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Community Calendar...page 4

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University of Southern Mississippi named to Best Online Master's Degree List for 2016

Submitted

The University of Southern Mississippi has been recognized by Affordable College Online as one of the Best Online Master's Degrees for 2016. Southern Miss earned the sixth position on the list among thousands of U.S. colleges with online master's degree options.

"We wanted to highlight the schools that are setting a high standard for online programs," said Dan Schuessler, CEO and Founder of Affordable Colleges Online, "It is important to honor these universities who are going above and beyond the standard for online learning."

Only public, not-for-profit institutions were eligible for the ranking. The primary

data points used to identify the Best Online Master's Degrees of 2016 include the following:

- In-state tuition and fees
- Percent of full-time undergraduate students receiving institutional financial aid
- Number of online programs offered
- Student-to-teacher ratio

Kati Collins, of Geilenkirchen, Germany, is currently enrolled in the online Child and Family Studies master's (CFSMS) program.

"I chose CFSMS for the flexibility of the program and the diversity of the curriculum," said Collins. "It has been an amazing experience, and being able to take what I have learned throughout the program and

apply it to everyday life (even in a different culture) is truly amazing."

Southern Miss offers more than 20 online master's degree in business, education, music, nursing and health related fields. To learn more about online master's degrees offered go to <https://online.usm.edu/programs>

AffordableCollegesOnline.org has distinguished its ranking scale by using a Peer-Based Value metric, or PBV. A "bang for your buck" metrics, the PBV compares the cost of a program to the cost of other programs with the same (or a similar) qualitative score. It also compares the qualitative score of the program to the score of other

programs with the same (or a similar cost). A complete list of rankings can be found <http://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/degrees/masters-programs>.

About AffordableCollegesOnline.org

Since 2011, AffordableCollegesOnline.org (<http://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/>) has been a leader in providing quality data and information about pursuing an affordable higher education. They feature higher education institutions that have developed online learning environments that include highly trained faculty, new technology and resources, and online support services to help students achieve educational and career success.

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A Shepherd's Heart – Simeon's song and blessing

Dr. Timothy L. Hubbard

“Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light of revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.” Luke 2:29-32 (ESV)



Simeon's song, like the other three songs that we have looked at these past weeks, is found in the midst of the story line of the birth narrative recorded by Luke. In this portion of the story, we are told that the time came for the purification ritual for the newborn babe. As Mary and Joseph enter the Temple to present their firstborn to the Lord, Luke tells of this man Simeon.

Simeon was a man who was righteous and devout and had been awaiting the coming of the Messiah. The Holy Spirit had revealed to him that he would not die before he had seen, with his own eyes, the Messiah. As Mary and Joseph entered the Temple with the Lord, Jesus Christ, Simeon took the babe into his arm, lifted him toward the heavens and blessed God. The words of this blessing (listed above) revealed much in the way of God's fulfilling His word. So much so that Simeon actually included the phrase in his song of blessing, “According to your word.” Simeon's way of saying, “Enough said!”

Simeon praised God for allowing him to see God's salvation before his death. But he also made a statement that we must not overlook; he stated that God's salvation was not only for the people of Israel but that he also was a light of revelation to the Gentiles. In other words, Simeon was stating clearly that the Messiah came to offer salvation to all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles who would receive Him. These words caused Joseph and Mary to stand in amazement, and then Simeon turned and blessed them with the following words, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

These words uttered by Simeon to Joseph and Mary certainly brought questions to their minds concerning their son. They knew that He was a special gift from God, but could they possibly understand how these words would be fulfilled in the life of their son, Jesus? Certainly not! They would depart and do their best to rear their firstborn named Jesus, knowing all the while that the angel Gabriel had given the child this Name because He would save His people from their sin. And now Simeon had proclaimed that he had just seen Jesus, The Messiah who was the Salvation of God for all mankind.

Have your eyes seen the Messiah? Do you know Him as your Savior? There is no time like the present to know Him. God's word says clearly that God loves you and He sent His Son for you and for me. John 3:16 states, “For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him shall be saved.” Yes, God loves, God gives, and God saves anyone who believes.

