THE DIRTY TRUTH:
HAND WASHING MATTERS

WHY YOU NEED A PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

LOOK INTO OUR Crystal Ball:
DIET DOS AND DON'TS
Waiting Can Be a LOSING GAME

Life’s busy schedule can often make weight loss seem like an elusive idea — you may have good intentions but often procrastinate. Here is some motivation: The longer you wait, the greater the risk for obesity-related cancers.

In a study published in *PLOS Medicine*, researchers examined approximately 74,000 post-menopausal women from the Women’s Health Initiative to see how time affects the risk of various cancers in overweight or obese women. The results suggest that the longer a woman is overweight, the more vulnerable she is to several obesity-related cancers such as colorectal, liver, pancreatic and post-menopausal breast cancers.

This study is the first of its kind and shows that, even in small amounts, losing weight sooner rather than later betters your chances of avoiding cancer.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 40 million Americans wear contact lenses. Although using contact lenses is generally safe, they can cause serious vision-related complications if they’re not cared for properly.

The CDC studied more than 1,000 cases of serious contact-related corneal infections between 2005 and 2015 and found that roughly 25 percent of these cases may have been prevented if users avoided certain behaviors, including wearing lenses longer than prescribed, improper cleaning and swimming or sleeping in them.

Lesson to learn? Follow your optometrist’s or ophthalmologist’s instructions carefully. Don’t sleep, swim or shower while wearing contact lenses, and remember to properly clean them and change out your contacts case regularly.

Better Contact Lens CARE

FOR EVERY DECADE OF BEING OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE, THERE WAS A 7% INCREASE IN CANCER RISK.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIMARY CARE

Every year, nearly 20 million people over the age of 65 go to the emergency room. While it is important to receive emergency care when needed, new research reveals that older adults can reduce their chances of an ER visit if they receive regular primary care.

Published in the *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, the study revealed that Medicare beneficiaries have lower chances of going to the ER if they regularly receive outpatient care from the same doctor or a small number of doctors. Examining more than 3 million Medicare patients, researchers observed up to a 20 percent decrease in ER visits in individuals who fostered a continuous relationship with their doctor versus patients who did not.

Check out our hospital website for primary care doctors near you.
Dr. Evors is now accepting new patients. To schedule an appointment, call (866) 954-7248.

For OB/GYN Laura Jane Evors, M.D., spending her days helping women at Mary Black Health System – Spartanburg is one of her greatest privileges in life.

Living the Dream

Q. How long have you been practicing? How did you get started in medicine?

A: I have been around medicine my entire life. My mother was an intensive care unit nurse, and I can remember making visits with her to the hospital. I was always fascinated with helping others feel better. That early exposure piqued my interest.

Throughout my academic career, I learned about many aspects of medicine — internal medicine, pediatrics, anesthesiology and gastroenterology — which helped guide me to become a doctor. Continuing in my medical education, it was easy for me to determine I wanted to be an OB/GYN. Every delivery I attended, my attention was always drawn to taking care of the mother.

Since then, my interest in women’s health has only continued to increase.

Q. What has surprised you about being a doctor?

A: That the saying is true — it is never boring being a doctor. Whether interacting with patients or providing them with medications or equipment they need, there are many exciting times all hours of the day, especially as an OB/GYN. Those times can range from meeting and caring for each unique patient in the office to celebrating the birth of a new life to operating on someone with a chronic condition. Every patient’s needs are unique, which most certainly keeps my medical life busy and exciting in the best possible way.

Q. If there were one thing you’d like to share with your patients, what would it be?

A: My greatest desire as a doctor is to provide women with excellent medical care. I want my patients to feel like their voices have been heard, their questions answered and their medical needs addressed. I want them to always feel safe and like they have an opinion as to the direction of their healthcare. In addition, I want patients to always ask questions so they understand their treatments or their own health.

I feel like one of the best ways to provide excellent medical care is to encourage open communication throughout every interaction.

Q. What do you like most about being a doctor?

A: I love being an OB/GYN. With my profession, I get the opportunity to be a part of women’s lives in very special ways. I get to journey with them through pregnancy and celebrate with them on the birthday of their little ones. I am able to provide women with information and knowledge to make their own decisions in very personal aspects of their lives. It is a privilege to be in women’s health.
IS WEIGHT LOSS In Your FUTURE?

With so much conflicting advice in magazines and blogs, making the right calorie choices can feel like gazing into a crystal ball. If you’re one of the 30 percent of Americans who resolve to lose weight every year, start by separating fortune-telling from facts.

