

Welcome Note - Richard Martin, MD, FAAFP - CMO Keystone ACO

Welcome to the Spring 2020 edition of the KACO newsletter!

Life has certainly changed over the past few months for all of us. From “stay at home” and social distancing advice to detailed handwashing and sanitization instructions, we are all in a brand new world.



We must continue to respect the seriousness of the coronavirus pandemic and keep our guard up. This virus will not go away until we have an effective vaccine or oral treatment. We have devoted this issue of our newsletter to advice on safety, nutrition and counseling to help get everyone through these times.

As unpleasant as it has been for some, the new lifestyle may offer some silver linings. Distancing not only reduces the spread of coronavirus, but other viruses as well. There has been a reduction in the flu and other respiratory infections such as the common cold. Please take care of your chronic health issues like high blood pressure, diabetes and heart conditions so they do not become uncontrolled and result in more trouble. Be careful of falls and if necessary, use canes or walkers even though you are just moving around your homes. If you are feeling anxious or depressed (or just frightened) please reach out to your primary health provider for help. We find people are avoiding the emergency department out of fear of coronavirus. Please be assured emergency departments are safe, and you shouldn't avoid going to one if you are having serious symptoms such as chest pain, difficulty breathing, stroke symptoms, severe abdominal pain or serious injuries. Other less serious symptoms should be directed to your primary care provider who knows you best and can help direct next steps for care.



As usual we are offering some healthy food tips to boost your immunity as well as some home exercises to help keep you strong.

As difficult as it is to remain isolated, please heed the warning of the health officials. Stay safe and respect this virus!

Staying healthy by feeding your immune system - Janet Milner, RDN, LDN, CDCES

Although you may not be able to fully prevent an illness this season, a healthy immune system is one way to give your body extra protection. Focusing on nutrient-rich foods and healthy lifestyle behaviors can help you step ahead.

The following nutrients play a role in the immune system and can be found in a variety of foods:

- **Beta carotene** is found in plant foods, such as sweet potatoes, spinach, carrots, mango, broccoli and tomatoes.



- **Vitamin C**-rich foods include citrus fruits, berries, melons, tomatoes, bell peppers and broccoli.
- **Vitamin D** is found in fatty fish and eggs. Milk and 100% juices that are fortified with vitamin

D also are sources of this important nutrient.

- **Zinc** tends to be better absorbed from animal sources such as beef and seafood, but also is in vegetarian sources such as wheat germ, beans, nuts and tofu.
- **Probiotics** are “good” bacteria that promote health. They can be found in cultured dairy products such as yogurt and in fermented foods such as kimchi.
- **Protein** comes from both animal and plant-based sources, such as milk, yogurt, eggs, beef, chicken, seafood, nuts, seeds, beans and lentils.

Focus on balance

To help keep your immune system healthy all year long, focus on a balanced eating plan, adequate sleep and stress management.

Aim for five to seven servings of vegetables and fruits daily to get vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that may support immune health. MyPlate concept suggests planning to make half your plate non-starchy vegetables and fruits.



Good hygiene and hand washing help prevent the spread of germs. Remember to wash produce before eating or using in recipes. Clean meal preparation areas before and after using.

Find healthy and appropriate ways to cope with stress, such as meditation, listing 3 to 4 reasons to be grateful, listening to music or writing/journaling. Stay in touch by phoning a friend or family member. Physical activity also is a great way to help manage stress and may help reduce the risk of some chronic diseases that could weaken your immune system further.

Lack of sleep contributes to a variety of health concerns, such as a weakened immune system. Seven to nine hours is recommended each day for adults, and children need 8 to 14 hours, depending on their age.

Staying active while staying home: Tips to encourage exercise while practicing social distancing. Catherine Bruno, PT, DPT, physical therapist, LIFE Geisinger

It is well known that exercise is the key to healthy aging. Research has shown that remaining active has many benefits from decreasing the risk of falls, strengthening the body's immune system as well as improving one's overall quality of life. During a pandemic, one may find that it is hard to remain active when gyms, senior centers and day centers are closed. Limited access to these services is a great loss to our senior community in promoting health and wellness.

However, one should know that our own home provides many opportunities.

How, you might ask? The answer is quite simple: **Sit less, move more!**

Here are some suggestions to stay healthy and active in the convenience of your own home:

- Walk within your home during commercial breaks of your favorite TV program.
- Stand up and sit down several times and or march in place for at least 3 minutes every hour throughout the day
- Dance to some of your favorite songs daily
- If able, take a walk outside to remain active and enjoy fresh air.
- If appropriate, climb steps within your home several times a day
- Take advantage of apps and websites that stream exercise videos.
- Do household chores that encourage you to move (vacuum, laundry, washing dishes, etc.)



