

QUALITY OF LIFE *from*

FALL/WINTER 2018

aiken regional

MEDICAL CENTERS



A journey of *hope*

Susan Mars shares
her story of survival

INSIDE:

**Men's health and
cancer screenings**

What you need to know

**Could you have
seasonal depression?**

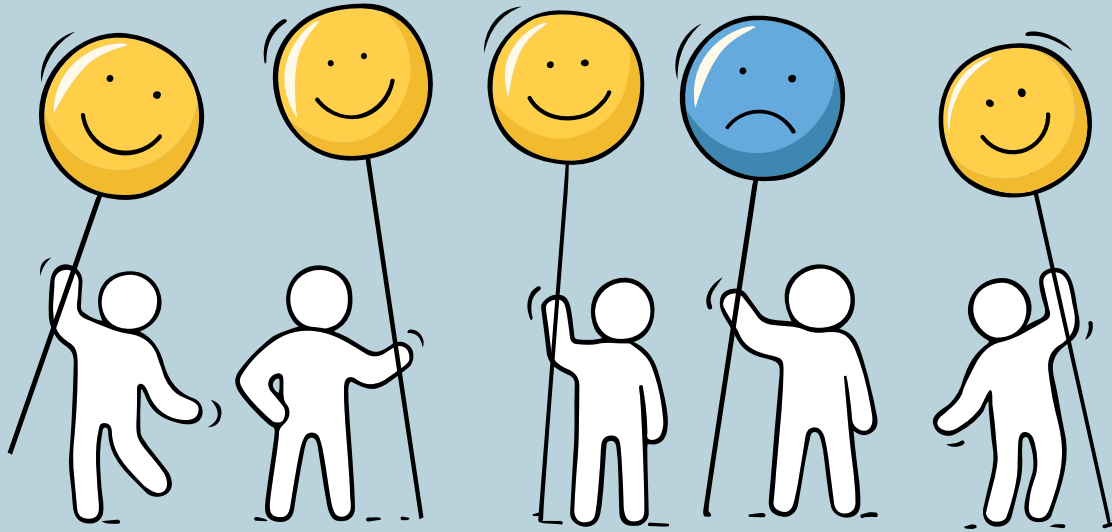
Learn the symptoms

Compliments of

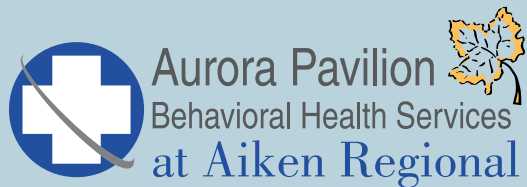


Aiken Regional
MEDICAL CENTERS

1 in 5 adults experience mental illness



Free crisis assessments
Monday - Sunday, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.
24/7 with RESPOND team of professionals
803-641-5900 or 800-273-7911



Source: National Institute of Mental Health

Physicians are on the medical staff of Aiken Regional Medical Centers, but, with limited exceptions, are independent practitioners who are not employees or agents of Aiken Regional Medical Centers. The hospital shall not be liable for actions or treatments provided by physicians. For language assistance, disability accommodations and the non-discrimination notice, visit our website.

BETTER *health.* BETTER *life.*



There has been quite a flurry of activity here at Aiken Regional Medical Centers. For starters, the hospital was awarded a Safety Score of “A” from The Leapfrog Group, an independent healthcare rating organization. They rank 2,600 U.S. hospitals on patient safety records and their performance in preventing infections, medical errors and other potential items that could harm patients. In addition, we also received a three-year reaccreditation by The Joint Commission, along with many compliments for our safety processes and culture of transparency.

We are proud to offer care for every generation as we continue to expand our services. We cover many aspects of care, from health and nutrition, to men’s health, seniors, mental health, youth athletics and orthopedic injuries, and we work with employers in the community to keep their employees healthy.

In that regard, we are excited to announce that we will be expanding care for the Aiken region when we open our first urgent care facility, Aiken Urgent Care, located on Highway-1 in Midland Valley. We expect this facility to begin serving the community sometime in early 2019. And we also acquired the Surgery Center of Aiken, a local surgery center for those needing outpatient procedures.

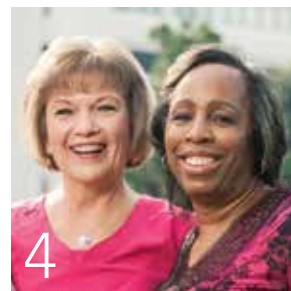
As we head into the holiday hustle and bustle, we often forget to take a breather for ourselves. So keep that in mind the next time you are running around – it’s okay, in fact it’s necessary – to push the “pause” button.

