



Health & Wellness Guide 2026

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Kate Marie
MailMax Rep

More Than Your Typical Therapy

When you think of therapy, where does your mind go? Perhaps you think of sitting in front of your psychologist and talking through your emotional and mental struggles. Or perhaps you think of your physical therapist, helping to get your body back to your everyday functional movements after an injury or accident. I'll admit that that is where my mind went whenever I first thought of therapy. However, I now have a new outlook on what all therapy can really entail. Thanks to Revive Spa in downtown St. Joseph, I have recently taken a deeper dive into some of the different forms of therapy that many of the facilities around us have to offer. According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, the definition of therapy is "any treatment intended to relieve or heal a disorder". Meaning therapy can be anything that relieves or treats your body, mind and/or soul.

One of the forms of therapy that I learned about is Halotherapy. Halotherapy, also known as salt therapy, is a form of therapy that crushes pure organic salt into microscopic sizes and disperses them into a designated space, such as

a bed or a room. At Revive Spa, they have what is called a Halo Bed, which is your own personal salt bed. Think of it as a tanning bed space, but you are laying on top of organic salts that are warmed (which felt amazing on my back) and there is a filter system that crushes up salt and disperses it through the air. I couldn't even tell that it was happening either because the air around you doesn't look or smell any differently. There are many different health benefits to halotherapy, but some of the biggest benefits are that it helps with your breathing, boosts your immune system, and is great for your skin. Even people who suffer from respiratory conditions, such as asthma, COPD, and allergies, have benefited from use of halotherapy. I can testify to that because I went in with a stuffy nose from the typical "Michigan can't make up her mind on the weather" allergies and came out 20 minutes later being able to breathe clearly through my nose again. Not to mention, the whole experience itself was extremely relaxing. The warmth of the salt along with the feel of running my hands and feet through the course salts and the color changing lights was extremely soothing to my nervous system. My skin felt silky smooth when I stepped out too. There are other halotherapy businesses in our area that offer what is known as salt caves where you can bring friends in the room with you instead of an individual experience like you receive in a Halo Bed.

Another form of therapy that I was able to learn about was Vibroacoustic therapy. This form of therapy is based off the idea that life is a vibration. The human body, believe it or not,

vibrates all the time at different frequencies even though we can't see it happening. When combined with other vibrations, such as music, it can bring your body into a state of healthy balance. There are different tracks of music and vibrations to help with different issues your body may be facing. I did the "I am rejuvenated" track, geared towards giving your body more energy, and the next morning was the first morning in years that I woke up feeling ready to tackle my day instead of that typical morning I need coffee to function grogginess. There are multiple tracks geared towards other struggles such as grief, addiction, love, sleep, releasing trauma, and many others. The experience itself was really cool and like nothing I have ever experienced before. You lay on a bed in a dimly lit room with a set of noise cancelling headphones on. The headphones play whichever track you pick, then the bed vibrates at different frequencies and in different locations of the body to coincide with the music being played. After about 5 minutes, I felt like my body was so relaxed and numb (in a good way). Even after the therapy was over, I felt like my body was vibrating with the sensations for another hour after. I couldn't explain it, but I just felt like my body was much lighter, and I had an extra pep in my step as I was leaving. But I noticed the biggest difference in how easy it was for me to get out of bed the next morning. I highly recommend trying this out!

The next form of therapy I had heard of before, but didn't know much about, is red light therapy. Red light therapy is a noninvasive treatment that uses low-level red light to stimulate

cellular repair, which improves skin appearance, such as fine lines, age spots, and even scars. In addition to the skin appearance benefits, the low-level red lights produce nitric oxide which cause mitochondria in your body to energize which can lower your blood pressure, enhance blood flow and circulation, support heart health, speed up muscle recovery, boost immune system, control inflammation, reduce mental fatigue, and improve sleep quality. There are many ways in which red light therapy can be distributed based on what your needs are. There are full body beds that can produce red light (similar to a tanning bed), facial machines that give you a full red light facial, or a handheld version which can focus on specific areas on the body. There are many spas in our area that provide red light therapy and many of them are advertising in this guide such as Revive Spa, Aesthetic Lounge & Spa, Stonegate Dermatology & Medical Spa, Elina Organics, and Inspirations Med Spa. Be sure to check them out and learn more!

