

IT'S ABOUT THE POWER OF **YOU**

Summer 2024

PARA LEER ESTA REVISTA
EN ESPAÑOL, VISITE
HMHforU.org/Spanish3

HEALTH **U**

Hello, Summer!



Hackensack
Meridian *Health*



**5 WAYS TO TREAT
A MOSQUITO BITE**

Page 11

**HOW TO KEEP KIDS
SAFE IN THE POOL**

Page 12

**GET SUNBURNED EASILY?
HERE'S WHY**

Page 14

Contents

Summer 2024



22

Innovation *improving health care where it matters the most* **Right at Home**

Hospital *From Home* gives patients all the benefits of being in a hospital in the comfort of their homes.

HEALTH **U**

**ONLINE
EXCLUSIVES**



Do weight-loss pills really work? Find out at HMHforU.org/DietPills.



Energy drinks: Are they bad for your heart? Visit HMHforU.org/EnergyDrinks to find out more.





04 Hi. Welcome to this issue of HealthU
A message from Robert C. Garrett, FACHE,
CEO of Hackensack Meridian *Health*.

Better U *quick tips to help you live your healthiest life*

05 Thirst-quenching Foods
Plus: Should you drink alcohol while in recovery? |
Sweat and pimples | Recipe for watermelon
granita with blueberries | What's trending?

Doctor Spotlight

10 Getting to Know Xue Ao, M.D.
Primary care doctor at Hackensack Meridian
Medical Group Primary Care—Morganville.

Spotlight on U *health topics that matter the most to you*

12 Pool Rules
Keeping kids safe at the pool this summer. Plus:
Should your child get baseline concussion testing?

14 (Sun)burned Out
What makes your skin more prone to sunburn?
Plus: Does sunscreen block vitamin D?

16 When to Sweat It
When is a faster heart rate normal, and when
does it signal something serious? Plus: What
to know about heart health supplements.

18 Get Aligned
Could shoulder misalignment be causing
discomfort, stiffness and soreness? Plus: Robotic
technology gets man back on his feet after double
hip replacement.

20 Digital Detox
Are platforms like Facebook, Instagram or TikTok
hurting your health? Plus: Talking to kids about
body image.

Schedule *event and class listings*

24 Your Calendar for Summer 2024
Live and virtual events and classes you won't
want to miss.

Foundation *meaningful gifts from U*

26 Wraparound Care for Cancer Patients
Thanks to a generous donation, cancer patients
and their loved ones can focus on their care rather
than financial worries.

By the Numbers *a snapshot view of an important health issue*

27 The Skinny on Skin Care
How young is too young for a skincare routine?



Find four diet trends to try and three to avoid at
[HMHforU.org/HealthyDiet](https://www.hmhforu.org/HealthyDiet).

Tune in to our
HealthU podcast!
For more details, visit
[HMHforU.org/Podcast](https://www.hmhforu.org/Podcast).



Visit [HMHforU.org](https://www.hmhforu.org) for these stories
and other great health care content.

HealthU is the winner of the 2023
Content Marketing Award for Best
Content Marketing Program in
Healthcare, as well as a 2023 Hermes
Creative Awards Platinum winner
and a 2022 APEX Award winner.



@HMHNewJersey



@HMHNewJersey



Hackensack Meridian *Health*



@HackensackMeridianHealth

03

One way Bob Garrett and his wife, Laura, stay active is by participating in the Spring Lake Five Mile Run in May alongside many Hackensack Meridian Health team members.



Health Care Your Way

At Hackensack Meridian Health, we believe that health care should meet you where you are—whether that means delivering care close to home or enabling you to manage your health on the go, from your phone. We've taken a number of steps to ensure that care is as accessible and convenient as possible.

We have opened new ambulatory centers across the state of New Jersey to ensure you don't have to travel far to receive quality health care. For a current listing of all of our locations—from hospitals to urgent care centers to labs—visit [HMHforU.org/Locations](https://www.hmhforu.org/Locations).


We also rolled out online scheduling for many of our services across the network, including mammography, primary care and lab services. Make an appointment with your doctor from the comfort of your home or on the go at [HMHforU.org/OnlineAppt](https://www.hmhforu.org/OnlineAppt).

Using MyChart, you can access all of your medical information from your phone, device or computer, including summaries of visits, lab results and discharge instructions. You can even request prescription refills and message your provider. Not signed up? Visit [HMHforU.org/MyChart](https://www.hmhforu.org/MyChart).

We have even introduced a new program that allows patients with certain conditions and who meet specific criteria to receive hospital-level care from the comforts of home. Our Hospital From Home program provides services such as:

- ▶ Remote monitoring and vitals
- ▶ Medications, lab, X-ray and infusion services
- ▶ Physical, occupational and speech therapy
- ▶ Oxygen, respiratory care and medical equipment

Learn more at [HMHforU.org/HospitalFromHome](https://www.hmhforu.org/HospitalFromHome)—or in this magazine issue on **page 22!**

We hope this time of year inspires you to head outdoors, get moving and make a pledge to prioritize your health. And we hope that HealthU can support you in that journey and meet you where you are with helpful tips and advice from our providers. Subscribe to our HealthU e-newsletter so you don't miss a beat: [HMHforU.org/ENews](https://www.hmhforu.org/ENews). 

Robert C. Garrett, FACHE, CEO
Hackensack Meridian Health



Chair Keith Banks **CEO** Robert C. Garrett, FACHE

Medical Advisor William Oser, M.D.

Production Team Marisa Tranchina, Jacki Kronstedt, Joe Colón, Katie Woehner

Editorial & Creative Services Maggie Callahan, Donovan Foote, Jenna Grundtner, Michelle Jackson, Unlock Health

This free magazine is prepared by the Marketing and Communications Team of Hackensack Meridian Health. Inquiries or ideas can be addressed to HealthU@hmn.org.

© 2024 Hackensack Meridian Health. The material provided in this magazine is intended to be used as general information only and should not replace the advice of your physician. Always consult your physician for individual care.

BetterU

quick tips to help you live your healthiest life

INSIDE THIS SECTION

- 6 Can you drink alcohol in recovery?
- 7 Does sweat cause pimples?
- 7 Recipe for watermelon granita
- 8 What's trending?

Thirst-quenching Foods

As the temperature soars, reach for these hydrating and electrolyte-filled foods.

Staying hydrated—with the right mix of water and electrolytes—is essential as you soak up the sun this summer. Not only is hydration crucial for brain health and function, but it's also beneficial for skin health and weight management.

Karen Young, M.D., family medicine physician at **Raritan Bay Medical Center**, says it's not only drinks that can help you stay hydrated. Certain foods are also hydrating and come with added nutritional benefits, like fiber, which can lower cholesterol, balance blood sugar and help you stay full. These hydrating foods also come without the extra sugar you typically find in sports drinks.



Karen Young, M.D.

Family medicine

800-756-1282

Perth Amboy

Hydrating Foods

Some of the most hydrating foods are:

- ▶ Cucumbers
- ▶ Strawberries
- ▶ Oranges
- ▶ Watermelons
- ▶ Lettuce
- ▶ Grapefruit

Foods High in Electrolytes

Electrolytes, such as potassium, sodium and magnesium, can help you retain water and stay hydrated, Dr. Young says. If you're looking for an electrolyte boost, grab one of these foods:

- ▶ Bananas
- ▶ Spinach
- ▶ Avocados
- ▶ Almonds
- ▶ Celery
- ▶ Salmon

Hydration Recommended Amounts

Dr. Young says a standard amount to aim for is 64 ounces of fluid, with a minimum of 48 ounces. But the exact amount is based on your height and weight. If you are outside moving and sweating, lounging on the beach, or walking the boardwalk at the shore, you should increase that amount by 16 ounces per day.

