

Watson Clinic

A community health education magazine made possible by generous donations from Watson Clinic Foundation's supporters.

Health scene

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to your
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**Diabetes
and
COVID-19**

Know your
risk and get
advice from
our experts



LIVE YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE IN 2021

Here are a few areas you can focus on to get healthier in 2021

AH, those pesky New Year's resolutions. We make them every year. Some we stick with, others we dismiss.

We all struggle from time to time with our willpower, but it's important to remember that your healthiest life is well within your reach in the new year.

Call your doctor for guidance on how you can improve your physical and mental wellness, and maintain open communications with loved ones who can keep you inspired and motivated. Also, give these five healthy habits a try.

BREAK A SWEAT.

Exercise doesn't just result in more defined muscles and flatter stomachs.

It might even stave off mental decline and possibly reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease. This may be because workouts increase the flow of blood and oxygen to brain cells.

"Aim for 30 minutes of exercise—like brisk walking—that will get your heart pumping on most days of the week," says **Dr. Brett J. Widick**, a board-certified family medicine specialist at Watson Clinic South. For safety's sake, get a green light from your doctor before significantly increasing your activity level.



Brett J. Widick, MD



FEED YOUR BRAIN. By simply changing what you eat, you may be able to lose weight, decrease your risk for conditions like diabetes and heart disease, and help keep your brain fit.

Target a diet that's low in saturated fats and trans fats and rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Cut back on sodium, sweets, sugary drinks and red meat.

BUTT OUT. Evidence shows that smoking raises the risk of lung cancer, coronary heart disease, cognitive decline and many other degenerative conditions. Quitting can reduce those risks significantly. If you've tried unsuccessfully to quit in the past, ask your doctor for help. Just a few minutes of advice from a doctor raises the odds of succeeding at quitting.

GET ENOUGH SHUT-EYE.

Too little sleep can hamper your physical and mental performance. Try to get seven to nine hours of ZZZs every night. Wind down with a calming bedtime routine like soaking in a warm bath, and stick to a sleep schedule by tucking in and getting up at the same time, even on weekends.

2x

CHALLENGE YOUR MIND. Keep yourself mentally agile by learning a new skill or hobby. Do mental mathematics rather than reaching for a calculator. Play a strategic game like chess. Sign up for a college course you can take online.

With every mental challenge, you're establishing what's called cognitive reserve, which means you're helping your brain become more adaptable to some mental functions. As a result, your brain can compensate for age-related changes and health conditions that may affect it.



Watson Clinic's Family Medicine and Internal Medicine specialists can help you gear up for your most productive year yet. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call **863-680-7190**.

New hopes for the new year



Steven G. Achinger, MD, FASN

FROM THE DESK OF
DR. STEVEN G. ACHINGER

There's no doubt that 2020 has been a tumultuous and transformative year for many. As we turn the page to a new year, we look for signs of hope on our horizon.

First, there are the practical steps we can all take to ensure a brighter outcome. At each of our locations, we continue to require the wearing of masks or other appropriate facial coverings for our patients, visiting caregivers, physicians and other staff members. We also encourage the practice of social distancing and frequent hand sanitizing. These steps remain the simplest and most attainable means for protecting everyone against the perils of the coronavirus.

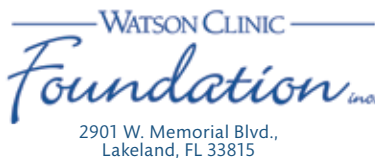
On the research front, Watson Clinic and Lakeland Regional Health have joined forces on an exciting new study aimed at defining the most effective blood clot treatments for COVID-19 patients who are in the intensive care unit. The study is being led by Watson Clinic Pulmonologist **Dr. Naem Shahrouh**, Lakeland Regional Health Pulmonologist **Dr. Thane Htun**, and Watson Clinic Pulmonology Hospitalist registered nurse practitioner **Amber Peterson, APRN**, and it's all being overseen by Watson Clinic Center for Research, a division we established in 1985 to nurture the most exciting clinical trials and help to define the future of medicine for all. For more information on this meaningful study, visit **WatsonClinic.com/Research**.

All of us at Watson Clinic wish you the very best in the new year. In 2021 and beyond, Watson Clinic will continue to serve as a safe and reliable haven where you and your family will receive only the highest level of compassionate and expertly delivered care.

Yours in good health,

Steven G. Achinger, MD, FASN

Watson Clinic Managing Partner



2901 W. Memorial Blvd.,
Lakeland, FL 33815

Winter 2021

President, Watson Clinic Foundation, Inc.
Galina Vugman, MD

HEALTH SCENE is published three times a year (this is issue 2 of 3) as a special service for the friends and neighbors of WATSON CLINIC. It is supported by generous contributions made to Watson Clinic Foundation, Inc. The Foundation's mission is to promote community wellness through education, research and service. If you

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ASK THE EXPERTS

Watson Clinic specialists answer your questions.



