

# HEALTHY *Connections*

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR LIFE

TASTE OR  
TOSS IT  
BEHIND THE  
BEST-BY DATE

IS IT A COLD,  
THE FLU  
OR COVID-19?

DO IT FOR THEM  
**Motivation to  
Quit Smoking**

**FORREST CITY**  
MEDICAL CENTER

# CHECK THAT DATE!

When is the last time you checked your household inventory?

## KITCHEN

Most dates on packaging are not safety dates but recommendations to ensure peak quality or taste of the product, with the exception of infant formula. Never use expired formula and discard opened powdered formula after 30 days, if not consumed.

Canned food is safe for two to five years after the best-by date — although high-acid foods like tomatoes are best used within 18 months. How long fresh produce will last depends on the type. The USDA app FoodKeeper can provide guidance for specific items.

Open foods that have expired often show visible signs of deterioration, such as mold, but what about that can of beans with a “Best By” date from six months ago or longer?

If the can isn’t bulging or otherwise suspect, you should be fine. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), you can eat many packaged foods beyond their best-by dates. In general, if a food item smells, looks or feels off, then it is likely time to throw it away.



## VANITY DRAWERS

Whether you buy designer lipstick or drugstore mascara, all makeup deteriorates at similar rates. As with food, expiration dates are rules of thumb and not actual safety guidelines.

However, the Food and Drug Administration and cosmetic trade groups all agree that eye products should be replaced more frequently than any other kind of makeup — every three to six months. If you have any kind of eye infection, that warrants prompt disposal.

Also, if you dip your finger into a product to apply it, you should replace it more frequently, because even a clean fingertip will add microorganisms to the makeup that could turn into bacteria or fungi.



## MEDICINE CABINET

Multiple studies have shown most drugs maintain their potency for years, if not decades, after the original expiration date. (Reporting from ProPublica in 2017 found that even the FDA does it!)

However, the FDA does not recommend anyone take over-the-counter and prescribed drugs past their expiration dates. For example, taking expired antibiotics may lead to antibiotic resistance or other complications.

Still, even though drugs might not go bad a year later doesn’t mean that you should keep unused prescriptions around, especially if they are controlled substances like opioids. The FDA recommends tossing any drugs you aren’t using. In order to do so safely, many police stations, health departments and hospitals, including Forrest City Medical Center have easy ways for you to drop off old medicine.



Don’t just renew your expired prescriptions out of habit. Review your medications during your annual checkup. Need a provider? We’re accepting new patients and offer telehealth and some next-day appointments. Visit [EastArkansasCare.com](http://EastArkansasCare.com) to schedule.

# Making the Most OF Telehealth

You now have a choice of in-person or telehealth visits at most clinics. Learn what you can do to have a smooth, successful video visit with your provider.

Many physician offices and clinics now offer telehealth in addition to in-person appointments for wellness exams and sick visits. Video visits give patients access to care from the comfort of home while practicing social distancing.

If you are new to telehealth, the following dos and don'ts can help you navigate this new world:

- **Do** follow your physician office's pre-visit instructions. After scheduling your appointment, you may receive instructions for preparing for the visit, such as how to download a video conferencing app or take certain vital signs. Be sure to follow these directions carefully.
- **Don't** go into the appointment without important information. This includes your medical history, a medication list, notes about symptoms you've experienced, a list of questions you'd like to ask your primary care provider (PCP) and vital signs you've taken at home, such as blood pressure and weight.
- **Do** pick a quiet spot and check your tech. Find a place in your home where you won't be disturbed during your appointment and be sure your internet connection is working. If you'll be using a laptop, tablet or smartphone, charge it before the appointment.
- **Don't** let a video visit change your behavior. You and your PCP won't be in the same room, but don't let that intimidate you. Talk with him or her as you normally would — be open and ask questions. Make sure you understand your treatment plan and the next steps to take before ending the call.



Looking for a PCP who offers telehealth? Alison Shepherd, APRN, at East Arkansas Medical Group is accepting new patients. Call (870) 633-0215 or visit [EastArkansasCare.com](http://EastArkansasCare.com).

Alison Shepherd, APRN

*Alison Shepherd, advanced practice registered nurse and member of the allied health staff at Forrest City Medical Center, sees patients of all ages.*

## YOUR SHOTS AT PREVENTION

Staying current with recommended vaccines is one of the most important things aging adults can do for their health. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adults need these vaccines:


- annual flu vaccine
- HPV vaccine before age 27
- one-time Tdap vaccine, which protects against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis, and a Td booster every 10 years
- pneumococcal vaccine at age 65 or older
- shingles vaccine at age 50 or older

Speak with your primary care provider about which vaccines are right for you.

*To learn more about adult immunizations, visit [EastArkansasCare.com](http://EastArkansasCare.com) and click "Services" and then "Family Medicine." Visit [ForrestCityAnytime.com](http://ForrestCityAnytime.com) or call (870) 633-0215 to schedule an appointment.*







The benefits of quitting smoking apply to more than just you — your family members, friends and even pets can reap the rewards, too.

# QUIT

## *For the Greater Good*

Whether you smoke, vape, dip or chew — whether you've been doing it for 12 months or 12 years — you already know smoking or using other tobacco products is bad for your health. The warnings are printed on every package you buy.

