



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

December 2022

FITNESS FOCUS **DAYLIGHT IS GOOD** **STEP OUTSIDE**

Sunlight has a positive effect on mood. Studies have shown that exposure to sunlight leads to higher levels of serotonin in the brain when compared to serotonin levels on cloudy days. Decreased levels of sunlight leading to lower serotonin levels may be an explanation for seasonal affective disorder (SAD) which affects many people during the winter months.

One study of nearly 17,000 participants found an association between decreased exposure to sunlight and cognitive impairment in patients with depression. Another study found that the turnover of serotonin in the brain was affected by the amount of sunlight on any given day, regardless of the season. And the levels of serotonin were higher on bright days than on cloudy days. In fact, the rate of serotonin production in the brain was directly related to the duration of bright sunlight.

Another study found that an increase in time spent in outdoor light during the day was associated with fewer depressive symptoms, less use of antidepressants, and better sleep.

Exposure to daylight is more difficult this time of year when the sun is rising about the time we go to work and setting while we are still at work. Look for ways to benefit your wellbeing and mood by finding ways to expose yourself to the sun - open blinds, sit next to windows, and get outside when the weather allows. (mt)

HEALTH TIP



ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

Benjamin Franklin famously said "...in this world, nothing is certain except death and taxes." Paperwork for taxes we have to deal with annually. Paperwork surrounding death will for sure be completed once in our lifetimes but we suggest a bit of planning to ease serious healthcare decisions around the time of death.

Healthcare Power-of-Attorney (POA) - Once we reach the age of 18, each individual is solely and legally responsible to make their own healthcare decisions. Unfortunately, a time could come in which an adult becomes incapacitated and unable to make medical decisions. Examples can range from an 18-year-old college student involved in a car accident to an 81-year-old parent in a nursing home. Both examples could have temporary or permanent periods of not being able to make a decision and so some other adult will need to be their surrogate decision maker. A Healthcare POA outlines WHO this surrogate person will be and WHEN they can make decisions. As you can see with the examples, every adult should have a Healthcare POA!

Living Will - This legal document helps direct surrogate decision makers and your healthcare team on what type of healthcare you want to receive. A patient can outline their general end-of-life wishes such as when / if they want CPR and their general wishes on "life-sustaining" care. As we reach our latter years, Living Wills may need additional clarification specific to a patient's medical conditions, so please

[Read More HERE](#) (db)



DOCTOR'S NOTE

END-OF-LIFE MEDICAL PLANNING

By Dr. Dean Bartholomew

As we reach our latter years, the next layer of the planning is thinking through how we want care delivered at the end of life. For example, a patient may want all available medications and treatments when dealing with serious medical conditions in the last several years of life. Receiving these treatments may extend life by months to years...and we would only know by trying and so "why not try it?" is a reasonable approach.

On the flip side, a patient who is reaching their last years may want to focus on quality of life, not necessarily quantity. They may choose to forgo treatments that offer a low probability of benefit / extending life so that they can focus on more quality time with their family.

An excellent planning document is the "5 Wishes" program ([MORE HERE](#)) which helps a patient to think through situations and decisions many will face at the end of life. Making these wishes actionable, we now have the WyoPOLST form. The WyoPOLST is a physician-signed order form that very succinctly spells out a person's wishes for their medical care at the end-of-life to include CPR, intubation and ventilator use, and comfort care wishes. ([MORE HERE](#) and [HERE](#)).

Knowing your wishes in advance will be very beneficial for you, your family, and your healthcare community when the time comes for difficult decisions. If you have not completed these steps, please reach out to your physician for guidance.

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BETTER ACCESS = BETTER CARE.

PRACTICE NEWS

TRACY EARNS ACP LAUREATE AWARD

307Health received notice this past month from the Wyoming Chapter of the American College of Physicians that our own Dr. Tracy has been selected as their 2022 Laureate Award recipient.

According to the 2022 chapter announcement, "The Laureate Award honors Fellows and Masters of the College who have demonstrated by their example and conduct an abiding commitment to excellence in medical care, education, or research and in service to their community, their chapter, and the ACP."

The announcement describes Dr. Tracy's background as follows, "Dr. Tracy has practiced internal medicine and pediatrics in Powell, Wyoming since 2002. Before that, he spent 3 years as a National Health Service Corps Scholar in rural Missouri. He graduated from the University of Rochester (NY) Residency Program in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics in 1998 and the University of Colorado School of Medicine in 1994.

Dr. Tracy enjoys collaborating with colleagues and teaching medical students. He is the past Governor of the Wyoming Chapter of the American College of Physicians and served two terms on the Executive Committee of the American Academy of Pediatrics' Section on Internal Medicine and Pediatrics. His special interests in medicine include improvements in access and efficiency and health care quality, and he is concerned about the magnitude of "burnout" in health care. He is the co-founder of 307Health, the first multi-physician direct primary care practice in Wyoming."

Past recipients of the ACP Wyoming Chapter Laureate Award include Loyd Evans, M.D. (1986); Donald Hunton, M.D. (1992); Joseph Murphy, M.D. (1997); Daniel Klein, M.D. (2003); Darryl Bindschadler, M.D. (2005); Harmon Davis, M.D. (2007); Robert Davis, M.D. (2008); Thomas Niethammer (2020); James Bush, M.D. (2021). (kt)

HEALTHCARE NEWS AND HISTORY

UNDERSTANDING ALZHEIMER'S & DEMENTIA

The Impact

Currently, an estimated 50 million people worldwide are living with dementia, including more than 5 million Americans. Without changes in prevention or treatment, this number could reach nearly 14 million by 2050.

The disease also affects the 16 million Americans who provide unpaid care for people living with Alzheimer's or another dementia. More than 80% of care provided at home is delivered by family members, friends or other unpaid caregivers.

The Alzheimer's Association is available across the country and online to help people understand Alzheimer's and dementia, and receive information and support they can trust.

Know The 10 Signs

- 1 – Memory loss that disrupts daily life.
- 2 – Challenges in planning or solving problems.
- 3 – Difficulty completing familiar tasks.
- 4 – Confusion with time or place.
- 5 – Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships.
- 6 – New problems with words in speaking or writing.
- 7 – Misplacing items and losing the ability to retrace steps.
- 8 – Decreased or poor judgment.
- 9 – Withdrawal from work or social activities.
- 10 – Changes in mood and personality.

Find Out More

Phone numbers and website for more information from the national Alzheimer's Association.

24/7 Helpline = 800-272-3900
National Website = **ALZ.ORG**

MEMBER SERVICES FOCUS

