



Your Health Matters

**CCMHG – Your Town, County, District, Authority
Working together for your health**

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Flu Season is Here and it Could be Nasty!

Early indicators point to some troubling signs that suggest that the US may be in for a severe outbreak of influenza. What happens in the Southern Hemisphere is often a preview of coming attractions for the United States. Influenza experts watch illness trends, like the prevalence and severity of influenza strains and the duration of the season carefully. Australia just experienced one of the worst flu seasons in recent memory, with 215,280 laboratory-confirmed cases. That is 2½ times more infections than at the same time last year. Additionally, as of October 13, 504 people in Australia died from an illness associated with an influenza infection.

"If Australia has a really tough year, we usually tend to follow," said Mary Devlin, public health and wellness manager for the VNA. "If they have seen an increase in illnesses and hospitalizations because of influenza, we are probably going to see the same thing." It looks like the U.S. is off to an early start. In the most recent flu report, the MA DPH confirmed the beginnings of statewide flu activity. "The fact that the flu season has already started may indicate that we are headed for a tough year," said Devlin. "In typical years, flu activity usually gets going in December. I've even seen it in the past where it's started in the month of January. So we are a couple of months ahead."

Influenza is a contagious upper respiratory infection that comes on suddenly with a fever of 100.8 and higher, body aches and lethargy lasting about a week. Coughing, sore throat and extreme fatigue are the hallmarks of the virus. Typically, the very young and the very old are at most risk from the flu, also people who already have respiratory illnesses, diabetes, certain cardiac conditions and anyone with a suppressed immune system need to be particularly careful. This year's vaccine includes four strains of both type A and type B influenza, including H3N2. Every year the experts give their best scientific guess of what's circulating. Viruses are living things and they do tend to drift and shift. Sometimes the ones they predict to be the most prevalent might not quite be what they end up experiencing.

So how can we protect ourselves this year? Optimally, its best to get vaccinated before flu season is underway. According to the CDC, it takes about 2 weeks for a robust immune response to provide maximum protection. Getting the flu shot will help decrease the severity and duration of illness if not prevent it altogether. Keeping yourself healthy also helps people at higher risk from getting the flu as well. Healthy people who get the flu shot and develop a strong immune response will protect those individuals who are more medically compromised and may not develop adequate immunity against the flu even though immunized. For the 2017 to 2018 season, the influenza vaccine is only available in the shot form. According to the CDC, FluMist, the nasal spray version does not provide adequate protection and is not being recommended this year. *Source: [Cape Cod Health News](#)*



Ready, Set, Engage!!

Good oral health habits need to start at an early age. Brushing and flossing should be an integral part of your child's everyday routine. But when your 2-year-old has the attention span of well, a 2-year-old, it can be hard to engage them in the important task at hand! The key is finding a method that works for your child. Here are a few ideas to help get your child excited about fighting cavities!

Start by letting your child pick out his or her own toothbrush. With all the fun colors and characters available, your child is sure to find one to his or her liking. Also, keeping a few different flavors of children's toothpaste around will enable your child to choose, thus encouraging involvement.

Children often mimic the actions of their parents or older siblings. So when you are in the bathroom brushing and flossing your own teeth, invite your child to watch. Be sure to portray brushing as a fun and exciting thing to do rather than a chore.


You can also try playing your child's favorite music and having him or her brush for the duration of a favorite song (three to four minutes).

If your child needs a visual aid to demonstrate the importance of brushing, there are a number of products that stain or discolor the plaque build-up on your child's teeth with a florescent color. This makes it easily visible and empowers more active brushing. Explain to your child the importance of getting rid of the bacteria by brushing and flossing every day.

Delta Dental also offers fun games and interactive online activities that teach children about the importance of taking good care of their smile. Visit www.smilesquadhq.com and join the fun!



Come and visit with Health Plan Providers at our Senior Health Benefits Fairs listed below!

