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If you would like to give, potential donors must be in good health, weigh at least 110 pounds, and be at least 17 years old. To schedule an appointment for blood donation, call Central Illinois Blood Center at 800-747-5401 to find a donor center or mobile blood drive near you.



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Cover and feature story photos by Amanda Gardner



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Sandra Yeh, MD

# Femtosecond Laser-Assisted Cataract Surgery

By Dave Tompkins and Sandra Yeh, MD, HSHS St. John's Hospital

In our grandparent's day, two generations ago, cataract surgery was a long, uncomfortable surgery involving inpatient stay and bed rest with sandbags on either side of the head. Twenty years ago, there was an advancement to a faster, no stitch outpatient procedure. This year, another stage of advancement in cataract surgery has arrived signaling yet another era of greater precision and faster healing.

cataract surgeries) this faster healing is particularly dramatic in patients with large cataracts and/or compromised corneas. Using the laser-assisted cataract surgery significantly decreases cornea cell disruption and thus, corneal swelling after surgery.

"It is such a thrill to see patients with huge cataracts have great vision and pristine eyes the first day after surgery. It is also very rewarding to know that we can offer the best technology in the world for cataract surgery right here in Springfield," said Dr. Yeh.

*The laser-assisted cataract surgery is available at St. John's Surgery Suites at Montvale in Springfield. In addition to Dr. Yeh, Drs. Rauscher and Yang are also certified to perform the cataract surgeries with the LenSx Laser. To find out if Laser Assisted Cataract Surgery is an option for you, contact Dr. Yeh's assistants at Prairie Eye and Lasik Center at 217-698-303 or visit them on their website: [www.prairieeyecenter.com](http://www.prairieeyecenter.com).*

"It is such a thrill to see patients with huge cataracts have great vision and pristine eyes the first day after surgery. It is also very rewarding to know that we can offer the best technology in the world for cataract surgery right here in Springfield."

With revolutionary new technology of Lensx (Alcon Laboratories) femtosecond laser-assisted cataract surgery, the surgeon is able to make corneal incisions, correct astigmatism, pre-cut a perfect circle to access the cataract (an opacified lens of the eye as a result of natural aging) and divide the cataract into perfect linear and circular pieces. This is all done before the actual surgery begins through an unopened eye. This laser makes the actual cataract surgery far more precise and much easier as larger cataracts are pre-cut making the pieces easier to remove and thus reducing the turbulence and heat that is inevitably generated during any cataract surgery. The diminished time and turbulence results in less swelling of the post-operative eye and typically faster recovery of vision.

In May of 2014, Dr. Sandra Yeh performed the first Lensx (by Alcon Laboratories) femtosecond laser-assisted cataract surgery in Springfield at St. Johns Surgery Suites at Montvale. According to Dr. Yeh, who has performed over 70 femtosecond laser cataract surgeries to date, (she has performed over 20,000 traditional

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John Sigle,  
DPM, FACFAS

# Treatment Options for Hammertoe Pain

By John Sigle, DPM, FACFAS, Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois



**H**ammertoes are one of the more common foot deformities that women suffer from. Women are more likely to get hammertoes than men and account for nearly 80 percent of the hammertoe cases I treat. Many women with this condition have been suffering in pain and reluctantly forced to end the physical activities they once loved. Any activity that required a bit more walking or standing became difficult without adding another layer of padding to their toes or shoes. Playing tennis or running was even more challenging, and many “just called it quits.” Hammertoes can also cause skin lesions, callosities, ulcers, nail deformities, and change in gait (walking). For many women, hammertoes are a source of embarrassment and frustration because toe deformity alters their appearance and restricts their choice of shoe wear.

When I ask my patients why it took them so long to seek treatment, the overriding response is that they were too busy to take time off for surgery. Many of them are scared to death of surgery because they have heard the horror stories of having wires stick out of their toes.

There is a variety of conventional and operative treatment options for hammertoes. New medical advancements are constantly becoming available. Here is some useful information that will help you to understand your condition and treatment options.

## Non-Surgical Treatments

Non-surgical treatments cannot correct a hammertoe deformity but in most cases, they should be tried before considering surgery. The goal of non-surgical treatments is to prevent the progression from advancing and to eliminate pain. Here are some tips:

- Wear comfortable shoes that have a large box around the hammertoes and low heels
- Visit a shoe repair shop to have your shoes spot-stretched

- Trim or file down calluses and corns with a pumice stone following a bath or shower
- Try over-the-counter pads, toe sleeves, toe cushions, splints, or shoe inserts
- Consult with your doctor about custom orthotics and self-help stretching exercises

## When to Consider Surgery

Surgery becomes an option if the conservative treatments do not improve your symptoms or alleviate pain. It is a last resort measure to correct the deformity and relieve pain. Unfortunately, the outcome cannot be predicted. There is no guarantee that your toes will completely return to their normal position after surgery; and joint problems may return. If the deformity is the result of a nervous system problem or a condition that affects your blood vessels, surgery may not even be an option.

## Surgical Treatments

There is no single surgical procedure that is best for everyone because each patient is different. After a thorough assessment, your surgeon will determine if surgery is the best option. Multiple surgical procedures are available. Your surgeon may mix and match procedures to tailor the best treatment for you.

Usually surgery is done on an outpatient basis with a local anesthetic and you are allowed to go home the same day. In most cases you can walk after surgery and you are not put in a cast; however, you have to follow strict guidelines during healing to avoid complications.

Some of the more common surgical treatments include:

- Removal of part of the toe bones in the joint so the toe can be straightened (Resection)
- Re-routing (Tendon Transfer) or Cutting (Tendon Lengthening or Capsule Release) to improve alignment and ease joint tension
- Shortening the long bone to provide more space for the toe (Metatarsal Shortening)
- Removing part of the joint to let the toe bones grow together to minimize motion and pain (Arthrodesis)

Several procedures require the implantation of orthopedic devices to fix the deformity and to neutralize the soft tissue imbalances that contribute to the deformity. Your surgeon will tell you about these options.

## Recovery

Recovery depends on the type of surgery performed and how well you heal. In minor procedures (tendon release or lengthening) surgery is simple and quick, and recovery time is minimal. In moderate cases (use of permanent implants), surgery is more complex and recovery is 1-2 months. In more advanced procedures (use of wire pins and

other hardware or multiple procedures) recovery is longer. Wire pins are removed in 6 weeks and full recovery is in 4-6 months. In all cases, patients who have a sedentary job can return to work quicker than patients whose job requires standing, walking, or physical activity.

#### Success Rates

The estimated success rate for hammertoe surgery is high, around 85-90 percent; however, it is difficult to predict the results of hammertoe surgery because there is such a wide variety of deformities and surgical variables. Success largely depends on the severity of the deformity, type of surgery, and surgeon's skill and experience. In some cases, the outcome may be worse than the pre-operative condition. Consult with your surgeon about the risks prior to making a decision.

*Don't let hammertoes cramp your style. There are plenty of non-surgical and surgical options available to address your condition and relieve pain. If you are interested in seeking a board certified surgeon for information about hammertoes and treatment options, call Dr. John Sigle at 217-787-2700 for an appointment. Also visit the Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois website library at [myfootandanklecenter.com](http://myfootandanklecenter.com) for additional information on toe implants.*

Hammertoe photo courtesy of Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois  
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Kevin Stouffer, PhD, LCPC

# Beating Holiday Rhythms and Blues

By Kevin Stouffer, PhD, LCPC, Stouffer Clinical Counseling & Consulting, LLC



I am sitting at one of my favorite places to write, looking out the window. There's been a light dusting of snow, the kind that blows away with a puff of air; and it's going to be c-o-l-d tonight. Thanksgiving has come and gone and we are smack dab in the middle of the holiday season. People have been talking about how they shopped early and others are talking about how they *still* have to get their shopping done before the shelves are empty. You know how it is; some people plan and others just wing it while some folks just never seem to get around to it.

