

Health CONNECTIONS

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR LIFE



DO IT FOR THEM
**Motivation to
Quit Smoking**

TASTE OR TOSS IT
BEHIND THE BEST-BY DATE

IS IT A COLD, THE FLU
OR COVID-19?

FANNIN
REGIONAL HOSPITAL

CHECK THAT DATE!

When is the last time you checked your household inventory?

KITCHEN

Most dates on packaging are not safety dates but recommendations to ensure peak quality or taste of the product, with the exception of infant formula. Never use expired formula and discard opened powdered formula after 30 days, if not consumed.

Canned food is safe for two to five years after the best-by date — although high-acid foods like tomatoes are best used within 18 months. How long fresh produce will last depends on the type. The USDA app FoodKeeper can provide guidance for specific items.

Open foods that have expired often show visible signs of deterioration, such as mold, but what about that can of beans with a “Best By” date from six months ago or longer?

If the can isn't bulging or otherwise suspect, you should be fine. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), you can eat many packaged foods beyond their best-by dates. In general, if a food item smells, looks or feels off, then it is likely time to throw it away.



MEDICINE CABINET

Multiple studies have shown most drugs maintain their potency for years, if not decades, after the original expiration date. (Reporting from ProPublica in 2017 found that even the FDA does it!)

However, the FDA does not recommend anyone take over-the-counter and prescribed drugs past their expiration dates. For example, taking expired antibiotics may lead to antibiotic resistance or other complications.

Still, even though drugs might not go bad a year later doesn't mean that you should keep unused prescriptions around, especially if they are controlled substances like opioids. The FDA recommends tossing any drugs you aren't using. In order to do so safely, many police stations, health departments and hospitals, including Fannin Regional Hospital, have easy ways for you to drop off old medicine.



VANITY DRAWERS

Whether you buy designer lipstick or drugstore mascara, all makeup deteriorates at similar rates. As with food, expiration dates are rules of thumb and not actual safety guidelines.

However, the Food and Drug Administration and cosmetic trade groups all agree that eye products should be replaced more frequently than any other kind of makeup — every three to six months. If you have any kind of eye infection, that warrants prompt disposal.

Also, if you dip your finger into a product to apply it, you should replace it more frequently, because even a clean fingertip will add microorganisms to the makeup that could turn into bacteria or fungi.



Need a prescription refilled? If you are already a patient at Blue Ridge Medical Group, you can request a refill by going to your Patient Portal at BlueRidgeMedicalGroup.com.

Band Together for Strong Hips



If you've had hip replacement surgery, always check with your physician before doing any type of hip exercises.

Using a resistance band can help you increase your strength and build lean muscle.

Don't let hip pain limit your life. Exercises to strengthen the hip flexor muscles — the group of muscles at the top of the thighs that help with lower body movement — are key to increasing flexibility, improving range of motion and maintaining mobility. Release hip flexor muscle tension by doing several repetitions of these gentle stretches throughout the day.

EXERCISE 1:

Begin by sitting in a chair with your legs to the front. Place the resistance band around both legs, just above the knees. While keeping your feet flat on the floor, slowly spread your knees apart and then bring them slowly back together.

EXERCISE 2:

Stand behind a chair with your left hand resting lightly on the top for balance. Place the resistance band around both legs, just above the knees. Keep your hand on the chair and your left foot flat on the floor. Straighten your right leg and extend it behind you until it's off the floor. Hold the pose for five seconds, and then repeat on the right side.

EXERCISE 3:

Place the resistance band around both legs, just above the knees. Stand with your feet hip-width apart, and then slide your right leg to the side until you feel resistance in the band. Shift your weight to your right leg, then slide your left leg over until your feet are hip-width apart again. Repeat the exercise on the left side.



Don't let hip pain keep you from the activities you love. Call us at (866) 417-6059 to schedule an appointment with Orthopedic Surgeon Hamidreza Doroodchi, M.D., to discuss the best treatment options for you.

Patient results may vary. Consult your doctor about the benefits and risks of any surgical procedure or treatment and before starting any new exercise regimens.

ANOTHER OPTION FOR HIP REPLACEMENT



Hamidreza
Doroodchi, M.D.

