



THRIVE

lose the
COVID 15
POUNDS



Booster Shots?
Life After COVID?
Is Racism A Health Emergency?
What's Up With Edgewater?

CEO Corner
Ask The Dr
Patient Portal
Watch This Space!

June 2021
Quarterly E-Magazine

From the Editor

Ben Clement



Thrive is back and better than ever!

Those in the know realize Edgewater Health's newsletter, Thrive, has been on hiatus for three years. Well, welcome back! If you've never heard of Thrive, welcome to the resurrection! Beginning with this June 2021 edition and continuing on a quarterly basis, Thrive will bring current healthcare news, topical discussions, and tips for healthy living. In essence, this reimagined E-magazine will be your informational lifeline to everything Edgewater and a window on the healthcare world.

Watch this space.

Watch this space for feature articles, editorials, advice from our medical director, doctors, psychiatrists, and clinicians, the latest information on health center services, patient resources, community outreach events, and insights from our president and CEO, Dr. Danita Johnson Hughes.

Thrive is Alive!

It's been three long years since your favorite E-magazine was available, but the wait is finally over. Thrive is alive and will be right here waiting for you every quarter exclusively on our website:

www.edgewaterhealth.org.

.....

CEO Corner

Dr. Danita Johnson Hughes



Welcome back!

To all our patients, loyal readers, community partners, donors, corporate sponsors, and other stakeholders, welcome back to Thrive! As the official news magazine for Edgewater Health, Thrive will be the place to discover what's happening in healthcare in general and at Edgewater in particular.

We're excited to reintroduce this E-magazine and look forward to sharing it each quarter. Of course, you don't have to wait for the next issue of Thrive to experience Edgewater. Stop by our main office in Gary or visit one of our primary care locations. Or if you prefer a virtual experience, make a telehealth appointment today! Edgewater is here for you. For your whole life.

SNAPSHOTS

"A quick glimpse at what's happening now."

CARF



Ask any staff member what's going on right now and they'll probably tell you, "CARF! CARF! CARF!" No, they're not barking or having a conniption, but they probably were preparing for the CARF survey that took place May 5-7, 2021. In case you didn't know, CARF International sends in a team of professionals, called surveyors, to visit sites and evaluate its services for quality. Those that meet CARF standards are accredited for up to three years.

We are pleased to report the CARF survey was completed successfully and we are eagerly awaiting the results. Based on exit

interviews, the Edgewater Health team performed admirably and we anticipate an exemplary report.

HRSA



Right on the heels of CARF, a HRSA site visit is scheduled for June 23-25, 2021. Both site reviews are comprehensive and require senior leadership, department heads and staff to be at their best in terms of data tracking, record keeping, policies, procedures, and quality assurance. Difference being as a rule of thumb CARF focuses more on the behavioral health side while HRSA focuses on primary care.

Customer Service

Perhaps the biggest change you may notice at Edgewater is our renewed commitment to customer service. Our customer service improvement plan requires extensive training and continuous monitoring and assessment for quality with a goal of making Edgewater Health the industry leader within two years. Lofty goal perhaps, but certainly achievable. Stay tuned!

Welcome Dr. Walker

Finally, it's our pleasure to welcome our new Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Roland Walker. Dr. Walker has extensive experience in primary care and pediatrics and he has also served as Gary's Health Commissioner. Be sure to check out his "Ask the Doctor"

column in every edition of Thrive!

