

TOPEKA

DECEMBER 2025

Health & Wellness

www.TopekaHealthandWellness.com

MAGAZINE

**TIPS FOR
SAFE AND
HEALTHY
HOLIDAYS**



**HEALTH
BENEFITS
OF DANCE**

Nutcracker Ballet

Family Winter Wellness: The Vitamin D Edition
A New Year of Emotional Health and Body Balance

Aging: 18 Secrets for a Longer Life
Mental health issues? You are not alone!

Helping Topekans Live Happier, Healthier Lives Since 2015!

GO RED FOR WOMEN DECLARATION

WE BELIEVE IN THE POWER
OF A WOMAN'S HEART

— THE POWER TO LOVE, THE STRENGTH TO FIGHT —
AND THE WILL TO OVERCOME.

BUT THERE IS A FORCE THAT THREATENS OUR HEARTS
AND IS KILLING OUR MOTHERS, SISTERS, DAUGHTERS, AND FRIENDS.

— THE TIME IS NOW —

TO TAKE A STAND AGAINST HEART DISEASE
AND FIGHT SIDE BY SIDE FOR AS LONG AS IT TAKES.

WE GO RED FOR WOMEN

WHO ARE ROCKED BY A DIAGNOSIS AND STRUGGLING THROUGH
TREATMENT, SO THEY MAY EMERGE VICTORIOUS TO EMBRACE LIFE.

WE GO RED FOR WOMEN

WHO TOUCHED SO MANY LIVES BEFORE THEY LOST THEIR OWN.

WE GO RED FOR WOMEN

TO SPEAK UP FOR MORE RESEARCH AND SWIFTER
ACTION FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH.

WE GO RED FOR WOMEN

BECAUSE IT'S TIME TO PUT OUR HEALTH FIRST.

WE GO RED FOR WOMEN

BECAUSE NO ONE SHOULD FIGHT ALONE. FOR EACH OTHER, WE
ARE A HAND TO HOLD, A SHOULDER TO CRY ON, A BACKBONE THAT ALWAYS STAYS STRONG.

WHEN WE GO RED FOR WOMEN, WE STEP UP WHENEVER AND WHEREVER SO THAT
EVERY WOMAN MAY LIVE. AND WE WILL NEVER STOP UNTIL THIS FIGHT IS WON.

BECAUSE THE POWER OF A WOMAN'S HEART IS
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEATH AND LIFE.



1

OUT OF

3



women die of
heart disease

80%

of heart disease
can be prevented

Women's HEART Health

GET THE FACTS



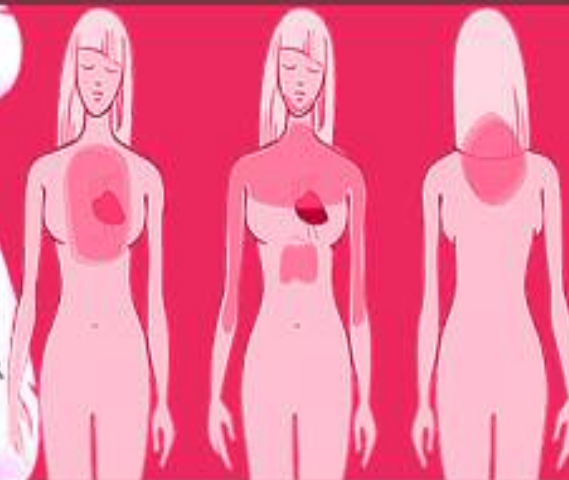
Every 60 seconds 1 woman dies of heart disease

Heart disease is the # 1 cause of death in women

23% of women die within 1 yr of having an attack

KNOW THE SYMPTOMS

Shoulder Pain
Neck, Jaw, Arm, Back Pain
Dizziness or Nausea
Clammy Sweats
Heart flutters
Paleness
Anxiety, Fatigue or Weak
Abdominal pain
Difficulty breathing



TAKE A HEART SUPPLEMENT



- Red Yeast Rice •
- UBQH •
- Lipotropic Complex •
- Boluo •
- Ubiquinol •
- Green Tea Kombucha •
- Daily Detox Decaf Green Tea •
- Omega-3 EPA/DHA Fish Oil •
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- Vectomaga Omega 3 DHA/EPA •



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ON THE COVER:

Our cover this month features family and friends celebrating the holidays in a healthy way.

Read more about this and other healthy living topics in the following pages.

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Our thanks go out to all of our advertisers and contributing experts who helped inform our readers this month! Let us know how you like what we have to offer, and any suggestions you may have for improvements & additions, simply by emailing us at info@TopekaHealthandWellness.com.

For more information, visit our website at www.TopekaHealthandWellness.com for all our offerings on past and present articles, health news stories, event calendar and an archive of our past issues in pdf form.

We are also on Twitter at:
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Christmas Tree

SAFETY CHECKLIST



- 

Get a fresh tree whose needles don't easily fall off -or- a UL-Listed artificial tree that is "flame resistant/retardant."
- 

Place the tree away from heat sources!
- 

UL-Listed Christmas Lights
(Pay attention to Indoor/Outdoor use)
- 

Check your decor for damage and replace as needed.
- 

Don't overload your sockets -- no more than 3 light strands in a row.
- 

Turn off your lights before bed or while you're away from home.
- 

Dispose of your live tree soon (less than 4 weeks after putting it up) and recycle, don't light it on fire!
- 

Take down decorations outside sooner to help them last longer. Go ahead and replace decorations that didn't make it by hitting up the after-Christmas sales.



Keep Safety at the Heart of Your Celebrations

From late November to mid-January, when families gather, parties are scheduled and travel spikes, safety should be top of mind. Following is tried-and-true advice to ensure your family remains safe and injury-free throughout the season.

Traveling for the Holidays? Be Prepared

If you're traveling this year, be sure your vehicle is in good running condition, get plenty of rest and be prepared for any emergency. Traveling by car during the holidays has the highest fatality rate of any major form of transportation based on fatalities per passenger mile. Hundreds of people die every year in crashes on New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day, according to Injury Facts. Alcohol impairment is involved in about a third of these fatalities.

Stay safe on the roads over the holidays — and every day:

- Prepare your car for winter and keep an emergency kit with you

- Get a good night's sleep before departing and avoid drowsy driving
- Leave early, planning ahead for heavy traffic
- Make sure every person in the vehicle is properly buckled up no matter how long or short the distance traveled
- Put that cell phone away; many distractions occur while driving, but cell phones are the main culprit
- Practice defensive driving
- Designate a sober driver to ensure guests make it home safely after a holiday party; alcohol or over-the-counter, prescription and illegal drugs can cause impairment

Decorate Safely

Decorating is one of the best ways to get in a holiday mood, but emergency departments see thousands of injuries involving holiday decorating every season.

When decorating follow these tips from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

- Keep potentially poisonous plants — mistletoe, holly berries, Jerusalem cherry and amaryllis — away from children
- If using an artificial tree, check that it is labeled "fire resistant"
- If using a live tree, cut off about 2 inches of the trunk to expose fresh wood for better water absorption, remember to water it, and remove it from your home when it is dry
- Place your tree at least 3 feet away from fireplaces, radiators and other heat sources, making certain not to block doorways
- Avoid placing breakable ornaments or ones with small, detachable parts on lower tree branches where small children can reach them



dren can reach them

- Only use indoor lights indoors and outdoor lights outdoors, and choose the right ladder for the task when hanging lights
- Replace light sets that have broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections
- Follow the package directions on the number of light sets that can be plugged into one socket
- Never nail, tack or stress wiring when hanging lights, and keep plugs off the ground away from puddles and snow
- Turn off all lights and decorations when you go to bed or leave the house

Watch Out for Fire-Starters

Candles and Fireplaces

Use of candles and fireplaces, combined with an increase in the amount of combustible, seasonal decorations in many homes during the holidays, means more risk for fire. The National Fire Protection Association reports on average candles cause 46% of fires annually in December.

- Place candles where they cannot be knocked down or blown over, and out of reach of children
- Keep matches and lighters up high and out of reach of children in a locked cabinet
- Use flameless rather than lighted candles near flammable objects
- Don't burn trees, wreaths or wrapping paper in the fireplace
- Use a screen on the fireplace at all times when a fire is burning
- Never leave candles or fireplaces burning unattended or when you are asleep
- Check and clean the chimney and fireplace area at least once a year

Turkey Fryers

Be alert to the dangers if you're thinking of celebrating the holidays by frying a turkey. The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports there have been hundreds turkey-fryer related fires, burns or other injuries, and millions of dollars in property loss from these incidents.

NSC discourages the use of turkey fryers at home and urges those who prefer fried turkey to seek out professional establishments or consider using an oil-less turkey fryer. If you must fry your own turkey, follow all U.S. Fire Administration turkey fryer guidelines.

Food Poisoning Is No Joke

Keep your holidays happy by handling food safely. The foodsafety.gov website from the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services provides some valuable holiday food safety tips:

- Wash your hands frequently when handling food
- Keep raw meat away from fresh produce
- Use separate cutting boards, plates and utensils for uncooked and cooked meats to avoid cross-contamination
- Use a food thermometer to make sure meat is cooked to a safe temperature
- Refrigerate hot or cold leftover food within two hours of being served
- When storing turkey, cut the leftovers in small pieces so they will chill quickly
- Thanksgiving leftovers are safe for three to four days when properly refrigerated

It's Better to Give Safely

Gifts and toys should inspire joy, not cause injuries. Thousands of children are seriously injured in toy-related incidents every year. Avoid safety hazards while gifting with these tips from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

- Toys are age-rated for safety, not for children's intellect and physical ability, so be sure to choose toys in the correct age range
- Choose toys for children under 3 that do not have small parts which could be choking hazards
- For children under 10, avoid toys that must be plugged into an electrical outlet
- Be cautious about toys that have button batteries or magnets, which can be harmful or fatal if swallowed
- When giving scooters and other riding toys, give the gift of appropriate safety gear, too; helmets should be worn at all times and they should be sized to fit

To find out about holiday toy safety and recalls, check the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website.

Family Winter Wellness: The Vitamin D Edition

December in Topeka has its own kind of magic — Christmas lights on Kansas Avenue, hot cocoa after school, and those crisp mornings where your breath becomes a little cloud in the air. But with all its charm, winter also brings something less fun: low sunlight and a predictable dip in our community's vitamin D levels.

And because vitamin D plays such a big role in immune strength for the whole family, this month's newsletter is dedicated to helping Topekans — from babies to grandparents — stay healthy, energized, and protected all winter long.

Why Winter in Topeka = Low Vitamin D

Once the sun starts setting before dinner and coats come out of closets, we simply aren't making much vitamin D. Even on sunny days, the angle of the winter sun in Kansas isn't strong enough for our skin to produce meaningful amounts.

So unless you're sunbathing at Lake Shawnee in December (please don't), your levels naturally drop.

But here's the encouraging part: a few daily habits can make a noticeable difference in how your immune system performs this season.