We are fortunate to be part of such a giving and supportive community. We thank you for continuing to trust us to care for you and your loved ones. Enjoy the rest of 2018 and we look forward to providing great patient experiences in 2019.

All the best,

Matt Merrifield

Chief Operating Officer



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all under one roof

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Senior Wellness

The Cancer Care Institute of Carolina

Helping women win the battle against breast cancer

A diagnosis of breast cancer is life altering, stressful, and filled with uncertainty. But at the Cancer Care Institute of Carolina (CCIC), personalized support is available to help guide women through their journey.

When a woman hears from the doctor, "You have breast cancer," her life changes instantly. The challenges of what lie ahead can be daunting. But at the CCIC, Breast Health Nurse Navigator Carolyn Cook, RN, is a beacon of light and acts as a patient advocate, tracking test results and treatments. In addition, she

reviews the family history for breast cancer or other cancers in case the patient decides to pursue genetic testing. Cook says one of the most important decisions that patients make is where to have their treatment. "Everything the patient needs is here under one roof. We create comprehensive, personalized treatment plans and use advanced technology," says Cook. "Be it chemotherapy, radiation, or both, having treatment here is comforting to patients because it is close to home."

The CCIC also works closely with several local agencies to offer emotional, financial and other support. Cook explains that CanHope and Lydia's Project help to provide rides to and from treatment, overnight accommodations, and more. Other services available at the CCIC include diagnostic imaging, pain management, physical therapy, nutrition and wound care.

Cook is passionate about raising awareness of their services and helping people through the process. "I love offering hope and encouragement to my patients, whether they are just starting their treatment, having surgery, or ringing the bell at the conclusion of their treatment," says Cook. "I am with them, supporting them all the way!" ■

To learn more, visit aikenregional.com/ccic.



Breast Health Nurse Navigator Carolyn Cook, RN, guides women in their battle against breast cancer.

CCIC also has an on-site boutique that carries an assortment of supplies for both prior to and during treatment, as well as post-surgery.

A breast cancer survivor's journey begins with one step

Hope. It's what gets many survivors through the process. Susan Mars shares her journey – one filled with faith, hope, determination and gratitude for the support she received from The Cancer Care Institute of Carolina and Aiken Regional Medical Centers.

I always had my mammogram regularly, and then I started having diagnostic mammograms and ultrasounds due to problems with my left breast. I also had several biopsies. This went on for years. In 2016, the radiologist suggested I have an MRI, followed by a biopsy. It came back positive and I was diagnosed with stage two breast cancer.

I decided on a double mastectomy, followed by four rounds of chemotherapy, which began in January 2017 and ended in March 2017. I work at the Women's Breast Health & Imaging Center, so I have been encouraged by the strength and courage of other women. I am blessed with a great support system - my husband and family, and also my ARMC family! The Bible was also of great comfort to me because it gave me hope for a better life.

Cancer does not know age or race, so do what you can to protect yourself and get your yearly mammogram. If you are diagnosed with breast cancer, do your homework, talk with your family and make a choice that will benefit all of you. Our choice was to have everything done right here. It starts with a team – the mammogram tech, the radiologist, the surgeon, the nurse, my family, my spiritual family, my ARMC family and the patients - they all encouraged me to continue to fight to win the battle against breast cancer. I look forward to when cancer will be in the past and we will all be healthy and free of pain. ■



Is it time for your yearly mammogram?

Sign up now to get your annual reminder. Visit us at aikenregional.com/mammogram.





The digital advantage at the Women's Breast Health and Imaging Center

Helping detect breast cancer earlier

The region's first dedicated freestanding women's imaging center offers many great advantages, but one of the top features is the all-digital mammography imaging, which can help detect breast cancer at early stages, when it's most treatable. Mammography Supervisor Lisa Hill, RT (R)(M)(CT) explains that digital mammography provides sharper, more detailed images and can help radiologists see smaller calcifications as compared to traditional film images.

Hill says that annual screening mammograms are important for early detection of possible breast cancer. "A mammogram should be part of a woman's yearly wellness checkup starting at age 40. We have a reminder program that lets women know it's time to make an appointment to come in," she says. "We know life gets busy, but this is one appointment that can save their life."

Patients are welcomed by an all-female staff, consisting of certified mammography technicians, a breast health nurse navigator and board-certified radiologists and surgeons. Services include diagnostic mammograms, routine X-rays, bone density scans and stereotactic biopsies. ■

An annual scan could save your life

Mammograms are a clinician's most powerful tool to detect breast cancer. Recent updates to guidelines by the American Cancer Society recommend that women with a family history of breast or other cancers should talk to their physician about starting annual scans in their 30s.