 Cape Cod Municipal Health Group			
SENIOR HEALTH FAIRS CY18			
NAME OF UNIT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION OF FAIR
Town of Barnstable	11/3/17	12:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Barnstable Senior Center 825 Falmouth Road, Hyannis, MA. 02601
Town of Falmouth	11/15/17	10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon	Falmouth Town Hall 59 Town Hall Square, Falmouth, MA 02540
Town of Mashpee	11/17/17	10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon	Mashpee Town Hall 16 Great Neck Road North, Mashpee, MA 02649
Martha's Vineyard	tbd	tbd	tbd
Cape Cod Tech High School	11/13/17	9:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Cape Cod Tech High School 351 Pleasant Lake Avenue, Harwich, MA 02645

CAPE COD MUNICIPAL HEALTH GROUP



MORE THAN 30 MILLION AMERICANS LIVE WITH DIABETES, BOTH DIAGNOSED AND UNDIAGNOSED. ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING ASPECTS OF DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT CAN BE IMPROVING EATING HABITS.

If you or a loved one is living with diabetes or pre-diabetes, don't let choosing a healthy meal plan frustrate you. Keep in mind, no food category should be off limits; you just need to choose your daily selections wisely.

Not sure how to choose a healthy meal plan to keep your blood sugars controlled? Talk to one of our diabetes educators, your health care team, or speak with a dietitian.

GET SUPPORT IN OTHER AREAS OF DIABETES MANAGEMENT BY JOINING THE GOOD HEALTH GATEWAY® DIABETES CARE REWARDS PROGRAM

The program is offered by the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group and their employer members for employees and family members covered on an eligible health plan. It benefits those who have a diagnosis of pre-diabetes or diabetes and is **FREE, CONFIDENTIAL, AND VOLUNTARY.**

PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE:

- ◆ \$0 copays on covered diabetes medications and supplies when basic requirements are met, such as having diabetes labs and exams
- ◆ Support from program staff
- ◆ Better communication with their own doctors to help monitor their condition
- ◆ Helpful tips and reminders through email, text, and e-newsletters

FALL PRODUCE TIP
from our Diabetes Educators

It's important to fill half your plate with fruits and veggies. And, the best way to save money while doing this is to purchase them when they are in season and most plentiful. Try these tasty Fall treats.

ROASTED SWEET POTATOES

excellent source of Vitamin A and iron

SAUTÉED BRUSSELS SPROUTS

great source of Folate, Vitamin K and iron

POACHED PEARS

good source of fiber and potassium

**VISIT US ONLINE, OR
CALL OUR HELPLINE TO JOIN TODAY.**

800.643.8028

GOODHEALTHGATEWAY.COM

Wellness News

Couch to 5k Running Program

Our next C25k will take place in February of 2018! The program will be in Falmouth location TBD! This gives everyone plenty of time to gain the courage to join the program! Register for this program at signup.com. You do not have to be or ever had to be a runner to take part! The completion of this program without missing more than one class will earn you → **35 points for our member wellness portal!**

We have so many great alumni from this program that we just started a weekly run group on Saturday mornings in Yarmouth at 6AM! We meet at Peter Homer Park on Old Townhouse Road and run at least 3.1 miles. All runners at all levels are welcome! Now that it is darker I do need participants to wear reflective gear and bring a headlamp if possible! We have a great group already so I hope you will join me! Register for our Run Club at signup.com!

Biometric Screenings

If you have not taken part in this program I strongly urge you, as an employer and member, to participate. Please contact me with any questions on this wonderful program! The most common referrals for follow-ups this past year were for bone density, hearing, and sun damage! These are screenings that are not part of your routine physical with your physicians. Please contact me directly at capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com to schedule your screening today!



Holiday Challenge!

Back again this year by popular demand is our “maintain” program! All you have to do is stay within two pounds of your weigh-in weight over the holiday season and you will be a winner! If you attain this goal you will be entered into a random prize drawing AND receive 25 points on our Wellness Portal! Historically we have been very successful at not only maintaining but actually losing weight! That’s amazing!

We have already started our weigh-ins across the cape! If you haven’t been weighed and would like to participate in the program there is one last-chance date on **November 21st at the Hyannis Youth and Community Center (HYCC) on Basset Road in Hyannis from 4:30pm - 6:00pm. This is the last opportunity to participate!**

The HYCC is also providing us access to their beautiful indoor track on Tuesday and Thursday nights from 4:30pm – 6:30pm to walk and/or run free of charge to CCMHG members although memberships to the facility are only \$20 for Barnstable residents and \$40 for non-residents. It’s a nice spot to walk on a cold dark night!! If you are going to join us please register at signup.com!