- Use your kitchen counter and or a sturdy chair to maintain your balance and perform some basic exercises like marches, heel raises, sit to stands and squats. (Pictures below)
- Play a card or board game but stand up every five minutes for the duration of the game

Any opportunity to move is beneficial. Every active minute counts!

Exercises to promote strength, balance and flexibility within your home

These are simple exercises that may be beneficial to those who are practicing social distancing. If you have any concerns about these exercises, consult with your healthcare provider. Also, if at any time you experience pain or discomfort when completing these exercises, STOP immediately.



Heel Raises

Slowly lift heels up and down while holding a stable surface such as a chair or counter. Can be performed seated if unable to stand.



Hip Flexion/Marches

Lift legs toward the ceiling while holding a stable surface. Alternate legs as able. Can be performed seated if unable to stand.



Chair Push-Ups

Put arms on chair and push body out of the chair, partially standing. If able to stand to a full position this is acceptable as well.



Trunk Rotation

Place both hands on one side of a chair while twisting to one side; hold for 5 secs. alternating sides.

Loneliness

Even before COVID-19 hit our community, we were dealing with an epidemic. This illness is considered by researchers to have the same impact on life span as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. It is associated with many emotional and physical conditions including, anxiety, depression, high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, a weakened immune system, stroke, memory impairments, and Alzheimer's disease. **The disease is loneliness.**



With the government setting new guidelines to increase social distancing, there is the potential for an increased rate of loneliness without active intervention. In the past, our recommendations to combat loneliness were to encourage patients to join a group to have the opportunity to make new social connections. Right now, we are discouraging people from joining or attending groups. Especially patients over the age of 60.

There are many ways to stay in contact with the people in your life, without being physically close. Phone calls, letter writing, and the internet are great ways for us to stay connected. Sharing stories, thoughts, dreams and day-to-day activities can deepen the bonds you already have.

Connect with your neighbors. Organize a bear hunt for children in the neighborhood by placing a teddy bear in your window for them to spot when they are outside for a walk. Call your neighbors and encourage them to join in the fun and place a bear in their window as well.

Feeling connected does not depend on people. Feeding birds, squirrels, or nurturing a garden are all great ways to increase your sense of value and place in the world. Write out a routine for yourself and bring order and purpose to daily tasks. Be sure to include activities such as exercise, eating healthy, meditating and other healthy hobbies. Find a topic or skill of interest such as painting, baking, building that can be taught by friends and family through video calls, or can be learned on YouTube or online classes.



Count those blessings! The practice of gratitude can increase your sense of connection! Post a list of everything you appreciate in your life somewhere you will see it daily.

Ask for help. This is a difficult time for all of us. If you are struggling, reach out for professional help. Physicians, therapists and social workers are offering telehealth, which is a telephone or video visit, and can give you guidance and help that is specific for you.

Keeping busy during social isolation

Below are just a few additional ideas to keep you busy during social isolation.

- Take a walk around your neighborhood or yard
- Try a new recipe
- Start a hobby
- Clean closets/drawers and prepare items for donation
- Read a new book or re-read an old favorite
- Make a playlist of your favorite music – include songs from your teenage years
- Write a song, story or novel
- Watch your favorite movies or TV series
- Plan regular exercise or activities routinely into your day and stick to it!



- Start a journal
- Plan for activities when social distancing guidelines are relaxed
- Prepare/work in your flower and/or vegetable gardens



[Expanding telehealth services amid a pandemic](#)

[Tejal Raichura, director, Center for Telehealth Geisinger](#)

One of the most critical steps any of us can take to stop the spread of COVID-19 is to stay at least 6 feet away from others when we are in public. Maintaining your healthcare needs is just as important. So, don't worry, you may not need to cancel your next appointment with your provider. There's a good chance you can still be seen, but from the comfort of your own home.

Telemedicine video visits allow patients to speak with providers using video chat technology on a secure network. Telemedicine visits are available for a wide range of conditions, such as cold or flu, rashes, diabetes, mental health needs, a neurological condition and many more.