It's also a time when many of my neighbors, friends, and family will be looking forward to gathering with others close to them, regaling over shared memories, anticipating the unfolding future, and celebrating faith and fellowship. Yet for some, the holidays may prove bittersweet. The holidays are often a season that prompts us to reach out with welcoming gestures to restore relationships; but they are also a time during which relationships can become strained and the business of the unfinished past in our relationships hurts once again. Or if relational issues aren't a



“Anxiety, depression, and thoughts of suicide increase just before, during, and after the holiday season.”

source of stress, the hubbub of shopping and putting our houses shipshape for company, or acting like we have our acts together, can also be quite stressful, leaving us feeling worn out, frustrated, angry, or even used. Add to this any number of those rest-of-the-year feelings you can imagine.

Fortunately, we can take steps to minimize the toll and maximize the blessings that go with the holidays. Here are some ways to help with holiday stress:

- Be hopeful and optimistic, but be realistic.
- Make a decision simply to be “good enough” and to let others be less than perfect.

- Be mindful of your emotional and financial health and set reasonable limits to avoid draining either your emotional wallet or your piggy bank.
- Share your plans and desires with friends and family so they can participate with you in making them a reality.
- Talk things over when differences or disappointments arise; taking responsibility for your *own* thoughts and feelings.
- Be flexible and accepting when things don’t go as planned.
- Remember, that there will be another day to solve problems that are too big for today.

The holidays are a time of great joy for many and a time of sorrow or regret for others. If you or someone you know feels overwhelmed, talk things over with friends or family who are sincerely interested and capable of offering support. Anxiety, depression, and thoughts of suicide increase just before, during, and after the holiday season.

If thoughts or feelings prove difficult to deal with, consider contacting a local professional counselor or calling a suicide prevention hotline at 1-800-273-TALK.

*Dr. Kevin Stouffer, is a licensed clinical professional counselor with specialized expertise assisting children, adults, couples, and families. Call 217-679-3766 today for an appointment.*

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# Entertaining When Company is Coming

By Melanie Kluzek, Registered Dietitian, and Hope Danielson, Health & Wellness Advisor, County Market



It's the holiday season and company is coming! Whether you are cooking all your holiday favorites from scratch, picking up a seasonal deli offering or a delicious baked good from your favorite bakery – make sure you have everything you need to make your holiday meal complete.

Here are some of our favorite ways to enjoy the holidays while still keeping health and wellness in mind.

We all love the festive holiday beverages this time of year, but unfortunately they tend to add up in calories and fat.

## Beverage Tips:

- Skip the heavy cream-based drinks like eggnog, whole-milk hot chocolates, and cream-based cocktails. Choose skim milk or low-fat milk alternatives such as almond milk to cut some calories.
- Champagne is festive and a lower calorie choice. Pair with pureed no sugar added frozen fruit for a delicious Bellini.
- Make wine spritzers made with your favorite wine and club soda garnished with lemon, lime or citrus.
- Act like a kid and make a mocktail with your favorite 100 percent juice such as pomegranate juice with sparkling water and fresh fruit garnishments.

## Appetizer Tips:

Looking for a healthy appetizer to take or serve at your next holiday party or work function. Here are some better-for-you options.

- Platters of fresh cut up vegetables such as carrots, celery, broccoli, tomatoes and sugar snap peas with hummus or Greek yogurt based dips are always a filling and low-calorie starter.
- Bruschetta bites made with roasted red peppers, pesto, and Parmesan cheese on thinly sliced French bread or whole-grain crackers makes a quick appetizer for company coming.
- Hot dips such as a creamy, spinach artichoke dip made with Greek yogurt and low-fat cheese paired with pita chips or pretzel thins is a crowd pleaser.
- Shrimp cocktail is one of the lowest calorie appetizers that is also full of protein to help fill you and your guests up before the big meal.
- Fruit and cheese platters make a colorful and healthy pre-meal appetizer or late night snack for guests.

### Salad Tips:

It's always helpful to include fruits and vegetables with any meal, but especially during the holidays when we tend to indulge on variety of not-so-good-for-you items. Here are some healthy options to fill half your plate with fruits and veggies.

- Vinegar and oil or veggie based deli salads such as the Fumi Fumi salad, broccoli salad, and Cowboy Cavier as a topping on a bed of leafy greens are better choices than heavy cream based salads.
- Fruit salads make a great side to your holiday brunch or as a healthier dessert.
- Try mixing fruits and vegetables together such as sliced Holiday Grapes with salad greens, shredded carrots, and diced apple chunks with a vinegar and oil-based dressing.
- Make your own fresh cranberry salad this year with pineapple, cranberries, diced celery, walnuts, and citrus juice to impress your guests.

### Side Tips:

We all look forward to holiday side dishes, but many times these are some of the unhealthiest items on our plates. Here are some ways to add a healthy spin on these popular sides.

- Make your stuffing with leftover whole-wheat bread to add more fiber so you won't need to take as big of a portion.
- Skip the sugar-laden candied yams and make baked sweet potatoes with a little cinnamon and a pinch of brown sugar or honey if you like.
- Opt out of choosing high-calorie and high-fat casseroles and choose roasted veggies or steamed fresh veggies like green beans.
- Choose whole-grain dinner rolls instead of the usual canned biscuit dough that have hydrogenated oils or Trans fats.

- Try making your mashed potatoes with low-sodium chicken broth, garlic, and herbs in the place of butter and heavy creams.

### Dessert Tips:

'Tis the season to indulge. We all enjoy our sweet treats during the holidays, but if you plan on fitting into your jeans by January follow these tips.

- Make a healthier fruit dip with plain, non-fat Greek yogurt, natural peanut butter and a little honey to pair with Honeycrisp apple slices and pear wedges.
- Fresh fruit dipped in dark chocolate such as navel orange segments, pear slices, and pineapple.
- Pumpkin pie or fruit based pies are always a better choice compared to sugary and higher fat pies like pecan pie, peanut butter pie, and chocolate pies – Still make your slices smaller to help reduce calories.
- Oatmeal cookies make a better choice because they are higher in fiber content, but portion control is still key.
- Plain dark chocolates are a better choice compared to sugar-filled milk chocolates, but limit yourself to only 1 or 2 small pieces.

So remember when company is coming... follow the above tips and have a happy and healthy holiday.

*County Market and the Live Well Team have your holidays covered! Let us be your guide to better health. Hope Danielson is a Health and Wellness Advisor and Melanie Kluzek is a registered dietitian for County Market. More information about healthy eating can be found at [www.mycountymarket.com](http://www.mycountymarket.com).*



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Jan Rakinic, MD and  
V. Prasad Poola, MD

# Colorectal Cancer Preventable With Colonoscopy

By V. Prasad Poola, MD, and Jan Rakinic, MD, Colon and Rectal Surgeons, Simmons Cancer Institute at SIU

If you are reading this article, I predict you know or heard about someone who had colorectal cancer. That is because colorectal cancer is the second most common cancer killer in the United States. There are about 150,000 new cases diagnosed each year and yes, it affects both genders equally. Fortunately, colorectal cancer is the most treatable *and* preventable cancer aside from certain skin cancers. We know this because both diagnosis of new cases and death from colorectal cancer has been decreasing for the past few decades. This is almost completely due to increased awareness of colorectal cancer and awareness of how colonoscopy can remove polyps, which are precancerous growths.