I am excited to continue learning about the different ways that we can help our bodies rejuvenate and heal. Now, of course, these are not the only forms of therapy there are out there, so I encourage you to take a deeper look into the local spas and practices that offer different forms of treatment. Remember... you are never too old or young to start taking care of your health and your body.

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The changing nutritional needs of aging bodies

Getting older requires adapting to the changes that come one's way. The human body is ever-changing and health requirements typically need to be modified as people age. One area that merits consideration is the body's changing nutritional needs. Individuals should know that generally the body absorbs nutrients less efficiently as it ages. That's just one of many changing needs.

- **Fewer calories:** Healthline notes that older adults likely need to eat fewer calories than they did when they were younger since they tend to move and exercise less and carry less muscle. Overeating may lead to gaining extra fat around the belly area.

- **Vitamin B12:** As people age, their stomachs produce less hydrochloric acid, and some medications can make it harder for the body to absorb B12. Adults should speak with a health care provider about whether or not a B12 supplement might be right for them.

- **Fiber:** Regular bowel movements are an important part of staying healthy. Fiber will help support healthy digestion and prevent constipation. Fiber is found naturally in most fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes, according to Penn Health. Men 50 years of age and older should aim for 30 grams of fiber a day, while women should strive for 21 grams,

according to Maureen Boccella, MS, RD, CDCES, LDN, at Chester County Hospital.

- **Protein:** Eating more protein might help older adults avoid loss of muscle mass and diminished strength, which are hallmarks of a condition known as sarcopenia, says Healthline. A study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found those who ate the most protein lost 40 percent less muscle mass than people who ate the least.

- **Calcium:** Bone health is a consideration as a person gets older, says the United States Department of Agriculture. Calcium supports bone health and plays a role in muscle function, hormone secretion and nerve transmission. Calcium can be found in yogurt, cheese, milk, and some vegetables like kale and broccoli.

- **Potassium:** According to Harvard Health, diets that emphasize significant potassium intake can help keep blood pressure in a healthy range compared to potassium-poor diets. Potassium also is necessary for the normal operation of all cells, ensuring proper function of muscles and nerves. While bananas are good sources of potassium, apricots, prunes, orange juice, squash, and some potatoes also contain this often-neglected nutrient.

- **Water:** While not a nutrient per se, water is essential for older adults, who do not feel thirst as readily as they did when they were younger, making them more vulnerable to dehydration. Low-fat milk and unsweetened juices also can help.

Older adults are urged to speak with their doctors or dietitians to discuss their changing nutritional needs.



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Low-calorie, nutrient-rich foods to help you maintain overall health

A nutritious diet is a notable foundation of a healthy lifestyle. When paired with routine exercise, a healthy diet can help people feel better physically and mentally and reduce their risk for various chronic diseases.

Temptation combined with the accessibility and convenience of unhealthy foods makes it easy to compromise a healthy diet. When planning meals and snacks, adults looking to stay a nutritious course can incorporate a variety of low-calorie, nutrient-dense foods into their diets.

The Mayo Clinic notes that most vegetables are naturally very low in calories but high in volume or weight. The weight in many vegetables comes from water and fiber, not calories. The fiber content in vegetables also can make people feel fuller longer, reducing the likelihood of between-meal snacking on unhealthy but convenient foods like potato chips. The Mayo Clinic cites these vegetables as low-calorie options that are high in water and fiber:

- Salad greens
- Asparagus
- Carrots
- Tomatoes
- Broccoli
- Zucchini

Incorporating more low-calorie and water- and fiber-rich vegetables into your existing diet is not difficult. For example, the Mayo Clinic recommends adding vegetables to pasta dishes as a replacement for meat and cheese. When reaching for a between-meal snack, opt for carrots or broccoli over chips, pretzels or baked goods.

Fruits also make a healthy addition to a daily diet, though the Mayo Clinic warns that some fruits are better than others for people looking for low-calorie, nutrient-dense options. The online medical resource Healthline notes that avocados typically contain 161 calories per 100-gram serving, which equals about half of a medium-sized avocado. That makes avocados a high-calorie fruit compared to some alternatives. Bananas also tend to be higher in calories than other fruits, as Healthline reports a medium-sized banana (105 calories) contains 27 grams of carbohydrates. Avocados and bananas pack a nutritional punch, but it's important that people seeking low-calorie fruits to add to their diet recognize that each fruit tends to be on the high end in regard to calories.

