



# The Hamaspik Gazette

News of Hamaspik  
Agencies and  
General Health

AUGUST '20 • ISSUE NO. 182



## GAZETTE SURVEY

The GAZETTE asks YOU:

**DO YOU WEAR INSERTED ARCHES  
IN YOUR SHOES?**

**A. YES ; B. NO**

Respond to: [survey@nyshainc.org](mailto:survey@nyshainc.org) • 845-655-0667



## HEALTH STAT

**FEWER POOR (AND NOT-POOR) U.S. FAMILIES  
AVOIDING MEDICAL CARE DUE TO COST**

	2013	2018
Poor	22.7%	17.3%
Not poor	7.1%	6.6%

Source: Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) QuickStats, CDC, June 12, 2020



## HEALTH TIP

**DEHYDRATION? “WATER” YOU KNOW!**

It's not just constantly drinking water: That's a given. Counteract your body's constant natural water loss these hot August days—and on any day—with these three additional tips: Eat juicy foods like fruits and vegetables; avoid or limit caffeine (coffee, soda); and don't drink alcohol.

Source: Rutgers University, CDC

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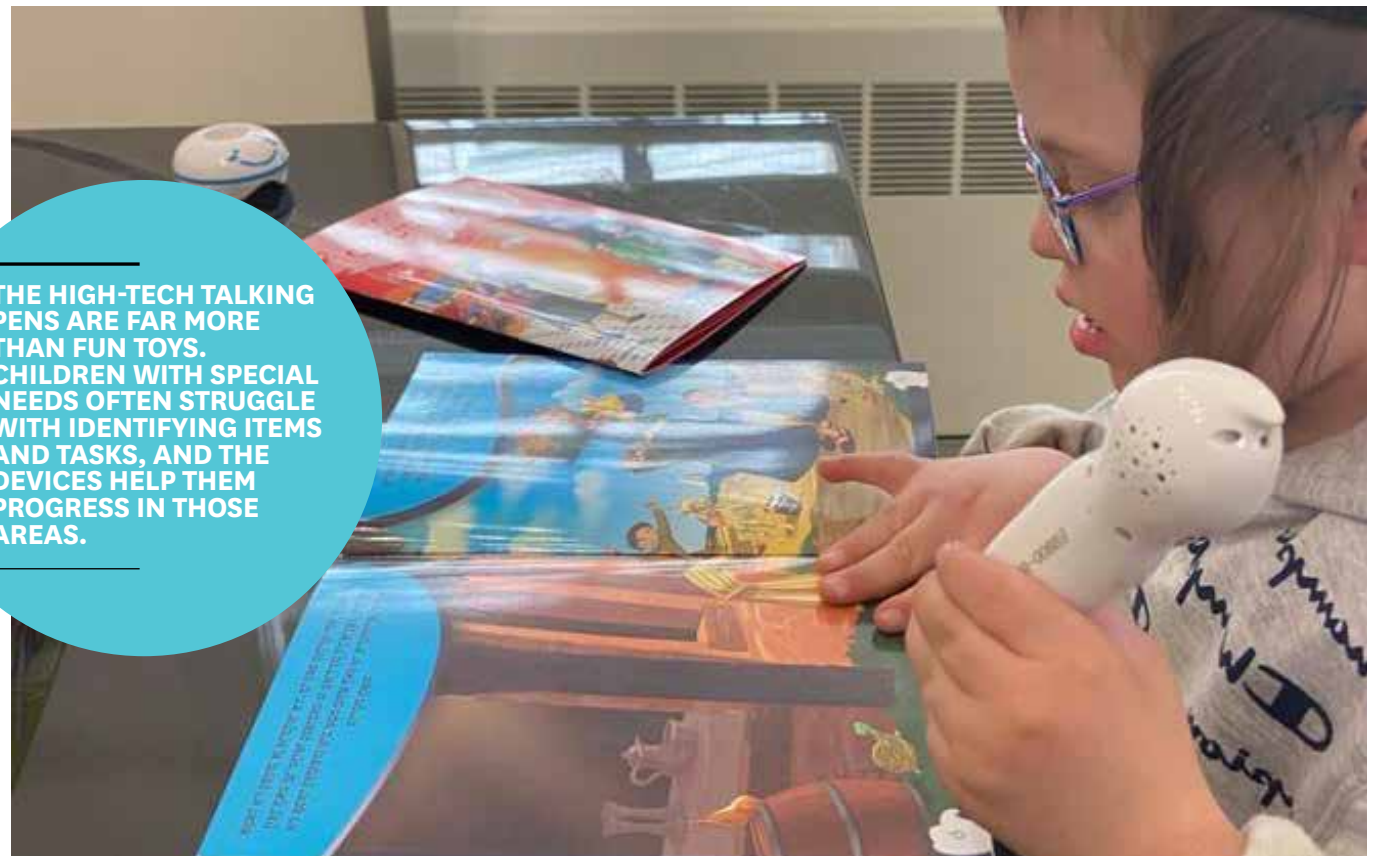
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### EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY—THIS ONE, LITERALLY SHAYA IS ENTHRALLED AS HE WIELDS HIS INTERACTIVE “PENPAL” DEVICE PROVIDED BY HAMASPIK



THE HIGH-TECH TALKING PENS ARE FAR MORE THAN FUN TOYS. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OFTEN STRUGGLE WITH IDENTIFYING ITEMS AND TASKS, AND THE DEVICES HELP THEM PROGRESS IN THOSE AREAS.

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# Services Provided by NYSHA AGENCIES

## OPWDD SERVICES

### INDIVIDUALIZED RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE (IRA)

A supervised residence for individuals who need out-of-home placement.

### INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT SERVICES (ISS)

Paid housing expenses and support for individuals who can live independently.

### HOME FAMILY CARE (HFC)

Places individuals with developmental disabilities into private homes to care and support the individual.

### DAY HABILITATION (DH)

A day program for adults with disabilities designed to develop skills, greater independence, community inclusion etc.

**Site Based:** Day Habilitation Service delivered in an OPWDD certified facility.

**Without Walls:** Day Habilitation Service delivered in a community-based setting.

**Stars Day Program:** Day Habilitation Service delivered in an OPWDD certified facility for higher-functioning individuals.

### COMMUNITY HABILITATION (CH)

Working one-on-one with individuals in their home or in the community to achieve valued outcomes by helping them develop daily living skills and achieve long-term goals.

### COMMUNITY PRE VOCATIONAL

Working with individual to prepare them for paid community employment- Teaching individuals job skills and other related social skills to enhance their ability to obtain employment in the future.

### SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SEMP)

Working with individual to support and provide them with necessary coaching so they can successfully engage in paid competitive employment.

### FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES (FSS)

Support for the individual's family by reimbursing them for certain qualifying items or services, otherwise not available to them.

### INTENSIVE BEHAVIORAL SERVICES (IBS)

Short-term interventional services for people with behavioral issues and their family members.

### RESPITE:

Home and Community-based respite services to provide a relief for the individual's caregiver and family.

**At-Home:** Respite services delivered in the home of the individual.

**After School:** Respite program provided every day after school hours.

**Sundays:** Respite program provided every Sunday.

**Legal Holidays:** Respite program provided on all legal holidays when school is not in session.

**Summer Break/Camp Neshomah:** Full day respite program during the summer break weeks.

**Stars Night Program:** Respite services delivered in the evening hours to high-functioning individuals by taking them out in the community and doing recreational and stimulating activities with them.

**Weekend Getaway:** A weekend retreat for individuals receiving respite services.

**Hamasmid:** After-School program for mainstreamed individuals engaging in recreational activities.

### SELF-DIRECTION

The Individual or their advocate takes direct responsibility to manage their services and self-direct their budget.

**Fiscal Intermediary (FI):** Assists individual or their advocate in implementing their Individual Support Agreement and to manage financial accountability and employer responsibilities.

**Brokerage:** Assisting individuals or their advocate in creating and managing their budget.

### PARENTAL RETREATS

Providing: Getaways and retreats for parents of individuals with disabilities

## DOH

### EARLY INTERVENTION (EI)

Providing a range of services to help young children (ages birth-3) who have a specific delay in their development.

**Group Development Model (GDM):** Providing Early Intervention services in a group-setting.

**Therapy:** Providing OT, PT, SLP, Vision, Nutrition, Play, Special Education, Family Training etc. to help the child develop appropriately.

**Evaluations:** Providing full evaluations to assess child's skills and development.

### NURSING HOME TRANSITION AND DIVERSION (NHTD)

Waiver services to help individuals who need nursing-home level of care safely remain home and avoid nursing home placement.

**Service Coordination (SC):** Provides coordination to the individual in gaining access to needed waiver and Medicaid State Plan services, as well as other local, state, and federally funded educational, vocational, social, and medical services.

**Community Transitional Services (CTS) / Moving Assistance (MA):** Provides moving assistance with packing and transporting individual's possessions and furnishings when he/she must be moved from an inadequate or unsafe housing situation to a viable environment.

**Environmental Modifications (EMODS):** Provides Internal and external physical adaptations to the individual's home, that are necessary to assure the health, welfare and safety of the individual and avoid institutionalization.

**Vehicle Modification (VMODS):** Modifications to a vehicle that is used to improve the individual's independence and access to services and supports in the community.

