

3RD QUARTER | 2024

Live Well, Work Well



Health Panel Drops Breast Cancer Screening Age to 40

Presented by
Liberty ISD

In the News



Catch up on the latest developments on the most significant wellness-related news from the past three months.



Health Panel Drops Breast Cancer Screening Age to 40

On April 30, 2024, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommended that women get a mammogram every other year starting at age 40 and continuing until they are 74. Nearly one year after this screening guidance was drafted in May 2023, the health panel's recommendations have been finalized without major changes.

This latest advice from the USPSTF, which comprises a group of independent disease prevention and medical experts, is somewhat of a reversal. In 2009, the health panel raised the age for starting routine mammograms from 40 to 50. At that time, health experts were concerned that earlier screening would do more harm than good. Yet new research reveals that breast cancer rates among women in their 40s are on the rise. The National Cancer Institute reported that the rate of breast cancer among women ages 40-49 increased by an average of 2% each year from 2015-19.

About Breast Cancer

The American Cancer Society reports that breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among women. About 42,000 women and 500 men die from the disease each year. However, breast cancer is treatable when caught early, and mammograms—X-ray images of breasts—are a reliable screening test. The latest medical evidence suggests that

every other year, the screening of breast tissue provides a “moderate net benefit” for women up to age 74 and can help save lives.

Several risk factors increase an individual's chances of getting breast cancer. Some risk factors can't be changed—such as family history, age and gender—whereas others, like smoking and drinking alcohol, can be avoided. To lower the risk of developing breast cancer, doctors recommend following a healthy lifestyle and getting regular screenings. Although breast cancer may not cause any symptoms in its early stages and tumors may be too small to be felt in many cases, abnormalities can still be found with a mammogram.

What Does This Mean?

Health experts stress that if all women follow the new recommendation of starting routine mammograms at the age of 40, it could save about 8,000 American lives each year. The guidance applies to all women who are asymptomatic and at average risk for breast cancer, including those with dense breast tissue and a family history of breast cancer.

Contact your doctor if you have questions about mammograms or your health history.

