

June 2020

Healthwise

The Official Newsmagazine of MFHN

2020

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE NURSE AND MIDWIFE

#SupportNursesAndMidwives



A Special Message from the President and CEO

Dear Friends,

All of us at Metropolitan Family Health Network (MFHN) hope this finds you all well and safe.

COVID-19 – also known as the Coronavirus – has taken a devastating toll on the physical, emotional and financial well-being of everyone. Sadly, Hudson County has the highest number of COVID-19 positive test results and the third-highest number of COVID-19-related deaths in New Jersey.

Since the first COVID-19 case was diagnosed in our area, Metropolitan Family Health Network has taken every precaution – and followed all prescribed guidelines – to protect you and our staff. While some of these measures may seem inconvenient, they are the best ways to keep everyone safe from the virus, and flatten the curve. These efforts include:

- *Operating only our Garfield Avenue (Jersey City) and Bergenline Avenue (West New York) sites.*
- *Closing our Bergen Avenue (Jersey City) site until further notice, and referring those patients to Garfield Avenue.*
- *Providing care Monday through Thursday, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; eliminating evening as well as Friday and Saturday hours.*
- *Testing patients and staff members for fever and symptoms before they enter the sites.*
- *Rearranging the layouts of our departments so we can all practice social distancing.*
- *Using face masks, gowns, and gloves.*
- *Installing “sneeze guards” at registration and check-in counters.*
- *Making sure hand sanitizer is available.*
- *Regularly deep-cleaning every area .*
- *Making Telehealth available.*
- *Calling patients who are vulnerable – pregnant women, and individuals with chronic conditions.*
- *Posting updates on guidelines and care on our website and social media platforms.*

Our new Telehealth services are an important step in caring for you in the safest way possible, and we encourage you to use it. (Please see the article on page 3.)

We know you have been doing your part to flatten the curve too, and encourage you to keep up the good work by:

- *Staying home – if you can – except to go out for food and medication.*
- *Practicing social distancing – keep at least 6 feet between yourself and other people. Do not gather in groups. Stay out of crowds.*
- *Washing your hands often, with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water aren't available, use hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol.*
- *Covering your mouth and nose with a face mask or cloth. You cannot enter a store, pharmacy, restaurant, or public transportation without a face covering.*
- *Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your arm.*
- *Staying away from people when you are sick, and avoiding people who are sick.*
- *Not touching your eyes, nose and mouth.*
- *Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces in your home.*

Please continue to check out our website and social media for updates on fighting the virus. Stay safe, stay healthy! Together we can beat this!

Joan Dublin

*Joan Dublin, RN, MPA, ACHE
President and Chief Executive Officer*

Metropolitan Family Health Network Now Has **Telehealth: Visit Your Doctor Without Leaving Your Home!**



Now, you can consult with your Metropolitan Family Health Network doctor or medical specialist from the safety, comfort and privacy of your own home.

While you're staying home and doing your part to flatten the curve of the COVID-19 pandemic (or, even if you're sheltering in place out-of-town), our medical specialists are available to meet with you virtually and focus on your medical issues and needs.

MFHN is offering Telehealth in all departments, for patients of all ages!

With MFHN Telehealth you can visit with your doctor or provider in Pediatrics, OB/GYN, Adult Medicine, Diabetes Management, Integrated Behavioral Health Care, Dental and Podiatry to discuss new and ongoing issues.

Here's how MFHN Telehealth works . . .

Our doctors and providers conduct virtual visits via video (using your smartphone, laptop or tablet), or by telephone. Your visits will be personal, private, and provide you with the peace of mind in knowing your healthcare needs are being addressed.

You may use MFHN Telehealth for . . .

- Established Patient Visits
- Annual Wellness Visits
- Medication Refills
- Consultations

To schedule a MFHN Telehealth appointment . . .

Just phone us at 201-478-5827, same as you would for a regular appointment. We will be glad to answer any questions and assist you with setting up your Telehealth visit.

Year of the Nurse & Midwife: The Essential Role of Nurses Throughout History

2020

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE NURSE AND MIDWIFE

#SupportNursesAndMidwives

Nurses have been on the front lines providing health care to communities throughout history, from early civilization to modern times, and during periods of conflicts and pandemics. The nursing profession traces back to 300 A.D. The Roman Empire rulers aimed to build hospitals for cities and needed nurses to assist physicians. In the 10th and 11th centuries, hospitals that were part of monasteries and churches formed the base for modern nursing. In the 1850s, Florence Nightingale led nurses to care for British soldiers during the Crimean War. When she returned, she began the Nightingale Principle education program that centered around hygiene and sanitation and is still used in health care.

