



# Vital!

VITAL INFORMATION FOR A VITAL LIFE®



## Cadia Healthcare

### The Best Place to Get Better

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FEBRUARY 2020





**I**t's February, and this month we're All About Heart! Following your heart's desires, keeping heart healthy, matters of the heart—it's all here. It's so easy to get caught up in the mundane matters of everyday living (or get caught up in the whirlwind of negativity swirling around the world these days) that often, people forget to make time for activities that bring them pure, unmitigated joy. You know—when you become so engrossed in whatever it is you're doing that hours pass by and you don't even realize it. Sadly, I've met people who can't even remember what that's like. Let this be your wake up call! Because not only will taking time for your passions make you happy, it will make you healthier too. Nice!

This month we're highlighting Cadia Healthcare on pages 8 and 9. Cadia has grown within the Delaware community to become the premier rehab facility in the state, and it's all because every person there loves what they do and loves helping patients get strong, get healthy and get home.

Last month we introduced you to our new section Your Vital Life. It's all about exploring new ways to be your best self. If you've ever considered learning (or re-learning) how to play an instrument, check out page 3. Whether it's piano, guitar, violin or something in between, even if you don't want to take a lesson from an instructor, you can learn how to play! Check out the sites listed; you'll be amazed at the resources out there (and they work! My son taught himself how to play piano...from YouTube!)

Everywhere you look this month, you're likely to see red. Not in a bad, angry way...in a Wear Red for Heart Health way. Think healthy eating, exercise, checking your numbers (cholesterol, blood pressure). They say it takes thirty times to ingrain a new habit. Well, we only have 28 days this month, so you might have to double up some days if, for instance you're committing to 20 minutes or more per day of exercise. Your body will thank you for it come March!

And so will your family, friends and ... maybe a new partner? It's the Love Month, so we wanted to make sure to help you spice up your love life. Whether you're single or married, break out of the rut and try some fun-loving new ideas on page 10. Escape room anybody?

Yes, the month may be short, but it's packed with fun!

Happy February!

*Karyn and Heidi*

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**YOUR VITAL LIFE**



## Teach Yourself How to Play an Instrument

**Y**ou've said forever, "I'd love to be able to play the (fill in the blank). Well what's stopping you? If you don't want to shell out the cash for lessons, there is a wealth of information waiting for you on the internet. From figuring out which instrument is best for you, to teaching you to read music, or showing you what it looks like/sounds like when someone plays a song (for those of you who prefer to play by ear), just turn on your phone, computer or iPad and get to it!

**Choosing your instrument.** Pick an inexpensive and widely used instrument to save money. If you stick to instruments that aren't overly complex and frequently show up in popular music, such as the guitar, bass guitar, keyboard, ukulele and harmonica, you'll have an easier time finding an inexpensive example of that instrument and a wealth of free online resources from which to learn. Watch Craigslist and ebay or your local music shops for bargains on a used instrument. This guide ([www.wikihow.com/Choose-an-Instrument](http://www.wikihow.com/Choose-an-Instrument)) will help you pick the right instrument for you.

**Train to Play by Ear:** Theta Music Trainer ([trainer.thetamusic.com](http://trainer.thetamusic.com)) is a great site with simple games designed to teach you to play by ear.

**Reading Music:** Read Music Free ([www.readmusicfree.com](http://www.readmusicfree.com)) features some great tutorials and exercises to teach you how to read music.

**Rounding it out:** Teoria ([www.teoria.com](http://www.teoria.com)) offers exercises for all of the fundamentals of music, including music theory.

**The Introductions:** YouTube ([youtube.com](http://youtube.com)) is the world's largest video library. It provides great introductions for any instrument, at any skill level.

**Learn to Play the Piano**  
**Zebra Keys** ([www.zebrakeys.com](http://www.zebrakeys.com)) features interactive lessons for piano beginners and great exercises for new players.

**Piano Nanny** ([www.pianonanny.com](http://www.pianonanny.com)) has great lessons for every skill level that are easy to understand and fun to read.

**Musicnotes** ([www.musicnotes.com/piano](http://www.musicnotes.com/piano)) is your source for sheet music from hundreds of popular songs and pieces for free.

**Learn the Guitar, Violin, or Drums**  
**Free Drum Lessons** ([www.free-drumlessons.com](http://www.free-drumlessons.com)) is for drummers of all levels who are looking to expand their repertoire and skillset.

**Virtual Drumming** ([www.virtual-drumming.com](http://www.virtual-drumming.com)). If you want to learn, but can't really afford drums, try out this site on your PC!

**Ultimate Guitar** ([www.ultimate-guitar.com](http://www.ultimate-guitar.com)) is a massive library of guitar and other instrument-related chords and learning tools.

**Justin Guitar** ([www.justinguitar.com](http://www.justinguitar.com)) is a collections of all popular YouTube instructor Justin Sandercoe's tutorials, as well as other great resources.

**Violin Lab** ([www.violinlab.com](http://www.violinlab.com)). If you're more classically oriented, Violin Lab features great lessons for violinists of all skill levels.





# Wear Red for Heart Month



**Heart disease doesn't happen just to older adults. It's happening to younger adults more and more often. This is partly because the conditions that lead to heart disease are happening at younger ages. February is Heart Month, the perfect time to learn about your risk for heart disease and the steps you need to take now to help your heart.**

Heart disease—and the conditions that lead to it—can happen at any age. High rates of obesity and high blood pressure among younger people (ages 35-64) are putting them at risk for heart disease earlier in life. Half of all Americans have at least one of the top three risk factors for heart disease (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking).

## 4 Ways to Take Control of Your Heart Health

**Don't smoke.** Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States. If you don't smoke, don't start. If you do smoke, quit.

**Manage conditions.** Work with your health care team to manage conditions such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol. This includes taking any medicines you have been prescribed.

**Make heart-healthy eating changes.** Eat foods low in trans-fat, saturated fat, added sugar and sodium. Try to fill at least half your plate with vegetables and fruits, and aim for low-sodium options.

**Stay active.** Get moving for at least 150 minutes per week. Break your time into 10-minute blocks if necessary, but get moving.

## Heart Attack Warning Signs

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Some signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

**Chest discomfort.** Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.

**Discomfort in other areas of the upper body.** Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.

**Shortness of breath.** This feeling often comes along with chest discomfort. But it can also occur without chest discomfort.

