

Health, Beauty & Fitness

**SEVERNA
PARK VOICE**
AUGUST 2021

GREEN POINT WELLNESS

Locally owned and operated, the cannabis dispensary is run by a staff that helps patients feel their best. **Page 12**

EYE CARE **Page 2**

Blurred vision or redness of the eyes can indicate problems, but some eye diseases develop without symptoms.

EXERCISE **Page 6**

Strengthen your heart and lungs, decrease your blood pressure, and become more alert and focused.

REOPENING SCHOOLS **Page 17**

Learn about the school masking, testing and vaccination protocols.

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How Often Should I Get An Eye Exam?



Daniel Cason, O.D.

Allan Rutzen, M.D., FACS

Rutzen Eye Specialists
& Laser Center

How often should I get an eye exam?" is a common question asked to eye doctors from our patients as well as our families and friends. While blurred vision or redness of the eyes can be indications of problems, some eye diseases develop without any symptoms. This means that having your eyes examined periodically is important to maintaining your vision for the long haul.

CHILDREN

For children, it is important to catch any diseases that may threaten the normal development of vision. Kids should have their eyes screened by either their pediatrician, family medicine provider, ophthalmologist, or optometrist at several time points in their early life, including once as a newborn, once between the ages of 6 to 12 months, once between the ages of 1 to 3 years, and once between the ages of 3 to 5 years.

If any issues — such as misalignment of the eyes or evidence of nearsightedness, farsightedness, or astigmatism — are present on screening, then the child should be seen for a comprehensive exam with an eye doctor. After starting school, symptoms like blurry vision or eye strain when reading are good clues that an eye exam would be beneficial.

ADULTS

As a young adult, it is not necessary to be seen as frequently for eye examinations as long as vision is clear and no ocular diseases have been diagnosed earlier in life. Examinations are recommended every five to 10 years if you are under 40 years old and every two to four years from ages 40 to 54. Many diseases of the eye, including cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration, become more

prevalent over time, so more frequent examination is recommended for those 55 years old and over, even in those without any eye diseases. People aged 55 to 64 should be seen every one to three years, and people 65 and older should be examined every year.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

The general rules of thumb outlined above apply to people without any diagnosed eye conditions and may not be applicable to everyone, however. For example, people with diabetes should have eye examinations every year to monitor for the potentially blinding condition of diabetic retinopathy. Additionally, having high blood pressure puts you at increased risk of diseases

involving blood vessels in the eye, so people with high blood pressure benefit from more regular eye examinations as well.

MEDICATIONS

Certain medications can also cause eye problems. A common example is steroids, which are used for a variety of conditions and may cause problems in the eye including increased eye pressure, which can lead to glaucoma, or cataracts. In addition, Plaquenil (also known as hydroxychloroquine), a medication that is

used for inflammatory conditions such as lupus or rheumatoid arthritis, can cause damage to the retina. You can ask your doctor or other health care provider if any medications you use might necessitate more frequent follow-up with an eye doctor.

Clearly there are a lot of reasons why you may need to get eye exams on a regular basis, and in these cases, your eye doctor can work with you on an individual basis to help you know how often you should be examined. Even if you are one of the lucky people with great eyesight without glasses or contacts, it is important to have regular eye examinations to make sure your vision remains great throughout your lifetime!

Dr. Cason and Dr. Rutzen can be found at Rutzen Eye Specialists & Laser Center, located at 489 Ritchie Highway, Suite 200, in Severna Park. To make an appointment, call 410-975-0090, or learn more at www.rutzeneye.com. ■



*Our patients
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“ *First impressions are the most important, and my first impression — from scheduling my appointment, to coming in the office and meeting the staff, and being examined by the doctor — was *excellent* from the time I came in until my appointment was completed. I would recommend [Rutzen Eye Specialists] to friends and family.* ”

- George R.



Surprising Ways Supportive Care Can Help People Age In Place



Jessica Whittemore
LCSW-C
Social Worker
Chesapeake
Supportive Care

What does aging in place mean to you? Most people imagine they'll be in their own home, enjoying retired life, maybe traveling, doing

hobbies. That is what we hope for, right?

Often, health problems can get in the way of those plans. Coping with diagnoses like congestive

heart failure, Alzheimer's, cancer, Parkinson's, kidney disease and more can make daily living difficult. Many of these conditions result in hospitalizations, which, for elderly patients, often leads to the need for skilled nursing care.

There is a way for many people with complex and chronic health conditions to be able to stay where they are. They can seek supportive care.

In the medical world, supportive care is known as the specialty of palliative medicine. Palliative care is not hospice care. That's a myth we struggle to dispel. Instead, think of it as supportive care, specialized medical care focused on reducing the symptoms, pain and stress caused by

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Return From Oz

Jennifer Cook

*Office Manager
and Instructor*
**Creative
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One day, we were going about our normal daily activities — we left the house most days to go to work or to run our errands, we hosted family get-togethers to celebrate birthdays and holidays, and our children were going to school and participating in their extra-curricular activities like dance classes.