Booster Shots



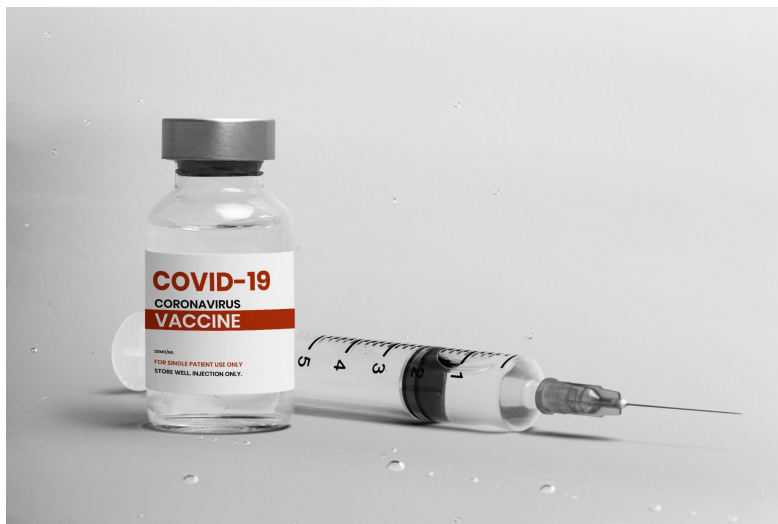
Okay, so you got your shots. Both of them. Now what? According to Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), this is no time to let your guard down or rest on your laurels. Since the SARS-CoV-2 virus is constantly mutating and vaccines like the one you just took might only be effective for six months or so, a third vaccination or booster shot will probably be necessary. And given variants will probably be around for years to come, health experts like Fauci predict annual vaccinations against COVID are most likely in the offing.

The good news is makers of Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson vaccines have already begun developing boosters. Initially, you'll be encouraged to get a booster of the same

vaccine you originally took, however, at some point you may be able to mix and match vaccines.

The question remains, exactly when will we need to start getting booster shots? Apparently, that depends on the results of studies currently underway to determine how long vaccines will offer immunity against COVID and its variants. Early indications are the Moderna vaccine continued to provide protection six months after the second dose. Most scientists expect immunity offered by Moderna, Pfizer, and Johnson & Johnson to last up to a year. In any event, Dr. Fauci and health experts agree booster shots will be in order the moment fully immunized people start getting sick from newer variants.

Life After COVID



Okay, you've survived the pandemic. Congrats. Now, you're probably wondering what comes next? What will post-pandemic life be like once we're able to hug again and put away those infernal masks?

First the bad news. Many scientists, futurists, and prognosticators

agree COVID will have long-lasting effects and some vestiges of our so-called new normal are here to stay. Some people will continue to work from home and remote learning will become a permanent option for colleges, universities, and even public schools. Ditto for Zoom, Microsoft Teams, GoToMeeting, and other virtual conferencing and meeting platforms. Businesses and non-profit organizations capitalized on the new technology that enabled operations to continue virtually (no pun intended) unabated through quarantines and lockdowns. They also realized time and cost savings by drastically reducing and in some cases eliminating travel expenses, office supplies, and utilities. So, you might want to hold on to those snazzy backgrounds that make it appear your office is in Barbados. Social distancing requirements will recede along with COVID, however, pandemic inspired innovations like telehealth, curbside pickup, and touchless commerce are certain to remain and probably expand until patients feel safer in doctor's offices and consumers more comfortable returning to shopping malls.

In fact, hands-free services and transactions will soon dominate some business sectors like restaurants, retail, health and beauty, and of course travel and tourism. The cruise industry has spent millions transitioning to more of a touchless environment and in Japan there's a new restaurant chain called Ichiran, that promises low-interaction dining where customers order food with as little human interaction as possible. And speaking of tourism, that industry suffered as much as any because of COVID-19 and many travel agencies will continue to offer as many virtual or armchair excursions as real trips. Not quite as exciting sitting at home staring at a flat screen as actually walking along a sandy

beach, but the post-pandemic experience does have its advantages. There will be less sand between your toes and far less of the beach will hitch a ride home in your luggage.

Is Racism a Health Crisis?



