A campus-wide campaign called “Go There: Break the silence. Break the stigma.” recently launched with a goal of supporting the mental well-being of Vanderbilt faculty, staff and students. The initiative, led by Chancellor Nicholas Zeppos and the Chancellor’s Strategic Planning Committee on Mental Health and Wellbeing, is focused on creating a nurturing campus environment, with easily accessible resources, that promotes positive mental health and wellness for all members of the academic community.

“We strive to foster a culture of openness through brave dialogue, honest self-reflection and willingness to invest in this incredible university by investing first in the mental health and wholeness of every member of the Vanderbilt family,” said Zeppos. For more information about the initiative and available resources, visit the university’s mental health and well-being website at vanderbilt.edu/wellbeing. #GoThereVandy

What do you value about your peers and co-workers?
I value their dedication, initiative, and creativity, as well as the collegial and collaborative environment they help to foster at Vanderbilt. Given that my work deals with accountability after misconduct, sexual violence prevention and response, and supporting students in distress, I also value the strength and passion that my team demonstrates daily as well as the levity we are able to bring to our offices despite the challenging nature of our work.

What does your department do to bond?
My areas usually have retreats and several informal and social gatherings during the year, most of which involve a meal, to bond, strengthen relationships, and de-stress.

What gives you pride in your day?
The most rewarding part of my job is helping students work through difficult issues and seeing them develop the skills to cope with setbacks, advocate for themselves, and ensure their academic and personal success at Vanderbilt and beyond.

How do you unwind after a stressful day?
I dedicate much of my evenings to spending quality time with my three-year-old twins, usually reading and playing without distraction from work and devices. I am an avid reader and I also like to unwind by taking walks and being creative on architecture and design apps on my iPad.
Q: Dear Counselor,
I think my co-worker might be depressed. He seems down, withdrawn and negative. He’s also missed a few days of work. He made some comments about “hating life” that worry me, too. What should I do?

Worried

A: Dear Worried,
It’s good that you’re asking for some guidance on how to approach your co-worker with your concerns.

Seeking help in the workplace can be intimidating due to fear and stigma. Expressing your concern, privately, and in a caring and nonjudgmental way could make a great deal of difference in your co-worker’s overall well-being.

Here are some suggestions:

1. **Focus on what you have seen.** Show empathy without labeling or trying to diagnose him. Use statements such as “I am concerned because…”

2. **Your role is to voice your concerns and to direct your co-worker to appropriate support resources.** Try not to offer more than you might be able to provide.

3. **Be prepared to ask, “Have you felt so bad that you’ve thought of hurting yourself?”** Suicidal thoughts are common when people are depressed, and asking doesn’t put the idea into his mind. You can always call Work/Life Connections-Employee Assistance Program (WLC-EAP) for advice. If he indicates plans to harm himself immediately, call 9-1-1 or help him get to an emergency room.

4. **Encourage him to make an appointment with WLC-EAP, or to at least call for some advice or community resources.**

WLC-EAP provides a private and confidential gateway for employees in need of targeted resources or consultation. Short-term, solution-focused counseling is also available. Visit WLC-EAP’s Resource Library on our website to read the article, “Talking about Mental Health in the Workplace” for more information on this topic. You or your co-worker can also call **615.936.1327** to schedule a confidential appointment to obtain more individualized support and guidance.

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**Break the cynicism cycle**

Avoid negative, cynical people — if people are complaining, don’t join in.

Focus on good times — thinking positive thoughts may help you to see a situation in a better light.

Make goals achievable — don’t set completely unrealistic goals for yourself that may lead to frustration and disappointment.

Don’t let yourself believe the world is against you — chances are, you’ll have good times ahead, even if you are going through a rough time now.
Finding a Primary Care Provider – Your Partner in Health

Choosing a Primary Care Provider (PCP) is the first and most important step you can take toward being healthy and staying healthy. A PCP is your partner for a variety of health care needs, including routine checkups, disease prevention, treatment of a health problem and referral to a specialist when needed. Whether you choose a PCP that is a physician (family practitioner, internist or pediatrician), nurse practitioner or physician assistant, establishing a relationship with a PCP is the key.

