

inspire

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR LIFE

WELCOME
WELLNESS

Tips for Your Home



OPEN. SAFE. READY.
COMMUNITY & CARE

**STEPS TO KEEP
FEET HEALTHY**

Community & Care

IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

In this issue of our community magazine, I'd like to emphasize the word **community**. These are unprecedented times, and although we may be in uncharted waters, I'm inspired by the sense of community this experience has fostered in us all.

HEALTHCARE HEROES

First, I'd like to express my sincere pride in our employees and medical staff for their efforts in recent months. These medical professionals have truly answered the call to care for the sick and comfort alarmed families as the pandemic has evolved. They are true heroes, who stepped up to serve on the front lines of the COVID-19 response. I applaud and thank them for their dedication.

OUR AWESOME COMMUNITY

I would also like to recognize our community. The outpouring of support you showed our team was overwhelming. Whether providing comforting meals for staff, making masks, sending cards and prayers to team members, or just staying home to protect our community — we are so grateful for everyone doing their part and pulling together during this crisis.

RESTRUCTURED FOR THE FUTURE

As you've heard by now, our parent organization also did its part to help ensure we could continue providing services for you and your family by restructuring its debt. This was good news for our hospital and our employees. It allows us to continue providing patient care. As a current or former patient, you may have received a legal

notice by mail. We regret any confusion that this required notification may have caused. The restructuring is concluded, and we are ready to serve you now and into the future.

A NEW WORLD FOR CARE

But rest assured, our Emergency Room is open, safe and ready to provide care for emergencies like heart attacks, strokes and broken bones. We always urge you to dial 911 in an emergency situation and don't delay going to the ER. We've established safety measures, such as separate care areas, new cleaning procedures and protective equipment guidelines to align with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

And finally, we remind you that in-person appointments are available again at physician offices. You can rest easy knowing these physician offices have adopted additional precautions to help keep you safe when you come in for your appointment. Of course, virtual visits are still available via our telehealth options. Just call your physician's office or visit BBRHC.com to book an appointment.

Thank you for caring for us, as much as we care for you. It is our privilege to serve you.

Sincerely,

Rick Flores

Chief Executive Officer
Big Bend Regional Medical Center

What New Moms Really Need

Before you register for your baby shower, find out which items will be most helpful for you and your little one.

If you are a first-time mom, you are learning how overwhelming putting together a baby shower registry can be. It begins from the moment you open your first online registry and continues with furor as your inbox swells with suggestions for must-have items. Urgent announcements broadcast your need for blankets, bunnies, sleepers, swings and that expensive bassinet that imitates your womb. But is it all really necessary for the comfort, happiness and safety of baby?

GIFT BUYERS' BEST PRACTICES

Keeping the following guidelines in mind will help your friends and loved ones choose gifts that will be most helpful to you and your baby.



Breastfeeding is wonderful, but it can be a little uncomfortable. Cooling gel pads can help soothe sore nipples. And for the mom who needs to use a pump to express extra milk, a hands-free pumping bra can offer a little extra freedom.



Car seat/stroller combos are perfect for the mom-on-the-go. Choose an option that is not too heavy and folds up easily. When you do get your car seat, visit the nearest child safety seat inspection station to make sure it is installed properly.



Diapers are always in style. They are also expensive. Buying boxes of diapers in a variety of sizes is a great way for your friends to pamper you.



Less is more when it comes to your crib. The most current safe sleep guidelines advise against having blankets, bumpers, pillows or stuffed animals in your baby's crib. Instead, invest in a comfy but firm mattress and tight-fitting sheet.



Organization is the name of the game. Having a diaper bag or toiletry kit with designated pockets and pouches for your changing pads, creams and diapers makes life much easier for sleep-deprived parents.



Are you expecting? Be sure to visit BigBendHealthcare.com! Take a video tour of our OB Wing and sign up for e-newsletter Nursery Notes! We would love to have you attend our free prenatal classes as well. Call (432) 837-0430 to reserve your place in our classes today!



