

Health CONNECTIONS

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR LIFE

ECOTHERAPY:

Walk Away From
Your Worries

HEALTH TIPS FOR
NAILS, SKIN AND SUN

SHAKING SODIUM
OUT OF YOUR DIET

 **FANNIN**
REGIONAL HOSPITAL

IF YOUR *Nails* COULD TALK

It's normal to clip the occasional hangnail or catch your fingertip in a door. However, you should keep an eye out for the following nail symptoms that could point to more serious medical conditions:

- **Darkened cuticles and colored streaks** that develop on nails are called Hutchinson's nail sign. They can indicate that you have melanoma, the most aggressive form of skin cancer.
- **Splinter hemorrhages** are red streaks in the nail bed and may signal an infected heart valve, especially if you haven't injured your nail recently.
- Heart conditions and lung diseases can cause **clubbing of the fingernails**. Clubbing symptoms include softening of the nail beds, bulging fingertips and increased nail curvature.
- **Brittle nails** and nails that split away from the skin can be signs of an underactive or overactive thyroid. They can also signal the development of psoriasis, a skin disease that causes redness and irritation.

If your nails exhibit any of these signs or if they don't look normal to you, don't hesitate to contact your medical provider.

Source: National Library of Medicine

Know Your ABCDEs

Detecting skin cancer doesn't require a complicated screening or exam. One of the best ways to detect melanoma early is by checking your skin once a month for one or more of these features:

- **ASYMMETRY** — The mole or birthmark has mismatched parts.
- **BORDER** — The edges of the spot are blurred, notched, jagged or irregular.
- **COLOR** — The color changes throughout the mole and may contain shades of brown, black, and — less frequently — white, red, pink or blue.
- **DIAMETER** — The mole or birthmark is wider than a quarter of an inch.
- **EVOLVING** — The color, size or shape of the spot changes over time.

Use both a full-length mirror and a hand-held mirror to check your entire body, including areas that are difficult to see. Ask your doctor about any concerning developments.

Source: American Cancer Society



Need a primary care physician? You can be in control and schedule an appointment online at FanninAnytime.com.

Sun PROTECTION



Protect your eyes and skin from sun damage all year round by:

applying sunscreen with an sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or greater to all exposed skin areas

wearing sunglasses that block 99 percent or more of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays



dressing in clothes that cover more of your skin, especially if their labels display a UV protection factor (UPF) of 30 or higher

choosing hats with brims that are at least three inches wide



Source: Skin Cancer Foundation

NOTHING TO Shrug Off

Shoulder problems can occur suddenly or over time, and they can significantly affect your daily life. That's why it's important to know how to recognize and prevent them.

Here's a primer on some common conditions that can affect one of the body's workhorse joints.

ROTATOR CUFF TEARS

Made up of four muscles and tendons, the rotator cuff connects the shoulder blade to the humerus bone of the upper arm and is partly responsible for the shoulder's range of motion. When one of the tissues tears, often due to decades of use, it can be painful to raise or lower your arm and lay on the shoulder at night. Shoulder-specific stretches and exercises can help prevent rotator cuff tears by making the tissues stronger and more flexible.

SPRAINS

Sprains most commonly affect the ligaments of the AC joint, one of four joints of the shoulder. The force from a blow, fall or collision can stretch or tear those tissues, causing swelling at the collarbone and pain with movement. When playing contact sports or doing chores around the home that have a high risk of falls, such as cleaning the gutters, consider wearing a shoulder brace or padding for protection.

TENDINITIS

Variety is the spice of life, and for the shoulder, it's an important part of health. Repeating the same motion over hours and days — think repainting the rooms of your home or lifting boxes overhead — can irritate the tendons of the shoulder, causing tenderness and pain. It's important to take breaks in repetitive activities or, if possible, avoid painful ones altogether. Strength and flexibility exercises can help the shoulders better withstand heavy use.



Shoulder pain got you down? To learn more about our program, visit FanninRegionalHospital.com and click on "More Information" under "Award-Winning Orthopedic Care."



In people older than 40, torn rotator cuffs tend to occur due to wear and tear on the tendons. When the injuries happen in younger adults, falls or other accidents are usually to blame, according to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.



ORTHOPEDICS AND SPORTS MEDICINE

Schedule an appointment with Hamidreza Doroodchi, M.D., Orthopedic Surgeon and Sports Medicine Physician.

