



Health Coach

Timely, trusted advice from Outer Banks Health

The vital role of physical activity for heart and lung health

Pumping Up Your Heart and Lungs

In the hustle and bustle of modern life, the importance of physical activity often takes a back seat. Yet, when it comes to our health, especially the well-being of our heart and lungs, regular exercise emerges as a cornerstone. If you've been inactive for a while, fear not, for even small steps toward physical activity can make a significant impact on your health.

Before embarking on any regular physical activity/exercise routine, it's crucial to check in with your healthcare provider. Taking this first step ensures that you tailor your activities to your individual health needs and limitations. Discussing goals such as weight loss, blood pressure

reduction, and cholesterol management with your provider, sets a smarter and safer course for your fitness journey.

Contrary to popular belief, starting an exercise routine doesn't mean hitting the gym immediately. Any form of physical activity is better than none. Simple activities like mowing the lawn, raking leaves, or vacuuming contribute to your

overall well-being. In areas with natural beauty, like the Outer Banks, taking advantage of the surroundings by walking on the beach or exploring nature trails can add an enjoyable aspect.

Exercise stands as one of the pillars of lifestyle medicine, impacting not just the body but also the overall quality of life. Regular physical activity has been linked to a reduction in anxiety and depression, and the positive effects on cardiovascular and lung health cannot be overstated. Exercise lowers high blood pressure, reduces the risk of stroke, and strengthens the heart muscle, promoting optimal blood flow to the heart. It also improves lung function, ensuring that oxygen is efficiently transported from the lungs to the rest of the body.

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"Waiting until you feel good to start exercising is a common misconception," says Marcie Jurges, exercise physiologist IV with Outer Banks Health Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation. "The truth is, you've got to move to improve. The benefits of physical activity include influencing mental and emotional well-being. By taking that first step, you set in motion a chain of positive changes that can transform your health and outlook on life."

As you contemplate improving your health and well-being this new year, a good first step is to make that appointment with your provider today. Get the clearance to begin your journey to better health. Whether it's a beach stroll, a nature hike, or simply incorporating more movement into your daily routine, every step counts. Small goals lead to significant transformations, and your heart and lungs will thank you.

Exercising After a Health Event

Life after a heart event or lung diagnosis may seem different, and the thought of any physical activity may be scary. The best way to begin is to join a medically supervised cardiac and/or pulmonary rehabilitation program that tailors exercise, provides education, and offers a supportive environment.

That's why Outer Banks Health offers a cardiopulmonary rehabilitation program right here in Nags Head. "Our focus is to help each patient feel better, increase their strength, and overcome the fear that often remains after a cardiac event or new pulmonary diagnosis," says Marcie Jurges, exercise physiologist IV with the program.

For more information, visit outerbankshealth.org/services/cardiovascular/cpr/. And check out the back of this newsletter for details about what promises to be a lively evening with experts Samuel F. Sears, Ph.D., ABPP, a professor in the Departments of Psychology and Cardiovascular Sciences at East Carolina University who practices and teaches health psychology, and Rana J. Khan, MD, FCCP, a pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine consultant.

January/February 2024

Education, Support, and Community Events

The Blood Connection Blood Drives

The Blood Connection will be hosting community blood drives on the Outer Banks. All donors are asked to make an appointment. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments are highly recommended and take priority. To make an appointment, use the QR codes or visit thebloodconnection.org. All donors will receive an e-gift card. *Special thanks to the Blood Connection for giving a donation to the Cowell Cancer Center for every donor who attends.*

Friday, January 5 | 8:00am – 1:00pm | The Outer Banks Hospital | 4800 S Croatan Hwy, Nags Head

Saturday, February 17 | 10:00am – 3:00pm | Outer Banks Family YMCA | 3000 S Croatan Hwy, Nags Head



Jan. 5



Feb. 17

Advance Care Planning

Do you know who would get to make medical decisions for you if you have not completed a healthcare power of attorney and advance directive? Join us for a free, informative session about advance care planning. If you require only a witness or notary assistance, please arrive 10 minutes before the close of the session. Questions? Call 252-475-0905.

Wednesday, January 10 | 9:00am – 10:00am

Tuesday, February 6 | 1:00pm – 2:00pm

Baum Senior Center | 300 Mustian Street, Kill Devil Hills

Wednesday, January 10 | 1:00pm – 2:00pm

Tuesday, February 6 | 9:00am – 10:00am

Virginia Tillett Center | 950 Marshall C Collins Drive, Manteo

A1C Screenings

Outer Banks Health will be offering free A1C screenings, which measure a person's blood glucose level over the past three months. Appointments are recommended and take priority; call 252-449-4529. Screenings will take place on the Outer Banks Health Coach vehicle in the parking lot.