Remember the good old days when natural disasters and other calamities came one at a time? No such luck in the age of COVID. No sooner had the pandemic struck in late February or early March 2020, when racial strife raised its ugly head. Suddenly Americans, particularly those of the African persuasion, found themselves not only dealing with a deadly virus, but battling white supremacy, police brutality, and systemic racism as well. Okay, racism isn't exactly new like the novel coronavirus. Some would argue it's been around for at least four hundred years when Africans were first brought to this country in chains as cheap (read free)

labor. Since then and through slavery, the Emancipation Proclamation, Jim Crow, Tulsa, Brown v. Board, Tuskegee, Selma, Little Rock, Memphis, Martin, Malcolm, up to George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and so many others, Black people have suffered the indignities and ravages of racism.

Recent studies have shown the trauma induced by racism on Black Americans is so pervasive and profound, it should be categorized and treated as a health crisis. A 2018 study examining the mental health impact of police killings on Black Americans found exposure to those events had adverse effects on mental health among Black people. Moreover, the study found that many Black Americans are facing a collective sense of grief and trauma that has grown more profound with the loss of each life at the hands of police. Some see themselves and their children reflected in the victims of police violence, heightening the grief they feel. That collective mourning is of great concern to health experts and medical professionals who consider the intersection of racism and various forms of trauma impacting communities of color a serious public health crisis facing America.

According to Dr. Steven Kniffley, a licensed psychologist and coordinator for Spalding University's Collective Care Center in Louisville, Kentucky, racial trauma is a unique form of identity-related trauma that people of color experience due to racism and discrimination. "A lot of cities across the country are realizing that racial trauma is a public health issue," Kniffley said. To illustrate, he cited health concerns such as increased rates of suicide among Black men, a life expectancy gap and post-traumatic stress disorder.

The American Medical Association describes racism as “an urgent threat to public health, the advancement of health equity, and a barrier to excellence in the delivery of medical care.” In fact, racism takes a direct toll on people of color, causing unhealthy stress levels, feelings of powerlessness, and countless other negative impacts to mental and physical health. The accumulation of daily stressors (like COVID) associated with exposure to racism and discrimination can cause toxic stress beginning at an early age. Such stress affects children’s physical, mental, and behavioral health throughout their lives, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Further proof that racism endangers the health and well-being of Black people can be found in glaring racial disparities in health outcomes:

1. Black women suffer pregnancy-related deaths at more than three times the rate of white women, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
2. Compared to white Americans, Black Americans are 2.6 times more likely to contract COVID-19, 4.7 times more likely to be hospitalized for the disease, and 2.1 times more likely to die from it, according to the CDC.
3. Black men are about 2.5 times more likely to be killed by police than are white men, and Black women are about 1.4 times more likely to be killed by police than are white women.
4. Compared to white Americans, Black Americans suffer higher rates of heart diseases, stroke, cancer, asthma, influenza and pneumonia, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, and homicide, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources.

If there is a silver lining, consider more Black people are turning to mental health professionals to deal with the trauma caused by racism. Mental health experts across the country say they have seen African Americans, whose skepticism of therapy has been documented by research, seeking it in growing numbers.

(Portions extracted from Associated Press article by Kat Stafford, “Black Americans Unable to Heal” April 19, 2021 and Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine report, “Why Racism Is a Public Health Issue” February 16, 2021)

Get Rid of that COVID 15!



If you've been avoiding mirrors lately, especially those that read, "OBJECTS MAY APPEAR LARGER!", you can probably blame COVID. As a direct result of being quarantined, locked down, isolated, secluded, Zoomed, homeschooled, Netflixed, or otherwise relegated to couch potato status, many Americans have picked up an unwanted pound or two. No, it's not your imagination and to be honest, it's probably closer to fifteen pounds.

Pandemic weight gain is real, people! In fact, nearly 50% of women in the U.S. report gaining weight since the pandemic began, packing on an average of 12.5 unwanted pounds. (whispering) Some report gaining twice that amount!