SAFE SLEEP 101

Before you can teach your newborn to sleep through the night, you want to ensure she is sleeping safely. That can be as simple as ABC. Baby should sleep:

- Alone
- on her Back
- in a Crib

Additionally, to reduce the risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that babies sleep only on firm surfaces that meet the safety standards set forth by the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Also, consider sharing a room with your baby by bringing her portable bassinet or crib into your room for the first six to 12 months of her life. Sharing a room with you may reduce your baby's risk of SIDS by roughly 50%.

Ekta Escovar, M.D., is the Tri-County area's only pediatrician. We just know she would love to meet your little one! Call Big Bend Regional Health Center at (432) 837-0430 and book an appointment with Dr. Ekta Escovar today!

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



MAKE YOUR HOME A

Wellness Retreat

In times of crisis or this new normal, having a home that makes you feel calm and inspired is critical to mental and physical well-being. Take time to turn your living space into a retreat by transforming ordinary rooms into functional areas where wellness will thrive.

COOK UP A HEALTHY KITCHEN

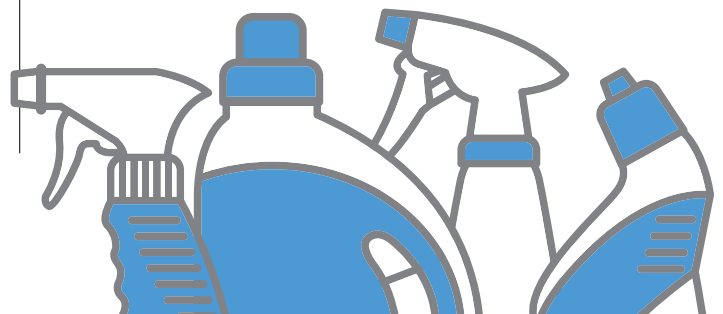
When you are preparing delicious and healthy meals, you want the preparation and final products to be as safe as possible. Your kitchen is a routine stop on that path to wellness, so keep the following tips in mind as you outfit the room where your family meals are made and enjoyed.

FILTER YOUR WATER.

Keeping water that tastes crisp and clean is a refreshing way to encourage yourself to stay hydrated. Further purifying your water may be beneficial if you have a weakened immune system or another health condition, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. To ensure that your water is as pure as possible, invest in a water filtration system designed to remove contaminants.

CONSIDER YOUR CLEANING SUPPLIES.

EPA-approved disinfectants are effective choices to clean household surfaces and prevent the spread of germs and viruses, such as the flu or COVID-19, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Wear disposable gloves while cleaning. Focus on high-touch areas, including tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, keyboards, remotes and touch screens. For the list, visit [epa.gov](https://www.epa.gov), search for SARS-CoV-2 and choose "List N."



SET THE STAGE FOR LUXURIOUS REST

Your bedroom can make or break your ability to rest. Everything from lighting to temperature to the thread count of your sheets plays a critical role. As you design your dream space, the National Sleep Foundation recommends you:



CHOOSE DIMMABLE LAMPS. Lowering the lights before bed will signal to your brain that it is time to rest. Covering your windows with blackout curtains or shades can also block out early morning light or the glow of street lamps.



INDULGE YOUR SENSE OF SMELL. An essential oil diffuser or eye pillow filled with lavender may help you relax. This scent may also enhance mood and reduce blood pressure and heart rate.



PAMPER YOURSELF WITH COZY BEDDING. Take time to try out different blankets, mattresses and pillows to find the right fit.

MAKE ROOM FOR MEDITATION AND MOTION

Taking care of your body and mind through stress-reducing activities is essential to heart health, according to the American Heart Association (AHA). Practicing meditation may reduce blood pressure and the risk of heart disease, while exercise may help you manage everything from blood sugar to cholesterol to weight. Encourage your family to spend time on practices by dedicating a corner or a whole room. Keep things simple, outfitting the area with a few key items:

Exercise ball — Develop your core and your balance with an oversized ball. Simply sitting on the ball helps develop your proprioception, or the awareness of where your body is in space and time, while also strengthening your abdomen, back and pelvis. Additionally, the ball is a great tool to strengthen your arms and legs.

