



# The Hamaspik Gazette

News of Hamaspik  
Agencies and  
General Health

AUGUST '21 • ISSUE NO. 193



## GAZETTE SURVEY

The GAZETTE asks YOU:

**HAVE YOU EVER HAD A DENTAL IMPLANT?**

**A: NO; B: ONLY 1; C: MORE THAN 1**

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



## HEALTH STAT

### DENTISTRY WITH TEETH

Number of global titanium implants in 1965	1
Number of U.S. titanium implants each year	5 million

Source: U.S. National Library of Medicine (NLM), American Dental Association (ADA)



## HEALTH TIP

### BRUSH UP ON IMPLANT CARE

If you've just gotten dental implants, you'll need to "baby" them before they're crowned with those natural- and great-looking permanent false teeth. Here's how: 1. Use a soft nylon brush; 2. Avoid abrasive toothpaste and mouthwash; 3. Floss daily; and 4. Avoid sticky or hard foods.

## INSIDE

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## HAMASPIK NEWS

### A "FOUR"-WARD THINKING MOVE TO BIGGER AND BETTER

THE MOVING TRUCK IN THE BACKGROUND HERE IS DISGORING FURNISHINGS FOR HAMASPIK OF ORANGE COUNTY'S NEW INZERHEIM—ITS FOUR-IN-ONE GROUP HOME FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (I/DD). BEYOND THE FOUR GROUND-LEVEL SETS OF DOUBLE DOORS, OF WHICH TWO ARE SEEN HERE, LIE BRAND-NEW LIVING QUARTERS FOR FOUR RESIDENTS, GIVING THEM THE PRIVACY TO GROW AND THE INTEGRATION TO FEEL THEY BELONG.



THE HAMASPIK INZERHEIM IS A TEXTBOOK EXAMPLE OF NEW YORK STATE'S "INDIVIDUALIZED RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVES" (IRAS)—DELIBERATELY ORDINARY-LOOKING HOMES THAT PUT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE MAINSTREAM WHERE THEY'VE ALWAYS BELONGED.

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## HOSPITAL NEWS

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## HAMASPIK NEWS

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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.

### RESPIRE:

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.

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

Providing: Daily onsite lunches and social/educational activities for community seniors (Orange County only). Meals funded by NYSOFA, Orange County OFA and the Administration of Aging.

## 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.

## HAMASPIK HOMECARE

### LHCSA

Licensed HomeCare Services Agency .

### 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.

### 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.

### CDPAS/CDPAP

As an alternative to traditional homecare, 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.

## 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.



● ► TRI-COUNTY CARE NEWS

# Upgrading Individuals to a Better Life— With a Little Help From Upgraded Software

*After Months of Trials, Tri-County Care's New EHR System Goes Live; Staff React Positively to User-Friendly Tools*

Tri-County Care's hundreds of Care Managers statewide now have better software on their office computers statewide. It allows them to better and more easily do their jobs statewide.

"People are excited as they're entering the system and seeing all the new features. They like the user friendly layout as well," says Ellie Cunningham, Tri-County's Transition Project Manager.

That new system is the culmination of an upgrade that's taken months.

After scrutinizing various vendors this past fall, Tri-County settled on Core Solutions' Cx360 software package. That system, already available in a self-explanatory New York IDD Community Edition, was further customized for the New York-based Tri-County Care to meet the agency's specific requirements, Cunningham continues.

"The 'off the shelf' version was

built for other providers of OPWDD services," she elaborates. "However, the needs of a CCO are not the same as a service provider, so there has been substantial customization to meet our unique business needs. They also designed the capabilities for our person-centered assessments and Life Plan templates from scratch to our specifications."

"Person-centered" refers to an upgrade in its own right—the mission shift in recent years by the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) towards making the individual's wants and needs the axis of every program and service to every feasible extent.

That includes synthesizing each individual's personality into each program's very paperwork—including the individual's initial assessment upon applying for OPWDD services.

That person-centered individuality is also hard-wired into the resulting Life Plan—the overarching reference document that not only lists the programs used and the goals for each, but which also functions as a birds-eye 'road map' for getting the individual to the place in life he or she wants.

"Because the act of moving data... to a new system is monumental, we have a whole in-house team dedicated to this process," adds Cunningham—with additional daily support meetings with Core's own dedicated client techies.

The customized new software underwent testing by a select group of staff for several months, then shifting to a "soft start" agency-wide in late June. It went live the first week of July.

So, why is the new software better? What does it allow staff to do that before now they could not do?

"One of the biggest improvements

is in data and metrics as it allows us to create much more detailed and accurate reports," explains the Transition Project Manager. "In the new system, the Care Managers can pull reports relevant to their own caseloads, set themselves tasks and reminders to accomplish things for each member, and identify and record presenting problems. When they select a member, the list of relevant tasks and presenting problems are listed at the top of the page as active reminders."

With ever the eye towards perpetual improvement, the Care Coordination Organization (CCO) known as Tri-County Care has done it again.

But this time, it's not finding yet a better way to support individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) "out there"—it's a better way to support those who support them "in here." ★

● ► HAMASPIK NEWS

# Sipuk: The Mental Health Clinic That Heals Hearts

*Bringing The Very Best Therapists, Modalities and Methods To The Brooklyn Community*

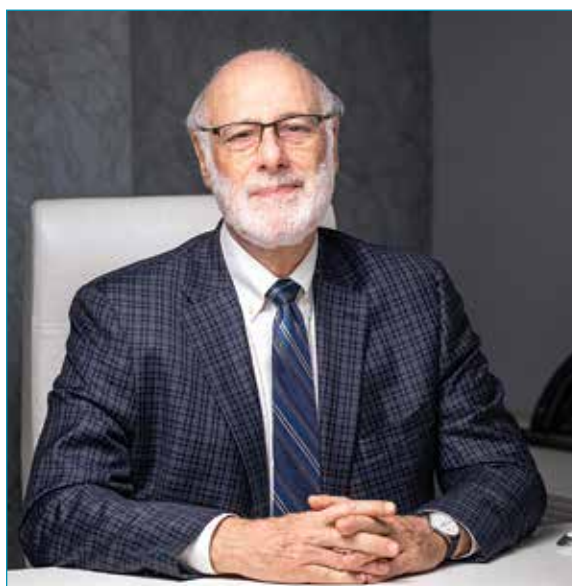
Often, the only thing more painful than a mental health diagnosis is the challenging road to recovery. Amid the whirl of pain, confusion, and despondency, someone suffering from mental health has to struggle to find the right therapist, modality, and method suited to his or her needs. And unfortunately, it's nearly impossible to find therapists who are highly skilled in their field but don't have equally high out-of-pocket rates.

Sipuk Clinic, the mental health clinic founded by Hamaspik of Kings County, operates on the premise that each person in our community deserves access to high-quality mental health care at no cost. Hamaspik recently got long-awaited state approval and opened their full-service clinic in the heart of Boro Park.

Mr. Mutty Solomon, previously Director of Behavioral Health at Hamaspik, serves as Director of the Sipuk Clinic. "Baruch Hashem, we've hired the real McCoy in the mental health field," shares Hershel Wertheimer, Executive Director at Hamaspik of Kings County. "He has invested his whole heart and soul to heal heart and soul."

Building on his tremendous expertise as a psychotherapist healing others and his role as adjunct professor at Touro College, where he has influenced many professionals, Mr. Solomon is driven to create a genuine breakthrough in the way mental health is treated in our community.

"Sipuk Clinic will be focusing on the community, working with the community, and partnering with



DR. RICHARD KESSLER DO, SIPUK'S MEDICAL DIRECTOR

community agencies and mosdos to deliver the best care, tailored specifically for our needs," shares Mr.

Solomon. "That translates into not merely hiring the right professionals for each modality and diagnosis, but providing extensive training and supervision to ensure that the care is truly top-tier and sensitive to our culture and values."

Sipuk has taken great measures to bring the very best of skill. Dr. Richard Kessler, DO, Sipuk's Medical Director, has been specializing in psychiatry for the past 49(!) years. Serving as the staff psychiatrist at multiple hospitals, treating clients in his private practice, and later on, in his role as a medical director at Westchester Medical Center, he's seen practically every situation and diagnosis. Famous for prescribing medication only as a last resort, he's trusted in the mental health field as someone who will only give medication when necessary, and be vigilant never to overprescribe. Over the years, he has transformed people's lives, including many who had severe diagnoses.

While the Sipuk Clinic aims to fill the void of

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## Hamaspik Gazette

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# Happening in Health Today



Novel micropillars are made via a new technique called *nanoimprint lithography*, which allows for the creation of microscale patterns with low cost and high resolution.

When implanting novel micropillars into the body as part of a bone replacement procedure, researchers were able to define the shape and size of the pillar—and also produce up to four times as much bone cell as currently possible.

## REDHEADS MAY FEEL LESS PHYSICAL HEAT, PRESSURE BECAUSE... THEY'RE REDHEADS

**Boston, Massachusetts** — The tough temperament of people with fiery red hair is long the stuff of legend. But is there any science behind the lore?

Possibly quite a bit, it turns out.

Earlier Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) research found that humans (and mice) with red hair have that red hair because part of their *melanocytes* (skin cells that produce skin and hair color, or *pigment*) don't work. That part is called melanocortin 1 receptor (MC1R). When MC1Rs aren't working, melanocytes produce yellow or red pigment—and hence, redheads.

But new MGH research on red-haired mice now finds that inactive MC1Rs also suppress the chain-like process prompting the brain to make *endorphin* and *enkephalin*, hormones that block pain.

