Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Genetic Testing Can Save Lives

Learn How Exercise Increases Bone Density

Macular Degeneration is on the Rise

How Can You Save Your Sight?

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Discover the benefits of respite for caregivers, loved ones

If you’re one of the millions of Americans who provide care to an elderly loved one, someone with a disability or a family member with dementia, you know how demanding the work is. From time to time, you may have tried to get another family member to assist or relied upon a friend or neighbor.

But, if you’re like most people who are giving care to someone in their homes, most of the responsibility falls upon you, with only occasional assistance from others. You may feel no one understands your day-to-day challenges.

Care Companions of Ohio understands. We know, and research demonstrates, that caregivers who are able to take a break from their caregiving responsibilities are healthier, less stressed and provide better care to their loved ones. What isn’t often discussed is that the person who is receiving care - whether it’s a spouse, parent, child or other relative - can benefit when someone else steps in to lend a hand.

Care Companions of Ohio specializes in providing in-home, non-medical care and companionship to our clients. We provide high-quality, individualized care for our clients, regardless of whether we’re providing care through a long-term arrangement or the occasional delivery of respite care.

Here are 10 ways in-home respite care can benefit your loved one:

1. When you’re around someone 24/7 it’s sometimes easy to miss subtle changes in them that might indicate something amiss. Care Companion staff members bring both fresh eyes and experiences right to your home ... and that can make a real difference.

2. We listen. Many of our clients like to reminisce about their lives, their families and their careers. Care Companions have good ears. We love to hear their stories and share their lives with them in meaningful ways.

3. Care is our first name! Care Companions staff genuinely care about your loved ones and demonstrate it each and every day, with every client.

4. We help. Care Companion staff can help with a wide range of activities, including bathing, dressing, personal hygiene and more.

5. We socialize. No matter the age or the ability, we human beings are social animals. We thrive on meeting new people and making new friends. Our Care Companions provide just that opportunity.

6. We play. Whether it’s a game of checkers, help with the crossword puzzle, or a friendly game of cards, Care Companions’ sole focus is on making each visit enjoyable, memorable and fun.

7. We travel. That’s right, Care Companions can provide transportation to the grocery, drug store, dry cleaners, church ... wherever your loved one needs to go.

8. We cook delicious, nutritious meals that your loved one will enjoy eating.

9. We’re flexible. We can be there for your loved one as little as you like, or as much as you like. Care Companions offers flexible plans that suit your ever-changing needs. Just ask.

10. Support for you. We know how hard it can be to be responsible for someone else all of the time. Our Care Companions care not just for your loved one, but for you, too. They offer ideas, information and tips that can help make the entire caregiving experience easier and more satisfying for everyone. Setting up respite care now means you’ll be prepared for an emergency should one arise. If you become ill or have to take care of another family member, who will care for your loved one?

Want to find out more?
Care Companions of Ohio wants to be your partner in caring for those you love. Give us a call at (740) 961-7307 or visit us online at CareCompanionsofOhio.com. We provide services to residents of Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Lawrence, Pike and Scioto counties. Care Companions office is located at 4734 Gallia Pike in Franklin Furnace. Care Companions is a Passport provider.
King's Daughters offers genetic testing at both its Center for Advanced Imaging and the Oncology Center of Excellence. Because counseling is an important part of genetic testing, a physician order is required. The test is often provided to patients who have been newly diagnosed with breast cancer. Testing can reveal BRCA-1 and BRCA-2 mutations, along with a variety of other genetic abnormalities associated with cancer.

Genetic testing can help guide treatment choices and can reveal susceptibility to other cancers.

"In patients with a cancer diagnosis, this information may change their treatment," said King's Daughters breast surgeon M. Katherine Hughes, M.D. "It may change their plan with drugs, like chemotherapy drugs. It may also change whether or not they're a candidate for radiation or impact their surgical management."

Sometimes women with breast cancer choose to have genetic testing to help identify risks to other family members. There is a 50% chance a patient's BRCA-1 and BRCA-2 breast cancer gene mutation could be passed to a child, regardless of gender. Patients with a gene mutation often choose to notify immediate and second-degree relatives.

"Part of our job in post-test counseling is making sure that family members have the resources, tools and information to update their family," said Dr. Hughes.

Counseling prior to genetic testing informs patients about the procedure and how results could affect them and their families. The presence of a genetic mutation does not mean an individual will get breast cancer, but does reveal that they are at an increased risk of developing it, Dr. Hughes said. Finding a gene mutation is rare, but the discovery of one is very important.

Patients are not required to undergo genetic testing, but Dr. Hughes noted most opt to do it. Those with a family history of cancer who are deemed by their healthcare provider to be at high risk for developing breast cancer can also undergo the testing. King's Daughters oncologist Chad Tarabolous, M.D., noted these individuals usually have a first-degree relative with a cancer diagnosis.