Please remember this program is open to family members covered under your health insurance too! The completion of this program without missing more than one class will earn you → **25 points for our member wellness portal!**

Winter Walking Program

Our Winter Walking Program will begin on January 2nd and run through February 22nd on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at the HYCC. We will be there from 4:30pm – 6:30pm each evening to walk with you! All ages and capabilities are welcome to join us! You must register for this program at signup.com! The completion of this program without missing more than one class will earn you → **35 points for our member wellness portal!**

Wellness Portal

Remember that our wellness portal is up and running and I am currently in the process of distributing over 100 \$25.00 gift cards to those smart members that logged on and completed their Health Risk Assessments in September! They also received 25 points toward their 100 point goal! You still have plenty of time to receive YOUR 100 points and \$35 gift card -- plus the chance of winning \$200 by earning 50 points by January 31st and 100 by June 30th!! If you haven't logged on follow this [link](#) and choose the "click here to signup" button highlighted below!

The screenshot shows the ahealthyme website. On the left is a logo with a green apple and the text "Everything to live a healthier life." On the right, under "Members Sign In:", there are fields for Username and Password, a Login button, and links for "forgot username?" and "forgot password?". Below this is a "Sign Up Now!" section with a paragraph of text and a yellow button labeled "Click here to sign up >>". Four black arrows point to this button from the left and right. At the bottom, there are links for "Commitment to Confidentiality", "Contact Us", "Terms & Conditions", and "Privacy Policy". Below these links is a copyright notice for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and Cerner Corporation. In the bottom right corner is the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts logo.

NEW!!! Stress Reduction and Nutrition Education

I am so happy to offer a number of great programs to help in your daily life! You will be able to take part in these programs offered both during lunchtime AND after work. I was even able to offer a 5 week workshop series in the evening! Cape Light Compact is just wrapping up with the 5 week series titled "Hitting the Pause Button"! This was so popular that we will be heading to the Forestdale School in January [REGISTER HERE](#) and to Cape Cod Regional Technical High School in February [REGISTER HERE](#). Check out the [CCMHG Website](#) for the full menu of offerings! Attendance at one of the programs will earn you → **10 points for our member wellness portal!** Attending the 5 week series will earn you → **30 points for our member wellness portal!**

Hot Topics

Did you know that a Cardio Obsession could be a weight loss saboteur?

Ramp up cardio, burn calories and fat. Sounds simple enough, but the latest science on exercising for weight loss says otherwise. Classic cardio – walking on the treadmill, running, stepping, spinning, etc. – doesn't help you lose as much weight as you might think, says Jim Karas, celebrity trainer and author of **THE CARDIO-FREE DIET**. "People tend to do these things for hours, but after 20 minutes you actually start burning muscle, not fat," he says. Instead of straight cardio, Karas recommends interval training – alternating one minute of working out at a high intensity followed by a minute at a slower rate – for 20 minutes, which burns more fat than staying at the same level throughout. And don't forget strength training. Muscles use more calories to maintain itself than any other body tissue. For every pound of muscle you put on, you automatically burn an extra 22 to 26 calories a day, says Karas. Strength-train every other day to give muscles time to repair. For more saboteurs visit [WebMD](#).

Using Ibuprofen for a long time can cause Rebound Headaches!

If you take it often to keep headaches at bay, you could set yourself up for trouble. The same goes for acetaminophen. People who take over-the-counter medicines more than a few times a week sometimes get stuck in a cycle. The more they take, the more they need. And if they try to stop taking them, their headaches come back even worse. If you have this issue you may need your doctor's help to break the cycle. Source: [WebMD](#)

Is Coconut Oil a Superfood?

