

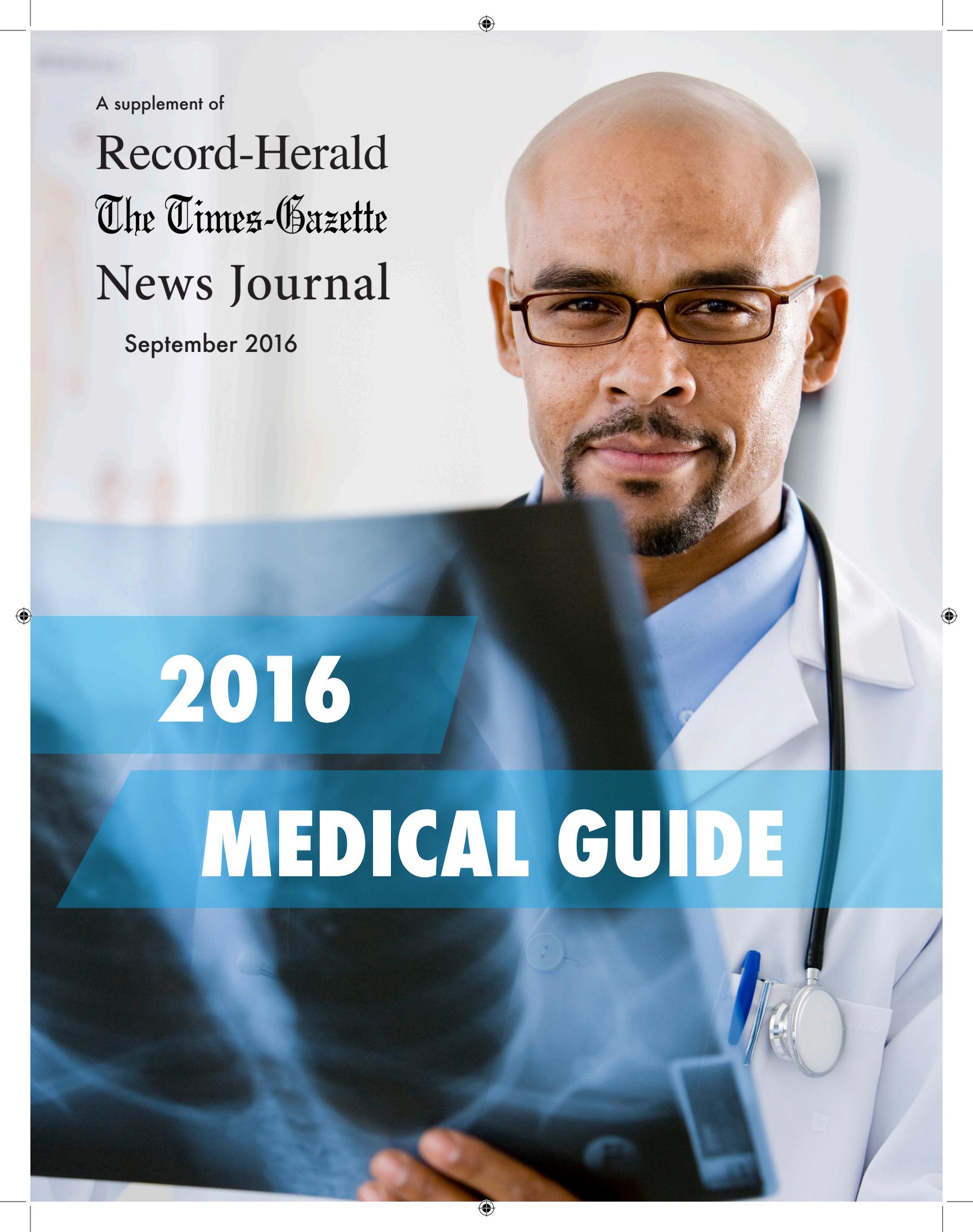
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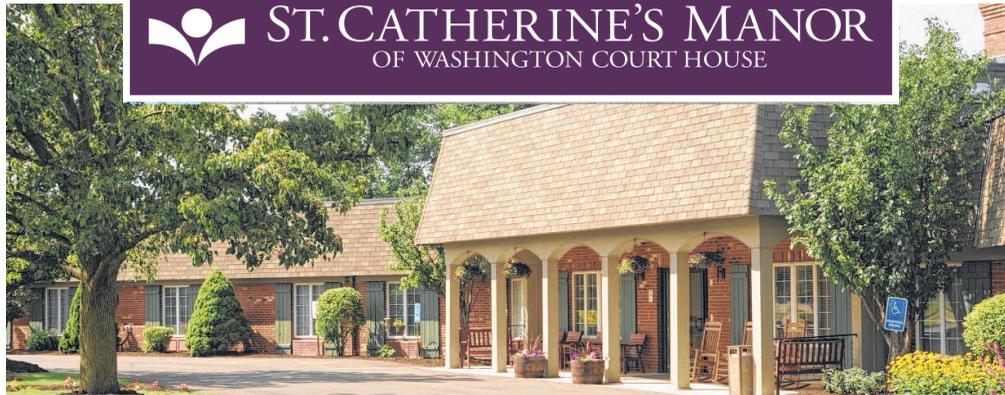
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September 2016

**2016**

**MEDICAL GUIDE**





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# Pros and cons to detox cleanse diets

Detox diet adherents tout the benefits of cleansing their bodies. The detox craze can be confusing, and misinformation regarding the best way to proceed with a cleanse only illustrates the emphasis men and women considering detox diets must place on learning as much about them as possible.