"These individuals are typically at a young age, usually less than the age of 50," said Dr. Tarabolous. "Before we didn't really have a process set up where we could do genetic testing so a lot of it was sent out to other facilities. With the format that we have in place now, when patients that are diagnosed with breast cancer come into their clinic appointments, we can incorporate their genetic testing into that actual appointment," said Dr. Tarabolous.

Results are usually available in 10 to 14 days. Health insurance typically covers genetic testing for those who have been diagnosed with breast cancer, but insurance coverage does vary.

For more information on King's Daughters' genetic testing call (606) 408-2650.

M. Katherine Hughes, M.D.
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Non-Healing Diabetic Wounds, Vascularization & Amniotic Grafts

By Dr. Brian K. Bailey, Podiatric Physician & Surgeon

Diabetes is a complicated condition to gain control of, but one of the most painful parts of this disease is the development of diabetic wounds. Often these wounds become “nonhealing” due to the adverse effects of the systemic disorder. Millions of people with diabetes will suffer from diabetic foot ulcers more than once in their lifetimes. Diabetes is a progressive disease that is many times not taken seriously enough by people predisposed to the disorder.

Diabetic foot ulcers (DFUs) represent one of the most common complications of diabetes. Approximately 25 percent of patients with diabetes will develop a lower extremity ulceration in their lifetime. Diabetic foot ulcers can have a profound impact on the morbidity, mortality, and quality of life of patients. For example, patients who develop DFUs have a higher risk of myocardial infarction and fatal stroke than those who have never had a wound.

Nerve Damage & Wounds

High blood sugar damages various organs within the body, but also has a severely adverse effect on nerves. This nerve damage happens when the blood supply is limited. The small blood vessels, which supply blood and nutrients to the nerves, becomes impaired. When the nerves are no longer fed nutrients, they either die, or their signals to the brain are ineffective. The lack of brain signaling from the nerve endings makes it difficult for a person to feel pain in their foot, so often injuries and these disorders are overlooked. This syndrome is called peripheral diabetic neuropathy.

Because of this nerve damage, people with diabetes are at a higher risk of developing foot ulcers. A foot wound may not sound overly alarming to most people, but foot ulcers can be life-threatening. These small sores go undetected due to the lack of feeling. If a patient delays treatment, foot ulcers can lead to amputation, strokes, heart attacks, and severe infections that can spread throughout the entire body.

Diabetic Wounds & Vascularization

If you have ulcers and lacerations that never fully heal, you might have a chronic wound. These are most often caused by diabetes mellitus, which causes blood vessels in the feet and hands to grow smaller. The restriction of blood flow damages nerve areas and reduces sensation.

Chronic wounds can also be caused by venous stasis, a condition of the veins in the lower legs, which also deprives your feet of adequate blood flow. With both conditions, when you bump or cut your foot or when you develop an ulcer, the lack of blood flow makes it difficult for the wound to heal.

In the endothelial layer of the dermis, vascularization must take place in order to heal the wound. The neovascularization or also known as angiogenesis is when new microvessels, fibroblast, and collagen begin to proliferate and form along with an increase in oxygen uptake and micronutrients to help grow new tissue, and to build a strong vascular blood flow to supply the proper nutrients to the dermal layers.

In some cases, diabetic wounds can be challenging to treat and difficult to heal. When traditional therapies fail, new enhancements have been made, including the use of amniotic grafts to treat advanced cases of nonhealing diabetic ulcers.
Wound Healing Properties of Amniotic Membrane

Amniotic membrane has a number of characteristics that make it especially suited to wound healing.

Amniotic Membrane:
- contains a significant number of cytokines and essential growth factors
- reduces pain when applied to a wound
- increases and enhances the wound healing process
- has antibacterial properties
- is non-immunogenic (will not be seen as foreign material)
- provides a biological barrier
- provides a matrix for migration and proliferation of cells
- reduces inflammation
- reduces scar tissue formation

Amniotic tissue grafts are the progressive option for treating nonhealing diabetic ulcers, as they offer the potential for accelerating wound healing, reducing the incidence of infection and preventing re-ulceration. Despite the remarkable outcomes, these grafts are not suited for every diabetic ulcer case, as traditional wound care, including medications, debridement, sterile dressings, and compounded ointments often are enough to heal these wounds.

For more information, please call the office at (606) 324-FOOT (3668).

References:

Dr. Brian K. Bailey is a Podiatric Physician & Surgeon with a private practice located in Ashland, KY. He is also a Clinical Professor of Podiatric Medicine & Surgery at Pikeville College of Osteopathic Medicine and a Personal Wellness Coach & Fitness Trainer. Dr. Bailey has written several books, including: Secrets to Happiness, Inner Peace and Health, Metabolic Syndrome 2011, Nutrients for Prostate Cancer Prevention and Eradication, Breast Cancer Prevention and Wholistic Treatment, and Prostate Cancer Prevention and Wholistic Treatment.

Dr. Bailey teaches his patients how to treat and sometimes cure type two diabetes. This is essential in his treatment of diabetic wounds.
Other than certain types of skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common form of cancer affecting women in the U.S. Statistics tell us that one in eight women will develop breast cancer in her lifetime.

