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HEALTH SCREENINGS YOU CAN DO AT HOME
Kick the **winter woes**

Enter the new year feeling merry and bright

*When the days seem short,* the weather feels cold, and the world looks a little darker, you may find yourself with a case of the winter blues.

It’s normal to experience a lower mood when you’re missing the warm weather and sunshine, but there are steps you can take to maintain your positivity. Julie Manuel, MSEd, LPCC, NCC, psychotherapist at Kettering Behavioral Medicine Center, suggests these tips for keeping a positive outlook during the winter months:

- **KEEP IT LIGHT.** Turn on bright lights, sit near a window, and leave your blinds open. If you are experiencing a more severe case of low mood, light therapy may be appropriate.
- **CONSISTENCY IS KEY.** Keep a consistent routine of sleeping eight hours a night, exercising each day, and eating a well-balanced diet. Any one of these things can affect your emotions.
- **GET INVOLVED.** Join a gym or a church group, have your friends over for a football game, host a gathering with your family, or plan some other fun activity that you can look forward to.
- **GAIN PERSPECTIVE.** Julie especially recommends reminding yourself that this feeling, though difficult, is most often temporary. “As always, spring is coming,” she says. “These next few months may be dark, dreary, and cold, but there are ways to combat how you’re feeling.”

If you feel you need assistance beyond tips for maintaining positivity, call Kettering Behavioral Medicine Center at **1-855-788-2895.**

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**Feeling SAD?**

If you’re consistently feeling down during the winter months, you might be experiencing seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

Seasonal affective disorder is a form of depression that typically happens the same time each year, usually starting late fall and lasting through the winter months.

“We typically see this disorder because of the reduced amount of sunlight, which can impact the chemical blue hormones in our brain,” Julie says.

Symptoms of seasonal affective disorder include:

- Low mood for most of the day, for several days in a row
- Increased fatigue
- Increased appetite and weight gain
- Irritability
- Not getting along with others
- The potential for suicidal thoughts

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Nutrition facts decoded: Tips for choosing healthy prepackaged foods

Be heart smart: Learn your heart attack risk and healthy tips

How to use health technology to your best advantage

Ready for winter? Keep the home fires burning safely

Heed your body’s warning signs

Play it safe outdoors

Protect yourself from germy gyms

Women’s health topics you need to discuss

Walking again without pain

Information in KETTERING HEALTH CONNECTION FOR BETTER LIVING comes from a wide range of medical experts. Models may be used in photos and illustrations. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider.

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DURING COLDER MONTHS, the limited availability of fresh produce can lead us to rely more on canned, frozen, and prepackaged foods. But how can you continue to be health-conscious when choosing prepackaged products? Below, our nutrition expert outlines tips for reading food labels and choosing nutritious foods during the winter.

“When reading food labels, I always tell clients to start at the top with the serving size,” says Alicia Buterbaugh, RD, certified diabetes educator with Kettering Health Network. “A lot of people neglect looking at the serving size, which may be different than a person’s portion size. If the serving size is half a cup and someone eats a full cup, then they need to double the information on the nutritional label.”

Next, look at the Percent Daily Values of certain ingredients. In general, explains Alicia, five percent or less is a low amount of an ingredient, while 20 percent or more is considered high.

Try to ensure that you consume low amounts—less than 100 percent of the daily value—of these ingredients:

**FAT:** Keep saturated fat below 20 grams per day and trans fat as low as possible.

**CHOLESTEROL:** Keep cholesterol intake under 300 milligrams per day.

**SODIUM:** Keep sodium intake under 2,300 milligrams per day.
“Over the next couple years, we’ll start to see labels listing grams of added sugar,” Alicia says. New guidelines from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration will require added sugar to be listed on nutrition labels by the end of January 2020. Some labels have already incorporated this change, while others are not listing it yet.

The American Heart Association recommends that men consume no more than 36 grams of added sugar per day, and women no more than 25 grams. “Currently, it can be tricky because most food labels don’t differentiate between sugar that is added versus naturally occurring sugar,” Alicia says.

Look for key words like dextrose, fructose, corn syrup, and sucrose, which can indicate that a food has more added sugar.

Take a look at the nutrients at the bottom of the food label, and choose foods that are higher—20 percent daily value or more—in these ingredients:

**VITAMIN D**: Vitamin D helps with calcium absorption and bone strength and lowers the risk of osteoporosis.

**POTASSIUM**: Adequate potassium intake can lower blood pressure, regulate water balance, and counteract the effects of sodium.

**CALCIUM**: Calcium is vital to heart, muscle, and nerve function and helps to build and maintain strong bones.

**IRON**: Iron is involved in transporting oxygen throughout the body and maintaining a healthy immune system.

**FIBER**: Soluble fiber can help lower “bad” cholesterol (LDL), and insoluble fiber helps with digestive regularity.

**Quick tips**

Fresh produce is the best option when choosing fruits and vegetables. In the absence of fresh produce, remember:

- When choosing canned products, opt for “unsweetened” fruit and “no salt added” veggies.
- Watch for frozen vegetables with added sauces, as these can be high in sodium.
- Be careful of frozen dinners, which can be very high in both sodium and fat.