Detoxing involves changing one's diet for a predetermined period of time for the purpose of ridding the body of unhealthy, potentially toxic substances. While there may be some immediate weight loss associated with detoxing, losing weight is not the main purpose of detoxing.

Men and women have various detox options to choose from, including some that target specific areas of the body or others that aim to improve overall health.

Detox diets tend to be restrictive diets, which may not make them

practical for everyone — particularly those who may have health ailments or specific dietary needs. Consult with a physician prior to beginning a detox diet to ensure it will not interfere with

any treatments. In addition, it can help to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of detox diets to determine if doing a cleanse is the right choice for you.



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## Pros

- **Eliminate poor eating habits:** Cleanses may help you to take better inventory of your eating habits and encourage you to make healthy choices in the process. Detox diets require that their adherents eliminate particular foods for a period of time, and in many instances, these off-limits foods are overly processed items that may not be the best food choices in the first place.
- **Increase vitality and energy levels:** Detox diets can sometimes increase one's energy and stamina. This can translate into more motivation to exercise or be active.
- **New foods:** A detox may require you to increase consumption of whole foods and participate in "clean eating." Eating cleanly is about selecting the healthiest options in each of the food groups. You may be exposed to new ingredients and discover healthy options you love.
- **Benefit the immune system:** You may find that healthy eating has positive effects on your immune system. This may make it easier to fend off illnesses or improve recovery time on those occasions when you get sick.

## Cons

- **Potential for nutrient deficiency:** Restrictive eating may deprive the body of certain nutrients it needs to remain in optimal shape. Nutrient deficiency can be dangerous, so it's important to proceed with caution.
  - **Weight loss concerns:** If your goal is to lose weight, do not expect detox diets alone to produce permanent weight loss. Many people experience weight gain after they stop a detox, says the health resource Everyday Home Remedy. Weight loss is better achieved gradually and through consistent healthy eating and exercise than through a cleanse.
  - **Potential to overextend detox diets:** Some people extend a detox for longer than is recommended in an effort to experience greater gains. They may feel that two or three weeks of a cleanse may be doing more good than simply one week. This is not a good idea because you can deprive your body of the balance of foods it needs to thrive.
- Detox diets can be short-term dietary options that bring about renewed vigor and health. Speak with a doctor and nutritionist to determine if a cleanse is best for you.

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# Robotic surgery can be advantageous

Certain illnesses or injuries require surgery to correct the problem or prevent further damage. Surgery is not something many people would volunteer for, but it can be a necessity in certain instances.

Patients may have many questions when they learn that surgery is on the horizon. Robotic surgery in particular may raise patients' eyebrows. Robotic surgery is a relatively recent development. According to UC Health and Mount Carmel Medical Center, robotic surgery is an advanced form of minimally invasive or laparoscopic (small incision) surgery. Compared to open surgeries, robotic surgery offers many benefits to patients, some of which include:

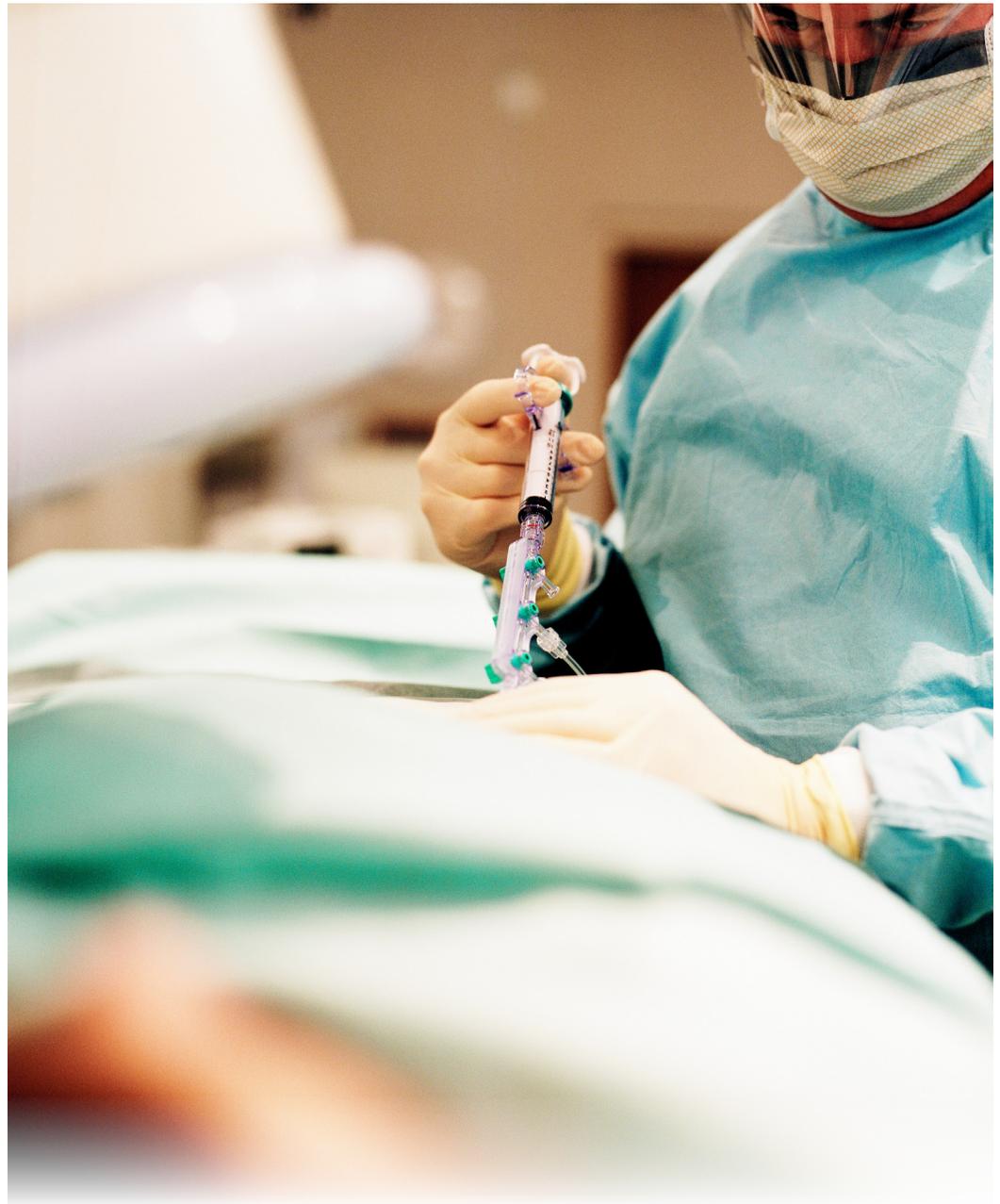
- minimal scarring
- reduced blood loss
- faster recovery time
- reduced risk of infection
- reduced pain and discomfort
- possibly shorter hospitalization
- faster recovery time

