

inspire

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR LIFE

TASTE OR TOSS IT
BEHIND THE
BEST-BY DATE

IS IT A COLD, THE FLU
OR COVID-19?

DO IT FOR THEM
**Motivation to
Quit Smoking**



CHECK THAT DATE!

When is the last time you checked your household inventory?

KITCHEN

Most dates on packaging are not safety dates but recommendations to ensure peak quality or taste of the product, with the exception of infant formula. Never use expired formula and discard opened powdered formula after 30 days, if not consumed.

Canned food is safe for two to five years after the best-by date — although high-acid foods like tomatoes are best used within 18 months. How long fresh produce will last depends on the type. The USDA app FoodKeeper can provide guidance for specific items.

Open foods that have expired often show visible signs of deterioration, such as mold, but what about that can of beans with a “Best By” date from six months ago or longer?

If the can isn't bulging or otherwise suspect, you should be fine. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), you can eat many packaged foods beyond their best-by dates. In general, if a food item smells, looks or feels off, then it is likely time to throw it away.



MEDICINE CABINET

Multiple studies have shown most drugs maintain their potency for years, if not decades, after the original expiration date. (Reporting from ProPublica in 2017 found that even the FDA does it!)

However, the FDA does not recommend anyone take over-the-counter and prescribed drugs past their expiration dates. For example, taking expired antibiotics may lead to antibiotic resistance or other complications.

Still, even though drugs might not go bad a year later doesn't mean that you should keep unused prescriptions around, especially if they are controlled substances like opioids. The FDA recommends tossing any drugs you aren't using. In order to do so safely, many police stations, health departments and hospitals, including Big Bend Regional Medical Center, have easy ways for you to drop off old medicine.



VANITY DRAWERS

Whether you buy designer lipstick or drugstore mascara, all makeup deteriorates at similar rates. As with food, expiration dates are rules of thumb and not actual safety guidelines.

However, the Food and Drug Administration and cosmetic trade groups all agree that eye products should be replaced more frequently than any other kind of makeup — every three to six months. If you have any kind of eye infection, that warrants prompt disposal.

Also, if you dip your finger into a product to apply it, you should replace it more frequently, because even a clean fingertip will add microorganisms to the makeup that could turn into bacteria or fungi.



Are you looking for a pediatrician or family medicine provider? Call (432) 837-0430 or visit BigBendAnytime.com to schedule an appointment online, anytime.

Band Together for Strong Hips



If you've had hip replacement surgery, always check with your physician before doing any type of hip exercises.

Using a resistance band can help you increase your strength and build lean muscle.

Don't let hip pain limit your life. Exercises to strengthen the hip flexor muscles — the group of muscles at the top of the thighs that help with lower body movement — are key to increasing flexibility, improving range of motion and maintaining mobility. Release hip flexor muscle tension by doing several repetitions of these gentle stretches throughout the day.

EXERCISE 1:

Begin by sitting in a chair with your legs to the front. Place the resistance band around both legs, just above the knees. While keeping your feet flat on the floor, slowly spread your knees apart and then bring them slowly back together.

EXERCISE 2:

Stand behind a chair with your left hand resting lightly on the top for balance. Place the resistance band around both legs, just above the knees. Keep your hand on the chair and your left foot flat on the floor. Straighten your right leg and extend it behind you until it's off the floor. Hold the pose for five seconds, and then repeat on the right side.

EXERCISE 3:

Place the resistance band around both legs, just above the knees. Stand with your feet hip-width apart, and then slide your right leg to the side until you feel resistance in the band. Shift your weight to your right leg, then slide your left leg over until your feet are hip-width apart again. Repeat the exercise on the left side.



Big Bend Regional Medical Center offers Orthopedic services twice a month. For questions regarding our Ortho services, call (432) 837-0436 today!

Patient results may vary. Consult your doctor about the benefits and risks of any surgical procedure or treatment and before starting any new exercise regimens.

IS IT REALLY HIP PAIN?

MISTIE MCBRIDE, PT, DPT, DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY AT BIG BEND REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER, SHARES HER PERSPECTIVE.

Common causes of hip pain include bursitis, impingement and joint surface issues, such as osteoarthritis or labral injuries.

Issues with your trunk, knees, spine, the area where your back and pelvis meet, or surrounding muscles or structures can also cause pain in the hip area.

This is when your physical therapist (PT) can be an integral part of your recovery. Your PT will perform a physical movement evaluation, assessing your symmetry of motion and strength. Frequently, especially after prolonged periods of pain or repetitive movement (or lack of movement), our bodies will learn to compensate using the path of least resistance to complete tasks. More times than not, this leads to dysfunctional movement patterns. Corrective strategies and exercises will be used to improve and retrain your movements, reducing pain and improving performance.

