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County  
Community  
Hospital



Making Communities

Healthier®

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WYTHE COUNTY COMMUNITY HOSPITAL NEWS + SPRING 2019



# Make 2019 Your Best Year Ever

10 Tips to Help You Manage Your Stress, Sleep Better and Be Healthier

The beginning of a new year means a fresh start. It is an opportunity to tackle new projects, set new goals and find new opportunities to get and stay healthy — including reducing the amount of stress in your life. But why does stress

play such an important role in our health? There are a number of reasons, according to Lavonne Blessing, RN, an occupational medicine nurse at Wythe County Community Hospital.

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## Ask a Doc



**James Zwanch, DO**  
General Surgeon

**QUESTION:** *When is the right time to schedule a colonoscopy?*

**ANSWER:** According to new recommendations from the American Cancer Society, those at average risk for colon cancer should begin screenings at age 45. Those at higher than average risk may need to be screened earlier, and more frequently and/or with specific tests.

Still, it's important to remember that colon cancer does not discriminate. It can happen to men and women of any age. Talk with your provider about colorectal cancer risks and discuss which screening method could be right for you and the appropriate timing. If you need a primary care provider, call 1.800.424.DOCS (3627) to get connected with one.

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## A note from the CEO

As another year gets underway, we are so grateful that you continue to choose Wythe County Community Hospital for your healthcare needs. A new year represents new opportunities for us to help you get and stay healthy so that you can enjoy all that our wonderful community has to offer.

This issue of *Making Communities Healthier* is packed with useful information and timely tips to help make 2019 your healthiest year yet, including ways to reduce your stress and boost your heart health.

From all of us here at Wythe County Community Hospital, we wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous year. We look forward to further advancing our mission of Making Communities Healthier® and continuing to serve you and your family in 2019 and beyond. ■

Joseph Wilkins, CEO

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## Make 2019 Your Best Year Ever

“Stress can cause depression or anxiety, increased blood pressure and weight gain, and can even lead to heart disease, among other detriments to your health,” Blessing says. “And while some level of stress is inevitable and can even be positive, it’s essential that we learn how to manage stress to maintain our physical and mental health, and protect our overall well-being.”

Stress, which is your body’s response to any demand or change, can come from a variety of sources, both positive and negative. It can be short-term or long-term and can present itself in a variety of ways.

“It’s important to identify the “stressors” in your life — those events or situations that cause you stress — and recognize how your body responds,” she says. “If you are aware of these factors, you can learn to manage your stress more effectively, which can help you sleep better and fight illness, among other health benefits.”

This year, consider improving your approach to stress management with these 10 helpful tips:

- 1. Be organized.** Prioritize your to-do lists and plan out your time, being realistic about how long tasks will take to complete.
- 2. Be flexible.** Planning can help prevent stress, but so can being ready to adapt when things don’t go quite as planned.
- 3. Be prepared.** If you know a stressful event is on the horizon, think through the situation and your options for responding.
- 4. Breathe.** Make it a habit to take moments to breathe deeply, stretch your muscles and relax. Relaxing the body and mind can do a world of good.
- 5. Exercise.** Incorporating physical activity into your daily routine can help improve your mood and prevent stress.
- 6. Eat healthy.** Give your body lots of energy by eating plenty of vegetables, fruits and protein.
- 7. Avoid excessive alcohol.** Refrain from drinking as a means to manage stress.
- 8. Treat yourself.** Read a book, listen to a favorite album, make plans with friends or enjoy a good laugh.
- 9. Talk to people.** Friends, family members or co-workers may be able to help you work through a stressful situation. And verbalizing your stress can help to physically relieve it.
- 10. Finally, ask for help.** If you feel out of control, depressed or too overwhelmed to cope, ask your doctor or a mental health professional for help. They can help you navigate and manage your stress.

If you would like to speak to a primary care provider or mental health professional about your stress, call 1.800.424.DOCS (3627). ■

## HEALTHY LIVING SPOTLIGHT

# Five Surprising Ways to Boost Your Heart Health

You probably know that healthy eating and regular physical activity are critically important to maintaining good heart health. But there are a number of other things you can do to give your heart an extra boost that might surprise you.

### Laugh.

Research has pointed to laughter having a number of benefits for your heart health, including increased blood flow and lowered stress levels. It turns out that laughter really is one of the best medicines, after all.

### Have a little dark chocolate.

Yep. You heard us. Dark chocolate contains polyphenols, which reduce the number of cell-damaging free radicals in your body. Just don’t go overboard — research suggests indulging three times a month.

### Be a good neighbor.

Next time you see your neighbor, say hi! According to a University of Michigan study, people who felt like a part of their community, trusted their neighbors and felt safe were 34 percent less likely to have a heart attack.

### Spend time with your pet.

Some studies have shown that owning a pet can help increase physical activity and lower blood pressure.

