

For Your HEALTH

Committed to the Health & Well-Being of El Dorado County

DECEMBER 2022

Living Healthily with Diabetes



MARSHALL
MEDICAL CENTER

It's about you

- ▶ From Pandemic to Endemic
- ▶ Grateful Patient Gives Back
- ▶ Try This If You're Depressed

The Best Exercises for Your Joints

Keep your joints healthier by incorporating these activities into your workout routine.

Your joints allow you to run, jump, twist and turn. In fact, nearly every movement you make is made possible by the functioning of one or more joints in your body. From your knees and hips to your shoulders and wrists, joints play a vital role in your life. That's why it's important to take care of them as much as possible.

As you age, your joints are subjected to wear and tear. Joints can also be affected by injury, overuse or conditions such as arthritis. While you can't control all factors that influence how well your joints work, there are steps you can take to keep your joints as healthy as possible.

One of the best ways to keep joints healthier is to exercise regularly and engage in daily activities like walking and stretching. Exercise increases the flexibility of joints and keeps muscles that support joints stronger.

Here are the best exercises to do to keep your joints in tip-top shape:

- **Aerobic exercises** — To ease strain on your joints, stick to lower-intensity activities like walking, biking, using an elliptical trainer or swimming. Avoid high impact exercise such as jumping or running, especially on hard surfaces like sidewalks or streets, if you have joint pain or have experienced any deterioration in joint function.
- **Strength training exercises** — Whether you use free weights, gym equipment, resistance bands or your own body weight, strength training helps keep your muscles strong so they can better support your joints. Just don't overdo it or you risk injuring both muscles and joints.



Proper form is important when doing any strength training exercise.

- **Flexibility exercises** — Activities such as yoga, tai chi and pilates help joints maintain flexibility so they can go through their full range of motion without pain. These activities are low impact and can be performed by almost anyone, regardless of age or fitness level. Tai chi is especially helpful for older adults because it helps maintain better balance, reducing the risk of falls.
- **Stretching exercises** — To loosen joints and muscles, stretch before and after aerobic and strength training activities. Stretching before activities helps get the blood flowing and loosens stiffness in muscles and joints. Stretching after activities is ideal because muscles and joints are more flexible, muscles are warm and circulation is increased.

“Variety is key when your goal is to keep joints healthy. Include aerobic, muscle strengthening and flexibility exercises in your workout routine. Stretch multiple times a week. Don't overstress joints by doing the same activities day after day—cross training adds variety and is good for your joints and muscles. Stick to lower-impact activities, especially if you have been experiencing any pain. Maintaining a healthy weight and avoiding injury as much as possible are other ways to support optimal joint health,” says Marshall Orthopedist Taylor Vance, MD.

Questions about your joint health? Call Marshall Orthopedics & Sports Medicine at **530-344-2070** or visit **marshallmedical.org/orthopedics**.

ABOUT MARSHALL MEDICAL CENTER

Marshall Medical Center is an independent, nonprofit community healthcare provider located in the heart of the Sierra Foothills between Sacramento and South Lake Tahoe. Marshall Medical Center includes Marshall Hospital, a fully accredited acute care facility with 111 beds located in Placerville; several outpatient facilities in Cameron Park, El Dorado Hills, Placerville and Georgetown; and many community health and education programs. Marshall has nearly 220 licensed providers and a team of over 1,400 employees providing quality healthcare services to the residents of El Dorado County.

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To reach the editor of For Your Health, contact Lourdes Edralin at 530-626-2675 or ledralin@marshallmedical.org

From Pandemic to Endemic

Adapting to Life with COVID-19

While the virus hasn't gone away, here are tips to navigate our new normal.

In early 2020, our worlds were turned upside down when the COVID-19 virus was labeled a pandemic, causing disruption and upheaval to life as we once knew it. Thankfully, life has returned to some sense of normalcy, even though the virus is far from being gone.

The best way to describe the current state of the COVID-19 virus is that it's on its way to reaching endemic status. This means the disease is still around (and is expected to remain indefinitely), but is not causing significant disruption to our daily lives. Hospitals are no longer reaching critical capacity. Schools and businesses are not closed. But there's still the possibility of contracting the virus and getting sick.

Endemics are nothing new. There are many viruses that are endemic in our community, including influenza (the flu), rhinovirus (the common cold) and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). These viruses circulate and get people sick but they don't stop us from living our lives. That's what we're facing with COVID-19, too.

What do we do if COVID-19 is endemic?

We live with endemics by protecting ourselves as much as possible. "In the case of COVID-19, that includes getting vaccinated and boosted as recommended. Immunity from vaccinations, as well as from natural infection, wanes over time and does not guarantee you won't catch the virus. But data shows vaccines do a good job of protecting against serious illness, hospitalization and death so they're still worth it," says Brian Goldsmith, MD, Marshall's Chief Medical Officer.

