



# HEALTHY LIVING <sup>2022</sup>

*Looking Good & Feeling Good  
in Baldwin County*



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# HEALTHY LIVING

*Looking Good & Feeling Good  
in Baldwin County*

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# Recovery from an accident or illness



**Colony Rehabilitation Hospital, located on the third floor of Thomas Hospital, serves patients with physical and neurological disorders. It is the only comprehensive acute rehabilitation facility in Baldwin County.**

## Inpatient rehabilitation programs can help

### Submitted by Thomas Hospital

After suffering from a stroke or debilitating accident or illness, your doctor may recommend inpatient rehabilitation to restore your bodily functions or improve your quality of life. In order to achieve the highest level of functionality possible, an

emphasis may also be focused on cognitive, emotional and psychological functions.

When choosing a comprehensive inpatient rehabilitation program, look for a state-of-the-art, CARF accredited facility with a highly specialized staff, including board-certified physicians, registered nurses and registered

physical, occupational and speech therapists. The program should tailor its services to each individual and consider the patient's medical history, current health and the overall goals. A personalized regimen can vary widely, depending on the organs and parts of the body affected.

The overall goal of

inpatient rehabilitation is for patients to return to their everyday environments as quickly and well prepared as possible. Once medical treatment and therapy sessions are complete, patients can rely on physical therapy activities, practiced at the hospital, to help them perform independently at home.





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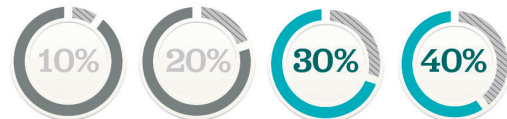


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# Esteemed physician and researcher Rodney P. Rocconi joins Infirmary Cancer Care

Submitted by Infirmary Health

In line with its mission to be the Gulf Coast's FIRST CHOICE for cancer care, Infirmary Health is excited to welcome Rodney P. Rocconi, M.D., FACOG to Infirmary Cancer Care (ICC), where he serves as Associate Director and Director of Research.

"Anytime you build something new, there's a level of excitement," said Dr. Rocconi. "We are partnering with the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), the only National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center in the state and one of the leaders across the country and globally in cancer care. The ability to bring that level of care to Infirmary Health and the region has yet to be done."

Dr. Rocconi brings an impressive level of experience to the team, having served as principal investigator in more than 60 clinical trials, including a series of ovarian cancer immunotherapy international trials.

His further research interests include genetic/molecular determinants of racial healthcare disparities

in gynecologic malignancies. With his involvement, clinical trial enrollment increased nearly tenfold, with up to 40% of all patients enrolled being minority patients of color.

Dr. Rocconi's has been recognized for his work as a recipient of the Gynecologic Cancer Foundation Ovarian Cancer Research Award,

the Gynecologic Oncology Group Young Investigator Research Award and an invited Associate Member of the NCI Early Detection Research Network.

Dr. Rocconi also has a long history with the Alabama community, having completed his medical training at UAB and working in Mobile for the last 15 years. Now, he looks forward to dedicating his expertise to ICC.

"I would love to bring state-of-the-art early phase trials to the patients here, so they can receive the best that clinical trials have to offer," he said. "Our patients will live longer, healthier lives and be able to achieve more milestones, such as anniversaries and birthdays. It's so important to the patients, and to us as well."



Rodney P. Rocconi, M.D

## FORREST & JENNY'S YARD ART



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# Start each day with a great breakfast

Submitted by Alabama Cooperative Extension

Getting the day started off on the right foot is vital for people of all ages, but especially for school-aged children. Whether it's preparing for work, getting the children ready for school or merely trying to jump-start the day, everyone knows that mornings can be a busy time. Eating breakfast is the important tool that can fuel you through your morning routines.