The mice were found to be “less sensitive to mild temperature or



**RED FLAG FOR TOUGHNESS:** SCIENTISTS LINK REDHEAD CELLS TO FEELING LESS PAIN

pressure signals,” notes MGH lead researcher David E. Fisher MD, PhD. “Therefore it is plausible that

human redheads might display similar relative insensitivity to mild temperature or pressure stimuli.” ★

## RESEARCHERS FIND POSSIBLE NEW WAY TO STARVE BRAIN TUMORS

**London, England** — At Queen Mary University of London, scientists may have found a new way to starve cancerous brain tumor cells of energy in order to prevent further growth.

The research looked at inositol hexaphosphate (IP6), a naturally-occurring compound present in almost all plants and animals. It found that it can inhibit medulloblastoma and even be combined with chemotherapy to kill tumor cells.

The pre-clinical research in human tissue samples, human cell lines and mice could lead to changes in how some children with medulloblastoma are treated in the future.

However, the findings still must be confirmed in human clinical trials.

Medulloblastoma is the most common high-grade brain tumor in children, with a survival rate of 70

percent for those whose tumor has not spread.

## NEW ANTIBIOTIC FOUND IN BALTIC AMBER

**Minneapolis, Minnesota** — Healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) remain the bane of public health, with thousands of Americans getting infections at healthcare settings each year. Making matters worse are so-called “superbugs,” which are resistant to virtually all known antibiotics.

While the CDC reports progressive declines in HAIs nationwide in recent years due to robust public-health countermeasures, finding new antibiotics—to which bugs and superbugs are not resistant—is a critical part of the war against HAIs. And with their discovery of abietic acid inside amber from the Baltic region, University of Minnesota (UM) researchers may have now found a new weapon.

Amber is hardened tree resin

commonly used in jewelry; in Baltic nations, it's been chewed as folk medicine for centuries. But the abietic acid found by UM in Baltic amber powder was shown in a lab to kill nine different bacteria, including some which are antibiotic-resistant.

## PILLAR OF SUPPORT: DISCOVERY COULD SPEED UP RECOVERY FROM BONE IMPLANTS

**Melbourne, Australia** — An international research team led by the Melbourne-based Monash University has uncovered a new technique that could speed up recovery from bone replacements.

The experimental technique works by altering the shape and nucleus of individual stem cells.

By using so-called *novel micropillars*, which are ten times smaller than the width of a human hair, researchers were able to alter the size, shape and nucleus of individual stem cells.

## POTENTIAL AGAINST ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE IN EXPERIMENTAL DRUG

**Bronx, New York** — Researchers at Albert Einstein College of Medicine have designed an experimental drug that reversed key symptoms of Alzheimer's disease in mice. The drug works by reinvigorating a cellular cleaning mechanism that gets rid of unwanted proteins by digesting and recycling them.

The study was published in the journal *Cell*.

The cell-cleaning process, known as *chaperone-mediated autophagy* (CMA), was discovered in the 1990s by Einstein researchers. The process becomes less efficient as people age, increasing the risk that unwanted proteins will accumulate into insoluble clumps that damage cells.

## BUG-LADEN BREATH SPEWED BY EXERCISERS CLEANSSED BY HEPA FILTERS

**Rochester, Minnesota** — Researchers have now found that exercising at increasing levels of exertion increases a room's concentration of bug-laden vapor droplets exhaled by people exercising. But they also found that a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) device effectively filtered out those airborne viruses and bacteria.

Researchers first set up a special aerosol lab in a plastic tent with controlled airflow. Two types of laser beam particle counters were used to measure aerosol concentration at the front, back and sides of a person riding an exercise bike.

During testing, a volunteer first had five minutes of resting breathing, followed by four bouts of three-minute exercise to work at 25 percent, 50 percent, 75 percent and 100 percent of their age-predicted heart rate—all followed by three minutes of cooldown.

The aerosol concentrations rose exponentially throughout the test. Specifically, exercise at or above 50% of resting heart rate showed significant increases in aerosol concentration. ★



● ► HAMASPIK NEWS

# Kinderville-Hard At Play

## *The Summer Sleepaway Camp That's Shattering Expectations*

It's all green grass and the smell of summer as you walk up the path at the far left of Kinderville, Hamaspiik's sleepaway camp for children with special needs. Enter the mini-forest and follow the path to the cabins between the shady trees, where you find yourself drawn to the happy sounds coming from within. As you peek into each one, you see that while the interior is pretty similar in all—namely, wooden walls, table, chairs, and benches, all set up to replicate a classroom—each cabin has unique decorations, toys, and paraphernalia. It's then that you notice the varied levels of function among the children in each cabin. The children are grouped by level, and each cabin is set up accordingly. Some have an abundance of sensory-based toys, while some have Aleph-Beis and the ABC hanging all around. All have Milestone Bulletins, where they acknowledge every time a child does something amazing.

These are the Kinderville school cabins, where the children receive an unparalleled education.

Every day and lesson was planned months in advance so that every moment is enjoyed to the max. "Our dream was that come September, the teachers should find themselves with the 'problem' that the children are on a higher level than before," says Mr. Yehuda Spangelet, Camp administrator. To that end, the children have a regular school day from 9:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., with a packed program that is fun, yet focused on developing their skills. Through the power of play, they're learning a ton.

Every classroom is focusing on different skills, based on the group's level. While some classes are learning to identify colors, some are learning Aleph-Beis, and others are even reading and davening! The highly qualified and experienced teachers do everything to help the children attain the goals set for them, helping them grow and achieve milestones.

Throughout the day, OTs, PTs and SLPs come to work with the children in the fully equipped therapy room. The therapists, having been at many camps throughout the years, all express their awe at Kinderville and can't believe it's Kinderville's first year. "It's so structured, never a dull moment, and everything is running so smoothly," said one impressed therapist.

In the afternoon, after a full day of learning, the children have fun activities where the children create arts and



**GRADED ON A SLIDING SCALE:** THE STATE-OF-THE-ART PLAYGROUND MODULE THAT DOMINATES KINDERVILLE'S OUTDOOR PLAY AREA



**EVERYTHING LOOKING UP (L):** KINDERVILLE DIRECTOR SPANGELET, NYSHA HEAD MEYER WERTHEIMER AND HAMASPIK KINGS DIRECTOR HERSEL WERTHEIMER LOOK ON AS A HAPPY CAMPER SAYS IT ALL; **GOOD TIMES GATEWAY (R):** PART OF KINDERVILLE'S LARGE COMPLEX



crafts, have paint parties, or play games outdoors. In addition, they go on many trips to farms, fun parks and so on, that the children speak about for days thereafter.

Each Shabbos, they invite a guest performer, to the delight of the children. One week was Uncle Moishy, who performed, sang, and entertained throughout Shabbos. The children were starry-eyed and followed him all over. Each week, a different guest shows up with more surprises.

"We opened a camp that would give the children the best summer experience, combining education and fun," says Mr. Hershel Wertheimer, Executive Director at Hamaspiik of Kings County.

"We are privileged to have Mr. Yehuda Spangelet as camp administrator. He has successfully led and built up many of our programs, and so when it came to hiring someone to run our camp, hiring Mr. Spanglet was a no-brainer. Baruch Hashem, with an incredible team, it's working out beyond what we could've imagined."

Besides the multiple directors who are the brains behind every lesson, activity and trip, each child has a personal mommy/counselor/playmate who's there solely for them. Every day, all day—the counselors give heart and soul to ensure the children are happy and having a good time.

Throughout all activities, the

counselors play one-on-one with "their" child, running, painting, singing, dancing, and creating joy together. They invest their all, and give non-stop patience, love, and attention.

Mrs. Green\*, one of the happy parents of Kinderville shares, "The minute I heard that Hamaspiik was opening a camp, I knew I wanted my son to be there. Everyone knows that whatever Hamaspiik does, they do fully. To top it all off, it's completely free—I didn't have to pay a penny! Whoever I spoke to is thrilled with the place. And honestly? I'm not surprised. Hamaspiik does everything right. They truly care for our kids, and always do things fully—with heart." ★



● ► HAMASPIK NEWS

# Comfort Health Hosts Grand Community Carnival for Beneficiary Children, Family Members

*Hundreds of Youths, Parents, Caregivers Enjoy Hours of On-Site Bounce Houses, Giant Slides, Snacks and Music*

Hundreds of children of all ages running free in all directions is not exactly anyone's idea of an organized event—except, of course if they're in an enclosed and controlled indoor space.

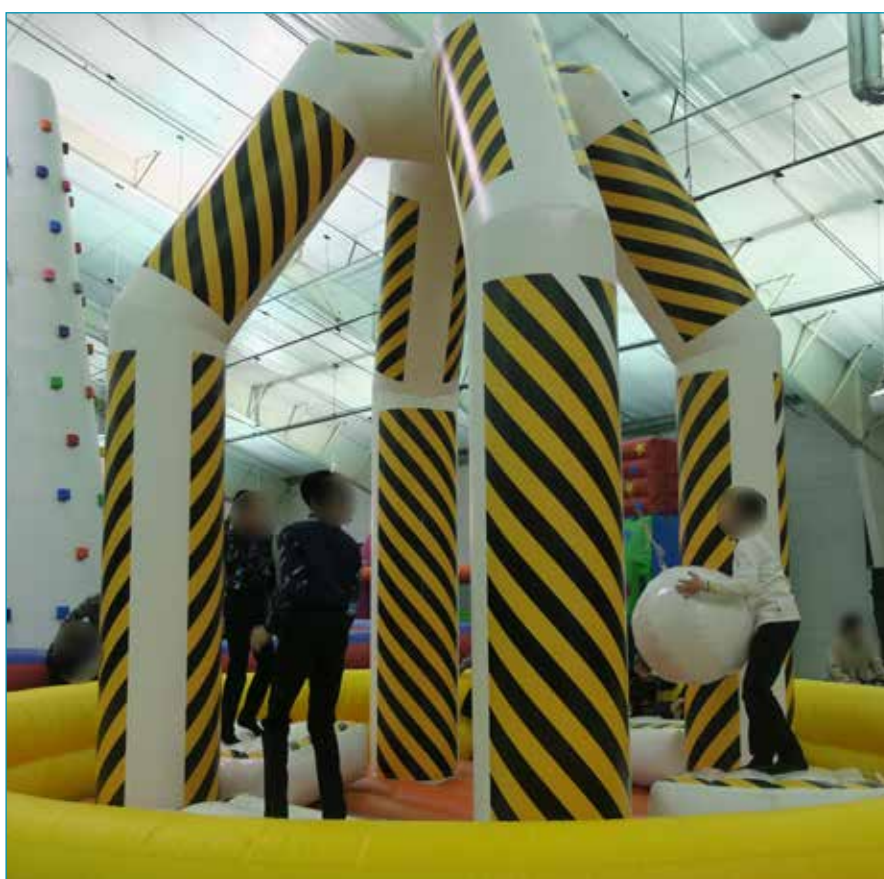
And if they're not exactly running but rather, walking enthusiastically—bouncing, we might say—from attraction to attraction within that giant indoor space, which in this case was the grand community carnival recently hosted by Comfort Health.