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

For more guidance in food choices for a healthy lifestyle, contact our Diabetes & Nutrition Center at 1-888-822-4114 or visit ketteringhealth.org/diabetes
Is bariatric surgery right for me?

Q: I have always struggled with my weight, and I want a solution that allows me to enjoy activities with my family. How do I know if bariatric surgery is right for me?

A: While bariatric surgery is not the solution for everyone, those who are candidates can greatly benefit from this type of procedure. Anyone who has a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or greater qualifies for the surgery, but those who have a BMI between 40 and 35 along with comorbid conditions are also generally considered candidates.

Comorbid conditions include hypertension, sleep apnea, coronary artery disease, cancer, joint pain, and diabetes. Bariatric surgery can be extremely beneficial to people with those conditions, because the reduction of weight tends to assist in treatment, improving both their health and quality of life.

Patients who require excessive weight loss may find they are limited in some areas of their life, like lifestyle and fertility. These limitations can lead to psychological symptoms such as anxiety and depression, which can cause them to gain more weight. Bariatric surgery can help patients defeat that cycle.

Though many seek bariatric surgery to treat comorbid conditions, patients can take charge of their weight-loss journey by electing to have the surgery before developing these conditions.

First steps: Anyone who wants to lose weight should first speak with their primary care physician to discuss their options. In most cases, people considering bariatric surgery have already tried dieting, exercising, and even medication to lose weight. If you have tried these tactics and have either gained the weight back or still have anywhere from 80 to 100 pounds to lose, your doctor will likely refer you to a bariatric surgeon. Bariatric surgery is proven to help patients lose up to 70 percent of excess weight within the first year.

Bariatric surgery used to have a reputation as having a high risk for complications. While every surgery has its risks, the advancement in technology such as laparoscopy and new stapling techniques has allowed the rate of complications from this surgery to decrease to less than .01 percent. Even if complications do occur, doctors are prepared to care for them quickly and efficiently.
Steady and strong again

Mike’s heart was in trouble—a few times. Luckily, expert cardiac care was nearby.

A healthy diet and regular exercise are both parts of a heart-healthy lifestyle. But most people might not consider another element: hydration. Mike Hood learned the importance of that earlier this year.

After a day of yard work, Mike came inside to cool off. When he went upstairs, his heart went into sudden cardiac arrest, prompting his wife to call 911 and start CPR.

He was taken to Soin Medical Center, and the heart catheterization did not show any blockages.

“They knew then that it was truly something electrical versus a blockage,” Mike remembers. “EKG showed that occasionally my heart would skip a beat. They think between that and dehydration, everything lined up perfectly to throw my heart out of rhythm.”

As treatment, Mike received an implantable cardioverter-defibrillator, also known as an ICD, which helps monitor his heart rate.

“If for whatever reason my heart is thrown out of rhythm, the device will shock it back into rhythm, just like if they were using the paddles on me,” he explains.

After about two weeks in the hospital, Mike was feeling great and was discharged.

An unexpected visit Just days after his release, Mike and his family went out for dinner but ended up in an unexpected place—the Emergency Department.

“I sat in the truck while they went in to get the food,” Mike says. “I sneezed, and as soon as I sneezed, I knew something was wrong.”

Luckily, Soin Medical Center was nearby. The staff diagnosed Mike with a burst blood vessel, and he was transferred to Kettering Medical Center for surgery, performed by Bruce Rank, DO, a cardiothoracic surgeon. Mike’s surgery went well and he was in recovery when, once again, the unexpected struck.

“When I was in the recovery room, I started coughing, and when I did, I burst another blood vessel,” he says. “They fixed it up and I came through just fine.”

Getting back into rhythm Today, Mike is back to his regular routine. His recovery took about six weeks. His physicians say his active lifestyle helped speed his recovery, which can take some people up to three months.

Another thing Mike says helped his recovery? The care he received.

“I think the positive outcome is because of the outstanding professionalism of the staff there at all levels,” he says. “Instead of having bad memories of what happened there, I actually have good memories of the care I got there.”

Schedule a heart screening by calling 1-844-850-0022.
Is your heart at risk?

TAKE THIS QUIZ TO FIND OUT YOUR HEART ATTACK RISK.

Choose the most appropriate answer in each category.

