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Prime Times

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PT Assistant, Christy Bashford, discusses  
arthritic knee pain. Pg.3

Better Hearing & Speech  
Page 2

Diet & Arthritis  
Page 3

Social Seniors  
Page 6



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## Better Hearing & Speech Month

by Abigayl Petermann, Speech-Language Pathologist

May is Better Hearing and Speech Month, and audiologists and speech-language pathologists across the country are using the opportunity to raise awareness about communication disorders and interventions available to those who might be affected by them.



Many people may believe that speech therapy is just for kids; maybe you know a child who has a lisp or who talks about those “wascally wabbits” and is receiving therapy to correct their speech sounds, or maybe you know a child on the autism spectrum who receives therapy to support their communication development. Pediatric speech therapy also supports early communication development, language skills, executive function skills, feeding skills, and social skills.

Many people do not realize that speech therapy is also for adults, and it’s not just about how they talk, either. According to information provided by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA):

- In 2015, approximately 1 million Americans were living with APHASIA, a language disorder usually caused by a stroke that impacts an individual’s abilities in spoken and written language expression and comprehension.

- As many as 22% of adults over the age of 50 may experience DYSPHAGIA, or difficulty swallowing. Approximately one third of these individuals will develop pneumonia as a result of their difficulties, which can be deadly.

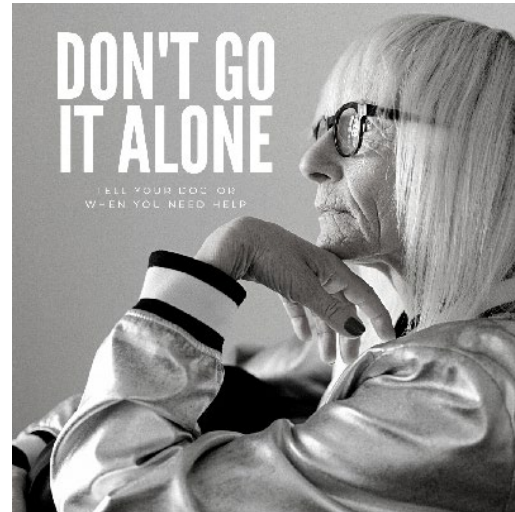
- Approximately 10% of adults aged 65+ in the United States were living with DEMENTIA in 2012.

- DYSARTHRIA, or difficulty with physical aspects of speech production like phonation, resonance, articulation, etc, is common among those who have suffered/are suffering from stroke, TBI, Parkinson’s, MS, or ALS.

- Many adults who are diagnosed with aphasia or dysarthria may also have APAXIA OF SPEECH, a motor planning disorder that impacts speech production.

- Approximately 2% of the U.S. population was living with a TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY in 2015.

All of these disorders can be treated by a speech-language pathologist. SLPs work in a variety of health care settings, including acute care, inpatient rehab, outpatient clinics, private practice, and home health. This means that you can receive care for your communication, cognitive, or swallowing needs throughout your disease or recovery.



If you or a loved one is having difficulty communicating with others, thinking clearly and completing tasks accurately, or swallowing, a speech-language pathologist can provide support by evaluating the disorder, providing a diagnosis, and designing an intervention plan that will help you accomplish your functional goals. These interventions may help you improve a skill directly, learn to compensate for a problem, or figure out how to modify a task so that you can complete it despite your disorder. Elder Care provides speech therapy for adults in the community and would be happy to provide this service for you. Call 918-766-0391 to set up an appointment today.

# THANK YOU NURSES



For the difference you make  
every single day

Linda  
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# The Importance of Socializing

by Leah Alexander, DayBreak Director

What are the health benefits of socialization and why it’s vital for healthy living? Healthy relationships are necessary at every age, but the importance of socialization for seniors cannot be overemphasized. High levels of socialization in seniors help increase longevity. Consistent social interactions help keep people mentally, physically, and emotionally fit. Positive social interactions on a consistent basis help keep seniors stimulated, mentally sharp and intellectually engaged. The improvements in these cognitive areas for regular socialization can help prevent general cognitive decline, including memory loss, Alzheimer’s disease, and other forms of dementia. Importantly, when these social interactions include exercise groups, the benefits of both are increased significantly.

