



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

January 2022

FITNESS FOCUS

Balance Training for Life

Balance issues are a common cause of medical office visits. A recent US National Health Interview Survey showed that nearly 20 percent of older adults reported dizziness or balance problems in the previous year.

Improving balance may reduce fall-related injuries and even prevent some falls. A planned balance exercise program is especially important in people with a history of falls with or without injury.

WebMD recently published an article describing these top 5 balance exercise for seniors:

1. Single leg balance
2. Tree pose
3. Tighrope walk
4. Flamingo stand
5. Lunges

Follow the simple instructions in the link [HERE](#) and modify them as needed to make them work for you. Do them carefully and have either a wall or a person to help stabilize you if needed. Over time, these simple exercises will improve stability and coordination and are a good starting point for a balance training program. Balance training will make your activities more enjoyable and decrease your risk of having a fall-related injury.

Finally, a list of evidence-based fall prevention programs can be found on the National Council on Aging website [HERE](#).

This website also provides guidance on how patients can find fall prevention programs near their home. (mt)

HEALTH TIP



WOMEN'S HEALTH UPDATE

January has been designated as "Cervical Health Awareness Month" by the U.S. Congress. More than 13,000 women in the United States are diagnosed with invasive cervical cancer each year. We can decrease this number with vaccination against Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and appropriate screening centered on detection of high-risk HPV. With the recognition of the role of HPV in cervical cancer, screening now centers on testing for HPV instead of the annual pap smear.

The 2020 guidelines for cervical cancer screening from the American Cancer Society recommend the primary HPV test as the preferred test for screening women aged 25-65. If the HPV test is negative, it should be repeated in five years. If the test is positive for HPV, the next step is referral for a pap smear for most strains of high risk HPV, and colposcopy if HPV types 16 or 18 are found to be present on the HPV swab. This same protocol is also being used in a number of other countries.

The next step in the near future is to provide kits for home collection of HPV swabs by patients. Home screening has been shown to be as accurate as office testing and is now being done in other countries, including women over age 30 in Australia, with good success. Home testing may improve the screening rates for cervical cancer in our country, as well. Up to 80% of women diagnosed with cervical cancer have been under-screened or never screened, so making screening more patient-friendly could have a positive impact on early detection of cervical cancer. (mt)



DOCTOR'S NOTE

DRESS FOR THE OCCASSION

By Dr. Mike Tracy

I remember watching my kids drive to school in the winter wearing a t-shirt and shorts, even in below freezing temperatures. Like any of us might do, they reasoned they would only be spending a short time outside when walking between their car and home or school. My hypothetical questions about frostbite and hypothermia in the event of an unanticipated delay or change in travel plans went unanswered.

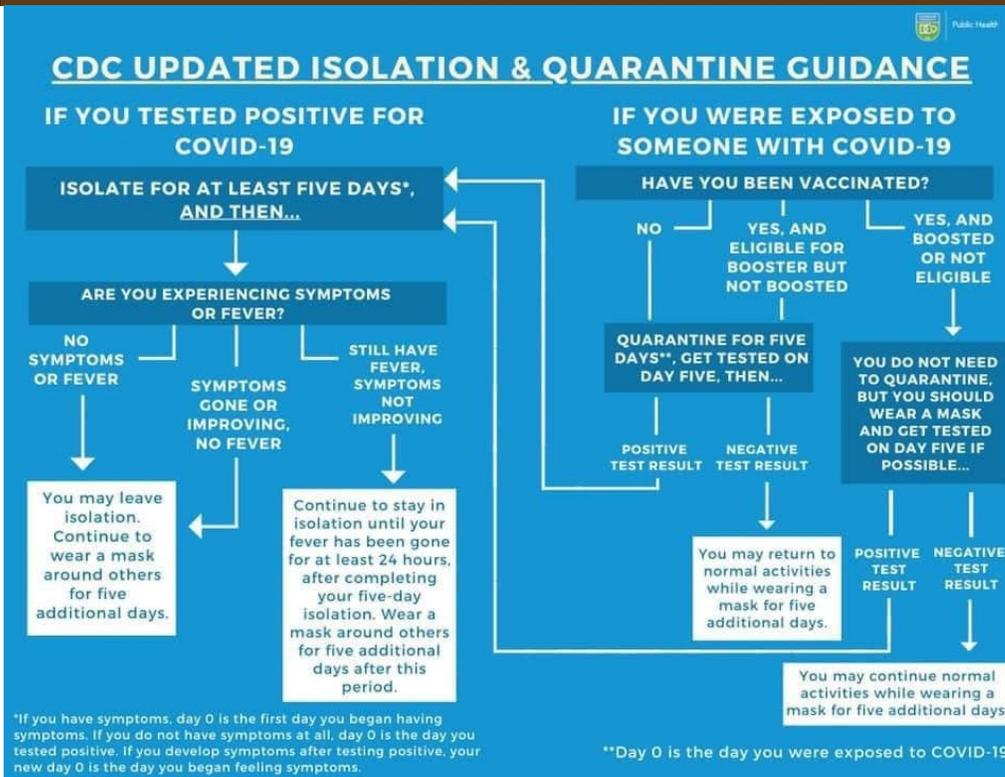
Fast forward to the summer of 2021 when I was the passenger in a friend's truck for a day of fishing in the Bighorns. I planned to put my waders on at our destination and head straight for the stream, so it made sense to me to wear Crocs on the drive. My friend took note of my shoes and his comments reminded me of my conversations with my children. He convinced me that Crocs were not adequate footwear should we encounter unplanned events such as a car wreck or other need to walk off-road.

