OKAY. So very few of us make actual hay these days, but you get the picture.

With a few more hours between dawn and dusk, we’re eager to do lots of things we couldn’t do a few cold, dark weeks ago.

After the whopper of a winter we just had in the Pacific Northwest, it’s no surprise that the sun has long been an object of worship. Something about sunshine just makes things better. Just ask your cat or dog. Chances are they’ve already co-opted the best sunny spots in your house, right?

Natural light provides lots of health benefits—even if it’s accompanied by spring showers (or "liquid sunshine," as we locals call it).

Here’s what that bright orange ball in the sky can do for you—in proper doses:

- Strengthen your bones by boosting vitamin D levels.
- Brighten your mood, which can renew your energy.
- Make gardens grow and put fresh, wholesome foods on your plate.
- Inspire you to get moving. Who can resist the tug of shirt-sleeve weather?

Did you know sunshine can also come in story form? To shine light on things that make people feel good, PeaceHealth invites you to share stories of kindness, generosity, and grace—simple everyday acts that make a positive impact or give someone hope.

Sunrise. Make hay. Sunset.

Keep your face always toward the sunshine—and shadows will fall behind you.

—American proverb

Read a few “rays of light” at peacehealth.org/everydymoments. Then add your own.
BRAIN FOG. Mood changes. Night sweats. Insomnia. Hot flashes. Many—or all—of these are familiar symptoms for women who have been through menopause—the biggest change in a woman’s life after adolescence.

Menopause is that stage in life when a woman stops having her monthly period. It is a normal part of aging to mark the end of her reproductive years. It typically happens in a woman’s late 40s to early 50s. If a woman’s ovaries are surgically removed, she will experience sudden menopause.

Women are considered to be officially in menopause after 12 consecutive months of missed periods.

“Menopause is a transition that all women will go through,” says Robert Cruz, MD. “Unfortunately for some, symptoms can greatly affect their lives and last for many years. Modern medicine has been able to bring relief of varying degrees to many women. Frank discussions with your doctor can help you with your transition.”

Keep your cool
Here are a few things that can make hot flashes worse:

- Stress
- Caffeine
- Alcohol (especially wine)
- Spicy foods
- Sugar

Pay attention to what you’re eating around the same time as you have episodes to see if there’s a pattern.

Treatments
If your symptoms are persistent enough to disrupt your life, ask your doctor for help. Three common treatments are:

- Over-the-counter natural remedies
- Antidepressants
- Hormone replacement therapy (HRT)

No matter which method you try, look at things in six-month blocks. Are your symptoms better? Are you able to handle them better? If your symptoms interfere with your life, talk with your doctor. Regular checkups are key to managing this change so you can live a happy, healthy life.
Is it a cold? An allergy? Or sinusitis?

**Have you ever** had a cold you felt would never go away? You may have been experiencing more than just a cold. There is a good chance you have sinusitis, a condition where infection or inflammation affects the sinuses.

This common condition occurs when viruses or bacteria infect the sinuses. Your body's reaction to the infection is to cause the sinus lining to swell, which keeps the mucus from draining properly. Bacterial or viral infections, allergies, asthma, and other health problems can cause sinusitis.

Symptoms include:
- Up to four weeks of cloudy or colored drainage from the nose
- Congested nose
- Pain or pressure in the face, in the head, or around the eyes
- Pain in upper teeth
- Bad breath

**Types of sinusitis**
The length of the symptoms determines the type of sinusitis you have.

**Acute sinusitis.** The symptoms for this type last less than four weeks, but if they occur frequently throughout the year, you may have recurrent acute sinusitis. This is usually caused by viruses or bacteria.

**Chronic sinusitis.** When you have frequent sinusitis or the infection lasts three months or more, it could be chronic sinusitis. Symptoms of chronic sinusitis may be less severe than those of acute; however, untreated chronic sinusitis can cause damage to the sinuses and cheekbones that sometimes requires surgery to repair.