## FUEL UP BEFORE SCHOOL

Before students head off to the classroom, it is essential that they get a complete breakfast. This can be done either at school or before walking through the school doors each morning. According to the School Nutrition Association (SNA), a

SEE **BREAKFAST**, PAGE 9



*Try our Grits and Greens recipe. Green leafy vegetables, such as collards, are high in vitamin C, which your body loves.*

### Grits and Greens

Servings: 1

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

#### Ingredients

- 1/2 serving quick cooking grits, cooked according to package
- 1/2 tablespoon butter
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup collard greens, chopped
- 2 tablespoons water
- Hot sauce, optional

#### Directions

Pour cooked grits in serving bowl and season with butter, salt and pepper.

In a small skillet, cook the egg to how you like it.

In a microwave-safe bowl, add collard greens and water. Cover tightly and microwave for 2 minutes. Drain water.

Spoon the greens over the grits, then top with the egg. Add hot sauce, if desired.



*Our Healthier French Toast is a simple, kid-friendly breakfast. Kids love to play chef! Let them help with this recipe by having them mash the bananas.*

### Healthier French Toast

Servings: 3

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

#### Ingredients

- 1 large or two small ripe bananas
- 3/4 cup low-fat milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- Cooking spray
- 6 slices whole wheat bread

#### Directions

With fork, mash bananas together with milk, vanilla, and cinnamon.

Spray skillet with cooking spray and turn on medium heat.

Dip one slice of bread at a time in banana mixture. Let excess mixture drip off, and place bread in skillet.

Cook until golden brown, and then gently flip to the other side.

**Optional:** Top with extra cinnamon.



# BREAKFAST

FROM PAGE 8

healthy school breakfast helps ensure students' academic success in school so they can take off and reach their goals.

## VITAL FOR GROWING CHILDREN

The morning meal has many vital components for growing children, especially for school-age children. By eating a proper breakfast, children will have the needed energy to be ready to learn at school. Eating a healthy breakfast can offer other benefits such as improved concentration, better grades and a healthier weight. In fact, there are studies that show children who eat breakfast tend to have better school attendance, are less tardy and have fewer hunger-induced stomach aches in the morning.

"Sometimes, it's all we can do to grab a pastry or piece of toast on our way out the door. But, a balanced breakfast is the key to a healthy day for children," said Katie Funderburk, an Alabama Cooperative Extension System specialist and registered dietitian. "When possible, help your child eat

from two or more food groups to make sure they are getting a variety of nutrients that support growth and development, like calcium, iron, vitamins and healthy fats."

## TIPS AND RECIPES

It is easy for both adults and children to eat a healthy breakfast, regardless of how much time is available. If there's plenty of time, scrambled eggs, sliced turkey bacon and sliced sweet pepper is an excellent start to the day. If there is a time crunch, a toasted whole-grain English muffin with peanut butter is a solid option. Try adding a piece of fruit, such as a banana, to the muffin and start the day.

If there's not much time for anything other than waking up and brushing teeth, consider making something the night before and warming it up in the microwave. The Live Well Alabama recipe for Rise and Shine Muffins could provide breakfast for multiple days. The recipe calls for combining six eggs, spinach, meat, tomatoes and cheese. The results are several protein- and vegetable-loaded muffins that can be refrigerated for a quick morning meal. Live Well Alabama has several other recipes that are great for breakfast.



*Looking for something new to try for breakfast, try our Fiesta Breakfast Bowl? Featuring eggs, beans, avocado and salsa, it's a protein-packed meal to get your day started. It doesn't hurt to add in a few leafy greens for a more colorful breakfast!*

### Fiesta Breakfast Bowl

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

#### Ingredients

- Cooking spray
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1 can black beans, 15 ounces, drained and rinsed
- 1 avocado, peeled and sliced
- 1/4 cup salsa
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### Directions

Spray skillet with cooking spray. Add beaten eggs. Cook and stir eggs over medium heat until eggs are set, 3 to 5 minutes.

Place black beans in a microwave-safe bowl. Heat in microwave until warm, about 1 minute.

Divide warmed black beans between two bowls. Top each bowl with scrambled eggs, avocado, and salsa. Season with salt and pepper.



# Thankfulness: How gratitude can help your health

Submitted by The American Heart Association

Gratitude is more than a buzzword. It's a habit and practice that may actually change your perception of well-being.