Products containing coconut, coconut oil, and coconut milk are popping up everywhere, with marketers claiming it's the latest "superfood". But coconut may not be all it's cracked up to be. The FDA recently warned that coconut products can't be labeled as "healthy" if they contain more than 1 gram of saturated fat or more than 15% of calories come from saturated fat. Some have claimed that the saturated fat in coconut is different because it's mostly lauric acid and metabolizes differently but the FDA isn't buying that argument, noting that some products contain as much as 16 grams of saturated fat per serving. Source: [Tufts University](#)

Managing Stress as the Season Changes

Stress is not an inevitability of seasonal changes. It's a product of the way many of us choose to live. This means it's changeable. For people overwhelmed by seasonal affective disorder, painful stress, or family conflict, therapy can be a powerful ally. Medication may also help, particularly when minor stress turns into major depression. Some other strategies that can help you make it through:

- ❖ Making a list of priorities for the season. Don't give into pressure. Do the things you really enjoy and forget about the rest.
- ❖ Getting access to plenty of natural light by spending some time outside or sitting under a sun lamp.
- ❖ Maintaining a regular schedule, even when cold temperatures tempt you to sleep in.
- ❖ Starting your own family traditions, particularly if you have a conflict with your family of origin.
- ❖ Taking care of your body. Exercise at least 30 minutes a day, at least five days per week. Eat plenty of healthy foods and get enough sleep.

Even if every seasonal change in years past has been difficult for you, this one can be better. Take time to protect your mental health and watch the transition to autumn and winter become your favorite time of year. Source: [Psychology Today](#)

Food for thought – Holiday Edition

The Holidays are a fun time to try new recipes. Here are a couple easy, lower calorie recipes for you to try. You can even make the mousse ahead of time to save on stress and time!! Enjoy!



Cranberry Stuffed Turkey Breast

- 1 (12 ounce) package low sodium bread stuffing mix
- 2 skinless boneless turkey breasts (approximately 24oz each)
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 (8 ounce) packages dried, sweetened cranberries
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 6 lettuce leaves

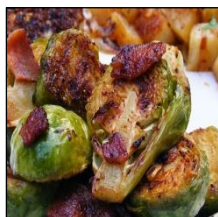


Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Prepare stuffing mix according to package directions. Set aside to cool. With a sharp knife, butterfly breasts open to lay flat. Place each breast between two sheets of waxed paper, and flatten with a mallet. Spread the prepared stuffing to within 1/4 inch of the edge of each breast. Sprinkle each one with chopped pecans and dried cranberries, reserving some of the cranberries for garnish. Roll up tightly in a jellyroll style, starting with the long end. Tuck in ends, and tie in sections with string, about 4 sections around the middle and one running the length of the roll to secure the ends. Heat olive oil in a large cast iron skillet over medium-high heat. Carefully brown rolls on all sides. Place skillet in oven, uncovered. Bake in a preheated oven for 1 hour, or until the internal temperature is at 170 degrees F when taken with a meat thermometer. Do not let these get overly dry. Allow rolls to set for 15 minutes before removing string, and slicing into 1/2 to 3/4 inch circles. Leave one roll whole, and slice the other for presentation. Stuffing will be spiraled into meat. Present on your prettiest platter on a bed of curly lettuce, and garnish by sprinkling with the reserved dried cranberries.

Serves 10. Per Serving: 347 calories; 13g fat; 2g sat fat; 80mg cholesterol; 1179mg sodium; 21g carbs; 1g fiber; 9g sugars; 32g protein

Quick Brussels and Bacon

- 6 slices turkey bacon
- 1/2 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 shallots, chopped
- 1 (16 ounce) package frozen Brussels sprouts, thawed & halved



Cook the bacon in a large skillet over medium-high heat until crisp; drain on paper towels and crumble. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cook and stir the onion in the oil until soft; stir in the bacon and cook until bacon is heated through. Add the Brussels sprouts; cook and stir until the sprouts are browned, 7 to 10 minutes.

Serves 6. Per serving: 73 calories; 2g fat; 0g sat fat; 10mg cholesterol; 159mg sodium; 9g carbs; 3g fiber; 3g sugar; 5g protein.

Quick and Easy Pumpkin Mousse

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 24 marshmallows
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup canned pumpkin
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1/3 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 cup heavy cream



Melt the butter in a large skillet. Stir in the marshmallows, milk, and pumpkin. Stir frequently until melted and smooth. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla and pumpkin pie spice. Cool completely, about 30 minutes. Combine 1/3 cup confectioners' sugar and 1 cup heavy cream in a large bowl. Use an electric mixer to beat until stiff peaks form. Fold whipped cream into cooled pumpkin mixture. Pour mousse into ramekins or chocolate shells. Cover and refrigerate until firm, about 2 hours.

