HEALTHCARE
HAPPENINGS

A Publication of Monroe County Hospital & Clinics | **WINTER 2020**

MONROE COUNTY
HOSPITAL & CLINICS

An Affiliate of
MERCYONE

HOW MUCH WATER
Do I Need Each Day?

You know you need to drink water,
but how much is enough?

FINDING A DEFINITIVE answer can be tricky, which is why we're breaking it down for you:

WHY YOU NEED WATER
Up to 60% of your body is water. Water leaves the body through sweat and urination, so it's important to replenish it. Proper hydration helps:
- get rid of body waste
- keep your body temperature normal
- lubricate and cushion joints
- protect your spinal cord and other tissues

HOW MUCH WATER IS ENOUGH?
The Institute of Medicine of the National Academies recommends women consume 91 ounces of water each day, while men should aim for 125 ounces daily.

WHERE TO GET WATER
You don't have to drink all that water! While around 80% should come from fluids, the other 20% comes from food. Try some of these foods, which are made up of at least 80% water:

celery · carrots · apples · grapes · melon · strawberries · lettuce · oranges · cabbage

MONROE COUNTY
HOSPITAL & CLINICS

An Affiliate of
MERCYONE.

5
Tips for Leaving the Emotion Out of
EATING

There's a reason why we call it "comfort food." Most of us, at one time or another, have turned to food for comfort.

WHILE THAT'S OCCASIONALLY OK, it isn't the healthiest way to cope. It's important to find better ways to manage when you're feeling hurt, angry or stressed.

"Some people react to uncomfortable feelings by eating unhealthy foods or overindulging, which is called 'emotional eating,'" said Liz Zmolek, RDN, LD, Registered Dietitian Nutritionist at Monroe County Hospital & Clinics. "If you're feeling stressed, develop ways to cope that don't involve food."

Follow her advice with these tips:
- **Know your triggers.** Knowing what causes you to turn to emotional eating is the first step toward curtailing the habit.
- **Master the pause.** If you're tempted to turn to food, take a break first. Pausing for a few minutes before giving in can help a craving pass.
- **Indulge, but savor your food.** Take a few bites and chew slowly to fully enjoy them.
- **Build coping habits.** Create habits to help you cope, such as eating a balanced diet, getting plenty of sleep and regularly exercising.
- **Keep nutritious options on hand.** You'll be less likely to indulge if there are healthy options available.

Making a Connection

The new and improved Monroe County Hospital & Clinics online MyMCHC Portal is making medical care more accessible than ever.

NOW THAT WE'RE in the 2020s, people expect to be able to do everything online, and medical care is no different. Patients shouldn't have to play phone tag with a doctor's office to contact their provider. They shouldn't have to wait for test results to be sent to them or wait for the clinic to open to schedule an appointment.

With the digital portal, you can take control of your care via your phone or computer. It's part of MCHC's commitment to stay on the cutting edge of technology.

"We take advantage of technology, as it becomes available to us, to enhance patient care," said Kendra Sinclair, Director of Rural Health Clinic Operations at MCHC, who has been instrumental in updating the MyMCHC Portal. "We've been able to give this technology to our patients so they can take a more active role in their health — and when it's convenient for them."

Through the improved MyMCHC Portal, you can directly contact your physicians and nurse practitioners and seamlessly make an appointment within minutes. "You can view available slots for each of our physicians or nurse practitioners. You choose which one you want, and secure that appointment time," Sinclair said. "For instance, if you need an annual physical, you can schedule online, when it's convenient for you, without calling the clinic."

READ YOUR PHYSICIANS' NOTES ONLINE

The first MyMCHC Portal launched in 2014. Since then, with several upgrades, the new MyMCHC Portal provides more options for patients.

Originally, you could use the portal to see lab results and patient summaries or request an appointment online.

"Now, patients can not only view lab results, but they can also review X-ray results," Sinclair said. "In addition, visit notes from the clinics, as well as surgery, emergency and in-patient departments are available."

There's another new feature too: The MyMCHC Portal is available through an app called HealtheLife, which is available on Apple and Android phones.

"From your smartphone, you can schedule an appointment, send a direct message to your physician or view your records," Sinclair said. "It's extremely user-friendly, and it helps families stay informed and take an active role in their health."

The MyMCHC Portal is free, easy to sign up for and completely secure. Only you and your healthcare team have access to your information.

