



**Baystate
Health**

every
WomanTM 

Published for members of the Baystate Health Every Woman program



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Virtual Events

To register for any of the virtual events visit BaystateHealth.org/EveryWoman and scroll to the bottom of the page or visit BaystateHealth.org/Events. Questions? Email Sue.Fontaine@BaystateHealth.org or call 413-794-5200.

Deep Brain Stimulation

Friday, February 19, 6-7 pm



Dr. Ogbuji

We can all experience tremors, twitching, muscle spasms, and clumsiness but these, and more, can also be early signs of movement disorders or Parkinson's Disease. Different disorders of brain function result in different diseases. Most of them are treated medically but also now with surgery.

Join Dr. Richard Ogbuji, neurosurgeon,

Baystate Neurosurgery, for a discussion about Deep Brain Stimulation to reduce tremors and block involuntary movement disorders including such conditions such as Parkinson's disease, Essential Tremors and Dystonia. There will be time for questions and answers.

How to Boost Your Resilience in a Pandemic

Thursday, February 25, 6-7 pm



Dr. Sanderson

Now that 2020 is over and we are working to move forward during a pandemic, a new expression "pandemic fatigue" seems to identify with most of us. Figuring out how to relieve the stress, anxiety and fear for ourselves and loved ones during these challenging times is so important.

Join Dr. Catherine Sanderson, Amherst

College Professor, author, speaker, examines what research in psychology tells us about how adverse events such as a global pandemic, can lead to positive outcomes.

NEW! Baystate HEALTH BEAT is a new monthly email publication with health information, inspiring stories, events & more! Visit BaystateHealth.org to sign up.

Baystate Health Beat

Practical health tips from trusted experts

Libido Deep Dive

Wednesday, March 10, 6-7 pm



Anastasia Hallisey, CNM

Libido can fluctuate over a woman's life. While it could be hormones, there are many factors that could play a role such as psychological and physical issues, including stress. This can affect our relationships with the ones we love. Join Anastasia Hallisey, CNM, MSN, Baystate Midwifery, an expert on pelvic pain and sexual

wellness, for a candid and encouraging discussion about the highs, lows, causes, characteristics, and treatments for libido. There will be time for questions and answers.

Sleepless Nights, Drowsy Days: Diagnosing Sleep Disorders

Wednesday, March 24, 6-7 pm

An estimated 50-70 million U.S. adults have a sleep or wakefulness disorder such as sleep apnea, snoring, sleep walking, restless leg syndrome, or other

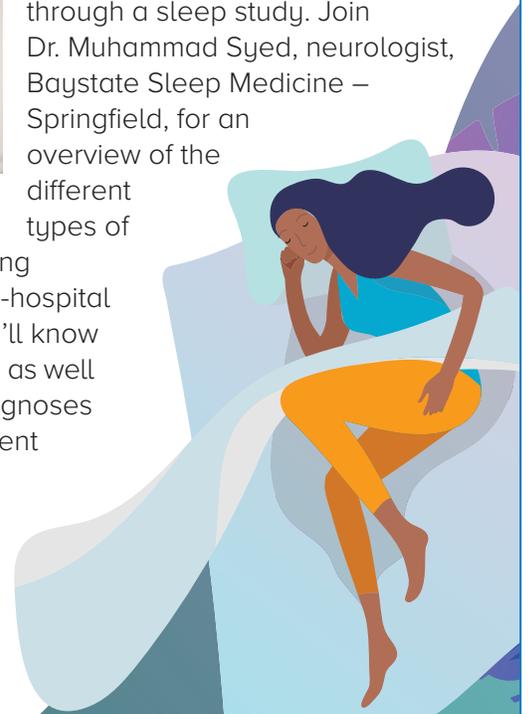


Dr. Syed

problems. One of the best ways to diagnose a sleep disorder is through a sleep study. Join Dr. Muhammad Syed, neurologist, Baystate Sleep Medicine – Springfield, for an overview of the

different types of

studies, including in-home and in-hospital studies, so you'll know what to expect, as well as common diagnoses and the treatment options.