♥ How often do you smoke?
• I have never smoked. (+0)
• It’s been more than two years since I smoked. (+0)
• I smoke a cigar, a pipe, or less than 10 cigarettes per day. (+2)
• I’ve smoked half a pack to one pack per day for five to 10 years. (+3)
• I’ve smoked one to two packs per day for 10 to 20 years. (+6)
• I’ve smoked more than two packs per day for over 20 years. (+9)

♥ Has your doctor ever expressed concern about your blood pressure?
• No, my blood pressure is normal. (+0)
• Yes, my doctor has expressed concern that my blood pressure is occasionally elevated. (+3)
• Yes, I am on medication to control my high blood pressure. (+7)

♥ How often do you exercise?
(Activities like walking, swimming, or biking performed at a brisk pace for 30 minutes nonstop.)
• Five to six times per week (+0)
• Three to four times per week (+2)
• One to two times per week (+4)
• No regular exercise (+6)

♥ Are you overweight?
• No, I’m at an ideal weight. (+0)
• Yes, I’m five to 15 pounds overweight. (+1)
• Yes, I’m 16 to 25 pounds overweight. (+2)
• Yes, I’m 26 to 50 pounds overweight. (+3)
• Yes, I’m more than 50 pounds overweight. (+5)

♥ What is your age and gender?
• Female under 55 (+1)
• Male under 45 (+2)
• Female 55 to 59 (+4)
• Male 45 to 59 (+5)
• Male or female age 60 or over (+6)

♥ Does your family have a history of heart disease?
• No one in my family has a known history of heart disease. (+0)
• I have one relative over 60 with heart disease. (+2)
• I have one relative under 60 with heart disease. (+3)
• I have two relatives under 60 with heart disease. (+5)
• I have three or more relatives under 60 with heart disease. (+8)

♥ How many servings of red meats, organ meats, fried foods, high-fat dairy, or high-fat sweets do you eat per week?
• Zero to two servings (+1)
• Three to seven servings (+4)
• More than seven servings (+7)

♥ Do you have diabetes?
• No. (+0)
• Yes, and I control it by my diet. (+3)
• Yes, and I am on medication to control my blood sugar. (+6)

♥ How often are you stressed?
• Seldom stressed and cope very well (+0)
• Sometimes stressed and cope fairly well (+1)
• Often stressed and cope fairly well (+3)
• Heavily stressed and have trouble coping at all times (+5)
• Excessively stressed and am unable to cope (+7)
What does my score mean?

2 to 14: Low risk. Consider scheduling an appointment with your physician to ensure you maintain a healthy lifestyle.

15 to 21: Below-average risk. This is only one indication of your heart’s health. For a complete evaluation, schedule a Kettering Health Network healthy heart screening.

22 to 31: Average risk. Do you have a family history of heart disease? If yes, schedule a heart calcium scan. If no, schedule a healthy arteries screening.

32 to 45: Moderate risk. Schedule a heart calcium scan or an advanced heart screening to potentially prevent a heart attack or stroke.

46 to 62: High risk. To prevent a heart attack or stroke:

1. Schedule an advanced heart screening.
2. Make an appointment with a cardiologist.

Take these tips to heart

INTEGRATE THESE HEART-HEALTHY TIPS INTO YOUR LIFESTYLE.

• CHANGE YOUR DIET. Watch your intake of fat, protein, and carbohydrates. Focus on eating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, fish, and poultry. Cut back on beverages with added sugar or caffeine.

• EXERCISE REGULARLY. Try to get at least 30 minutes of exercise five days a week. If you aren’t used to exercising that frequently, Mark Moronell, MD, cardiologist at Kettering Health Network, suggests starting slow. “You want to start off within your own capabilities, but as you work up, try to have that much aerobic activity,” he says.

• MANAGE YOUR STRESS. By working to stress less, you are protecting your heart health. “There are indirect correlations between stress and coronary disease, so those things can all add up,” says Dr. Moronell.

• WATCH FOR SIGNS. “First and foremost, keep an eye on your symptoms,” says Dr. Moronell. “Those who are more active may be able to spot problems before those that are a bit more sedentary, and the issues may be easier to fix.” Symptoms such as chest pain, indigestion, shortness of breath, heart palpitations, fast heartbeat, weakness, dizziness, nausea, or sweating may all be signs of coronary artery disease. If you experience these, or other irregular cardiac symptoms, seek medical attention.

BE HEART SMART

Schedule a heart screening by calling 1-844-850-0022.
From the moment our alarm goes off in the morning until the moment we go back to bed, we have hundreds of interactions with technology every day. Here are a few ways you can make the most of those and use technology to improve your health.

How many steps are you taking? According to Mayo Clinic, around 70 percent of U.S. adults don’t get the recommended amount of physical activity. Jessie Carf, exercise physiologist with Kettering Health Network Sports Medicine, explains that using a fitness tracker to measure step count and activity minutes and to track progress over time can motivate you to move more.

“For some people in active professions, they may regularly get 20,000 steps per day; others in desk jobs may not move for hours,” says Jessie.

Use an activity tracker to find your baseline of average steps per day and set small goals for improvement, such as adding 2,000 steps per day and increasing those over time. “That 10,000-step count goal might not be perfect for every individual,” says Jessie, “but fitness trackers can at least help you find a baseline and set a target.”