What the Research Says

1. Small daily doses help — consistency is key. A 2024 analysis of 43 clinical trials (nearly 49,000 people!) found that modest daily vitamin D — 400–1,200 IU/day — offered a small but meaningful protective effect against respiratory infections.

Wang et al., 2024 — PubMed ID: 39143549

2. Vitamin D helps your airways repair themselves. An-

other study found that vitamin D strengthens the “tight junctions” in your airway cells — like the caulking that keeps winter bugs out.

Liao et al., 2023 — PubMed ID: 37354621

3. Mega-doses don't work better. A separate trial using very high vitamin D doses showed no reduction in respiratory infections. More is not better — steady daily intake wins.

Wall-Gremstrup et al., 2024

What About Kids? Should Children Take Vitamin D?

In winter, most children in Topeka don't get enough vitamin D from sunlight, especially those who spend most of their day indoors, in school, or bundled up.

A 2023 meta-analysis of randomized trials found that children who received vitamin D had fewer flu-like illnesses, particularly at slightly higher daily doses compared to very low ones.

Fang et al., 2023 — PubMed ID: 37408991

General guidance for families (always confirm with your pediatrician):

- **Infants (especially breastfeeding babies):** Often advised to take a daily vitamin D supplement, as breast milk is naturally low in vitamin D.
- **Toddlers & School-Age Kids:** Many benefit from a daily vitamin D supplement during winter, especially if they don't get much sun or dairy.
- **Teens:** Teens are one of the most commonly vitamin-D-deficient groups — winter + indoor sports + school hours = low sunlight exposure.

Practical Winter Strategies for Topeka Families

1. **Keep doses modest, but consistent.** Daily vitamin D is more beneficial than sporadic large doses.
2. **Get outside when possible.** Even short walks can help mood and circadian rhythm — both of which support immune health.
3. **Eat vitamin-D-rich foods.** Fatty fish, fortified dairy or oat milk, eggs, and mushrooms contribute small amounts.
4. **Consider testing.** A quick blood test (25-hydroxyvitamin D) can clarify if you or your children are low.
5. **Ask us for help.** We carry high-quality vitamin D supplements for families — easy, safe, and science-backed. If you're unsure where to start, we'll guide you.

A Word From Our Practice

This season is all about connection — family gatherings,

holiday traditions, cozy evenings, and giving back to our Topeka community. Staying well means you get to be fully present for all of it.

As always, we're here to support your family's wellness journey — with chiropractic care, yoga therapy, and simple nutritional guidance that fits your lifestyle.

To a joyful, healthy, December —

The Beckley Chiropractic & Wellness Team

Research Sources

1. Wang, C.-H. et al. (2024). Meta-analysis of vitamin D supplementation and respiratory infections in adults. PubMed: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39143549/>
2. Liao, S. et al. (2023). Vitamin D improves airway epithelial barrier function after viral disruption. PubMed: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37354621/>
3. Wall-Gremstrup, G. et al. (2024). High-dose vitamin D shows no significant benefit in respiratory infection prevention. Respiratory Research: <https://respiratory-research.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12931-023-02642-9>
4. Fang, Q. et al. (2023). Effects of vitamin D on respiratory infections in children. PubMed: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37408991/>

After taking a complete history and providing a detailed diagnosis to the patient, Dr. Beckley will develop and carry out a treatment plan, as well as recommend rehabilitative exercises. Dr. Beckley may also suggest nutritional, dietary, and lifestyle modifications to help the patient reach their health goals. Dr. Beckley believes in addressing the patients overall health and not just their specific symptoms. She is focused on how a patient's musculoskeletal system and nervous system function in relation to the whole body. Dr. Beckley is a certified yoga instructor and offers classes at Beckley Chiropractic & Wellness.

Also offering:

- Massage therapy • Detoxification
- Spinal decompression therapy

Amber N. Beckley, D.C.

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A pink poster for a "Gentle Yoga & Meditation Class" by Kati. It features a lotus flower and floral designs. The text says "GENTLE YOGA & MEDITATION CLASS", "KATI IS BACK!", and "Start becoming an even better version of yourself!". At the bottom, it lists "Wednesdays 12:30-1:15" and "Book Now online at www.BeckleyChiropractic.com".

DESCRIPTION OF NEW EARTH – AFTER THE 1000 YEAR MILLENIUM

19 SCRIPTURES -- JESUS WILL RE-CREATE THIS EARTH NEW

Revelation 21:1; 2 Peter 3:13; Isaiah 65:17 “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth...wherein dwells righteousness...” God will create new heaven and new earth. **CITY OF GOD Revelation 21:1-2** “Holy City coming down from heaven” Holy City (New Jerusalem) from God. **Revelation 21:10-27** “...I saw no temple there for the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple of it...” God will dwell in the city with His people. **WEEKLY WORSHIP ETERNALLY Isaiah 66:22-23** “...from one Sabbath to another...all flesh shall come before me....” There will be weekly worship throughout eternity on the 7th Day Sabbath. **FORMER THINGS PASSED AWAY Revelation 21:3** No pain, no sorrow, no crying, no death **Isaiah 35** “...they shall obtain joy and gladness...” A beautiful and fruitful earth.. **Isaiah 65:17, 21** “...they shall build houses and inhabit them...plant vineyard and eat the fruit of them...” There will be country life. **Isaiah 11:6, 9** “...they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain...” The animals will be peaceful. **Philippians 3:20-21** “...change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body...” We will have bodies like Jesus. **WE WILL KNOW AND BE KNOWN Luke 24:30-31** We will have distinct divine personalities. **1 Corinthians 2:9** “...eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him...” We can’t fathom the things God has prepared for us – they are too wonderful. “The years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character... declare that God is love.”

Christ Our Righteousness Ministry

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IT'S THE LAW!

- A vehicle can legally pass a bicycle on the left, given there is at least 3 feet of space between the cyclist and the vehicle.
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- Vehicles may pass bicycles in a no passing zone as long as it’s safe to do so.



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How to Have Healthier Holidays in 1-2-3!

Give yourself the gift of better health this holiday season. Try these tips to add more movement to your day and healthy food to your plate.

Stay active

Even a few minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity can deliver some health benefits and count toward reaching the recommendations. For adults, the many benefits of physical activity include reduced short-term feelings of anxiety and better sleep.

Some tips for staying active during the holidays include:

- When shopping, walk a few laps around the shopping center before going into stores.
- Take the stairs at every opportunity. If you can't climb all the stairs, take the stairs part way, then the elevator.
- Rather than hunting for the closest parking spot, park farther away and walk briskly to your destination.
- When friends and family gather, go for a group walk. You can make the walk more fun by turning it into a scavenger hunt.
- Play an active group game in your yard or local park.
- Bundle up and take a walk instead of a drive to see holiday lights.

Eat healthy

Eating well supports muscles and bones, boosts immunity, helps the digestive system, and aids in weight management, among other health benefits for children and adults. Good



nutrition involves eating a variety of healthy foods. To do that during the holidays:

- If you eat foods that are high in calories, saturated fat, or added sugars, choose small portions and only eat them once in a while. Opt for healthier foods most of the time.
- At parties and other gatherings, fill your plate with your favorite fruits and vegetables first, then add small portions of less healthy items.
- If you are taking food to a party, make it your favorite healthy dish. Then you'll be sure that at least one item at the party will be a healthy choice that you enjoy.

Make healthier versions of your traditional recipes by using ingredients with less fat and salt.



- Spice up baked fish or chicken by adding salsa or black bean sauce.

- Consider beans in place of higher-fat meats.

- A plate of salmon on top of roasted peppers, tomatoes, and asparagus.

- Fill your plate with vegetables and lean protein.

Plan activities that don't involve eating

Here are some ideas for shifting the focus away from food during the holiday season:

- Volunteer in your community.
- Try a seasonal activity such as ice skating or winter hiking.



- Go on a walk and explore a new area with a friend or family member.

- Visit that museum or exhibit you've been wanting to see.

Consider what new healthy traditions you can start this year. The possibilities are endless!

—cdc.gov

Great Benefits Surround Dancing At All Ages

Local Ballet Midwest dancers will perform 'Nutcracker' Dec. 12-14

When you visualize a ballerina, what do you see? If you are like most people you see a cute kiddo with tights and some form of a pink tutu. Or perhaps you picture a super fit young adult in tights and pointe shoes dancing on stage. Very few individuals will automatically think of an older adult or senior although there are amazing physical and mental benefits to dancing throughout one's life.

As a weight-bearing form of exercise using the full range of muscles, ballet is not only a great physical workout, but is also great for cognitive functions such as concentration and coordination.

In addition, ballet helps significantly with balance and posture and alignment. It has been even known to reduce the symptoms of depression, arthritis, diabetes, and dementia.

Don't believe us?! Here is a short list of the amazing benefits ballet can provide to those physically young, as well as those young at heart.

1. Increases flexibility

2. Provides superior muscle toning, including strengthening and lengthening of some of the largest muscle groups
3. Improves stamina, coordination and posture
4. Increases energy and metabolism
5. Improves breathing, concentration, and balance
6. Furnishes a focus on mindfulness and calming
7. Delivers a vehicle for self-expression and self-confidence
8. Endorphin release increases happiness
9. Burns calories
10. Fends off osteoporosis
11. Combats dementia



In addition, ballet allows for self-expression in various forms, along with helping with aiding self-confidence. Even if class participants never step foot on a stage, just engaging in a weekly session with a small ballet class will feed an immediate impact on mental health.

Ballet Midwest's Nutcracker Ballet is a holiday staple, a favorite that will be performed live at TPAC, Friday, December 12th at 7:30 pm, Saturday, December 13th at 1:30 pm and 7:30 pm and Sunday, December 14th at 1:30 pm.

Join Clara at the Christmas Eve party where she receives a gift that will soon take her on a fantastic journey. Feel the joy of a Christmas Eve party, marvel at the special effects and excitement as the Nutcracker battles the Mouse King, watch as the snow falls gently in the forest and marvel as the dancers entertain you in the Kingdom of Enchantment. All set to the unforgettable score by Tchaikovsky.



A typical adult ballet class lasts between 45-60 minutes, once a week. In that time, you can burn more than 500 calories. If one is looking to trim down, ballet can provide an opportunity to do so, but it also generally improves overall bodily fitness by increasing resting heart rate, and improving circulation throughout your whole body.

Tickets can be purchased in person at the TPAC box office. For more information visit www.balletmidwest.net.

6 Reasons Why I Prefer Books Over the Internet

Books allow me to connect with the best, brightest and most inspiring people, and to be influenced by those making choices I'd like to make for myself. That is why I love not only owning them but giving them as gifts too. So to close out 2025, here are some recently published books to inspire you to live more healthfully and happily. And in case you are not familiar with it, there is an app, called "LIBBY" you can download for free from the library's website and it will allow you to listen to audio books FOR FREE on your phone with ZERO ADS!

Libby is a wonderful alternative to both reading and to engaging the internet. Though I mostly prefer to read hard copies of books, when I am working alone in the kitchen, or working out, it is really nice to listen to an audio book. So here is to wishing you a happy and inspired new year:

1) Once I own a book, I can always go back and reread its information without worrying that some behind-the-scenes, power decided I should no longer be allowed to access that info and made it disappear.

