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Health and Well-Being

A special publication
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January 20, 2022

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Our kids are hurting

And their helpers need our help and support

By CHRISTOPHER ROSS

ADDISON COUNTY — Children’s mental health has reached such a crisis point that it’s been declared a national emergency.

“The more we can each take a little time for ourselves every day, the more I hope we can all sort of collectively have the energy to go forward together.”

— CSAC’s Cheryl Huntley

“We are caring for young people with soaring rates of depression, anxiety, trauma, loneliness and suicidality that will have lasting impacts on them, their families, their communities, and all of our futures,” said American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry President Gabrielle A. Carlson in an Oct. 19 statement issued jointly with the Children’s Hospital Association. “We cannot sit idly by. This is a national emergency, and the time for swift and deliberate action is now.”

Addressing policymakers “at every level,” the groups pointed out that children’s mental health had been declining for at least a decade



CHERYL HUNTLEY
CSAC Operations Director of Youth and Family Services

before COVID-19.

The pandemic has only made it worse.

Citing data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the statement points to recent increases in emergency room visits related to children’s mental health and suspected suicide attempts.

In addition, it notes, more than 140,000 children have lost a primary or secondary caregiver over the past two years, with disproportionate impacts on children from communities of color.

Here at home in Addison County, children’s struggles with mental health became especially visible in our schools, which experienced an uptick in violent and destructive behaviors across the age spectrum.

But is Addison County experiencing a children’s mental health emergency?

“Yes, absolutely,” said Cheryl Huntley, operations director for Youth and Family Services at the Counseling Service of Addison County (CSAC). “Kids are hurting right now. As we all are.”

WHAT’S HAPPENING

When Huntley tries to explain what’s going on with children right now, she usually starts by reflecting on what’s happening for adults, she said.

“We’re all a little bit more irritable, we’re a little sad, a little worried, a little scattered, we’re having trouble focusing,” she said. “We don’t get to do the things we like to do, we can’t socialize as much, everybody’s a little cranky.”

Kids are very much tuned into that, and they’re feeling the same things, too, Huntley said. But children, especially (See Huntley, Page 12)

Protecting our youth’s mental health

In December, the Office of U.S. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy released an advisory called “Protecting Youth Mental Health.”

“The good news is that, throughout the pandemic, many people have recognized the unprecedented need to support youth mental health and well-being and have taken action to do so,” the advisory said. “But there is much more to be done, and each of us has a role to play.”

Here is what we as a society can do, according to the report.

- Recognize that mental health is an essential part of overall health.
- Empower youth and their families to recognize, manage and learn from difficult emotions — and to know that asking for help is a sign of strength.
- Make sure every child has access to high-quality, affordable and culturally competent mental health care.
- Support children’s mental health in educational, community and childcare settings.
- Address economic and social barriers contributing to poor mental health.

(See Support, Page 13)

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Huntley

(Continued from Page 11)

younger ones, don't always have the words for what they're feeling.

So they express themselves through behavior.

"It's their way of telling you something's not OK," Huntley said. "They're doing the same things adults are doing, only in kid versions. They're flying off the handle more easily, they're having tantrums more often, they're harder to calm down. They're impulsive or angry or reactive or they startle easier."

At the same time, they don't have the depth or breadth of coping skills that adults have.

Making matters worse, the pandemic has also hindered or even prevented many children from developing those very skills.

WHAT'S MISSING

It's not just about what's happening or what children are doing, Huntley said. It's also about what they're missing.

"Think about our littlest kids, in preschool, kindergarten, first grade. Their whole school experience has been with adults wearing masks over their mouths and faces. And think about the things we learn as little kids about facial expressions

and how to express emotion, all the stuff we learn from just watching faces."

A whole segment of the student population has missed that, Huntley said.

"Children are doing the same things adults are doing, only in kid versions. They're flying off the handle more easily, they're having tantrums more often, they're harder to calm down. They're impulsive or angry or reactive or they startle easier."

— CSAC's Cheryl Huntley

"How is that gap affecting their social and emotional learning?"

Older kids are missing out, too, especially when it comes to the social lives that are so critical to their development.

"Adolescence is all about your friends and your peers, it's about developing your own identity and what you think about yourself," Huntley said. "And we've got a bunch of adolescents who've been stuck at home with their parents."

WHAT'S NEEDED

"What kids need right now is some of the stuff that's hardest for adults to do right now," Huntley said. For example, "younger kids do better with structure, routine and predictability. They need someone spending time with them." They also need calm, "which is often hard for many of us to do right now."

And when kids develop more serious issues, they need professional-level care.