I pray that you will see Jesus with your own eyes today.

The hidden benefits of water

Submitted

Dehydration is a dangerous condition that can cause a host of complications and even prove fatal in severe cases. But as dangerous as dehydration can be, many cases are entirely preventable.

The best way to prevent dehydration is to drink enough water. When the body does not take in as much water as it puts out, it can become dehydrated. People who live in warm climates or in elevated altitudes may lose more water than those who do not. In addition, water loss is accelerated during strenuous exercise, highlighting the emphasis men and women must place on drinking enough water during their workouts.

But water does more for the body than prevent dehydration. The following are a handful of lesser known ways that water benefits the body.

- Water can help people maintain healthy weights. Dieting fads come and go, but water is a mainstay for people who want to control their caloric intake in an effort to maintain healthy weights. Water has zero calories, so reaching for a bottle or glass of water instead of a soda, lemonade or another caloric beverage can help people keep the pounds off. A study from researchers at the University of Texas Health Science Center found that even diet soda enhances weight gain by as much as 41 percent. In addition, soda has been linked to conditions such as obesity, diabetes and tooth decay. No such association exists with water.

- Water helps to fight fatigue. The fatigue-fighting properties of water are another of its lesser known benefits. When the body is not adequately hydrated, it can experience muscle soreness. And fitness enthusiasts who do not drink enough water may notice their bodies require extensive recovery time after working out. Each of those consequences can be prevented by drinking enough water, and doing so can even improve performance, as studies have shown that just a 3 percent loss of body weight due to dehydration can cause as much as a 10 percent drop in performance level.

- Water can improve the appearance of the skin. Skin that does not get enough wa-



ter can turn dry and flaky and feel tight. In addition, dry skin is more likely to wrinkle than adequately hydrated skin. Getting water to the skin can be tricky, as the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health notes that water will reach all the other organs of the body before it reaches the skin. But the school recommends applying a hydrating moisturizer within two minutes of leaving the bath or shower and drinking at least eight glasses of water a day to ensure the skin is getting enough water.

- Water helps the gastrointestinal tract. Water can help maintain normal bowel function. When the body lacks sufficient fluid, the colon will pull water from stools in an effort to stay hydrated. That can lead to constipation, a condition in which people experience difficulty emptying their bowels. By drinking enough water, people can ensure their colon will not have to pull water from stools to stay hydrated, thereby helping them stay regular.

Water helps the body in myriad ways, many of which might surprise people unaware of just how valuable water can be to the body.

Did you know?

Submitted

Carbohydrates are seen as the enemy by many people looking to lose weight, but that reputation is ill-deserved for certain types of carbs. Carbohydrates referred to as “smart carbs” can boost energy and mood and help people, even dieters, maintain healthy weights. Smart carbs, which can be found in fruits, vegetables, minimally processed whole grain products such as brown rice and quinoa, and whole wheat bread among other foods, contain vital nutrients and fiber. The body takes longer to

absorb whole grains than it does processed carbohydrates, stabilizing blood sugar and energy levels as a result. Because the body takes longer to absorb whole grains, feelings of satiety and fullness are extended. That reduces the likelihood of being hungry again shortly after eating, thereby helping people maintain healthy weights. Those who want to avoid carbohydrates should avoid products made with white flour, such as white bread, non-whole grain pastas, potato chips, and breakfast cereals with high amounts of sugar.

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GENERAL

Wishing all my clients and their families a Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with peace, joy and love. May your days be stress free. Robert Lowe.

