

# HEALTH CONNECTIONS

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR LIFE

**BACK-TO-SCHOOL**  
COVID-19 RULES

**DO YOU KNOW**  
YOUR HEART AGE?

**Fascinating Rhythm:**  
**RESET YOUR**  
**SLEEP SCHEDULE**

# Give Thanks – IT'S GOOD FOR YOU!

Did you know that being thankful is not only good for your mental health but your physical health as well? According to the American Heart Association's website,

practicing gratitude on a daily basis can lower your blood pressure and give your immune system a boost.

People who spend time being thankful are more likely to exercise and make healthy food choices and are less likely to smoke or misuse alcohol. A study from the journal *Scientific Reports* also found that grateful people are happier and less stressed. So spend a few minutes every day focusing on all you are grateful for. Your body will thank you!

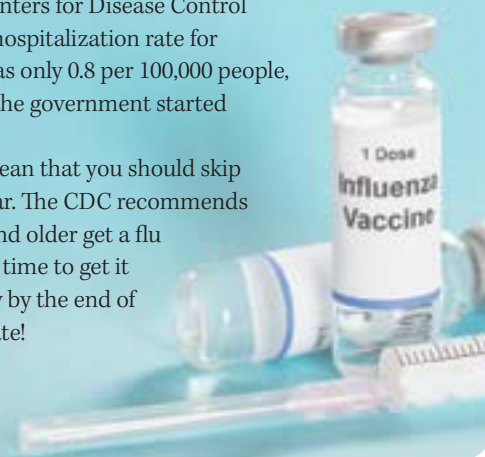


## Don't Forget Your FLU SHOT

While the 2020–2021 flu season set record lows for hospitalizations and deaths, it's still important to get your flu shot this fall.

Experts believe that COVID-19 safety measures, including wearing masks and social distancing, contributed to the historically mild flu season. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the hospitalization rate for the 2020–2021 flu season was only 0.8 per 100,000 people, the lowest rate by far since the government started collecting this data in 2005.

However, this does not mean that you should skip getting your flu shot this year. The CDC recommends that anyone 6 months old and older get a flu vaccine every year. The best time to get it is early in the season, ideally by the end of October, but it's never too late!



## 5 Changes That Are HERE TO STAY

Many aspects of our daily lives have changed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, from mask-wearing to social distancing and even the way we watch movies. Some of the things we had to change are now part of our new normal and likely to stay, even when the pandemic is in our rearview mirror. Here are five things unlikely to change anytime soon.



1. Companies offering more work-from-home options, either permanently or on a rotating schedule



2. Healthcare workers, including doctors, nurses, dentists and others who work in the facilities, wearing more personal protective equipment (PPE), including masks and face shields, on a regular basis



3. Increased travel precautions, including mask-wearing on airplanes and stricter cleaning and sanitation guidelines for airplanes and hotels



4. More generous sick leave from employers (and less stigma attached to taking a sick day when needed)



5. TeleHealth options for appointments with healthcare providers to reduce the need for in-person visits

Another thing that is here to stay? Quality ER services close to home at Mountain West Medical Center. If you or a loved one experiences chest pains, pain in the jaw or arm, sudden confusion, shortness of breath or other serious symptoms, call 9-1-1 or get to the ER as quickly as possible.

*We work diligently to have you initially seen by a medical professional within 30 minutes of your arrival in the ER.*



## IT'S AN EMERGENCY! OR IS IT?

When you or a family member is in crisis, it can be difficult to know whether to rush to the emergency room for care or wait for your provider's regular office hours. Always err on the side of caution, but consider these typical scenarios.

### Call 9-1-1 for:

- back or neck injury with loss of feeling

- choking

- electric shock

- head injury with fainting or confusion

- inability to breathe

- overdose with lack of consciousness

- severe burn

- severe chest pain

- signs of a stroke

### Head to the ER for:

- coughing or throwing up blood

- dizziness that doesn't go away

- fainting

- fractures

- heavy bleeding

- high fever that does not improve

- pain in the arm or jaw

- poisoning or overdose

- serious burn

- severe allergic reaction

- smoke inhalation

- trouble breathing

- uncontrolled vomiting or diarrhea

- unusual, sudden headache

Other minor injuries and illnesses may not need emergency care.

If you aren't sure if something is life-threatening, call a doctor, the hospital or 9-1-1.