With its prevalence, it is important that women understand the many components of breast cancer, from risk factors, screenings and diagnosis to treatment.

**Risk Factors**

Your risk for developing breast cancer is a combination of various factors, some of which you can control and others that you cannot. A list of risk factors is provided on the next page.

**Breast Screenings**

Breast screenings are imperative to catching breast cancer early. If breast cancer is found early and confined to the breast, the five-year survival rate is 99%. Screenings include monthly self-examination of the breast; an annual clinical exam performed by a physician or other healthcare provider; and screening mammography.

All women can perform a breast-self exam at home to check for abnormalities in their breasts. In a breast-self exam, look for breast lumps, changes in size or shape, leaking of fluid from the nipples or irregular thickening of tissue. The best time to do a breast-self exam is about three to five days after your period starts. If you have gone through menopause, do your exam on the same day every month.

Women should start getting a yearly mammogram at the age of 40. If you have a genetic mutation or relatives with a history of breast cancer you should start earlier. King’s Daughters offers the latest in mammography—the Genius 3D Mammogram from Hologic. 3D mammography has been clinically shown to find 20 to 65 percent more invasive breast cancers than 2D mammography alone.

3D mammography is most beneficial for first-time mammograms, for those whose previous test results weren’t clear, and for those whose breast tissue is considered dense.

**Diagnosis**

When a mammogram returns an abnormal result, a needle biopsy is often performed to collect a sample of the suspect tissue. The biopsy is performed by a radiologist using ultrasound or 3D mammography. Specimens are only few millimeters in length. The specimen is sent to the lab where the water and fluids are slowly replaced with liquid paraffin, which maintains the natural shape and form of the sample.

The next morning, the sample is embedded in a block of additional paraffin and sliced into
BREAST CANCER

3.5 micron sections by the histotechnologist. (For reference, 3.5 microns is less than the width of a human hair.) After the slices are mounted to a glass slide and stained, they are ready for examination by the pathologist.

The pathologist then makes the determination of benign or malignant and provides the essential information that allows the medical oncologist, breast surgeon and radiation oncologist to select the best treatment for the individual patient.

Treatment

After a patient has been diagnosed with breast cancer the King’s Daughters breast care team works with them to identify the most effective treatment for their particular type of the disease. Options can include surgery, chemotherapy and radiation therapy. Radiation therapy is often prescribed and uses equipment called a linear accelerator to deliver high-energy x-rays to kill cancer cells only in the part of the body being treated.

Radiation therapy can be the only form of treatment or can be used after surgery. If the patient also requires chemotherapy, radiation therapy begins after it is finished.

Surgery includes lumpectomy (the removal of cancer or other abnormal tissue from the breast) or mastectomy (the removal of the whole breast).

Breast Reconstruction

During breast reconstruction, the plastic surgeon rebuilds the breast(s) to duplicate the size and shape prior to mastectomy. Women may choose to have breast reconstruction at the same time as mastectomy or wait for a period of time following treatment. The decision is based upon a number of factors, but most important is what kind or type of follow-up treatment, if any, she will receive after surgery. Breast reconstruction options include newly shaped breast with the use of a breast implant, a tissue flap (a section of the patient’s skin, fat and muscle is moved from the stomach, back or other area of the body to the chest area) or a combination of the two.

Recovery from breast reconstruction varies depending on which procedure was performed, but typically lasts between four and six weeks.

Schedule Your Mammogram

3D Mammography is available at King’s Daughters Breast Care Center, 2225 Central Avenue, Ashland, Ky.; King’s Daughters Ohio, 2001 Scioto Trail, Portsmouth, Ohio; and on the mobile mammography unit. No physician referral is required for a screening mammogram. For a list of upcoming mobile unit visits or to schedule an appointment, call (606) 408-1111.

Know the risk factors

Risk factors you cannot change include:

- Getting older. The risk increases with age.
- Genetic mutations. Mutations to certain genes, such as BRCA1 and BRCA2, put women who inherited them at greater risk.
- Reproductive history. Early menarche (before age 12) and late menopause (after age 55), increase the risk of breast cancer.
- Dense breast tissue. Dense breasts have more connective tissue than fatty tissue, which increases the risk of breast cancer.
- Personal history of breast cancer or certain kinds of non-cancerous breast disease.
- Family history of breast cancer. A woman’s risk is higher if she has a mother, sister or daughter or multiple family members who have had breast cancer. Having a first-degree male relative with breast cancer also increases risk.
- Prior treatment using radiation therapy to the chest or breast area before age 30 increases the risk of breast cancer later in life.
- Use of the drug DES, which was used to prevent miscarriage in the U.S. between 1940 and 1971.