**Treatments**
The most important step is to talk to your doctor. Here are some treatments that may be used:
- Decongestants or nasal sprays to reduce swelling
- Fluids and rest
- Nasal saline rinse
- Antibiotics if it is a bacterial infection

A referral to an ear, nose and throat (ENT) specialist may be conducted if you have frequent infections. The ENT specialist can evaluate you further to determine other treatment options or if surgery is needed.

**New ENT team joins PeaceHealth**
The ENT Clinic of the Northwest is now PeaceHealth Medical Group Ear, Nose, & Throat. The team is available at three great locations for you:

- **Fisher’s Landing**
  1405 SE 164th Ave., Suite 102
  Vancouver, WA
  360-256-4425

- **Salmon Creek**
  14411 NE 20th Ave., Suite 101
  Vancouver, WA
  360-256-4425

- **Longview**
  1801 First Ave., Suite 3A
  Longview, WA
  360-636-4469

Learn more at peacehealth.org/ent.
NO WOMAN CAN give her bones too much TLC. “And it’s never too soon—or too late—to give your bones the attention they deserve,” says James Nakashima, MD.

That’s because caring for your bones throughout your life can help protect you from osteoporosis. That’s a disease of progressive bone loss and fragile bones, which means your bones can get thinner and more prone to breaking as you get older. It puts you at high risk for a break or fracture. Many of these are painful fractures of the hip, spine and wrist caused by falls.

“But even doing a simple household chore can cause a fracture in your spine if your bones have been weakened by osteoporosis,” says Dr. Nakashima.

Your changing bones

Bone is living tissue. And it changes constantly, as old bone breaks down and new bone takes its place. When you’re young, your body makes new bone faster than it breaks down old bone—and your bone mass increases. But bone mass peaks around age 30. As time goes by, the body loses more bone than it adds. Your risk of osteoporosis depends on how much bone mass you have by age 30 and how rapidly you lose it later.

The good news: You can take steps to build your bone mass early in life—and slow bone loss later. Here’s how.

Eat a well-balanced diet rich in calcium and vitamin D. Good sources of calcium include:

■ Low-fat dairy products
■ Dark green, leafy veggies
■ Calcium-fortified foods and drinks

Supplements may help you get enough calcium every day, especially if you have a milk allergy or are lactose intolerant.

If you’re age 19 to 50, aim for 1,000 milligrams of calcium daily, and after age 50, aim for 1,200 milligrams each day.

Food sources of vitamin D include:

■ Egg yolks
■ Fatty fish, such as salmon, tuna, and mackerel
■ Fortified milk and other fortified foods, like breakfast cereal

But many women, especially older women, may need to take vitamin D supplements to get the recommended daily intake of 600 to 800 international units daily.

Move more for bone health. Like muscles, bones need exercise to stay strong. Weight-bearing exercises—such as walking, jogging, and climbing stairs—are especially beneficial. So are resistance exercises, like weight lifting.

Don’t light up, and go easy on alcohol. Smoking raises the risk of osteoporosis, as does drinking too much.

One last—and crucial—tip: Ask your doctor if you should have a bone density test. “It can detect osteoporosis before a fracture happens,” says Dr. Nakashima. “And it can help your doctor determine if you’re a candidate for medicine that can help prevent or treat osteoporosis.”

Women: Be kind to your bones

Bone health after menopause

Estrogen protects against bone loss. And after menopause—when the ovaries produce less estrogen—women lose bone rapidly, increasing their risk of osteoporosis.

What’s more, lower estrogen levels after menopause may also explain why more women than men develop osteoarthritis, the most common chronic condition of the joints, especially after age 50.

“But just as you can reduce your risk of osteoporosis, you can also reduce your risk of osteoarthritis,” says Colleen Fox, MD.

