

Welcome note from Richard Martin, MD, FAAFP, CMO Keystone ACO



Hello again, and welcome to the spring 2021 edition of the Keystone Accountable Care Organization newsletter. Well, it's still with us and as active as ever. Despite over 8,000,000 doses of vaccine, we still are reporting 4,000 to 5,000 additional cases of COVID-19 daily in Pennsylvania. We have had a total of over 1,000,000 cases and over 25,000 deaths due to this virus. We must continue to be vigilant, especially since variations in the viral genetic makeup are increasing in Pennsylvania. These variants seem to be more contagious, but as more people are immunized or have had the disease, seem to cause less serious illness.

Even if you are vaccinated, it is still important to remember to follow the basic principles of public health: social distancing, frequent handwashing, and masking when in public. Over time there has been some controversy about these measures, but unfortunately, we know of no better way to prevent transmission of this virus until over 70% of the population is vaccinated and deemed immune to it.

Some people decline the opportunity to vaccinate, and you will learn more about reasons why or why not in the article written by Dr. Maria Kobylinski in this edition.

Other topics of interest in this edition include discussion of optimal weight and a healthy recipe, information about sleep disorders and reasons for daytime drowsiness, and methods to help reduce chronic pain with the increase of activity.

We recommend that everyone become more engaged in a healthy lifestyle and stay active, eat appropriate amounts of nutritious foods, and follow the principles of public health.

COVID-19 vaccine update

The use of vaccines dates back hundreds of years.

The founder of vaccines was Dr. Edward Jenner, who in 1796 was able to cause smallpox immunity in a 9-year-old boy after injecting him with fluid from someone infected with cowpox (a virus closely related to smallpox).

Since those early times, vaccine

development has become more specialized using viral proteins and plant-based compounds.

The COVID-19 vaccine uses genetically created RNA to make a protein that prompts the body's immune system response.

The speed at which this vaccine was developed and made available has caused some people to worry about its safety.

However, it is important to know that there were no shortcuts taken in the rules or clinical trials in making this vaccine.

The more people who are vaccinated will lead to decreased spread and the severity of illness from this virus. You cannot contract COVID-19 from the vaccine.

Please reach out to your healthcare provider if you have any questions about the vaccine and its safety.

Together, we can all do our part to prevent everyone — especially the frail and weak members of our communities — from catching this illness.

All people physically able to be vaccinated should do so.



Maria S. Kobylinski, MD

Chair of Geisinger Community Medicine

Spring into a healthy weight

If you've experienced weight gain over this past year, you are not alone. A recent study published in JAMA Open Network found that participants gained an average of 1.8 pounds per month during COVID lockdown. This weight gain can cause or worsen many health conditions such as diabetes, cardiac disease, and increase our risk for severe illness from COVID-19.



Fortunately, there are simple steps we can take to shed those pounds and maintain a healthier weight.

- Create a healthy environment in your home by purchasing healthy snacks to have on hand when hungry. Avoid those comfort snacks such as chips and cookies. Instead, stock your fridge with spring-time favorites such as fresh berries, light yogurt, or vegetables with hummus.
- Follow the “plate method” when planning meals: Fill half the dish with vegetables, such as salad, green beans, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, and carrots. Fill one quarter of the plate with a lean protein, such as chicken, turkey, beans, or tofu. Fill the remaining quarter with healthy grains, such as brown rice or whole grain pasta.
- Choose water as your primary drink and avoid sugar-containing drinks, which can add lots of calories.
- Don't forget to move. It is finally spring, and the snow is gone! Aim to get at least 150 minutes of exercise each week (like walking, riding a bike, or taking a hike).

On the next page is a recipe to inspire your weight-loss efforts.

Kimarie Segiel, RDN, LDN
Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center

Citrus Basil Green Beans

Recipe courtesy of dce.org (Diabetes Care and Education Practice Group)



Ingredients:

1 cup of green beans, trimmed
and cut in 1-inch pieces

1 tablespoon olive oil

Dash of red pepper flakes

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/8 cup fresh basil

1/2 lemon, juiced

Directions:

1. Boil the green beans in water for 5 minutes.
2. Heat a medium skillet. Add the olive oil and let it heat up for 30 seconds.
3. Add the green beans and seasonings. Let it cook for 2 minutes.
4. Add the lemon juice and serve.

Serving suggestion: Serve as a side dish to lean meat and rice.

Yield: 2 servings

Nutritional information:

Calories 85 | Fat 6.9 g | Saturated fat 1.0 g | Cholesterol 0 g | Sodium 291.6 mg | Carbohydrate 6.2 g | Dietary Fiber 2.1 g | Sugars 1.3 g | Protein 1.2 g

Is a sleep disorder causing your daytime drowsiness?