Most of us don't spend our days wondering what it would be like to suddenly be without

those daily tasks that we take for granted. In fact, most days we long for the day off, the day that we don't have to be running from one thing to the next, juggling the chaos of our lives, a day to spend at home to binge something on Netflix – then POOF! One seemingly average day in March 2020, we are told that we need to take a little “break” from those daily activities, that we are on the verge of a pandemic and that only essential employees will be permitted to work for the immediate future. Could we have ever imagined that we would end up where we did?

With work and school becoming virtual, adults and children alike have

had to forgo those activities they looked forward to attending, spending more time at home than ever before. Many of us thought it would be temporary, only a few days or weeks. A few weeks in, we were reminded of “The Wizard of Oz” and that famous line, “Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore.”

What began as a short hiatus became something else, and in that time, many of us had to miss out on so many of the things we do for our physical and mental wellbeing. Exercise is so vitally important, and many people prefer that exercise come in the form of dance class.

Continued on page 14



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Aerobic Exercise: How To Do It Right



Dr. Vasundhara Muthu, M.D.
UM Baltimore
Washington
Heart Associates

Have you been told that you need to do aerobic exercise? What does that mean? How do you know if you are doing enough?

Aerobic exercise involves getting your heart beating faster and getting oxygenated blood flowing around your body. As a result, you breathe faster and your heart rate speeds up. Over time, this strengthens your heart and lungs, decreases your blood pressure, and makes you more alert and focused.

There are many types of aerobic exercise from which to choose, such as walking, jogging, swimming or dancing. Pick exercises that you enjoy, and don't be afraid to try new ones. Always check with your doctor before you start a new exercise program.

Experts recommend that adults do 150 minutes of moderate exercise a week, which is 30 minutes five days a week. You could also choose each week to do 75 minutes of vigorous exercise, which could be as little as 15 minutes a day five days a week at a high intensity. Children ages 6 to 17 years old should get at least 60 minutes of moderate- to high-intensity exercise every day.

How do you know if you are working out moderately or vigorously, or if it is too much or not enough? A heart monitor is a great tool, but the easiest way is to just monitor how you feel. Check in with yourself while you are working out.

With moderate exercise, you should be breathing quickly, but not out of breath; sweating lightly after 10 minutes of exercise; or you're able to talk, but not sing. If your goal is vigorous or high-intensity exercise, your breathing should be deep and rapid, you are sweaty after just a few minutes, and you cannot say more than a few words without pausing for breath.

Interval training is also an option that is usually safe for most people. Interval training is when you alternate short bursts (15 to 60 seconds) of high-intensity exercise are between longer, less intense exercise during your workout. Studies have shown interval



training is very effective at improving cardiovascular fitness and promotes weight loss.

Moderate-intensity exercise is safe for most people including those with heart disease. However, closer supervision and care is required prior to high-intensity and interval training programs.

You may be exercising too hard if you are short of breath, are in pain, or can't work out as long as you planned to. If this is the case, slow down, back off a little bit to a moderate level. If you are not feeling any exertion, pick

up the pace a bit. You will get the most from your workouts when you are exercising at the right pace for you.

If you would like to speak with a cardiologist about how an exercise plan may affect your heart, call the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Heart Associates.

Dr. Muthu is a cardiologist with University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Heart Associates. To reach Dr. Muthu, please call 410-768-0919. ■

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Prostate Cancer Screening



Dr. Katherine Smentkowski
Chesapeake Urology

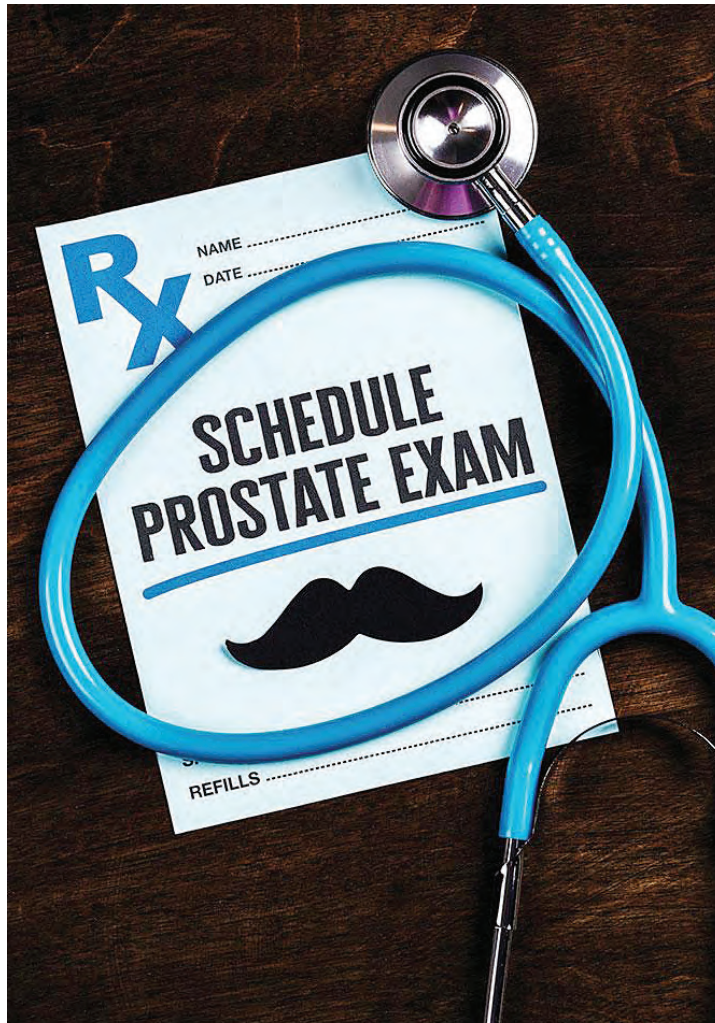
Over the past decade, there has been controversy about screening for prostate cancer, however, evidence suggests that it has a positive benefit in preventing prostate cancer deaths.

