapy specialist with Henry Ford's diabetes education team to answer some of the more pressing questions that apply to those with hypertension and diabetes ... or for anyone who wants to be healthier!

Q. We have heard a lot about the Quarantine 15, meaning that many people have gained about 15 pounds over the past year of quarantining. How hard is this type of weight gain on someone who already has a health concern such as diabetes or hypertension?

A. "The reason we encourage people with diabetes to lose weight is because this will reduce their insulin resistance. We all need insulin to transport glucose (sugar) out of the blood stream and into body cells. When you gain weight, especially in a short amount of time, it increases the struggle to do this. For those with hypertension, extra weight puts extra strain on the heart, which increases blood pressure even more."

Q. Does stress cause an A1c level to rise?

A. "Stress can cause your blood sugar to be higher, which can lead to a higher A1c. Also, if stress is not managed it can lead to lack of motivation to maintain healthy lifestyle behaviors such as exercise and making healthier food choices. As you can see, stress can have a huge impact on our health."

Q. What are some steps people can use to break this cycle of eating unhealthy "comfort" food?

A. "First, identify your trigger. Then you can minimize it or eliminate it. Is it talking about a certain subject or talking to a specific person? Maybe it's sitting on the couch at night watching TV. Often, it is stress related. Stress management and coping is one of the seven health behaviors we teach people with diabetes when they are learning to control their blood sugar. Perhaps try meditation and mindful breathing, talk to someone, start a hobby to keep your mind or hands busy, exercise. I also tell my patients to keep their comfort foods out of the house."

Q. What are some realistic healthy go-to snacks or meals?

A. "Single serving options such as a small, round fruit can be a controlled snack, whereas it's harder to stick with one portion when you eat loose options like grapes or cut up melon. I also recommend single serving packs of nuts, popcorn and even chips on occasion."

Q. Does eating the "wrong" foods increase stress levels?

A. "After drinking or eating high-sugar snacks like soda or candy there is inevitably a crash. There have also been links of high sugar intake to increased anxiety and depression. Sounds like a good thing to avoid, right?"

Q. For those with health concerns like diabetes and hypertension, how important is exercise?

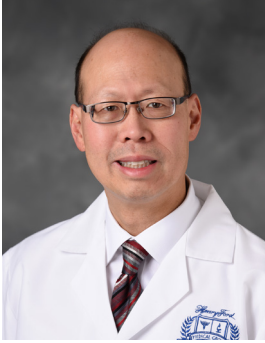
A. "Your heart is a muscle that will get stronger through exercise. This can lower your blood pressure. Even if your weight loss is slow, exercise will lower your blood pressure. That is why cardiovascular workouts are recommended with the approval of your physician. It also lowers insulin resistance. We recommend at least 30 minutes, five days per week (150 minutes per week) without going more than 48 hours between exercise. Always start low and slow, meaning start at 10 minutes, 2-3 days per week and at a slow pace. You can always increase your time spent and the pace as you learn your body's limitations."

Q. Is there anything else you'd like to share?

A. "Sometimes trying to do too much at one time can become overwhelming or frustrating. When making lifestyle changes, work on one or two small changes at a time and build from there. Think baby steps! Also, when it comes to exercise, don't have a set time of how long you'll workout or far you will go. If you think you have to walk for 30 minutes, it might be hard to get out the door. But if you tell yourself you'll walk for five minutes chances are you will keep going because time will pass pretty quickly. And you will also knock down the mental roadblock most of us have about exercising."

Hypertension: A Two-way Road

Thank goodness high blood pressure (also called hypertension) is not a one-way street. There are simple steps you can take to naturally reverse this trend and begin improving your health in so many ways.