Wednesday, January 17 | 9:00am – noon

Baum Senior Center | 300 Mustian Street, Kill Devil Hills

Wednesday, January 31 | 9:00am – 12:30pm

Virginia Tillett Center | 950 Marshall C Collins Drive, Manteo

Let's Celebrate the Opening of the Cowell Cancer Center!

It's a celebration of community! Outer Banks Health and our Development Council invite you to the ribbon cutting and community open house for the Carol S. and Edward D. Cowell, Jr. Cancer Center. Light refreshments and tours of the new center will be offered.

Wednesday, January 24 | 4:30pm – 6:00pm

Carol S. and Edward D. Cowell, Jr. Cancer Center

4927 S Croatan Hwy, Nags Head

Build the Tribute Path with the Purchase of a Paver



Help build the Tribute Path at the Cowell Cancer Center. Just scan the QR code or visit give.ecuhealthfoundation.org/TOBHtributePath

For more information, contact our Development Office at 252-449-4529.

Wellness Screenings

Outer Banks Health offers free wellness screenings, which include blood pressure, heart rate, cholesterol, blood sugar, and body mass index, as well as health coaching. Appointments are highly recommended and take priority. Walk-ins are welcome; call 252-449-4529 to make an appointment. All screenings will take place on the Outer Banks Health Coach vehicle in the parking lot.

Tuesday, February 20 | 9:00am – noon

Baum Senior Center | 300 Mustian Street, Kill Devil Hills

Lunch and Learn: Stroke Risk Reduction

Do you know if you are at risk for a stroke? Outer Banks Health will be offering a lunch and learn about stroke prevention. If you have high blood pressure, cholesterol, or diabetes; use tobacco products; are overweight; have an unhealthy diet or don't exercise; or have a previous history of stroke or a transient ischemic attack (TIA), you are at risk for stroke. This is a free lunch event. To secure a spot, call 252-449-4529.

Tuesday, February 20 | noon – 1:00pm

Baum Senior Center | 300 Mustian Street, Kill Devil Hills

Leap into Heart and Lung Health

Join us on Leap Day for what promises to be a lively evening with two experts on the topic of heart and lung health who will provide insight on the psychological impact of a health event. Leading this topic will be Samuel F. Sears, Ph.D., ABPP, a professor in the Departments of Psychology and Cardiovascular Sciences at East Carolina University who practices and teaches health psychology, and Rana J. Khan, MD, FCCP, a pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine consultant. A heart-healthy dinner will be provided along with a free copy of "Living with Heart" by Dr. Sears, which offers an inspiring approach to living life after a heart event. To RSVP for this free event, call 252-449-4529.

Thursday, February 29 | 5:30pm – 7:30pm

Jennette's Pier | 7223 S Virginia Trail, Nags Head



Save the Date! Saturday, March 23, 2024

Painting the Outer Banks Blue

A **black-tie gala at Duck Woods Country Club** with live music that will benefit Outer Banks Health wellness efforts and programs. The theme, *Painting the Outer Banks Blue*, is inspired by the five "blue zones" around the world that have been identified as having the longest-lived and happiest populations. The gala will incorporate local flavor from the blue zones and raise awareness about ways to live a healthier lifestyle right here on the Outer Banks. For more information, contact our Development Office at 252-449-5933.

Lunch and Learn: Nutrition Tips and Resources

Are you ready to move toward a healthier lifestyle in the new year? Join Jaclyn Hall, RD, and Denise dePedro, NBHWC, from the Center for Healthy Living, who will provide tips, resources, and guidance for healthy nutrition. This is a free lunch event. To secure a spot, call 252-449-4529.

Thursday, January 25 | noon – 1:00pm

Outer Banks Family YMCA | 3000 S Croatan Hwy, Nags Head



gala to go



Saturday, February 10, 2024

Presented by Outer Banks Health Development Council

Dinner for two will be prepared by Chef Wes Stepp of Red Sky Café and NC Coast Grill & Bar. Cost is \$175 per Gala to Go (feeds two people and includes dinner, dessert, wine, and flowers). Proceeds from the Gala to Go support the Cowell Cancer Center. For more details, visit OuterBanksHealth.org/GalatoGo2024 or call 252-449-5933.

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)

What is the CHNA? It's an opportunity for members of our community to voice their opinion about what health services and programs are needed to support our population. The assessment occurs every three years and **Spring 2024** is the next one. Be on the look out for more information and be sure to participate in the survey process. Visit outerbankshealth.org/about-us/community-health-needs-assessments/ or scan the QR code to learn more.