According to the American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons,

the most common approach for hip replacement surgery is the posterior approach — where the hip joint is accessed from the back of the hip. The anterior approach, which uses an incision at the front of the hip, is gaining popularity as an alternative.

Research published in *The Journal of Arthroplasty* reports that 90 days after surgery, patients who had anterior hip replacement reported less pain and lower rates of narcotic use, as well as improved hip function. There were no significant differences reported in complication rates.

The approach your surgeon chooses will depend on various factors, including his or her experience and your anatomy. Together, discuss your personal risks and benefits for each approach and then decide which is your best option.

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

The benefits of quitting smoking apply to more than just you — your family members, friends and even pets can reap the rewards, too.

QUIT

For the Greater Good

Whether you smoke, vape, dip or chew — whether you've been doing it for 12 months or 12 years — you already know smoking or using other tobacco products is bad for your health. The warnings are printed on every package you buy.

That's why the huge increases in youth e-cigarette usage is so alarming. Over 5 million youth, grades 6 through 12, reported regularly vaping, and 1 million reported doing it daily, according to a survey by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Unfortunately for many people, knowing that tobacco is bad for them isn't a good enough reason to quit. Nicotine is a highly addictive drug, but its misuse won't land users in jail. This means it might be hard for users to hit "rock bottom" before they get sick.

Yet, if you keep using tobacco or vaping nicotine, it is extremely likely that you will get sick. And if you smoke indoors, anyone who lives with you might get sick too, including your kids and pets. You should also know:

- Smoking is still the top cause of preventable death and disease in the United States, according to the CDC.
- Over 480,000 people die from smoking-related causes every year.
- Smoking doesn't just cause lung cancer. The CDC finds it can also cause cancer of the bladder, cervix, colon, esophagus, kidney, mouth, liver, pancreas and stomach.
- Smoking can also cause or contribute to diabetes, emphysema, heart disease, osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis and stroke.
- Tobacco use can make it harder to get pregnant. It can also make it more likely for

a baby to have certain birth defects or to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

- Men who smoke are more likely to have erectile dysfunction.
- According to the CDC, 2.5 million nonsmokers have died from exposure to secondhand smoke since 1964.
- In small children, secondhand smoke is often a contributing factor to ear infections and asthma.
- Secondhand smoke can cause nose or lung cancer in your pets.

READY TO QUIT YET?

Even if you are trying to quit — and/or have tried time and time again to quit — habits are hard to break, especially when they are wrapped up with an addictive substance like nicotine. That's why finding the support you need to quit once and for all is important.



RESOURCES TO QUIT SMOKING

- The American Lung Association's Freedom From Smoking program has been around for decades and helped over 1 million people quit tobacco use. Classes and support groups are available online and across the country, along with a telephone hotline.
- The National Cancer Institute has two free smartphone apps, QuitGuide and quitSTART, that can help you assess your tobacco use habits and provide needed distractions to counter cravings.
- There are numerous other apps, some free and some paid, that can help you track how much or how little you are smoking, if you aren't quitting cold turkey. Some apps even tally up the amount of money you're saving with every tobacco product you don't use.
- Your state health department has trained counselors available. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

HELP FOR TOBACCO CESSATION

If quitting cold turkey has not worked for you, limiting your tobacco use with nicotine gum or patches to help you taper off may help. A physician can also prescribe a nicotine nasal spray, an inhaler or other medication. However, it is important to discuss possible side effects of any medications.

The FDA does not recommend using e-cigarettes as a way to taper tobacco use. Vaping can actually increase your nicotine intake, which can, in turn, strengthen your addiction.

Support groups or therapy, whether online or in person, can often provide the needed encouragement to overcome the frustration of quitting.

If none of these methods have helped you, the good news is that there are almost as many different methods and motivations to quit nicotine for good as there are brands

of cigarettes. Some other things you can try include:

- **Exercise.** If you're a heavy smoker, it might not be easy to start, but doing something physical, even simply taking a walk, is a great way to keep your mind off your cravings. Plus, the more your cardiovascular health improves, the less you are going to want to make it worse again.
- **Identify your triggers and avoid or replace them.** If you always smoke while drinking, cut back on alcohol until you quit. If you always take a cigarette break in the middle of the afternoon, find something else to do during that time, like having coffee or a healthy snack. Basically, create new habits to replace the old one.
- **Take it easy on yourself.** If you slip up and smoke again, it's OK. Don't beat yourself up, and don't tell yourself that you've failed. You

haven't failed. Tomorrow is a new day where you can start again, cigarette or vape-free.