What to expect during a mammogram

- The exam only takes about 20 to 30 minutes
- You'll undress from the waist up and remove any deodorant, powder or jewelry that might interfere with the scan
- The technologist will mark nipples and any moles and scars before the scan
- You'll stand while the mammography machine applies compression and takes images from different angles
- After the images are captured, the technologist will explain how you'll receive the results

Visit the Women's Breast Health and Imaging Center at aikenregional.com/breastcenter.

PROUD TO SERVE THE WOMEN IN OUR COMMUNITY



The staff at the Women's Breast Health and Imaging Center offers a range of diagnostic and imaging services to help you maintain breast health. Services include digital mammography, breast MRI and ultrasound and stereotactic breast biopsy.

Are you due for a screening?

Call 803-641-5808 to schedule an appointment.



Women's Breast Health
& Imaging Center 
at Aiken Regional



Playing it safe | Staying on top of sports injuries



R. Vaughan Massie, MD

When playing sports, there is always the risk of injury, especially in high-contact sports such as soccer, football, lacrosse, basketball and baseball. But athletes can minimize their chances of injury by following safety guidelines and directives from their coaches. To maintain the best possible condition and make sure they are fit to play, athletes should first have an annual physical, according to board-certified orthopedist R. Vaughan Massie, MD, who treats sports injuries.

Injury prevention

Dr. Massie, who completed a fellowship in sports medicine, says common injuries include strains and sprains, fractures and ligament tears. With many athletes playing a sport throughout the year instead of just one season, it means repeated stress on joints, muscles and ligaments, which can lead to stress fractures from chronic overuse. To avoid this, the athlete can change their training routine or alternate with a different sport, which uses different muscles.

"Warming up, stretching and cooling down also help prevent injuries, as does following the techniques learned in training," says Dr. Massie. "And athletes should always use the safety equipment appropriate for their sport." Hydration is also essential, especially in hot weather. And getting adequate rest and eating a balanced diet fuels the body and helps it recover.

Dr. Massie and other orthopedists volunteer on the sidelines of local high school football games and USC Aiken games to assist with evaluating and treating injuries right on the spot. "The best thing is to be there and see the injury as it happens, so we know what to look for at the follow-up exam," he says.

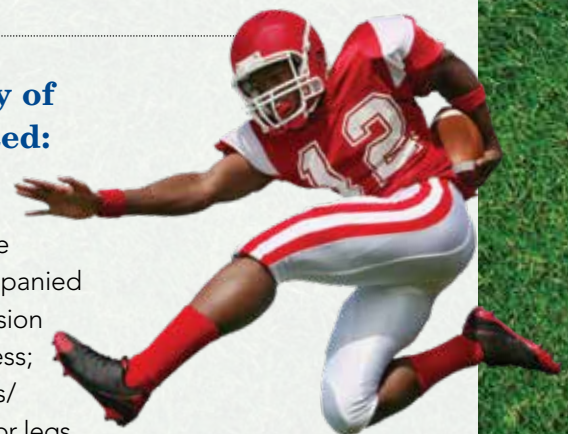
Fractures and younger athletes

Growth plate injuries are something to be aware of as young children are growing. Dr. Massie says any joint is susceptible, especially from chronic overuse, stress fractures or trauma injuries. "Fractures are more common in and around the growth plates," he says. "If an injury is not treated quickly and appropriately, it can result in growth arrest and affect them for life." ■

Learn more at aikenregional.com/joints.

If an athlete sustains an injury and experiences any of the following symptoms, a doctor should be consulted:

- Joint instability, locking or swelling
- Deformity in the legs, arms or joints
- Pain that does not go away, or interferes with sleep or daily activities
- Numbness, tingling, weakness or pain that travels down the arms or legs
- Any symptoms of possible concussion, which can include headaches, especially if accompanied by vomiting, sleepiness, confusion or seizure; loss of consciousness; garbled speech; or numbness/tingling/weakness in the arms or legs



Incorporating health programs in the workplace

The Business and Industry Health Clinic partners with local Aiken employers to provide wellness and healthcare services to employees.



Darren Waters,
MPH, BA, RN

The clinic offers physicals for pre-employment, as well as new-hire, fit-for-duty, return-to-work and annual physicals; audiometry; vision testing; hair and urine drug testing and many other services.