**Assistive Technology :** Provides durable medical equipment and supplies for the individual to increase their level of independence, safety, and functional limitations.

### TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI)

Waiver services to help individuals who had a traumatic brain injury.

**Service Coordination (SC):** Provides coordination to the individual in gaining access to needed waiver and Medicaid State Plan services, as well as other local, state, and federally funded educational, vocational, social, and medical services.

**Community Transitional Services (CTS) / Moving Assistance (MA):** Provides moving assistance with packing and transporting individual's possessions and furnishings when he/she must be moved from an inadequate or unsafe housing situation to a viable environment.

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**Assistive Technology :** Provides durable medical equipment and supplies for the individual to increase their level of independence, safety, and functional limitations.

### SENIOR DINING/SOCIAL DAY PROGRAM (SHNOIS CHAIM)

Providing: Daily onsite lunches and social/ educational activities for community seniors (Orange County only).

## HAMASPIK CHOICE

### MLTCP:

Providing: A managed long-term care plan (MLTCP) approved by New York State.

## HMO/INSURANCE

### ABA

Behavior modification services for children with autism.

**Social Group:** ABA service delivered in a group setting.

**One on One:** ABA service delivered on a one-on-one basis in the child's home or community.

## LHCSA - HAMASPIK HOMECARE

### PERSONAL CARE SERVICES

Our PCA/HHA assist individuals with personal care needs, activities of daily living, and light housekeeping. They are extensively trained, and screened, and are supervised by RN.

### SUPPORT SERVICES

Our HCSS Certified Aides assist those enrolled in the NHTD or TBI Medicaid Waiver Programs with oversight and supervision, in addition to personal care services.

### CDPAS/CDPAP

As an alternative to traditional homcare, this program empowers the client to hire, train, and set the schedule of their personal assistants (PA). The PA's may be family members and can even live in the same home.

### NURSING SERVICES

Providing: skilled observation and assessment - care planning - paraprofessional supervision - clinical monitoring and coordination - medication management - physician - ordered nursing interventions and skilled treatments.

### TRAINING

Providing: free PCA training and competency testing for those interested in a home care career.

## NYC HCR

### ACCESS TO HOME

Providing home modifications for people with physical disability.

## NYSED SERVICES

### ACCESS VR

Assist individuals to achieve and maintain employment and to support independent living through training, education, rehabilitation, and career development.

### PATHWAY TO EMPLOYMENT

Employment planning and support services that provide assistance for individuals to obtain, maintain or advance in competitive employment or self-employment.

## NYSHA

### ARTICLE 16 CLINIC

Providing: Physical therapy · occupational therapy · speech therapy · psychology · social work · psychiatry · nutrition

### TRAINING SESSIONS

Providing: SCIP · CPR and first aid · orientation · MSC CORE · AMAP · annual updates · Com Hab/ Respite · Family Care · Supported employment

### CENTRAL INTAKE

Providing: The first contact for a person or family in need of Hamaspik services

### THE HAMASPIK GAZETTE

Providing: A bilingual monthly newspaper keeping the community up-to-date on all major news in medicine, public health, disability, hospitals, senior care, and general Hamaspik news.

## OMH

### ADULT HEALTH HOME CARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Intensive, comprehensive care management for Adults with chronic condition(s) and/or mental health issues at greater risk for relapse and/or lack of care.

### CHILDREN HEALTH HOME CARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Intensive, comprehensive care management for children with chronic condition(s) and/or mental health issues at greater risk for relapse and/or lack of care.

### ADULT HCBS SERVICES

Behavioral Health Home and Community-Based Services for eligible adults over the age of twenty one.

**Community Psychiatric Support and Treatment:** Support and treatment to achieve functional improvement and stability, while working to attain the personal goals in a community setting.

**Family Support and Training:** Family training and support to engage the family in the treatment planning process and provide them with emotional and informational support to enhance their skills to assist in the recovery.

**Psychosocial Rehabilitation:** Assists with rehabilitating functional deficits and interpersonal or environmental hardships associated with the behavioral health condition.

**Empowerment Services-Peer Support:** Peer-delivered services designed to promote skills for coping with and managing behavioral health symptoms, while utilizing recovery-oriented principles.

**Habilitation:** Assist to acquire and improve skills such as: communication, self-care, socialization, mobility, etc. to successfully reside in home and community-based setting.

**Intensive Supported Employment:** Assists to obtain and keep competitive employment.

**Prevocational Services:** Prepares for employment, developing strengths and soft skills that contribute to employability.

**Transitional Employment:** Strengthens the work record and skills toward the goal of achieving assisted or unassisted competitive employment.

**Ongoing Supported Employment:** Ongoing follow-along support when holding down a job.

### CHILDREN HCBS SERVICES

Behavioral Health Home and Community-Based Services for eligible children from birth to twenty one.

**Prevocational Services:** Designed to prepare a youth (age 14 or older) to engage in paid work, volunteer work, or career exploration. Prevocational Services are not job-specific, but rather are geared toward facilitating success in any work environment.

**Caregiver Family Support and Services :** Teaches skills to caregiver/family's that will enhance their ability to care for the child/youth in the home and/ or community.

**Community Self Advocacy Training and Support:** Provides family and caregivers with techniques and information not generally available so that they can better respond to the needs of the Individual related to their disabilities.

**Community Habilitation:** Provides assistance with learning social skills, daily living and health related duties by working with the individual on goal-oriented tasks.

**Supported Employment:** Designed to prepare youth with disabilities (age 14 or older) to engage in paid work.

**Planned Respite:** Provides short-term relief for the individual's family/caregiver while supporting the individual's mental health, substance use and/or health care goals.

**Day Habilitation:** Provides assistance with learning social and daily living skills in a certified agency setting.



## ●► NYSHA NEWS

# Hamaspik Making Inroads into the Mental Health Field: an Interview with the Directors of Integrated Health

*In an interview with Mordechai Neuman, LCSW, who directs this new initiative in the Hudson Valley, the Gazette gets a firsthand glance at the daily activities of this specialized program*

**Hamaspik Gazette:** For whom is this program designed?

**Mordechai Neuman:** Integrated Health serves those with emotional challenges as well as those with chronic physical challenges. (The program is not meant for the OPWDD population). Through this program, eligible individuals will be assigned a Care Manager, who serves as their personal advocate and guide through their difficult journey.

**HG:** What's behind the name "Integrated Health"?

**MN:** As the name suggests, it integrates the care from different dimensions: doctors, therapists, psychiatrists, social services benefits, etc., all under one virtual roof, creating one comprehensive plan with one goal of providing hope and concrete solutions,

so that the individual remains in the game with their chin up.

**HG:** What do you mean by that?

**MN:** All too often, individuals who have "been through the system," including several inpatient visits, lose hope in any sense of a meaningful future. With specialized care, however, focused around the feelings and needs of the individual, hope is not a far cry anymore.

**HG:** From your spectrum of cases, can you pick a few that would best explain the program?

**MN:** For starters, we try to refer to our individuals as "people"—not "cases." We look at an individual and see potential. We see a loving family with lots of hope. Through the eyes of our adult clients we see them in their youth, playing innocently with friends, looking at the world as a beautiful place. We believe

that the value of a human is more than the sum of his or her problems. We believe that and we practice it daily.

**HG:** Wow. Well said. Could you give us some scenarios of when someone would reach out for help?

**MN:** One: A talented young man finds himself suddenly in a difficult chronic medical situation. Doctors are perplexed. By the time a diagnosis and a course of treatment is found, he has lost many months, all at the price of his overall wellbeing, physical and emotional. He is no longer motivated to keep his preexisting diabetes under control.

Two: A home where both parents are battling psychological ailments that were never addressed properly. With three children at home, the question becomes, "Should this family be written off or can

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 >>



## ●► HEALTH NEWS

## Pharma Giant Resorts to Lottery to Dole Out Limited Stock of World's Most Expensive Lifesaving Drug

*Novartis: Drawing Lots Best Response to Vexing Ethics; Zolgensma Costs \$2.1 Million a Dose*

**Basel, Switzerland** — Say you produce the world's most-expensive drug: \$2.1 million for a single dose. Then, say it cures a previously-incurable rare disorder in children.

Now, say its tedious manufacturing process limits your supply—but you've got parents practically pounding your doors, doing everything they can to help their affected children.

What would you do?

That's the ethical dilemma that faced drugmaker Novartis last year, when it announced that its wonder drug Zolgensma would be provided to parents based on lottery win, not medical need.

Zolgensma is a genetic cure for spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), a very rare neuromuscular disease. It works by replacing the missing or mutated SMN1 gene; a missing or mutated SMN1 causes low levels of the SMN

protein that is vital for normal muscle function.

When Zolgensma was approved by the FDA last year, SMA parents worldwide rejoiced. But because of the limited supply, Novartis was faced with a dilemma: Who gets it first?

Random lotteries are an accepted way to mete out resources when there is a limited amount, some say, as they establish an equal playing field. But others argue that favoring children most ill would be a more ethical approach, as healthier patients could potentially wait until more supply is

available.

Novartis finally settled on conducting a lottery—an odd raffle of sorts in which patients were assigned random numbers, and a number randomly picked.

