

# HEALTHY OUTCOMES



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## November 21-27 is GERD Awareness Week

### What is the Difference Between GERD and Heartburn?

*From Healthline.com*

Heartburn is a common symptom of acid reflux. Acid reflux happens when contents from your stomach move up into your esophagus. It's also called acid regurgitation or gastroesophageal reflux.

Most people experience heart-burn from time to time, and in general, occasional heartburn isn't a cause for concern.

But if you get heartburn more than twice a week, you might have GERD.

GERD is a chronic type of acid reflux that can cause complications if left untreated. Looking for more information: *Everything You Need to Know About Acid Reflux and GERD* at <https://www.healthline.com/health/gerd>. ■

### Bad Breath

*By Geisinger Wellness*

**Did you know that GERD can be a source of unexplained bad breath?**

It can be about more than food.

Bad breath can be embarrassing.

We've all had days when we order lunch without considering the effect it might have on that 1 p.m. meeting or notice a strange taste after waking up from a long nap. But what if the odor never goes away?

Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) is a chronic condition marked by persistent acid reflux, or the rise of stomach acid in the esophagus. The misplaced stomach acid may be the cause for unexplained bad breath but is often paired with other symptoms.

"GERD can cause permanent tissue damage in the esophagus and should be treated with medication," says Dr. Wazir. "Other symptoms include heartburn, nausea, vomiting, and difficulty or pain with swallowing. Additionally, repeated acid reflux can erode the enamel and hard tissues of the teeth, subsequently causing crevices

*(Continued on page 4)*

The HCQU works with intellectual disabilities and behavioral health programs in Central PA to provide health care management services for adults with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities or Autism. Our goal is that all people living in PA, regardless of ability, receive the finest community services available – assuring that they are as healthy as possible and can fully participate in community life. The HCQU works to enhance access to community physical and mental health care through **FREE** education, public health outreach, advocacy, and empowerment as well as to improve health care outcomes. Serving the following counties: Blair, Centre, Columbia/Montour/Snyder/Union, Huntingdon/Mifflin/Juniata, Lycoming/Clinton, Northumberland, and Schuylkill.

*The information offered in this newsletter is to increase your awareness of health-related situations. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice. If you believe you or someone you support has a condition, please seek the advice of a physician.*

# Flu and COVID-19

By Geisinger Wellness | September 2021

## Can I get the flu and COVID-19 at the same time?

It's possible. But you can take steps to keep yourself (and those around you) healthy this flu season.

Last year's flu activity was unusually low. Experts believe everything we did to help slow the spread of COVID-19 — and a record number of flu vaccinations — are largely to thank for that.

But with some preventive measures being relaxed, and COVID cases on the rise, what does that mean for the 2021 flu season?

The short answer: healthcare professionals are concerned about a potential spike in flu cases. And with the delta variant, they're even more concerned about the risk of co-infection. That's when people — especially those who aren't vaccinated against either virus — get both at the same time.

"This is possible because the flu and COVID-19 are caused by different viruses," explains Dr. Stanley Martin, system director of infectious diseases at Geisinger. "Both can result in serious illness, hospitalizations and even death. And having both at once could increase the chance of more serious outcomes, including pneumonia and respiratory failure."

While there's no way to know just how bad this flu season will be, there's one thing we know for sure — taking precautions is the best way to protect your health.

## Flu and COVID-19: What's the difference?

The flu and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they're caused by different viruses. "Both

illnesses spread from person to person, mainly through close contact with an infected person and droplets traveling through the air when an infected person talks, coughs or sneezes," says Dr. Martin.

Symptoms of the flu and COVID-19 are similar, including fever, cough, fatigue and body aches. Unlike the flu, COVID-19 can cause you to lose your senses of taste or smell. But that doesn't always happen.

"It's difficult to distinguish between the two illnesses," says Dr. Martin. "The best way to know if you have COVID-19 or the flu is to get tested."