2) History (or science) as written in a book – never suddenly changes! I can go back to that book one year, five years, ten years later – and it will say exactly the same thing.

3) I don't have to face "weapons of mass distraction" (ads and pop-ups) that sabotage my deep critical thinking.

4) When I buy a book from a brick and mortar store with cash, or borrow it from the library, I don't worry that my choices are being tracked by corporations seeking to influence my future behavior (usually in ways that are not beneficial to me.)

5) When I read a printed book, my comprehension is clearly better than when I read things on electronic devices.

6) When the power goes out or if devices fail, info in my books is still accessible.

A Race for Life by Ruth Heidrich

An engaging memoir, packed with so much great information about how to live healthfully. You won't be able to put it down and Ruth's story really could change your life.



There is a Planet B by Sailesh Rao

If you care about the environment but are tired of all the doom and gloom, you will love Dr. Rao's vision of how humans are in fact necessary to the planetary ecosystem and his framing of the crisis as an opportunity for the collective transformation of humanity.



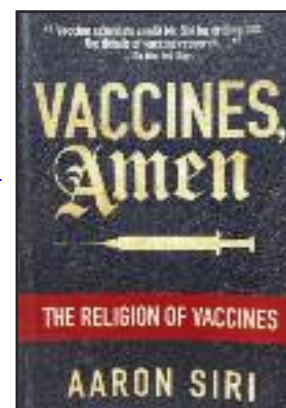
Worth a Shot by Caroline Pover

This is the story of Brianna Dressen, a Covid vaccine trial participant who became the 'Erin Brockavich' of pharma as a result of the unbelievable things she experienced in that trial. You will be touched and inspired by her story, plus you'll learn things that could save you from future tragedy.



Vaccines Amen by Aaron Siri

Whether confused, curious, or just looking for actual facts, this book delivers. Siri is an attorney



who has deposed the world's leading vaccinologists. Attorneys can't win in court based on opinion – but must know and present actual evidence. This book WILL blow your mind. I couldn't put it down.

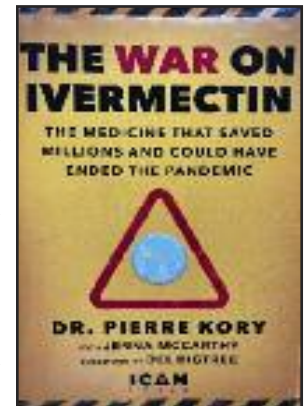
No Bad Parts by Richard Schwarz

This is a fascinating introduction to Internal Family Systems Therapy by its founder. I loved the audio-book version as it's full of instruction and guided sessions to explore how this systems thinking can help us get "unstuck" in our lives.



The War on Ivermectin by Pierre Kory

As we head into the winter cold and flu season, the information in this book just might save the life of someone you love. Written by a world renowned pulmonary and critical care specialist, he sets the record straight on a drug listed by the WHO as one of the world's "essential medicines" which was widely regarded as very safe – until it posed a threat to the largest upward transfer of wealth the world has ever seen.



-By JoAnn Farb

JoAnn Farb is a former microbiologist with a global pharmaceutical company, and the author of *Compassionate Souls – Raising the Next Generation to Change the World, and Get off Gluten*. She speaks nationally and lives in Lawrence where she teaches about the benefits of the Whole-Food Plant-Based Lifestyle. She can be reached through her website at www.JoAnn-Farb.com.



JoAnn Farb

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Why you need dental insurance in retirement.

Medicare doesn't pay for dental care.¹

As good as Medicare is, it was never meant to cover everything. If you want protection, you need to purchase individual insurance.

Early detection can prevent small problems from becoming expensive ones.

The best way to avoid large dental bills is preventive care. Experts recommend checkups twice a year.

Previous dental work can wear out.

Your odds of having a dental problem only go up as you age.²

Treatment is expensive — especially the services people over 50 often need.

Unexpected bills, like \$190 for a filling, or \$1,213 for a crown³ can be a real burden, especially if you're on a fixed income.

1 "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2025. 2 "Aging changes in teeth and gums", medlineplus.gov, 4/17/2022. 3 American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, 2020 Survey of Dental Fees, Copyright 2020, American Dental Association.

When you're comparing plans ...

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Struggling with mental health issues? You are not alone!

NAMI Topeka is Topeka's voice on mental illness: People working together to improve lives and outcomes through education, advocacy, and support. For those struggling with mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, OCD, ADHD, bipolar, PTSD, etc., it's important to know: you are not alone.

NAMI Topeka is the local non-profit affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. NAMI Topeka offers peer support, advocacy and education programs for people with mental illnesses and those who love them.

In Topeka and across the nation, NAMI education programs ensure hundreds of thousands of families, individuals and educators get the support and information they need. All of the programs are offered free of charge to the participants.

The toll-free national NAMI helpline responds personally to hundreds of thousands of requests each year, providing free information and support—a much-needed lifeline for many.

Public awareness events and activities, including Mental Illness Awareness Week and NAMIWalks, successfully fight stigma and encourage understanding. NAMI works with reporters on a daily basis to make sure our country understands how important mental health is.

What people are saying

"I've learned how to communicate with my parents about what's going on with me"

"I am now aware that I'm not alone. I'd like to become more involved in NAMI and advocacy"

"NAMI Peer-to-Peer gave me hope when I was close to giving up. I realized that things can and do get better and that my mental health condition doesn't define me. I learned how to speak up for myself, build a strong support network, and make plans for my future. I felt welcome and like I was among friends. Most importantly, I felt heard and understood"

"I've really learned how to cope with my triggers better, and I'm now on the path to truly loving myself"

"I felt safe in this class. I've been able to talk about things I haven't been comfortable expressing elsewhere"

Nami Topeka hosts several local support groups to meet various local needs. These groups allow everyone to be heard and gain coping skills. They will help you gain hope and develop relationships, encourage empathy, productive discussion and a sense of community.



Family 2 Family

Family 2 Family workshops are offered three times a year. It is a free workshop for families, friends and caregivers of adults, over 18, who live with mental illness. It is an 8-week workshop that meets on 8 consecutive Monday evenings.

The next class is January 12 – March 2, 2026, 6pm - 8:30 pm at Countryside UM Church 3221 SW Burlingame Rd. Parking is in the north lot. Bottled water, snacks, and workbooks are provided.

To register, contact Marilyn Rowland at mrowland533110@yahoo.com or 785-806-3049.

Peer to Peer Class

PPeer to Peer is a free educational program for adults with mental health conditions who are looking to better understand themselves and their recovery. This class is scheduled periodically.

Taught by trained leaders with lived experience, this program includes activities, discussions, and informative videos. It is a safe, confidential space providing an opportunity for mutual support and growth. With experience compassion and understanding from people who relate to your experiences, it is a place to learn more about recovery in an accepting environment.

NAMI Family Support Group

This is a free peer-led support group for adults with a loved one experiencing mental health conditions. Led by NAMI trained facilitators, it is an opportunity to talk, listen, and vent in a

friendly space. You may gain insight from the challenges and successes of others facing similar experiences. Everyone has an opportunity to be heard and get what they need.

"Sometimes there is trauma in a person's background," said Kay Logan, group facilitator. "Maybe there are bi-polar issues for others. Even sleeping can be a problem for some. There is a need to be able to share about issues, or just to vent, and relieve anxiety. This is a friendly place, no judgement or embarrassment – just try it once, and maybe just listen the first time."

The group meets the 2nd Monday of each month.

NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group

A free peer-led support Group for anyone 18 and over dealing with mental health challenges. This group meets one afternoon each week.

Further information and schedules are available at www.namitopeka.org

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A New Year of Emotional Health and Body Balance

Consider a time when you encountered someone who was in a “bad mood.” After your interaction with them, were you in a bad mood and they seemed to feel better? That is how sensitive we are to each other and the world around us.

Everyone has experienced some type of trauma in their life in varying degrees and in different stages of life. Some trauma happens when we are young and we can block out or forget incidents. That does not mean that our bodies forget.



Rebecca Wharton

For those of you who have any chronic conditions, chronic stress = inflammation = chronic disease. Chronic means a condition that lasts over 3 months. Some conditions that come to mind are:

- Migraines
- Chronic fatigue
- Fibromyalgia

Emotional healing isn't just about feeling better as individuals. When we do our own healing, we are more capable of offering love, respect, and kindness to others and reshape culture from the ground up, far away from the noise of the world.

Trauma isn't “all in your head”—it literally reshapes the brain and lives in the body.

Our core focus points are love and kindness, toward ourselves and each other. These are some of the most powerful medicines we have, and they're essential for healing both people and society.

What *The Body Keeps the Score* teaches us about trauma

The central message of the book is simple but profound: The mind may try to forget trauma, but the body does not.

How trauma changes brain function:

- **Overactivated amygdala** that is the “alarm system” of the brain, making people hyper-alert to threat and easily triggered.
- **Reduced regulation** from the medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC) that helps you calm down, think clearly, and put things in perspective.
- **Alters the hippocampus and default mode network**, that are involved in memory, self-reflection, and a stable sense of self.

For people who have experienced trauma early in life, altered connectivity between the mPFC and amygdala may partly explain why they are more vulnerable to anxiety, mood disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).



How is Trauma Expressed by the Body?

- Chronic muscle tension, pain, fatigue, and headaches
- Digestive issues and sleep problems
- Emotional numbing, shutdown, or dissociation
- Automatic reactions like rage, panic, or collapse that don't match what's happening right now

Trauma can reorganize how the brain and body process the world, changing what you think AND your capacity to think and feel safe.

Why Does Emotional Healing Work?

Childhood trauma and neglect don't just go away with time; they often become an “operating system” for adult life.

Early trauma, shame, guilt, and self-criticism

Children who grow up with abuse, emotional neglect, or chaos are more likely to develop:

- Deep shame and a harsh inner critic
- Difficulty trusting others
- Trouble regulating emotions

Research on self-compassion and trauma suggests that early trauma makes people more vulnerable to self-criticism and less able to respond to themselves with warmth and care.

At the same time, self-compassion appears to protect against PTSD symptoms by reducing avoidance and helping people face painful emotions more safely.

Unhealed Trauma Doesn't Stay Private

When trauma is unhealed, it often leaks into:

- Parenting (over-controlling, emotionally distant, or explosive patterns)
- Workplaces (bullying, defensiveness, chronic mistrust)
- Politics and media (fear-based narratives, dehumanizing language)

Healing your nervous system allows you to learn how to respond with more kindness and less reactivity, which creates a culture that is more respectful and less cruel. This is where love and kindness stop being clichés and start being nervous-system skills.

Talking alone isn't always enough

Standard trauma-focused psychotherapies (like trauma-focused CBT and EMDR) are strongly evidence-based and remain first-line treatments. But research also supports the idea that mind-body approaches can help, especially for PTSD:

1. **Mindfulness**-based treatments show moderate benefit for PTSD symptoms.

2. **Yoga** has growing evidence as a complementary treatment that can reduce PTSD and depression symptoms.