*We work diligently to have you initially seen by a medical professional within 30 minutes of your arrival in the ER.*



# RECOGNIZING SEIZURES



Children and adults experience seizures when there is sudden, abnormal brain activity on one or both sides of the brain. Learn how to recognize a seizure and when to get help fast.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1 in 10 people may have a seizure during their lifetime. That means you also have a good chance of being around someone who is having a seizure, whether it's a family member or a stranger in the grocery store.

Most seizures pass quickly, from 30 seconds to two minutes, according to the National Library of Medicine. During the seizure, there are things you can do to help:

- Keep the person **SAFE**, moving them away from traffic, etc.
- **STAY** with the person until the seizure is over. Start timing it immediately, and check for a medical ID bracelet.
- Turn the person on their **SIDE** if they are not awake. Loosen any tight clothing around the neck.

### WHAT NOT TO DO

Never restrain a person having a seizure. Do not put anything in their mouth, like a mouth guard. Also, do not give them anything to drink until the seizure is fully over.

### WHEN TO CALL 9-1-1

If a seizure lasts five minutes or longer, or the person does not wake up between multiple seizures, you should call 9-1-1. Also seek medical help if the person is pregnant or sick, is having a seizure for the first time, and has difficulty walking or breathing after the seizure.

When in doubt, call 9-1-1. When it comes to emergencies like a stroke or heart attack, time is everything, and the ER team at Mountain West Medical Center is here for you. Our 30-Minute ER Pledge means we work diligently to have you initially seen by a medical professional within 30 minutes of your arrival in the ER. Find out more at [MountainWestMC.com](http://MountainWestMC.com).

# 5 SIGNS OF HEART HEALTH

How's your heart doing? **Here are five ways to know.**



## 1. BLOOD PRESSURE

Your blood pressure tells how hard your blood pushes against the artery walls during and between each heartbeat. Healthy blood pressure is less than 120/80 mm Hg.



## 2. CHOLESTEROL LEVELS

Total cholesterol should be no higher than 200 mg/dL. Your LDL (bad) cholesterol should be lower than 100mg/dL, and HDL (good) should be 40mg/dL or higher for men and 50mg/dL or higher for women. Additionally, the difference between your total and HDL cholesterol should be less than 130mg/dL, and your triglycerides should be below 150mg/dL.



## 3. HEALTHY BREATHING

Your breathing pattern may indicate a heart issue. When all is well with your heart, you should be taking 12–18 breaths per minute.



## 4. QUICK RECOVERY RATE

Your heart recovery rate (HRR) shows how quickly your heart recovers after activity. To find yours, take your pulse at the end of your workout and again one minute later. Subtract the second number from the first. Researchers are still determining a target HRR, but it is generally agreed upon that a higher HRR is better.



## 5. TARGET HEART RATE

Subtract your age from 220 and then multiply this by .5 and .85. These two numbers provide the bottom and top ends of your target heart rate. If you can exercise at the top of your target heart rate, your heart is in good shape. If not, slowly increase your exercise tolerance until you can.



## UNIVERSITY OF UTAH SPECIALTY CLINIC - CARDIOLOGY



Tara  
Jones, M.D.



Brigham  
Smith, M.D.



Sandee  
Spackman, APRN

Sometimes our hearts need some extra help by a specialist trained in cardiac conditions. Having a specialist close to home is an added bonus. As part of Mountain West Medical Center's affiliation strategy with The University of Utah, residents of Tooele County can now have access to University-affiliated, subspecialty-trained cardiologists.

**To schedule an appointment with one of our cardiologists, call (435) 843-2725 or go to [MountainWestAnytime.com](https://www.MountainWestAnytime.com) for convenient online scheduling.**

*Drs. Jones and Smith are members of the medical staff at Mountain West Medical Center. Sandee Spackman, nurse practitioner and member of the allied health staff at Mountain West Medical Center, treats patients of all ages.*

Start talking with your primary care provider (PCP) about your heart-health risks. If you don't have a PCP, you can find one at [MountainWestMedicalGroup.com](https://www.MountainWestMedicalGroup.com).



# Rhythm of the Night

Everybody has a circadian rhythm — the body's natural process that regulates sleep. Staying in sync with your internal clock improves your overall health.