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PROTECT YOUR HEART

Have you had a heart attack? Prevent a second one with these helpful tips.



Check out our website

WatsonClinic.com

Email us at

HealthScene@

WatsonClinic.com.



A trusted locale for lung cancer screening

Watson Clinic's Radiology department has been designated a Lung Cancer Screening Center by the American College of Radiology. This distinction signifies that Watson Clinic offers the cutting-edge imaging equipment, highly experienced physicians and radiologic technologists, and the strict quality standards necessary to perform these services in the safest and most effective manner.

Low-dose computed tomography (CT) screening is the most effective means available for detecting the presence of lung cancer and formulating a potentially life-saving course of treatment.

Medicare guidelines currently recommend annual low-dose CT lung cancer screening for adults ages 55 to 77 who have a 30 pack-year history, and who currently smoke or have quit within the past 15 years.



For more information on Watson Clinic's Radiology department, call **863-680-7755** or visit **WatsonClinic.com/Radiology**.

Focus on fall prevention

One out of every four older people falls each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The injuries sustained from a fall can severely limit a person's independence and may even result in death.

Consider the following in order to reduce these hazards and maintain your strength, balance and vision:

- Don't go barefoot. Always wear shoes—not slippers—both inside and outside the house.
- Keep clutter to a minimum. Arrange furniture so that there's a clear walkway. Keep objects off the floor and electrical cords next to the wall so that you won't trip over them. Remove throw rugs or small area rugs.
- On the stairs, fix loose or uneven steps. Install sturdy handrails on both sides of the stairway, and keep it clutter-free. Make sure there's plenty of light at the top and bottom.
- In the bathroom, use a nonslip mat on the tub or shower floor. Install grab bars next to the tub and toilet. If you're prone to falling, use a shower chair.
- Exercise regularly to improve strength, coordination and balance.
- Use a cane or walker if you're unsteady. Have your vision checked at least once a year, and update your eyeglasses when needed.
- Get up slowly after sitting or lying down.



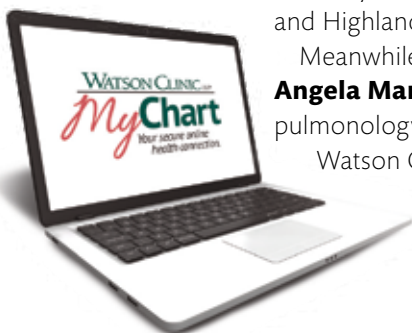
If you believe you might suffer from dizziness, vertigo or other balance disorders, Watson Clinic's Otolaryngology (ENT) department can help. The department is proud to partner with the American Institute of Balance to provide comprehensive evaluation and management services for both adult and pediatric patients. For more information, call **863-904-6296** or visit **WatsonClinic.com/ENT**.



Specialists and providers on the move

Watson Clinic physicians and medical providers have recently expanded or changed their locations to better serve patients in our community.

Pain management specialist **Dr. Osman Latif** and his registered nurse practitioner, **Brenda Giffen, APRN**, have expanded their appointment availability to include both our Watson Clinic Main and Highlands locations.



Meanwhile, registered nurse practitioner **Angela Mann, APRN**, is now serving patients of pulmonology specialist **Dr. Naem Shahrour** from Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland.



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Please call **863-680-7190** to schedule an appointment with any of these expert physicians or providers.



Osman Latif, MD



Brenda Giffen, APRN



Naem Shahrour, MD



Angela Mann, APRN

Healthcare at your fingertips

Imagine having instant access to your medical records on your smartphone, laptop or desktop. Schedule your next doctor's appointment, request prescription refills, and communicate with your physician's office through private messaging without having to place a phone call and wait on hold.

It's all possible with the MyChart at Watson Clinic LLP patient portal. This exciting platform allows patients to manage their health information all from the convenience of their personal computer or mobile device. Recent

upgrades include the following additional benefits:

Telemedicine: Attend your next doctor's appointment from the comfort of your own home with this popular feature. Subject to physician availability.

More test results delivered fast: Pathology and radiology test results are often available on your portal before your medical provider has had a chance to review them. If you have questions regarding your results, please give your doctor a few days before contacting their office.



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Signing up for your own MyChart patient portal account is absolutely free and can be completed in just a few minutes. Simply visit **WatsonClinic.com/Portal** and follow the appropriate prompts.