Prostate cancer is the most common internal malignancy and second-leading cause of cancer-related death in American men. Approximately 12% of men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime.

Many men have heard about prostate cancer but are probably not familiar with the details surrounding prostate cancer screening. Over the past decade, there has been controversy about screening for prostate cancer, however, evidence suggests that it has a positive benefit in preventing prostate cancer deaths.

Guidelines vary, but in general, men should be screened for prostate cancer starting around age 50. This is typically done with a blood test, called a PSA (prostate specific antigen) and an exam. It can be performed by a primary care physician or a urologist.

Some men may benefit from earlier screening, starting around age 40. Those include men who have a family history of prostate cancer, African ancestry or a known genetic predisposition. Certain genetic mutations, such as BRCA mutations (traditionally associated with breast



cancer) are known to increase the risk of prostate cancer. Patients should be aware of their family history, and if there is any of the following, they should speak to their physician regarding early screening:

- 1** First- or second-degree relative with metastatic prostate cancer, ovarian cancer, or breast cancer diagnosed (45 years of age or younger)
- 2** Colorectal or endometrial cancer (50 years old or younger)
- 3** Two or more first- or second-degree relatives with breast, prostate, pancreatic, colorectal or endometrial cancer at any age

Sometimes, a man's PSA may be temporarily elevated for other reasons, such as infection, inflammation or sexual activity. The first step is to repeat the PSA. If any patient has a PSA over 3 on at least two lab tests or an abnormal exam, they should be referred to a urologist. Generally, at this point, a prostate biopsy is recommended. While other tests, such as prostate MRI, are available to help guide decision-making in patients with an elevated PSA, only a biopsy can definitively say whether cancer is present. Even patients with a negative prostate MRI should still undergo a biopsy if their PSA is persistently elevated – this is because a prostate MRI can sometimes miss cancer.

If prostate cancer is detected on a biopsy, shared decision-making between the patient and the urologist is performed. Close observation – called “active surveillance” – or treatment may be recommended

depending on the aggressiveness of the cancer. Treatment for most men involves surgery or radiation, however, other treatments such as cryotherapy or high-intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) may be recommended depending on the individual patient and their needs.

After ages 70 to 75, most men can discontinue prostate cancer screening. This is because we know prostate cancer is typically slow-growing, and after this age, patients are more likely to die with prostate cancer rather than from prostate cancer. Discontinuing screening at this age spares patients the side effects of treatment while maximizing the detection of a potentially life-altering prostate malignancy.

If you have any questions about prostate cancer screening, you should reach out to your primary care physician or urologist. ■

