

HEALTH U



Hackensack
Meridian Health

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REALLY WORK?

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LET THE SUN BEGIN!

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New Hope

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HEALTH **U**

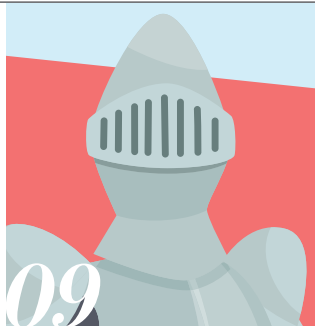
**ONLINE
EXCLUSIVES**



Discover 10 tips to help your baby sleep through the night at [HMHforU.org/BabySleep](https://www.HMHforU.org/BabySleep).



Are strokes and heart attacks the same? Our experts weigh in at [HMHforU.org/HeartAttackStroke](https://www.HMHforU.org/HeartAttackStroke).



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On the cover: iStock.com/Faber14



Dealing with incontinence? Learn how to stop your bladder from leaking: [HMHforU.org/BladderLeak](https://www.hmhforu.org/BladderLeak).

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 a 2023 Hermes Creative Awards Platinum winner, 2022 APEX Award winner and a 2021 Content Marketing Awards finalist.





Bob Garrett and team members from Hackensack Meridian Health kicked off summer at the Spring Lake Five Mile Run held May 27, 2023.

Dose of Vitamin D

I can't help but celebrate every year when summer arrives. There's just something about the longer days, the warmer temperatures and the green grass, isn't there?

But there's some science behind the summertime euphoria: Research shows that sunlight exposure positively impacts our serotonin levels, the hormone that makes us feel happy. Regular exposure to daylight can help raise our spirits and improve our focus. Turn to page 6 to find even more mental health benefits that come from being outdoors.

Of course, the summer sun also poses a risk to our skin. As we spend more time outdoors, we have to protect our skin from harmful ultraviolet (UV) light. On page 12, you can find helpful tips for reducing your skin cancer risk as well as good advice on how to effectively apply spray sunscreens.

I personally look forward to moving my workouts outdoors and soaking up the fresh air each summer. In fact, I always kick off the summer by running in the Spring Lake Five Mile Run alongside my fellow Hackensack Meridian *Health* team members. This unofficial start to the summer is less about clocking the time and more about community and camaraderie.

Another wonderful summertime tradition at Hackensack Meridian *Health*: Our team members maintain community gardens at several of our hospital sites. Each year, our team members harvest produce to benefit our local communities. We grow a variety of different foods, including beets, asparagus, kale, potatoes, turnips, cabbage, lettuce, basil, tomatoes and more. It's not just a way to give back to our communities. It's also a fun activity that our team members enjoy year after year.

We hope you're enjoying your own favorite summertime traditions with your loved ones and that you're doing so in good health. ❁

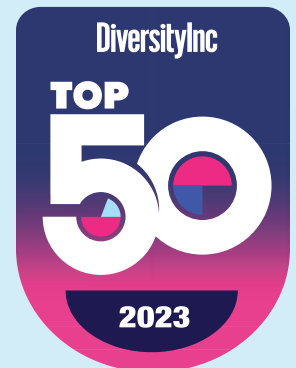
Robert C. Garrett, FACHE, CEO
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Hackensack Meridian Health #1 in DEI

Diversity Inc. has named Hackensack Meridian *Health* as the top hospital/health care system in the U.S. in diversity, equity and inclusion. "As a health network, we believe we are uniquely qualified to take up the fight against health inequity. We are so grateful to have these efforts recognized by Diversity Inc., and we celebrate all of our team members who have contributed to these efforts," says CEO Bob Garrett.

Learn more at fair360.com/top-50-list/2023.

Better **U**

quick tips to help you live your healthiest life

INSIDE THIS SECTION

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- 7 Is plant protein better than meat?
- 7 Recipe for edamame and black bean salad

Ice, Ice, Baby

Can ice baths really improve your health?

Ice baths typically operate as a recovery method for athletes to relieve and prevent muscle pain, but as interest in ice baths grows within the general population, many people are curious about its benefits outside of physical recovery. Our expert, **Craig Van Dien, M.D.**, physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist at **JFK University Medical Center**, weighs in.

Potential Benefits of Ice Baths

- ▶ Stress management
- ▶ Depression support
- ▶ Strengthened immune function
- ▶ Decreased fatigue
- ▶ Decreased inflammation
- ▶ Increased libido
- ▶ Improved glycemic control for those with diabetes

Potential Risks of Ice Baths

- ▶ Hypothermia
- ▶ Drowning
- ▶ Cold shock
- ▶ Cognitive impairment
- ▶ Loss of muscular control in extremities
- ▶ Cardiovascular risks for those with pre-existing heart conditions

Before You Try an Ice Bath

Never take an ice bath alone, especially for your first time. You don't know how your body will react to the cold temperature of the water, and as we have seen from the risks listed above, it puts you at risk for severe impairment of your physical and cognitive abilities.

Know your medical history and conditions before taking an ice bath, to determine how they could impact your preexisting conditions. If you are unsure whether you can safely take an ice bath, talk to your doctor to weigh the potential benefits and risks for you.

Take an ice bath with a well-informed mindset and an open mind. Make sure you learn everything you can before taking the plunge, and follow the suggestions your doctor gives you. Ice baths can be an exciting experience, but your safety regarding your health comes first.

"It is important to note that the research around ice baths is highly inconclusive," Dr. Van Dien says. "Although it is common among professional athletes to participate in some form of cold therapy, there is currently no sound research that points toward its general health benefits."



Craig Van Dien, M.D.

Physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist

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Go Online

Find tips for staying active and exercising safely at HMHforU.org/Exercise.

The Great Outdoors

Going outside can positively impact your mental health. Here's how.



Arunesh Kumar Mishra, M.D.

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Perth Amboy

Has anyone ever told you to “get some fresh air” when you weren’t feeling well? Spending time outdoors and reconnecting with nature is a great way to improve your physical and mental health.

Here are five reasons why going outside can boost your mood.

1 It's a great source of vitamin D. Being out in the sun exposes you to sunlight, which your skin uses to make vitamin D as a nutrient for your body. Vitamin D can help improve your immune system, make your bones stronger and lower your risk of developing diseases and various types of cancer.

2 It can be the calm after the storm. “Moving your body and being outside in nature can help your body recover after stressful events in your life,” says **Arunesh Kumar Mishra, M.D.**, psychiatrist at **Raritan Bay Medical Center**. Being in nature can reduce cortisol levels and muscle tension.

3 It's a great way to foster connection with other people. Whether you join a running club, play ultimate frisbee or take a walk with your family after work, exploring outdoors can be a great opportunity to bond and experience nature together.

4 You will sleep like a baby. Ever notice after spending a day outside, at the beach or in your backyard, that you sleep more soundly? Our circadian rhythm, also known as our internal clock, regulates how our body functions, and research supports that it is directly affected by how much sunlight you are exposed to. Bright light will help you feel more alert and awake during the day, and fall asleep easier and feel more tired at night.

5 Sunlight can help with feelings of depression. Research suggests that exercise and exposure to sunlight impact your mood. Getting regular exercise and exposure to daylight can help raise your spirits and improve your focus.

If you need professional support for your mental health, find a doctor near you at [HMHforU.org/MentalHealthDoc](https://www.hmhforu.org/MentalHealthDoc).

Outdoor Health Boosters to Try

Connecting your body with the natural environment can play a significant role in your health. Here are three ways you can foster this connection.