Robotic surgery works similarly to traditional surgery, but instead of the surgeon working manually, robotic arms take over. During robotic surgery, typically three robotic arms are inserted into the patient through small incisions. One arm is a camera and the other two serve as the surgeon's "hands." In some instances, a fourth arm is used to clear away any obstructions. Surgeons will perform the procedure using a computer-controlled console.

Robotic surgery does not mean that a robot is taking the place of a surgeon. Rather, robotic surgery combines the skills and knowledge of surgeons with advancements in technology in an effort to improve surgical procedures. Many surgeons prefer robotic surgery because of its precision and the superior visualization of the surgical field that the procedure provides. It's also easier to account for tremors in the hands, and the machinery enables greater maneuverability.

UC Health explains how robotic surgery works:

The surgeon will work from a computer console in the operating room, controlling the miniaturized instruments mounted on the robotic arms. He or she looks through a 3-D camera attached to



another robotic arm, which magnifies the surgical site. The surgeon's hand, wrist and finger movements will be transmitted through the computer console to the instruments attached to the robot's arms. The mimicked movements have the same range of motion as the surgeon, allowing for maximum control. While the surgeon is working, the surgical team will supervise the robot at the patient's bedside.

Men, women and children can benefit from robotic surgery, which has become especially helpful for gynecologic condi-

tions. Robotic surgery has been used in the treatment of cancers of the abdomen, as well as pelvic masses, fibroids, tumors, and tubal ligations. Robotic surgery also can be used for pelvic reconstruction surgeries and to treat incontinence and organ prolapse.

Although the success rates of traditional surgery versus robotic surgery have been relatively similar, many people are now leaning toward robotic surgery because of its advantages — and seeking doctors and hospitals trained in robotic surgery.

# Coffee and colon health

Coffee compels many people to rise out of bed every morning. While individuals have many reasons to drink caffeinated beverages, the most notable is often the pep such beverages provide. But coffee, tea and other caffeinated beverages actually may provide additional benefits, including helping to fend off disease, including colorectal cancer.

The American Cancer Society estimates that, in the United States, more than 95,000 new cases of colon cancer and 39,000 new cases of rectal cancer will be diagnosed in 2016. Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer diagnosed in men and women. However, coffee may help reduce instances of colon cancer.

A study titled “Coffee Consumption and the Risk of Colorectal Cancer,” which was published in the journal *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*, found that regular coffee

consumption inversely correlates to colorectal cancer risk. Coffee has been identified as a protective agent against colorectal cancer, as several of its components affect the physiology of the colon and can make cancerous cells less likely to take root there. The *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* also substantiates these claims. Frequent coffee consumption has been associated with a reduced risk of colorectal cancer in a number of case-control studies — for both men and women.

Drinking coffee may not only help keep cancer at bay, it may boost the survival rate from colon cancer, too. Information from a study published in *The Journal of Clinical Oncology* stated that colon cancer patients who are heavy coffee drinkers have a far lower risk of dying or having their cancer return than those who do not drink coffee.



See COFFEE | 12



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# What exactly is cancer?

Cancer can affect anyone. Sometimes it strikes with no warning, while other times people may have a genetic predisposition. Various medical organizations say there are between 100 and 200 different types of cancer. Everyone has heard of cancer, but some are still unsure of what cancer is.

## Defining cancer

The organization Cancer Research UK defines cancer as abnormal cell growth. Cancer cells are cells that divide in an uncontrolled way. New human cells normally grow and divide to form new cells as the body requires them. As healthy cells grow old or become damaged, they die off and new cells take their place. However, when cancer develops, this process goes haywire. Damaged cells become even more abnormal and can survive when they would normally die. These cells keep multiplying and eventually can form lumps or masses of tissue called tumors. This is the case in most cancers, with the exception of leukemia, wherein cancer prohibits normal blood function due to abnormal cell division in the bloodstream.

Not all lumps in the body are tumors. Lumps that remain in place and do not spread to other areas of the body can be harmless or benign. According to the American Cancer Society, cancerous tumors are malignant, which means they can spread into, or invade, nearby tissues. Cancer stages actually are determined based by how far cancerous cells have spread beyond their point of origin.

## Cancer stages

Cancer is staged according to particular criteria based on each individual type of cancer. Generally speaking, lower stages of cancer, such as stage 1 or 2, refer to cancers that have not spread very far. Higher stages of cancer, such as 3, mean cancer has branched out more. Stage 4 refers to



cancer that has spread considerably.