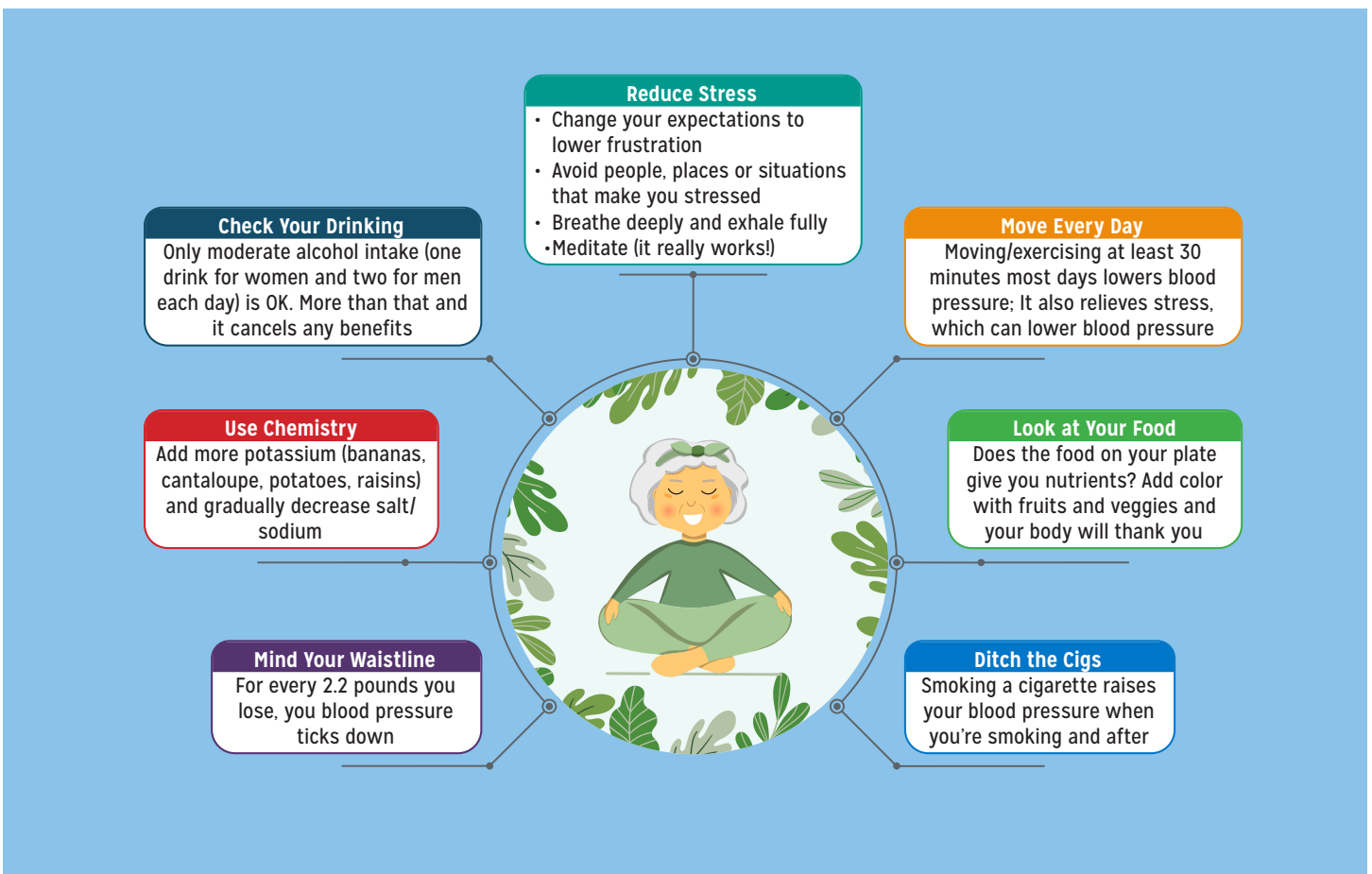
Jerry Yee, M.D.

“Yes, there are some people genetically predisposed to having high blood pressure,” said Jerry Yee, M.D., Henry Ford Hospital’s Division Head of Nephrology and Hypertension. “But many others develop high blood pressure with their lifestyle. And when the lifestyle changes – even for those with the genetic factors – blood pressure can come down.”

Chronic high blood pressure impacts the body negatively in several critical ways. It causes a narrowing of the blood vessels. This can result in stroke, heart attack and kidney damage among other things.

“There are many things we cannot change about our bodies,” Dr. Yee said. “But this is one we can. I encourage anyone who has hypertension or is flirting with gradually increasing blood pressure to make some changes today. You don’t have to make every change at once but get on that road and start. It is really quite remarkable how small and consistent changes can have an immediate and long-term positive effect on your health.”

Here are some things you can do today to start heading in the right direction on the road to health.



Break's Over: Time to Get Back on Track with Health Screenings

While getting out of the house to run an errand has turned into a highlight or luxury, there are still some that rate higher than others.

- Picking up a coffee cake from a local bakery: Yum.
- Stopping off at a family member's house to drop off a birthday gift: Nice.
- Driving to a pretty area to go for a hike: Fantastic.
- Traveling to a local outpatient center to get a colonoscopy: Yuck.