**Other signs** may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

**Heart Attack Signs in Women.** As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting and back or jaw pain.

## Stroke

Stroke is a medical emergency. Every second counts, because time lost is brain lost! Know these stroke warning signs and share them with others:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.

If you or someone you know has one or more of the signs of heart attack or stroke, don't delay! Call 9-1-1 or the emergency medical services (EMS) number immediately so an ambulance – ideally with advanced life support – can come. If you think it's a stroke, check the time so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared. It's important to take immediate action. If given within three hours of the start of symptoms, a clot-busting drug can reduce long-term disability for the most common type of stroke.

**Use the letters in "F.A.S.T." to spot stroke signs and know when to call 9-1-1.**



**Face Drooping.** Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the person's smile uneven or lopsided?

**Arm Weakness.** Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

**Speech.** Is speech slurred? Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence.

**Time to Call 9-1-1.** If the person shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1 and get them to the hospital.

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**Stop in today and get your flu shot!**

\*Vaccine subject to availability. State-, age- and health-related restrictions may apply.





# 10 Ways Poor Posture Can Harm Your Health

By Ruben Castaneda,  
U.S.News Health

Mom was right: You should stand up straight. Poor posture can have many negative effects on your health, including putting more stress on certain muscles and joints, forcing them to be overworked and causing them to fatigue. Here are 10 ways poor posture can affect your health:

## Exacerbating arthritis

Poor posture can lead to malalignment of your spine or knees, which can increase stress on your knees. This can be particularly detrimental if you suffer from arthritis of the knees because over time, that malalignment can worsen the effects of arthritis by putting pressure on just one part of the joint and causing pain.

## Poor circulation

If you sit in a chair for hours every day with poor posture, you're at risk of developing or worsening circulation issues, which can lead to varicose veins, particularly in women. Take time to move throughout the day and make postural changes. It will not only help you have better posture, it can prevent you from serious health issues later in life.

## Fatigue

Poor posture can negatively affect your energy level. When we have poor posture, we add tension and compression to structures that weren't meant to bear that weight. These stresses and strains build up over time and wear down our bones, joints and ligaments, even changing the way our muscles fire. Not only can poor posture add stress and strain, it can also cause you to become fatigued more quickly, since it takes much more energy and work to compensate for poor posture and gait.

## Mood

Research suggests poor posture can negatively affect your mood. For example, a study published in March 2017 in the Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry found that "adopting an upright posture may increase positive affect, reduce fatigue and decrease self-focus" in people with mild to moderate depression. A 2014 study published in Health Psychology produced similar results. In that research, 74 people were randomly assigned to either sit slumped or upright and were asked to complete a reading task and recite a speech. People who sat upright reported a higher self-esteem, a higher level of alertness, a better mood and less fear than those who slouched.

## Forward head posture

Forward head posture is a common condition that occurs when your head is aligned forward in relation to your spine. Ideally, a healthy head and neck relationship aligns a person's ear with his or her shoulder when viewing them from the side. As the head progressively lurches forward over time, the individual may succumb to a myriad of musculoskeletal dysfunctions impacting various systems of the body. This condition can tighten some muscles and weaken others, leading to neck pain caused by muscle strain and tension headaches.

## Jaw pain

Poor posture can lead to temporomandibular joint syndrome, which is also known as TMJ, says Anne Bierman, a physical therapist with Athletico Physical Therapy in the Chicago area. As poor posture misaligns the spine, it can also cause an improper bite pattern, which affects your temporomandibular joints — the two joints that connect your jaw-



bone to the temporal bones of your skull. "These joints function similarly to a hinge, allowing you to open and close your mouth," Bierman says. "Poor posture in the neck and shoulders, or forward head posture, can cause these delicately balanced joints to become misaligned. When the jaw joints are misaligned, they're more likely to pop, lock, cramp or even go into spasms, resulting in jaw pain and difficulty chewing."

## Breathing efficacy

To breathe properly, your diaphragm needs to have enough space in the thoracic cavity to properly release and contract with each breath, Bierman says. Your ability to breathe optimally is boosted when your body is lengthened and in proper alignment. Poor posture and spine misalignment can compromise your ability to breathe well, she says. "Breath quality is important because the body needs to have oxygen in order to restore and rejuvenate the cells," Bierman advises. Full, deep breaths help promote a healthy brain, heart and other vital organs.

## Headaches

Bad posture can contribute to tight neck muscles, which can send pain radiating up to the head, and compromise the natural curvature of your spine, which can also lead to headaches.

## Shoulder and back pain

Poor posture can contribute to shoulder pain, according to the Mayo Clinic. It can lead to rotator cuff tendons pressing on the coracoacromial arch of your shoulder,

which causes pain when you move or lie on the side of the affected shoulder. Bad posture can also lead to the shortening and contraction of the lumbar muscles, which can contribute to unhealthy tightness and lower back pain. Back pain can also be caused by "military posture," in which someone tries to stand or sit up ramrod straight, lifting his or her chest and causing the lower back muscles to work too hard. A person trying too hard to stand straight will typically suffer from aching and unrelenting pain and burning in the upper back muscles. It also contributes to lower back pain, since pushing out your chest will cause your lower back to overextend.

## Sexual function

Having poor posture while sitting can also adversely affect your sexual function. Sacral sitting, or sitting with a rounded lower back, can be even worse than other postures. It can have profound effects on men's and women's sexual function because this posture shortens and tightens the pelvic floor muscles, which are our primary sexual muscles. When the pelvic floor muscles are tight and weak, they cannot exert their power and strength, and the end result can be weak or nonexistent orgasms. Weak pelvic floor muscles can affect the sexual function of men and women in different ways. For example, men with a shortened and tightened pelvic floor caused by poor sitting posture may have less stamina and could experience weak ejaculations, while research suggests that women with pelvic floor issues may experience reduced sexual arousal and infrequent orgasms.

## WORDS OF WISDOM

*"Never bend your head. Always hold it high. Look the world straight in the eye."*

— Helen Keller





# iBuyers Are Here, But at What Cost?

By Kyle Stoner and Thomas O'Shaughnessy

**T**ech companies have entered the real estate market. They're using algorithms to sniff out deals and snap up properties. They're the new "Instant Buyers" or iBuyers. This is home flipping on an industrial scale, sponsored by Silicon Valley. Companies like Zillow and Opendoor close deals and resell properties at a lightning pace. Not many sellers are using them yet, likely because of the widespread comparisons with payday loans. Instant does not always mean better.