The flu and COVID-19 can result in severe illness, especially for older adults, people with underlying medical conditions and pregnant women. However, young children are at a higher risk of severe complications from the flu than they are from COVID-19.

"While rare, some children who become infected with COVID-19 may develop multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C), which can be serious," adds Dr. Martin.

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"The flu and COVID-19 are caused by different viruses."

## HCQU Online Course Update

We are here for your education credit needs! Our courses are great for DSPs and they are easy and informative.

**Upon completion of each online course, a certificate with 0.5 contact hours that can go towards their annual human services requirement for DSPs will be awarded.**

*Available Now!*

**ALLERGY AWARENESS**

[www.geisinger.org/hcqu](http://www.geisinger.org/hcqu)

ONLINE  
TRAINING





## WEIS MARKETS VIRTUAL COOK-ALONG WEBINARS

### November 17<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM

Join Weis Dietitian Emily Bumgarner as she shows how to use a fall favorite food to make an **Apple Pie Yogurt Parfait**.

This recipe is perfect any time of day or even as a Thanksgiving Day dessert. \*\*\*This recipe can be prepared in the microwave so feel free to join in and cook along. Recipe serves 4 people.

*If possible, have all ingredients prepared and measured in advance to save time.*

#### **INGREDIENTS:**

- ½ cp Weis Quality Chopped Walnuts
- 1 Tbsp Weis Quality Unsalted Butter
- 2 large Fuji, Gala or Granny Smith apples, peeled and chopped
- 2 Tbsp Weis Signature Collection Pure Maple Syrup
- 1 tsp Weis Quality Ground Cinnamon
- ½ tsp McCormick Ground Nutmeg
- ¼ tsp McCormick Ground Allspice
- 1 1/3 cp Weis Quality Nonfat Greek Yogurt
- ½ cp plus 2 Tbsp Weis Quality Vanilla Almond Probiotic Granola

**DIRECTIONS:** In a large skillet, toast walnuts over medium-high heat for 4 minutes or until lightly browned and fragrant, stirring frequently, transfer to a plate to cool.

In the same large skillet, heat butter over medium heat, add apples and cook for 4 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Stir in 1 Tbsp maple syrup, cinnamon, nutmeg and allspice: cook 2 minutes or until heated through.

In 4 (8-ounce) jars or glasses, alternately layer apples, yogurt, ½ cup granola and walnuts: drizzle with remaining 1 Tbsp maple syrup and sprinkle with remaining 2 Tbsp granola.

Click this link to join: <https://zoom.us/j/92662329845?pwd=QXdnUkdjRC96Z3JUVVlvdUR0UUVArUT09>

Passcode: 1c03b86188

#### **Registration not required**

- Join on a computer or mobile app
- Attend as a group or individually
- Closed Caption not available

HOSTED BY [THE CENTRAL PA HCQU](#)





## Flu and COVID-19...

(Continued from page 2)

### How can I protect myself from the flu and COVID-19?

This year, we have safe and effective vaccines for both the flu and COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccines are available for everyone age 12 or older. And it's recommended that everyone, even those who've already had COVID-19, get vaccinated.

Like every year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone age 6 months and older get their flu shot.

Both vaccines are proven to decrease severe illness, hospitalizations and deaths. And yes, those who are eligible need to get both. The COVID-19 vaccine won't protect you from the flu.

"The single best way to protect yourself this flu season is by getting vaccinated," says Dr. Martin. "Even if you're young and healthy, it can protect yourself and others from getting the flu and COVID-19."

### Take these steps, too, to avoid the flu (and COVID-19):

- Wash your hands often with warm, soapy water for 20 seconds.
- Use hand sanitizer when handwashing isn't an option.
- Continue wearing a face mask in public and following physical distancing guidelines.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose, and mouth (until you've washed your hands).
- Avoid crowds and close contact with those who are sick.

### Can I get the COVID and flu vaccines at the same time?

If you're 12 or older and haven't received your COVID vaccine yet, experts recommend getting it as soon as you can.

