

# HEALTHCARE HAPPENINGS

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**MONROE  
COUNTY**  
HOSPITAL & CLINICS

An Affiliate of  
**MERCYONE**<sup>SM</sup>

*Nerves or ANXIETY?* | *Growing a* LOW-MAINTENANCE GARDEN | *The Power* OF POSITIVE THINKING



# OUCH!

## IT BIT ME!

Easy tips for treating insect bites and stings

**THERE'S NOTHING LIKE** a pleasant afternoon outside in the summer. That is, until you get bitten by a mosquito or stung by a wasp. If it's too late to bring out the insect repellent, here's how to treat most bug bites:

- Take an antihistamine to reduce the allergic reaction. If you feel pain, add an over-the-counter pain reliever.
- If the bee or wasp stinger remains in your skin, remove it immediately.
- Wash the affected area and apply a 1% hydrocortisone cream, calamine lotion or paste made by adding water to baking soda. An ice pack will also reduce swelling and pain.

If the bite or sting seems worse after a few days, make an appointment with one of our providers for further treatment.

If you are experiencing a severe allergic reaction and an auto-injector epinephrine product is not available, head straight to our emergency room.



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# Nerves or ANXIETY?

Some childhood anxieties  
need medical intervention

**EVERY CHILD WILL** be anxious at some point, whether scared of a loud thunderclap or worried about a test. But how do you know if your child's anxiety has tipped into something problematic, especially during these challenging times?

"If the worry seems excessive or is causing distress and has lasted for more than six months, it could be an anxiety disorder," said Alex Curiel, MD, Family Physician at Monroe County Hospital Medical Clinic.

Anxiety can lead to loss of sleep, poor eating habits and struggles in school—and it makes life harder on the parents as well. Over 30% of adolescents struggle with anxiety at some point. Getting a proper diagnosis is important, as medication and cognitive behavioral therapy can help.

Patience and understanding is needed while parenting an anxious child, but it is also key to not reinforce the child's fears. Parents should also learn to model healthy ways of dealing with their own anxieties in front of their children.

**MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH ONE OF OUR PROVIDERS AT THE MONROE COUNTY HOSPITAL MEDICAL CLINIC VIA [MCHALBIA.COM](http://MCHALBIA.COM) OR CALL 641-932-7172.**





# THE **FAMILY** THAT PLAYS *Together*

Spending time with your children as a family strengthens bonds between all family members—and may provide health benefits, too.

**PLAY IS THE** business of children. While they may think of it solely as fun, it also serves many important purposes in childhood development, including building the child's thinking, movement and social skills.

Interactive play between family members helps boost the mental health of children who now have a safe space to exercise emotional control, while also boosting the mental health of parents who can de-stress with some playtime with their kids (particularly important in the era of COVID-19).

Additionally, family playtime can also provide exercise when you opt for a physical activity or lessons in healthy eating when you bring a little kitchen creativity to the mix.

## **SCHEDULING FAMILY PLAYDATES**

Busy families may encounter challenges in getting all family members in the same place at the same time, so take advantage of the time when you have it. Dedicate a specific day to family fun. Ask your kids for activity ideas or consider one of these options.

**Game Day:** Pick a day to break out some of those board games you've got stowed in the closet. Have a large family? Pair up into teams of two or set up tournaments with elimination brackets. Don't have board games? Play

tried-and-true favorites like Frisbee, flag football, freeze tag, hide-and-seek or red rover.

**Art Show:** Break out the arts and crafts supplies to let your family flex their creative muscles. Need inspiration? Try an online painting class or origami. Recognize the best of the best with a ribbon or other homemade trophy.

**5K Training:** Practice together as a family to walk or run a 5K (3.1 mile) race virtually or in person, when social distancing has relaxed. Many 5Ks raise awareness and/or research dollars for deadly diseases like cancer, diabetes or COVID-19.

**Chef-Off:** Dream up your own fast-paced cooking show by pairing into teams and creating two or three dishes for the entire family to judge and enjoy. Make one of the guidelines of the contest the use of nutritionally-dense ingredients so you end up with a healthy meal at the end of the competition. Declare a winner after letting each family member vote for their favorite dish.