In their national emergency declaration, children's medical groups urged policymakers to take action on a number of fronts, including:

- federal funding to ensure all families can access mental health services.
- better access to telemedicine.
- support for school-based mental health care.
- solutions to workforce challenges and shortages in the mental health field.

Vermont knows all too well about mental health workforce shortages these days.

Reporting last month on a "mass exodus" of frontline workers at community mental health agencies," Vermont Public Radio noted that nearly 1,000 of the 5,000 positions at the state's 16 publicly funded community mental health organizations were vacant.

CSAC, which is one of those 16 agencies, is faring better than average, but not by much.

"It's certainly affected all of us," Huntley said. "It's very real. Here we are at this high-need time, and we don't have the workforce capacity to really support kids the way we want to."

But it's not a problem that can be solved without funding.

WHAT IT'S COSTING

CSAC's primary source of income is reimbursement from Medicaid, which is the largest payer for mental health services in the United States. But Medicaid's reimbursement rates do not cover the actual cost of providing mental health services, which makes it difficult for community organizations like CSAC to offer salaries and wages to attract and retain qualified staff.

"Quite honestly I don't know that there is enough of a trained workforce within Vermont to fill those vacancies," Huntley said. "I do think part of it is we need to create educational tracks and develop that... but you've got to have a salary scale that works for someone to be willing to go into this field, too."

"We're all a little bit more irritable, we're a little sad, a little worried, a little scattered, we're having trouble focusing. We don't get to do the things we like to do, we can't socialize as much, everybody's a little cranky."

— CSAC's Cheryl Huntley

Huntley has had staff come into her office and cry, she said. They say they want to stay, but they're struggling to pay their own bills.

"It's heartbreaking."

(See Help, Page 13)

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Support

(Continued from Page 11)

- Improve data collection and research to identify and respond to youth mental health needs more rapidly.

“Since many of the challenges young people face are outside of their control, we need a whole-of-society effort to support children’s mental health and well-being from birth to adulthood,” the report says.

That being said, there are also **some things that youth can do.**

- Remember that mental health challenges are real, common and treatable. Struggling with your mental health does not mean you are broken or that you did something wrong.

- Ask for help.
- Invest in healthy relationships. Social connection is a powerful source of well-being and an antidote to stress.

- Learn and practice techniques to manage stress and other difficult emotions.

- Take care of your body and mind. Stick to a schedule, eat well, stay physically active, get quality sleep, stay hydrated, spend time outside.

- Be intentional about your use of social media, video games and other technologies.

- Be a source of support for others.

Young people often learn behaviors and habits from what they see around them, so the best **thing family members and caregivers can do** is to be good role models by taking care of their own mental and physical health.

Here are some other things they can do.

- Help children and youth develop strong, safe and stable relationships with you and other supportive adults. Research shows that the most important thing a child needs to be resilient is a stable and committed relationship with a supportive adult.

- Encourage children and youth to build healthy social relationships with peers.

- Do your best to provide children and youth with a supportive, stable and predictable home and neighborhood environment.

- Try to minimize negative influences and behaviors in young people’s lives. Talk to children early about the risks of alcohol and other drugs.



**U.S. SURGEON GENERAL
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- Ensure children and youth have regular health care check-ups.

- Look out for warning signs of distress and seek help when needed.

- If you notice concerning changes in your child, let them know you’re there and ready to support them in any way they need.

- Don’t be afraid to ask for help.

- Minimize children’s access to means of self-harm, such as firearms and prescription medications.

- Be attentive to how children and youth spend time online.

- Be a voice for mental health in your community.

The full advisory can be found online at <https://tinyurl.com/yckufpnx>.

Beating the Blue Monday blues

The third Monday in January is dubbed “Blue Monday,” also known as the saddest day of the year. Feeling down on this day could be a sign of the winter blues. But for some, “Blue Monday” lasts all season. If short and gloomy days are draining your energy levels and affecting your mental health, then you’ve got classic symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

This form of depression is triggered by changes in weather and daylight that occur in winter. The good news is, there are many effective treatments and preventive measures for SAD.

MedStar Health shares some advice on how to ease Seasonal Affective Disorder that would be applicable on Blue Monday, or any time you are feeling blue:

• Consider Light Therapy

SAD is triggered by changes in our exposure to sunlight. Sitting in front of a special type of light box for about 30 to 45 minutes every morning can reduce your

symptoms of SAD. Make sure you talk to your doctor about whether this treatment option is the right one for you.

• Maintain A Balanced Diet

People affected by SAD tend to crave more sugary foods, which allows your body to feel greater fatigue. Try balancing your diet by including more fruits, vegetables, lean proteins and healthy fats. When you eat better, you feel better!