The lottery has several rules. Firstly, it's only for non-U.S. residents—Zolgensma is FDA-approved in the U.S., but is not government-approved elsewhere. Secondly, winners get the drug for free. Thirdly, only children under age two can apply, and fourth, 50 doses will be dispensed in the first half of 2020, with up to 100 total later. ★



LOTTERY LIFE WINNER: NOVARTIS HQ

### Hamaspik Gazette

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# Happening in Health Today

## POST-HEART ATTACK PROBLEMS MAY BE REDUCED BY 30 DAILY MINUTES OF MUSIC

**Belgrade, Yugoslavia** — If you regularly listen to music, here's a study that'll surely be music to your ears—especially if you've suffered a heart attack: A study now finds that listening to 30 minutes of music a day can significantly reduce the risk of further heart problems for people who have experienced one.

"There have been very few studies analyzing the effects of music on heart conditions," said the study's lead author, Prof. Predrag Mitrovic, of the University of Belgrade School of Medicine.

The seven-year study followed 350 people who had experienced a heart attack and the following chest pain. Half got the usual treatment while the other also got 30 daily minutes of music therapy. On average, the music therapy group had one-third less anxiety and one-quarter less angina pain than the regular treatment group.

## LOWER CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE RISK ASSOCIATED WITH DAILY HOT BATHS

**Osaka, Japan** — The heat of the water, not to mention the relaxation of the ritual, has long been known for health benefits when it comes to taking a hot bath.

But now, according to Japanese research, a hot bath every day is associated with lower risk of cardiovascular disease.

In the study, researchers reviewed data from the Japan Public Health Center-based Study Cohort I, which included over 61,000 participants aged 45-59. Their analysis indicated that people who had a hot bath on a daily basis had a 28 percent lower overall risk of cardiovascular disease.

"Heat exposure increases core body temperature, cardiac contractility, heart rate and blood flow, and decreases vessel endothelial shear stress," the authors wrote. "These effects are similar to the impact of exercise and are believed to improve vascular function

over the long term."

## SCIENTISTS FIND PROMISING NEW TREATMENT FOR LYME DISEASE

**Stanford, California** — Lyme disease is a bacterial illness which, if not treated fast enough, can lead to chronic conditions lasting even years. It's transmitted by bites from ticks carrying *borrelia burgdorferi*, the Lyme-causing bacterium.

But now, a new study on existing antibiotics cefotaxime and azlocillin lends hope that an effective long-term treatment for Lyme disease may be available in the future.

A team of Stanford University researchers first tested whether the drugs could kill drug-tolerant *borrelia* better than doxycycline, a standard Lyme antibiotic. It found that azlocillin outperformed doxycycline.

They then tested for presence of *borrelia* in infected mice given either

antibiotic. They found that the mice given azlocillin had none, while one of the mice given doxycycline still had the bacteria.

Researchers now plan to test azlocillin in a human clinical trial.

## ASPIRIN DOES NOT PREVENT DEMENTIA OR SLOW DOWN COGNITIVE DECLINE

**Melbourne, Australia** — Earlier research has suggested that the humble aspirin can benefit cardiovascular health—which is why some researchers had hypothesized that aspirin might also help prevent dementia or at least slow down cognitive decline.

But now, new research at Australia's Monash University has found that taking low-dose aspirin daily neither affects a person's dementia risk nor slows down cognitive decline.

"Worldwide, an estimated 50 million people have some form of dementia, a number that is expected to

grow as the population increases, so the scientific community is eager to find a low cost treatment that may reduce a person's risk," says co-author Joanne Ryan, Ph.D.

"Unfortunately, our large study found that a daily low dose aspirin provided no benefit to study participants at either preventing dementia or slowing cognitive decline."

## SCIENTISTS MONITOR BRAINS REPLAYING MEMORIES IN REAL TIME

**Bethesda, Maryland** — "Just as musical notes are recorded as grooves on a record, it appears that our brains store memories in neural firing patterns that can be replayed over and over again," says Kareem Zaghloul, M.D., Ph.D., a neurosurgeon-researcher at the NIH's National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS).

According to Dr. Zaghloul's research at the NIH Clinical Center, the country's largest research hospital, the electrical firing patterns of brain cells that occurred when patients learned a word pair were replayed fractions of a second before they successfully remembered the pair.

The finding underscores the idea that episodic memories are stored, or encoded, as neural activity patterns that our brains replay when triggered by such things as the whiff of a familiar scent or the riff of a catchy tune. ★

## PROTEIN GROWN IN LETTUCE MAY HELP HEAL BROKEN BONES FASTER

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** — Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia are paving the way for an oral therapy that could heal bones quicker in people with diabetes.

Because bones heal slower in people with diabetes, researchers have long been working on an affordable therapy using plants that could aid healing. For now, experiments in mice show promise.

The research team's work involves introducing specific proteins to plant cells. The plants then begin to express that gene in their cells. Once the plant produces the protein in its leaves, people can use it for oral therapy.

In this particular study, the team introduced human insulin-like growth factor-1 (IGF-1), a protein that plays an essential role in the development and regeneration of muscle and bone. It also included e-peptides to stimulate regeneration. ★



**A NEW KIND OF GREEN HEALTH:** LETTUCE, LONG KNOWN FOR BEING NUTRIENT-RICH, HAS NOW BEEN GENETICALLY MODIFIED TO PRODUCE A HEALING PROTEIN



# THE PROOF IS IN OUR PEOPLE



## Respite Services

Fun should be accessible to everyone. Our amazing counselors will give your child an experience to remember with our OPWDD Day Camp program.

Boro Park: 718.387.8400  
Williamsburg: 718.387.8400  
Rockland County: 845.503.0200  
Orange County: 845.774.0300



**HAMASPIK**  
CENTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES  
**המספיק**  
מרכז עזרה לצרכי העיבור

## ● ► HAMASPIK NEWS

# Summit Briderheim IRA Residents Enjoying and Sharing Their Own Vegetable Garden

*Hamaspik of Orange County Group Home Lays Down New Roots of Personal Growth*

Simcha likes cucumbers and sweet potatoes. Shea enjoys strawberries. Eli's favorite is cherry tomatoes (and vegetable salad). Yanky loves any vegetable—beets the most, says Home Manager Jacob Safdie. And now, thanks to working the good earth with Mr. Safdie's help, they're growing all those delicious fruits of nature right in their own backyard.

What they all have in common, besides a newfound passion for horticulture, is residency at the Summit Briderheim Individualized Residential Alternative (IRA).

Summit is one of Hamaspik of Orange County's newest IRAs, deftly helmed by Mr. and Mrs. Safdie since its inception.

Perhaps inspired by their home's proper name, the Safdies keep striving for new heights in personal growth among their young charges. One of those many groundbreaking efforts have now broken



**WILDLIFE OUT, ORGANIC HORTICULTURE IN:** SUMMIT'S RESIDENTS (L) EAGERLY CONQUER NEW GROUND INSIDE AN OUTDOOR ENCLOSURE (TOP) PROTECTING NEW PLANTS (BOTTOM)

new ground—in the form of a young and flourishing vegetable garden out in the yard (and one safely ensconced inside a terrarium-like shed to keep chipmunks and other hungry critters out).

How does the new adventure in



gardening help further Hamaspik's global mission of supporting people with intellectual/developmental disability (I/DD)?

The ongoing home-improvement project is both educational and

vocational, says Hamaspik of Orange County Director of Residential Services Solomon Gelb. "They can see the fruits of what they plant," he posits, expressing quite the double entendre.

More down to earth, though (pun definitely intended), is the fact that the project is also quite person-centered, Mr. Gelb adds—with the boys planting (and regularly tending to) what they want, and where they want it.

Watering the plants and watching them grow—seeing their constant changes in size and color—energizes the young men's daily routines, says Mr. Safdie.

Plus, he adds, the boys get the opportunity to share with and care for others as they get complimented for the fruits of their own labor. "The whole Hamaspik of Orange County gets tomatoes from us!" ★

## Integrated Health

<< CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3  
this home be saved?"

Three: An older *bochur* [single guy—ed.], after a life of trauma, finds himself being discharged (again) from the psychiatric ward. Is his home the optimal choice for him or will it be re-traumatizing him? What about his mental health care team: are they the right fit for him? What about a day program? How about SSI?

Four: A young housewife who raises her children with joy and runs a small mom and pop shop out of her house, has fallen ill. Lyme disease has done her in. When she is between doctor and hospital visits, she is on constant bedrest. Her life is shattered.

**HG:** And what do you actually do in these situations?

**MN:** For the latter one, we assisted with setting up appointments, medication refill reminders; we even got a team in place to help save the business! We worked with schools and organizations concerning the children. We were able, *b'siatya d'shmaya* [with Heaven's help—ed.] to turn the situation around from bleakness to hopefulness.

Our overall approach is to involve ourselves all the way to do whatever we could. We create a care team of doctors, therapists, teachers, and others

involved. We work with other providers on obtaining services such as home care aides and other appropriate services. We help secure social services benefits such as Food Stamps/SNAP and Medicaid renewals. We can help arrange medical transportation, home energy programs, and the like. The same with community organizations such as Tomchei Shabbos. With the appropriate consent in place we will involve family members to join in, in creating a plan that would work, and we monitor the plan to make sure that it is indeed working.