One key is to stay at a healthy weight. Extra pounds put extra pressure on weight-bearing joints, such as your knees. But unless you are very overweight, losing even a few pounds can reduce joint stress and inflammation and cut your risk of osteoarthritis in half.

Women: Be kind to your bones

Colleen Fox, MD
OB/GYN
PeaceHealth Medical Group
505 NE 87th Ave., Suite 160
Vancouver, WA
360-514-1060

James Nakashima, MD
Rheumatology
PeaceHealth Medical Group–Musculoskeletal Medicine
1615 Delaware St.
Longview, WA
360-414-2700

Find more tips for improving your bone health at peacehealth.org/healthy-you.
**NUTRITION**

**Q** How can I help my kids make healthier food choices?

**A** Whether you’re a child or an adult, when it comes to choosing healthier foods, the best time to start is right now, when you are thinking of it.

Have kids make a list of all the foods they like and categorize them into anytime foods, sometime foods, and once-in-a-long-while special party foods. Then have them limit their favorite treats foods to only five times a week, but pick when they want them. Help them think about their daily foods and only treat themselves with the least healthy choices on a holiday or on their next birthday.

When you and your child do treat yourselves, keep it to just one serving. Get rid of the rest of the package or food, so you are not tempted to indulge again.

For everyday beverages, stop all sugary drinks. Water is the best. No need to spend extra calories on or expose your teeth to all that sugar. Switch to calorie-free and sugar-free drinks. Encourage your kids to do this and to drink milk a couple times a day—and you’ll see a move toward success in their health.

By making small changes a few at a time and building on that success, you’ll empower your children to make healthy choices without feeling deprived. They will have the power in their hands to live a healthy life.

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**PREGNANCY**

**Q** My baby is due soon, and I feel like I’m on an emotional roller coaster. What’s wrong?

**A** Don’t worry—that’s normal. Your months of waiting to meet your baby are nearly over. And whether you’re a first-time mom or an experienced parent, you know there are challenges ahead.

**Preparing for the big day**

One way to ease anxiety about childbirth is to learn more about it. Our childbirth education classes can teach you the basics of labor and delivery as well as introduce you to other parents-to-be.

We also invite expectant parents to tour our birthing facilities. During your tour, feel free to ask the staff any questions you have.

Ask your doctor how you’ll know when it’s time to go to the hospital. Signs of labor can vary, but these are some signs that it has begun:

- Strong, regular contractions
- Back pain
- An increase in vaginal discharge
- A trickling or gush of fluid (your water breaking)

Visit peacehealth.org/baby to learn more or to register for a class.

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**JOINT REPLACEMENT**

**Q** My knee hurts constantly, but I feel like I am too young for joint replacement. Does age matter?

**A** Experts used to advise that you put off considering a total joint replacement until you are well into your golden years. This was due to the idea that the replaced joint could wear out before you do. Today, this way of thinking is no longer the norm.

You are a candidate for total joint replacement if you have joint pain day and night, if it interferes with daily activities, if it causes a decreased tolerance for walking, and if the medications used to manage it are no longer effective. Quality of life is what matters.

**Recovery and success**

Besides the actual surgery, recovery time is another consideration. The rate of recovery depends on the joint. With hip replacement, more than 90 percent of patients report improvement, and it has less recovery time than other joint replacements. With knee replacement, about 85 to 90 percent of patients report success.

Shoulders and ankles can also be considered for total joint replacement. Joint replacement, at the appropriate time, gets people back to work and improves their quality of life.

Learn more about joint replacement and informational classes at peacehealth.org/ortho.

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**Webinar on Brain Health**

**When:** Thursday, May 25, noon to 1 p.m.

**Info:** Presented by Louise Jenkins, manager of the Stroke and Chest Pain Program at PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center. Sign up at peacehealth.org/webinars.