Are you feeling overwhelmed by the coronavirus pandemic, all the changes it has brought to your life and everything you need to worry about to stay safe?

Or do you sometimes feel like you just can't catch a break? You know — the truck that cut you off, the weird feedback you got from your boss, the grocery item you need but is never on the store shelf? Do you sometimes feel negative and cynical?

Sure, we all do this a little, but doing it a lot can lead to depression, which is linked to poor heart health, more inflammation and even a weaker immune system. Yikes!

Some neuroscience experts think our brains focus on negative information as a way to remember pain so we can avoid it in the future. They call this the “negativity bias.”

To balance out this natural tendency, we can practice gratitude.

“Gratitude is good medicine,” says Robert A. Emmons, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at the University of California, Davis and author of *The Little Book of Gratitude*.

“Clinical trials indicate that the practice of gratitude can have dramatic and lasting effects in a person's life. It can lower blood pressure and improve immune function. Grateful people engage in more exercise, have better dietary behaviors, are less likely to smoke and abuse alcohol and have higher rates of medication adherence.”

Dang, being grateful is the gift that seriously keeps on giving, right? Who couldn't use all these benefits right now?

Here's a simple way to get started:

Write these down before you go to bed or share them around the dinner table. In five minutes, you can practice gratitude from the heart.

## **1. Health: What did your body do for you today?**

Did you know you take about 8 million breaths a

*“Clinical trials indicate that the practice of gratitude can have dramatic and lasting effects in a person's life. It can lower blood pressure and improve immune function. ... Grateful people engage in more exercise, have better dietary behaviors, are less likely to smoke and abuse alcohol and have higher rates of medication adherence.”*

**DR. ROBERT A. EMMONS**

Professor of Psychology at the University of California

year? Your feet can take you up a mountain; your arms can hold someone you love. Take a minute to marvel at the finely tuned machinery of your body, and thank yourself for the steps you take every day to keep it safe and healthy.

## **2. Eat: What did you feed your body to nourish yourself today?**

Was it an old favorite, something you made or something new and different? If you eat three meals a day, you'll eat about a thousand meals this year! Take a minute to savor an especially yummy meal. And check out some healthy options on the AHA's recipe hub.

## **3. Activity: What did you do that you really enjoyed today?**

Did you give it your all when exercising today, or find a quiet moment while sitting in traffic to reflect? Take a minute to think back on one particularly awesome moment.

## **4. Relationship: Whom do you look forward to connecting with?**

Is it someone who sets your heart on fire, always has a smile for you, has your back or makes you laugh until you cry? Take a minute to smile as you think about this special person. Then make plans for a virtual meet-up.

## **5. Time: What are you doing right now?**

Every single day you wake up with 24 brand new hours. The past is history, the future is a mystery and today is a gift. That's why they call it the present! Take a minute to be thankful for the gift of time, including any extra time you have right now for your family or yourself.





# Helping senior adults *Enjoy a better Life.*

Some adults, ages 55+, may need the specialized inpatient help, including individual and group therapy, provided by the staff at North Baldwin Infirmary's Senior Behavioral Health program. The program helps seniors successfully adapt to the challenges of aging including:

- Depression
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- Social withdrawal
- Grief and loss
- Medication management
- Suicidal thoughts
- Dementia

Senior Behavioral Health provides medical supervision and individualized treatment for senior adults with emotional and behavioral difficulties. If you or someone you know needs help, call for a free consultation.

**For more information, call  
251-580-1770 or 251-937-5521.**



**North Baldwin Infirmary**  
INFIRMARY HEALTH



# The facts about high blood pressure

By The American Heart Association

## WHAT IS HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE?

High blood pressure (also referred to as HBP, or hypertension) is when your blood pressure, the force of blood flowing through your blood vessels, is consistently too high.

## IF YOU HAVE HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, YOU ARE NOT ALONE

- Nearly half of American adults have high blood pressure. (Many don't even know they have it.)
- The best way to know if you have high blood pressure is to have your blood pressure checked.

## HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE IS A "SILENT KILLER"

- Most of the time there are no obvious symptoms.
- Certain physical traits and lifestyle choices can put you at a greater risk for high blood pressure.
- When left untreated, the damage that high blood

pressure does to your circulatory system is a significant contributing factor to heart attack, stroke and other health threats.

## PREVENTING AND MANAGING HBP

- This is one time that the old adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," is particularly apt. It's best to avoid high blood pressure altogether. Healthy lifestyle choices are a great place to start.

## MAKE CHANGES THAT MATTER:

- Eat a well-balanced diet that's low in salt
- Limit alcohol
- Enjoy regular physical activity
- Manage stress
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Quit smoking
- Take your medications properly
- Work together with your doctor

SEE **FACTS**, PAGE 13

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
<b>NORMAL</b>	<b>LESS THAN 120</b>	<b>and</b>	<b>LESS THAN 80</b>
<b>ELEVATED</b>	<b>120 – 129</b>	<b>and</b>	<b>LESS THAN 80</b>
<b>HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1</b>	<b>130 – 139</b>	<b>or</b>	<b>80 – 89</b>
<b>HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2</b>	<b>140 OR HIGHER</b>	<b>or</b>	<b>90 OR HIGHER</b>
<b>HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)</b>	<b>HIGHER THAN 180</b>	<b>and/or</b>	<b>HIGHER THAN 120</b>



# Mental healthcare and you – finding the right fit

## Submitted by StatePoint

Searching for a mental health provider? You likely have questions.

Recent research from virtual care provider MDLIVE suggests that confusion around finding a mental healthcare provider is common. One in five surveyed said they were concerned about finding a provider match and 70% experience confusion and uncertainty about where to begin. The research also revealed that not everyone knows the difference between the various mental health professionals -- psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, mental health coaches and others.

“Many people are ready to get depression, anxiety and stress under control by working with a mental health professional, but get bogged down right from the start. Confusion about selecting a professional that best suits their needs causes a lot of people to give up. That’s something we want to change,” says Dr. Shakira Espada-Campos, who brings more than two decades of direct practice experience to her role as behavioral health medical director at MDLIVE.

To help you in your search, MDLIVE is answering some frequently asked questions:

When is it time to see a therapist? Mental healthcare is self-care that most everyone can benefit from. However, if

your emotional state is interfering with your daily life, it’s definitely time to take action. Beyond the common signs of mental illness, such as sadness, drug and alcohol misuse, trouble sleeping and mood swings, Dr. Espada-Campos notes that there are some often overlooked signals that could indicate it’s time to seek treatment. These include withdrawing from loved ones, feeling fatigued, having a lack of motivation and frequently “zoning out.” She also notes that life events such as decoupling, job loss or the loss of a loved one can often trigger the need for professional mental health support.

What’s the difference between therapists and psychiatrists? Psychiatrists and therapists can treat the same things, however, psychiatrists are medical doctors who can diagnose psychiatric conditions and prescribe medication, while therapists are licensed providers who can evaluate and support people with emotional or behavioral health concerns through talk therapy.

What should one look for in a provider? Mental healthcare is highly personal and it’s essential that your provider is someone you can open up to, make progress with and not feel judged by.

A good place to start is by working with a provider who has experience treating patients like you.

Understand that you may not find the right therapist on your first try. Dr. Espada-Campos encourages individuals to both trust their feelings in this regard and to take an active role in their sessions by asking questions like, “What can I do to help my treatment?” and “How can we work together to achieve my goals?”

Does insurance cover therapy? In recent years, many health plans and employers have acknowledged the importance of mental healthcare and have expanded the resources available to their members and employees. Check coverage details online or through the plan’s call center. Alternatively, you may wish to seek counseling through an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). EAP counselors can help with a variety of mental health concerns, however, members are typically restricted to a set number of sessions. If you’re suffering from a recurring mental health issue, check what options are available through your health plan.

Can therapists be seen remotely? Virtual care, an increasingly popular option, can provide private, convenient, quality care quickly, and is often offered by health plans. For example, MDLIVE’s platform makes it easy to search for a provider that meets your needs and to schedule an appointment with one of their psychiatrists or licensed therapists. MDLIVE is a covered benefit for more than 60 million Americans through health insurers such as Cigna, Aetna, certain Blue Cross Blue Shield plans, and many regional and local plans. To learn more or to register, visit [www.mdlive.com](http://www.mdlive.com).

