

# HEALTH *Connections*

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR LIFE

WELCOME  
WELLNESS

Tips for Your  
**Home**



**OPEN. SAFE. READY.**  
COMMUNITY & CARE

**STEPS TO KEEP**  
FEET HEALTHY

# Community & Care

## IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

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

### HEALTHCARE HEROES

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

### OUR AWESOME COMMUNITY

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

### RESTRUCTURED FOR THE FUTURE

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

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

### A NEW WORLD FOR CARE

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

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

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

Sincerely,

**Caleb O'Rear**

Chief Executive Officer

Alta Vista Regional Hospital

# What New Mams Really Need

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

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

## GIFT BUYERS' BEST PRACTICES

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



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



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



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



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



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



## SAFE SLEEP 101

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

- Alone
- on her Back
- in a Crib

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

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



Ready to welcome your bundle of joy? To find a pediatrician with Las Vegas Medical Group, visit [LasVegasNMDoctors.com](http://LasVegasNMDoctors.com) or call (505) 426-8010. Visit [AltaVistaRegionalHospital.nurserynotes.com](http://AltaVistaRegionalHospital.nurserynotes.com) to receive the Nursery Notes e-newsletter — weekly updates about your pregnancy.



MAKE YOUR HOME A

# Wellness Retreat

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

## COOK UP A HEALTHY KITCHEN

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

### **FILTER YOUR WATER.**

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

### **CONSIDER YOUR CLEANING SUPPLIES.**

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



### SET THE STAGE FOR LUXURIOUS REST

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



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



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



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

### MAKE ROOM FOR MEDITATION AND MOTION

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

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

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

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



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



A primary care physician (PCP) can help you develop a wellness plan for a healthier life. To find a PCP, visit [LasVegasNMDoctors.com](http://LasVegasNMDoctors.com) or call (505) 426-8010.

## Where the Germs Are

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

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

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

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

# QUIT YOUR BELLYACHING

Abdominal pain is one of the most common reasons adults visit the emergency room, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Learn more about abdominal pain you should not ignore.

## APPENDICITIS

The appendix is a small organ attached to the intestines in the lower right portion of the abdomen, and its function is unknown. Blockage or inflammation in the appendix can cause severe pain called appendicitis, which, if left untreated, can cause the appendix to burst.

Appendicitis pain:

- begins near the belly button and moves toward the lower right
- gets worse when you move, cough, sneeze or take a deep breath
- occurs suddenly and worsens over a few hours
- may be accompanied by nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or constipation, fever, and abdominal swelling

Appendicitis is a medical emergency in need of immediate care. In most cases, surgery to remove the appendix is required.

## GALLBLADDER

The gallbladder is a small organ located in the upper abdomen. It collects and stores bile, a fluid that helps digest food. Tubes called bile ducts carry bile to and from the gallbladder.

Gallstones are small, hard deposits made primarily of cholesterol. Most gallstones do not cause any symptoms, but some gallstones move into the bile duct and get stuck. This causes severe pain known as a gallbladder attack.

Gallbladder attack pain:

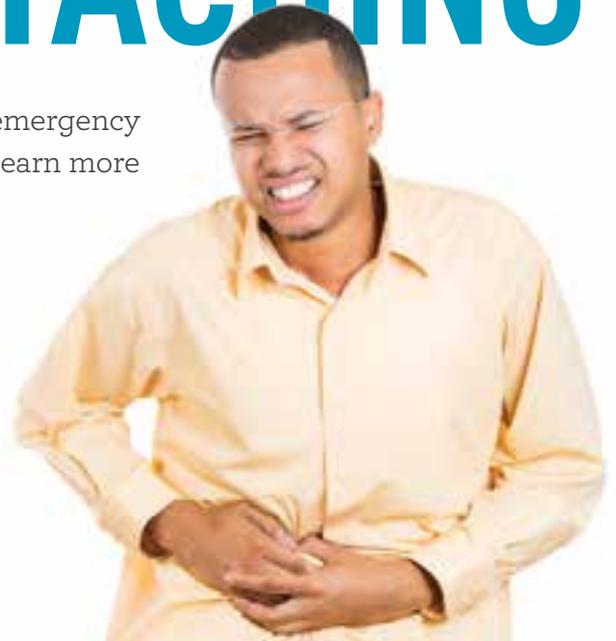
- begins suddenly and lasts for 30 minutes or more
- starts on the right side of the upper abdomen and may move to the upper back
- worsens after eating, especially fatty or greasy foods

If you experience gallbladder attack pain, make an appointment with your physician. If symptoms last longer than 5 hours and you have other symptoms, such as nausea or vomiting, seek immediate care. According to the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons, most patients return to normal activities in a week after laparoscopic gallbladder removal surgery.

## HERNIA

A hernia occurs when an organ or other tissue pushes through a weakened area of muscle, usually in the abdomen. The most common symptom of a hernia is a bump under the skin that may or may not be sore.

Over time, the herniated tissue can become stuck in the hole in the muscle, resulting in severe pain and swelling. Surgery is the only way to permanently repair a hernia.



## RURAL SURGICAL ASSOCIATES

A committed team of surgeons who serve the community of Las Vegas and the surrounding areas, Rural Surgical Associates works closely and in collaboration with referring providers and other specialists to provide you with the best treatment options while ensuring personalized care from skilled professionals.

We offer surgical services including:

- Advanced laparoscopic surgery
  - Splenectomy
  - Cholecystectomy (gallbladder surgery)
  - Exploratory surgery
  - Colon and rectal
  - Colectomy
  - Peritoneal dialysis catheter
- Hernia — laparoscopic and open repair
  - Inguinal
  - Umbilical
  - Ventral
  - Incisional
  - Hiatal
- Anal/rectal (fissures, hemorrhoids, fistula)
- Appendectomy
- Biopsy
  - Lymph node
  - Muscle
  - Breast biopsy
- Chest tubes
- Colon surgery — cancer and diverticulitis
- Colonoscopy/upper endoscopy/percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG)
- Cysts/abscesses
  - Pilonidal
- GI surgery
  - Colon/small bowel
- Hemorrhoid treatment
  - Staple hemorrhoidectomy
  - Hemorrhoid banding
- Intestinal obstructions

To learn more, visit [AltaVistaRegionalHospital.com](http://AltaVistaRegionalHospital.com) and click on “Services” and “Surgical Services.”



If you are experiencing abdominal pain, don't wait to seek help. To find a general surgeon, visit [AltaVistaRegionalHospital.com](http://AltaVistaRegionalHospital.com) or call (866) 650-0095.

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

# STEP UP FOR YOUR FEET

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

## PRESCRIPTION FOR RELIEF

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

### CORN.

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

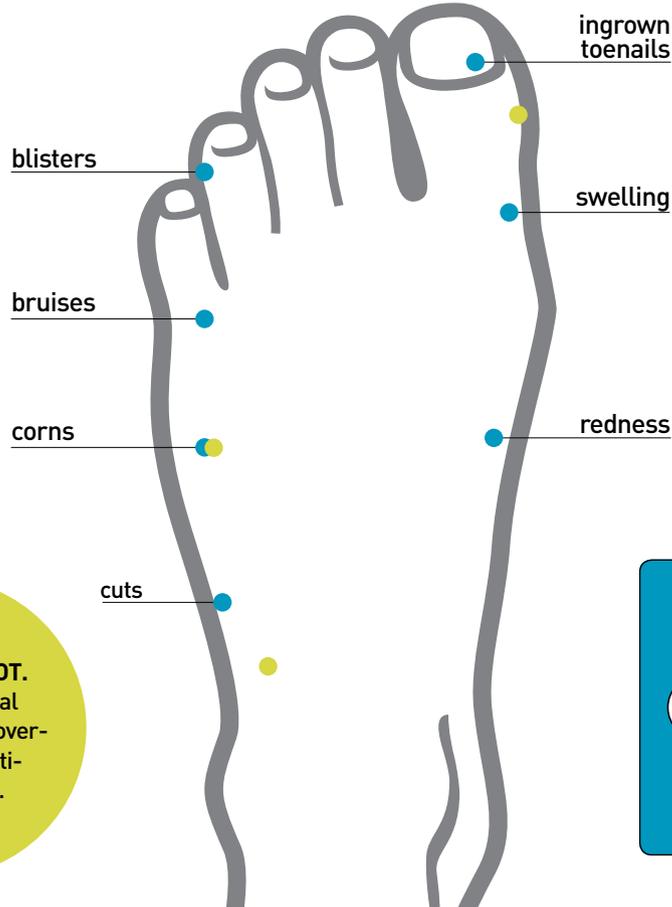
### ATHLETE'S FOOT.

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

## FOOT SCAN

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

Scan your feet from toes to heel for:



### BUNION.

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

To find a primary care physician or podiatrist who can help you keep your feet healthy, visit [AltaVistaRegionalHospital.com](http://AltaVistaRegionalHospital.com).

## FIND THE RIGHT FIT FOR FITNESS

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

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



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

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



**WALKING.** Prioritize shock absorption and arch support.



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ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al (505) 426-3500 (TTY: (800) 659-8331).

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This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your doctor before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.



# When should you go to the Emergency Room? *When you have an emergency.*

It's not a trick question. Emergencies don't wait. And you shouldn't wait to seek care if an emergency strikes you or your family.

Chest pain, burns, cuts that won't stop bleeding, potential broken bones, trouble breathing, dizziness or loss of consciousness are all signs that you need help. Immediately. Delaying care in an emergency can lead to worse outcomes and potentially serious complications later. So don't delay seeking help.

By instituting specific protocols that meet or exceed CDC guidelines, we can say that we are open and ready to care for you in an environment specifically designed to keep you safe.



For more information go to [AltaVistaRegionalHospital.com/ER](http://AltaVistaRegionalHospital.com/ER)