The carnival was held at the new site of Mein Platz, the community special-needs recreational venue. That new site is 18 College Rd. in Monsey, site of the former LifePlex health club.

Around one dozen inflatable rides were on hand to greet the children of all ages. A bounce house, giant slide, rock-climbing tower, ball pit, and an inflated obstacle course were among the air-filled offerings that the youthful guests took to like, well, youthful guests.

Well over 100 children, accompanied by their mothers, fathers and siblings, who benefit from Hamaspiik's successful and still-growing Comfort Health program were invited to attend free of charge. That initiative, which today boasts a staff of dozens in Rockland County alone, purveys a wealth of hands-on supports and services to young ones (and their loving families) who simultaneously struggle with medical and mental-health issues. Resolutely led by the capable and ever-professional Sarah Gottlieb, MPH, Director of Comfort Health in Rockland County, the program's teams of Care Managers don't just inform parents what their best options are, but actively support them in the daily care, maintenance and improvement of their precious charges—be that at school, home, or therapist's office alike.

Making a difference behind the scenes, where knowing parents and teachers privately know that something isn't quite mainstream, is where Comfort Health continues



**HAVING A BALL:** A GROUP OF BOUNCY BOYS COMPETE IN AN EQUALLY BOUNCY GAME OF CATCH

to have its biggest impact. And continuing its theme of working in and with the mainstream, where everything external seems perfectly typical, the event hosted by Comfort Health positively rollicked for nearly five hours. Participating children climbed, jumped, bounced and otherwise had tons of shoeless fun on the rubber air-filled attractions.

Hamaspiik stalwart Avrumi Markowitz, also unofficially doubling as on-site medic, was on hand to coordinate the event.

A welcome table manned by Hamaspiik's very own Hannah Simon, by day a hardworking Direct Support Professional (DSP) at Hamaspiik of Rockland's Women's Day Hab program, greeted arrivals. Names were looked up and checked off on one of two laptops, and guests were then ushered in to enjoy the exciting afternoon.

A PA system blasted upbeat music

across the cavernous chamber, which had once served as a row of tennis courts. (Different things were bouncing across and around the room now!)

To slake any thirst and stave off the munchies, three shopping carts filled with water bottles stood next to two tables covered with boxes filled with bags of potato chips.

For additional take-home fun, bottles of soap bubbles, complete with bubble-blowing wands, were available for collection by attendees.

A heartwarming moment, and one indicative of everything that Hamaspiik truly is, occurred when a distraught mom came over to the welcome table to alert staff that her daughter was stuck at the top of the giant slide.

The girl, terrified, was unable to budge from the corner of the upper platform and refused to come down. The mother asked for an employee to



**DRIVEN UP THE WALL:** A LAD AIMS HIGH

intervene.

Without missing a beat, Ms. Simon cheerfully and casually offered to climb up and help the girl down herself.

About a minute later, that Hamaspiik staff member had scaled the slide's ladder to the top and could be seen lovingly and gently coaxing the petrified guest away from the corner. After a few heartfelt words, she was seen holding the young girl ever so softly by the hand and walking her over to the looming precipice. Together, they let gravity work its magic. Seconds later, with both safely on the ground, the crisis was over.

The mother later marveled at how sweet the moment had been, complimenting Ms. Simon for her gentle and knowing touch.

But given that she's a Hamaspiik Direct Support Professional, that's not surprising. ★

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## Sipuk: The Mental Health Clinic That Heals Hearts

<< CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

mental health professionals at no cost, it is equally determined to make a wider variety of methods accessible to our community. Group therapy, for instance, has been proven to have higher success rates for specific diagnoses and circumstances versus individualized therapy. Yet despite transforming the mental health arena, group sessions have never truly been embraced by our community, due to the lack of skilled professionals to lead those groups. In addition to having highly skilled therapists on staff, Sipuk provides group therapy that is highly confidential, emotionally safe, and empowering. *B'ezras Hashem*, it will bring great results to those who need it.

For years, therapy has been viewed as a solution appropriate only for those who have a mental health diagnosis. In the last decade, however, even people going through minor mental or emotional issues have come to see the great benefits of therapy as well. While Sipuk will definitely serve

those who suffer from significant mental health issues, it is intent on helping any person throughout any challenge. An ambitious entrepreneur overwhelmed by his workload? Check. A frazzled parent overburdened by wedding expenses and stress? Check. In short—anyone who can use some help living life to its fullest can find it at Sipuk.

Family counseling and marriage counseling will also be a big focal point at the Clinic, with separate therapy rooms built specifically for this purpose. The state-of-the-art facility was designed with the needs of each client in mind, and by customizing rooms for each therapy type, it's making it easier for clients to heal.

"A full-service Article 31 Clinic is something our community has desperately needed for many years. I feel privileged to have a part in the impact it will surely have on so many families," says Mr. Solomon. "We look forward to making a difference and filling the gaping void for so many in Klal Yisrael." ★

## Getting a Good Grilling



**WELL DONE:** MENACHEM OBSERVES WHILE MANAGER YIDEL KLEINMAN WORKS THE GRILL; ZALMAN LIEBERMAN, DSP WITH RAFAEL; YIDDY ENJOYS A HOT DOG; ELAZAR DIGS IN

## Celebrating a Double Birthday With an All-American Barbeque

*Pinchas and Yoel Tzvi of the Orange County Men's Day Hab Program Eat Up the Attention*

Every month, anyone with a birthday gets some sort of party.

Whether it's gathering around the table and singing "Happy Birthday to You" as a classic round birthday cake is ushered in amidst pomp and circumstance, or an outing to a favorite restaurant with a few close friends, a birthday celebration for every birthday boy has been the standing house rule for years now at Hamaspiik of Orange County's Men's Day Hab program.

So when not one but two young gentlemen were marking another year of awesomeness in the same month, and on the very same day, to boot, Day Hab Manager Yehudah "Yidel" Kleinman knew he had to step it up.

And so it was off to the Hamaspiik Estate for Pinchas, Yoel Tzvi and the entire Day Hab gang.

There, they experienced the perfect storm: The weather was balmy, the scenery and architecture was brochure-picturesque, and the food was

irresistible—all combining to form the classic American backyard barbecue, grill and all.

Mr. Kleinman himself proudly doubled as event chef, presiding over the back-porch gas range to churn out hot dogs, burgers and sliced-and-diced vegetables grilled to perfection.

Of course, all the trimmings and fixings were available for the individuals' preferences: Cole slaw, sauerkraut, relish, mustard, ketchup, pickles, hot peppers and, of course, French fries. And what would a backyard barbecue be without fresh corn on the cob—or steak? Both were also served.

With everything served on tried-and-true red-and-white plaid plates and tablecloths, the only thing missing was the birthday cake—which Mr. Kleinman produced just as things were winding down.

Who says you don't have room for something sweet? ★



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## Groundskeeping, Maintenance and Recreation Rolling Right Along at the Hamaspiik Estate

### *Purchase of Motorized Six-Seater Keeps Equipment, Supplies and Guests Moving*

Besides sheer acreage, nothing quite shouts “estate” than a motorized mini-vehicle with which to zip all over that estate. (Ironically, isn’t it, that they get the large estate to get away from the crowded Big City and its vehicles, only to need another vehicle?)

And the vehicle most suited for an “estate,” at least stereotypically so, is the generic golf cart—that non-descript bench on wheels that somehow seems to make no noise as it moves.

But get an all-purpose, all-terrain “estate cart” they did at the Hamaspiik Estate—and Manager Mr. Shlomo Zalman (Solomon) Rabi lost no time putting it to good use.

In fact, he informs the *Gazette*, it’s been his dream since the Hamaspiik Estate launched operations to acquire just one such general-purpose outdoor vehicle. The cart can thus be seen as rendering the 29-acre

property complete.

Mr. Rabi and staff are currently deploying it to ferry about outdoor folding chairs, random boxes and supplies that always seem to need moving from place to place and, of course, guests and staff. (The Estate does have two main structures set significantly apart, making manual porting hardly practicable, you know.) The cart, and its materials-carrying detachable trailer, is likewise being used to facilitate and expedite exterior maintenance of the sprawling property.

The vehicle was acquired after weeks of due diligence by Hamaspiik of Orange County Purchasing and Special Affairs Coordinator Joel Schnitzer.

