

December 2023

West Carleton

Family Health Team

Monthly Newsletter

In this WCFHT email we'll share clinic news and provide you with information to improve your health and well-being.

This month's highlights:

Clinic and Community News

Manage your Health

Mental Health

Nutrition and Wellness

Healthy Seniors

Healthy Kids

Clinic and Community News

Uninsured Services Reminder: There have recently been changes to the cost of uninsured services at the clinic. Some examples of uninsured services that result in a fee are: missed appointments, sick notes, or certain injections. For an updated list of uninsured services, [click here](#) or visit the services tab on our website. These fees are in keeping with those suggested by the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) and help to offset operational costs. We will be making a more vigilant effort in ensuring these fees are collected.

Clinic Conduct: It is a busy time of year for all of our clinic staff at West Carleton Family Health Team and we are working hard to manage all inquires. We recognize it can be difficult to reach reception or triage staff through the phone lines and we are doing all we can to manage this. Remember to be patient and kind to all staff. **Hostile or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated.**

Healthy Living: There has been some changes to the healthy living page on our website, including updates on group programs and blog posts. [Click here](#) to explore these changes.

**Centre for Care Access and Equity Research (CCAER) Project:
Seeking Three Patient Partners**

The CCAER team is seeking patient partners from West Carleton FHT with lived experience of food insecurity. Food insecurity is a term used to describe individuals who have difficulty accessing healthy and nutritious food. Here are the the two studies taking place in collaboration with the paramedicine team at WCFHT:

1. [Designing a Food Insecurity Screening Tool for Older Adults with Dementia](#)
2. [Understanding Food Insecurity in Older Adults Living in Community](#)

As a patient partner, you have a unique opportunity to contribute your expertise in a collaborative research team environment. Patient partners will be compensated \$25 per hour.

Recruiting three patient partners:

- One with lived experience of food insecurity and cognitive impairment/dementia
- One who is a caregiver of a patient living with food insecurity and cognitive impairment/dementia

- One who has past or present experience with food insecurity and is aged 70 or older

If you are interested, please get in touch with Sarisha Philip at saphilip@ohri.ca for more details on the application process and expectations.

Manage your Health

Take your health into your own hands with these resources/guidelines.

Screening for Colorectal Cancer

A Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) is a screening test for people at average risk of getting colorectal cancer. You may be contacted by our office if you are overdue to have a FIT completed. To determine when you need to be screened, visit Cancer Care Ontario by [clicking here](#).

If you are contacted by our office, you can fill out a self-initiated qnaire through the UpPatient app by following these steps:

1. In the email sent to you by our office, click the blue box that says "Start Qnaire".
2. Fill in your date of birth and health card number as required.
3. If it comes up on your screen, read and agree to the disclaimer if you have not yet done so.
4. When you get to the screen that says "FIT TEST", click "Start Questionnaire". Answer all the questions on each page, and click next when you are finished.
5. Review your answers and click the blue box that says "Send Answers" when you are ready.

If the questionnaire indicated that you do not quality, our staff will contact you to discuss the results of your form. If the questionnaire indicated that you do quality, your requisition will be submitted to LifeLabs by our staff and you should receive a kit within the next four weeks.

If you are not able to use the UpPatient app, our office staff can send you a qnaire in the form of a message through the Patient Portal. Our phone lines are very busy this time of year and our receptionists are working very hard

to manage your inquiries. **Please refrain from calling the clinic to request a qnaire unless you cannot access the UpPatient app.**

Screening for Breast Cancer

The Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP) is a screening program that encourages people in Ontario to get screened for breast cancer. To find out if you should get screened, visit Cancer Care Ontario by [clicking here](#).

People of average risk between the ages of 50 and 74 can contact an OBSP site directly to schedule a screening mammogram every two years - you do not have to contact your family doctor for this. Guidance is different for people who are high risk or who do not fall between the ages of 50-74. Read through the OBSP information by [clicking here](#) to determine if are high risk and/or if you need a referral from your doctor.

There has recently been a news release about the minimum age of self-referral for publicly funded mammograms through the OBSP changing from 50 to 40. Please note this change will not take effect until fall 2024.

Mental Health

Managing Stress (Continued from previous newsletter)

Stress is a common, and at times, inevitable part of life. Chronic, unmanaged stress can lead to a range of mental health issues, including anxiety and depression. It can exacerbate existing conditions or trigger new ones.

Tips for Managing Stress

Build a Support Network: Don't be afraid to reach out to friends and family. Talking about your feelings and experiences can be a great stress reliever. If you need more support, consider talking with a therapist or counselor. Find information on WCFHT's mental health services by [clicking here](#).