**HG:** Have you seen the fruits of your labor?

**MN:** Absolutely! With the help of Hashem, we have seen young families get back on track. Fathers and mothers who are again fulfilling their mission in life with pride and confidence. Seniors who are enjoying their children and grandchildren rather than belaboring them needlessly. Older *bochurim* and girls have been given a second chance in life.

**HG:** Hamaspik is known for its services for the OPWDD population. Do you borrow any of that for your new program?

**MN:** In addition to Integrated Health offering care management, it

also serves as the gateway to the HCBS benefits package. HCBS stands for Home and Community-Based Services (which, as the name implies, focuses on keeping people out of hospital and in the community). HCBS includes a list of services, many of which Hamaspik has been providing for 20-plus years, such as Habilitation and Pre-vocation (employment) services. HCBS is available to select eligible clients.

**HG:** What are the demographics of the program?

**MN:** The ages of our program participants to date range between 21 and 70. Half of our clients are in their 20s and 30s. Close to half exhibit chronic physical ailments (either as standalone or in conjunction with emotional challenges), while the other half are those with emotional challenges. A large percentage of the last category are those with mild emotional/behavioral problems, such as anxiety, ADHD, etc. who can benefit from Care Management while not fully dependent on them it.

**HG:** If people fall off track due to not making appointments, how do they get to you?

**MN:** The program is designed to be home- and community-based. This means we can meet clients at home, shul, coffee shop, or at our offices—whatever works for the client in terms of their physical and emotional level of

comfort. It starts with one phone call of a family member and we work together from there.

**HG:** What does it take to run such a program?

**MN:** All Care Managers undergo extensive training. More than that, we take care to hire those who possess a kind heart, a keen eye, and a pleasing personality—people who are ready to go the extra mile until the light is seen. Our Care Managers are well-versed in the world of medicine and mental health. They are a wealth of knowledge in community resources, social services benefits, and whatever they are unsure of, they become familiar with quickly. The program directors are licensed mental health professionals with years of experience working in the community. We, here in upstate, work hand-in-hand with our counterpart in Brooklyn, Mr. Mutty Solomon, LMHC, whose guidance and experience serves as a constant guide for us. Together, with the help of Above, we have put together a good product that we believe will change the way our community approaches difficult physical and emotional challenges. ★

To register for this program or for more information, call Integrated Health in Brooklyn at 718-387-8400x152 or 845-503-0200 for the upstate Hudson Valley region.

Friday Afternoons / Ages 8-9

# ● Social Friday.



Join us to improve your child's self-confidence and social skills in a group setting.



A project run  
by Hamaspik

Contact Reiny Steif / 845.503.0239 [Rsteif@hamaspikrockland.org](mailto:Rsteif@hamaspikrockland.org)

FOR CHILDREN WITH ASD ELIGIBLE FOR ABA SERVICES.

Grow  
today.



● ► HAMASPIK NEWS | HAPPENINGS AROUND HAMASPIK



## Fancy Meeting You Here!



**FORTRESS OF FRATERNITUDE:** TWO WANNAMAKER BRIDERHEIM IRA RESIDENTS RIDE OUT THE LOCKDOWN TOGETHER (AND YES, FRATERNITUDE IS A WORD—IN FRENCH)

## “Penned”-up Feelings



**“WRITING” IT OUT:** SHAYA, A GRATEFUL RECIPIENT OF HAMASPIK’S “PEN-PAL” INTERACTIVE TOYS, PUTS HIS TALKING PEN TO WORK; GIFT BAGS READY TO GO (R)



## For Kiryas Joel’s Kids With Special Needs, No More Boring Shabbos Afternoons!

Affected by disability or not, kids at home with nothing to do (or, let’s be honest, nothing that they *want* to do!) are among parenting’s biggest challenges.

The growing population of upstate Kiryas Joel, New York is a sprawling, vibrant and overwhelmingly child-friendly community served extensively by Hamaspik of Orange County—and one where parents of children with disabilities now have yet another positive option for those long Shabbos (Saturday) afternoons when kids are calling for something fun to do.

Kiryas Joel, meet Shabbafun!

As Hamaspik of Orange County’s latest offering, the self-explanatory Shabbafun gives youths with special needs a five-hour Shabbos afternoon respite program at two sites in the heart of the village.

At the same time, parents of these precious souls with special needs get the restorative Shabbos rest they so desperately need and richly deserve—all too often, the attention demanded

by kids with disabilities renders the otherwise-restful Shabbos just another exhausting day, especially when, due to Shabbos, few if any programs exist.

Hamaspik staff members personally pick up the children from their homes, walking them to the sites and then spending with them five hours filled with stimulating and therapeutic games, songs and activities. The formal “Shalosh Seudos” third Shabbos meal, served at sundown Saturday, is also provided, as is the informal *oneg Shabbos* spread of healthy snacks.

Upon the close of the sacred Shabbos with nightfall, the children are then driven back home.

But most important of all, it’s not just five hours of healthy fun and game for the kids: It’s also five hours of recharging and rejuvenation for their heroic parents, too. ★

For more information, please contact Mrs. Loeb at [tloeb@hamaspikorange.org](mailto:tloeb@hamaspikorange.org) or 845-774-0332.

## Hamaspik of Orange County Writes Another Chapter in Community Attentiveness

### After-School Respite Program Gives PENPal Talking Pens, Books to Kids at Homex

Not even 24 hours had gone by before the accolades began pouring in—at least so reported a staffer at Hamaspik of Orange County’s After-School Respite (ASR) program, in an e-mail to the *Gazette*.

“For some, it was the poem that gave the boost to juggle another day,” she wrote. “For others, it was the thought of being on our minds. For everyone it was the smiles on the kinderlach’s [Yiddish for “kiddies”—ed.] faces.” Positive feedback is still coming in, ASR Director Mrs. Shevy Schnitzer reports days later.

The staff member was referring to the sensitive support and understanding expressed recently by her agency to the mothers of young children with special needs who would have been attending Hamaspik’s daily afternoon ASR program in normal times.

In those freshly-passed times, however, those little boys and girls were all stuck at home—and so, Mrs. Schnitzer and team gave them all something to

write home about, even bringing it literally to their doors.

Mrs. Schnitzer handed each ASR child a PENPal toy, an oversized talking electronic pen that identifies or otherwise comments on images it touches on the pages of two accompanying books (with a variety of additional books slated for future expansion).

The toys are also quite educational, notes Hamaspik of Orange County Exec. Director Moses Wertheimer—a statement confirmed by Mrs. Schnitzer. In fact, she reports, one boy whose severe autism keeps him unanchored was positively captivated by the educational device—even impressing his visiting therapist.

“Children with special needs, especially those with Down syndrome, struggle with speech,” said Mr. Wertheimer, adding that it also helps with identifying items and tasks. “This is the perfect device to help them progress in those areas.” ★



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## Hamaspik of Rockland County and Lowe's Join Forces for Disability Job Success

At one of the regional locations of the national Lowe's home-improvement superstore, employees are positively thrilled with "Moshe" (name changed for family privacy), reports Berel "Beri" Oberlander, a Hamaspik of Rockland County Supported Employment Program (SEMP) Job Coordinator.

He would know. Keeping individuals thoroughly entrenched in the mainstream (personal protective equipment, or PPE, now also included) is what Beri Oberlander does—because, among many other things, that's what Hamaspik does.

At Lowe's, Moshe regularly retrieves shopping carts, tidies up the parking lot, stocks shelves, helps shoppers load cars with bulk purchases, and otherwise provides smiling customer service.

As a Hamaspik of Rockland County Supported Employment Program (SEMP) Job Coordinator, Mr. Oberlander regularly reaches out to employers region-wide. Far or near, big or small,

the friendly, energetic Coordinator makes it his business to connect with Hudson Valley businesses—and to help people with disabilities.

The SEMP initiative, an understated but highly successful pillar of the New York State OPWDD, matches employable people with disabilities with business seeking quality employees.

Through the program's ever-patient coaches, individuals get on-the-job training while employers get reliable support—creating a win-win situation for all. Led by Yaakov Grunwald, Director of Employment Services, Hamaspik of Rockland County has provided SEMP to the community for years now.

Above all, Moshe comes back to his Monsey home each day feeling good about himself. And if there is one thing that more than anything else defines "being in the mainstream," it's "self-esteem"—something that, thanks to the SEMP program, Moshe isn't about to run low on anytime. ★

## With New Accessibility Vans, Hamaspik of Orange County Rolling Along

### Three Brand-New Vehicles Accommodate Growing Body of People Served

They couldn't have come at a better time, Hamaspik of Orange County Technology and Transportation Director David Daskal tells the *Gazette*.

He's referring to the three brand-new full-size vans that have been newly delivered to the non-profit agency—allowing two Hamaspik group homes, plus its Day Habilitation (Day Hab) program, to drive more individuals who use wheelchairs to their destinations of choice.

That's "more" as in more individuals serviced by Hamaspik, not more drives for the existing number of individuals serviced by Hamaspik, Mr. Daskal notes.

Hamaspik's Summit and Catherine Individualized Residential Alternatives (IRAs)—the agency's newest, having opened in the last year—indicating growth in their own right in number of people supported. Each now has its own accessibility van, too.

Ditto for the Women's Division of

Hamaspik of Orange County's Day Hab program—a robust day program which revolves, among many other things, on outings of personal preference requested by the individuals regularly attending, and which also further their habilitation goals. The addition of another lift-equipped transportation vehicle to Day Hab's fleet allows even more individuals to be out and about during the day.

