



# Healthy People Newsletter

October 2019

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# National Health Observances

## October | 2019

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Dental Hygiene Month

Disability Employment Awareness Month

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Health Literacy Month

Patient-Centered Care Awareness Month

“Talk About Your Medicines” Month

Midwifery Week | 9/29-10/5

Mental Illness Awareness Week | 6-12

Health Cares About Domestic Violence Day | 9

Depression Screening Day | 10

Arthritis Day | 11

Healthcare Security and Safety Week | 13-19

Infection Prevention Week | 13-19



# BETTERSAFE

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY

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## Chiropractors: ALIGNING YOUR SPINE AND THE FACTS

There's a lot of controversy surrounding chiropractic care which makes it hard to know which route to take if you're suffering from back pain, for example. Back pain, neck pain, and headaches are the most common reasons people seek out chiropractors. Chiropractic treatment is no different from any other medical decision you'll ever make - you need to weigh the pros and cons and decide if it's right for you.

### WHAT IS CHIROPRACTIC TREATMENT?

Chiropractors are specialists who use their hands or small instruments to apply force to a spinal joint to help their patients get better alignment. The result is (hopefully) less pain and better function, among many other possible benefits. This is called spinal manipulation or chiropractic adjustment. Chiropractic treatment is considered a natural and holistic alternative to the traditional medical route. Chiropractors pride themselves on helping patients without the use of medications or surgery.

### THE BENEFITS OF CHIROPRACTIC TREATMENT

As stated above, most people initially see a chiropractor because of neck/back pain or headaches. But many people believe that by releasing the pressure on so many nerves that run everywhere in our body, the benefits of chiropractic treatment go far beyond pain control.

- » In children, it has been found to help ear infections, acid reflux, and colic symptoms.
- » It has been shown to help neurological conditions such as epilepsy, seizures, and multiple sclerosis. Seen on MRI scans, spinal fluid and blood flow are increased after a chiropractic adjustment and patterns in the brain are improved.



- » It can improve blood pressure. One chiropractic adjustment has been shown to improve blood pressure for 6 months.
- » Studies have shown a 10-30% decrease in spine curvature in those diagnosed with scoliosis.
- » A staple for athletes, chiropractic adjustments have been shown to help with sports injuries, enhance joint function, decrease inflammation and pain, and improve mobility.

In addition, it is also believed that chiropractic treatments can help improve:

- » Asthma and other respiratory issues
- » ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)
- » Anxiety
- » Vertigo/dizziness
- » Insomnia
- » Bell's Palsy

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- » Osteoarthritis
- » Constipation, digestion, or other gastrointestinal discomfort
- » Your immune system
- » Your energy level



Talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.



## THE RISKS OF CHIROPRACTIC TREATMENT

It's always important to remember that finding the right person to treat you, whether it be a medical doctor or chiropractor, is imperative. There is no guarantee that every doctor is going to be excellent at his/her job, and the same goes with chiropractors. So do your research, get a referral from a trusted friend, read reviews, and meet him/her in person. That being said, as a general rule, chiropractic treatment appears to be just as safe as medical doctors. The risks of chiropractic treatment:

- » Vertebral artery dissection after neck manipulation. This can lead to a stroke.
- » Nerve compression in the spinal column.
- » Herniation of a disc.
- » Paralysis or death, especially when referring to the artery dissection mentioned. The neck manipulations as a whole have not been proven to be effective enough to outweigh the risk of dissection.

To ease your mind a little bit about those risks, a study has shown that the risk of an adverse effect after a neck manipulation occurred in less than 1 per 1 million patients. Another study showed the risk of a stroke after neck manipulation was 1 per 5.85 million. But again, the risk is there and not one to take lightly.

## ARE CHIROPRACTORS MORE EXPENSIVE THAN A MEDICAL DOCTOR?

Not necessarily. Check with your insurance but most plans do cover chiropractors. And for those who receive successful treatment, the cost ends up being one-third of the more conventional medical route.