HEART & VASCULAR

2021 Virtual Lecture Series

Join us for all or part of the free annual virtual series to learn about the latest advances in heart and vascular care. There will be time for questions and answers. To register, visit [BaystateHealth.org/Heart](https://www.baystatehealth.org/Heart).



Aaron Kugelmass, MD

SUNDAY | FEBRUARY 7 | 12 - 1 PM

Aaron Kugelmass, MD – Chief, Department of Cardiology

The COVID Heart: Effects of COVID-19 on the Heart, What We Know to Date

Join Dr. Aaron Kugelmass as he walks through what's been learned about how COVID-19 may affect the heart, the treatments available, and Baystate Health's response to this challenging disease.



Quinn Pack, MD



Patrick Schilling,
BS, ACSM-RCEP

SUNDAY | FEBRUARY 14 | 12 - 1 PM

Quinn Pack, MD – Preventive Cardiologist

Patrick Schilling, BS, ACSM-RCEP – Clinical Exercise Physiologist

Cardiac Risk Factors and Wellness in the Era of COVID-19

Join Dr. Quinn Pack and Patrick Schilling, CEP, as they explain how changes in our behavior have impacted our cardiac risk factors during the Covid-19 pandemic. They'll discuss what we can do to keep our heart healthy and strong despite these challenging times.



Zachry Zichittella, MD

SUNDAY | FEBRUARY 21 | 12 - 1 PM

Zachry Zichittella, MD – Cardiologist

"Am I Having a Heart Attack?"

Listen as Dr. Zachry Zichittella discusses what a heart attack is, the different symptoms associated with a heart attack and the importance of taking action. Learn about the coordinated response when help is needed fast.



Fadi Chalhoub, MD

SUNDAY | FEBRUARY 28 | 12 - 1 PM

Fadi Chalhoub, MD – Cardiac Electrophysiologist

The Heart's Electrical System and Latest Treatments

Spend time with Dr. Fadi Chalhoub as he reviews the role of the heart's electrical system and discusses the latest technology available to treat dysrhythmias, including leadless pacemakers.



DON'T GIVE UP ON YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS JUST YET!

Here's how to make them count.

2020 has taken quite the toll on all of us. Many have worked to take care of sick loved ones or mourned the death of a friend. Parents and their children have had to adjust to hybrid or completely virtual learning. Others have fighting off loneliness with video chatting friends and picking up hobbies. Still others have struggled with job loss and a struggling economy.

With the New Year, many of us hope for a better future altogether.

We can take our future into our own hands by crafting attainable goals that can be accomplished through smaller, more manageable steps.

Health Screenings



With so many health websites at your fingertips, it can be easy to search your symptoms online and find the worst diagnosis.

But nothing beats getting officially screened, especially if you have a history of different illnesses or conditions in your family.

- 1. Get Screened for Type 2 Diabetes:** The American Diabetes Association encourages you to take this quick online test to see if you are at risk for type 2 diabetes.
- 2. Get Screened for Lung Cancer:** If you are an older current or former smoker, talk to your doctor about getting screened for lung cancer. Medicare covers those who are at the highest risk.
- 3. Get a Colonoscopy:** If you have a family history of colorectal cancer, personal history of polyps, or have lifestyle risk factors like obesity or smoking, ask your doctor about scheduling a colonoscopy. It's a great way for people age 50 or older to prevent colon cancer. It may even save your life!
- 4. Know your risk:** Take 5 minutes to learn your risk for heart attack and stroke, and learn about actions you can take minimize those risks. Check out the American Heart Association's tool for calculating your risk.

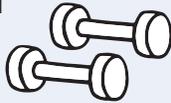
Exercise



Work on mind and body this year!

1. Exercise your brain: There's no known way to prevent Alzheimer's disease, but doctors encourage you to keep your brain active. Pick a couple days a week or a specific time in your day to do crossword puzzles or brain games. You can get your friends and family involved in this resolution by playing games like chess or bridge.

2. Exercise your body: You may not feel comfortable going to the gym just yet. Through different internet videos and articles, you can create your own at-home workouts. Dr. Wilson Mertens of Cancer Services for the Baystate Regional Cancer Program says even "moderately vigorous" walking 3-5 hours per week (or 30 minutes most days of the week) can lower rates of breast and colorectal cancer. You don't have to run a marathon every week. Just commit to doing more than what you are right now.