Learn more about programs that can help you increase movement at ketteringhealth.org/sportsmed

Can mind games keep you young? As our bodies age, so can our minds. “It’s natural for an aging brain to lose some cognitive ability, but it’s important to recognize that cognitive reserve can be preserved by a healthy lifestyle,” says Kenneth Pugar, DO, neurologist with Dayton Center for Neurological Disorders. “Challenging your brain with new tasks, like playing an instrument or learning a new language, can be beneficial.”

A number of apps and online games may also be helpful in retaining cognitive strength. “There is no app that has been proven to be better than another, but we do know that using the brain and keeping it stimulated helps keep up your cognitive strength,” Dr. Pugar says.

Level up! Try some of the highest-rated brain games:

• Lumosity • Brain HQ • Constant Therapy
• Fitbrains • Cognifit

Learn more about Kettering Health Network Brain & Spine services at ketteringhealth.org/neuro
Continuous monitoring options

Continuous glucose monitoring technology allows diabetes patients to significantly reduce the need for finger pricks.

New continuous blood glucose monitors involve wearing a sensor on your upper arm or abdomen for seven to 10 days at a time. Patients may use a reader to scan the sensor periodically throughout the day. Other sensors communicate with a smartphone or a receiver to monitor blood sugar every five minutes.

Some devices have alarms to alert you of high or low blood sugars. “These new options can provide a lot of protection, comfort, and ease of mind for those who may have unpredictable low blood sugar,” says Dawn Lyon, RN, diabetes educator with Kettering Health Network Diabetes & Nutrition Center.

Learn more about Kettering Health Network Diabetes & Nutrition Center’s diabetes self-management education and advanced evidence-based clinical care at ketteringhealth.org/diabetes

Health data at your fingertips

You can view your Kettering Health Network medical record at any time using MyChart. You can also use the online tool to view test results, message with your provider, pay bills, schedule appointments, and request prescription refills. For minor issues, you can even participate in an e-visit with your primary care provider or save your spot in line at an urgent care center.

“MyChart allows patients to be active participants in their health care,” says Charles Watson, DO, chief medical information officer at Kettering Health Network. “It gives much more real-time access to health data.”

Download the MyChart app in your app or Google play store, and talk to your physician about ways to use MyChart as a tool in your overall wellness.
Colder weather means cozying up indoors. Use these tips to stay safe and warm all winter long.

**Space heaters**

Check to see if your space heater has an anti-tip switch.

“The switch allows the space heater to shut off automatically if it were to be knocked over, preventing the risk of it starting a fire,” says Chris Vecchi, an EMS coordinator at Kettering Health Network. Also make sure it’s in a place that’s clear of flammable items, like furniture or curtains.

**Fireplaces**

Schedule a professional fireplace inspection, which detects buildup and issues with the flue system. Do-it-yourself methods like chimney logs are not enough to ensure safe operation.

“The logs can help remove creosote buildup, but if there’s an issue with the flue itself, you’re still not ensuring that the flue will exhaust the heat from the fireplace safely,” says Chris.

**Fire safety**

Stay a step ahead of potential fires by checking the batteries in smoke detectors. Practicing what to do when the alarm sounds is also important, especially with children.

“I always recommend making it a game,” Chris says. “Practice crawling low underneath the smoke and using your escape plan. See if they can do it with their eyes closed so that if there’s limited visibility due to smoke, they still know their way out.”

Make sure you have at least one fire extinguisher in your home. If there’s any question in your ability to extinguish a fire safely, evacuate immediately and call 911.

**Carbon monoxide**

Every home should have a carbon monoxide detector.

“A lot of people think if they have all electric appliances, then there’s no risk of carbon monoxide,” Chris says. “A portable generator or a running vehicle in a closed garage could still pose a hazard.”

If your carbon monoxide detector goes off, go outside and call 911 from a safe place.

**Know where to go**

In an emergency, call 911. To find an emergency center near you, visit [ketteringhealth.org/emergency](http://ketteringhealth.org/emergency)

Making an emergency preparedness plan? Visit ready.gov to find resources that can help.
HEALTHY LIVING EVENTS

Meet our physicians and medical experts to get your health questions answered.
All presentations and events include lunch or appetizers.

Register online at ketteringhealth.org/healthcalendar or call toll-free 1-844-883-3420.

**CARDIAC**
Treatment Options for Varicose Veins
Learn about varicose veins and how to keep your blood, and body, moving with ease.
Kettering Medical Center
Feb. 27, 6–7 p.m.

**BRAIN & SPINE**
Treatments for Spine Pain
Back pain, neck pain, and other spine conditions can make living a normal life difficult. Learn from our specialists about treatments for spine pain.
Emmanuel Christian Academy
Jan. 17, 6–7 p.m.
Grandview Medical Center
March 12, Noon–1 p.m.

