



# HEALTH & WELLNESS

VANDERBILT FACULTY & STAFF

The Occupational Health Clinic

Health Plus  
Work/Life Connections - EAP

# Connection

Providing programs that support the well-being and productivity of Vanderbilt's most valuable asset... YOU!

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## Growth & Beauty in Difficult Times

*Jim Kendall, LCSW, CEAP  
Manager, Work/Life Connections-EAP*

"April showers bring May flowers" reminds us that there can be growth and beauty even in difficult times. Through the difficulties of 2020, our mental well-being has been challenged, and we have learned to be resilient.

5 insights gained from a year of beauty amongst adversity:

- 1. Self-care:** Remember to recharge, connect with others, and create daily routines. It's important!
- 2. Time with family:** Virtual learning and working remotely provide opportunities for interaction outside of the usual hustle and bustle. Take pleasure in the small things, like having lunch with a loved one and give yourself grace in the times of struggle.
- 3. Gratitude, appreciation, and hope:** Appreciate the people in your life, feel gratitude for the small things (like toilet paper!), and look for hope on the horizon (e.g. new COVID vaccine and treatments).
- 4. Be intentional:** Enjoy simpler pleasures such as nature walks, gardening, new hobbies, and quiet time.
- 5. Be open to new ways of doing things:** Embrace the positive changes in your work and home life. Working remotely, using new technology and flexible schedules may contribute to greater balance.

As you continue the uncharted course through adversity, slow down. Stop and smell the roses watered by the April showers. May you nourish your psychological growth and mental well-being.



## Care Gap Alerts

### COVID-19 Pandemic



*Meg Benningfield, MD  
Associate Professor of Psychiatry &  
Behavioral Sciences and Pediatrics  
Director, Division of Child and  
Adolescent Psychiatry  
Vanderbilt University Medical Center*

### How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected our mental health?

In this past year, we have experienced unprecedented loss. At the same time, our typical rituals for coping with grief have been disrupted. Furthermore, the pandemic has created a situation of uncertainty that is more intense and has extended for longer than any of us have ever experienced. This prolonged uncertainty may be the most challenging aspect in terms of our mental health.

### What are the signs and symptoms of pandemic-related anxiety?

Uncertainty often causes us to feel on edge, nervous, even fearful. Anxiety can make it difficult to sleep and may cause us to be more irritable. It may be hard to focus or concentrate. We may experience disruptions in digestion, headaches, or significant muscle tension.

### Are there coping mechanisms that I can use myself or with my family?

A good place to start is by accepting how challenging our circumstances continue to be. Taking a few mindful moments each day to focus our attention on present circumstances without judgment can be helpful.

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## Work/Life Connections-EAP

### The Counselor's Corner

Rosemary Cope, LPC, CEAP



## Maintaining Your Mental Health is Essential

Maintaining your mental health during a pandemic is a worthy goal. We are missing hugs, getting together with family and friends, concerts, and socializing in ways we could prior to the onset of the coronavirus. It is normal to feel stressed and even overwhelmed from time to time during times of change and uncertainty.

When you traveled in the past, the airline attendant always gave these instructions: If the plane hits turbulence and the oxygen masks come down, place a mask on yourself first before turning to help others. This is critical. If we don't, we may not be able to help anyone. We have hit that turbulence, and we all need to practice the best self-care possible.

David Mosher, Assistant Professor in Psychology at the University of North Texas, encourages self-care in this way:

**1. Practice emotion-based coping.** Here is the good news about emotions: Emotions are momentary. Emotion-based coping strategies help you stay upright through the emotional waves by matching your actions to your feelings. When you are sad, melancholy, or depressed, try something slow and soothing. What if you are angry, frustrated, or restless? Then you can try cleaning your house or cranking up loud music and dancing. Discharge your tension with some laughter by watching a funny video.

**2. When anxiety is gripping you, try calling out your worries** by saying them out loud or breathing and placing your hand on your heart to measure your heartbeat. Regarding anxiety with COVID-19, try noticing your thoughts without judgment, attuning to how these thoughts impact your being and your breathing as they inevitably fade with time.

**3. Notice the unhelpful thoughts that do not give you vitality** (e.g., What will happen tomorrow?).

**4. Help someone else.** Focusing efforts to help other people cultivates better emotional health. Given the COVID-19 precautions that limit contact, helping may look a little different, such as calling to check in on a friend, sending encouraging texts, or sending uplifting videos to others. Altruism reminds us of the good in humanity and why we prosper in a healthy community.



## Passion at Work



Elizabeth Humphreys, PharmD, MMHC

Executive Director, Pharmacy

Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt

### What keeps you connected to and passionate about your work?

Even though I am currently in a leadership position at Children's, my core passion is being a pediatric pharmacist. Knowing that the work I do every day has a positive impact on thousands of children and their families every year keeps me connected and passionate.

### In a dynamic workplace like VUMC, how do you keep your team informed?

For immediate needs, we conduct daily departmental huddles. These became especially important during COVID as things were rapidly changing. In addition, we have all-staff meetings twice a year. We have had to get creative since in-person meeting hasn't been possible, but we are thankful for the technology available to keep us connected!

### What do you do to celebrate the accomplishments of others on your team?

Every year during National Pharmacy Week we recognize members of our team who have exemplified the VUMC Credo in their work. Twice a year we nominate members of our team for a VUMC Credo award. On a personal level, I like to use written notes to recognize the efforts of my team.

### How do you focus on your personal well-being while still managing responsibilities at work?

I knew personal well-being was going to become even more important during COVID. In April 2020, I started running. I have slowly worked up to 6-10 miles per week. This has been a huge step for me as I always found it difficult to make time for exercise. Making this a priority has made a huge difference in how I feel physically and mentally.



## Care Gap Alerts

### COVID-19 Pandemic

(continued from page 1)

Maintaining social connections in a safe way, healthy eating, and regular physical activity have also been shown to enhance our resilience in high stress circumstances.

#### How will I know if I should discuss this with my or my family's primary care physician (PCP)?

When anxiety gets out of control, it can actually increase our risk for physical illness including infection. If you find that you are unable to unwind or shut your thoughts down, or if you are experiencing feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness, it's a good idea to reach out. Disruptions in sleep, eating, or energy levels are other signals that it may be time to seek some help. Finally, the pandemic has been associated with an increase in thoughts of suicide. If you begin to wonder if it's really "worth it," remember that you are not alone. You can seek help from your doctor or contact the national suicide prevention lifeline [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org) at **1.800.273.8255** or by texting TN to 741741.



#### Occupational Health Clinic talk:

## Let's Get Moving!

**Angela Wells, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC**  
Nurse Practitioner, Occupational Health Clinic



Every year on the first Wednesday in April, the American Heart Association (AHA) sponsors National Walking Day. To observe this day, people of all ages get outside to take a 30-minute walk and remember the health benefits of increasing physical activity. During this time of a pandemic and with warmer weather right around the corner, it couldn't be a better time to get ourselves moving.

According to the AHA, the many health benefits to increasing our physical activity include the following:

- Lower risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and high blood pressure.
- Less weight gain and lower risk of some complications of pregnancy.
- Better sleep and fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- Improved cognition, including memory, attention, and processing speed.
- Better bone health and balance, with less risk of injury from falls.
- Better quality of life and sense of overall well-being.

Dr. Cristina Kline-Quiróz, who practices cancer rehabilitation at VUMC and is an assistant professor in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, states, "Exercise is important for all adults. Exercise can lower the risk of several types of cancers, and for those with cancer, exercise has a positive effect on health outcomes including fatigue, physical function, anxiety, and depression."

It is recommended in the *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* that adults get at least 150 to 300 minutes a week of moderate-intensity exercise, or 75 to 150 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity. Preferably, aerobic activity should be spread throughout the week.

If you need to stay home and exercise, then make it interesting and carve out some space just for exercise. Try to get outside as much as possible and consider adopting a walking buddy — coworker, friend, or family member. (Remember to wear your masks if walking together!) If you decide to start walking on your breaks, here is a link that will provide you with information about the walking routes: [vumc.org/health-wellness/news-resource-articles/walking-routes-campus](https://vumc.org/health-wellness/news-resource-articles/walking-routes-campus).

We hope everyone can find their own ways to take advantage of the many benefits of exercise! And remember, log in to the Health & Wellness Information Portal (HWIP) to complete your Health Risk Assessment and receive a personalized fitness report. Go to [bit.ly/healthplushra](https://bit.ly/healthplushra).



# Carpe Annum! — Seize the Year!

## 6 Keys to a Re-energized 2021

It's time for your third key action to re-energizing in 2021. In the last issue, we covered the second key: Get Active. In this issue, we focus on: Be Smoke-Free!

### 6 Keys to an Energized Year!

- Eat for Energy
- Get Active
- **Be Smoke-Free**
- Get Enough Sleep
- Live with Less Stress
- Work Toward a Healthy Weight



### You Can Be Smoke-Free!

Quitting smoking during a pandemic might seem impossible, even outrageous. But did you know big transitions can be a good time to work on new habits and set aside old ones? If quitting smoking is something you would like to do, **you can!** Remember that it's never too late to quit. Your body begins to heal within minutes of your last cigarette — and it won't take long for you to notice.

## Take the first steps in quitting tobacco today:



### Make the decision to quit.

The decision to quit smoking is one that only *you* can make. Think about why you want to quit. Write down your reasons so you can look at them every time you want to smoke.



### Set a quit date and make a quit plan.

Pick a date within the next month to quit. There are many ways to quit, such as nicotine replacement therapy, prescription drugs, and other methods. The Quit Rx program offers counseling and treatment services, including medications when recommended. Call the Occupational Health Clinic at **615.936.0955** to schedule an appointment.



### Get support.

Support from friends, family, coworkers, and programs can increase your chances of quitting for good. Health *Plus* offers one-on-one lifestyle coaching to support smokers in quitting. Go to [bit.ly/healthpluscoach](https://bit.ly/healthpluscoach) for more information.

## Can't-Miss Health *Plus* Activities in April and May!



### Active in April

Get creative and get Active in April with Health *Plus*! Visit [bit.ly/healthplusaia](https://bit.ly/healthplusaia) for activity details.



### Employee Health & Fitness Month

Join Health *Plus* in celebrating Employee Health & Fitness Month this May! Visit [bit.ly/healthplusfitmonth](https://bit.ly/healthplusfitmonth) for activities details.



### Time for a 5-Minute Stretch Break!

### Stretch Breaks

Every Wednesday from noon to 12:30 p.m. on the Plaza in April and May! Visit [bit.ly/healthplusmindful](https://bit.ly/healthplusmindful) for details.

# Ask a Lifestyle Coach

**Q** How can I stay motivated with my goals?

**A** Even under the best circumstances, it can be tricky to stay motivated with goals. It doesn't matter how big or small your goal is. Understanding your motivators will help you with long-term success. The best motivators will be personal to you and will help you stay connected to your goal, even when life gets tough.

Motivation has natural highs and lows, so consider these 5 tips to stay motivated!



Rachel Bowman, CHES  
Health Educator, Health Plus

## 5 TIPS TO STAY MOTIVATED

### 1. Understand your motivators

- What are your 3 best reasons for making this change?
- What will your life look like by meeting this goal?

### 2. Start small & keep climbing

- Taking small steps will lead you to big changes and positive momentum.

### 3. Get support

- Energy is contagious. Support yourself with friends, family, or a lifestyle coach that uplifts you.

### 4. Celebrate along the way

- To prevent burnout, plan small ways to celebrate that will encourage you as you go.

### 5. Check in

- Keep reminders visible, and reconnect with your goals and purpose often.



To get started with Lifestyle Coaching, complete the registration form at [bit.ly/healthpluscoach](http://bit.ly/healthpluscoach).



HEALTH PLUS

## NUTRITION CORNER

Learn about a different nutrition topic each month to support your health. With tips and delicious recipes, Nutrition Corner makes healthy eating simple!

**April — Benefits of Breakfast**

**May — Fueling Your Workout**

Enjoy this recipe from April's Nutrition Corner:

## Spinach and Prosciutto Frittata Muffins

Serves 6

### Ingredients:

- Non-stick cooking spray
- 6 large eggs
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 3/4 cup crumbled soft goat cheese
- 5 ounces chopped and wilted baby spinach
- 1/2 cup diced roasted red pepper
- 2 ounces prosciutto, sliced into ribbons

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray 12-cup muffin pan with non-stick cooking spray.
2. In large bowl, beat eggs, milk, salt, and black pepper. Stir in cheese, spinach, and roasted red pepper.
3. Divide batter among muffin-pan cups (about 1/4 cup each), top with prosciutto and bake 20 to 25 minutes or until just set in the center.
4. Cool on rack 5 minutes, then remove from cups. Serve warm. Can be refrigerated up to 4 days; microwave on high 30 seconds to reheat.

**Nutrition Information per Serving:** (2 egg muffins) Calories 155 | Total Fat 10g | Saturated Fat 4g | Sodium 520mg | Carbohydrate 4g | Fiber 1g | Protein: 13g

Adapted From: <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/food-recipes/easy/a42206/spinach-and-prosciutto-frittata-muffins-recipe/>

Log in to Nutrition Corner in April and May for these great topics and more delicious recipes. Go to [bit.ly/healthplusnutritioncorner](http://bit.ly/healthplusnutritioncorner).



# HR Corner

## Getting The Most Out of Your Benefits

### Five Affordable and Convenient Options for Quick Medical Care

Vanderbilt University Medical Center is committed to helping you get the care you need as quickly and conveniently and as affordably as possible. Rather than pay a \$125 co-pay, or more, for an emergency room visit, employees can take advantage of these cost- and time-saving health care options.

#### Vanderbilt Health Walk-In Clinic Belcourt



Opened in fall 2020, the newest Vanderbilt Health Walk-In Clinic is conveniently located near the Medical Center campus, in Hillsboro Village on Belcourt Avenue, across from the Belcourt Theatre. The clinic, which offers same-day, full-service care, is a good option if you become sick or have an injury but can't make it to your primary care provider. The clinic treats minor injuries and non-emergent conditions, such as cold, flu, and sinus infection, and features on-site lab services, x-ray, and EKG machines. Walk in or reserve your spot at [www.myhealthwalkin.com](http://www.myhealthwalkin.com).

#### VUMC Telehealth



Employees enrolled in the VUMC health plan can schedule on-demand telehealth visits through the My Health at Vanderbilt mobile app or web portal. Telehealth appointments are available seven days a week, from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. and are staffed by Vanderbilt Health nurse practitioners, who can diagnose and treat a wide range of non-emergent medical conditions, including allergies, sinus infection, rashes, and bug bites. Appointments are charged at the Tier 1 rate.

#### Vanderbilt Health OnCall



Serving Nashville-Davidson County and the cities of Brentwood, Franklin, Hendersonville, and Nolensville, Vanderbilt Health OnCall brings a Vanderbilt Health nurse practitioner to your home or office to treat common illnesses, such as strep, flu, colds, and urinary tract infections. Vanderbilt Health OnCall providers can also write prescriptions. Appointments are available seven days a week, from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. and are charged at the Tier 1 rate. Download the mobile app or visit [www.vanderbilthealth.com/vhoc](http://www.vanderbilthealth.com/vhoc) to request a visit, and a provider will arrive within two hours of your request.

#### Faculty/Staff Express Care



The Faculty/Staff Express Care clinic, in Suite 112 of the Medical Arts Building, is open weekdays, 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m., and treats minor illnesses. A self-scheduling kiosk in the clinic lobby allows patients to walk in and select an open time slot. If the Faculty/Staff Express Care clinic is closed, you can go to the Occupational Health Clinic in Suite 640 of the Medical Arts Building as a walk-in patient or for work-related illnesses and injuries, weekdays, 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. Both clinics are free to employees.

#### Appointments Direct



If you are an employee on the VUMC employee health plan, one call means seeing a provider within a week. It's fast, simple, and one more way we're making health care personal. Call the Appointments Direct hotline at **855.724.2454**.

# upcoming events



## Know Your Numbers

Go to [bit.ly/healthpluskyn](https://bit.ly/healthpluskyn)  
for digital options.



## Active in April

Go to [bit.ly/healthplusaia](https://bit.ly/healthplusaia)  
for activity details.



## Babies & You

Go to [bit.ly/healthplusbabies](https://bit.ly/healthplusbabies)  
for updated scheduling.



## Employee Health & Fitness Month

Go to [bit.ly/healthplusfitmonth](https://bit.ly/healthplusfitmonth)  
for activities details.



## Healthier You Presents

Go to [bit.ly/healthplushealthieryou](https://bit.ly/healthplushealthieryou) to  
view monthly presentations.



## Stretch Breaks

Go to [bit.ly/healthplusmindful](https://bit.ly/healthplusmindful) for  
weekly stretch break details.

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### In This Issue:

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*Let's Get Moving!* with Angela Wells, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC

*Ask a Lifestyle Coach* with Rachel Bowman, CHES

**Correction:** In a previous article, *The Mediterranean Diet: Now That's Amore!*, we should have stated that *The Nutrition Source* states that interest in the Mediterranean diet started around the 1960s, when it was noted that individuals in the Mediterranean region experienced "low rates of chronic disease and higher than average life expectancy despite limited access to health care."

Have a topic you want to see covered? Email us at [health.wellness@vumc.org](mailto:health.wellness@vumc.org).

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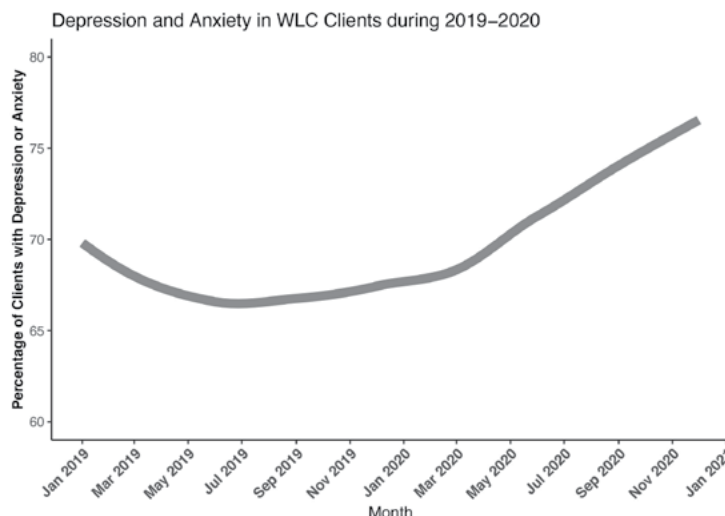
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## The Healthy Pulse

FOR FACULTY AND STAFF AT VANDERBILT



Depression and anxiety are the most prevalent mental health concerns when faculty and staff present to our Work/Life Connections-EAP counselors. Work/Life Connections-EAP (WLC) has developed brief, anonymous and confidential self-assessment questionnaires including depression, anxiety, stress, post-traumatic stress, and others.

Access the online screening tools at the WLC website ([bit.ly/wlcscreening](https://bit.ly/wlcscreening)) or by signing on to the Health and Wellness Portal (same location as the new "Go for the Gold" site).