## But what does it mean?

The iBuyer concept is only about 5 years old. So far, home sellers are rejecting that concept. Industry analysts estimate 90 percent of all instant offers are rejected by homeowners, particularly because of the high additional costs and fees tacked on to the back end of their offers — they make their money from fees, not from resale.

Many iBuyers focus on a narrow home price band for their offers. For instance, Opendoor's average instant home price is just over \$200,000. Another problem? The U.S. is not one-size-fits-all, which is why most companies are only active in a handful of major cities across the U.S. It sounds obvious, but the housing market of each state requires a different approach. For example, the concept has found success in states like Arizona, where uniform subdivisions create similar housing stock, while it is yet to crack the Northeast where homes are older and varied. iBuyers expect homes to be newer, up to code and without maintenance issues. Furthermore, their equations factor in weather-related maintenance costs to decide which homes are even worth buying.

## Cash Buyer vs. iBuyer

A cash buyer is usually a local investor who relies on boots-on-the-ground property evaluations to set prices. Their cash offers are based on techniques like comparative market analysis (CMA), or even a gut feeling, to assess a property's profit potential.

An iBuyer is backed by venture capital. iBuyers will typically offer more than cash buyers; however, this ad-

vantage is often more than cancelled out by the high service fees they charge to cover maintenance and selling costs, and ensure a decent margin on the transaction. Speed can come at a high price. Expect to lose a big chunk of your equity when you sell to an iBuyer.

## Pros and Cons of Selling to an iBuyer

### iBuyer Pros

- **Speed:** The entire sale, from initial contact to closing, can happen in a couple weeks.
- **Convenience:** Most of the process takes place online. Fill out a form and get a preliminary offer. The company will send a representative to your house to do an inspection. If any repairs are necessary, their costs (as determined by the iBuyer, not a local contractor) will be deducted from your offer.
- **Simplicity:** You don't have to stage your house.
- **No Hidden Costs:** Most iBuyers will lay out all of the costs and fees (along with how much they're willing to pay) up front. There may be some discrepancy between the initial and final offer, pending the on-site inspection.

### iBuyer Cons

- **Service Fees:** iBuyers charge a service fee to ensure their profit margin is met on each transaction. The fee covers their carrying costs and protects their bottom line. Long story short, if the iBuyer thinks your house is going to be difficult to resell at a profit, expect your fee to be higher.
- **No Negotiations:** When you get an offer from an iBuyer, it's usually a take-it-or-leave-it deal. Some will allow you to submit additional information; however, most will be unwilling to budge on price.
- **Limited Coverage:** Because the iBuying phenomenon is relatively new, most companies are only operating in a handful of major metro areas across the U.S. In other words, selling to an iBuyer isn't actually an option yet for the vast majority of Americans.
- **Strict Criteria:** iBuyers are relatively strict about the types of properties they buy. Most will only

make offers on properties that are relatively new (post 1970), worth less than \$500,000-600,000, and sit on less than one acre. If you're trying to sell a unique, distressed, or older property, an iBuyer may not be a viable option.

## Bottom Line

If you're not in a hurry to sell, or your property is not distressed, test the water first with a real estate agent. If time is of the essence or you don't want to be locked into a binding agent contract, then consider a cash buyer or iBuyer. Broken down further, if your home is newer, does not need repairs and is in one of the few markets where iBuyers operate, then take offers from an iBuyer. If your home needs updates or repairs, or is not a cookie cutter property, call a cash buyer. It's the best of both worlds: a fast sale for your as-is property.

For more help and answers to all your questions, call Vital Capital Strategies at 302-635-0205. We'll get that cash right where you want it—in your pocket.

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## Problem House?

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# Test Drive Your Retirement

Test drive your retirement? It's something everyone nearing retirement should think about.

Your test drive begins by taking a month off (take vacation or leave of absence) a year or so before retirement. This is a stay-at-home vacation to allow you to live as if you're retired. Some tips to get you started:

**1 Live on the income you expect to have in retirement.** Before retiring, try spending like a retired person. If you can't live within your retirement budget while you're still working, there's a good chance you won't be able to when you have all day to spend money.

Living on your retiree income for a month is a retirement reality check. Many expenses will be the same (you'll still eat), some will fall (you don't have to travel to work) and some will rise (you may want to eat out more). If you're not able to work

out what your total income would be, check with a financial advisor.

**2 Really focus on your health.** Good health is worth more than money. In retirement there can be no "I-don't-have-the-time" excuses to not exercise; after all, you're in charge of your time... just as you are during this test-drive month. In fact, this test-drive month could be the beginning of a health regime that continues to retirement and beyond.

**3 Develop a routine.** Retirement can be an adventure with planned trips and other activities, but most of the time you'll be at home. Even grey nomads who take off with their caravans for months at a time do head home eventually—even if it's only to plan their next trip.

What will you do at home? Start simple: What time will you get up in the mornings? Then, unless you

see your retirement as one long vacation, what will you do? Routine is important for both being and doing. Start by listing the things you want to do or make happen each week.

**4 Take time to focus on your interests.** What do you already love doing? What hobbies or passions have fallen by the wayside? Do you want to volunteer? Work? Play? If the answer to your question, "What do I want to do when I retire?" is "Nothing," think again.

**5 Consider the people in your life.** If you have a partner, this test-drive month is an ideal time to get used to the idea that, once you're both retired, you're together so much more. That can be a challenge for even the most together relationships.

Many couples will set aside time in their week to do things together, while also leaving time to follow their



own interests. Studies show that people thrive when their social circle includes not only family and good friends, but also lots of acquaintances, and maybe even a confidante.

**6 And...** Your turn! What else could you do to test drive your retirement? Taking the time now to think and plan will smooth your transition and help you create your perfect new reality.



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# Cadia Rehab – The Best Place to Get Better

*Providing care in Delaware for over 30 years and with 5 locations, Cadia Healthcare is the largest provider of Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing in the state. In everything they do, the professionals at Cadia Healthcare bring a passion for positively impacting the lives of the people that come to them. This month Joyce Winters, Corporate Community Marketing Manager, answers our questions and shares Cadia's vision of caring for people in the First State, today and in the years to come.*

## What exactly are rehab services?

Rehabilitation services can be either short-term or long-term and include a combination of Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech-Language Pathology. When a person suffers a life-altering injury or event, they may be left with various disabilities or dysfunctions. Rehab services help a person get back to, or as close to, pre-injury as possible. Therapists use exercises, therapeutic activities, self-care training, balance and gait training, cognitive retraining, and more to improve function and movement, improve the patient's level of safety and independence, and improve their quality of life. Here at Cadia Healthcare we incorporate an interdisciplinary approach to the patients' treatment and plan of care. While keeping our focus on the patient, we also include the family and caregivers during education and training sessions.