Big Bend Regional Medical Center is pleased to offer our talented Rehab team! Call (432) 837-0220 today.



The benefits of quitting smoking apply to more than just you — your family members, friends and even pets can reap the rewards, too.

QUIT

For the Greater Good

Whether you smoke, vape, dip or chew — whether you've been doing it for 12 months or 12 years — you already know smoking or using other tobacco products is bad for your health. The warnings are printed on every package you buy.

That's why the huge increases in youth e-cigarette usage is so alarming. Over 5 million youth, grades 6 through 12, reported regularly vaping, and 1 million reported doing it daily, according to a survey by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Unfortunately for many people, knowing that tobacco is bad for them isn't a good enough reason to quit. Nicotine is a highly addictive drug, but its misuse won't land users in jail. This means it might be hard for users to hit "rock bottom" before they get sick.

Yet, if you keep using tobacco or vaping nicotine, it is extremely likely that you will get sick. And if you smoke indoors, anyone who lives with you might get sick too, including your kids and pets. You should also know:

- Smoking is still the top cause of preventable death and disease in the United States, according to the CDC.
- Over 480,000 people die from smoking-related causes every year.
- Smoking doesn't just cause lung cancer. The CDC finds it can also cause cancer of the bladder, cervix, colon, esophagus, kidney, mouth, liver, pancreas and stomach.
- Smoking can also cause or contribute to diabetes, emphysema, heart disease, osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis and stroke.
- Tobacco use can make it harder to get pregnant. It can also make it more likely for

a baby to have certain birth defects or to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

- Men who smoke are more likely to have erectile dysfunction.
- According to the CDC, 2.5 million nonsmokers have died from exposure to secondhand smoke since 1964.
- In small children, secondhand smoke is often a contributing factor to ear infections and asthma.
- Secondhand smoke can cause nose or lung cancer in your pets.

READY TO QUIT YET?

Even if you are trying to quit — and/or have tried time and time again to quit — habits are hard to break, especially when they are wrapped up with an addictive substance like nicotine. That's why finding the support you need to quit once and for all is important.



RESOURCES TO QUIT SMOKING

- The American Lung Association's Freedom From Smoking program has been around for decades and helped over 1 million people quit tobacco use. Classes and support groups are available online and across the country, along with a telephone hotline.
- The National Cancer Institute has two free smartphone apps, QuitGuide and quitSTART, that can help you assess your tobacco use habits and provide needed distractions to counter cravings.
- There are numerous other apps, some free and some paid, that can help you track how much or how little you are smoking, if you aren't quitting cold turkey. Some apps even tally up the amount of money you're saving with every tobacco product you don't use.
- Your state health department has trained counselors available. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

HELP FOR TOBACCO CESSATION

If quitting cold turkey has not worked for you, limiting your tobacco use with nicotine gum or patches to help you taper off may help. A physician can also prescribe a nicotine nasal spray, an inhaler or other medication. However, it is important to discuss possible side effects of any medications.

The FDA does not recommend using e-cigarettes as a way to taper tobacco use. Vaping can actually increase your nicotine intake, which can, in turn, strengthen your addiction.

Support groups or therapy, whether online or in person, can often provide the needed encouragement to overcome the frustration of quitting.

If none of these methods have helped you, the good news is that there are almost as many different methods and motivations to quit nicotine for good as there are brands

of cigarettes. Some other things you can try include:

- **Exercise.** If you're a heavy smoker, it might not be easy to start, but doing something physical, even simply taking a walk, is a great way to keep your mind off your cravings. Plus, the more your cardiovascular health improves, the less you are going to want to make it worse again.
- **Identify your triggers and avoid or replace them.** If you always smoke while drinking, cut back on alcohol until you quit. If you always take a cigarette break in the middle of the afternoon, find something else to do during that time, like having coffee or a healthy snack. Basically, create new habits to replace the old one.
- **Take it easy on yourself.** If you slip up and smoke again, it's OK. Don't beat yourself up, and don't tell yourself that you've failed. You

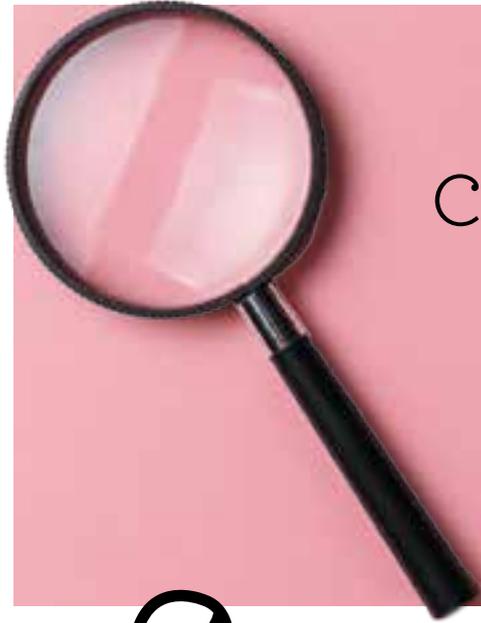
haven't failed. Tomorrow is a new day where you can start again, cigarette or vape-free.

