

# THE PATIENT PRESCRIPTION

HOPEHEALTH

Your Health Begins Here



## Quality Spotlight - HIV/AIDS

HopeHealth's quality focus for the month of November is HIV/AIDS. This focus includes topics like increasing patients on PrEP and HIV screening measures. Below, read about treatment options for preventing HIV.

### Effective Treatments for Preventing HIV

**Harmeet Gill**  
MD

There was a time when an HIV diagnosis was considered a death sentence. Thankfully, we have come a long way! While there is no cure for HIV, with consistent treatment and medication, HIV can become undetectable, and someone with the diagnosis can have a normal, healthy life. The problem is, one needs to be aware of the diagnosis to receive treatment, and it's estimated that over 150,000 people in the US have HIV and don't know it.



Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) attacks immune cells that fight infection and disease. If left untreated, HIV can advance to acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). The immune system becomes badly damaged, and the risk of infections and other diseases is very high. Continued education about how HIV/AIDS is transmitted and the risk factors included remains vital to the health of our population.

HIV is spread by sharing bodily fluids with someone with the virus through blood, semen, seminal or vaginal fluids, rectal fluids, or breast milk. The two major risk factors for transmitting HIV are having unprotected sex or sharing needles with someone who has HIV. The virus is not spread by toilet seats or by kissing, hugging, touching, or sharing food or drink with someone who has HIV.

In 2021, the South accounted for the highest incidence of HIV, with more than half (52%) of the 32,100 estimated new HIV infections nationwide. The breakdown of how new HIV infections were acquired by percentage is as follows:

- 70% by male-to-male sexual contact
- 22% by heterosexual sex

- 8% by IV drug use

By age group, the 13-34 age group accounted for 58% of new infections. This number has thankfully decreased by almost 20% since 2017, particularly among young gay men. HIV, however, continues to have a significant impact on specific populations, including racial and ethnic minorities and homosexual men.

PEP is one of two powerful prevention strategies which greatly decrease the risk of transmission of HIV. PEP stands for post-exposure prophylaxis. Prophylaxis means to prevent or control, and the goal of PEP is to start a round of this medication immediately after being exposed or potentially exposed to HIV. PEP **MUST** be started within 72 hours after exposure - the earlier, the better. The medication is taken daily for 28 days, with visits to your provider and follow-up HIV testing during the process.

[Click here to read more about HIV prevention.](#)

## Social and Emotional Wellness During the Holidays

### Corey Remle

*Community Health Worker*

Many of us will be gathering with friends and family during the holidays. Socializing with others can bring joy, excitement, and love into our daily lives while we enjoy the season. Here are some tips for maintaining social and emotional wellness during these special times:



**Make communication a priority.** Visit or call with relatives on or before the holidays, including seniors in your family. Communicate in person, by phone or by video chat (if everyone has the technology available). Texting is the least preferred option for most seniors as it seems less personal.

**Observe holiday traditions.** Despite the busy activities of the season, make holiday traditions a priority. Decorating the home (safely!), cooking foods, baking cookies, and watching beloved television shows or movies together are great opportunities to connect with one another. Teaching children and grandchildren about traditions passed down by great-grandparents, grandparents, and other family can build feelings of warmth and love across multiple generations.

**Attend religious services.** For many people, spiritual wellness includes attending holiday religious services. Plan ahead if you are attending an event with anyone who requires additional time, transportation, or physical support for an event. The holiday celebrations, especially the music, can be uplifting for everyone involved.

**Experiencing grief is okay.** This may be the first holiday season without a loved one who passed away in the previous year. It is okay to express sadness about missing them or grief during holiday family get-togethers. Share memories and pictures as a way to remember how they enjoyed the holiday season.

**Simplify your holiday plans, if needed.** Older adults may have health-related or emotional reasons for attending fewer holiday events or attending for shorter times than initially planned. If a senior or child will be overwhelmed by large gatherings, complicated activities, or multi-hour parties, plan accordingly to give them a break. Spend some quiet time alone with them or be prepared to take them home early.

**Reach out to someone who lives alone.** We all know someone who lives alone and may not have plans for the holidays. Calling, visiting, or giving an unexpected gift to someone living alone will help them feel loved, appreciated, and included in your holiday activities. Someone living alone might prefer a quiet dinner with one or

two friends over an invitation to someone's large family reunion where most people are strangers to them.