Having treatment options available also helps us deal with endemics. People at high risk who contract COVID-19 may be advised to take a drug like Paxlovid to reduce symptoms and lower the chance of serious illness. As different variants of the virus emerge and our knowledge about the disease increases, other treatments options will likely be available in the future.



While we would like to imagine a world where COVID-19 doesn't exist anymore, that is not our reality. That means we have to find ways to go about our daily lives in as close to a normal fashion as possible while taking steps to avoid illness. These tips can help protect you from being severely impacted by COVID-19:

- **Continue to get boosted.** Updated vaccine boosters will soon be available to better protect against newer omicron variants. Although it's not known yet how often boosters will be recommended, it's likely we'll have to continue to get them regularly. This is something we already do with other viruses. For example, every year flu shots are recommended. Other vaccines require periodic boosters as well.
- **Take precautions in high risk situations.** The same steps that protected you during the pandemic will help you now. Steer clear of anyone you know who has COVID-19 or those who appear to have symptoms. Consider wearing masks when you are in large crowds, especially indoors. Wash your hands often.
- **Boost your immunity.** Take steps to keep your immune system strong. Filling your plate with healthy foods, exercising regularly, getting enough sleep, not smoking and reducing stress are all ways to boost your immunity, so you can better fight COVID-19 or any other illness you may get. As an added bonus, you'll improve your overall health in the process.



For more information about Marshall Medical Center, visit www.marshallmedical.org or follow us on Facebook/[marshallmedicalcenter](https://www.facebook.com/marshallmedicalcenter), twitter.com/MarshallMedical, on YouTube, LinkedIn and on Instagram

Live Healthily with Diabetes



“If you can change your mindset and you have a good support system, you can also change your lifestyle.”



Laura Morris didn't know she had Type 2 Diabetes when she lost consciousness at her home last December. Six days later on Christmas morning, she awoke at Marshall Medical Center and learned she was in diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA)—a serious complication of diabetes that develops when the body can't produce enough insulin to process high levels of blood sugar.

“I could have died,” says the 61-year-old Pollock Pines resident. “My husband said that having me wake up was the best Christmas present ever.”

Laura hadn't recognized the warning signs of Type 2 Diabetes, including a skin infection that wasn't healing. Extreme thirst indicated that her blood glucose levels were dangerously high.

She spent five weeks rehabilitating in a convalescent center, dependent on insulin to regulate her blood sugar.

These days, Laura no longer requires insulin shots. She's working with Marshall's Diabetes and Nutrition Education team to manage her blood sugar through a healthy diet and frequent glucose monitoring. She's successfully lost weight by tracking her food choices, controlling portions and reading food labels.

“There's no cure for diabetes—but I want to help myself get better,” Laura says. “I'm keeping a positive attitude. I believe if you can change your mindset and you have a good support system, you can also change your lifestyle.”

Diabetes facts

With diabetes, the body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't use it as well as it should to let blood sugar into your body's cells for use as energy. Over time, too much sugar in your bloodstream can

cause serious health problems, including heart and kidney disease, loss of vision and nerve damage in hands and feet. One way to consider how diabetes affects the body is by visualizing blood with high sugar levels as thick and syrupy, which makes it difficult for the blood to pass through the tiny veins and arteries in our eyes, kidneys and finger tips.

Diabetes affects more than 1 in 10 Americans, and 1.5 million people will be diagnosed with it this year, according to the American Diabetes Association. Yet, many people don't even know they have this chronic disease. That's why it's important to recognize symptoms including changes in vision, tingling in hands and feet, and lingering fatigue. Get your A1C level tested regularly if you're at risk.

Type 1 diabetes comes on suddenly and usually affects younger people. It is not preventable and requires daily insulin shots. Type 2 diabetes—the most common type—develops over many years and can be prevented or delayed with healthy lifestyle changes.

Risk factors for Type 2 diabetes include being overweight, not being physically active, and being age 45 or older. Having gestational diabetes, prediabetes, a family history of the disease, or being African American, Hispanic, Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native also contribute to the risk.

The good news: While there isn't a cure for diabetes, healthy lifestyle habits can help manage blood sugar levels over the long term. Annual health screenings can catch diabetes early.

“Weight loss, exercise and dietary changes are three ways to improve blood glucose levels,” says Lacey Neufeld, DNP, FNP-BC, a member of Laura's



healthcare team. “There’s no such thing as diabetes reversal, but you can change your lifestyle enough to lower your blood sugar, often without medication.”

Diabetes and Nutrition Education

Diabetes management is a high priority at Marshall Medical Center.