Risk factors you can change:

- Physical inactivity. Women who are not physically active are at greater risk.
- Being overweight or obese after menopause.
- Taking hormones. Some forms of HRT taken during menopause can increase the risk when taken for more than five years. Some oral contraceptives have also been shown to increase the risk.
- Never having a full-term pregnancy, never breast-feeding, or having the first pregnancy after age 30 increases risk.
- Alcohol use increases risk.
- Smoking, exposure chemicals shown to cause cancer, and hormonal changes caused by night-shift work may increase cancer risk.
An Advanced Treatment Option for Women’s Health and Intimacy

In today’s world, we’re much more educated now about healthy diets and the importance of exercise and limiting stress, but what doesn’t garner much attention is the importance of intimacy and sexuality. Being sexually intimate has the ability to increase overall health benefits. So, how does this one aspect make us healthier? It has to do with the release of major hormones and chemicals that our bodies need on a regular basis. It’s a mind, spirit, body connection on a medical level, which includes benefits such as lowered stress hormones, brain function improvement, better sleep, enhanced bone health, and an increase in mood and pleasure, to name a few.

But what happens if you struggle with intimacy? For men, there are pills, injections, and other quick fixes, but for women, they often suffer in silence. In fact, many women believe their issues are a common condition chalked up to aging, and that there is nothing that can be done to help them. However, nothing could be further from the truth.

Along with physical bodily changes and loss of sensations due to childbirth, sexual disorders in women are often due to vaginal atrophy. Intimacy issues can also equally affect one’s partner’s psychological well-being and cause undue tension on the relationship. Dyspareunia (painful sex) is a symptom of vulvar and vaginal atrophy (VVA). You’re not alone; painful sex is a very common disorder.

Vulvar and Vaginal Atrophy
The truth is that many pre and postmenopausal women, and also women that have recently gone through childbirth, can have vaginal disorders, like burning, dryness, and pain that they often withhold and keep to themselves. Most women think that it’s just a “normal” part of the hormonal process, but they don’t have to live with this condition! There are options to relieve and reverse vaginal and vulvar atrophy.
What is VVA?
Due to the limited estrogen supply, the walls of the vagina start to thin out, causing dryness, and inflammation. This can make intercourse very painful, can cause urinary disorders, and can even interfere with daily activities for many women due to the extreme pain and discomfort that it can cause.

There are many options for women, like creams, medications, and surgery, but they all pale in comparison to an innovative procedure that has no side effects and only takes a few minutes to perform right in the convenience of the office-setting. This advanced technology is called ThermiVa®, and it’s helped numerous women find restoration within their relationship and has helped them to get their confidence and sexual health back.

ThermiVa
Women don’t want to feel as though they’ve lost control of their body - especially when it affects parts of their life. ThermiVa is a quick, non-invasive, non-ablative treatment delivering physician controlled radiofrequency energy using a thoughtfully designed handpiece to heat the tissues gently.

Collagen is a protein that makes your skin firm and elastic. The natural aging process can diminish collagen. When the skin has less collagen, it can lose its youthful appearance.

By using radiofrequency energy, tissues are heated to stimulate and re-build your body’s own collagen, naturally. Treatments using radiofrequency technology are also widely used in dermatology and aesthetic medicine. ThermiVa restores balance to the vaginal mucosa and tightens the area to increase sensations. ThermiVa is a convenient radiofrequency treatment, performed in-office.

ThermiVa Benefits
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Did You Know You Can Improve Your Bone Density With Physical Therapy?

By Kaylee Weber, PT, DPT, Clinic Manager
ApexNetwork Physical Therapy - Gillespie, IL Clinic

October 12 – 20 is national Bone Health Week. Bone loss or weakening is a common problem associated with aging. The bone minerals can begin to degenerate over time. DXA scans can measure precisely how much bone mineral density you have via a T score. T-scores of -1.0 or above are normal; anything ranging between -1.0 and -2.5 is considered low bone density or osteopenia. T-scores ranging from -2.5 or below are considered osteoporosis.

Bone mineral density begins to weaken gradually, but females tend to show demineralization during the first decade after menopause. Osteoporosis causes an increased risk of height loss, fractures of the hips, wrists, and vertebrae and chronic pain. The symptoms of your osteoporosis are generally not obvious unless you have a fracture. You may not even know that you have the disease until you break a bone, or a test shows that you have low bone mineral density. Studies show that after an initial fracture, secondary fractures are common in osteoporosis.

**Bone Strengthening Exercise**
Weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening (resistance training) exercises have proven to be beneficial for rebuilding bone density and for maintaining bone mass. Physical therapists are well-trained in helping patients improve bone regeneration and keep patients safe with custom-tailored and specific plans that are most advantageous for each individual patient’s needs.

Improving balance, strength, and flexibility are critical to staying safe. If a person has advanced osteoporosis, they will obviously be given a much less intensive plan than a person that might have the beginning stages of osteopenia. Examples of low impact exercise programs are aquatic therapy, elliptical machines, walking, and low-impact aerobics. Some examples of muscle-strengthening exercises are using resistance bands, resistance training with your own body weight (squats or lunges), handheld weights, or weight machines.
A Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) knows what will help and what could potentially harm a patient and therefore, is the optimal choice for helping patients improve bone mass, alleviate falls, improve range-of-motion and prevent osteoporotic fractures.

