

# UPMC

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## WESTERN MARYLAND

### Summer Happenings

#### HEALTH AND WELLNESS COACHING

**FREE** one-on-one personalized health and wellness planning for long-term behavior changes to improve well-being and health. Board-certified coaches can help with weight management, fitness planning, lifestyle changes, stress management and recovery. Sessions are offered in person, via video, or by phone. Call 240-964-8424 for more information.

#### FITNESS CLASSES

Join a **FREE** fitness class offered in locations around the region.

- **Chair Yoga**, Tuesdays at 2:15 p.m., at the South Cumberland Library. To register for the in-person or online class via ZOOM, contact Christina Collins-Smith at [collinssmithcd@upmc.edu](mailto:collinssmithcd@upmc.edu) or call 410-967-9112.
- South Cumberland Library **Yoga Classes**, Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m.
- LaVale Library **Yoga Classes**, Fridays at 10:30 a.m.

#### ONLINE SMART RECOVERY

Tuesdays at 7:30 a.m., Wednesdays at 6:00 a.m. and 7:30 a.m., and Thursdays at Noon. **FREE** self-help support group assists in recovering from all types of addictions and addictive behaviors. For more information contact Carey Moffatt at [moffattcl@upmc.edu](mailto:moffattcl@upmc.edu) or call 240-964-8418.

# Real WELL

SUMMER 2026

WELLNESS NEWS YOU CAN USE!

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**Stacey Blank, MS, BTPS, RRT**  
Manager, UPMC Community Health and Wellness

**WELCOME TO THE SUMMER EDITION OF OUR HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWSLETTER!**

Summer is here, bringing fresh energy and plenty of ways to enjoy the season while taking care of yourself. From juicy tomatoes and sweet corn to berries, cucumbers, and zucchini, summer's farm fresh foods make it easy to add color, flavor, and goodness to everyday meals. Toss together a quick salad or keep things simple at breakfast or dinner.

The summer months are also made for doing the things that feel good - digging in the dirt, planting flowers, tending gardens, mowing the yard, or simply spending time outdoors. Add in leisurely walks, local paths, picnics, live music, or finding a cool, comfortable place to stay active indoors. Summer offers endless ways to move your body, clear your mind, and lift your spirits.

Here's to a healthy, active, and joyful summer ahead. Stay active, my friends.

Be well,

*Stacey*

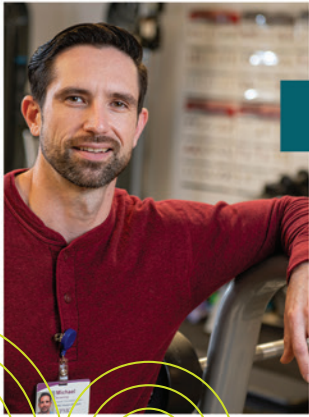
#### In this Edition...

- Low Back Pain and Exercise
- When Structure and Routine Become Support
- Using Small Habits to Create Lasting Change
- Summer Mini-Yoga Earthing
- My Journey as a Servant of God
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Visit our **UPMC Western Maryland Community Health and Wellness Coaching Website** at

[UPMCWesternMaryland.com/Wellness](http://UPMCWesternMaryland.com/Wellness)

Find us on Facebook at **Get Healthy Allegany.**



# Low Back Pain and Exercise

Michael Browning, MA, NBC-HWC

New research suggests that up to 80% of adults will experience low back pain at some point in their lives, and like most health problems, the risk increases with age. There are many causes that contribute to low back pain including:

- Obesity
- Osteoporosis
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Prolonged sitting
- Degenerative discs, joints, and ligaments

The good news is that you can do something about it. Resistance training or weight bearing exercise can slow, reverse, and potentially eliminate low back pain by improving bone density and muscle strength according to Christopher Bise, assistant professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences.

Before starting an exercise program for your back, consult with a doctor or physical therapist to assess the actual problem to avoid further harm to your back. If your doctor or physical therapist gives you the greenlight for exercise, listed below are some of the best options. Check out the source for this article for more information:

## 8 Exercises for Low Back Pain

1. Standing Lumbar Extension
2. Supine Bridge
3. Bird Dog
4. Cat-Camel
5. Double Knee-to-Chest Stretch
6. Supine Twist
7. Child's Pose
8. Cobra Stretch



## WHEN STRUCTURE AND ROUTINE BECOME SUPPORT



Carey Moffatt, MS, NBC-HWC

Ever have one of those weeks where nothing is technically wrong, yet everything feels harder than it should? Picture a morning spent searching for your keys versus one you prepared for the night before. Same tasks. Completely different experience.

Structure and routine work together, but each plays a different role. Structure is the framework of your day, like when you work, rest, or eat. Routine is what you do consistently within that structure, like setting out your clothes the night before or doing weekly meal prep. Knowing the difference helps you see where simple shifts can make life easier.

Structure reduces stress by creating predictability. It helps your nervous system settle. Routine reduces decision fatigue by turning helpful actions into habits. Planning time for work, movement, rest, and meals adds breathing room. Writing things down frees up headspace. Perfection is not required. Structure can flex as life shifts.