People with Disabilities Take Part in Study - Compensation. The University of Southern Mississippi is currently conducting a study examining mental health-related outcomes in individuals with various physical disabilities. Participants will be asked to answer questions about different aspects of their disabilities, beliefs, and mental and physical health. Accessibility software and equipment will be provided so that individuals with various forms of physical disabilities can use our laptop computers. Participants needing an American Sign Language Interpreter will be provided one by study staff. Financial compensation in the form of \$45 Amazon gift cards will be provided. Participation in the study will take place at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. For more information about this study, or if you are interested in participating, please contact us at 214-236-6106 or usm.disability.study@gmail.com

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yams. Choose 1: Cornbread or rolls. We also have other menus available. Party foods, etc. All dishes are freshly made from scratch. Free delivery in Hattiesburg city limits. Delivery fees will be added to all orders outside of Hattiesburg, MS. References available. Reasonable prices. Place your order today! Granny's Home cooking, 601-596-8451, 601-408-8486.

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LAND

Jones County +/- 57 Acres: Must see! Located in South Jones County on Rainey Road. 10 Miles from Hattiesburg and Laurel right off the Sanford Road Exit on I-59. This property would be perfect for a home-site or

mini-farm with plenty of recreational opportunities. Price: \$153,500. For more details, Contact Marc 601-670-5429 at Walley Properties, LLC.. Or visit our website walleyproperties.com for maps and more information of this listing.

South Jones County +/- 130 acres. Located on the Leaf River. 9 miles North of Hattiesburg on Church St. between I-59 and Hwy. 11. Great hunting/fishing opportunity, over a 1/2 mile of river frontage, big sand bar, food plots, mature hardwood bottoms, young pine plantation. \$305,500. For more information on this outdoorsman paradise, contact Marc 601-670-5429 at Walley Properties, LLC.

Lake Eddins: a great Place To Be. Now offering Offwater Lots As Low As \$3500.00. Call CrossRoads Realty 601-727-7653.

Jones County +/- 123 Acres. Located 5 miles from downtown Ellisville off of Hwy. 29 South on Pecan Grove Road. This Property has

endless opportunities! From hunting, fishing, building a home/farm, or just for an investment. Property contains mature pine plantation and a fully stocked pond that would be great to build a home/camp next too. \$455,100. For more details, Contact Marc 601-670-5429 at Walley Properties, LLC. Or visit our website walleyproperties.com for maps and more information of this listing.

20 acre farm/ranch in Janice, Ms. With custom built home, wrap around porch, Pond, horse stalls, fenced and cross fenced, huge shop. Bordered on two sides by National Forest lands. Lots of wildlife call Shawn, Southern Coastal Realty, LLC 601-408-3570.

Jones County +/- 30 Acres Located just minutes from the Howard

Technology Park, I-59/Hwy 590/Hwy 11, and Ellisville. This property has paved road frontage on Dacetown Road and has a 10 yr. old pine plantation. \$89,500. Contact Marc 601-670-5429 at Walley Properties, LLC. Please visit walleyproperties.com for maps of this listing.

Stringer, MS: This excellent 92 acre parcel is located in the heart of Stringer School District. The property consist of various merchantable timber types with multiple home sites. With an abundance of wildlife the property could also be used as a hunting retreat. The property can be divided. Priced to sell at \$207,000. Contact Marc 601-670-5429 at Walley Properties, LLC.

Continued on ... Page 5

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PB144

January 5
"The Do You Know" Foundation of Mississippi is sponsoring the following events for King Day Activities 2017: Saturday, January 7; Talent/Oratorical Contest Oak Park Elementary Auditorium at 5:00 p.m. The deadline to register is January 5. Monday, January 9, deadline for Essay and Poem Writing (grades 4-6, 7-9) (Essays 10-12). Saturday, January 14, MLK Parade (no charge for participants) line up at 9:00 a.m. at the Sawmill Mall, Laurel. Parade starts at

10:00 a.m. Contact Anthony Hudson, 601-699-4186. Sunday, January 15, Memorial Service at 5:00 p.m. at Christ's Church, 1301 Second Avenue, Laurel. Monday, January 16, MLK Prayer Breakfast, 9:00 a.m. at the Cameron Center, 711 North 10th, Laurel. For more information or to get entry applications to any event please contact Pastor Anne Clayton, 601-466-4186 or Pinky Jones 601-323-2967; Anthony Hudson, Parade coordinator 601-699-0969.