## YOUR CIRCADIAN RHYTHM:

- Is a cluster of neurons located at the base of the brain
- Is guided by light
- Plays a role, along with sleep, in appetite, digestion, mood and hormone production
- Resets every 24 hours



## MORNING

Daylight causes the body to produce cortisol, a hormone that helps you feel alert and awake.

## NIGHT

Fading natural light signals the body to produce melatonin, a hormone that makes you feel relaxed and sleepy.



## RESET YOUR CIRCADIAN RHYTHM

You may need to adjust your circadian rhythm if you've started a new job, are traveling or simply need a healthier sleep routine. Here's how:

- Ask your physician about artificial light therapy, especially if you work the graveyard shift.
- Don't exercise one to two hours before bed.
- Take a melatonin supplement.
- Wake up and go to bed at the same time every day.



## SOCIAL JET LAG

If your sleep patterns change based on your activities — for example, getting up early during the week and sleeping in on the weekend — you may experience something called social jet lag. Such dramatic shifts can make you feel tired, as if you just got back from a long trip, and may negatively affect your physical and mental health. Social jet lag is associated with poor mood, daytime sleepiness and fatigue.

Staying consistent with your sleep schedule is key to avoiding social jet lag. Ideally, your work schedule and even vacations should align with your circadian rhythm.

To get back on track, increase your light exposure in the morning and decrease your light exposure at night to help reset your circadian rhythm.



If you have untreated sleep problems, it may be time to speak with your primary care provider about a referral to a sleep specialist. If you need a PCP, visit [MountainWestAnytime.com](https://www.MountainWestAnytime.com) to schedule online.

# ALL ABOUT ASTHMA

A guide to help you breathe a little easier.



Asthma is a chronic condition that causes airways to be swollen and irritated. And while there's currently no cure, there are ways to manage it while preventing flare-ups and improving your quality of life.

## WHO GETS ASTHMA?

More than 25 million Americans have asthma, according to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, and most people develop asthma during their childhood. Adult-onset asthma can occur as well, and it's more common in women than men. In either case, asthma is a chronic condition. It requires day-to-day maintenance to prevent asthma attacks.

Allergies are not the same as asthma, but they often go hand-in-hand. It's not uncommon for allergens — dander, pollen or mold — to cause an asthma attack. People with allergies are more at risk of having asthma.

Other risk factors for asthma include:

- environment or occupational exposures
- family history
- obesity

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING AN ASTHMA ATTACK?

Asthma affects the airways, which help carry air into the lungs. For some, breathing in an allergen, such as dust, causes their lungs to react strongly. The airways swell up in response to these triggers, making it difficult to breathe. This causes the common symptoms in asthma: coughing, wheezing, chest tightness and shortness of breath.

Other common triggers for asthma include:

- air pollution
- changes in weather
- chemical irritants
- exercise
- mold
- pollen
- smoke
- stress

## WHAT IF I HAVE BREATHING ISSUES?

If you're concerned about your lung health, discuss your symptoms with your primary care provider (PCP). Take note of when your symptoms occur and what makes them worse.

If your PCP determines you have asthma, you can work together to create an asthma action plan. This will include long-term medication to help alleviate symptoms, as well as a rescue medication that can be taken during an asthma attack.

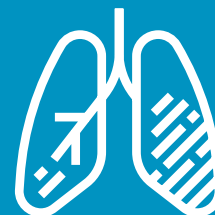
## LUNG CANCER SCREENING

In early 2021, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force updated their guidelines for lung cancer screenings. Screenings are now recommended if patients:

- are between ages 50 and 80
- currently smoke or quit within the last 15 years
- have a 20 pack-year history of smoking

The ages of recommendation have been lowered, as well as the pack-year history. One pack-year is smoking the equivalent of one pack of cigarettes per day for a year. Smoking 1/2 pack per day for 40 years or three packs for roughly seven would also count as a 20 pack-year history.

Yearly low-dose CT scans are the only recommended way to screen for lung cancer. Ask your PCP if you would benefit from annual lung cancer screenings.



Once you've located and established a relationship with a primary care provider, you can relax and breathe easier. You can conveniently schedule online at [MountainWestAnytime.com](https://MountainWestAnytime.com).



# Honey,

# DON'T!

Your partner may have a long list of jobs to complete around your home. Before you get started on this season's honey-do list, keep these safety tips in mind.