## Common forms of cancer

Cancer can occur just about anywhere in the body. Cancers of the breast, lung, colon, and prostate cancers affect males and females in high numbers.

Classifying cancer involves understanding where the cancer originated. Cancer Treatment Centers of America offers these classifications:

- Carcinomas begin in the skin or tissues that line the internal organs.
- Sarcomas develop in the bone, cartilage, fat, muscle or other connective tissues.
- Leukemia begins in the blood and bone marrow.
- Lymphomas start in the immune system.
- Central nervous system cancers develop in the brain and spinal cord.

Cancer is treated in various ways and depends on the cancer's stage, type and effects on the body. A person's age as well as his or her current health status also may play a role in treatment decisions made by both the patient and his or her medical team. Surgery may be

conducted to remove a tumor, while chemotherapy employs chemicals to kill cancerous cells. Radiation therapy, which uses X-rays to direct radiation toward cancerous cells, is another potential cancer treatment. The side effects of each treatment vary, and there are ways to mitigate these effects.

## Why does cancer occur?

Cancer develops for various reasons — some of which may not be fully understood. The National Cancer Institute states genetic changes that cause cancer can be inherited from a person's parents. Cancers can also arise during a person's lifetime as a result of errors that occur as cells divide or because of damage to DNA that results from certain environmental exposures. Cancer-causing substances include the chemicals in tobacco smoke. Ultraviolet rays from the sun also have been linked to cancer.

Learning more about cancer can help people reduce their risk for developing this potentially deadly disease. Individuals should always speak with their physicians if they have specific questions about cancer.

Fatigue is one of the most common side effects of cancer treatment. But cancer patients should know that fatigue is treatable.



## Coping with cancer treatments

Affecting people all around the world, cancer does not discriminate based on gender, age or ethnicity. A cancer diagnosis and subsequent treatments can be overwhelming. Medical teams work together with patients and families to choose the best treatment plans. But while treatments are often highly effective, coping with both the emotional and physical side effects of cancer treatments is a big part of winning the fight against this disease.

The National Cancer Institute says cancer treatments cause side effects because treatments not only affect cancerous cells, but also healthy tissues or organs. Side effects vary from person to person, even among those who get the same treatment. Side effects are particularly common among recipients of chemotherapy. According to The Mesothelioma Center, fatigue is the most frequently reported side effect of chemotherapy, affecting up to 96 percent of cancer patients. Nausea and vomiting also occur in 70 to 80 percent of chemo patients.

Cancer patients dealing with side effects like nausea, vomiting and

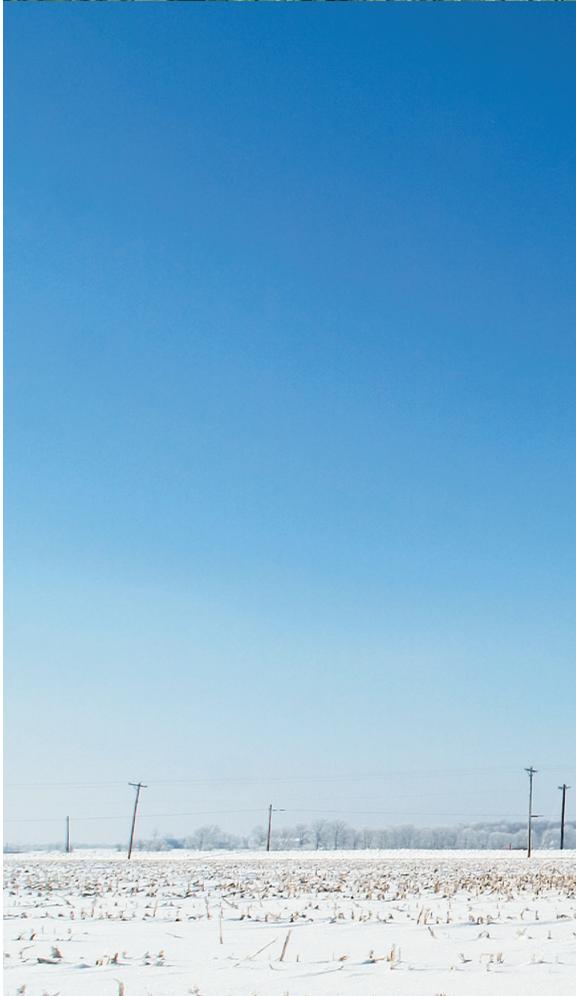
fatigue can focus their efforts on feeling the best they can despite these effects. Nausea can occur during both radiation and chemo treatments. Patients undergoing treatments for cancers of the brain may also experience nausea, says the American Cancer Society. Patients can discuss alternative treatment plans with their physicians if nausea becomes overwhelming. Furthermore, there are medications designed to staunch the feelings of nausea that may help alleviate vomiting spells. Patients should always speak with their cancer care teams about how nausea or vomiting is affecting them, especially if it's impacting how much nutrition they are able to receive.

Fatigue is another common concern. MD Anderson Cancer Center says that fatigue is treatable, but many patients fail to discuss fatigue with their doctors. Cancer-related fatigue can have a trickle-down effect that leads to sleeping disorders; emotional distress, including depression; and added stress. A healthy lifestyle can help fight fatigue, and such a lifestyle includes healthy eating and exercise. Exercis-

ing while undergoing cancer treatments can be challenging, but even a 20-minute walk during the day can help reduce stress and increase energy. People experiencing fatigue should resist the urge to nap too frequently. One 30-minute nap may be all you need to recharge. In addition, maintain a fatigue journal, which can help doctors identify potential fatigue triggers.