Go Online

Find more nutrition tips at [HMHforU.org/Nutrition](https://www.HMHforU.org/Nutrition).

The Alcohol Conundrum

Can you drink alcohol while in recovery from drug addiction? Our expert explains.



If you or a loved one is in recovery, you may wonder if you can drink alcohol while in recovery from drug addiction.

"In general, you should not drink any alcohol while you are in recovery," says **Joseph Verret, M.D., MPH**, addiction psychiatrist and chief of Addiction Services at Blake Recovery Center at **Carrier Clinic**. "While using drugs, you'll get a dopamine high that creates a sense of euphoria, a loss of inhibitions and diminished control of impulses and urges. And that's exactly what alcohol does, too, which can lead to relapse and other risky behavior."

Tips for Lasting Recovery

Dr. Verret offers tips to stay on track in your recovery:

- ▶ **Join and be involved in peer support groups.** Find a Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous or Smart Recovery group near you to support your recovery.
- ▶ **Develop a relationship with a sponsor, coach or mentor.** "If you're having trouble managing a craving, call your sponsor. It's important to have someone you can trust and call whenever you need to talk to someone," adds Dr. Verret.
- ▶ **Explore therapy options.** "Therapy is a good option to help you identify other traumas and begin to heal. Whether it's a family history of drinking, sexual trauma, sexual abuse

or depression, exploring those issues and supporting your mental health needs can help prevent relapse," he says.

- ▶ **Understand your triggers.** Understand the situations, circumstances and people that may facilitate or enable substance use or jeopardize your sobriety. It may seem difficult at first, but limiting or avoiding exposure to those triggers will increase your chances of success.
- ▶ **Find activities you love.** Whether it's some form of exercise, playing a new instrument or learning how to paint, finding an enjoyable hobby can be beneficial.

Never Give Up

"With any rule, there can be exceptions," Dr. Verret says. "But for the majority of people, drinking alcohol while in recovery will lead them back to their original addiction or substance use disorder or an addiction to alcohol."

Dr. Verret emphasizes that addiction recovery is a lifetime commitment and process. "Sometimes people hit rock bottom before they are able to rise from the ashes," he says. "The key is, no matter where you are in the process, know that help is available and you should never give up."

Find an addiction specialist near you at [HMHforU.org/BehavioralHealthDoc](https://www.HMHforU.org/BehavioralHealthDoc).



Joseph Verret, M.D., MPH

Addiction psychiatrist

800-756-1282

Belle Mead



Does sweat cause pimples?

If your acne flares in warmer weather or after hitting the gym, you may suspect that sweating causes pimples. Here's why that's only partly true.

People get pimples when their pores get clogged on the face, back or elsewhere. There are different things that may cause the pores to become blocked, including makeup, bacteria and sweat.

When you let sweat sit on your skin, it mixes with bacteria and oil. The combination of sweat, oil and bacteria may increase your risk of developing acne and lead to more severe breakouts.

Intense workouts or time spent outdoors may leave you feeling sweaty in warmer weather. **Divya Bhatnagar, M.D.**, dermatologist at **Old Bridge Medical Center** and **Bayshore Medical Center**, recommends these hygiene hacks to keep you from breaking out more than usual:

- ▶ **Avoid wearing makeup during hot activities.** Wiping your sweaty face while wearing makeup may clog your pores with makeup. When makeup blocks your pores, oil may become trapped, which may contribute to acne.
- ▶ **Use water-based sunscreen or moisturizer instead of oil-based products.** Water-based products are less likely to clog pores, which should limit breakouts.
- ▶ **Change out of sweaty clothing as soon as possible.** Wearing damp, sweat-soaked clothing feels unpleasant and keeps bacteria against your skin. Acne may develop on the chest or back, not just the face.



Divya Bhatnagar, M.D.

Dermatologist

800-756-1282

Holmdel

To find a dermatologist near you, visit [HMHforU.org/DermDoc](https://www.HMHforU.org/DermDoc).



Watermelon Granita with Blueberries

Serves 4

Ingredients

4 cups watermelon, plus more for serving
Fresh berries of your choice
Fresh mint

Seasoned Cook

Freeze extra cubes of the granita to use in lemonade.

Nutrition

Per serving: 48 calories, 1g protein, 11g carbohydrate (1g fiber), 1g fat (0g sat, 1g mono/poly), 3mg sodium

Preparation

- ❶ In a food processor or blender, purée four cups of watermelon. Fill two ice cube trays and freeze for about three hours.
- ❷ Once frozen, place in a food processor with an S blade. Gently process.
- ❸ Fill glasses as follows:
½ frozen watermelon,
½ fresh berries,
½ watermelon.
- ❹ Top with blueberries and a sprig of mint.

Find more recipes and tips for healthy eating at [HMHforU.org/HealthyEating](https://www.HMHforU.org/HealthyEating).

Why does my bladder leak?

Nina Bhatia, M.D., weighs in:

Urinary incontinence is the medical term for urine leakage. Urinary incontinence happens when a person leaks urine by accident, or without control. It is a common condition that tends to get worse with age, and can affect a person's quality of life.

There are several reasons that can cause incontinence, including:

- ▶ Damage to nerves that control the bladder from diseases
- ▶ Examples: Parkinson's disease, diabetes, multiple sclerosis
- ▶ Weakened bladder or pelvic floor muscles
- ▶ Pregnancy and childbirth
- ▶ Diseases that prevent one from going to the bathroom in time
- ▶ Example: arthritis, difficulty with mobility
- ▶ Urinary tract infections
- ▶ Vaginal infections or irritations
- ▶ Overactive bladder muscles
- ▶ Pelvic organ prolapse
- ▶ Constipation

Treatment can vary depending on the type of incontinence you have and how serious it is. Talk to your doctor to find the best treatment that fits your lifestyle.



Nina Bhatia, M.D.

Urogynecologist

800-756-1282

Old Bridge and
Monroe Township



Learn more at HMHforU.org/BladderLeak.

Can weight loss lower blood pressure?

Jonathan Reich, M.D., FACS, weighs in:

The short answer: Yes, it can.

The heart needs to pump blood to all parts of the body. If someone is obese, the abdominal cavity develops a higher pressure. This makes it more difficult for the blood to return to the heart. That can lead to leg swelling and elevated adrenaline.

When you lose weight, the opposite occurs: It becomes easier for blood to travel throughout the body and back to the heart—causing blood pressure to decrease.



Jonathan Reich, M.D., FACS

Bariatric surgeon

800-756-1282

Manahawkin, Holmdel
and Glen Ridge



Learn more at
[HMHforU.org/
HeartAndWeight](https://HMHforU.org/HeartAndWeight).



Scan the
QR code
to take our
health risk
assessment
and see if
you're a
candidate for
weight-loss
surgery.

What are the signs of sleep apnea?

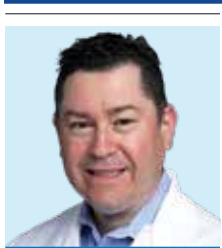
Thomas Mazzoni, D.O., weighs in:

The way sleep apnea commonly presents can be rather apparent: loud snores punctuated by quick, sometimes alarming gasps for air.

But sleep apnea symptoms appear in many ways, including subtly. Many people go undiagnosed, training their bodies to get used to daytime fatigue. Here are four unusual signs of sleep apnea:

- 1 Morning headaches.** If you wake up with a headache, whether in the middle of the night or the morning, that could be a sign of apnea. This is the most concerning of the unusual symptoms because it could be related to high blood pressure.
- 2 Night sweats.** Repeated episodes of not getting oxygen to the brain or not breathing enough spikes adrenaline in the body, causing it to sweat. When you have a surge of adrenaline, your heart rate increases, your blood pressure rises and you sweat.
- 3 Frequent movement.** People with sleep apnea may move around while sleeping. The repeated issue and difficulty in breathing might be jerking people awake or otherwise causing physical activity. These jolts may or may not be accompanied by snoring.
- 4 Frequent urination.** For older adults, frequent urination at night is common. But for younger adults, multiple bathroom trips at night could be an unusual sign of apnea. Like night sweats, this particular symptom might be caused by increased adrenaline, creating the feeling that your bladder is full.