Your home for quality healthcare

For the third consecutive three-year term, Watson Clinic has achieved Certificates of Recognition as a Patient-Centered Medical Home by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), a private, non-profit organization dedicated to improving healthcare quality. These recognitions were granted to six Watson Clinic locations: Watson Clinic Main, South, Highlands, North Pediatrics, Bartow and Plant City.

"This recognition affirms to our community that Watson Clinic puts the patient at the forefront of everything we do," says Watson Clinic Managing Partner **Dr. Steven G. Achinger**.

In order to earn this coveted recognition, Watson Clinic was required to meet or exceed a series of strict standards and criteria. Evaluators looked for ongoing relationships between patients and their primary care providers, a smooth coordination of care among all members of a patient's medical team, and a system to measure performance, set goals and improve upon the quality and cost-efficiency of care.

The NCQA Patient-Centered Medical Home program was designed with input from the American College of Physicians, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics and other noted organizations. The program is an industry leader in evaluating and recognizing the use of systematic, patient-centered, coordinated care that supports access, communication and patient involvement.

INTRODUCING

OUR NEWEST PROVIDERS



**MELISSA
BALLENGEE, MD**
FAMILY MEDICINE

Medical school: Medical University of the Americas, Nevis, WI

Residency: Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana, IL, Family Medicine

Board certifications: Family Medicine and Obesity Medicine

Location: Watson Clinic Main

Appointments: 863-680-7190



**DIANA
BRASWELL, MD**
DERMATOPATHOLOGY

Medical school: Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, NC

Residency: University of South Florida Morsani College of Medicine, Tampa, FL, Anatomic and Clinical Pathology

Fellowship: University of Florida College of Medicine, Gainesville, FL, Dermatopathology

Board certifications: Anatomic Pathology, Clinical Pathology and Dermatopathology

Location: Watson Clinic Bella Vista Building



**TAMMY
GEBSEAMAN, DO**
GASTROENTEROLOGY

Medical school: Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, Bradenton, FL

Residency: Largo Medical Center, Largo, FL, Internal Medicine

Fellowship: Largo Medical Center, Largo, FL, Gastroenterology

Board certification: Internal Medicine

Locations: Watson Clinic Main and Watson Clinic Highlands

Appointments: 863-680-7490



JESSICA GARBER, PA
**ORTHOPAEDIC
SURGERY/SPORTS
MEDICINE**

Education: University of South Florida, Tampa, FL (BSN), South University, Tampa, FL (MSN)

Memberships: National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants; American Academy of Physician Assistants; Florida Academy of Physician Assistants

Supervising physician: Phuc Vo, MD

Location: Watson Clinic Main
Appointments: 863-680-7214



BERTHA HARLEY, APRN
**CARDIOLOGY
HOSPITALIST**

Education: University of South Florida, Tampa, FL (BSN), Florida Southern College, Lakeland, FL (MSN)

Location: Lakeland Regional Health



**WENDI
JOHNSON, APRN**
**GYNECOLOGY, FEMALE
PELVIC MEDICINE &
RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY**

Education: Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA (BSN), South University, Tampa, FL (MSN)

Memberships: American Academy of Nurse Practitioners

Supervising physician: John R. Ellington, Jr., MD

Location: Watson Clinic Bella Vista Building

Appointments: 863-680-7243




**BROOKE LIVINGSTON,
APRN**
FAMILY MEDICINE

Education: University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL (BSN), University of South Florida, Tampa, FL (MSN)

Memberships: American Association of Nurse Practitioners

Supervising physician: Rony J. Alvarado, MD

Location: Watson Clinic Highlands
Appointments: 863-680-7190

 Meet the latest additions to our team of expert physicians and providers. Appointments are now available except where noted. Visit **WatsonClinic.com** for more information.

TAKE THREE

Questions for the experts

What causes high blood pressure?

Half of all American adults have high blood pressure, but many don't know it. That's because the condition does not always present obvious symptoms.


High blood pressure raises your risk of a heart attack, stroke, kidney disease and vision loss. The good news is that it can be controlled.

Blood pressure is measured in two numbers. The top (systolic) number is the pressure when your heart beats. The bottom (diastolic) number is the pressure when your heart rests between beats. A normal blood pressure reading is below 120/80. Elevated blood pressure is a systolic pressure of 120–129 and a diastolic pressure of less than 80. High blood pressure is a systolic pressure of 130 or higher or a diastolic pressure of 80 or higher that stays high over time.

An unhealthy diet (especially one that's high in sodium) can make blood pressure creep up. So can being inactive or overweight or drinking alcohol. Healthier habits will help lower high blood pressure.

