

# PRIME TIMES

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AboutElderCare.org | (918) 336-8500  
1223 Swan Drive, Bartlesville, OK 74006



# Flu Season

by Desery Drake, Practice Manager,  
Community Health Center of SEK

With the flu season fast approaching, the CHC/OK Bartlesville Clinic located at 1223 Swan Drive, recommends getting an annual flu vaccination to protect your health.



Flu shots are available on a walk-in basis and with no out-of-pocket costs to the recipient (CHC/OK will bill the insurance of covered patients). No appointment is needed, and you do not have to be a current patient of the clinic.

For most persons who need only one dose of the influenza vaccine for the season, vaccinations should ideally take place during September or October.

Adults 65 years and older are recommended to get immunized with a high-dose vaccine. These shots can offer greater protection to seniors, who,

due to immune system changes that happen with age, typically do not have as strong a response to vaccination as younger people.

There are two main types of influenza (flu) viruses: types A and B, that routinely spread in people which are responsible for seasonal flu epidemics each year.

Most experts think that flu viruses spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Putting physical distance between yourself and others can help lower the risk of spreading a respiratory virus. Less often, a person might get flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.

It is also important to remember that everyday preventive actions such as washing hands frequently and avoiding close contact with sick individuals can further reduce the risk of flu.

Flu vaccines will be available in the CHC/OK clinic towards the first to middle of September.

# Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo

by Joshua Lindblom PT, DPT



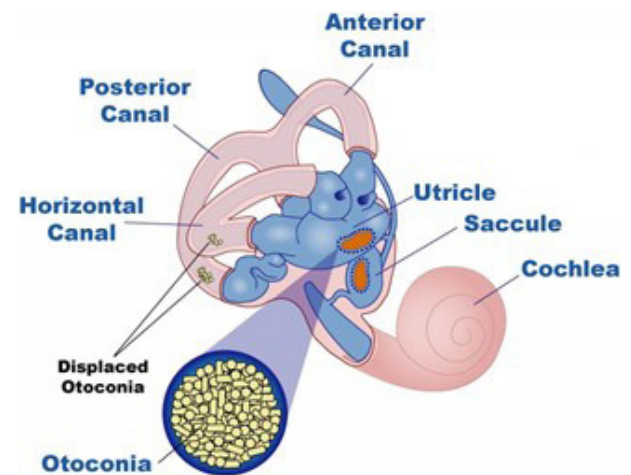
**D**izziness or vertigo is a common complaint among adults and is one of the top reasons why elderly people go to the emergency room. However, it does not have to be a normal

part of aging. Vertigo is the sudden sensation that you or your environment is moving or spinning. These severe symptoms typically last less than one minute. You may feel unsteady or even nauseous for days. There are several causes of vertigo ranging from inner ear infections to vestibular neuritis to Meniere's disease. However, the more common type of vertigo is Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV) and can be seen at any age. Studies have suggested that up to 50% of patient-identified dizziness is due to BPPV.

The most common cause of BPPV is degeneration of the inner ear or vestibular system. This can occur idiopathically or stem from a recent trauma, fall or even sinus infection or cold. Symptoms may arise with various activities, primarily changes in head position, e.g. looking up or down, sitting up or rolling over in bed, or bending down to tie your shoes.

So how does the inner ear work? The inner ear is comprised of two main parts, the cochlea that

is in charge of hearing and the semicircular canals that are responsible for equilibrium and recognition of head position and movement. If the semicircular canals are functioning properly, fluid flows through them and contacts sensory hair cells. Depending on which way you turn your head, the fluid pushes the hair cells one way or the other, sending an appropriate signal to your brain. In less than a second, your brain sends signals to the appropriate muscles for you



*Anatomy of the Inner Ear*

to maintain your balance and respond to the movement.

So why do you get vertigo? Calcium crystals called otoconia are displaced from their normal position around the utricle and find their way into the semicircular canals, most commonly the posterior and horizontal canals. These crystals alter the way fluid flows through these canals,

# Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo

continued

changes the gravity within the canal, and leads to erratic signals to your brain. In essence, your brain is not getting the correct information, loses track of the horizon and throws your eyes into a tailspin.

Physicians can often make a diagnosis based on a patient's history and physical examination alone. Have you ever felt dizzy when you lay down at the doctor's office? Some physicians will also perform special vestibular or hearing tests. The most effective treatment of BPPV is a series of specific maneuvers that are based on your clinical presentation and typically performed by your physician or a trained physical therapist.

