

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

As I write this, COVID-19 is raging across the country. Those of you reading this are at the highest risk for severe complications of the disease. Vaccines are being introduced and I encourage everyone to get the vaccine as soon as you are able. The standard public health recommendations, including mask, hand hygiene, and social distancing, remain in place and are not a substitute for vaccination. As you have likely heard, we need approximately 75% of the entire population to become immune to the coronavirus so that COVID-19 will abate.

It breaks my heart that so many people continue to be infected — and especially that many disregard the recommendations for public health measures. These are not difficult measures to achieve. Masks are minimally uncomfortable if at all, handwashing and hygiene should be part of everyone's day, and the importance of separation or distancing has been emphasized repeatedly.

The statistic that has been very moving to me is that when this is over, approximately 1 in 1,000 Americans will have died from COVID-19. This is rather sobering to me. It is many more than any war, natural disaster or other manmade tragedy in recent times has caused.

So please take this advice seriously and get your vaccination quickly — and continue to distance, mask, and perform hand hygiene at every opportunity. If we all do this each time, every time, the pandemic will go away more quickly than if we continue to ignore the public health recommendations.

Healthy Eating During Cold and Flu Season

As we put 2020 behind us and start a brand-new year, we remain focused on preventing viral illnesses such as colds and flu. You probably already know that eating a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and healthy fats — while limiting processed foods, saturated fats, sugar, red meat and alcohol — is good for you. This pattern of eating translates to what's become known as the Mediterranean diet, which (once again) topped U.S. News & World Report's list of the best diets to follow for good health in 2020.

Foods included in the Mediterranean diet are high in nutrients that bolster our immunity. Here are some examples:

- Citrus fruits, red bell peppers, kiwi, and broccoli for vitamin C
- Yogurt and salmon for vitamin D and immune-stimulating probiotics (in the yogurt)
- Almonds and sunflower seeds for vitamin E
- Carrots and sweet potatoes for beta carotene and vitamin A
- Seafood, chicken, eggs and whole grains for selenium
- Nuts, fatty fish, olives and avocados for healthy fats to help you absorb fat-soluble nutrients
- Protein from both animal and plant-based sources, such as milk, yogurt, eggs, beef, chicken, seafood, nuts, seeds, beans and lentils



Although you may not be able to completely avoid 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 stay ahead of the germs this year.

Kimarie Segiel, RDN, LDN
Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center

Crispy Baked Broccoli

This tasty broccoli side dish is a great source of vitamin C, vitamin K, potassium, folate and fiber!



Ingredients:

16 ounces frozen broccoli florets

1 teaspoon garlic powder

½ teaspoon onion powder

1 tablespoon reduced-sodium soy sauce

1 tablespoon olive oil

Source: American Diabetes Association

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Spray a cookie sheet with nonstick cooking spray.
3. Defrost the broccoli and drain.
4. Combine the remaining ingredients in a 1-gallon resealable storage bag. Add the broccoli and shake until coated.
5. Place the broccoli florets on the cookie sheet, making sure there is space between the florets.
6. Discard the leftover marinade. Bake for 45–60 minutes. The broccoli will be soft inside but crisp at the edges when done.

Yield: 4 servings

Nutritional information:

Calories 60 | Fat 2 g | Saturated fat 0 g | Cholesterol 0 g | Protein 2 g | Fiber 2 g | Sodium 95 mg

Colorectal screenings and treatment: Why your care shouldn't stop

When it comes to your colon health, prompt care and routine screenings are crucial for colon cancer prevention. Here's how you can get the colorectal care you need with preventive screenings and virtual appointments.

Colorectal appointments and surgeries during COVID-19

Throughout the pandemic, colorectal doctors have continued seeing patients in hospitals and clinics. But rather than seeing everyone in person, office appointments are more often reserved for people with urgent colon and rectal problems, signs or symptoms of colon or rectal cancer (also called colorectal cancer) and anyone who's actively battling cancer. Why? To help slow the spread of COVID-19 and keep everyone safe.

Hospitals and clinics are screening every person before they come into the building — patients, staff and any visitors. This helps identify anyone who may have come in contact with a person who had COVID-19 or who's experiencing symptoms.

If you're scheduled for an in-person appointment, such as a colonoscopy or surgical procedure, your doctors are ready and following strict guidelines to keep everybody safe.

Virtual appointments for colorectal care

While some colon health appointments have to be completed in person, telemedicine appointments are being scheduled whenever possible — especially for anyone considered low-risk for developing cancer or complications, or for follow-up care.