3. **Neurofeedback** has emerging evidence and is now FDA-cleared for PTSD, with a recent meta-analysis showing significant symptom reduction versus control groups.

4. **Relationships and community are central to healing** Summaries of *The Body Keeps the Score* and related reviews highlight that supportive relationships and safe connection are core to recovery.

Techniques That Support Healing and Self-Validation

These practices are **NOT a substitute** for professional help, especially if you have severe PTSD, thoughts of self-harm, or active addiction, but they can be meaningful, evidence-informed supports you can use on your own.

Grounding: teaching your body “I'm safe right now”

Grounding techniques help pull you out of flashbacks, dissociation, and spiraling thoughts by anchoring you in the present to help manage anxiety, PTSD, and dissociation.

5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Grounding Practice

1. **Look** for 5 things you can see. Say them out loud: “Blue mug, plant, window...”
2. **Touch** 4 things you can feel (your shirt, the chair, your feet on the floor).
3. **Listen** for 3 sounds you can hear.
4. **Smell** 2 things you can smell (or remember favorite smells if you can't smell anything now).
5. **Taste** 1 thing (sip water, notice the taste in your mouth).

Add a gentle validating phrase: “I'm here. I survived. I'm safe enough in this moment.”

Use **grounding** whenever you feel yourself leaving your body, spacing out, or getting overwhelmed. Over time,

this teaches your nervous system that the present is not the same as the past.

Slow, kind breathing to calm the nervous system

Slow, diaphragmatic breathing increases parasympathetic (“rest and digest”) activity and heart rate variability, which are linked with reduced stress and improved emotional regulation.

Try the 4–6 breath (about 5–6 breaths per minute):

1. Place one hand on your chest and one on your belly.
2. Inhale through your nose for a count of 4, letting your belly gently rise.
3. Exhale through your nose or pursed lips for a count of 6, letting your shoulders drop.
4. Repeat for 3–5 minutes, focusing on the feeling of your body softening on each exhale.

Validation add-on: “My body is allowed to relax. It’s safe to take a softer breath now.”

You’re not forcing yourself to “be calm”; you’re giving your nervous system a physical signal of safety.

A self-compassion break (instead of self-attack)

Trauma survivors often have a fierce inner critic. Research suggests that self-compassion reduces shame and may buffer against PTSD symptoms.

Use this when you feel overwhelmed, embarrassed, or ashamed:

1. Notice and name:

“This is a moment of suffering. I feel [scared / ashamed / alone].”

2. Remember common humanity:

“Many people have felt this way. I’m not the only one who struggles.”

3. Offer kindness:

Put a hand on your heart or cheek and say something like:

- “May I be gentle with myself right now.”
- “I’m doing the best I can with what I’ve lived through.”

You can repeat this 1–2 minutes at a time. It’s simple, but over months, this kind of self-talk can slowly rewire how you relate to yourself.

Validating your younger self through gentle writing

Expressive writing is brief, structured writing about emotional events and has been shown to produce modest but real benefits in emotional and physical health for many people, though effects are not huge and not universal.

Some studies show that people with difficulty identifying feelings may initially feel worse, so go slowly and stop if you feel overwhelmed.

A simple “inner child” letter exercise:

1. Set a time limit – 10–15 minutes, in a safe, private



space.

2. Pick an age where you remember feeling especially alone, scared, or unheard.
3. Write to that younger version of you, from your present-day self. You might say:
 - “I believe you. What happened wasn’t your fault.”
 - “You deserved safety, love, and protection.”
 - “I’m here with you now. I won’t leave you alone with this.”
4. End with a grounding statement:

“Right now, I’m [your current age]. I’m in [current year]. I’m in [where you are]. This is over. I survived.”

If you feel very stirred up afterward, use grounding or breathing and maybe something soothing (warm tea, soft blanket, a kind text to a friend).

Gentle movement and body awareness

Because trauma often disconnects us from our bodies, safe, non-pushing movement can help you reclaim your physical self. Research suggests that yoga and other body-based practices can reduce PTSD, anxiety, and depression symptoms in some people.

Try a 5-minute “body scan with micro-moves”:

1. Sit or lie down. Start at your feet.
2. Gently tense your toes for 3 seconds, then release and notice the difference.
3. Move up through calves, thighs, belly, shoulders, hands, jaw, and face.
4. At each step, ask: “What does this part of me need? Softening, stretching, or just attention?”

This combines awareness with small movements, which is often safer than intense exercise for trauma survivors who are early in healing.

Love and kindness as daily nervous-system medicine

Safe and caring relationships are central to trauma recovery. A “tend and befriend” response toward social support and caregiving is a natural, protective way humans cope with threat.

Tiny daily practices that build a culture of respect:

- One daily kindness to yourself:

- Saying, “You did enough today” before bed and letting yourself rest without earning it
- One daily kindness to someone else:
 - A sincere compliment
 - A short “thinking of you” text
 - Letting someone merge in traffic without resentment
- One daily act of “de-media-tization”:
 - 10–15 minutes where no news, no social media, no politics—just being with a pet, a tree, music, or a quiet room

These micro-acts sound small, but over time they signal safety and belonging to your nervous system—and they slowly shift the emotional climate around you.

When self-help is not enough

Self-directed practices can be powerful adjuncts, but some situations really do call for professional care. **Please consider seeking trauma-informed therapy if:**

- You have frequent flashbacks, nightmares, or panic attacks
- You feel numb, detached, or unreal much of the time
- You use substances, self-harm, or dangerous behaviors to cope
- You have persistent thoughts of not wanting to live

Evidence-based treatments for trauma include trauma-focused CBT, EMDR, and other trauma-focused psychotherapies, which have strong empirical support.

If you ever have thoughts of harming yourself or others, please contact emergency services or a crisis line in your country right away. Even if your trauma came from other people failing you, there are people and professionals who genuinely want to help keep you safe now.

* See chart on next page for chart linking chronic conditions to trauma and chronic stress.

—Rebecca Wharton, RN, Master of Science in Nursing in Public Health, CPT, is a Certified Functional Nutrition Coach offering one-on-one Nurse Coaching to help you regain healthy body function through Food, Mindset, and Movement. She can be reached at thefunctionalnursecoach@gmail.com or 913-298-1092.



913-717-6812

www.thefunctionalnursecoach.com

Chronic conditions linked to trauma and chronic stress

Condition	How it links to trauma/stress
Cardiovascular disease (heart disease, hypertension, stroke)	Chronic stress leads to persistent activation of the stress response (cortisol, catecholamines) and low-grade inflammation, which damages blood vessels and the heart.
Diabetes / metabolic syndrome / obesity	Stress and trauma can lead to dysregulated metabolism, insulin resistance, accumulation of abdominal fat, and changed eating behaviors.
Autoimmune disorders / chronic inflammation	Chronic stress contributes to immune system dysregulation, elevated cytokines and inflammation, which can trigger or exacerbate autoimmune conditions.
Digestive/gut problems (IBS, ulcers, GI distress)	The stress response affects gut motility, microbiome, barrier integrity (gut-brain connection). Also, early trauma (toxic stress) interrupts normal development of bodily systems.
Sleep disorders, chronic pain, headaches, muscle tension	Ongoing stress increases muscle tension, alters pain processing, disrupts sleep architecture.
Mental-health disorders (depression, anxiety, PTSD, complex PTSD, substance use)	Trauma is a major risk factor for PTSD/CPTSD; chronic stress interacts with neurobiological systems (HPA axis) to increase vulnerability to mood/anxiety disorders.
Accelerated aging / cellular damage / brain structural changes	The concept of allostatic load (wear and tear due to chronic stress) shows how multiple systems accumulate damage over time, affecting brain, cardiovascular, immune, etc.

If childhood trauma or chronic stress has been part of your story, it's not surprising that you may be facing stubborn health issues (metabolic, pain, gut, sleep, mood) even if they seem "unrelated."



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Healthy Recipes for a Healthy Heart

Healthy and tasty recipes are key to sticking with a healthy nutrition plan. Here are some good ones!

Oven Roasted Sweet Potatoes



These savory sweet potatoes are cooked with onions and garlic, then drizzled with balsamic vinegar before serving.

Ingredients

- 4 cups chopped peeled sweet potato
- 1 sweet onion, cut into wedges
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar, or more to taste
- 1 pinch salt and ground black pepper to taste

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C).
Mix sweet potatoes, onion, and garlic in a bowl. Drizzle olive oil over the mixture and toss to coat; pour into a shallow roasting pan.
Roast sweet potato mixture in the preheated oven, turning frequently, until the vegetables are soft and golden brown, 30 to 35 minutes.
Remove from the oven. Drizzle balsamic vinegar over the vegetables; season with salt and pepper.

Nutrition Information (Servings: 4)
Per serving: 224 calories; fat 10g ; carbohydrates 31g; protein 3g

Source: allrecipes.com

Heart Healthy Burrito



This hearty and healthy meal will certainly satisfy the biggest appetites in the house.

Ingredients

- 4 (10 inch) Mission® 96% Fat Free Flour Tortillas
- 2 cups grilled chicken strips, pre-cooked, prepared refrigerated or frozen
- 1 ½ cups brown rice, microwaveable
- 1 ⅓ cups broccoli, microwaveable
- 2 cups Cheddar Cheese, shredded

Directions

Cook chicken strips, brown rice and broccoli according to each of their package instructions. Re-serve hot.
Warm tortillas in a microwave for 10 seconds.
To build 1 burrito: Place 1/2 cup of chicken on the bottom third of each tortilla, followed by 1/3 cup of brown rice, then 1/3 cup of broccoli.
Evenly sprinkle 1/2 cup of cheese over the broccoli.
Repeat steps 1 through 4 using remaining tortillas and ingredients.
Roll each tortilla into a burrito, forming a larger size burrito. Cut each burrito in half, on an angle, and serve hot.

Nutrition Information (Servings: 4)
Per Serving: 763 calories; fat 25g; carbohydrates 86g; protein 46g.

Source: allrecipes.com

Heart-Healthy Potato Ham Soup



A heart-healthy version of potato ham soup loaded with veggies and turkey ham is low in fat and high in flavor. Serve with hearty bread and your favorite cheese.

Ingredients

- 2 ½ quarts water
- 4 cups peeled and diced potatoes
- 2 ½ cups diced turkey ham
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 (10 ounce) can butter beans, rinsed and drained
- 3 carrots, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels
- 1 (8 ounce) can cream-style corn
- 1 teaspoon dill
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 (12 fluid ounce) can evaporated milk

Directions

Heat water in a 6-quart pot over high heat; add potatoes, turkey ham, onion, beans, carrots, celery, frozen corn, cream-style corn, dill, salt, and black pepper. Bring water to a boil, lower heat to medium-low, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are tender and soup is reduced, 1 to 1 ½ hours.
Remove pot from heat and stir in milk until incorporated and soup is creamy..

Nutrition Information (Servings: 10)
Per serving: 219 calories; fat 5g; carbohydrates 30g; protein 14g.

Source: allrecipes.com

Diabetes: Sugar Overload Killing Hearts - Is There an Answer?