The vehicles, all Ford Transit Connect vans, were procured through a lengthy federal grant application process, says Mr. Daskal. Known informally as "5310," that grant provides for "Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & People with Disabilities," according to official literature.

And if Hamaspik's immediate regular usage of the trio of vehicles is any indicator, the people with disability now benefiting from them have certainly had their mobility enhanced. ★

## Rounds of Indoor Fun



**A VERY COLORFUL PERIOD:** YITZCHAK ENJOYS PUTTING HIS GIANT COLORED DOTTING MARKERS TO GOOD USE



**"DOT'S" THE WAY TO DO IT!** SHMIEL COMPLETES A PAPER OF A DECIDEDLY NON-ACADEMIC BUT STILL-STIMULATING KIND, AS HE STAYS HEALTHILY BUSY AND OCCUPIED

## More Mobility for More



**LINEUP OF SUPPORT:** AFTER YEARS OF PROCUREMENT EFFORT, HAMASPIK OF ORANGE COUNTY'S NEWEST FORCE FOR GOOD IS READY TO ROLL IN THE AGENCY'S PARKING LOT



# The Autism Update

*News and developments from the world of research and advocacy*

## OVER 100 GENES TIED TO AUTISM IN LARGEST-EVER STUDY

**New York, New York** — According to research at the legendary Seaver Center, one of the world's leading centers for autism research and treatment for children, over 100 genes appear to be involved in autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

The Seaver Center study, which involved over 50 centers around the world, identified 102 genes associated with ASD, including a few dozen previously unrecognized.

According to Dr. Joseph Buxbaum, who directs the Seaver Autism Center for Research and Treatment at New York's very own Mount Sinai Hospital, knowing the genes involved in ASD will help researchers better understand the causes and possibly develop new drug therapies for children with severe impairments.

"Autism exists on a spectrum," said Buxbaum, "and many people wouldn't need any new, targeted drug therapies because they're doing fine" But for children who are profoundly affected, he said, there could be promise in the "precision medicine" approach—treatments that are tailored to individuals based on their characteristics, like the genes they carry.

## AUTISM RATE CLIMBS AGAIN, SAYS CDC

**Atlanta, Georgia** — The number of American children diagnosed with autism is on the rise yet again, says the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). As of two years ago, the rate nationwide was one out of every 59 children. Now, according to the CDC, it's 54.

The latest figures are based on data collected in 2016 through the agency's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network. That program regularly tracks prevalence by reviewing health and educational records for eight-year-olds living in 11 communities across the country.

According to Stuart Shapira, associate director for science at the CDC's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, some of the increase might be due to the way children are identified, diagnosed and receiving

services in their communities.

Boys were four times more likely to be diagnosed with autism than girls, the CDC found.

## SENSORY SENSITIVITY IN KIDS WITH AUTISM MAY STEM FROM SPECIFIC NEURONS

**Cambridge, Massachusetts** — Could a missing gene have a part in the cause of autism?

Research at the famed Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) found that lab mice missing an autism-associated gene called SHANK3 respond to much lighter touches than typical mice do—with

that hypersensitivity seemingly resulting from the underactivity of neurons, or brain cells, that normally dampen sensory responses.

Up to two percent of people with autism have a mutation in SHANK3, which encodes a protein needed for neurons to communicate with one another.

The researchers found that neurons called excitatory neurons were overactive in the mice's brains.

Up to 90 percent of people with autism have sensory problems, including hypersensitivity to sensations such as sound or touch. These disruptions may underlie many of the difficulties they face in

navigating the world.

## AFTER FDA BANS JRC'S SHOCK DEVICES, PARENTS FIGHT BACK

**Springfield, Massachusetts** — A small but vocal group of self-described "autism advocates" are all but jumping for joy at what they see a historic victory for disability rights—while a substantial number of parents of the affected individuals see the development as anything but progress.

For decades, efforts were made to have the Canton, Mass.-based Judge Rotenberg Center (JRC) stop usage of corrective electrical-stimulation devices. The vest-based devices are worn by a handful of JRC students from all over the country who have extreme behaviors of injury to self or others; desperate parents have described the shock treatments as life-saving interventions that worked where nothing else did, testifying that their kids could now live largely typical lives.

After endless pressure, the FDA has now finally banned the devices. But both the JRC Parents Association and JRC say they will fight the decision.

## TWITTER BANS "DEHUMANIZING" DISEASE-RELATED POSTS

**San Francisco, California** — Social-media giant Twitter has rolled out yet another policy that limits what people can post on its worldwide service—now prohibiting posts that "dehumanize" people because they have a disease or disability or because of their age.

The three new categories had been added not because there were more reports of hateful language in these areas but because of the potential for offline harm, said Jerrel Peterson, Twitter's head of safety policy.

Now, even a message that "likens a group based on their age, disability or disease to viruses or microbes or maggots, something that's less than human, that can be in violation of our policy now," Peterson said.

Twitter's hateful conduct policy already bans attacking or threatening others on the basis of categories such as race, age, disability or serious disease.



A SHOE-IN FOR DISABILITY ACCEPTANCE: VANS NOW MAKES "SENSORY" ASD SHOES

## VANS INTRODUCES "SENSORY INCLUSIVE" ASD SHOES, SHIRTS

**Costa Mesa, California** — The long-running shoe brand Vans has now joined the growing number of major apparel companies, and other companies, in manufacturing products geared towards people with disabilities—and without making them obvious that they're for people with disabilities. In short, mainstreaming!

Vans' new "Autism Awareness Collection" features "sensory inclusive footwear designs," which are described as "ultra-comfortable" and with "sensory-

inclusive elements including a calming color palette and design features that focus on the senses."

According to the company, input on how to make the new shoes sensory-sensitive came from the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards.

The new shoes will be sold in sizes from adult down through toddlers.

Vans will also be selling sensory-sensitive t-shirts for children.





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● ► **HMASPIK NEWS**

# Hamaspik of Rockland County Men's Day Hab Building Undergoes Interior Refreshing

*Improved 1st and 2nd Floors Inspired by Individuals—and the Staff who Support Them*

A site that supports and serves people with intellectual/developmental disability (I/DD) is only as good as the program residing at that site.

By that logic, Hamaspik's program sites have been consistently outstanding over the decades. But that's hardly a reason to leave "good enough" at good enough.

That's why Hamaspik of Rockland County is now putting the finishing touches on an interior redesign of its Men's Day Habilitation (Day Hab) program site at 78 Rt. 45 in Spring Valley, New York.

The treatment of the building's first and second floors invokes all the standard interior paint color schemes and floor upgrades of your standard interior revamp.

The update on site for the past several weeks has improved the multipurpose dining area. Designers have also laid down new flooring and decked the walls with bright and freshly-painted colors.

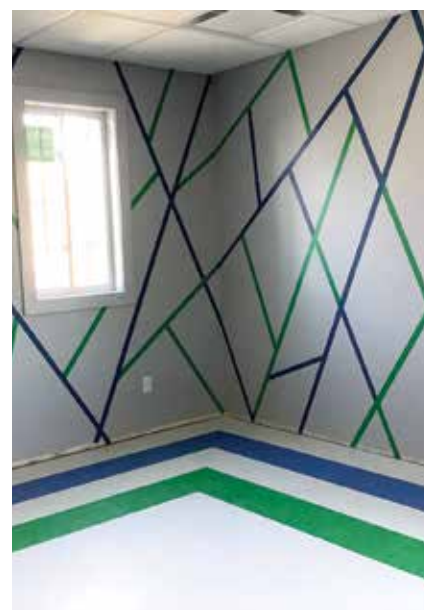
The project took full advantage of the confluence of several factors—primarily the absence of the Day Hab's daily usage due to the lockdown, and the simultaneous state non-restriction of "essential" economic sectors, including interior design and, more importantly, disability supports.

The project began a few months ago.

Working with longtime Day Hab Manager Pinchos Knopfler and his experienced team of Direct Support Professionals (DSP), Hamaspik of Rockland County Director of Development Nathan Fried designed a plan that would retain all of the floors' existing advantages—while eliminating all of their drawbacks.

Mr. Knopfler and his crew of DSPs supplied Mr. Fried with ample front-line information on what worked, what didn't, and what needed improvement.

Those multiple meetings and conversations would ultimately produce a far more efficient and ergonomic counter and serving area for the first-floor kitchen and dining area. They gave the front lobby more space.



**WALL-TO-WALL REINVIGORATION:** NEWLY-REDONE ROOMS AND FLOORS AT HAMASPIK OF ROCKLAND COUNTY'S MEN'S DAY HAB RADIATE LIFE

On the newly—updated second floor, one will find classrooms, activity rooms, storage rooms and closets, offices, and restrooms—all beautifully reinvigorated.

A cursory on-site tour of the facilities reveals overwhelmingly spacious closets in the classroom, with high-tech monitors mounted on walls that are also boasting vibrant and fresh coats of paint. Floors practically gleam underfoot with lustrous new flooring, while the restrooms all feature expanded new ADA accessibility hardware.