Emotional effects of cancer treatment can be overwhelming, and some patients may not be eager to share such side effects with their physicians. But seeking help for depression, anxiety, fears, and any of the other myriad feelings that cancer and its treatments can produce can make a world of difference. Trained therapists who specialize in helping cancer patients routinely work with individuals to assist them in coping. When emotional health is in check, it's much easier to focus on physical health.

Cancer treatments may come with side effects. But these effects can often be mitigated so patients can direct their energy and focus to fighting the disease more effectively.



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## COFFEE

From page 7

Significant benefits start at two to three cups per day. People who consumed four cups of caffeinated coffee or more a day had half the rate of recurrence or death than non-coffee drinkers.

Other data indicates caffeine alone may not be behind the reduced cancer risks and rates — it may be the coffee itself. Researchers at the University of Southern California Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center of Keck Medicine found that decreased colorectal risk was seen across all types of coffee, both caffeinated and decaffeinated. According to Dr. Stephen Gruber, the author of the study, coffee contains many elements that contribute to overall colorectal health, which may explain coffee's preventive properties. Caffeine and polyphenol can act as antioxidants, limiting the growth of potential colon cancer cells. Melanoidins generated during the roasting process have been thought to encourage colon mobility, and diterpenes may prevent cancer by enhancing the body's defense against oxidative damage.

Although data continues to suggest that coffee can help reduce colorectal cancer risk and survival rates, additional information is still needed before doctors can start recommending coffee consumption as a preventative measure.

## Growing out of pediatric care

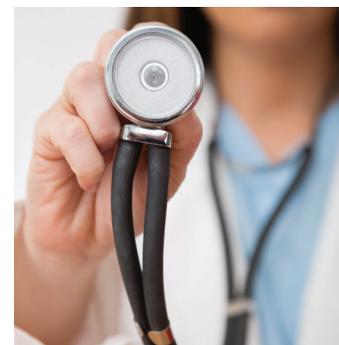
### Know when and how to transition to adult care doctors

Pediatricians provide valuable health care to children from the moment the children are born until they reach young adulthood. But there comes a time in each child's life when he or she is ready to make the transition from pediatric care to adult health care. This decision can become even more challenging if the child is being treated for a serious illness like cancer.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, ideally children should transition to an adult-oriented health practice between the ages of 18 and 21. But that transition can occur even earlier if the patient feels comfortable doing so.

Transitioning to a new doctor might be difficult for young people coping with cancer. However, children and parents can work together to make the transition go smoothly, and parents should encourage youngsters to voice any concerns they have as they switch physicians.

Parents can begin the transition by involving their children in the search for adult care doctors. Young adults may want to use the same doctor their parents see, though some may feel more comfortable visiting a different practice. A patient-doctor connection is important, so parents can encourage their children to find a doctor who has the right credentials but also a demeanor they're comfort-



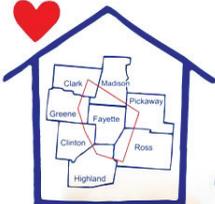
able with. Pediatricians may refer doctors they know and trust, and that can be handy when patients require a doctor with specific experience or one who understands the particular challenges of cancer treatment.

Insurance coverage will also play a role in choosing a new doctor. When looking for a new physician, make sure each prospective physician accepts your insurance; otherwise, you may pay substantial out-of-pocket expenses.

Doctors can take steps to facilitate the transition as well. They can work together to transfer health records. With regard to cancer treatment, doctors will need to discuss maintenance medications and cancer therapy options that can impact overall health.

Parents, doctors and patients can work together to make sure the transition from pediatrician to adult doctor goes as smoothly as possible, even when a disease such as cancer threatens to complicate that transition.

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# Managing prediabetes or diabetes

Diabetes and its precursor is a major problem, both in the United States and across the globe. In 2015, a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* revealed that nearly 50 percent of adults living in the United States have diabetes or prediabetes, a condition marked by higher than normal blood glucose levels that are not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. Meanwhile, the World Health Organization reports that the global prevalence of diabetes figures to rise from 8 percent in 2011 to 10 percent by 2030.

Preventing diabetes should be a priority for men, women and children, but management must take precedence for the millions of people who have already been diagnosed with prediabetes or diabetes. According to the American Heart Association, making healthy food choices is an essential step in preventing or managing diabetes. Making those choices can be difficult for those people who have never before paid much attention to their diets, but the AHA offers the following advice to people dealing with prediabetes or diabetes.

- Limit foods that may worsen your condition. Some foods, including fiber-rich whole grains and fish like salmon that are high in omega-3 fatty acids, can help people with prediabetes or diabetes. But many more foods must be limited, if not largely ignored. Limit your consumption of sweets and added sugars, which can be found in soda,

candy, cakes, and jellies. It's also good to limit your sodium intake and resist fatty meats like beef and pork.

- Document your eating habits. The AHA recommends that people with prediabetes or diabetes maintain a food log to see how certain foods affect their blood glucose levels. Within 60 to 90 minutes of eating, check your blood glucose levels to see how your body reacts to the foods you eat. As your food log becomes more extensive, you will begin to see which foods match up well with your body and which foods you may want to avoid.

- Plan your meals. Hectic schedules have derailed many a healthy lifestyle, but people who have been diagnosed with prediabetes or diabetes do not have the luxury of straying from healthy diets. Plan your meals in advance so your eating schedule is not erratic and your diet includes the right foods, and not just the most convenient foods. Bring lunch and a healthy snack to work with you each day rather than relying on fast food or other potentially unhealthy options in the vicinity of your office.