The key to achieving your goals may be breaking it down into smaller, achievable, and measurable steps.

"Achievable" is defined by you. If you know you can't make it to the gym seven days a week, don't make that a goal. Start off with going two days a week and work your way up. That way, you don't get as discouraged, and you have small victories to celebrate.

The same can be applied to mental exercise goals. Don't promise yourself you'll become a grandmaster at chess. Take a month to learn the rules. Take a month to play mini games. Take a month to play against a computer. You'll get there.

Healthy Home



Get a fresh start in the new year by having a tidy home. This could help reduce asthma triggers.

1. Deep clean your house: Scrubbing down your entire home can seem daunting. Break up the cleaning into smaller chunks. Clean the junk drawer one week (and don't keep throwing things in there!), and clean out your closet the next.

2. Make cleaning a routine: Write a list of all of the things that need to get done and put them in your calendar as "appointments." That could mean vacuuming happens every Tuesday after work. You could book yourself a "dusting date" every Thursday morning, making sure to tackle

Spending Quality Time

This year, make sure you cherish the ones you love. Show them you care by spending quality time with friends and family.

"The breakfast, lunch, or dinner table is a good place to start when everyone can share their day and you can listen," Dr. Barry Sarvet, the chair of Behavioral Health, said.



Some things you can do with family and friends from a distance?

- **Have a movie night:** Some streaming services give you the option to sync your screens so you can watch a movie at the same time – while continuing your video chat.
- **Play virtual game:** There are some online platforms and chatting apps that let you play games with people virtually. There are even virtual escape rooms!
- **Have a meal "together":** Even though you may not be able to sit down around the table together, you can video chat the ones you love during a meal. You can even show off your culinary creations and swap cooking tips!
- **Attend a virtual concert:** Many artists have been putting on virtual musical events during the pandemic. Billboard lists some upcoming events you can stream with your loved ones.
- **Take a virtual trip to a museum:** Your together time can be educational too! Some museums are offering free virtual tours, including the National Museum of National History. You can take a walk-through together virtually, and each share your favorite facts you find out!

Go easy on yourself



While it's good to have some accomplishments under your belt for the new year, remember to give yourself a break.

These are hard times, and it's okay to feel overwhelmed.

If you're feeling stressed, make sure you get the help you need. If you need a primary care provider, visit [BaystateHealth.org/primary](https://www.baystatehealth.org/primary) or call 413-794-5412.

You can also visit [BaystateHealth.org](https://www.baystatehealth.org) and click "Find a Provider" for physician ratings, clinicians accepting new patients and virtual visits, and more.

Stress Eating During Holidays AND

Celebrating holidays and special events are glorious. And stressful. Even without a pandemic, the extra challenges of family, travel, shopping and food can shift you into stress mode. This year, with COVID-19, you may also be concerned about your eating and exercise habits.