Significantly, one existing classroom is also being transformed into a veritable "beis medrash," or "study house"—the large and library-like rooms you'll find inside any sizable synagogue where scholars of any level can find themselves right at home surrounded by book-lined shelves and ample seating. It's something that one long-time regular "Day Habber" requested, Mr. Fried reveals—evinced not just sensitivity to that particular individual's needs but to the faith community from which he springs, not just giving him the habilitation he requires but a familiar space that his fellow "Day Habbers" desire.

You'd think that consistency creates the steady background needed for steady growth. But a scientific study of interior design actually once found that the more an interior space changes,

the more its occupants focus on their work, not their surroundings—a fact proven true for offices, and certain to

be true for the hardworking DSPs of Hamaspik of Rockland County's Day Hab, and their beneficiaries. ★

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HEALTH NEWS

# Scientists developing more durable dental materials, longer-lasting fillings

**Portland, Oregon** — Researchers at the Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) School of Dentistry are developing a new kind of dental filling that is twice as strong and longer lasting than those currently used in dental clinics.

The researchers are currently working on how to make the new filling material resistant to cavity-causing bacteria, but without harming the helpful species that regularly live in the mouth.

Most fillings used today are dental composites. They are white and look tooth-like, but last only seven to ten years. What's more, these fillings can crack, break, or simply fall out over time—but they most often need replacing when new cavities develop around their edges.

Failure of dental fillings can lead to more extensive damage to the tooth, requiring repeated visits to the dentist and increased expenses for patients.

Since today's dental fillings were first invented in the 1960s, dental researchers have tinkered with their ingredients to improve their durability. Much of the work focused on the *filler*: the putty-like material that is packed and hardened into the cavity, along with the *adhesive*, which glues the composite filling to the tooth.

However, little has changed over the decades, with fillings still largely made of chemicals called *methacrylates*. Water and bacterial enzymes can break methacrylates' chemical bonds.

After trying many combinations of chemicals, the researchers found two



GIVING FILLINGS TEETH: EXPERIMENTAL NEW FILLINGS ARE 2X STRONGER, LAST LONGER

chemicals that worked well together: *methacrylamide*, which is stronger than methacrylates, and a filler coated with *thiourethane*.

They found that thiourethane makes the composite twice as break-resistant as standard fillings, and methacrylamide's bond strength—how well it sticks to a tooth—appears to increase over time.

HEALTHY EATING

BUTTERNUT SQUASH

MEDIUM

YIELDS: 6-8 SERVINGS

READY IN: 2:00

Butternut Squash Quiche

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 butternut squash, peeled and cubed
- 4 sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 can crushed pineapple
- 1/4 cup oil
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1 tablespoon vanilla sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 4 tablespoons honey
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS:

- In a 9x13 baking pan, place butternut squash and sweet potato
- Mix with honey, oil, salt, vanilla sugar and cinnamon
- Bake covered at 350° for 1 hour
- Mash everything; mix in the pineapple and eggs
- Bake uncovered for 45 minutes

CHEF'S TIP:

Microwave for 5 min for easy peeling and cutting

BENEFITS:

Low in fat, butternut squash delivers an ample dose of dietary fiber, making it an exceptionally heart-friendly choice. It provides significant amounts of potassium, important for bone health, and vitamin B6, essential for the proper functioning of both the nervous and immune systems.

EASY

YIELDS: 8-10 SERVINGS

READY IN: 1:30

Hearty Butternut Squash Soup

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 onion
- 4 cloves garlic
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 butternut squash
- 4 carrots
- 2 green squash
- 3 sweet potatoes
- 1 knob celery
- 1 root parsley
- Water
- Salt to taste
- Pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

- Peel and cube all vegetables
- In an 8-quart pot, sauté onion and garlic until translucent
- Add all vegetables; cook for about 5 minutes
- Add seasonings and water to cover all vegetables
- Bring to boil; lower flame and simmer for an hour
- Blend soup with immersion blender; adjust seasonings if necessary

MEDIUM

YIELDS: 2 DOZEN

READY IN: 0:30

Butternut Squash Muffins

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 bag frozen butternut squash
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup apple sauce
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 cup oil
- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 cup flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 cup ground almonds
- 1/4 cup cinnamon sugar for garnish

DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 400°
- Defrost and drain butternut squash
- Mash with a fork, mix in well the eggs, apple sauce, oil, sugar and honey
- Whisk in the rest on the ingredients
- Spoon in batter into lined muffin tins
- Sprinkle cinnamon sugar on top
- Bake for 20 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center of muffins comes out clean

© 2020 Recipes by Mrs. Chana G. Laufer

For all your personal cooking and catering needs, contact chanagitty@gmail.com



# Public Health and Policy News

(HHS) would have required drug companies to put the wholesale prices of their drugs in their ads.

The idea was to encourage free-market competition based on consumer information and choice, thus hopefully driving costs down and making drugs more affordable to all.

But Big Pharma fought back, filing suit in June of 2019 that HHS lacked the authority to create such a rule.

After they won that case, the federal government appealed in January 2020 before the U.S. Court of Appeals in D.C. Tellingly, a brief supporting the HHS was filed by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), America's largest and most powerful lobbying group. This June, HHS lost again, with the Court of Appeals ruling that "there is no reasoned statutory basis" for the rule.

## EXPERTS WARN OF HEIGHTENED DISEASE-CARRYING BUG SEASON

**New York, New York** — What with a number of industries dampened or depressed in recent months, experts are warning against the dearth of pest-control efforts—and a possibly-resulting rise in number of mosquitoes and ticks across the Northeast this late summer and early fall.

Mosquitoes and ticks are known to carry West Nile virus, Lyme disease, and the eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) virus, among other bugs—and with less exterminators out working nowadays, experts advise the public to take pest-control matters into their own hands.

Besides ensuring a minimal mosquito presence on properties by eliminating any standing water, experts also advise using bug repellent scrupulously when in natural outdoor areas.

For indoor (and even outdoor) areas, natural repellents like citronella or lemon eucalyptus—and products based on them—will help keep mosquitos at bay.

## SUGARY DRINKS DROP IN CHILE AFTER LANDMARK ANTI-OBESITY LAW

**Chapel Hill, North Carolina** — Talk about going south!

But in the case of a public-health law



**SENDING A CHILL THROUGH THE SOFT-DRINK INDUSTRY:** WHILE SODA SALES IN CHILE ARE NOW DOWN, SO ARE THAT SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRY'S RATES OF OBESITY IN ADULTS

requiring warning labels on unhealthy foods in the South American country of Chile, that's a good thing.

A study by the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill finds that four years after Santiago passed the world's most sweeping measures at the time to combat mounting obesity, Chileans are drinking a lot fewer sugar-laden beverages.

The research found that consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks dropped nearly 25 percent in the 18 months after Chile adopted a raft of regulations that included advertising restrictions on unhealthy foods, bold front-of-package warning labels and a ban on junk food in schools.

However, during the same period, researchers recorded a five percent increase in purchases of diet soft drinks, fruit juices without added sugar, and bottled water.

## CONTAMINATED HEARTBURN MEDS PULLED OFF SHELVES BY FDA

**White Oak, Maryland** — Brand-name Zantac heartburn drugs, used widely to treat stomach acid and ulcers, have been pulled off retail shelves nationwide after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) determined that a contamination issue with Zantac poses a greater risk than previously thought.

The FDA's move applies to all prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) versions of Zantac. Patients should stop taking any of the medications they currently have and throw them away, the FDA said.

The call reverses last year's decision by the FDA that patients could continue taking the medications and did not face health risks from contamination with a "probable" cancer-causing chemical found in multiple brands.

Most recently, however, the FDA determined that levels of the chemical increase over time, especially if tablets and capsules are stored at higher temperatures.

## OVER HALF OF AMERICANS WANT MONEY, CONTROL IN EXCHANGE FOR GENETIC DATA

**Ithaca, New York** — With the growth of genetic database companies, and the growth of ways to treat people and improve medicine being developed by genetic database companies, the majority of people want compensation for their personal genetic data being used by genetic database companies.

That's according to new research by Ithaca, New York-based Cornell University of and Penn State University in State College, Pennsylvania.

In short, people want to be paid for providing companies with their DNA information.

The research was based on a survey of over 2,000 officials and employees at 12 different companies nationwide. It found that while 11.7 percent of respondents were willing to charitably donate their data, 37.8 percent were unwilling regardless of compensation—and 50.6 percent were only willing if financially compensated. ★



**SHOW ME THE MONEY:** FOR MANY, THE BUSINESS OF DNA IS ABOUT THE DNA OF BUSINESS

## FEDERAL OVER-THE-COUNTER (OTC) DRUG REGULATIONS REVAMPED

**Washington, D.C.** — Tucked quietly into the recent \$2 trillion (yes, "trillion") public health response bill was a raft of reforms of the over-the-counter (OTC) drug industry that had been waiting for action for years.

What was it doing in a bill whose purpose ostensibly is to help shore up the economy as it crawls out from a public-health crisis of unprecedented proportions? Well, the OTC industry lobbied Congress—and effectively so, obviously—that the changes could play a key role in the economy's recovery.

Specifically, the law changes how the FDA designates or approves changes to OTC drugs. Now, those changes are done administratively, instead of going through a full public notice and comment period (followed by any rule change).