Understanding Cataracts: Symptoms And Treatment

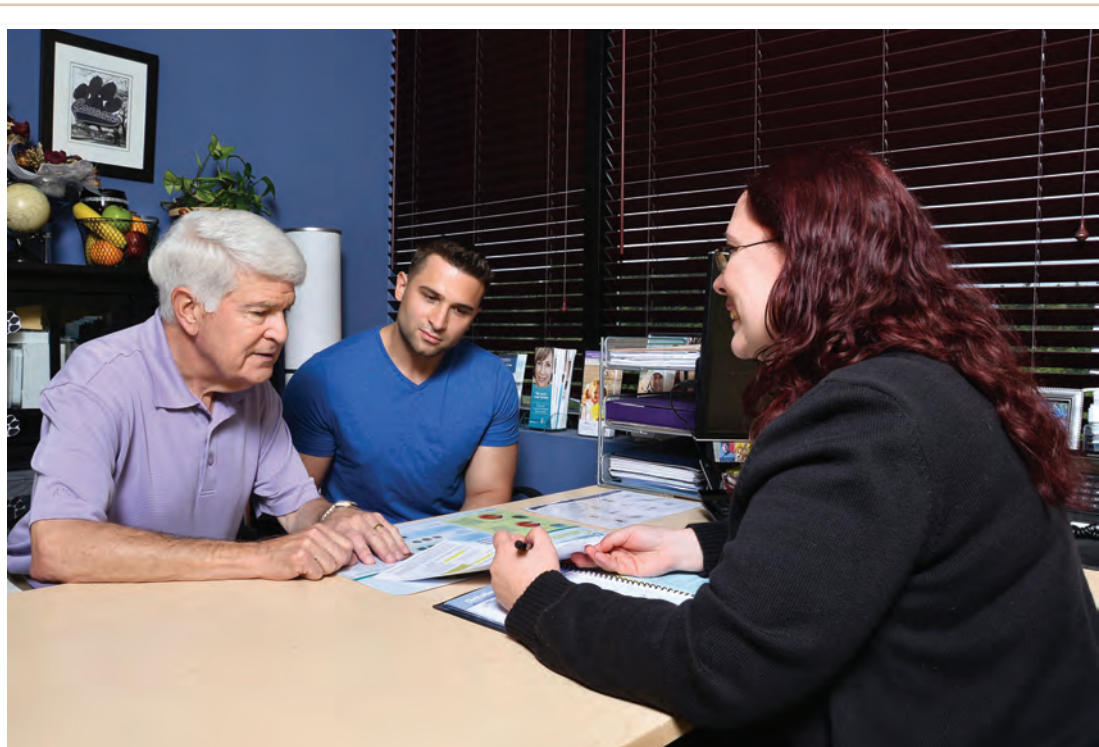


Dr. Samuel Boles
Anne Arundel Eye Center

You may notice that your bleach is not working anymore and your white clothing is not as bright as it once was. Your glasses are always dirty no matter how many times you wipe them off. The characters on the television are hard to make out, and headlights on the road at night wash out your vision.

What you do not notice is that you no longer read the paper and you move through

Continued on page 18



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Kathryn Turner, OD

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Getting Back Into A Fitness Routine Today



Joe Bocek
Park Fitness

August is such a great month. We are still in the warmth of summer. We start getting a few cooler, more comfortable nights. And we are clinging a little tighter to the few remaining weeks we have before returning to our post-Labor Day routines.

And speaking of routines, if your health and fitness routine has been

off, inconsistent or missing lately, you are not alone. This last year or so has thrown many people off of their game and habits.

With many health experts agreeing that we might have to learn to live in a world with COVID for many more years, our health and fitness might be more important than ever.

But knowing that something is

important is different than reincorporating that important thing into your life.

Often, the easiest way to begin something is to just start. I know that sounds a bit overly simplistic, but it's true. The activation energy we get from just doing something is more powerful than we realize.

Continued on page 21

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Green Point Wellness Offers Cannabis As An Alternative Form Of Treatment



By Zach Sparks

At Green Point Wellness, owner Tony Toskov and his staff have heard startling stories from patients fighting debilitating health issues: the inability to sleep, arthritis and joint pain, even children with autism or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Medical cannabis gives them a medical alternative to consider, one that has been lifechanging for some people.

“We have heard from people that we got them off opioids or alcohol, and that makes you feel good,” said Mandy Jowanowitch, a dispensary agent at Green Point Wellness.

Toskov said, “There was one lady who came in for her son. Once he started using it, he was able to go bowling and got his first strike. It’s really incredible.”

How Does It Work?

Cannabis has many ingredients including cannabidiol (CBD) and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). They can alter pain levels, mood, sleep and memory. Both CBD and THC have health benefits, but unlike THC, CBD does not produce a “high” feeling.

Some people will get a blend of CBD and THC to dull the psychoactive factor.

“You still get all the benefits, but you won’t feel woozy or impaired throughout the day,” Jowanowitch said.

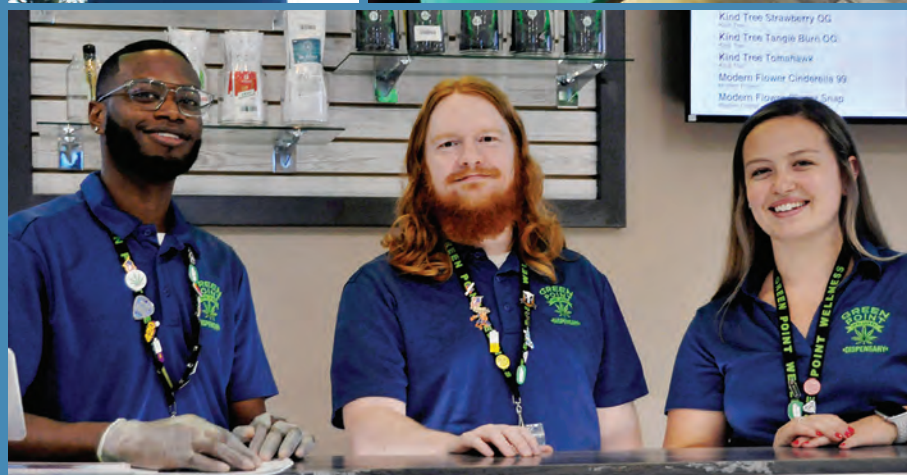
Terpenes are organic chemical compounds found in cannabis and other plants. They give cannabis strains their distinct flavor, smell and medicinal properties.