If you think you have sleep apnea, the first step is to see your primary care doctor and describe your symptoms, especially if you snore. Your doctor can help determine which type of sleep apnea you have—obstructive sleep apnea (the most common), central sleep apnea or complex sleep apnea—and how to treat your specific case. For those patients that are unable to tolerate medical management, there are a variety of surgical options.



Thomas Mazzoni, D.O.

Otolaryngologist

800-756-1282

Iselin



Learn more at [HMHforU.org/SleepApneaSigns](https://www.hmhforu.org/SleepApneaSigns).

Is it safe to work out in humid weather?

Xue Ao, M.D., weighs in:

Exercising outside on hot, humid days can increase the risk of health incidents, including increased body temperature, dehydration, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and even stroke.

Humid weather makes you feel hotter, so it's harder to cool off. Plus, hotter perceived temperatures put greater stress on your body.



When the weather forecast calls for a hot, humid day, consider indoor workouts. If you exercise outdoors on hot, humid days, help protect yourself with these tips:

- ▶ Drink cool water before, during and after workouts to decrease your risk of dehydration.
- ▶ Stop exercising and rehydrate if you notice muscle spasms that could be heat cramps.
- ▶ For heat exhaustion, go somewhere air-conditioned, rehydrate well and take a cool shower.
- ▶ If you suspect a heat stroke, call 911 or go to the emergency room. Use air-conditioning and cool washcloths to cool down until treatment is available.



Xue Ao, M.D.

Internal medicine
doctor

800-756-1282

Morganville

Learn more at [HMHforU.org/HumidWorkout](https://www.hmhforu.org/HumidWorkout).

Doctor Spotlight

XUE AO, M.D.

Internal medicine doctor

Hackensack Meridian Medical Group Primary Care—Morganville

After graduating from China Medical University, Xue Ao, M.D., wanted to come to the U.S. to do research. She chose graduate school at The University of Texas at Austin for molecular biology, then M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston to better understand disease and the effectiveness of clinical trials.

The field of pathology beckoned, but while volunteering at an Austin hospital, and then at M.D. Anderson, Dr. Ao realized patient care was calling her name. “I enjoy figuring out a little bit of everything medically, forming long-term relationships with my patients while helping them achieve a better lifestyle that may prevent disease,” she says. “After my residency at Ocean University Medical Center, I went directly to primary care and internal medicine.”

Today, she sees a diverse range of patients from China, Korea, Thailand and India. “I think they can relate to me,” she says. “I respect that my Chinese patients want to live a very healthy life, but they may not want to be on medications and instead want everything to be ‘natural.’ Sometimes it takes more than that to manage chronic conditions, so we work together.”

What’s one thing that makes you happiest in life?

It’s my 10-year-old daughter. She plays piano and violin, enjoys concerts at the symphony, likes to read and visit museums with us. I like to learn with her. Our family likes to explore and travel on the weekend, or just go hiking in the park. We sometimes like to go further, and when we went



Xue Ao, M.D., works with patients to merge their natural treatments with modern medications to treat chronic conditions.

to Costa Rica recently, we really enjoyed rafting and riding a zipline.

If you could meet anyone at all, who would that be?

It has to be Leonardo da Vinci, because he was such a genius and so full of ideas. He seemed to be good at everything: painting, architecture, anatomy and inventing. He was also a very hard worker. I was taught that he used to practice drawing an egg over and over, trying to make it perfect. I also like to pay attention to details,

and I appreciate people who do that and are creative, with no boundaries in their way.

What do you like to cook and eat?

It can take forever to prepare Chinese food the traditional ways. I taught my daughter how to make traditional dumplings and noodles. But typically Monday through Friday, we use quicker cooking methods, like with an air fryer or pressure cooker. We like American and Italian foods, especially pizza and pasta—and sushi, too! 🍣

To make an appointment with Dr. Ao or a doctor near you, call **800-756-1282** or visit **[HMHforU.org/FindADoc](https://www.HMHforU.org/FindADoc)**.

Spotlight on

health topics that matter the most to you



Bites That

BUG You



Wash the bite with soap and water.



Apply a cold compress or ice pack to reduce swelling and itching.



Apply an over-the-counter antihistamine or anti-itch cream containing hydrocortisone to relieve itching.



Take ibuprofen or acetaminophen to reduce inflammation and discomfort.



Don't scratch the bite, since this can increase the risk of infection.

If you are bitten by a mosquito, take these steps to relieve the bite.

In most cases, mosquito bites result in minor irritation and go away on their own in a few days. But if you've been bitten by a mosquito and have any of these symptoms, see your primary care doctor:

- ▶ High fever
- ▶ Severe headache
- ▶ Body aches
- ▶ Spreading redness

For more health tips and resources, subscribe to the HealthU e-newsletter at HMHforU.org/ENews.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Pool Rules

Keep your kids safe at the pool this summer with these four tips from our expert.

During the hot summer months, pools are a great way to have fun and relax with your family. However, drowning is one of the leading causes of accidental deaths among children, so it's critical that parents take the proper steps to keep everyone safe. **Rosa M. Mendoza, M.D.**, family medicine doctor at **JFK University Medical Center**, offers four ways parents can keep their kids safe at the pool this year.

1

Practice Active Supervision

When your children are splashing in or by the pool, designate yourself or another parent to take the role of active supervisor. While supervising, avoid using cell phones or consuming alcoholic beverages. "It is also important to stay within arm's reach of your children, so if something were to happen, you are not too far to take action," Dr. Mendoza says. "If you need to step away, designate another active supervisor."

2

Provide Adequate Safety Equipment

Always keep the necessary safety equipment close to the pool area. This equipment includes life jackets, reaching poles and a first aid kit. It is also important to ensure that you and your children know how to use these tools in case of an emergency.

3

Teach Water Safety at a Young Age

Each child's emotional maturity level and physical development is different, so there is not a standard age for every child to start swim lessons. But the American Academy of Pediatrics suggests swimming lessons can begin for many children at age 1. Studies suggest that swim lessons and water skills training reduce drowning risk for children. "I also recommend that parents learn CPR in case of an emergency," Dr. Mendoza says.

4

Establish Clear Rules

It is critical to enforce pool safety regulations for your children. Suggestions include:

- ▶ No running near the pool
- ▶ No diving into the pool unless the water depth is safe
- ▶ Enter the pool feet first (unless diving in a safe deep zone)

"By taking these proactive safety measures, you can significantly reduce the risk of accidents and ensure your child's well-being at the pool," Dr. Mendoza says. 🌊



Rosa M. Mendoza, M.D.
Family medicine doctor
800-756-1282
Edison

Go Online

Find a pediatrician near you at [HMHforU.org/Pediatrician](https://www.hmhforu.org/Pediatrician).

Home Base

Concussions are a serious concern in youth sports. Baseline concussion testing may provide a valuable guide for treatment.

Competitive sports are fun, but concussions are serious, potentially causing long-term physical, cognitive and emotional consequences. According to American Academics of Pediatrics data, an estimated 1.1 million to 1.9 million recreational and sports-related concussions occur every year in the United States in children ages 18 and younger.

This may have you wondering if you should consider tools such as baseline concussion testing. **Christine Greiss, D.O.**, director of the Concussion Program at **JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute**, weighs in on what baseline testing is and who might benefit from it.

What Is Baseline Concussion Testing?