There are no two ways about it. Health screenings – even those that have been proven to save lives – are not exciting or fun. No one looks forward to being squished, poked, questioned or examined. And this past year or so has provided all of us with the perfect excuse not to get our health screenings. While this isn't a good thing, it was understandable that many people decided against going into a healthcare facility for health screenings during the surges of the coronavirus. Because, after all, health screenings are usually done when there is no illness so what's the rush, right?



Joyce Leon, M.D.

But it is very important to remember that health screenings are done to get an early glimpse into what is happening in your body in case something is starting to take an unhealthy turn. Think of it as heading something off at the pass. Knowledge is power and with that power you can potentially create a healthier future for yourself!

"Most health screenings are painless and require very little effort on the part of the patient," said Henry Ford Health System Medical Director of Population Health Joyce Leon, M.D. "Some are just discussions with your doctor or require a small amount of blood be drawn. Yes, others are a bit more uncomfortable. By this I mean mammograms and colonoscopies. But both take a very small amount of time. When measured against the important information that can be learned from them, it is certainly time well spent."

Now is the time to get in the books for your health screenings such as:

- Mammogram
- Dermatology skin check
- Colonoscopy
- Bloodwork, if needed to assess important markers such as cholesterol and blood sugar (a diabetes screening)
- Depression screening
- Body Mass Index (BMI) monitoring
- Teeth cleaning

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“The bottom line is that health screenings can make you and your care team aware of current or budding health concerns,” said Dr. Leon, who is also a practicing internist. “In every situation, it is always beneficial to learn of a health concern in its early stage, when it is more treatable and often curable. Another positive side of health screenings is that the majority of the time you are given a clean bill of health and peace of mind.”

If you are unsure whether you are due for any health screenings, please contact your primary care provider and they will be able to guide you toward the screenings recommended for you.

“Many people have delayed these important screenings over this past year,” added Dr. Leon. “I am here to partner with my patients, but I can only act on information we have. I can’t force anyone to get their colonoscopy, a mammogram or have their blood sugar checked. I understand that there is a type of comfort in not knowing if you have a health issue. But learning about it at an early stage, when it is much more treatable, will ultimately give you true comfort.”

Here are some of the more common health screenings for those aged 65 and older:

| Screening | What it can reveal | Benefits |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Mammogram | Changes in the breast/early stage breast cancer | Breast cancer is always more treatable/curable, when caught at an early stage |
| Colonoscopy | Polyps that can become cancerous or early stage cancer | Most polyps can be removed during the colonoscopy; biopsies for suspected cancer can be taken immediately to accelerate treatment and a care plan |
| Bloodwork | Blood sugar levels and cholesterol, in addition to other assessments as needed | This gives a look into important levels that can help generate a care plan, for instance, for those with diabetes and high cholesterol |
| Dermatology skin check | Precancerous areas on your skin | When caught early nearly all skin cancers are treatable/curable |
| Depression Screening | Changes in your overall mental health | By addressing mental health issues, you can live a happier and healthier life |
| Body Mass Index (BMI) | If you are at an unhealthy weight for your height and age | You can work with your doctor to create a plan to lose (or gain) the weight you need to reach a healthy BMI |
| Teeth cleaning | If you have unhealthy plaque buildup or gum disease, which can be detrimental to your heart | You get rid of plaque and can address gum disease, plus you get a healthier looking smile! |

TO CONTACT YOUR HENRY FORD ACO:

CALL
(313) 874-1466

EMAIL
hfaco@hfhs.org

GO TO
www.henryfordaco.com
for more information

Did You Know?

Receiving the COVID-19 vaccine after you've recovered from COVID can help expel or reduce lingering symptoms – in addition to helping to prevent another infection – according to Henry Ford Health System Medical Director of Infection Control, Dennis Cunningham, M.D.

“You can safely receive the vaccine as early as 10 days after your onset of COVID-19 symptoms,” said Dr. Cunningham. “It is understandable to want to wait a few weeks after you recover before getting the vaccine, but it is highly recommended that you get it as soon as possible because you can get re-infected with a different or the same COVID strain. This guidance has changed from a few months ago because the vaccine supply is now plentiful. Prior to this point the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) asked that those who had recovered from COVID-19 to wait 90 days to allow others who had no natural antibodies to get the vaccine.”



Please note: If you received a monoclonal antibody infusion or convalescent plasma as treatment for COVID-19, you must wait 90 days before receiving the vaccine. This is because these treatments could interfere with the effectiveness of the vaccine.