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Let's Get Healthy Program  
Diabetes Center for Excellence



## High Blood Pressure Education Month

High Blood Pressure Education Month, recognized in May, is a public health observance aimed at increasing awareness about hypertension, often called the "silent killer" because it may not show symptoms until serious complications occur, such as heart attack, stroke, or kidney disease. About 50% of Americans have high blood pressure, and many are unaware of it.



## Women's Health Month

Women's Health Month is celebrated annually to raise awareness about preventive care, mental wellness, reproductive health, and chronic disease management among women in the U.S. The observance aims to:

- Promote preventive care such as screenings for heart disease, osteoporosis, and certain cancers
- Encourage physical activity, stress management, and mental wellness
- Educate women about conditions that disproportionately affect them, including heart disease, depression, and reproductive health issues



**We are closed Monday May 25th, in observance of Memorial Day**





## Healthy Blood Pressure

To take care of your heart, it's important to know and track your blood pressure. Millions of Americans have high blood pressure, also called hypertension, but many don't realize it or are not at a healthy level. For most adults, healthy blood pressure is 120/80 mm Hg or less. Blood pressure consistently above 130/80 mm Hg increases your risk for heart disease, kidney disease, eye damage, dementia and stroke.

High blood pressure is often "silent," meaning it doesn't usually cause symptoms but can damage your body over time. While you can't control everything that increases your risk for high blood pressure – it runs in families, often increases with age and varies by race and ethnicity – there are things you can do:

**Know Your Numbers:** Everyone should get their blood pressure checked by a health care provider at least once a year.

**Eat Healthy:** Follow a heart-healthy eating plan, such as Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH). For example, use herbs for flavor instead of salt and add one vegetable to every meal.

**Move More:** Get at least 2 ½ hours of physical activity each week to help lower and control blood pressure. To ensure you're reducing your sitting throughout the day and getting active, try breaking your activity up. Do 10 minutes of exercise, three times a day or one 30 minute session five days each week. Any amount of physical activity is better than none and all activity counts.

**Aim for a Healthy Weight:** If you're overweight, losing just 3-5% of your weight can improve blood pressure. If you weigh 200 pounds, that's a loss of 6-10 pounds. Ask a friend or family member for help or to join a weight loss program with you. Social support can help keep you motivated.

**Manage Stress:** Stress can increase your blood pressure and make your body store more fat. Reduce stress with meditation, relaxing activities or support from a counselor or online group.

**Have a Healthy Pregnancy:** High blood pressure during pregnancy can harm the mother and baby. It also increases a woman's risk of having high blood pressure later in life. If you're planning to become pregnant, start monitoring it now.

**Stop Smoking:** The chemicals in tobacco smoke can harm your heart and blood vessels. Seek out resources, such as smoke free hotlines and text message programs, that offer free support and information.

**Work with Your Medical Provider:** Get help setting your target blood pressure. Write down your numbers every time you get your blood pressure checked. Ask if you should monitor your blood pressure from home. Take all prescribed medications as directed and keep up your healthy lifestyle.





## Women's Health

Despite medical advances, women continue to face disparities in healthcare access and outcomes. For example, heart disease remains the leading cause of death for women in the U.S., yet awareness of this risk is limited. Maternal mortality rates have also risen, particularly among Indigenous women, highlighting the ongoing need for education and advocacy during Women's Health Month. By participating in Women's Health Month, women are encouraged to schedule check-ups, engage in healthy behaviors, and learn about conditions that affect them, contributing to improved long-term health outcomes.

You play an important role in every step of your health journey. Whether you are seeking help for a specific health issue or you are getting a checkup, health care visits are an important part of supporting your health and well-being. The tips below can help you make the most of every health care visit:

**Be Open:** Sharing information about how your body is or is not working helps your Provider learn more about your health and how to best provide you with any treatment. If you feel uncomfortable talking about these topics, practice explaining your symptoms, because the more you talk about them, the easier it will be.

**Write It All Down:** Make a list of anything that hurts, worries you, or is new or different than it was before. This not only applies to your physical health but also applies to your mental health. Use this to make a list of questions for your Provider, and put the most important questions at the top.