Fall's crisp, cool weather makes it a perfect time to do outdoor chores, getting the house ready for winter or decorated for the holidays. But if you get careless with your safety, you could miss the big game or have to party in a hospital room.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, over 580,000 injuries were treated as a result of ladder mishaps in 2018. In 2019, over 60,000 people landed in a doctor's office after a holiday decoration-related injury, including tree-trimming accidents or festive falls hanging lights.

## LADDER SAFETY

- Don't use a ladder after you've consumed alcohol.
- Make sure the ladder is on stable ground and is 1 foot away from the wall for every 4 feet that the ladder rises.
- Never step above the third rung from the top on a regular ladder and two rungs down on a stepladder.
- Use the correct ladder height for the chore you need, and make sure it can bear your weight.
- Wear proper footwear. Do not wear sandals or flip-flops, and make sure your shoelaces are tightly tied.

## GENERAL SAFETY

- Heart condition? Check with your physician before shoveling snow or using a snowblower.
- If something is too heavy for you to lift on your own, ask a neighbor or family member for help.
- Lost your footing? Fall strategically on your bottom or your side, if you can, to minimize potential injuries.
- Stretch and warm up your muscles before attempting outdoor chores like raking or shoveling snow.
- Wear weather-appropriate clothing. Add safety gear, like gloves and goggles, when needed.
- When clearing brush or lifting bags of leaves, make sure to bend at your knees and lift with your legs to protect your back.

If your seasonal chores result in joint pain or injuries, make an appointment with one of our orthopedic team members either online at [MountainWestAnytime.com](https://MountainWestAnytime.com) or call (435) 843-3859.

## HOW MUCH BACK PAIN IS TOO MUCH?

Most of us will experience back pain at some point in our lives, especially as we age. But when should you see a doctor about it?

In general, most back pain will get better on its own after a few days. To give your back a chance:

- Avoid heavy lifting and twisting your back for six weeks.
- Ice the area to reduce inflammation the first day or so, then follow with heat.
- Sleep on your side with a pillow between your knees for support.
- Take over-the-counter pain relievers like acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

If your pain hasn't gone away after several weeks, it's time to see an orthopedic specialist. You should also make an appointment if:

- Your back pain is affecting your daily activities.
- Your pain is getting progressively worse.
- You're struggling to cope with the pain.



# School Daze

“Back to school” might look a little different this year.

As you help your kids prepare to head back to the classroom, talk to them about the changes they’ll see. While each state and school system will decide the rules to follow this fall, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stand by 2020–2021 guidelines for in-person learning.

## CLASSROOMS

In elementary school classrooms, students should sit at least three feet apart. In middle and high schools, students should also stay at least 3 feet apart in the classroom, except in high traffic areas, where they should be 6 feet apart. Teachers and other adults should stay 6 feet apart from each other and students at all times. In addition, desks and other furniture should be spaced apart as much as possible, but physical barriers between students are not necessary.



## COMMON AREAS

In school lobbies, auditoriums and lunchrooms (especially while eating), students and adults should stay 6 feet apart.



## ACTIVITIES

Singing, playing musical instruments, playing sports or doing other exercise-related activities should take place outside or, if indoors, in a large, well-ventilated space whenever possible.

## MASKS

Everyone should wear a mask to limit the spread of COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status. For students ages 12 and up, teachers and school staff who have their vaccinations up to date, wearing a mask might be required. Follow the rules and play it safe if you have symptoms.



## HANDWASHING

Teachers should reinforce to students the importance of washing their hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Hand sanitizer should also be available for older students.



Is your child’s annual wellness visit overdue? Schedule an appointment with your child’s pediatrician or primary care provider and ensure he or she is up to date on the latest vaccinations. Visit [MountainWestAnytime.com](https://www.mountainwestanytime.com) today to search for a provider and schedule online.



Gordon Duval, D.O.



Steven Rich, D.O.

## SUPER CARE FOR YOUR SUPER KID

Every kid deserves to soar. Finding quality, pediatric healthcare for your child is a top priority for every parent, and it’s better if the doctor is close to home.

We can treat your children whether they have sniffles, need immunizations or have more serious conditions. We know that going to the doctor may sometimes be scary to a child, so we’ll put your child at ease while communicating with you every step of the way.

The pediatricians at Mountain West Medical Group are ready to partner with you in your child’s care.