**Personalized Plans**
A physical therapist can also help patients map out an at-home plan to keep their bones and joints healthy. These can include things like discussing diet options, recommending certain supplements, endorsing a few minutes in the sun (vitamin D3), giving you at-home exercises, and reviewing certain medications that may be contributing to your bone loss (steroids).

**Additional Benefits of Physical Therapy**
Whether it’s a backache, sore shoulder, knee pain, or a sprained ankle, physical therapy can help most people. Perhaps you’re having trouble regaining strength after a surgery or hospitalization or you’re working to regain abilities lost due to a stroke or a workplace injury, ApexNetwork Physical Therapy can be the solution to getting you back to doing the things you love.

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When Jennifer McCreary, 48, of Louisa, Ky., had her yearly mammogram back at the end of April, breast cancer was the furthest thought from her mind.

“I had thought that I might not have one this year,” McCreary said. “I had seen the 60 Minutes episode about not having it every year under the age of 50 if you’re not at high risk, and I have no risk factors. But I saw my doctor and they told me to go ahead and have one.”

She had a 3D mammogram almost exactly one year to the day from her previous one. Shortly afterward she received a call that they wanted additional imaging, followed by a biopsy, where microcrystals were discovered.

“They said that only 25% of people with microcrystals came back with cancer,” McCreary said. “I was like, oh I don’t have any family history or any of the things that you most likely think of when you’re dealing with breast cancer. So, I kept saying no, it’s not going to be me. Sure enough, it was me.”

Thankfully, the Stage 0 cancer was caught very early and isolated to a small area.

“It was shocking because the whole time I wasn’t very worried,” McCreary said of her diagnosis. “But, you just go forward and do what needs to be done.” Jerald Ford, M.D., her gynecologist, referred her to breast surgeon M. Katherine Hughes, M.D. “She is amazing. You can tell that she’s passionate about what she does. When she came in, she really explained to me my options and if I wanted to have a mastectomy or just do a lumpectomy with radiation.”

McCreary chose the latter, having a lumpectomy in May, followed by radiation treatments. Many factors helped her make her decision. First, genetic testing determined she was negative for the breast cancer gene. Outcomes for patients at her stage of cancer who choose lumpectomy with radiation and an estrogen blocker had a very similar reoccurrence rate as those undergoing mastectomy. Also, lumpectomy typically requires less recovery time.

She was very happy with her decision. “The incision is very small,” she said. “It was very quick healing.”

Once she healed from her lumpectomy, McCreary began radiation treatment at Tri-State Regional Cancer Center with Terry Justice, M.D. She received a higher-concentrated dose of radiation with fewer treatments.

“I have a little fatigue in the evenings, but I still try to stay very active,” McCreary said. “I work part-time and I try to work half days since I have to come for treatment. I try to stay physically active and walk and exercise.”

McCreary’s family — her husband of more than 27 years, daughter and son — have been incredibly supportive throughout her journey. Her father-in-law often drives her to treatments.

“The family has just come together to lift me up and support me and encourage me,” she said.

Her work family at Louisa Drug Store, where she is a pharmacist, has also come together to support her. Her fellow pharmacists have stepped up to help work around her treatment schedule and give her time off when she needs it. “They made t-shirts and surprised me,” she said. “We consider ourselves a work family and the shirts say, ‘In this family no one fights alone.’”

McCreary completed her radiation treatments in September of this year, and will take an oral medication for the next five years in addition to regular checkups and screenings. “It is an inconvenience that will alter your life for a few months, but after that you just go back to normal,” McCreary said. “You go back to yourself with a new regard for life. It does make you think that we’re not bulletproof and things can happen. Enjoy your time and don’t worry about the little things that come up every day.”

She likes to call her experience a speed bump. “It’s a bump in the road and hopefully that’s all,” she said. “If it wasn’t caught early, it would have been more than speed bump. It could have been much more. I’m very happy that we caught it. Thank God I had the 3D mammogram and that it was caught early.”
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“TEST DRIVE”
HEARING AIDS WITH FLEX TRIAL
By Ann L. Rhoten, Au.D., CCC/A

Would you buy a car without test driving it first? Would you buy a house without seeing it first? If the answer is no, then why would you buy a hearing aid without taking it for a “test drive”? If you are like most people for whom hearing aids have been recommended, you are reluctant to buy before you know how they perform. Besides the significant financial investment, there are so many choices, it can be quite overwhelming. How do you know what is best for you at the best price? At Kentucky Audiology & Tinnitus Services, we have several methods which help us determine the most appropriate make and model for your unique listening needs including a thorough case history and comprehensive hearing assessment as well as hearing handicap inventories to assess what situations you experience the most difficulty. Using these tools, we can typically choose the most appropriate technology for you. That being said, sometimes the patient needs to experience what a hearing aid sounds like in order to make the right decision for them. The most convincing and powerful tool is to experience amplification in your own environment and experience the benefits first hand. No matter what make or model you ultimately choose and no matter where you purchase hearing aids, there is always a 30-day trial period, so even if you don’t get to “test drive” your hearing aid prior to a purchase, if you are dissatisfied for any reason, they can be exchanged or returned. However, most people prefer to actually experience the improvement in hearing before they purchase with no cost or obligation.