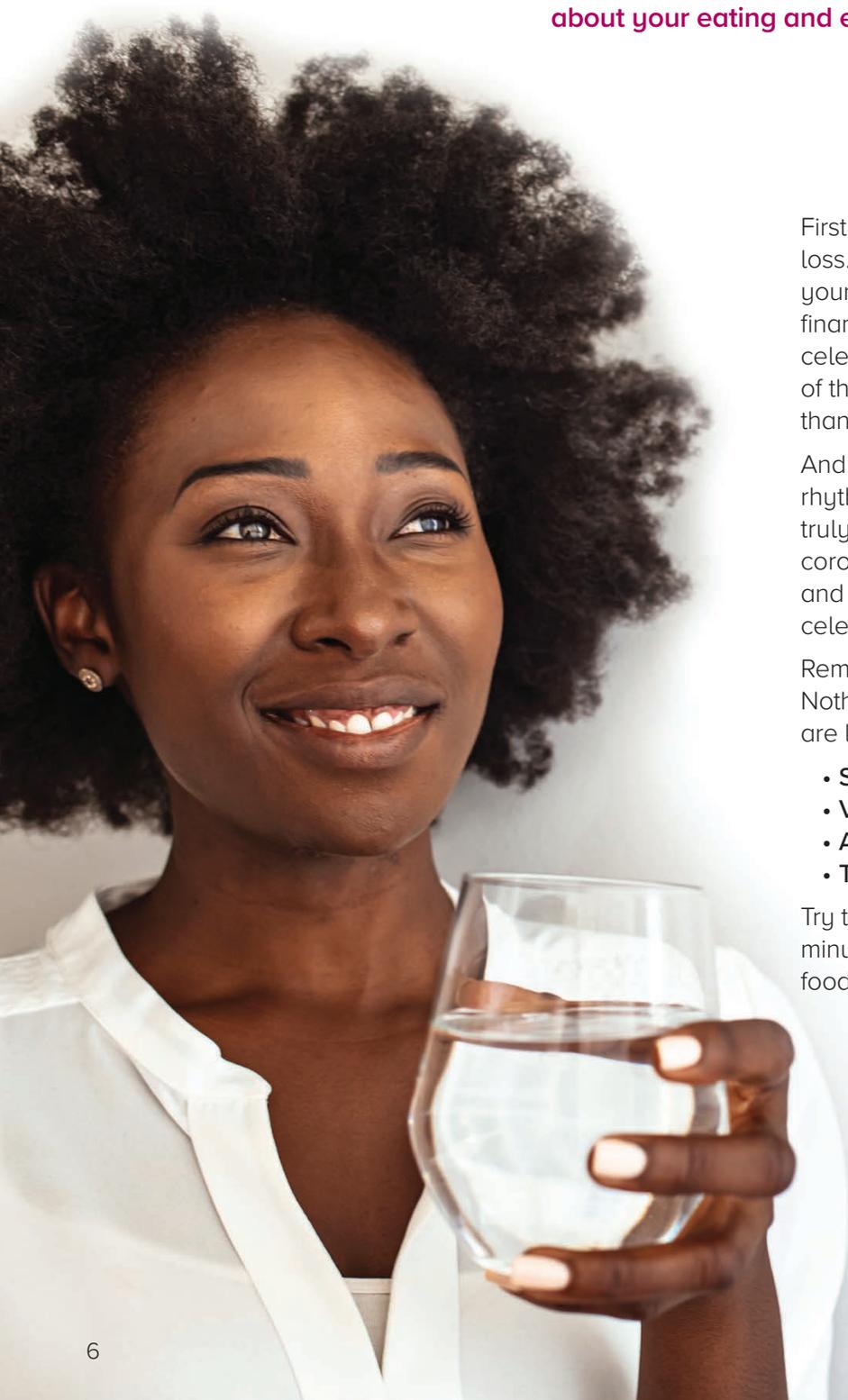
First, acknowledge your feelings of anxiety and loss. It's sad to imagine the family circle without your loved ones. If the pandemic affected your finances, you may be worried about how to celebrate any holidays the way you'd like. All of those feelings may push you to eat more than you'd like or less healthy than you'd like.

And while the pandemic has changed many of our rhythms, it's highlighted how valuable our health truly is. Take steps to protect yourself from the coronavirus — and steps to care for your emotional and mental health. Developing an eating plan for celebrations may help you feel more in control.

Remember that food is just one component. Nothing beats holiday eats, it's true. But there are lots of non-food ways to celebrate:

- **Spend time with friends and family**
- **Volunteer**
- **Attend religious services**
- **Take a traditional walk or do an activity**

Try to find a small slice every day (even just 15 minutes) where you practice enjoyment without food or eating.



Covid-19: How to Deal

WHEN YOU START TO OVEREAT OR USE FOOD TO SOOTHE YOUR FEELINGS OF LONELINESS OR GRIEF — THAT'S WHEN IT'S TIME **TO TURN TO A DIFFERENT ACTIVITY.**

Here are some other tips for handling the stress of food and eating.

1. It's OK to enjoy yourself

Nutritionists and dietitians encourage people to enjoy their food. All foods are OK in appropriate amounts. YOU get to choose what those are for you. If you have a favorite cookie or cake that makes you feel like it's a celebration, enjoy it!

When you restrict your enjoyment of food, it can lead to overeating. Eat the treat as part of the celebration. Recognize that it's OK and healthy. When you start to overeat or use food to soothe your feelings of loneliness or grief — that's when it's time to turn to a different activity. Take a walk, play cards or talk to your family and friends.