Most colorectal cancers start as a precancerous polyp. One-fifth to one-half of Americans over 50 have these polyps, and they become more frequent as we age. There are many techniques used for colorectal cancer screening; however, most do not have the ability to detect or remove polyps. Fecal occult (hidden) blood tests and the new stool DNA tests cannot tell if a person has



polyps. Barium enema (lower GI X-ray) and virtual colonoscopy can see abnormal shapes in the colon, but cannot tell what they are or remove them. Colonoscopy has distinctive advantage of allowing polyp removal from any part of the colon, therefore preventing colon cancer most effectively.

Colonoscopy involves cleansing the colon (bowel prep) for better visualization of the colon lining, where polyps grow. The prep is what most people dislike about colonoscopy; cleaning out the colon used to require up to a gallon of liquid medication. But preps have gotten better: less liquid to drink in most cases, and some people can use pills for the prep along with drinking plenty of water. Colonoscopy is covered by all health insurance programs including Medicare and Medicaid. It is an outpatient procedure performed with sedation, and you will be able to resume your daily activities the following day. Risks are very low for most people, and when no polyps are found, the next colonoscopy is usually planned for later.

*Please feel to contact us for further information or to schedule consultation. Your insurance program may require you to see your primary care physician for a referral. V Prasad Poola, MD, and Jan Rakinic, MD, are located at Simmons Cancer Institute at SIU. To schedule a consultation, call 217-545-800 or visit [siumed.edu/cancer](http://siumed.edu/cancer).*

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# From Springfield to Spain

## One *Extra-Ordinary* Woman's Team USA Journey

Submitted by Vibra Hospital of Springfield

**T**welve years ago, Ann Stahel was 50 years old, overweight, and slightly depressed. An office worker, she had never run before but decided to give it a try when the hospital she worked for sponsored a 5k run.

"To prepare, I got out in the morning and did some walk/run things. I don't know what I was thinking, but I was not prepared," remembers Stahel, now an executive assistant at Vibra Hospital of Springfield. "I thought I was going to die."

Well, she didn't die, but she did continue to run. For the next 10 years she performed in the middle of the field, plagued by pain in her knees and back. At one point, she threw out her back and was unable to run for a year. After going to physical therapy and learning to focus on her form, things began to change.

"I also started reading and figured out how to eat better. That was a big deal," she says. "I started sleeping more, and I got faster."

By the time she turned 60, Stahel was ready for a new challenge, so she bought a bike. But, having never learned to ride one, she left it in her garage for an entire year, terrified to give it a try. On her 61st birthday, her son convinced her to take a long bike ride together and just one month later, she successfully completed her first triathlon.

"I did the running and biking," Stahel says. "I was so happy."

Around the same time, she started to receive email from Team USA. Her running times had caught the team's attention. Unaware she ranked among the top runners in her state, Stahel was elated when Team USA invited her to compete in the National Championships in Tucson, Ariz. The top six finishers would represent Team USA in the World Championships in Spain the following year.

"What did I have to lose?" Stahel remembers thinking. "I wanted to go out there and see if I could make Team USA." Stahel ran a 5k, biked a 20k, and then ran another 5k, beating her best time and running a seven-minute mile to ensure that she not only made the team, but also finished fourth in the nation.

"I just wanted to pass the person in front of me," she says of her motivation. "The books will tell you that as you get older, you will be slower. It hasn't happened yet. I just get faster and faster."

Elated by her win, Stahel decided it was time to up her training regimen, adding spinning as a way to prepare for running through Spain's hilly terrain.

"I don't have a lot of time to train," she says, stressing that she is just a "regular" person. "I do get up and run every morning and bike every evening I can. I don't train for six hours a day."

Stahel headed to Spain in May of this year to compete alongside athletes from all over the world. Despite uneven ground and the steepest, most winding bike route she had ever ridden, she held on where others faltered and finished 14th in the Women's event.

"I am so proud! I couldn't be happier," she says. "Without a coach or special gear, I did it as a regular American allowed to compete alongside truly amazing athletes from all over the world."



What was important to her was showing people that it is possible to get up every day for work and still make time for health and fitness and dreaming big dreams.

"This has all happened in such a short amount of time," she says. "I was never chosen for any team when I was in high school, but I'm having the time of my life now and, hopefully, encouraging those around me."

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# Doing More With Less: The Story of Allen Sugar

By John Marchioro, Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation (DHS-DRS)

**A**llen Sugar is a man of many talents and interests. He loves to cook, read and has been a fan of chess his whole life. A dedicated and devoted husband and self-employed business man, Allen seems like he has it all. But it's what he doesn't have that makes this story of success so much more intriguing.

Allen was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois, in the 1940s. He was born deaf due to a disability known as Ushers Syndrome. With little to no supports in the public school system, Allen's parents made the decision to send him to St. Joseph's school for the deaf in St. Louis, Missouri. Allen always returned home for the summers and spent time with his family.



Upon graduation from high school, Allen began working full time at his family's steel warehouse business. It wasn't too long into his tenure that he began to notice that his vision was significantly deteriorating. Discouraged but determined to make sure he would maintain as much of his independence as possible, Allen left for New York to attend the Helen Keller Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults. While there, Allen gained the skills necessary to remain independent at home and in the community without the use of sight or hearing.

Upon his return from The Helen Keller Center, Allen attended Prairie State College in Chicago Heights, Illinois, where he earned a degree in Accounting. Determined to seek out a new career, Allen leveraged the assistance of the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DHS-DRS). DRS counselors reviewed his skills and matched him with a training program specifically for individuals who are blind and visually impaired known as the Business Enterprise Program for the Blind, or BEPB. BEPB allows blind individuals an opportunity to be trained on how to run and eventually operate a successful vending business.

Allen's background in accounting, as well as his family business, made this self-employment venture a terrific match, and in 1995 was recognized as the first Deaf-Blind graduate of the Business Enterprise Program for the Blind. In 2012, Allen was recognized by his fellow BEPB vendors as the "Vendor of the Year," a prestigious award for continuing to go above and beyond expectations in job performance.

Allen has come a long way since his graduation. He now employs one staff, who also is deaf, and owns 12 different vending machines in

two different federal buildings in Chicago. Allen is in charge of ordering inventory, replacing inventory and maintaining all of the bookkeeping and revenues. Allen communicates with his vendors through the use of assistive technology that transfers his brailled information into a computer program readable by others. He also has a currency counter that transfers the tallied revenue into a brailled report that is then formatted by Allen into a spreadsheet report.

Allen says he is a firm believer that people with disabilities should contact DRS to help them be successful in obtaining or maintaining employment just like they have done with him. He also believes that employers should partner with DRS when looking to hire new employees. "If I can do it, so should others."

DHS's Division of Rehabilitation Services is the state's lead agency serving individuals with disabilities. DRS works in partnership with people with disabilities and their families to assist them in making informed choices to achieve full community participation through employment, education, and independent living opportunities.

*To learn more, call 1-877-761-9780 Voice, 1-866-264-2149 TTY, 312-957-4881 VP, or visit us at [drs.illinois.gov/success](http://drs.illinois.gov/success).*

Photo courtesy of Illinois Department of Human Services

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# Capitol

HEALTHCARE AND REHABILITATION CENTRE

## Helping You Get Back Home

By Roberta Codemo



Capitol Healthcare and Rehabilitation Centre's dedicated RehabCare team.

There is a growing movement away from long-term care in rehabilitation facilities nationwide. The aging baby boomer population now wants to return home as quickly as possible after joint replacement surgery or a stroke. Capitol Healthcare and Rehabilitation Centre in Central Illinois has embraced this trend and is shifting its focus to short-term care.

### Short-Term Care

In order to reach the goal of providing short-term rehab care, Capitol HealthCare and Rehabilitation Centre converted the third floor of their existing rehab facility into a short-term care floor with room for 45 patients and a new therapy gym and dining hall. Patients have a private room, which seems to help them recover more quickly. The average stay is two to three weeks.