January 9
Jones County Federation of Democratic Women will hold their monthly meeting on Monday at 6:00 p.m. in the Cook Avenue Center.

January 10
The monthly DMA (Don't Mention Age) group will meet at 11:00 a.m. This will be our quarterly bingo. Be sure to bring a gift. Lunch will be served at noon. For more information call the Y at 601-428-5694.

January 12
The West Jones Football athletic banquet will be held at 6:00 p.m. at Life Church, Laurel, on Hwy 84 west. Tickets are \$20 per person. Tickets are available at West Jones High School Office or you can contact Mike Smith at 601-433-8012.

January 14
Gospel sing on Saturday beginning at 6:30 p.m. at Sanford Community Center, located at 663 Old Highway 49, Sanford. Featured guest will be "The Floyds," "The Trustys of Da Va Crossing," and "Faithway Singers." Free admission; a love offering will be received. For information call 601-765-6485.

January 16
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration Breakfast will be held at the Heidelberg Multi-Purpose Building, Heidelberg, at 8:00 a.m. Dr. Samuel Jones from Richton will be the speaker. Admission is free.

January 17
There will be a three-night revival beginning on January 17 thru 19 starting at 7:00 nightly at the Danny Hinton Community Center, 225 Tatum Road, Hattiesburg. The guest speaker will be Elder Anthony Toney of Birmingham AL. Come and hear a powerful word from God. The theme is "All Things are Become New," IICorinthians 5:17. Everyone is invited to attend these services.

January 23
Jones County Junior College baseball will host a Hitting Camp for players in grades 7-12 from Jan. 23-26 at Community Bank

Park. The camp will be from 6-7:15 each evening. Camp cost is \$100 per player with the camp limited to the first 40 players that register. Each night, campers will get hitting instructions from current JCJC players and coaches. Three of the four days will be hitting on the field, while the other night will be done in the cages. Go to jcjcatletics.com, click on "Baseball" and click on "Hitting Camp." Fill out the registration form and medical waiver and send along with a check payable to Bobcat Dugout Club to: Chris Kirtland, Head Baseball Coach, Jones County Junior College, 900 South Court St., Ellisville, MS 39437. For more information, contact assistant coach Zach Allen at zachery.allen@jcjc.edu or 228-990-3729.

January 29
Gospel Sing - Glade Baptist Church, located on Hwy. 15 South, will have a gospel sing on Sunday night starting at 6:00 p.m. The featured group will be the Magnolia Boys Quartet of Laurel. Everyone is invited to attend for a night of gospel music.

February 18
The Jasper County Adult Club of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Club of Bay Springs & Vicinity will host our 15th Annual Beauty & Beau Pageant Saturday, February 18, 2017, at 6:00 p.m. The pageant will be held at the Jones County Junior College Building on Highway 15 North of Bay Springs. If you would like to participate in this pageant please contact the following committee members: President Linda Ellis Brown @ (601) 789-5058, Chair Phyllis Norris @ (601) 789-5471, Co-Chair Addie Burks Gammage @ (601) 789-5564 or Dyann Mizell @ (601) 729-8231. More information will be made available later.

Miscellaneous
On the last Tuesday of each month, Covington County Hospital hosts a cancer support group at 5:30 p.m. in the hospital's classroom. For more information, or call 601-765-6711.

Al-Anon meetings are held each Monday night at 7:00 at the 24-hour Society Club House at 626 N. Magnolia Street (corner of 7th Street, Laurel). Al-Anon is for families and friends for those who have addiction problems. Al-Anon hotline is 601-426-4688.

TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) meets every week on Thursday, 9:15 a.m., in the Magnolia Baptist Church fellowship hall, 1040 Wansley Road in Laurel. For more information, call or text 601-

How to improve alertness during the workday

Submitted

A long workday can be both mentally and physically draining. As a result, office workers and professionals whose jobs are more physically demanding than office work may find themselves less alert at the end of the workday than at the beginning.

