

November 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

Medication Renewals: The UpPatient App is the easiest and most efficient way to renew your medications. Please make sure you are renewing your medications at least one week before they run out so the clinic has time to process your request.

Flu Clinics: The time of year to get your flu shot is here. West Carleton Family Health Team will offer a variety of dates and times to book your flu shot in the coming weeks. Keep your eye out for an email from us on booking your flu shot through the Portal or UpPatient app. You may also get your flu shot at many participating pharmacies. For more information, [click here](#).

High-Dose Flu Vaccine: We have a limited amount of the high-dose flu vaccine available at our clinic for patients ages 65 years and older. When booking your flu shot, please indicate your vaccine preference and we will do our best to accommodate. Please note: As the supply is so limited, even if you are booked for a high-dose vaccine we may only be able to offer a standard vaccine which offers excellent protection.

Community Paramedics Spotlight: Our extensively trained Community Paramedics can assist patients with a range of concerns in their own homes, including: managing complex chronic conditions, injections, wound care, home environmental assessments, cognitive assessments and more. Patients must be referred by their health care provider to access Community Paramedics services. To read more about these services, [click here](#).

Breast Cancer Survivor Study: Are you tired of having a swollen arm or chest wall pain and you are a breast cancer survivor? Consider enrolling in a research study on breaststroke swimming after breast cancer radiation and/or surgery through Bruyere, The Ottawa Hospital and the University of Ottawa.

Study criteria:

- At least 18 years of age
- Female at birth
- Have been treated for breast cancer in the past 3 years and are still having pain and swelling

Swimming participants will receive free pink bathing caps and swimming passes to swim three times per week for a minimum of 30 minutes, for two months. A kinesiologist will also measure your range of arm motion and you will be asked to answer short surveys regarding your pain and quality of life. Please note this study includes an intervention and a control group and participants may be assigned to either.

To learn more about participating in this study, contact Monisha Kabir by emailing monisha.kabir@uottawa.ca or by calling 613-562-5800 ext. 7629.

Manage your Health

Take your health into your own hands with these resources.

VaxFacts+ Clinic:

Scarborough Health Network offers a Canada-wide telephone service to help community members and families get the most accurate information on health topics. Their health professionals understand that you may be uncertain, have concerns, or just want to learn more – and are ready to talk, listen, and answer your questions.

Find information on:

- COVID-19 vaccinations
- A wide range of vaccines, including RSV, flu, and routine immunizations
- Screening for colon, breast and cervical cancers
- Preventative health counselling for infectious diseases, health risk factors, community resources, and more

[Click here](#) to book an appointment with one of their doctors or other qualified specialists to have your questions answered.

Health811: Health811 is an Ontario-wide platform where you can access safe, high-quality health care and avoid unnecessary visits to the emergency room. This service is an easy way to get connected to care you or your loved ones need, but it does not replace your other touch point with your health care provider. Health811 can help you find a doctor or healthcare service near you, check your symptoms, get health advice, speak with a registered nurse at any time of day and more. [Click here](#) to explore all of their services.

Mental Health

Managing Stress

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

Identify Stressors: The first step in managing stress is identifying what's causing it. Take some time to reflect on the sources of your stress. Once you understand the triggers, you can develop strategies to address them.

Practice Mindfulness: Mindfulness involves being fully present in the moment. Techniques like meditation, deep breathing, and yoga can help you reduce stress and increase self-awareness. Even a few minutes of mindfulness each day can make a big difference.

[10-Minute Guided Imagery Meditation](#)

[5-Minute Breathing Meditation](#)

[5 Senses Meditation](#)

Stay Active: Exercise releases endorphins, your brain's natural mood lifters. Find an activity you enjoy, whether it's walking, dancing, or playing a sport, and make it a regular part of your routine. Visit the Movement page to learn more.

Get Adequate Sleep: Lack of sleep can exacerbate stress and lead to a host of other health concerns. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night. Read more about sleep further down on this page.

Quick Tip: Self Care

Self care is not selfish. You need to care for yourself to be able to care for others. Blocking off time in your calendar for “me time” is essential to avoid burnout. You can't pour from an empty cup.

Nutrition and Wellness

Mediterranean Eating

Mediterranean eating is a lifestyle that promotes overall health and wellbeing.

A Mediterranean Diet may help with:

- Reducing your risk of heart disease, stroke, and type-2 diabetes
- Improve blood sugar management for people with type-2 diabetes
- Delaying development of cognitive disorders such as dementia and Alzheimer's Disease

Key Components of the Mediterranean Diet

Plant Foods Every Day:

- Abundant fruits and vegetables: these should take up half your plate
- Healthy fats: olive oil, nuts and seeds
- Whole grains
- Plant proteins: beans, peas, and lentils
- Herbs and spices: less of an emphasis on salt
- Lean animal proteins: fish 2-3 times per week, chicken and turkey

Foods in Moderation:

- Dairy: choose lower fat dairy products such as low fat Greek yogurt and skim milk. Choose foods like cheeses, cream and butter less often.
- Red Meat
- Sweets and Desserts
- Alcohol: Newest guidelines suggest limiting alcohol to two drinks per week or less.

There is also an emphasis on social eating. Sharing meals with family and friends in a relaxed environment can reduce stress and promote a positive relationship with food.

The Mediterranean diet is not a restrictive eating pattern; it is a lifestyle change that focuses on eating more of the right types of food instead of focusing on restriction. If you would like to start working towards a Mediterranean diet pattern, [review this resource](#) and choose 2-3 areas to make a change today.

Quick Tip: Managing Cravings

A typical craving lasts about 15 minutes. If you are not physically hungry but are craving a certain type of food, you can try the "delay your craving" approach. Once you feel a craving coming on, pick an activity that will take 20 minutes, such as cleaning, organizing your junk drawer, knitting, or reading. After 20 minutes has passed, you might find that your craving isn't as overwhelming.

Healthy Seniors

Staying Connected (Continued from the 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

Community Workshops: Need some help looking organizing a workshop for youth? The Child and Youth staff team at the West Ottawa Community

Resource Centre can help individuals or groups provide services and education on issues that impact young people. Topics may include: self esteem, anxiety, healthy relationships, navigating social media, and self-care. For more information, [click here](#).

Picky Eaters: Try the Division of Responsibility

Whether you have a toddler or young child, picky eating can feel frustrating and discouraging. When in doubt, come back to the Division of Responsibility.

The Division of Responsibility is a tool introduced by Ellyn Satter that assigns certain responsibilities to the caregiver and child at mealtimes.

The parent/caregiver is responsible for:

- What to eat. The caregiver is responsible for offering healthy choices. Try not to make a separate meal for your child. With each meal, try offering two foods that you know your child likes along with one new food. Consistently offer new foods.
- When to eat. The caregiver is responsible for setting meal and snack times.
- Where to eat. Eat together at the dinner table with no screens.

The child is responsible for:

- If they want to eat. Toddlers and children have built-in hunger and fullness cues and their appetites vary - some days they may eat less, and others they may eat more. Look at your child's eating patterns on a weekly basis instead of daily.
- How much to eat. Trust your child when they say they've eaten enough. Avoid pressuring your child to eat more if they say they are full.

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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.

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