For resources on choosing a PCP that is right for you, visit vanderbilt/pcp.

To find a provider covered by the Vanderbilt Health Affiliated Network (VHAN), visit the Aetna DocFind® website at aetna.com/docfind/custom/vanderbilt or VHAN’s Find a Doctor website at vhan.com/findaprovider. These sites include both Vanderbilt providers and other providers in the network with the lowest out-of-pocket costs. Wait times for a first appointment vary, so it’s important to schedule before you have an urgent health care need.

Spring Cleaning For Your Medicine Cabinet

Melanie Swift, MD, FACOEM, Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine Director, Occupational Health Clinic

What’s in your medicine cabinet? Perhaps you have a few pain pills, half a bottle of cough syrup or even an entire cache of controlled substances.

It’s a common and potentially dangerous problem according to Andrea Bryant, PharmD, MBA, MHA, and Executive Director for Pharmacy Business Operations at VUMC. “We know that 60 to 70% of prescription drug abuse starts with medications obtained from family and friends — often found in the family medicine cabinet,” says Bryant.

Abuse isn’t the only risk, however. Medication given to a friend could be harmful to them. Children and pets can swallow medications with dangerous or even fatal results. Even taking your own expired medicine is not safe.

So how should one dispose of unwanted medication safely? Can it be returned to a pharmacy, thrown in the trash or even flushed down the toilet or sink?

“Flushing is not recommended because of potential environmental effects,” says Mark Sullivan, PharmD, MBA, and Executive Director of Pharmacy Operations at VUMC. “You could put them in the trash, sealed in a plastic bag mixed with something like kitty litter, to send to a landfill, but even this isn’t ideal.” Landfill drugs can leach into the ground and may present an environmental hazard.

Sullivan and Bryant agree that the best way to dispose of unwanted medications is to have them professionally destroyed through a pharmacy take-back program since many pharmacies now have safe and eco-friendly medication disposal programs. While pharmacy staff cannot touch the medications you wish to discard, they can help you place them in a drug collection kiosk where they are stored before being securely routed to an incineration plant.

Kiosks accept human and veterinary medications in pill, liquid and patch form. “The only things we can’t accept are sharps and inhalers,” says Bryant. Any personal information on the medication is protected throughout the process and destroyed with the medication. All Vanderbilt retail pharmacies have drug collection kiosks, and other Middle Tennessee locations can be found online at vanderbilt/meddisposal.

If medication disposal has you stumped, remember that your pharmacist is happy to help. So roll up your sleeves and clean out that medicine cabinet today!
Take a stroll on April 5! Join Health Plus for a 20-minute walk around campus beginning at noon as we celebrate National Walking Day.

**Starting location:** the flag pole at Alumni Lawn.

The walk will merge with a group from VUMC as we head over to the Peabody campus before ending with a fun celebration at Library Lawn.

There will be guest speakers at the celebration, and refreshments and door prizes will be available for all walkers!
Tips for Mindful Eating

Melinda Mahoney, RDN, LDN, Health Educator, Health Plus

1. **Break the food routine.** Eating the same foods every day can prevent you from listening to your internal hunger and satiety cues.

2. **Savor each bite.** Bring all of your senses into each bite of your meal. Notice the aroma, texture, appearance and taste.

3. **Give your meals and snacks all of your attention.** The opposite of mindful eating is mindless eating, where you eat out of boredom or while your brain is engaged in another activity, such as watching TV.

4. **Check in with your body during your meal.** After eating about half of your meal, stop and take a moment to ask yourself if you are still hungry. Slow down and give your mind time to listen to the signals your body may be trying to send you.