During the mid-19th century in the United States, the demand for nurses increased as the population grew and moved to cities where the number of hospitals multiplied. The Frontier Nursing Service traveled to dispense medication and treat people who were ill or injured. Civil War nurses tended to wounded soldiers. During World War I, around 23,000 American nurses served in the military. The 1918 influenza pandemic led to 675,000 U.S. deaths, and then, as now, nurses risked their lives to provide care for the afflicted. About 78,000 nurses served in World War II.

In the early 1800s, women were trained to care for mothers during childbirth and the post-partum period. By the 1920s, nurse-midwives delivered babies, as an estimated 30 to 50 percent of births occurred in hospitals. The nurse-midwives maternity care

later included the radical idea of allowing fathers in the delivery room, treating the birth as a bonding experience for both parents and their child. Nurse-midwives now play a vital role in child-birth and breastfeeding education.

The education and credentialing of nursing has evolved. In the early 20th century, states started regulating registration and licensing for nurses. In the 1960s, nurse education moved from hospitals to colleges that offered degree programs and trained nurses for more advanced roles. Nurses began specializing in areas such as emergency services, intensive care, primary care, and surgical care, and serving as nurse practitioners. Research and education funding support helped modernize training programs in line with scientific advances.

Nursing continues to grow into important parts of the health care industry. Today nurses work in hospitals, long-term care facilities, private practices, schools, home care, and health care centers.

We take great pride in our caring and dedicated nurses at Metropolitan Family Health Network. Our nurse heroes are health care professionals who provide compassionate and knowledgeable care to our most underserved Hudson County communities. Our nurses provide care in every aspect of health care. During the Year of the Nurse and Midwife, we thank our nursing professionals for their service in helping Hudson County families stay healthy.

Managing Asthma

and its Physical/Emotional Tolls



Asthma is a chronic respiratory disease affecting the lungs.

Symptoms include wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and coughing at night or early in the morning. In Hudson County, 9.5 percent of children and adults have asthma. In New Jersey, over 600,000 adults and 167,000 children are estimated to have asthma. The number of women with asthma is almost twice that of men. However, asthma occurs more frequently in boys than girls. African Americans, Hispanics, children, and residents of urban communities are most likely to be affected, according to the New Jersey Department of Health.

Anyone can develop asthma. Risk factors include family history, obesity, air pollution, smoking, allergies, occupational exposure, and respiratory problems during infancy and childhood. Babies who live in moldy homes are three times more likely to develop asthma by age 7. Every year, 1 in 6 children with asthma visit the Emergency Department and about 1 in 20 are hospitalized, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The emotional toll of living with asthma includes feelings of isolation, fear, anxiety, and depression. A 2017 Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) survey of 804 adults with asthma reported that asthma affected their finances, work, school, self-confidence, time spent with friends, sports/exercise, hobbies, and travel.

The key to managing asthma is to avoid triggers and work with your healthcare provider to find the right treatment for your type of asthma. People who have allergic asthma may be affected by pollen, pet dander, dust mites, cockroach droppings, tobacco smoke, air pollution, strong odors such as scented lotions and perfumes, and chemical fumes that trigger symptoms. Some asthma is triggered by exercise, cold air, infections, flu, stress, and gastroesophageal reflux disease. Food allergy triggers include peanuts, eggs, milk, wheat, and shellfish. Your provider can perform a skin test to determine if you have allergic asthma and evaluate your lung capacity.

Allergies and asthma can occur together, and some treatments deal with both conditions. Quick-relief medicines control the symptoms.

Asthma proofing your home can reduce triggers. Wash stuffed animals and bedding frequently. Do not allow anyone to smoke. Use exhaust fans when cooking. Clean moldy areas with bleach. Do not allow pets to sleep in beds. Use a mattress cover to reduce exposure to dust mites. Vacuum carpeting often. Avoid using room deodorizers. Remove heavy curtains that collect dust.

By avoiding triggers and managing asthma with medications, you can sleep better, won't miss work or school as often, can socialize more with friends, and enjoy physical activities.



How Women Protect Their Health at Any Ages.

At all stages of life, from adolescence to geriatric, women can and must take steps to protect their health. Everyone needs to practice healthy eating habits [[choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov)], get 7-8 hours of sleep, exercise, abstain from smoking, and limit alcohol. However, women-specific health issues include breast cancer, cervical cancer, and osteoporosis.

Women's overall health is tied to the reproductive system and the sex hormone, estrogen.

