

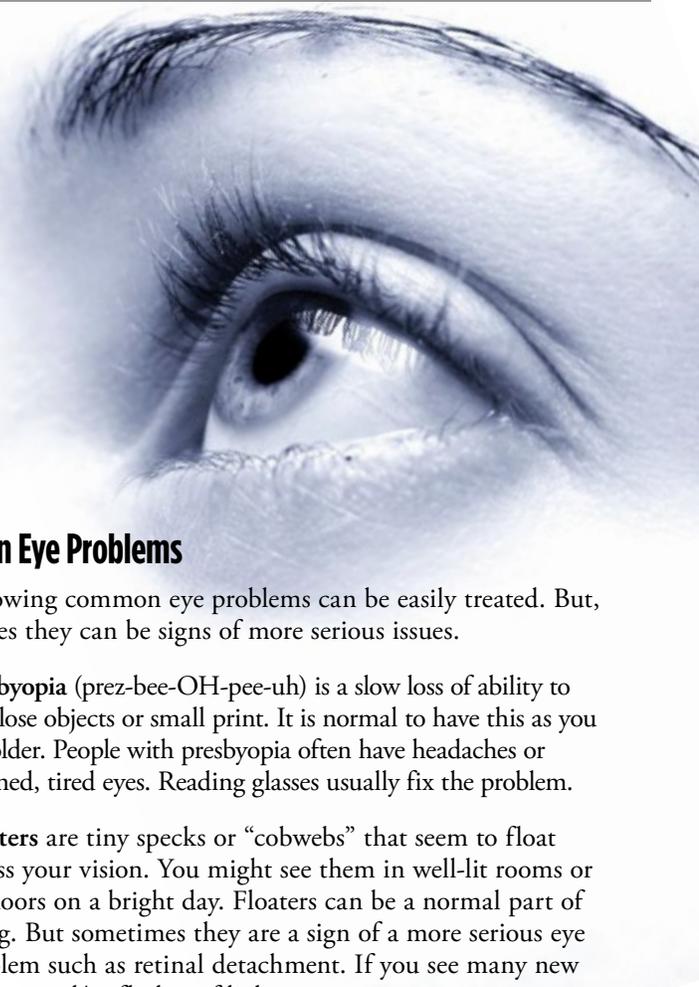


BetterSafe

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY

All about the EYES

HOW TO KEEP YOUR EYES SAFE AND HEALTHY



Steps To Protect Your Eyesight

Have your eyes checked regularly by an eye care professional—either an ophthalmologist or optometrist. People over age 65 should have yearly eye exams. During this exam, the eye care professional should put drops in your eyes that will widen (dilate) your pupils so that he or she can look at the back of each eye. This is the only way to find some common eye diseases that have no early signs or symptoms. If you wear glasses, your prescription should be checked too.

See your doctor regularly to check for diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure. These diseases can cause eye problems if not treated.

See an eye care professional right away if you:

- Suddenly cannot see or everything looks blurry
- See flashes of light
- Have eye pain
- Experience double vision
- Have redness or swelling of your eye or eyelid

Protect your eyes from too much sunlight by wearing sunglasses that block ultraviolet (UV) radiation and a hat with a wide brim when you are outside.

Common Eye Problems

The following common eye problems can be easily treated. But, sometimes they can be signs of more serious issues.

- **Presbyopia** (prez-bee-OH-pee-uh) is a slow loss of ability to see close objects or small print. It is normal to have this as you get older. People with presbyopia often have headaches or strained, tired eyes. Reading glasses usually fix the problem.
- **Floaters** are tiny specks or “cobwebs” that seem to float across your vision. You might see them in well-lit rooms or outdoors on a bright day. Floaters can be a normal part of aging. But sometimes they are a sign of a more serious eye problem such as retinal detachment. If you see many new floaters and/or flashes of light, see your eye care professional right away. This is a medical emergency.
- **Tearing** (or having too many tears) can come from being sensitive to light, wind, or temperature changes, or having dry eyes. Wearing sunglasses may help, as might trying eye drops. Sometimes tearing is a sign of a more serious eye problem, like an infection or a blocked tear duct. Your eye care professional can treat these problems.
- **Eyelid problems** can result from different diseases or conditions. Common eyelid problems include red and swollen eyelids, itching, tearing, and crusting of eyelashes during sleep. These problems may be caused by a condition called blepharitis (ble-fa-RI-tis) and treated with warm compresses and gentle eyelid scrubs.

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Did You Know?

Eye injury is the leading cause of blindness in children in the United States.

Each year millions of eye injuries occur. These usually happen at home and school, often during sports and hobby activities. However, 90 percent of these injuries could be prevented.

Every 13 minutes, someone in the United States goes to a hospital emergency room for a sports-related eye injury. Protect your eyes!

