

Autumn 2021

# thrive

Appreciate Health. Enjoy Life.

## Being There for Seniors

Supporting Seniors  
This Holiday Season

## Wellness First

Connecting  
Employers with  
Health and  
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# Fallin', for Pollen

How to Cope With  
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### A Note from the President

Dear Friends,

Thank you for embracing *thrive!* We're happy to deliver this second issue, which is filled with the stories you wanted to see about striving to be healthier, taking time for self-care, supporting loved ones and participating in local events to help worthy causes.

An important part of our Mission is being active members of our community. We want you to know that we're here to support you in whatever ways we can to improve your overall quality of life. In this issue, you'll learn more about:

- Preparing for your next appointment in "Check-up Checklist"
- Embracing seniors this holiday season in "Being There"
- Supporting initiatives that improve breast cancer and oncology care in "Think Pink"

We hope *thrive* inspires you to *Appreciate Health and Enjoy Life*. Thank you for your support.

**John A. Jurczyk**  
President, St. Joseph Hospital and  
Senior Vice President, Covenant Health

## 10 Prevention and Detection October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month



Scan this QR code with your mobile device and schedule your screening today.

### On the Cover

Ed Canto is local CDL-A driver. Nashua has been his home for 25 years. Ed is married and has two daughters. He chooses St. Joe's for his primary care.

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# We're in This Together

## WellnessFirst Builds Community and Promotes Wellness

By Suzanne Dumaresq

Wellness is defined as “... being in good health, especially as an actively pursued goal.” St. Joseph Hospital’s WellnessFirst Program supports exactly that by offering local employers a complimentary service that connects employees with health and wellness services that enhance their lives.

To date, the hospital has partnered with nearly 20 employers. One example of a thriving WellnessFirst partnership is between the hospital and the YMCA of Greater Nashua, New Hampshire.

“Our partnership was rekindled when our healthcare heroes were working on the frontlines during the COVID-19 pandemic and the YMCA stepped up to offer essential workers much-needed childcare,” commented Kara Ellis, director of service line development, St. Joseph Hospital. “As non-profit organizations, we appreciated there was tremendous synergy in our priorities and that we both have a vested interest in serving the community.”

For information about improving employee wellness with your organization, please contact **Colleen Heaslip** at [cheaslip@covh.org](mailto:cheaslip@covh.org).

“Our mission is very clear — to nurture our members in every way we can to ensure good health, overall well-being and a sense of social responsibility — partnering with St. Joe’s to do so made great sense,” said Mike LaChance, chief executive officer, YMCA of Greater Nashua. “We were happy to offer St. Joe’s employees childcare options when the

pandemic hit, as we were granted emergency childcare status from the state and knew our healthcare providers were in need.”

Today, St. Joseph Hospital and the YMCA are working collaboratively to provide its employees and members access to wellness opportunities. They’ve included the hospital’s Mobile Health Clinic,

providing physicals for campers, with the YMCA offering membership opportunities to hospital employees. Future plans include hosting vaccine clinics, educational seminars, meet the provider events and more.

# Healthy Holiday Eating

Is it Possible?

By Cherry Odom, BSN, RN, NPD-BC

**T**he holidays are meant to be savored. At this time of year, old, family-loved recipes emerge from storage. “Enjoy them!” said Liz Whalen, RD, LDN, clinical nutrition manager, St. Joseph Hospital.

## Tips for Healthy Holiday Eating

Whalen suggests that you:

- Plan ahead
- Control portion sizes
- Cut sodium and fat
- Flavor with herbs and spices
- Group a special dish with lower calorie items, such as fruits and vegetables
- Stick with calorie-free drinks, such as water or seltzer
- Limit alcoholic beverages
- Eat until you are satisfied, not stuffed

## Can You Splurge and Eat Healthy?

Is it possible to splurge on a few special holiday treats and still maintain a healthy food plan? “Absolutely!” according to Whalen. “Create a plan, and stick to it. Do not skip meals. Enjoy your healthy eating plan before and after your holiday treats. Eat slowly, be present and relish every bite of your meal.”

