

# HEALTH CONNECT



CONNECTING PATIENTS FOR BETTER HEALTH

**April 2020**

## ORAL CANCER

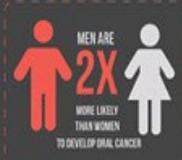
DON'T BE A STATISTIC



8,000

PEOPLE DIE FROM ORAL  
CANCER EVERY YEAR

ONE AMERICAN DIES EVERY  
HOUR FROM ORAL CANCER



## COVID-19 Got You Cooking at Home?

As billions of people around the world face stay-at-home orders because of COVID-19, family dinners — and breakfasts and lunches — are resurgent. I know, changing old, bad dietary habits is tough, and it takes a long time for new eating habits to become permanent. Don't make it too complicated. No matter how bad your diet is, here are five easy things you can do right now to improve the way you eat.

1. Add an extra vegetable to your next meal. I don't care if your next meal is breakfast, lunch or dinner, you can improve your diet instantly by eating an extra vegetable.
2. Eat fresh fruit. Grab an apple or pear instead of a cookie or piece of cake. You don't have to give up dessert, just cut back by having half the amount you normally eat.
3. Yes, we can't say this enough, drink more water please. A lot of excess calories come from sugar and fat come from beverages you drink.
4. Make your next grain a whole grain.
5. Pay attention to portion size. There is an old saying about your eyes being bigger than your stomach.

It is suggested incorporating these tips is a way to include healthier options into your nutrition during this unusual time of stress and uncertainty.

## Tips For Better Sleep

Sleep problems are common. If allowed to go unaddressed for very long, it may lead to other health issues. Some people with sleep problems have more serious sleep disorders. Sleep disorders include sleep apnea (brief periods of not breathing), restless leg syndrome (involuntary leg movements) or narcolepsy (falling asleep during the day). If you suspect you have a sleep disorder, talk to your health provider.

If a good night's sleep is something you dream of, these tips can help.

1. Recognize that sleep is as important as food or water. Restful sleep can improve your mood, energy and ability to handle stress. It can strengthen your immune system for better resistance to disease.
2. Learn how much sleep your body needs. Most healthy adults need an average of 8 hours per night. You may need more or less.
3. If you are dealing with pain, talk to your health care provider. Pain is one of the leading causes of sleep problems.
4. Go to bed at the same time each night.
5. Get up at the same time each day.
6. Turn off screens before bedtime.
7. Don't eat a big meal right before bedtime.
8. Avoid caffeine in coffee, tea, cola or chocolate in the afternoon or evening.
9. Quit smoking
10. Cut down on or eliminate alcohol.

Unhealthy habits and lifestyle choices can leave you tossing and turning at night and adversely affect your mood, brain and heart health, immune system, creativity, vitality, and weight. But by experimenting with those tips, you can enjoy better sleep at night.

### Nurse Advice Line 24/7

800-TRICARE  
(800-874-2273)

**Hampton Roads  
Appointment Center**  
(866) 645-4584

**Emergency Room**  
(757) 953-1365

**Pharmacy Refill**  
Local: (757) 953-MEDS (6337)  
Toll Free: (866) 285-1008

**Information**  
(757) 953-5008

**Customer Service Office**  
(757) 953-2600

**Relay Health Secure Messaging**  
<https://app.mil.relayhealth.com/>

Check out  
NMCP  
on social  
media



# Mindfulness

## NMCP Public Affairs Office

What is mindfulness? Mindfulness is the quality of being conscious or aware of something. It can also be a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique.

Diaphragmatic breathing is a therapeutic technique that uses deep breathing to slow down the "alarm" or "reacting" stage of stress into a more restful calm state. Recommended places and moments include: driving in congested traffic, running late for an appointment, engaging in other stress-provoking situations, to begin a power nap or a restful night of sleep, and any other time you have 5 or 10 minutes to calm. It sends the message to your body and brain that functions "slow down now".

To Begin: If possible, but not necessary-

- Both feet on the ground if seated in a chair
- Quiet space (relaxing background music may help)
- Close your eyes
- Place one hand on your heart
- Place the other hand below or on your belly button
- By placing your hands in this manner, it allows you to note whether you are taking short, chest breaths (upper hand rises): if you are breathing deeply, your lower hand that is on your belly button will move out slightly as you lower lungs fill and diaphragm moves downward.

Sit still for a few moments before trying to do anything. Notice your breathing. Notice your feet on the floor. Notice your heart beating. Take your first deep breath through your nose, relaxing the abdomen to allow the breath to go deep in the lungs. Exhale completely and slowly through your nose. Inhale to the count of 3 and exhale to the count of 3

At best, mindfulness is a tool that allows people to be more aware of their physical and emotional conditions without getting bogged down in self-criticism and judgment.