A loss of alertness as the workday draws to a close might be unavoidable. But professionals whose sense of alertness begins to dwindle in the thick of the workday might need to take steps to improve their alertness to protect themselves from injury and to ensure the quality of their work does not suffer.

- Avoid caffeine in the late afternoon. Some professionals rely on caffeinated beverages such as coffee or energy

drinks to combat afternoon drowsiness. While that afternoon caffeine fix might provide an immediate, if temporary, jolt of energy, it might also affect a person's energy levels the following day. A 2013 study published in the Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine found that caffeine consumed as early as six hours before bedtime can significantly disrupt sleep. Professionals who reach for a cup of coffee in the late afternoon might get a sudden boost of energy, but their energy levels the following day might be lower due to a poor night's sleep.

- Avoid high-fat foods at lunchtime. Foods that are high in fat should always be avoided thanks to their connection to a host of health problems. Such foods also negatively affect energy levels when consumed in the middle of the day. The University of Rochester Medical Center notes that the body digests and absorbs high-fat foods very slowly. That means workers who eat high-fat foods for lunch won't get the afternoon energy boost that low-fat, healthy lunches will provide.

- Snack healthy. Professionals who find themselves needing a snack in the mid- to late-afternoon can sate their hunger and give themselves an energy boost by snacking healthy.

Avoid snacks like potato chips that tend to be high in fat and low in nutrition. Foods that are high in fiber and/or protein can provide a longer energy boost and quell the afternoon hunger pangs at the same time. Fresh fruit and Greek yogurt fit the bill.

- Change your workout schedule. Regular exercise improves short- and long-term health while also increasing daily energy levels. Professionals who include exercise in their daily routines yet still suffer from a lack of alertness in the afternoon may need to alter their workout schedules. A 2011 study published in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine found that participants who were assigned afternoon exercise programs during work hours reported increased productivity versus those who were not assigned afternoon workouts. If working out in the afternoon is not feasible, avoid working out too late at night, as the National Institutes of Health note that exercising within two to three hours of bedtime can disrupt sleep, ultimately having a negative impact on energy levels the following day.

Professionals who find their alertness levels waning in the afternoons can combat such drowsiness in various ways.

4 foods that can boost energy levels

Submitted

Diet can go a long way toward increasing or lowering energy levels. No one wants to consume foods that will make it harder for them to get through the day, so the following are a handful of foods that pack an energetic punch.

1. Cashews: Cashews, which are high in magnesium, help to convert sugar into energy. Magnesium deficiency can lead to low energy levels, so nuts that are high in magnesium, including cashews, can provide that mid-afternoon jolt that some people are seeking. Cashews are high in calories, so it's best for those looking to lose weight or maintain healthy weights to adhere to serving suggestion guidelines.

2. Skinless chicken: A study from researcher Judith Wurtman of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Clinical Research Center found that alertness tends to increase when the brain produces the neurotransmitter dopamine and the hormone norepinephrine. Skinless chicken contains an amino acid known as tyrosine that helps in the production of both dopamine and norepinephrine. If skin-

less chicken is not available, other foods that may provide this same effect include fish, lean beef and eggs. In addition, lean meats like skinless chicken contain enough vitamin B to help ease insomnia.

3. Salmon: Omega-3 fatty acids can help the body fight inflammation, which has been linked to a host of ailments, including chronic fatigue. Salmon is also high in protein, which can eliminate the mid- to late-afternoon hunger pangs that can derail healthy diets and contribute to weight gain.

4. Beans: Beans are loaded with fiber, and that's a good thing for energy levels. Like magnesium, which can also be found in beans, fiber takes awhile to digest, extending the energy-boosting properties of foods loaded with fiber. In spite of the growing movement to eat and live healthier, many adults still do not include enough fiber in their diets. Men and women can consult with their physicians to determine how to make that happen, but eating more beans is a good start.