VERDICT: GOOD ADVICE!

One pound of muscle can burn three times as many calories at rest as a pound of fat, according to the American Council on Exercise. That’s why men — who tend to have less body fat and more muscle mass than women — are more efficient calorie-burners. It seems unfair, but there’s a silver lining. People who carry excess weight burn more calories during exercise than fit people do. If you’re overweight and just starting to exercise, a little bit will go a long way. Once your initial weight loss slows down, start incorporating more muscle-building exercises such as weight lifting and ab crunches into your routine.

To burn more calories, build more muscle.

VERDICT: TRY AT YOUR OWN RISK.

You may have heard of diets based on the idea that if you constantly shift when and how many calories you consume, your metabolism learns to be more efficient. Similar diets opt for five or six micro-meals instead of the traditional three square meals a day. Unfortunately, science doesn’t back up these diet trends. A small-scale study published in 2014 in the International Journal of Preventive Medicine showed minor advantages of calorie shifting over simple calorie restriction, but it did not improve participants’ resting metabolic rate.

Boost your metabolism by changing when you eat.

A BETTER IDEA:

Listen to your body. Don’t wait to eat until you’re starving, which can lead to poor nutritional choices. Don’t eat out of boredom, either. When snacking, choose filling foods, such as whole-grain crackers, green vegetables and other foods rich in complex carbs, which have appetite-curbing effects for as long as 24 hours.
THE MYTH OF THE AGING METABOLISM

You’ve heard the excuse before — “When I was young, I could eat whatever I wanted. Then I turned 40, and my metabolism slowed to a halt.” The truth is, your metabolic rate doesn’t slow down because you age, but rather because you lose muscle mass as you age. According to the National Institutes of Health, sedentary adults lose about 8 percent or more of their muscle mass every decade after age 40. You can’t stop aging, but you can prevent muscle loss through regular physical activity. Try these tools to preserve your muscle mass and keep your metabolism going strong.

Consult your primary care provider before starting a new exercise regimen.

Exercise Band – These giant rubber bands provide resistance to stretch and tone your muscles without harmful impact on your bones.

Kettlebell – Increasingly popular among fitness buffs, kettlebells enable ballistic exercise, a unique combination of aerobic, strength and flexibility training.

Medicine ball— Medicine balls filled with water can offer a harder challenge. As the water sloshes around inside, it requires more muscle engagement to control the ball.

A study published in 2016 in the BMJ Open journal found that 58 percent of Americans’ total energy intake comes from ultra-processed foods, which include candy, desserts, packaged baked goods, reconstituted meat products, and sweet and savory snacks. On average, the amount of added sugar in these foods is eight times greater than in regular processed foods.

VERDICT: TWO THUMBS UP!

Eating a well-balanced diet is a better weight-loss strategy than restricting or eliminating certain food groups. Unsaturated fats found in eggs, vegetable oils, nuts, seeds and avocados are considered good fats because they decrease harmful LDL cholesterol and provide important nutrients such as fatty acids. A 2007 study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition showed that consuming fatty acids actually reduces body fat and improves metabolic health.

Zero-calorie means zero weight gain.

VERDICT: KEEP WISHING.

Several studies suggest zero-calorie beverages could actually contribute to weight gain. One preliminary study published in the journal NeuroImage in 2008 found that the brain can tell the difference between caloric and noncaloric sweeteners, which could trigger the body to crave the calories it was expecting to get — and lead to overeating. A 2015 study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society found that older adults who drank diet soda every day for almost a decade experienced an increase in waistline size three times that of those who never drank it.

A BETTER IDEA:

To satisfy your sweet tooth, stick with natural sources of sugar, such as whole fruit or a teaspoon of honey. Pair your sweet with a protein or complex carb to avoid a blood-sugar crash.

For every 20 pounds you weigh, you can expect to burn an additional 10–12 percent of calories during exercise. For example, a 160-pound woman will burn about 255 calories during 30 minutes of jogging. A 180-pound woman will burn about 286 calories doing the same thing, according to the Calorie Control Council.

This explains why it becomes harder to lose weight as you become slimmer!
When planning your weekly runs, consider capping your mileage at 45 miles per week if you want to keep your injury risk low, according to the American Academy of Family Physicians.

Your morning runs are more than just a routine — they’re part of who you are. If you don’t take certain safety precautions, however, they can do your body harm as well as good.

Running too much, too hard and with too little preparation can be hard on your bones, muscles, ligaments and tendons. Use these tips to avoid orthopedic pitfalls due to running:

• **Branch out.** Cross training can make you a stronger and safer runner. Add some different activities, such as strength training, swimming and yoga, to your exercise regimen.