Yoga mat — Available in a wide price range, a mat is the perfect place to practice poses that will enhance your strength, balance and flexibility while also boosting your concentration and focus. Your mat can double as a spot to sit on for your morning meditation routines, which may include deep breathing exercises, gratitude affirmations and mindfulness practices.

Resistance bands — Get your two days per week of strength training recommended by the AHA without touching heavy weights or machinery. Resistance bands are easy to store and offer a variety of options to tone your muscles and improve your metabolic rate.



Where the Germs Are

Your home is your sanctuary — but it may not always be the cleanest place to be. For example, surfaces in your bathroom and kitchen that are frequently damp and/or warm may also be home to bacteria, such as salmonella and E.coli, which may indicate the presence of fecal contamination, according to NSF International. Other common areas where this type of bacteria may be found include:

- bathroom faucet handles
- kitchen sinks
- counter tops
- toothbrush holders
- cutting boards

To clean these surfaces effectively, begin with soap and water to wipe down and remove grime from surfaces. Follow up with a sanitizing spray or cloths to kill lingering germs.

Choose sanitizers that are not in concentrated form and never spray them near children. If you elect to use a cleaner containing bleach, make sure the cleaner is not concentrated and never mix it with ammonia — a blend that can create a poisonous gas, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Further, the AAP recommends storing all cleaners, sanitizers and disinfectants in containers with clear labeling in a secure place to protect children and pets.

GO FOR GLASS. Clear, sturdy mason jars are a chic alternative to plastic that can make a healthy statement in your kitchen. These storage containers may be used to display fresh flowers on your table, serve fresh orange juice in the morning or store guacamole and colorful fruit salad.



Big Bend Regional Health Center is pleased to announce our population health nurse, Ralene Tarrant, RN, BSN. Stay on top of your wellness visits at Big Bend Regional Health Center and come and meet Ralene. Just call the helpful staff at BBRHC at (432) 837-0430.

Do you need to follow a menu for diabetes? Join BBRMC's dietitian one Saturday per month for her free diabetes classes! Call (432) 837-0304 to reserve your seat today!

Make small, gradual changes to your endurance and strength routines to improve your health and minimize your risk of injury.

Take It to the NEXT LEVEL

Perhaps you've reached an exercise plateau or you're preparing for a vacation packed with activities. Regardless of your fitness level or warm-weather plans, exercises built to improve your strength and endurance can help you lead a healthy and independent lifestyle.

The American Heart Association recommends adults get at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic exercise five days out of the week, as well as working out each muscle group at least twice a week. However, you may require more or less time, depending on your health and fitness level. Here's how to amp up your activity level without hurting yourself.



START BY STRETCHING. Stretching will give your muscles and joints a more complete range of motion, as well as increasing blood flow to the muscles you'll use during exercise. The Arthritis Foundation recommends stretching after a brief warm-up period so the muscles are warmer and more pliable.



GO SLOW. When building up strength and endurance, slow and steady wins the race, especially when exercising with joint pain. Walk an extra five minutes or add an extra three repetitions during your strength training workout.



RECOVER RIGHT. Soreness after a workout is a good thing. It means that your muscles are getting stronger and repairing themselves. Stay hydrated, stretch and rest for at least 48 hours before working out the same muscle group. Ice can help reduce inflammation, heat can increase blood flow to your muscles, and over-the-counter pain medication can relieve muscle soreness.

Patient results may vary. Consult your doctor about the benefits and risks of any surgical procedure or treatment.

MAINTAIN YOUR MOBILITY WITH STRETCH AND FLEX

You are invited to join the Our Healthy Circle's Stretch and Flex exercise group. Exercises are done either sitting in a chair or standing behind it. We generally use light hand weights (1–3 lbs. each) and a towel, both of which you provide.

The exercises are not extreme or strenuous and concentrate on maintaining mobility and improving balance. If you have a disability or difficulty with an exercise, it can be modified to work for you. The point is to keep moving! The class is led by Joe Goldman, and there is no cost outside of your annual Our Healthy Circle membership.