(Ivanhoe Newswire) —

Many people living with diabetes don't even know their hearts are already under attack. But groundbreaking research hopes to stop and even reverse the damage before it's too late.

Two in five people will be told they have diabetes during their lifetime.

And people who have it are twice as likely to develop heart disease. One of the deadliest dangers? Diabetic cardiomyopathy.

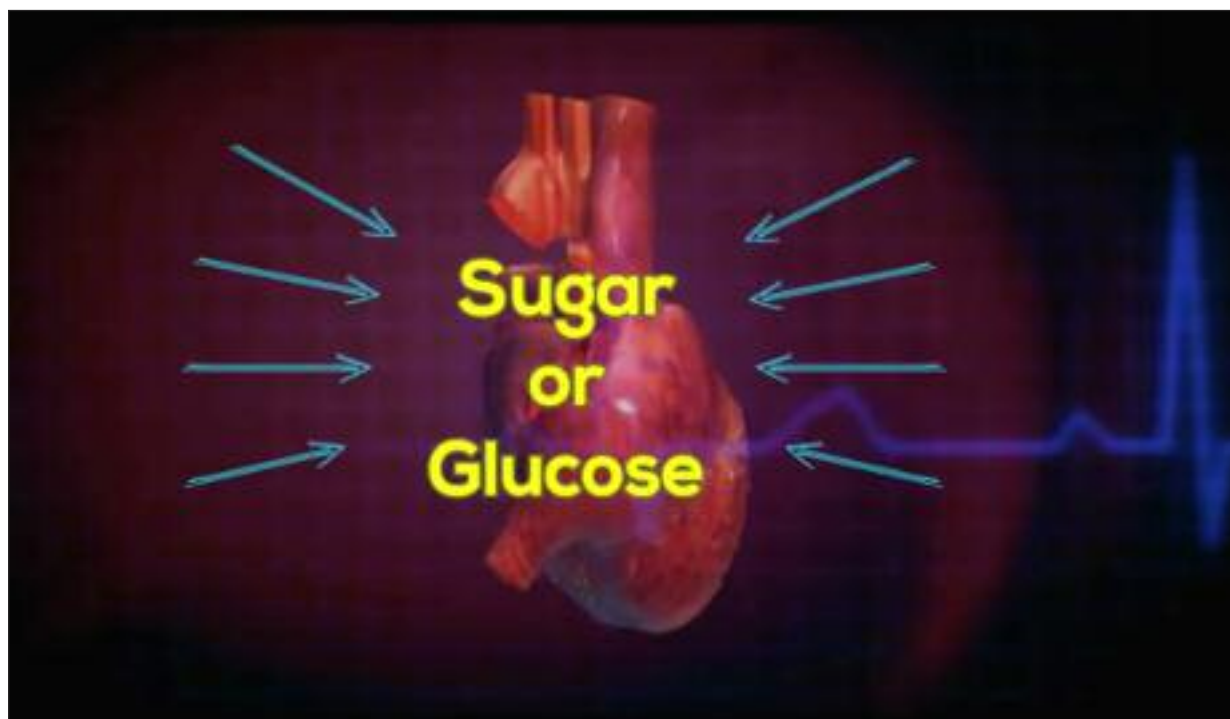
"It will reduce the ability of the heart to pump the blood efficiently to the rest of the body," explained Konstantinos Drosatos, PhD, molecular biologist at the University of Cincinnati.

And that impacts a person's ability to walk, sleep, even breathe.

"You can see the heart as an engine. If we had to go to the gas station to fuel our heart daily, we would need about six to seven gallons of gas per day," said Prof. Drosatos.

But while the heart burns a lot of fuel, it's not built for overload. Too much sugar in the heart weakens the way it pumps. That's why Prof. Drosatos is studying what happens inside heart cells when they're flooded with glucose.

"How this protein is activated and by glucose that is taken up by heart, and how a transporter of glucose, which actually imports glucose in the heart, plays a role in that," he told Ivanhoe.



The protein is GLUT1: The gatekeeper for sugar entering heart cells. In diabetes, GLUT1 goes into overdrive, flooding the heart with glucose. That overload then triggers a protein called KLF5, what researchers call a "toxic switch" within the heart. Fat builds up: heart cells get damaged setting the stage for heart failure. But when researchers blocked the GLUT1 in diabetic mice the damage stopped and even reversed.

"The end game here will be to see if by blocking the glucose import we can affect certain molecules that contribute to the disease," explained Prof. Drosatos.

The goal: To develop new drugs to stop diabetes from damaging the heart before it's too late.

Because about 90% of people with diabetes have Type 2, new therapies targeting this process could one day help the majority live longer, healthier lives.

For now, doctors say the best defense is still a healthy lifestyle, but if this research holds true in humans, it could provide a powerful new defense against heart failure.

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How Running Fights Some of the Worst Effects of 'Brain Rot'

Brain rot—describes the potential mental decline caused by spending way too many hours on your phone or computer. If you've ever surfaced from an hours-long doomscroll feeling sluggish and unfocused, you've felt its effects firsthand.

Fortunately, there's an antidote that doesn't involve throwing your phone into the ocean—as much as you may want to. Scientists say running might counteract the cognitive drain of excessive screen time, keeping your brain sharp and more resilient to decline.

What is brain rot?

Don Grant, Ph.D., an expert in the impact of digital media on mental health, says brain rot refers to the negative psychological and cognitive effects from chronic engagement with low-quality, usually short-form, digital content. These effects include reduced attention span, difficulty focusing, forgetfulness, irritability, and reliance on devices for memory and entertainment, he explains.

“Regular aerobic exercise is a powerful tool in maintaining and enhancing brain health,” Grant says. “It also can offer the brain the opportunity to take even a short ‘digital detox’ or break from devices and technology in general.” Plus, he mentions, exercise of any kind can help promote creative thought processes and mindful thinking.

In fact, according to Susie Reiner, Ph.D., certified strength and conditioning coach, exercise physiologist, and run coach, exercise counteracts brain rot in a few key ways.

How Running and Aerobic Exercise Improves Brain Health

1. Release of Myokines

Myokines are signaling proteins and peptides secreted by skeletal muscle fibers in response to muscle contraction during physical activity, Reiner explains. They essentially act as a communication network, connecting our skeletal muscles to the rest of the body and brain.

“Myokines have been shown to exert diverse influences on neuronal function and cognitive performance,” Reiner says. “These muscle-derived signaling molecules can modulate various aspects of brain health, thereby enhancing cognitive abilities such as learning, memory, and executive function.”

In non-scientific terms, running and other exercise boosts the presence of these proteins and peptides that improve cognitive function, according to The Journal of Neuropsychiatry. Running, can, in fact, make you smarter.

2. Increase in Lactate

As a runner, you're probably already familiar with lactate—at least how it feels in your muscles during a hard workout. Lactate buildup may burn, but it also betters your brain. “Lactate, a byproduct of exercise, plays a crucial role in brain health by acting as both an energy substrate and a signaling molecule,” Reiner says. During running and other forms of intense physical activity, lactate crosses the blood-brain barrier to fuel neurons, particularly in the hippocampus—an area critical for learning and memory.

3. Increased Blood Flow

Running boosts blood flow to the brain, which delivers oxygen and nutrients essential for brain function and long-term neuroprotection, says Reiner. This increased circulation enhances neuronal metabolism, supports neurotransmitter synthesis, and facilitates waste clearance, reducing the risk of cognitive decline.

Additionally, running helps promote vasodilation, or widening of the blood vessels, through the release of nitric oxide. This gets more oxygen and nutrients to key brain areas like the prefrontal cortex and hippocampus, Reiner says. These brain areas are vital for memory, decision-making, and emotional regulation.

But that's not all: Increased circulation also strengthens vascular networks and brain resilience. “As a result, running sharpens cognitive function while acting as a protective buffer against neurodegeneration,” Reiner says.



Design Your Runs to Counteract Brain Rot

Most running intensities and durations will promote positive changes to cognitive health, and mixing up your run types will optimize brain benefits, according to Reiner.

Run long and run slow. Long, slow-duration steady-state running is characterized by sustained rhythmic muscle contractions, which gradually enhance myokine and BDNF release, says Reiner.

She recommends sessions of 30 to 60 minutes at 70 to 75 percent of your VO2 max, which will closer within your zone 2. Longer runs at this pace will boost blood flow and lead to glycogen depletion, increasing lactate for added brain benefits.

Make your hard intervals really hard. HIIT and fartlek training boost myokine secretion through greater muscle activation, inducing a rapid increase in BDNF levels, Reiner says. To achieve this effect, Reiner recommends short bursts of near-maximal effort sprints at an intensity greater than 85 percent of your VO2 max. Hill repeats also work.

Hit the trails. Eccentric exercises involving the lengthening phase of muscle contraction, like downhill running drills, also stimulate the secretion of myokines, Reiner says. “With this in mind, trail running may be a great option if you're trying to boost brain health with its steady-state bouts combined with some uphill intervals and downhill running,” she says. “It also provides a novel environment for mental stimulation to counteract sluggishness from brain rot.”

Engage your brain. Many runners try to distract themselves when they run—with music, for example. Instead, use mindfulness techniques to improve your brain health. For example, you can use a rhythmic focus, like counting strides or your breath pattern, to reduce mind wandering and enhance working memory, Reiner says.

Another technique is to focus on your surroundings, which can reduce stress and enhance cognitive flexibility by activating key brain regions for memory and decision-making.

Finally, try dual-task training, during which you alternate your attention between internal factors (breathing, muscle sensations) and external factors (scenery, pace, sounds).

By Amanda Capritto



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Source: American Heart Association's Heart-Healthy Kids Program. Added Sugars and Cholesterol Levels: Topeka Post-Dispatch

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The Pursuit of True Happiness and Meaning in Life

By Will Graham

People will try many different things in an attempt to bring themselves happiness and fulfillment. Some pursue philanthropy, good deeds, mentoring or positive social work. Others throw themselves into hobbies, jobs or relationships. Unfortunately there are many who pursue destructive vices that only bring suffering.

While many follow the world's path in seeking fulfillment, the Bible gives instruction from one of the wisest men who ever lived—King Solomon. Philosophers, kings, rulers and sages would come, sit, and listen to his wisdom.

Solomon searched for true happiness and meaning in life, and he gives us his conclusions in Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.

Fear God: Surprisingly, Solomon does not say to get more education or to acquire more wealth. He has all of this and has concluded that it is all vanity. Rather, Solomon's first and primary conclusion is to fear God (v. 13).

The fear of God is the sense of awe that emerges when we see our lack of holiness, since we are broken sinners, and we are met with God's perfect righteousness. It is not a sense of being scared or timid, but that of reverent awe.

Keep God's Commandments: Solomon's second conclusion is to keep God's commandments (v. 13), which—by the way—is a natural result of fearing God. Once we are in awe of God, we will follow Him. Often in life we think that God's commands steal our joy and happiness. However, the opposite is true. The commandments are given so that we can enjoy life and live it to the fullest.

Those two points—fearing God and keeping His



commandments—encompass everything in a person's life. Solomon says in verse 13, "For this is man's all." Nothing else.