Patients admitted directly from the hospital meet with one of the staff, who immediately begins formulating a treatment discharge plan with the patient so they have an approximate time frame for when they will go home. "Our goal is to get them home as soon as possible," according to program director Nicole Thomas.

Patients are admitted to a rehab facility when their doctors feel they won't be able to finish all their therapy in the hospital. They are looking for a place where they will have their own room and that is close to home and family. "They want to focus on rehab," Nicole said. "That's why they're here."

### Inpatient Therapy

Inpatient therapy is more intense than at-home therapy where they might meet with a therapist two to three times a week. Here,

therapists work with patients between two to three and a half hours a day, seven days a week. Patients do not go home until they meet their doctor's protocols, such as being able to get off the toilet by themselves.

The average patient is recovering from a joint replacement of the knee or hip and needs short-term therapy. "Everything goes through the doctor," Nicole said. The doctor forwards orders with protocols for the therapist to follow. This ensures the patient meets recovery expectations through therapeutic exercises like range of motion and strength building.

The staff works with patients to motivate them to achieve their goals. The doctors and nurses on staff strive to resolve pain control issues so patients can do their very best in therapy.

The staff uses the most up-to-date technologies and pain modality treatments, like ultrasound, diathermy and electrical stimulation. These are great with helping with pain before and after therapy. "Not every facility has them," Nicole said.

A typical physical therapy session starts with warmup and stretching exercises before moving to working on standing, balance, and walking. Patients work with both the physical therapist and the physical therapy assistant to achieve maximum recovery in a short time.

### **Occupational Therapy**

Occupational therapy is geared toward performing activities of daily living, such as getting out of bed, getting dressed, and getting breakfast. Regaining these abilities is important to the patient's self-esteem and contributes to the speed of recovery.

Stroke patients with cognition, speech, and swallowing problems work with speech therapists. Speech therapists are trained to help patients with these deficits. Through one-on-one therapy, patients are brought up to the highest level of attainable function.

### **Returning Home**

Once the patient has completed therapy and is ready to go home, the social service department sets up home health care visits for the next two to three weeks. Staff with Capitol HealthCare and Rehabilitation Centre works with home health care to do a complete home safety assessment before the patient is released. "It makes the transition easier," Nicole said. Once a patient returns home, home health nurses and therapists continue to help them with their exercises until they are able to function in the community.

### **Staff**

Program director Nicole Thomas works with the facility, schedules patients, and manages the therapists. In addition, she serves as the liaison between the skilled nursing facility and therapists to ensure that the therapy needs of the residents who live there are being met. As a certified nursing assistant in high school, she fell in love with the patients she worked with in nursing homes. She graduated from Illinois Central College in Peoria in 1996 with an occupational therapy assistant applied science degree.

Therapy staff includes two occupational therapists, seven occupational therapy assistants, two physical therapists, seven physical therapy assistants and two speech therapists, for a total of 20 therapists. The large number of therapists allows for collaboration and exchanges of ideas. The patients benefit from this team approach.

Staff undergoes special training, which includes cardiac training and dementia training, because of the high number of seniors in the patient population. The staff considers the medical history and current issues of the patient to reduce changes of complications.





Each therapist is certified and must complete a set number of continuing education hours, which varies depending on whether one is a physical therapist, occupational therapist, or a speech therapist. On average, a therapist must have 24 hours of continuing education every two years.

"The staff likes the flexibility to choose their own schedules and love working with people," Nicole said. The therapists cater to the patients. There are some therapists that come in at 5:30 a.m. and others that come in later in the day and work until 9 p.m. Patients like the wide variety of therapy times that are offered. Some patients like to complete their therapy first thing in the morning while others choose evening hours.

### Accreditation

Capitol HealthCare and Rehabilitation Centre is accredited by The Joint Commission and was last accredited in December 2013. This is the only skilled nursing and rehab facility in Springfield where the entire facility is accredited by The Joint Commission. By law, either the skilled nursing facility or the rehab facility must be accredited.

Every three years, The Joint Commission does an on-site survey to ensure that the facility meets set standards. The short-term care facility must also meet specific criteria, including how many days a week and what hours services are offered, therapist training, vital

signs, pain modalities, transfer training, documentation training and safety. The Joint Commission sends an auditor to conduct a mock on-site survey periodically to make sure everything is on track.

The State of Illinois also does an annual on-site survey and inspection. During these inspections, the State verifies the facility is following doctor's orders and practicing infection control.

Capitol HealthCare and Rehabilitation Centre is focused on helping you get back home quickly. With their shift to short-term care, they meet the needs of the active baby boomer population by putting them back on their feet. Capitol HealthCare and Rehabilitation Centre will continue to grow their short-term rehab facility to meet the changing health care needs of the Central Illinois area. In doing so, they will maintain their state-of-the-art facilities and adapt to new technologies as they are developed.

"Capitol HealthCare is a great facility," Nicole said. "We want what's best for our patients."

**For more information contact  
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# Forgetfulness

## Knowing When to Ask for Help

### Part 2

Submitted by Reflections Memory Care

**D**ementia. Dementia is the loss of thinking, memory, and reasoning skills to such an extent that it seriously affects a person's ability to carry out daily activities. Dementia is not a disease itself but a group of symptoms caused by certain diseases or conditions such as Alzheimer's. People with dementia lose their mental abilities at different rates. Symptoms may include:

- Being unable to remember things
- Asking the same question or repeating the same story over and over
- Becoming lost in familiar places
- Being unable to follow directions
- Getting disoriented about time, people, and places
- Neglecting personal safety, hygiene, and nutrition

Two of the most common forms of dementia in older people are Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia. These types of dementia cannot be cured at present.

In Alzheimer's disease, changes to nerve cells in certain parts of the brain result in the death of a large number of cells. Symptoms of Alzheimer's begin slowly and worsen steadily as damage to nerve cells spreads throughout the brain. As time goes by, forgetfulness gives way to serious problems with thinking, judgment, recognizing family and friends, and the ability to perform daily activities like driving a car or handling money. Eventually, the person needs total care.

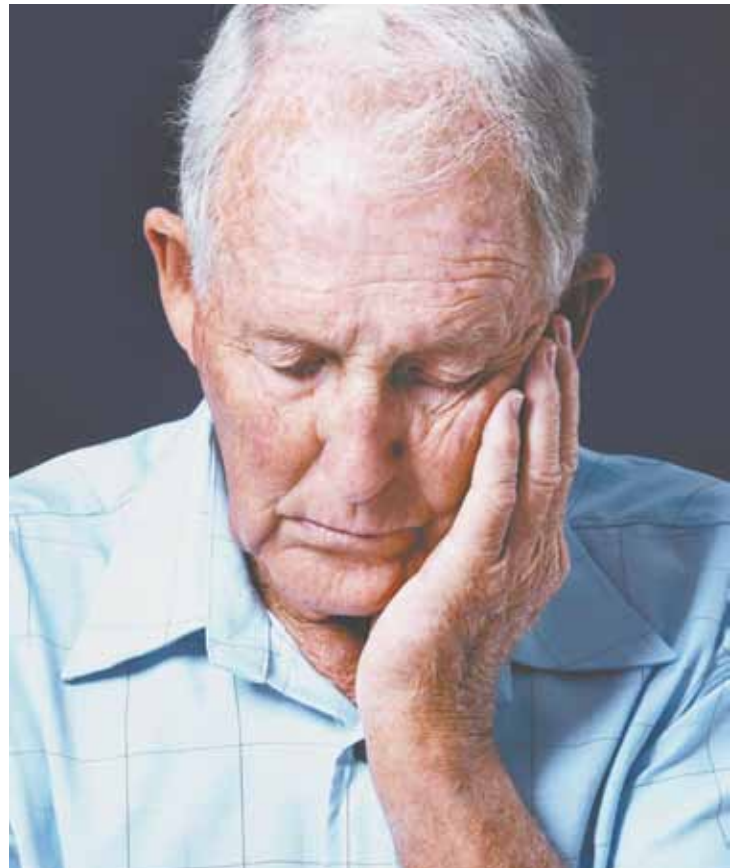
In vascular dementia, a series of strokes or changes in the brain's blood supply leads to the death of brain tissue. Symptoms of vascular dementia can vary but usually begin suddenly, depending on where in the brain the strokes occurred and how severe they were. The person's memory, language, reasoning, and coordination may be affected. Mood and personality changes are common as well.