At the end of the day, you have to decide if you “believe in” the possible benefits that chiropractors believe they offer.

Acupuncture, deep tissue massage, and physical therapy are thought to be complementary therapies as well. And participating in any of these doesn't mean you have to stay away from “regular” medical doctors! They should all be working as a team and give you suggestions based on your own personal concerns and experiences.

### QUICK CHIROPRACTIC FACTS:

- » 77% of people who saw a chiropractor in the last year said it was “very effective.”
- » 94% of patients who received spinal manipulation experienced 30% reduction in their pain. This is compared to 54% of medical care patients.
- » Chiropractic treatments outperformed all other treatments for back pain, including yoga, deep tissue massage, medications, and physical therapy.
- » The Joint Commission has added chiropractic treatments to its pain management standard.



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# Flossing Our Way to Better Health

## DENTAL HYGIENE

Your insurance very likely covers a dental check-up every six months - for free! (Well, beyond the bi-monthly payment of course.) You know what isn't free? Cavities. Or anything beyond those check-ups. Sure, they cover a percentage of it but why pay anything extra? Let's make dental health a priority and save those dollars for the fun stuff!

### COVERING THE BASICS

We all know the basics of what we're supposed to be doing for good dental hygiene, but that doesn't mean we actually do it. If we want to avoid cavities and gum disease, we just need to spend 5-8 minutes per day taking care of our teeth - that's it!

- » Use a soft-bristled toothbrush that is small enough to reach behind the molars - it can be tight back there! An electric toothbrush can be helpful but is not mandatory, you can still brush well with a "regular" toothbrush.
- » We need fluoride to build up the enamel in our teeth and make them stronger. Make sure you're choosing toothpaste with fluoride and that the water you drink has fluoride in it.
- » Use short back-and-forth motions when brushing and make sure you're getting the inside, outside, and tops of teeth. Aim the bristles where the teeth and gums meet and don't forget to brush your tongue as well. It's a good idea to also use a tongue scraper which removes more bacteria and helps prevent bad breath.



- » Brush for at least 2 minutes. A lot of electric toothbrushes have a timer built in but you can set your own or brush to your favorite song!
- » Rinse your toothbrush well when you're done and let it air dry. Covering the bristles increases the likelihood of bacteria growing.
- » Floss your teeth - once a day - you can do it! Use at least 18 inches of floss or help yourself out and use one of the flossing picks! It is so easy. Make sure you are "hugging" each side of the tooth, so you'll essentially pass the floss through each space twice. Our gums peak upward between each tooth so you want to floss on both sides of the peak!
- » Rinse with mouthwash to hit all the places your toothbrush, flosser, and tongue-scraper didn't reach.
- » Replace your toothbrush/toothbrush head every 3-4 months or more often if the bristles are looking frayed.

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## WHAT ABOUT OUR BABIES?

Dental hygiene is important for them, too! Before teeth pop up, wipe their gums clean twice a day with a soft, wet washcloth to remove bacteria. Once they get their first tooth, start brushing! Use only water until they are two years old. They can start seeing a dentist by their first birthday!

## AND FOR OUR OLDER CHILDREN?

Once they turn two years old, you can start helping them brush with a fluoride toothpaste. As soon as two teeth are touching together, start flossing! Brushing can be tricky for our little kiddos so be prepared to help them for quite some time, making sure they're brushing long enough and hitting each tooth sufficiently. Talk to their dentist about getting dental sealants - a thin coating that "seals" the deeper grooves on the back teeth, helping prevent particles and germs from sticking.