A stumbling block in this process of demonstration hearing aids is that most manufacturers only provide demonstration hearing aids in the premium-level products. While this is very helpful, the patient is unable to experience the less expensive technology without proceeding with the purchase. I think it is safe to say, most of us feel more comfortable when making a large purchase, to be able to try the actual device in our own environment without any cost or obligation before making a decision. Being able to experience the different levels of technology in your own home may save the patient a substantial amount of money should they find a lower level of technology is just as beneficial as a more expensive one.

Unitron, a small Canadian-based, hearing aid manufacturer, has developed a program to address this issue called Flex-Trial. The Flex-Trial program allows the audiologist to program the demonstration hearing aids to any level of technology from economy to premium. There are 5 technology levels from which to select. Based on your history, your hearing handicap inventories and your unique hearing needs, the audiologist will make a recommendation on the technology level most appropriate for you and program the devices for you to take home. You can now try the hearing aid in all the situations in which you experience difficulty and make an informed decision about which level of technology is providing you with the benefit you need. Most people try one to two different levels of technology to determine which best suits their unique situation. Now they can proceed with the purchase of hearing aids with confidence in the ability of the hearing aid to significantly improve their lives. If you, a family member, friend or co-worker would like to experience better hearing with no cost or obligation, please contact the office for your “test drive” with a Flex-Trial. 859-554-5384

Dr. Rhoten is an audiologist with Kentucky Audiology & Tinnitus Services, PLLC, 1517 Nicholasville Road, Suite 202, Lexington, KY 40503 (859) 554-5384, or visit her online at www.kytinnitus.com
The King's Daughters Breast Cancer Support Group is helping patients, survivors and family/support persons deal with the emotional effects of breast cancer.

The meetings take place in the conference room of King's Daughters Oncology Center of Excellence on the fifth floor of Medical Plaza A on the third Tuesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. Meetings last around an hour.

Breast health nurse navigator Bethany Gentry, RN, who facilitates the meetings, said the support group was organized this summer and already attendees have begun to share their different experiences.

"I think that the group is really enjoying it. They're all starting to get to know each other," said Gentry, adding the group has been filled with a mix of newly diagnosed breast cancer patients and long-term survivors.

The meetings also provide an avenue for the group to discuss the different range of emotions that often coincide with breast cancer including depression, anxiety and fear.

These emotional issues can even continue following treatment.

"There's just the stress of having that diagnosis and dealing with the stress of possible recurrence," said Gentry.

Gentry said another emotional aspect often associated with breast cancer is handling the loss of one or both breasts following a mastectomy. This can dramatically effect how a woman feels about her physical appearance, femininity and sexuality. Gentry pointed out that a topic discussed in the meetings is how patients and survivors can navigate interacting with their partners experiencing these emotions.

Chemotherapy can also affect a woman's hormones and cause early menopause.

Gentry said the support group really helps the participants realize others feel the same emotions.

"I think it's important for these women to know they're not alone. There are other people going through what they're going through," she said.

The meetings are very educational, including an informative discussion that covers different topics. Overall, Gentry said the support group plays an influential role in the lives of breast cancer patients and survivors.

"Mostly it's about sharing experiences with each other and having a good time together," said Gentry.

Gentry said she has already seen the impact of the group, noting several women have expressed their appreciation of the meetings to her.

"It's been really fulfilling to me," she said.

Gentry said she hopes to continue to grow the King's Daughters Breast Cancer Support Group. For more information on the group or to reserve a seat, call (606) 408-1630. RSVPs are preferred but not required.
Macular Degeneration Poised to Become Epidemic in U.S.

A
ge-related macular degeneration (AMD) is poised to become a new epidemic in the U.S. by 2030, affecting more than 10 million Americans. Already, it is the No. 1 cause of blindness, robbing more people of their sight than cataracts and glaucoma combined.

AMD is caused by the deterioration of the central portion of the retina, the surface at the back of the eye that registers what we see and transmits the information to the brain. This central part of the retina is called the macula, and is the most sensitive part of the retina. It is involved in nearly everything we see—reading, driving, recognizing faces and colors and seeing objects in fine detail.

It is unclear exactly what causes AMD, although it is believed both genetic and environmental factors contribute to its development. In its early stages, AMD has almost no symptoms. People with early AMD often don’t know they have it, making regular eye exams critical to early detection and treatment. A thorough eye exam can detect the signs of AMD—medium sized yellow deposits called drusen, below the retina.