Medicine may also be a part of treatment. If your provider wants you to take blood pressure medicine, use it exactly as prescribed.



 **Fabio Vasquez, MD**, is a board-certified family medicine specialist at Watson Clinic South in Lakeland. Call **863-680-7190** to schedule an appointment.

Can snoring lead to more serious health problems?

Sometimes snoring is a sign of sleep apnea, a potentially dangerous condition. The most common type is called obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). It causes someone to stop breathing as much as 30 times or more during sleep. When this occurs, oxygen levels go up and down and can put a big strain on the heart.

OSA can also increase the risk of high blood pressure, atrial fibrillation, type 2 diabetes and stroke.


OSA is caused by the collapse of the airway in the back of the nose, mouth and throat during sleep. The vibration of the relaxed airway triggers the snoring. When the airway closes completely, it cuts off oxygen to the lungs.

Loud snoring is the most obvious hallmark of OSA. Other signs might include gasping or choking during sleep, morning headaches, daytime fatigue and trouble concentrating.

Your first step is to talk with your doctor if you suspect you may have OSA.

The condition can be diagnosed by a sleep study or an at-home test. OSA can be treated with a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) device, which involves wearing a mask while sleeping that keeps air pressure flowing in your airways.



 **Naem Shahrour, MD**, is a board-certified pulmonology and sleep medicine specialist in the Sleep Disorders Center at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. Call **863-680-7190** to schedule an appointment.

How can I keep my immune system healthy during the pandemic?

It's best to keep your immune system healthy all the time, not just when a virus is going around. That means focusing on a well-balanced diet filled with nutritious foods like fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

These nutrients can help strengthen your immune system:

Probiotics. These good bacteria can be found in cultured dairy products like yogurt.

Protein. This may be especially helpful in healing and recovery. You can find protein in plant and animal products, such as milk, eggs, beef, chicken, fish, nuts, beans and seeds.

Vitamin A. This helps regulate the immune system and protect against infections. Look for it in sweet potatoes, carrots, broccoli, spinach, eggs, or milk and cereal fortified with vitamin A.


Vitamin C. Look for this in citrus fruits. It increases the amount of antibodies in your system.

Vitamin D. Find it in fatty fish and eggs, as well as drinks fortified with vitamin D.

Vitamin E. This works as an antioxidant that decreases inflammation. Find it in fortified cereals, sunflower seeds, vegetable oils and peanut butter.

Zinc. This may help wounds heal. Zinc is best absorbed from animal sources like beef and fish. You can also find it in wheat germ, beans and tofu.



 **Lilliam S. Chiques, MD**, is a board-certified internal medicine and obesity medicine specialist at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. Call **863-680-7190** to schedule an appointment.

BONE UP ON bone health



Watson Clinic's

Rheumatology department

treats a wide array of complex inflammatory conditions, including osteoporosis, arthritis and fibromyalgia.

They utilize the most advanced technologies to provide accurate diagnosis and targeted treatments, including the DEXA bone density scan for the detection of osteoporosis.

Schedule an appointment at one of two convenient locations—Watson Clinic Main or Watson Clinic Bartow—by calling **863-680-7486**.

YOUR BONES are the framework of your entire body. Without them you couldn't stand up, sit down or take a walk.

Although it's hard to the touch, bone is actually living tissue that's constantly remaking itself. Old bone is regularly being removed and replaced with new, fresh bone.

"Depending on how we take care of it, bone can get either stronger or weaker as we age," says **Dr. Ann C. Winny**, a board-certified rheumatologist at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland

and Watson Clinic Bartow. "If it gets weaker, we put ourselves at risk for falls and fractures." Every year about 2 million older Americans sustain fractures because of weak bones.

You can take steps to avoid osteoporosis, a bone-thinning condition, and build strong bones and keep them strong throughout old age. It takes a commitment to exercise, good nutrition and healthy lifestyle behaviors. When you're walking tall and strong in your 70s and 80s, you'll be glad you did it.



Parents: Building strong bones begins in childhood

Throughout our lifetime, old bone is removed and new bone is added to our skeleton. Up until our late 20s, new bone is added faster than old bone is removed. At around that age we reach what's called peak bone mass—the strongest, densest bone we'll ever have.

Once we reach peak bone mass, the process reverses itself: We begin losing bone faster than we replace it.

"That's why it's so important for kids and young adults to work on building strong bones," says **Dr. Marian F.**

Ceniza, a board-certified rheumatologist at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. "The bone mass attained in our

younger years is an important factor in our lifelong skeletal health."

Not all the factors that determine peak bone mass—such as genetics—are under individual control, but many are.