## When would a person come to you?

Visits to Cadia are either planned or relatively unplanned. Someone planning a hip or knee replacement chooses where they want their recovery to take place just like they choose their doctor – ahead of time. Stroke victims, on the other hand, would decide they want to come here while they're preparing for discharge. Both scenarios are very typical at our facilities. A patient is typically referred to our facility for short-term rehab services

following hospitalization in order to regain their prior level of independence, with the goal of returning home. The length of "short-term" rehab could range from 2 weeks to 6 months, depending on the reason for hospitalization, extent of their disabilities, medical complications, and other considerations. Significantly, at Cadia Healthcare, the average length of stay is 24 days; the average across the state of Delaware for short-term stays in similar facilities is 35 days. The primary purpose of admission is usually for the skilled rehabilitation therapy; however, a person may also require skilled nursing services during their stay.

If, after a patient undergoes their plan of care, they haven't regained their prior level of function or gotten to a level necessary to return to independent living, they may be appropriate for a referral to our long-term care unit.

## How have the services typically thought of as being provided at a rehab facility changed over the years?

When most people hear "rehab in a skilled nursing facility," I think some of them imagine very little treatment time, simple exercises, and older people crying out in pain so that the therapists will send them back to their room. That is *not* what you will see in our rehab departments. Fully 75% of our rehab patients receive 2-3 hours of therapy



per day and rehab is provided 5-7 days a week. We pride ourselves on the relationships we forge with our patients, especially because we feel it's these relationships that help provide motivation and increase participation. The relationships are a huge factor toward making functional gains and achieving both the patients' and the therapists' goals. We want our patients to achieve the maximum benefits from their time spent in therapy and work extremely hard to reach that goal.

We continually challenge our patients to increase their strength and to increase the complexity of the activities they're capable of. We often see the greatest gains when activities are enjoyed in a fun and interactive environment. One way we love to make it fun is by playing Nintendo Wii. Wii Fit, Bowling, and the other activities found in the games offer real benefits to patients' balance, strength, coordination and progress. The games can even get a little competitive!

## What sets you apart from other rehab facilities in the area?

One of the key things that distinguishes our facilities is our personnel. We're proud to say that staffing ratios for Cadia Healthcare are among the best in the state. Our certified nursing assistants are trained to help patients using our "rehabilitation" philosophy versus a "doing for" philosophy. Our goal is to get our patients home, enjoying life, as quickly as possible. It's imperative, then, that the skills and techniques patients learn during ther-







apy can be carried over to life back at home. It's one of the most important areas of our focus, and is essential for achieving the long-term goal of independence. Significantly, over 65% of our short-term rehab patients return home. Our rehab unit personnel also provide excellent customer service to our patients and families to make their overall stay at Cadia Healthcare a success.

In addition, we have the unique distinction of having Delaware's only dedicated ventilator unit for skilled nursing care at our Cadia Pike Creek facility. This means that we can provide skilled rehab services to our patients who are ventilator-dependent, providing them the ability to receive rehab therapy in our open, well-equipped gym. We also provide training in the use of assistive technologies. For instance, we're able to train a quadriplegic with no motor function except head control to operate a computer, their TV and call bell.

**How does the treatment that I would receive at Cadia Healthcare differ from other types of treatment I might receive elsewhere?**

Our rehab staff uses a holistic approach when caring for patients. Not only do our therapists identify any physical deficits, but they also identify emotional and psychological issues that may be interfering with a patient's progress in therapy. Daily communication among the interdisciplinary

team members means these issues are always addressed. We offer alternative therapy techniques to address pain, wounds and fall prevention. We also provide outpatient therapy services to patients discharged home from our short-term rehab program and accept referrals from patients in the local community.

One of Cadia's newest initiatives is inviting patients to participate in group therapy. Group therapy is an alternative treatment method that allows for greater socialization among people, which in turn improves participation and motivation while also offering psychological support. We've found that when a resident's perspective shifts with the realization that they are not the only one fighting a battle, it empowers them to give that extra added effort, which in turn results in a better, faster rehabilitation. Each facility has implemented group therapy with positive outcomes and feedback from the residents and families.

Our staff consists of highly educated and trained Physical Therapists/Assistants, Occupational Therapists/Assistants, and Speech-Language Pathologists. The bottom line is that we're professionals who possess excellent clinical skills, but more than anything we have a passion for positively impacting the lives of our patients.



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# Keeping Your Marriage Young



By Susie & Otto Collins

**A**void becoming part of the “gray divorce” wave by keeping your marriage alive and well.

If you believe that after a certain age or number of years together, you and your partner are home free and out of danger, think again. The temptation can be strong to glide along in your relationship after reaching middle age and beyond. After all, you and your spouse have possibly weathered the tumult of raising kids together, building careers and handling all kinds of other challenges along the way. You shouldn’t have to think too much about your marriage now...or should you?

Actually, it’s wise to stay aware of what’s happening in your relationship, even when you’re over 50 and you’ve celebrated 25 (more or less) years of marriage. A recent study shows that while the divorce rate for most Americans has remained about the same, for the segment of the population over age 50, the incidence of divorce is increasing. It’s the “gray divorce wave.”

There are myriad reasons this trend has developed, but the takeaway is this: It’s time to wake up! Don’t put your marriage on autopilot just because you’re getting older. Especially with the changes going on in your body and transitions in your life, it’s essential to continue to keep communication, connection, trust, and intimacy healthy and vital.

Perhaps one of the biggest relationship killers for couples over 50 comes from the belief that you both are and will continue to be the same as you’ve “always” been. This myth will destroy your marriage if you buy into it. The fact is you, your spouse

and everybody else, are changing all the time. It’s unavoidable—and it’s good! It may not be obvious. You might not be getting piercings and tattoos, shifting your religious or political views, or switching your favorite flavor from chocolate to vanilla, but you’re changing (and your partner is too).

When couples act and react from the assumption that we remain the same and that to change is bad and a threat to the relationship, then resentment and conflict arise. Allegations that, “You’re not the person I married!” can kill the relationship spark, and can lead to a downward spiral that causes distance in the marriage and can even lead to separation or divorce. But it doesn’t have to happen this way. Use these five tips to divorce-proof your marriage.