Nearly 80% of the time, vertigo symptoms are completely abolished with these maneuvers. However, the anatomy of your inner ear may predispose you to recurrences. You may also experience motion sensitivity following treatment that could require continued skilled care. Understanding the etiology of the problem, learning a maneuver that can help, and seeking additional help quicker will improve your outcome.

This is one of the many services we offer at Foundation Therapy Specialists. It is the perfect scenario to take advantage of Direct Access to PT, in that you would not need a physician referral for treatment. The therapists here are trained in the assessment and treatment of BPPV. We will work

to establish a quality home vestibular training program for your long-term success that will provide you a first line of defense if symptoms should recur. Call us at 918-766-0391 to schedule an appointment. We would love to help!

## September Events

RSVP to Elder Care by calling (918) 336-8500.

### Community Connect – Understanding the Aging Skin

**Sept 18 | 3:00 – 4:30 pm | FREE Limited Seating**

Understand why aging skin is prone to certain diseases and issues. Learn how to care for your skin and partner with professionals who can assist with monitoring changes and provide treatment when needed. Kori Sauer, APRN. Premier Dermatology.

### Community Connect - Understanding Phases of Alzheimer's

**Sept 26 | 6:00 – 7:00 pm | FREE Limited Seating**

Understand the different stages of Alzheimer's and dementia, what family members might expect, and what services and treatments would be most helpful during each stage. Dr. James Hutchins, MD.

# A Healthy Brain: Use It or Lose It

by Shelia Tucker

As we get older, brain function can decline. Brain cells operate under the same general principle as muscle fibers. Like muscle, if a brain cell is not used or does not communicate with adjoining cells, that brain cell loses its function. The good news is there are simple things we can do at any age to boost our mental fitness.

## **Play a Game**

Playing games and doing puzzles can help train your brain. Working on jigsaw puzzles engages many cognitive functions like visual perception and long-term memory. Other types of puzzles and games like crosswords, Sudoku, word searches, and card games can assist in keeping your mind engaged helping with memory, attention, and reasoning.

## **Learn a New Skill**

Engage your mind by learning a new skill. It can be something in the arts like drawing, painting, knitting, or pottery. Studying a new language or reading a book can help build your vocabulary. Learn to play a musical instrument or join a choral group. Activities like cooking and baking can engage your mind and benefit your mental health.

## **Stay Connected**

Social connections are important for our mental health. Staying connected to family and friends reduces stress and anxiety. Even if you are unable to get together in person, there are many ways you

can stay connected. Schedule a phone call or a video call with a friend. Having meaningful conversations, seeing facial expressions, and hearing others speak helps us learn new concepts, ideas, and language.

## **Practice Using the Other Hand**

Performing tasks like writing with your non-dominant hand can help increase brain activity. If you are right-handed, practice writing, drawing, or brushing your teeth with your left hand. Using your non-dominant hand can create new neural pathways in the brain.

## **Be Good to Your Body**

In addition to brain-boosting activities, remember to focus on your total health. This includes sleeping well, eating balanced, nutritious meals, keeping well hydrated and staying physically active. When you are good to your body, your brain benefits. Physical, emotional, and mental health all work together to support brain health and keep our minds sharp.

## **Take Action**

The possibilities are endless for finding activities to challenge and improve our brain health. To benefit from cognitive exercises, it is important to incorporate them into our daily routines. Set realistic goals, create a varied routine, and make it fun.

# Turning the Page

by Dee Evans, Guest Contributor

There is a place where stories come alive, ideas flow freely, and friendships blossom—a place where the only requirement is a love for books and a curious mind. Welcome to the world of book clubs, a haven for adults aged 50 and older. Joining a book club can be an incredibly enriching adventure.

Book clubs provide a delightful blend of intellectual stimulation and entertainment. Each meeting is a voyage into new worlds, cultures, and perspectives. Whether it's a gripping mystery, a poignant memoir, or an insightful piece of non-fiction, a diverse reading list keeps the mind engaged and curious. Discussing books fosters critical thinking and broadens horizons.

For older adults, social interaction is crucial, and book clubs are perfect for building connections. They offer a welcoming space where people can share their thoughts and experiences. The camaraderie that develops over shared stories and discussions creates a strong sense of community. Members often form lasting friendships, finding support and companionship that extend beyond the club meetings.

The act of reading and discussing books can be a therapeutic escape from everyday stresses. Delving into a good book provides mental relaxation, while the social aspects of the club help alleviate feelings of loneliness and isolation. Engaging with others in meaningful conversations boosts self-esteem

and provides a sense of accomplishment, contributing positively to emotional well-being.