Darren Waters, MPH, BA, RN, Director of Outpatient Services, says employees for the City of Aiken, Aiken County and over 60 other employers are benefiting. "The workplace wellness programs can help keep employees healthy through preventive care offerings, which means less sick days and savings on health insurance premiums and copays," he says. Employers couldn't agree more.

"The partnership with Aiken Regional Medical Centers (ARMC) has been very beneficial for the City," says Stuart Bedenbaugh, City Manager for the City of Aiken. "Preventive and wellness care leads

to a healthier and more productive workforce, while improving the quality of life for our employees by diagnosing and treating chronic health conditions in their early stages and encouraging a healthy lifestyle. In addition, treating these health conditions early saves money," he says.

people. We provide health screenings for our employees through ARMC, and several employees believe this program has saved their lives," he says. "In many other instances, minor health issues were addressed before they could have become major problems for our employees."

"This is an investment in the workforce that all leaders should consider for their organizations."

- Chris Verenes, Chief Executive Officer at Security Federal Bank

Chris Verenes, Chief Executive Officer at Security Federal Bank, says his company's longstanding partnership with ARMC's Business & Industry Health has made them a better company. "The best thing a company can do is to take care of its most important asset—its

Waters explains that he meets with the employer to determine their needs and set up the programs that will work best for them and their employees. "Working with employers to help their employees stay healthy is a win-win," he says. ■



To learn more about custom employee wellness programs, visit aikenregional.com/bih.

Men and preventive health



Asif Hashmi, MD



Brent Slack,
Manager of CCIC

Meeting with your doctor can help save your life. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that if everyone in the U.S. received the recommended clinical preventive care, more than 100,000 lives could be saved.

Asif Hashmi, MD, who practices internal medicine, says that the purpose of screenings is to catch problems at an early stage, when they are most treatable. "Start with an annual wellness check up and go from there. Your health involves a two-prong approach - screenings and immunizations," he says. "You should discuss with your doctor what is appropriate for you, according to your age, previous medical history and family medical


history." Your doctor is also a great resource for guidance on interventional healthcare, such as smoking cessation, weight loss, cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes.

Cancer screenings are also important. The Cancer Care Institute of Carolina (CCIC) offers free prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood screening for prostate cancer. Director of CCIC Brent Slack says the test measures the level of PSA, and any man can go to the CCIC and get an order for blood work. "They simply take the order to the first floor laboratory at Aiken Regional to have their blood drawn and a physician will contact them with the results," says Slack.

Another important cancer screening tool is the colonoscopy. The test allows doctors to examine the lining of the colon and rectum for polyps or cancer. By finding and removing polyps early, colon cancer may be prevented. The Endoscopy Center at Aiken Regional Medical Centers conveniently offers this procedure. Check with your doctor for a referral to schedule your colonoscopy today. ■

**Learn more about colonoscopies at aikenregional.com/colonoscopy.
At risk for prostate cancer? Learn more at aikenregional.com/psarisk.**



A photograph of two men walking towards the camera. The man on the left is older, with glasses, wearing a light blue cardigan over a green shirt and dark trousers. The man on the right is younger, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt and dark trousers. They are both smiling. The background is a bright, abstract geometric pattern in shades of blue and white.

Regular screenings can be early detectors of disease and are an important part of protecting your health – now and in the future

GENERAL SCREENINGS

Annual wellness physical

- Review overall health and any needed immunizations, including a yearly flu shot
- Your doctor may order lab work to check cholesterol, blood sugar or other levels

Annual skin exam

- Full body check for moles, lesions or suspicious marks
- Review of family history of skin cancer and preventive measures

CANCER SCREENINGS

Prostate cancer

- Beginning at age 50, men should get the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test as well as digital rectal exam
- African-American males and males with a family history of prostate cancer should begin screening at age 45

Lung cancer

- Recommended for current smokers; non-smokers with a history of smoking one pack daily for 30 years; or smokers who quit within the last 15 years
- Low-dose CT scan for men and women beginning at age 55

Colorectal cancer

- Screening is recommended every 10 years, starting at age 50 for men and women at average risk, and at age 45 for African Americans
- If you have a family history of colon cancer, your doctor may recommend screening sooner

Cancer screenings source: American Cancer Society

Making smart food choices during the holiday season

Eat healthy now and reap the benefits long into the new year

The holidays are here and with them come the multitude of family dinners and parties laden with not-so-healthy food and drinks. But eating mindfully and wisely can help you successfully maneuver even the biggest temptations, which can minimize holiday weight gain. ►



Choose healthier party food options

If you are determined to stick with your food plan, here are some nutritionally dense, guilt-free options to help keep you on track.