Baseline concussion testing consists of a baseline neurological examination and a computerized neurological test that measures a person's baseline levels of concentration, reaction times, memory and motor skills. These results can be used for comparison if your child is suspected of having a concussion in the future.

What Are the Benefits of Testing?

Baseline testing can provide a foundation of measurement of a person's cognitive and physical abilities if a concussion is suspected and give a comparison rather than relying on self-reporting. If it is determined that your child has a concussion, it can then be used as a guide for treatment and management.

"Symptoms vary by child, and every case is different," Dr. Greiss says. "Baseline testing gives us their unique standard and helps us find a treatment that suits their individual needs."

Who Should Get Tested?

For boys, studies show tackle football carries the highest risk of concussion, with lacrosse, ice hockey and wrestling also with high risks. For girls' sports, soccer and cheerleading carry a high risk of concussion, followed by lacrosse, field hockey and basketball.

If your child participates in a sport with minimal to no contact, baseline concussion testing may not be necessary. Always consult your child's coach or talk with your pediatrician. ❄️



Christine Greiss, D.O.

Brain injury medicine specialist

800-756-1282

Edison

Go Online

To find a neurologist near you, visit **HMHforU.org/NeuroDoc**.

CANCER CARE



(Sun)burned Out

In the hot summer sun, anyone can burn, but are there certain things that make your skin more prone to it?



Michelle Lomotan, M.D.

Internal medicine
specialist

800-756-1282

Edison

Michelle Lomotan, M.D., a primary care physician at **JFK University Medical Center**, lists three factors that may make you more prone to burn this summer.

1 Fair Skin

Melanin is the pigment that defends your skin against the sun's rays. When your unprotected skin is exposed to the sun, melanin can cause it to darken. Since the amount of melanin you can produce is determined by genetics, some people are more prone to burn, while others tan.

2 Conditions That Weaken Your Immune System

If you have an autoimmune disease such as systemic lupus erythematosus or another medical condition that weakens your immune system, such as HIV, the UV light from the sun can cause more damage to your skin.

When the immune system is suppressed, you are more susceptible to develop skin cancers from the DNA damage caused by sun exposure.

3 Family History of Skin Cancer

A family history of skin cancer or inherited conditions can increase the risk of skin cancer after sun exposure and sunburns.

- ▶ Every single sunburn increases a person's risk of developing skin cancer because the UV radiation damage from sunlight accumulates over time.
- ▶ Experiencing a higher volume of sunburns earlier in life is linked to developing melanoma skin cancer later on.

In some individuals, skin cancer is a hereditary condition and the increased risk of it can be passed from parent to child. It is important to be aware of your family's history of skin cancer and other skin diseases when enjoying the sun so you can take the proper preventative measures, such as more sunscreen applications, protective clothing, time in the shade and getting screened for skin cancer by a dermatologist.

Protecting Your Skin

Any type of skin can burn under certain circumstances when it is unprotected and exposed to the sun's rays. Dr. Lomotan emphasizes that it's important for all people, regardless of age or skin tone, to wear sunscreen. ⚙️

Go Online

For more summer safety tips, check out HMHforU.org/SummerSafety.

A+ Vitamin D

Sun exposure doesn't help vitamin D production as much as you might think. Our expert explains why skipping sunscreen doesn't provide benefits.

It's time for some fun in the sun, which is a good opportunity to get some extra vitamin D. But can the use of sunscreen hinder vitamin D production?

Our expert, **Jennifer Turkish, M.D.**, family medicine doctor at **Old Bridge Medical Center** and **Raritan Bay Medical Center**, explains the connection between vitamin D and sunscreen.

"Vitamin D plays a crucial role in supporting overall bone health, boosting the immune system and potentially reducing the risk of certain diseases," Dr. Turkish says. "It can also contribute to better calcium absorption, stronger bones and improved mood regulation."

Can Sunscreen Stop Vitamin D Production?

Approximately 95 percent of the rays we experience are UVA, which can cause skin aging but cannot help initiate vitamin D production.

The other 5 percent are UVB rays, which can boost vitamin D production but also lead to sunburn. Both cause



Jennifer Turkish, M.D.
Family medicine doctor
800-756-1282
Old Bridge

damage and changes in skin cells' DNA, which can lead to skin cancer.

"Research hasn't shown sunscreen use leads to reduced vitamin D levels," Dr. Turkish says. "It's essential that you continue to wear sunscreen when you are exposed to the sun to protect your skin from harmful UV rays."

In fact, it's likely that you can get enough sun exposure to produce a healthy amount of vitamin D simply by walking from your office or the store to your car. Purposely spending time in the sun without sunscreen only boosts negative outcomes.

How Can You Get Vitamin D Safely?

In addition to UVB rays, we also take in vitamin D through the foods we eat and supplements we take, including:

- ▶ Fatty fish
- ▶ Egg yolks
- ▶ Fortified foods such as orange juice, milk or cereal
- ▶ Beef liver
- ▶ Vitamin D supplements

Go Online

Make an appointment for a skin cancer screening at HMHforU.org/SkinCancerScreening.

When to Sweat It



When is a faster heartbeat normal, and when is it a sign of something more serious?

Our expert **Saleem Husain, M.D.**, a cardiologist at **JFK University Medical Center**, provides insight on what's "normal" and what needs immediate professional attention.

Less Concerning Reasons for a Fast Heart Rate

In addition to exercising, your heart may beat faster because of:

- ▶ **Dehydration.** A large portion of your blood is made up of water. So when water is in short supply, the volume of your blood is lower, and your heart has to work harder to compensate.
- ▶ **Caffeine.** Caffeine is generally safe for most people when consumed at low to moderate levels. However, if you ingest high amounts of caffeine, it can affect your nervous system and heart rhythm.
- ▶ **Emotions.** Our emotions are powerful and cause bodily responses. If you are stressed or highly anxious, you may notice that your heart beats faster.

"All of these common reactions will typically resolve on their own, so there's no need to see a doctor," Dr. Husain says.

Fast Heart Rate Due to Arrhythmia

Sometimes people experience a pounding heart not caused by the heart responding to a normal situation. This is called an arrhythmia. "An arrhythmia is a faster heartbeat caused by a disease," says Dr. Husain.

There are various reasons why you may have an arrhythmia, but atrial fibrillation—also known as AFib—is the most common one.

Arrhythmia can be caused by numerous conditions including:

- ▶ Heart attack
- ▶ Lung diseases
- ▶ Thyroid issues
- ▶ Infections
- ▶ Leaky heart valves
- ▶ Sleep apnea

Many arrhythmias come and go, so you may be tempted to ignore it. But if you are consistently experiencing moments of heart palpitations, don't ignore it. "Untreated arrhythmia can weaken your heart, eventually causing heart failure," Dr. Husain says. ❄️



Saleem Husain, M.D.

Cardiologist

800-822-8905

Plainfield and
Piscataway

Go Online

Learn more about heart care at Hackensack Meridian Health at [HMHforU.org/Heart](https://www.hmhforu.org/Heart).



The Scoop on Supplements

There's no question that diet and exercise support a healthy heart, but what about supplements for cardiovascular health? Here's what you should know.



Mariam Wassef, D.O.

Cardiologist

800-756-1282

Edison and Old Bridge

Red yeast rice, fish oil, beet chews, coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) gel caps, magnesium powder, garlic pills—many supplements on the market are advertised as “heart-healthy.” But are they really worth taking? “There have been studies of supplements like vitamin D, fish oils and calcium, but overall results haven’t proven their effectiveness,” says **Mariam Wassef, D.O.**, cardiologist at **Old Bridge Medical Center, Raritan Bay Medical Center** and **JFK University Medical Center**.

Do Your Homework

Without proven results, Dr. Wassef usually doesn’t recommend “heart-healthy” supplements. “If you’re considering heart health supplements, talk to your doctor and do extensive research beforehand,” she says.

Better Options for Heart Health

While the research on taking supplements for cardiovascular health may not offer ringing endorsements, it’s clear that diet and exercise benefit heart health.

Dr. Wassef recommends trying a diet that’s primarily plant-based and low in saturated fats. “Medications can help, but diet and exercise make the most difference,” she says. “I believe that a well-balanced diet with a variety of nutritious ingredients is superior to taking any supplements. ⚙️



Know your risk of heart disease. Schedule a CT Calcium Scoring scan: [HMHforU.org/CTCalciumScan](https://www.HMHforU.org/CTCalciumScan).

Get Aligned

Could shoulder misalignment be causing discomfort, stiffness and soreness?

Many of us end the day slumped on the couch after spending hours hunched over a computer and often feel stiff and sore. **Mitchell Stroh, D.O.**, orthopedic surgeon at **Old Bridge Medical Center** and **JFK University Medical Center**, says pain often has to do with shoulder alignment.



Mitchell Stroh, D.O.
Orthopedic surgeon
800-756-1282
Edison and Old Bridge

Misalignment and Pain

While we tend not to think about shoulder alignment, if something is askew, it can lead to pain. If shoulder alignment is not correct, it can affect the range of motion in the shoulder and muscle strength.

Shoulder movement is a coordinated dance between the humerus (upper arm bone), the scapula (shoulder blade) and the clavicle (collar bone). If one of these is out of sync, it can cause a variety of issues.

Signs of Misalignment

If your shoulder is out of alignment, you may experience:

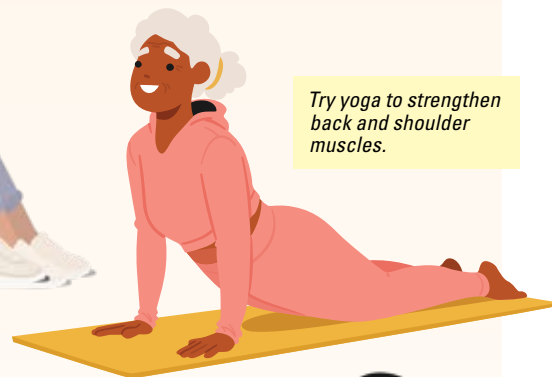
- ▶ Pain around the shoulder blade
- ▶ Difficulty raising your arm
- ▶ Weakness
- ▶ Winged scapula (one shoulder blade sticks out further than the other)
- ▶ Neck issues or neck pain

Prevention

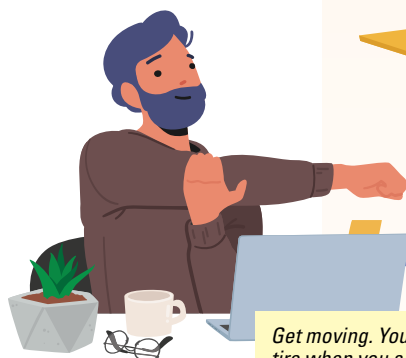
Correcting poor posture is challenging because it's second nature, but there are a few things you can do to improve:



Be aware of your posture, and correct it when you're slouching.



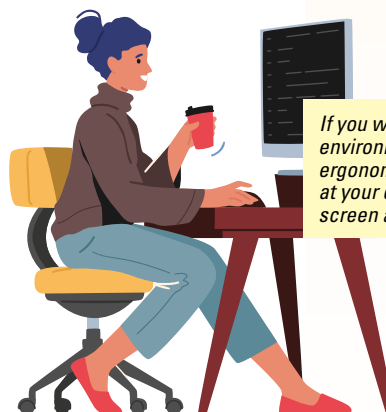
Try yoga to strengthen back and shoulder muscles.



Get moving. Your muscles tire when you are in one position for a long period, and slouching is more likely.

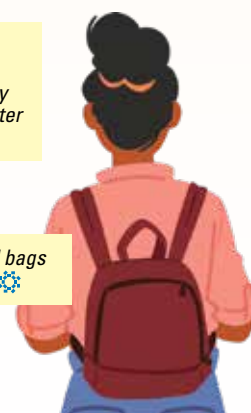


Wear proper corrective eyewear if needed. This will prevent you from straining or hunching forward to see.



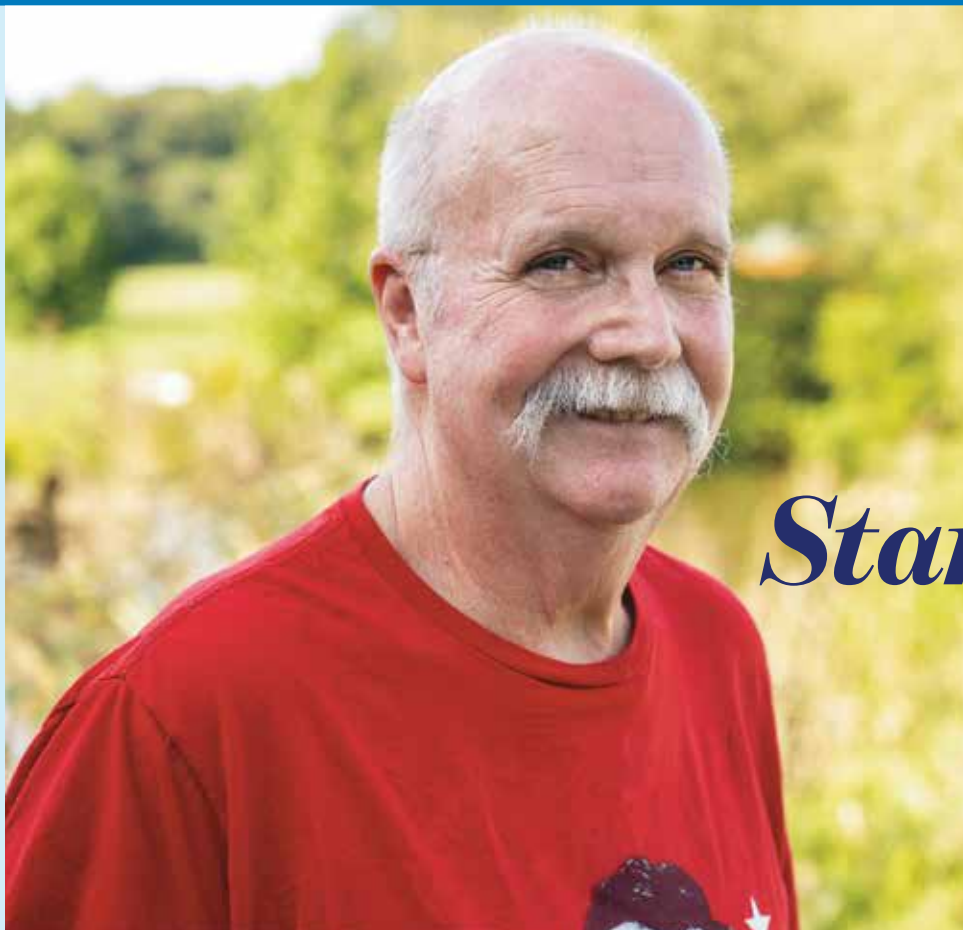
If you work in an office environment, use proper ergonomics by sitting squarely at your desk with your computer screen at resting eye level.

Don't overload bags or backpacks.



Go Online

Make an appointment with an orthopedic specialist at [HMHforU.org/OrthoDoc](https://www.HMHforU.org/OrthoDoc).



Today, Doug Buy walks 1 or 2 miles every day, and the pain he previously had from his back to his knees is gone.

Scan the QR code to take our knee and hip health assessment.



Standing Strong

Thanks to a double hip replacement using robotic technology, Doug Buy is pain-free and back on his feet.