• Make A Plan

Are you oversleeping or spending more time in bed? Develop a “fun menu” of activities, daily exercise, and outings that can help you when you’re looking for an uplifting diversion.

• Check Your Vitamin D Levels

Lack of sunshine means lower levels of Vitamin D, which is a nutrient your body needs. Try spending time outdoors when the sun is at its highest, your doctor might also recommend Vitamin D supplements if your body needs an extra boost.

Help

(Continued from Page 12)

Still, Huntley and her colleagues are seeing some signs of hope.

“Some of our legislators have been really responsive,” she said, noting that CSAC Executive Director Rachel Lee Cummings had recently testified before lawmakers. “I do think there is a sense that the tide has turned a bit and that people are supportive of it.”

How that will translate into material support remains to be seen.

WHAT WE CAN DO

“I don’t know that there’s any magic to get us through this,” Huntley said. “Connecting with other people is what helps most of us get through tough things — so phone calls, Zoom calls, outdoor walks and things like that are really important for all of us right now. Connection is kind of the core of recovery in many ways, but it’s also the thing we haven’t been able to have.”

And while it’s important to “recognize we all need to be patient with each other and take time to support each other, pay attention to kids and help their lives be as structured and predictable as we can,” it’s

also important to recognize that “that’s hard for all of us right now.”

In the meantime, Huntley and her colleagues have been working for some time to gather and organize a wide range of resources focused on building resilience.

“It’s about helping kids find their strengths and coping skills and all those things,” Huntley said.

The project, which is ongoing, can be found online at okyouvegotthis.org.

“I think part of what we’ve liked about this resiliency project is that it’s not rocket science,” Huntley said. “It’s stuff we all do right now but it helps us understand the framework for thinking about it.”

So what’s the bottom line?

The basics: good food, good exercise, good sleep. Taking care of ourselves so we can take care of others.

“The more we can each take a little time for ourselves every day, the more I hope we can all sort of collectively have the energy to go forward together.”

Reach Christopher Ross at christopherr@addisonindependent.com

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COVID-19 helps some re-set their priorities

The number of COVID-19 cases will decline and people will head back out into the world. But some people will be unsure of what to expect and what lies ahead.

We will be forced to reevaluate many aspects of our daily lives with many decisions about how to adjust to a post-pandemic society while still navigating through what remains of the pandemic. We will be forced into a “new normal.” But, what exactly will this “new normal” look like?

Dr. Teralyn Sell, a psychotherapist and brain health expert, touches on what exactly the “new normal” is and how it is impacting individuals everywhere.

“One of the unspoken topics of the pandemic is how it is actually helping some people re-evaluate the things that are important to them,” Sell said. “Some people are being required to go back to their offices and continue what was, others are attempting to negotiate for more of ‘what is’ and still others are really looking to create something new or continue on the journey they have forged over the past year. No matter what side of the conversation you are on, it is time to unpack what ‘new normal’ means for you.”

Here are Sell’s top tips on how you can establish a “new normal” while keeping your mental health a priority:

Tip #1: Before you jump back into “what was” pre-pandemic, take inventory of the things that were working for you during the pandemic.



TERALYN SELL

“I like the analogy of the frog in the boiling pot of water. Pre-pandemic many of us were quite ‘comfortable’ living in the discomfort of the boiling water. Once we were taken out of the water we then realized how uncomfortable it actually was. Now, we will often be asked to jump back into the boiling water as if it isn’t boiling.”

“This is a great time to unpack the things that you may have enjoyed during the pandemic and move in those directions. Perhaps you really liked the freedom of not commuting so you were home for meals with your family. Evaluate what is important to you; time with loved ones is

likely on top of the list. Often our mental health suffers when we continue to live in discomfort. You may experience more depression, anxiety and sleep-related problems. That is why it is important to begin your evaluation of what parts of the ‘new normal’ you absolutely need to protect and what you can leave behind.”

Remember that the “new normal” will include some aspects of the “old normal” — not every change in the pandemic will for the better post-pandemic.

Tip #2: Establish healthy habits one micro habit at a time.

“For some of us, we have gathered some unhealthy habits during the pandemic. Perhaps hygiene was slipping, or not dressing properly daily or not exercising. More than ever, the time is now to evaluate some of the negative habits we have developed and start replacing them with new, healthier ones. Don’t try to tackle all habits at once. Instead set a micro goal and master that. Then ‘habit stack’ positive habits around that micro habit.”

“Healthy and unhealthy habits play a large role in our mental health. However, habits are tough unless we establish an awareness of what we are doing in the

first place. That is why before you start something new, evaluate your day from start to finish and find a time of day that makes sense to you to start something new.”