Getting enough sleep every day is an important component of self-care. But what happens when we slip into a sleep deficit by getting less than 7 to 9 hours of sleep each day?

People often don't realize they have a sleep deficit or how it impacts them over time. Sure, you may struggle to stay awake during a less active part of the day, but there are other, less-obvious signs that you're not getting enough sleep:



- Slowed thinking
- Inattentiveness
- Impaired memory
- Poor decision-making
- Lack of energy
- Moodiness
- Increased anxiety
- Tension in interpersonal relationships

And since sleep helps nearly all the body's systems function normally, a chronic sleep deficit can cause significant physical and mental health risks, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, worsened immune function and mental health disorders.

Six things you can do to improve your sleep quality:

1. Keep your room dark and cool (67–70 degrees). Try to block light sources from outside and dim or block the light from any digital clocks.
2. Avoid caffeine 4 to 5 hours before you plan to sleep. Coffee isn't the only source of caffeine. Soda, dark chocolate, and green tea contain this stimulant as well.
3. Engage in physical activity. Try to exercise for 30 minutes per day, 5 days per week. Anything that gets your heart rate up and helps you break a sweat is great for your health.
4. Avoid water an hour before bedtime. It'll help you avoid Mother Nature's call once you fall asleep.
5. Stick to the same bedtime every night. Inconsistent bedtimes and wake times can shift your body's drive to sleep, making it harder to fall asleep.
6. Talk to your doctor. If you're concerned about the quality of your sleep, speak with your primary care provider.

Preventing pain with increased activity

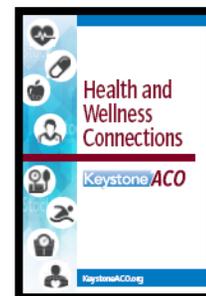
With warmer weather comes the desire to be outside and enjoy the kinder temperatures. You may be doing more activities like walking or beloved fair-weather sports, gardening and yardwork — and with the end of snow comes the often-labor-intensive spring cleanup! There are a few important things to remember to prepare for increased activity and prevent undue stress and strain on your body.

Whether you have existing pain or are simply deconditioned from being less active due to COVID-19 or the winter, following are some helpful tips to help you ease into your desired activity. Preparing your body for increased activity can prevent injury or worsening pain.

- Talk with your physician(s) to be certain that it is safe to do the activity that you desire.
- Make a schedule — this helps you set specific goals without overdoing it
- Take a few minutes to gently stretch your muscles and repeat periodically. This is important when doing any activity.
- Take breaks and remember to breathe. Periodic rest and relaxation is beneficial to rejuvenate your body and mind.
- Stay hydrated — keep a cool beverage nearby and sip often. Water keeps your body functioning well.
- Pace yourself. There's no need to get everything done at once.
- Stop to enjoy the beauty of nature and your surroundings. Appreciate what you've done!

Teri Thomas, RPh, Clinical Pharmacist, Geisinger Chronic Pain Management

Get your free Keystone ACO Health and Wellness booklet! Free calendars are also still available full of tips, reminders, and resources to keep you healthy throughout the year. Both are available upon request by emailing us at KeystoneACO@KeystoneACO.org or visiting our website, KeystoneACO.org, for information.





Evangelical Community Hospital, in partnership with The Miller Center for Recreation and Wellness in Lewisburg, is holding National Senior Health and Fitness Day on Wednesday, May 26, from noon to 2 p.m. at the Miller Center. The event is graciously sponsored by RiverWoods Senior Living Community. This free program will be presented in a safe, drive-through format, and open to the public. Attendees should arrive by vehicle at the Miller Center's main entrance facing Giant. Follow the directional signs to the area where you will receive a bag full of health and wellness information relating to adults 55 and older. Virtual education programs will be available throughout the day at www.evanhospital.com. More information about the event is available by calling Evangelical Community Health and Wellness at 570-768-3200.

Take charge of your health! Follow the tips below and talk to your physician about scheduling important preventive appointments.



- Get your COVID-19 vaccine.
- Schedule a screening for breast and colon cancer.
- If you use tobacco, talk to your doctor about a method that will help you quit.
- If you have diabetes, it's very important to keep your follow-up appointments with your physician and monitor your hemoglobin A1c.
- If you have high blood pressure, keep your follow-up appointments to make sure your blood pressure is maintained in a range that's appropriate for you.
- Mental health is just as important as physical health. Talk with your doctor if you're feeling lonely, stressed, or isolated.
- Go to your annual wellness visit.

Resources

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.

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

KeystoneACO.org