- Embrace alternative ingredients. Upon being diagnosed with prediabetes or diabetes, many people assume they must abandon their favorite foods. But that's not necessarily true. Many dishes can be prepared with alternative ingredients that are diabetes-friendly. In fact, the AHA has compiled a collection of diabetes-friendly recipes that can be

accessed by visiting [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org).

A prediabetes or diabetes diagnosis requires change, but these conditions can be managed without negatively affecting patients' quality of life.



## Did you know?

Despite the ongoing efforts to study cancer and cancer treatments, in many ways the disease remains a mystery to researchers and medical professionals alike. According to data published by the research-based healthcare company Roche, for reasons that are not entirely understood, breast cancer is more common in the left breast than the right. The left breast is 5 to 10 percent more likely to develop cancer than the right breast. The left side of the body is also 10 percent more vulnerable to the skin cancer melanoma than the right side of the body.

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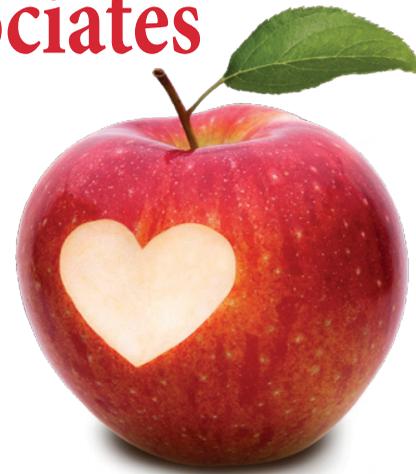
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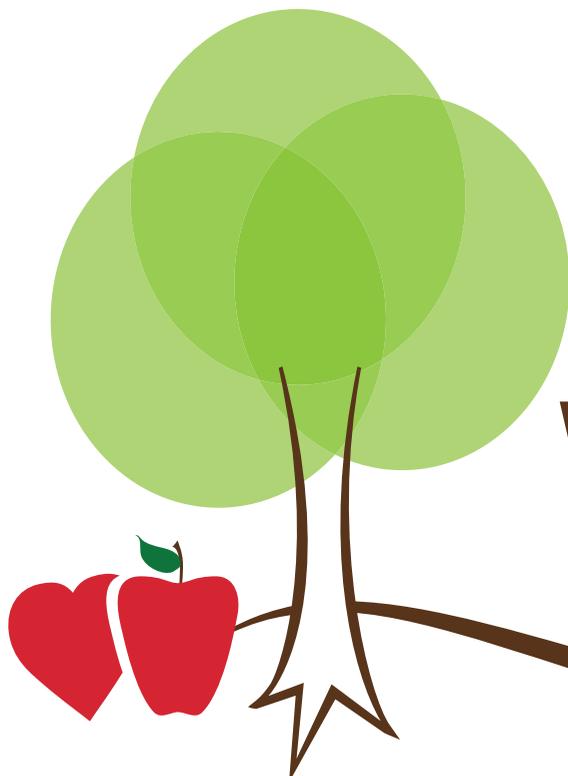
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# How women can combat high cholesterol

High cholesterol can dramatically affect a person's long-term health. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, people with high total cholesterol have approximately twice the risk of developing heart disease as people whose cholesterol levels are ideal. And contrary to what many people may think, women are no less susceptible to high cholesterol than men.

Cholesterol can be a confusing topic. Though cholesterol has a bad reputation, that stature can be somewhat misleading. That's because there are two types of cholesterol, one of which actually reduces a person's risk for heart disease and stroke. High-density lipoprotein, often referred to as "HDL" or "good" cholesterol, absorbs low-density lipoprotein, or "bad" cholesterol, or "LDL," and carries it back to the liver, which then flushes it from the body. HDL accounts for a minority of the body's cholesterol. Unfortunately, the majority of cholesterol in the body is LDL, high levels of which can contribute to plaque buildup in the arteries, increasing a person's risk for heart disease and stroke.

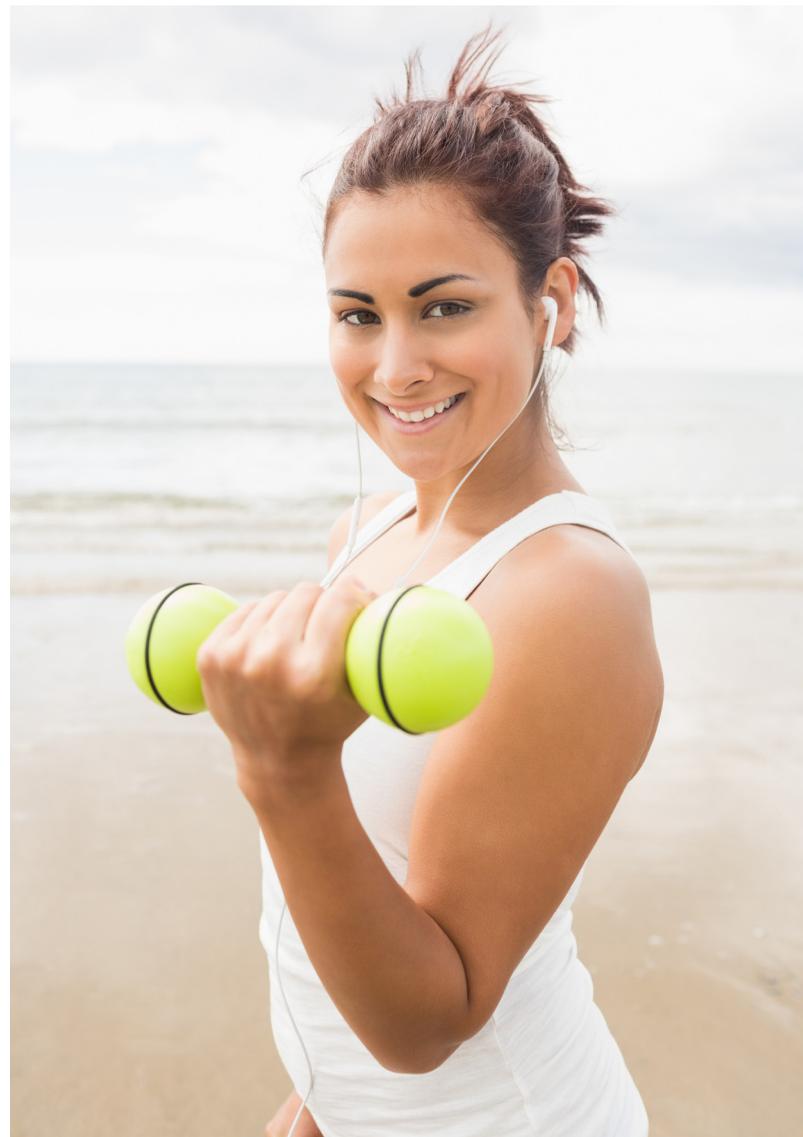
A 2015 report from the American Heart Association indicated that more than 73 million American adults have high LDL cholesterol. The 2013 Canadian Health Measures Survey found that, between 2009 and 2011, the number of Canadians with unhealthy levels of LDL increased significantly with age, with 40 percent of men and women between the ages of 40 and 59 suffering from unhealthy LDL levels.