Calcium and vitamin D intake is important, for example. Kids 9 to 18 years old should get 1,300 milligrams of calcium daily. The most common source of calcium is milk and other dairy products. Vitamin D helps the body more easily absorb calcium.

Other good sources of calcium include dark green, leafy vegetables, sardines and salmon with bones, tofu and other soy products, and foods fortified with calcium.

Physical activity is vital too. As with muscles, exercise helps build strong bones. The best exercises for bone strength are weight-bearing ones, such as walking, running, or weight-lifting.

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) recommends that kids get at least an hour of exercise every day of the week.



Marian F. Ceniza, MD



Ann C. Winny, MD

Are you at risk for osteoporosis?

Some risk factors for osteoporosis aren't under your control. These include:

- **Sex.** Women are more likely than men to develop osteoporosis. Women lose bone faster than men because of the hormonal changes of menopause.
- **Age.** The older you are, the greater your risk for osteoporosis.
- **Body size.** Small, thin-boned women are at greater risk.
- **Ethnicity.** White and Asian women have a higher risk than African American and Hispanic women.
- **Family history.** People whose parents have a history of fractures also seem to be at increased risk.

Risk factors that you may be able to control include:

- **Calcium and vitamin D intake.** A lifetime diet low in calcium and vitamin D makes you more prone to bone loss.
- **Certain medications.** Long-term use of medicines like glucocorticoids and some anti-convulsants puts you at greater risk.
- **Lifestyle.** A sedentary lifestyle or extended bed rest can weaken bones.
- **Smoking.** One of the many health risks of smoking is osteoporosis.
- **Drinking alcohol.** Alcohol increases the risk of bone loss and fractures.

Source: National Institutes of Health



Maintaining bone health in adulthood

Good nutrition and physical activity are vital for slowing bone loss in adulthood, too.

Adults 19 to 50 years old need at least 1,000 milligrams of calcium per day. For women, that jumps to 1,200 milligrams daily at age 51. Depending on how much calcium you get each day from food, you may need to take a calcium supplement.

The AAOS also recommends that adults get at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day.

Here are some other things you can do to help maintain bone strength as an adult:

Be aware of your personal risk for osteoporosis. Talk with your doctor about your risk factors for osteoporosis. Ask whether a bone density test is right for you. This screening test uses a low-dose x-ray to measure your bone density. If your bone density is low, your doctor may recommend you take medication. These medications may include supplements or other drugs to build stronger bones.

Keep a healthy weight. Older adults who are overweight have a higher risk of falling and breaking bones.

If you smoke, here's another reason to quit. Smoking can reduce bone mass.

Know the risks of alcohol. Drinking alcohol can reduce bone mass, as well as increase your risk for falls and fractures.



DIABETES AND COVID-19:

What to do if you get sick



SEVERE ILLNESS from COVID-19 is more likely in people who have certain underlying medical conditions. One of these is type 2 diabetes. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), it's possible that people with type 1 or gestational diabetes are at higher risk too.

The danger goes both ways. Being sick may also make it harder for people with diabetes to control their blood sugar.

So if you have diabetes, it's a good idea to know what to do in case you get sick.

Plan ahead in case of illness

That means making sure you always have plenty of insulin—and groceries—for at least the week ahead.

"Be sure you're stocked up on supplies of simple carbohydrates—like regular soft drinks, honey, jam, gelatin dessert, hard candies or frozen pops," says **Dr. Vindya Gunawardena**, an endocrinology specialist at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. "These can help keep your blood sugar up in case you feel too sick to eat."

You should also keep plenty of glucagon and ketone strips on hand, as well as rubbing alcohol and soap to wash your hands.

Also, talk with your doctor ahead of time about what steps to take if you start to feel unwell. Ask questions like:

- How often should I check my blood sugar?
- When should I check for ketones?
- Should I make any changes in my diabetes medications?



Watson Clinic's Endocrinology department can help you manage your diabetes through medication, diet and exercise. Patients also benefit from the expertise and guidance of the Clinic's certified diabetes educators, who offer a series of classes aimed at helping patients with diabetes live their best life.

To schedule an appointment with an endocrinologist, call **863-680-7490**. For more information on Watson Clinic's Diabetes Education offerings, visit **WatsonClinic.com/Diabetes**.

If you do get sick

The first thing to do if you suspect you have COVID-19 is to call your doctor's office. They will tell you what to do next—for example, where and how to get tested.

If you have COVID-19, you'll need to manage your blood sugar as well as possible. These tips may help:

Keep taking your diabetes medicines as usual, or follow your doctor's advice.

Stay hydrated. If you're having a hard time keeping water down, try taking small sips every 15 minutes or so.