**SURGERY**
Robotic Surgery Options
Robotically assisted surgery can help you recover faster to get back to your normal life. Join our surgeon to find out if robotic surgery is right for you.
Soin Medical Center
Feb. 13, Noon–1 p.m.

**ORTHOPEDICS**
Hand: Top 10 Conditions
Hands are vital to everyday interactions, so when pain or injury gets in the way of normal function, it makes life difficult. Join our orthopedic surgeon and learn about the most common hand conditions and treatment options to get you back to the life you love.
Soin Medical Center
Feb. 7, 6–7 p.m.

Treatment Options for Hip Pain
Arthritis or pain in the hip can make life difficult. Join our orthopedic specialist and learn about treatment options for hip pain.
Kettering Health Network
Middletown
Feb. 26, Noon–1 p.m.

Endoscopic Carpal Tunnel Surgery
Join our orthopedic surgeon to learn about a minimally invasive option for carpal tunnel surgery.
Southview Medical Center
March 27, Noon–1 p.m.

**WOMEN’S HEALTH**
What to Ask Your OB-GYN
Whether you’re scheduling your first appointment with a gynecologist or planning a family with your obstetrician, knowing what questions to ask can make the process less daunting. Join our OB-GYNs as they talk about common questions and concerns with OB-GYN visits.
Fort Hamilton Hospital
Jan. 10, 6–7 p.m.
CALL CLASSES & SCREENINGS

Call 1-844-883-3420. Registration required unless otherwise noted.

CAREGIVING

Powerful Tools for Caregivers
This free, six-week educational workshop is for people who are taking care of a family member or friend. It is designed to support the family caregiver and improve his or her well-being. Call for more information.

DIABETES

Diabetes Support Groups
If you’re living with diabetes, you are not alone. Support groups allow participants to gain knowledge while sharing information and ideas.

Beavercreek Health Center
First Tuesday of each month, 4–5 p.m.

Southview Medical Center–Medical Arts Center
Second Monday of each month, 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Walden Ponds Medical Care
Second Tuesday of each month, 5–6 p.m.

New location:
Years Ahead Health Center
Fourth Thursday of each month, 1–2 p.m.

Prevent T2: Diabetes Prevention Program
Take charge of your health by meeting with a lifestyle coach and a group of peers. This year-long, proven program from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention empowers you to live a healthier life by finding successful ways to increase your activity, reduce stress, and eat healthier. $360. Call for more information.

Duck Diabetes
Learn how to reduce the risk of getting diabetes and enjoy better health in this free, one-hour presentation. Get practical tips for grocery shopping, eating out, losing weight, and increasing physical activity. Call for dates and locations.

Diabetes Risk Factors & You
Free, half-hour presentation followed by optional blood sugar screenings. Cost: $5 for Years Ahead or Rec West members; $7 for all others.

Rec West Enrichment Center
Feb. 13, 10–11 a.m.

KETTERING HEALTH NETWORK SPEAKERS’ BUREAU

Kettering Health Network Speakers’ Bureau provides informational health and wellness presentations for the community, organizations, churches, and other audiences. We have a variety of health speakers and topics to motivate and educate your group to achieve and maintain optimal health. To schedule a speaker, call 1-888-546-0662. Certain criteria may apply.

Weight Management
Kettering Health Network Diabetes & Nutrition Center offers options to help you meet your weight-loss goals. Group sessions provide a supportive environment to learn how to modify eating habits. Individual nutrition counseling is also available. Call 1-888-725-1897.

EXERCISE & FITNESS

Adult Fitness
This program provides one hour of one-on-one instruction to work toward your specific goals or on overall fitness. The program can accommodate all levels and goals, including post-rehabilitation, weight loss, and performance. Call 1-855-583-9991.

Kettering Sports Medicine
Dartfish Movement Analysis

Kettering Sports Medicine
HEART & STROKE

**Blood Pressure Screenings**
Know your numbers and get your questions answered. No registration required. Free.

- **Miamisburg Community Center**
  Jan. 18, Feb. 15, March 15, 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m.
- **Town & Country Shopping Center, Kettering**
  Jan. 25, Feb. 22, March 22, 9:30–11:30 a.m.
- **Charles Lathrem Senior Center, Kettering**
  Feb. 5, March 5, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

SAFETY

**Stop the Bleed**
Learn how to save a life at this free, one-hour class that prepares bystanders to stop uncontrolled bleeding until help arrives.

- **Kettering Medical Center**
  Jan. 28, Feb. 25, March 25, 7–8 p.m.
- **Years Ahead Health Center**
  Feb. 8, 2–3 p.m.

NUTRITION

**Healthy Eating Out**
Do you find it hard to eat healthy when eating out? Gain knowledge, tips, and resources to make healthier choices in restaurants.

- **Years Ahead Health Center**
  March 7, 1–2 p.m.