It's not possible to reverse damage already caused by a stroke, so it's very important to get medical care right away if someone has signs of a stroke. It's also important to take steps to prevent further strokes, which worsen vascular dementia symptoms. Some people have both Alzheimer's and vascular dementia.

#### Keeping Your Memory Sharp

People with some forgetfulness can use a variety of techniques that may help them stay healthy and maintain their memory and mental skills. Here are some tips that can help:

- Plan tasks, make "to do" lists, and use memory aids like notes and calendars. Some people find they remember things better if they mentally connect them to other meaningful things, such as a familiar name, song, book, or TV show.



- Develop interests or hobbies and stay involved in activities that can help both the mind and body.
- Engage in physical activity and exercise. Several studies have associated exercise (such as walking) with better brain function, although more research is needed to say for sure whether exercise can help to maintain brain function or prevent or delay symptoms of Alzheimer's.
- Limit alcohol use. Although some studies suggest that moderate alcohol use has health benefits, heavy or binge drinking over time can cause memory loss and permanent brain damage.
- Find activities, such as exercise or a hobby, to relieve feelings of stress, anxiety, or depression. If these feelings last for a long time, talk with your doctor.

#### Treatment For Dementia

A person with dementia should be under a doctor's care. The doctor might be a neurologist, family doctor, internist, geriatrician,

or psychiatrist. He or she can treat the patient's physical and behavioral problems (such as aggression, agitation, or wandering) and answer the many questions that the person or family may have.

People with dementia caused by Alzheimer's disease may be treated with medications. Four medications are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat Alzheimer's. Donepezil (Aricept®), rivastigmine (Exelon®), and galantamine (Razadyne®) are used to treat mild to moderate Alzheimer's (donepezil has been approved to treat severe Alzheimer's as well). Memantine (Namenda®) is used to treat moderate to severe Alzheimer's. These drugs may help maintain thinking, memory, and speaking skills, and may lessen certain behavioral problems for a few months to a few years in some people. However, they don't stop Alzheimer's disease from progressing. Studies are underway to investigate medications to slow cognitive decline and to prevent the development of Alzheimer's.

People with vascular dementia should take steps to prevent further strokes. These steps include controlling high blood pressure, monitoring and treating high blood cholesterol and diabetes, and not smoking. Studies are underway to develop medicines to reduce the severity of memory and thinking problems that come with vascular dementia. Other studies are looking at the effects of drugs to relieve certain symptoms of this type of dementia.

Family members and friends can help people in the early stages of dementia to continue their daily routines, physical activities, and social contacts. People with dementia should be kept up to date about the details of their lives, such as the time of day, where they live, and what is happening at home or in the world. Memory aids may help. Some families find that a big calendar, a list of daily

plans, notes about simple safety measures, and written directions describing how to use common household items are useful aids.

### What You Can Do

If you're concerned that you or someone you know has a serious memory problem, talk with your doctor. He or she may be able to diagnose the problem or refer you to a specialist in neurology or geriatric psychiatry. Health care professionals who specialize in Alzheimer's can recommend ways to manage the problem or suggest treatment or services that might help. More information is available from the organizations listed below.

People with Alzheimer's disease, MCI, or a family history of Alzheimer's, and healthy people with no memory problems and no family history of Alzheimer's may be able to take part in clinical trials. Participating in clinical trials is an effective way to help in the fight against Alzheimer's. To find out more about clinical trials, call the Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral (ADEAR) Center toll-free at 1-800-438-4380 or visit the ADEAR Center website. More information is available at [www.ClinicalTrials.gov](http://www.ClinicalTrials.gov).

*Reflections is a new Alzheimer's and dementia specialty care facility located at 401 N. Park Ave. in Chatham. For more information about this unique memory care community, please contact the Reflections' executive director, Patrick Lam at 217-508-8527 anytime.*

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Tim Ippel

# Farm Succession Requires More Than Good Intentions

Submitted by Tim Ippel, Thrivent Financial

Each year, thousands of American farm families wrestle with the task of passing the farm to future generations. A lot is at stake in this delicate handoff, including income and security for the senior generation, control and authority for the younger generation, fairness and equity for non-farming family members, and, of course, dealing with the government's "tax bite."

These tough decisions can take a toll on one's emotional health. Be proactive and address this subject in advance of a potential crisis caused by death or disability. Knowing that a plan is firmly in place will bring peace of mind both to you and to your loved ones. Don't delay this conversation.

Planning for the transfer of one's farm from one generation to the next can be aided by following some very practical steps.

Start the conversation. If you're the farm owner, sit down with your spouse and children to tell them of your desire to pass the farm to the next generation. Listen to their thoughts about farm operations and succession. Which child or children have an interest in operating the farm? Discuss your preliminary thoughts about releasing authority to them for farm operations.

Talk through possible timeframes for the transfer to take place. If more than one child wants to operate the farm, discuss your thoughts about the farm supporting multiple families. Exchange ideas about a transition that would treat everyone equitably.

Consider retirement, not just succession. While many farm families have a plan in place to pass the farm to the younger generation in the event of the farm owner's death, too few farmers have adequately planned for a retirement.

Financial services professionals can assist seniors in preparing for their golden years by helping farm families analyze potential sources of retirement income, eligibility for Social Security benefits, adequacy of life and health insurance coverage, and investment allocations, among others.

Beware of *debt* and taxes. Giving the next generation of farm owners the ability to operate the farm without saddling them with excessive debt is essential. It does little good to leave your loved ones with the farm only to see them forced to sell it in whole or in parts to pay off existing debt.

Perhaps no tool is more valuable in preserving the farm for succeeding generations than life insurance. Under current tax laws, life insurance death benefits are generally income tax-free, and families can use proceeds to pay taxes or expenses at the time of the insured's death. In addition, proceeds from life insurance can be a ready source of cash to equalize the distribution of the estate to adult children who have no interest in operating the farm.

The 2014 federal estate and gift tax laws provide a lifetime exclusion amount of \$5,340,000 per person. With a proper financial strategy in place, a married couple could transfer to someone outside of the marriage (assuming both spouse die in 2014) \$10,680,000 in money and property without incurring federal estate taxes. In addition, the lifetime exclusion amount is portable amongst spouses. The representative of a deceased spouse's estate can transfer any unused exclusion amount



to a surviving spouse. A surviving spouse may use this unused exclusion amount in addition to the surviving spouse's lifetime exclusion amount to shelter gifts she or he would make during life or at death.

If the transfer of money or property is made in 2014 while the farm owner is alive, the federal gift tax lifetime exemption is \$5,340,000 (\$10,680,000 for a couple). A gift in excess of the \$5,340,000 federal gift exemption in 2014 is taxed at the top marginal federal estate tax bracket of 40 percent.

In addition to the estate and gift taxes reviewed above there could be state gift and state death taxes that need to be considered. A financial services professional can help explain applicable taxes.