Follow your doctor's advice about how often to check your blood sugar. If you use a continuous glucose monitor, keep in mind that some devices are affected by acetaminophen. You may need to do finger sticks to ensure you're getting the right readings.

"If your blood sugar is low, eat 15 grams of simple carbs. Confirm that your blood sugar is on the rise with a 15-minute recheck," says **Dr. Khanh T. Pham**, a board-certified endocrinology specialist at Watson Clinic Main and Watson Clinic Bartow.

"If your blood sugar is high more than two times in a row, check your urine for ketones. If ketones are present, call your doctor's office right away." You may need to go to the emergency room to be treated for diabetic ketoacidosis.

Wash your hands often. Also clean your injection and finger-stick sites with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.

Additional source: American Diabetes Association



Vindya
Gunawardena, MD



Khanh T. Pham, MD

COVID-19: Are you at high risk for serious complications?

Diabetes isn't the only underlying condition that places people with COVID-19 at greater risk of serious health complications. Other high-risk groups include older adults, and those who have been diagnosed with lung disease, heart conditions, sickle cell disease, obesity or a weakened immune system.

If you're in one of these higher-risk categories, start with the basics:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching surfaces in public.
- Try not to touch your face (germs can be transmitted from your hands to your eyes, nose and mouth).

Due to the ease of transmission, there are extra steps everyone should take to lessen the risk for infection. For instance:

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Keep a distance of at least 6 feet from other people in public.
- Wear a cloth face mask in public.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily, such as doorknobs, tables, light switches and faucets.

- Avoid sharing personal items with others in your household.

People at higher risk should also:

Delay travel plans. Especially avoid all cruise travel and nonessential air travel.

Plan ahead. Gather the phone numbers of your doctor, pharmacy and insurance provider in one place just in case. Have enough medical supplies, household items and groceries on hand so that you will be prepared to stay at home for several weeks if needed.

Be smart about meds. If you can't get to the pharmacy, see if you can get your prescriptions delivered. Or get extra refills so you don't have to leave the house.

Create a safety net. If you live alone, get contact information for your neighbors, friends and colleagues in case you need help.

Give telemedicine a try. Keep up with routine medical visits from the comfort of your own home through Watson Clinic's Telemedicine service. For more information, visit **WatsonClinic.com/Telemedicine**.

Sources: American Diabetes Association; American Heart Association; American Lung Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Is it an emergency?

According to the CDC, you should go to the emergency room if:

- You're having trouble breathing.
- You have moderate to high ketone levels in your urine.
- You can't keep liquids down for more than four hours.
- You lose five pounds or more while sick.
- Your blood sugar is lower than 60 mg/dL.
- You are too sick to eat normally and can't keep food down for more than 24 hours.
- You have vomiting or severe diarrhea for more than six hours.
- Your temperature is above 101 degrees for 24 hours.
- You feel sleepy or can't think clearly. If this is the case, call 911 or ask someone else to drive you.



Life after a HEART ATTACK

LEARN STEPS FOR PROTECTING YOUR HEART

YOU SURVIVED a heart attack. That's news you can embrace.

The big question on your mind is, what now? How can you help keep your heart healthy and avoid further problems like another attack?

Fortunately, there's a lot you can do. Experts advise that you:

Take your medicine as pre-scribed. "It's not unusual for people who have had a heart attack to be on multiple medicines," says **Dr. Gloria Ayuba**, a board-certified cardiovascular medicine specialist at Watson Clinic Main. "Each one of them helps your heart in a different way, so it's important that you take them exactly as your doctor prescribes."

You may be on medicines to:

- Prevent blood clots.
- Lower your cholesterol.
- Lower your blood pressure.
- Prevent a second heart attack.
- Reduce episodes of chest pain.

If you're having trouble managing all your medicines, use a daily or weekly pillbox to organize them. Use

a calendar or smartphone app to help you remember when to take them.

Attend your follow-up medical appointments. These appointments help your healthcare team keep track of your recovery. Make each visit count by preparing a list of questions you may have. Also, bring a list of all the medicines you take—including vitamins and over-the-counter drugs—to each appointment.

You should see your doctor within six weeks of your heart attack to help keep your recovery on track.

Make needed lifestyle changes. Lifestyle changes can help you manage your risk factors. These might include:

- **Quitting smoking.** Quitting now can lower your risk for dying of heart disease.
- **Losing weight.** Shedding extra pounds can help lower your blood pressure and improve your cholesterol levels.
- **Becoming more active.** Regular exercise has many benefits, including weight loss, lower stress levels

Know all the symptoms of a heart attack

"Unfortunately, having one heart attack does put you at increased risk for a second one," says

Dr. Zia Rab, a board-certified interventional cardiologist at Watson Clinic Main. "If you do have another one, your symptoms may be different than they were the first time." So it's important to know all the possible warning signs of a heart attack:

- Chest pain or discomfort.
- Discomfort in other areas of the body (such as one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach).
- Shortness of breath.
- Breaking out in a cold sweat.
- Nausea.
- Light-headedness.