Some other health benefits include reduced stress and longer life spans. Older adults who are socially active handle stress better. This leads to important increases in cardiovascular health and an improved immune system. Older adults

Older adults with social supports are more likely to exercise more, which leads to reduced risk of depression. The more seniors socialize the less likely they are to experience depression caused by isolation and loneliness. Lastly, socialization can reduce levels of anxiety and help build your self-esteem.

Unfortunately, as we age, it can be difficult to fulfill these needs, with factors such as health conditions, lack of mobility, and decreased energy limiting our ability to interact with others on a regular basis. Elder Care’s Daybreak is a great place to come and fulfill all your social needs; we offer a wide variety of activities to meet your social, physical, and nutritional needs. We have a wide variety of activities; from table games, active games, gardening, cooking classes, discussion groups, arts and crafts, parties, dances, music and day trips and delicious meals, we try to reach all interests and hobbies. For more information on our Daybreak program give us a call, 918-336-8500.

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3

# Arthritis and Knee Pain

by Christy Bashford, PT Assistant

Osteoarthritis is a very common problem in the United States with the knee being the most common joint affected. Osteoarthritis is also known as “wear and tear arthritis,” meaning simply that the cartilage that cushions the ends of your bones gradually deteriorates. People who suffer from knee osteoarthritis often have pain and difficulty performing simple everyday tasks such as walking or climbing stairs. As the condition progresses, individuals may begin to experience pain even when sitting or lying down. There are some conservative approaches to treating osteoarthritis. They include pain medication, either over the counter or prescribed by your physician, steroid injections, and walking supports such as a cane or walker. Physical therapy may also be prescribed to help strengthen the muscles surrounding the joint.

If conservative measures fail to provide relief, your physician may recommend a total knee arthroplasty (TKA). This procedure involves cutting away the damaged bone and cartilage and replacing it with an artificial joint. Total knee arthroplasty is the most common elective surgery currently performed in the United States with over 700,000 performed each year. Surgery is generally recommended for individuals who experience severe knee pain or stiffness that limits everyday activity, moderate to severe knee pain while resting, chronic inflammation or swelling that does not improve with rest, knee deformities, or failure to improve with medication or injections. The success rate of total knee arthroplasty is very high. More than 90% are functioning well 15 years after initial surgery.

Typical hospital stay following a total knee arthroplasty is 1-3 days. Individuals that have no in-home support may choose to go to a rehab facility for a few weeks following the surgery. Movement is encouraged almost immediately following the surgery. A physical therapist will evaluate you in the hospital and will begin working on getting you back on your feet, often on the day of surgery. You will also be taught exercises to gently begin moving your knee.

Following your hospital stay, physical therapy will play a vital role in your recovery. Exercise and movement of the joint are imperative to ensure a successful outcome. Most individuals attend outpatient physical therapy 2-3 days a week for several weeks following surgery. Specific exercises to strengthen the leg and restore normal movement are taught in addition to helping improve gait with the least amount of assistance possible.

Elder Care Physical Therapy would love to help you achieve your goals. Whether you are trying to treat your knee pain conservatively, or if you need rehabilitation following a surgery, our team is ready to help. You can contact us at 918-766-0391 with any questions or to make an appointment for evaluation.