So, what does the Manager like about the Estate’s new wheels? “You can drive it on the grass,” quips Mr. Rabi, “and not ruin the lawn!” ★

## Grounds for Roving About



**RIDERS ATTACHED:** THE GENTLEMEN VISITING THE ESTATE (ABOVE) HAVE CLEARLY GOT “CART”-OGRAPHY DOWN TO A SCIENCE; BEFORE PURCHASE (R); AND ON-SITE, AFTER (L)

## Hamaspiik Orange Moves “Four”-ward With Reinvented Disability Residence

### *Culminating Years of Planning, Agency Upgrades One Kiryas Joel Group Home Into Four*

Hamaspiik of Orange County has done it again.

The agency known for constant expansion has now transformed its former Dinev Inzerheim Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) into four new residences: the Hamaspiik Inzerheim Individualized Residential Alternatives (IRAs).

With the four new IRAs, Hamaspiik singlehandedly met a government mandate to convert ICFs to IRAs, improve staff-to-resident ratio, increase residents’ privacy, and even create space for more residents.

Hamaspiik of Orange County’s four new IRAs—each a “mini-IRA” on the Village of Kiryas Joel’s Hamaspiik Way—are a study in efficiency.

Designed and built from the ground up with disability and accessibility in mind, the four units each house four individuals in fashion and function alike. Of equal importance is the homes’ full compliance with all Americans with

Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements: Accessibility ramps lead from the street to front doors. (Each home has its own marked accessible-parking spot, too.)

Bedroom doors and interior hallways are extra-wide. Bathrooms are fully equipped with grab bars and roll-in showers.

Most importantly, notes Executive Director Moses Wertheimer, is the increased privacy and home-like atmosphere of each home. With each hosting a maximum four residents, and most in their own personal bedrooms, it’s the next big thing in mainstream living. “They needed their own quiet environment,” adds Hamaspiik of Orange County Residential Manager Solomon Gelb, “and now they are getting it.”

They may be four totally separate new IRAs—with separate OPWDD paperwork, landlines and even different agency vehicles. But in the close and tight-knit family that is the four new Hamaspiik Inzerheims, they are one organic unit. ★

## Reinvention x 4



**HOME SWEET HOME, HOME, HOME, HOME:** FROM ADA-COMPLIANT FACILITIES (L), MODULAR CLOSETS (R) AND COZY LIVING AREAS (B), RESIDENCES HAVE EVERYTHING THEY NEED



# The Autism Update

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

## UNCERTIFIED 'ADA DOGS' CAN JOIN OWNERS IN STORES, RESTAURANTS: COURT

**San Francisco, California** — The landmark Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) grants “reasonable accommodations” to people with disabilities seeking to enter government facilities, workplaces and public venues like stadiums—with courts consistently interpreting that clause widely since the law’s 1990 signing.

Writing a new chapter in the ADA’s ongoing saga now is the San Francisco-based Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. It recently ruled that people with mental or physical disabilities can self-train their own dogs to aid them at restaurants, shops and hospitals without having to formally certify them as “service animals,” subject to reasonable limits.

The case had initially been argued on behalf of a woman suffering trauma-based flashbacks after years of abuse. She had resorted to training her own dog to alert her to irrational reactions instead of acquiring an expense service dog.

## DIRECT EYE CONTACT “SLOWS TIME”: SCIENTISTS

**Geneva, Switzerland** — While “time stopped when we met each other’s gaze” is a common saying (in its endless variations), neuroscientists have now found that time in fact *does* seem to slow down when direct eye contact is made between two pairs of eyes.

Researchers at Université de Genève (UNIGE) conducted gaze-reaction and time-perception experiments with a small group of volunteers.

They first had volunteers watch full-face video clips of people making a specific eye movement. The people in the video clips then either made direct eye contact with viewers (by looking directly at the camera), or looked away. Volunteers were then asked to rate how long each interaction took.

The researchers found that when volunteers were “eye-contacted” by the video clips, they perceived the eye contact to have lasted shorter than it actually had.

According to researchers, direct eye contact activates the brain’s attentional system, which distracts from the ability to objectively evaluate time.

The researchers believe that their findings may eventually benefit people

with autism, who are known for having difficulty making and maintaining eye contact.

## AGE SIX MAY REPRESENT KEY TURNING POINT IN AUTISM, SAYS STUDY

**Hamilton, Ontario** — A new long-term study by McMaster University says that autism trait severity decreases from age three to six in most children with autism. However, the same study finds that progress then stalls for nearly 75 percent of such children.

The research suggests that age six, when elementary school usually begins, is a key turning point for children with autism—when families, clinics, schools and communities can, and should, provide extra support.

The results dovetail with a 2020 study that showed that autism traits are not stable in young children with autism.

“Most children with autism do show some improvement, in contrast with a lot of the literature,” says David Amaral, professor of medical psychiatry at the University of California, Davis, who led the 2020 study but was not involved in the new work. “Change in the severity of

symptoms over time is more likely than ever thought before.”

## PANDEMIC UNITES WORLD AUTISM PROS AT NEW MONTHLY ZOOM MEETING, SPARKS INNOVATIONS

**New York, New York** — For autism researchers and treatment professionals alike, the coronavirus closed that proverbial door over the past year-plus—but opened the window to a new IDEA: the International Collaborative for Diagnostic Evaluation of Autism (IDEA), that is.

With in-person treatment and research clinics physically closed by the virus, autism professionals were forced to find alternative ways to assess youths for autism—prompting the creation of a regular online Zoom meeting of some 200 participants worldwide.

The IDEA conference, founded in part by Stephen Kanne, director of the Center for Autism and the Developing Brain at Weill Cornell Medicine, has already produced a virtual version of the gold-standard ADOS autism diagnostic test.

Dubbed the Brief Observation of Symptoms of Autism (BOSA),

researchers are reportedly finding it as equally effective as the in-person real thing.

## MANY U.S. COUNTIES LACK AUTISM THERAPISTS

**Louisville, Kentucky** — Applied behavior analysis (ABA) may perhaps be the nation’s most popular therapy nowadays for children with diagnosed autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

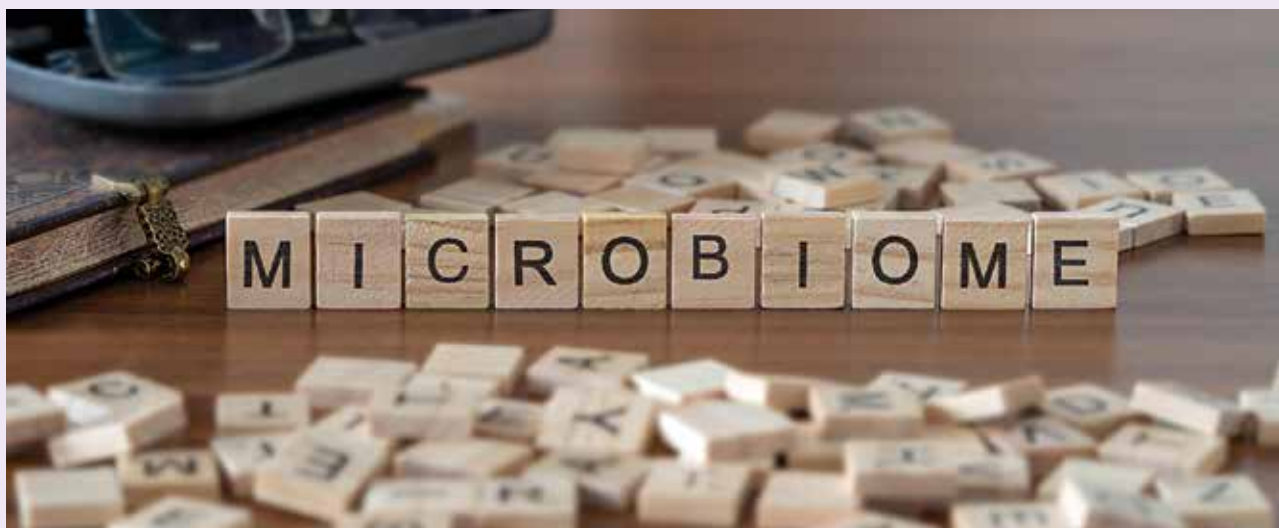
But in new demographics research by the University of Louisville in Kentucky, availability of local board certified behavior analysts (BCBAs)—trained professional ABA therapists—is woefully low nationwide.

The research found that over half of America’s 3,108 counties (nearly 54 percent) didn’t have a single BCBA.

What’s more, in counties with BCBAs, the research found that ratios of children with ASD to BCBAs ranged from as high as 18 to one to as low as 328 to one.

Researchers also found that, according to U.S. Census data, BCBA availability and affluence seem to go hand in hand—counties with the most BCBAs also had the most residents with health insurance and the least residents living in poverty. ★

## STUDY LINKS MICROBIOME TO AUTISM BEHAVIORS



THE GUT OF THE MATTER: THE BODY’S MICROBIOME, OR HEALTHY GUT BACTERIA, HAS AN AUTISM CONNECTION, SAY RESEARCHERS

**Aurora, Colorado** — The gut has as much to do with the development of autism as does the brain, a study has apparently found.

Research into the relationship between the gut microbiome—the body’s native population of harmless and beneficial bacteria—and autism-related behaviors have now yielded some interesting results.

The study by the University of Colorado, published recently by the American Society for Microbiology, found that within an individual, changes in the microbiome were associated with changes in behavior.

Specifically, researchers found that a worsening of inappropriate speech in children with autism was

associated with decreased diversity in their gut microbiomes.

“We need more research,” said University of Colorado lead researcher Catherine Lozupone, PhD, “but our work shows that the gut microbiome is playing a role in the provocation of symptoms in kids with autism spectrum disorder.” ★



בס"ד

☎ ... Caller @ 4:45 PM

“My brother Chaim was hospitalized after his last relapse and is finally being discharged, but I’m concerned. I don’t think he’s set up with the right help.