Even a single morning or bedtime routine can offer stability and support on unpredictable days. Here are a few simple steps to get started:

- Outline the basic structure of your day
- Choose one supportive routine and write it down
- Practice it for one week and reflect on what feels easier

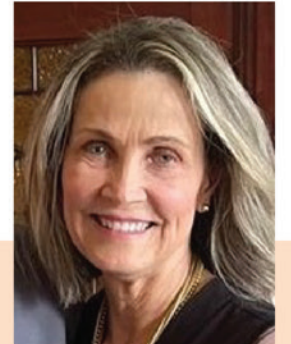
One small, consistent step can make a real difference. Choose one and let it support you.

Source: <https://mhanational.org/resources/creating-healthy-routines/>



## Summer Mini-Yoga Earthing

Christina Collins-Smith, MLA, E-RYT 500, LMT  
Yoga, Health and Wellness Coach



As summer heats up, shift your yoga practice to a shady patch of cool earth. Let your feet touch the ground and wiggle your toes in the grass. This practice, often called "earthing," reconnects the body to natural frequencies that offer powerful gifts of balance and restorative energy. When synced with movement, it's a delightful way to release stress and restore well-being.

### Try this cooling summer day mini-yoga flow:

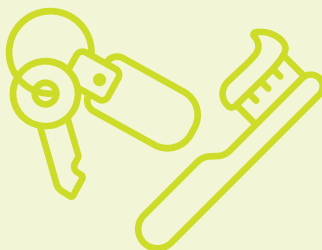
- Stand tall with all joints aligned. Bring hips forward. Relax shoulders. Wiggle your toes. Feel the grassy earth beneath your feet.
- Savor the gift of breath with long, cool inhales and slow, full exhales. Focus your mind on your breath. Allow yourself time to relax into the moment.
- Stretch your arms toward the heavens. Wiggle your fingers. Move rhythmically from side to side, then down in a wave. Say "ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh."
- Next, gently bend forward from the waist. Stretch your hands to greet the earth. Relax into the breath as tension releases from the spine. Feel yourself move closer to the earth with each exhale.
- When ready, sit on the grass - or in a chair with your feet still on the grass. Take a few cooling breaths then bring your arms up like a goalpost. Slowly stretch them back with an inhale, then forward with an exhale. Do this 3 to 5 times,
- Then, softly lay your hands on your lap or knees. Quietly close your eyes for a moment and savor your peacefulness.

Sources: <https://www.webmd.com/balance/grounding-benefits>  
<https://www.bwellarts.com/bewellarts-news.html#/>

Join weekly yoga at Allegany County Libraries



**Brittany Friend, MS, NBC-HWC**



## USING SMALL HABITS TO CREATE LASTING CHANGE

Many people start trying to make lifestyle changes by making big goals that quickly seem insurmountable, leading to lack of motivation and the feeling of failure, ultimately resulting in abandoning their goals.

One way to tackle this is using a think small and build approach. BJ Fogg developed the Tiny Habits method to help develop lasting change. Fogg saw that the success to creating this change was starting with a small behavior and linking it to an anchor moment in a person's day. An anchor moment is something you already do out of habit, such as brushing your teeth. Say you want to work on upper body strength and have a hard time doing pushups. The anchor moment of brushing your teeth in the morning is a perfect place to work on this goal. "After I brush my teeth, I will do two pushups."

### TINY HABITS RECIPE:

After I \_\_\_\_\_,  
I will \_\_\_\_\_,  
Then, I Celebrate!



What comes last is perhaps the most important step. "THEN, I celebrate!" Celebrating what you have done with a smile, a positive thought, high fiving yourself in the mirror, doing a happy dance, or whatever type of celebration you choose, is the key to creating positive feelings in your body that keep you coming back the next day to do it again. From here you can challenge yourself. Increase the pushups, add a different exercise during an evening anchor moment. Start small and build and never forget to celebrate!

Link: <https://tinyhabits.com/>

## SPIRITUAL WELLNESS



# MY JOURNEY AS A SERVANT OF GOD

**Rusty Kitzmiller, Associate Chaplain**  
**UPMC Western Maryland Pastoral Care Department**

me to join him here. Although I initially said no three times, he saw a calling in me that I hadn't yet recognized. I am so grateful he persisted. He and others even nominated me for an ACES award in 2024 which I received and was totally overwhelmed by this honor.

Over the past eight years, this journey has been both challenging and incredibly rewarding. Many of you may know me from the "dark days" of the pandemic, when Chaplain Sam Seletyn and I worked the doors checking everyone in. We became very close during those dark days, and we watched as God had many "appointments" at those front doors to minister to many hurting people and their families.

Or perhaps you know me now as "the Weekend Guy" or the "Candy Man Chaplain." Whether I am visiting with patients or walking the hallways with my basket of candy, my goal is simple: to offer a smile, a prayer, and a small token of appreciation to our doctors, nurses, security, custodial staff, and everyone in between. These interactions have allowed me to build trust and offer support to this wonderful community.