In 2013, Doug Buy was on the job working for Monmouth County, New Jersey, when he was hit by a car. The accident resulted in chronic back pain due to damage to his sacroiliac joints, which sit on each side of the spine where it meets the pelvis.

"There was sharp pain running down my back from my hips to my knees," he says. His injuries forced him to retire early at age 62 in 2017.

In 2022, Doug's neurologist performed surgery for spinal compression, but his pain remained after the procedure. "My back kind of degenerated," Doug says. "I was walking with a cane most of the time. Sometimes I needed a walker."

One Procedure, Two Hips

A CAT scan revealed that osteoarthritis in Doug's hips had wiped out the cartilage, and an orthopedic surgeon told him he needed surgery on both hips.

Fortunately, Doug was a good candidate for a double hip replacement. The technique used

by his orthopedic surgeon wouldn't allow both hips to be replaced at the same time, so Doug was referred to **Ahmed Siddiqi, D.O., MBA**, a reconstruction and joint replacement surgeon specializing in robotic minimally invasive surgery at **JFK University Medical Center**. Dr. Siddiqi uses a technique that allows the procedures to happen simultaneously.

"It's not common for people to have two hips that are equally bad and equally painful, so double hip replacement surgery is uncommon," Dr. Siddiqi says. "But I happen to do a lot of double hip replacement surgeries."

When meeting with Dr. Siddiqi, Doug appreciated his doctor's open communication. "Everything was fantastic," Doug says. "When I went to the initial consultation, he put me at ease about what he was doing and explained the whole process to me."

For Doug's surgery, Dr. Siddiqi used robotic technology and advanced pain control to optimize Doug's outcome and help him recover faster.



Ahmed Siddiqi, D.O., MBA
Orthopedic surgeon
800-756-1282
Edison

Back on His Feet

Doug spent one night in the hospital and was walking less than two weeks after surgery.

Instead of physical therapy, Dr. Siddiqi set him up with an online exercise program that began a month before surgery and continued for three months after, with interaction from team members to monitor his pain levels and progress.

"If you actually do those exercises, you recover really quickly," Doug says.

Adds Dr. Siddiqi: "Educating patients and boosting their confidence goes a long way. When you give them a mindset that this is what to expect and this is how they're going to do, that sets them up for success."

Today, Doug is walking a mile—sometimes two—every day. The sharp pain shooting from his back to his knees is gone. Even with arthritis pain in his knees, he's walking well and hopes to return to golfing, an activity he had to give up after his accident. "The hips aren't bothering me at all," he says.

Digital Detox

Are platforms like Facebook, Instagram or TikTok hurting your health?



Vedavani Tiruveedhula, M.D.

Psychiatrist

800-756-1282

Old Bridge and Perth Amboy

From scrolling through Instagram to browsing endless TikTok videos, social media is a part of life for many. And because it's considered so "normal," it's easy to get lost in the virtual world of likes, comments and shares. What many people don't realize is that excessive use of social media can lead to addiction, which gradually impacts mental and emotional well-being.

Vedavani Tiruveedhula, M.D., psychiatrist at **Old Bridge Medical Center, Raritan Bay Medical Center** and **JFK University Medical Center**, says that although social media addiction is not an official medical disorder, its symptoms are similar to other types of addictions that psychiatrists recognize.

Impact on Mental and Emotional Health

Using social media too much can have profound effects on mental and emotional well-being. Studies have linked social media addiction to increased feelings of loneliness, depression, anxiety and low self-esteem. When you're constantly comparing yourself to curated

online personas, you can develop unrealistic standards and start to feel inadequate. The constant barrage of information and notifications can also raise your stress levels and make it challenging to concentrate.

Spotting the Signs of Addiction

Recognizing the signs of social media addiction is the first step toward addressing the issue. Some common signs include:

- ▶ **Preoccupation with social media:** Constantly thinking about or planning the next time you can check social media
- ▶ **Withdrawal symptoms:** Feeling anxious, irritable or restless when unable to access social media
- ▶ **Neglecting responsibilities:** Prioritizing social media over work, school or personal responsibilities
- ▶ **Impact on relationships:** Spending more time on social media than with friends or family, or experiencing conflict due to social media use
- ▶ **Loss of interest:** Losing interest in hobbies or activities that were once enjoyable in favor of spending time on social media

Taking Control and Seeking Help

If you or a loved one show signs of social media addiction, take proactive steps to address the issue. While there isn't a specific treatment available for social media addiction, behavioral health professionals can help. Connecting with an expert is especially important if you have a co-existing mental health condition, such as anxiety or depression, and you're also worried about your social media use.

"Take time away from screens to do things that are good for your mental health, like going on a walk or grabbing coffee with friends," Dr. Tiruveedhula says. "Be intentional about your social media usage." 🌱

Go Online

Find a behavioral health specialist near you at [HMHforU.org/BehavioralHealthDoc](https://www.HMHforU.org/BehavioralHealthDoc).





Talking About Body Image

Discover five ways to help your child love the skin they are in.

The way that your child views their body is essential in building self-esteem and can have a lasting impact on other areas of their lives including school performance and forming healthy relationships. Children who begin to obsess over their appearance or lack body positivity may be subject to experiencing body dysmorphia, a mental health condition where a person spends much of their time worrying about their appearance.

Body positivity can be an effective way to combat your child's negative thoughts about their body in practicing healthy ways to think about themselves. "Body positivity is a mindset that centers around loving your body no matter what—regardless of shape, size, color or ability," says **Alyssa Rios, M.D.**, pediatrician at **JFK University Medical Center**. "By teaching your child to think positively about their body, you can support their mental health and confidence."

Dr. Rios suggests five ways to help your child love the skin they're in:



Alyssa Rios, M.D.

Pediatrician

800-756-1282

Metuchen

1 **Be a role model**

- ▶ Avoid associating certain foods with shame, such as saying "Ugh, I shouldn't have eaten that cookie!"
- ▶ Your child notices how you perceive and talk about yourself, so make sure you are practicing body positivity too.

2 **Develop a healthy relationship with food**

- ▶ Don't create "good" or "bad" labels for food and instead recommend a variety of foods.
- ▶ Promote nutritious foods by teaching your child how they can help to make them strong and grow.

3 **Make physical activities about having fun rather than weight loss**

- ▶ Sports and other physical activities can lose their fun for your child when associated with the pressure of weight loss.
- ▶ Encourage your child to participate in sports/activities that they enjoy and emphasize movement as part of a lifelong healthy lifestyle.

4 **Celebrate all of your child's qualities, not just the physical ones**

- ▶ Help your child learn to associate their bodies with more than just looks.
- ▶ Make sure to compliment their other qualities that you love such as their sense of humor or how thoughtful they are.

5 **Encourage wearing clothes that fit and they feel comfortable in**

- ▶ Do not keep clothes that your child has outgrown in their closet as this could make them feel anxious about fitting into them again.
- ▶ Remind your child that it is okay to size up or size down and that clothes are about expressing yourself and being comfortable. 🌟

After about five days of care through Hospital From Home, Denise Dixon was discharged from the program. Today, she is healthy and happily back on the golf course.

Right at Home

Hackensack Meridian Health's Hospital From Home gives patients all the benefits of being in a hospital in the comfort of their homes.

Denise Dixon, 71, lives with multiple medical challenges, so when her right leg became painfully swollen, she knew she needed medical help. She went to the emergency department at **Hackensack University Medical Center**, where she was admitted and diagnosed with hypertensive urgency (a condition where blood pressure is elevated) and congestive heart failure.

While Denise—who lives in Hackensack, New Jersey—was grateful to be getting the care she needed, a week or more of inpatient care was staring her in the face. Then a nurse visited her on June 12, 2023, asking if she'd like to participate in Hackensack Meridian Health's Hospital From Home program. Denise learned she was an ideal candidate for the program and could get the treatments she needed in the comfort of her own home. She was delighted to have the opportunity.