1 in 8 U.S. Adults Have Taken a GLP-1 Drug

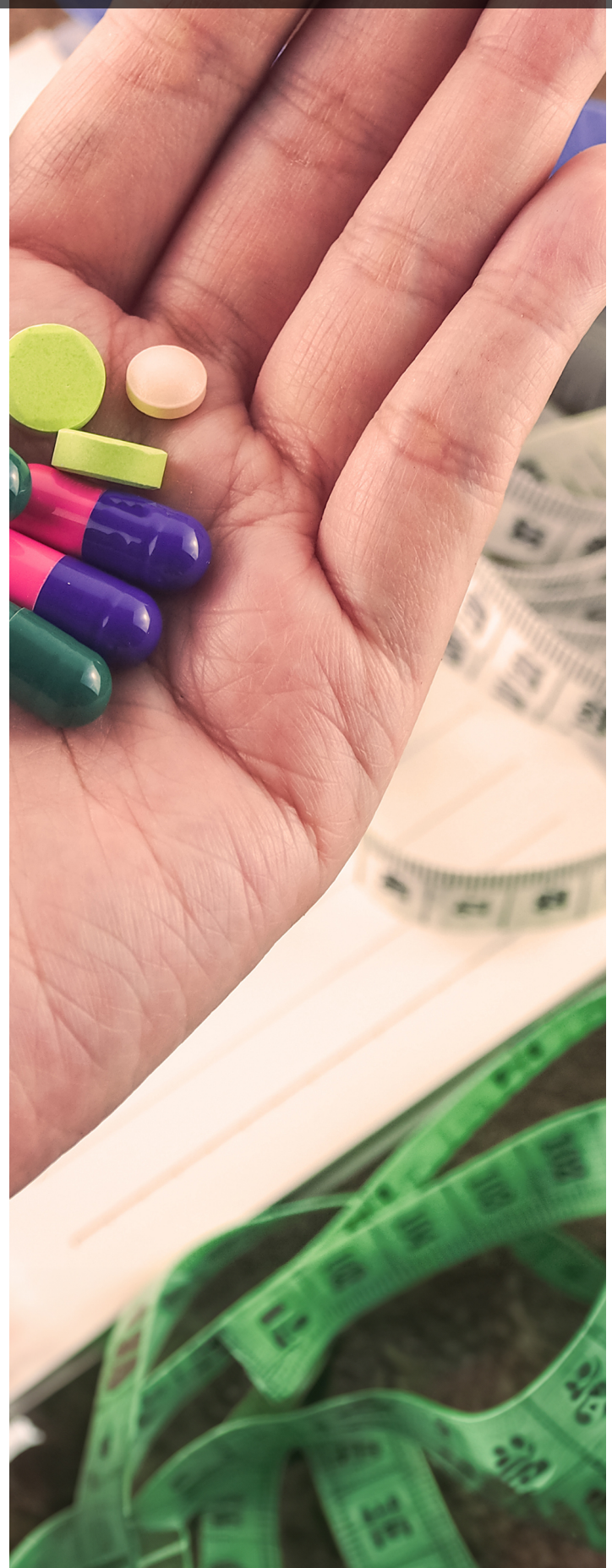
A recent Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) [survey](#) found that 1 in 8 adults have used a glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) drug at some point in their lives, and about half of them are currently using a prescription. GLP-1 drugs are a popular class of prescription drugs used to treat people with Type 2 diabetes and to lose weight. Doctors commonly use GLP-1 drugs off-label for weight loss. While Wegovy is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for obesity, neither Ozempic nor Mounjaro are approved for weight loss specifically.

Here are some additional key findings from the KFF survey:

- More than 15 million people, about 6% of adults, are currently using a GLP-1 prescription.
- Most adults (62%) who have taken GLP-1 drugs said they took them to treat a chronic condition, including diabetes or heart disease, while 39% took them primarily to lose weight.
- Roughly half (54%) of all adults who have taken GLP-1 drugs said it was difficult to afford the cost, including 22% who said it was “very difficult.” A month’s supply of GLP-1 drugs can cost about \$1,000. Most insured adults who have taken these drugs said their insurance covered at least part of the cost; however, even among insured adults, about half (53%) said the cost was difficult to afford.

GLP-1 drugs have gained an increasing amount of media attention and celebrity endorsements in the United States, mostly focusing on their use for weight loss. The FDA reinforces that patients should only obtain GLP-1 drugs with a prescription from a licensed health care provider.

Prescription weight loss medications are costly and may not be suitable for everyone. Therefore, it’s important to become informed about weight loss drugs and how they interact with insurance coverage to determine if they are right for you.



New COVID-19 Variants May Lead to Increase in Summer Cases

The virus that causes COVID-19 continues to mutate, and a group of new variants referred to as “FLiRT” are on the rise in the United States as summer approaches. FLiRT includes a variant called KP.2, which the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes as the dominant strain in the country. KP.2 began accounting for the largest share of new cases at the end of April, outpacing the JN.1 variant that dominated during the winter.

The CDC doesn’t collect regular data on how COVID-19 symptoms evolve, so it’s difficult to assess whether illnesses caused by KP.2 look different. However, COVID-19 symptoms have remained generally consistent over the last couple of years: sore throat, congestion, sneezing, headaches, sore muscles, nausea and vomiting. In general, the more immunity you’ve built up from vaccination or past infections, the milder your next experience with the virus.

What Can You Do?

Since it’s too soon to know how the new variants will play out this summer, it’s still important to follow preventive measures, such as being up to date on COVID-19 vaccines and boosters. Furthermore, you could take an at-home COVID-19 test before attending a crowded event to ensure you’re not spreading the virus. This preventive measure could help protect those who may be most vulnerable, such as older adults and individuals who are immunocompromised.