## Emotions and Holiday Eating

Whalen shared, “The holidays can be an emotional time of year for many reasons. When enjoying family favorite recipes, reminisce about how they became favorites. Turn memories into positive emotions. Enjoy and share those emotions with friends and family members.”

## Shopping for Holiday Ingredients

Temptations lurk in every aisle of the supermarket. To be successful at healthy holiday eating, make a shopping list and stick to it!

## Lean Pork Roast

The hospital's Executive Chef, Leo Short, suggests trying out this healthy and hearty comfort food in the fall.

### Ingredients

- 5 lbs. boneless lean pork loin
- 2 Tbsp. garlic, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. fresh rosemary, chopped
- 2 Tsp. coarse salt
- 1 Tbsp. black pepper, freshly ground
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 2 Tsp. lemon juice
- 2 Tsp. brown sugar

### Preparation

Combine oil, vinegar, garlic and seasonings and rub onto pork loin. Allow pork to marinate in the refrigerator for one to two hours. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Roast pork for 15 to 18 minutes per pound until internal temperature reaches 155 degrees. Pairs well with roasted root vegetables or asparagus.



# The Mindful Five

## Tap Into Your Five Senses This Fall

By Suzanne Dumaresq

**T**he onset of fall in New England offers an inviting opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, cooler temperatures and brilliant foliage. Be sure to take it — and enjoy a brisk walk in the autumn air to boost your mood and energy level as well as reduce stress and anxiety. Make the most of your stroll by silencing your phone. Focus on tapping into your five senses. Begin by focusing on your breath. Then, gently shift your concentration to one sense at a time, as though each is new to you.

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Gaze around your surroundings. **SEE** the colors, shapes and textures. Is there anything special or refreshing about what you see?

---

Listen to the sounds in the air. What do you **HEAR**? Can you make out sounds that are new or interesting to you?

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As you walk, contemplate the air's **SMELL**. Is it fresh? Is it pleasant? Does it bring to mind a particular feeling or memory?

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Turn your attention to your mouth. Feel your tongue against your teeth. Do you **TASTE** anything?

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Stop walking for a moment. **TOUCH** a tree or flower — maybe a leaf or blade of grass. How does it feel? Is it familiar or unfamiliar? Rough or smooth?

As your walk comes to an end, take a moment to truly appreciate the season's splendor. Draw in a deep breath and exhale. Finally, schedule a bit of time for yourself to be mindful each and every day.



# Check-up Checklist

## Preparing for Your Appointment

By Suzanne Dumaresq

**M**aybe you feel fantastic and you appreciate your good health. Maybe you're ill, not feeling quite right and you're in search of some answers. Either way, your appointment is on the calendar and right around the corner. In the past, you tended to "wing it." However, now that you're older — and wiser — you understand the importance of being prepared and making the most of the visit with your provider.

No matter how old you are, it's important to cultivate and maintain a relationship with your provider. Especially as you age, your need for care changes. Here are a few simple steps to help you take an active role in your appointment.

### Prepare Yourself

Don't wait until you're sitting in the waiting room. Take the time to prepare a list of medications and the doses you're taking — include supplements and vitamins, jot down any symptoms you're having or specific questions you'd like to ask. And, of course, be ready to discuss your medical history.

### Share Details

Be forthcoming about what you're thinking and how you're feeling. The more insight and information you provide about your history and what you're experiencing, the better position your provider is in to advise, treat and care for you.

### Ask Questions

Remember, your goal is to have a collaborative, productive visit. Be an active participant. Don't hesitate to interact with your provider. Ask questions or voice concerns as they come up during your visit. Write down responses and suggestions as you get them to refer back to later.

### Ask for a Referral

Some symptoms may require evaluation by a specialist. Typically, providers welcome this type of collaboration and are happy to refer patients to an appropriate specialist for further evaluation.

### Recap Your Visit

Before departing the provider's office, spend a few moments with your doctor recapping your visit. Make sure the two of you are on the same page in regard to a referral, diagnosis, medications, treatment, next steps and follow-up.