How Hospital From Home Began

The Hospital From Home program combines the best of hospital-level care with the comforts of home for patients with specific conditions that meet program criteria. The program, which was



originally created through a Medicare waiver during the COVID-19 pandemic, has since become available to qualified patients ages 18 and older at Hackensack, **Jersey Shore University Medical Center** and **JFK University Medical Center**.

To qualify, a patient admitted to one of the three participating hospitals must undergo a comprehensive clinical assessment to confirm they meet specific selection criteria, which includes their diagnosis, type of care they need and their living situation.

The concept of providing more care in the home has been gaining acceptance and preference from patients in recent years, but the COVID-19 pandemic, which filled hospitals to capacity with critically ill patients, created a national imperative for medical providers to find ways to offer hospital-quality care in patients' homes.

Denise's Typical Day With Hospital From Home

The day after Denise's nurse approached her about Hospital From Home, she was discharged from the hospital, transferred home and began the program in the comfort of her living room. Here's how her daily routine would go:

- ▶ She would begin her day with a telemedicine appointment with her doctor using a tablet provided by the hospital. Much like when a doctor visits a patient in the hospital, they would discuss how she is doing, reports from her nurses and medical tests.
- ▶ At about 8:30 a.m.—and again at 4:30 p.m.—her nurse practitioner, Shannon Byrne, would arrive at her door for her twice-daily visits and examine her, just as if she were in a hospital.
- ▶ Denise's blood pressure was taken, and blood tests were performed.
- ▶ If she needed them, Denise might receive IV fluids. She was especially delighted to find that lab work and even X-rays were done with equipment all brought to her home.
- ▶ Each day, Shannon would bring Denise's medications and insulin needles in a lockbox and ensure Denise received them.

"It's not that I enjoyed being sick, but the experience was very uplifting and comfortable with me being able to be home," Denise says. "I had more comfort here. I could watch my own television, sleep in my comfortable bed, people could call me and friends could come by."

Meeting All Patients' Needs

In addition to medical care, Hospital From Home also provides additional support for patients based on their specific needs. For Denise, that meant that every day, three meals were delivered to her home, each customized to provide maximum nutrition while addressing her dietary needs specific to her diabetes and hypertension.

While Denise was able to move around on her own, less mobile patients may qualify for durable medical equipment like wheelchairs, walkers, bathing equipment, oxygen and even a hospital bed to be brought to their homes.

Depending on patients' individual needs, they may also receive physical, occupational and speech therapy as well as social worker support. Their care team will also collaborate with hospital specialists as necessary. The program is currently only available to patients already admitted to one of the three Hackensack Meridian Health hospitals offering the program.

"Hospital From Home enabled Denise, like my other patients, to receive the comprehensive care and services they would receive in the hospital while being treated in the comfort of her own home," Shannon says. "We are available to our patients 24 hours a day, seven days a week, just like in the hospital."

On June 18, Denise was discharged from Hospital From Home in stable condition and with an updated medication regimen. Today, she is feeling great and living her best life. She loves to get out in the sun, play golf, exercise at her gym and visit the park to enjoy watching the people and animals. 🌻



Watch Denise tell her story and learn more at
HMHforU.org/HospitalFromHome.



We offer a number of programs to help keep our communities healthy. Topics range from general wellness to heart health, stroke, cancer care, women's health and more. View some featured events below.

For a full listing or to register, visit HMHforU.org/Events or call 800-756-1282.

SchedUle

Here are just a few of the events & classes this July through October 2024

Special Events

Free Health & Wellness Screenings Join us for free health & wellness screenings. Instant results given by a registered nurse. Screenings will include blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose, pulse, body mass index and stroke risk assessments—non-fasting. Walk-ins welcome; registration not required.

Sep. 19, noon–3 p.m., Edison Library North Branch, 777 Grove Ave., Edison



Bayshore Medical Center
727 North Beers St.
Holmdel

Carrier Clinic and Blake Recovery Center
252 County Rd. 601
Belle Mead

Behavioral Health

Cyberbullying and Social Media: What Every Parent Should Know

Join Nanditha Krishnamsetty, M.D., for an insightful look at how online bullying affects children and teens, what parents and loved ones can do to help, and how to support them.

Sep. 10, 5–6 p.m., virtual event



Current Trends in the Management of Metastatic Brain Tumors Join this informative webinar and learn about metastatic brain tumors and your medical care.

Sep. 16, 11 a.m.–noon, virtual event, Speaker: Nitesh Patel, M.D.

September Is National Recovery Month: Understanding Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Addiction impacts the entire person, including having powerful effects on their brain and behavior. Join us and learn how treatment can save lives and help individuals and families transform. This webinar will help listeners understand how addiction develops, how to access treatment and the key principles of recovery.

Sep. 24, 6–7 p.m., virtual event

Cancer Care

Risk-Based Screening for Breast Cancer Join Harriet Borofsky, M.D., to learn about risk-based multi-modality screening and the current technologies available to know your personal risk for breast cancer. Advanced technologies for early detection and diagnosis will be discussed as well.

Oct. 16, noon–1 p.m., virtual event

► **Stop Smoking With Hypnosis**
July 10, Sep. 11, 7–8 p.m., virtual event

Jersey Shore University Medical Center and K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital
1945 Route 33
Neptune

JFK University Medical Center
65 James St.
Edison

Ocean University Medical Center
425 Jack Martin Blvd., Brick

Old Bridge Medical Center
1 Hospital Plaza
Old Bridge

Raritan Bay Medical Center
530 New Brunswick Ave.
Perth Amboy

HOSPITAL LOCATIONS

Riverview Medical Center
1 Riverview Plaza
Red Bank

Southern Ocean Medical Center
1140 Route 72 West
Manahawkin



Heart Health

Angioscreen®: Know Your Risk for Heart Disease and Stroke Cardiovascular disease, including heart attack and stroke, is the number one cause of death for men and women in the U.S., more deadly than all cancers combined. Knowing your risk now can go a long way toward prevention. Start with AngioScreen®, a comprehensive heart and vascular screening. In just 15 minutes, this simple, non-invasive evaluation will help identify your risk for heart disease and stroke, so you can take charge of a heart-healthy life. *Special rate \$49.95. Registration required. Visit [HMHforU.org/Events](https://hmn.org/Events) or call for dates, times and locations.*



Pediatrics

Parent/Guardian Talks

All About Allergies Join our experts to learn about different types of allergies, how to prevent reactions and what to do if your child has allergies.

Oct. 24, noon–1 p.m., virtual event

- ▶ **Safe Sitter** Visit [HMHforU.org/Events](https://hmn.org/Events) for more upcoming dates, or for groups of six or more, email Coeventinquiries@hmn.org for more information. Fee \$40
- ▶ **Safe at Home by Safe Sitter** Visit [HMHforU.org/Events](https://hmn.org/Events) for upcoming dates, or for groups of six or more, email Coeventinquiries@hmn.org for more information. Fee \$15

General Wellness

Summer Meal Planning: Let's Get Fresh! Join our registered dietitian and learn how to incorporate seasonal fruits and vegetables into your summer diet.

July 24, 1–2 p.m., Woodbridge Library, 1 George Frederick Plaza, Woodbridge

- ▶ **Take Control of Your Health: Chronic Disease Self-Management** Six-week series. Oct. 1, 1–2 p.m., registration/information session; Oct. 8, 15, 22 & 29 and Nov. 6, 1–3:30 p.m., Edison Library North Branch, 777 Grove Ave., Edison
- ▶ **Weight-loss Surgery** To learn more about weight-loss surgery, attend a free seminar. Find a seminar near you at [HMHforU.org/WeightLoss](https://hmn.org/WeightLoss).
- ▶ **Support Groups** Hackensack Meridian Health offers regular support group meetings. Learn more at [HMHforU.org/SupportGroups](https://hmn.org/SupportGroups).