## BIG PHARMA WINS APPEAL AGAINST NEW RULE REQUIRING DRUG PRICES IN ADS

**Washington, D.C.** — Well, so much for common sense.

A May 2019 rule proposed by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services



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# In the Know

## ALL ABOUT... HEADACHES

Sources: Mayo Clinic,  
WebMD, HealthCareDive

Does just scanning this article's title give you a headache?

If you've just started this article and already feel the onset of a headache, then you're perfectly poised to understand the most common of several kinds of headache: the *tension* headache.

That's because the tension headache is caused mostly by stress. And if you get stressed out just reading about headaches, then that up-and-coming headache is probably a tension headache.

But the purpose of this article is not to give everyone headaches, instead, we'll review this common health nuisance for facts widely known and otherwise. We hope that will leave you without a headache, and armed with facts on how best defeat—and better yet, prevent—the next one.

### DEFINITIONS AND SYMPTOMS

It turns out that there are quite a few types of headaches. But to keep things simple and readable, here are the definitions of the three most common ones.

#### Tension

With up to 80 percent of U.S. adults getting these headaches from time to time, this is the most common headache. Women are twice likelier than men to get tension headaches. Tension headaches tend to affect both sides of the head, cause mild to moderate pain, or cause pain that feels pressing or tightening. Tension headaches can also cause trouble sleeping, fatigue, irritability, and mild sensitivity to light or noise.

#### Migraine

Migraines have a notorious reputation due to their debilitating and painful symptoms. They are most known for causing nausea or vomiting (or both), and/or sensitivity to light and sound. Migraines also tend to: affect one side or both sides of the head; have a pulsating, throbbing sensation; and, unfortunately, also cause moderate to severe pain.

#### Chronic/episodic

This category describes headaches by frequency, not type—meaning, most headache types can be categorized as chronic or episodic. These include: migraine headaches; tension headaches; new daily persistent headaches; rebound headaches, hemicrania continua headaches, and ice cream headaches (yes, there actually is such a thing as an ice cream headache).

If you have a headache more days than not, you might have chronic headaches: By definition, chronic headaches occur 15 days or more a month, for longer than three months, and can be short- or long-lasting (over four hours). Episodic headaches, by contrast, are generally those that occur less than 15 days a month—meaning, from time to time.

### CALL 9-1-1 IF:

- You are experiencing “the worst headache of your life”
- You have speech, vision, or movement problems or loss of balance, especially if you have not had these symptoms with a headache before
- The headache starts very suddenly
- If these symptoms occur, you may be having a stroke or aneurysm, not a headache. Get yourself to the nearest emergency room immediately!

### CAUSES

What causes headaches? In most cases, stress—meaning, if you address the cause (whatever in your life is stressing you, whether job, bills, family, etc.), you'll eliminate the symptom (the headache). But we digress. Here's the nitty-gritty.

#### Tension

When it comes to tension headaches, there's no single clear, concise and specific cause. Most of the time, they're triggered by stress,

whether from work, school, family, friends, or other relationships.

#### Migraine

While much of migraines' cause isn't yet understood, genetics and environmental factors seem to both play a role. Whatever migraines' exact mechanism, a number of things are commonly-known triggers, including: anxiety and stress; changes in eating or sleeping habits; exposure to light (especially bright lights); and certain foods, especially those containing tyramine, sodium nitrate or phenylalanine.

#### Chronic/episodic

- Daily strain can lead to chronic headaches. Episodic ones are usually set off by a single stressful situation or a build-up of stress
- With some people, chronic/episodic headaches are caused by tightened muscles in the back of the neck and scalp. This muscle tension can come from:
  - Not enough rest
  - Bad posture
  - Emotional or mental stress, including depression
  - Anxiety
  - Fatigue
  - Hunger
  - Low iron levels

For others, tightened muscles aren't part of tension headaches, and there's no clear cause.

### TREATMENT

As mentioned, since most headaches are tension headaches and most tension headaches are stress-cause, the best treatment for headaches is stress relief.

#### Tension

It's best to treat tension headaches when they first begin and the symptoms are still mild.

Over-the-counter (OTC) painkillers are often the first treatments doctors recommend for tension headaches. People with the chronic kind can use some of these drugs to prevent





headaches. If OTC pain relievers don't help, your doctor may recommend a prescription-strength med or a muscle relaxant.

Some drugs can keep you from getting tension headaches, like antidepressants, blood pressure meds, and anti-seizure drugs. You take them every day even if you aren't in pain, so that you end up using less medication over time.

Keep in mind that medications don't cure headaches and that, over time, pain-relievers and other drugs may not help as much as they did at first. Plus, all medicines have side effects. If you take one regularly, including products you buy over-the-counter, discuss the risks and benefits with your doctor. You'll still need to find out and deal with the things that are causing your headaches, too.

### Migraine

Try to treat migraine symptoms right away so as to minimize severity:

- Drink water to avoid dehydration, especially if you have vomited
- Rest in a quiet, darkened room
- Place a cool compress or cloth on your head
- Massage the scalp and/or temples with heavy pressure

Non-prescription over-the-counter (OTC) medications like acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Motrin), naproxen (Aleve), ketoprofen (Orudis KT) or aspirin are often helpful when migraines are mild.

Prescription medications, for their part, can help reduce the frequency and severity of migraines. If one medication isn't working, talk to your doctor about others.

Pain-relieving medications are drugs to be taken during migraine attacks and are designed to stop symptoms once they have already begun. These include classes of drugs called triptans and ergots. Doctors may also prescribe anti-nausea medications, corticosteroids, or opiates (as a last resort).

The right medicines, combined with self-help remedies and lifestyle changes, may make a tremendous difference in treating migraines.

### Chronic/episodic

Treatment for chronic/episodic headaches generally revolves around the principle of treating underlying condition. If no such condition is found, treatment focuses on preventing pain.

Pain prevention strategies vary, depending on the type of chronic/episodic headache you have and whether medication overuse is contributing to them. If you're taking pain relievers more than three days a week, the first step might be to wean yourself off these drugs with your

doctor's guidance.

For many people, complementary or alternative therapies offer relief from headache pain. It's important to be cautious, however. Not all complementary or alternative therapies have been studied as headache treatments, and others need further research. In the meantime, here are several popular alternative therapies for chronic/episodic headaches that have worked for many

people. high dose of vitamin B-2 (riboflavin) also might reduce migraines.

Coenzyme Q10 supplements might be helpful in some individuals. And oral magnesium sulfate supplements might reduce the frequency of headaches in some people, although studies don't all agree.

Before trying complementary or alternative therapy, discuss the risks and benefits with your doctor.

Other antidepressants, such as the selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) fluoxetine (Prozac, Sarafem, others), might help in treating depression and anxiety, but have not been shown to be more effective than placebo for headaches.

Beta blockers. These drugs, commonly used to treat high blood pressure, are also a mainstay for preventing episodic migraines. These include atenolol (Tenormin), metoprolol (Lopressor, Toprol-XL) and propranolol (Inderal, Innopran XL).

Anti-seizure medications. Some anti-seizure drugs seem to prevent migraines and might be used to prevent chronic daily headaches, as well. Options include topiramate (Topamax, Qudexy XR, others), divalproex sodium (Depakote) and gabapentin (Neurontin, Gralise).

NSAIDs. Prescription nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs—like naproxen sodium (Anaprox, Naprelan)—might be helpful, especially if you're withdrawing from other pain relievers. They can also be used periodically when the headache is more severe.

Botulinum toxin. Onabotulinum-toxinA (Botox) injections provide relief for some people and might be a viable option for people who don't tolerate daily medication well. Botox would most likely be considered if the headaches have features of chronic migraines.

The use of one drug is preferred, but if one drug doesn't work well enough, your doctor might consider combining drugs.



people.

Acupuncture. This ancient technique uses hair-thin needles inserted into several areas of your skin at defined points. While results are mixed, some studies have shown that acupuncture helps reduce the frequency and intensity of chronic headaches.

Biofeedback. You might be able to control headaches by becoming more aware of and then changing certain bodily responses, such as muscle tension, heart rate and skin temperature.

Massage can reduce stress, relieve pain and promote relaxation. Although its value as a headache treatment hasn't been determined, massage might be particularly helpful if you have tight muscles in the back of your head, neck and shoulders.

Herbs, vitamins and minerals. Some evidence exists that the herbs feverfew and butterbur help prevent migraines or reduce their severity. A

### PREVENTION

The goal of headache prevention is to prevent more from happening and to relieve any pain in which you may be already. For prevention, you can:

- Take medications
- Avoid the causes or triggers
- Manage your stress or learn relaxation techniques
- Practice biofeedback
- Try home remedies, like a hot bath, ice packs, or better posture

Preventive therapy largely depends on the type of headache in question. When you're ready to begin, depending on your type of headache, your doctor may recommend any of the following:

Antidepressants. Tricyclic antidepressants like Pamelor can be used to treat chronic/episodic headaches. These medications can also help treat the depression, anxiety and sleep disturbances that often accompany chronic daily headaches.

### PROGNOSIS

Headaches can interfere with work, relationships and quality of life. Here are some suggestions to help with coping.