Women may think that the presence of the female sex hormone estrogen can positively impact their cholesterol levels. While estrogen tends to raise HDL levels, its presence alone does not mean women are out of the woods with regard to cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke. In fact, the CDC notes that heart disease remains the leading cause of death among women.

High LDL cholesterol levels do not mean women will automatically develop heart disease, but women who receive such a diagnosis should take the following steps to lower their LDL levels so they can live longer, healthier lives.

- **Eat right.** Avoid foods that are high in fat, especially saturated fats and trans fats. The AHA notes that foods that contain saturated fats contribute to high levels of LDL. Fatty beef, lamb, pork, poultry with skin, lard and cream, butter, and cheese are just a few of the foods that contain saturated fats. Those foods all come from animal sources, but many baked goods and fried foods are also high in saturated fat and should be avoided. Fruits, vegetables and whole grains are heart-healthy foods that can help women lower their LDL levels and reduce their risk for cardiovascular disease.

- **Exercise regularly.** Routine physical activity can help women lower their LDL levels, especially when such exercise is combined with a healthy diet. The Office on Women's Health recommends women get



two hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week, or one hour and 15 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity each week. Speak with your physician to learn which exercises are most appropriate for someone in your condition. Women who want to do more than aerobic activity can still meet their exercise requirements by combining moderate and vigorous cardiovascular exercise with muscle-strengthening activities two or more days

per week.

- **Quit smoking.** Smoking can accelerate the damage already being done by high cholesterol. While research does not indicate that smoking directly impacts LDL levels, the toxins produced and inhaled from cigarettes can modify existing LDL, making it more likely to cause inflammation.

Cholesterol does not discriminate, and women need to be just as mindful as men when monitoring their total cholesterol levels.

# Use it, or LOSE it!

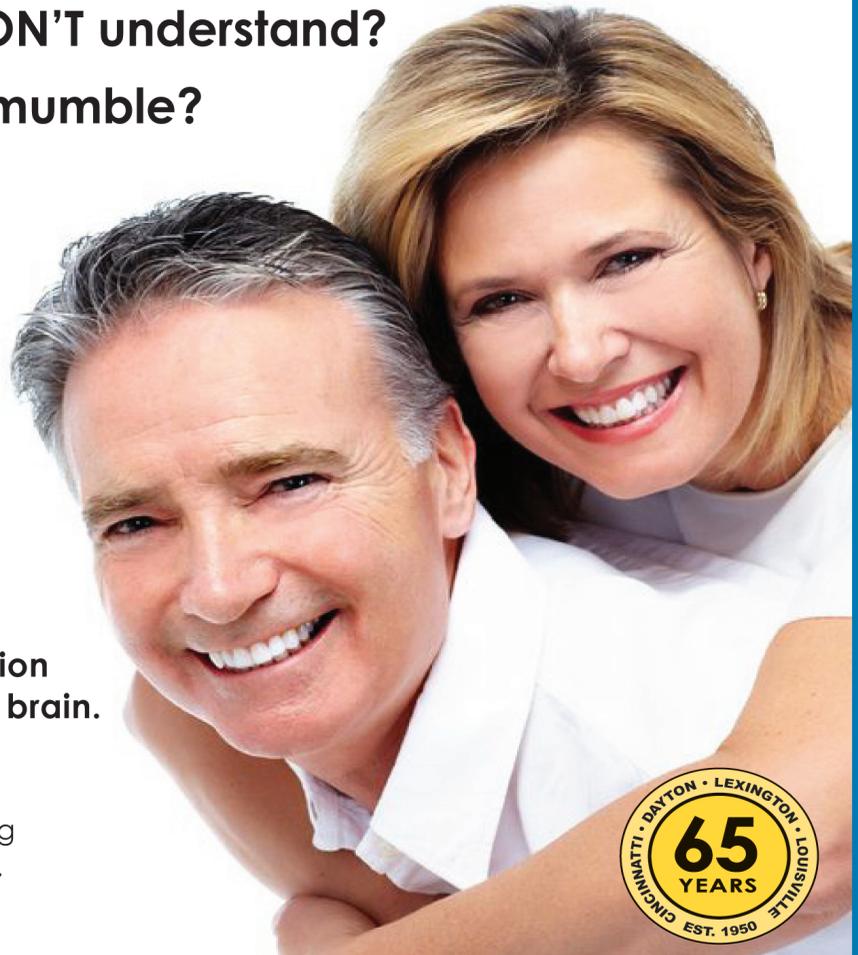
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# Diabetic vision changes

Diabetes affects 23.6 million people in the United States and close to three million people in Canada. While diabetes can be accompanied by many different symptoms, some people are surprised to learn that diabetes can affect the eyes and vision.