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● ► HAMASPIK NEWS

# Case Management With Heart and Soul—the Hamaspik Way

It was Sunday—one good reason not to report for work. But on this occasion, a man made his way to his office in the early a.m. hours of just such a day. That man was Mordechai Neuman, LCSW, regional Program Director of Hamaspik's Integrated Health.

What was he doing there on a Sunday morning, you might wonder? Mr. Neuman knew that he had three new patients being referred to Rockland's Integrated Health who were currently hospitalized at various psychiatric institutions in the area. His mission? Reaching out to those hospitals to advocate for those patients, and then calling their families to provide them with an update and some much-needed words of *chizuk* [encouragement—ed.].

But then, as he was listening to his messages, he saw two calls from the same number.

*Saturday night, 10:43 p.m.:* The caller explained that he is not sure what to do and where to turn because



his friend was just hospitalized after wrecking his car—attributed to a botched suicide attempt.

*Sunday, 9:12 a.m.:* “I called already and left a message; I’m calling again,” the message began.

Mr. Neuman quickly called back. After a short conversation, he realized

that the referred party had actually recently enrolled with Integrated Health. He thanked the caller and got to work.

Now Mr. Neuman reached the hospital social worker, who was the weekend social worker filling in for the regular social worker. The patient was hospitalized in an out-of-the-area hospital, where they knew little about the Orthodox Jewish community's cultural nuances. But in the two minutes spent on the phone, Mr. Neuman explained about kosher food. The social worker knew very little about the case and even less about Jewish religious needs, but promised to call back. That call did not come.

“How do we help this man?” Mr. Neuman kept on asking. He then realized that one of his Care Managers lives less than a half-hour away from that hospital. Mr. Neuman hand-picks his staff and knows that they—like him—would stop, drop, and roll to help a fellow Jew in pain. But after dialing that Care Manager, all he got was voice mail (virtually no one has a physical answering machine anymore!). He left a message and started working on plan B.

“Sorry, I’m at a funeral,” the Care Manager suddenly texted him.

But a few minutes later Mr. Neuman got a call from that Care Manager, Mr. Yonah “Yoni” Bekhor: “Mr. Neuman, I got your message. I’m on it! Which campus is the psych unit?”

While Mr. Neuman looked up that information, Yoni listed all the food he’s getting for the patient. A few

minutes later, Mr. Neuman received a text with a picture of all the yummy kosher food that his Care Manager had packed up for the patient—a man hardly known to either of them but a fellow Jew, connected in heart and soul: *How can we let him languish in a state of uncertainty, without a reminder of home, community, and brotherly love?*

The patient was discharged a few days later to the care of his waiting Care Manager at Integrated Health, who worked tirelessly to secure housing options and other necessary supports to help man him recover and reintegrate within the community.



Another such example of the genuine heart and soul that is all in a day's work at Integrated Health, and indeed, around all of Hamaspik, was the man tragically stricken by terminal illness.

An Integrated Health beneficiary, he had reached out to his Care Manager with a unique but not-unheard-of request: Transportation from his home to his Rebbe's *tziyun* [monument—ed.] located in a Queens, New York cemetery. But with all of the gentleman's medical complications involved, the request would require special medial-transportation arrangements.

The Care Manager reached out to Mr. Neuman, who in turn asked a fellow employee of Hamaspik about any regular rides from upstate New York to Queens. The employee immediately mentioned a well-known Monsey community member and activist with ties to both EMS and law enforcement. That activist in turn was quickly contacted, and within the same day, the terminally-ill patient had secured transportation for a spiritual pilgrimage of great personal importance to him.



When this writer remarks that these indeed are remarkable anecdotes, Mr. Neuman waves him off. “Business as usual around here,” he simply states.

Knowing Mr. Neuman and watching his team work tirelessly in the belly of Hamaspik's engine, this writer knows that that is exactly the way it is. ★

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● ► HEALTH NEWS

# “Olfactory Retraining” Helps Long-Term COVID Patients Regain Ability to Smell

*In Mild-Moderate Cases, 85 Percent Lose Nasal Function—but 95 Percent of Those Regain it Within Weeks; ‘Smell Therapy’ Helps Remaining Five Percent*

Of the millions of U.S. cases of COVID-19 in the past year-plus, people who recovered from mild to moderate bouts of the disease have reported an ominous but largely harmless symptom: loss of ability to smell.

In fact, some 86 percent of patients with mild to moderate COVID-19—over six million cases—reported problems with their sense of smell.

The good news, according to current research, is that 95 percent of those

millions of aroma-deprived people regain their ability to detect everyday signature scents and smells within a few weeks.

The not-yet-good news, however, is that the other five percent can go (and have gone) months without being able to smell anything—neither fresh or spoiled food nor leaking gas that indicates immediate danger.

However, there’s good news for many of them, too: An ongoing movement of providing such patients with olfactory

retraining is growing across the country.

The treatment essentially helps the brain relearn how to smell, not unlike how post-stroke treatment retrains the brain how to send and receive signals between muscles and the brain.

Informally known as physical therapy for the nose, olfactory retraining patients are instructed to gently smell different essential oils or herbs with familiar scents for 20 seconds while focusing on their memories and experiences with



RE-“SCENT”-MENT: FOR SOME COVID PATIENTS, RECOVERY LOOKS LIKE THIS

that scent.

Commonly used scents are rose, lemon, clove and eucalyptus. However, patients can choose scents based on their preference. The practice should be repeated twice a day for four to six months—and the more they train, the better the outcome will be. ★

HEALTHY EATING

## Broccoli

EASY

YIELDS: 4 SERVINGS

PREP TIME: 0:10

READY IN: 1:10

### Simple Easy Salad

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 1 fresh broccoli
- 1 cup dried cranberries (craisins)
- 1 cup slivered honey-coated almonds
- 1 purple onion, sliced thin
- 3/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese (optional)

**DIRECTIONS:**

- Cut broccoli into small bite-size pieces
- Slice the onion thinly
- In a bowl, combine the broccoli, cheese, onions, almonds, and craisins
- In another bowl, whisk the mayonnaise, vinegar and sugar
- Pour dressing over broccoli mixture and toss to coat
- Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving

**DRESSING:**

- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sugar

EASY

YIELDS: 4-6 SERVINGS

PREP TIME: 0:10

READY IN: :30

### Easy Broccoli Side Dish

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 1 bag frozen broccoli
- 1 onion, diced
- 5 cloves garlic, crushed
- Oil for sautéing
- Salt to taste
- 1/4 tsp black pepper (or to taste)
- 1 tablespoon consommé soup mix
- 1 cup shredded cheese

**DIRECTIONS:**

- Preheat oven on 400°
- Defrost broccoli
- Sauté onions and garlic till golden
- Spread broccoli out evenly in baking pan
- Top with sautéed onion and garlic
- Season with salt, black pepper, and soup mix
- Top with shredded cheese
- Bake uncovered for 20 minutes

MEDIUM

YIELDS: 8-10 SERVINGS

PREP TIME: 0:20

READY IN: 1:20

### Broccoli Soup

**HEALTHY SOUP**

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 2 bags frozen broccoli
- 1/4 cup oil
- 2 onions, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 4 potatoes, cubed
- Salt to taste
- 2 tablespoons consommé soup mix
- Water

**DIRECTIONS:**

- Sauté onions and garlic
- Spread 1/2 bag broccoli on a cookie sheet, roast in oven at 400° for 20 minutes
- Add 1 1/2 bag broccoli and sauté a bit longer
- Add potatoes and seasoning
- Fill pot with enough water to cover vegetables
- Bring to boil then simmer for 1/2 hour, stirring every few minutes to prevent burning
- Blend with an immersion blender
- Add roasted broccoli
- Simmer for additional 1/2 hour

**CHEF’S TIP:**

When buying fresh broccoli make sure the florets are tightly closed—and the greener the better!

**BENEFITS:**

Broccoli is a great source of vitamins C and K, a good source of folate (folic acid) and also provides potassium and fiber. Vitamin C builds collagen, which forms body tissue and bone, and helps cuts and wounds heal. Vitamin C is also a powerful antioxidant and protects the body from damaging free radicals.

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# Public Health and Policy News

## UBER HEALTH EXPANDING PRESCRIPTION DELIVERY TO 37 STATES

**San Francisco, California** — Not only can you now get a ride with Uber, or a ride to your doctor appointment with Uber Health, but also get your prescription delivered straight to your door with Uber Health.

In a new partnership with ScriptDrop, an e-prescription startup, the ride-hailing giant is drastically expanding its prescription delivery

footprint from a few cities to dozens of U.S. states—37, in fact.

Through a deal with digital delivery marketplace NimbleRx, Uber first forayed into medication delivery in several metro areas this past August. With the new deal, hundreds of thousands of Uber drivers in 37 states will be accessible to pharmacies who use ScriptDrop.

ScriptDrop, a third-party tech platform connecting patients and pharmacies with couriers nationwide, will pay Uber for the cost of each delivery.

## U.S. APPROVES WORLD'S FIRST DEVICE TREATING CONGENITAL HEART DISEASE

**Silver Spring, Maryland** —

Congenital heart disease is a group of over 25 different cardiac birth conditions.

Most are treatable—and now, one of them has a history-making new treatment.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently approved the world's first non-surgical heart valve. The new implant device, dubbed the Harmony Transcatheter Pulmonary Valve (TPV) System, provides a less invasive option to treat *pulmonary valve regurgitation*.

In that form of congenital heart disease, blood leaks backward (regurgitates) into the heart's lower right chamber, the *right ventricular outflow tract* (RVOT). The Harmony valve improves blood flow to the lungs in patients without resorting to standard open-heart surgery.

