



A Wellness Newsletter for AvMed Members

Road to **WELLfluent**TM

Embrace better health.

Why caregivers need to practice self-care

Most women in the U.S. are caregivers — either taking care of children, adults or people with an illness or disability. But there's one person they can often neglect to take care of, and that's themselves. If you are part of this majority, we want you to know a vital fact: It is equally important to take care of yourself.

Make sure you're following healthy habits and that you're getting yearly checkups and screenings. Exams such as wellness visits, routine GYN care, mammograms and colorectal cancer screenings can help your doctor spot illnesses that could be better treated when detected early.

Don't let the coronavirus stop you from seeing your doctor. Now, more than ever, it's crucial to stay on top of your health. Providers are taking safety precautions to protect their patients and staff while continuing to provide essential healthcare. Some doctors are even offering consultations over the phone for patients who have basic medical questions, need medication refills or to order preventive screenings or lab tests.

Get started today in ensuring your own wellbeing, as well as those you care for, by following the below tips directly from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Maintain Healthy Behaviors

- Take steps to protect yourself and others against COVID-19.
- Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate.
- Eat foods that are safe and healthy.
- Drink lots of water to stay hydrated.
- Exercise regularly.



- Get plenty of sleep.
- Avoid excessive alcohol and substance abuse.

The CDC also recommends to take breaks from news stories or social media posts about COVID-19. To further manage stress, engage in self-care and reward yourself by doing an activity you enjoy. Stay well and thank you for all you do.

Breast Cancer Signs and Symptoms

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is a long-running, annual campaign that seeks to educate people about the importance of early screening, testing and more. This campaign starts on October 1st and ends on October 31st every year.

Knowing how your breasts normally look and feel is an important part of breast health. Having regular screening tests for breast cancer is important as they can detect very small changes in the breast that cannot be felt or seen on examination. However in between mammograms, it's also important for you to be aware of changes in your breasts and to know the signs and symptoms of breast cancer.

The most common symptom of breast cancer is a new lump or mass. A painless, hard mass that has irregular edges is more likely to be cancer, but breast cancers can be tender, soft, or round. They can even be painful. For this reason, it's important to have any new breast mass, lump, or breast change checked by an experienced health care professional.

Other possible symptoms of breast cancer include:

- Swelling of all or part of a breast (even if no lump is felt)
- Skin dimpling (sometimes looking like an orange peel)
- Breast or nipple pain
- Nipple retraction (turning inward)
- Nipple or breast skin that is red, dry, flaking or thickened



- Nipple discharge (other than breast milk)
- Swollen lymph nodes (Sometimes a breast cancer can spread to lymph nodes under the arm or around the collar bone and cause a lump or swelling there, even before the original tumor in the breast is large enough to be felt.)

Although any of these symptoms can be caused by things other than breast cancer, if you have them, you should see a health care professional so the cause can be found.

Remember that knowing what to look for does not take the place of having regular mammograms and other screening tests. Screening tests can help find breast cancer early, before any symptoms appear. Finding breast cancer early gives you a better chance of successful treatment.

Source: <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/breast-cancer/about/breast-cancer-signs-and-symptoms.html>

New and Improved Member Portal Is Here!

For more than 50 years you have come to know us for exceptional service and our commitment to helping Members like you Embrace better health®. Over the past two years, we have been working on revamping our technology capabilities to provide you with unparalleled service. We understand how important it is for you to easily and conveniently access the information you need to make important decisions about your health and wellness on-demand. With this guiding principle in mind, AvMed recently introduced a new and improved Member Portal. It is intuitive and user-friendly, and has a cleaner, more streamlined interface as well as several new features and enhancements for a richer and more rewarding health experience. Learn more about the new AvMed Member Portal and how to register at www.AvMed.org.



Return to School During the Pandemic

Parents and children can expect further changes in the coming school year. State and local authorities continue to navigate schooling options in consideration of public health, state and local guidelines. We find ourselves in uncharted territory with the realities of an ever-changing pandemic. Therefore, it is important to focus on helping your family adjust to new routines.

Some students will return to fulltime classroom learning. Others will participate in a hybrid model with both in-class and virtual learning, and some will continue with full-time virtual learning.

Help children to adapt

Everyone is affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Children are no exception. Although the prospect of returning to school is exciting, children could also experience a wide range of emotions. This could include anxiety and fear of the coronavirus or stress about changes in their normal routines, such as social distancing or wearing masks at school.

- Reassure your child that their feelings are normal, they are not alone and many people are working to protect them. Teach them how to stay safe by social distancing, wearing a mask and proper hand washing
- Help your child look for the positive in the situation. They will be able to see their friends and teachers again when they return to the classroom or at least interact with them.
- Encourage your child to continue to practice regular handwashing and find new, socially distant ways to greet their friends.
- Ask them how they are doing. Their emotions can change quickly and you can show them this is normal during these times.
- Children often take emotional cues from important adults in their lives, so it is important that you control your own emotions, stay calm and talk to them in a friendly way.



Take care of your own mental health

It is just as important for parents to rest and exercise sufficiently, eat a healthy diet and have a consistent daily routine as it is for their children. Here are a few tips to help you with this:

- Recognize what you can and can't control and how you spend your time.
- Avoid overeating or using alcohol or other stress-relieving drugs. Try meditation, yoga or other relaxation techniques, go for a walk outside or call a friend for support.
- Practice gratitude and confidence for the future. Helping others can also improve your prospects.

Remember that kindness to yourself and others is a positive example for your children.

For more information and tips, visit <http://www.magellanhealthcare.com/COVID-19-2/covid-19>.

Source: Supporting your child's mental health as they return to school during COVID-19. (2020, June 16). Retrieved August 02, 2020, from <https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/supporting-your-childs-mental-health-during-covid-19-school-return>

Global Handwashing Day

Global Handwashing Day, celebrated every year on October 15th, is an annual global advocacy day dedicated to promoting handwashing with soap as an easy, effective, and affordable way to prevent diseases and save lives.

Global Handwashing Day was founded by the Global Handwashing Partnership, and is an opportunity to design, test, and replicate creative ways to encourage people to wash their hands with soap at critical times.

The first Global Handwashing Day was held in 2008, when over 120 million children in 70 countries around the world washed their hands with soap. Since 2008, community and national leaders have used Global Handwashing Day to spread the word about handwashing, build sinks and tippy taps, and demonstrate the simplicity and value of clean hands. Since then, Global Handwashing Day has continued to grow. Global Handwashing Day is endorsed by governments, schools, international institutions, civil society organizations, NGOs, private companies, individuals, and more.

The 2020 Global Handwashing Day theme is "Hand Hygiene for All." This year's theme follows the recent global initiative calling on all of society to scale up hand hygiene, especially through handwashing with soap. This year's theme reminds us that we



must work toward universal access and practice of handwashing with soap for now and for a healthy future.

No matter your role, you can celebrate Global Handwashing Day. This website is the central repository for all the tools necessary to make your event a success!

Source: <https://globalhandwashing.org/global-handwashing-day/about-ghd/>

Join us for our Virtual Events!

We look forward to engaging and connecting with you.

AvMed has expanded our virtual programming! These thoughtfully curated events will help you stay safe, and active and entertained at home. Enjoy live performances, learn new dance moves, cook a tasty dish, reenergize with Ageless Face Yoga and let your imagination fly with our Book Talks series with bestselling authors!

Visit this link for Fall 2020 calendar of Club Aspire events www.AvMed.org/About-Us/Calendar.

For the latest information, call **1-888-430-9896** to reserve your spot to all of these amazing events!





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