Fortunately, there are plenty of low-calorie and flavorful fruits that can make great additions to a healthy diet. Strawberries are loaded with flavor and rich in vitamin C and

fiber, and a 100-gram serving of this popular fruit contains around 32 calories. Watermelon (30 calories per 100 grams), cantaloupe (34 calories), honeydew melon (36 calories), and peaches (39 calories) are some additional

low-calorie fruits that make great additions to a nutritious diet.

Eating right involves consumption of healthy foods like fruits and vegetables, which tend to be low in calories and nutrient-rich.



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What to know about colonoscopies

Adults in their early 40s know the day is looming when their physicians indicate it's time for them to get a colonoscopy. According to the MD Anderson Cancer Center®, most people should get their first colonoscopy at age 45 and continue to get semi-regular screenings through age 75.

Colonoscopies are an effective means to screening for colorectal cancer, which the World Health Organization reports is the third

most common cancer worldwide. Though the MDACC characterizes colonoscopies as the "gold standard" for colorectal cancer screening, many people still approach the test with a degree of apprehension. But a closer look at these highly effective screenings shows there's little to fear when getting a colonoscopy.

What happens during a colonoscopy?

During the procedure, a long, flexible tube known as a colonoscope is inserted into the rectum and around the colon. A camera and light at the tip of the colonoscope allows the doctor to examine the lining and the walls of the colon. The MDACC notes that ability is what makes colonoscopies so effective. During a colonoscopy, a doctor can remove any polyps, which are small, typically benign growths. Stool-based colorectal screenings and virtual colonoscopies do not allow for the removal of polyps.

Why do colonoscopies inspire anxiety?

The anxiety associated with colonoscopies typically does not stem from the procedure itself but the preparation required the night before it. The Mayo Clinic notes that the colon, which is normally filled with stool, will need to be emptied prior to getting a colonoscopy. That means patients cannot eat solid food the day before the exam, and any drinks

they consume may be limited to clear beverages, including water, tea and coffee without milk or cream, or broth (patients should first consult with their physicians about what they can and cannot consume on the day prior to the procedure).

Avoiding solid food and sticking to clean liquids can be inconvenient, but the anxiety from a colonoscopy often can be traced to the prescription laxative patients typically consume in pill or liquid from the night before the procedure. That laxative facilitates the emptying of the colon, and patients may make several trips to the bathroom after consuming the laxative. Patients also may need to wake up in the middle of the night and take a second dose, after which they may make several additional trips to the restroom.

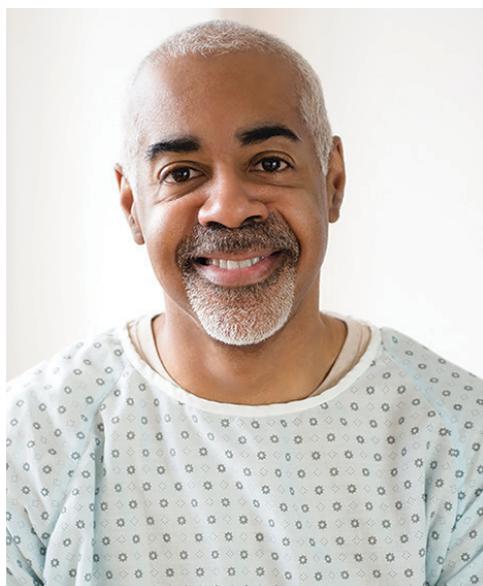
What about the procedure itself?

During a colonoscopy, patients will wear a gown but likely nothing else. Sedation or anesthesia is typically administered, and after that patients often fall asleep and ultimately awake in another room after the procedure has been completed. The Mayo Clinic notes some patients feel stomach cramps and/or bloated after the procedure. When patients awake from the sedative, the doctor who performed the procedure will offer his prognosis.

How soon do I need another colonoscopy?

Recommendations regarding a subsequent colonoscopy depend on what was found during the procedure. The MDACC notes that the typical timeline if no polyps were discovered is 10 years before the next colonoscopy.

Colonoscopies have a reputation for being unpleasant, but any pre-procedure discomfort is worth it given the efficacy of the exams.



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Hearing issues can be frustrating in many different ways. Whether it be hearing your loved one at dinner, hearing your kids or grandkids in those precious moments or hearing what your doctor is recommending

at an appointment, we need to be able to make sure that we are hearing everything that is important to us. The first step to ensuring you are hearing all that you can would be to take a hearing test. No matter your age, if you have noticed issues hearing or if you are just curious how you are hearing and want reassurance on your hearing ability, a hearing test with an audiologist will generally tell you everything you need to know.