Instead of	Choose
Potato chips	Flavored rice cakes, baked tortilla chips and salsa
Fried or greasy appetizers	High-protein options like shrimp cocktail, baked chicken skewers or lox
Heavy desserts	A small serving of dark chocolate, which is loaded with antioxidants, along with a small handful of nuts, like walnuts or almonds
Cream-based cheesy dips	Green salad with a squeeze of fresh lemon juice
Pasta or potato salad	Fresh vegetables dipped in low-fat greek yogurt or hummus
Cookies	Whole or fresh cut fruit
Soda	Flavored, sugarless seltzer water

Have a game plan

Before you head out and enjoy the parties, plan your days accordingly. Here are some tips and recommendations by the Diabetes and Nutrition Teaching Center at Aiken Regional Medical Centers and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help you breeze through this busy time of year.

- Get up earlier in the morning to go for a brisk walk or get an early session in at the gym
- Don't skip meals to save up calories for later in the day, but eat smaller meals throughout the day to keep blood sugar steady
- Focus on the quality time with family and friends instead of the food
- If you plan to have dessert, skip the potatoes and bread during the meal
- Plan to bring along a healthy, guilt-free dish for all to enjoy
- If there is a buffet, start with a salad or vegetables to fill up on fiber
- Use a small plate for servings of your favorite food items
- Chew your food thoroughly and eat slowly
- Sleep deprivation can lead to cravings for foods high in fat and sugar, so aim for seven to eight hours of sleep a night
- Don't deprive yourself of your favorite food that you only eat once or twice a year; just eat a smaller portion and savor it

Learn more about healthy food options at aikenregional.com/dntc.



The BIG benefit of family meals

Busy schedules have made it increasingly difficult to sit down to dinner as a family these days. In fact, over the past three decades, the number of meals families eat together has declined by more than 30 percent. But even if it's not that easy to get everyone together for a meal, the benefits of eating together make it worth making family dinners a priority. There are many good reasons to make time to eat together as a family.

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To learn six good reasons to eat as a family and get healthy recipes, visit aikenregional.com/family.

Could you have seasonal depression?

What to look for and how to get help



As the days get shorter, the amount of sunlight decreases, and by dinnertime it is dark. Combine that with the stress, fatigue and hustle and bustle of the holiday season, it's no wonder that seasonal depression is most common from November through February, explains Whitney O'Connor, Director of Business Development at Aurora Behavioral Health Services.

Depression around the holidays can also be related to Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), which is very common this time of year. "We see more people in January and February as they are dealing with the letdown after the holidays. Also, our biological rhythms are off because of less sunlight, decreased serotonin levels and increased melatonin levels," she says. "This can make people feel lethargic and without a sense of purpose, and snowball into depression."

Depression can happen to anyone

O'Connor says depression can happen to anyone at any time. "Just because you don't have a history of it doesn't mean it can't happen to you," she says. "At Aurora, we see people of all ages, from children to seniors. We help stabilize them and connect them with resources outside so they can be successful." O'Connor also explains that many people fear they will have to be admitted or put on medications, and that simply is not true. "For many people, it is as simple as meeting with a therapist to help

them work through their issues and put things into perspective. If you don't need medication, they will not give it to you," she says. "And there are many evolving therapies, so people have more choices and can pick what they think will help them."

O'Connor says the classic symptoms of depression include sadness; no interest in usual activities; eating and sleeping more or less than usual; feelings of guilt and worthlessness; trouble concentrating; and feeling suicidal. "If you or someone you know is experiencing these symptoms, do not be prideful – reach out for help," says O'Connor. "And of course, if someone is threatening to harm themselves or others, call 9-1-1 immediately." ■

Learn more at aikenregional.com/bh.



WE ARE HERE TO HELP 24/7 Aurora Pavilion Behavioral Health Services offers a free, comprehensive community service called RESPOND, which provides free crisis assessments, information and referral services for psychiatric and substance use problems. RESPOND professionals are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at **803-641-5900** or **800-273-7911**.

Life in the balance

Juggling the commitments of everyday life can be stressful and overwhelming for everyone. Here are some ways to find a little zen in your daily routine.



Merry De Leon, MD

Merry De Leon, MD, FABPN, a psychiatrist and Medical Director at Aurora Pavilion at Aiken Regional Medical Centers

says when we are stressed, our bodies go into 'fight or flight' mode, our muscles tighten and constrict, our blood pressure rises and we release certain hormones to protect the body. "The long-term effects of not dealing with stress appropriately can lead to chronic health issues such as high blood pressure, ulcers, migraines, panic attacks and more," she says.