Call 911 if you experience any of these symptoms.

and lower blood pressure. A cardiac rehabilitation program can help you get started.

Join a cardiac rehab program.

Cardiac rehab is a medically supervised program to help people recover after a heart event. In it, you'll learn how to exercise safely, how to eat a heart-healthy diet and how to manage stress. Ask your doctor for a referral.



Watson Clinic's Cardiology department consists of the area's finest board-certified cardiologists, cardiovascular surgeons and electrophysiologists, all of whom are assisted by the latest technologies, breakthrough treatments, and a highly experienced assembly of nurses and additional specialists. For more information, call **863-680-7190** or visit **WatsonClinic.com/Cardiology**.



Gloria Ayuba, DO



Zia Rab, MD

COLORECTAL CANCER

KNOW YOUR SCREENING OPTIONS

COLORECTAL CANCER is a major killer in the U.S., but it doesn't have to be.

That's because screening for colorectal cancer saves lives.

"Screening works because it can find polyps, which can be removed before they become cancerous," says **Dr. Robert D. Lamport**, a board-certified gastroenterologist at Watson Clinic Main. "Screening can also find colorectal cancer early, before symptoms start and when treatment works best."

Screening tests fall into two main categories:

STOOL-BASED TESTS

"These check the stool for possible signs of cancer. They're done at home, and no bowel prep is required," says

Dr. Joffre R. Rivera, a board-certified gastroenterologist at Watson Clinic Main.

Abnormal results must always be followed up with a colonoscopy. These tests include:

Fecal immunochemical test (FIT)

It uses antibodies to look for tiny amounts of blood in the stool that might be a sign of cancer or large polyps. You collect a small amount of stool and return the kit as instructed.

How often you need it: Yearly.

Guaiac-based fecal occult blood test (gFOBT)

This uses a chemical reaction to detect blood in the stool. It's done in the same way as the FIT kit.

How often you need it: Yearly.

Stool DNA testing

It looks for abnormal sections of DNA from cancer or polyp cells that often get into stool. You collect the entire stool sample and return the kit as instructed.

How often you need it: Every three years.



If you're 45 or older, talk with your doctor about which test is right for you. You may need to be screened at a younger age if you're at higher risk for colorectal cancer. Appointments with any member of Watson Clinic's gastroenterology team may be scheduled by calling **863-680-7490**. The department treats patient from Watson Clinic Main, Watson Clinic Highlands and Lakeland Regional Health Medical Center.

VISUAL TESTS

"These tests look inside the colon and rectum for any abnormal areas that might be cancer or polyps," says Dr. Lamport. A bowel prep with strong laxatives and possibly an enema are required. These tests include:

Colonoscopy

Doctors use a flexible lighted tube with a small camera at its end to look at the entire colon and rectum. If doctors find polyps, they can be removed during the test.

How often you need it: Every 5 to 10 years if results are normal.

Virtual colonoscopy

This imaging scan of the colon and rectum lets doctors look for polyps or cancer. If they see something suspicious, a follow-up regular colonoscopy is necessary.

How often you need it: Every five years.



Robert D. Lamport,
MD, FACP

Joffre R. Rivera, MD

When worry becomes excessive

EVERYONE worries now and then—about bills, jobs or families—but some of us worry to the extreme. When that happens, it may be a condition called generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), and it can interfere with our day-to-day lives.

“GAD is a disorder in which a person has excessive and frequent worries that are hard to control,” says **Dr. Joachim A. Benitez**, a board-certified psychiatrist at Watson Clinic Main. “For instance, adults who have GAD may worry about things like work, health, finances and household responsibilities, whereas children and teens who have GAD may fret about school, sports or natural disasters.”

No one knows what causes the disorder, but biological factors and stressful events may play a role. On a deep level, people with GAD may have a hard time accepting uncertainty, a common thread among all anxiety disorders.

Millions of people in the U.S. have

GAD. It often starts during the teen or young adult years, and it affects more women than men.

“GAD can make you worry a lot about everyday things. You might often think things will turn out much worse than they actually do,” says **Dr. Karen R. Teston**, a board-certified psychiatrist at Watson Clinic Highlands. “You may have trouble controlling your feelings of dread, even though you realize you worry more than you should. The anxiety can be worse during times of stress and uncertainty.”

