

Welcome to the winter 2025 edition of the Keystone Accountable Care Organization (ACO) newsletter!

We thank those of you who have offered us feedback on our newsletters and invite all of you to do the same. Inform us of any health-related topics you'd like to see in our next editions by emailing keystoneaco@keystoneaco.org.

February: American Heart Health Month



This is a great time to think about your heart health habits — and ways to improve them. Try these simple tips from Geisinger cardiologist George Ruiz, MD. With just 1 or 2 a week, you'll be well on your way to a healthier heart.

Schedule preventive screenings:

- Mammograms
- Eye exam
- Annual wellness visit
- Colonoscopies
- Dental visits
- Updated annual vaccines for flu and COVID

Week 1

- **Step away from the salt.** Use other seasonings and herbs as salt substitutes and steer clear of high sodium processed and fast foods.
- **Opt for a flu shot.** If you have heart disease, catching the flu is risky.
- **Take your medicine.** Follow your doctor's instructions and don't take any that have been prescribed to someone else.
- **Skip the elevator.** Take the stairs instead to build exercise into your day-to-day routine.

Week 2

- **Move more often.** Exercise for 30 minutes a day to keep your heart strong and healthy. It could be as simple as walking.
- **Limit alcohol consumption** to one to two beverages a day.
- **Manage that AFib.** Talk to a doc if you have AFib — there are new ways to reduce the health risks with medication or devices.
- **Have your blood pressure checked** regularly at your doctor's office. Medications can help keep it in a healthy range.

Week 3

- **Know your cholesterol numbers.** A simple blood test can tell you your cholesterol levels. Your doctor will analyze your risk profile and decide if medication is needed.
- **Clear the air.** Quitting smoking is the best way to improve your health.
- **Watch your weight.** Staying close to an ideal body weight reduces stress on your heart and joints.
- **Get hooked on fish.** It's lower in the saturated fats that clog arteries.

Week 4

- **Un-friend frying.** While fried foods can be delicious, they're less healthy than foods prepared in other ways.
- **Tune up your snacks.** Stock the kitchen with healthy choices (think fruit or nuts) to grab when you have the urge to snack.
- **Take a history lesson.** Find out if heart disease runs in your family — and if so, tell your healthcare provider.
- **Snag some shut eye.** Shoot for 7 to 8 hours of sleep every night and set a specific time to go to bed.

Heart health word find

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. Aorta | 6. Cardiology | 11. Pulmonary |
| 2. Artery | 7. Circulation | 12. Septum |
| 3. Atrium | 8. Heart | 13. Valve |
| 4. Blood | 9. Heartbeat | 14. Vein |
| 5. Bloodstream | 10. Oxygen | |

M P U Y B X S J Z W X T Q P P V J P R S R E L I
N W L X J W A W D L B V M D J F D G J E V L H K
P I F H J O V Y Y O C G B V E I N T Z L P E M M
H G C Y M W W P M L O S I R S B X W D F A Y T V
K X C H G D V M U D S L V B E F H N I R A T A N
S S S D Z O Q R N M Z V B X P Q D B T K Z D N J
U M G B Y K L L O J P G M I T X W B X I H T O S
J K C U E J D O D W C P U F U S E X G B I J I D
C A L Q A V N V I K D U I M M A L X R H J O T E
H O Y C C M R K J D P S R F T U T J C Z H I A M
U R H O D M A T Q S R P T R I G X E H G M M L V
P T P H W T B E F B Y A A Q J Z N X H N N C U I
U A T B X R B I R P G P C Y C H G E B X S M C A
O B E F E V R V M T U F X S T U Y A D M B N R C
X M O E N B E V M G S L L E M W E E E L C M I L
S I H U C V C S L Z V D M Q V R J G W S R Q C D
D T N C A N Z J S K L V O O T L I C Z E A V T O
P Z R F H D N R Q E H C K O N Y A I T I D K U N
C R G A I C E A L W L S W R L A A V W D H T A F
M C H E E N G F R S S T M R I B R D D L P T A T
C V W K B H Y H U T Q W B L O R G Y P U A U I Z
F T I U Y B X H G L E X R F P X O K P L S S G W
L F L O X I O A J B V R L P F U B X U I Z U S I
R H P Q L K R U F W N R Y T Z V H G F Q S X V P



March: Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Screening for colorectal cancer: What are the options?