For many farm owners, a combination of life insurance and trusts may help establish equity among children, provide income for the owners and facilitate the transfer of a farm property to the next generation.

Work with trusted advisors to build and execute your succession plan. In building a farm succession plan for your family, work with a collaboration of experienced professionals: an attorney, capable of establishing proper wills, trusts and durable power of attorney; an accountant, familiar with farm and tax issues; and a financial services professional experienced in estate strategies. Together, this group of professionals can work to develop a farm succession plan that keeps the family farm in the family.

Passing the family farm to the next generation may not be easy, but it surely is rewarding. Don't delay in developing a farm succession plan to secure your and your family's future.

*For more information, contact Tim Ippel, Thrivent Financial representative. His office in Springfield is located at 983 Clock Tower Dr., Ste C or in Forsyth at 332 W. Marion St. You can also reach him by calling 217-787-1877.*

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Stephanie Johnson, MS

# Increase Performance Using Nutrition and Exercise

By Stephanie Johnson, MS, Just Right Eating

In a nation where disease and obesity is skyrocketing, we are on a quest to pull back on the rising numbers of mortality with two of the most obvious preventative measures — nutrition and exercise.

It's proven that exercise and nutrition is the best medicine. Incorporating the proper method, duration, and frequency of exercise can vastly prevent and manage disease. When we exercise, it helps to release hormones that keep our body running efficiently, it keeps our heart healthy, reduces risk of cancer, eliminates the risk of diabetes, keeps us happy, builds confidence, and helps us live a better quality of life.

In conjunction with exercise, including the proper amount of foods and the right foods will double and maybe even triple the extent of what exercise will do for you.

One of my favorite success stories is of a lady who delivers mail. She wanted to get her cholesterol under control because she had high cholesterol and was taking a doctor-prescribed drug to combat this. I would see her a couple of times a week and saw her losing weight at a very healthy rate. Then one day she came in with a big smile on her face and told me she just had a checkup with her doctor to check her cholesterol levels. She explained how her doctor was amazed at the success she has had with eating right. The doctor said she was taking her off the medicine because eating healthy is doing a better job of managing her cholesterol levels than prescription medicine.

Another great success story is of a lady who competes in triathlons and Ironman competitions. She came to me to help her get the proper amount of healthy foods to supplement her training. To prepare for a competition as strenuous as triathlons and Ironman, athletes train for six months to a year to prepare for the competition. Their training is an extremely long and grueling process and they need the proper nutrition to reach their peak performance and prevent injury during this process. During this period, I provide her with food and a lot of it to supplement all the training her body is enduring. Before she left for the event, we meet to go over everything she needed to eat leading up to the event. When she arrived back in Springfield after the event she came to see me and wanted to let me know she achieved her best time ever in an Ironman competition.

Hopefully by sharing some of these stories I can motivate you to achieve your health and wellness goals to be the best you can be regardless of your struggles. Proper nutrition and exercise together can get you to your goals. Proper nutrition can regulate blood sugar, manage a healthy weight, control cravings, provide you with more energy, and increase your performance. Just remember: "Health is the first wealth."

*Just Right Eating gives people the properly portioned meals that are macronutrient balanced to help them achieve their health and wellness goals. By providing people with healthy meals, I have seen many people make the transition to a healthier lifestyle. Just Right Eating is located at 3047 Hedley Road in Springfield. You can reach us at 217-827-2669 or [www.justrighteating.com](http://www.justrighteating.com).*



Photo credit: GlobalStock/iStock



Debra Babich, MD

# Don't Grow Old Without a Fight

By Debra Babich, MD, Babich Skin Care Center

**A**ging is an inevitable process that most of us would like to avoid. Needless to say, that fact of life is unavoidable. Fortunately, there are ways to help fight against the effects that time takes on our skin. Unfortunately, we are bombarded with so many anti-aging advertisements promising amazing results, how do we know what to use?

The anti-aging advertisements, especially for topical products (creams, lotions, solutions, etc.) can be misleading. They might reverse the hands of time slightly but most often their benefit lies in slowing down the aging process. And, you know the old adage, "you get what you pay for?" This, too often, is true. Many of the over-the-counter products don't offer high enough concentrations of the active ingredients to pack much punch. That doesn't mean that they won't



work — but they most definitely don't work the way the ads attempt to steer your minds. It is called creative advertisement and it is used all the time.

So by now, you may be wondering: "Is there really anything that is worth it?" Most definitely. And this article will attempt to give you some practical guidelines or suggestions.

- First, and foremost, *stay out of the sun*. Or at least be smart. Limit your mid-day sun exposure. Wear sunscreen with at least an SPF of 15 or greater and reapply if you are going to be outside for more than three hours.
- Start taking care of your skin at a young age. Start some form of "anti-aging" topical product as soon as possible. It is not too early to start in their twenties. The earlier you start it, the more you will *maintain*. And remember, that is what we are talking about with topical products – maintaining what we have, not seeking to regain much of what has been lost.
- Moisturize daily. If the only area you are concerned about includes your face, then great start with that. Many women with oily skin will tell me "I don't need a moisturizer because my skin is so oily." Moisture and oil are two very different things. Even oily skin can become dry and sallow (unhealthy appearing). I too have an oily T zone, so I don't moisturize my nose *but* I moisturize the rest of my face *daily*.
- Start some form of retinol (vitamin A) or alpha-hydroxy acid product. Your doctor can often prescribe a prescription form of vitamin A, which is a great weapon to use to slow down the aging process. It has other benefits such as helping to slough the dead skin (which often leads to a sallow appearance when they build up); helping to rebuild collagen or at least maintain the collagen we have; helps to prevent and even treat clogged pores (which by the way increases as we age); and it increases elastic tissue (loss of this tissue is what causes skin to sag as we age).
- Consider starting an anti-oxidant like vitamin C. Some topical products contain anti-oxidants in them. We have a line of skin care products that use some natural ingredients that work as anti-oxidants. Anti-oxidants serve to repair the damage from the sun. I could go into a long description of this but I am sure those that are interested will google it on their own.

So I have provided some simple suggestions on what you can do to slow down the process. There are numerous procedures available to reverse the process and discussing which type of procedure is appropriate for which patient would be too extensive to include in an article. Suffice it to say there is something for everyone. I recently received volume expanders in my cheeks and it was worth it.

*When you're ready to start the battle against aging, call Babich Skin Care Center at 217-330-8939. We have a board-certified dermatologist and two nurse practitioners that are more than able to take care of your needs. NO REFERRAL NEEDED. Babich Skin Care Center is located at 2880 N. Monroe St. in Decatur or find us online at [www.BabichSkinCare.com](http://www.BabichSkinCare.com).*

Photo credit: Goodluz/iStock

# Higher Education Institutes Addressing the Future Need for Nurses

By Elizabeth DeBouck, Millikin University

The shortage of registered nurses (RN) in the U.S. can be attributed to several factors, including the nearing retirement of a significant segment of the nursing workforce and high turnover rates relating to job satisfaction. A 2013 survey conducted by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing and the Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers estimates 55 percent of the RN workforce is age 50 or older, and the Health Resources and Services Administration projects that more than 1 million registered nurses will reach retirement age within the next 10 to 15 years.

Despite this estimated shortage, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Employment Projections 2012-2022*, registered nursing is listed among the top occupations in terms of job growth through 2022. The RN workforce is expected to grow from 2.71 million in 2012 to 3.24 million in 2022.

While the jobs for nurses may be out there, the field will also certainly be reliant upon institutions of higher education for producing quality health care workers. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) has stated that a growing body of research links baccalaureate- and graduate-prepared nurses to lower mortality and failure-to-rescue rates. The latest studies published in the journals *Health Services Research* in August 2008 and the *Journal of Nursing Administration* in May 2008 confirm the findings of several previous studies that link education level and patient outcomes. Efforts to address the nursing shortage must focus on preparing more baccalaureate-prepared nurses in order to ensure access to high quality, safe patient care.