**1 Never stop learning.** Don’t assume that just because you’ve always thought you’d do, be or prefer certain things, you’re locked into that forever. Periodically check in with yourself. Ask yourself questions like, “Am I enjoying doing this?” and “Does this still feel fulfilling to me?” You might be resistant or even afraid of stepping out from what you’ve normally been or done, so be courageous. Never stop learning what it is that helps you feel happy and alive.

**2 Never stop learning (part 2).** Staying informed about the changes that your partner is going through can be a wonderful way to get close and keep your connection healthy. Avoid asking your spouse the usual questions, like “How are you feeling today?” Get creative and ask, “What made you smile today?” or “What would you like to do tonight that we’ve never done before?” Rekindle your curiosity about your partner, and even if you don’t love everything that he or she is interested in, you can appreciate the excitement of discovery.

**3 Don’t take anything for granted.** You’ve heard this phrase before, but do you practice it? It’s easy to fall into the habit of assuming that your partner will want to vacation where you two usually do or celebrate holidays in the same way as before. If you want to keep the spark alive, stop assuming

and start asking. Don’t take it for granted that your partner already knows how much you love and appreciate him or her either. Feel it in your heart and say it out loud often, with kind and compassionate actions as well as words.

**4 Take care of yourself.** We’re all getting older, but that doesn’t mean you have to “be old.” You can age with grace and remain vital no matter how many candles are on your birthday cake. It’s easier when you stay active, eat healthy foods and drink plenty of water, release stress, heal old emotional wounds and nourish healthy self-confidence. As you take good care of yourself, you’ll be able to more fully enjoy the time you spend with your spouse and the range of what you can do together expands

too. Instead of continually being dragged down by aches, pains or the blues, you’ll be open and ready for passion!

**5 Take care of your relationship.** Remember to apply that same TLC to your relationship too. When disagreements come up, resolve them. Have those difficult conversations and go into them with the intention to really listen and consider your partner’s point of view. Set aside time in your schedule for regular one-on-one connecting time for just you and your partner. Take care of your relationship as if it was as precious to you as your children or grandchildren are—because it is.

It’s a flat out lie that “passion dies in a long-term relationship,” so don’t believe it!

## Save the Date!

Dinner out is so mundane. Instead, try something new together to keep the spark burning bright.

**Go dancing with your star during a ballroom class.** You may feel like a clod at the start, but you’ll feel confident and sexy at the end. Check the schedule at the Blue Ball Room in Wilmington, Take the Lead Dance Studio in Hockessin, or at a local country club (often, dance lessons are open to non-members).

**Cooking together is hands-on fun together.** Take a class at Chefs’ Haven in Hockessin. Learn to make sushi at Mikimoto’s in Wilmington. And if you really want to spice it up, visit Haneeda’s Kitchen in Glen Mills for a lesson on Indian cuisine.

**Go to an escape room.** You have one hour to find the key that lets you out. Work together to solve the clues in rooms built on themes such as Shawshank Prison and “National Treasure.” Locations include Exodus Escape Room in Newark and Wilmington or Escape Rehoboth in Rehoboth Beach.

**Float in a hot air balloon.** You’ll have a truly panoramic view of the countryside when you fly with outfits such as Delmarva Balloon Rides in Chester, Maryland. It’s peaceful, exhilarating and inspiring. You’ll be a hero.

**Tap into your creative sides** at Painting With a Twist in Wilmington, Newark and Middletown. Following the instruction of an artist, you can create a memento of your time together. On scheduled date nights, you paint one half of the image, your date paints the other. Or try Partner Painting at T. C. Studio in Ocean City, Maryland.

**Eat chocolate.** Visit the annual Rehoboth Beach Chocolate Festival March 14. Sample decadent and amazing creations from local restaurants and stores, and feel good about supporting the Harry K Foundation, which works to eliminate food insecurity in Delaware.





# Finding Lasting Love Over 50

By Brielle Gregory

**D**ating at *any* age can be daunting, but if you've been out of the game for a while, it can feel especially intimidating. The good news is that meeting new people can be a ton of fun and a great opportunity to find someone who could be an incredible addition to your life.

The first truth about dating over 50? It's not anything like dating in your 20s or 30s. You're not the same person, and neither are the people you'll be attracted to. On top of that, a lot has changed. For example, behaviors like "ghosting" (ending a relationship with someone by cutting off communication without explanation) and "breadcrumbing" (sending someone enough messages to keep them interested, but not enough to be committed) are part of the new norm. So how to navigate it all?

## Get online

For most people over 50, online dating is the easiest way to meet other singles interested in a relationship versus a one-night stand. Experts recommend using sites that users have to pay for, both because it shows the person is more serious, and because, if they're a bad actor in any way, they can be barred from the site. Try sites like eHarmony, Match or OurTime. Get your (recent!) profile photo ok'd by a friend and don't worry—everyone has a learning curve when it comes to online dating.

## But don't give up on traditional tactics

Let friends and family know you're dating and ask them to introduce you to potential matches. Go to work outings. Go to sites like meetup.com to find people who share your interests. If those methods don't work, try a matchmaking service like It's Just Lunch. They can get pricey, but these services offer a more personalized experience, so you're more likely to get a strong match right out of the gate.

## Internalize the "Pineapple Theory"

Rejection can be discouraging at best and hurtful at worst. Don't take it personally—likely, it has nothing to do with you.

"People reject people for a host of reasons," says one therapist. "It may

be that they don't have the nerve to say hey, I'm dating a couple other people. Or, you remind me of someone. Or, I just feel a friendship vibe. So they end up just disappearing, and it comes off as harsh rejection."

Just keep in mind the "pineapple theory": Someone doesn't like pineapple, so they take it off their plate when it's served. But tons of people love pineapple. It's the same fruit, but for no reason except individual taste, it's a favorite of some and disliked by others. But a pineapple is what it is—neither desirable nor undesirable by nature. It just needs to find a pineapple lover. And the same goes for you, too.

## Don't give up just because you've had a few bad dates

Dating comes with ups and downs, and is rarely a pretty, seamless process. You'll probably have to go on several dates with different people before finding someone you really connect with. That's normal, so although it's easier said than done, try not to give up after a few bad dates. It could take a year or more to find the right person, but if you're determined, you'll find them.

## Leave your baggage at the door

We all have insecurities and baggage from our past, from failed relationships to health issues or problems with your children. Don't let your baggage weigh you down with preconceptions. Leave it behind and don't let it keep you from finding happiness with someone new.