What are some things we should try to look out for when going through this process of creating a “new normal?” Here are Sell’s top two things to avoid when creating your “new normal”:

#1: When starting something new, avoid the pitfalls of perfection.

“The idea is to do something new more often than not. However, we tend to do the all-or-nothing idea here. ‘If we aren’t perfect, it isn’t worth (it),’ that sort of thinking. Look to create trends that more often than not, the new habit is completed instead of looking for perfection.”

#2: Have realistic expectations of yourself.

“For instance, if your new goal is to go for a walk every day, think of the time of day that you are at your best and put the walk in there. If you are not a morning person, don’t set your alarm for early dawn to fit it in because you will likely hit the snooze on day three. Instead, look for the time of day that you could easily fit in the walk and start there instead.”

“One of the unspoken topics of the pandemic is how it is actually helping some people re-evaluate the things that are important to them.”

— Dr. Teralyn Sell

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How to discuss mental health with others

By Stan Popovich

Do you struggle with your mental health and have a difficult time in getting people you know to be more understanding? In some cases, your colleagues might give you a hard time regarding your anxieties and depression.

Here are seven suggestions on how to deal with the people you know regarding your mental health issues.

1. Listen to the professionals and not your friends: Your peers may mean well, but when it comes down to it the professionals are aware of your circumstances more than anyone. A counselor knows what you are going through and can help you deal with your problems. When you have serious questions about your mental health, consult with a therapist.

2. Don't argue with others: It is important that you do not get into arguments with those who are giving you a rough time. Your number one

priority is to get relief from your anxieties. It is not your job to worry about how others may view your circumstances. Your health is more important than what other people may think.

It can be very frustrating to manage your fear-related issues when the people you know are on your case. Remember, you are not alone. There are millions of people around the world who struggle with their fears, anxieties and depression.

3. Your goal is to get better: Concentrate on how you can face your fears and anxieties. Don't waste your time arguing with your colleagues who are giving you a difficult time. This isn't a public relations event where you need to get approval from everyone. This is your life and you are the one suffering. Your main focus is to get better.

4. Tell your friends to learn about your situation: Explain to your peers that the best way for them to help you is to learn about your mental health issues. They could talk to a counselor, read some good books, or join a support group to better understand your situation. If your friends won't make an effort, then stay away from them because they will only make

things worse.

5. Distance yourself from those who give you a difficult time: Distance yourself from those who won't make an effort to help understand what you are going through. You need to surround yourself with positive and supportive people. If you have problems or issues with a particular person, you can always ask a counselor for advice.

6. You are not alone: It can be very frustrating to manage your fear-related issues when the people you know are on your case. Remember, you are not alone. There are millions of people around the world who struggle with their fears, anxieties and depression. The key is to find those people who can relate to you through various organizations in your area.

7. Join a local mental health support group: There are many mental health awareness support groups in your area. Many hospitals, churches and counselors in your area will be able to provide you with a list of these organizations. These groups will be aware of your situation and can give you additional advice regarding your problems.

Editor's note: Stan Popovich is the author of the book "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear."

Walk/Bike Summit on tap

Save the date! The Vermont Walk Bike Summit is coming to Middlebury on May 6.

In partnership with Vermont Agency of Transportation and along with a number of other participating organizations and sponsors, the Addison County Regional Planning Commission and the Walk-Bike Council of Addison County will host the statewide Vermont Walk/Bike Summit at the Town Hall Theater in Middlebury on that Friday.

Don Kostelec is slated to be the event's keynote speaker.

He is a principal at Vitruvian Planning in Boise, Idaho, and a 17-year veteran of transportation planning, health analysis and comprehensive planning. Kostelec's mission is to lift the citizens of our country and communities out of poor health and into healthier, happier and more fulfilled lives through an improved built environment that promotes physical activity, social interaction and emotional contentment. You can follow Don's work on Twitter @KostelecPlan.

Find out more about the summit online at vtwalkbikesummit.com.



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7 ways you can promote good prostate health

By MARC S. COHEN, MD

A unique aspect of caring for a man's health is paying proper attention to the prostate gland.

The prostate, located just below the bladder in men, produces the fluid that nourishes and transports sperm.

Here are seven tips to support the health of this gland.

Watch your meal portion sizes. Growing up I was always told to "clean my plate." It wasn't known at the time, but that was bad health advice. The golden rule is to eat slowly and deliberately so that you know when you're full and don't overeat. This is a chance to do something good for your prostate and your health in general, as overeating can lead to weight gain and increase your risk of prostate cancer.