2. Create new traditions

Many families have traditional dishes they prepare and eat together. That may not be possible if you can't be in the same place as your cousins. Turn it into something fun. Or have everyone make the dish and then eat it together over Zoom.

Now is a great time to start a new tradition: Pick a new recipe to make with your family or the people you're celebrating with. Food can and should be an important part of celebrating. Get creative about how to incorporate favorite dishes even though you may not be together in the same physical place.

3. Reach for water

Alcohol is fun — and delicious — but it can add a lot of calories to your daily total. Think about filling your glass with flavored seltzers, fruits like strawberries or oranges or sugar-free drink

mixes. You don't have to go full-on teetotaler — by all means, celebrate. But even saying "I'll pass" to one drink can be saying no to an extra 150 to 300 sugar-filled calories.

Saying "yes" to water is always a good idea. Staying hydrated keeps you from filling up on empty calories and helps control some of your hunger around those goodies.

4. January 1 is just a day

Many people eat more than they want because they know January 1 can be a new start. That's when they'll "turn over a new leaf." But January 1 is just a day. It's not very different from December 31.

Try saying, "I'm going to eat one treat a day during the holiday, even though I normally restrict myself." Make the daily treat part of your holiday eating plan. That way, you can still enjoy the time but not get mad later that you didn't stick to a strict eating plan.

5. Move

Continue to exercise — aim for at least 30 minutes a day. Host a dance party with friends and family over Zoom. Rake your leaves. Shovel your driveway. Studies show that exercise releases your endorphins, those feel-good hormones.

Remember that eating is just one part of the celebration. Don't let it cause even more hassle during an already stressful time. Enjoy a piece of cake and move on!



IS IT SAFE FOR PREGNANT WOMEN TO GET THE CORONAVIRUS VACCINE?

Dr. Amanda Westlake and Dr. Katie Barker. Photo Credit: Doug Hook at MassLive

That’s a question that two Baystate Medical Center doctors contemplated together recently—one a primary care physician at Baystate Mason Square Neighborhood Health Center, who is also board certified in infectious diseases—and the other an OBGYN.

Physicians are constantly reading to stay up to date on the latest medical information in their field, especially now to keep informed on the ever-changing treatments and data on coronavirus. So, it is not surprising that when Dr. Westlake visited with her OBGYN, Dr. Katie Barker of Baystate Wesson Women’s Group, she was already familiar with much of the emerging literature on pregnancy and COVID-19. However, there is no scientific study on whether or not the vaccine is safe for pregnant women.

PREGNANT WOMEN AT INCREASED RISK FOR SEVERE ILLNESS FROM COVID-19

Both doctors – who are long familiar with one another since Dr. Westlake as a medical student had done a clinical rotation at Brown University under Dr. Barker, who was a third-year resident at the time – knew what

the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) now clearly states on its website:

“Based on what we know at this time, pregnant people are at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 compared to non-pregnant people. Additionally, pregnant people with COVID-19 might be at increased risk for other adverse outcomes, such as preterm birth.”

What is also known is that COVID patients who are pregnant are 5 times more likely to end up in the intensive care unit (ICU) or on a ventilator than COVID patients who are not pregnant. And pregnant women are more likely to die of COVID than non-pregnant women of the same age with COVID.

But when the two doctors came together to discuss whether Dr. Westlake should get the coronavirus vaccine, the answer wasn’t that simple.

NO SIMPLE ANSWER

“Pfizer did not include pregnant women in its clinical trials to establish the safety and efficacy of their vaccine (it is common in clinical trials to exclude pregnant women). That was unfortunate because our professional organization, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) has long advocated for women to be involved in vaccine trials,” said Dr. Barker.

“As a result, we do not have specific data on which to make a decision about pregnant women receiving the vaccine. However, we have no reason now to suspect that it would work differently or be harmful to pregnant women, which is something I tell my patients every day,” she added.

And, when studies are completed on the vaccine’s effects on pregnant women now being inoculated against the virus, Dr. Barker said she would be surprised if they discover anything unexpected.