**Gather Your Family's Health History:** This important information can provide clues to your health and risks for genetic conditions.

**Bring Support:** If you want support during your visit, you can ask a friend or family member to come with you. They can help you feel more at ease during the appointment, help you remember your questions, and help write down the next steps given by your Provider.

**Be Honest:** Share your concerns with your Provider. Tell them you care about your health and want a positive and successful visit. You and your Provider should work as a team to help you maintain good health and address any concerns.

**Know your Patient Rights:** Among your many rights as a patient are the right to understand your treatment options and to receive respectful care. If your HCP doesn't explain things clearly, makes you feel bad for any reason, or says your problems are not real, express your concerns and communicate your needs.





# Mental Health Awareness Month

Women's Mental Health Matters. Women's mental health naturally evolves over time and is a vital part of overall well-being. Hormonal changes during puberty, pregnancy, after childbirth, and menopause can all affect mental health. Understanding these natural changes can help women find the care and support they need. By focusing on their mental health, reaching out for support when needed, and talking openly with others, women can navigate these challenges more effectively and feel better supported.

***Women are more likely than men to experience conditions such as depression, anxiety, and PTSD***



Common symptoms for women with depression include sadness, tiredness, and feelings of worthlessness.

Women are more likely than men to experience anxiety together with depression, physical symptoms such as aches and pains, and changes in mood with the seasons.

## Common Mental Health Symptoms in Women

If any of these symptoms appear, talk with a health care provider about treatment options:

- Feeling sad or hopeless often
- Mood, energy, or appetite changes
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Low energy or tiredness
- Worrying too much or feeling fearful
- Anger or irritability
- Headaches, body aches, or stomach problems
- Using alcohol or other drugs to cope
- Distancing from friends or family members
- Thoughts of death or self-harm

## Everyday Tips to Support Mental Health



Get regular exercise (aim for 30 minutes most days)



Eat healthful foods and drink plenty of water



Limit caffeine and alcohol



Keep a regular sleep schedule



Try a calming activity such as meditation or deep breathing



Spend time with loved ones and stay connected socially



Set realistic goals to avoid feeling overwhelmed





## Healthy Vision Month

Healthy Vision Month is an annual observance dedicated to encouraging people to take proactive steps to protect their eyesight and prevent vision loss. The campaign emphasizes the importance of regular eye exams, healthy lifestyle choices, and protective measures to maintain good vision over a lifetime.

### TIPS FOR HEALTHY VISION



Get an  
Eye exam



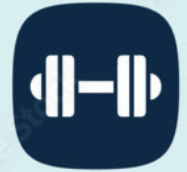
Wear  
Sunglasses



Healthy  
Eating



Stop Smoking



Exercise  
Regularly

### Diabetes and Eye Health

American Indians and Alaska Natives have the highest prevalence rate of diabetes in the United States, more than twice the rate of the general population. Over time, diabetes causes damage to blood vessels in the eyes in a condition called diabetic retinopathy. The damage to the blood vessels can sometimes grow to dangerous levels causing moderate or severe vision loss (blindness).

However, with regular examinations, timely diagnosis, and treatment, severe vision loss (blindness) can be avoided in most cases. American Indians and Alaska Natives with diabetes are at increased risk for diabetes-related vision loss, largely because only half get the annual diabetic eye exam needed for timely diagnosis and treatment.

The Indian Health Service–Joslin Vision Network (IHS–JVN) Teleophthalmology Program was established in 2000 to use telemedicine technology to provide high quality, cost-effective, annual diabetic eye exams to American Indians and Alaska Natives. This technology obtains photos of the back of the eyes, without dilation. The photos are immediately sent to a reading center where eye doctors interpret them and report any abnormalities needing further evaluation and possible treatment.

*The JVN eye exam is available at the Diabetes Center for Excellence.  
This retinal imaging is recommended annually as part of Standards of Care*

*Call and make an appointment for this important exam to reduce the risk of  
diabetes related vision loss and blindness*



**Join us to celebrate Women's Health on  
Wednesday May 13<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00 – 9:30 am:** Elder Fitness Class

**9:30 – 10:30 am:** Healthy Breakfast

**10:30 – 11:30 am:** Diabetes Bingo

**12:00 – 1:00 pm:** Women's Health Lunch & Learn  
with Stephanie Leffler, NP  
(Please call to register for the Lunch & Learn)

We will also have interactive educational tools,  
Blood Pressure & Blood Glucose Screening,  
and prizes!