Hamidreza Doroodchi, M.D. As a specialist in the sports medicine and orthopedics field, Dr. Doroodchi's focus is to redefine health and wellness for athletes, active adults and adolescents. Proper care for

bone and joint issues can help you continue to engage in the activities you enjoy, for life.

Dr. Doroodchi's training includes a sports medicine fellowship at the American Sports Medicine Institute in Birmingham, Alabama.

If you are experiencing shoulder pain, schedule an appointment with Dr. Doroodchi to discuss your options. Call (706) 686-3745 to schedule an appointment today.

Dr. Doroodchi is a member of the medical staff at Fannin Regional Hospital.

OUTDOOR RX

Whether you prefer exercising outdoors, meditating in a natural setting or simply working in your garden, ecotherapy — healing time spent in the natural world — offers something for everyone.

In the 1980s, Harvard University biologist Edward O. Wilson, PhD, presented a concept called “biophilia” in which he argued that humans have an innate love of and connection to nature. Today, scientific research shows that connection has numerous positive effects on our health.

A slightly unconventional practice called ecotherapy is becoming more commonly used as part of mental health treatment in the United States. Used to treat many conditions, including depression and anxiety, ecotherapy works to address a wide variety of stressors through outdoor activities including adventure therapy, meditating in nature, working in gardens and on farms, playing with animals and getting involved in conservation activities.

CALL OF THE WILD

Have you ever been sitting at your desk at work and noticed you felt completely unable to focus? Next time that happens, try taking a walk outside. Even a brief period spent experiencing the sights and sounds of plants and animals improves your ability to concentrate and renews your reserves of patience.

This phenomenon of directed attention fatigue is similar to attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), present in both children and adults. While spending time

in natural environments benefits everyone, researchers believe people with ADHD may especially see results.

LEAVE YOUR TROUBLES OUTSIDE

Approximately 85 percent of Americans don’t have access to forests, according to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, but everyone can reap the benefits of being in nature. Spending time in a park or garden, or strolling down a sidewalk lined with trees, provides some of the same benefits as walking through a traditional forest — inner calm and feelings of well-being.

About 350 million people suffer from depression worldwide. Treatment options for most are psychotherapy, medication or a combination of both. Ecotherapy is a treatment option that most people can access at little to no cost.

Researchers at the University of Essex found a walk in a park improved feelings of depression in about three-fourths of participants, and 90 percent felt a higher level of esteem.

Ready to take a walk for better health? Talk with your doctor about the potential benefit of getting outside and enjoying green spaces.



Need a primary care physician? You can be in control and schedule an appointment online at [FanninAnytime.com](https://fanninanytime.com).



MORE MELATONIN

When you were younger, did your parents ever send you outside to run around and exhaust yourself? Apparently, they were on the right track. This approach works for adults, too, but it isn't just the exercise that makes you sleep better at night.

Experiencing natural light and its fluctuations prompts your body to produce melatonin, a hormone that helps your body maintain a healthy sleep cycle. Adequate sleep is important — not only for feeling rested but also for things like concentration, proper judgment and memory.

When your body produces enough melatonin, you're more likely to sleep deeply through the night. A good night's sleep allows your brain to process the things you learned and did that day, consolidating memories and allowing you to retain new information.

TAKE A FOREST BATH

Don't worry — you don't need a swimsuit or towel for this adventure. Forest bathing, also known as *shinrin-yoku*, is a Japanese healing method that refers to the act of simply spending time in the forest. It's not hiking or adventuring with any real destination in mind. You aren't trying to get somewhere. You're there to absorb the experience of being in nature.

The concept of *shinrin-yoku* is an important part of preventive healthcare in Japan and South Korea today and is supported by extensive research.

Known benefits include:

- better mood
- better sleep
- higher energy levels
- improved healing after surgery or illness
- lower blood pressure
- lower stress levels

Whether forest therapy is offered near you or not, you can practice *shinrin-yoku* on your own. Find a park or hiking trail nearby, ideally where you can be covered by a tree canopy, and set aside some time to meander and be present in the greenery that surrounds you.



According to the American Cancer Society, about 42 percent of cancer cases are caused by risk factors in our control.