Many continue to ask, why do I hand out candy? I simply tell them that I continue to do it to let them know how much they are appreciated and prayed for. It has allowed me

to become very close to many of our staff who I have become friends with and someone they trust and share when they need prayers for what is happening in their lives. Chaplains are here for patients, families and staff. We are a listening ear to everyone who needs to share.

For our patients and their families, many remember me ministering to them and their families when they were here at the hospital over the years. They have shared with me that my mom's poem that I gave them then is in their family Bible or kept in another place of importance. My mom would be so happy that she is still touching lives with her poetry 12 years after going Home to Glory.

I share this background so you can better know the heart behind the candy basket. My service is guided by...

### Proverbs 3:5-6

**"Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
And lean not on your own understanding.  
In all your ways acknowledge Him,  
And He shall direct your paths."**

I leave you with this thought: the secret of serenity is to see God in everything and to give the LORD praise.

It is an honor to serve alongside you. To God be the glory for the great things He has done.

**My journey here began in November 2017, but the path that led me to become your chaplain started long before. For nearly 20 years, I worked with Peoples Drug Store, eventually managing a location in Keyser. However, when CVS acquired the chain in 1991, I found myself at a crossroads that required deep soul-searching. During that difficult transition, my mother, Beulah Kitzmiller, penned a poem titled "God is Working." That poem became a catalyst for my life, leading me into ministry just three months later.**

Many of my associates and patients over my eight- plus years at the hospital will recognize this poem. I have shared it hundreds of times with patients, families, colleagues, and others because it seemed perfect for anyone going through a difficult time.

For 26 years, I served as the Development Director at Calvary Christian Academy. It was Chaplain Bruce McBride who eventually urged



# IN THE KITCHEN with RACHEL



Rachel Sprout, RDN, LDN

## Chicken & Kale Taco Salad with Jalapeño-Avocado Ranch



### INGREDIENTS

- 1 ripe avocado
- 1/3 cup ranch dressing
- 2 tablespoons chopped jalapeños
- 1 tablespoon white-wine vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 8 cups shredded kale
- 2 cups shredded cooked chicken breast
- 1 1/2 cups tortilla chips
- 1 cup canned black beans, rinsed
- 1/2 cup chopped mango
- 1/4 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup diced red onion
- Lime wedges & crushed red pepper for serving



### DIRECTIONS

- Combine avocado, ranch dressing, jalapeños, vinegar and pepper in a food processor. Pulse until smooth.
- Toss kale, chicken, tortilla chips, beans, mango, cheese and onion with the avocado mixture in a large bowl. Serve with lime wedges and crushed red pepper, if desired.

[Chicken & Kale Taco Salad with Jalapeño-Avocado Ranch](#)

## Chopped Salad with Chickpeas, Olives & Feta



### INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 (15 ounce) can no-salt-added chickpeas, rinsed
- 1 cup diced cucumber
- 1 cup quartered cherry tomatoes
- 1/3 cup chopped parsley
- 1/4 cup finely chopped red onion
- 1/4 cup halved Kalamata olives
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta



### DIRECTIONS

- Whisk together olive oil, vinegar, garlic powder, salt, and pepper in a large bowl.
- Add chickpeas, cucumber, tomatoes, parsley, onion, olives, and feta; toss to coat.

[Chopped Salad with Chickpeas, Olives & Feta](#)



## BE FAST

When You Spot Stroke Warning Signs

UPMC  
LIFE CHANGING MEDICINE

**B**alance: Loss of coordination or balance



**E**yes: Sudden double vision or vision loss



**F**ace: Facial drooping on one side



**A**rms: One arm becomes weak or numb



**S**peech: Slurred speech



**T**ime: **BE FAST.** Call 911



## SAFETY FIRST

Susan Lee, Admin Assistant



## SUMMER HEAT SAFETY

Summer brings picnics, ball games, family reunions, outdoor concerts, and more! As we plan to spend more time outside, take care when summer temperatures rise to unhealthy levels. Extreme heat poses a real health risk and can cause heat exhaustion and heat stroke, dangerous conditions which require medical care ([Heat-related illnesses | Heat | CDC](#)). When temperatures rise to extreme highs, protect yourself and your loved ones:

- Stay in air-conditioned spaces as much as possible.
- Drink plenty of fluids (even if you don't feel thirsty).
- If you are outside for extended time periods, take frequent breaks and take advantage of any available shade.
- **NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN OR PETS IN CARS!**
- Check on neighbors and friends to make sure they are safe.
- Check local weather reports and news for any heat-related safety advisories.

For more information, visit [Protect Yourself From the Dangers of Extreme Heat | Climate and Health | CDC](#)

# LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

From: [www.parade.com](http://www.parade.com)



What did the alien say to the landscaper?

*Take me to your weeder*

What do you call cheese that belongs to someone else?

*Nacho cheese*

What do you do if someone rolls their eyes at you?

*Roll them right back*