If you are not feeling well and experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, staying home and getting tested is important. Fortunately, COVID-19 tests are readily available, making it easy to test yourself at home. If necessary, call your doctor for further medical care.



NHO



Learn more about three upcoming national health observances (NHOs) in this section.



July: UV Safety Awareness Month

During the summer months, it's time to get outside and enjoy the sunshine. But it's important to know that too much sun can negatively impact your body. Ultraviolet (UV) rays contain harmful radiation, and too much exposure can cause serious health issues, such as premature aging and skin cancer.

July is UV Safety Awareness Month. When the weather heats up, it's important to be aware of the impacts of UV exposure. To protect yourself, consider staying in the shade during the sun's peak hours, wearing protective clothing and using a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30.

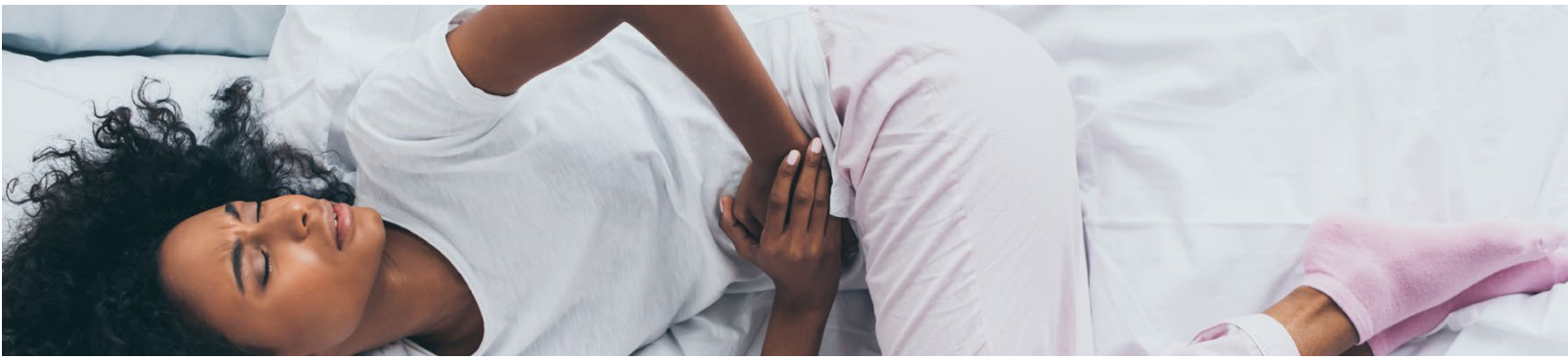
Check out aad.org to learn more about the risks of UV exposure and how you can best protect yourself.

August: Gastroparesis Awareness Month

Gastroparesis is a condition that affects the stomach muscles, preventing the stomach from emptying properly. It can cause indigestion, pain, bloating, heartburn and blood sugar fluctuations. Nearly 1 in 3 people who have diabetes develop gastroparesis, but it can also arise following surgery, with the use of certain medications or in association with another illness.

August is Gastroparesis Awareness Month. Healthy eating habits, such as eating small, nutritious meals and staying hydrated, can help prevent or manage gastroparesis. Use this month as a reminder to take an active role in your health.

Visit aboutgastroparesis.org to learn more about the condition.



September: National Recovery Month

Substance use disorder (SUD) is a treatable mental disorder that impacts an individual's brain and behavior, causing an inability to control the use of certain substances, such as drugs or alcohol. Millions of people struggle with SUDs and co-occurring mental disorders every year.

September is National Recovery Month. Recovering from addiction is a process of change that can improve wellness, increase control and help you reach your full potential. Use this month to reflect on your health and the goals you want to accomplish.

Visit facesandvoicesofrecovery.org to learn more about the observance and how to support individuals in your community.

Looking Ahead...

October

Health Literacy
Month

November

American Diabetes
Month

December

Safe Toys and Gifts
Awareness Month

Health and Wellness



Remain on top of the latest trends in health and wellness with the three articles in this section.



Foods Offering Natural Sun Protection

Diet is often overlooked in terms of how our bodies adapt to external environments during different seasons. Researchers at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center found that an enzyme that repairs UV-damaged skin has a daily cycle of production that can be altered by eating food at unusual times. That means if you have a normal eating schedule—for example, breakfast in the morning—you'll be better protected from UV during the daytime.

Researchers recommend incorporating the following skin-friendly foods early in the day:

- **Blueberries** are rich in antioxidants that combat free radicals that can damage skin due to sun exposure. Try a breakfast parfait made with layers of yogurt, blueberries and granola.
- **Watermelon** contains more lycopene than tomatoes, which often get attention. Lycopene absorbs UVA and UVB radiation, so enjoy watermelon slices or use the fruit as a salsa base.
- **Nuts and seeds**, including walnuts, hemp seeds, chia seeds and flax, contain omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3s are anti-inflammatory and also help maintain your skin's integrity. Trail mix is a great snack to have on hand.

- **Cauliflower** contains the alpha-amino acid histidine, which stimulates the production of urocanic acid that absorbs UV radiation. Incorporate cauliflower into a breakfast hash or skillet.
- **Carrots and leafy greens** are packed with beta-carotene, which our bodies turn into vitamin A. Antioxidant-rich leafy greens can also protect against wrinkling and sun damage. Mix carrots and leafy greens into your morning smoothie to reap the benefits all day.
- **Green tea** is rich in epigallocatechin gallate (also known as EGCG), which is associated with reduced inflammation. It's also been found to reduce skin damage from UVA light and protect against the decrease of collagen, which gives skin its firmness. Shake up your tea routine and try the beverage over ice.

While no food can replace the need for sunscreen and other sun-protection measures, incorporating these foods into your diet can bolster your skin's defenses against harmful UV rays.

What's on the 2024 "Dirty Dozen" List?

The Environmental Working Group (EWG) released its annual report ranking pesticide residue levels of fruits and vegetables based on samples taken by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the FDA. This report is designed to help consumers make healthy and informed choices and reduce their exposure to toxic pesticides.

The "Dirty Dozen" is a list of the most pesticide-tainted produce. The EWG reports that 75% of all conventional fresh produce sampled this year had residue of potentially harmful pesticides, with Dirty Dozen items containing 95% of samples containing pesticides. Here's the 2024 Dirty Dozen list:

1. Strawberries
2. Spinach
3. Kale, collard and mustard greens
4. Grapes
5. Peaches
6. Pears
7. Nectarines
8. Apples

9. Bell and hot peppers

10. Cherries

11. Blueberries

12. Green beans

In addition to the Dirty Dozen, the EWG publishes the "[Clean Fifteen](#)," highlighting the "cleanest" produce. Avocados and sweet corn continue to top the list.

Whether organic or not, all properly handled fresh produce is considered safe to eat, so don't let the Dirty Dozen scare you away. Do your best to get your daily dose of healthy fruits and vegetables while still being an informed shopper. Frozen or canned versions can be a great alternative if you're still uneasy about pesticides after scrubbing your produce. Ultimately, it comes down to finding what works best for your household and budget.



Outdoor Workout Safety Tips

Beyond aiding in weight loss, regular exercise can boost your mood and reduce your risk of chronic disease. As the weather starts to warm up, it's the perfect time to take your exercise regimen out of the gym and soak up some vitamin D.

Exercise of any kind may enhance your physical and mental well-being, but in particular, outdoor exercise can provide additional benefits you may not have thought of. Working out in nature can alleviate negative feelings, enhance immune function, sharpen your mind, improve sleep quality and strengthen social bonds.

Before heading outside, set yourself up for a successful and safe workout. Consider these tips to ensure you remain safe during outdoor workouts:

- Check the weather forecast to ensure conditions are safe for outdoor exercise, avoiding extreme heat or cold and severe weather.
- Avoid exercising during the hottest part of the day, typically between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Wear comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing and supportive shoes. Lightweight, loose-fitting clothes allow air to circulate and keep you cool. Reflective clothing can also help keep you safe and visible, especially around dawn and dusk.
- Bring a water bottle and take regular sips to stay hydrated—whether you're thirsty or not.
- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher, and reapply every two hours or after sweating or swimming.
- Use insect repellent to ward off mosquitoes, ticks and other bugs.
- Do warm-up exercises (e.g., light jogging, stretches or jumping jacks) to activate your central nervous system, get your blood flowing and reduce your risk of injury.
- Inform a trusted friend or family member about your plans and when they can expect you back if you're exercising alone.
- Bring your phone and ensure it has enough charge to call for assistance if you get lost on a trail, suddenly feel unwell or get injured.
- Carry some form of identification, such as an ID bracelet or a card with your name, emergency contact information and any relevant medical details.
- Avoid blasting music or podcasts on your earphones. This helps you hear any oncoming cars, people and other potential hazards.
- Stop and rest if you feel dizzy, lightheaded or nauseous during exercise. Pushing through discomfort can lead to injury or heat-related illness.

Incorporating outdoor workouts into your regimen, whether at a park, a trail or your neighborhood streets, is a step toward a holistic approach to fitness and overall wellness. Always speak with your health care provider before beginning a new exercise program.



Recipes



Try out these two healthy recipes from the USDA's MyPlate Kitchen website.

Yogurt Berry Parfait

Makes: 4 servings



Ingredients

2 cups low-fat or fat-free yogurt (any flavor)
1 cup banana (sliced)
½ cup fresh blueberries
½ cup fresh strawberries (sliced)
Other optional fruits, such as raspberries, peaches, pineapple or mangos
1 cup granola

Directions

- 1 | Line up four parfait or other tall glasses.
- 2 | Spoon ½ cup of yogurt into each glass.
- 3 | Sprinkle with granola.
- 4 | Top with about ¼ cup of fruit.

Nutritional Information (per serving)

Calories	304
Total fat	9 g
Saturated fat	2 g
Cholesterol	6 mg
Sodium	89 mg
Carbohydrate	46 g
Dietary fiber	5 g
Total sugars	30 g
Added sugars included	11 g
Protein	11 g
Vitamin D	1 mcg
Calcium	240 mg
Iron	2 mg
Potassium	613 mg

Roasted Cauliflower Steaks

Makes: 6 servings



Ingredients

1 head medium cauliflower
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
2 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. garlic powder
½ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. ground black pepper
½ tsp. paprika (optional)
¼ cup grated parmesan cheese (optional)

Nutritional Information (per serving)

Calories	48
Total fat	3 g
Saturated fat	0 g
Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	224 mg
Carbohydrate	6 g
Dietary fiber	2 g
Total sugars	2 g
Added sugars included	0 g
Protein	2 g
Vitamin D	0 mcg
Calcium	23 mg
Iron	0 mg
Potassium	306 mg

Directions

- 1| Preheat oven to 400 F and lightly grease a large baking sheet.
- 2| Slice cauliflower from top to bottom through the core into 1- to 1 ½-inch-thick steaks. Place steaks and end pieces on the baking sheet, flat side down.
- 3| In a small bowl, mix the rest of the ingredients except the cheese.
- 4| Spread half of the mixture on the cauliflower steaks. Roast for 20 minutes.
- 5| Remove the baking sheet from the oven, carefully turn the steaks and spread on the rest of the mixture. Roast for 15-20 minutes or until the cauliflower is browned and tender.
- 6| Sprinkle with cheese, if desired, and serve.