

50+ HealthConnection

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Coping with grief.

Grief, a deep sadness experienced after a significant loss, is a natural human reaction that can profoundly impact your mental health. Join us on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom to learn more about grief, including tips on how to cope with and move on from loss. Staff from the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health will speak about **Grief and Loss**. See **Calendar of Events** for details.



Digestive health in 2025.

Without good digestive health, you may experience a host of uncomfortable symptoms such as abdominal pain, bloating, indigestion and more. On Wednesday, June 25, 2025, come hear from Huntington Health-affiliated gastroenterologist Peter Rosenberg, MD, who will share important information about advances in colon screening and the latest options for treatment of common gastrointestinal conditions. At an in-person Noon Hour event, which will take place at 12:30 p.m., Dr. Rosenberg will cover **Advances in Digestive Health**. See **Calendar of Events** for details.

Preventing elder financial abuse.

Did you know financial exploitation is the fastest growing form of elder abuse? On Wednesday, July 9, 2025, Alisa “Lisa” Anderson, elder abuse prevention advocate at Bet Tzedek Legal Services, will talk about scams targeting older adults, including how you can protect yourself from exploitation after a disaster strikes. Join us at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom for **Financial Elder Abuse**. See **Calendar of Events** for details.



Healthy bones for healthy aging.



Bones play an important role in your overall health. They protect your vital organs, provide support and structure to your body, store important minerals and help you use your muscles to move. But as you get older, your bones naturally begin to lose strength. And while some bone loss is normal, too much can be a sign of osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis, which affects approximately 20% of women and 4% of men over the age of 50, is a disease that causes bones to become weak and brittle. Brittle bones, which are thinner and have less density, are much more susceptible to fractures. These fractures can be especially serious when they occur in the spine or hip, as they can lead to loss of mobility.

Although there is no cure for osteoporosis, here are some lifestyle adjustments you can make to prevent its onset or progression:

Exercise.

Moving your body increases strength, which improves balance and lowers the risk of a fall or injury. Doctors

recommend 30 minutes of weight-bearing exercise, such as lifting weights or playing pickleball, five days per week. However, if you have osteoporosis, strenuous activities like heavy lifting or jumping can increase the risk of breaking a bone. Instead, try low-impact activities such as walking, yoga or Pilates.

Get enough calcium and vitamin D.

Calcium and vitamin D are essential nutrients for bone health. To incorporate more calcium into your diet, try eating dark leafy vegetables (e.g., spinach and collard greens), low-fat dairy products (e.g., milk, yogurt and cheese) and fortified foods such as cereal and juice. To increase your vitamin D intake, get some sunlight! Spending five to 30 minutes in the sun fulfills the recommended daily amount. Salmon, trout, cod and many types of milk are also good sources of vitamin D. In addition to eating mineral-rich foods, you can also get calcium and vitamin D in the form of supplements. Ask your doctor if supplements may be right for you.

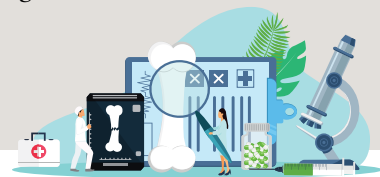
Don't skip the screenings.

Osteoporosis is diagnosed by a dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry (DEXA) scan, which takes images of the spine and hip from two angles. Generally, women over 65 and men over 70 should get screened every two years. However, if you're at a greater risk, start these screenings earlier. Risk factors include a family history of osteoporosis, inactivity, a history of smoking or heavy drinking, a small body frame and taking certain medications. Postmenopausal women are also at greater risk of developing osteoporosis, as menopause lowers levels of the hormone estrogen — which helps maintain bone density and health.

Be mindful of changes in your body.

Although osteoporosis often goes undetected until a fracture occurs, there are subtle indicators. Losing height with age is normal — however, if this loss is greater than one inch and accompanied by back pain, it could be a sign of a spinal compression fracture caused by osteoporosis. Other symptoms may include receding gums, weakened grip strength, brittle fingernails, stooped posture and shortness of breath.