Eat the right fats. Everyone needs some fat, but too much bad fat can increase weight, which is associated with an increased risk of prostate cancer. Replacing animal fats with vegetable oils may help men with prostate cancer to live longer, while eating lots of saturated fats may be linked with an increased risk of prostate cancer recurrence. Much less is known about the impact of fats in prostate cancer prevention. Good fats consist of things like avocados, which are rich in oleic acid, a monounsaturated fatty acid, which helps lower cardiovascular inflammation; nuts, such as pecans,



Metro Creative photo

almonds, and walnuts; and olive oil, which is also rich in monounsaturated fat. Avoid hydrogenated fats and limit fats

from dairy and processed foods.

Limit red meats. The literature on the effect of red meat on prostate cancer is unclear, but some research suggests that eating too much fat may raise your risk of aggressive and advanced prostate cancer. Some studies suggest that a diet that is low in meat but high in fruit and vegetables may help slow the growth of prostate cancer. Large amounts of meat that have been cooked at very high temperatures or are very well done (barbecued, grilled, fried) may increase your risk of prostate cancer due to the heterocyclic amines, or HCAs, found in cooked meat. Common examples include beef, pork, hot dogs, sausage and luncheon meats.

Eat prostate-healthy foods. Laboratory studies have demonstrated a positive effect of certain ingredients in foods such as lycopenes in tomatoes on the prostate. What remains largely undetermined is supplementation mostly effective in individuals that are deficient in a particular substance and how much is enough. This means we can't say for sure that any of these foods unquestionably benefit the prostate. That being said, the following foods are thought to have possible benefit: Soybeans and legumes (kidney beans, chickpeas, lentils), green tea, tomatoes (cooked over raw), watermelon, guava, papaya and pomegranate.

Avoid sugar. It is said that prostate cancer has a sweet tooth because sugar (glucose) appears to be associated with many cancers in that it increases the risk of obesity, insulin resistance,

and inflammation, all considered to be substantial risk factors for cancer development. Things to avoid include: sugary sweets, sweetened beverages such as soda, and fruit juice. Exercise portion control, avoiding additional sugars added to products. Rely on natural sugar sources (such as fruit) for your sugar fix.

Cut down on salt. Salt is known to increase urinary tract symptoms associated with benign prostatic hyperplasia, a type of prostate enlargement, so it is best to follow a low-sodium diet. By limiting the use of frozen foods, processed and canned foods, and not adding salt to meals wherever possible, you can cut down on your salt intake.

Salt is known to increase urinary tract symptoms associated with benign prostatic hyperplasia, a type of prostate enlargement, so it is best to follow a low-sodium diet.

Lifestyle Changes. Simple lifestyle changes can do wonders for your health including good prostate health. If you're a smoker, cut back or better yet stop immediately. Modest alcohol intake is fine but never in excess. *Any* exercise is better than no exercise. Start slow and progress as your body permits. The recommendation is at least three hours per week for a really healthy lifestyle. Don't give up. It can take months before a habit becomes ingrained.

Do just *one thing* every day to make you feel good about yourself and you may find that the positive change is empowering.

Many of these tips are just plain good for you, and promote good health in general. If you have other medical conditions such as heart disease, you will recognize most of these suggestions as heart healthy as well. When talking to patients I often say, "heart healthy is prostate healthy."

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Are antigen tests OK to use in cold weather?

Most likely, experts say

By ERIN PETENKO
VTDigger.org

Beginning at 10 a.m. on Jan. 12, Vermonters were invited to help “test” a new system for ordering and delivering rapid COVID-19 tests by visiting SayYesCovidHomeTest.org.

“It is our hope that rapid tests will be readily available at every local pharmacy for lower prices in the near future,” Gov. Phil Scott said. “We need to bridge the gap between where we are today and where things will be in the months ahead. That’s why we are partnering with the team at the National Institutes of Health to ‘test drive’ the effectiveness of this online ordering and home delivery model, while also surging thousands of tests into our communities.”

State officials noted that this program is not the same as the rapid testing tools being implemented for schools and childcare programs, which along with long-term care facilities and nursing homes have been prioritized by the state. And though it is similar to the system President Biden has said the federal government would use to make rapid tests more easily available later in the month, this YesCovidHomeTest program was in addition to that federal effort.

The program was developed by the

National Institutes of Health (NIH) and is expected to deliver recently purchased rapid COVID-19 tests to households across the state in two phases, beginning with 350,000 tests. Details of when 150,000 additional tests may be made available are still to be determined. The date will be set following a review of lessons learned in the first round, the production timeline of the test manufacturer and other considerations.

How did the rollout of the free rapid COVID-19 tests go? The website was flooded and Vermonters claimed all of the first 350,000 free tests by Thursday.