During adolescence, girls begin to develop their identities as their bodies change. Beginning at age 21, all women should get annual, well-woman OB/GYN check-ups that address menstruation issues such as heavy bleeding, pain, bloating and other symptoms. Your OB/GYN provider can also diagnose and prescribe treatment for urinary tract infections, endometriosis, and more.

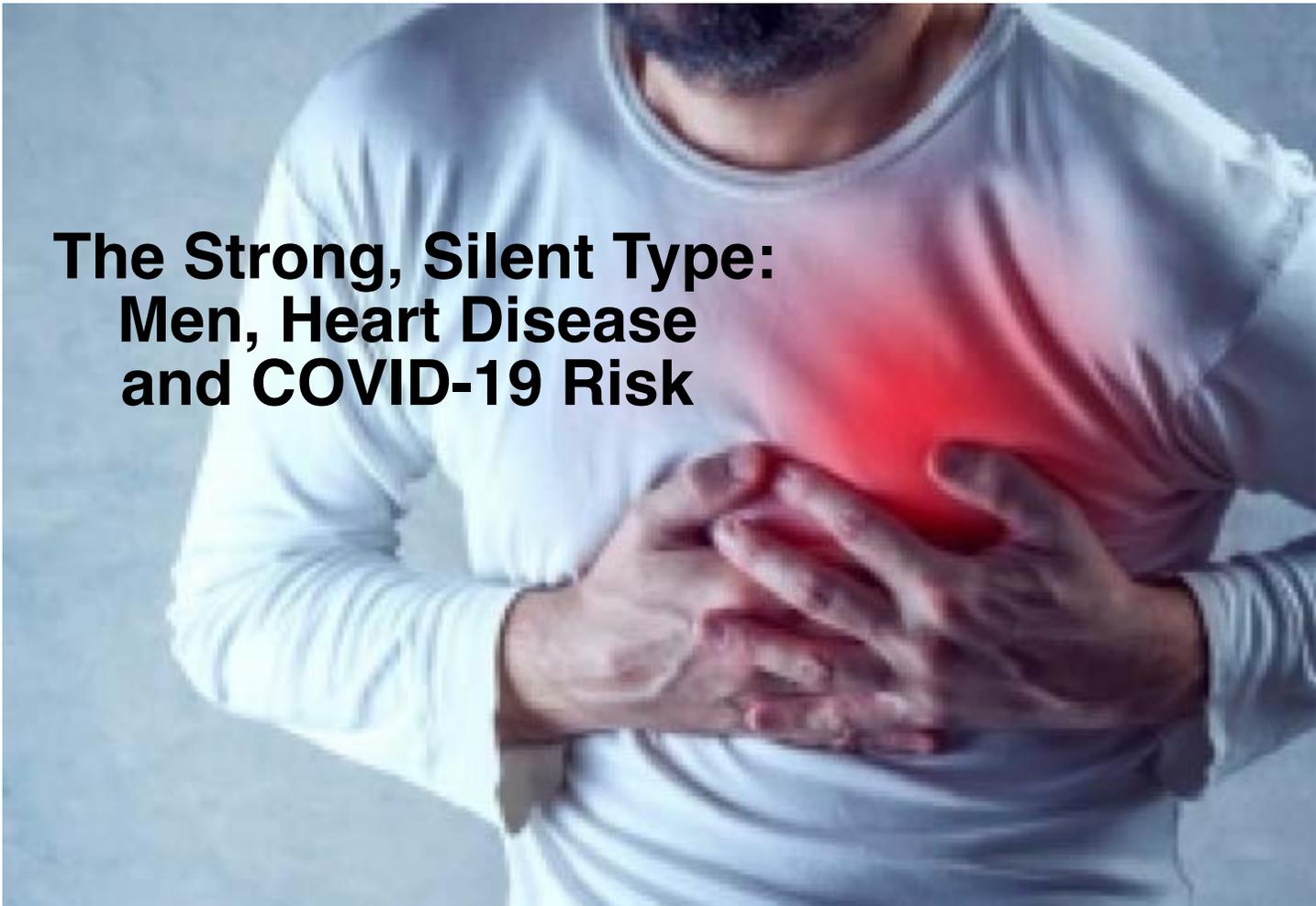
Women in their 20s and 30s are at their peak fertility stage, and estrogen levels are high, contributing to strong bones. Sexual health education includes using condoms, knowing a partner's history, and receiving vaccinations. Tell your provider about family health history, especially cancer, heart disease and diabetes. Ask whether you are at risk or in need of tests, vaccines, or treatment for the following: blood pressure; tuberculosis; chicken pox; MMR; flu; Hepatitis A, B and C;

and STDs like HIV and HPV. Discuss birth-control options for family planning. Women ages 21-65 should have a Pap test every three years; The HPV test should be done every five years for women ages 30-65.