Please join us (every time or occasionally) on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings in the large room on the basement level of the First Methodist Church from 10–11 a.m.

If you are age 50 or older, we want you! Become an Our Healthy Circle member today! Call Ruth Hucke at (432) 837-0254.



Big Bend Regional Medical Center's Our Healthy Circle is a wonderful group of adults 50 or better, and membership comes with many perks! Visit BigBendHealthcare.com and click "Community" then "Our Healthy Circle" to learn more.

STEP UP FOR YOUR FEET

You depend on your feet, so take steps to keep them healthy.

PRESCRIPTION FOR RELIEF

Here's what you can do at home to treat three common foot conditions.

CORN.

Soften this tough area of skin by soaking in warm water and applying lotion.

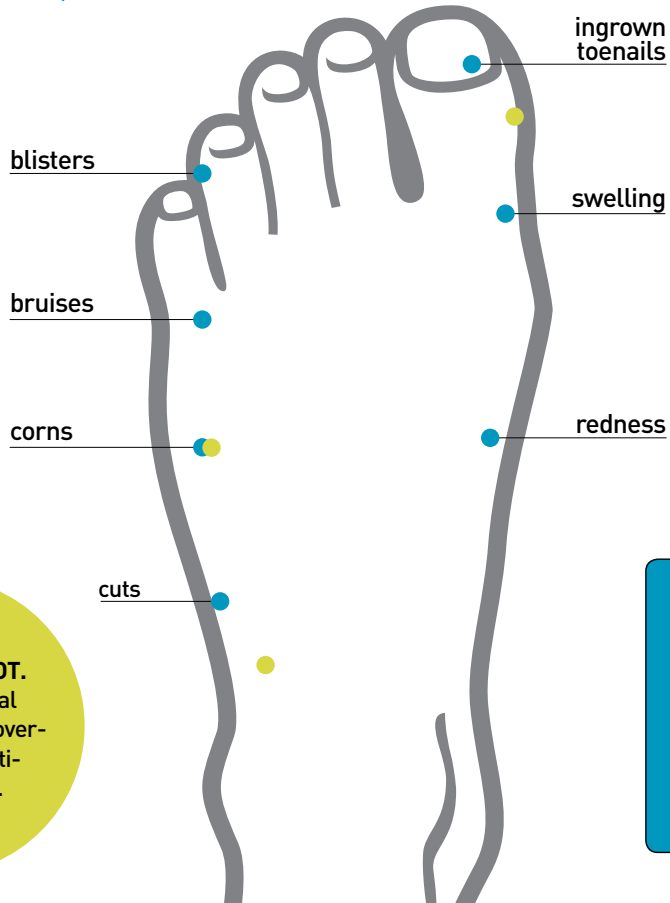
ATHLETE'S FOOT.

Treat this fungal infection with an over-the-counter anti-fungal cream.

FOOT SCAN

It's important to check the condition of your feet regularly, especially if you have diabetes.

Scan your feet from toes to heel for:



BUNION.

Wear shoes that give your toes plenty of wiggle room, apply ice a few times daily and cushion the bony bump on your outer big toe with bunion pads.

Take a step in the right direction and call Big Bend Regional Health Center at (432) 837-0430, or make your own appointment by going to BigBendAnytime.com today!

FIND THE RIGHT FIT FOR FITNESS

Here's how to choose footwear to suit your preferred form of exercise.

CYCLING. You want a close but comfortable fit with padding for the ball of the foot.



HIKING. Look for plenty of tread and stability all around, especially for the ankle.



RUNNING. The less arch you have, the more cushioning and stability you'll want for your mid-foot.



WALKING. Prioritize shock absorption and arch support.



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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 home page 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.

Time to prevent COLORECTAL CANCER?

Colonoscopies take about 30 minutes and can remove polyps that may become cancerous. According to the American Cancer Society, when colorectal cancer is found early, there is a 90 percent five-year relative survival rate. Talk with your doctor about whether it's time for your colonoscopy.



For more information about colonoscopy, visit BigBendHealthcare.com and search “surgical services” or call Big Bend Surgical Associates at (432) 837-0400 today!