TO ACCESS THE PATIENT PORTAL, GO TO MCHALBIA.COM AND CLICK ON "ACCESS MYMCHC PORTAL."

MyMCHC Portal allows you to:

· communicate with your provider

· schedule an appointment

· view lab and X-ray results

· view hospital, clinic, ED and surgery notes

· view your medication list

· request prescription refills

· pay your bill

TOP WORK PLACES 2020
Des Moines Register

#1
TOP WORKPLACE
in 2020

A tough year brings out the best at
Monroe County Hospital & Clinics.

A HOSPITAL ISN'T a traditional business, and 2020 hasn't been a typical year. That's why Veronica Fuhs, MHA, CEO of Monroe County Hospital & Clinics, is especially proud that the hospital won this year's highest award for medium-sized businesses in the *Des Moines Register*'s Top Workplace program.

Top Workplace winners are ranked based on an anonymous, third-party survey of their employees. MCHC, which has 185 employees and is the only hospital in the county, has won numerous Top Workplace awards over the past five years—just never the highest one. Given how stressful 2020 has been for healthcare workers, this top award is special, Fuhs said. It's a testament to how MCHC supports its employees, and how its employees support each other, as they balance the challenges of living in a pandemic and fighting on its front lines.

RESPECT AND CONNECTIVITY

"The supportive culture at MCHC begins at hiring," said Kaylee Siebrecht, MPA, Director of Human Resources.

"We're very particular about who works here," Siebrecht said. "All our applicants go through a team review of three to four peers. The peer team and the managers are always looking for someone who aligns with our culture, mission and values for patient-centered care."

Employees who help choose their coworkers are vested in their success, Siebrecht explained.

The hospital keeps that dynamic going with teams that reward great work. Its Standards, Praise, Recognition and Events teams, for example, focus on "connected and purposeful celebration of the things we do well," Fuhs said. "We also have a Team Culture budget that gives us the ability to honor a department for a job well done, or for helping pitch in when things are hectic."

Departments can use their part of the budget however they like. Recently, employees in the lab chose to throw a pizza party for the maintenance department after it completed a difficult installation project.

Respect and connectivity—between departments, and from top leadership down through the ranks—doesn't just make people feel appreciated, Fuhs continued. It also ensures that their problems and concerns are addressed.

"I rely on [my team]. I appreciate their critical thinking skills and their ability to think about things differently than what my approach might be."

— Veronica Fuhs, MHA, CEO of Monroe County Hospital & Clinics

'WE'RE TAKING CARE OF PATIENTS'

The second Top Workplace award MCHC won this year was for "Most Clued-in Senior Leadership Team."

"I can't say I was surprised by that—I think they're awesome," Fuhs said. "I rely on them. I appreciate their critical thinking skills and their ability to think differently than what my approach might be."

To Fuhs, hospitals see people at their most vulnerable, so employees must always put patients first. The best way for leadership to make that happen is to remove barriers to good care.

According to Siebrecht, a supportive workplace culture is essential in a hospital, because workers spend long hours together facing tough situations. That's been especially true in 2020.

"We're not focusing on widgets—we're taking care of patients," Siebrecht said. "So we have to trust each other and work together to have good, positive outcomes."

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MCHC TOP WORKPLACE AWARD, GO TO MCHALBIA.COM.

Rising to
THE CHALLENGE

The Disaster Preparedness Coordinator at Monroe County Hospital & Clinics
has been honored with the DAISY nursing award.

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC has made 2020 an intensely challenging year in health care. Hospitals like MCHC have had to deal with rapidly changing circumstances, worried patients and families, and continual changes in rules and regulations.

Dedicated staffers like Cory Billings, a nurse who works as the Emergency Services Clinical Support Coordinator, have made all the difference.

Billings is in charge of the Disaster Preparedness team. He's been helping to guide the hospital, from a disaster perspective, through the COVID-19 crisis.

For his hard work, Billings is being honored with the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses. He's the 2020 winner of the award at MCHC.

"It is an amazing feeling to be recognized. I believe that any nurse at MCHC could be a DAISY nurse," Billings said. "The staff here work harder than any other place I have worked in the past to ensure that every person that walks through these doors receives the best care humanly possible."

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENT NURSING

The DAISY Award is a nationwide program that recognizes nursing excellence. It was founded in 1999 by the family of a patient named J. Patrick Barnes who died at age 33 from complications of an autoimmune disease. DAISY stands for "Diseases Attacking the Immune System."