- **Treat yourself.** With all the money you'd save by not smoking, reward yourself with something like a book or a dinner out when you hit sobriety milestones.

It takes time to get used to your new life, but eventually you can get there. Quit now, and your body will thank you later.



Concerned about your risk for lung cancer? Speak with your primary care provider about a low-dose CT. Visit FanninAnytime.com to schedule an appointment.

Making the Most

OF

Telehealth

You now have a choice of in-person or telehealth visits at most clinics. Learn what you can do to have a smooth, successful video visit with your provider.

Many physician offices and clinics now offer telehealth in addition to in-person appointments for wellness exams and sick visits. Video visits give patients access to care from the comfort of home while practicing social distancing.

If you are new to telehealth, the following do's and don'ts can help you navigate this new world:

- **Do** follow your physician office's pre-visit instructions. After scheduling your appointment, you may receive instructions for preparing for the visit, such as how to download a video conferencing app or take certain vital signs. Be sure to follow these directions carefully.
- **Don't** go into the appointment without important information. This includes your medical history, a medication list, notes about symptoms you've experienced, a list of questions you'd like to ask your primary care provider (PCP) and vital signs you've taken at home, such as blood pressure and weight.
- **Do** pick a quiet spot and check your tech. Find a place in your home where you won't be disturbed during your appointment and be sure your internet connection is working. If you'll be using a laptop, tablet or smartphone, charge it before the appointment.
- **Don't** let a video visit change your behavior. You and your PCP won't be in the same room, but don't let that intimidate you. Talk with him or her as you normally would — be open and ask questions. Make sure you understand your treatment plan and the next steps to take before ending the call.

YOUR SHOTS AT PREVENTION

As you age, one of the most important things you can do for your health is to stay up to date with recommended vaccines. Getting vaccinated helps keep you safe from serious diseases, protects people who can't get vaccinated through herd immunity and sets a good example for your children.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adults need these vaccines:

- annual flu vaccine
- HPV vaccine before age 27, which protects against human papillomaviruses that can cause cancer
- one-time Tdap vaccine, which protects against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis, followed by a Td (tetanus and diphtheria) booster every 10 years
- pneumococcal vaccine at age 65 or older
- shingles vaccine at age 50 or older

You may need additional vaccines or require certain vaccines earlier than most people based on your medical history. Be sure to discuss vaccines with your primary care provider at your annual physical exam to ensure you're on schedule.



Don't let your health be put on hold. Visit us at [FanninAnytime.com](https://www.fanninanytime.com) to schedule your telehealth visit from the comfort and safety of your own home.