Pet of the Week

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Felix is between three and four months old and is very playful and affectionate. He has been neutered and vaccinated. Felix and his siblings and several other cats are available at the Animal Rescue League, located at 2511 Moose Drive in Laurel. ARL is open Monday-Saturday, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. If you have any questions about adopting, volunteering, or donating, you can call us at 601-649-0821. You can also find us on Facebook as the Laurel Jones County Animal Rescue League or visit our website at <http://arllaurel.webs.com>. ARL is currently in need of cat litter, Kitten Chow, Mean Green cleaner, laundry detergent, and bleach.

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Jones County +/- 35 Acres with 1850 sq ft home. Great Location!! Located in Southeast Jones County on Old Progress Road just minutes from Hattiesburg. This property consist of a 3br/2ba house along with shop. Timber has recently been harvested and chemical has been sprayed for replanting. \$230,000. Contact Marc 601-670-5429 at Walley Properties, LLC. Please visit walleyproperties.com for maps of this listing.

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Covington County +/- 74 Acres. Located 4 miles from downtown Seminary off hwy 590 on the corner of Shirley Sanford Road and Johnny Sanford Road. This property would be perfect for a home-site with plenty of recreational opportunities. Property consist of mature pine plantation, gorgeous hardwoods, and a stream that flows throughout the property. Great for hunting. \$244,200. For more details, Contact Marc 601-670-5429 at Walley Properties, LLC. Or visit our website walleyproperties.com for maps and more information of this listing.

24 acres in Runnells town. Lots of mature timber and wildlife. Unbelievable hunting!! May subdivide. Call Shawn with Southern Coastal Realty at 601-408-3570.

Waterfront lot +/-1acre, Gautier, Ms. \$54,900. 228-497-2787, 228-218-0774.

Jasper County 35 +/- Acres This tract is located 7 miles northwest of Heidelberg, MS on County Road 14 and offers an abundance of wildlife that is sure to satisfy any hunters needs. The property was planted with Loblolly Pines in the winter of 2016. The property will be sprayed for release in the summer of 2016. This property is offered at \$52,500. Call Marc 601-670-5429 at Walley Properties LLC or visit walleyproperties.com for maps of this listing.

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IMPACT

How much sleep should kids get?

Submitted

School-aged children are busier than ever before, and some may be sacrificing sleep to accommodate their lifestyles. The National Sleep Foundation says school-aged children need between nine and 11 hours of sleep each night to function at a healthy level. Sleep deprivation can be linked to a host of health ailments, including issues affecting the development of the brain. Growing evidence suggests that lack of sleep can cause disturbances in metabolic rates that could affect the risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity. A recent study from Johns Hopkins University found that, for each additional hour of sleep a child gets, the risk of that child becoming

overweight or obese decreases by 9 percent. Children who slept the least, according to the research, had a 92 percent higher risk of being overweight or obese compared to children with longer sleep duration. The NSF adds that poor or inadequate sleep can lead to mood swings, behavioral problems and cognitive problems that impact kids' ability to learn in school. To promote good sleep habits in children, parents and other caregivers can establish consistent sleep/wake routines; ensure children avoid excess caffeine, particularly late in the day; create a cool, dark sleep environment; keep televisions and other media devices out of bedrooms; and help children work through stressors that may impact sleep.

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Simple ways to avoid injuries when working out

Submitted

A desire to live a healthy, active life compels many people to include exercise in their daily routines. Numerous studies have shown that regular workouts that include a combination of strength training and cardiovascular exercise can make bodies less susceptible to injury while reducing a person's risk for conditions such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

Exercising is most effective when it's part of a daily routine, but that routine can be derailed if men and women are not taking the appropriate measures to avoid injury while working out. While even professional athletes succumb to injury from time to time, there are steps everyone can take to avoid injury when working out.

- Confirm your technique is the right one. Exercise science is continuously evolving, and that means workouts and fitness machines are evolving as well. When using a piece of equipment for the first time or altering a workout routine, men and women should consult with a gym employee or personal trainer to learn the correct technique. Incorrect technique can lead to minor and serious injuries because muscles are used in ways they are not intended to be used when exercises are performed properly. Research appropriate techniques, taking advantage of online video tutorials if you don't exercise at a gym, to ensure the exercises you want to perform are done properly. When beginning a new routine, ask a friend or gym employee to observe your workout and let you know if you are doing anything incorrectly.