Gardening: Spending time outdoors and growing your own plants, flowers or produce can help boost feelings of happiness, success and productivity.

Forest bathing: This refers to “taking in the medicine or atmosphere of the forest.” You can practice forest bathing by walking, biking or relaxing in a forest setting, such as an area with many trees.

Earthing: Earthing, or grounding, refers to the activities in which you immerse yourself in an “earthy” experience. These activities include walking barefoot, laying on the ground or swimming in a natural body of water. Going to your local beach or park can be a great setting to practice earthing.

Is Plant Protein Better Than Meat?

Plant-based diets seem to be growing in popularity, from the Mediterranean diet to the vegan diet to the raw food diet.

Brian Fertig, M.D., endocrinologist and chairman of the Department of Diabetes and Endocrinology at **JFK University Medical Center**, lays out what you need to know.



Brian Fertig, M.D.

Endocrinologist

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Piscataway

Health Benefits of Plant Proteins

Plant proteins are an important source of nutrition and provide lots of health benefits:

- ▶ They may have fewer calories, less unhealthy fat and less cholesterol than animal protein.
- ▶ They provide nutrients like niacin, thiamine, B5, B6, B7, and vitamins A and K.
- ▶ Plant proteins provide fiber, which helps digestion and can reduce the risk of cancer and heart problems.
- ▶ Studies have found that eating multiple servings of plants per day can lower the risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke and heart attack.

Risks Associated With Eating Plant Proteins

Plant proteins are often incomplete protein sources, meaning they don't have all nine essential amino acids needed for muscle growth and repair. "Not eating a variety of plant proteins can lead to you not getting all the essential amino acids," Dr. Fertig says. "Amino acid deficiency can result in decreased immunity, digestive problems, depression, fertility issues, lower mental alertness, slowed growth in children and other health issues."

To ensure you don't become amino acid-deficient, eat a variety of plant products, especially from these nearly complete protein sources:

- ▶ Quinoa
- ▶ Buckwheat
- ▶ Hummus
- ▶ Tofu
- ▶ Chia seeds
- ▶ Peanut butter
- ▶ Edamame

If you rely mostly on plant sources for protein, make sure you're getting enough vitamin B12. "If you're on a plant-based diet, look for foods fortified with vitamin B12 or consider taking a supplement," Dr. Fertig says.



Edamame and Black Bean Salad

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 1 10-ounce package frozen shelled edamame, thawed
- 1 15-ounce can low-sodium black beans, drained and rinsed (or 1½ cups cooked)
- ½ cup red onion, chopped
- 2 cups celery (about 3 medium stalks), thinly sliced
- ½ cup cilantro, finely chopped (optional)
- 2 cups cabbage, chopped, or coleslaw mix

Dressing

- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon minced ginger
- 1 tablespoon low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt (optional)

Preparation

- ❶ In a large bowl, mix together all the vegetables.
- ❷ In a small bowl, whisk together the dressing ingredients, then add to the vegetable mixture.
- ❸ Chill until cold, about 1 hour, then serve.

Nutritional Information

Per serving with dressing: 383 calories, 22g protein, 56g carbohydrate (21g fiber), 8g fat (1g sat, 7g mono/poly), 49mg sodium (with optional salt: 323mg sodium)

Seasoned Cook

This is a great "make-ahead" dish because it gets better as it marinates.

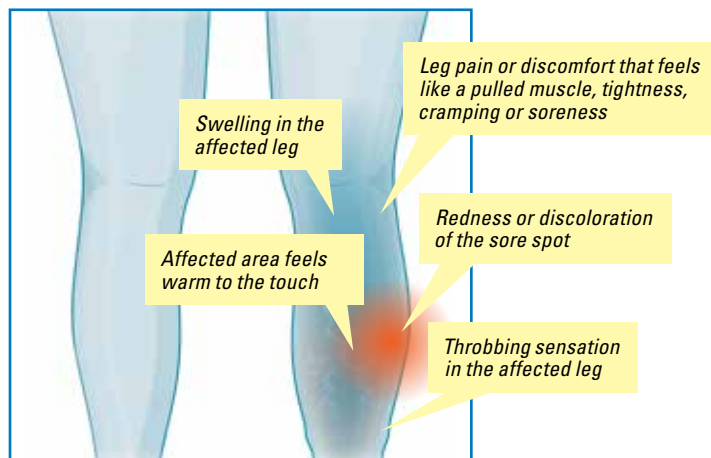
Find a healthy cooking demo or other nutrition event near you at HMHforU.org/Events.

Find more recipes and tips for healthy eating at HMHforU.org/HealthyEating.

How do I know if I have a blood clot in my leg?

Geoffrey Wong, M.D., weighs in:

When a blood clot—also called deep vein thrombosis—forms, it can obstruct blood flow, leading to uncomfortable symptoms, including:



If a clot breaks free from the spot where it formed, it may cause a potentially life-threatening condition known as pulmonary embolism, which is when the clot travels through blood vessels and enters the lung. So if you think that you may have a blood clot in your leg, see your doctor or visit an urgent care center or emergency room as soon as possible to help avoid complications.

Even if you haven't noticed symptoms of deep vein thrombosis, seek emergency care if you have symptoms of a pulmonary embolism, including:

- ▶ Sudden difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- ▶ Chest pain that worsens when you try breathing deeply
- ▶ Sudden cough, especially if you produce bloody mucus
- ▶ Fast heartbeat
- ▶ Dizziness or loss of consciousness

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



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What does colon cancer feel like?

Nathaniel Holmes, M.D., weighs in:

Unfortunately, many people with colorectal cancer may not feel anything. The first signs of colorectal cancer are often subtle. There's a misconception that if you don't feel anything amiss in your abdomen, there's no reason to consider the possibility of colorectal cancer. Being asymptomatic is common, which makes proactive screening so important.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force suggests screening for colorectal cancer at age 45 for people of average risk. Speak to your doctor to see if you are a candidate or if you experience these symptoms over a prolonged period of time:

- ▶ Fatigue
- ▶ Change in your bowel movements
- ▶ Rectal bleeding or blood in the stool
- ▶ Unexplained abdominal pain
- ▶ Unexplained weight loss



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

How can I get relief from headaches?

Brian Gerhardstein, M.D., Ph.D., weighs in:



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How do I stop getting bitten by mosquitoes?

Galen Centeno, M.D., weighs in:



Avoid being outdoors during mosquito “prime time”—stay indoors at dawn and dusk.

Get rid of any standing water around your home. Check pool covers, trash cans, gutters and bird baths, for example.

Apply mosquito repellent that contains DEET. If you prefer to avoid DEET, look for a natural repellent, such as oil of lemon eucalyptus.

Use screens on windows and doors, and repair any holes in them to keep mosquitoes out of your home.

Keep your grass low. Give mosquitoes fewer places to hide.

Place an oscillating fan in your yard. This can help deter mosquitoes.



Galen Centeno, M.D.

Internal medicine specialist

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

Headaches are common, often triggered by stress, lack of sleep, dehydration or a combination of all three. Here are seven ways to help find relief:

1. Pain reliever medications	Over-the-counter or prescription pain medication can often be used to minimize headache pain.
2. Sitting in a dark room	Light often can exacerbate headache pain, so find a comfortable, dark and quiet room to rest in.
3. Hot and cold compresses	Apply an ice pack covered by a washcloth—or alternatively a heat pack—to the forehead or cheeks for no more than 10 minutes.
4. Massage	Muscle tension in the upper body or neck due to poor posture or a rigorous exercise routine can trigger headaches. Massage therapy can reduce muscle tension and aid with chronic pain.
5. Acupuncture	This involves applying thin needles to naturally stimulate the body’s pain-relieving compounds.
6. Aromatherapy	Certain scents, such as peppermint, eucalyptus and lavender, have shown to trigger positive and healing responses in the brain.
7. Breathing meditation	Slow rhythmic breaths can relieve muscle tension.