Other symptoms may include:

- Feeling restless and having trouble relaxing.
- Having a hard time focusing on daily tasks, such as work or school.
- Being easily startled.
- Having trouble sleeping.
- Feeling tired.
- Having unexplained aches and pains.
- Feeling irritated or on edge.

Treatments may include getting counseling, taking medications or both.



If you think you might have GAD, let your doctor know. It's the first step toward feeling better. To schedule an appointment with one of Watson Clinic's psychiatrists, please call **863-607-3689** for Dr. Teston at Watson Clinic Highlands or **863-680-7385** for Dr. Joachim Benitez at Watson Clinic Main.



Joachim A.
Benitez, MD



Karen R.
Teston, MD

Be kind to yourself

Social distancing and worrying about your health can be super stressful. To take good care of your mental health, remember these coping techniques:

- Take breaks from watching, reading or listening to the news and social media.
- Take deep breaths and stretch.
- Eat healthy, well-balanced meals.
- Exercise regularly.
- Stay connected to important people in your life through the phone, your computer or social media.
- Talk with friends and family about how you're feeling.
- Call your healthcare provider if the stress seems to be overwhelming.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Enriching lives, elevating communities

All of us at Watson Clinic Foundation are honored to have provided support throughout the year to many worthy organizations and events that have advocated for health education in our community and beyond. We are also grateful to the individuals and local businesses that have assisted us in these efforts along the way through their generous donations and volunteerism.

Over the past 12 months, the Foundation has provided



The Watson Clinic Foundation recently presented the second of three \$100,000 donation checks to the Breast Cancer Foundation of Central Florida

financial support to the Breast Cancer Foundation of Central Florida, American Heart Association, American Cancer Society, Epilepsy Foundation, Lakeland Volunteers in Medicine, Volunteers in Service to the Elderly and many other worthwhile organizations that work to elevate the wellness of our beloved

community one neighbor at a time.

As we mark the ending of another year, we vow to continue our mission of promoting community wellness through education, research and service in the new year.

Find out more about this mission by visiting **WatsonClinic.com/WCF**.



Arts in medicine

WATSON CLINIC Foundation's Arts in Medicine (AIM) program has been presented with a generous \$2,000 grant from the GiveWell Community Foundation, a public charity serving Polk, Hardee and Highlands counties.

The grant was presented in response to an application submitted as part of the organization's 2020 Impact Polk competition, and was distributed from the George W. Jenkins Fund within the GiveWell Community Foundation.

Sam's Club, located at 4600 U.S. Highway 98 N. in North Lakeland,



has also presented the AIM program with a grant of \$500 in response to their exceptional work within the community.

Housed on the second floor of Watson Clinic Cancer & Research Center at 1730 Lakeland Hills Blvd. in Lakeland, the AIM program offers all forms of the expressive arts—including creative activities, such as watercolor painting, origami, and mosaics—for

cancer patients, caregivers and family members.

Research shows that these creative outlets reduce anxiety and create an environment that is more conducive to healing.

These generous grants will allow the AIM program to continue to serve the needs of cancer patients and their caregivers by funding additional supplies, resources and initiatives.



For more information on Watson Clinic Foundation's Arts in Medicine program, and to learn how you can volunteer or donate to their cause, visit **WatsonClinic.com/AIM**.

Reach us

Watson Clinic Locations

Bartow	863-533-7151
Bartow Obstetrics & Gynecology	863-534-2728
Bella Vista Building	863-904-6200
Cancer & Research Center	863-680-7780
Center for Rehabilitative Medicine	863-680-7700
Center for Specialized Rehabilitation	863-607-3699
Dermatology at Sun City Center	813-633-6121
Dermatology at Zephyrhills	813-788-7867
Health Scene	863-904-4653
Highlands	863-607-3333
MAIN	863-680-7000
North Pediatrics	863-680-7337
Plant City	813-719-2500
South	863-647-8011
Urgent Care Main	863-680-7271
Urgent Care South	863-647-4047
Watson Clinic Foundation	863-904-2656
Women's Center	863-680-7752
XpressCare Highlands	863-393-9472



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CENTER FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATES IN NATIONWIDE COVID TRIAL



The **Watson Clinic Center for Research** is proud to serve as one of 30 national partners on an exciting new clinical trial which studies the efficacy of anticoagulants for COVID-19 patients admitted into the Intensive Care Unit. Our participation in this study will help to shed light on the best defense against the formation of blood clots in these patients and pave the way for more effective treatment protocols in the near future.



For more information on this important study, visit WatsonClinic.com/Research.