**Lights, Camera, Action:** Enlist each family member to play a different role in a video production, such as screenwriter, actor, producer, camera person or editor. Rehearse and record your production using cell phone or wearable cameras. Proud of your production? Host a screening, complete with healthy snack options like popcorn and fresh fruit.



# MOVING Forward

Our construction project is scheduled for completion soon, and we are eager to bring you care.

**WITH OUR NEW** construction project, we look forward to serving our friends and neighbors in South Central Iowa—hopefully sooner rather than later. Our providers and staff consistently strive to meet our community’s ever-changing needs. When our construction project began in 2017, we sought to create an accessible, welcoming and state-of-the-art environment to continue offering quality care close to home.

“This has been a great project to be a part of, especially for such a deserving community,” said Adam Douglas, Senior Project Manager of The Graham Construction Team. “We know we’ve had to shift parking and travel for patients while the project’s being completed, and we’ve greatly appreciated everyone’s patience.”

By the project’s completion, our Rural Health Medical Clinic will be almost twice the size it was, going from 8,800 square feet to 13,300.

“There will be 24 exam rooms, as well as a treatment room and two teamwork spaces with offices for Monroe County Hospital & Clinics providers,” stated Vince Horras, Field Engineer with the Graham Construction Team. “We’re currently using 18 of the new rooms, and the rest will be available by January.

## **A WALK IN THE PARK(ING LOT)**

Construction on the north parking lot of the hospital campus continues, with construction estimated to be complete by this Fall. It will be ready for use when the building project is complete.

“Once completed, the lot will provide 82 parking spots, as well as the new drop-off and pick-up lane by the new entrance, located on the North side of the facility,” explained Horras. “It will give patients a significantly easier place to enter and exit the facilities.”

## **NEW AND IMPROVED SUSAN ALLISON OUTPATIENT CLINIC AND REHAB SERVICES**

Our old main entrance will also become the secondary entrance to our new Susan Allison Outpatient Clinic and Rehab Services. We are currently creating a new entrance on the North side of the hospital, with a large and easy-to-spot canopy.

“The entrance will be much grander,” Douglas said, “It’s going to provide a centralized registration area for the main hospital and our updated Rural Health Medical Clinic, as well as create a clear, direct path of travel for patient services.”

While the Susan Allison Outpatient Clinic will remain in the same space, everything else about it will change.

“We’ve completely demolished the old building, and by the time we’re done, it will look completely different,” Douglas said. “It’s going to be one story and roughly 4,000 square feet. The new Susan Allison Outpatient Clinic will have eight exam rooms, a provider teamwork space, and a treatment room with its own dedicated registration. This new space will be open to the public in July.”

The Susan Allison Outpatient Clinic’s makeover will compliment

expanded telehealth options to give patients multiple options for care.

We've also completed some work on the new Rehab Services Gym and Occupational Therapy rooms, with work still being done on the remaining rehab areas.

"Like the Susan Allison Outpatient Clinic, the Rehab Services space was demolished and rebuilt, but with a completely different structure," Horras explained. "There will be a group of treatment rooms, offices and a waiting room, shared with the Susan Allison Outpatient Clinic. We're incorporating soundproofing and other measures in the treatment rooms to help maintain patient privacy. The new building gives patients a new, refreshing facility, and the new design will help providers focus on patient care."

**OUR CONSTRUCTION PROJECT IS SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION BY EARLY 2021. TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR AVAILABLE SERVICES, VISIT [MCHALBIA.COM](http://MCHALBIA.COM).**

## Other Additions to Our New Building

Some other changes to Monroe County Hospital & Clinics you can expect to see in the future include:

- A new, beautiful courtyard
- A larger gift shop (The Look Nook)
- Control upgrades to heating, air conditioning and ventilation
- Pharmacy upgrades
- Two private and seven semiprivate infusion rooms



# TO OUR COMMUNITY: THANK YOU!

As the COVID-19 outbreak has placed immense pressure on hospital workers to keep their facilities and patients safe, our community has stepped up in the time of need. Special thanks to: Wes Aeschliman, Agent with State Farm in Albia for treating the entire Monroe County Hospital & Clinics staff to free catered lunch; Girl Scouts Troops 51, 160 and 21019 for spoiling the entire staff with cookies; and Iowa Corn, Casey's and Atlantic Coca-Cola Bottling Company for partnering with MCHC to donate pizzas and Coke products and support us during these tough times.