**To schedule an appointment with Dr. Duval or Dr. Rich, call (435) 882-9035.**

*Drs. Duval and Rich are members of the medical staff at Mountain West Medical Center.*



# TIME FOR A Mammogram?

Delaying tests was understandable as the pandemic unfolded, but now it's time to get recommended screenings like mammograms back on the calendar.

Following the recommended mammogram schedule gives physicians the chance to detect breast cancer early — even before a lump can be felt — in its most treatable stages. Women should begin annual breast cancer screenings at age 45, according to the American Cancer Society, but you can talk with your primary care provider about what's right for you.

## GIRLS SUPPORT GIRLS

Breast cancer screenings can be something to look forward to if you find a way to make them fun. One idea is to ask a friend to schedule her screening the same day as you. Here are some ways to make it a girls' day.

- **Schedule morning appointments.** Try to get back-to-back appointments early in the day for you and your breast friend.
- **Celebrate with brunch.** After your screenings, toast to your health, but choose a nonalcoholic drink; alcohol can increase breast cancer risk. If you miss your mimosas, limit yourself to one alcoholic drink per day.
- **Continue with shopping.** Enjoy some retail therapy and pick out next year's screening-approved outfit. Since you'll only need to undress from the waist up, look for shirts or sweaters you can easily slip on and off, paired with a skirt or pants.



- **Go for a stroll.** Physical activity helps lower your risk, so take a walk with your friend before you say adieu.
- **Don't sit by the phone.** If you don't hear back from your provider within 10 days after the mammogram, call and request your results. You should also receive a written summary of your mammogram results within a few weeks.

If you have put off your mammogram because of the pandemic, get back on schedule as soon as possible. Call (435) 843-3856 to schedule your next mammogram today!

If you're scheduled for or recently received a vaccine dose (first or second), wait four to six weeks before you have a mammogram. The vaccine may cause the lymph nodes in your arms to swell, which may show up on your mammogram. Follow your doctor's advice to avoid callbacks.

## 3 TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MAMMOGRAM

These three things can help make your mammograms more comfortable and your results more accurate.

1. **Save the date.** Avoid scheduling your mammograms during the week before your period. Your breasts may be sore or swollen, and this can make mammograms more uncomfortable. Waiting until any swelling is gone can also help your doctor get better images.
2. **Skip deodorant for the day.** Some antiperspirants or deodorants have ingredients that can show up on imaging tests.
3. **Talk to your technologist.** Before receiving your mammogram, tell your technologist if you've noticed any changes in your breasts since your last mammogram. Let her know if you're breastfeeding or think you may be pregnant, as well.

# HOLISTIC HEALTH:

## The Mind-Body Connection



Your mental and emotional wellness can strongly influence your physical health.

When you are living with a mental health condition, such as anxiety or depression, trying to ignore the problem or hide it from others is not unusual. However, letting these conditions go unchecked can have a negative impact on your physical health.

Anxiety and depression can increase the likelihood that you will develop physical health complications, including heart disease, stroke and Type 2 diabetes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Similarly, when you are facing serious medical conditions, such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease, it is not uncommon to develop anxiety and depression about the state of your physical health and life in general, according to the National Institute of Mental Health.

Each situation underscores the connection between the mind and the body and the importance of taking care of your health on every level.



### WHY STRESS MANAGEMENT MATTERS

Life is filled with situations you cannot control, which can cause you to feel overwhelmed and nervous. While it is completely normal to experience brief periods of stress, chronic stress can directly impact every system in your body, according to the American Psychological Association.

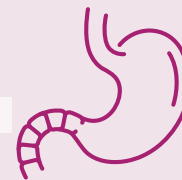


#### CARDIOVASCULAR —

Sudden bursts of short-term stress can cause your heart rate and blood pressure to increase temporarily. Chronically high blood pressure can increase your risk for other heart problems, including heart attack and stroke.



**ENDOCRINE** — In response to stress, your body may produce steroid hormones known as glucocorticoids, which contain cortisol. Cortisol acts as fuel to drive your body through the stressful event. It can also reduce inflammation in the body and help regulate your immune system. However, chronic stress can disrupt this process, resulting in mental and physical health conditions, including chronic fatigue, depression, diabetes and obesity.



**GASTROINTESTINAL** — Your gastrointestinal (GI) tract is populated by nerve cells that are in direct communication with your brain. When you are nervous, these neurons can give you the butterfly-in-the-stomach sensation. Emotional distress may also cause bloating and pain in the GI tract. Millions of bacteria in your GI tract must be in balance to keep your mind and body healthy. Stress can result in an imbalance in this relationship, which can have negative consequences on your overall health.