Sources: Dartmouth Health, American Medical Association, and Parade Magazine.



To learn more about the importance of bone health, we invite you to attend Senior Care Network's Noon Hour lecture **Bone Health for Seniors: A Secret to Healthy Aging** on Wednesday, May 21, 2025. See **Calendar of Events** for details.

Especially for caregivers

Caring through a crisis: a short guide to disaster preparedness.

In light of the recent wildfires in our region, you may be worried about the future. You may even be wondering about what will happen if there's another fire or other natural disaster. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to ensure you and your loved one are prepared — and many resources are available to support you along the way. Here are some general tips to keep in mind as you hone your disaster readiness.

1. Build a kit. First, take some time to think through and identify what items your loved one must have with them if an emergency were to occur. While everyone's list may differ depending on their needs, the following should help you get started:

- Water and nonperishable food.
- Daily prescription medications (periodically rotate medications to account for expiration dates).
- Extra food and supplies for pets/service animals.
- Mobility aids (canes, wheelchairs, scooters, etc.).
- Assistive devices (hearing aids, dentures, glasses, etc.).
- Important documents, including identification (passports, driver's licenses, birth certificates, etc.), bank account records and insurance information.
- Cash.
- Extra clothing.
- Hygiene items.
- Cell phone battery/charger.
- First aid kit.
- Flashlight and extra batteries.

- Blanket.
- Maps/travel guides.
- Contact information for health care providers (doctors, pharmacists, therapists, etc.); social service providers; and family members and friends.

Once you have a list specially tailored to the needs of your loved one, begin collecting these essentials and gathering them into a “go-bag” such as a sturdy backpack or duffle bag. Be sure to store it in an accessible area so that you can easily grab it in an emergency.

2. Form a team. Being a caregiver can feel lonely, like everything rests on your shoulders — but you're not alone. Tapping into your support network is actually one of the best ways to prepare for a disaster. Form a team of reliable and trusted



► Visit dor.ca.gov/home/disasterpreparedness for more information about how you can be prepared. With the right support and enough planning, you and your loved ones will be ready for whatever may head your way.

friends, family members, neighbors and colleagues. Brief them on your responsibilities as a caregiver, as well as your loved one's needs. This one action can be a game changer!

3. Make a plan — and practice! The most important step in disaster preparedness is to make a plan. With your loved one's needs in mind, and your support network willing and ready to help, you can begin to think about taking action. Be sure to consider multiple scenarios, as a wildfire may necessitate a different response than an earthquake or a flood. Your plan should include:

- Evacuation routes.
- Meetup locations.
- Emergency and family contact phone numbers.

It's best to take a collaborative approach. Work with your loved one and your team to create a plan that works for everyone involved. Assign specific duties to each member of your support network. For example, a friend could agree to provide temporary shelter should you and your loved one need to evacuate. Or, if transportation is not available, someone else who has a car could be on standby to offer a ride.

Successful execution of your plan will also require ample practice, so be sure to do a trial evacuation, visit meetup locations and become familiar with alternate routes.

Sources: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and Red Cross.



If you're a caregiver, you're not alone. Senior Care Network (SCN) offers professional assistance, referrals to important resources, and support for family caregivers, including long-distance caregivers. For more information, call SCN at (626) 397-3110 or (800) 664-4664 or email us at 50+membership@huntingtonhealth.org.



ASK THE DOCTOR

Q&A with Norman Chien, MD

Norman Chien, MD, is a Huntington Health-affiliated geriatrician.



Q. I've heard there is some controversy surrounding the metric BMI. Is there a newer measurement that I should ask my doctor about?

A. In recent years, researchers and clinicians alike have criticized BMI (body mass index) as an inaccurate measure of a patient's health. Amid this controversy, some doctors have started using a newer metric known as body roundness index or BRI.