ORTHOPEDICS

**Osteoporosis Screening**
This screening determines bone loss without using radiation in less than five minutes. Cost: $5 for Years Ahead members; $10 for all others. Call to register.

- **Charles Lathrem Senior Center, Kettering**
  March 5, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

STOP SMOKING

**Say Goodbye to Tobacco**
This free, five-week class takes you through the quitting process and provides a month of nicotine patches, as well as gum or lozenges. Provided in partnership by Kettering Health Network and Public Health–Dayton and Montgomery County.

- **Kettering Medical Center**
  Wednesdays, Jan. 2–30 and Feb. 13–March 13, 6–7 p.m.

FINANCIAL AID IS AVAILABLE
Concerned about your ability to pay hospital bills for an emergency or medically necessary care? Kettering Health Network has financial aid programs that ensure all patients receive the best quality medical care available, regardless of their financial situation. Some patients may be eligible for a full or a partial discount. For more information, visit ketteringhealth.org/financial or call 1-888-681-5610.

**MORE ONLINE**
Visit ketteringhealth.org/healthcalendar for more classes and screenings.
Self-screenings may reveal warning signs

**Do you notice subtle changes** to your skin or weight? These could be your body’s way of telling you about your health. Perform these self-screenings between visits to your primary care provider and make sure to follow up if you notice anything out of the ordinary.

**Scan your skin** Changes to the skin—including color changes to existing moles, the appearance of new moles, or any ulcerated or bleeding spot—should be evaluated by a physician, as they could indicate the presence of skin cancer. While skin cancer is more often correlated with people who are blond, blue-eyed, and fair-skinned, anyone could be affected. “It’s actually the amount of sun exposure you’ve accumulated at a young age,” says David Ettinger, MD, plastic and reconstructive surgeon at Beavercreek Health Park.

Women tend to find more skin abnormalities on their extremities, while men see them more often on the face, but everyone should check all areas of skin that have been exposed to the sun, as early detection is key.

“It’s usually a simple treatment with a topical agent or surgical excision if you catch it early, with a 99.9 percent chance of cure,” Dr. Ettinger says. He recommends doing skin checks monthly.
Watch for wounds
If you have diabetes, you may also have neuropathy, meaning you may not experience sensation in your feet. For that reason, you may not realize if you develop an area of irritation. “If there’s a rock in your shoe, you don’t have the trigger to look at your feet because you can’t feel it,” says Monica Johnson, nurse supervisor at Sycamore Medical Center’s Wound Center.

Monica recommends removing your shoes and socks and checking for wounds daily by turning the bottom of your foot toward your face or putting a hand mirror on the floor and sitting with your foot over the mirror. If you do find a wound, it’s best to get it checked out.

“If you find a blister or a cut on your foot and don’t have any sensation there, you can’t tell how bad it is,” Monica says. “I would recommend going to your primary care physician and having it assessed.”

Check for changes
If you’re a woman, you should take time for monthly breast self-exams and take note of any new lumps or masses while also making sure you understand what’s normal for you. “If your breast tissue is always lumpy, your goal is to be able to identify a change or if something is different,” says Rebecca Tuttle, MD, surgical oncologist with Kettering Cancer Care.

Though mammograms can detect lumps or masses before they can be felt, it’s important to understand your normal. If you notice a mass or any other changes, such as skin puckering or nipple discharge, follow up with your OB-GYN or primary care physician.

Step on the scale
Waist measurements can give you an idea of your body mass index (BMI). As your BMI increases, so does your risk for coronary heart diseases.

But you don’t need to use a measuring tape each week. Mark Moronell, MD, cardiologist at Kettering Health Network, says that stepping on a scale is enough.

“People should just be cognizant of their weight,” Dr. Moronell says. “If your clothes aren’t fitting properly, you can start measuring your waistline.”

If you are concerned about how your weight may contribute to heart disease risk, see your primary care provider and incorporate a healthy diet and exercise into your routine.

Perform these self-screenings between visits to your primary care provider.

**TAKE IT A STEP FURTHER**
If you want to take your health a step further, consider scheduling an appointment for an exam or screening.

**Find a physician** who can check your skin or wounds by visiting ketteringhealth.org/findaphysician or calling 1-888-726-2372.

**Get your wound checked** if you have a concern by calling Wound Care at Kettering Health Network at 1-877-952-6778.

**Schedule a mammogram** by calling the Kettering Breast Evaluation Centers at 1-888-382-0627.

**Schedule a heart screening** by calling 1-844-850-0022.
Stay safe outdoors when winter packs a wallop

Just because it’s cold outside doesn’t mean you have to stay cooped up indoors. But it’s wise to play it safe—whether you’re going for a jog, sledding with your kids, or shoveling the front walk.

**DRESS DEFENSIVELY.** Bundle up in loose, light, and comfortable layers. Ideally, the first layer will be a material other than cotton and help wick away sweat.