## HEALING PRACTICES

Behavioral strategies can help you manage stress effectively and minimize the impact stress can have on your physical health. To manage stress, practice the following healthy habits:

**Exercise regularly.** If stress is leaving you feeling fatigued and unable to focus, working out on a regular basis can help improve your ability to concentrate.

**Dedicate yourself to a hobby you enjoy.** Regularly indulging in an activity that you find challenging, interesting and relaxing can help you focus on mindfulness and the power of the present moment. Painting, photography and yoga are great options to explore.

**Get plenty of sleep.** When you are well-rested, you are better equipped to handle challenging situations, be they emotional or physical.

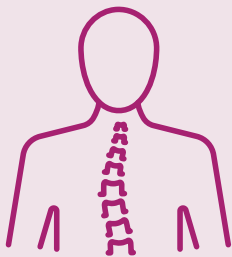
**Practice gratitude.** While research is still ongoing, a 2017 study revealed that grateful individuals have lower levels of hemoglobin A1c, a protein in the blood associated with certain cancers, chronic kidney disease, diabetes and heart failure, according to The Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkeley. To enhance your gratefulness, keep a gratitude journal, and write in it daily.

**Schedule sessions with a mental health provider if necessary.** Sometimes, challenges are too much to handle on your own. Seeking help from a trained professional can help you develop coping mechanisms that are causing stress to compromise your mental and physical fitness.

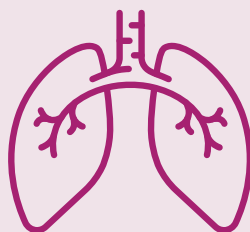
**Stay close to family and friends.** Spend time with people who love and value you.

Family Medicine Physician Al Parker, M.D., can help you manage your emotional and physical health. Schedule an appointment with him online at [MountainWestAnytime.com](http://MountainWestAnytime.com) or call (435) 843-2634.

*Dr. Parker is a member of the medical staff at Mountain West Medical Center.*



**MUSCULOSKELETAL** — When you are confronted with stress, your body goes into fight-or-flight response. As a result of this, your muscles tense up to offer you a sense of protection against discomfort. If the muscles are tense for long periods of time, you may begin to experience other types of stress-related disorders, such as low back pain and migraine headaches.



**RESPIRATORY** — Strong emotions and stress can cause the air passageway from the nose to the lungs to temporarily get smaller. As a result, it may be difficult for you to take long and complete breaths. If you already have a respiratory disease, such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD), acute stress can make your symptoms worse, resulting in hyperventilation and panic attacks in those prone to having them.



## PANIC ATTACK OR A HEART ATTACK?

Heart attacks and panic attacks share many of the same symptoms. However, a heart attack can be fatal if not treated immediately. That is why recognizing the difference between these two events is critical.

People with panic disorder have a history of panic attacks and live in fear of having another. Panic attacks usually begin with an overpowering sense of anxiety followed by physical symptoms, including:

- pain that eases or worsens when you change positions
- shortness of breath
- stabbing pain that is not long-lasting

Heart attacks tend to occur after physical overexertion or strain but not always. Physical symptoms that you may notice include:

- constant aching in the chest
- pain that extends to the arms, back, jaw and shoulders
- shortness of breath
- worsening chest pain

If you experience chest pain or other symptoms associated with a heart attack, seek medical care immediately by calling 9-1-1.

*We work diligently to have you initially seen by a medical professional within 30 minutes of your arrival in the ER.*



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ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al (435) 843-3600 (TTY: (800) 346-4128).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。  
請致電 (435) 843-3600 (TTY: (800) 346-4128)。

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This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your doctor before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.

# STAND STRONG

The knees are your body's strongest joints, but the strain they endure makes them prone to pain. Joint replacement surgery can restore knee function, relieve chronic joint pain and allow you to be more active.

Don't let chronic knee pain limit your life. To schedule an appointment with Orthopedic Surgeon Jake Daynes, D.O., who can determine whether knee replacement is right for you, call (435) 843-3859.

*Patient results may vary. Consult your doctor about the benefits and risks of any surgical procedure or treatment. Dr. Daynes is a member of the medical staff at Mountain West Medical Center.*