Part of the controversy surrounding BMI is that it doesn't account for different body types and/or ethnicities. When Belgian mathematician Adolphe Quetelet invented BMI in 1832, he based it off the average European male body. Today, doctors use BMI as a metric for all patients – regardless of race or ethnicity. Additionally, BMI only takes into account a person's height and weight, meaning it cannot differentiate between muscle mass and body fat. A pound of muscle takes up less space than a pound of fat, so someone with a high muscle mass can have a higher BMI without necessarily being overweight.

Alternatively, BRI factors in your waist circumference, providing insight into the amount of visceral fat – the fat that surrounds your vital organs – you have. Higher amounts of visceral fat can increase your risk of developing diabetes, heart disease, certain types of cancer and fatty liver disease.

For both BMI and BRI, it's important to remember that there's no "perfect" number to measure health. While BRI may be a better indicator at predicting

your risk of developing certain diseases, it's still just one metric. To learn more about BRI, talk to your doctor.

Q. I recently heard about a new medication called Leqembi for patients with Alzheimer's. Is it a cure?

A. Leqembi – the brand name for the medication Lecanemab – was approved by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) in 2023 to treat early Alzheimer's disease, including mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or mild dementia. While it is not a cure, it has been shown to slow progression of the disease, enabling patients to participate more fully in their daily lives. In fact, in a clinical trial, the drug slowed the decline of cognitive functioning by nearly 30% after 18 months of treatment.

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive disorder that damages and destroys nerve cells in the brain. Over time, the disease leads to a gradual loss of cognitive functions, including the ability to remember, reason, use language and recognize familiar places. Leqembi works by removing a sticky protein from the brain that is believed to cause Alzheimer's disease to advance. The drug is delivered through an intravenous infusion every two weeks.

If you're experiencing early symptoms of Alzheimer's, Leqembi may be an option for you. Talk to your doctor for more information.

Sources: : Alzheimer's Association, and Yale Medicine.

This column is for information only. Please discuss any treatment options with your doctor.

On the younger side

To scroll or to sleep: revenge bedtime procrastination and how to beat it.

With only 24 hours in a day, our busy schedules often make us feel like there's never enough time to get everything done. Have you ever come home exhausted from work or school, sat down on the couch and binge watched TV for hours? Scrolled on your phone well past your bedtime, even though you knew you should get some sleep? Researchers actually have a name for this phenomenon: revenge bedtime procrastination (RBP).

RBP occurs when we intentionally put off sleep to engage in mindless, low-energy leisure activities. We exact "revenge" on our busy daytime schedules by recouping some of that time during the only window we have — before bed.

While these activities may seem harmless, experts say these types of late-night rituals can become toxic habits. RBP can disrupt your sleep patterns and cause sleep deprivation — which can have serious health consequences. In the short-term, not getting enough shuteye can dampen your mood and worsen your cognitive functioning. In the long-term, it can lower life expectancy and heighten your risk of developing certain cancers, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, Alzheimer's, and even depression and anxiety.

The good news is RBP is preventable. Read on to learn about the steps you can take to resist its temptation.

Don't sleep and scroll in the same space.

Our beds have become a space for more than just sleep. Many of us attempt to wind down in bed while watching TV, scrolling Instagram or reading emails. However, sleep experts recommend that we reserve our beds for sleep — only. Shifting these potentially unhealthy routines helps us associate our bed with rest, making it easier to turn off those devices and catch some much-needed Zzzs.

Respect the bedtime routine.

Figure out a bedtime routine that works for you — whether it be taking a nice long hot shower, watching an episode or two of a TV show you like, listening to your favorite album or all the above. Make it enjoyable — that way, you can look forward to the process rather than dread it.

The key take-away here is to make your pre-bedtime regime realistic. As much as you might like the idea of an evening that includes a full yoga or stretching session followed by meditation or listening to music and a bath, all of these activities may not be feasible. The best routine is the one you can do consistently.

Understand the underlying causes.