“Cotton will get wet from you sweating, and it can make you feel chilly because the moisture will get cold,” says Krista Migliore, DO, an orthopedic surgeon at Kettering Health Network. “You’ll then get tight, sore muscles because your body is working so hard to keep its core warm.”

Also wear insulated mittens or gloves and a hat. You can lose up to 20 percent of your body heat from a bare head.

“When you’re cold, the blood flow is concentrated in your body’s core, so it will leave external places more vulnerable to injury,” explains Dr. Migliore. “Your head, hands, feet, ears, and toes are all subject to frostbite and hypothermia.”

**TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT SLIPS.** Keep sidewalks, driveways, and outside steps as ice-free as possible. Treat them with sand, kitty litter, or a de-icing compound like rock salt. And don’t venture out in slippery conditions unless you’re wearing shoes with good traction. For extra grip, you can wear ice cleats over your shoes.

**BE SEEN.** In bad weather and as the days get darker, wear bright or reflective clothing so you’re visible to drivers. Remember: Even if you can see drivers, they might not be able to see you.

**STAY HYDRATED.** Drink plenty of water when you’re active, even if you don’t feel thirsty. Dehydration may be more difficult to spot in cold weather. “You still sweat when you’re active outside,” Dr. Migliore says. “That sweat evaporates, which may be less noticeable in the winter, but still causes dehydration.”

Dr. Migliore also notes that people tend to feel less thirsty in the winter. “We don’t feel as thirsty even if we are dehydrated, leading to further dehydration.”

Sources: American Academy of Dermatology; American Council on Exercise; American Heart Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**GET HELP**

If you experience pain while exercising, follow up with a physician. Request an appointment with a Kettering Health Network orthopedist by calling 1-877-930-9354 or visiting ketteringhealth.org/ortho.
Hygiene hints for your next workout

If you work out at a gym, you and your fellow gym goers may share more than the pursuit of fitness. Even in the cleanest facilities, there may be surfaces that harbor germs.

You don’t need to be afraid to hit the gym. But why not take sensible steps for germ protection and peace of mind?

Wipe it down Some gyms provide disinfectant wipes or sprays you can use to clean equipment in between use.

“There’s no question that hygiene, both personal hygiene but also wiping down inanimate objects, can kill viruses and reduce transmission,” says Jeffrey Weinstein, MD, infectious disease specialist at Kettering Health Network and chief quality officer for Kettering and Sycamore medical centers.

For larger surfaces—think exercise mats and weight-training benches—you can place a fresh towel between your skin and the surface.

Hit the showers If your gym has showers, using them right after your workout helps wash away any germs on your skin. You might want to bring shower shoes. Going barefoot in locker rooms or on gym floors increases your chances of getting athlete’s foot.

Remember to bring a clean towel for drying off. Wash towels and gym clothes after use—and dry them completely.

Know when to get help Dr. Weinstein noted that most people are not at high risk of getting an infection in a gym setting, except in situations like flu season.

“Most of the time, there’s not a lot of risk,” he says. “Still, it’s good to just get in the habit and take reasonable precautions.”

Signs of an infection can vary, including things like a runny nose, fever, diarrhea, or even boils occurring on the skin.

“If you’re having symptoms of fever, severe diarrhea that’s not resolving within a day or two, or a skin boil or infection—especially with a fever—you should go see your health care provider,” Dr. Weinstein says.

Sources: American Academy of Dermatology; American Council on Exercise; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Scrub up!

Washing your hands is a simple and effective way to prevent the spread of germs.

Scrub thoroughly—including in between your fingers and all over the backs of your hands—with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. That’s about how long it takes to sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice.

Find a physician

Visit ketteringhealth.org/findaphysician or call 1-888-726-2372 to find a primary care physician.
Some topics just feel difficult to bring up—especially when it comes to your pelvic and gynecologic health. Your physician is there to help with all your health care needs, even the ones that might embarrass you. However, knowing more about these common topics might help you to feel more comfortable talking about your concerns.

**Bladder control and issues** If you’re dealing with bladder incontinence, you aren’t alone.

“Nearly half of all women complain of one or more types of leakage by the time they experience menopause,” says Janelle Evans, MD, urogynecologist at Southview Medical Center.

Women deal with two types of bladder incontinence: stress incontinence and urge incontinence.

Dr. Evans recommends seeing your doctor to discuss the issue. “If someone is experiencing leakage, it is very important she address it with her OB-GYN or primary care provider,” she says.

A primary care provider may refer someone to a urogynecologist, like Dr. Evans, who specializes in all forms of incontinence and sees women 18 and older who complain of either or both types of leakage.

**KNOW THE DIFFERENCE**

**Stress incontinence**

- It is primarily caused by trauma from childbirth and commonly occurs when a woman coughs, sneezes, or exercises.