To combat the nursing shortages, schools are beginning to employ strategies to help boost enrollment. Some programs can be as beneficial to the students in the program as it can to local hospitals. Summer immersion programs are one way universities are attracting students.

Other options that could help significantly improve the turnover rate for registered nurses include advancing their education by pursuing a BSN, MSN, or DNP. The AACN states on its website that it believes an advanced degree in nursing often "has a significant impact on the knowledge and competencies of the nurse clinician, as it does for all health care providers" and that "Nurses [with a BSN] are well-prepared to meet the demands placed on today's nurse." These degrees can open more doors and provide far more opportunities for advancement than have ever been available to previous generations working in the health field.

As long as nursing schools continue to form strategic partnerships that can help boost student enrollment, provide practical experience, and also impart the value of continuing their education in the nursing field – the anticipated nursing shortage might not seem so very daunting. After all, the job growth is there, but the pressure lies on the shoulders of our learning institutions as they continue to remind nursing students why they wanted to

become a part of the health care field in the first place: to provide quality care to those who need it most.

*Millikin University hosts a summer immersion course. The course is coordinated by Millikin professor, Charlotte Bivens, and Tanya Boyd, a nurse educator at St. Mary's Hospital of Decatur. The program, which saw its fifth summer this year, involved students working 32 to 40 hours a week, for eight weeks, at St. Mary's Hospital. According to Boyd, 40 to 50 percent of the students involved in the summer program typically end up returning to the hospital to work because of their experience with the staff and facility.*

*Learn more about the Millikin University School of Nursing, the summer immersion course, and the recently added Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) at [millikin.edu/nursing](http://millikin.edu/nursing).*

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# Food Safety: What's in a Date?

By Patrick Harness, Health Alliance



I was hunting for some cookies at my mom's house, and I noticed a bottle of Tabasco® sauce in the back corner of the pantry. I wondered why she had a new bottle of something she rarely uses, and she told me she just keeps it around and had moved it from her house on Church Street.

"Gee, Mom, that was 12 years ago," I said, and it got me thinking about expiration dates and what they mean.

I hope during this holiday season and all year long, people pay attention to this wise advice from the experts. The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines the most common terms this way.

- A "sell-by" date tells the store how long to display the product for sale. You should buy the product before this date.
- A "best if used by (or before)" date is recommended for best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.
- A "use-by" date is the last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. The maker of the product determines this date.
- "Closed or coded dates" are packing numbers for use by the manufacturer.

Who knew? Another good food safety resource is your local University of Illinois Extension office. Jenna Smith is the nutrition and wellness educator for Livingston, McLean, and Woodford counties. She has a safety-first approach.

"Dates on food packaging can be very confusing," Smith says. "But in general, most dates refer to best quality, not to food safety. When in doubt, throw it out. If the food develops an off odor, flavor, or appearance — do not use it."

As a former holder of a Food Service and Sanitation Certificate, I tend to take a very conservative approach when it comes to food safety. I especially remember some videos on the proper methods for handling raw chicken and the consequences of not maintaining the proper temperature. I didn't eat poultry for two years.

Paying attention to safe food practices and being well informed are the best ways to be safe. I think my mom's Tabasco sauce has transformed from a condiment to a treasured family heirloom along the way. I am OK with it for now, as long as I'm not eating it.

Happy Holidays from all of us at Health Alliance!

*Patrick Harness is a community representative with Health Alliance Medicare. To learn more about Health Alliance Medicare, please call 1-888-382-9771 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week during the period of Oct. 1 – Feb. 14; Monday through Friday the rest of the year. TTY 711. Or visit [HealthAllianceMedicare.org](http://HealthAllianceMedicare.org).*

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Mary Cole, DDS

# Laser-Assisted Periodontal Therapy

By Mary Cole, DDS, Cole Family Dentistry

**D**id you know that more teeth are lost from periodontal disease than cavities? Periodontal disease affects approximately 80 percent of adults and is a growing epidemic in our society. Many people have this disease without ever being detected until it is too late. Most patients with dentures today have lost their teeth from periodontal disease. There is no cure for periodontal disease, but it can be controlled with our laser therapy.



only to them, which is usually four to six appointments for a moderate to advanced case of periodontal disease. The laser is precise and only removes disease tissue and decontaminates the tissue from billions of bacteria to almost nothing. The traditional cavitron and hand instruments are used to remove the calculus. In each appointment, the worst teeth are worked on the most but the entire mouth is cleaned in every appointment.

You may be given a rinse or prescribed antibiotics during or after your therapy.

*Our office is located in the Northwest Professional Building at 2727 North Oakland, Suites 101 and 103, Decatur, IL 62526. Please call Dr. Mary Cole at 217-877-1743 or Dr. Ron Cole at 217-875-4505 to schedule an appointment.*

Photo courtesy of Cole Family Dentistry

We now know that periodontal disease is a bacterial infection around your teeth. Most people assume that it is hereditary. However, periodontal disease and cavities are passed from person to person by saliva just like the flu. Believe it or not, drinking after family members can give you periodontal disease and cavities. Diabetics are typically unable to fight the infection as well and will usually have the more advanced periodontal disease. These same bacteria can travel throughout the bloodstream and cause heart attacks, strokes, diabetes, and premature labor in addition to loose teeth.

Laser-Assisted Periodontal Therapy (LAPT) is the most cutting edge treatment for periodontal disease. It combines traditional deep cleaning appointments with the benefits of the laser. Hygienists need to be advanced laser certified to use the soft tissue diode laser. The hygienists first take readings of your gum tissue. The dentist can then make a diagnosis of healthy or periodontal disease. They access the bone levels and the amount of radiographic calculus.

If LAPT is recommended, either a very effective liquid anesthetic is used or traditional anesthetic. Each patient is given a treatment specific

## Holiday Pets Need Checkups!



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# Hospice Patients Have Wishes Come True

Submitted by Memorial Medical Center Foundation

Everyone has dreams and wishes for the future. Unfortunately, for people receiving hospice care because of a terminal illness like cancer or congestive heart failure or dementia, the future can't wait.

The focus of hospice care is comfort and quality of life through physical, emotional and spiritual support for patients and their loved ones. The Sharing Wishes Fund through the Memorial Medical Center Foundation plays a role when it comes to quality of life.

Since 2012, the Sharing Wishes Fund has given hospice patients and their families in central Illinois an emotional lift during a challenging time in life by providing the funds necessary to make their wishes become a reality.

Some wishes are modest: audio books, dinner at a local restaurant, or a day of fishing. Other wishes have been more elaborate: a weekend getaway to Indiana, a hot air balloon ride, tickets to a favorite performer's concert.



No matter the wish, the recipients and their loved ones are appreciative and many take time to express their feelings in words. Here are a few of those comments.

**The wish:** A TV, DVD player and new guitar

"Thank you so much. Little wishes mean big things to folks like me."

**The wish:** A family meal and a new suit

"Our family had a wonderful time visiting with each other, talking and laughing. It was nice to have that special time. However we may try, we cannot express to you how grateful we are for your kindness."

**The wish:** A gift card to pay for expenses while on a trip to visit a sibling in Florida

"He was all smiles, from the time he left Springfield for his first airplane ride, all the way to Florida and back! Thank you! We do not know how much longer we have here on Earth with our brother, but we know one thing for sure — he will leave Earth knowing he was truly loved and that he has seen all of his family and even Mickey Mouse!"

Every year, the Foundation hosts the Hospice Gala to raise funds to fulfill patients' wishes. The next gala will be held Saturday, April 11, at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield.