After his mother passed away, Adithya Bathena and his family began hosting annual events to raise money and help others receive the best cancer care possible.

Wraparound Care for Cancer Patients

Thanks to a generous donation from the Sarala Bathena Foundation, cancer patients and their loved ones can focus on their care rather than financial worries.

When Sarala Bathena passed away in 2006 from late-stage renal carcinoma two days shy of her 46th birthday, Adithya Bathena, her son, and their family knew they wanted to assist other families undergoing the same challenging experiences. In her honor, the family created the Sarala Bathena Foundation, which supports individuals and families affected by cancer and causes that benefit children and those in need. The foundation recently made a generous \$1 million gift to JFK University Medical Center Foundation to establish the Sarala Bathena Oncology Patient Assistance Fund at **JFK University Medical Center**.

The Sarala Bathena Oncology Patient Assistance Fund will cover expenses for patients that could otherwise be a barrier to treatment, including transportation, medication and other necessities.

"Our mother was a selfless woman who always put others first," Adithya says. "The three years that she battled cancer were very difficult for our family, but we were fortunate enough to have the financial resources to give her the best care possible and exhaust every option. Realizing that others didn't have the same luxury helped shape the mission and core values of our family's foundation, and we started to host annual events to raise money to help families provide their loved ones with the best care possible."

The transformational gift comes at an exciting time for JFK, which is in the midst of a \$14 million oncology expansion project, which will create a new, state-of-the-art oncology facility located in a separate building across the street from the main hospital at 80 James Street. Designed to provide patients with access to the latest in cancer-fighting technology and nationally recognized specialists, the new building will enhance the patient experience and is slated to be completed by the end of 2024.

The Bathena family is committed to fulfilling the mission of the Sarala Bathena Foundation and, as owners of Buy Rite Liquors, began hosting annual wine-tasting events in 2007 to make an impact. This year, they will celebrate their 16th annual Super Sampling event, where attendees can try samples of more than 500 wines, craft beers and spirits. Proceeds from this year's event will go to the newly established Sarala Bathena Oncology Patient Assistance Fund at JFK to benefit patients and their loved ones, as well as support other interests that align with the goals of the Sarala Bathena Foundation.

"No family should ever have to worry about where their next meal will come from or how they will pay their electric bill to keep the lights on," says Sheri A. Marino, MA, CCC-SLP, executive director of JFK University Medical Center Foundation. "But too often, for individuals living with a cancer diagnosis who are receiving rigorous treatment, this becomes their reality, as they may be unable to work and keep up with bills. This incredible gift from the Sarala Bathena Foundation eliminates financial worries so patients undergoing cancer care may continue providing for their families and solely focus on their treatment and getting well." ❄️



Every gift helps. To learn more, contact Hackensack Meridian Health Foundation at giving@hmn.org or 848-308-5000.

The Skinny on Skin Care

Social media influencers promote expensive anti-aging skin care products to tweens and teens. But how young is too young for a skincare routine?

Basic Is Best

Complicated skin care routines may be popular, but basic is often best. A simple routine for tweens can consist of three things:

Gentle cleanser

Moisturizer

Sunscreen

Mid-20s

The age when anti-aging skin care products may be useful and needed

Sun Protection Is Key

30 or higher

The SPF level of sunscreen that teens and tweens should use

When people don't use sunscreen during their childhood and adolescent years, they often grow up to experience:

Premature aging, wrinkles, fine lines and sagging skin

Dark spots, freckles and uneven skin tone

Increased risk of skin cancer

Weakened skin barrier

Steer Clear of These Ingredients

Certain anti-aging ingredients often do more harm than good to a young person's skin—creating dryness and irritation, and disrupting natural skin balance. Avoid these ingredients:

- ▶ Alcohol-based products
- ▶ Alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs)
- ▶ Fragrances and dyes
- ▶ Beta hydroxy acids (BHAs) or salicylic acid (in high concentrations)
- ▶ Essential oils (in high concentrations)
- ▶ Retinol
- ▶ Vitamin C

Go Online

If you're unsure about whether the skin product you're using is safe—or if it's harming your skin—talk to a dermatologist. Find one at [HMHforU.org/DermDoc](https://www.hmhforu.org/DermDoc).



Hackensack
Meridian Health

343 Thornall St.
Edison, NJ 08837-2206

HMH-074_C

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Hackensack
Meridian Health

Ready to Achieve Your Weight-loss Goals?

If you're unhappy with your weight because it's causing health problems or keeping you from living your life fully, you may wonder if weight-loss surgery could be an option for you. Weight-loss surgery, also known as bariatric surgery, is not for everyone, but it may be an effective way to help you lose weight if you're committed to making the necessary lifestyle changes.



Scan the QR code to take our weight-loss health risk assessment and find out if you may be a candidate for bariatric surgery.

Keep up With Your Health on the Go

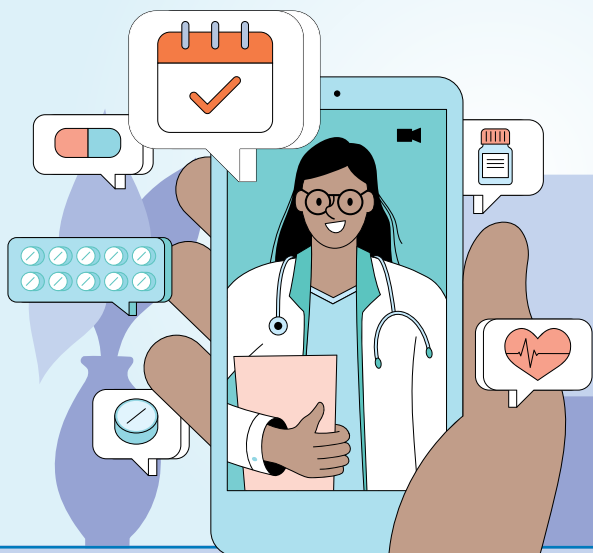
Did you know that you can schedule an appointment with a provider from the comforts of home or while on the go?

Online scheduling is available for:

- ▶ Primary care
- ▶ Mammograms
- ▶ Lab services
- ▶ And more!

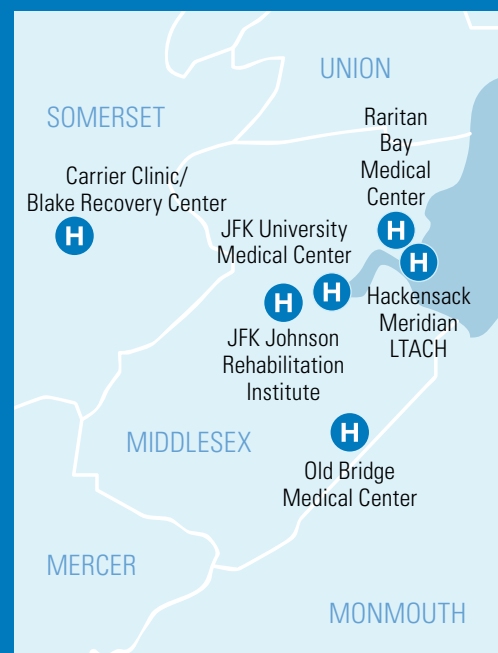


Scan the QR code to schedule your next appointment today.



As the state's largest, most comprehensive health network, Hackensack Meridian Health is made up of 7,000 physicians, 18 hospitals and more than 500 locations.

Our hospitals near you:



For a complete list of our hospitals, services and locations, visit HMHforU.org/Locations.



Hackensack
Meridian Health

KEEP GETTING BETTER