5. **Change your talk.** Negative thoughts can have a huge impact on your mind and emotions, which can affect how you respond to food and hunger cues. Be kind to your body and mind, and allow yourself to have a positive relationship with food.

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Eating-Well Recipe

**Chicken Cutlets with Strawberry-Avocado Salsa**

- 1½ cups chopped strawberries
- ½ cup diced, peeled ripe avocado
- 2 tablespoons minced seeded jalapeño pepper
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 teaspoons fresh lime juice
- ½ teaspoon salt, divided
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 4 (4-ounce) chicken breast cutlets
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 4 lime wedges

1. Combine strawberries, avocado, jalapeño, cilantro, lime juice and ¼ teaspoon salt in a small bowl; toss to combine.

2. Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add oil to pan; swirl to coat. Sprinkle chicken with remaining ½ teaspoon salt and pepper. Add chicken to pan; cook 3 minutes on each side or until done.

3. Divide chicken among 4 serving plates, and spoon salsa evenly over each serving. Garnish each serving with a lime wedge.

Nutrition information per serving (1 chicken cutlet with ½ cup salsa): 211 calories, 9 g total fat (1.5 g saturated fat), 494 mg sodium, 7 g carbohydrates, 3 g fiber, 3 g sugar (0 g added sugar), 25 g protein

Source: Cooking Light
HR Corner
Getting The Most Out of Your Benefits

Take a bite out of chronic diseases:
A healthy mouth means a healthy life.

Did you know diabetes and heart disease are linked to oral health? Research shows that a healthy mouth can help.

Oral Health and Diabetes
People living with diabetes need to take special care with their teeth and gums. Did you know people with diabetes are more likely to develop gum infections? Gum infections increase your likelihood of tooth decay, gingivitis and periodontal disease. If you have diabetes, a combination of higher blood sugar levels and dry mouth makes it difficult for your body to fight the bacteria that causes gum infections. This can lead to a cycle of higher blood sugar and other infections that are tough to heal.

Expectant Mothers Need Good Oral Health Care
Did you know a woman with periodontal disease is nearly eight times more likely to have a pre-term delivery?

Good oral health care is important for expectant mothers. Bacteria from gum disease can lead to premature babies — and increase the expectant mother’s chances of developing toxemia (also called preeclampsia, which is a condition in pregnancy characterized by the onset of high blood pressure and protein in the urine). If you are pregnant, let your dentist know. You shouldn’t have X-rays, but you should still keep your regular cleaning appointment to avoid developing gum disease.

Tips to Improve Your Oral Health
☐ Visit your dentist for regular checkups.
☐ See your dentist every six months.
☐ Talk with your dentist about steps you should take to keep your mouth healthy.

When to Call Your Dentist
• Sores, bleeding, redness or swelling in your mouth and gums.
• Pain when chewing, bad odors or taste.
• Pain in your teeth when you eat something cold, hot or sweet.
• Holes or dark spots in your teeth.
• Loose teeth.

The Best Way to Brush
• Brush your teeth with a fluoride toothpaste for at least one minute, twice a day.
• Don’t forget to brush your tongue and behind your front teeth.
• Hold the brush at a 45-degree angle to your teeth.
• Move the brush back and forth in short strokes over two or three teeth at a time.
• Be gentle! Plaque comes off with light pressure. Scrubbing too hard may hurt your teeth and gums.
• Brush the insides, outsides — and tops (chewing surfaces) of your teeth.

How to Floss
• Floss at least once each day.
• Use approximately 18 inches of floss.
• Don’t forget the back of your last tooth.
• Wind the floss around the middle finger of each hand.
• Use your thumbs and index fingers to guide the floss between each tooth.
• Curve the floss around each tooth and slide it between the tooth and the gum, rubbing gently.

Healthy Lifestyle
• Avoid tobacco. Tobacco users are seven times more likely to develop gum disease.
• Eat sugar and starches in moderation.
• Choose foods high in fiber like fruits and vegetables.
• Avoid sipping juices and sodas throughout the day.
• Drink water to wash away any acids created by sugar in your diet.