**Join us for National Senior Health & Fitness Day Wednesday May 27<sup>th</sup>**

9:00 – 9:30 am: Elder Fitness Class featuring fun games and activities

9:30 – 10:30 am: Healthy breakfast,  
Blood Pressure & Blood Glucose Screening

10:30 – 11:30 am: Diabetes bingo

*Chance to  
win a prize!*





# Fitness Room Classes

## ELDER FITNESS

Monday, Wednesday & Friday

9:00 - 9:30 am

A low-impact class with a variety of exercises designed to increase muscular strength, range of movement, balance and activities for daily living

## LUNCH CRUNCH

Monday - Thursday

12:15 - 12:45 pm

A 30 minute session to burn fat and increase strength. Each class will vary and will leave you feeling energized and refreshed

## EVENING CRUNCH

Tuesday & Thursday

4:15 - 5:00 pm

With a similar format to the same day lunch crunch, this class will boost endorphins and improve overall strength and endurance.

## MOVE WITH MEGAN

Wednesday

5:15 - 6:00 pm

A fun, group fitness class to move your body and benefit health



## Fitness Room Hours:

Monday - Thursday  
7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Friday  
7:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m..

## May Fitness Challenge

**"May your Flowers Bloom"**

Find a flower in the fitness room, flip it over and perform the exercise. Once completed, add your name on a flower petal and place on the flower stem.



We had over 650 eggs decorated for our April "Hop into Spring" Challenge  
Great job!



All fitness levels welcome





## Recipes

### Slow Roasted Tomato & Chickpea Pasta



#### Ingredients:

1/2 yellow onion, finely chopped  
4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced  
1 TBSP fresh oregano (or 1 tsp dried)  
1/2 tsp crushed red pepper flakes  
1 (15 oz) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed  
1 lb cherry tomatoes  
1/2 C low-sodium vegetable stock  
1/4 C olive oil, plus more for serving  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper  
12 oz. angel hair pasta or spaghetti  
Fresh basil for serving

#### Directions:

Preheat oven to 400° F. To a large baking dish, add the onion, garlic, oregano, red pepper flakes, chickpeas, and cherry tomatoes. Pour in the olive oil and vegetable stock. Season with kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper and toss to combine. Bake for 50-60 minutes, stirring halfway through, until the tomatoes are bursting and the chickpeas are golden brown. Cook the pasta. Drain and reserve 1 cup of pasta water. Immediately toss the cooked pasta with the chickpeas and tomatoes, adding pasta water as needed to thin. Drizzle generously with olive oil and serve with fresh basil.

### Vegan Lo Mein

#### Ingredients:

8 oz. udon or rice noodles  
2 TBSP avocado oil  
2 C sliced cremini mushrooms  
1 small white onion, thinly sliced  
1 red bell pepper, seeded & thinly sliced  
1 medium carrot, shredded or julienne  
4 large cloves garlic, minced  
chopped green onions, optional



#### Sauce:

1/4 C low sodium soy sauce  
(or tamari for gluten free)  
1 TBSP granulated sugar  
2 tsp sesame oil  
1/2 tsp ground ginger  
1/2 tsp Sriracha hot sauce

#### Directions:

In a small bowl, whisk together all sauce ingredients. Set aside. In a large pot of boiling water, cook the noodles according to package instructions. Drain well and set aside. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms, onion, red pepper and carrot and cook, stirring frequently for about 5 minutes until tender. Add the garlic and cook for 1-2 more minutes.

Stir in the cooked, drained noodles and sauce. Toss gently to combine. Stir in some chopped green onions, if desired. Serve immediately.

*\*Mix and match the veggies to your liking! Add broccoli florets, edamame, snow peas, green onion, shredded cabbage, bok choy, or anything else you prefer.*