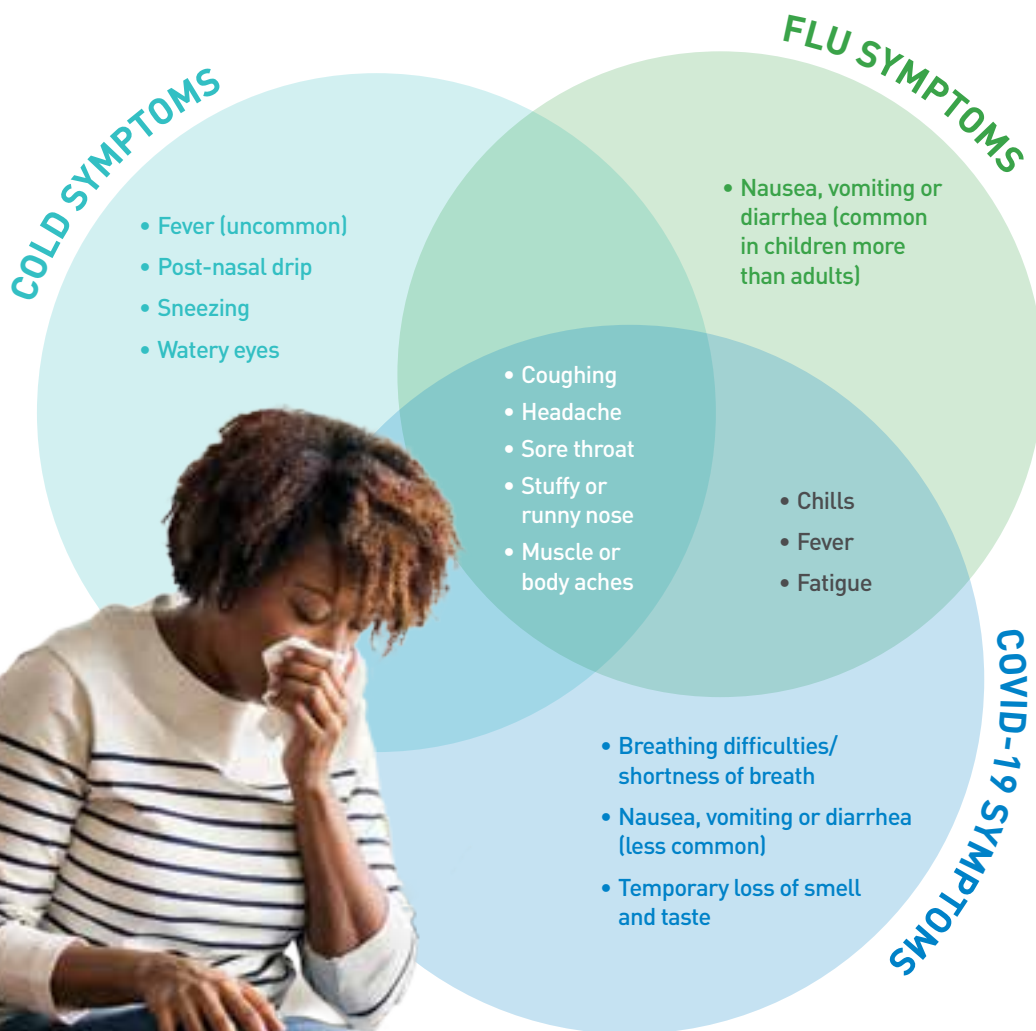
COLD vs. FLU vs. COVID-19

Staying home when you are sick is more important than ever. Recognize cold, flu and COVID-19 symptoms so you can take the appropriate action.

HOW MANY DAYS AFTER EXPOSURE DO SYMPTOMS START?

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Cold: 2-3 days						
Flu: 1-4 days						
COVID-19: 2-14 days						

COLD VS. FLU VS. COVID-19 SYMPTOMS*



WHEN AM I CONTAGIOUS?

COLD:
From 1-7 days after symptoms

FLU:
From 1 day before to 7 days after symptoms; most contagious 3-4 days after

COVID-19:
From three days before, to two weeks after symptoms; **most contagious 48 hours before symptoms, according to emerging research**



If you are concerned about your symptoms, call your primary care provider's office for guidance. Need a provider? Find one at BlueRidgeMedicalGroup.com.

HOW CAN I PREVENT GETTING OR SPREADING UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS?

- Avoid close contact with others, keeping at least six feet away from people.
- Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue or your arm, dispose of tissues and wash hands immediately after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- Frequently disinfect surfaces, such as tables, doorknobs or your phone.
- Keep away from others who are sick.
- Stay home if you are sick or have been in contact with someone who is sick.
- Try to not touch your face, mouth, nose and eyes with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth in public.

Fact:

Staying isolated from other people when you have an upper respiratory infection is essential to prevent spreading the disease.

*Per the CDC, these are not all-encompassing lists, and some people may experience other symptoms. Sources: CDC, U.S. National Library of Medicine

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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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This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your doctor before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.

HERE FOR *You*

In a crisis, emergency rooms (ERs) provide prompt medical care and determine next steps, if needed. Don't hesitate — severe symptoms may require an ER visit.

CALL 911 if you or a loved one experience:

- bleeding that won't stop
- chest pain or discomfort
- excessive abdominal pain
- loss of consciousness
- numbness isolated to one side of the body or an upper body part
- slurred speech
- vision problems



The care you need — when you need it. Visit FanninRegionalHospital.com to learn about how we are OPEN, SAFE and READY to care for you.

We work diligently to have you initially seen by a medical professional within 30 minutes of your arrival in the ER.

But remember:

**This list is not exhaustive!
Seek emergency care if you experience any unusual or alarming symptoms.**