The Harmony valve is inserted

through a vein into the RVOT where it anchors to the RVOT. Once in place, it opens and closes like a door to force the blood to flow in the correct direction.

## PANDEMIC SURVEY FINDS STAY-AT-HOME MOMS DO MOST HOUSEWORK, CHILDCARE

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** —

According to new sociological research by the University of Pennsylvania, women at home during the coronavirus pandemic do far more household work—housekeeping, homework help, childcare and other unpaid domestic labors—than men.

The research found that held true whether moms were working remotely from home, working normally outside the home, or stuck at home unemployed.

Using data on two-parent households from a nationwide survey conducted in April 2020, the researchers found that with couples working remotely, wives did twice the household work—and that working wives were up to seven times more responsible than working husbands for their children's home learning.

## PANDEMIC SPURS MORE NURSES TO CONSIDER LEAVING ROLES: REPORT

**New York, New York** — Seems there's more fallout to the coronavirus than just the obvious.

According to a recent report by Manhattan-based management consultant McKinsey & Co., over 22 percent of nurses say they may leave their current position within the year. And among those, many are planning to leave altogether for another job outside of nursing, or to retire.

The report found that nurses in long-term care settings were likelier to consider leaving than those in inpatient settings. It also found rates of female nurses considering leaving twice as high as that of male nurses.

For the report, McKinsey researchers surveyed 400 nurses across different settings in February 2021, finding a 60-percent increase in the number planning to leave compared to last year.

According to McKinsey, employers need to offer adequate compensation for expertise and effort, provide flexible scheduling options and give more support overall to recruit and retain more nurses.

## UTAH GOV. SIGNS MAJOR BILL REGULATING STATE'S "TROUBLED TEEN" RESIDENTIAL CENTERS

**Salt Lake City, Utah** — For various



**SIGN OF THE TIMES:** UTAH'S GOV. COX LAYS DOWN THE LAW FOR YOUTH RESIDENCES

reasons, the Beehive State is home to about 100 youth residential treatment centers—among the nation's highest. But now, Utah's "troubled teen" industry is subject to significantly enhanced oversight.

Under a bill now signed by Utah Gov. Spencer J. Cox, the state's Office of Licensing is empowered to increase its regulation and monitoring of the so-called *congregate care facilities*. The legislation places limits on use of restraints, drugs and isolation rooms, and increases state inspections.

"While these facilities provide critical services and resources to families," said Gov. Cox at a signing ceremony, "we must always ensure the safety of participants and hold bad actors accountable."

Nearly 12,000 children have come through the treatment centers in the past five years, with about 90 percent from out-of-state by some estimates.

## PRIVATE-PRACTICE DOCTORS NOW MINORITY FOR FIRST TIME

**Chicago, Illinois** — The classic doctor's office is now a part of history more than ever.

According to the latest Physician Practice Benchmark Survey by the authoritative American Medical Association (AMA), Year 2020 marked a historic shift in the organization of medicine, with fewer than half of U.S. doctors working in a private practice.

Furthermore, among those private practices that continue to operate, many are trending toward a larger size.

The report found that 50.2 percent of physicians were employees, up from 47.4 percent in 2018 and 41.8 percent in 2012.

Hospitals are one of the largest employers of physicians, with the proportion increasing nearly 50 percent between 2012 and 2020. And with the vast majority of doctors under the age of 40 now employees rather than employers, it suggests the trend will continue over the long term. ★



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# In the Know

## ALL ABOUT... HEPATITIS

Sources: Mayo Clinic, CDC, WebMD

Hepatitis, for some reason, is seen by some as a harmless chronic condition. And given the fact that, according to the CDC, over four million Americans are walking around with some form of hepatitis, with many of those not even knowing it, that notion would seem defensible.

However, “hepatitis” is actually a family of five related subcategories of the same thing: an inflamed liver, usually due to a certain virus. And while hepatitis can be symptom-less and therefore harmless, it sometimes is anything but harmless. Here’s everything you need to know about hepatitis, A to Z.

Make that Type A through Type E.

### DEFINITIONS AND CAUSES

Hepatitis refers to an inflammatory condition of the liver. It’s commonly caused by a viral (and sometimes highly contagious) infection of the liver cells, but there are other possible causes of hepatitis. These include autoimmune hepatitis and hepatitis that occurs as a secondary result of medications, drugs, toxins, and alcohol. (Autoimmune hepatitis is a disease that occurs when your body makes antibodies against your liver tissue.)

The liver is located in the right upper area of the abdomen. It performs many critical functions that affect metabolism throughout your body, including:

- Bile production, which is essential to digestion
- Filtering of toxins from your body
- Excretion of bilirubin (a product of broken-down red blood cells), cholesterol, hormones, and drugs
- Breakdown of carbohydrates, fats, and proteins
- Activation of enzymes, which are specialized proteins essential to body functions
- Storage of glycogen (a form of sugar), minerals, and vitamins (A, D, E, and K)
- Synthesis of blood proteins, such as albumin
- Synthesis of clotting factors

Thus, hepatitis can (though often does not) cause problems with those functions.

Now here’s where things get different: Viral hepatitis infections of the liver include hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E—with a different virus responsible for each type. Hepatitis A is usually an acute, short-term disease, while hepatitis B, C, and D are most likely to become ongoing and chronic. Hepatitis E is usually acute but can be particularly dangerous in expectant mothers. None are spread through coughing or sneezing. Here are the basics on each:

### Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is caused by infection with the hepatitis A virus (HAV). People mostly get hepatitis A by eating food or drinking water that got contaminated by someone with hepatitis A. Unlike other types of viral hepatitis, hepatitis A rarely causes long-term liver damage. In some rare cases, it can cause a sudden loss of liver function.

### Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is transmitted through contact with infected body fluids that contain the hepatitis B virus (HBV).

### Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C comes from the hepatitis C virus (HCV). Like hepatitis B, hepatitis C is transmitted through direct contact with infected body fluids. It is also one of the most common blood-borne viral infections in the U.S.

### Hepatitis D

Hepatitis D is a serious liver disease caused by the hepatitis D virus (HDV). It is transmitted by direct contact with infected blood. Hepatitis D is a rare form of hepatitis that only occurs together with hepatitis B. In fact, the HDV virus can’t multiply without the presence of the HBV virus.

### Hepatitis E

Hepatitis E is a waterborne disease caused by the hepatitis E virus (HEV). Hepatitis E is mainly found in world regions with poor sanitation and typically results from drinking contaminated water.

### Alcoholic hepatitis

Liver damage and inflammation caused by excessive alcohol consumption is sometimes referred to as *alcoholic hepatitis*, in which the alcohol directly injures the cells of the liver. Over time, this can cause permanent damage and lead to *cirrhosis* (a thickening and scarring of

the liver) or liver failure.

### Other causes

Other causes of hepatitis include:  
Overuse or overdose of medications  
Exposure to poisons  
Immune-system attack

### SYMPTOMS

With acute hepatitis (hepatitis A, D and E), symptoms typically don’t appear until the virus has been in your system for a few weeks—at which point symptoms appear quickly. These include:

- Fatigue
- Sudden nausea and vomiting
- Low-grade fever
- Joint pain
- Dark urine
- Light-colored bowel movements
- Abdominal pain (especially on the right, near your liver)
- Loss of appetite
- Unexplained weight loss
- Yellow skin and eyes (which may indicate jaundice)
- Intense itching

Hepatitis A symptoms can sometimes be relatively mild and go away in a few weeks. But hepatitis A infection sometimes results in severe illness lasting several months.

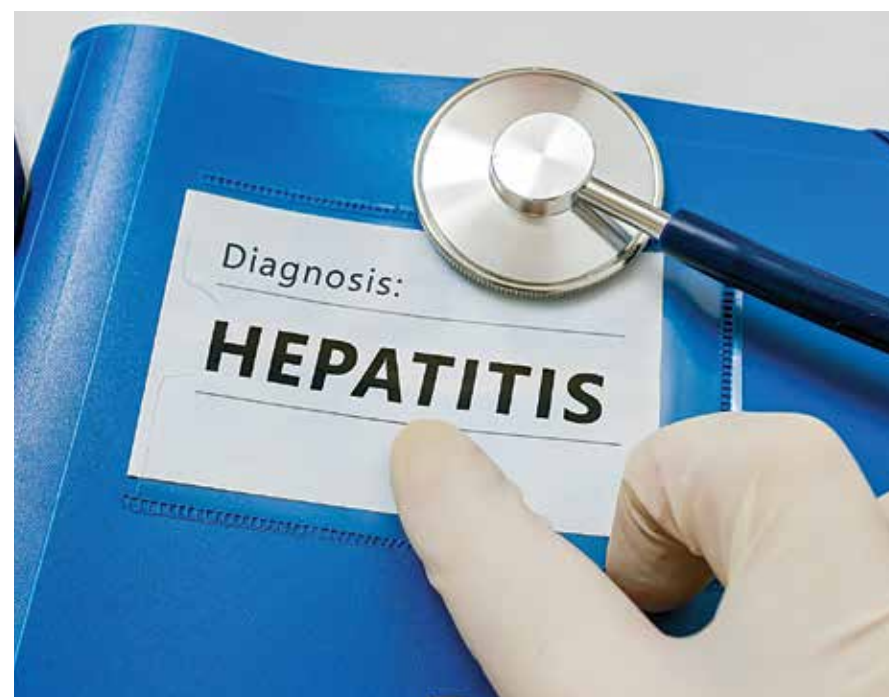
Infectious forms of chronic hepatitis, like hepatitis B and C, may not produce symptoms at first. Symptoms may not present themselves until the liver is damaged enough to affect its function.

Chronic hepatitis (B and C) develops slowly, so the above symptoms may be too subtle to notice.