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**To recognize and react appropriately to a stroke, BE FAST!**

**A** ARM: One arm is weak and/or numb

**S** SPEECH: Speaking is slurred or words are difficult to comprehend

**T** TIME: If any of these symptoms are present, it is time to call 911!

- Note the time so that you can tell medical personnel when the symptoms started.
- BE FAST, spot a stroke, and save a life.

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**Daryl Linnell, MD**

**Pediatrics**

PeaceHealth Medical Group

1615 Delaware St.

Longview, WA

**360-414-8324**

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**Saeyeal Lee, MD**

**Obstetrics/Gynecology**

PeaceHealth Medical Group

1660 Delaware St.

Longview, WA

**360-414-2800**

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**Michael S. Fleischman, DO**

**Orthopedics**

The Vancouver Clinic

2525 NE 139th St., Suite 140

Vancouver, WA

**360-882-2778**
### WELLNESS

**For more information or to register, call 360-636-4943 unless otherwise noted.**

**Diabetes Education Classes**
- When: Mondays, May 8, 15, 22, and 29, 1 to 3 p.m.; Mondays, June 5, 12, 19, and 26, 5 to 7 p.m.
- Where: ◆
- Info: Four-week diabetes education series. A physician referral is required.

**Prediabetes**
- When: Friday, May 19, 10 a.m. to noon
- Where: ◆
- Info: This group class will cover what you need to know about prediabetes to successfully manage your condition.

**Heart Health: Nutrition**
- When: Wednesdays, April 26, May 24, June 28, 10 a.m. to noon
- Where: ◆
- Info: Learn about lifestyle changes that can help prevent and treat heart disease.

**HEALTHY YOU**

**WHERE IS THIS CLASS?**

Classes and events are at the following locations unless otherwise noted.
- ◆ = PeaceHealth St. John Medical Center, 1615 Delaware St.
- ♦ = PeaceHealth Medical Group—Internal Medicine, 1615 Delaware St.
- ● = Women’s Health Pavilion, 1660 Delaware St. (corner of Delaware and 17th Avenue across from PeaceHealth St. John)

**WEIGHT MANAGEMENT**

**To register or for more information, visit peacehealth.org/st-john/events or call 360-636-4943.**

**One-to-One Individual Weight Loss Program**
- Where: ♦
- Info: $250. Physician referral not required.

**Weight Loss**
- When: Wednesdays—May 17, 10 a.m. to noon; or June 21, 5 to 7 p.m.
- Where: ◆
- Info: Learn ways to help you start on your path to a healthy weight.

**BIRTH AND PARENTING**

**Registration required for all classes:**
- peacehealth.org/baby or 360-501-3708

**Heartsaver Pediatric First Aid/CPR**
- When: Thursday, July 6, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Where: ◆
- Info: Class for anyone who spends time with infants and children. $70.

**Preparing for Delivery**
- When: Tuesday evening series: begins first Tuesday of each month, 6 to 8:30 p.m.
- Saturday class (one-day class):
  - May 20, June 10, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Where: ◆
- Info: $74 per couple; state medical card accepted. Taught by certified childbirth educators. Providing useful information on labor, relaxation techniques, and medication options.

**SUPPORT GROUPS**

**Cancer Support Group**
- When: First Thursday of each month, 2:30 to 4 p.m.
- Where: Cancer Center Resource Room
- Info: Providing education and support through the cancer journey for patients, friends, and family. Call 360-414-7968 for more information.

**Diabetes/Prediabetes**
- When: Bimonthly, second Monday of the month, May 8, July 10, 5 to 6 p.m.
- Where: ◆
- Info: Learn how to live a vibrant life with diabetes. No registration required. Call 360-636-4943 for more information.

**Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA)**
- When: Tuesdays, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
- Where: ■ second floor, conference room E

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### Volunteer

Looking for a rewarding way to use your time to help others? Consider being a PeaceHealth volunteer or Friend of St. John. Adult and teen positions are available. Call 360-636-4126 for more information.