To learn more visit the Relax Relax Toolkit: <http://www.Med.navy.mil/sites/nmcp/hc/health-promotion/psychological-emotional-wellbeing/relax/pages/breathing.html>

# HEALTHY WEIGHT

## ShipShape Weight Management Program:

8-week intensive program for adults. To register, call the HRAC at (866) 645-4584.

**Right Weigh:** 4-week program for learning to manage your weight the right way. To register, call (757) 953-9247 or 953-1927.

For more information on Health Promotion and Wellness Department programs and resources, call (757) 953-1927.

# TOBACCO CESSATION

## Tobacco Cessation Class

1st and 3rd Tuesday  
of every month from 1 – 3 p.m.

## One-on-One Counseling

Call today to schedule!

For more information, call  
(757) 953-1927 or 953-1934



# MINDFULNESS



# Oral Cancer Awareness

NMCP Public Affairs Office

The month of April brings oral, head, and neck cancer into focus. Oral head and neck cancers usually begin in the squamous cells that line the moist, mucosal surfaces inside the head and neck: the oral cavity, pharynx, larynx, paranasal sinuses, nasal cavity, and salivary glands. Other cancers such as brain, eye, esophagus, and thyroid, are not classified as head and neck cancers as these do not originate in the same type of cell.

Oral cancer refers to cancer found in any part of the mouth, including cancers of the lips, tongue, cheeks and floor of the mouth. It can be life threatening if not diagnosed and treated early. Unfortunately, oral cancers are often not detected early because the symptoms can be painless, and many people are not aware of the disease. The good news is that survival rate is high when oral cancers are found in the first stages.

The symptoms:

- White or red patches inside the mouth or on the lips
- Swelling, lumps, bumps, rough spots or eroded areas on the lips or inside the mouth
- Unexplained bleeding in the mouth

## GET CONNECTED

Download the NMCP app today and get access to:

- News and announcements
  - Interactive maps
  - Pharmacy wait times
  - Telephone directory
  - Relay Health
  - ICE feedback
- and so much more!**



## SELF-EXAMINATION IS EASY AND COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE COMMON SYMPTOMS:



**01** **ULCERS**  
which do not heal within three weeks

**02** **PATCHES**  
Red and white patches in your mouth

**03** **LUMPS**  
Unusual lumps or swellings in your mouth

- Unexplained numbness or loss of feeling in mouth, face or neck
- Persistent sores in the mouth that do not heal within 14 days
- Difficulty chewing, swallowing, speaking or moving the jaw or tongue

The risk factors:

- Age: The disease usually occurs over the age of 40.
- Gender: Men are twice as likely to develop oral cancers.
- Lifestyle: Tobacco use, including smokeless tobacco, and heavy alcohol use.
- Family or personal history: Those who have had oral cancer previously are at an increased risk of developing another oral cancer.
- Excessive sun exposure.
- HPV infection.

If you are diagnosed with oral cancer,

you are likely to find that during and after treatment, mouth and chewing pain, taste changes and dryness might impact your ability to eat a balanced diet. Work with your health care team to help manage these side effects. In particular, an oncology dietitian can help you manage your symptoms and suggest food and nutrition options to improve your nutrition. Maintaining a healthy diet as much as possible during treatment can help improve treatment tolerance.

Oral cancer is a grim topic, but with an estimated 40,000+ people diagnosed every year in the United States, it is important to bring awareness to the risks, facts, and symptoms of this terrible disease.

If you notice anything strange or unusual in your mouth, talk to your dentist about a fast, painless oral cancer screening. Awareness and early detection are key to the health and wellness of you and others.

**118,000**  
patients with a PCM at one of our 10 facilities

**22**  
Medical Home Port teams

**440,000**  
patients we serve – active duty, retired and families

With all the news about COVID-19, you've probably heard the term:

# SOCIAL DISTANCING

## But What Does That Mean?



Social distancing, also referred to as physical distancing, means making changes to your everyday routine **to minimize close contact with others.**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines social or physical distancing as:

- ✗ avoiding groups of more than 10 people
- ✗ maintaining a distance of 6 feet or more from others when possible



## Why Do We Need to Social Distance?

COVID-19 is **highly contagious**. The goal of social distancing is to slow down the spread of the virus and to reduce the strain on the health care system and its workers. You may have heard this described as "flattening the curve."

## How Do You Practice Social Distancing?



6ft.

6ft.

"Two Carts Apart"

"One Car Far"

### Person-to-Person Spread

According to the CDC, the virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- ✓ **Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).**
- ✓ **Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.**

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

To learn more about TRICARE and COVID-19, visit:  
[www.tricare.mil/coronavirus](http://www.tricare.mil/coronavirus)

### Other Ways to Practice Social Distancing

- Greet others with a wave
- Stay home as much as possible, and work from home if possible
- Shop online to avoid going to the store
  - Use technology to keep in touch with friends and family