In its intermediate stage, patients may notice some vision loss or report blurry or wavy vision. As AMD continues to worsen, central vision may be completely lost. At this point, patients experience a big blurry spot right in the middle of everything. People with late AMD are considered legally blind. Although they often retain peripheral vision, this is not as clear or as detailed as central vision.

Risk factors for AMD
• AMD occurs more frequently in people over the age of 55. A genetic form of macular degeneration affects younger people.
• Family history of AMD. Having a close relative with age-related macular degeneration puts you at greater risk for developing it yourself.
• Caucasians are at higher risk for developing AMD. African-Americans and Latinos have a lower risk, possibly because they generally have more melanin in their eyes. (Melanin absorbs UV rays.)
• Smoking/tobacco use doubles the risk of developing AMD.

AMD seems to affect people in occupations that entail greater exposure to ultraviolet and blue light. This includes:
• Those who work or play outdoors: Construction workers, farmers, truck drivers, athletes, police, beachgoers
• Those who work in offices that are brightly lit with fluorescent lights
• People who spend a lot of time in front of computer terminals, tablets and other devices that generate blue light
• People who take photosensitizing medications, including tranquilizers, diuretics, oral contraceptives, antibiotics, diabetes medications and high blood pressure medications

At Tri-State Ophthalmology, John Gross, M.D., Carter Gussler, M.D., and Joshua Daniel, O.D., specialize in diagnosing and treating all forms of eye disease, including macular degeneration. With a combined 50 years of experience, we are the area’s premier ophthalmology practice. Our offices are conveniently located at 2841 Lexington Ave., in Ashland. For more information, please call (606) 324-2451. Patients are seen by physician referral.
Although we don’t know for certain what causes AMD, there are steps you can take to help reduce your risk:

- Have regular eye exams and discuss any family history with your eye professional.
- When outdoors, wear sunglasses. The best sunglasses are those that provide UV400 protection.
- Follow label directions carefully for any medications you may be taking.
- If you experience blurriness, waviness or loss of sight, seek professional help immediately.

**Treating AMD**

Although AMD is considered incurable, there are things your eye care professional can do to slow its progression, including medications, injections, and laser therapy. New surgical procedures are under development that may show promise in the future.

Your eyecare professional may advise you to take supplements that have demonstrated some success in preserving your eyes.
Most people want to protect their principal investments from the fluctuations of the stock market with fixed annuity options. However, many people don’t realize that they can easily roll over their IRA or 401K into a fixed annuity contract.

Rick White’s Insurance Company offers annuity contracts that his company allocated to make regular payments to the buyer. Rick explained, “This can be either immediately or at some date in the future, as these payments can be made monthly, quarterly, annually, or as a single lump-sum. Annuity contract holders can opt to receive payments for the rest of their lives or for a set number of years. The money invested in an annuity grows tax-deferred. When the money is withdrawn, the amount contributed to the annuity will not be taxed, but earnings will be taxed as regular income. There is no contribution limit for an annuity. Fixed annuities offer a guaranteed payout, which is typically a set dollar amount or a set percentage of the assets in the annuity. To qualify for the tax-free and penalty-free withdrawal of earnings, Roth IRA and 401K distributions must be withdrawals must take place after age of 59½.”

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HEALTH & WELLNESS
October 2019 - Tri-State Edition

KEEP PETS SAFE THIS HALLOWEEN

Halloween isn’t just for humans; four-legged friends have plenty of opportunity to get in on the fun, too. However, it’s important to take some pet precautions that allow the whole family to enjoy the holiday safely, as the costumes and excitement can be overwhelming and some of the candy is even dangerous.

As you’re filling the candy buckets and assembling the perfect costumes, be sure to heed these tips from the experts at PetSmart for a Halloween filled with pet-friendly fun:

Out and about
Make sure pets have proper identification by microchipping and registering your pet’s microchip, and keeping identification and registration tags on their collars. This is especially important around Halloween, when open doors offer more opportunity for escape.

If your pet will be joining the family while trick-or-treating, be sure they are visible to motorists by using a reflective collar, harness or leash.

Costume concerns
Just like with children, there are safety issues to consider when costuming your pets. Not all dogs like wearing clothes and some may become stressed or agitated while wearing a costume or sweater. However, many dogs just need a little coaxing and positive reinforcement.

• Start with a simple accessory, like a bandana, working your way up to a costume.
• Make sure costumes include eye and ear holes, and if they don’t, consider removing whole portions of the costume to ensure your pet’s ability to see, hear and breathe. Make sure there isn’t anything that could be a tripping hazard. Also, be sure to check the costume for little parts within biting or chewing distance.
• Dogs can overheat easily, so ensure your dog’s clothing is not too bulky or heavy if the weather is warm.
• In the end, the top priority should be your pet’s comfort level.