- **Treat yourself.** With all the money you'd save by not smoking, reward yourself with something like a book or a dinner out when you hit sobriety milestones.

It takes time to get used to your new life, but eventually you can get there. Quit now, and your body will thank you later.



Big Bend Regional Health Center is here for you! Let one of our providers help you KICK the habit! Visit BBRHC.com to find a provider who is right for you.



COULD YOU SPY A UTI?

Anyone can get a urinary tract infection (UTI), so it's important to know the facts, including how to spot the signs.



If you're pregnant and notice signs of a urinary tract infection (UTI), seek care right away, as a UTI can cause your blood pressure to spike or lead to premature birth, according to the Office on Women's Health.

A UTI is a bacterial infection of part of the urinary tract, typically the bladder. The flow of urine keeps most bacteria that invade the urinary tract from getting far, but sometimes germs evade this defense mechanism. Here's what you need to know about UTIs:

- **A burning feeling during urination is a common symptom.** Others include an urge to urinate more frequently, bloody or foul-smelling urine, abdominal pressure, and fatigue.
- **Antibiotics are the treatment of choice.** These medications, which require a physician's prescription, can kill the bacteria that cause UTIs.
- **Risk factors abound.** In addition to being female, risk factors for a UTI include pregnancy, diabetes, kidney stones, difficulty emptying the bladder, having gone through menopause, being sexually active, and using a diaphragm or spermicide for birth control.
- **UTIs are more common in women.** Men get UTIs, but in far smaller numbers than women. At least 40 to 60 percent of women will develop a UTI at some point, according to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.
- **Women are an easier target for UTI-causing bacteria than men.** That's because bacteria have a relatively short distance to travel from a woman's anus to the entrance of the urethra, and a woman's bladder is closer than a man's to the urethral mouth.
- **You can reduce your risk.** To help prevent a UTI, you should drink eight glasses of water daily, according to the Office on Women's Health, wear loose-fitting clothes and urinate when you feel the urge.



Roane McLaughlin, M.D., offers more than 30 years of OB-GYN experience. Visit BigBendAnytime.com to book your appointment online. Anytime.

Dr. McLaughlin is a member of the medical staff at Big Bend Regional Medical Center.

TRUST THE EXPERT

Ignoring what appears to be a urinary tract infection (UTI) or trying to treat it yourself could have serious consequences. Without proper treatment, a UTI can lead to a kidney infection, which may be painful and often requires hospitalization.

Attempting to treat a UTI by drinking cranberry

juice or taking over-the-counter medications won't work. Cranberry juice and other products are not effective treatments for a UTI, according to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

UTIs are caused by bacteria, which require treatment with prescription antibiotics to

eliminate. That's why it's important to see your primary care provider (PCP) if you suspect a UTI. He or she can confirm whether an infection is present and prescribe the medication you need to help you get better. Your PCP can also provide tips on preventing future infections, as having a UTI increases your risk of a second infection.