Care providers can answer patient questions and discuss concerns in real time, just like at a regular office visit, but via a video call. The visits are accessible through a smartphone (iPhone or Android), or a computer with a webcam and speakers, along with high-speed internet. If you can see your family and friends over a video call, then you may be able to see your doctor too. Contact your provider's office to see if telemedicine services are available for your next visit.

Apple and Thyme Chicken

Recipe from: www.dlife.com/diabetes/diabetic-recipes/ & Geisinger Fresh Food Farmacy

Ingredients:

- 4 boneless skinless chicken breasts
- Cooking spray
- Pinch of pepper
- 1 cup sliced apples
- 1 medium shallot
- 1 Tbsp fresh thyme
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar



Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375° F.
2. Rinse chicken breasts and pat dry. Spray baking dish with cooking spray.
3. Sprinkle chicken with pepper, place in single layer on prepared baking dish.
4. Arrange thin apple slices over and around chicken breasts.
5. Sprinkle with shallot and thyme; pour on balsamic vinegar.
6. Bake 15-20 minutes, until chicken is cooked through.

Memorial Day Observance



This Memorial Day, we thank all servicemen and women who have gone above and beyond, serving our country and protecting our freedom. We are forever grateful.

Thank you to all our Keystone ACO beneficiaries for taking care of yourselves and practicing social distancing during this difficult time. We appreciate the trust you give your healthcare professionals to provide you with the best possible care. And thank you to all essential personnel working on the front lines to care for and provide for our daily needs. We are most appreciative!

Thank You

Resources



Now, more than ever, you may need access to resources for your most immediate and life sustaining needs. Neighborly is available as an easy-to-use online tool that helps you connect to free and reduced-cost programs and services, including food, housing, childcare, transportation, utility assistance, healthcare and financial assistance. If you or someone you know needs more information about what is available in your neighborhood, go to NeighborlyPA.com.

Senior Medicare Patrol – Pennsylvania Senior Medicare Patrol (PA-SMP)

Senior Medicare Patrols are groups of volunteer organizations that provide education to you, your families and caregivers on how to prevent, detect and report healthcare fraud, errors and abuse. There are also resources available for personalized counseling, evaluating complaints, local community events and volunteer opportunities.

Please take an active role in protecting yourself and Medicare from fraud and abuse. Visit smpresource.org and click on “Find Help in Your State.” You will then be provided with several contact options.

State Health Insurance Assistance Programs — SHIP

This resource provides local, in-depth and objective insurance counseling and assistance to Medicare-eligible individuals, their families, and caregivers. Visit the following websites for additional information.

shiptacenter.org/
shiptacenter.org/about-medicare/regional-ship-location/pennsylvania - SPECIFIC TO PA

To contact Medicare

For additional information on accountable care organizations, contact Medicare at 1-800-Medicare, (1-800-633-4227) and ask for the Medicare ACO Department.

TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048. You may also visit medicare.gov/acos.html.

Physician Groups

- Advanced Inpatient Medicine Wayne PC
- AOP Inc.
- Capital Anesthesia LLC
- Caring Community Health Center
- Digestive Disease Institute Inc.
- Enteron Inc.
- Evangelical Medical Services (Lewisburg and surrounding communities)
- Family Practice Center PC
- Geisinger Clinic
- Geisinger HM – Joint Venture LLC
- Geisinger Jersey Shore Foundation Inc., Jersey Shore
- Geisinger Lewistown Hospital Family Health Associates
- Jackson Siegelbaum Gastroenterology Ltd.
- Lycoming Internal Medicine, INC
- Medical Arts Allergy PC
- Pennsylvania Gastroenterology Consultants PC
- Spirit Physicians Services Inc.
- The Wright Center Medical Group (Scranton & surrounding communities)
- Ultra Care Urgent & Family Care
- Urology of Central Pennsylvania Inc.
- Valley ENT Sinus and Allergy
- Wayne Memorial Community Health Centers
- West Shore Endoscopy Center LLC

Participating Hospitals

- Evangelical Community Hospital, Lewisburg
- Geisinger Bloomsburg Hospital, Bloomsburg
- Geisinger Community Medical Center, Scranton
- Geisinger Holy Spirit, Camp Hill
- Geisinger Jersey Shore Hospital, Jersey Shore
- Geisinger Lewistown Hospital
- Geisinger Medical Center, Danville
- Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center, Wilkes Barre
- Wayne Memorial Hospital, Honesdale

Visit our website for more information on Keystone ACO and to see previous KACO Connections issues.

KeystoneACO.org

Is there a specific topic you would like to see addressed in future newsletters? You can email your suggestions to:

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