So, with about 350,000 at-home antigen tests on their way to Vermonters’ mailboxes, readers wrote to VTDigger to ask how the antigen tests would hold up if left for an afternoon or overnight in cold weather. Some antigen test kits, such as the QuickVue one sent through the pilot program, specify that the tests should be stored above freezing temperatures.

“We encourage people who

have questions about storage and transport conditions to consult the test manufacturer’s instructions for use or the product insert,” Jason Malucci, a spokesperson for the governor’s office, said via email.

At a press conference last week, Health Commissioner Mark Levine said there are worries about tests being exposed to cold temperatures, although he emphasized the concern was for “prolonged” periods of time.

“We’re trying to get a better handle on what that means exactly, ‘prolonged,’ and how much work (manufacturers) have done to understand it,” Levine said. “They’ve tried to give us an indication that this is not something we should be overly concerned about.”

Information from the QuickVue test manufacturer appears to back that up. Although the FAQs page for the tests says the kits should be stored at 59°F to 86°F or 15°C to 30°C, “Quidel has performed studies that demonstrate the product performs as expected under different temperature conditions (i.e., heated and

frozen conditions) encountered during shipping.”

The Food and Drug Administration’s instructions for the tests say that they were studied at room temperature, which suggests that you should probably allow the test components to fully thaw and come up to room temperature before using them.

MinnPost, a nonprofit news outlet in Minnesota, has compiled a range of manufacturer responses for other brands of antigen tests you might pick up at the pharmacy or order online. None of the manufacturers said that the tests should be tossed if they have been exposed to cold weather.

Tim Lahey, an infectious disease expert at the University of Vermont Medical Center, said via email that until data shows otherwise, “we should expect they work and focus on that most important message.”

“It’s kinda like someone said, ‘What if you were hanging upside-down from a coconut tree when you had your rapid antigen test done, would it still work?’” he wrote.

A “compulsively careful” scientist might say that it has not been tested yet under those conditions, but “if a skeptic came along and said, ‘Those tests don’t work where it’s cold,’ when push came to shove the answer is, ‘Prove it,’” Lahey said.



“It is our hope that rapid tests will be readily available at every local pharmacy for lower prices in the near future.”

— Gov. Phil Scott

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Vicki is a board certified registered lactation consultant that offers home, phone, or telemedicine visits for mothers who are facing a variety of breastfeeding challenges in Addison and Rutland counties, and some areas in New York State. She also has a prenatal monthly breastfeeding class available on Zoom. Mothers can feel overwhelmed when trying to balance milk production, latching issues, nipple soreness, engorgement, pumping and returning to work, and much more. Vicki is available to help mothers during this transitional period – you are not alone.

Vicki is a provider for BCBS, and Vermont Medicaid for home consultations and receive personal use breast pumps. She also sells Medela and Spectra breast pumps and products.

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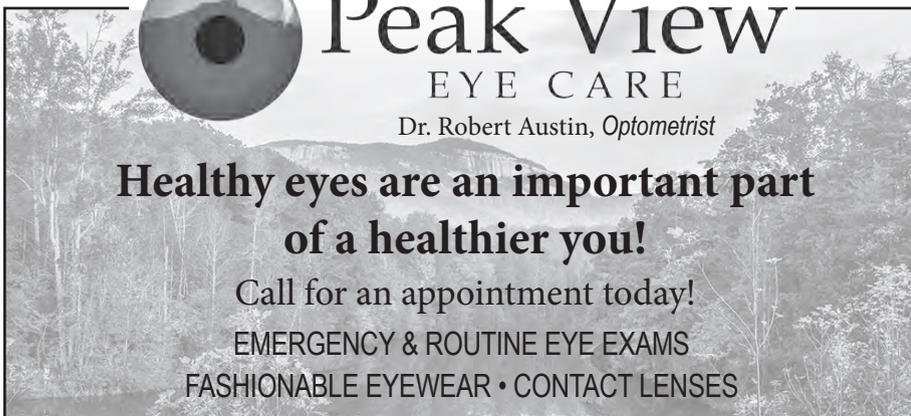


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Five common falsehoods about Alzheimer's disease

The Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA) is providing information to dispel common falsehoods about Alzheimer's disease to help individuals know the warning signs, understand the importance of early detection, and learn how to be proactive about reducing their risk.

"Dispelling the misconceptions about Alzheimer's disease is critically important, because they may cause people to ignore symptoms and delay taking action which impacts their health and quality of life," said Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr., AFA's president & CEO.

Here are five common myths about Alzheimer's disease:

Falsehood #1: Alzheimer's is just part of getting older. Alzheimer's is not a normal part of aging — it is a progressive, degenerative brain disorder that impacts memory, thinking and language skills, and the ability to carry out simple tasks. It differs from regular age-related memory loss, such as occasional forgetfulness. Persistent, progressively worsening memory issues that interfere with everyday functions, such as routinely becoming disoriented in familiar places or forgetting familiar names and faces, are not "just part of old age" — they're warning signs of a health problem.