5 Ways to Reduce CANCER RISK

Fast Fact

Daily, 3,200 people younger than 18 try their first cigarette and 2,100 young adults and youths advance from occasional to regular smokers, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

YOUR BODY ON SLEEP

Adults who get fewer than the recommended amount each night are more likely to have health problems, such as cancer, depression, high blood pressure, obesity and Type 2 diabetes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Getting the recommended seven to nine hours of sleep* each night is critical, because while you rest, your body is hard at work preparing you for the day ahead.

For example, during sleep, your body performs several essential functions, including repairing your heart muscle and blood vessels, according to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. People who don't get enough sleep have a higher risk of heart disease and related risk factors, including diabetes and elevated blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

BLUE RIDGE MEDICAL GROUP

If you need a primary care provider, visit BlueRidgeMedicalGroup.com to schedule an appointment. In some instances, same-day appointments are available.

*The National Sleep Foundation recommends adults between ages 18 and 64 sleep for seven to nine hours. Older adults should aim for seven to eight hours.



1. Spend 150 minutes exercising each week. Staying active through aerobic and strengthening activities is known to relieve stress and manage weight control. It also may reduce cancer risk, according to the American Cancer Society. Before starting a new exercise routine, talk with your doctor.



2. Achieve a healthy weight. Maintaining at a healthy weight for your height protects your body from many chronic conditions, including cancer. Approximately 40 percent of all cancers are linked to being overweight or obese, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). To effectively manage weight, combine physical activity with a nutritious diet.



3. Limit alcohol intake. Seven in 10 people remain unaware that drinking any amount of alcohol increases overall cancer risk, according to survey results published by the American Society of Clinical Oncology. If you drink to relieve stress or relax, consider swapping this pastime for healthier options, such as reading, practicing yoga or exercising with a friend.



4. Protect your skin. Harmful ultraviolet rays from the sun and artificial sun lamps put you at risk for skin cancer, according to the National Cancer Institute. Skip the tanning bed but remember time outside is beneficial, provided you apply sunscreen with at least sun protection factor (SPF) 30 every few hours and wear protective clothing and sunglasses. Also, apply sunscreen before riding in the car for long distances during daylight hours.



5. Quit smoking. Tobacco use increases cancer risk to most of your body, according to the CDC. Quitting tobacco takes teamwork. For help with smoking cessation, talk with your doctor.



Starting a new diet and exercise routine? Talk with your primary care provider (PCP) first. Need a PCP? Use our "Find A Doctor" tool at FanninRegionalHospital.com to search by location.



Sneaky SODIUM


Too much sodium can cause high blood pressure and put your heart at risk. Learn how sodium finds its way into your food and how you can avoid it.

Ideal Intake



Adults should consume **fewer than 2,300mg** of sodium every day.



To **MAXIMIZE**  **HEALTH BENEFITS**, adults should limit their daily sodium intake to **1,500mg a day or less.**



▶ People need fewer than **500mg of sodium** a day for their bodies to function properly.



Source: American Heart Association

So Much Sodium

▶ Average Americans consume **more than 3,400mg** of sodium daily.



>75%

MORE THAN 75 PERCENT of consumed sodium comes from prepackaged, processed and restaurant food — not table salt.



Many products — like chain pizza — contain **more sodium in the U.S.** than in other countries.



Source: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

See Ya, Sodium

Prepare fresh meals and **avoid prepackaged, processed and restaurant foods** to cut most sodium out of your diet.



Check the **NUTRITION FACTS LABEL** for foods with 5 percent Daily Value of sodium or less and products marked “low sodium.”

Gradually **reduce your sodium intake** and

use spices

to help your taste buds adjust.



To make an appointment with our cardiologist, call (706) 468-3092 or visit FanninRegionalHospital.com and click on “Services” and “Cardiac Care” for more information.

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ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al (706) 632-3711 (TTY: (800) 255-0056).

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số (706) 632-3711 (TTY: (800) 255-0056).

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Looking for a primary care provider?

Make an appointment online at FanninAnytime.com

Having a primary care provider is important to your health. So it's good to know that there are so many options close to you. These providers will take the time to listen, advise you, and help you play an active role in all decisions related to your health. Their services include preventive care, such as screenings, physicals and vaccinations, plus treatment of conditions ranging from the flu to diabetes. **Call or visit FanninAnytime.com to schedule an appointment.**



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