Now, why does Solomon say that this is man's all? It is because we will be judged by the Lord (v. 14). I believe that the reason people do not fear the Lord (stand in awe) or keep His commandments is because we often forget about God's judgment. However, like it or not, we will be judged—both believers and non-believers.

Not only are we judged, but our works will also be judged. Solomon says that both our good and bad will be judged, and all the things done in secret will be judged as well. Nothing is kept from God's judgment.

I don't know about you, but that thought is a bit intimidating to me. I fear God and strive to follow Him in all that I do, but I also know I've fallen far short of His glory (Romans 3:23).

The good news is that Jesus became the perfect

sacrifice, taking our judgment. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." Christ paid "the wages of sin" on our behalf, giving those who call upon Him as Savior the gift of "eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

Does that mean that we should not fear God, or that we do not need to keep His commandments? Of course not. We should pursue Jesus and His righteousness with all that we are. However, we will never be "good enough," and that's why Christ came and offered His atoning sacrifice.

If you've not yet surrendered your life into His hands and accepted the hope only Jesus offers—the hope that brings true and lasting peace—I encourage you to do so today!

Your heart can be filled with God's peace. Ask for His help today.

Scripture Reference: Ecclesiastes 12:13-14:

13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:

Fear God and keep His commandments,
For this is man's all.

14 For God will bring every work into judgment,

Including every secret thing,
Whether good or evil.

-Will Graham is the Vice President and Associate Evangelist at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. For more information on the BGEA, visit <https://billygraham.org>. This article was reprinted with permission.

New Health & Wellness Info at the Library

By Alex Henault

Fulfill your prescription for information at the library's Health Information Neighborhood, where wellness knowledge is at your fingertips.

The Devil's Castle: Nazi eugenics, euthanasia, and how psychiatry's troubled history reverberates today – by Susanne Antonetta; Counterpoint; 2025 New Books 610.9 ANT

In *The Devil's Castle*, Susanne Paola Antonetta weaves a haunting narrative that confronts the darkest chapters of psychiatric history while offering a bold vision for the future of mental health care. In 1939, the eugenics movement growing throughout the West did its worst in Nazi Germany. Through the Aktion T4 euthanasia program, five asylums and an abandoned jail were transformed into gas chambers. Tens of thousands of lives—predominantly adults with neuropsychiatric conditions—were extinguished in those structures, ultimately paving the way for the horrors of the Holocaust. Interlacing her experiences of psychosis with the complex history of psychiatry, Antonetta sheds light on the intersections of madness and societal perceptions of mental difference. She brings to life the stories of Paul Schreber and Dorothea Buck, two historical figures who act as models for mind care and acceptance.

Managing Cholesterol – Simon Poole; Wiley & Sons; 2026 New Books 613.284 POO

Take charge of your heart health with this guide to managing cholesterol. *Managing Cholesterol For Dummies* demystifies cholesterol and clearly offers effective solutions for

prevention, management, and lowering it which have changed in recent years. This approachable guide helps you understand why balancing overall cholesterol is important, and what you can do to improve your numbers and keep them in check. It also navigates the latest lifestyle tips, medical treatments, complementary therapies, and culinary nutrition research available to keep your heart in shape. You'll also learn what cholesterol really is, how it's formed and linked to inflammatory processes you can reverse, and why it's never too early to think about keeping cholesterol regulated. If you're managing an existing condition, this book will help you make sure you're on a treatment path that works for you. This *Dummies* guide lays it all out in a clear way, so you can get your cholesterol questions answered without feeling overwhelmed. Learn how to maintain good health and reduce the risk of diseases linked to high cholesterol. Get the latest cholesterol insights, like oxidized LDL cholesterol and why it matters. Make mouthwatering recipes packed with fiber, antioxidants, and healthful fats to fight inflammation. Decide on a treatment plan, including medications and complementary therapies, that's right for you. For anyone dealing with elevated cholesterol or helping a loved one manage their numbers—and for people who want to avoid high cholesterol altogether—*Managing Cholesterol For Dummies* covers all the must-know information for staying healthy.

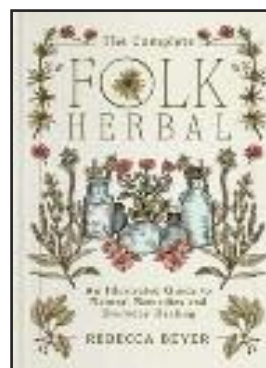
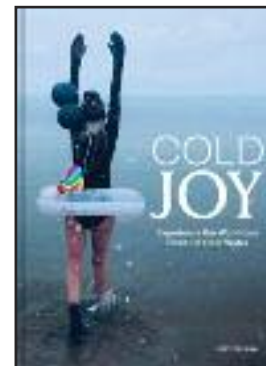
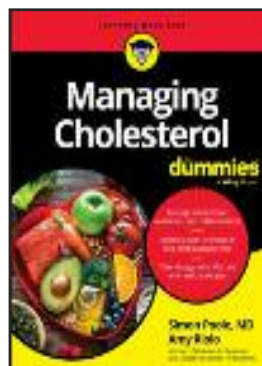
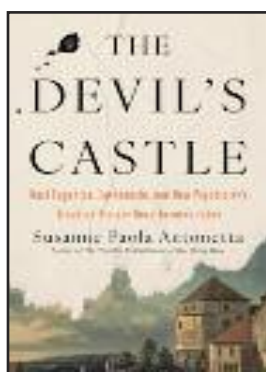
Cold Joy: experience the wondrous power of cold water – by Libby DeLana; Chronicle Books; 2025 New Books 615.853 DEL

For most of her life, Libby DeLana believed she hated the cold—fear of cold became part

of her identity. Then, in a dark period of deep personal turmoil and self-doubt, an impromptu dip in icy water cracked something open in her heart, forcing her to reexamine the limiting stories she told herself. If she could learn to love cold, what other beautiful life experiences might await? In this exhilarating guide to well-being, DeLana explores how a daily cold plunging practice taught her self-love, courage, and resilience, illuminating the physical, mental, and spiritual benefits of cold water. Combining personal storytelling with step-by-step guidance and essential tips for safety, plus fascinating details on the science and history of cold immersion, *Cold Joy* provides everything you need to experience the tremendous power of cold water—whether you're dipping in a sea, lake, river, or tub. Equal parts inspiring and instructive, and featuring breathtaking photographs throughout, this is a must-have companion for anyone curious about cold plunging and a stirring call to open your heart to new adventures, new possibilities, and new joys.

The Complete Folk Herbal: an illustrated guide to natural remedies and everyday healing – by Rebecca Beyer; Simon Element; 2025 New Books 615.88 BEY

A richly illustrated and deeply researched guide to the folklore, history, and healing uses of nearly one hundred plants. Ethnobotanist Rebecca Beyer explores each plant's origins, traditional and modern applications, and prac-



tical ways to incorporate them into daily life. Blending herbal wisdom with sustainable foraging practices, *The Complete Folk Herbal* offers timeless remedies and invites readers to reconnect with the natural world through the living traditions of folk medicine.

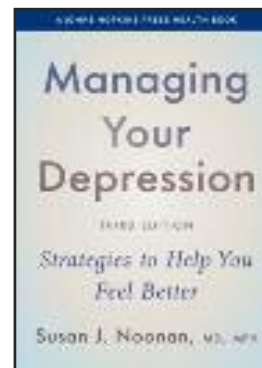
Migraines – by Diane Stafford; Wiley & Sons; 2026 New Books 616.8491 STA

Haven't you spent enough time juggling schedules and cancelling events when headache pain sidelined you? You can put those days behind you with up-to-date information on the when-why-how of migraines and a whole-of-body approach to micromanaging them. *Migraines For Dummies* supplies the answers you've been looking for in the form of straightforward explanations and reliable advice to help you tackle symptoms, avoid triggers, and find the best medical support. You'll explore new drug therapies, including prescription meds, over-the-counter drugs, nerve stimulators, and alternative remedies. Plus, learn how to reduce migraine frequency by tweaking diet, sleep, and exercise. Updated with the latest research, this Dummies guide shows you how to balance medical care and lifestyle adjustments to fix that aching head of yours and upgrade your quality of life once and for all. Millions suffer from migraines. That's why it's key to stay on top of developments in diagnosis and treatment. If you or someone you love wrestles with headaches on a regular basis, let *Migraines For Dummies* deliver topnotch ideas that will change your life forever.

Managing Your Depression: strategies to help you feel better – by Susan Noonan; John Hopkins University Press; 2025 New Books 616.8527 NOO

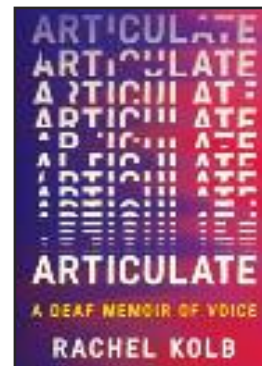
This updated edition offers compassionate,

evidence-based guidance for managing depression, with practical tools and new insights on topics like precision medicine, cultural factors, and the role of technology in mental health care.



Articulate: a Deaf Memoir of Voice – by Rachel Kolb; Ecco; 2025 New Books 617.8 KOL

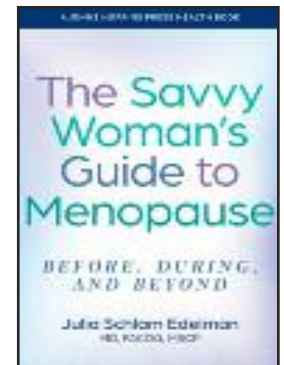
A deaf writer's exploration of language, communication, and what it means to be articulate--and her journey to reclaim her voice. Rachel Kolb was born profoundly deaf the same year that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed, and she grew up as part of the first generation of deaf people with legal rights to accessibility services. Still, from a young age, she contorted herself to expectations set by a world that prioritizes hearing people. So she learned to speak through speech therapy and to piece together missing sounds through lipreading and an eventual cochlear implant, all while finding clarity and meaning in American Sign Language (ASL) and written literature. Now in *Articulate*, Kolb blends personal narrative with cultural commentary to explore the different layers of deafness, language, and voice. She deconstructs multisensory experiences of language, examining the cultural importance hearing people attach to sound, the inner labyrinths of speech therapy, the murkiness of lipreading, and her lifelong intimacy with written English. And she uses her own experiences to illuminate the complexities of disability access, partnerships with ASL interpreters, Deaf culture and Deaf identity, and the perception versus reality of deafness. Part memoir, part cultural exploration, Kolb details a life lived among words in varied sensory forms and considers why



and how those words matter. Told through rich storytelling, analysis, and humor, *Articulate* is a linguistic coming-of-age in both deaf and hearing worlds, challenging us to consider how language expresses our humanity--and offering more ways we might exist together.

The Savvy Woman's Guide to Menopause: before, during, and beyond – by Julia Schlam Edelman; Johns Hopkins University Press; 2025 New Books 618.175 EDE

His book offers evidence-based advice on managing menopause symptoms and optimizing midlife health through lifestyle changes, treatments, and preventive strategies.