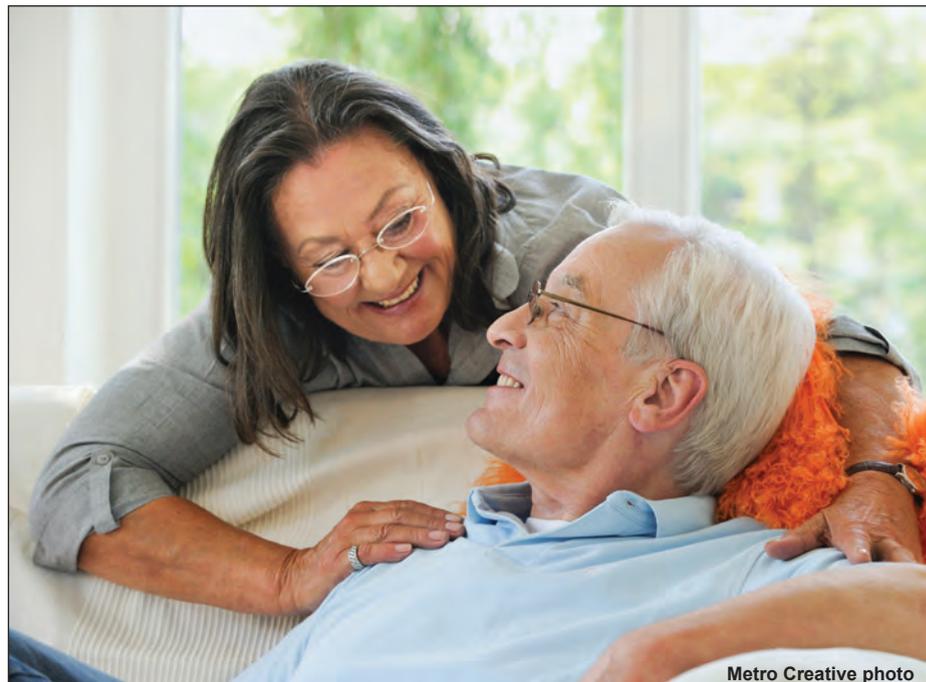
Falsehood #2: Alzheimer's disease only affects senior citizens. While the majority of people who develop Alzheimer's disease are over the age of

65, young-onset Alzheimer's disease can affect people as young their 30s or 40s. Memory problems at any age should be checked out.

Falsehood #3: Nothing can be done for Alzheimer's disease. Although there is currently no cure or treatment for Alzheimer's disease, people diagnosed with the disease can, and often do, have meaningful, active lives. They can participate in activities they enjoyed prior to the onset of Alzheimer's (making some adaptations), and therapeutic interventions can help improve one's quality of life. Some medications can help manage the symptoms. The earlier Alzheimer's is detected, the more significant the impact these interventions can have.

Falsehood #4: You cannot reduce your risk of developing Alzheimer's. While there is no guaranteed way to prevent Alzheimer's, lifestyle choices can help you reduce your risk for developing Alzheimer's disease. Good diet, exercise, social interaction, learning new skills, proper sleep, limiting alcohol, and quitting smoking are all things you can, and should, do to promote good brain health.

Falsehood #5: All memory impairments are the result of Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's is a cause of memory loss, but not the only one — vitamin deficiencies, thyroid problems, depression, sleep apnea, stress, and urinary



Metro Creative photo

tract infections can all cause memory impairments. Detecting the underlying cause is essential in order to take action. Memory screenings are an important first step in uncovering potential memory issues — they are quick, noninvasive, and consist of a series of questions to gauge memory, language, thinking skills and other intellectual functions. Results are not a diagnosis, but a memory screening can suggest if someone should see a physician for a full evaluation. AFA offers free,

confidential memory screenings virtually — visit www.alzfdn.org to learn more.

Anyone who has questions about Alzheimer's disease, memory concerns, or support resources available to help can contact the AFA Helpline seven days a week by phone (866-232-8484), webchat (www.alzfdn.org), or text message (646-586-5283). Information about Alzheimer's, memory screening, caregiving, and healthy aging is also available on AFA's website, www.alzfdn.org.