## Have a general idea of what you want

Before heading back into the dating scene, reflect on what in your past relationship(s) didn't work, and what you want to avoid going forward. You're not creating a laundry list of necessary qualities, but rather, a few core attributes that are important to what you feel makes for a healthy relationship.

Your right match now is also probably different than when you were younger. For example, it might have been important to you in your earlier years that your partner make a lot of money. But now, you might be financially stable enough to not view that as a requirement. Be open.



## Keep first date conversation light

First dates can be nerve-racking for both of you. Have fun. Keep it light. You don't need to go into what your ex did to you. This same rule goes for body language. Smile, sit up straight and show that you're happy to be with this person. Another topic you should try to avoid, or at least limit, is your kids. Conversation all about the kids isn't going to create any kind of spark.

## Give a potential new partner three dates

It takes time to get to know someone so give it at least three dates to see if you click. If you set up a vision and you're questioning whether this person's a good listener, or they acknowledge you, or whatever, and you haven't seen it after three dates, then you're probably not going to see it. Another good rule of thumb? For that first date, keep it to a 20-minute coffee date, especially if it's someone you met online. That's enough for the first introduction, and it can feel very long for the wrong person.

## Only have sex if you're ready (and be safe if you do)

At some point, dating will likely lead to sex, but remember: there's no need to rush it. Be upfront with your partner about your feelings toward sex and what you're comfortable or uncomfortable with. Let them know if you're nervous or haven't had sex in a while, and ask them if you can take it slowly. And when you're ready, make sure you use protection. Just because you're older and not worried about pregnancy doesn't mean you can forget about condoms.

## Don't give in to playing games

Remember how in your 20s you'd let someone get away with breaking plans? If you're over 50, you shouldn't put up with that. "If somebody says they're going to call you, or do something, and they don't, the end," says Laino. "Don't play games."

## Pay attention to his life as a whole

Just because you think you've found the perfect match, don't let those rose-colored glasses keep you from getting the full picture of their life and how you would fit into it. This is especially true when it comes to finances, friends, and family.

Does their lifestyle show responsibility? Don't make excuses just because they're charming, sexy, or compelling. Take a hard look at spending habits. If you were married, would a joint economic status put you in jeopardy?

If you're starting to date someone more seriously, how do you fit in with their social group and family? A key component? How long it takes them to introduce you to the important people in their life. "Don't let it go on too long without meeting friends and family," says Laino. "If s/he doesn't include them, they're either a) not serious, or b) hiding something."

So whether you're just getting back into the dating game or have been dating for a while with little luck, just remember: what you're looking for is out there. It just takes time (and a little effort) to find it.



# Hospice Equals “Hope” for Parents of Medically Complex Child

Hospice can be a frightening word to a family with a medically complex child. But not to Patty and Zach Fazio. To them, “hospice” equals “hope”—hope for the freedom to embrace every joy-filled moment with their baby boy.

When Patty and Zach brought four-day-old Leo home, they were greeted by balloons, family...and their Katybug team from Delaware Hospice. It was a joyous occasion; Patty and Zach had been told not to even bother bringing a car seat to the hospital.

Thirteen weeks into her pregnancy, Patty had gotten the frightening news: her baby had Trisomy 18—a genetic condition with a high rate of miscarriage, stillbirth, and fatality before the age of one. They were encouraged to terminate the pregnancy. Ultimately, they decided to enjoy and love Leo for as long as he

was able to live. If he was born alive, they wanted him to have “comfort care” rather than significant medical intervention.

As baby Leo defied one odd after another in his first few days of life, the family focused on enjoying each tiny moment and milestone. But at every turn, they were reminded of how serious Leo’s condition was and not to let their hopes get too high.

When it became clear Leo might leave the hospital, the hospital’s palliative team set the family up with Delaware Hospice’s Katybug pediatric program to support them in their home. Ironically, it wasn’t until they met their hospice team that they felt they were allowed to hope.

Patty remembers Nurse Colleen giving Patty her “first genuine smile”—not one of sympathy, but of hope, as if saying, “We have hope for this baby’s life. No matter how

short. It doesn’t matter. Hope in the time that’s given.”

A year later, the family’s Katybug nurse Lynn was at Leo’s first birthday party, rejoicing over Leo’s refusal to eat another bite with a shake of his head. Lynn had become part of the family, and Leo was thriving. Only about 10% of babies born with his condition make it to their first birthday. He was the family’s little miracle.

In a short time, Leo will “graduate” from Katybug. It’s a happy milestone, although Zach wishes they could keep Katybug forever. Getting in-home services and having someone to call—even in the middle of the night—has been an enormous help to the family, especially since the hospital is a 2-hour drive.

Children at any stage of any serious illness can benefit from the expertise of pediatric palliative and hospice

care specialists like the caring team members of Katybug. In addition to caring for children from birth through age 21, Katybug also offers prenatal support to families awaiting the birth of a baby diagnosed with a serious condition.

Katybug is the only program of its kind in Delaware with Certified Hospice and Palliative Pediatric Nurses on staff. Katybug’s pediatric specialists are experienced in walking alongside children and their families during these tough times, so the family can focus on the joys of life instead the child’s illness.

*If you know a family who may benefit from our services of transitioning from hospital to home; in-patient care and/or respite care; education, assistance, or companionship; symptom management support; coordination with physicians; and emotional and spiritual support, please visit [katybugde.org](http://katybugde.org) or call 800-838-9800 to learn more about Katybug.*



## Because every moment counts.

### With our help, you can still see new things together.

At Katybug, we believe in making time for life’s special moments. We work to make each day the best it can be, so that you can focus on connecting with the people that matter most.



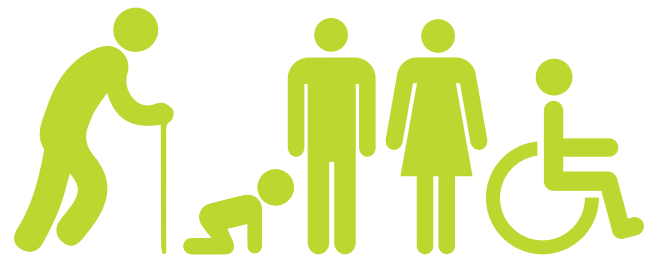
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# Aging in Place: What is Universal Design?



By Michael Moore Jr.  
heraldtribune.com

For those looking to stay in their home long-term and age in place, which according to AARP could be as many as 87% of adults age 65 and older, “universal design” could be your key.