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

Doctor Spotlight

When he isn't working, Andrew S. Habib, M.D., loves spending time at the beach, especially snorkeling and swimming.

ANDREW S. HABIB, M.D.

Family medicine doctor

Hackensack Meridian Medical Group
Primary Care—East Brunswick

Primary care doctors are the first stop for most patients. That's why, shortly after graduating from high school, Andrew S. Habib, M.D., knew he wanted to be that person.

"My dad was diagnosed with cancer, and that sparked the idea, as well as the fact that I have asthma," says Dr. Habib, now a family medicine doctor at Hackensack Meridian Medical Group Primary Care—East Brunswick. "Instead of going right to the emergency room for a non-emergency, or even to urgent care or waiting to see a specialist, I hope patients will call their primary care doctor first."

Married in November 2020 to a speech pathologist, Dr. Habib is also the proud father of a 10-month-old daughter. He came to the United States from Egypt as a teenager, and he remembers thinking that New York City was "huge." Now he enjoys all the benefits of living in a major metropolitan area.

What do you consider your patient philosophy in primary care?

I believe prevention is key. I always stress that patients should come for their annual physical for bloodwork and screenings—like a colonoscopy if appropriate—so they stay on top of their health care. It's like taking care of a car to keep everything running properly. People think, "I can skip this because I'm not sick." But I remind them that prevention can go a long way to keep them from being sick.



When you aren't working, what do you do for fun?

I watch Gordon Ramsay on "Hell's Kitchen," because I like the drama and the cooking. I'd love to be in the studio audience for that show. When I'm at home, I cook a good steak and a traditional Egyptian dish called goulash—not like Hungarian goulash, which is a crispy, layered, phyllo meat pie. The Egyptian version is more like lasagna. When I'm not working, I like to

spend quality time with my wife and daughter, so I work out in my home gym as much as I can instead of going to the gym. I have weights and a treadmill, and I walk my dog.

Where do you most like to spend time?

I love spending time at the beach! I love swimming, snorkeling and traveling, and I've been to five Caribbean islands. I'd like to go to Greece and, closer by, to California. 🌊

To make an appointment with Dr. Habib or a primary care doctor near you, call **800-822-8905** or visit our website.

Spotlight on **U**

health topics that matter the most to you

Passport to Health

Three hacks for staying healthy when you travel this summer.

1 Take the No-elevator Pledge

Skip the elevator and opt for the stairs every chance you get. In addition to helping you get your daily steps in, this will help you avoid the germs in a crowded elevator.

2 Eat a Nutritious Meal After Every Indulgent One

Some of us tend to overindulge on snacks and fast food while traveling, but don't let this derail your whole trip. For every treat you enjoy, plan a healthy meal to follow, with a focus on lean protein and vegetables.

3 Conquer Jet Lag

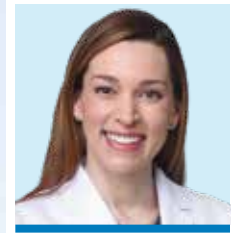
Adjust to your new time zone before you leave for vacation. For example, for a few days before your trip, go to bed an hour later and wake up an hour later than usual if you are headed west.



For more health tips and inspiration, visit [HMHforU.org](https://www.HMHforU.org).

Safe in the Sun

Take these steps to lower your risk of skin cancer.



Lindsey Goyal, M.D.

Facial plastic and reconstructive surgeon

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Perth Amboy

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. The main cause of it is too much exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays, which is why it's important to protect your skin.

"Unfortunately, I tend to see patients when a dermatologist has already diagnosed their skin cancer," says **Lindsey Goyal, M.D.**, facial plastic and reconstructive surgeon at **Raritan Bay Medical Center**. "The good news is that it's never too late to lower your risk of skin cancer with simple prevention strategies."

How to protect yourself from skin cancer:

Wear sunscreen year-round

Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. There are two main categories of sunscreen on the market:

- ▶ **Chemical sunscreens** contain compounds that react with the sun and block harmful rays. They need to be applied 30 minutes prior to any sun exposure. Dr. Goyal recommends against using chemical sunscreens for pregnant patients and young children.
- ▶ **Mineral sunscreens** contain inert compounds that act as a physical barrier to the sun's rays. They can be applied immediately before exposure.

No matter the type, reapply liberally every two hours, particularly when swimming or sweating. "There are advantages and disadvantages to each category of sunscreen, so it's important to experiment with different formulations to find one you like," says Dr. Goyal. "The best sunscreen is the one you'll actually wear."

Avoid sun between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

The UV rays are the highest between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., so avoid going out during that time period.

Avoid tanning salons or deliberate sun baths

UV rays from tanning beds can cause skin cancer. "There is no such thing as a base tan or a safe tan. If your skin changes colors, you damage your DNA and significantly increase your risk for future skin cancer," Dr. Goyal says. A tan achieved from a self-tanner is much safer and does not cause skin cancer.

Wear sun-protective clothing

Certain types of clothing can be chemically treated or tightly woven to impart an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF). Sun-protective clothing offers extra protection against UV rays and can be cooling on a hot day. UPF clothing wears out over time, so read labels and replace items when it's time. "If you're bald or have thinning hair, your scalp skin is especially vulnerable," says Dr. Goyal. "I recommend wearing a hat to cover your scalp, face, neck and ears."

Stay healthy overall

Eating a diet rich in antioxidants, staying well-hydrated, avoiding beverages with added sugar and exercising regularly can reduce your risk of many different cancers. "Most people think

sun exposure is the only risk factor for skin cancer, but smoking can increase your risk of certain types of skin cancer," says Dr. Goyal. She recommends quitting smoking and seeking additional resources if you're having difficulty.

Be mindful of skin changes

Look for these signs:

- ▶ Discolored patches on the skin
- ▶ Changes to freckles or moles
- ▶ A sore that doesn't heal by itself
- ▶ An ulcer that doesn't heal by itself

Consider regular skin screening

Just like you go for an annual physical exam, you should have your skin checked by a dermatologist. Regular skin checks are especially important for people who have already had skin cancer or who are at increased risk. "Fair skin, significant sun exposure, family history of skin cancer, certain genetic conditions and weakened immune system can increase your risk of skin cancer," says Dr. Goyal. She also recommends regular self-exams to check for skin changes or new growths. "All you need is your eyes and a mirror," she says. "Skin cancer is usually treatable if detected early." ❄️

Does Spray Sunscreen Work?

Spray sunscreens may save some time during the application process, but do they offer the same sun protection as lotions?

Spray-on sunscreen can be effective at protecting the skin, as long as you apply it properly (and often enough).

“Some people who use spray-on sunscreen just go through the motions, without checking to see if they’re actually covering their skin properly. They may not protect themselves from the sun effectively,” says **Jennifer Turkish, M.D.**, family medicine specialist at **Raritan Bay Medical Center** and **Old Bridge Medical Center**. “However, if you pay close attention to the application process, it is possible to protect yourself from the sun’s rays with spray-on sunscreen.”