A great way to counteract stress is to try and incorporate non-stressing activities into our daily lives. Dr. DeLeon provides the following suggestions to help balance things out.

DAILY EXERCISE: It's great for overall well-being and for relieving stress. Had a bad day at work? Head to the gym and sweat out your frustrations. Or take a brisk walk around the neighborhood after dinner.

TRY YOGA: There are many different types, from relaxation to power yoga. It not only improves your strength, flexibility and posture, but lowers your blood pressure and pulse rate. Tai chi can be relaxing as well.

GET MORE SLEEP: Aim for at least six to eight hours of sleep each night. Turn off electronics at least an hour before bed and charge your phone as far away from your bed as possible, preferably in another room.

GET A MASSAGE: A massage may be very relaxing, and feels great! There may be some health benefits, such as increased circulation; reduced soreness, stiffness or muscle spasms; stress relief (and associated insomnia); injury rehabilitation and recovery; headache relief; and lowered blood pressure and heart rate.

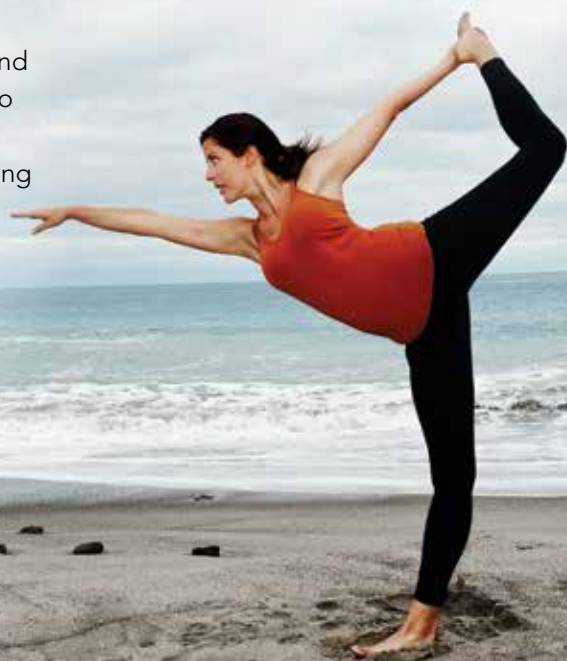
MEDITATE: It's great for relieving stress, increasing self-awareness and reducing negative emotions. It also teaches you mindfulness, which is being attentive to what is happening at the present moment. There are many free mobile apps and online resources to learn meditation and do it "on the go."

DRINK MORE WATER: Staying properly hydrated is crucial to the body and the brain. Drinking at least 64 ounces daily keeps inflammation at bay, aids in kidney function, and promotes cognitive processes.

DON'T OVER-COMMIT: Just say "No." You do not have to say "Yes" to every volunteer request, party or event you get invited to. Downtime is a precious commodity, and you saying 'yes' when you really want to say 'no' only causes you more stress. ■

Note: Don't forget to consult your physician before starting any exercise program.

To find a physician, visit aikenregional.com/doc.



Alzheimer's disease – the most common type of dementia

Mild memory loss, forgetting details and not doing things correctly are just a few of the symptoms of this disease



Adam Bruckner,
DO

Adam Bruckner, DO, says Alzheimer's disease is progressive, with the greatest risk factor being increased age, but there is also a genetic component. "Not everyone is at risk, but there are a few markers that can be checked, such as the APO-E protein," he says. "To screen patients, we ask questions, and the answers can lead us in a different direction. Historical findings of spatial disorientation, forgetfulness, thought process, confusion and social withdrawal, and short-term memory loss can aid in diagnosing the patient."

An MRI of the brain can determine if the person has Alzheimer's or another form of dementia. In addition, an underactive thyroid and low levels of vitamin B12 can mimic symptoms of dementia, so your doctor may order blood work to check.

Currently, there is no cure for Alzheimer's disease. If a patient is diagnosed, there are certain medications that can help slow the progression of the disease, but not everyone is a candidate. "Cognitive function can also be improved by keeping the patient mentally engaged with games and crossword puzzles," says Dr. Bruckner. "Social interaction is also good for keeping the mind active and alert." ■

Aiken Cares Alzheimer's Support Group

Support for family members and caregivers working with individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. No registration required.

For information, visit aikenregional.com/alzsupport.



SENIOR WELLNESS

BREAKFAST CLUB

Each quarter, Aiken Regional Medical Centers hosts a breakfast and seminar program dedicated exclusively to seniors that addresses a different healthcare or wellness topic.