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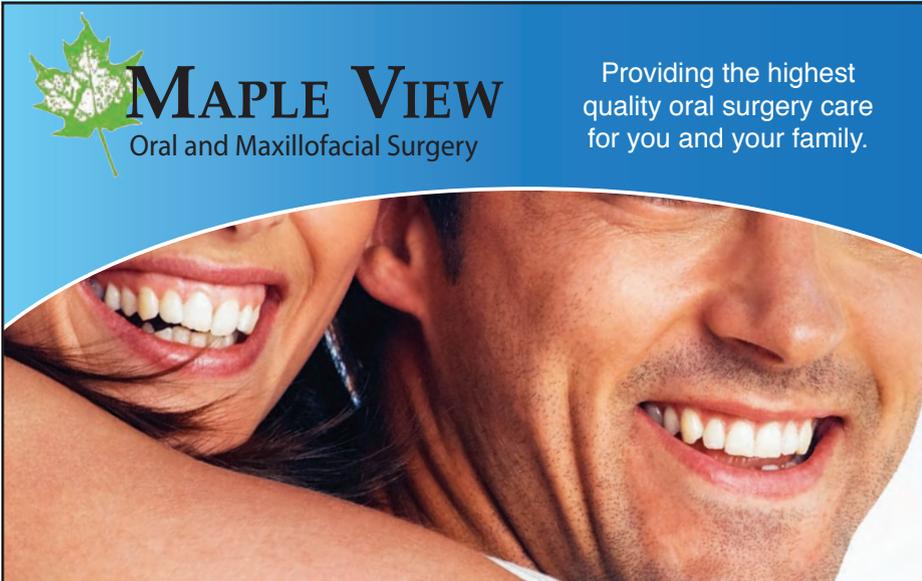
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Need Care? Know where to go.

A Guide to Finding the Right Care in the Moment

As the pandemic presses on and the national shortage of health care workers intensifies, it's more important than ever to understand your health care options to ensure you receive the right level of care in the most appropriate setting.

Health care options for Addison County residents often include primary care, urgent care and emergency care so it's not always obvious where to go for care — or when. In the heat of the moment, this guide can help you answer, *where do I go?*

If you're still not sure what to do, call your primary care provider. Even when the office is closed, there is always someone on call who can direct you to the care you need.

In case of a life threatening emergency, dial 9-1-1.

Think you may have COVID-19?

Unless you are having a medical emergency, there is no need to go to the Emergency Room. If you're feeling ill and believe you should be seen, please call your primary care provider or visit an express care location. [Visit uvmhealth.org/coronavirus to find a testing site near you.](https://uvmhealth.org/coronavirus)

Where	Primary Care 	Porter Express Care 	Emergency Room 
When	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have a new problem or an old problem flares up You need a prescription refilled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the condition doesn't appear life threatening, but you can't wait until the next day or to see your primary care provider. You're not in extreme pain Open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-7 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have a serious or life-threatening condition Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your provider knows you and your medical history You're seen by appointment so there is generally less waiting You'll pay the lowest co-pay Same- and next-day appointments are available for injuries or illnesses that don't require urgent or emergency care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shorter wait times than the ER, as you're seen in the order you arrive Access to advanced diagnostic imaging like X-ray machines and lab capabilities to assess your illness or injury onsite. Urgent care providers can prescribe medications No appointment Necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipped with life-saving equipment and providers trained to treat life-threatening illnesses or injuries It is always open You are seen based on how sick or injured you are. The most serious cases jump to the front of the line, even if they arrive later than everyone else. This will increase wait times for others.
Symptoms & Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cough, cold, flu Ear infections and sore throat Minor injuries like sprains, bumps and bruises Rashes Urinary tract infections Chronic conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, COPD, asthma and allergies Immunizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cold or mild flu symptoms Sore throat Fever without a rash Non-life threatening allergic reactions Ear pain Painful urination Sprains and strains Small cuts that may require stitches Mild asthma attacks Tick bites Eye Irritation Rashes without fever Minor Burns Evaluation for Rabies prophylaxis Simple foreign body removal Ingrown toenails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abdominal Pain Chest pain Difficulty breathing Weakness/numbness on one side Slurred speech Fainting/change in mental state/confusion Serious burns Head or eye injury Broken bones, dislocated joints Fever with a rash Seizures Severe cuts that may require stitches Severe cold or flu symptoms Vaginal bleeding with pregnancy Uncontrollable bleeding Severe asthma attack Severe allergic reaction Poisoning Animal bites Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea Dehydration Headache Bloody bowel movements
Important to Note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recommended to have a primary care provider to monitor your health, schedule regular check-ups and preventative screenings to keep you as healthy as possible. Porter Primary Care offices are accepting new pediatric and primary care patients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Porter Express Care is equipped to handle medical problems that need same-day attention but are not life-threatening. If your urgent care provider determines that you need a higher level of care, you will be transferred to the Emergency Department. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always follow-up with your primary care provider after a visit to the Emergency Room to continue to monitor your health / condition.