How to Apply Spray Sunscreen

To use sunscreen effectively, put enough product on your skin to provide sun protection, then spread it evenly, so all areas are well-covered.

To apply spray sunscreen properly:

- ▶ **Pay attention to your skin where you’ve sprayed sunscreen.** Notice whether the skin appears wet and shiny where you’ve just sprayed. If your skin looks dry, you haven’t sprayed enough of the product.
- ▶ **Once each section of your skin is moist** and glistening from wet sunscreen, rub it in before it dries to make sure it’s spread evenly. This helps ensure you don’t miss any spots.
- ▶ **If someone else sprays sunscreen on your back**, ask them to notice whether your skin appears wet before they stop spraying. Have them rub the sprayed-on product around your back, so it covers your skin evenly.
- ▶ **Don’t spray sunscreen on your face**, because you might accidentally get the product in your eyes or mouth or inhale it. Instead, spray sunscreen into your hand so you have a small pool of liquid in your palm, then rub your hands together and apply the liquid sunscreen to your face.
- ▶ Most importantly, **remember to reapply.**

“Putting sunscreen on once and going to the beach for eight hours won’t give you enough sun protection,” says Dr. Turkish. “You should reapply sunscreen every 1½ to 2 hours, depending on the specific product you’re using. If you spend a lot of time swimming, you may want to reapply more frequently, because being in the water may remove sunscreen. Sweating and toweling off may also remove sunscreen.”



Jennifer Turkish, M.D.

Family medicine
specialist

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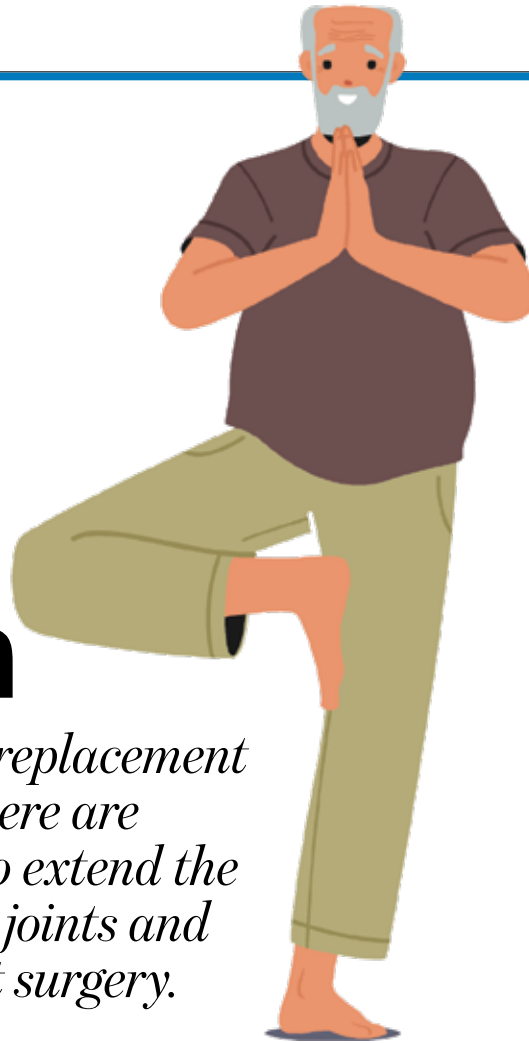
Old Bridge

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Schedule a skin cancer screening near you at [HMHforU.org/CancerScreen](https://www.HMHforU.org/CancerScreen).

A Leg Up on Knee Health

Sometimes, a knee replacement is necessary. But there are things you can do to extend the health of your knee joints and postpone or prevent surgery.



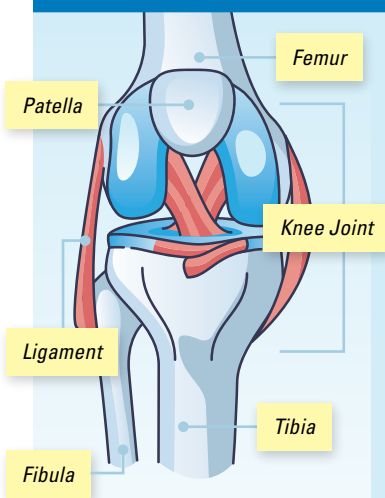
Whether you need knee replacement surgery is influenced by several factors, including your genetic predisposition and how you have used your body.

“Normally, smooth, shiny cartilage coats the ends of the knee joint,” says **Alexander Russoniello, M.D.**, knee and hip orthopedic surgeon at **JFK University Medical Center**. “This keeps the space open, allowing the ligaments to stay in tension, maintaining the alignment of the knee. When the cartilage wears out, the ends of the bone start rubbing against each other. This causes friction, stiffness and pain. In addition, the ligaments can become looser, and the knee may develop a deformity like ‘bow leg’ or ‘knock knee.’”

But there are things you can do at any age to extend the health of your knee joints and postpone or prevent knee replacement.

How to Support Your Knee Health

Dr. Russoniello says the best way to keep knees healthy is maintaining good lifelong habits including:



Healthy Knee

Partial vs. Full Knee Replacements

If you are planning knee replacement surgery, here's how to better understand if you're a candidate for a partial replacement or a full one.

Knee replacement surgery is a common procedure designed to relieve pain and stiffness of the knee joint. After arthritis or injury damages the joint, knee replacement helps recover and improve daily functionality, and restore the integrity of the knee.

When there is damage to the cartilage of your knee, your primary care doctor will typically refer you to an orthopedic specialist, who will help you understand the best treatment option for you. Surgical treatment may be appropriate if pain can no longer be alleviated by nonsurgical treatments, such as medication and physical therapy.

Differences Between Partial and Full Knee Replacements

The knee consists of three major compartments, whose independent operating conditions determine whether you require a partial or full knee replacement:

- ❶ **Lateral:** The outside of the knee, opposite the medial
- ❷ **Pastellofemoral:** The part of the knee that maintains the patella (kneecap) and connects the thigh to the leg bone
- ❸ **Medial:** The part of the knee that runs along the inside of the joint

- ▶ Eating a balanced diet that helps you maintain a healthy weight
- ▶ Avoiding smoking, which can increase oxidant stress and weaken bones
- ▶ Staying active

There is a wide range of ways to help support and maintain weak knees. “Sometimes, these options preserve knees for a lifetime, but for other people, they are more of a delaying tactic,” Dr. Russoniello says.

Examples include:

- ▶ Over-the-counter knee braces
- ▶ Over-the-counter nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)
- ▶ Topical creams and pain patches
- ▶ Injectable medications, such as cortisone and hyaluronic acid, for pain relief

Dr. Russoniello adds that patients who are living with knee pain often ask about nutritional supplements. He tells them:

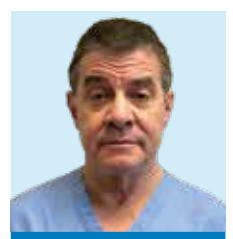
“Unfortunately, the data is sparse on this topic, but there is mixed evidence and a lot of work being done looking at the use of glucosamine, chondroitin collagen and turmeric, among

other antioxidants, and how they might preserve cartilage.”