### Get a flu shot.

A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 2013 showed that persons who received a flu shot reduced their risk of heart disease, stroke, heart failure or death from cardiac-related causes by roughly 36 percent. ■



## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### Things to See and Do in Wythe County

#### Nonsense Amen! Jan 10 – Mar 3

Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theatre  
170 Malin Dr., Wytheville  
276.223.0891 / 888.950.3382  
whboxoffice@ntelos.net  
www.wohlfahrtHaus.com

#### Winter Wytheville Farmers Market Jan 12 & 26, Feb 9 & 23, Mar 9 & 23, 10 am – 12 pm

210 W. Spring St., Wytheville  
276.620.4095  
www.wythevillefarmersmarket.com

#### WCC Bluegrass & Old-Time Jamboree Jan 19, Feb 16 & Mar 16, 7 pm

FREE event sponsored by  
Wytheville Community College  
Snyder Auditorium  
1000 E. Main St., Wytheville  
276.223.4848

#### First Fridays at the Listening Room Feb 1 & Mar 1, 7 – 8:30 pm

Live music, limited seating  
420 E. Main St., Wytheville  
888.265.0324  
booking@ronirelandmusic.com

#### Rainier Trio Concert Feb 2, 7 – 8:30 pm

Mozart, Dvorak and Gershwin with the  
Classic Strings Duo  
St. John’s Episcopal Church, Wytheville  
kevin-matheson@hotmail.com

#### Valentines with Elvis Feb 13 – 14

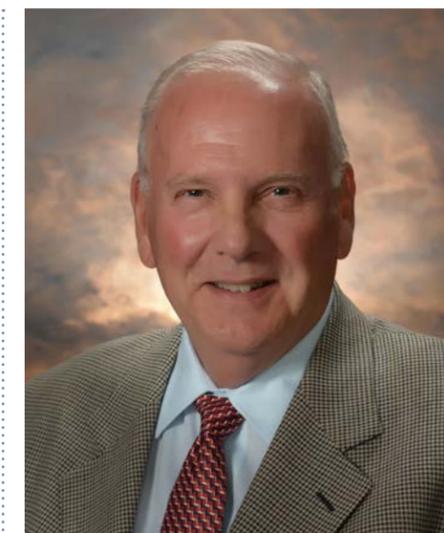
Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theatre  
170 Malin Dr., Wytheville  
276.223.0891 / 888.950.3382  
whboxoffice@ntelos.net  
www.wohlfahrtHaus.com

#### Wythe Rhythm Showcase Feb 23, 2 pm

FREE event featuring Lisa’s School of  
Performing Arts award winning team  
George Wythe High School Auditorium  
One Maroon Way, Wytheville  
info@lisasschool.com  
www.lisasschool.com

#### Back to the 50’s Mar 7 – Apr 28

Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theatre  
170 Malin Dr., Wytheville  
276.223.0891 / 888.950.3382  
whboxoffice@ntelos.net  
www.wohlfahrtHaus.com



## Meet Landon E. Weeks, MD

Dr. Weeks is a board-certified gastroenterologist who treats general GI issues. He specializes in the treatment of gastric reflux, irritable bowel syndrome and celiac disease. To make an appointment with a provider, please call 1.800.424.DOCS (3627). ■



600 W Ridge Road  
Wytheville, VA 24382

### Slow-Cooker Chicken Parmesan with Eggplant and Angel Hair Pasta

An easy-to-make, heart-healthy twist on an Italian classic.

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|--|--|
| 1 med eggplant<br><i>(peeled &amp; finely chopped)</i>                         | 1/8 tsp. salt  |
| Cooking spray  | 1/8 tsp. ground black pepper   |
| 1 28 oz. can of no-salt-added,<br>crushed tomatoes                             | 1 12 oz. package of<br>whole-wheat angel hair pasta<br><i>(broken into quarters)</i> |
| 1 tbsp. + 1/4 tsp salt-free<br>Italian seasoning <i>(divided)</i>              | 2 tbsp. Parmesan cheese  |
| 2 lb. boneless, skinless chicken<br>breasts <i>(all visible fat discarded)</i> | 1/4 cup shredded, fat-free<br>mozzarella cheese                                      |

- Peel the eggplant and finely chop it into small pieces, about 8 cups.
- Coat the bowl of a large slow cooker with cooking spray. Then, add chopped eggplant, crushed tomatoes and 1 tbsp. Italian seasoning into the slow cooker bowl. Stir to combine. Add chicken breasts into the slow cooker, combining them into the tomato and eggplant mixture. Sprinkle remaining 1/4 tsp. Italian seasoning, salt and pepper onto the chicken. Set the slow cooker to low for 7–8 hours or high for 3–4 hours.
- When almost ready to serve, remove chicken from slow cooker, along with 1/2 cup tomato-eggplant sauce. Break the angel hair pasta into quarters and stir pasta into the tomato sauce. Add chicken back into the slow cooker on top of pasta, pouring the removed 1/2 cup tomato-eggplant sauce over chicken. Top with parmesan and mozzarella cheese.
- Cover and cook until pasta is done, about 15-25 minutes. (Note that the pasta will cook faster if the slow cooker is on high.)
- Cut each chicken breast into 3 portions and serve with eggplant pasta. Serves 6.

\*Recipe from the American Heart Association.  
Find more healthy recipes at [www.heart.org/recipes](http://www.heart.org/recipes).

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## Ask A Doctor

**QUESTION:** *What can I expect during a colonoscopy?*

**ANSWER:** A colonoscopy is an easier procedure than you might think. Shortly before, you will likely be given a pain medication and a sedative to minimize discomfort. The procedure itself takes about 30 minutes, during which any polyps (tissue growths) found will be removed by the doctor, and tissue samples will be sent for a biopsy. You will be instructed to follow a special diet the day prior to your colonoscopy, and you'll need to have someone to take you home following the procedure. ■

*DISCLAIMER: The information and practices described in this newsletter are not intended as substitutes for a diagnosis or clinical or medical advice prescribed by a medical provider for an individual patient that is based on the individual's history, condition and current medical assessment. This information is not intended to be comprehensive about the subjects addressed and may include information that is time-sensitive and subject to change.*