Women in their 40s and 50s experience fluctuations in estrogen levels as they transition from perimenopause to menopause. Symptoms include lighter or skipped periods, hot flashes, fatigue, night sweats, dry skin, anxiety, reduced sex drive, and thinning hair. Hormone replacement therapy can be discussed with your provider. Mammograms to screen for breast cancer, which affects 12 percent of American women, are recommended every two years for women ages 50-74.

As life expectancy increases, so do the number of post-menopausal diseases. Women ages 50-74 should get regular colorectal cancer screenings. By age 65, women should be screened for osteoporosis, as low estrogen levels increase risk of bone loss and bone fractures. Risk may be reduced with calcium supplements and vitamin D. In their 60s and 70s, women may develop high blood pressure. All women should be tested for diabetes if they have high blood pressure.

Most women in the United States can look forward to enjoying life into their late 70s or early 80s by making good health and recommended screenings a top priority.



The Strong, Silent Type: Men, Heart Disease and COVID-19 Risk

Men are traditionally looked to as a source of strength. But biological and lifestyle factors put them at higher risk of death for heart disease and COVID-19.

Heart disease is a silent killer, claiming the lives of one in four men in the United States. Half of the men who die suddenly of coronary heart disease, which occurs when the walls of the arteries to the heart become too narrow, had no previous symptoms. High blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, obesity, unhealthy diet, excessive alcohol use, physical inactivity, and smoking can lead to heart-related diseases.

Signs of a heart attack include chest pain or discomfort, upper back or neck pain, indigestion, heartburn, nausea or vomiting, extreme fatigue, dizziness, and shortness of breath. Symptoms of heart failure also include swelling of the feet, legs, ankles and neck veins.

The physical effects of stress, anger and anxiety may result in high blood pressure which puts strain on the heart. Men are more likely than women to have a heart attack before age 55. Men experience stress more often through physical exertion as opposed to emotional and psychological reasons.

Men should not mistake Erectile Dysfunction (ED) as a normal part of getting older. It's almost always an indication of

a physical problem and may be a symptom of cardiovascular disease, even for men in their 40s. Low testosterone is increasingly linked to heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. Men with abdominal obesity are more likely to have low testosterone.

Current research shows that when it comes to fighting COVID-19, men may be at a disadvantage. Women have the extra X chromosome, which contains 60 genes associated with immune function. Estrogen in women binds to immune cells to fight the virus. Worldwide, higher percentages of men than women are dying of COVID-19. Men accounted for more COVID-19 deaths in Italy, South Korea, France, and China. In New York, more men than women were hospitalized or died from the virus.

Lifestyle factors put men at more risk of death from COVID-19 and heart disease. Men are more likely to smoke, drink alcohol, and put off seeing a doctor when they feel ill.

Men can reduce their risk of cardiovascular diseases and contracting viruses by managing pre-existing conditions, reducing stress, limiting alcohol consumption, eating healthy, and quitting smoking. Make an appointment with your MFHN provider to learn more.

Kids Corner: Put On Your Germ Fighter Cape



Kids who keep their hands clean are heroes and germ fighters. They protect everyone from icky germs that spread. Everything we touch has germs on it that can live for a long time. When we touch something, we can spread infections like colds, flu, coronavirus and other bad stuff. If you touch your face a lot, germs can get into your eyes, nose or mouth. Then the germs can go inside you.

Germs really love to stick to hands. They can live on doors, toys, electronics, tables, and other spots you touch a lot. Parents usually clean all that stuff. Every kid must learn to wash their own hands after touching these things. Hand washing scrubs away dirt, and germs go bye-bye down the sink.

Kids who wash their hands a lot may not get sick as often as others. That means that when the time is right, they get to see friends or go outside. So wash your hands after you eat, use the bathroom, play, touch pets, come in from outside, and after you cough, sneeze and blow your nose.

Here's the best way to wash your hands:

Wet your hands with warm water. Lather with soap. If you use liquid soap, use enough soap to make lots of bubbles. Wash by rubbing the fronts and backs of your hands. Then wash in between your fingers, under nails, and around wrists. Sing or hum a song like "Row Your Boat" two times while you wash. Rinse well with running water. Dry with a clean towel.

If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer the same way you use soap. Some hand sanitizers are scented like candy or fruit. Some even have glitter in them and they can fit in your pocket.

Make handwashing a habit everywhere you go. Make it fun!