If caught early, colorectal cancer is highly treatable. The key is screening.

“Regular screenings are so important in detecting colorectal cancer or precancerous lesions early,” says Joshua Obuch, MD, Geisinger gastroenterologist and director of endoscopy at Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center. “There are several options available for screening, each with its own pros and cons.”

What is colorectal cancer, and what causes it?

Colorectal cancer develops when abnormal cells in the colon or rectum grow out of control and form a tumor. If left untreated, colorectal cancer can spread to other parts of the body and be potentially fatal.

Risk factors include age, family history, personal history of certain conditions (e.g., inflammatory bowel disease), lifestyle choices (e.g., diet, smoking) and race/ethnicity. While some of these factors can’t be changed, others can be managed.

Symptoms

The most common type of colorectal cancer is adenocarcinoma, which begins in the cells lining the colon or rectum. Other less common types include squamous cell carcinoma, mucinous adenocarcinoma and signet ring cell carcinoma. Often, colon cancer doesn’t have symptoms until it’s become very advanced. When symptoms of colorectal cancer are present, they can vary depending on the location and stage of the tumor. Some common symptoms include:

- Blood in the stool or rectal bleeding
- A change in bowel habits, such as diarrhea or constipation
- Abdominal pain or cramping
- Weakness and fatigue
- Unexplained weight loss

If you have any of these symptoms, see your doctor.

Screening

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| ✓ Colonoscopies | ✓ Stool testing |
| ✓ Flexible sigmoidoscopies | ✓ Virtual colonoscopies |

What are the signs of common thyroid disorders?

The thyroid, a butterfly-shaped organ at the front of your throat, produces hormones that regulate body functions like your heart rate, body weight and cholesterol.

An underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism) is the most common thyroid disorder. Hormones in your body will start to slow down and you may have symptoms including:

- Brittle nails
- Depression
- Dry skin or hair
- Fatigue
- Forgetfulness
- Muscle cramps
- Changes in menstrual flow
- Slowing of your bowels or constipation
- Weight gain despite your best efforts to lose weight

If you have an overactive thyroid, you may have symptoms such as:

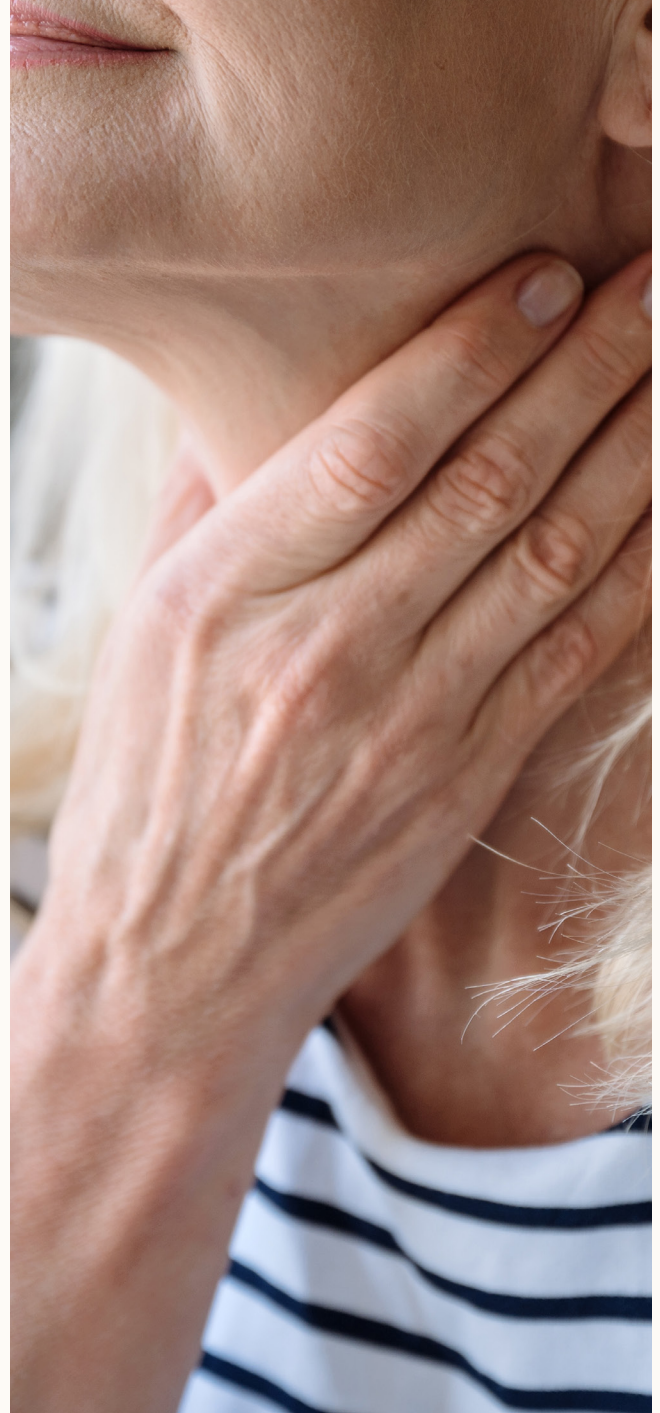
- Anxiety, nervousness and irritability
- Changes in bowel habits and loose stools
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling hot and sweating
- Problems falling asleep (insomnia)
- Racing heart and palpitations
- Weight loss (un-intentional)

What signs might mean thyroid cancer?

Thyroid cancer doesn't typically show symptoms in the earliest stages. Still, look out for:

- A lump in your throat that you can feel through your skin
- Constant coughing, non-related to a cold
- Difficulty swallowing or breathing
- Hoarseness or other changes in your voice
- Pain in your neck or throat
- Swelling in your neck or neck's lymph nodes

Thyroid cancer risks include exposures to high levels of radiation and inherited syndromes.



What does treatment look like?

Treatment for thyroid cancer often requires surgery. After surgery, hormone medication is prescribed for life.

There are several treatments for overactive and underactive thyroids, including medications that can reduce symptoms or help your body produce the right amount of hormones.



Healthy lasagna

Prep: 45 min. Bake: 70 min.

Ingredients:

- 1 pound extra-lean ground beef (95% lean)
- 1 package (14 ounces) breakfast turkey sausage links, casings removed and crumbled
- 3 cans (8 ounces each) no-salt-added tomato sauce
- 1 can (6 ounces) tomato paste
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 9 whole wheat lasagna noodles
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 cups 2% cottage cheese
- 1 carton (15 ounces) reduced-fat ricotta cheese
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 1 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 6 slices provolone cheese
- Additional minced fresh parsley

1. In a large skillet, cook the beef and sausage until the meat is no longer pink. Drain and discard excess grease. Add the tomato sauce, tomato paste, garlic, sugar, Italian seasoning and pepper. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer. Cover and cook for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, cook the noodles according to the package directions. Drain and set aside.
2. In a small bowl, combine the eggs, cottage cheese, ricotta cheese, Parmesan and parsley. Spread 1 cup meat sauce into a 13x9-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. Layer with 3 noodles, half of the cheese mixture, 1 cup sauce and ½ cup mozzarella cheese. Repeat layers.
3. Cover and bake at 350° for 1 hour or until bubbly. Top with provolone and remaining mozzarella cheese. Bake, uncovered, 15 – 20 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Let stand for 15 minutes before cutting. Sprinkle with additional parsley.