Five Signs Your Knees May Need Surgical Replacement

- 1** Pain in your knees that slows you down regardless of the remedies you’ve tried
- 2** Instability or weakness that causes your knee to buckle, possibly causing you to fall
- 3** Limping from the pain that causes you to strain other body parts like the back or hip
- 4** Stiffness that does not get better as the day goes on
- 5** Needing to take multiple medications, like NSAIDs, or even narcotics, to quell the pain

For those who eventually need knee replacement to relieve pain and allow good function, newer surgical techniques have significantly reduced surgical risks and healing time that previously were associated with surgery. 🌀

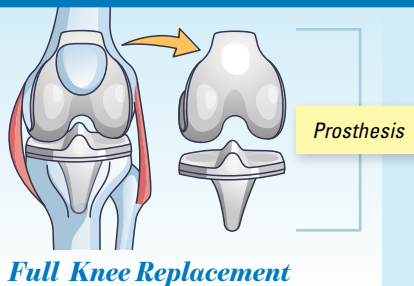


Alexander Russoniello, M.D.

Knee and hip orthopedic surgeon

800-822-8905

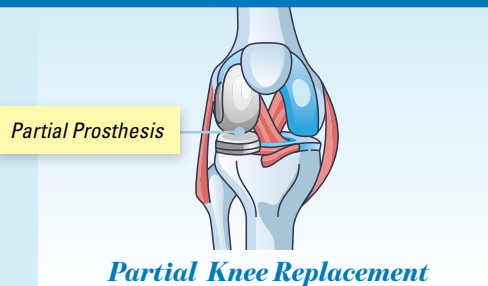
Edison



Full Knee Replacement

Full knee replacements replace the entire joint with an artificial, internal prosthesis. Typically, complete replacements occur when two or more compartments of the joint exhibit significant damage and require an implant to support normal function—or if a patient has a complication such as deformity from long-term arthritis.

Partial knee replacements only address the damaged compartments of the knee joint, using metal or plastic compartments to resurface the damaged areas. In some cases, just one



Partial Knee Replacement

compartment is affected in the knee. In this case, a person may be a candidate for partial knee replacement.

An orthopedic surgeon will help you understand which procedure is best for you by assessing your medical history, range of motion, strength and stability. If surgery is necessary, your surgeon will plan to implant a prosthetic joint made of medical-grade plastic, metal or ceramic materials that mimic the function of a natural, healthy knee joint.

Take our health risk assessment to learn about your knee or hip health.



Perfect Attendance

Our expert shares five reasons to avoid skipping physical therapy appointments.

If your doctor prescribes physical therapy for injury, illness or even the physical changes that occur by simply aging, it's important to consistently attend your appointments, says Alissa Rocco, a physical therapist at **JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute**.

"There may be days when you're tired, it's inconvenient, you're busy or progress is slow and you want to skip your appointment," Alissa says. "But consistently receiving physical therapy is the key to getting your best results."

Here are five important reasons to make the effort—even if it's challenging—to get to your scheduled physical therapy appointment.

1 You Might Delay Your Healing

Each appointment is key to improving your strength and agility, and skipping appointments will delay recovery. Whether you are going to physical therapy to heal injuries or to rehabilitate cardiac or neurological conditions, you cannot achieve the benefits without working with your physical therapist. Skipped appointments will ultimately postpone or negate the results and goals you want to achieve.

2 The Pain May Not Go Away on Its Own

Alissa explains: "Physical therapy can help improve alignment and range of motion for various joints. This can help decrease pain, as well as improve your overall movement ability for daily tasks."

3 You May Put Yourself at Risk for Future Injury

Physical therapy can help you develop strength and learn proper body mechanics that are key to preventing future injuries.

4 Skipping Appointments Can Be Costly

If your condition worsens because you missed therapy, you may end up needing an extended length of stay or additional medical procedures. As a result, there may be increased utilization of insurance benefits and additional out-of-pocket costs.

5 You Miss Out on Being Supported in Your Recovery

Your physical therapist works with you and your medical team to ensure that you get the best care possible. Going to physical therapy allows you to be actively involved in setting your goals and developing an exercise program. In addition, your physical therapist can provide you with community resources to address your concerns.

At times, practical considerations can make it difficult to attend your appointments. If you have issues with transportation, preferences for the time of day you come in or other factors that are problems for you, discuss them with your physical therapist, who can work with you on scheduling or refer you to professionals who can help with other issues. ⚙️



Go Online

Find a physical therapy location near you at [HMHforU.org/PhysicalTherapy](https://www.HMHforU.org/PhysicalTherapy).

Cardiac Arrest or Heart Attack?



Cardiac arrest and heart attack are not the same conditions. Here are the key differences you should know and the signs of each.

It's a misconception that heart attack and cardiac arrest are the same condition. While they have similarities—they're both related to heart health and considered emergency situations—it's important to understand the differences between them. "Knowing the differences is key to quick action in the event of either condition," says **Ossama Ahmed Elsaid, M.D.**, cardiologist at **Raritan Bay Medical Center, Old Bridge Medical Center** and **JFK University Medical Center**. "Quick action is vital to a positive outcome. It often can mean the difference between life and death."



Ossama Ahmed Elsaid, M.D.

Cardiologist

800-822-8905

South River

What Is Cardiac Arrest?

Cardiac arrest is a sudden loss of heart function in a person with or without heart disease. "With cardiac arrest, your heart comes to a functional stop due to electrical disorganization and no longer pumps blood," says Dr. Elsaid. "This quickly puts your organs at risk of failure and you at risk of death."

Signs of cardiac arrest:

- ▶ Fainting or loss of consciousness
- ▶ Dizziness or lightheadedness prior to loss of consciousness
- ▶ Shortness of breath prior to loss of consciousness
- ▶ Quick heartbeat prior to loss of consciousness
- ▶ Chest pain prior to loss of consciousness

If you suspect cardiac arrest, call 911 immediately. If possible, CPR or defibrillation should be administered right away.

What Is a Heart Attack?

A heart attack is caused by a blockage that stops blood flow to the heart. It can sometimes lead to cardiac arrest, but the two conditions are not the same.

Signs of a heart attack:

- ▶ Chest pain, tightness and pressure
- ▶ Pain or discomfort radiating to the arm, neck, jaw or teeth
- ▶ Pain in the back or belly
- ▶ Sweating
- ▶ Nausea or vomiting
- ▶ Shortness of breath
- ▶ Lightheadedness

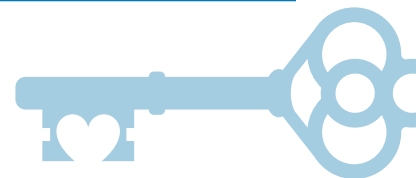
If you suspect a heart attack, call 911 right away.

Why CPR Is Key

In the case of cardiac arrest, CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation), which uses chest compressions to keep blood flowing throughout the body, is vital to survival.

"Without oxygen delivery by a pumping heart, cardiac arrest can lead to death in minutes. But with CPR, compressions can keep the blood flowing throughout the body until the person can get more advanced care," says Dr. Elsaid.

If a trained bystander administers CPR in the first few minutes of cardiac arrest, they can double or triple the victim's chance of survival. "Everyone should know basic life support because it can be needed at any time," Dr. Elsaid says. "You'll be ready to jump into action anytime you're around someone who collapses." 🌀



Go Online

Find a CPR class near you at HMHforU.org/Events.

Are You at Risk for Heart Disease?

Take our quiz to find out.



Are you a man over the age of 45?

Yes No

Do you have diabetes?

Yes No

Are you a woman over age 55, or are you postmenopausal?

Yes No

Do you smoke?

Yes No

Does anyone in your immediate family have a history of heart disease or diabetes?

Yes No

Is your blood pressure 140/90 or higher?

Yes No

Are you a Black American or Latino American?

Yes No

Is your total cholesterol over 200?

Yes No



Time to Get Screened?