“I refer patients to Marshall’s Diabetes and Nutrition Education program when they are newly diagnosed or when they need help to better manage their diabetes,” says Dr. Neufeld. “The Marshall team is a fantastic resource for creating a plan to control diabetes in a way that is truly individualized.

“A diabetes diagnosis can be profound and scary, so it’s important to have a support team,” she adds. “There are emotional and social adjustments as you make lifestyle changes. It can be challenging to change your diet, learn to check your blood sugar and take new medications.”

Marshall’s program offers a team of physicians, registered nurses, and registered dietitians certified in diabetes and nutrition education. They partner with patients to develop a personalized plan including diet, exercise and medication recommendations.

“These people link arms with a patient on their journey,” says Rachel Peigh, RN, who works

with the Diabetes and Nutrition Education program.

The team works with patients to help lower blood sugar levels and prevent diabetes complications while living comfortable, full lives. Patients are referred by their healthcare providers to the program, which is often covered by insurance.

“We use practical approaches,” says Rachel. “We’ll make tweaks to your diet, without changing everything. We’ll help you make practical changes with things that work for you, considering lifestyle, medications, diet and exercise.”

Marshall also provides free Healthy Living classes. Anyone seeking help with diabetes management is welcome to attend, and no referral is necessary.

“I understand how some people may be hesitant to try a new program,” says Dr. Neufeld. “Perhaps they’ve suffered from diabetes for some time and they may not understand the benefit of having a diabetic nutritionist who can make a difference. Our team looks at a complete plan of care. I urge patients to try the program. It’s worth the time to attend even that first meeting.”

For more information about Marshall’s Diabetes and Nutrition Education program, call 530-672-7021.

Blood Glucose Monitors Manage Highs and Lows

For those with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes, a home glucose monitor is a critical tool for tracking blood sugar levels and providing valuable insights for managing the disease.

Glucose levels can be tested at home with a fingerstick device that uses a small drop of your blood on a test strip, or you can use a continuous glucose monitor (CGM), which takes the pain and the hassle out of the process.

With a CGM, a flexible filament sensor is placed just under the skin to measure glucose levels 24 hours a day and a transmitter sends results to a wearable device or a smart phone. A GCM provides round-the-clock insights on hourly or daily changes in glucose levels caused by factors including food, exercise, medication, sleep and stress.

“A CGM helps us gather real-time information about habits that affect blood sugar levels,” says Rachel Peigh, RN, describing the experience patients have in Marshall’s Diabetes and Nutrition Education program.

“It gives us the details we need to make small, sustainable changes. We look for things that can affect overall glucose management. Sometimes it’s as simple as changing the time you take your medication,” she says.

Patients are often surprised by seeing the impact of stress and sleep on glucose levels. (Stress increases levels, and a good night’s sleep can lower them.) Monitors also illustrate how even a 10-minute walk can make a difference in lowering blood sugar.

“Glucose monitoring helps patients avoid having high and lows. We can see which habits are affecting fluctuations in blood sugar levels with the goal of getting patients to steady levels—which helps preserve eye health, heart and kidney function, and nerves in fingers and toes,” Peigh says.

Several types of fingerstick glucose monitors are sold over the counter at pharmacies and online, while a CGM requires a doctor’s prescription. Both types of monitors are available at Marshall Medical Center.

The cost of home glucose meters and test strips varies. You’ll want to consider a device’s features, ease of use, information storage and support that’s available with your options. Choose a monitor that’s best for you by speaking with your health care provider or certified diabetes care and education specialist, and check with your insurance carrier regarding what’s covered under your plan.



Grateful, Patient Gives Back

“Do you believe in angels?” asked Marilyn Schmidt, her blue eyes sparkling at the thought. “I’ve come to know a lot of angels,” she continued.

Self-sufficient at 92 years of age, she lives independently in a tidy home overlooking a serene lake. Marilyn still drives, “I have driven for 72 years and never had a ticket or accident,” she proclaimed.

Marilyn is spritely, active, and enjoys spending time with her tightknit community of neighbors. Her tribe has gotten just a little bit bigger lately, including caregivers from Marshall’s Community Care Network (CCN). About five years ago, Marilyn fractured 10 vertebrae trying to move a heavy appliance by herself. Though she gets around ok, the injury has had lasting effects.

Dr. Pete Barba has been Marilyn’s doctor for the past 16 years. “He’s not just a doctor, but a friend. Dr. Barba realized I did not have as much support as he desired for me, so he put me in touch with the Marshall Hospital-funded Community Care Network. Immediately more angels entered my life,” explained Marilyn. The CCN team arranged home visits, facilitated treatments, a pharmacist reviews her medication, and a specialist works with Marilyn regarding health goals and her care plan.