## FACTS

FROM PAGE 11

### MANAGING BLOOD PRESSURE IS A LIFELONG COMMITMENT

If you have high blood pressure, it’s vital that you listen to your doctor. Remember: You’re a part of your healthcare team. You and your doctor are partners.

Educate yourself about HBP and learn how to monitor your blood pressure at home. Armed with this information, you can commit to living heart healthy.

#### BY ADOPTING A HEART-HEALTHY LIFESTYLE, YOU CAN:

- Reduce high blood pressure.
- Prevent or delay the development of high blood pressure.
- Enhance the effectiveness of blood pressure medications.
- Lower your risk of heart attack, stroke, heart failure, kidney damage, vision loss and sexual dysfunction.

#### YOU CAN FIGHT HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

While heart disease is still the No. 1 killer in the United States and around the world, death rates have decreased significantly. Earlier and better treatment of high blood pressure has played a key role in that decrease.

# Meditation can help boost your well-being

By The American Heart Association

Practicing mindfulness and meditation may help you manage stress and high blood pressure, sleep better, feel more balanced and connected, and even lower your risk of heart disease.

Meditation and mindfulness are practices — often using breathing, quiet contemplation or sustained focus on something, such as an image, phrase or sound — that help you let go of stress and feel more calm and peaceful. Think of it as a mini-vacation from the stress in your life! Stress is your body's natural alarm system. It releases a hormone called adrenaline that makes your breathing speed up and your heart rate and blood pressure rise. It kicks us into action, which can be a good thing when we're faced with a real danger or need to perform.

But that “fight or flight” response can take a toll on your body when it goes on too long or is a regular occurrence. Mindfulness meditation provides a method for handling stress in a healthier way.

Meditation can improve well-being and quality of life.

Recent studies have offered promising results about the impact of meditation in reducing blood pressure. There is also evidence that it can help people manage insomnia, depression and anxiety.

**Some research suggests that meditation physically changes the brain and could help:**

- increase ability to process information
- slow the cognitive effects of aging
- reduce inflammation
- support the immune system
- reduce symptoms of menopause
- control the brain's response to pain
- improve sleep

More research is needed, but it's clear that meditation's effects on the body and brain are a no-brainer!

Find the method that works for you.

**There are many different types of meditation, including:**

- compassion (metta or loving-kindness),
- insight (Vipassana),
- mantra, mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR),
- relaxation,
- Transcendental,
- Zen, and others.

It could be as simple as sitting quietly and focusing on your breath. When your mind wanders (and it will!), gently bring it back to the breath again. Gradually increase the amount of time you're able to stay focused. If you're not sure how to get started, look for



online classes on meditation, get recommendations from friends, or research different types that interest you.

Transcendental meditation is a technique that allows your mind to focus inward, staying alert to other thoughts or sensations without allowing them to interfere. It's typically done seated with your eyes closed for 20 minutes, twice a day. Mindfulness meditation may use an object of focus, such as the ringing of a bell, chanting, touching beads or gazing at an image. Prayer can also be a form of meditation.

Not all meditation is done sitting down with your legs crossed and eyes closed. Moving meditation forms include qi gong, Tai Chi and yoga.

The bottom line.

• While meditation can help you manage stress, sleep well and feel better, it shouldn't replace lifestyle changes like eating healthier, managing your weight, and getting regular physical activity. It's also not a substitute for medication or medical treatment your doctor may have prescribed.

• Try different types of meditation to find what works for you, and make it a regular part of your healthy lifestyle.



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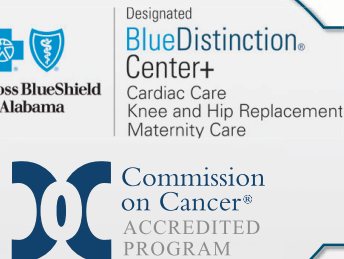
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