Provided by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee
**April**

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<tr>
<td>APR 5</td>
<td>National Walking Day</td>
<td>Noon to 12:45 p.m. 20-minute walk will end at Library Lawn with refreshments, speakers and prizes! Starting location — Flag pole at Alumni Lawn</td>
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<tr>
<td>APR 18</td>
<td>Vandy Cooks</td>
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**Go Healthy with TN Produce**  
Noon to 1:00 p.m.  
Presented by Tammy Algood, TN Dept. of Agriculture  
Vanderbilt Recreation and Wellness Center  
Demo Kitchen |
| APR 19 | Boomers, Elders & More |  
**Long-Term Care Insurance**  
Noon to 1:00 p.m.  
Light Hall, Room 419 |
| APR 20 | Babies & You* |  
**Nutrition: Eating For Two**  
Noon to 1:00 p.m.  
Presented by Melinda Mahoney, RDN, LDN, Health Educator Health Plus  
Light Hall, Room 411 |
| APR 20 | Know Your Numbers |  
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Kennedy Center, One Magnolia Circle, Room 241 |
| APR 26 | Know Your Numbers |  
7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Langford Auditorium, Lobby |
| APR 27 | Know Your Numbers |  
7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Langford Auditorium, Lobby |

**May**

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<td>MAY 4</td>
<td>Know Your Numbers</td>
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11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Law School, Alexander Room #105 |
| MAY 4 | Boomers, Elders & More |  
**Estate Planning Basics and More**  
Noon to 1:00 p.m.  
Light Hall, Room 411 |
| MAY 17 | Know Your Numbers |  
10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Light Hall, North Lobby |
| MAY 18 | Babies & You* |  
**Coping with the Stresses and Emotions of Pregnancy**  
Noon to 1:00 p.m.  
Presented by Steven Brunwasser, PhD, Psychologist  
Light Hall, Room 411 |
| MAY 19 | Vandy Cooks |  
**Korean Cuisine**  
Noon to 1:00 p.m.  
Presented by Marilyn Holmes, Marissa Wertheimer and Melinda Mahoney  
Vanderbilt Recreation and Wellness Center  
Demo Kitchen |
| MAY 24 | Know Your Numbers |  
7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Langford Auditorium, Lobby |
| MAY 25 | Know Your Numbers |  
7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Langford Auditorium, Lobby |

*If you have questions regarding the Boomers, Elders & More events, contact Stacey Bonner, Family Services Coordinator, at 936.1990, or at stacey.l.bonner@vanderbilt.edu.*

*Babies & You is a prenatal health program offered by Health Plus for VU employees, spouses and dependents. The classes are provided monthly with a $50 incentive for those who register in their first trimester, attend at least three monthly classes and go to all prenatal provider appointments. For more information, class location or to register online, visit healthplus.vanderbilt.edu.*

**Mother’s Day is right around the corner.** Make Mom feel special without breaking the bank by using your Vanderbilt employee discounts. Choose from gift ideas ranging from flowers to custom framing to jewelry to experiences like dinner, event tickets and travel. And don’t forget — you can always use your Vanderbilt ID to receive 10% off at Barnes and Noble Bookstore. Visit vu.edu/discounts for a complete list.
“Don’t let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.” - John Wooden

A Bar Chart of Vanderbilt’s Favorite Pies

A Pie Chart of Vanderbilt’s Favorite Bars

A little humor for everyone around April Fool’s Day! Laughter is the best medicine, after all!

In this Issue:
“Go There” Mental Health & Well-being Initiative Launces
“Going There” with G.L. Black
The Counselor’s Corner
Spring Cleaning For Your Medicine Cabinet
Finding a Primary Care Provider — Your Partner in Health
Tips for Mindful Eating
Have a topic you want to see covered? Email us at health.wellness@vanderbilt.edu.