Nutrition Facts:

1 piece: 349 calories, 14g fat (7g saturated fat), 119mg cholesterol, 571mg sodium, 23g carbohydrate (9g sugars, 3g fiber), 30g protein.

Selecting a primary care provider

Medicare beneficiaries may select their primary care provider (PCP) on the medicare.gov website. A how-to video is on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/AZ7h-rqshG4>. A Spanish-language version is available in conjunction with the Spanish language Medicare.gov site, es.medicare.gov/. The direct link to the Spanish video is <https://youtu.be/baCO37UqJHU>.

Keystone ACO attends local events



Luzerne County Senior Expo: Sept. 26

Diakon Senior Expo: Oct. 15

Elan Skilled Nursing and Rehab Health Fair: Nov. 6

Geisinger Wellness Events

Event	Start	End	Location	Day	Time
Chronic Self-Management Program	1/16/2025	2/27/2025	Virtual	Thursday	10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
A Matter of Balance	1/31/2025	3/28/2025	Virtual	Friday	10 a.m. – Noon
Chronic Self-Management Program	2/24/2025	4/7/2025	Virtual	Monday	1 – 3:30 p.m.
A Matter of Balance	3/18/2025	5/6/2025	65 Forward-Milton*	Tuesday	1 – 3 p.m.

To register for these free programs, visit events.geisinger.org or call 866-415-7138 (PA Relay 711).

* Must be 65 or older to attend.



What is advanced care planning?

It's all about expressing your values and wishes for healthcare if you ever can't consent to or refuse treatment.

Why now?

Life is unpredictable. Planning now will make your wishes known if your loved ones are faced with a difficult healthcare decision.

Who will speak for you?

Choose an advocate who can make health and personal care decisions on your behalf when you can't. Pick someone you trust and who can be there if you need them. Your advocate can only make decisions when you can't do it.

Legal paperwork

Complete the legal paperwork required that will need to be signed by you, witnesses and a notary. Share a copy of your Advanced Care Plan with your family/friends and your provider care team.

Our administrative team



*Janet Comrey,
Operations Director*



*Cindy Yeager,
Data and Quality
Manager*



*Kaitlyn Huttman,
Senior Clinical
Practice
Transformation
Coordinator*



*Annette Wilson,
Practice
Transformation
Coordinator*



*Theresa Cosgrove,
Administrative
Assistant*



*Dr. Richard Martin
Senior Clinical
Advisor*

To reach us: Call 570-271-6403 or email keystoneaco@keystoneaco.org



Need help affording your medications?

Programs are available for those who meet financial requirements, and some pharmaceutical companies offer reduced pricing on certain drugs based on financial need. Call 570-808-4704 for help.



Neighborly

If you or someone you know needs information about local social resources, Neighborly is here to help. This online network helps you connect to free and reduced-cost programs and services, including food, housing, childcare, transportation, utility assistance, education, healthcare, legal services and financial assistance. Go to neighborlypa.com.

While on the site, you can also download the NeighborlyPA mobile app.

If you no longer wish to receive our newsletter, email keystoneaco@keystoneaco.org and request to be removed from our distribution list. Be sure to include the name and address of the person to be removed.



Keystone Accountable Care Organization, LLC
M.C. 30-55
100 N. Academy Ave. Danville, PA 17822

Phone: 570-271-6403

Fax: 570-214-1314

E-mail: keystoneaco@keystoneaco.org

Website: keystoneaco.org

Medicare resources

To contact Medicare for additional information on accountable care organizations, contact Medicare at 800-Medicare (800-633-4227) and ask for the Medicare ACO Department. TTY users should call 877-486-2048. You may also visit medicare.gov/acos.html

To contact Keystone ACO, call 570-271-6403. You will be offered options to connect you to the appropriate person. You can also email us at keystoneaco@keystoneaco.org