• **Don’t pound the pavement (unless you have to).** Running on concrete sidewalks can cause shin splints as well as stress fractures in the feet and lower legs. Choose more forgiving surfaces, such as a dirt trail or synthetic track. Even asphalt can be slightly better for the body than concrete.

• **Keep on an even keel.** If you’re a novice runner, stick to flat surfaces to build strength before tackling hills.

• **Listen to your body.** Never run through injury, or something that could affect your mechanics, such as a bunion. Doing so could lead to a more serious issue.

• **Phase in change gradually.** Sudden variations in your running regimen, such as switching from a treadmill to an outdoor track or from running two miles a day to four, can increase your risk for a variety of injuries, including stress fractures, plantar fasciitis and runner’s knee. Give your body time to adjust. Introduce a new running surface slowly over a period of weeks. Follow the American Academy of Family Physicians’ recommendation, and only increase your mileage by 10 percent or less each week.

• **Start with a warmup.** Never run or stretch with cold muscles. A gentle walk is a great way to warm up muscles and prevent injury.

**NEED PAIN RELIEF?**

If you suffer from neck, back or joint pain, it’s important to see a qualified doctor, who can determine if early intervention with exercise, therapy or medications might correct or slow the progression of your condition.

Charles Catron, M.D., board-certified orthopedic surgeon, will provide personalized treatment options after taking the time to get to know you and diagnosing the source of your pain.

Among his many services, he treats sports-related inflammation, sprains, strains, tears and breaks, as well as foot pain stemming from plantar fasciitis.

For more information or to request an appointment, call (864) 529-9587 or visit 4healthier.me/MBHS-appointments.

Dr. Catron is a member of the medical staff at Mary Black Health System – Spartanburg.

Don’t let achy joints slow you down. An orthopedic surgeon with Mary Black Health System – Spartanburg’s Joint Care Program may be able to help. Learn more at 4healthier.me/MBHS-joint-care.
HANDS OFF!

These everyday items could be crawling with germs and bacteria that can make you sick. Proceed with caution, and wash your hands frequently to stay healthy.

KITCHEN SINK

According to the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF), 45 percent of kitchen sinks are contaminated with dangerous coliform bacteria (Salmonella and E. coli are part of this family).

Clean tip:
Sanitize sponges and scrub your sink regularly.

Note: Beware the sponge! 75% have coliform bacteria.

CELL PHONE

Research from NSF found:

Clean tip:
Wipe your phone down with a lint-free cloth daily.

5% TESTED POSITIVE FOR COLIFORM BACTERIA.

23% TESTED POSITIVE FOR YEAST OR MOLD.

WET LAUNDRY

Germs survive cold washes.
Use hot water, at least

140° Fahrenheit.

Clean tip:
Use a detergent with bleach or peroxide in it to kill germs. Or hang your laundry in the sun to dry — the ultraviolet rays kill germs.

SHOPPING CART

Food Protection Trends found that of the shopping carts in one study:

72% HAD COLIFORM BACTERIA.

51% HAD E. COLI.

Clean tip:
Grab a disinfecting wipe and clean the cart before use.

5% OF WEIGHT TRAINING EQUIPMENT AT GYMS IS CONTAMINATED WITH RHINOVIRUS, (THE CULPRIT BEHIND THE COMMON COLD), ACCORDING TO A STUDY IN THE CLINICAL JOURNAL OF SPORTS MEDICINE.

If a minor illness or cold gets you down, call your primary care doctor.

KEEP ’EM CLEAN

To get your hands clean and help prevent illness, follow these steps from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Step 1: Use clean water to wet your hands.

Step 2: Work soap and water into a lather all over your hands — the palm, back of the hand, around fingernails and between fingers.

Step 3: Wash for 20 seconds (long enough to sing Happy Birthday twice).

Step 4: Rinse off soap under clean, running, warm water.

Step 5: Air dry or use a clean surface to dry your hands.

5% ONLY 5 PERCENT OF PEOPLE WASH THEIR HANDS CORRECTLY, ACCORDING TO A MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY STUDY.
In a medical emergency, every minute matters. So, at our hospital, you’ll find faster care in the emergency room. We work diligently to have you initially seen by a medical professional* in 30 minutes – or less. And, with a team of dedicated medical specialists, we can provide a lot more care, if you need it.

For average wait times in the emergency room, visit 4healthier.me/MBHS-ER-wait.

*Medical professionals may include physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners.