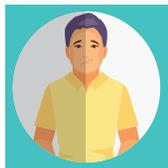


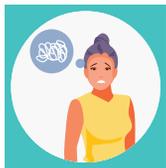
STROKE 101

An estimated **2% of the population** suffers an acute stroke in Bermuda every year. A stroke happens when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is blocked or bursts. This interrupts blood flow, causing brain cells to die.

SPOTTING A STROKE



Numbness or weakness in the face, arm, or leg (especially on one side of the body)



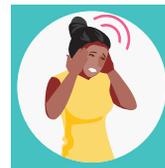
Trouble speaking or understanding others



Difficulty seeing



Trouble walking, dizziness, and loss of balance or coordination



Severe headache

If you notice any of the symptoms listed above, call **911** right away.

DID YOU KNOW?



Treatment is most effective within **3 hours** of the onset of symptoms.



Stroke can occur at **any age** – even in children.



An estimated **80%** of strokes can be avoided by making healthy lifestyle choices.

PREVENTING A STROKE



Get high blood pressure under control.



Don't smoke.



Manage your diabetes, if you have it.



Eat a healthy diet.



Exercise regularly.

www.bfm.bm

BF&M Overseas Healthcare Toll-Free Helpline

BF&M medical assistance is available 24/7 with our toll-free numbers:

- **1-888-674-1367** (from Bermuda)
- **1-877-236-2338** (from outside Bermuda)
- **1-519-251-5186** (from Bermuda: collect calls)
- **1-519-251-5185** (from outside Bermuda: collect calls)

See back issues of *healthmatters* online at www.bfm.bm/news/healthmatters.

BF&M wants you to LiveWell!

Check out the LiveWell Program at www.bfm.bm/products/group/group-health.aspx#LiveWell.

Meet us on Facebook for hot news, policy info, and events.

EDITOR
Brenda Dale, AVP,
Wellness

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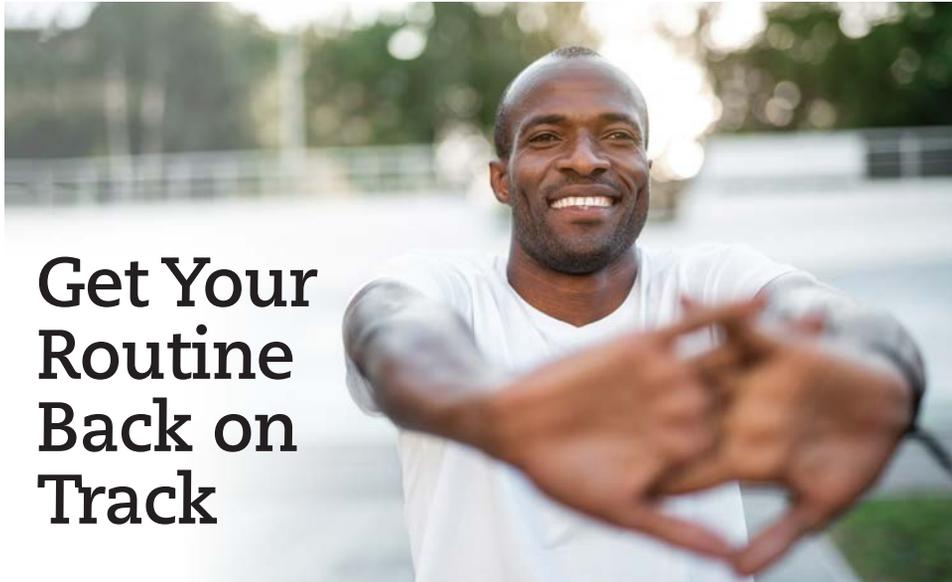


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REACH OUT

To find helping services after a stroke, visit <https://helpingservices.bm>.



Get Your Routine Back on Track

During the coronavirus pandemic, much of life has felt out of control. It's no wonder so many have sought instant gratification by eating more or sleeping less.

But experts in behavior change know how to break these patterns. Try these three steps to regain control.

Step 1: Choose a goal and a motivation.

Be clear about the behavior you're trying to adjust, and paint a clear picture of the best outcome. With sleep, imagine how much better you'll feel when you're rested. For snacking after lunch, see yourself working through the afternoon and staying focused instead of experiencing the inevitable energy crash.

Step 2: Predict the obstacles.

Think clearly about something that might stand in your way—fresh-baked cookies when you're home all day, or the desire to watch another TV episode at night.

Step 3: Plot your strategy.

Consider when this obstacle might occur and plan how you'll overcome it. Use an "if-then" phrase: "If it's 9 p.m., then I'll stop what I'm doing and go to bed." Or, "If I'm hungry midday, then I'll reach for a healthy snack."

Finally, put your strategy into action. With this approach, you're more likely to choose long-term success over short-term desires.

health facts

5 Reasons Your Legs Hurt

Relief from leg pain starts with identifying the issue. Here are five common causes.

1. Shin Splints

Ramping up a fitness routine quickly inflames and irritates the soft tissues in your shin. Rest, ice, and stretching help. Resume activity gradually.

2. Muscle Cramps

"Charley horses" occur when muscles seize and won't relax. They often strike in the middle of the night or mid-activity. Fatigue or dehydration may contribute. They usually subside with gentle massage and stretching.

3. Muscle Strains

Overtaxed muscles can stretch or tear. Signs include pain, spasms, swelling, muscle weakness, and limited motion. Mild strains will heal with rest and time, but more serious cases might require surgery.

4. Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD)

Plaque can block blood flow to your legs and feet, resulting in leg pain or weakness when walking. Without treatment, you could develop sores, infections, or other complications.

5. Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)

Blood clots in a deep vein of your leg may interfere with circulation. Your leg may swell, turn red, or feel warm. DVT can be life-threatening if a clot breaks off and travels to the lungs, so see your doctor right away if you notice any of these symptoms.



Stay Connected for a Longer Life

New research suggests social isolation is tied to a greater risk of dying. But you can stay connected, even from home. Here's how.

- Identify your social support system—the people to whom you matter and who matter to you.
 - Reach out, whether by calling, texting, or using a video chat platform such as FaceTime or Zoom.
 - Try to spot the needs of those around you and take a simple step to fulfill them.



- Be intentional about time spent with family. Just because you're together at home doesn't mean you're connected. Make a date with your partner, such as a movie or game night. Talk with kids about their feelings.



MENTAL HEALTH HELP

For support with mental health, the Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute offers a wide range of services and therapies. Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call **441-236-3770**, or reach the 24-hour mental health crisis line at **441-239-1111**.

Signs That Kids Might Develop Adult Diabetes

It's well-known that childhood obesity puts kids at risk for type 2 diabetes. But a recent study reveals that children can sometimes show other signs of being prone to adult diabetes.

Early Indicators

After analyzing blood sample data collected from participants at ages 8, 16, 18, and 25, researchers found a clear warning sign for adult diabetes: abnormal cholesterol levels.

In susceptible children, low levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL), or "good" cholesterol appeared as early as 8 years old. As the study participants grew older, low HDL levels continued to be a strong risk factor for type 2 diabetes. Other warning signs included increased inflammation and high body mass index (BMI).

Get a Head Start

It's a good idea to pay attention to your child's cholesterol test results. Kids should receive



their first test between ages 9 and 11. They should be retested every five years.

If your child's HDL levels are low, ask the pediatrician for advice on how to raise the numbers. Tips might include:

- **Choosing healthy fats.** Serve your kids unsaturated fats, found in foods like avocados, nuts, and tuna. Cut back on saturated and trans fats.
- **Eating more high-fiber foods.**

Good choices include

apples, oatmeal, sweet potatoes, black beans, and whole wheat bread.

- **Exercising daily.** Children need at least 60 minutes of activity daily. Try taking a walk after dinner, starting a dance party, or playing outside.

Diabetes doesn't develop overnight. Knowing what signs to look for gives parents and pediatricians an opportunity to intervene earlier and instill healthy habits at a young age.



Give Your Daughter a Shot Against Cancer

You can't always shield your tween or teen daughter from life's challenges. But research confirms you can keep her safe from cervical cancer by vaccinating against human papillomavirus (HPV). This may slash her risk of developing cervical cancer by up to 88%.

HPV: A Common Threat

HPV is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections. Often, people don't know they have it.

That's a problem because HPV is linked to more than nine out of 10 cervical cancer cases. HPV infections can also cause cancer in the cervix, vagina, vulva, anus, and throat.

Start Young

Experts recommend three doses of the HPV vaccine over six months for both girls and boys. Boys can develop anal, throat, and penile cancers from HPV.

Earlier vaccination is better, since younger immune systems make more virus-fighting antibodies from the vaccine. The Department of Health recommends that all children receive the HPV vaccine at age 11.

Some parents worry this encourages sexual activity but studies dispute this. An open discussion with your child and the pediatrician can address your concerns.

A wellness programme tailored for you

If your health insurance is with BF&M, you have access to LiveWell, our free online wellness platform that can be tailored to your needs and interests.

Our easy-to-use online wellness platform includes:

- An individualised Wellbeing Activity Hub
- Fun and engaging wellness challenges
- A personal Wellness Assessment
- Healthy habits programmes
- Access to health lifestyle and chronic disease management programmes and events
- Access to BF&M's LiveWell Rewards Programme



The BF&M difference? Insurance the way it should be. Visit www.bfm.bm and click on LiveWell or contact us at livewell@bfm.bm.

LiveWell is intended to complement rather than substitute for proper medical advice or treatment.

LiveWell
by BF&M



TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Child and school health clinics provide children and their parents with immunisations and other preventive health services. For information, call **441-278-6460** or **441-278-6461**.