Hazardous food and decorations
“It’s fun to include our pets in our celebrations, but it’s also important to be aware of the dangers associated with Halloween to ensure their safety,” said Jennifer Freeman, DVM, PetSmart’s resident veterinarian and pet care expert. “Keep chocolate and candy out of paws’ reach. Xylitol, a sugar substitute found in candy, gum, mints and baked goods, is toxic to pets and can cause liver damage.”

Keep the Halloween fun going by establishing some rules for your family and any guests joining the festivities:
• Xylitol can be extremely dangerous to pets, even in small amounts. Just 1/8 teaspoon can cause dangerously low blood sugar in dogs and 1/2 teaspoon can cause liver damage. If xylitol is consumed by your pet, take him or her to a veterinarian immediately.
• Cellophane, plastic and paper from candy wrappers and lollipop sticks can cause gastrointestinal upset.
• Natural stimulants in chocolate can cause a range of symptoms like vomiting, diarrhea and abnormal heart rhythm.
• Raisins may cause a toxic reaction in dogs from vomiting to kidney failure.
• Cellulose, plastic and paper from candy wrappers and lollipop sticks can cause gastrointestinal upset.
• As an alternative to sharing dangerous snacks, stock up on some seasonal dog-friendly treats and set out a pet-specific bowl.

Seasonal decorations can also pose a threat:
• Fall decorations like jack-o’-lanterns can cause gastrointestinal upset.
• Glow sticks can cause irritation, agitation and vomiting.
• Hot wax and flames from candles can potentially burn your pet’s nose, tongue or tail.

Don’t forget the fun
Despite some concerns, Halloween can still provide fun moments for your pet:
• Take your dog along for trick-or-treating.
• Allow your four-legged friend to greet trick-or-treaters at the door.
• Encourage friends to dress up their pets and join the festivities.

Find more tips and tricks for keeping your pets safe this Halloween at PetSmart.com.
Hungry Heart

By Alex Anderson, Senior Associate Pastor at Bayside Community Church

The songwriter and performer Bruce Springsteen was right when he wrote, “Everybody’s got a hungry heart…”

Inside of every human is this need or hunger. Sometimes we try to fill it with love for another person, but for some reason…another person is not the answer.

Sometimes the hungry heart destroys the very things we love and want.

Springsteen goes on to sing, “We fell in love, I knew it had to end…we took what we had and we ripped it apart…everybody’s got a hungry heart…don’t make no difference what nobody says…ain’t nobody like to be alone…everybody’s got a hungry heart.”

I do believe our hungry heart is about loneliness, not for another human…but for God himself. We were created in the very image of God (Genesis 1:26) but when man left God…man missed, and still misses, God. They had a bond that filled man with joy and satisfied his heart like nothing else.

C.S. Lewis calls this the, “Numinous Awe.” It seems to be built into mankind, this ravenous hungry heart to know God. And it’s so strong nothing can fill it but God himself.

Psalms 34:8 says, “Taste and see that the Lord is good.”

And the truth is… If you don’t get that deep ravenous hunger in your heart satisfied by Jesus you will starve to death spiritually, while eating everything else.

So how do you do that? How do you find the true satisfaction that calms your hungry heart?

If you are a Christ-follower, then you know how to do this. You…do again…something that you have already experienced when you asked God to be your Lord and Savior. You “make up” with God and you’re back to stay.

You are so glad to be back together. Glad that God owns you and your life. So you decide to be happy because God owns you and is your life partner (Philippians 4:4).

Feel the pleasure, the joy and the delight again about Jesus being your master. Let this fact cause you happiness, pleasure and delight.

Be full of joy because Jesus paid a high price for your life. (1Corinthians 6:19-20).

Let the reality of what He has done sink over you.

Not only are you in His family now, but you can live the life of a victorious and joyful person of God; with all the rights and privileges of a child of rich royalty.

"You are my child says the Lord...my very rich child says the Lord...let the riches of your heart begin to overflow into all of your life." (3 John 2)

You can, should, and must rejoice always in the Lord...way before anything changes physically in your life.

The seed of hope and joy is there if you have become one with Jesus Christ. His seed is within you. If your hope is nonexistent then find the seed once planted deep in your heart by the Holy Spirit.

Like a precious pearl search for it (Matthew 13:45).

When you find it (that small seed), clean it up. Polish it and put it in the center room of your heart, shine the brightest light you can find on it and let its magnificent beauty captivate you. Stare at it with intentional focus as though you are searching and waiting for hope itself.

Its magnificent light will light up your life.

For it will change everything about you as you clearly see and feel the love that God has shed in your heart...that is for you (Romans 5:5).

It is so worthy of your time my friend to meditate and think about Jesus, again.

Whether things in your life are going well or not...you have the power of a Christ-follower to focus on Jesus...the author and finisher of your faith and the centerpiece of your heart.

Bon Appetit!

To your spiritual health,
Alex E. Anderson
Senior Associate Pastor at Bayside Community Church
Author, Dangerous Prayers
alex.anderson@alexanderson.org
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Ohio: Burlington, Ironton, Jackson, Wheelersburg

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