Limit Screen Time: Constant exposure to screens, particularly on social media, can contribute to stress. Set boundaries and disconnect from technology at designated times to focus on self-care.

Practice Time Management: Effective time management can reduce stress. Create schedules and to-do lists to help you stay organized and on top of your tasks.

Engage in Hobbies and Relaxation: Dedicate time to activities you enjoy, whether it's reading, painting, or gardening. Engaging in hobbies can provide a much-needed break from stress.

Quick Tip: View your screen time data in your phone settings. Choose the app you spend the most leisure time on, and set a realistic time limit to adhere to each day.

Nutrition and Wellness

Eating to Boost your Immune System



Maintaining a robust immune system is crucial during cold and flu season. Fueling our bodies with the right nutrients can boost our immune system, both preventing you from getting sick and helping you recover from sickness

quicker.

Vitamins and Minerals: Many vitamins and minerals are involved in our immune system. The best way to ensure you are getting enough of the right nutrients is by following the healthy plate model - 1/2 plate vegetables, 1/4 plate protein, and 1/4 whole grains. Here are some specific immune-boosting nutrients and foods you can find them in:

- Vitamin C: strawberries, oranges, pineapple, spinach, kale, bell peppers (most fruits and vegetables).
- Vitamin A: carrots, sweet potato, cantaloupe, spinach, romaine lettuce
- Vitamin E: nuts and seeds and some plant oils like sunflower oil
- Zinc: seafood, chicken, and milk products
- Iron: red meat, chicken, turkey, beans, broccoli
- Vitamin D: most adults in Canada should take 600-1000 IU of vitamin D each day in the winter months, as we mainly absorb vitamin D through our skin from the sun.

Protein: Whether it's from lean meats, poultry, fish, or plant-based sources like beans and tofu, protein is essential to a well-functioning immune system. Proteins provide the building blocks for immune cells and antibodies, helping your body mount a strong defense against infections.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids: Omega-3 fatty acids are known for their immune-boosting properties. They are found in fatty fish like salmon and other seafood. Research shows we experience the most health benefits when we get omega-3 fatty acids from food rather than supplements.

Probiotics: A significant portion of the immune system resides in the gut, and maintaining a healthy balance of gut bacteria is essential. Incorporate yogurt, kefir, sauerkraut, and other fermented foods into your diet to promote a healthy gut microbiome.

Hydration: Aim to drink plenty of water throughout the day to keep your immune system in top shape.

Healthy Seniors

Staying Connected (Continued from previous newsletter)

As you age, it's essential to focus on maintaining your mental well-being. Here are some effective ways for older adults to stay socially connected and keep your brains sharp.

[Stay Connected with Family and Friends.](#) Maintaining strong connections with family and friends is vital for healthy aging. Regular phone calls, video chats, or in-person visits (when possible) can bridge physical distances and create cherished memories.

[Engage in Brain-Boosting Activities.](#) Keeping the brain active is essential for cognitive health. Engage in activities that challenge the mind and stimulate creativity. Crossword puzzles, brain-training games, reading books, or learning a new skill or language can all contribute to mental sharpness.

The New York Times has a variety of daily mental puzzles.

[Click here](#) to try "Wordle".

[Click here](#) to try the daily crossword.

[Click here](#) to try "Spelling Bee".

Healthy Kids

Cold and Flu Season: Hand Hygiene for Kids

Cold and flu season is in full swing. It is important to learn about hand hygiene and other strategies to stop the spread, so the whole family can stay well over the holidays. Here are some tips to help teach your kids about hygiene and germ prevention:

- Lead by example, showcasing proper practices like handwashing and covering the mouth when sneezing.
- Make hygiene routines fun with colorful, child-friendly products and establish a consistent schedule. Choose a song or jingle to sing for at least 20 seconds while your child washes their hands thoroughly with soap and water.

- Explain the "why" behind hygiene, emphasizing its role in preventing illness. Use visual aids, charts, or videos to help children understand the concepts of germs and cleanliness.
- Encourage personal responsibility by involving kids in age-appropriate cleaning tasks.
- Reinforce positive behavior with praise and celebrate their successes in adopting good hygiene habits.
- Address your child's questions honestly, using age-appropriate language to explain the importance of cleanliness.
- Highlight the importance of personal space and avoiding close contact when someone is sick. Encourage kids to maintain distance and avoid sharing personal items like cups or utensil when they are unwell.

By fostering these habits early on, parents can set the foundation for a healthy and mindful future.

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Patient feedback: Is there a topic you enjoyed reading about that you'd like to see more often? Are there any additional topics you'd like to read about?

[Click here](#) to fill out an anonymous survey and provide your feedback on our monthly newsletter.

This e-mail has been sent to @, [click here](#) to unsubscribe.

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