### Complications

Hepatitis B or C can often lead to more serious health problems. Because the virus affects the liver, people with chronic hepatitis B or C are at risk for:

- Chronic liver disease





- Cirrhosis
- Liver cancer

When your liver stops functioning normally, liver failure can occur. Complications of liver failure include:

- Bleeding disorders
- A buildup of fluid in your abdomen, known as ascites
- Increased blood pressure in portal veins that enter your liver, known as portal hypertension
- Kidney failure
- Hepatic encephalopathy, which can involve fatigue, memory loss, and diminished mental abilities due to the buildup of toxins, like ammonia, that affect brain function
- Hepatocellular carcinoma, which is a form of liver cancer

## DIAGNOSIS

To diagnose hepatitis, your doctor will first take your history to determine any risk factors you may have for infectious or noninfectious hepatitis.

Next comes a physical examination, in which a doctor may press down gently on the abdomen to check for pain or tenderness. The doctor may also feel to see if the liver is enlarged, as well as check your eyes for yellow color, another symptom of hepatitis.

Liver function tests will usually follow. These involve taking blood samples to determine how efficiently your liver works. Abnormal results may be the first sign that there is a problem, especially if you don't show any signs of liver disease in a physical exam. High liver enzyme levels may indicate that the liver is stressed, damaged, or not functioning properly.

Other blood tests. If liver function tests are abnormal, the doctor will likely order additional blood tests to determine the source of the problem. These tests can check for hepatitis viruses as well as for antibodies that are common in conditions like autoimmune hepatitis.

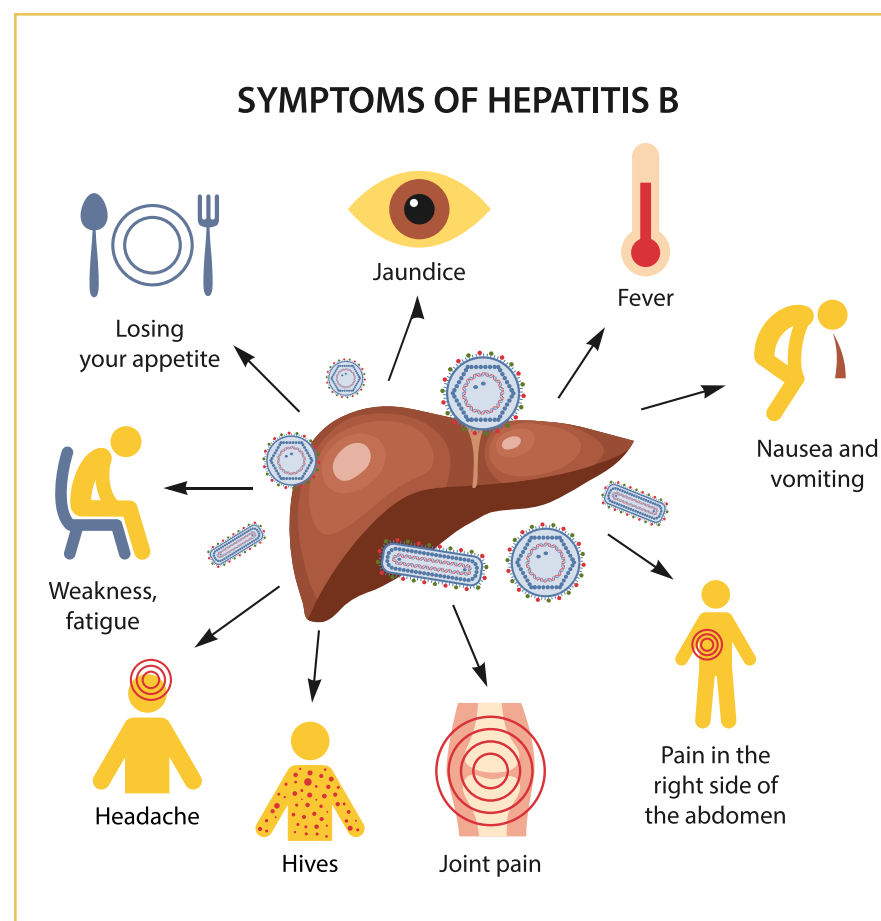
### Ultrasound

An ultrasound scan uses inaudible high-pitched sound waves to create an image of the organs inside the abdomen. So in some cases, the doctor will order an abdominal ultrasound to take a closer look at the liver and nearby organs. The ultrasound reveals:

- Fluid in your abdomen
- Liver damage or enlargement
- Liver tumors
- Abnormalities of the gallbladder

### Liver biopsy

A liver biopsy is an invasive procedure that involves the doctor taking a sample of tissue from the liver. It is a non-surgical procedure that can be done through the skin with just a



needle. Typically, an ultrasound is used to guide your doctor when taking the biopsy sample.

The liver biopsy test allows the doctor to determine how infection or inflammation has affected the liver. It can also be used to sample any areas in your liver that appear abnormal.

## TREATMENT

With hepatitis, treatment options are depends on which type hepatitis the patient has. It also depends on if the infection is acute or chronic.

### Hepatitis A

Because it's a short-term illness, hepatitis A—especially if the case is mild—often doesn't require treatment. Bed rest may be recommended if symptoms cause a great deal of discomfort. In case of vomiting or diarrhea, follow your doctor's orders for hydration and nutrition.

Most people infected with hepatitis A recover completely with no permanent liver damage. According to the Mayo Clinic, no specific treatment exists for hepatitis A—the body will clear the hepatitis A virus on its own.

However, a hepatitis A vaccine is available to prevent that specific infection. Most children begin vaccination between ages 12 and 18 months. It's a series of two vaccines. Vaccination for hepatitis A is also available for adults and can be combined with the hepatitis B vaccine.

### Hepatitis B

Acute hepatitis B doesn't require specific treatment.

Chronic hepatitis B is treated with antiviral medications. This form of treatment can be costly because it must be continued for several months or years. Treatment for chronic hepatitis B also requires regular medical evaluations and monitoring to determine if the virus is responding to treatment.

Like hepatitis A, hepatitis B can be prevented with vaccination. The CDC recommends hepatitis B vaccinations for all newborns. The series of three vaccines is typically completed over the first six months of childhood. The vaccine is also recommended for all healthcare and medical personnel.

### Hepatitis C

There is currently no vaccine for hepatitis C. (While researchers are developing one, hepatitis C is generally completely curable with existing medications for most patients.)

However, antiviral medications are used to treat both acute and chronic forms of hepatitis C. People who develop chronic hepatitis C are typically treated with a combination of antiviral drug therapies. They may also need further testing to determine the best form of treatment.

People who develop cirrhosis (scarring of the liver) or liver disease as a result of chronic hepatitis C may be candidates for a liver transplant.

### Hepatitis D

Hepatitis D can be prevented by getting the vaccine for hepatitis B, since infection with hepatitis B is necessary for hepatitis D to develop.

While no antiviral medications for treatment of hepatitis D currently

exist, the infection is commonly treated nowadays with a drug called interferon for at least 48 weeks. Interferon is a type of protein that may stop the virus from spreading and lead to remission from the disease. However, even after treatment, people with hepatitis D can still test positive for the virus.

### Hepatitis E

Currently, no specific medical therapies are available to treat hepatitis E. Because the infection is often acute, it typically resolves on its own. People with this type of infection are often advised to get adequate rest, drink plenty of fluids, get enough nutrients, and avoid alcohol.

### Autoimmune hepatitis

In cases of autoimmune hepatitis, corticosteroids like prednisone or budesonide are extremely important in early treatment. They're effective in about 80 percent of people with this condition.

Imuran, a drug that suppresses the immune system, is often included in treatment. It can be used with or without steroids.

Other immune-suppressing drugs like CellCept, Prograf and Neoral can also be used as alternatives to Imuran for treatment.

## PREVENTION

### Hepatitis A and E

Good hygiene is one key way to avoid hepatitis A and E. If you're traveling to a developing country, avoid local water, local ice, raw or undercooked shellfish and oysters, and raw fruit and vegetables.

Getting the hepatitis A vaccine or an injection of immunoglobulin (an antibody) within two weeks of possible exposure to hepatitis A may prevent infection. Ask your doctor about getting the hepatitis A vaccine if:

- You've traveled out of the country recently, particularly to Mexico or South or Central America, or to areas with poor sanitation
- A restaurant where you recently ate reports a hepatitis A outbreak
- Someone close to you, such as a roommate or caregiver, is diagnosed with hepatitis A

### Hepatitis B, C, and D

Hepatitis B, C, and D, which are spread through contact with infected blood, is largely prevented by not using someone else's personal-care items like shaving tools or toothbrushes, as well as not touching exposed blood. ★





## Status Report

# Happening In Hospitals Today

### LESS BUSINESS DEALS, BUT MORE MONEY, FOR U.S. HOSPITALS IN EARLY 2021

**Chicago, Illinois** — Some 28 major business transactions between U.S. hospital systems took place in the first three months of 2020. However, only 13 such transactions happened in the first quarter of 2021—but each of those involved larger sums than those of first-quarter 2020.

That's the news from Chicago-based healthcare management consultant Kaufman Hall. According to a recent report by the company, the average Q1 hospital deal was \$676 million—with several transactions involving \$1 billion or more.

The biggest announced deal in 2021's first quarter was Brentwood, Tennessee-based LifePoint Health's announced purchase of Ardent Health Services, based in Nashville, Tenn. The latter has annual revenue of around \$4.6 billion.

According to Kaufman Hall, the lower quantity but higher price of deals was largely due to the pandemic.

### WAVE OF LIVER DISEASE HITTING HOSPITALS POST-COVID-19

**Washington, D.C.** — As the COVID-19 virus fades in many parts of the country, hospitals coast to coast are reporting a grim rise in cases of liver disease, says Kaiser Health News (KHN).