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**HealthyYou**

For health news, events, and tips, visit peacehealth.org/healthy-you.
Students raise funds to help babies thrive

Every baby needs nurturing. Some babies need even more—they are born with special medical needs.

PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center offers specialized treatment for these newborns in the Holtzman Twins Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), which includes 24 private rooms designed to keep mothers and premature babies close and create optimal outcomes.

With the (Miss)ter Union Pageant, students from Camas’ Union High School National Honor Society have raised more than $300,000 since 2013 in support of the Holtzman Twins NICU. Here’s how that money has been used:

- **2013**: The hospital purchased Kangaroo Care Chairs, used to help parents and babies bond through skin-to-skin contact.
- **2014**: The hospital purchased the Olympic Brainz Monitor, which closely tracks the neural vital signs of fragile babies so caregivers can help them heal and grow.
- **2015**: The hospital used the funds for the creation of a Music Therapy Program, which supports family bonding and lowers stress levels so infants can thrive.
- **2016**: The hospital purchased a RetCam3 ocular scanner, which provides low-stress screening for vision impairments.

These advancements have enriched the lives of more than 1,500 premature infants and their families at the Holtzman Twins NICU. Union High School students are committed to raising these much-needed funds and educating the community about premature birth and the importance of excellent medical care for infants. The 2017 (Miss)ter Union Pageant, held March 18 at Union High School, raised $100,000.

To support the Holtzman Twins NICU or for more information, please call the PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center Foundation at 360-514-3106.
Heart & Stroke Walk

When: Saturday, May 13
Festival begins at 8:30 a.m.
Walk begins at 9:30 a.m.
Where: Lake Sacajawea, Longview
Info: Register at pdxheartwalk.org/peacehealth.

When good isn’t good enough

Spine program raises the bar for patient outcomes

As many as 800 times every year, patients with debilitating back pain place their faith in the talented hands of the spine surgeons at PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center.

“These patients all want to reduce their back pain and return to a more active life,” says Brian Ragel, MD, a neurological surgeon at PeaceHealth Southwest. In early March, PeaceHealth Southwest launched the nationally recognized Marshall Steele program to advance these recovery goals. This program is proven to enhance patient outcomes, increase coordination and collaboration, and raise the overall level of patient satisfaction.

“Marshall Steele, MD, is a surgeon who watched as his own mother went through her joint replacement journey more than 20 years ago,” Dr. Ragel says. “Inconsistencies in her care made it clear to him that much work could be done to streamline and improve the surgical process. He studied the process from beginning to end, uncovered great opportunities for improvement, and then implemented those changes in his own hospital. The results were astounding.”

Dr. Steele began sharing those impressive results with other physicians and medical centers. Today, his ideas represent the best practices in the field, and his team has helped introduce his protocols in more than 100 U.S. hospitals. PeaceHealth is already using the Marshall Steele approach in other programs, such as orthopedics.

How it works

The Marshall Steele program is meant to give each patient peace of mind. It focuses on the following goals:

- Education for the patient and family.
- Enhanced training for primary care physicians.
- Creation of a one-stop medical clearance screening for all EKG and laboratory services.
- Standardized pre-operative process.
- Standardized surgical protocols.
- Increased focus on rehabilitation.
- Follow-up through the first year after surgery, including home safety evaluations and coaching.
- Benchmarks to measure outcomes.

PeaceHealth Southwest’s new spine program features a multidisciplinary team, a specialized spine unit, and a spine care coordinator to ensure maximum collaboration across all disciplines.

“A successful spine surgery requires much more than the work of a gifted surgeon,” Dr. Ragel says. “Marshall Steele’s work shows clearly that many other elements play a significant role in giving the patient a great outcome, including reducing their pain and nausea, increasing the speed of their recovery, monitoring the outcome of the surgery for up to year, and even measuring the satisfaction of the surgeon and staff.”

For more information, visit peacehealth.org/spine.

Leave your joint pain behind
peacehealth.org/ortho