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Regional Healthcare

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TCRH.org

TWIN COUNTY REGIONAL HEALTHCARE NEWS + SUMMER/FALL 2021

Your Health Means Everything: Protect It with Immunizations

By Sammy Elayas, MD, Pediatrician

If a researcher were to sit down at the end of 2021 and tabulate and record the number of times individual key words were mentioned over the course of the year, “vaccine” would surely be near the top. The advent of COVID-19 vaccines and the key role they have played in slowing the spread of the virus and helping us get closer to the pandemic’s end has not only been at the forefront of global discourse but has also served as a reminder of how effective vaccination – or immunization, as it is also known – can be in protecting us from a number of illnesses both mild and severe.

Of all the things we have learned throughout this historic time, the one fact that perhaps can have the farthest-reaching impact for each of us individually and collectively is that our health means everything. It has always been true but

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Ask a Doc

**Robert
Menezes Jr., MD,**
is a primary care
physician.



QUESTION: *What is the difference between “good” and “bad” cholesterol?*

ANSWER: Cholesterol travels through your bloodstream on “lipoproteins.” Your cholesterol levels reflect two different lipoprotein numbers. The first, LDL (low-density lipoprotein), is what is commonly referred to as the bad type and makes up most of your body’s cholesterol. High LDL levels can lead to plaque buildup in your arteries and put you at increased risk for heart disease and stroke. The second type, HDL (high-density lipoprotein), is known as the “good” cholesterol. These lipoproteins transport cholesterol from your arteries back to your liver, where it is then flushed out of your body. Unhealthy cholesterol levels – while unfortunately common – are treatable through simple healthy lifestyle changes or prescribed cholesterol-reducing medication. Talk with your provider about your cholesterol and the best ways for you to maintain healthy cholesterol levels. Call **800.424.DOCS (3627)** or visit **TCRH.org** to make an appointment with a provider.



A note from the CEO

As we move into the second half of 2021 and continue to take steps back to a more normal way of life, I am reminded of just how far we have come from the beginning of the pandemic in March of last year. I am so proud of our providers, medical staff and employees for their tireless commitment to the health of our patients and community in the face of professional and personal hurdles. Whether it's caring for patients at the bedside, administering COVID-19 vaccines, keeping our facilities clean, ensuring nutritious meals for our patients and staff and every job in between, they are at the heart of our mission of Making Communities Healthier – not just during a challenging time but always.

Our vision includes creating a place where people – like you – choose to come for their healthcare. Your health means everything to us, and we are privileged to be able to help you get and stay healthy. From the importance of immunizations and knowing the different types of cholesterol to blood donations and getting the most out of your health insurance, this issue of *Making Communities Healthier* has timely and helpful info to aid you on your health journey.

It is an honor to have you as a neighbor and to call this community home.

Gregory Pearson

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perhaps never truer than now. We have been reminded of how fragile our health can be and how essential it is to do all that we can to protect it so that we can enjoy the things we love and take advantage of all that life has to offer.

One of the safest and most effective ways we can protect not only our health but the health of others is by getting vaccinated against preventable diseases. Immunizations are recommended for all ages, from birth through senior adulthood. Following recommended vaccination schedules can help ensure that you and your family stay healthy and protected from preventable serious disease. And it helps make your community healthier too, by reducing the spread of infectious diseases.

August is National Immunization Awareness Month and a time when many of us are gearing up for another school year – perhaps in person for the first time since spring of 2020. So, it's a perfect time to check your child's immunization record, make sure they're up to date on recommended vaccines and make an appointment with their pediatrician to make up for any that are missed. And while you're checking on theirs, don't forget to double-check yours, too. Adults can benefit from vaccines as well, including some that can help prevent illnesses like shingles, hepatitis A and B, and certain cancers that can result from disease infection. Below is a quick, at-a-glance breakdown of recommended vaccinations for different ages.

Birth, 1-2 months, and 6-18 months (3 doses)
Hepatitis B

2, 4 and 6 months (3 doses)
RV (Rotavirus)

6 months and up
Influenza (yearly)

2, 4, 6-18 months and 4-6 years (4 doses)
IPV (Polio)

2, 4, 6 and 12-15 months (4 doses)
Hib (Haemophilus influenza type B)
PVC13 (Pneumococcus)

12-15 months and 4-6 years (2 doses)
MMR (Measles, mumps and rubella)
Varicella (Chickenpox)

12-23 months (2 doses)
Hepatitis A

2, 4, 6, 15-18 months and 4-6 years (5 doses)
DTaP (Tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough)

11-12 years
HPV (Human papillomavirus) (2 doses)
Tdap (DTaP booster)
MenACWY (Meningococcal disease)

16-18 years
MenACWY (booster)

15 years and up (a good rule of thumb is to get a booster on the "5"s – 15,25,35, etc.)
Tdap or td (Booster every 10 years)

50 years and up
Zoster recombinant (Shingles)

65 years and up
PPSV23 (Pneumococcus)

Recommended vaccinations for children and adults alike may alter depending on factors like health conditions, lifestyle and other characteristics, so it's important to maintain a good dialogue with your primary care provider and pediatrician on which immunizations you should receive and when. And if you're an adult who may have missed some of the recommendations above, you may be able to get catch-up immunizations. Check with your provider about what's right for you.