The nursing care that Barnes received while he was hospitalized profoundly touched his family, prompting them to start the nonprofit DAISY Foundation.

"During those weeks, we experienced the best of nursing," his father, Mark Barnes, recalled on the organization's website. "We expected that Pat would have great clinical care. What we did not expect was the way his nurses delivered that care—the kindness and compassion they gave Pat and all of us in his family every day. They truly helped us through the darkest hours of our lives."

Today, roughly 4,500 healthcare facilities give a DAISY Award annually to one of their nurses.

'PROUD TO BE A NURSE'

Cory Billings has worked at MCHC for a decade and has been a registered nurse for seven years. He has started earning a master's degree in nursing, and he hopes to continue moving nursing at MCHC into the future.

"To be nominated by this organization and these wonderful people is a true honor," he said. "I am proud to be a nurse at MCHC."

Roxi Leffler, another nurse at MCHC, also was nominated for the award this year. She works on the medical-surgical team.

"I joked with Cory that there's nobody I would have rather taken second place to," Leffler said. "I can't even count the number of times Cory has helped me, and he doesn't even work in my department. He's always willing to help with difficult IV starts, transfer a patient or just share his nursing experience."

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DAISY AWARD, VISIT MCHALBIA.COM

Your Heart on EXERCISE

Each year, more than 800,000 heart attacks occur in the United States. The good news? You can take a big step toward preventing a heart attack by exercising.

YOU PROBABLY KNOW you're supposed to exercise regularly, but what exactly does that mean? While how much exercise you need varies depending on your individual health, your risk factors for disease and your fitness goals, there are some basic guidelines that can give you a starting point.

The American Heart Association recommends that you get at least 150 minutes of moderate heart-pumping activity each week, or a little more than 20 minutes per day.

If you aren't getting that much currently, you aren't alone. Only one in five American adults and teens get the recommended amount to stay in optimal health.

But there's no reason you can't start today! If you're ready to begin an exercise regimen, start small and build up.

Begin with a basic activity that gets your heart beating faster and do it for a short period of time. You can increase the duration of your workout or its intensity over time, gradually building up to the recommended amount to give your heart a boost.

Are You Stressing Out Your Body?

You probably recognize the frenzied way your mind feels when you're stressed, but stress also wreaks havoc on your body.

A SMALL AMOUNT of stress is normal and to be expected. In fact, small bursts of stress can actually be a positive—motivating you to get something done.

Too much stress, though, or stress over a long period of time can negatively impact nearly every aspect of your health and well-being. Pardon the pun, but it's particularly stressful for your heart.

- **It may trigger inflammation.** There seems to be a link between stress and inflammation in the body, which is a known risk factor for heart disease.
- **It increases your heart rate.** That's OK for the short-term, but long-term, it can harm the heart.
- **It floods the body with "stress" hormones.** Adrenaline, noradrenaline and cortisol can all signal to your heart that it needs to speed up.
- **It can increase blood pressure.** Elevated blood pressure, or hypertension, is a risk factor for both heart disease and stroke.
- **It may cause you to turn to bad habits.** Many people turn to habits that are unhealthy for the heart, such as overeating and smoking.

BELIEVE STRESS MAY BE IMPACTING YOUR HEART HEALTH? TALK WITH YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT WHETHER A STRESS TEST IS RIGHT FOR YOU.

Staying Active
When You Work From Home

Whether you're new to working from home or have been doing it for a while, you've probably found that it can be more difficult to fit movement into your day.

THANKFULLY, THERE ARE some easy ways to fix that. According to the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, a lack of physical activity can increase your risk for cardiovascular disease. When you're working and living in the same space, it can be all too easy to zone out and forget to get up and moving. Make it a habit again using these tips:

1. Set an alarm. When you're focused on a task, you can lose all sense of time. Set yourself regular reminders to cue you to get up and move.

2. Schedule your workouts. Drop your exercise plans into your planner or calendar, and don't cancel on yourself!

3. Create opportunities to move. Need to get up to use the bathroom? Take a few laps around the house. On a phone call? Pop on a headset and take a walk.

4. Make your desk a workout space. Feel like you're tied to your office all day? There's ample space at your desk for squats, lunges and basic yoga movements.

5. Stand up more. We can all benefit from standing up more. A standing posture will allow you to naturally stretch and move around.