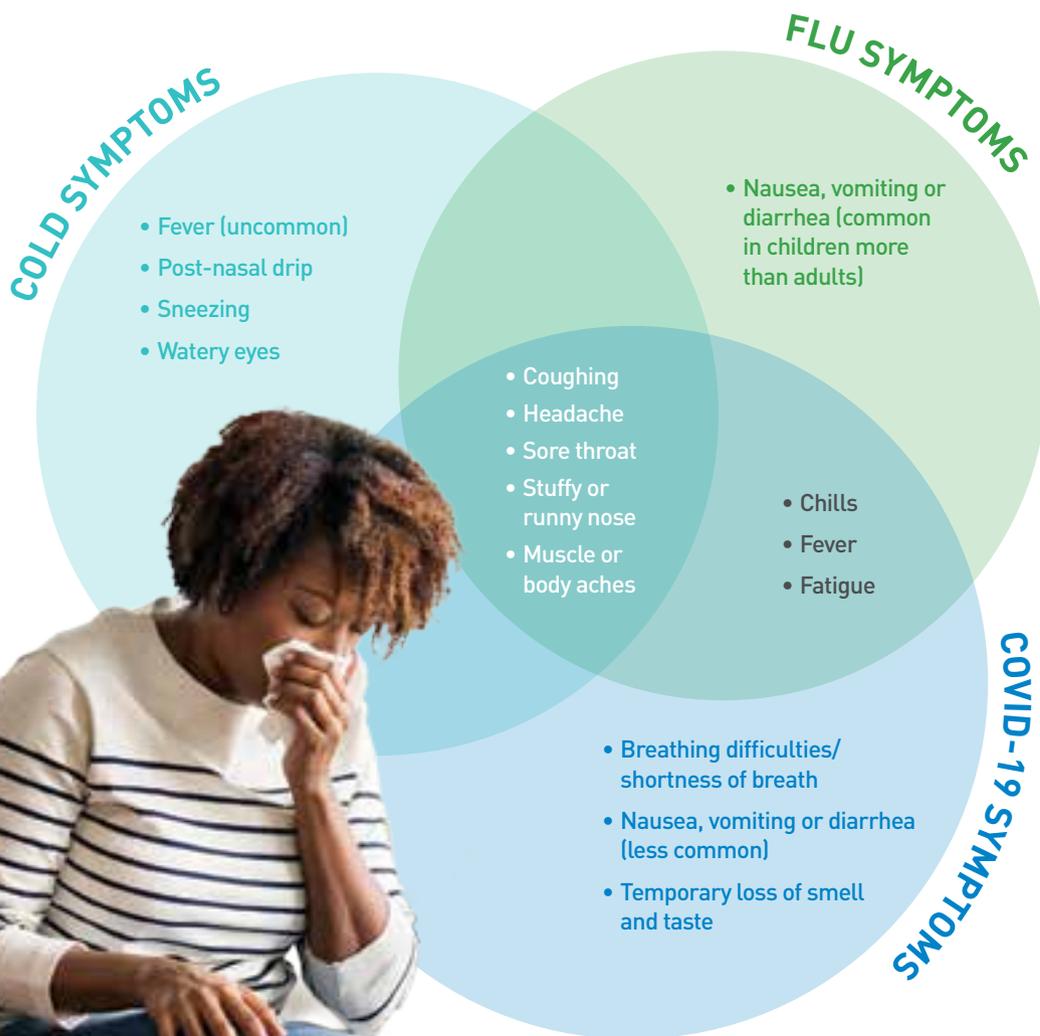
COLD vs. FLU vs. COVID-19

Staying home when you are sick is more important than ever. Recognize cold, flu and COVID-19 symptoms so you can take the appropriate action.

HOW MANY DAYS AFTER EXPOSURE DO SYMPTOMS START?

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Cold: 2-3 days						
Flu: 1-4 days						
COVID-19: 2-14 days						

COLD VS. FLU VS. COVID-19 SYMPTOMS*



WHEN AM I CONTAGIOUS?

COLD:
From 1-7 days after symptoms

FLU:
From 1 day before to 7 days after symptoms; most contagious 3-4 days after

COVID-19:
From three days before, to two weeks after symptoms; **most contagious 48 hours before symptoms, according to emerging research**

Big Bend Regional Health Center offers an assortment of talented providers! Go to BBRHC.com/providers, read their bios and pick the provider who is right for you!

HOW CAN I PREVENT GETTING OR SPREADING UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS?

- Avoid close contact with others, keeping at least six feet away from people.
- Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue or your arm, dispose of tissues and wash hands immediately after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- Frequently disinfect surfaces, such as tables, doorknobs or your phone.
- Keep away from others who are sick.
- Stay home if you are sick or have been in contact with someone who is sick.
- Try to not touch your face, mouth, nose and eyes with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth in public.

Fact:

Staying isolated from other people when you have an upper respiratory infection is essential to prevent spreading the disease.

*Per the CDC, these are not all-encompassing lists, and some people may experience other symptoms.
Sources: CDC, U.S. National Library of Medicine

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Big Bend Regional Medical Center complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. For more information, see link on our homepage at BigBendHealthcare.com. Attention: If you do not speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call (432) 837-3447 (TTY: (800) 735-2989).

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al (432) 837-3447 (TTY: (800) 735-2989).

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số (432) 837-3447 (TTY: (800) 735-2989).

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This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your doctor before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.

HERE FOR *You*

In a crisis, emergency rooms (ERs) provide prompt medical care and determine next steps, if needed. Don't hesitate — severe symptoms may require an ER visit.

CALL 911 if you or a loved one experience:

- bleeding that won't stop
- chest pain or discomfort
- excessive abdominal pain
- loss of consciousness
- numbness isolated to one side of the body or an upper body part
- slurred speech
- vision problems



Our Emergency Room is open, safe and ready for you! Go to BigBendHealthcare.com and see what we are doing to keep our patients, staff and community safe!

We work diligently to have you initially seen by a medical professional within 30 minutes of your arrival in the ER.

But remember:

**This list is not exhaustive!
Seek emergency care if you experience any unusual or alarming symptoms.**