Heart screenings, prevention tools and diagnostic tests can help you understand your heart condition or risk of heart disease, as well as what prevention or treatment options may be needed.

Most screenings can start as early as 20 years old, and the frequency will depend on your medical history. Contributing factors for more frequent screenings include:

- ▶ Sex
- ▶ Age
- ▶ Family history of heart disease
- ▶ Race
- ▶ Obesity
- ▶ Being a smoker
- ▶ Poor diet
- ▶ Stress

Here's a snapshot of some of the heart screening options and imaging capabilities available at Hackensack Meridian Health.

AngioScreen

Within 15 minutes, AngioScreen screens for heart and blood vessel disease by blending several distinct screenings and measurements, including blood pressure, pulse, ultrasound and EKG. Anyone can receive an AngioScreen, even those who are not at high risk or experiencing symptoms.

CT Calcium Scoring

A CT Calcium Scoring scan is a 10-minute scan performed at an imaging center that can help identify signs of heart disease. The test looks for calcium-containing, hardened plaque in the arteries around the heart.

HeartFlow

HeartFlow builds on results from cardiac CT scans that yield concerning results—generating personalized, color-coded 3D images of a patient's coronary arteries without requiring additional hospital visits or separate tests. Using this information, doctors can quantify a patient's individual risk of a heart attack over the next five years when a blockage has been identified.

To learn more about screening options, or to schedule a screening near you, visit [HMHforU.org/HeartScreen](https://www.hmhforu.org/HeartScreen).

Are you 30 or more pounds over your recommended weight?

Yes No

Do you exercise less than three times a week?

Yes No



If you answered "yes" to three or more of these questions, you may be at higher risk for heart disease. Scan the QR code to schedule a wellness appointment online, or call 800-822-8905 to find a doctor.

First Signs of Prostate Cancer

Early stage prostate cancer is often asymptomatic, but here are six signs to be mindful of, as well as what to know about screening.

Prostate cancer is a serious condition that affects millions of men around the world. But if detected early enough, it can be treated fairly easily. “One in eight men in America will be diagnosed with prostate cancer. It is one of the more treatable forms of cancer if it’s caught early, but it’s important for men to get screened and be aware of potential warning signs, so they can seek medical attention if needed,” says **Michael Lasser, M.D., FACS**, medical director of Robotic Surgery at **JFK University Medical Center**.

Early Signs of Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer doesn’t usually cause noticeable symptoms in its earliest stages. “While early stage prostate cancer is often asymptomatic, there are some signs of prostate and urinary health to be mindful of,” Dr. Lasser says.

Urinary tract symptoms may include:

1. Difficulty urinating or an increased need to urinate
2. Weak or interrupted flow of urine
3. Pain in the back, hips, pelvis or bones
4. Pain or burning sensation during urination or ejaculation
5. Blood in urine
6. Sudden erectile dysfunction

“Urinary symptoms don’t mean you have prostate cancer. But it’s important to be aware of these signs and talk to your doctor if you experience any of them,” says Dr. Lasser.

Screening for Prostate Cancer

Men should begin discussing the pros and cons of annual screenings for prostate cancer with their doctors at age 50. Because prostate cancer usually affects men in their 60s, it’s important to begin these discussions ahead of time.

Men who are at an increased risk of prostate cancer should begin discussing screening options at age 40. Risk factors include:

- ▶ African American descent
- ▶ Family history of prostate cancer
- ▶ Family history of advanced pancreatic, ovarian or breast cancers (especially if BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes are positive)

Screening is a combination of a simple blood test to measure the level of the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) and a digital rectal exam.

- ▶ A PSA blood test measures the level of PSA in the blood. A high level of PSA indicates a potential issue with the prostate, oftentimes an abnormal growth or other noncancerous issues of the prostate.
- ▶ A digital rectal exam is a procedure used to assess the size, shape and general condition of the prostate. During the examination, a doctor will insert a gloved, lubricated finger into the rectum to feel the back wall of the prostate gland for any changes such as enlargement, tenderness or lumps.

“Don’t wait for symptoms to get screened. If you are 50 or older, or you are at an increased risk of prostate cancer, talk to your doctor about screening options,” says Dr. Lasser. 🌟



Michael Lasser, M.D., FACS

Urologist

800-822-8905

Edison and Old Bridge

Go Online

Schedule a screening for prostate cancer at [HMHforU.org/CancerScreen](https://www.HMHforU.org/CancerScreen).



Mike Siebig is grateful to be cancer-free and able to spend time with his family, including his beloved dog, Mabel.

A Fighting Spirit

Determination to fight prostate cancer helped Mike Siebig decide to choose robotic surgery.

When Mike Siebig, 59, was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2017, he was determined to fight his disease.

Thanks to the support he received from his care team at **JFK University Medical Center**—and his fighting spirit—Mike, who lives in Old Bridge, New Jersey, with his wife, will celebrate his five-year anniversary of being cancer-free this year.

PSA Levels Rising

In 2017, Mike's family doctor became concerned that his prostate-specific antigen (PSA) levels—tested regularly to screen for prostate cancer—were quickly increasing. "It wasn't so much the fact that it had gotten high; it was how quickly it had gotten high," says Mike. His doctor recommended he see urologist **Michael Lasser, M.D., FACS**.

After a biopsy and more tests, Dr. Lasser confirmed that Mike had intermediate-risk prostate cancer. They discussed treatment options and the risks involved with each:

- ▶ Active surveillance, where the cancer is monitored closely

- ▶ Radiation, which is often combined with hormone therapy

- ▶ Surgery to remove the prostate
"I didn't want to take the chance of having any problems down the line, so I chose to have it completely removed robotically," says Mike, who appreciates how Dr. Lasser helped him understand his options. "He's a great doctor. He's easy to talk with and candid. I prefer that."

A Very Good Choice

Dr. Lasser performed a prostatectomy—complete removal of the prostate—using a surgical robotic system. "When we remove the prostate, we're basically disconnecting the bladder from the urethra or the urinary tract. Once the prostate is removed, we put everything back together in a reconstructive manner with the robot," says Dr. Lasser.

Mike also had lymph nodes removed during the surgery, which showed no spread of his cancer. But further testing of his tumor upgraded the severity of his cancer to high risk.

"Mike made a very good choice choosing surgery because he had worse cancer than we

thought, and we never would have known had we not taken his prostate out," says Dr. Lasser. "Luckily, he had negative margins, which means there was no cancer left behind."

Importance of Early Detection

Mike hasn't needed any additional treatment, and his PSA levels remain normal.

His experience has made him a big believer in the importance of early cancer detection.

"Having my PSA tracked is what gave me the notification that something was going on," he says. "Early detection is the way to go."

Prompted by his cancer diagnosis and treatment, Mike started a new career as a medical assistant. Working at a family practice in Red Bank, he helps others facing health issues and talks to them about his own experience fighting and winning the big fight.

"I'm coming up on my five-year anniversary of being cancer-free. It feels good. My daughter got married in June 2022, so I was happy to walk her down the aisle. I'm glad I could be there for that," he says.

New Hope

Children in New Jersey undergoing cancer therapy or facing other fertility-threatening conditions or treatments now have more promising options for the future.



Burton Eliot Appel, M.D.
Pediatric hematologist-
oncologist
800-822-8905
Hackensack

Lifesaving treatments are helping children fight serious diseases and disorders like never before. Thanks to these treatments, survival rates are improving, and many children are able to live longer and achieve a high quality of life.