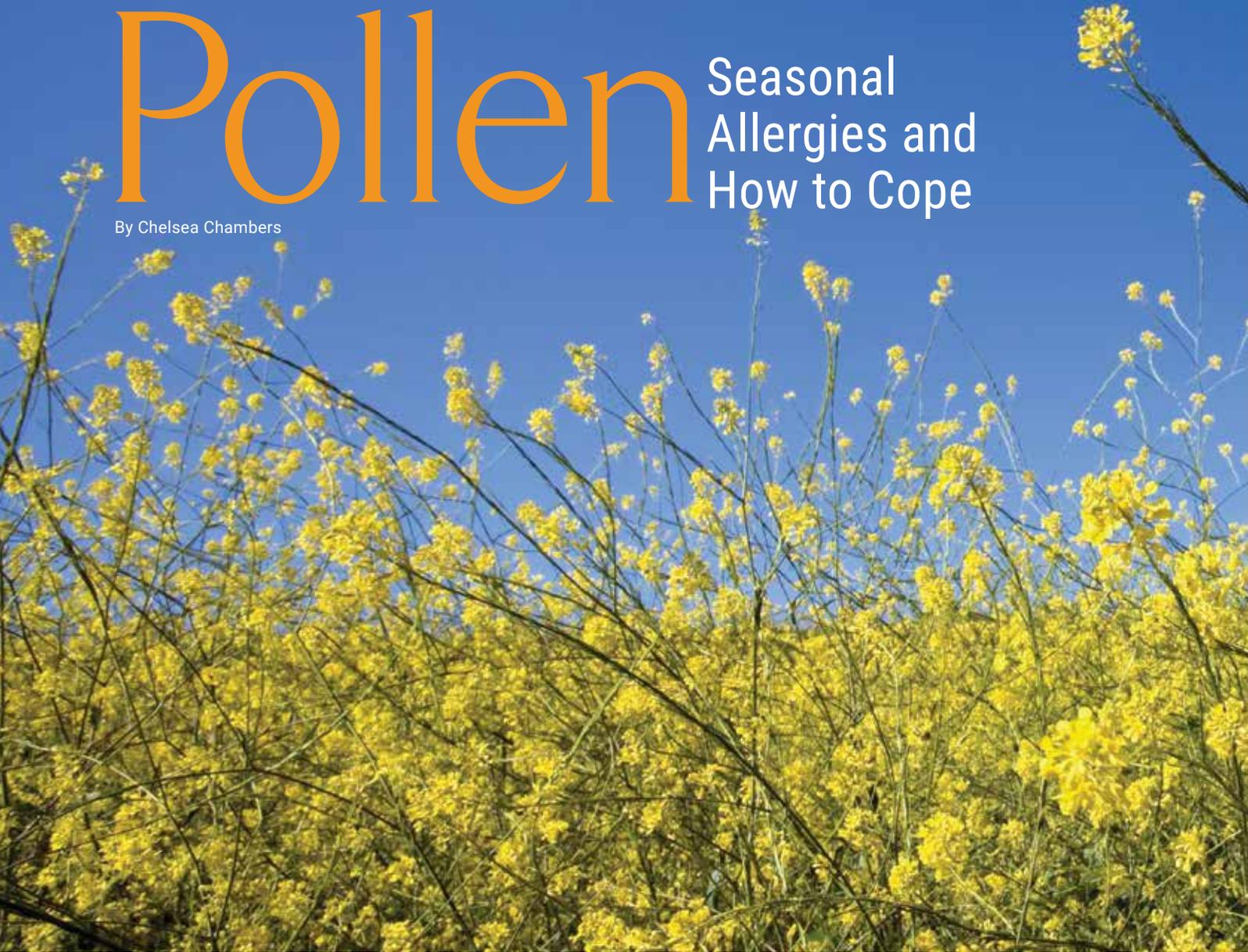
These five simple steps also apply to a virtual health visit, which became a more popular option during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you are scheduling time with your provider virtually, you'll need to take one additional step — be sure you test the conferencing or video technology you plan to use prior to your visit.