Getting back on track after holiday indulgence

Speaker: Darren Waters, MPH, BA, RN,
Director of Outpatient Services

Date: Friday, February 8

Time: 9 a.m.

Location: USC Aiken Nursing Building,
Room 121

Register at aikenregional.com/bc

We are working on some exciting topics for 2019, so be sure to check our website for updates on the next Breakfast Club.

FITNESS & FUN

Fitness & Fun

Are you looking to change up your fitness routine or learn some new dance moves? There are many classes to choose from, including yoga, resistance training, low-impact aerobics, line dancing, ballroom dancing and more!

Visit aikenregional.com/50plus



If you need to find a doctor for yourself or your family, visit aikenregional.com/finddoc.



Taking control of **YOUR HEALTH**

Specialized services for children, adults and seniors

The Diabetes and Nutrition Teaching Center of Aiken Regional Medical Centers offers each patient an individualized health needs assessment and self-care plan. "The Diabetes Management class can be a lifesaver. Patients realize they are not alone and have our support to be successful," says Nancy Goslen, RN, BSN, Certified Diabetic Educator. Whether you or a loved one are working to control diabetes, lose weight or eat a more nutritious diet, our registered dietitian or certified diabetes educator can help with:

- Diabetes management technology and tools
- Pediatric and adolescent services
- Weight loss and nutritional counseling
- Food allergies
- Athletes in training
- Poor growth/failure to thrive
- Disease-specific self-management sessions
- Nutrition for seniors
- Constant reinforcement through personal patient contact

The Aiken Regional Diabetes and Nutrition Teaching Center was the first in the region to be recognized by the American Diabetes Association as an Accredited Self-Management Education program.

Join our Diabetes Support Group

Join others with diabetes to discuss your experiences and to learn how diabetes can be managed.

Dates: Second Tuesday of each month

Time: 3 - 4 p.m.

Location: O'Dell Weeks Center, Whiskey Road

Registration required; Call 803-293-0023.

 **Aiken Regional**
MEDICAL CENTERS
Diabetes & Nutrition Teaching Center





Celebrating a surgical milestone

General Surgeon Lorenzo Sampson, MD, FACS, recently performed his 300th TIF procedure at Aiken Regional. While Dr. Sampson performs traditional, minimally invasive and robotic assisted surgery, one of his specialties is the TIF® (transoral incisionless fundoplication) procedure on patients with acid reflux. "This minimally invasive, endoscopic procedure is performed without a surgical incision on the skin, which can mean less pain and quicker recovery. Plus, it gets them back to life without reflux," he says.



Allen Hansard, Program Development Manager with EndoGastric Solutions, Inc., (L) and Nicole Morgan, ARMC Physician Relationship Manager, (R), present Lorenzo Sampson, MD, FACS, with a plaque to commemorate his 300th TIF procedure at Aiken Regional Medical Centers.



A Rated for patient safety

The Leapfrog Group, an independent healthcare rating organization, has rated Aiken Regional Medical Centers with an "A" for patient safety. The group surveys and ranks 2,600 U.S. hospitals based on patient safety records and performance in preventing infections, medical errors and other potential harms. Also contributing to the ranking are top surgical safety and care guidelines, best practices used to prevent infections and injuries, and safety measure procedures to thwart errors.



**Aiken Regional recognized
as one of the *safest hospitals*
in the Nation**

Family Life Education

Breastfeeding for Expectant Parents

This class helps make breastfeeding a positive and successful experience for mother and child. Both parents and support persons may attend.

Date: Mar. 12

Time: 6 – 9 p.m.

Location: ARMC, 2nd floor, Women's LifeCare Center Classroom

Registration: Required
FREE to ARMC patients only.

For Babies' Sake

This monthly support group allows you to connect and share experiences with other new moms. Dads are welcome, too! Become part of a friendly and supportive community. Guest speakers will be featured every quarter.

Date: Second Tuesday of each month

Time: 1 – 2 p.m.

Location: ARMC, 2nd floor, Women's LifeCare Center

Registration: Required
Call **803-641-5703**.

FREE to ARMC patients only.

Childbirth Preparation

This course helps prepare you for the birth of your child.

Tuesdays

Dates: Jan. 15, 22, 29, Feb 5

Time: 6 – 9 p.m.

Location: ARMC, 6th floor, Classrooms A & B

Registration: Required

Saturdays/Sundays

Dates: Mar. 2 & 3

Time: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Location: ARMC, 6th floor, Classrooms A & B

Registration: Required
FREE to ARMC patients only.