## Holiday Closure Reminder



### **HopeHealth Holiday Hours**

Friday, December 22: 8 am - 12 pm

Saturday, December 23: Closed

Monday, December 25: Closed

Friday, December 29: 8 am - 12 pm

Saturday, December 30: Closed

Monday, January 1: Closed

### **HopeHealth Pharmacy Holiday Hours**

Friday, December 22: 9 am - 1 pm

Saturday, December 23: Closed

Monday, December 25: Closed

Friday, December 29: 8 am - 4 pm

Saturday, December 30: Closed

Monday, January 1: Closed

## Seniors with Hope Spotlight

### Holiday Recipe Feature - Spiced Pumpkin Bread

In honor of the holiday season, enjoy a recipe for spiced pumpkin bread from the winter Seniors with Hope newsletter.

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1 (15 oz) can solid pumpkin
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon allspice
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie



- spice
- 1 (16-ounce) package angel food cake mix
- 1 cup water

### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Coat bread pan or 24 muffin cups with nonfat cooking spray.
- In a large bowl combine the pumpkin, pumpkin pie spice, allspice, cinnamon, and water together until well mixed.
- Gradually stir in the dry cake mix and continue to stir until all the ingredients are well blended.
- Fill the bread pan or muffin cups half full.
- Bake for 15 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center of muffin comes out clean.



**Serving per container: 24**

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## Upcoming Seniors with Hope Events



**Seniors with Hope  
at Bethea**

**January 4, 2-3:30 PM**  
157 Home Avenue, Darlington

**Seniors with Hope**

**at the Medical Plaza**  
**January 11, 2-3:30 PM**  
**360 N. Irby Street, Florence**

### **Seniors with Hope in Kingstree**

**January 18, 2-3:30 PM**  
**520 Thurgood Marshall Hwy, Kingstree**

Seniors with Hope is held monthly and includes speakers, games, snacks, door prizes, and more. For more information about participating in the program, email **Diane Davis** or call 803-525-4241.

## **Dr. Ed Behling Receives Llewelyn Memorial Award**

Dr. Ed Behling, Chief Medical Officer, was presented the Constellation Quality Health's Timothy Llewelyn, MD Memorial Award for his dedication to quality health care and outstanding achievements in the medical field.

Constellation Quality Health President and CEO Steven Martin shared, "Dr. Behling's record of achievements and commitment to improving the standards of health care to underserved populations is an inspiration to the medical community and merits receiving the prestigious Llewelyn Memorial Award." Congratulations, Dr. Behling!



## **Medicaid Renewal Continues**



MEDICAID OR CHIP RENEWAL

### **Protect yourself from fraud**

Your state Medicaid office will **never** threaten you or your family with legal action or ask for your credit card information.

*Don't give scammers money or  
your personal information!*

**Medicaid.gov**  
Keeping America Healthy

Do you or a loved one have Medicaid or CHIP coverage? Medicaid renewals were paused due to COVID-19, but they're back! Don't wait – update! Make sure your



address and other information is up to date so that you can receive critical updates and re-apply. [SC residents can do that here.](#)

[Click here](#) to view a helpful video providing information on the Medicaid renewal process! Additionally, [click here](#) to read an article about what to know if you lose Medicaid coverage in South Carolina.

## Help Wrap Gifts for Children of Hope



Want to come wrap gifts for the 280+ children who are receiving Children of Hope gifts this year? Staff and volunteers will be wrapping several nights a week for the next several weeks and need your help - bring a friend!

[Click here to register.](#)

## Access Hope: After-Hours Care



Access Hope is our convenient after-hours program for patients to receive care when life doesn't go as planned.

### Why HopeHealth patients use Access Hope:

- Your primary care provider isn't available when you're not feeling well
- You are sick after-hours or on Saturday
- You are a new patient whose busy schedule doesn't allow you to be seen during normal provider hours

Our staff of health care providers at Access Hope is available in Florence and Manning, **Monday-Saturday from 8am - 8pm.**

Examples of after-hours care services provided by Access Hope are minor aches and pains, cold and flu sick visits, treatment of high blood pressure, management of diabetes and other chronic conditions, immunizations/flu shots/PPD testing, urinalysis, annual and pre-employment physicals, and STD treatment.

For more information about Access Hope, [visit our website.](#)

## HopeHealth QuickLinks

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[hope-health.org](http://hope-health.org)

Support Community Health Centers at [hcadvocacy.org](http://hcadvocacy.org). Become an advocate today!