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Contact Lissa Staley:
estaley@tscpl.org

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Healthy Event Calendar for Greater Topeka

Send events to info@TopekaHealthandWellness.com. See complete calendar on website.

CYCLING EVENTS – Various cycle rides are offered by Kansas Cyclist. www.kansascyclist.com/

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES – Outdoor events and activities. www.getoutdoorskansas.org/calendar

WOODSHED MARKET – Sundays 10-3, 1901 N. Kansas Ave.

FRIDAY NIGHT FUNNIES – Fridays at Cosmos Court, 909 S. Kansas. Weekly comedy show

240 CHRISTMAS TREES & ORNAMENT DISPLAY – Nov. 1-Jan. 1, 10am-4pm Mon-Sat., & 1-5pm Sun. at Territorial Capital Museum, 640 E. Woodson, Lecompton. Over 240 Christmas Trees decorated in antique, Victorian, vintage and theme décor – including turn of the century and WW II era decorations, a barb-wire tree and feather trees. Also tour Constitution Hall, a National Landmark 785-887-6148. lecomptonkansas.com

SLI FESTIVAL OF TREES – Nov. 25- Dec. 6, 10am-6pm, Fairlawn Plaza Mall. Wonderfully decorated trees & silent auction.

TARC's WINTER WONDERLAND – Nov. 26-Dec. 31, Sun-Thu; 6-9pm; Fri-Sat 6-10. Lake Shawnee, 3435 SE East Edge Rd. View dazzling holiday light displays, featuring one million lights, while winding through a 2-mile scenic drive. Advanced Tickets are available: TARC, 2701 SW Randolph. 785.506-8720. winterwonderlandtopeka.com. Closed Dec. 1, 8 & 15

KNIGHTS OF LIGHTS HOLIDAY FESTIVAL – Nov. 28 – Dec. 29, Fridays & Saturdays – 5:30pm – 10pm; Sundays – 5:30pm – 9pm; PLUS December 19-24, 27-29; AND New Year's Eve Party 31st 10:00pm – 1:00am. Stroll through a Renaissance wonderland with lights, shopping, food, entertainment, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, and more! Glow in the dark putt putt, train rides, & snowball fights! \$20 at the gate. Age 5-9 = \$9, under 5 free. (Free tickets available from Metro Voice for advertisers & donors: email.voice@cox.net)

CELEBRATIONS OF WINTER – Nov. 29, 2-8pm, NOTO Arts District. Candlelight shopping, Santa visits, lighting of Redbud Park, Horse-drawn wagon rides free hot cocoa & cookies.

ING NETWORKING GROUP – Dec. 3, 11:30am at Dough Boy's Pizza, 1312 N. Kansas Ave.. All welcome, free to attend, order from menu if desired

HOLIDAY REMEMBRANCE SERVICE – Dec. 4, 6pm, Mt. Hope Cemetery Funeral Chapel & Reception Ctr, 4700 SW 17th St. This service includes an ornament presentation and special video tribute. You may submit one photo of your loved one for the video to contact@mounthopetoepka.com by Dec. 1. Refreshments will be provided. To RSVP: <https://share.hsforms.com/1Y1-sKWIBQZq3s5nYOcMBGw-bunf0> 785-272-1122

CRAFT SALE – Dec. 5, 9-4, New Life Baptist Church, 3601 SW 10th. Breakfast and lunch available. Raffle for 2 quilts.

NATIVITIES AND NOELS – Dec. 5 & 6, 10am - 9pm; Dec. 7, 1-7pm, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2401 S.W. Kingsrow Rd. Hundreds of nativities on loan from members of many different local churches, live Christmas music, refreshments, more. Free. For info: 785-554-8068 or <https://www.facebook.com/nativitiesandnoels>

CHILDREN'S SHOPPING SPREE – Dec. 6, 9-2, Garfield Park Community Ctr, Kids can explore a mini market full of treasures — every item is \$15 or less, and free gift wrapping is included, booth spaces available, \$30. Call 785-251-6886.

DONUTS WITH SANTA – Dec. 6, 9-11am, Dover Community Ctr, 5928 SW Douglas Rd, Dover, KS. Free.

CHRISTMAS ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR – Dec. 6, 10am, Stout Elementary School, 2303 SW College. Music, food, decorations & gifts. Contact markarganbright@yahoo.com for booth space. Sunflower Fiddlers will perform.

SANTA PAWS – Dec. 6, 11:30-3, HHHS, 5720 SW 21st St. A festive day of fun and furry cheer. Vendors, photos with Santa, bake sale, garage sale section, more. <https://e.givesmart.com/events/M4Y/> for Santa photo reservations, nail trim or to donate.

SANTA AT WHEATLAND IN BROOKWOOD – Dec. 6, 1-3pm, 2905 SW 29th St. Free visit and photos.

LIVE NATIVITY – Dec. 6, 4-6pm, Old Rock Church, 301 SE Railroad St. Silver Lake. See the people, pet the animals, enjoy live music, get a hot dog or s'mores by the fire pits.

WING FLING – Dec. 6, 2-5pm, Stormont Vail Event Ctr. Indoor festival of hot wings, cold drinks, and friendly competition. Live music, party games. \$27 in advance, \$32 at door.

BREAKFAST IN BETHLEHEM – Dec. 6, 9-11am, Christ Lutheran Church, 3509 SW Burlingame. A free Christmas event for all ages! Sit back and enjoy food and time in fellowship, or participate in our interactive Christmas story stations. Pancake Breakfast, Coffee & Cocoa, Activities, Giveaways.

FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVENT – Dec. 6, 5-7pm, Susanna Wesley UMC, 7433 SW 29th St. Christmas crafts, cookies & cocoa, the Christmas story, build-your-own gingerbread house

UGLY SWEATER FUN-RAISER – Dec. 6, 5-8pm, Topeka Art Guild & Gallery, 5333 SW 22nd Pl, Suite 25 in Fairlawn Plaza. Karaoke, games, photo booth, door prizes, auction items, refreshments. Register: www.topekaartguild.org

MIRACLE ON KANSAS AVENUE PARADE – Dec. 6, 6-9pm, Downtown Topeka. Lighted parade on Kansas Avenue. www.topekapartnership.com/gtp-events

LAWRENCE OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS PARADE – Dec. 6, 11am, Downtown Lawrence. Authentic horse-drawn carriages parading down Massachusetts Street is the perfect way to kick off the holiday season. Cozy up with hot cocoa and blankets. Watch dozens of beautiful horses and wagons adorned in garland and bells

TOPEKA SPIRIT FAIR – Dec. 6-7, 10-5, The Woodshed Event Center. A two-day indoor symposium, with optional outdoor activities (weather permitting), dedicated to holistic wellness and personal development. This event will feature workshops led by recognized local practitioners, designed to engage participants in practices promoting mental, physical, and spiritual well-being. All are welcome. Vendors and Food Trucks. \$3 admission. www.geminivibeskansas.com

COOKIES WITH CLAUS – Dec. 6, 10-1, Big Gage Shelter House. Cookie decorating & hot cocoa, A festive holiday craft, Giraffe feeding, Storytime & music, A photo opportunity with Santa, A candy cane hunt

VISIT FROM SANTA + HOLIDAY KID'S JAM – Dec. 7, 12:30-5pm, Doughboyz Pizzeria, 1312 N. Kansa Ave. Santa 12:30-3, Kids Jam 1-5. Take your own photos or have a 4x6 photo printed on site.

GARDEN OF LIGHTS & CAROL SERVICE – Dec. 7, 5:30-7pm, Highland Park UMC, 2914 SW SE Michigan Ave. Kick off the holidays with music, laughter, and community in our prayer garden. Singing all the classics. Warm up with cookies & hot chocolate. Will move inside if the weather is bad.

GINGERBREAD BASH – Dec. 7, 6-7:30pm, Capital City

Church, 2000 NW Clay. Kick off the holiday season with an evening of fun and games. Families will build gingerbread nativities, hear the Christmas Story, sing songs and more. Registration closes Dec. 1. For questions, contact Miranda at kids@capcitytopeka.org.

HOLIDAY REMEMBRANCE SERVICE – Dec. 9, 6pm, Cremation Garden Pavilion at Memorial Park Cemetery, 3616 SW 6th Ave. This service includes a litany of remembrance and red ribbons to personalize with your loved one's name. Refreshments will be provided. To RSVP: <https://share.hsforms.com/1Y1-sKWIBQZq3s5nYOcMBGw-bunf0> Call 785-234-6605

C5Alive "POWER" LUNCHEON – Dec. 11, 11:30-1, at Westridge Mall Food Court. Featuring a Christmas devotional and fun games! Free admission. Meals available from menu if desired. Please RSVP to info@C5Alive.org so we know how many to expect. Open to the public - bring a friend!

SAVE THE DATE: C5 POWER Luncheon, Jan. 8, 11:30-1, at Celtic Fox.

CHRISTMAS LIGHT SHOW – Dec. 12-14, Topeka Bible Church, 1101 SW Mulvane St. Dazzling light displays synchronized to live performances of Christmas music as you enjoy the show from the comfort of your car. Music is played over your car's stereo. Shows at 6, 7, 8, and 9 p.m. Price: Free, 30 minutes long. Free glow sticks for everyone. 785-234-5545. <https://www.discovertbc.com/light-show>

NUTCRACKER BALLET – Dec. 12-14 at TPAC. Ballet Midwest's holiday staple. Tickets at TPAC box office, and Barbara's Conservatory of Dance. www.balletmidwest.net. Join Clara at the Christmas Eve party where she receives a gift that will soon take her on a fantastic journey. Feel the joy of a Christmas Eve party, marvel at the special effects and excitement as the Nutcracker battles the Mouse King, watch as the snow falls gently in the forest and marvel as the dancers entertain you in the Kingdom of Enchantment. You don't want to miss this Topeka holiday tradition!

RED STOCKING BREAKFAST - Dec. 13, 8-10:30am, The Pennant, 915 S. Kansas Ave. Get \$15 tickets in advance at www.kcsl.org or \$18 at the door. Children 10 & under eat free. Benefits KCSSL's child abuse prevention programs and services.

HOLIDAY FLING TOPEKA – Dec. 13-14, Stormont Vail Event Ctr. Featuring booths showcasing the latest in fashion, beauty, wellness, treats and more. Sip and shop with festive cocktails (or cocoa for the kids!), sample gourmet foods and wines, and check out the latest fashion trends live on stage—featuring clothing and accessories you can find right at our boutique exhibitor booths. Adults \$10, Senior \$8, kids 6-12 \$8

COOKIE WALK – Dec. 13, 9-1, Potwin Church, 400 SW Washburn Ave. \$8 per pound.

SWEET SHOPPE – Dec. 13, 9-1, Highland Park UMC, 2914 SW Michigan Ave. (south side). Delicious baked goods perfect for gifting or enjoying at home

"WHY THE NATIVITY?" - Dec. 13, 2pm, Oakland United Methodist Church, 801 N.E. Chester Ave. Film from David Jeremiah will be shown. Free.