Life in our modern, fast-paced world can be stressful. There are always errands to run, chores to complete and other demands to meet. The key to beating RBP is to acknowledge that daily responsibilities can be difficult and exhausting. By understanding the root causes of RBP and implementing healthier habits (like building in time during the day to take breaks), you can prioritize rest without feeling like you're sacrificing your personal time. Next time you're tempted to scroll, stream or stall before bed, consider burrowing under the blankets and hitting the lights instead. A new, healthier day awaits!



Sources: Sleep Foundation, Cleveland Clinic, and NPR.



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We speak your language. We are committed to providing you with compassionate care regardless of the language you speak. ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al (626) 397-5211. 注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 (626) 397-5211。



**Join our
Senior CareLine
today!**

In the aftermath of the Eaton Canyon wildfire, the San Gabriel Valley has begun the difficult work of recovering and rebuilding. Amid such uncertainty, you may be looking for ways to give back to your community. If you're seeking an opportunity to make a difference, consider volunteering for Senior Care Network's Senior CareLine.

To help prevent feelings of loneliness and isolation, we started Senior CareLine to give older adults the chance to connect with someone new from the safety and comfort of their own home. Our friendly, trained volunteers call older adults to check in and chat about anything from family life to favorite books.

- ▶ If you're interested in volunteering for Senior CareLine and spreading some joy, one phone call at a time, call Huntington Hospital's volunteer services department at (626) 397-5208 to learn more.

50+ HealthConnection members receive informative publications, including event calendars, from SCN throughout the year. If you received this newsletter and are not yet a 50+ member, you can sign up for free by visiting huntingtonhealth.org/50+. If you prefer, you can leave a message on our membership line at (626) 397-3147 or (800) 664-4664 and a member of our staff will be in touch to sign you up by phone. Alternatively, you may email us at 50+membership@huntingtonhealth.org. In addition to sending you our future publications, we'll also provide you with a membership card so you can take advantage of membership benefits, including a discount at Huntington Hospital's Bistro Café and S. Robert and Denise Zeilstra Gift Shop.

(626) 397-3110 or (800) 664-4664 | Fax (626) 397-2982 | huntingtonhealth.org/SCN

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Claudia Chavez, MSW
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Noon Hour

SCN's Noon Hour lecture series provides information you can use to pursue good health and age well. All Noon Hour events begin at 12:30 p.m. on the dates listed. Each lasts about an hour and includes time for your questions. Participation is free.

Virtual Events

There are two ways to join virtual Noon Hour events:

1. By computer, smartphone or tablet.

Complete the online registration form online by visiting <https://qrco.de/bdAJec> or scanning the QR code with your smartphone.



2. By phone.

At the time of the event, call (564) 217-2000, then enter the following when prompted:

Meeting ID: 862 5512 7925#

Participant ID: press #

Meeting Password: 599251#

If you need help using Zoom, please call Senior Care Network's membership line at (626) 397-3147. We're happy to help!

In-Person Events

Preregistration is required for in-person-only Noon Hour events. Visit <https://forms.office.com/r/ADqCAKKnvT> or scan the QR code to register. Events will take place in Huntington Hospital's North Dining Room. Valet parking is offered at no cost to attendees. Self-parking in the North Parking Structure is also available at a cost of \$1.50 for every 15 minutes (\$12 daily maximum). Boxed lunch will be offered for purchase, and lunch reservations are highly encouraged at the time of registration.



Please note we have a visitation check in-system to enter the hospital's campus and invite you to enter through the main entrance. To help ensure a smooth and quick process, please bring your driver's license or identification card. Your photo will be taken, and a badge will be printed for you.

If you have a cough, cold or any symptoms of flu, COVID-19 or any other infectious disease, please don't visit.

VIRTUAL

Wed., May 7 | Grief and loss.

During Mental Health Awareness Month, staff from the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health will talk about grief, including tips on how to cope with and move on from loss.



Wed., May 21 | Bone health for seniors: a secret to healthy aging.

Huntington Health endocrinologist **Elena Forouhar, MD**, will speak about the importance of having strong, healthy bones as you age.