To complicate matters, many people have discovered, to their dismay, COVID poundage is far more difficult to shed than regular weight gain. The explanation is simple. COVID weight gain is mostly attributable to stress. And any diet guru worth their weight in NutraSweet will tell you, chronic stress triggers your body's "fight or flight" response and that in turn causes hormonal changes that disrupt the way your body uses calories and stores fat. In other words, when you're under constant stress, your body starts hanging on to every single calorie you consume, just in case you need that fuel to flee danger.

So what's a body to do? Try the following these tips to lose those lockdown pounds:

✓ **Eat Healthier!** I'm sure you've never heard that before, but certain foods are excellent sources for nutrients that help to calm your body's stress response and rebalance cortisol levels, thus removing those stubborn blocks to weight loss.

✓ **Exercise!** No, you're not on Family Feud, but you probably heard the *Ding!* Everybody knows exercise is always prescribed by physicians and drill sergeants, but when it comes to cutting that COVID-15, it's the kind of exercise that counts. Vigorous exercise can trip the body's fight or flight response, creating a surge in stress hormone production. That's why engaging in high intensity exercise often doesn't do much for weight loss, especially when

you're under chronic stress. In fact, strenuous exercise can actually amplify a stress hormone imbalance and keep stress weight right where you don't want it...in Keisterville!

✓ **Exercise Smarter!** You've heard the old saying, don't work harder, work smarter. Same goes for exercising to lose that pandemic pouch. Listen to your body. Do you feel better or worse after your daily (or yearly) workout? If exercise is leaving you wiped out instead of rejuvenated, start engaging in exercise that actively supports your stress response. Yoga is one of the most effective workout regimens. It's a gentle, relaxing practice that helps to re-regulate out of control stress hormones, plus it's a proven weight loss tool.

✓ **Ditch the Sugar and Refined Carbs!** Probably another no-brainer, but after spending hours binging on Bridgerton and Cheetos, it's probably a good idea to cut back on refined carbohydrates and all the foods that send your blood sugar spiking. When you're stressed, it's easy to turn to sugary foods and drinks, but these just add to the vicious cycle of stress weight gain. And sorry, Simon Basset fans, rumor has it, British heartthrob, Regé-Jean Page won't be returning for season two, but those pesky pounds will if you overindulge on wine, sourdough bread, sauces, and smoothies with added sugars.

✓ **Eat Larger Meals Earlier in the Day!** The only better tip is, go long on August wheat. Nutritionists will tell you, cortisol follows a natural cycle that corresponds to your circadian (sleep/wake) rhythm. Normally, cortisol is highest in the morning and declines

gradually throughout the day to help you get ready for sleep.

Because eating always increases cortisol, it's better to consume larger meals earlier in the day as a way to help cortisol fall back into its regular pattern.

✓ **Try Intermittent Fasting!** Not a huge fan of starvation diets, however skipping a meal here and there or abstaining from stress eating, or what farmers call, pigging out, can also help balance Cortisol.

The Check Up!



What's Up With Edgewater?

CARF Survey

- Survey team visited virtually May 5-7, 2021.
- EH seeking three-year accreditation

HRSA

- Site review scheduled for June 23-25, 2021

Mass Vaccination Clinic (CDC card holders)

- FEMA and Indiana Department of Health sponsored clinic at

Roosevelt April 7-June 2, 2021. (Don't forget to get your free vaccination card holder courtesy of Edgewater Health!)

Moderna Vaccine at Primary Care!

- Schedule your appointment today!
- Call (219) 884-4900

Upcoming Events

Women's Health Week

- Celebrate Women's Health Week at Edgewater Health (Resource Center Auditorium) on Thursday, May 13, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. The free event features guest speakers, health information, grab & go lunch, and free giveaways!

Customer Service Initiative

- CEO formed Customer Service Committee to develop strategies to improve customer service.
- Plan includes training, monitoring, and assessment.
- Goal is to make Edgewater Health the customer service leader in the healthcare industry.
- Let's go, Team! We can do this!

.....