# Fallin', for

# Pollen

## Seasonal Allergies and How to Cope

By Chelsea Chambers



**T**he seasons are changing, the leaves are ablaze with color, and the air turns cooler with each passing day — it is truly a beautiful time of year in New England. Despite the natural beauty, for the estimated 50 million Americans suffering from fall allergies, it's a whole different story.

### What can cause fall allergies?

The primary culprits of seasonal allergies can persist well into frost season — namely, mold and pollen. Mold can be found anywhere, anytime, indoors and out. Tree pollen, such as those from maple, oak

and birch, can spread throughout the growing season. Grasses and low-to-the-ground weeds may also be a cause for concern.

Perhaps the biggest allergen of all is ragweed. This plant produces tiny yellow flowers with extremely high levels of pollen. The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America estimates that between 10% and 20% of the American population (more than 40 million people) have an allergic reaction to ragweed specifically. And because ragweed pollen is so small and light, it can travel hundreds of miles by air. So even if you aren't in close proximity, the allergy-riddled plant can still make its way into your home, eyes and sinuses.

## What are the symptoms of allergies?

Allergy symptoms vary from person to person, which is why it can often be difficult to diagnose without proper testing. But on average, most people experience the following symptoms:

### Most common symptoms may include:

- Sneezing
- Runny, stuffed or clogged nose
- Itchy, watery eyes that may be red in color
- Shortness of breath or chest tightness

- Cough
- Swelling of the face, tongue, eyes or lips
- Dark circles around the eyes
- Dry, cracked skin
- Headaches

### Other less common symptoms may include:

- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Vertigo or dizziness
- Poor sleep quality resulting in grogginess

### What can be done?

If you've already ruled out COVID-19 and can confirm your symptoms are allergy-induced, then there are options to find relief. Aside from a discussion with your health care provider and finding the right allergy medicine for you, there are a few things to try to reduce the impacts of seasonal allergies.

- Keep track of pollen counts. Pollen.com and the weather apps on most smartphones will calculate these totals for you.
- Stay inside on windy, dry days.
- Wear a mask when doing outside chores.

- Take off outside layers before going into your home to avoid spreading allergens indoors. Pollen can also adhere to clothes and skin.
- Avoid outdoor activities in the morning, as pollen counts are at their highest at this time.
- Vacuum floors often with a high efficiency or HEPA filter vacuum cleaner.
- Be sure to keep your windows closed and look into air filtration options, which have been shown to reduce the effects of some allergens.



# Prevention and Detection

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

By Chelsea Chambers

**E**arlier this year, the World Health Organization announced that breast cancer was the most common cancer on a global scale, substantially surpassing lung, liver and cervical cancer. In fact, The National Cancer Institute anticipates a diagnosis of more than 280,000 new breast cancer cases in 2021 in the U.S. alone. This is the number one reason why it is imperative to get frequent screenings and do regular self-screening. Early detection can be a lifesaver. And keep in mind, while dramatically lower, men can also be at risk for breast cancer. Today, nearly 2,000 men are diagnosed annually.

## Screening

A screening is a preemptive check for disease, typically done before symptoms appear. If something is found, screenings can also help detect whether cancer cells are slow- or fast-growing. Early detection is the primary reason for screening.

The current guidance, while ever-changing, is that women in their mid 40s should begin regular screening practices, ideally on an annual basis. However, those with a history of breast cancer in their families should start considerably earlier. Screening options may include mammogram, MRI, breast exam, thermography and more.

## Self-Screening

A good starting place for everyone, regardless of age or risk level, is at-home self-screening,

which should be done at least on a monthly basis. Here's how:

**Step 1:** Begin with a visual examination. Take note of any obvious changes in size, shape or color.

**Step 2:** Raise your arms and repeat step one.

**Step 3:** Lay flat on your back. With a firm touch of your fingers, move in a circular motion around each breast, one at a time.

**Step 4:** Repeat step three while sitting or standing. Carefully feel for any noticeable lumps or changes in tissue.

**Step 5:** Take note of any changes and discuss them with your healthcare provider right away.

## Prevention

If you do have a family history of breast cancer, or simply want to take extra precautions, there are some additional steps to help protect yourself.