# A Diet for Arthritis and Inflammation

by Tracy Stuckey, APRN, MSN, Clinic Director

All forms of arthritis can be painful and debilitating, but lifestyle changes along with medication therapy can help. An arthritis diet focuses on incorporating foods that can help reduce the production of inflammation-producing chemicals in your body. The hope is that you develop a flexible eating pattern of adding healthy, inflammation-reducing foods to your diet and find what helps you. Some easy additions and modifications to your diet:

**Fruits:** Colorful fruits are antioxidant-rich and high in anthocyanidins, both of which can help reduce inflammation. Deep red, blue, and purple berries, grapes, pomegranates, plums, cherries, oranges, peaches, nectarines, cantaloupe, apples, and pears are all examples of brightly colored fruit that can help. Cantaloupe, papaya, tangerines, apricots, and persimmons are also great choices!

**Vegetables:** It's no secret that all vegetables are good for you. However, dark leafy greens, broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, carrots, beets, onions, peas, and sweet potato are among the better choices for this diet because of their beta-carotene content. Veggies rich in beta-cryptoxanthin, such as winter squash, red peppers, and corn can also be incorporated into your diet.

**Beans and legumes:** Legumes are a great, easy way to add more fiber and replace meat or animal proteins. Good choices include Anasazi, adzuki, black, chickpeas, black-eyed peas, and lentils.

**Pasta:** Organic pasta, rice noodles, bean thread noodles, whole wheat, and buckwheat noodles are good choices.

**Whole and cracked grains:** Brown or wild rice, quinoa, steel-cut oats, millet, and Sorghum are suggested. They're excellent sources of fiber and inflammation-fighting antioxidants.

**Healthy fats:** Replace saturated fats in meat and dairy with omega-3 fats found in nuts like walnuts, hemp seeds, and chia seeds, and monounsaturated fats found in avocados, olives, and extra-virgin olive oil.

**Fish and seafood:** Salmon, herring, sardines, mackerel, and black cod are excellent sources of healthy fat and lean protein.

**Tea:** White, green, and oolong are the best for this diet and work exceptionally well when you are also drink a lot of water throughout the day.

**Spices:** Turmeric, curry powder, ginger, garlic, chili peppers, basil, cinnamon, rosemary, and thyme are beneficial spices to add to your food that help combat inflammation.

Lastly, ask your doctor or a dietitian if you should take a supplement like a multivitamin, vitamin D, or fish oil.

Change isn't easy, especially if you're learning to like new foods or eat new things more regularly. A few easy steps for your journey:

Meal prep at home with fresh ingredients. Cut down on packaged, processed junk foods and fast food, which are high in unhealthy saturated fat. Slowing start swapping a meal full of fatty cuts of meat with cold water fish or other seafood, gradually building up to a healthy balance of both.

While it may not sound like it at first, an anti-inflammatory arthritis diet does a lot of flexibility, variety, and options.

The most important thing to remember is to build your meals and snacks around a variety of colorful, whole foods while limiting fast foods and processed foods that come in packages with long ingredient lists.

# The Good, The Bad, The BBQ 2022

by Cordell Rumsey, Executive Director

For 22 years Elder Care supporters have attended our annual fundraising event, The Good, the Bad, the BBQ. Your continued financial support for our cause makes it possible to fulfill our mission and ensure that mature adults live happy, healthy, independent lives in their home environments. The funds raised from our BBQ event help underwrite health and wellness education, essential care,



enrichment programs, and the many services we provide to support seniors who wish to age in place.

The recent pandemic caused many charitable organizations to cancel or postpone in-person events. And this year, out of an abundance of caution for the hundreds of guests who join us each year for the BBQ, our leadership has decided to not hold the 2021 event.

We ask you to join us on Saturday, May 7, 2022, at the Hughes Ranch for The Good, The Bad, The BBQ 2022.

And this year, consider donating to Elder Care in lieu of our in-person fundraiser. Our services are made possible in part through generous donations from individuals, businesses, corporations, foundations, and the Bartlesville Regional United Way. Your financial support is important to Elder Care and needed to help us continue to serve seniors in northeast Oklahoma.

***The gift you give today may be the gift that impacts you and your family tomorrow.***



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