How Your Eyes Are Protected

Your eyes lie in bony sockets that protect them from getting hit. Here are the other ways in which your peepers are protected:

- Eyebrows help keep light from getting in your eyes.
- Eyelids close to keep things from getting in your eyes.
- Eyelashes grow along the outside of the eyelids; they also keep things from getting in your eyes.
- Tears help keep the eyes moist. Tears also help to wash away things that can irritate your eyes

First Aid Tips

If something gets into your eye, such as sand or dust, do not rub your eye. Wash your eye with water to get the object out.

If your eye gets hit by a ball or a fist, put cold cloths on your eye for 15 minutes. This will make the swelling go down and the eye won't hurt so much.

You should go to the doctor right away:

If an object, such as a stick or a pencil, gets stuck in your eye, do not pull it out. Put a loose bandage on your eye.

If a chemical, such as cleaning fluid or battery acid, splashes in your eye. Wash out your eyes with water for at least 10 minutes, and call or visit your doctor.





Day In Day Out

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR LIFESTYLE

Can Your Own Cells Help Fight Cancer?

A New Study Shows Promise



Experimental therapy developed at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) used a patient's own immune system to attack and shrink her tumors. With further research, this type of immunotherapy might be used to treat many common cancers.

The 43-year-old woman has cholangiocarcinoma, a rare and often-deadly cancer that develops in the bile duct (a tube that goes from the liver to the intestine). She was enrolled in an NIH clinical trial for patients with digestive system cancers. Her cancer had spread to her lung and liver. Standard chemotherapy didn't help.

The scientists first removed some of the woman's cancerous lung tissue, which along with tumor cells also had some of the patient's own immune cells. These immune cells had been fighting a losing battle against the tumor.

Analysis showed that the tumor's DNA contained several abnormal regions, or mutations. Some of these mutations created mutant proteins that could trigger an immune response.

The researchers then tested the patient's immune cells. A few could specifically recognize and trigger an attack on a particular mutant protein found on the tumor cells. The scientists then grew billions of the anti-tumor immune cells in the lab and infused them back into the patient.

After this treatment, the woman's tumors stopped growing in the lung and liver. When her disease eventually progressed, after about 13 months, she was re-treated with a more purified collection of the immune cells, and her tumors shrank. This regression continued as of the last follow-up exam 6 months later.

The results show that the immune system's response against a mutant protein can be harnessed to fight a hard-to-treat type of cancer.

"The method we have developed provides a blueprint for using immunotherapy to specifically attack ... mutations unique to a patient's individual cancer," says NIH's Dr. Steven Rosenberg, who led the research. He and his colleagues are continuing to assess their experimental immunotherapy in a clinical trial.

What Is Cancer?

Cancer is a term used for diseases in which abnormal cells divide without control and are able to invade other tissues. Cancer cells can spread to other parts of the body through the blood and lymph systems.

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Day In Day Out

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Cancer is not just one disease but many diseases. There are more than 100 different types of cancer. Most cancers are named for the organ or type of cell in which they start - for example, cancer that begins in the colon is called colon cancer; cancer that begins in melanocytes of the skin is called melanoma.

Cancer types can be grouped into broader categories. The main categories of cancer include:

- **Carcinoma** - cancer that begins in the skin or in tissues that line or cover internal organs. There are a number of subtypes of carcinoma, including adenocarcinoma, basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and transitional cell carcinoma.
- **Sarcoma** - cancer that begins in bone, cartilage, fat, muscle, blood vessels, or other connective or supportive tissue.
- **Leukemia** - cancer that starts in blood-forming tissue such as the bone marrow and causes large numbers of abnormal blood cells to be produced and enter the blood.
- **Lymphoma and myeloma** - cancers that begin in the cells of the immune system.
- **Central nervous system cancers** - cancers that begin in the tissues of the brain and spinal cord.

“The most common type of cancer is breast cancer...”

COMMON CANCERS

Below is a list of common cancer types. These are cancers are diagnosed with the greatest frequency in the United States, excluding nonmelanoma skin cancers:

- Bladder Cancer
- Breast Cancer
- Colon and Rectal Cancer
- Endometrial Cancer
- Kidney Cancer
- Leukemia
- Lung Cancer
- Melanoma
- Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma
- Pancreatic Cancer
- Prostate Cancer
- Thyroid Cancer

The most common type of cancer on the list is breast cancer, with about 235,000 new cases expected in the United States in 2014. The next most common cancers are prostate cancer and lung cancer.

Because colon and rectal cancers are often referred to as “colorectal cancers,” these two cancer types are combined for the list. For 2014, the estimated number of new cases of colon cancer and rectal cancer are 96,830 and 40,000, respectively, adding to a total of 136,830 new cases of colorectal cancer.