Rebecca Lobo, an Olympic gold medalist, NCAA national champion, and former WNBA player, is the keynote speaker and will share her personal experience with hospice. Tickets are \$85 and go on sale March 2.

To help make wishes of central Illinois hospice patients come true, you can donate to the Sharing Wishes Fund at [SharingWishesFund.org](http://SharingWishesFund.org) or by attending the fourth annual Hospice Gala in 2015. For more information, visit [MemorialHospiceGala.com](http://MemorialHospiceGala.com).

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Julie Hale-Miller

# How to Protect Your Identity During the Holidays

Submitted by Julie Hale-Miller, Country Financial Representative

**A**s online shopping becomes more prominent, identity theft does too. Hearings news of security breaches is far from uncommon, and our latest index proved a majority of Americans are worried about it.

Frequent credit card use during the holidays puts you a higher risk for identity theft. Follow these simple steps to help keep your information safe:

**Use HTTPS everywhere, all the time.**

You can't control whether or not a site is secure, but you can control which sites you're shopping on.

Sites that begin with HTTPS in the URL take extra measures to help secure your information. They provide another layer of security by authenticating the website and web server the site is communicating with. This ensures only you and the retailer have access to the data, no one else.

**Don't make your password your pet's name.**

This also means if you're using the word "password" as your password, it's time for a new one.

When you choose a new password, make sure you're using random capital letters, symbols and numbers. It's also important to use different passwords for each account. That way, if one is hacked they aren't all hacked.

Remember to put a password lock on your devices too. Otherwise, if the wrong person gets a hold of your phone, they also have access to account information, emails, and any credit card data you have auto-saved. For that reason, it's also recommended not to auto-save any information.

**Don't buy gifts over a public Wi-Fi connection.**

There's something relaxing about sitting at your favorite coffee shop sipping a latte while buying holiday gifts online, but using unsecured public wireless networks or Wi-Fi could allow an attacker to connect to your device and view private information.

There's also an increased likelihood someone is looking over your shoulder collecting credit card information.

**Debit vs. Credit**

Credit cards only require a signature while debit cards require a PIN number, which adds an extra layer of security to debit cards.

However, if you're using a debit card you have a limited timeframe (two days) to dispute charges. Your cash assets are also tied up during the dispute, which could cause you to lose more money through transfer/insufficient fund fees. The Fair Credit Billing Act limits fraudulent credit card liability to \$50 and you have up to 60 days to dispute the claim.

Of course, ditching the cards and sticking with cash is the safest bet when protecting yourself against identity theft.

**Check your checking account.**

This is one of the easiest, but one of the most important. Holiday shopping gets hectic, but carve time out of your busy schedule to look over your latest transactions. It's important to know where your money

is going — if your security is threatened, knowing about it sooner rather than later can make all the difference.

**Subscribe to credit monitoring.**

This isn't preventative, but it will help you if your identity is hacked. Most major banks offer this service and, if you're signed up, alert you if there's any suspicious activity to your account. This type of service is useful because it ensures fraud is stopped quickly (usually within 24 hours), hopefully before much damage is done.

Although fraud is becoming more prevalent, security measures are also becoming stronger. Being aware of your credit cards, what you're spending and where you're putting your information goes a long way toward preventing identity theft.

What ways are you staying safe against hackers during the holidays?

*For more information about Country Financial, contact Julie Hale-Miller. Julie helps provide protection for your peace of mind. She can be reached at 217-483-4355 or [www.countryfinancial.com/julie.halemiller](http://www.countryfinancial.com/julie.halemiller).*

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# Massage

## How It Can Benefit You

By Chiffonia White, Licensed Massage Therapist, Inner Health Spa

If you look up the term “massage” in a dictionary, most likely it will state this: “the systematic manual or mechanical manipulations of the soft tissues of the body for therapeutic purposes.” I’ve learned that by incorporating several types of movements such as rubbing, pressing, kneading, slapping, tapping, rolling, etc., massage can have many benefits for therapeutic purposes such as relaxation of muscles, relief from pain, promoting circulation of blood and lymph and other benefits physically and mentally.

Beyond the benefits for specific conditions or diseases, some people enjoy massage because it often involves caring, comfort, a sense of empowerment, and creating deep connections with their massage therapist

### Benefits of Massage

Massage can benefit health in many ways. It can reduce heart rate, blood pressure, and levels of stress hormone, enhance immune function, boost levels of endorphins and serotonin (the body’s natural painkillers and mood regulators), and increase blood circulation — all this while easing sore and achy muscles. Massage certainly can help address the build up of lactic acid in muscles, and promote the clearing of normal byproducts of muscle metabolism. Massage can also assist with:

- Relief from stress, headaches and body pain
- Decreased stiffness and increased muscle and joint flexibility and range of motion
- Increased circulation and tissue regeneration
- Improved posture
- Blood pressure control
- Decreased time required to recover from physical exertion or injuries.

Many diseases are stress-related. And perhaps nothing ages us faster, internally and externally, than high stress. While eliminating anxiety and pressure altogether in this fast-paced world may be idealistic: massage can, without a doubt, help manage stress. There are many modalities (types) of massage and here a few of the most common:

- **Swedish:** This is the most common massage. It’s a great massage for someone that has never had a massage or if you want a relaxing and revitalizing massage. Five different strokes are used in variation to perform this classic massage.
- **Deep Tissue:** Use this form to reduce pain and inflammation. It focuses on the deeper layers of muscle tissue and fascia. This massage technique doesn’t feel relaxing as the Swedish massage but it shouldn’t leave you hurt or bruised.
- **Hot Stone:** This is great choice for people that suffer from insomnia. The hot stones melt away tension and stress. It also relaxes very tight muscles.

- **Himalayan Salts:** This type promotes deep relaxation, reduced inflammation, improved sleep and is used to balance the central nervous system.
- **Lymphatic Drainage:** Reduce swelling, support detoxing of the body, regenerate tissue, relief of sinusitis and bronchitis with this soft touch massage. Helps reduce symptoms of fibromyalgia and alleviation of adipose tissue.
- **Pregnancy:** This form is used to ease the discomforts of pregnancy. With regular sessions after your first trimester, it supports easier delivery and shorter labor.
- **Cranial Sacral:** People who suffer from chronic pain, sports injuries, strokes, neurological impairment, and Autism may benefit from this form of massage therapy. In this massage session, the spinal column and sutures of the head are addressed gently.
- **AromaTouch:** Essential oils, when diffused into the air and/or used in conjunction with massage, supports the relief of tension, decreases pain and inflammation, influences mood, eases cramping, digestion aid, relieves sinus and congestion and so many other things.

### Contraindications

All massage sessions should include an initial consultation to create a individualized treatment plan and to make sure a massage is appropriate for you because there are a few contraindications; including, but not limited, to:

- Bleeding disorders or take blood-thinning medication
- Burns, open or healing wounds
- Deep vein thrombosis
- Fractures
- Severe osteoporosis
- Severe thrombocytopenia

### History

Massage is one of the earliest and most instinctive ways of relieving pain and discomfort. Think about it, when you have a pain or ache or when you bump your elbow, what is the first thing you do? Massage or rub the area. Massage has been a major part of medicine for at least 5,000 years.

Lets make massage therapy part of your healthy lifestyle routine today.

*As a licensed massage therapist, I can’t administer a shot, prescribe a pill or pop and crack bones or muscles, but what I can do is support relief of many issues with the touch of my hand.*

*Massage is a great tool if you open your mind to it. I’ve helped many people enjoy life again with the touch of my hands and several variations of movements and breathing exercises. I look forward to touching as many lives as I can with massage. For more information on massage, call Chiffonia White at Inner Health Spa, 217-572-1611.*

Source: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)



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