Changes in vision are sometimes the earliest warning signs of the presence of diabetes or prediabetes. Diabetic eye disease is its own stand-alone condition, and the National Eye Institute points out that diabetic eye disease comprises a group of eye conditions that affect people with diabetes. These may include retinopathy, macular edema, cataracts and glaucoma. All forms of eye disease can potentially cause severe vision loss or blindness.

Those with diabetes also can experience xanthelasma, or yellowish collections of cholesterol around the eye area. What's more, diabetes can put individuals at risk of developing conjunctival bacterial infections (pink eye), as well as corneal erosions, corneal defects and subsequent dry eyes.

According to the American Diabetes Association, people with diabetes are at a 40 percent greater risk of suffering from glaucoma than people without diabetes. The longer someone has had diabetes, the more common glaucoma is. Diabetics also are 60 percent more likely to develop cataracts. Vision checkups and care are an important part of living with diabetes.

Routine eye examinations can head off potential vision problems and have been



**Routine eye examinations can help doctors diagnose diabetes early. Such examinations also are important in the management of the disease and the prevention of vision loss.**

known to alert doctors to the presence of diabetes before patients know they have it. During a comprehensive dilated eye exam, eye doctors will examine all areas of the eye to check for illness. Pressure on the eye will be tested, as glaucoma can cause elevated pressure. The doctor also will check for any clouding of the eye lens.

When an eye is dilated, doctors can examine the retina at the rear of the eye. Points that will be checked include:

- changes to blood vessels, including any leaking blood vessels or fatty deposits
- swelling of the macula
- damage to nerve tissue
- health of the retina, and whether there are any tears or detachments

While many of the vision loss problems associated with diabetes are irreversible, early detection and treatment can reduce the risk of blindness by 95 percent, advises the NEI. Controlling diabetes slows the onset and worsening of visual symptoms. Peo-

ple with diabetes may need to see their eye doctors more frequently and have a greater number of dilated exams to ensure eyes are still in good health.

To keep diabetes in check, follow a doctor-recommended diet, monitor your blood-sugar levels and get plenty of exercise. Eye doctors and primary care providers can work together to ensure that all symptoms of diabetes — whether visual or otherwise — are treated effectively.

# Understanding and preventing head lice infestations

Many parents recall being tested for head lice at the beginning of each school year when they were children. While those tests might be fresh on the minds of parents as they prepare to send their children back to school, moms and dads may not know much about head lice and the threat lice poses to youngsters.

## What are head lice?

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, head lice are parasitic insects that can be found close to the scalp, most often on the head, eyebrows and eyelashes. While head lice don't spread disease, they do feed on blood several times per day.

## Who is most susceptible to head lice?

Head lice are more common in close, overcrowded living conditions, which may be one reason why schoolchildren who spend their days in the relatively close confines of classrooms tend to be vulnerable to head lice infestations. In fact, the CDC estimates that as many as 12 million head lice infestations occur each year in children between the ages of 3 and 11 in the United States alone. Adults are not immune to head lice, though they may be less likely than children to suffer an infestation.

## How do head lice spread?

Contrary to popular belief, head lice cannot

hop or fly. Head lice move by crawling, and they can be spread in various ways. According to HeadLice.org, head lice can spread whenever there is direct contact of the head or hair with an infested individual. Head lice also can spread when an infested person shares personal articles, including hats, pillows, towels, brushes, hair ties, and helmets, with someone who is not infested.

## What are the symptoms of head lice infestations?

Schoolchildren are typically tested for head lice at the beginning of each school year, and such tests may uncover an infestation before kids even begin to exhibit any symptoms. But kids can be infested with head lice, which can live up to 30 days on a human, at any time of year, so parents should be on the lookout for the following symptoms of head lice:

- Tickling feeling of something moving in the hair
- Excessive itching of the scalp, which may be the result of an allergic reaction to bites of the head louse
- Difficulty sleeping, as head lice are most active in the dark
- Head sores that result from scratching and may lead to infections caused by bacteria found on the infested person's skin

## How can I reduce my child's risk for head lice?

Head lice are easily spread during the school



year because kids spend so much time in cramped quarters with their friends and classmates. But parents can encourage their youngsters to take certain protective measures that can reduce their risk of being infested with head lice.

- Teach kids to avoid sharing certain items. Teaching kids to share can be important in their development as human beings, but it's important that parents teach kids to avoid sharing combs, brushes, hair ties and other accessories, hats, helmets, coats, scarves, towels, and earbuds. Head lice can attach themselves to such items, making kids vulnerable to infestation when these items are shared.
- Avoid storing clothing

in common areas. Coats, scarves and hats hung in common areas are vulnerable to head lice infestation, as lice can crawl from item to item, spreading infestations along the way. While the CDC notes that spreading head lice through inanimate objects is uncommon, it can occur. Teach youngsters to keep their clothing in their own lockers at school, and encourage educators to make separate hooks available to each student to reduce the risk of spreading infestations among classmates.

Head lice is most often discussed at the dawn of a new school year, but head lice infestations can occur at any time. Learn more about head lice at [www.HeadLice.org](http://www.HeadLice.org).

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