



Message from the CEO

Carol Carew, RN, BSN, MBA

January is a time of renewal for many of us. Whether we want to kick a smoking habit, eat better, lose weight, or be kinder and gentler to ourselves, we tend to make big goals and hope for the best.

No doubt about it. Change is hard. And sometimes we can be “all or nothing” creatures with extreme expectations of ourselves.

So, this year, try making SMART goals. SMART stands for:

- Specific – What exactly will you do? Use details: “I will eat healthier by including fruits and vegetables at most meals.”
- Measurable – how will you evaluate your progress? Use numbers: “I will exercise 30 minutes, 3 days per week over the next 2 weeks”
- Attainable/Achievable – Is your goal realistic? Making changes takes time. Use small goals you feel mostly confident you are able to achieve.
- Relevant – Does this goal truly matter to you – now, and in the future?
- Time bound – Identify a time-frame for achieving your goal: “By January 15, I will quit smoking.”

Remember, your primary care provider is here to help you with your goals. You will also find many additional resources within reach to help you. For example, the Maine QuitLink at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or www.mainequitlink.com can help you create a plan to quit tobacco, and get you the tools you need.

If eating healthier and losing weight is a goal, check out Choose My Plate at <https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-plan>

Choose My Plate takes the guess work out of how to eat the right foods in the right portions. There is even an app for your phone to help you be successful. And there is a quiz to determine how many calories you should eat to successfully lose weight.

Also, if you haven’t already, start the new year protected. Get a COVID booster (or your initial doses if you haven’t already) along with a flu shot. You can get them at the same time. Visit our website or www.maine.gov/covid19/vaccines to find a clinic.

Carol

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month - the perfect time to spread the word glaucoma

This year, add learning about glaucoma to your list of resolutions! Your eyes will thank you for it.

Glaucoma can cause vision loss and blindness, which can't be reversed. Glaucoma causes fluid to build up in your eye, causing pressure that can damage the optic nerve, which transfers visual images to your brain. But, you can save your vision with early detection and treatment.

There are no early symptoms. Glaucoma often has no early warning signs. No pain. No discomfort. No blurry vision. Only advanced glaucoma will affect your vision. And in the United States, half the people who have glaucoma don't know they do. Nearly 3 million Americans have glaucoma.

Some people are at higher risk than others. African Americans over 40, adults over 60 - especially Hispanics/Latinos, and people with a family history of glaucoma are at higher risk, making early detection especially important.

Are you at higher risk?

Talk to your family about glaucoma. There is only one way to know if you have glaucoma. Getting a comprehensive dilated eye exam is the only way to find out if you have glaucoma.

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- Greeter, temporary position
- Patient Scheduler Behavioral Health, part-time
- Practice Manager (Bucksport), full-time
- Dentist, per diem
- Medical Director, full time
- Behavioral Health Therapist (LCSW) Bucksport & Ellsworth, full-time
- Medical Assistant, Bucksport & Ellsworth, full-time
- Human Resources Generalist, part-time

COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics

Please check our Facebook and website for upcoming COVID vaccine clinics.

January is Thyroid Awareness Month

Source: CDC www.cdc.gov/cancer/thyroid

The thyroid gland is a powerhouse in our bodies. It is located in front of the neck and looks kind of like a butterfly with one wing on each side of the neck. The thyroid is important in many ways for keeping your body healthy. It sends out certain chemicals (hormones) that help control many activities in the body, such as breathing and pumping blood. It also helps children’s bodies develop as they grow, such as getting taller and putting on muscle. The thyroid also helps control weight and other functions.

Thyroid Cancer

While scientists are unsure what causes thyroid cancer, there are some things that may make getting thyroid cancer more likely. These include:

- Getting too much radiation around the neck area, especially when you are young.
- Having certain genetic conditions inherited from parents.

Symptoms of Thyroid Cancer

- A lump or swelling on the side of the neck is the most common symptom.
- Having trouble breathing.
- Having trouble swallowing.
- Having a hoarse voice.

But these symptoms can be caused by other conditions so if you are experiencing any of them, talk to your primary care provider right away. It is very important that you don’t ignore them and hope they go away. Don’t wait until the symptoms get worse.

How Can I Reduce My Risk for Thyroid Cancer?

To lower the risk of thyroid cancer, avoid unnecessary exposure to radiation, including radiation from medical imaging procedures, especially in young children, and especially around the head and neck.

Glaucoma

From front page

During the exam, an eye care professional places drops in your eyes to widen the pupils and looks for signs of the disease in the optic nerve.

Now that you've got the facts about glaucoma, make a resolution for healthier vision. Schedule a comprehensive dilated eye exam today! To learn more about glaucoma, visit www.nei.nih.gov/glaucoma.

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

Source:

www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/resources/features/cervicalcancer

Getting screened regularly, starting at age 21, can reduce the risk of cervical cancer.

Screening Tests

- The Pap test (or Pap smear) looks for precancers, which are cell changes on the cervix that might become cervical cancer if they are not treated appropriately.
- The human papillomavirus (HPV) test looks for the virus that can cause these cell changes.

Symptoms

Cervical cancer may not cause signs and symptoms early on, but once advanced, symptoms can include bleeding or discharge from the vagina that is not normal for you, such as bleeding after sex.

If you have any of these signs, see your doctor. These symptoms may be caused by something other than cancer, but the only way to know is to see your provider.

Word Search - January Fun!

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| Skiing | Ice Fishing | Snowshoeing |
| Ice Skating | Shoveling | Sledding |
| Snowboarding | Plowing | Snow Angel |
| Fort Building | Hockey | Snow Tubing |
| Snowball Fight | Wreath Making | Catch Snowflakes |