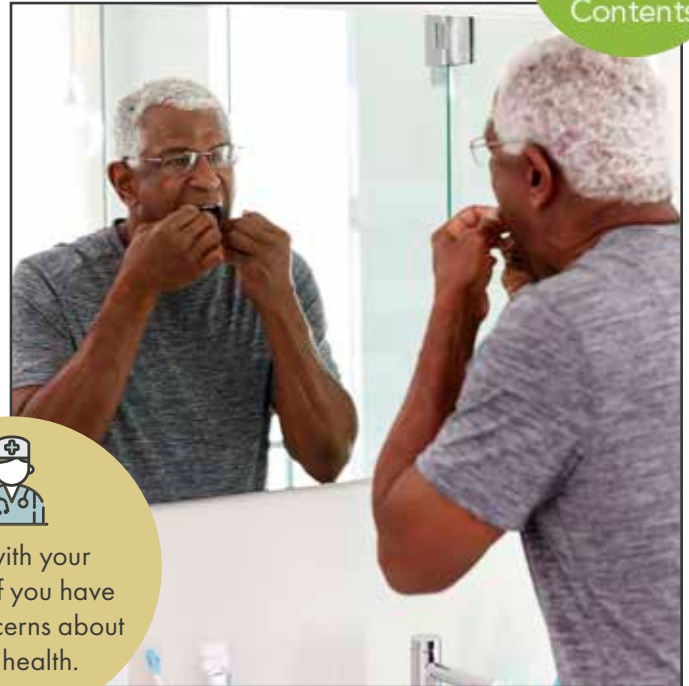
## MORE THAN JUST FRESH BREATH

In addition to fresher breath, avoiding cavities, and gum disease; good oral hygiene increases your overall health. Poor oral hygiene has been linked to heart disease, stroke, poorly controlled diabetes, oral cancer, preterm birth, and more.

In addition to seeing your dentist twice a year, also head in if there's anything concerning, such as:

- » Red, tender, swollen, or bleeding gums.
- » New sensitivity to hot or cold.
- » Gums pulling away from teeth.
- » Loss of any permanent teeth.
- » Mouth sores or ulcers that aren't healing.
- » Persistent bad breath.

Make dental health a life-long priority! Not only is it good for you, but it's good for your bank account and you know we all love that!



Talk with your  
doctor if you have  
any concerns about  
your health.

## TIPS TO GOOD DENTAL HYGIENE

- » Brush 2-3 minutes at least twice per day with a fluoride toothpaste. This hardens tooth enamel.
- » Floss daily.
- » Limit acidic drinks, like sodas and juice. They dissolve minerals in the tooth enamel.
- » Limit sugary foods, which become acidic when mixed with bacteria in our mouth.
- » Avoid tobacco use.
- » Use your teeth for chewing! Not opening packages.
- » See your dentist for regular check-ups every 6 months.



# TAKECHARGE

WELCOA'S SELF-CARE BULLETIN

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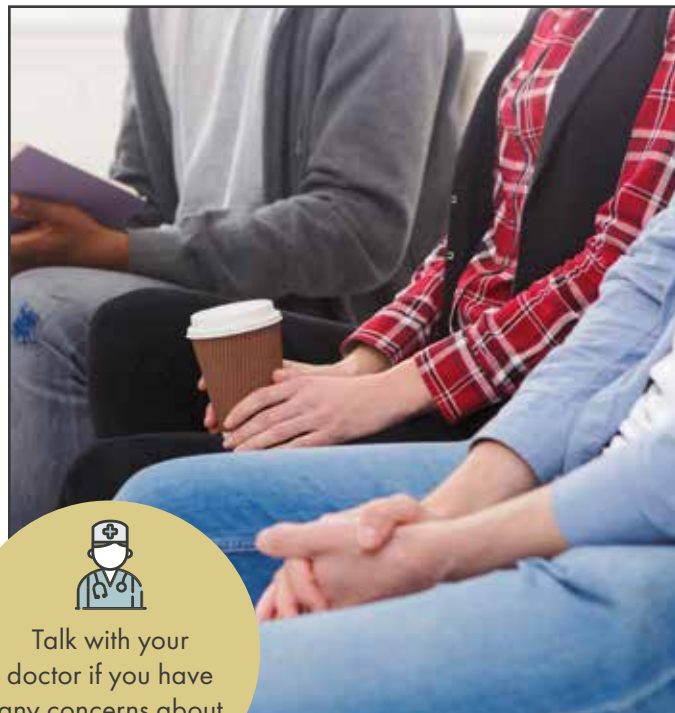
## Mental Health