Wed., June 11 | Understanding Alzheimer's and dementia.

Come hear from **Theresa Wong, MD**, community educator with the Alzheimer's Association California Southland chapter, who will discuss the causes, risk factors, stages and treatment of Alzheimer's disease.



IN-PERSON

Wed., June 25 | Advances in digestive health.

Huntington Health-affiliated gastroenterologist **Peter Rosenberg, MD**, will share about advances in colon screenings and the latest options for treatment of common gastrointestinal conditions.



VIRTUAL

Wed., July 9 | Financial elder abuse.

Alisa "Lisa" Anderson, elder abuse prevention advocate at Bet Tzedek Legal Services, will cover scams targeting older adults, including how you can protect yourself from exploitation after a disaster strikes.



Wed., July 30 | All about skin cancer and skin health.

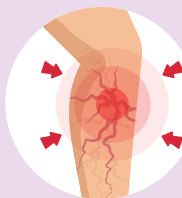
July is UV Safety Awareness Month. Come learn from dermatologists **Teo Soleymani, MD, FAAD, FACMS**, and **Neda Black, MD, FAAD**, about the causes, detection and treatment of skin cancer, as well as how you can protect your skin from the sun.



IN-PERSON

Wed., August 13 | Painful legs.

Join us as Huntington Health vascular surgeon **Theodore Teruya, MD, FACS, DFSVS**, talks about the causes of pain in your legs, including venous disease and peripheral arterial disease.



Taking Care of You: Powerful Tools for Caregivers.

Fridays, August 8 – September 12, 2025

10-11:30 a.m. via online platform

This six-session online course — designed for family caregivers of adults — will provide information you can use to increase your self-care skills and help you manage difficult situations. Instructors include expert staff from Senior Care Network (SCN). To register, please contact Karla Palma, MSW, at (626) 397-8135 or karla.palma@huntingtonhealth.org. Class size is limited so be sure to register early. Cost: \$25 for digital copy of workbook or \$30 for hard copy of workbook (plus shipping). Scholarships are available for those unable to afford the cost.

Around the campus

Going further to improve health.



As part of our nonprofit mission, Huntington Health provides significant benefits to the communities we serve, often in the form of health education, outreach and low or no-cost hospital care for the uninsured and those with limited means. In fiscal year 2024, we provided an estimated total of \$144.5 million worth of health care services and support to residents of the San Gabriel Valley and beyond.

Through these community benefits, we are proud to provide a wide range of specialized programs and services, both on our campus and beyond. This includes free health screenings, counseling services, educational programs, clinical training and complimentary flu shots.

Our community benefit services also include Huntington Health's Senior Care Network (SCN). Last year, SCN helped 851 seniors live more safely in their homes, educated 629 older adults through its Noon Hour lecture series, conducted post-discharge follow-up with 1,556 at-risk patients, and connected 1,879 Resource Center callers to necessary supports and referrals.

- ▶ Visit huntingtonhealth.org/communitybenefit to learn more about community benefit services and their impact.



Helpful resources.



Huntington Collection

Visit Huntington Collection's new location at 2670 East Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena. Purchases made at this unique resale shop help fund Senior Care Network's (SCN's) important work supporting seniors and other vulnerable adults. Donations are welcome and tax deductible. The Collection is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Please note the entrance to the store is located off of San Gabriel Boulevard.

- ▶ Call (626) 535-2468 or visit huntingtoncollection.org to learn more.

Huntington Health's Calendar of Events

Visit huntingtonhealth.org/events to view classes and events offered by Huntington Health, including virtual support groups.

- ▶ You may also call SCN's membership line at (626) 397-3147 or (800) 664-4664 or email us at 50+membership@huntingtonhealth.org for assistance.



Resources for Mental Health Month

During Mental Health Month in May, Huntington Health's Della Martin Center (DMC) will be hosting various events to support mental health awareness.

- ▶ For more information, please visit huntingtonhealth.org/DMC or call DMC's access center at (626) 397-2323.



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