- Take control. Commit yourself to living a full, satisfying life. Work with your doctor to develop a treatment plan that works for you. Take good care of yourself. Do things that lift your spirits.
- Seek understanding. Don't expect friends and loved ones to instinctively know what's best for you. Ask for what you need, whether it's time alone or less attention paid to your headaches.
- Check out support groups. You might find it useful to talk to other people who have painful headaches.
- Consider counseling. A counselor or therapist offers support and can help you manage stress. A therapist can also help you understand the psychological effects of your headache pain. In addition, there's evidence that cognitive behavioral therapy can reduce headache frequency and severity. ★

## Status Report

# Happening In Hospitals Today



**A BREATH OF FRESH AIR:** A JOINT STUDY BY ACADEMICS IN AUSTRALIA AND FINLAND FINDS THAT VENTILATOR USAGE RATES ARE SHORTER WHEN PATIENTS ARE ON VITAMIN C

## VENTILATOR TIME FOR CRITICALLY-ILL PATIENTS REDUCED BY VITAMIN C: STUDY

**Helsinki, Finland** — When a critically ill patient is on a respirator, doctors will want to do whatever's possible to make the patient's stay on the device as short as possible.

That's why doctors may want to administer vitamin C to such patients, according to recent research. According to a review of existing data, vitamin C can shorten the duration of mechanical ventilation by up to an average of 25 percent.

Based on eight studies (685 patients) included in the joint project by the University of Helsinki and the University of Sydney (Australia), researchers found that vitamin C shortened the length of mechanical ventilation on average by 14 percent.

Among 471 patients (in five trials) requiring ventilation for more than 10 hours, a dosage of 1 to 6 g/day of vitamin C shortened ventilation time on average by 25 percent.

## UBER HEALTH TO DOUBLE IN SIZE FOR YEAR 2020

**San Francisco, California** — As of early 2020, Uber Health boasted around 15 employees—but that number has changed in a big way, according to the

transportation company.

Uber Health, Uber's non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) program, is doubling in size over 2020.

The decision is part of the company's ongoing effort to solidify and grow its beachhead on the shore of the NEMT industry, a growing multi-billion-dollar market.

According to several studies, some 3.6 million people miss appointments due to lack of transportation each year—driving (no pun intended) traditional healthcare companies to partner with NEMT companies to reduce patient no-shows, recapture lost revenue and help patients, especially those in vulnerable low-income populations.

## ANALYST: OUTLOOK FOR NONPROFIT HOSPITALS "WORST ON RECORD"

**New Albany, Ohio** — Analysts with financial firm Fitch Ratings say that this past quarter was devastating for non-profit hospitals due to the coronavirus pandemic—and that the second quarter has been just as bad, and worse.

According to Fitch Ratings senior director Kevin Holloran, the second quarter is "the worst on record for most" such non-profit hospitals.

For example, the esteemed Mayo Clinic of Rochester, Minnesota estimated to have lost up to \$3 billion in revenue losses from the onset of the pandemic

until late April.

What's more, facilities with more than 250 beds saw average per-facility revenues based on estimated in-network amounts decline from \$4.5 million in the first quarter of 2019 to \$4.2 million in the first quarter of 2020.

The gap was less pronounced in hospitals with 101 to 250 beds and not evident at all in those with 100 beds or fewer.

## STATE-OF-THE-ART STROKE CARE ACCESSIBLE ONLY TO 1 IN 5

**Houston, Texas** — New research shows that too few Americans have quick access to a medical center that can perform a procedure to remove stroke-causing blood clots.

Researchers at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) examined nation-wide availability of *endovascular thrombectomy*, or removal of a blood clot with a mechanical device that's threaded through an artery.

The researchers found that just under 20 percent of Americans are within 15 minutes, by ambulance, of a stroke center capable of performing endovascular thrombectomy.

According to the team, 15-minute



**U.S. CRITICAL STROKE CARE ACCESS LOW:** TEXAS RESEARCH MAKES MAJOR FINDING

access to endovascular thrombectomy could be improved if ten percent of hospitals within every geographic area were equipped for the procedure—or if patients were transported directly to equipped hospitals instead of elsewhere, but only if rerouting would take under 15 minutes.

## NEW EHR PATIENT-TRANSFER RULE COULD HURT MEDICARE PAYMENTS

**Bethesda, Maryland** — When hospitals still used paper health records, when a patient was transferred from Hospital A to Hospital B, his or her papers were transferred, too.

Now, a new federal rule requires today's electronic health records (EHRs) to "move" with the patient at such transfers—but hospitals are concerned that the rule could hurt their reimbursements from Medicare, the federal healthcare plan for seniors.

The rule, called the Admissions, Discharge and Transfer (ADT) Provision, is from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). It requires hospitals to send basic electronic messages to other providers communicating key changes in a patient's status within six months—or potentially get cut off of reimbursement.

While some hospital executives see the new ADT rule as not giving them sufficient time to get up to speed, EHR vendors and the government say the technological capability is already there.

## EMERGENCY-ROOM DOCTOR VOLUNTEERS AS "STREET MEDIC" AT RECENT MAJOR PROTEST EVENTS

**Fond Du Lac, Wisconsin** — By day, Dr. Mitchell Li is a mild-mannered doctor for a great Midwest hospital.

On weekends, he fights for social justice.

Armed with a white coat, essential supplies and his medical degree, Dr. Li takes to the streets to take care of those who take to the streets—bringing medical justice to those who need it most.

At a recent public demonstration, Dr. Li helped organize three makeshift medical tents set up to treat protesters needing medical attention. The ER physician also coordinated about 20 teams of roving medics to dispense first aid as needed.

"The volunteers who have come together in this effort have been incredibly inspiring with their dedication, positivity and frankly their diverse competencies; I wouldn't give this up simply for that reason," Li told reporters. "This is a marathon and not a sprint. We can't just high-five and be done."







# The Senior Care Gazette

News from  
the World of  
Hamaspik  
HomeCare and  
Senior Health

## Changes in Getting Home Care due to new Medicaid Regulations Taking Effect Oct. 1, 2020; Seniors Urged to Act Now

When Medicaid was launched in the 1960s, it was held up as a social-justice solution to a vexing age-old problem: Lack of healthcare due to poverty.

That basic model hasn't changed for decades.

But in New York, seniors (and others) seeking long term home-care services have a more pressing need for Medicaid, as those services are typically not covered by standard private insurance or Medicare.

All along, anyone in need of Medicaid was able to arrange their assets in a trust to immediately qualify for Medicaid. Come this fall, though, applicants will be subjected to a "look-back" spanning not 30 days but 2.5

### Rules Tightening Soon for CDPAP

At the same time, new applicants to New York State Medicaid's popular CDPAP home aide program must now require physical maneuvering assistance with more than two activities of daily living (ADLs)—for example, sitting up in bed or reaching for a cup at the dinner table.

Under the new rule, in plain English, Bubby must need someone to help her do both things—or any other two common ADLs, like walking or eating. Additionally, for applicants medically diagnosed with

dementia or Alzheimer's disease, it will not be enough to qualify needing only one ADL; at least two will be required.

As such, beloved family matriarchs or people with physical disabilities may qualify for CDPAP today, but come this October they may not be considered eligible and disqualify.

"Changes are coming," says Mordechai Wolhendler, Hamaspik HomeCare's Chief Operating Officer. "The time to apply is now!"

years—with state officials reviewing all financial transactions to verify no income or assets.

As such, family members or people with physical disabilities may qualify for Medicaid today, but, come this October, may only be considered eligible after a 30-month wait.

The stringent new eligibility rules are slated to take effect October 1, 2020 and will specifically affect those having difficulty meeting the Medicaid guidelines. ★

For more information and assistance on homecare and Medicaid approvals, please reach out to our Intake team at 855-426-2774 x700.

## Mindfulness a Powerful Tool for Aging

**Adelaide, Australia** — Researchers at Flinders University "Down Under" may now have an answer as to why many older people feel their life has gotten better with age: Mindfulness.

According to their research, mindfulness can help reduce stress and promote good mental health.

Mindfulness refers to the acquired mental-health skill or exercise of being aware of experiences and paying attention to the present moment in a purposeful, receptive and non-judgmental way.

According to study co-author Tim Windsor, an associate professor and

behavioral scientist at Flinders, certain characteristics of mindfulness appeared to be much more common in older people than in younger people—suggesting that "mindfulness may naturally develop with time and life experience."

The research was based on a survey of 623 people, aged 18 to 86. ★

## Strokes Can Be Detected Earlier With Artificial Intelligence

**Turku, Finland** — One of the more tedious and trying tasks involved in stroke treatment is something called *lesion segmentation*—the process of identifying problem areas in MRI brain scans of stroke patients by physically looking at them.

Lesion segmentation requires the trained eye of an experienced radiologist, or doctor who specializes in medical imaging.

But now, researchers at the Turku PET Centre, a facility within the Turku University Hospital in Turku, Finland, have created a fully automated method of lesion segmentation of brain MRIs.

The experimental new system, driven by artificial intelligence (AI) computer software, was shown to reduce the work load of radiologists.

Timely detection and accurate segmentation of acute ischemic stroke (AIS) patients using MRIs are essential for effective treatment, both short- and long-term. ★



**MIND THAT MINDFULNESS, MIND YOU:** RESEARCHERS AT FLINDERS UNIVERSITY IN ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA HAVE LINKED MINDFULNESS, OR SENSE OF EMOTIONAL, MENTAL AND SPIRITUAL PRESENCE, WITH DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION OF GOOD BRAIN HEALTH WITH AGING



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