**Urge incontinence**

- It can be caused by a number of diseases and represents a malfunctioning of communication between the bladder and the brain.
Promote your pelvic health
Pelvic organ prolapse is a condition that occurs when the uterus, rectum, or vaginal wall begin to drop due to muscle and ligament weakness or damage. This condition could cause a variety of symptoms, including pelvic pain or pressure, difficulty urinating, lower back pain, or urinary tract infections.

To prevent or manage pelvic floor problems, such as prolapse or incontinence, Kegel exercises are recommended.

“Kegel exercises are controlled exercises to strengthen the large muscles that are in the pelvic floor,” Dr. Evans says. “Women should ideally do these exercises two to three times a day for 10 controlled repetitions.”

The difficulty with Kegel exercises is that many people who learn to do them on their own do them incorrectly, so it is best to see a gynecologist or pelvic physical therapist who can assist with proper form.

Urinary tract infections
If you’re experiencing frequent, painful urination, you might have a urinary tract infection (UTI), as these are the most common symptoms. However, these are not the only symptoms of a UTI, so it’s important to see a physician to confirm your diagnosis.

“A UTI can manifest in many ways,” says Dr. Evans. “A physician should always test to ensure that’s what you’re experiencing, especially after menopause.”

Some women are more prone to UTIs than others, so antibiotics may be the best course of treatment. They also may be prescribed as a form of prevention.

Pain and frequency of urination can also indicate other, more serious conditions that cannot be treated with the course of antibiotics that you may be given for a UTI. By getting your urine tested, your physician can better understand which antibiotic is best for you—or if something else is going on that requires alternative treatment.

My doctor visit checklist
This checklist can help you communicate better with your doctor. Fill it out and take it with you to your appointment. You might also use it to prepare for calls to your doctor’s office about your care.

The reason for my visit
• I am most concerned about:

What the doctor needs to know
• I have these new or worsening symptoms:

• My health has changed recently (taking new medications, recovering from surgery, etc.):

• I have these limitations (poor vision, difficulty walking, memory problems, etc.):

Your health/treatment: Questions to ask
☐ Do you have any follow-up instructions for me? Can I get those in writing?
☐ When will I get the test results from my visit?
☐ When should I schedule my next appointment?
☐ When should I expect to see improvement?
☐ If there is no improvement, what should I do?
☐ How should I contact you if I have questions after this visit?

Staying well: Questions to ask
☐ Does my family health history raise my risk for any health problems?
☐ What vaccines, screenings, or medical tests do I need?
☐ What are some steps you think I should take to stay healthy?

I feel

NEED EMERGENCY CARE? CALL 911.
With 30 years in the classroom under her belt, Pam Genson had no problem running her business classes until her last year of teaching.

Pam had a torn meniscus in her right knee, which made it difficult for her to make her way around the classroom, including when she was recovering from the surgery she had to repair it. She completed that last year of teaching but still had trouble walking.

Finding relief This prompted her to go back in to see Frank Fasano, MD, an orthopedic surgeon with Kettering Health Network, about her pain.

“I was convinced it was a knee problem,” Pam says. “Dr. Fasano seemed to know right away that it was my hip.”

Her hip was X-rayed, and 10 months after her meniscus repair, Pam was scheduled for an operation to replace her left hip.

“I was pretty apprehensive,” she says. “I had heard of meniscus repairs before, especially working in schools, but I didn’t know anyone who had a joint replaced.”

Despite feeling nervous, Pam arrived at Sycamore Medical Center prepared for her joint replacement surgery and was immediately at ease when she saw a past student of hers accompanying her anesthetist.
“That was comforting—to see a familiar face when you’re in that place of uncertainty,” Pam says. Her trust only grew as she received world-class care in a facility that felt like a neighborhood community.

Pam has now had her other hip and her knee replaced—all part of the effort to relieve her symptoms.

“The promise of being able to walk again without pain was the motivator,” Pam says.

A walking success story Today, Pam’s surgeries are rarely in the forefront of her mind, as she no longer has the pain to remind her.

“Previously, I had learned to live with a certain amount of pain, but it got to a point where I needed to do something,” Pam says. “In each case, I went in seeking relief from pain and improvement in my ability to walk, but today I can do pretty much everything I’ve wanted to do.”

Pam goes on walks and works in her garden and was even able to attend her daughter’s wedding in three-inch heels.

“The people I knew before the surgery, they’ve seen me hobbling around with a cane,” she says. “Now they tell me I don’t walk like I’ve had surgery. I think that speaks volumes.”

▼ GET MOVING

If you’re in need of orthopedic care, trust Kettering Health Network to help you achieve your goals for better health. Call 1-877-930-9354 or visit ketteringhealth.org/ortho to schedule an appointment with one of our orthopedic surgeons.

“Today I can do pretty much everything I’ve wanted to do.”

—Pam Genson
Heart Healthy Tips
Zumba
Cooking Demos
Prizes

FREE EVENT

Tuesday
February 12
5:30-8 p.m.
Kettering Recreation Complex

every heart matters

let's go

ketteringhealth.org/atozumba