“With terpenes, some are uplifting, some will bring your energy down, some will make you hungry,” Jowanowitch said.

One common terpene is pinene, which boosts energy, improves focus and has anti-inflammatory benefits. Myrcene is good for pain relief and insomnia. Linalool is used for anxiety and pain relief. Humulene is an appetite suppressant and inhibits tumor growth. Caryophyllene is used for stress and pain relief, depression and anxiety. Limonene elevates the mood, and relieves stress and nausea.

People can find a natural remedy for just about any ailment and administer that treatment in a way that best suits them.

“You can use flower and vapes, but we also have a large variety of other products such as tinctures,



lotions, patches, capsules and chews,” Jowanowitch said. “It’s not just smoking a bowl or a pipe.”

Why Choose Green Point Wellness?

“Green Point Wellness is one of the few dispensaries in Maryland that is locally owned and operated,” said Sandi Harrison, director of compliance. “We enjoy helping people in our community. We don’t rush anybody out the door.”

Part of helping people is making sure they are educated about the products they are using. Green Point Wellness can provide lab reports for each product to show its potency, the terpenes it has, and that it passed tests for heavy metals, residual solvents, pesticides and mycotoxins. Store-bought products do not come with the same certificates of analysis to reassure customers.

“Everything we have here is regulated

by the MMCC [Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission] and lab tested. If you buy a CBD product from the gas station, they cannot show you that,” Toskov said. “Everything here, from a flower to a tincture, you can see what’s in it.

“The other products on the market are unregulated, so it could have 1 percent CBD in it, but it says CBD on the label.”

Getting Started

The Green Point Wellness staff will help people register as a patient with the MMCC for free.

Once they are approved by the MMCC and receive their patient ID number, patients must obtain a written certification from a provider that is registered with the MMCC. After the written certification is received, patients can visit Green Point Wellness and consult with a dispensary agent to find a product that not only helps their condition but can also be administered in a way that’s comfort-

able to them.

Green Point Wellness has two locations. The Linthicum store is located at 823A Elkridge Landing Road and can be reached at 410-553-7171. Hours are Monday through Saturday from 10:00am-8:00pm and Sunday from 10:00am-6:00pm. The Laurel store is located at 116 Washington Boulevard and can be reached at 240-524-4010. Hours are Monday through Saturday from 10:00am-8:00pm and Sunday from 10:00am-7:00pm.

“We focus on every patient and their needs,” Toskov said. “Everybody has a story.

“When we’re sitting there with people, we have to hold back because it can get emotional when we’re talking to an elderly person or a mom whose life has changed because of cannabis,” he continued. “That’s where we get the satisfaction — when they come back and say it worked.” ■





Return From Oz

Continued from page 5

Teachers and students so missed being in the studio for classes and yearned for the day that life would return to normal.

As we emerge from this pandemic stronger and with a renewed sense of priority and gratitude, it is wonderful to be able to have our children return to activities that restore a sense of peace and normalcy to their lives. Dance students not only reap the many physical benefits including improved cardiovascular conditioning, increased muscular strength and flexibility and enhanced coordination; they also find that the rewards extend well beyond mastering a

certain step, trick or style of dance. More than ever, our children are craving the social interaction with their peers, experiences they would typically get from attending school and other gatherings, things that have been on hold for well over a year. These experiences are essential to a child's growth and development. Dance classes help us feel more connected socially and can encourage bonds and friendships, which are key factors in improving our mood and mental health.

Creative Force Dance Center is located in Severna Park. The staff can be reached at 410-431-7018 or info@creativeforcedance.com.

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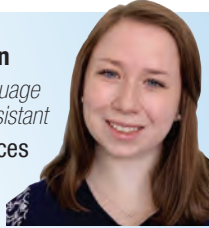


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Mary Martin

Speech-Language Pathology Assistant
Budding Voices



Just as the COVID-19 pandemic has affected each of our social lives as adults, it has also affected the social lives of young children. Early on in life, children learn how to interact with other people, including their peers. They build their communication, language, speech, and social skills by watching and listening to their peers, older children, their parents, and other adults in their lives. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, young children have not had access to many natural opportunities to interact with others and develop these essential skills.

At Budding Voices, we have noticed a trend of young children who have atypical social skills and/or language delays. This is most likely an effect of the pandemic. Young children have had



fewer chances to meet and play with other children in their community. Preschools are mostly shut down, and play groups are not meeting. During some of the most critical phases of their development, children are not getting to see peer models of play skills or practice communication skills with their peers. Their interactive play skills and social skills typically develop when they have meaningful play time with other children. Without that opportunity to see peers in action and interact with them, their only play and communication partners are their parents and

possibly their siblings.