Still, certain treatments can lead to side effects years later, called late effects, including decreased or permanently impaired fertility in both boys and girls. Chemotherapy and radiation therapy can harm the reproductive organs and damage the tissue responsible for producing eggs or sperm, making it harder or impossible for these children to conceive later in life.

“In years past, doctors were solely focused on helping patients beat cancer and didn’t consider the late effects until after the fact,” says pediatric hematologist-oncologist **Burton Eliot Appel, M.D.**, associate director of the Children’s Cancer Institute at **Joseph M. Sanzari Children’s Hospital** at **Hackensack University Medical Center**. “But as survival rates for cancer and other diseases have improved, we can now emphasize reducing long-term risks, including infertility.”

Today, fertility preservation techniques, such as egg or sperm freezing or even preserving ovarian or testicular tissue, may be an option for some pediatric patients. The fertility preservation program at Hackensack Meridian Children’s Health—the only program of its kind in New Jersey—offers plenty of heartfelt support and education along with promising options to greatly enhance these patients’ quality of life.



What Is Involved in Fertility Preservation?

Dr. Appel, who directs the fertility preservation program at the Children’s Hospital, points out that not all chemotherapy or radiation treatment will lead to infertility. The drugs used and the total dosage are important factors in determining infertility risk.

Not all infertility loss is permanent, either. Some children and teenagers lose their fertility for a short time because of treatment, and sometimes treatment can cause complete and irreversible infertility.

At the Children’s Hospital, the program includes:

- ▶ Sperm banking for male patients
- ▶ Testicular tissue cryopreservation (freezing) for male patients of all ages, done under the auspices of a clinical trial
- ▶ Ovarian tissue cryopreservation (freezing of ovarian tissue) for female patients
- ▶ Egg freezing for some post-pubertal female patients

Making Families Feel Comfortable

When children need treatments that may affect their future fertility, it’s important for parents to talk to their care team about this risk—and bring their children into the conversation when they are old enough to understand.

Presenting such a complex subject requires sensitivity, intuition and depth of experience when introducing the information either alone with the child or with parent and child, says advanced practice nurse Rachel Heaney, APN, who works in the Children’s Hospital’s fertility preservation program.

“We make it clear that this is not the easiest conversation, discussing what happens and things that are ‘weird’ or that the child may not have discussed with an adult yet,” she says. “We explain that we’re looking to their future, and that just like a family puts money aside for the future, we’re doing something similar by planning for the future. I want parents and children to have confidence that no question is silly, and it’s important that they feel comfortable.”

The Children’s Hospital recently added the role of a fertility preservation nurse navigator to better enhance communication with families. “The addition of this position has had a major impact,” Dr. Appel says. “It means an expert can sit down with patients and families and do the detailed work that’s involved—sometimes in a very short period of time that’s not weeks or months to think about fertility preservation.”

Nurse navigator Laurie Donnelly, RN, becomes a family’s ongoing resource for information and coordination, including helping with financial assistance paperwork, as this service is often not covered by insurance. “My role is helpful when the patient and family must absorb so much confusing and complicated information so quickly while understandably experiencing stress,” Laurie says.

Instilling Optimism

Dr. Appel says the fertility preservation program can provide optimism and clarity for families who are in a challenging situation. “We want families to know that we hope and expect their child to survive this, and we want them to have as many opportunities as their peers,” he says.

But the team also reinforces to parents and children that the decision is theirs. “We explain that we want to have the discussion about fertility preservation and what it entails, but the decision is the family’s own,” Dr. Appel says. ❄️

Go Online

Learn about our nationally recognized pediatric cancer care at [HMHforU.org/KidsCancer](https://www.HMHforU.org/KidsCancer).



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](https://www.HMHforU.org/Events) or call 800-560-9990.

SchedUle

Here are just a few of the events & classes this August through November 2023

Special Events



Heart-healthy Eating: Hispanic Style! Learn about the Mediterranean and Dash diets and how they contribute to heart health. Hispanic recipes will be featured in celebration of Hispanic Heritage month.

Oct. 4, noon–1 p.m., virtual event

Prevention, Screening and Surveillance of Colon and Rectal Cancer Learn the risk factors, prevention and treatment options for colon cancer and how early detection can save your life. Free at-home colorectal screening kits are available during registration.

Sept. 18, 11 a.m.–noon and Sept. 18, 6–7 p.m., virtual event



September Is National Recovery Month
Every Person. Every Family. Every Community. This webinar will discuss the stigma and improve how one can access available resources, so every person, family and community can celebrate recovery from addiction.

Sept. 12, 6–7 p.m., virtual event

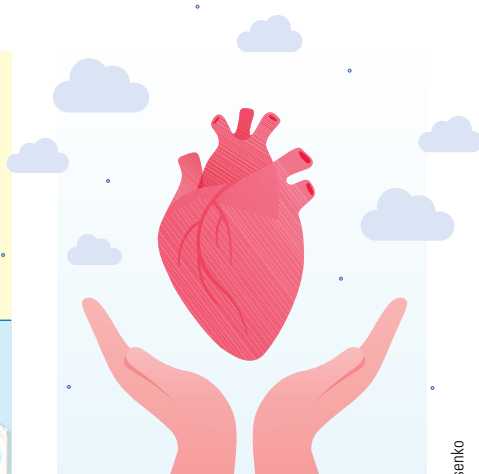


Behavioral Health

Depression: Better Days Are to Come Join Vedavani Tiruveedhula, M.D., and learn the causes, risk factors and pathology of depression.

Sept. 27, 6–7 p.m., Old Bridge Medical Center

► **The Holidays Are Coming! How Do I Cope?** Oct. 25, 7–8 p.m., virtual event



Heart Health

Living With Heart Failure Learn how to maximize your quality of life while living with heart failure.

Sept. 27, 11 a.m.–noon, virtual event

► **AngioScreen Special rate: \$49.95. Registration required. Call for dates, times and locations.**

Bayshore Medical Center
727 North Beers St.
Holmdel

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

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

Riverview Medical Center
1 Riverview Plaza
Red Bank

Southern Ocean Medical Center
1140 Route 72 West
Manahawkin

HOSPITAL LOCATIONS



Cancer Care

An Overview of Prostate Cancer Join Mina M. Fam, M.D., who will review the basics of prostate cancer, risk groups, treatment options and prognosis.

Sept. 13, 2–3 p.m., virtual event

- ▶ **Thriving and Surviving Cancer Survivor Workshop** *Sept. 6, 13, 20 & 27 and Oct. 4 & 11, noon–2 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Stop Smoking With Hypnosis** *Sept. 13, 7–8 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Prevention, Screening and Surveillance of Colon and Rectal Cancer** *Speaker: Steven C. Tizio, M.D., Sept. 18, 11 a.m.–noon and 6–7 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Obesity and Cancer** *Speaker: Dena G. Arumugam, M.D., Sept. 20, noon–1 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Game Changers: Advances in Early Detection and Diagnosis of Breast Cancer** *Speaker: Harriet Beth Borofsky, M.D., Oct. 10, noon–1 p.m., virtual event*



General Wellness

Women's Health Perimenopause and Menopause Join us and learn the signs, symptoms and treatment options of perimenopause and menopause.