Ask the Doctor

Dr. Roland Walker



Professional Advice from our Chief Medical Officer:

QUESTION: “I’ve already had COVID. Do I still need to get vaccinated?”

ANSWER: “Yes. Although the coronavirus is brand new or novel and medical professionals still have much to learn about how it spreads, it’s best to secure the added protection of an FDA approved vaccine to limit the chances of reacquiring or transmitting the virus.”

QUESTION: “Are vaccines safe? If so, which one should I choose?”

ANSWER: “The three vaccines approved for emergency use were thoroughly tested for safety and efficacy, so the short answer is yes, vaccines are safe. Though rates of effectiveness against COVID-19 and new variants differ

slightly between Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson, all have proven to be safe and effective with minimal side effects or risks.”

QUESTION: “I don’t have any symptoms, nor have I ever been exposed to anyone with COVID-19. Why should I get tested, let alone vaccinated?”

ANSWER: “First of all, count your lucky stars! Millions have been infected by the virus and nearly 600,000 killed. And that’s just in America! Considering many infected individuals are asymptomatic, it’s best to get tested to be sure you are perfectly healthy. While you’re at it, why not get vaccinated as well? Knowing you are protected and more importantly, your family, friends, coworkers, and others you come in contact with, should provide some peace of mind not only for you, but for them as well.”

Second Opinions

“Don’t get too comfortable just because you tested negative and have been completely vaccinated (received both shots of Pfizer or Moderna or a single dose of Johnson & Johnson). You still must wear a protective face mask in crowded indoor settings including buses, airplanes, hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, and homeless shelters. It’s probably also a good idea to wash your hands, and social distance from people with halitosis. And get ready for a booster shot six months to a year after the first vaccination. Remember, it ain’t over until it’s officially over!”

Doctor’s Orders

“Believe it or not, the pandemic hasn’t been all bad. If nothing else, COVID has taught us to be healthier and more hygienic. It’s also given us

new ways to communicate and convene. Of course, the jury is still out on whether Zoom is a good or bad thing. In any event, stay healthy, get your shots, and watch this space for more free advice.”

Patient Portal

Emergency Broadband Benefit



This new FCC program will help households struggling to pay for internet service during the pandemic. It will connect eligible households to jobs, critical healthcare services, and virtual classrooms.

The Emergency Broadband Benefit will provide a discount of up to \$50 per month towards broadband service and also a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers.

Households are eligible if one member meets at least one of the following criteria:

- ✓ Receives benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program
- ✓ Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year

✓ Experienced a substantial loss of income since February 29, 2020 and the household had a total income in 2020 below \$99,000 for single filers and \$198,000 for joint filers

✓ Meets eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income or COVID-19 program

It is very easy to apply:

✓ Contact your preferred participating broadband provider directly to learn about their application process.

✓ Go to: [GetEmergencyBroadband.org](https://www.GetEmergencyBroadband.org) to apply online and to find participating providers near you.

✓ Call (833) 511-0311 for a mail-in application, and return it along with proof of eligibility to:

Emergency Broadband Support Center

P.O. Box 7081

London, KY 40742

COVID Vaccination Clinic

The mass vaccination clinic sponsored by FEMA and the Indiana State Department of Health continues at the former Roosevelt High School located at 725 W. 25 th Avenue in Gary until June 2, 2021.

Members of the Indiana National Guard and medical professionals are on hand to administer Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson “single shot” vaccines.

Don't forget to get your vaccination card holder courtesy of Edgewater Health!

Patient Satisfaction Surveys

Are available at all Edgewater Health locations. Staff are ready to help patients complete surveys if necessary. Please note patient satisfaction surveys are also available in Spanish.

Don't forget to fill out a survey whenever you visit Edgewater Health for primary or behavioral healthcare services. After telehealth visits you can find the patient satisfaction survey online.

Tell us what you think! Your honest feedback will help us serve you better.



1100 W 6th Ave, Gary, IN 46402