Book clubs embody the spirit of lifelong learning. They encourage members to step out of their comfort zones and explore new genres and authors. This continuous learning keeps the mind sharp and adaptable, fostering a growth mindset that is vital at any age. The diverse perspectives encountered in book discussions also enhance empathy and cultural awareness, enriching personal growth.

Above all, book clubs are fun! They transform the solitary act of reading into a social event. Lively debates, shared laughter, and the joy of discovering new favorite books make each meeting a highlight. Whether it's guessing plot twists, debating character motivations, or simply sharing a love for literature, the experience is always engaging and entertaining.

Joining a book club is not just about reading books; it's about joining a community of fellow book lovers, embarking on literary adventures, and finding joy and fulfillment in the shared love of reading. So, grab a book, join a club, and let the journey begin!

## **Local book clubs:**

Bartlesville Public Library - Johnstone Irregulars;  
Gentle Reads | Bartlesville Women's Network  
Book Group | Goodreads Virtual Book Club

## Prime Times

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# Laughter is Medicine

Laughter is one of the best feelings in the world. It brings people together and can create a connection with someone you just met. Laughter can change the mood of a room and lighten spirits in the most unlikely situation. Over the years, the value and benefits of laughter have been studied.



**Lowers blood pressure and improves cardiac health.** People who lower their blood pressure can reduce their risk of stroke and heart attack. Laughter works the muscles, leading to an initial rise in blood pressure followed by a more sustained drop. Blood vessels dilate and an increased amount of oxygen enters the circulation due to deeper breathing. Laughter also gets your heart pumping and can be a great cardio workout for those who are incapable of doing other physical activity.

**Reduces stress hormones.** By reducing the level of stress hormones, you're cutting the anxiety and stress that impacts your body. Additionally, the reduction of stress hormones may result in higher immune system performance.

**Works your abs.** When you are laughing, the muscles in your stomach expand and contract, similar to when you intentionally exercise your abdominal muscles. A strong core is known to be beneficial to your physical health increasing stability and balance.

**Triggers the release of endorphins.** Endorphins are the body's natural painkillers. By laughing, you can release endorphins, which can help ease chronic pain and help you feel better throughout your body.

**Produces a general sense of well-being.** Researchers have found that people who have a positive outlook on life tend to fight diseases better. It also helps improve your mental health.

With all these benefits it is wise to create laughter opportunities in your busy life. Surround yourself with loved ones and friends, watch a comedy on television or join a class that will create laughter in your life. So smile, laugh, and live longer!

# This Month's Donors

In appreciation of contributions to Elder Care in August 2024

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Ralph & Lois Bergstad  
Laura Glasgow  
Jerry and Beth Maddux  
Marie McCrary  
Gary and Patricia Parrish  
Mark and Diana Quinlan  
The Francis Whitehorn Trust

## Memorials

Frank and Dana Jordan  
*In memory of Dean Horsman*

John and Xandra Manley  
James L. Ratliff  
*In memory of Dr. Charles Johnson*

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*In memory of Deirdre McArdle*

Dawn and Mark Chapman  
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Rick and Brenda Page  
Donald R. Rizzo  
John and Mavis Smith  
Kay Sowers  
Thomas and Carol Wesson  
*In memory of David Yardley*

*We sincerely apologize for any unintended error or omission. Due to publication deadlines, acknowledgment of gifts may take up to 60 days in Prime Times Publication.*

## For Your Consideration

by Reverend Scott Taylor

Good morning, good people! Recently, I saw a Youtube video of a turtle on a tiny skateboard. It's delightful! I watched as the turtle wizzed along at mind-numbing speed (for a turtle) with all the aplomb of a speedster at the Olympics. It zipped right over to its favorite buddy, the cat, who, I might add, did not seem to approve of this change in speed status. The turtle just wanted to play! At least, that's what I thought. And then I thought of the times I wanted to 'play' with someone - and they turned away. And I wondered about people who maybe aren't very fast in any sort of way and maybe they just want a friend too. And maybe I, like the cat, turned away too soon. I felt for that turtle and cat, just trying to make their way through a topsy-turvy world and I felt a kinship, "I know how you feel, little buddy." With a wider heart, I'll consider how someone might just need a skateboard to help them catch up. May you be blessed with the speed of a turtle on a tiny skateboard and friends who'll give you a hand to keep you going today!