



Health story tips
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HealthExtra

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In the Wrong Medicare Advantage Plan?, C3

CPR for Kids: The life-saving training can begin much early than you might think. **C8**

Dementia risk: Strokes may increase the risk of cognitive decline in the first year after one. **C10**

America's Healthiest Hometown

Our community medical partners are committed to making The Villages a preeminent home to quality health care, longevity and enhanced quality of life for seniors. It's a mission crafted through innovative primary care practices, cutting edge technology, a nationally renowned hospital system and research university. Here is a roundup of health and medical happenings this week, compiled by Daily Sun Specialty Editor Veronica Gallagher.

From The Local Health Community

New funding is providing 40 scholarships to University of Florida students entering its Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program. The \$400,000 grant is part of the Linking Industry to Nursing Education, which requires a health care partner to match the funds. UF Health Shands and the National Cancer Institute-designated UF Health Cancer Center partnered to provide the matching \$400,000 to make \$800,000 available for the nursing scholarships. As part of the scholarship, the students agree to work as full-time registered nurses at a UF Health facility.

From Local Health Researchers

Researchers at UF Health Cancer Center and UF Health College of Pharmacy have developed a first-of-its-kind compound known as NR-V04. It is designed to target NR4A1, a protein that suppresses the immune system's ability to battle cancer. In laboratory testing of skin and colorectal cancer models, NR-V04 slowed the growth of established tumors and, in some cases, eradicated the tumors. Only about 20% to 40% of cancer patients respond to immunotherapy, but NR-V04 may provide new options for resistant patients. The research team is currently refining NR-V04's effectiveness.

At The Villages Health Learning Center

The Villages Health Learning Center is focused on keeping people healthy and has a variety of classes and seminars to help the community get the best information. The Villages Health Learning Center is holding a class on prediabetes and diabetes prevention on Friday at 1 p.m. at the Santa Barbara Care Center. The class aims to provide information on the prevention and development of Type 2 diabetes through lifestyle changes, including healthy eating and exercise. To register, go to thevillageshealth.com/events.

The Villages Health

The Villages Health opened its doors in 2012 with the goal of putting the focus back on patients. It includes seven primary, and two specialty, care centers in the community.

LOCAL EVENTS

BOOST YOUR HEALTH I.Q.

1

The Parkinson's Foundation is holding its first Moving Day fundraiser on March 16 at The Villages Polo Club located at 700 Buena Vista Blvd. This walking event serves to raise funds and increase awareness of the disease. For more information or to register, go to movingdaythevillagesfl.com.

2

The Florida Department of Health in Marion County is hosting "Staying Healthy as You Age" from 11 a.m. to noon on Feb. 22 at the Marion Oaks Community Center, located at 280 Marion Oaks Lane in Ocala. The class is aimed at those 55 and older and helps participants discover ways to promote healthy aging.

3

The Villages Health Patient Support Center can assist patients with tasks such as appointment scheduling, communicating with the clinical team, medication refills, handling referral requests and assisting with the patient portal. It can be reached at 1-844-TVH-WELL (884-9355).

Join a Clinical Study: Opportunities to participate in health care research in The Villages include Charter Research (charterresearch.com/open-studies) and the UF Health Precision Research Center (tinyurl.com/UFVillagesResearch).

EXERCISE



EATING WELL

Small Changes Can Help Your Heart

Switching from an unhealthy diet and sedentary lifestyle to healthy eating and exercise can be daunting. In this expert alert, Juan Cardenas Rosales, M.D., an internal medicine physician and medical director of the international medicine practice at Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Florida, shares small steps and one big one that can lead to a heart-healthy life. Taking the first step can be difficult, whether trying to eat a nutritious diet, exercise more or both, Dr. Cardenas says. That is in part because people often set high expectations for themselves and try to reach them immediately, rather than approaching it as a process. "It is better to make these changes little by little, and stay consistent, than to make a sudden change that is difficult to maintain," Dr. Cardenas explains. "For example, don't start exercising 30 minutes a day, five times a week, but start with 10 minutes every third day. Also, adjust your diet, and each day lower your sugar consumption a little, your fat consumption, your salt, and so on, little by little. Start with small steps but keep moving forward."

— Tribune News Service

STOP SMOKING

There is one big change that Dr. Cardenas recommends making immediately: Stop smoking and avoid second-hand smoke, exposure to other people's smoke. "Research has shown that after one year of completing quitting smoking, the cardiovascular risk falls to half that of a person who smokes," he says.

GET THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF SLEEP

Working toward adequate sleep — at least seven hours — is also important for heart health. It reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease and serious conditions, such as hypertension, diabetes and high cholesterol, that are also risk factors for heart disease, Dr. Cardenas says.