The recommendation for getting your flu shot is more specific. "It's best to get your flu shot before flu season starts," says Dr. Martin. "Mid-September to October is ideal timing."

And if you're immunocompromised and plan to get the third dose to protect against COVID or a COVID booster when they're available, there's no need to put off your flu shot.

"When the COVID vaccines first became available, the CDC recommended they be given two weeks apart from other vaccines," says Dr. Martin. "That was just a precaution and is no longer the recommendation."

If you have any questions or concerns about your specific situation, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. ■

**Check out this link that includes new COVID-19 resources from the CDC for people with IDD as well as a tip sheet for caregivers and one for health care providers:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/humandevelopment/COVID-19-Materials-for-People-with-IDD.html>



## Bad Breath...

(Continued from page 1)

and slight spaces where food can become lodged.

Many people experience periodic gastroesophageal reflux (GER), but it is usually situational and will go away with treatment. If you are experiencing chronic acid reflux, be sure to speak to your doctor.

Most serious causes of unexplained bad breath are paired with more serious symptoms, making the conditions hard to overlook. However, it's important to maintain good overall gum health to keep teeth and bones strong and healthy. Those close to you will thank you.

The dentist's office is the best place to start your journey to better breath. After establishing good oral hygiene and routine exams, additional treatment may be needed to address issues such as tooth decay, gum disease or infection.

For more information and additional sources of unexplained bad breath read:

*Three Sources of Unexplained*

*Bad Breath @*

<https://www.geisinger.org/health-and-wellness/wellness-articles/2018/11/13/19/27/three-sources-of-unexplained-bad-breath> . ■



## UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS

Test your knowledge and see how many words taken from the newsletter you can unscramble:

POUTCREASIN \_\_\_\_\_

DAVEMPER \_\_\_\_\_

MOUSECOT \_\_\_\_\_

LONNIE GRINTAIN \_\_\_\_\_

HABTER \_\_\_\_\_

NEARBURTH \_\_\_\_\_

DECENTIF \_\_\_\_\_

NICHCOR \_\_\_\_\_

NASTIRIZE \_\_\_\_\_

STORYPAIRER \_\_\_\_\_

EXFURL \_\_\_\_\_

GROUTY \_\_\_\_\_

CAMHOST DIAC \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS TO WORD SCRAMBLE:

*Chronic, Sanitizer, Reflux, Yogurt, Stomach Acid, Precautions, Revamped, Outcomes, Online Training, Breath, Heartburn, Infected,*



## HCQU's New Website Design!

If you haven't been to our website lately, you must go and check us out! We have revamped the whole site and given it a crisp, clean, new look. It's easier to maneuver around in and you will find it more informative!

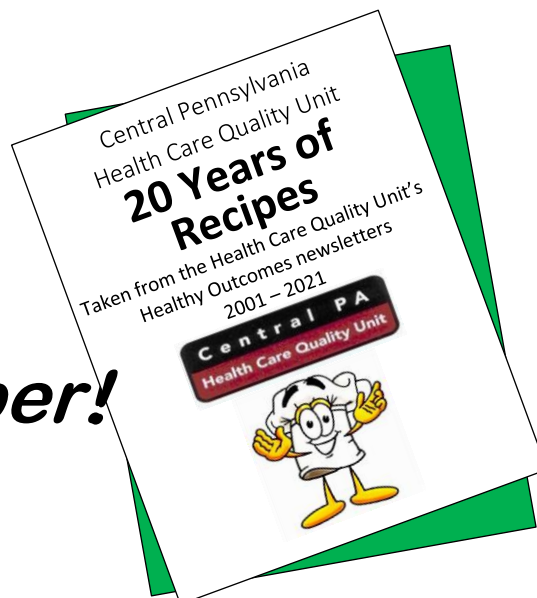
Check us out at

<https://www.geisinger.org/hcqu>



## Cooking Corner

**Coming  
in  
December!**



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