For instance, many common symptoms, such as minor bleeding, pain or irritation, can be initially treated with bowel regimens, local care and topical medications. And these can be prescribed during a telemedicine appointment. These video or phone visits allow you to virtually connect with your doctors within the comfort of your own home.

When to schedule an appointment with a colorectal specialist

If you've had a routine screening or colorectal appointment postponed but believe your situation has changed or you're experiencing new symptoms, reach out to your doctor. To take preventive steps in your colon health at home, follow a healthy, high-fiber diet and drink plenty of fluids.

Your best defense in cancer prevention: Having routine colorectal screenings, or a colonoscopy. Most people should start having these at age 50 if they're considered low or average risk. But if you have rectal bleeding, stomach pain or a family history of colon cancer, talk with your doctor about having your screening sooner.

Winter Safety Tips

It's that time of year again! Bitterly cold temperatures, snow and ice can put older adults at a higher risk of health issues and injury. While this is not a complete list, here are recommended precautions you can take to ensure safety throughout the winter season.

- Snow shoveling is a must during the winter season, but can be a danger by putting stress on your heart. Allow yourself breaks while shoveling and don't overdo it. If you are able, hire someone to remove snow or ask family, neighbors or friends to help. You might also check with local churches/scouting troops/youth groups for volunteers.
- Avoid the risk of falls by wearing snow boots or shoes with appropriate tread or non-skid soles for traction. Remove snow and treat icy steps/sidewalks.
- Hypothermia and frostbite can occur when your body temperature drops to a dangerous level due to extended exposure to cold temperatures. Seniors are at a higher risk of hypothermia, so avoid spending long periods of time outdoors. Dress in several (2–3) thinner layers instead of a single thick layer. When outdoors, wear appropriate winter outerwear, making sure to cover all exposed skin and body parts.
- Be prepared for power outages resulting from winter storms. Store flashlights, extra batteries, blankets and a battery-operated radio in an easily accessible place. Keep your pantry stocked with non-perishable foods.
- Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning by making sure your heating sources as well as gas appliances are properly ventilated. Have carbon monoxide detectors installed in your home and check/change batteries regularly to ensure they are working properly. If you feel you may have carbon monoxide poisoning, get outside into fresh air.
- Be sure your car is winter-ready by checking the oil, antifreeze, wipers, battery and tires and making any necessary changes. Keep an emergency kit in your car that includes blankets, a sweatshirt, gloves, flashlights, bottled water, non-perishable snacks and a first-aid kit. If possible, avoid traveling during bad weather.



Durable Medical Equipment (DME) cost savings

Did you know?

Your medical supply company most likely has its patients set up on an automated delivery schedule to receive supplies on a regular basis for equipment like CPAP and oxygen. This can result in having extra supplies at home. While it is not a bad idea to have a few backup supplies, having too many can take up space and may be difficult to use up. Here are some tips to minimize extra shipments:

- Look at what you have.
 - What equipment are you using now?
 - Do you have extra supplies already?
- Have things changed since you first started receiving your supplies?
 - As your health improves or changes, you might not be using the same equipment you used to.
- Call your home care company and ask questions. They will be happy to help you.
 - Most home care companies will place a sticker on their equipment with their name and phone number. Their information may also be found in the boxes your supplies come in.
 - If you are no longer using your equipment or your supply needs have changed, let them know. The company might not be aware.
 - If you are still using your equipment but have way too many supplies, ask them to review your supply schedule with you. Perhaps you're getting the correct amount but not changing them out in the recommended amount of time, or the company may need to adjust its shipping frequency.



Flu shots – It's not too late! Remember to get your flu shot before March. The best defense is prevention. Contact your primary care doctor's office to schedule your flu shot or attend a flu shot clinic in your community.

Request your 2021 Keystone ACO Health and Wellness calendar & Connections booklet

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



Physician Groups

- Advanced Inpatient Medicine Wayne PC
- Capital Anesthesia LLC
- Caring Community Health Center
- Evangelical Medical Services
- Family Practice Center PC
- Geisinger Clinic
- Geisinger HM – Joint Venture LLC
- Geisinger Jersey Shore Foundation Inc.
- Geisinger Lewistown Hospital Family Health Associates
- Jackson Siegelbaum Gastroenterology Ltd.
- Lycoming Internal Medicine, INC
- The Wright Center Medical Group
- 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 Jersey Shore Hospital, Jersey Shore
- Geisinger Lewistown Hospital, Lewistown
- Geisinger Medical Center, Danville (including the Shamokin Campus)
- Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center, Wilkes-Barre, (including the Geisinger South Wilkes-Barre campus)
- Wayne Memorial Hospital, Honesdale

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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Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

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

KeystoneACO.org