Employees from State Farm hand off donations to MCHC staff.



**“Thank you for all the work that you have done and continue to do during this crazy time in our lives. Please accept a free meal on us!”**

**—Wes Aeschliman, Agent, State Farm**



**“We are delivering pizzas to hospitals across Iowa as a thank you for all your work during this pandemic and a special thank you for the front line workers.”**

**—Alyssa Preston,  
District 9 Field Manager, Iowa Corn**



# GROWING A *Low-* *Maintenance* GARDEN

Here are some plants that grow with a little love but not a lot of effort.

**BUSY PEOPLE CAN** still enjoy the fun of gardening. Choosing the right, easy-care plants can help your garden thrive while you're stretched for time. Start with these suggestions:

## FLOWERS

For beautiful, carefree blooms, try planting more perennials, which don't need to be replanted every season and often flower longer than annual varieties. These flowers adapt to a variety of conditions, grow almost anywhere across the country and are resilient to pests and invasive neighbors.

Try planting black-eyed Susans, coneflowers and daylilies in sunny spots, pansies in a bed with afternoon shade and hostas where they get shade all day.

## FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Growing your own produce can save you trips to the grocery store, help you save money and give you the opportunity to cultivate your own food. You can grow from seeds or get a head start by purchasing transplants.

Here are a few options for the beginner gardener:

- Peppers
- Tomatoes
- Cabbage
- Squash
- Lettuce

## MORE EASY GARDENING TIPS:

- **Start small.** An indoor herb garden with fresh basil, mint and oregano can be an easy way to hone your skills.
- **If you're tight on space, try a windowsill or patio garden.** Plants such as cherry tomatoes, mini-romaine lettuce, eggplant and peppers grow well in a container or pot.
- **Save your scraps.** Creating a compost pile is an affordable way to enhance your soil.



## Summer Vegetable Pasta With *Fresh Tomatoes*

Try this refreshing take on pasta you can make with vegetables from your own garden.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium zucchini, cut into ½-inch pieces
- 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and crushed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon dried basil leaves, crushed
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 cups prepared, non-fat pasta sauce
- 1 cup fresh tomatoes
- 8 ounces dried pasta of choice
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley or basil

### DIRECTIONS

1. Sauté zucchini, onion, garlic, olive oil and seasonings over medium heat in a large skillet. Cook until soft.
2. Mix in pasta sauce and let simmer for five minutes.
3. Add half of fresh tomatoes to the skillet and heat thoroughly.
4. Cook pasta in a separate pot according to directions on package. Drain water and place pasta in serving bowl.
5. Add sauce mixture to pasta. Top with other half of fresh tomatoes and fresh parsley or basil.
6. Serve hot. Enjoy!

### NUTRITION INFORMATION

Servings: 4	Carbohydrates: 60g
Calories: 340	Fiber: 7g
Total fat: 6g	Protein: 12g
Saturated fat: 1g	

*Recipe courtesy of Produce for Better Health Foundation.*





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# The Power of POSITIVE THINKING

When faced with a difficult situation, how do you respond?

**STUDIES SHOW A** positive mindset can help you better cope with anxiety and look beyond negative situations. When you are in crisis mode, it's more challenging to find the bright spots that feed positive thoughts, but they exist. Cycle from negative to positive thinking with these tips:

**Define your values.** Outlining what's important to you can ground you and keep you focused on the positive when challenges arise.

**Embrace exercise.** Having a bad day, week or year? Combat it through physical activity, which releases feel-good body chemicals called endorphins that elevate your mood.

**Eat right.** Hunger can directly affect your physical and mental energy. A diet filled with nutrient-rich foods will fuel your ability to think through issues objectively.

**Sleep tight.** Studies show getting the recommended amount of quality sleep—7 to 8 hours daily for adults—supports a better mood, while not getting enough sleep can make you grumpy.

**Believe in yourself.** If you think you can do something, you are more likely to achieve it, whether it's accomplishing a feat or overcoming a bad situation. A good first step to believing in yourself is listing your strengths.

**Don't fear failure.** Failures provide an opportunity to foster positive growth and build optimism through recovery.

**Make friends.** Draw on the wisdom, experiences and energy of other positive people. Their perspective can help light the way when you need inspiration.