Serves 10. Per serving: 181 calories; 10g fat; 7g sat fat; 37mg cholesterol; 34mg sodium; 21g carbs; 0g fiber; 16g sugar; 2g protein

Overweight vs. Overfat: is the scale lying to you?

You may be storing unhealthy amounts of visceral fat even if your weight appears normal.

The Last Word



For decades, the body mass index (BMI) has been the gold standard for gauging obesity-related heart disease risk. But this handy tool doesn't always tell the whole story. It extrapolates your body fat percentage based on your height and weight, but the formula can't assess how or where your body stores its excess fat — a distinction that is crucial for cardiovascular health. By some estimates, the BMI misclassifies nearly 50% of people who are at higher disease risk from excess fat, meaning that you can be overfat even when you're not overweight.

Some people are genetically programmed to have a lot of fat tissue under the skin, which is deployed to store extra food energy during times of scarcity. But other people have very few of these designated fat cells, explains Dr. Christos Mantzoros, professor of medicine at Harvard-affiliated Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

In individuals who lack an adequate quota of available fat storage cells (or people whose fat tissue is already filled to capacity), fat particles travel in the bloodstream and congregate in the liver, muscles, and other organs, which normally have no fat. This also leads to the accumulation of visceral or "belly" fat — a pattern of fat distribution that is particularly hazardous to your health. Visceral fat is associated with insulin resistance and other metabolic irregularities. "It also triggers the release of inflammatory substances that damage the arteries and help set the stage for cardiovascular disease," says Dr. Mantzoros.

The tendency to accumulate visceral fat is governed by genetic, ethnic, and gender differences. For example, people who inherit two copies (one from each parent) of a mutation in a gene involved in fat metabolism are more likely to have higher amounts of visceral fat than people with just one copy. Those without any copies of the gene mutation are less likely to develop heart disease — even if they become obese. Natives of India and South Asia have a higher-than-average propensity for abdominal obesity and white men and black women tend to accumulate more visceral fat than black men and white women.

With age, people tend to lose muscle tissue, especially the type of specialized muscle fibers that produce quick bursts of speed and power. Fat frequently accumulates within the remaining muscle tissue, causing your body fat percentage to increase even when your weight remains constant. This scenario is closely linked to body-wide inflammation and diabetes risk. It may also explain why your BMI measurement doesn't provide a true reflection of your health risks.

Evidence suggests that waist circumference and waist-to-hip ratio are better indicators of metabolic health than BMI. Even among people with the same BMI, those who have a large waist (defined as more than 40 inches for men and 35 inches for women) have a significantly higher risk. In addition, people who tend to carry their weight in their hips and thighs (a "pear" shape) have lower waist-to-hip ratios and are less prone to heart disease than people with abdominal obesity (an "apple" shape).

To measure your waist accurately, exhale and wrap a measuring tape around your bare abdomen just above your navel (belly button). Don't suck in your gut or pull the tape tight enough to squeeze the area.

To compute your waist-to-hip ratio, first measure your hips by putting the tape measure around the widest part of your buttocks. Keep the tape measure level. Then, divide your waist size by your hip size.

Measurements that signal high risk

	Waist (inches)	Waist-to-hip ratio
Women	35 or more	0.9 or more
Men	40 or more	1.0 or more

People with abdominal obesity — even if they're not overweight — can lessen their heart disease risk with regular exercise and healthy eating habits. "Reducing the total amount of fat in your body frees up storage space for fat particles in places that are associated with less metabolic risk," says Dr. Mantzoros. That's why losing as little as 7% of your total weight helps lower heart disease risk: the most dangerous visceral fat disappears first.

Source: [Harvard Health Publishing](#)



All of the programs listed in this publication are also listed on the Cape Cod Healthy Connections Website calendar: capecodhealthyconnections.com along with signup links!

Your Health Matters is a quarterly publication for municipal employees and family members of the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group.

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