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Physical activities kids can engage with each day

Modern children are not getting enough daily physical activity. So says a 2024 report from the Physical Activity Alliance, a coalition that works to promote regular participation in physical activity. Researchers behind the report utilized data from the National Survey of Children's Health and National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey data, which showed that just 20 percent of children between the ages of six and 17 meet the daily physical activity minimum of 60 minutes recommended by the U.S. Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.

That four in five children are not getting enough physical activity each day is a red flag for parents. A 2023 study published in the journal Children noted that children who engage in sedentary behaviors are at increased risk for an assortment of negative health outcomes that include obesity, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and poor mental health. Parents can help kids reduce their risk by encouraging daily physical activity, which can be incorporated into youngsters' lives in various ways.

• **Walking:** Walking is an accessible physical activity that children can embrace throughout the day. In lieu of driving to the bus stop each morning, parents can walk their children there and even arrive a little early so kids get a chance to run around with their friends before the bus arrives. Parents also can incorporate walks into their nightly

routines by taking a post-dinner stroll around the neighborhood.

• **Dancing:** Dancing is another great physical activity that children, especially those in elementary school, tend to love. The National Institutes of Health note that dancing can improve mood, promote heart health, help to build strong muscles and bones, and create better balance and coordination, among other benefits. Parents concerned that kids aren't getting enough physical activity can host routine dance parties at home to get kids off the couch and up and moving. Let kids choose the music so they're more enthusiastic about cutting a rug.

• **Outdoor activities:** Organized sports is not the only way for kids to be physically active. Kids who don't enjoy sports can still get lots of exercise each day. Parents can introduce youngsters to outdoor activities like hiking, kayaking and cycling to ensure they aren't spending all of their free time sitting around. Come wintertime, if the air outside is too chilly, consider taking youngsters to a local indoor swim club or an indoor rock climbing facility, many of which have programs for climbers as young as five.

Many modern kids aren't getting enough physical activity each day. Parents can remedy that by incorporating any number of fun physical activities into kids' daily routines.

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7 signs of spring allergies

Few things are more deflating than finally venturing outdoors after a long winter of cabin fever, only to find that blooming trees and flowers start wreaking havoc with your personal health.

Spring allergies, also known as allergic rhinitis, occur when the body's immune system overreacts to indoor or outdoor allergens, such as tree and grass pollen, mold and dust. According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, approximately 25.7 percent of adults and 18.9 percent of children in the United States suffer from seasonal allergies. Allergic rhinitis accounts for an estimated \$16 billion in annual health care costs and is a leading cause of reduced productivity while at work.

Identifying the symptoms of allergies is key to distinguishing them from a cold or another infection and to ensuring fast relief. Spring allergies typically peak from March to May and may even continue into July. Physicians will look for specific physical markers to confirm allergies.

1. Sneezing: Sneezing can occur in rapid-fire patterns, known as paroxysmal sneezing, especially after spending time outdoors. These intense episodes can be tied to allergies or be symptomatic of another condition, says the National Institutes of Health.

2. Itchy, watery eyes: Allergic conjunctivitis is the medical term for this condition, which is a hallmark of spring allergies. Eyes will appear red, feel gritty or drip clear fluid.

3. Nasal congestion/runny nose: A thin, clear discharge typically is a sign of allergies, whereas any mucus that is thick, yellow or green could indicate an infection. Constant upward rubbing of the nose from allergies (called the allergic salute) often causes a permanent transverse nasal crease at the junction of the nose tip and the bridge, says Healthline.

4. Itchy throat and ears: Pollen may cause a scratchy or tingly sensation in the throat and in the ear canals. Medical professionals warn that chronic inflammation from allergies is a primary risk factor for secondary bacterial infections that can occur in the sinuses and ears. Eustachian tube dysfunction occurs when fluid builds up behind the eardrum because the eustachian tubes become blocked or don't open properly to let fluid drain to the nose and throat, says the Cleveland Clinic. Pressure imbalances, muffled hearing, popping sounds, and even pain can occur.

5. "Allergic shiners": Nasal congestion can cause swelling and increased blood vessels to the small veins in the infraorbital area, causing dark, bluish circles under the eyes called periorbital hyperpigmentation, says the Center for Orofacial Myology. This makes allergy sufferers appear as though they have two black eyes.