### Break the Stigma

Mental health is one of the leading causes of disability. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15-24 year olds. And yet it has this stigma to it that makes people feel afraid to talk about it and uneasy to hear about it. We've got to do better and learn how to support people, letting them know it is safe to reach out for support. Mental illness affects emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. It can often manifest itself in physical ways as well, such as stomach aches or headaches. It can make school, work, and relationships extremely difficult or impossible. And even with the same diagnosis, each person is affected differently, has different triggers, and different things that help them.

THERE ARE FIVE MAIN CATEGORIES OF MENTAL ILLNESS, WITH AN UMBRELLA OF DIAGNOSES UNDER THEM.

1. Anxiety disorders, characterized by constant fear or worry, inability to cope with life events, and/or attempt to control surroundings.
  - Social phobia or social anxiety disorder
  - Panic disorder
  - Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)
  - Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
  - Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)
2. Mood disorders, characterized by extreme mood changes, feeling sad or suicidal, and/or low energy.
  - Depression or Major depressive disorder
  - Bipolar disorder
  - Premenstrual dysphoric disorder
  - Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)
3. Schizophrenia and Psychotic Disorders, characterized by paranoia, hallucinations, and disorganized thought and/or speech.
  - Schizoaffective disorder
  - Delusional disorder
  - Substance-induced psychotic disorder
4. Dementia, characterized by the inability to think or reason, memory loss, and change in motor skills.
  - Alzheimer's disease or other diseases, such as Parkinson's
  - Substance-induced dementia
  - Traumatic brain injury



Talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.

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5. Eating disorders, characterized by obsessive food habits such as over- or undereating, as well as a concern with body image and weight.

- Anorexia Nervosa
- Bulimia Nervosa
- Binge eating disorder

There are many contributing factors to why some people struggle with a mental health illness. These include family history, brain chemistry, or a major life event such as trauma or abuse. Substance abuse often goes hand-in-hand with mental illness, because:

- » Along with mental illness, those with substance abuse struggle with the same contributing factors (family history, brain chemistry, or a major life event).
- » Many of the illegal drugs actually cause signs and symptoms of mental health disorders.
- » Those with a mental illness often turn to drugs and alcohol as a form of self-medication.

#### HOW CAN WE HELP OURSELVES OR OTHERS?

- » If you or someone you know is having suicidal thoughts, call 911 immediately and seek help. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline in the U.S. is 1-800-273-TALK (8255). You can also call your healthcare provider, mental health specialist, minister, or a loved one.
- » It's so important to watch for warning signs, both for ourselves and loved ones we might be concerned about. Know what the triggers are, as well as tips to work through them.
- » Get plenty of sleep, eat a well-balanced diet, and get regular physical activity as they are great for everyone's mental health.
- » See your doctor regularly for follow-up. There are many medications available to help control the symptoms of a mental health illness.
- » Attend psychotherapy sessions with a mental healthcare provider. This involves talking and learning about your thoughts, behaviors, and emotions, as well as gaining coping tools to help through stressful times.
- » Substance abuse treatment may be needed as well, depending on the person's unique experiences.

- » Other options are available such as inpatient treatment at a hospital or brain-stimulation treatments. Talk with your doctor about the best route for you.
- » Join a support group. Nobody understands what you're going through more than people going through similar situations.

With treatment, most people with mental illness can live a completely normal life and have healthy relationships. There are more treatment options, services, and community support systems in place now than ever before and they are successful in helping people manage their mental illness.