Since there have not been as many gatherings with family and friends, children have not had as much opportunity to spend time with adults other than their parents. While parents are the most important communication partner for young children, es-

Continued on page 23

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for more information**

Department Of Health Guidelines For Reopening Schools



In-person instruction is critical for the cognitive, social/emotional, and physical development of children. The Anne Arundel County Department of Health provided school reopening guidance in October 2020 and again in February 2021 to help safely reopen schools. Now, almost a year and a half into the pandemic, all schools are able to fully reopen for the 2021-2022 academic year.

In the past month, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) have published updated guidelines on a range of strategies to ensure that schools can fully reopen to students while also minimizing the spread and impact of COVID-19. This guidance will address only the three mitigation strategies that the health department gets the most questions about: masking, testing and vaccination. There are many more mitigation strategies that schools are implementing that will not be covered here but that are covered in the guidelines mentioned above.

Masking

A comprehensive masking strategy is a critical piece of a multilayered COVID-19 mitigation strategy. Reducing the level of spread in schools will help keep students in school safer, with decreased absences, and decrease the need for quarantining students. For many students who are not eligible to get the vaccine, either because of age or medical condition, the more others are vaccinated, the less likely they are to

get infected.

All kindergarten through grade 12 schools in Anne Arundel County should implement universal masking in indoor settings for students, teachers, staff and visitors. In outdoor settings, masks are not indicated for unvaccinated individuals except in crowded settings. This recommendation is consistent with guidance released in July by both the CDC and the AAP.

Critical factors that went into this recommendation include:

- The Delta variant spreads more easily than previous variants.
- Vaccinated individuals can spread the Delta variant.
- Children 11 and younger are not yet eligible for vaccination.
- Significant numbers of children 12 and older are not yet vaccinated.
- The purpose of a mask is to both protect the wearer from being infected and to prevent an infected person from transmitting to other people.
- With schools returning to full capacity, distancing indoors is recommended at 3 feet or the maximum distance possible if less than 3 feet.
- Updated contact tracing guidance from the CDC notes that for students who are 3 to 6 feet from each other, if both the case and contact students are masked, the contact will not need to quarantine.

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Understanding Cataracts: Symptoms And Treatment

Continued from page 10

your surroundings slower. You stop enjoying activities that require precision: crossword puzzles, bird watching, and sewing.

You have cataracts.

Cataracts, unlike other conditions, are usually a gradual decline in vision. This means that you will not notice how much you are not seeing until the cataracts become advanced. As you gradually get used to seeing less, you begin to lose interest in activities that once brought you joy.

How did you get them?

Well, they are as natural as gray hair; eventually, we all get them. As you age, proteins begin to build up and clump together in the eye's lens, preventing light from

Cataracts, unlike other conditions, are usually a gradual decline in vision. This means that you will not notice how much you are not seeing until the cataracts become advanced.

passing clearly through the lens and obscuring vision. These protein deposits are known as cataracts. Currently, more than half of all Americans over the age of 80 are affected by cataracts,

according to the National Eye Institute (NEI).

Cataracts do not mean that you are unhealthy; they are a natural event that is not preventable. Thankfully, they are easily treatable. Cataracts are removable, and you can easily reclaim your mobility and connection to the world around you.

If you think that surgery is scary, you are not alone; it is. However, cataract surgery is one of the safest and most effective types of surgery performed in the United States today, with a very low rate of complication. Cataract surgery involves removing the lens in the eye and replacing it with an artificial lens.

After your cataract surgery, you will notice a difference mere hours or days after the

surgery has been completed. Whites are whiter, the world is brighter, and you cannot believe how much your vision has changed for the better. The day after your surgery, you will likely return to your eye care center for a follow-up appointment to ensure that you are well, and your vision is improving. In most cases, you will eventually return to your eye care center only every six months, and then once a year for a routine checkup.

For more on this topic or other questions, contact Anne Arundel Eye Center. The staff is dedicated to making the best eye care accessible to everyone. Visit www.arundelleyecenter.com or call 410-224-2010.



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What You Should Know About The COVID-19 Delta Variant



Mary Clance

Jean Murray

Luminis Health

Thanks to vaccines, there's been a renewed sense of hope that we'll move past COVID-19. Businesses have reopened. And many of us are once again spending time with family and friends. In short, life seems to be returning to normal.

But if you've watched the news lately, you know we're not out of the woods just yet. A mutated form of the virus, known as the delta variant, is circulating worldwide. And it's important we all know something about it.

A variant of concern

It's not uncommon for viruses to mutate, or change, over time. In fact, officials have already identified several COVID-19 mutations or variants. Experts watch these variants carefully because the variants can behave differently than

the original virus strain from 2019.

Although there's still a lot to learn about delta, there are several reasons the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) named it a "variant of concern," including:

- The delta variant has been responsible for "breakthrough" infections in vaccinated people, primarily those with severe chronic diseases and weakened immune systems. Vaccination continues to prevent severe illness and hospitalization with the delta variant.
- It spreads quickly. Delta was first identified in India in late 2020 and wasn't detected in the U.S. until March 2021. But by July 2021, it was responsible for more than 80% of U.S. COVID-19 cases. It's also much more contagious than earlier strains of the virus.
- Young people are at risk. Younger people who contracted the original coronavirus generally fared well. However, without the vaccine, cases are now occurring primarily among young adults.