6. Cough: Post-nasal drip occurs when mucus drips down the back of the throat from the nose. This can cause a persistent, dry cough that's often worse at night. Post-nasal

drip also may result in a sore throat and a "cobblestone" appearance in the back of the throat that's visible during a medical exam.

7. Fatigue: Insufficient rest due to allergy-related discomfort can cause those with spring allergies to feel fatigued. The constant immune system response to allergies also can lead to daytime tiredness and lack of focus.

Allergic rhinitis is a problem for millions of people each spring. A combination of avoiding triggers and using allergy medications can help calm any symptoms that crop up.

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Signs of minor brain injuries

Mild traumatic brain injuries are more common than people may realize. While the prevalence of concussions among competitive athletes is widely recognized, one need not play a sport to suffer a mild traumatic brain injury.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that anyone can experience a traumatic brain injury (TBI). A 2019 study published in the journal JAMA Insights noted that mild traumatic brain injuries (mTBIs) are

the most common type of TBI. Despite their characterization as “mild,” mTBIs can produce physical, cognitive and social or emotional symptoms. Recognition of the signs of mTBIs may compel people experiencing such injuries to seek medical attention that can make life more manageable until symptoms subside.

Physical

The physical symptoms of an mTBI can affect everything from balance to vision. The CDC notes that such symptoms include:

- Bothered by light or noise: The Optometrists Network reports that 40 percent of individuals who have suffered a brain injury are sensitive light.

- Dizziness or balance problems: The Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center indicates that issues with balance are common among people who have dealt with a TBI. A TBI can affect parts of the brain that control movement, which can make it hard for people to maintain their balance.

- Feeling tired, no energy: The Brain Injury Association of America reports that 98 percent of people who have experienced a TBI have some form of fatigue. In fact, the BIAA notes that many report fatigue is the most challenging symptom they experience after a TBI.

- Headaches: The MSKTC notes that headaches like migraines, tension headaches and cervicogenic headaches, which can start in the neck, shoulders and back of the head before traveling over the top of the head, are common after a TBI.

- Nausea or vomiting, particularly in the immediate aftermath of suffering the injury

- Vision problems: The Optometrists Network notes that blurred or double vision, difficulty with eye movements, focus issues, and struggles with tracking are some common vision problems associated with TBIs.

Cognitive

Some people experience cognitive issues after a TBI, and such problems may affect thinking and memory. The CDC notes that some of the cognitive issues associated with TBIs include:

- Attention or concentration problems
- Feeling slowed down
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Problems with short- or long-term memory

- Trouble thinking clearly

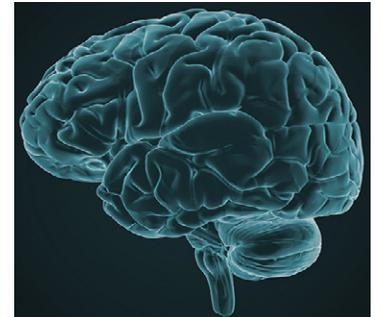
Social or emotional
In the aftermath of a TBI, people may experience a range of social or emotional symptoms. The Brain Injury Association notes

such issues occur because TBIs can cause damage to parts of the brain that control emotions. Others may develop these symptoms due to living with the impact of the TBI. After experiencing a TBI, people may develop these social or emotional symptoms:

- Anxiety or nervousness
- Irritability or easily angered
- Feeling more emotional
- Sadness

The BIA notes anyone experiencing social or emotional symptoms after a TBI can work with a clinical neuropsychologist or clinical psychologist to assess their situation and work on coping strategies that can be vital to overcoming the symptoms.

TBIs affect people from all walks of life. Recognition of symptoms of TBIs can alert people when they need to seek professional medical attention.





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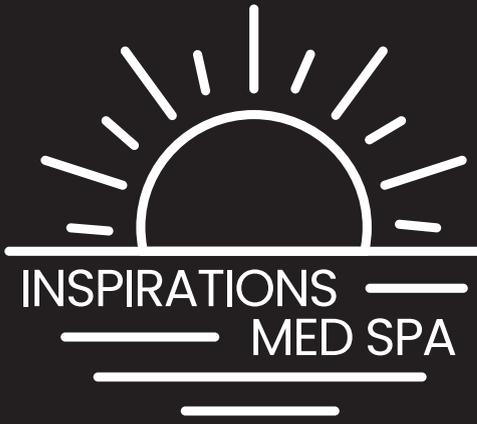
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INSPIRATIONS MED SPA

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