- **Limit alcohol**
- **Quit smoking**
- **Maintain a healthy weight**
- **Eat well and avoid processed foods**
- **Educate yourself** and talk with your physician about the possible risks of hormone replacement therapy drugs. Many have been linked to cancer cell growth.

# Welcome to the Family

## Quarantine Companions

By Chelsea Chambers

**D**uring the pandemic, many people across the nation welcomed new family members by giving an animal a loving home — kudos to you! That's been a wonderful thing for most families, as they've experienced not only the daily joy pets can bring to a household, but also an improved overall quality of life.

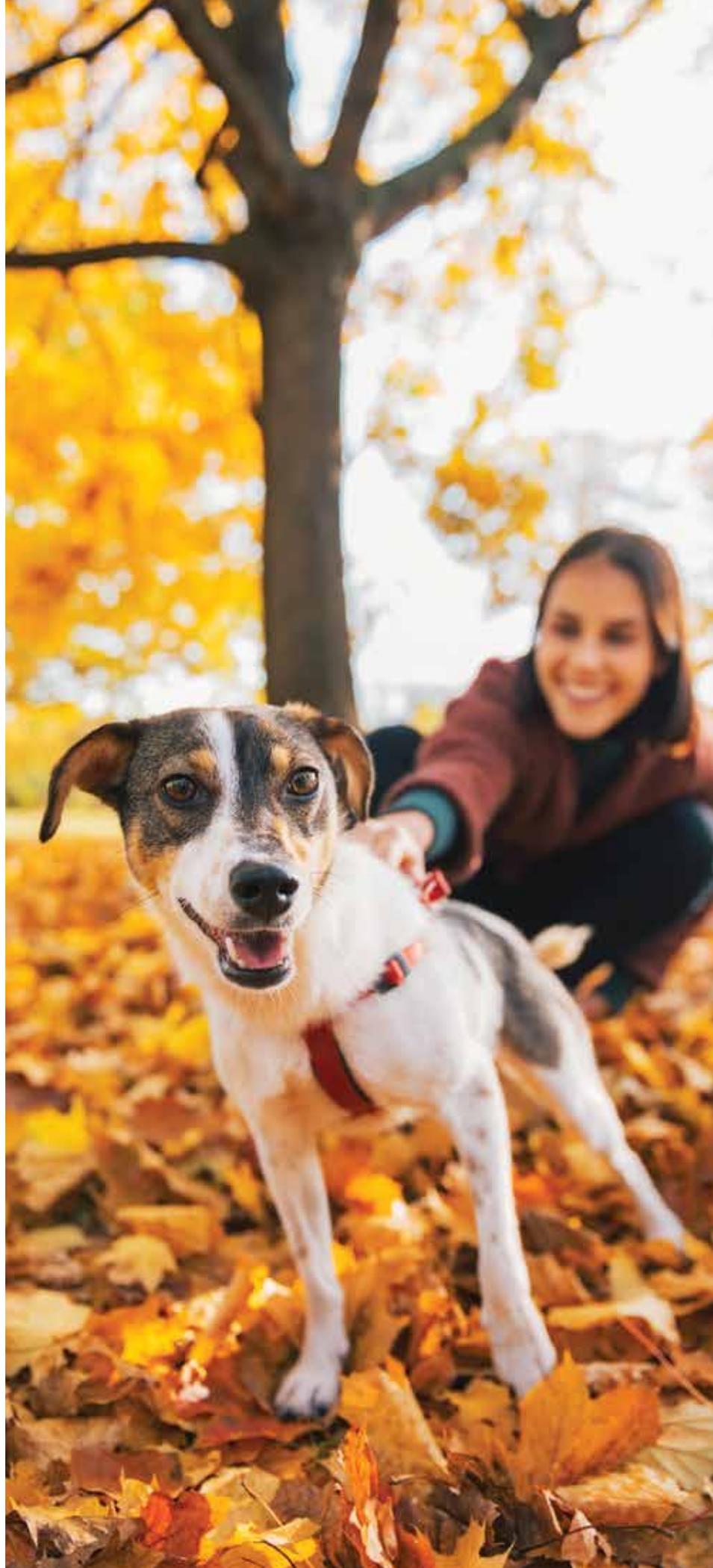
### Love, Companionship and Laughter

It's a demonstrable fact that pets help humans reduce their stress levels — when they're not contributing to them — which improves emotional health. When the pandemic brought worry, working from home, mask mandates, home schooling and more, pets delivered their humans much-needed love, companionship and laughter. Just as importantly, our pets serve as a constant reminder to live in the present, enjoy the little things and appreciate each day.