Get vaccinated, get protected

Currently, everyone 12 years and older is eligible to get a COVID-19 vaccine in the U.S. But

as of late July, less than 60% of that population are considered fully protected. This means there are still many Americans at risk from the delta variant.

Know the symptoms of COVID-19

- COVID may present with a variety of symptoms, including:
 - Cough
 - Diarrhea
 - Fatigue
 - Fever
 - Loss of sense of taste or smell
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Shortness of breath
- People with the delta variant also frequently report:
 - Headaches
 - Runny nose
 - Sore throat

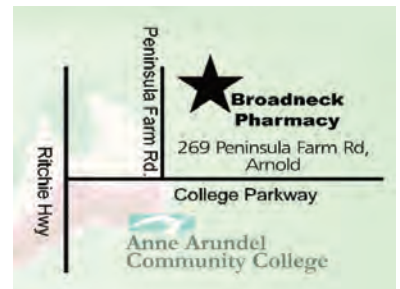
Mary Clance, MD, is an epidemiologist for Luminis Health. Jean Murray is system director of infection prevention and epidemiology for Luminis Health. ■



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Surprising Ways Supportive Care Can Help People Age In Place

Continued from page 4

serious illness and complex chronic health conditions.

Supportive care can help you age in place through symptom management. The most common symptoms that affect quality of life are pain, shortness of breath and agitation. Supportive care aggressively treats these symptoms through medicine, therapies, mindfulness and more. Studies show that addressing symptoms before they're out of control can prevent hospitalizations and even help to prolong life.

Quality of life is as important as quantity of life. That's where goals of care play an important role. Goals of care are patient-centered plans that detail how you and your loved ones want to manage your health. The planning begins with an initial consultation with a physician or nurse practitioner

that can take up to 90 minutes. It takes that amount of time to get to know you and your family to determine what you want and need.

Goals of care can change throughout the course of the disease, so those goals are revisited in follow-up visits. The supportive care team works with your health care teams, from primary care physicians and oncologists to radiologists and cardiologists, to ensure their treatments align with your goals.

A supportive care team usually includes a social worker, chaplain and other clinical professionals who work with the physician and nurse practitioner to care for the whole patient – physical, psychological, social and spiritual.

Through it all, you can continue with curative treatments like chemotherapy, dialysis, radiation therapy, blood transfusions and the like if that's what you choose to do. You can also choose to

stop these treatments. That is why it is called supportive care.

How does this all get paid for? As a board-certified medical specialty, it is covered by Medicare and most insurance plans and billed the same way. Managing advance illness or complex chronic diseases can be overwhelming for you and your loved ones. It helps to have a specialist ready to help you do it how you want to do it.

Hospice of the Chesapeake is a nonprofit organization that is caring for life throughout the journey with illness and loss in Anne Arundel, Charles and Prince George's counties. Its affiliated programs include Chesapeake Supportive Care, which offers specialized care, compassion and encouragement for wherever you are on your journey with complex advanced illness. For details, visit www.chesapeakesupportivecare.org or call 443-837-3376.



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In-Person Grief Support Groups For Children And Teens

Chesapeake Life Center's grief support programs for children and teens are meeting in person on the John & Cathy Belcher Campus at 90 Ritchie Highway in Pasadena. The schedule for fall 2021 is as follows:

Stepping Stones, a monthly support group for children ages 6 to 12 grieving the loss of a loved one, will meet from 10:00am to noon Saturdays, September 11, October 2, November 6 and December 4.

Breakfast, games and activities are included.

Phoenix Rising, a monthly group for teens ages 13 to 18 grieving the loss of a loved one, meets from 6:30pm to 8:00pm on the third Wednesday of the month, September 15, October 20, November 17 and December 15. A meal is provided along with games and other activities.

Pre-Teen Group is a monthly support group for preteens and early teens to connect and share with others who have

lost a loved one. It meets at the same time but in a different room as the Phoenix Rising group – from 6:30pm to 8:00pm on the third Wednesday of the month, September 15, October 20, November 17 and December 15. A meal is provided along with games and other activities.

These groups meet according to the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Anne Arundel County. Groups are limited in size, according to most recent guidelines, and

masks must always be worn within the building. The cost for each group is \$10 per participant, with a maximum of \$20 per family. Preregistration is required for all these programs and must be completed before attending by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org.

For information about other programs, including summer events for children and teens, visit www.chesapeakelifecenter.org. ■

Getting Back Into A Fitness Routine Today

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Whether it's on a day we don't feel like working out, but we just get out the door to get rolling, or even something like organizing our desk for work, the act of just beginning can at times carry us through the whole process. Creating momentum is often the most important step.

After that, there are a few more simple steps to help you get back on track with your health and fitness routine.

Lower The Barrier

If I were to give you the option of either climbing Mount Everest or a small hill in your backyard, which one do you feel you could accomplish today? Yes, this seems like a ridiculous question, but when it comes to exercise and nutrition, we somehow think we need to start with the toughest path immediately.