TakeCharge

WELCOA'S ONLINE SELF-CARE BULLETIN

Managing Asthma

Learning To Breathe Easier

Most people have little trouble climbing a flight of stairs or taking a brisk walk, but these simple activities can be tough for someone with asthma. Although there's no cure, you can breathe easier by knowing how to keep the condition under control.

Asthma is a common, long-lasting disease that affects the lungs. It can begin in childhood or adulthood. More than 25 million Americans have asthma, including 7 million children. Without proper care, asthma can become serious, even deadly. But most people with asthma learn to manage the disease so they have few symptoms or none at all.

Symptoms & Triggers of Asthma

Major symptoms of asthma include wheezing (a whistling sound when breathing), shortness of breath, coughing that's worse at night and early morning, and chest tightness. These symptoms arise from reactions that narrow the airways, the tubes that carry air into and out of your lungs. When symptoms flare up, it's called an asthma attack.

The airways of people with asthma are prone to inflammation, which causes the airways to swell and narrow. They become extra sensitive to certain substances that are breathed in. These are called "triggers."

Asthma triggers can worsen inflammation and cause the muscles around the airways to tighten, further shrinking air passages and making it harder to breathe. Cells in the airways might also produce excess mucus (a sticky, thick liquid), making the airways even narrower.

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TakeCharge

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Common asthma triggers include cigarette smoke, air pollution, mold, house dust mites, and furry animal dander. Other asthma triggers include weather changes, exercise, stress, and respiratory infections like common colds.

Asthma is one of the most common causes of chronic (long-term) illness in children—and some symptoms appear more often in children than in adults. “Children have smaller airways, so if they have asthma, they tend to wheeze more often, particularly during the night,” says Dr. Robert Lemanske, Jr., a pediatric asthma expert at the University of Wisconsin.

Some preschool age children frequently wheeze when they get colds but don't go on to develop chronic asthma. “But some kids start wheezing at age 3, and the problem continues,” says Lemanske. “These kids also tend to be more allergic.”

Diagnosing Asthma

A doctor will test for asthma by doing a physical exam and asking about your medical history to learn when and how often your symptoms occur. Your doctor may also ask you to breathe in and blow out into the tube of a spirometer. This device measures how much air you can breathe out and how fast you can do it.

Managing Asthma

Whether you're young or older, it's important to know how to manage your asthma. Work with your doctor to develop a written asthma action plan. Your action plan should spell out the daily treatment plan to help control your asthma. This may include recommendations for medications and for avoiding exposure to your triggers. The action plan should also give specific instructions for what to do when asthma symptoms start and what actions to take if symptoms worsen, including when to seek medical attention, go to the hospital, or call an ambulance.

Quick-relief medicines—such as short-acting bronchodilator inhalers—are used to relax the muscles in the airways to make it easier to breathe within a few minutes. If exercise is an asthma trigger, doctors may recommend taking this medicine 5 to 15 minutes before exercise or strenuous activity.

Controlling Asthma

- Get regular checkups for your asthma.
- Make a written asthma action plan with your health care provider and follow it.
- Use asthma medicines exactly as prescribed.
- Identify which triggers make your asthma worse—such as dust mites, mold, air pollution, or secondhand tobacco smoke—and try to avoid them.
- Exercise can trigger asthma attacks in some people, but physical activity is important to your health; ask your doctor about medicines and other options that can help you stay active.

Long-term control medicines—such as inhaled corticosteroids—are used every day to help control symptoms and prevent asthma attacks.

If young children have trouble taking inhaled medications, there are masks and other devices that can help. Some kids are given a nebulizer, a portable machine that releases medicine in a mist.

A small percentage of people with asthma have a hard time controlling their symptoms even when they take their medicines regularly. Their airways become extremely inflamed and particularly sensitive to asthma triggers. They wheeze more, wake more throughout the night, and are at greater risk for breathing failure and trips to urgent care. If your asthma is severe, see a specialist to identify the most appropriate, personalized treatment.



To Your Health

WELCOA'S ONLINE GENERAL WELLNESS BULLETIN

Protect Your Tendons

Preventing the Pain of Tendinitis

You've probably heard of such sports injuries as tennis elbow or jumper's knee. These are just two examples of tendinitis, a painful condition caused by overusing and straining the joints in your body.

Tendons are the tough but flexible bands of tissue that connect muscle to bones. You have about 4,000 tendons throughout your body. Tendons make it possible for you to bend your knee, rotate your shoulder, and grasp with your hand.

Tendinitis is inflammation of a tendon. (When you see "itis" at the end of a medical word, it means inflammation.) In tendinitis, the tendon gets inflamed and can rub against bone, making movement painful.