### Improved Health

According to a recent study from the American Heart Association, pet owners — specifically dog owners — were 54% more likely to get their recommended daily exercise. So, beyond the emotional benefits a pet can provide, they also often encourage us to get outside and move — whether we're walking, running or playing. As a result, pet owners typically enjoy better heart health than non-pet owners.

In New England, autumn is just about here. It brings a unique opportunity to enjoy the outdoors in cooler temperatures. Get out there, make the most of it and enjoy some quality time with your favorite canine walking companion.



# Family-Friendly Fun

## It's About Connecting with the Community

By Suzanne Dumaresq



Kendall Reyes with his wife, Kristin, and three children Kyla, KJ and Kenzie.

St. Joseph Hospital's mission is clear — provide healing and care for the whole person, in service to all in its communities. To help bring that message to families in Greater Nashua, St. Joe's recently introduced a new Ambassador of Health and Wellness.

"We welcomed Kendall Reyes, former NFL player, community activist and local resident to our community outreach team earlier this year," said John Jurczyk, president of St. Joseph Hospital and Covenant Health senior vice president. "Our overarching goal is to connect with families in

Please visit the hospital's Facebook page or its website at [stjosephhospital.com](http://stjosephhospital.com) for more information about opportunities to connect, have some fun and be well!

our community in new, different and fun ways. We want to partner with other non-profits and take a family-friendly approach to educating parents and kids on local resources and fun events that benefit their overall health and wellness."

In recent months, the hospital has worked with:

- Boys & Girls Club of Greater Nashua on the Reyes Family Fun Day, which raises money to support the club's programs.
- Nashua's Healthy Kids Running Series, a five-week series that encourages consistent activity and fitness for youth. St. Joe's will be sponsoring the fall event, too!

# Breast Cancer Awareness With Dr. Manoli



During Breast Cancer Awareness month, Sabine H. Manoli, M.D., FACS, a breast surgeon at the St. Joseph Hospital Breast Care Center, answers questions about maintaining breast health.

## What are the best ways to find breast cancer early?

The 2D mammogram has largely been replaced by 3D mammograms for early detection of breast cancer, especially in dense breasts. Combined with monthly self-exams, these are our best tools. Other ways of finding breast cancer are ultrasound, breast MRI and needle biopsy to confirm if lumps are cancerous.

## Why are yearly mammograms important?

The earlier you find breast cancer, the more treatment options you have and the better your long-term survival. The American Society of Breast Surgeons recommends mammograms start in most women at age 40 or in high-risk women with a family or personal history of breast or ovarian cancers or mutations in BRCA-1 or BRCA-2 genes at earlier risk-determined ages. I had breast cancer at age 45, and if I hadn't had my mammogram, it would not have been discovered until much later.

## What's the best time to do a breast self-exam?

For women still menstruating, start doing self-exams at age 18 every month the week following your cycle. After menopause, continue monthly self-exams when you flip to a new calendar month, as a simple reminder.

## What should I look for in a breast self-exam?

Normal breast tissue does not feel perfectly soft like a pillow. Self-exams help you become aware of normal lumps or bumps for you. If a lump changes, becomes more firm, or gets larger, see your doctor.

## How do I perform an exam?

There are three parts to breast self-exams. While lying down with your arms overhead, use your opposite hand to feel each breast. Using several grouped fingers in a small circular or lawnmower pattern, search your breast from your collarbone to your ribs and armpit to cleavage. Use light, medium and firm pressure to search all layers of your breast tissue. Follow the same process while sitting. Finally, look at your breasts in the mirror with hands on your hips and also with arms overhead. Call your doctor immediately if you notice any of the following:

- Lumps, redness or swelling in the breast
- Skin dimpling, thickening or puckering
- Changes in breast size or shape
- Changes in the nipple, such as nipple inversion or non-milky discharge
- Swollen lymph nodes under the arm

For more information, contact your provider.