“Everybody I have met at CCN is so special. They are interested in my wellbeing. They call weekly to ask if I’m ok and if there is anything I need,” she continued, “These are the kind of people I want in my life.”

“I’ve been blessed with the most caring assistance in all aspects of my health care. I want to give back all that I have been given. Community Care Network will be remembered in my trust for compassionate, never-ending care,” Marilyn shared.

She reached for a piece of paper to read aloud the definition of philanthropy, “The love of humankind. Devotion to human welfare.” Content, Marilyn concluded, “You help the people who help you. My heartfelt thanks to outstanding professionals who will be my friends forever.”

For more information about the Community Care Network, visit marshallmedical.org or speak with your Marshall healthcare provider. For information about the Marshall Foundation for Community Health and how you can support worthwhile programs, visit marshallfound.org.

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Make Your Wishes Known

By Christeen M. Reeg, Principal, Financial Advisor, CapTrust

Peace of mind is one of the greatest benefits of getting your estate in order, for the benefit of your loved ones and the charitable organizations you support.

Consider managing your assets through wills and living trusts. Both provide the ability to distribute property and protect your loved ones after your passing. A living trust has the added benefit of avoiding probate.

Everyone should have an up-to-date will or living trust, carefully thought through, and drafted by an attorney. With a will or living trust you can:

- Maintain control and flexibility
- Provide for family and loved ones
- Distribute assets as you wish
- Choose an executor or trustee
- Nominate a guardian for dependents

You can also use a will or living trust to support your favorite charity, including specific programs or services you believe in. Consider providing for the future of healthcare in your community by designating a healthcare organization who has touched your life.

Try This If You're Depressed



If you've been feeling sad or blue lately, here are some tips that may help.

It's natural to feel down on occasion. Sadness is a normal reaction to life events, such as the loss of a loved one, a change in family status or a tough situation. But if you find yourself feeling down more often than not, or you just can't seem to shake your bad mood, it may be a sign that you are experiencing depression.

Depression isn't something you can easily snap out of. It may make you feel sad, hopeless and miserable. You may also have little energy or drive to do anything about it. But although it may be a difficult step to take, the best thing you can do if you're depressed is to seek help.

Many people find it difficult to ask for help. They may not even be sure that what they're experiencing is depression and may not realize that

anything can be done to change the way they feel. Even if you're not ready to begin any type of formal treatment, there are still ways to cope with your depression so you start feeling better.

Here are 5 steps you can take to manage depression:

- 1. Get screened.** If you're not sure if what you're feeling is depression, take an online quiz or talk to your doctor. There may also be counselors available through work or school. You can be screened for depression without having to step foot in a therapist's office. Telehealth options are available.
- 2. Stay connected.** Talk to people who you feel comfortable with and can trust. Open up to them as much as possible about how you're feeling and ask for any support you need. You may not feel like taking part in social activities, but isolation is likely

to make your depression worse. If you don't have anyone you can talk to, try building new relationships or join a support group.

- 3. Take care of yourself.** When you're feeling down, you may not want to do much of anything, but the better you can take care of yourself, the better you'll likely feel. Do your best to eat healthy, exercise and sleep. Get outside for a few minutes a day to take a walk—the fresh air and movement will do you good. Avoid turning to alcohol or drugs to ease your pain.
- 4. Do things that make you feel good.** Push yourself to do things you used to enjoy, even if you don't feel much like doing them right now. Engage in a hobby, read, express yourself through art, take a walk through nature, play a sport, enjoy live music or volunteer. Once you get going, you may find that engaging in pleasurable activities makes you feel better.

- 5. Accept help.** There's long been a stigma about mental health in our society, but it's important to understand that depression is common—and having it doesn't make you less of a person. The best thing you can do is to understand when you need help and to accept the help that's available to you. Depression often requires treatment, including medication and/or other therapies. Finding the right treatment may take some time, but be open to trying different options until you figure out what works best for you.

Contact your primary care provider for a consultation or referral to a licensed mental health professional. Visit [MarshallMedical.org/find-a-doctor](https://www.marshallmedical.org/find-a-doctor) for a list of healthcare providers.

Choose Marshall

Board
Certified
Physicians

Primary
and Specialty
Care



Marshall Medical Center, recently named one of the **Best Hospitals in America**

Recognized for consistently delivering the safest, highest-value care for patients and excellence in hospital experience by Money (formerly Money Magazine), and the Leapfrog Group, a national patient safety watchdog group.

Marshall ranks among the **top 2% of the 6,000 hospitals** in the nation and **one of only 10 in California** to receive this distinction.

What's more, U.S. News recently ranked Marshall Medical Center as one of the **elite hospitals nationwide** in the areas of Stroke, Hip Fractures, COPD, and Pneumonia.



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Visit marshallmedical.org/physicians
or call **530-676-0777** for information