- Be patient. Lifting too much weight or pushing yourself too hard on the treadmill, exercise bike or elliptical machine will increase your risk of injury. This is especially true for men and women working out for the first time or

after lengthy stretches of inactivity. Men and women who are elderly, inactive and/or overweight are likely to suffer from poor balance because their muscles are weak. Those muscles can be strengthened over time, but remain patient and stick to light weight during initial workouts so lack of balance does not lead to pain or injury. Take the same approach with aerobic exercise to prevent muscle strains and pulls. Increase weight and the intensity of cardiovascular exercises as muscles gradually strengthen and become accustomed to exercise.

- Allow for adequate time to warm up. Failure to warm up is another contributor to exercise-related injury. Before diving into a workout routine, spend between five and 10 minutes warming up your body with some low-intensity exercises. This increases blood flow to the muscles and makes them more elastic and pliable than cold muscles, thereby improving flexibility. Some low-intensity cardiovascular exercise on the stationary bike or treadmill can greatly reduce injury risk during the workout.

- Vary workouts and exercise regularly. Varying workouts is a good idea because doing so can prevent repetitive-use injuries and prevent overuse of muscles. Repetitive-use injuries such as shin splints and tendinitis require extended rest to heal, and that can derail your routine and nullify your progress. Vary workouts so you are not always working the same muscles, and don't mistake varying workouts for varying workout schedules. Working out five days one week and one day the next increases your risk of injury.

Injuries sometimes happen when exercising. But veteran and novice fitness enthusiasts can employ a handful of simple strategies to greatly reduce their risk of injury while working out.



Five to 10 minutes of light aerobic exercise before working out can help men and women avoid injury. Photo/submitted

Depression common but treatable

Submitted

It's normal to experience feelings of sadness and grief from time to time. But when these feelings are prolonged or interfere with daily life, they may be symptomatic of depression.

Depression can affect anyone regardless of age, gender or economic status. The National Institute of Mental Health says around 350 million people worldwide suffer from depression. Understanding depression can help those dealing with the disorder.

What is depression?

Depression is a mood disorder that causes persistent feelings of sadness and loss of interest. The Mayo Clinic says depression can produce a variety of symptoms and affect the way a person thinks, acts and feels. Symptoms may include changes in sleeping patterns, anxiety, fatigue, weight gain or weight loss, unexplained aches and pains, and difficulty concentrating.

What causes depression?

Although the cause of depression remains a mystery, certain distinguishing factors are common among those who have the condition. People with clinical depression appear to have physical changes in their brains. In addition, naturally occurring brain chemicals known as neurotransmitters likely play a role in depression. The Mayo Clinic states changes in the function and effect of these neurotransmitters and how they interact with neurocircuits involved in maintaining mood

stability may play a significant role in depression and its treatment.

In addition to biological factors in the brain, hormones can impact rates of depression or even trigger it. These hormone shifts may be a leading reason why women have higher incidence rates of depression than men. Depression is more common in people whose blood relatives also have the condition. Therefore, those with a family history of depression may be more likely to get it than those without such a connection.

Different types of depression

There are different types of depression. A person may have a single bout of major depression or recurring episodes. Depression that lasts two or more years is called persistent depressive disorder. A less common type of depression is called manic-depressive illness. This involves

cycles of depression that alternate with extreme highs, or manias.

Treating depression

Depression is a very treatable condition. Psychotherapy (talk therapy), medications or a combination thereof can be very effective in managing symptoms. Mental health professionals can work with individuals to find the right therapy based on symptoms and severity of the depression. Also, it may take some time to find the right medication or treatment; therefore, people are urged to remain patient and hopeful.

The National Institute of Mental Health says people who suspect they may be suffering from depression should make an appointment to see a doctor or health care provider. The sooner action is taken, the more quickly the condition can be addressed.

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