This article is a simple plea to dress for the weather and terrain. It is convenient to be able to drive across the county or the state in a warm vehicle in the winter. However, changing a flat tire or even sitting on the side of the road in a disabled vehicle can be an inconvenient and even deadly experience in the winter if you are not prepared. Changing a flat tire in the rain or snow can be uncomfortable and may have consequences ranging from frustration to hypothermia without a proper jacket. Finally, wearing proper footwear for the conditions and terrain will help lead to a happy ending if you have to walk even a short distance in bad conditions.

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BETTER ACCESS = BETTER CARE.

PRACTICE NEWS



COVID INFORMATION And RESOURCES

REDUCING RESPIRATORY ILLNESSES

By Aaron Billin, MD

Reprint of 01/04/22 Facebook post

Recent evidence about the less severe disease caused by the Omicron variant suggests that SARS-CoV-2 may be going the way of other viruses in recent memory (influenza, West Nile virus, Zika, etc.). This means that these diseases are present in their respective seasonal patterns but remain occasionally lethal.

The Wyoming Department of Health continues to advocate the following to reduce respiratory viruses. We saw almost no influenza or RSV last year in Wyoming because people were doing these things. This year influenza and RSV have come back with a vengeance because people have stopped doing these things. The pandemic has reinforced that these things are always a good idea, not just during a pandemic.

1. Vaccination
2. Physical distancing
3. Correct mask use (not all the time, but only in appropriate high-risk settings)
4. Ventilation
5. Hand washing and respiratory etiquette (staying home when you are sick)
6. Cleaning and disinfection

Reprint of 01/05/22 Facebook Post

"Record high case numbers and fewer deaths means that the global case fatality rate has dropped — it's now below 1% for the very first time during the pandemic."

We anticipate an Omicron surge in Park County, but hopefully it will be accompanied by lower hospitalization and death rates. The reference article can be read [HERE](#)

MEMBER SERVICES FOCUS

STAYING INFORMED ABOUT CHANGING GUIDELINES

"Change" is one thing of which we can be certain in Life. As we head into year three of CoVID-19, mitigation recommendations and treatment options continue to change with the virus. We may find these changes to be uncomfortable and confusing at times. 307Health will continue to share information about best-practices that we think will be helpful to our members and our community.

The flowchart of updated CDC isolation and quarantine guidelines posted above is an example of change and our effort to keep you informed. While it can seem confusing at first to have things changing after finally adapting to the original guidelines, it is helpful to remember the virus is changing, as are the medical community's knowledge, mitigation recommendations, treatment options and society's economic needs and limitations.

As we learn to co-exist with CoVID-19, here are some "straight-from-the-horse's mouth" resources which you can personally investigate and follow in your efforts to stay informed about changing CoVID-19 recommendations.

- **Park County Health Officer – Facebook Page** [HERE](#)
- **Wyoming Department of Health – CoVID-19 Page** [HERE](#)
- **Wyoming Department of Health – News Page** [HERE](#)
- **U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) – Guidance for CoVID-19** [HERE](#)
- **World Health Organization (WHO) – CoVID-19 Pandemic** [HERE](#)

Personal study of these original-source resources can help us be better informed and parse through all the news and anecdotal stories that come into our awareness and conversations. In addition, your 307Health doctor is a good resource as he is connected to a real-time alert network operated by the Wyoming Department of Health and monitors the local, state and national medical community news. (kt)