**DE-“LIVER”-ING GRIM STATISTICS:** CASES OF U.S. LIVER DISEASE ARE SPIKING POST-COVID

Due to the prolonged lockdowns imposed on most of the country for various time periods during the pandemic, a silent wave of health deterioration both mental and physical—and one warned about by numerous public-health experts—built among the public, especially in hardest-hit areas.

Resulting misuse of various substances due to lockdown-caused mental stress triggered cases of alcoholic hepatitis and liver failure—two critical diseases now hospitalizing a rising toll of patients.

At California's Keck Hospital, for example, alcoholic liver disease admissions were up 30 percent in 2020 compared to 2019. And New York's Mount Sinai Health System says rates of admissions for alcoholic liver disease have leapt by up to 50 percent since March.

### MORE CMS MENTAL-HEALTH PAYMENTS FOR MORE STAFF COVID VACCINATIONS

**Baltimore, Maryland** — If recently-proposed new rules are finalized, U.S. hospitals providing certain forms of mental-health care will be paid more by Medicare and Medicaid. But in exchange, they'll have to show Uncle Sam that they're vaccinating staff against COVID-19.

Under the proposals, hospitals providing inpatient rehabilitation facilities (IRFs, or in plain English, rehab on site for mental-health patients staying for a while) will see their reimbursement rate increased by 2.2 percent.

At the same time, under a separate new proposed rule, hospitals providing inpatient psychiatric facilities (IPFs) will be reimbursed by 2.3 percent more.

The proposed changes, which would go into effect for Fiscal Year 2022, would increase federal IRF spending by \$160 million and IPF spending by about \$90 million. But hospitals would have to deliver current records of staff COVID-19 vaccinations, though.



**A TREASURE OF A MEDICAL CAREER OPPORTUNITY:** TO JUMPSTART YOUR DOCTOR CAREER, START OFF UNDER THE BIG SKIES OF MONTANA, SAYS MEDICAL-CAREER STATE RANKING REPORT

### ROOKIE DOCTORS BEST OFF STARTING IN MONTANA: REPORT

**Helena, Montana** — There are more people in Manhattan than there are in the entire state. But now, the Treasure State, a.k.a. Montana, has one thing in opposite abundance than Manhattan: status as the best place to work as a doctor. At least in 2021.

Given New York City's abundant and world-leading medical scene, what with its numerous top hospitals and doctors, you'd be quite surprised. But according to financial advisor WalletHub, the best state in year 2021 for doctors to work in is... yup, Montana.

"In order to help doctors decide where to practice, WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across 19 key metrics," reads the company's report. Those metrics include salary, competition and hospital safety.

While Montana came in at 24th for "Opportunity and Competition," it scored #1 in "Overall Rank."

The Empire State? Well, at least New York came in #2 for "Least Punitive State Medical Boards."

### AVERAGE COST OF 2019 DAY IN U.S. HOSPITAL: \$2,266.33

**Chicago, Illinois** — In Year 2019, it cost an average of \$2,266.33 for a patient to spend a single day in a U.S.

hospital. That's according to the most recent statistics from Kaiser State Health Facts, a regular report released by the Kaiser Health Foundation.

The report looks at three categories of hospitals: state/local government hospitals, non-profits, and for-profit hospitals. Those three categories are further ranked by state.

So, hospital stay-wise, which states are most and least expensive?

For government hospitals, Connecticut came in at \$4,316 a day while Georgia scored \$596. In the nonprofit hospital category, California scored worst at \$4,128 a day, with Mississippi patients costing only \$1,234. And with for-profit hospitals, North Dakota's

charged an average of \$5,548 a day, but Delaware's only cost \$1,110.

New York State came in at an overall average of \$3,095.50 a day.

Good thing for health insurance!

### VIRTUAL DOC-VISITS MAY CAUSE MORE—NOT LESS—IN-PERSON VISITS: RESEARCH

**Ann Arbor, Michigan** — Telemedicine—seeing your doctor virtually via live audio-video—is arguably there to reduce in-person doctor visits.

However, a new study finds that it actually has the opposite effect—namely, that because of telemedicine, people are not only not visiting doctors less, but actually visiting doctors more.

The study, conducted by Ann Arbor-based University of Michigan, compared data from over 28,700 virtual visits with data from over 54,700 in-person visits for acute respiratory infections from 2016-2019.

While most first-visit telehealth patients needed no further care for infections (including ear infections, bronchitis, laryngitis, sore throat and pneumonia), just over ten percent ended up with a second visit in person the next week.

By contrast, just over six percent of first-visit in-person patients ended up with a second visit in person the next week. ★





# The Senior Care Gazette

News from  
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Senior Health

## A Look at Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD)

### Understanding, Treating and Preventing This Most Common Cause of Senior Vision Loss

By Rena Milgraum, R.N.

It's true that, from time immemorial, age has been associated with declining vision. But what's also true, thanks to ever-improving medicine, is that older age is no longer synonymous with failing eyesight. So let's look at age-related macular degeneration (AMD), the leading cause of vision loss in people over 50.

#### DEFINITION

The *macula* is the small center part of the *retina*—the layer of tissue on the inside back of the eye. The retina sends light from the eye to the brain, allowing us to see. When macula cells begin dying of natural aging, clear vision in the center of the field of vision suffers.

There are two types of AMD. *Dry* AMD means deterioration of the macula. *Wet* AMD means swelling of the macula

caused by leaky tiny new blood vessels in the back of the eye.

About 90 percent of AMD cases are dry, so we'll focus on that here.

In dry AMD, symptoms typically develop slowly. They typically include a need for increasingly bright light when reading, increasing difficulty adjusting to dim rooms, increasing blurriness of printed materials, and a blurry or blind spot in the center of the field of vision.

#### CAUSE

Aging is the most common cause—specifically, the body's slow lifetime buildup of *free radicals*: molecules that can sometimes damage cells in a process called *oxidative stress*.

#### DIAGNOSIS

If someone you love experiences any symptoms, see an ophthalmologist right

away. That eye doctor may use the Amsler grid test, a visual acuity test, a dilated eye exam, the tonometry test, and/or the optical coherence tomography test to diagnose AMD.

#### TREATMENTS

While there's no reversal, early detection of AMD can slow it. The keys here are to constantly monitor symptoms and test vision regularly. You can still enjoy life with AMD!

AREDS: One regimen known to slow (not cure or reverse) AMD is the Age-Related Eye Disease Study (AREDS). This formulation of vitamins C, E, beta carotene, zinc and copper has been shown to lower the risk of AMD progressing to advanced stages by about 25 percent.

Telescopic lens implant: This may be an option for people with advanced AMD.

Lenses in this tiny plastic tube magnify the field of vision and may improve both distance and close-up vision.

Retinal image translocation (RIT): Digital retinal photography first locates healthy spots on the retina, then custom prismatic lenses move the retinal image to those spots.

#### PREVENTION

- Routine eye exams
- Management of other diseases
- Eat lots of fruits and vegetables
- Eat fish and nuts
- Test your vision daily with an Amsler grid

Because about 90 percent of AMD cases are dry, they are thus at least somewhat treatable—so in cases of AMD, it's critical to get the medical, emotional, mental, and social support one needs. ★

## Know About Pneumonia

### How to Help Prevent This Chronic Danger to Seniors

By Rena Milgraum, R.N.

As a nurse working in home care, I can tell you that pneumonia is a very real threat to seniors. That's why prevention is crucial! With a few basic measures, your loved ones can significantly reduce its risk.

#### WHAT IS PNEUMONIA?

Pneumonia happens when lung air sacs get infected by various bacteria or viruses (or even fungi). They then get inflamed and may fill with fluid—causing chest pain, cough with phlegm or pus, fever, chills, difficulty breathing or other symptoms. Pneumonia can be mild to life-threatening.

#### HOW IS PNEUMONIA TREATED?

The sooner, the better! See a doctor as soon as pneumonia is suspected.

The doctor will firstly listen to the lungs with a stethoscope. The doctor may: Test the blood for any infection; X-ray the chest for infection extent/location; measure blood oxygen level; and test lung fluid to pinpoint infection

cause. A doctor may also order a CT scan or even test lung fluid.

Treatment involves curing the infection and preventing complications. General treatment consists of antibiotics, cough medicine, and common pain reliever/fever reducer like ibuprofen.

If pneumonia is not tended to in short order or spirals fast enough, a patient may be hospitalized—typically when blood pressure gets too high/low, breathing is difficult or too fast, or heartbeat is too slow/fast.

If it exacerbates at an extreme and manifests with severe symptoms, a patient may need ventilation and hospital intensive care unit (ICU) monitoring.

#### BOUNCING BACK FROM PNEUMONIA: HOME AND LIFESTYLE TIPS

If your loved one is getting over pneumonia, "Easy does it!" is the rule! Don't jump full-force back into life until the system is ready. Get plenty of rest and don't go back to work until normal temperature returns and you stop coughing up mucus. (Drink plenty of

water to help loosen that mucus.) Take all your medications exactly and for as long as prescribed, even if you feel better! Recurring pneumonia is much harder to treat the second time around.

#### HOW DO WE AVOID PNEUMONIA?

The most important thing to know about pneumonia in seniors is that it is critical to fortify the immune system to begin with, which is the key ingredient

in preventing pneumonia. By doing so, you greatly reduce the number of infections that get bad enough to turn into pneumonia. So here are several things your loved one can do to keep that immune system healthy:

- Take supplements, vitamins and minerals to reinforce the body's immune system
- Exercise regularly—even if just a short daily walk
- Get enough sleep
- Eat a healthy diet
- Vaccinate against several germs known to cause pneumonia
- Wash hands regularly
- Don't smoke ★

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