Our health means everything, and immunizations can have tremendous benefits when it comes to protecting your health and that of your family and community. Make sure you're up to date on yours today. For more information on immunizations recommendations by age, visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines ■

If you would like to speak with a provider about your or your child's immunizations, call 800.424.DOCS (3627) or visit the Find a Provider tab at TCRH.org to make an appointment and get connected with the care you need.



Mission Moment

Frank Harmon,
PharmD, BCGP
DIRECTOR OF
PHARMACY

Frank was named TCRH's 2021 Mercy Award winner. He is considered

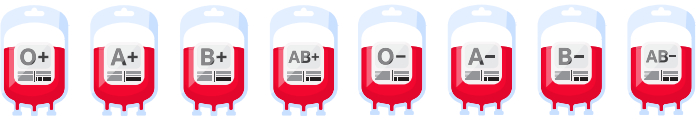
an "owner" of Twin County Regional Healthcare as he has served for five years at our facility. He has developed personal and career goals through his tenure at TCRH and serves on multiple committees within the hospital.

Frank pastors a small church in Max Meadows. He plays golf and rides bikes when time allows. He and Amanda have been married for 21 years (also a pharmacist) and they have two sons and one daughter. He is a humble yet enthusiastic person which immediately puts patients, co-workers and visitors at ease. Frank is a role model for his co-workers and is a natural leader. ■

Getting the Most Out of Your Health Insurance

Taking care of your health may be more pocketbook-friendly than you think. Many health insurance plans offer regular check-ups and age-specific preventive health screenings at little or no cost to you. And if you've met your deductible for 2021, your out-of-pocket costs for procedures could be minimal or zero. With the

second half of the year in full swing, now is a great time to book that checkup, schedule that screening or plan for that procedure before your deductible resets in January. Call 800.424.DOCS (3627) or visit TCRH.org today to make an appointment. ■



Donate Blood. Save a Life.

The American Red Cross is facing a severe national blood shortage and needs all eligible donors, especially those with type O blood and platelet donors, to give now and help save lives. Please consider making a donation and encourage your friends and loved ones to join you. You can streamline your experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass to complete a pre-donation reading and health history questionnaire on the day of your appointment.

To make a donation, visit RedCrossBlood.org or call 800.RED.CROSS to find a donation spot near you and make an appointment.

SO MUCH is back.
Get your COVID-19 Vaccine

#VaccineHero

Black Bean Burgers

A heart-healthy spin on a summer supper staple.

1 15.5-oz can no-salt-added black beans, rinsed and drained	½ tsp ground cumin
1 8.8-oz pouch brown rice, cooked	¼ tsp salt
1 15-oz can sweet potatoes or yams in light syrup	¼ tsp ground black pepper
1 large egg white	½ cup whole-wheat or plain panko bread crumbs
	1 tbsp canola or corn oil and 1 tbsp canola or corn oil, divided use

1. In medium bowl, stir together ½ cup beans and 1 cup rice. Set aside.
2. In a food processor or blender, process the remaining beans and rice, sweet potatoes, egg white, cumin, salt and pepper for 30 seconds to 1 minute.
3. Transfer the bean mixture to the bowl with the reserved beans and rice. Stir in the panko until well combined. Form into 6 patties.
4. In a medium nonstick skillet, heat 1 tbsp oil over medium-high heat, swirling to coat the bottom. Cook half of the patties for 4 minutes on both sides, or until slightly browned. Repeat with the remaining 1 tbsp oil and patties.

*Recipe from the American Heart Association. Find more healthy recipes at heart.org/recipes



Meet Michael
Simmons, MD

Dr. Simmons is a general surgeon who joined Twin County Surgery located at 225 Hospital Drive, Galax Va. He attended Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, Ga. and completed his residency at USA Health University Hospital, Mobile, Ala. Dr. Simmons welcomes new patients.

Need a provider? Call 800.424.DOCS (3627) or visit TCRH.org and click on the Find a Provider tab. ■

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.