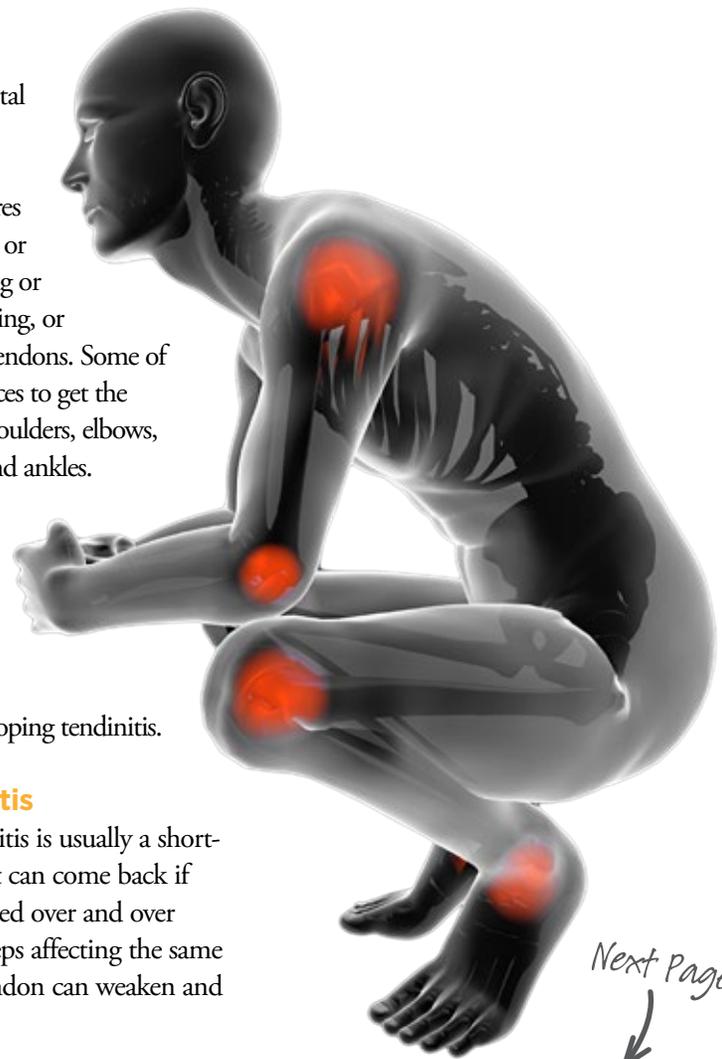
Tendinitis is usually caused by repeated motion, stress, or injury to certain muscles or joints. A sports or job-related injury is a common way to get tendinitis, but the condition can happen to anyone. Your risk for tendinitis also increases with age. "Tendons lose health as we get older and become less able to handle the load," says

Dr. Evan Flatow, an orthopedist at Mount Sinai Roosevelt Hospital in New York.

Any activity that requires repetitive wrist turning or hand gripping, jumping or bending, pulling, pushing, or lifting can irritate the tendons. Some of the most common places to get the condition are in the shoulders, elbows, hands, wrists, knees, and ankles. Gardeners, carpenters, musicians, and other people whose work regularly places stress around the same tendons are at increased risk for developing tendinitis.

Treating Tendinitis

If treated early, tendinitis is usually a short-term condition. But it can come back if the tendon is aggravated over and over again. If tendinitis keeps affecting the same area over time, the tendon can weaken and tear or break.



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ToYourHealth

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If you have pain or swelling—and especially if you can't move a joint at all—contact a primary care doctor or an orthopedist. They can perform tests to pinpoint the exact areas of inflammation. You may also get an MRI scan or X-ray to check for a tear in the tendon or rule out other conditions, such as arthritis.

The first step in treating tendinitis is to reduce pain and swelling. Be sure to rest the swollen tendon so it can heal. “We have to break the cycle of inflammation to allow therapy to work,” Flatow says. A doctor may prescribe medicines that relieve inflammation (such as aspirin or ibuprofen), give steroid injections, or give you a splint or brace. Then gentle exercises can help strengthen the tendon.

If a tendon becomes torn, surgery might be needed to repair the damage. NIH-funded researchers such as Flatow are working to develop new ways to repair and regenerate tendons without surgery.

Regular physical activity helps keep muscles, bones, and tendons strong, and can lower your risk of injury and tendinitis. But be careful not to overdo it so you don't injure yourself.

“Keep joints limber,” Flatow advises. “Warm up and stretch before physical activity to prevent sudden injury.” Take care of your tendons so they can keep you painlessly bending and flexing your muscles long into old age.



Preventing Tendinitis

- Exercise regularly to strengthen muscles around the joints.
- Begin new activities or exercise routines slowly and gradually increase the intensity.
- Position your body properly when doing daily tasks.
- Take frequent breaks from repetitive exercises and motions.
- Stop activities that cause pain.
- Use padding, gloves, or grip tape to cushion joints while using tools and sports equipment.