SNEAKERS FOR SANTA 5K RUN/WALK – Dec. 13, 8am, Garfield Park. Hot chocolate, donuts, raffles, free pics with Santa & Chester Cheetah. Contact sole_reason@yahoo.com

PICTURES WITH SANTA & HEALTH FAIR – Dec. 13, 9-11am, SENT Topeka, 455 SE Golf Park Blvd. Healthcare services, shopping for gifts, wrapping and more. Free photos &

gifts for kids to choose, wrap. Food pantry available.

OLD PRAIRIE TOWN CHRISTMAS – Dec. 13, 10am-2pm, 199 NW Filmore. Old Prairie Town will be filled with activities: Letters to Santa, make an ornament to take home and hear a story in the school house, petting zoo, snowman snow machine, giant snow globe photo op. Families can enjoy shopping for nostalgic gifts or treats in the Mulvane General Store and Potwin Drug Store as well. Warm beverages available. \$5 Adm.

NEKAWF PAWS WITH CLAUS – Dec. 13, 1-4, **Rosewood Event Ctr, 3216 SW 29th St. A Festive Event for the Whole Family (Including Your Furry Friends)! The Northeast Kansas Animal Welfare Foundation invites you and your entire family to enjoy photos with Santa, local vendors with unique gifts, treats and pet-friendly products.**

SANTA'S FREE COSMIC WORKSHOP – Dec. 13, 2:30-5:30pm, Cosmos Court, 909 S. Kansas Ave. Fun, games and crafts with your kids! Write letters to Santa! Decorate an ornament! Play Santa Bingo! Color Santa Pictures! Santa stickers! Pictures with Santa from 3:30-5:30! **ALL FREE FOR THE KIDS!** Purchase a Cosmic Cookie and decorate it for **FREE** in the Cosmic Workshop! The whole family can also eat dinner for \$33! Large Pizza, 2 Side Salads and up to 4 small build your own sundaes **PLUS** you get 2 Cosmic Cookies to decorate in Santa's workshop! You can also buy a giant sugar cookie to decorate for \$5

WOODSHED HOLIDAY MARKET – Dec. 14, 10-3, The Woodshed Event Ctr. Food trucks, Market Bingo, free prizes

ING NETWORKING GROUP – Dec. 17, 11:30am at REMAX EK Real Estate, 2130 SW 37th St.. All welcome, free to attend, lunch provided by Shannon Engler.

THE NUTCRACKER BY KANSAS BALLET ACADEMY – Dec. 20-21, TPAC. Tickets available at the TPAC box office or Ticketmaster.com. For info: 785-234-2787

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE – Dec. 21, 4-5pm, Stull Community of Faith, 1596 E. 250th Rd, LeCompton. Blue Christmas is a worship event offered during the holiday season for those who are experiencing grief, loss, or pain, and who may feel estranged from the overwhelming joy of the Christmas season. Questions: pastor@stullcoff.com

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE - Dec. 24, 4pm, Countryside Christian Church, 3635 NE Highway K4. Join us for "The Greatest Story!"

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE - Dec. 24, 6pm, First Baptist Church, 3033 SW MacVicar

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE, 2 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 24, Oakland United Methodist Church, 801 N.E. Chester Ave.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE, 4 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 24, Kansas Avenue United Methodist Church, 1029 N. Kansas Ave.

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE - Dec. 24, 4:30 & 6:30pm, Christ Lutheran Church, 3509 SW Burlingame.

CHRISTMAS MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE - Dec. 25, 9:30am, Christ Lutheran Church, 3509 SW Burlingame.

LIVERPOOL LEGENDS – Dec. 27, 7PM, TPAC. Tickets available at the TPAC box office or Ticketmaster.com. For info: 785-234-2787

WATCH NIGHT SERVICE, 4 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 31, Kansas Avenue United Methodist Church, 1029 N. Kansas Ave

ONGOING EVENTS / MEETINGS

SK8AWAY LEARNERS SESSIONS - Every Saturday morning 11-1, Sk8away, 815 Fairlawn Family fun environment and the best deal in town, \$8 per person but an adult skates for free with paid child! sk8away.net; 785-272-0303; manager@sk8away.net

PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP meets 1st Thursday every month at 5:30 pm, Midland Hospice House, 200 SW Frazier. Jean Barton 785-478-9045.

HOPE AND HEALING ACADEMY harnesses the power of horses to transform the human spirit. They are expanding services to address the needs and experiences of first responders and members of the armed forces. For info, call 785-224-4232 or go to www.hopeandhealingacademy.com

SENIORS NUTRITIONAL LUNCH – Weekdays, except holidays, noon at Auburn Civic Center, 1020 N. Washington St. Minimal cost. Reservations/cancellations required 24 hours in advance by calling 295-3980. Each meal includes 1% milk & sugar-free items are included for diabetics. 785-215- 0064.

THE HEAT – FREE fitness classes for the community. Located at Florence Crittenton Services Center for Integrative Health, 5423 SW 7th St. www.flocritkansas.org

MEDICARE MONDAYS – First Mon. of ea. month, 1-3pm.

Topeka/Sh. Co. Public Library (Menninger Room 206), 1515 SW 10th. Senior health insurance counseling. For info: 580-4545 or nhonl@tscl.org

SENIOR FIT & FUN PROGRAM - Every Mon., Wed., and Fri at 1:30 at Pleasant Hills United Methodist Church, 4525 NW Button Rd., 785-246-1737.

SENIOR STRETCHING EXERCISES - Mon. – Wed. – Fri., 9:30-10:15am, Seaman Community Church, 2036 NW Taylor St. Enter on east side of the Fellowship Hall. No Charge. 785-354-8777 or 785-213-6016

TRAIL LIFE & AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS TROUPS - Every Mon. 6pm, Cornerstone Comm. Church, 7620 SW 21st. Faith-based scouting programs for kids age 5-18. cornerstone-topeka.com. 478-2929

TOPEKA LIONS CLUB – 1st Mondays at Noon - 1 pm at **The Capper Foundation, 3500 SW 10th Ave. Park on the North side. RSVP by Fri. for lunch/pay at the meeting. Visitors welcome.** TopekaLions.org/contact-us-to-RSVP.

OVERCOMER'S OUTREACH ANONYMOUS RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP – Mondays 6:30-7:30pm, at Be Filled Of South Topeka, 200 Airport Rd, Bldg. 818 Suite 1. Led by Pastor Bill Ritchey. 785-817-2802

TAI CHI FOR HEALTH – Mon. 10-11 at Lowman United Methodist Church and Thu. 9:30-10:30 at Topeka Zoo. No training needed, just watch & follow. Contact Madon Daily at 505-424-8989 or madondailey@gmail.com. To Join from Home via Zoom, contact Madon for the Zoom link.

PICKLEBALL – Mon. & Wed, 1–3pm, First Baptist Church, 3033 SW MacVicar Ave. Park on West Side, where the gym is. Contact Dave , davemathias@sbcglobal.net, or Betsy Thompson, betsyjthompson@gmail.com.

DUPLICATE BRIDGE - Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12:30PM at The Woman's Club of Topeka, 5221 SW West Dr. janescola@hotmail.com.

HEALING AFTER LOSS TO SUICIDE (HeALS) - Topeka support group meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays from 6:30-8, at 1st Congregational Church, 17th and Collins. For info: Topeka.heals@gmail.com or 785-380-9309.

CAREGIVERS GROUP - Caring Hearts of Hope meet 2nd & 4th Tuesdays from 5:30-6:30pm at Highland Heights Christian Church. Encouragement in God's word & prayer as well as conversation & sharing. Open to all who care for others with debilitating illnesses or injuries. For info, go to "Weekly Class List" at highlandheightscc.com or 785-379-5642.

GRANDPARENT/RELATIVE CAREGIVER

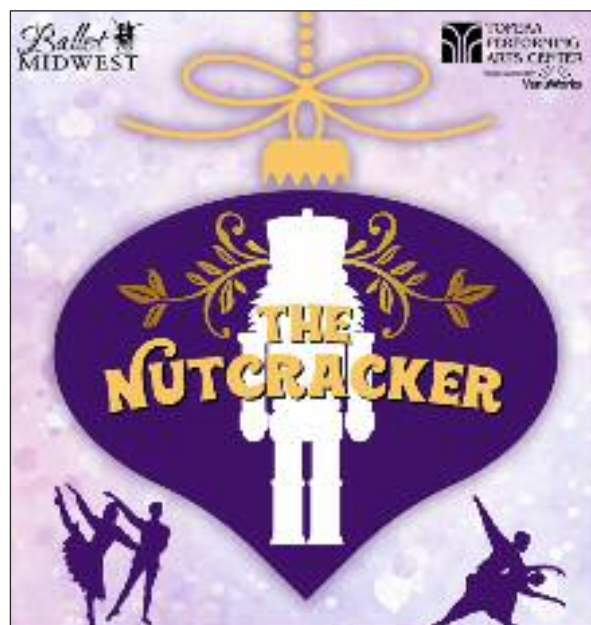
SUPPORT GROUP – 3rd Tue., 6:30-8pm, 2nd floor meeting room, St. Francis Hosp, 1700 SW 7th. For info: Sharla, 286-2329; Jennie (English/Spanish) 231-0763.

FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION – 4th Tue. through Nov., 9am, 1231 NW Eugene St. No ID or proof of income required, 1st come 1st served. 785-234-1111 RandelMinistries.com

VIP LUNCHEON FOR SENIORS – Every Wed., 10:45 bible study and meal at Noon, Topeka Church of the Brethren, 3201 NW Rochester Rd. FREE lunch with Christian fellowship, devotions & entertainment provided by Topeka North Outreach, Free will donation. 785-224-8803; vip@topekanorthoutreach.org

LIBRARY'S LEARN & PLAY BUS - Every Tuesday 9:30am-noon, Lakeview Nazarene Church, 2835 Croco. Then 1-3pm, Auburn Community Center.

OPERATION BACKPACK – 1st Thurs., 6pm, Indian Creek Elementary, 4303 NE Indian Creek Rd. Volunteers gather to assemble Weekend Snack Sacks for low-income students. Topeka North Outreach. 286-1370.



DECEMBER 12, 13 & 14 • Topeka Performing Arts Center

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Treating abdominal pain, digestive disorders, constipation & more 785-354-8518.
KMCPA.com • TopekaEndoCenter.com

MENTAL HEALTH - ADDICTION

MENTAL HEALTH - ADDICTION TREATMENT - Valeo Behavioral Health Care, 330 SW Oakley and 400 SW Oakley. 785-233-1730

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OFFICE SPACE available, great for therapists, health & wellness companies, small bus. owners. Desks/chairs, all utilities & Wi-fi/Ethernet included. \$100 VISA card to new leases if you mention this ad! College Park Office Suites, 2611 SW 17th St. Call/text 785-430-1657. info@cpofficesuites.com

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HEALTH INFORMATION

HEALTH INFORMATION - Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, 1515 SW 10th Ave. A variety of health and wellness information in various formats.

Call 785-580-4400
or visit www.tscpl.org

COMMUNITY CARE LINE

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