Sept. 27, 7–8 p.m., virtual event

- ▶ **Women's Health & Wellness Day** *Sept. 27, 8:30–10:30 a.m., YMCA Old Bridge, 1 Mannino Park Drive*
- ▶ **Weight Loss With Hypnosis** *Oct. 11, 7–8 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Eating Healthy Around the Holidays** *Nov. 16, 7–8 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Weight-loss Surgery** *To learn more about weight-loss surgery, attend a free seminar. To find a seminar near you, visit HMHforU.org/WeightLoss.*
- ▶ **Support Groups** *Hackensack Meridian Health offers regular support group meetings. Learn more at HMHforU.org/SupportGroups.*

Pediatrics

Parent/Guardian Talks

Back-to-School Anxiety & Reminders For parents of children from preschool to college, join our pediatric experts Ulrick Vieux, M.D., and Alyssa Rios, M.D., as they discuss how to prepare for back-to-school, including responding to back-to-school anxiety.

Aug. 24, noon–1 p.m., virtual event

- ▶ **Positive Parenting 101** *Speakers: Brett A. Biller, PsyD, and Steven Kairys, M.D., Sept. 28, 7–8 p.m., virtual event*
- ▶ **Safe Sitter** *Fee: \$40. Visit HMHforU.org/Events for upcoming dates.*
- ▶ **Safe at Home by Safe Sitter** *Fee: \$15. Visit HMHforU.org/Events for upcoming dates.*





Ankit Gupta (pictured below) is helping expand pet therapy at JFK University Medical Center to support adult patients, pediatric patients, visitors and team members.



Man's Best Friend

Thanks to a generous donation from the Nandansons Foundation, pet therapy is expanding for patients in the Edison community.

Thanks to the generosity of the Nandansons Foundation, pet therapy is expanding at **JFK University Medical Center**, and it's hard to tell who is more excited—patients or team members.

"Patients react quite well, but I have seen nurses sit on the floor and cry and hug the dog," says Mary Beth Cunningham, co-president of the Auxiliary of JFK University Medical Center Foundation.

Hospital pet therapy, also known as animal-assisted therapy, involves trained animals visiting patients in the hospital to provide comfort and support. "This type of therapy has been shown to have many benefits for patients, including reducing stress and anxiety, improving mood, increasing socialization and providing a sense of companionship," says Ankit Gupta, whose family started the Nandansons Foundation in Edison.

For nearly a year, Creature Comfort Pet Therapy has brought trained therapy dogs—and on special occasions rabbits and miniature horses—to JFK. The program has been a hit, expanding from two days a week to three, with visits from "regulars" Niles, a black Lab, and Chace, a golden retriever.

Through his family's foundation, Ankit has committed to providing the funds so that the pets and their handlers from the nonprofit group based in Morris County can come to JFK every day for a year.

"The pet therapy program is particularly beneficial for patients who are recovering from surgery or illness, as well as those who are dealing with mental health issues such as depression or anxiety. It can also be helpful for patients who are experiencing chronic pain or undergoing chemotherapy or other intensive treatments," Ankit says. "Through launching this program

at JFK, it was interesting to learn that these pets also provide comfort and support to not only adult patients but also pediatric patients, visitors and team members."

In the warmer months, Mary Beth says JFK may also see visits from therapy goats and notes that philanthropy is crucial in helping expand this program and continue to enhance the hospital's visits from these furry friends.

"The pet therapy program at JFK is such an incredible addition to the care our patients receive. It provides emotional and social support in a meaningful way," says Sheri Marino, MA, CCC-SLP, executive director of the JFK University Medical Center Foundation. "We are so grateful to the Nandansons Foundation for enabling us to continue and grow this program."

The gratitude is reciprocal. Adds Ankit: "The Nandansons Foundation is pleased with the positive impact this program has provided the community. We would like to express our deep gratitude for the endless effort of team members in creating and further developing this program." 🌟

**Fundraise in your community,
for your community, and support
a hospital or health care cause
important to you. Start your
virtual fundraiser today.**



Sleep Easy

The numbers you need to know to get a good night's sleep.

How Much Sleep Is Enough?

Adults	7–9 hours
Teens	8–10 hours
Children	9–12 hours



Stages of Sleep

Light Sleep

Stage 1:

You transition between drowsiness and wakefulness. You will relax and perhaps twitch as you slowly drift into stage two.

1–5 minutes

Stage 2:

Your body and muscles relax. Heartbeat, breathing and brain waves all slow down.

10–60 minutes

Deep Sleep

Stage 3:

The deepest sleep stage tends to happen earlier in the night. It is the stage in which the body does essential tissue growth and repair.

20–60 minutes

REM Sleep

Stage 4:

This is the stage where dreaming is most likely.

90 minutes after you fall asleep and every 90 minutes during sleep

Go Online

If you are experiencing chronic or excessive tiredness, talk with a doctor about your symptoms. They might recommend a sleep study to understand what's causing your fatigue. Make an appointment with a sleep specialist near you at [HMforU.org/SleepDoctor](https://www.hackensackmeridianhealth.org/Health-Care/Services/Behavioral-Health-and-Mental-Health/Sleep-Disorders).



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343 Thornall St.
Edison, NJ 08837-2206

HMH-057_C

Get Checked

Even just one hour spent once a year at an annual wellness check can yield benefits for years to come. Here are the top five reasons you should schedule an annual wellness check:



Learn healthy behaviors

As we get older, our health needs change. During an annual wellness check, your doctor can make suggestions for making healthy improvements to your lifestyle.



Identify disease risk factors

Your doctor can help spot any potential disease risk factors and recommend screening or lifestyle changes to reduce that risk.



Keep health care costs low

It's much less expensive to prevent an illness or chronic condition compared to treating one, so annual well checks can help keep health care costs down.



Diagnose diseases in their earliest stages

Often, diseases are most treatable when they are discovered in their earliest stages. Preventive care can help spot those early on.



Get preventive care

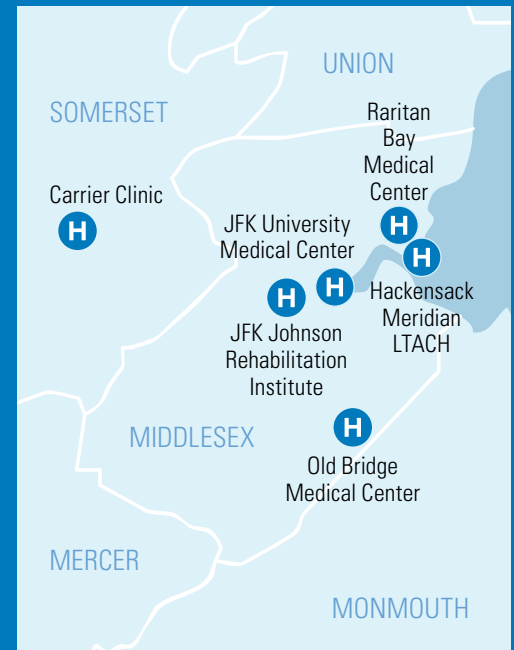
You can use your annual wellness check to get caught up on any needed vaccines as well as understand what screenings you may need based on your age or other factors.



Schedule
an annual
wellness
check with
a doctor
near you.

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 listing of our hospitals, services and locations, visit HMHforU.org/Locations.



Hackensack Meridian Children's Health Nationally Ranked

For the third year in a row, **Joseph M. Sanzari Children's Hospital** at **Hackensack University Medical Center** and **K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital** at **Jersey Shore University Medical Center** are ranked #1 in New Jersey for Best Children's Hospitals by *U.S. News & World Report*. They are ranked in four pediatric specialties, more than any children's hospital network has ever achieved in New Jersey.

Learn more at HMHforU.org/BestChildrens.



Hackensack
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KEEP GETTING BETTER