For Dr. Westlake, her personal answer was clear: the benefits of receiving the vaccine far outweigh the risks. And, as a frontline healthcare worker, she was vaccinated in December as Baystate rolled out the Pfizer vaccine to employees.

As the Pfizer vaccine came closer to receiving Emergency Use Authorization from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the two doctors wanted to share what they knew to help other pregnant healthcare workers make an informed decision about getting the coronavirus vaccine.

SHARED DECISION-MAKING

That’s when Dr. Barker received a precipitous call from Dr. Lauren Westafer an Emergency Medicine physician at Baystate, who was looking to find out how obstetricians at Baystate were counseling pregnant doctors who would soon be eligible for the vaccine. Recognizing that this guidance would be widely needed, the Shared Decision-Making: COVID Vaccination in Pregnancy working group at the University of Massachusetts Medical School – Baystate was created under the leadership of Dr. Elizabeth Schoenfeld, another Emergency Medicine physician at Baystate.

Dr. Schoenfeld, a shared decision-making researcher in the hospital’s Institute for Healthcare Delivery and Population Science, has experience making decision aids to help patients make decisions together with their doctors. Because of the lack of evidence to guide recommendations for pregnant women, a shared decision aid was needed to help women understand the risks and benefits and the unknowns. Dr. Schoenfeld was asked to make a decision aid by Dr. Andrew Artenstein, chief physician executive and chief academic officer for Baystate Health. As the health system’s COVID-19 incident commander, Dr. Artenstein at the time of the call was planning Baystate’s vaccine distribution.

“Shared decision-making helps patients understand their choices and come to an informed decision with their doctors about their care. It is a way for patients to have their voices heard when deciding what the next step in their medical care will be. And a decision aid is a tool to help facilitate a discussion between a doctor and patient such as, “Should I get the coronavirus vaccine,” said Dr. Schoenfeld.

The clinical researcher noted that “in general the vaccine is highly recommended and safe” and although there was no hard data available on pregnancy and the vaccine, it wasn’t as if “there was no evidence at all about the vaccine to share in an aid.”

“Certainly, for many pregnant women the pros outweigh the cons,” said Dr. Schoenfeld, who noted that when putting together the decision aid it was important to involve multiple stakeholders, such as maternal-fetal medicine experts, COVID experts, and pregnant healthcare workers.

I’M PREGNANT. SHOULD I GET THE COVID VACCINE?

The result is a 6-page decision aid (pdf) on the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines that starts with the basics: “I’m pregnant. Should I get a COVID vaccine?” It discusses a woman’s options, the benefits and risks of getting an mRNA COVID vaccine, and other information to help pregnant women make an informed decision. There are also additional details about breastfeeding, noting the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) and the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM) report that

WOMEN WILL WANT TO THINK ABOUT THEIR OWN RISK OF GETTING COVID OR GETTING SEVERE COVID AND BALANCE THAT RISK WITH THE RISKS OF THE VACCINE – WHICH ARE THOUGHT TO BE SMALL, BUT ARE RELATIVELY UNKNOWN.

there is no reason to believe that the vaccine affects the safety of breastmilk.

So, what are the main points in the shared decision-making tool from experts for pregnant women thinking about getting the coronavirus vaccine?

Because COVID is dangerous and easily spread, the CDC says that the mRNA vaccines for COVID-19 are recommended for adults.

However, because there are no studies of pregnant women yet, there are no clear recommendations for pregnant women. This is standard for a new drug and is not due to any particular concern with this vaccine.

Women will want to think about their own risk of getting COVID or getting severe COVID and balance that risk with the risks of the vaccine – which are thought to be small, but are relatively unknown.

WHAT IS MRNA?

mRNA vaccines are a new type of vaccine to protect against infectious diseases. To trigger an immune response, many vaccines put a weakened or inactivated germ into our bodies. Not mRNA vaccines. Instead, they teach our cells how to make a protein—or even just a piece of a protein—that triggers an immune response inside our bodies. That immune response, which produces antibodies, is what protects us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies.

The tool—which is now aimed at all pregnant women, not just healthcare workers—was ultimately created under the auspices of the Shared Decision-Making: COVID Vaccination in Pregnancy working group at the University of Massachusetts Medical School – Baystate. The group consists of experts from Baystate in the fields of OBGYN, maternal-fetal medicine, emergency medicine, shared decision making and risk communications.