Experts discussed this theme at the Aging in the Right Place Forum held in Sarasota, FL. The panel featured a variety of experts on aging who shared vital keys to planning and implementing steps for those looking to age in place. A primary focus of the forum was how to adapt your current living environment in order to improve accessibility, convenience, levels of care, functionality and safety. The best way to do that includes incorporating some elements of universal design.

For Chuck Vollmer, board member of the Universal Design Coalition and owner of 101 Mobility, a company that focuses on mobility and accessibility solutions for homes, thinking about universal design is more important than ever as our population ages and the majority of people wish to stay in their own home. “The first thing you have to understand about universal design is what it is, because a lot of people believe that universal design means you put in grab bars when you have a problem. That’s not universal design; that’s a necessary evil,” says Vollmer. “Universal design is a plan ... and it’s not just a plan for seniors, it’s a plan that works for and is important for everybody.”

There are seven basic principles of universal design that were developed in 1997 by a group of architects,

product designers, engineers and environmental design researchers, with the purpose of guiding design in a way that gives homes characteristics that make them more livable. These principles are equitable use, flexibility in use, simple and intuitive use, perceptible information, tolerance for error, low physical effort, and size and space for approach and use.

Essentially, it boils down to design elements that make homes simple and easy to use, consistent and easy to understand, and requiring low physical effort with as little chance for hazard and harm as possible, regardless of a person’s stage of life. This includes eliminating or minimizing stairs when possible, replacing doorknobs with levers, trading traditional faucets for more accommodating models, minimizing level changes, widening hallways so they are at least 36 inches and much, much more.

Of course, you’re not going to be able to do this all at once, which is why it’s important to have a plan. Universal design shouldn’t be an overwhelming concept that ties your hands, but instead should be used as a guide that helps you consider what to look for in a house or what changes to make in your own home. Researching its concepts, understanding what it is, and speaking with contractors and consultants who understand universal design is key. Says Vollmer, “Whether you’re getting a little older and are starting to have some mobility issues, or there’s a child that has special needs or a disability, this is a plan that should work for everybody. And that’s the point.”

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## Don’t Abbreviate 2020 When Signing Legal Documents

You may have already heard the warnings: don’t abbreviate 2020 when signing your checks and legal documents. Police have warned that anyone signing important documents or checks with an abbreviation of 2020, i.e. “20,” could put themselves at risk of fraud or forgery. They recommend writing out the date in full, as 2020, on legal documents and checks.

### Why not abbreviate 2020?

By writing out the date as 02/01/20 (February 1, 2020), the date can be fraudulently changed to 2019, 2021, or any other date in this century. Instead, make sure when you’re dating documents in 2020 that you write the year out in full, to protect yourself against fraud and prevent any issues with legal paperwork.

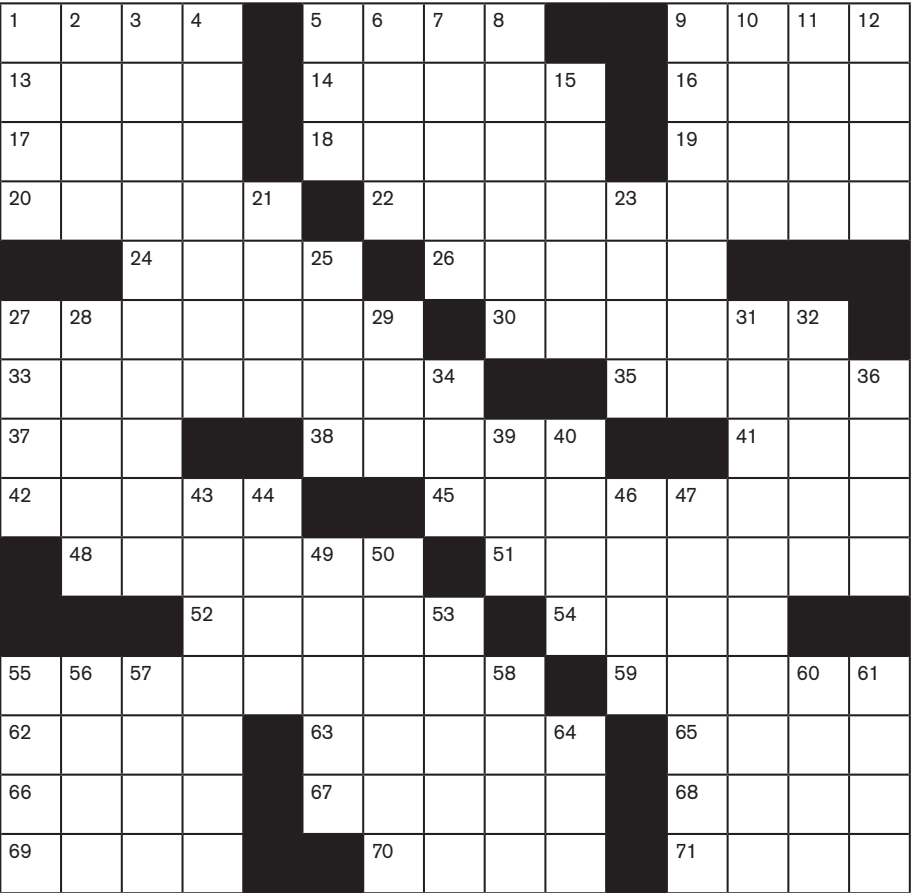
The problem is specific to the year 2020, since abbreviating 2019 as “19” could only be changed to a date in the 1900s and abbreviating 2018 as “18” could only be changed to a date in the 1800s. But abbreviating 2020 to 20 means that a criminal could write two numbers after the 20 to imply that the document or check is dated before or after its actual date.

Of course, all dates can be altered. The point is that if any document, whether legal or professional, is questioned as being forged or fraudulent, it would likely raise far more red flags, depending on the circumstances, if it had a date of, say, 1999 as opposed to 2019 or 2021. It’s easy to protect yourself. Write 2020.