# Being There

## Supporting Seniors This Holiday Season

By Suzanne Dumaresq

**T**he upcoming holiday season will bring families together — many who may not have seen one another since the COVID-19 pandemic. It's a time for gatherings and celebrations. It's also an opportunity to check-in on aging family members and friends and reconnect in ways that make sense in the “new normal.”

### Connect With a Senior

Some tips on how to reach out and brighten up a senior's day:

**Be Available** – Take time to keep in touch

**Be Present** – When chatting, really listen

**Be Dependable** – Don't reschedule visits

**Help Seniors Find New Ways to Keep in Touch** – Determine what technology they're comfortable with and teach them to use text and social media to keep up with family and friends.

### Evaluate a Senior's Wellness

If you haven't seen a loved one for a period of time, it's important to have realistic expectations. Signs of physical aging may be more obvious, but be on the lookout for the emotional toll of the past year. There may be cause for concern or a need for intervention, support or professional care if a senior is experiencing:

- Sadness or a depressed mood lasting for more than two weeks
- Tiredness or a loss of interest in things once enjoyed
- A change in weight or loss of appetite
- Trouble concentrating or making decisions
- Anxiety, agitation or restlessness

If you're concerned about your loved one, please contact Peter Burke with the Senior Behavioral Health Unit at [pburke1@covh.org](mailto:pburke1@covh.org) or call 603.884.5560



### If You Need Support

For families in need of inpatient mental health care for their aging loved one, you can turn to the Senior Behavioral Health Unit at St. Joseph Hospital.

“In many cases, older adults tend to believe in pulling themselves up by their bootstraps, but that doesn't work if they're suffering from depression,” said Jodi Marshall, M.D., medical director of the senior behavioral health unit at St. Joseph Hospital. “Our dedicated team is here to provide compassionate care to those who need it in the later stages of life.”



# Think Pink

## The 11th Annual Pink Ride is Coming Up

By Suzanne Dumaresq

**W**ith October and Breast Cancer Awareness Month just around the corner, it's an ideal time to consider The Pink Ride, a fundraising event that has been held for 10 years running and raised more than \$160,000 for St. Joseph Hospital's Breast and Oncology Care Center.

### What is it?

The event is a snowmobile ride held by the local club, the Hollis Nor'Easters. The upcoming event will be held in February, 2022, in Hollis. And, yes — riders are encouraged to don pink attire of all kinds – hats, gloves and safety gear — and enjoy a winter day and a sled ride to help support an incredibly worthy cause.

Over 10 years, the funds raised by this event have been invaluable in providing cancer patients access to immediate, expert and compassionate care in their local community. The hospital's Breast Care and Oncology Care Center offers advanced diagnostic and treatment options. Patients can rest assured they'll receive the high-quality care

If you're interested in learning about opportunities to support St. Joe's, please visit [stjosephhospital.com](http://stjosephhospital.com) or contact **Deb Tighe**, Executive Director of Philanthropy, at **603.884.4343** or [dtighe@covh.org](mailto:dtighe@covh.org)

and considerable support they'll need to take on what may be a challenging journey.

### What's the Impact?

Most recently, funds raised were used to purchase a state-of-the-art LOCALizer. This new, non-invasive system precisely guides the surgeon to the exact location of a lump. Improving the efficiency of this procedure typically reduces a patient's stress level and shortens surgery. "It's new technology we were excited to implement to improve care," shared Sabine H. Manoli, M.D., FACS, a breast surgeon at the St. Joseph Hospital.

### Support Pink Events

The snowmobile ride has been so successful, the Hollis Nor'Easters have expanded the fun and fundraising to include the Pink Motorcycle Ride and the Pink Equestrian Ride. For event details and information on how to participate, please visit [noreasters.org](http://noreasters.org).



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