SHARING THE DECISION AID WIDELY

Since completing the aid, it has been shared via Twitter and with various national professional networks such as maternal fetal medicine doctors, obstetricians, emergency medicine doctors, and medical informatics leaders. Based on feedback from those who have received the aid, it is being used at Boston Medical Center, Kaiser Southern California, Mass General Hospital, and in multiple other practices including Texas, and all around the country.

“We have received so much positive feedback. In fact, one woman from Costa Rica asked if we had a Spanish version of the document. We were able to quickly create Spanish and Russian versions and have made them available as well,” said Dr. Schoenfeld.

She noted there are a few things about the vaccine that don't fit in the decision aid.

“First, it gives us hope - that we will eventually get to go back to the social world we miss so much. Second, it lets us front line workers feel better about spending more time at the bedside—I am more comfortable holding a patient's hand and lingering than I was 6 months ago. That's a nice gift for both me and my patients,” said Dr. Schoenfeld.

Visit BaystateHealth.org/OBGYN for more information for pregnant and expecting moms.



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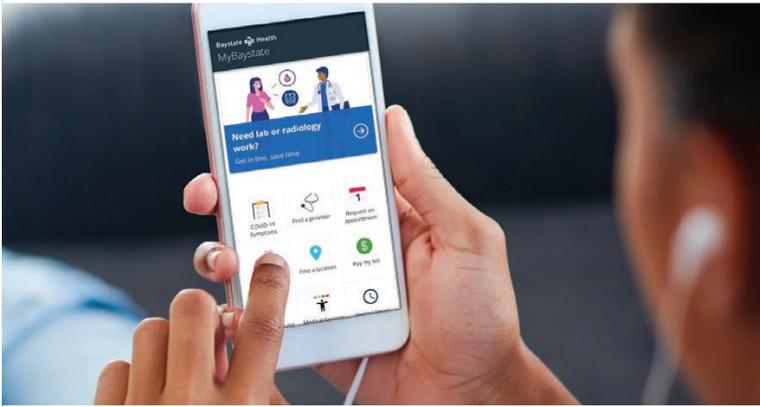
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BAYSTATE HEALTH FOUNDATION



*Kylie Johnson
Senior Philanthropy Officer
& Planned Giving Manager*

As Baystate Health connects with friends of Baystate Health Foundation, we hear the relief in many voices at finally making time to review their estate plans.

“When I completed my estate planning, I enjoyed great peace of mind. It is satisfying to know that my wishes and loved ones are taken care of.”

“I realized I had not updated my will in twenty years. So much has changed since then. Spending the time to update it gave me comfort. I could support my family and the charities I care about, like Baystate Health Foundation.”

“No one wants to think about their own death. I’ve put off making a will for years but with the coronavirus I realized the time is now. I’ve worked hard my whole life and want to make sure my assets do good for my family and the charities I love instead of going to taxes.”

If you are like 60% of Americans who have put off their estate planning, please contact us for a free **Will Guide** or **Guide to Updating Your Will** to get started today. We are here to help you enjoy peace of mind and also ensure your wishes are heard. Reach out to **Kylie Johnson** at **413-794-7789** or **Kylie.Johnson@BaystateHealth.org**. Visit **BaystateHealth.org/Giving**.



Follow us on Instagram @Baystate_Health
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When can I get a COVID-19 vaccine in MA?



PHASE ONE

In order of priority

- Clinical and non-clinical healthcare workers doing direct and COVID-facing care
- Long term care facilities, rest homes and assisted living facilities
- First responders (EMS, Fire, Police)
- Congregate care settings (including corrections and shelters)
- Home-based healthcare workers
- Healthcare workers doing non-COVID-facing care

December - February

Estimated timeframes



PHASE TWO

In order of priority

- Individuals with 2+ comorbidities and/or age 75+ (high risk for COVID-19 complications)
- Early education and K-12 workers, transit, grocery, utility, food and agriculture, sanitation, public works and public health workers
- Adults 65+
- Individuals with one comorbidity

February - April



PHASE THREE

Vaccine available to general public

April - June