Working out seven days a week and eating salads at every meal is unfortunately where many people think they should begin. And then when they come up short, they view it as a failure. This way of thinking often has people setting themselves up to quit. They should instead be looking to climb that small

hill first.

Walking five minutes a day, drinking more water, or adding a bit of protein to each meal may not seem as profound, but those actions are going to start good habits, have you feeling accomplished and put you on the path to long-term success.

On a scale of one to 10, what habits do you feel you can do regularly that are a nine or a 10? Now do that and let's reassess in a few weeks. Then we can look to add a couple new habits.

Don't Overplan It

Many times, with starting a new habit or routine, we end up in a state of paralysis by analysis. We start looking at all the things we feel like we can or should be doing instead of finding the simplest or easiest way to start.

James Clear, author of "Atomic Habits," sums this up by saying, "Planning and preparation are useful until they become a form of procrastination. Is this task enhancing my actions or substituting for them?"

That's quite a powerful statement. Are we overplanning? Is the way of thinking we have on this subject actually bringing us closer to doing it? Or is it really keeping us from starting and



doing the thing anyway?

In the health and fitness world, we often hear, "I can start when..." That sentence has a number of endings, from "when I lose some weight" or "when I'm in better shape" or even "when I have more time."

These sentiments may sound good, but more times than not, they end up substituting for us actually moving forward. Then, one or six months go by, and we haven't gotten any closer to our goal.

Keeping the plan simple and just doing it may not be glamorous, but more times than not it gets the job done.

There Is No Perfect Time

Something we preach with our members is progress over perfection. Waiting for things to be better or easier often just sets us up to be in the exact

same spot just further down the road. There is no perfect time.

But that's actually a good thing. Recognizing that things will never be perfect allows us to embrace a more important idea, progress.

Progress allows us to just start. Progress allows us to make mistakes and mess up. Progress lets us celebrate being 1% better, climbing that hill in the backyard and taking action today.

As someone once said, "You don't need a better guitar to be a better musician, you don't need a better brush to be a better artist, you don't need better workout clothes or a completely open schedule to be a better exerciser.

"You just need to start and keep going." So, as we approach the end of this summer, what are you starting? Remember to focus on progress and I bet you are going to do great! ■

Department Of Health Guidelines For Reopening Schools

Continued from page 17

Testing

K-12 schools in Anne Arundel County are recommended to implement testing, in combination with other prevention strategies, as an important layer of prevention to decrease COVID-19 transmission amongst students and staff in school.

The CDC recommends screening testing as part of a layered approach to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the school setting. The MDH and MSDE also recommend diagnostic testing programs in schools as part of a comprehensive testing program.

Screening testing is used to identify positive cases in symptomatic or asymptomatic students and staff. Screening testing is a surveillance tool, as well as a prevention strategy used to support the full return to in-person learning. Diagnos-

tic testing can be performed when an individual exhibits COVID-19 symptoms or has had a known exposure to a confirmed positive case.

The COVID-19 Testing Task Force, Maryland Department of Health (MDH), and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) have developed a K-12 COVID-19 testing program to provide free COVID-19 testing, laboratory support, and technical assistance for public school systems and non-public schools. For program registration or questions, email mdh.k12testing@maryland.gov.

Vaccines

Vaccines against COVID-19 are safe and effective. Vaccines significantly decrease the risk of severe disease and death. Vaccines are currently available for all individuals 12 and older. **Everyone who is eligible is strongly encouraged to get vaccinated, preferably before the beginning of the school year.** ■

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Has The Pandemic Affected Your Child's Communication?

Continued from page 15

pecially in the early years, it is also important for children to communicate with unfamiliar listeners. Parents tend to both anticipate their child's needs and understand their child better than an average listener. This tends to allow the child to meet their needs without having to speak much, if at all.

When communicating with other adults, it forces children to use their full range of speech and language skills to communicate what they want or need, rather than utilizing the "shorthand" that they can use with their parents. Family gatherings also allow for children to be surrounded by many models of speech and language, since people speak differently.

Finally, children have not had as many in-person experiences that typically elicit language or provide opportunities for more varied language. These could include things such as programs at the library, trips to the zoo or aquarium, vacations, sports and more. The non-tangible, virtual experiences that have



replaced so many in-person experiences do not benefit a child's development as thoroughly. As the vaccines continue to be developed for younger ages, and as more activities are opening up, the opportunities for these language-rich experiences will grow. Any opportunity for children to safely be around their peers, new people, or new experiences will help fill the developmental gaps caused by the pandemic. Their development will not be instantaneously fixed by socializing with peers; it may take a while to make up for the deficit

of social experiences in their young years.

Pediatricians and speech-language pathologists are both good resources for any parent who is concerned about their child's social, speech, or language development. We are all still discovering the various ways that the pandemic has affected each of us in life; in the field of speech-language pathology, that is no different. Each day, we are learning more about how the pandemic has affected development, and we are looking to address that as best we can. ■

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