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#### TIPS TO PROMOTE GOOD MENTAL HEALTH:

- » Eat a well-balanced diet
- » Get plenty of sleep
- » Exercise regularly
- » Avoid smoking, alcohol, and drug use
- » Practice good coping skills
- » Surround yourself with a good support system
- » Try meditation, yoga, or relaxation techniques
- » Make time for hobbies
- » Practice positive thinking
- » Try journaling







# TO YOUR HEALTH

WELCOA'S ONLINE GENERAL WELLNESS BULLETIN

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## Liver Disease

### HOW WE CAN HELP OUR LIVER

Our liver is a big organ on the upper right side of our abdomen, sitting protectively behind the rib cage. It works with the gallbladder, pancreas, and intestines to digest, absorb, and process food. The liver's biggest job is to act as a filter, filtering through blood and toxins before sending it out to the rest of the body. It metabolizes medications and drugs and makes proteins essential for blood clotting.

There are many things that can damage the liver, including alcohol, obesity, viruses, and drug abuse. It can also be genetic, something you're born with or get later in life as substances build up in the liver. Autoimmune diseases (when your own body attacks it or other organs) can also damage the liver. Liver cancer is another possible diagnosis and may include bile duct cancer or liver adenoma. The damage to the liver eventually leads to scarring called cirrhosis, which then leads to liver failure.

#### RISK FACTORS INCREASING THE CHANCE OF LIVER DISEASE:

- » Heavy alcohol use
- » Drug abuse, especially if sharing needles
- » Unprotected sex
- » Obesity
- » Diabetes
- » Exposure to blood or body fluids
- » Exposure to toxins or chemicals



#### WHAT DOES LIVER DISEASE LOOK LIKE?

- » Yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice)
- » Dark urine
- » Stool may be pale, bloody, or tar-colored
- » Nausea and/or vomiting
- » Abdominal pain or swelling
- » Bruising easily
- » Loss of appetite
- » Chronic fatigue

#### WHAT CAN WE DO TO PREVENT LIVER DISEASE?

- » Get vaccinated for Hepatitis A and B, if you haven't already.
- » Don't have unprotected sex.
- » Avoid drug use, especially needle sharing.

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- » Protect your skin when around toxic chemicals. Wear a mask if it's a spray.
- » Maintain a healthy weight.
- » Avoid heavy alcohol use. Suggested amount is less than 1-2 drinks per day.
- » Take medications as prescribed and only when needed.
- » Exercise regularly.
- » Clean up your diet. Avoid sugary and processed foods.

### HOW IS LIVER DISEASE DIAGNOSED?

- » Liver Function Tests (sometimes referred to as LFTs) are blood tests that can test the function of your liver.
- » A liver biopsy may be done, where a small amount of tissue is removed and tested for liver damage.
- » An ultrasound, MRI, or CT scan may also be used to look for signs of liver damage.



Talk with your  
doctor if you have  
any concerns about  
your health.



### TREATMENT

Treatment depends on your diagnosis but may include abstaining from alcohol, losing weight, taking medications, or surgery. Some people need a liver transplant if all other options are unsuccessful. Work closely with your doctor for necessary lab draws and a plan that works for you.

Many people believe that liver cleanses are helpful, especially after a night of binge-drinking or -eating, but they are not FDA approved. Some of the ingredients have been shown to help the liver by decreasing inflammation, but there is not enough clinical trial data on humans at this time. Best advice? Control the food and alcohol intake a bit more.

There are some alternative medicine treatments that have actually been linked with liver damage. Especially if you're at higher risk, discuss these with your doctor first.

There are certain foods that are believed to raise antioxidants, lower the risk of liver disease and cancer, and offer protection from harmful toxins.

- » Coffee
- » Green tea
- » Berries and melons
- » Green leafy vegetables
- » Brussels sprouts, broccoli, and other cruciferous vegetables
- » Fish high in Omega-3 fatty acids (salmon, trout, herring)
- » Olive Oil
- » Beets/Beetroot Juice

Think of your liver as the filter of your body because that's what it is! Everything that goes in is being processed and filtered by your liver and that's a big job. So do your best by taking in a well-balanced diet and plenty of water, and avoid risky behavior; your liver will thank you.

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