First Aid and CPR

Family and Friends CPR

Learn basic CPR and relief of foreign body airway obstruction for adults, infants and children. Course DOES NOT result in certification.

Date: Jan. 31

Time: 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Location: ARMC, 6th floor, Classrooms A & B

Registration: Required

Fee: \$10

Standard First Aid, CPR & AED

Covers breathing and cardiac emergencies in adults, infants and children; caring for bleeding; illness; injury; preventing disease transmission and automatic external defibrillators.

Date: Feb. 2

Time: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Location: ARMC, 6th floor, Classrooms A & B

Registration: Required

Fee: \$45 (includes book)

For Kids and Teens

American Red Cross

Babysitting Class

Students learn about leadership, safety, basic care and first aid in order to provide safe, responsible care. Ages 11-15.

Date: Mar. 16

Time: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Location: ARMC, 6th floor, Classrooms A & B

Registration: Required

Fee: \$35, includes afternoon snack, textbook and certificate.

Support Groups

AA Meeting

Designed for open discussion.

Dates: Every Sunday and Wednesday evening

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Location: Aurora Pavilion

Aiken Cares Alzheimer's Support Group

For family members and caregivers.

Date: Second Tuesday of each month

Time: 11 a.m. – Noon

Location: 151 Linden Street
Daybreak Training Center

Registration: Not required

Al-Anon

Support for those dealing with another's drinking.

Dates: Tuesdays and Thursdays

Time: 7 – 8 p.m.

Location: St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Aiken, Room 207

Registration: Call **803-270-0853** for more information.

Cancer Support Group

Emotional, educational and spiritual support for families living with cancer.

Dates: Third Wednesday of each month

Time: 2 – 3 p.m.

Location: First Baptist Church

Registration: Not required

Call **803-341-2530** for more information.

To register, call the class reservation line at **800-882-7445** or go online at aikenregional.com/choices.

CSRA Dream Catchers – Traumatic Brain Injury and Disability Support Group

This group offers peer and skilled support to those seeking assistance for and information/ education about head and spinal cord injuries and other disabilities.

Date: First Monday of each month

Time: 6 – 7 p.m.

Location: Walton Options
for Independent Living,
325 Georgia Ave.

Registration: Required

Call **803-279-9611** or visit

csradreamcatchers.weebly.com.

Diabetes Support Group*

Join others to discuss how to better manage your diabetes.

Date: Second Tuesday of each month

Time: 3 – 4 p.m.

Location: O'Dell Weeks
Activity Center

Registration: Required

Call **803-293-0023.**

*No meetings in July or August

Kidney Smart® Classes

Learn how to manage your kidney health.

Date: Second Monday of each month

Time: 11 a.m.

Location: Aiken Dialysis,
775 Medical Park Drive

Registration: Not required

Call **803-641-4222** for
more information.

Lewy Body Dementia Association M'Aiken A Difference Support Group

Date: Third Tuesday of each month

Time: 11 a.m.

Location: DayBreak Outreach &
Training Center, 151 Linden St.,
SW, Aiken

Registration: Not required

Call **803-300-1266** or email
nancy13LBD@gmail.com.

Mended Hearts

This volunteer organization consists of people who have had heart disease and their families, medical professionals and other interested individuals.

Date: Second Friday of each month

Time: 10 – 11:30 a.m.

Location: USCA Alan B. Miller
Nursing Building

Registration: Not required

Call **803-641-1192** or **803-648-7002**
for more information.

Parkinson's Support Group

Support for Parkinson's patients and caregivers.

Date: First Tuesday of each month

Time: 1 p.m.

Location: Millbrook Baptist Church in
atrium of W. James Rivers Education
Center - East Pine Log side of campus.

Registration: Not required

Email: **mk4316@gmail.com.**

Pink Ribbonettes

This is the American Cancer Society Breast Cancer Self-Help Group for women and men diagnosed with breast cancer. Guest speakers cover topics of interest to survivors, patients and caregivers.

Date: First Tuesday of each month

Time: 10:30 a.m. – Noon

(light lunch provided)

Location: Millbrook
Baptist Church

Registration: Call

803-641-0011 or
803-648-7365 or visit
pinkribbonettes.org.

Stroke Support Group

Date: First Tuesday of each month

Time: 11 a.m. – Noon

Location: Aiken Senior Activity
Center, 944 Dougherty Road

Registration: Call **803-502-8400**
or **803-641-5643.**



Allergy

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Gregory H. Esselman, MD
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Afsar M. Waraich, MD
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