# Crossword

By Dave Fisher



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Answers on page 6

ACROSS

- 1. Sea eagle
- 5. Russian emperor
- 9. Big party
- 13. Bobbin
- 14. Group of 8
- 16. Gorse
- 17. Anger
- 18. Tally mark
- 19. Not a single one
- 20. Dirty fogs
- 22. Water-filled beds
- 24. The thin fibrous bark
- 26. Juliet's love
- 27. Laughable
- 30. Overhaul
- 33. Knickknacks
- 35. Endured
- 37. Mesh
- 38. Shrewd
- 41. Regret
- 42. Decelerates
- 45. Hike
- 48. Donnybrook
- 51. Respire
- 52. Hurdle
- 54. "Do \_\_\_ others..."
- 55. Personal attendants
- 59. Goat antelope
- 62. Quiet time
- 63. Onyx
- 65. Connects two points
- 66. Not yours
- 67. Termagant
- 68. Pear-shaped instrument
- 69. Immediately
- 70. Sort
- 71. Out of control

DOWN

- 1. Makes a mistake
- 2. 500 sheets
- 3. Mediator
- 4. Chic
- 5. 2,000 pounds
- 6. Flat-bottomed boat
- 7. Fragrant oil
- 8. Parson
- 9. Coastal patrol boat
- 10. \_\_\_ vera
- 11. Extend credit
- 12. Chopping tools
- 15. Motif
- 21. Whirl
- 23. Guns an engine
- 25. Dwarf buffalo
- 27. Barley beards
- 28. Mantelpiece
- 29. And so forth
- 31. Postponement
- 32. Sack
- 34. A type of large sandwich
- 36. Apollo astronaut Slayton
- 39. Bar bill
- 40. Beige
- 43. Ripple
- 44. Stigma
- 46. Knows
- 47. Kneecap
- 49. Vibes
- 50. Small in degree
- 53. Weepy
- 55. Shade trees
- 56. Resign
- 57. Forearm bone
- 58. Stair
- 60. Savvy about
- 61. Seven days
- 64. Female sheep

# SHORT RIB LAGER STEW

Beef Short Ribs braised in lager, with carrots & mushrooms. Think "Mom's Pot Roast" but better!

Prep time: 15 minutes  
Cook time: 1hr 50 minutes  
Yield: Serves 4



INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds boneless beef short ribs, each cut in half
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cups diced Vidalia onion
- 1 cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced green bell pepper
- 6 cloves garlic minced
- 4 cups beef stock
- 1 12-ounce bottle lager
- ¼ cup chopped herbs, such as sage, thyme and rosemary
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 cups chopped carrots
- 2 cups halved button mushrooms

DIRECTIONS

**Step 1:** Toss beef, flour, salt and pepper in a stainless bowl. Add oil to cast iron pot over medium-high heat. Sear beef until golden, 5 minutes on each side.

**Step 2:** Remove beef and set aside. Add onions, celery, pepper and garlic to the same pot. Scrape any crunchy bits off bottom of pot. Cook for 5 minutes until translucent. Season with salt and pepper.

**Step 3:** Add beef back to pot. Add stock, lager, herbs and bay leaf. Cover and cook for 1½ to 2 hours until the sauce has thickened and beef is tender. Add carrots and mushrooms. Cook for 10 to 15 minutes more over medium heat. Season and serve, baby! (Even better the next day after another slow simmer!)

source: Dale Gray @thedaleplate, www.thedaleplate.com

WORDS OF WISDOM

*"Life happens pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it"*

— Ferris Bueller





# Sudoku

Fill in the blank squares so that each row, each column and each 3-by-3 block contain all of the digits 1 thru 9.

|   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|
|   | 9 |   |   |  | 7 |   |   |   |
|   | 3 |   | 8 |  |   |   | 6 | 2 |
| 5 |   | 4 | 2 |  |   |   |   | 9 |
|   | 8 |   |   |  |   | 4 |   |   |
|   |   |   | 6 |  | 9 |   |   |   |
|   |   | 3 |   |  |   |   | 9 |   |
| 8 |   |   |   |  | 6 | 1 |   | 5 |
| 3 | 7 |   |   |  | 5 |   | 8 |   |
|   |   |   | 1 |  |   |   | 2 |   |

Answers on page 6

(courtesy of KrazyDad.com)

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## The Funny Bone

A football coach walked into the locker room before a big game, looked over to his star player and said, "I'm not supposed to let you play since you failed math, but we really need you in there. So, what I have to do is ask you a math question, and if you get it right, you can play."

The player agreed, so the coach looked into his eyes intently and asked, "Okay, now concentrate hard and tell me the answer to this... What is two plus two?"

The player thought for a moment and then answered, "Four?"

"Did you say four?" the coach exclaimed, excited that he had given the right answer.

Suddenly, all the other players on the team began screaming, "Coach! Coach! Come on coach, give him another chance!"

ATTORNEY: She had three children, right?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: How many were boys?

WITNESS: None.

ATTORNEY: Were there any girls?

WITNESS: Your honor, I think I need a different attorney. Can I get a new attorney?

ATTORNEY: How was your first marriage terminated?

WITNESS: By death.

ATTORNEY: And by whose death was it terminated?

WITNESS: Take a guess.

ATTORNEY: Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

WITNESS: No, this is how I dress when I go to work.

ATTORNEY: Doctor, how many autopsies have you performed on dead people?

WITNESS: All of them. The live ones put up too much of a fight.

ATTORNEY: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

WITNESS: The autopsy started around 8:30 pm.

ATTORNEY: And Mr. Denton was dead at the time?

WITNESS: If not, he was by the time I finished.

ATTORNEY: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for blood pressure?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for breathing?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

WITNESS: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.



When it comes to  
your health care,  
**experience makes  
a difference**



**At ManorCare Health Services, Arden Courts and Heartland Hospice, our continuum of care services provide the right care at the right time in the right setting.**



### **Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation**

ManorCare Health Services provides comprehensive medical and rehabilitative treatments to help patients get back on their feet after a hospital stay. We work with each patient to design an individual plan of care to meet their specific goals.

**ManorCare Health Services**

Wilmington

**302-764-018**

Pike Creek

**302-239-8583**



### **Memory Care**

Arden Courts is a unique approach to caregiving and was created to help individuals with memory impairment enjoy residential living while receiving the professional assistance and engagement they need. By recognizing each individual resident's needs, we provide an environment that promotes safe independence for as long as possible.

**Arden Courts Memory Care**

**302-762-7800**



### **Hospice**

Heartland's approach to caring focuses on patients and their family's needs. Hospice care enables patients to maintain cherished activities in comfort, provide support to family members in caring for their loved ones and offers spiritual and emotional support.

**Heartland Hospice**

**302-737-7080**

As part of ProMedica, the 15th largest not-for-profit health system, we are proud to serve the Wilmington community with our continuum of care designed to meet individual health care needs.  
**For more information about our services, please call us.**

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