That's why the huge increases in youth e-cigarette usage is so alarming. Over 5 million youth, grades 6 through 12, reported regularly vaping, and 1 million reported doing it daily, according to a survey by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Unfortunately for many people, knowing that tobacco is bad for them isn't a good enough reason to quit. Nicotine is a highly addictive drug, but its misuse won't land users in jail. This means it might be hard for users to hit "rock bottom" before they get sick.

Yet, if you keep using tobacco or vaping nicotine, it is extremely likely that you will get sick. And if you smoke indoors, anyone who lives with you might get sick too, including your kids and pets. You should also know:

- Smoking is still the top cause of preventable death and disease in the United States, according to the CDC.
- Over 480,000 people die from smoking-related causes every year.
- Smoking doesn't just cause lung cancer. The CDC finds it can also cause cancer of the bladder, cervix, colon, esophagus, kidney, mouth, liver, pancreas and stomach.
- Smoking can also cause or contribute to diabetes, emphysema, heart disease, osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis and stroke.
- Tobacco use can make it harder to get pregnant. It can also make it more likely for

a baby to have certain birth defects or to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

- Men who smoke are more likely to have erectile dysfunction.
- According to the CDC, 2.5 million nonsmokers have died from exposure to secondhand smoke since 1964.
- In small children, secondhand smoke is often a contributing factor to ear infections and asthma.
- Secondhand smoke can cause nose or lung cancer in your pets.

### **READY TO QUIT YET?**

Even if you are trying to quit — and/or have tried time and time again to quit — habits are hard to break, especially when they are wrapped up with an addictive substance like nicotine. That's why finding the support you need to quit once and for all is important.



## RESOURCES TO QUIT SMOKING

- The American Lung Association's Freedom From Smoking offers classes and support groups across the country.
- The National Cancer Institute has free smartphone apps, QuitGuide and quitSTART.
- There are numerous other apps, some free and some paid, that can help you track how much or how little you are smoking, if you aren't quitting cold turkey. Some apps even tally up the amount of money you're saving with every tobacco product you don't use.
- Your state health department has trained counselors available. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.



Nizar Issa, M.D.

*Need support quitting smoking or want to know more about your prescription options? Make an appointment with Nizar*

**Issa, M.D., Lung Care Specialist at East Arkansas Medical Group. Call (870) 630-9362 or visit [EastArkansasCare.com](http://EastArkansasCare.com)**

*Dr. Issa is a member of the medical staff at Forrest City Medical Center.*

## HELP FOR TOBACCO CESSATION

If quitting cold turkey has not worked for you, limiting your tobacco use with nicotine gum or patches to help you taper off may help. A physician can also prescribe a nicotine nasal spray, an inhaler or other medication. However, it is important to discuss possible side effects of any medications.

The FDA does not recommend using e-cigarettes as a way to taper tobacco use. Vaping can actually increase your nicotine intake, which can, in turn, strengthen your addiction.

Support groups or therapy, whether online or in person, can often provide the needed encouragement to overcome the frustration of quitting.

If none of these methods have helped you, the good news is that there are almost as many different methods and motivations to quit nicotine for good as there are brands

of cigarettes. Some other things you can try include:

- **Exercise.** If you're a heavy smoker, it might not be easy to start, but doing something physical, even simply taking a walk, is a great way to keep your mind off your cravings. Plus, the more your cardiovascular health improves, the less you are going to want to make it worse again.
- **Identify your triggers and avoid or replace them.** If you always smoke while drinking, cut back on alcohol until you quit. If you always take a cigarette break in the middle of the afternoon, find something else to do during that time, like having coffee or a healthy snack. Basically, create new habits to replace the old one.
- **Take it easy on yourself.** If you slip up and smoke again, it's OK. Don't beat yourself up, and don't tell yourself that you've failed. You

haven't failed. Tomorrow is a new day where you can start again, cigarette or vape-free.

- **Treat yourself.** With all the money you'd save by not smoking, reward yourself with something like a book or a dinner out when you hit sobriety milestones.

It takes time to get used to your new life, but eventually you can get there. Quit now, and your body will thank you later.



Concerned about your risk for lung cancer? Talk to Nizar Issa, M.D., Lung Care Specialist at East Arkansas Medical Group. Call (870) 630-9362 to schedule an appointment.

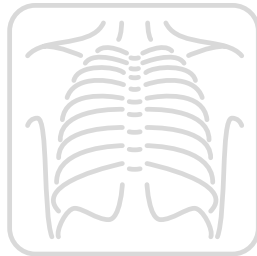


# IMAGE OF HEALTH

At some point in your healthcare journey, you'll need imaging, such as a mammogram, CT scan or an MRI. Learn more about how these tests help physicians guide treatment and manage your health.

## **Q.** WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM CT BONE DENSITY SCREENING?

**A.** Anyone at risk of, or previously diagnosed with, osteoporosis (thinning bones). The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends that every woman discuss her risk factors with her physician, beginning at age 50. A simple test using our CT equipment scans the bones in the lower spine and hip, two of the main areas at risk from osteoporotic fractures. The procedure is simple, quick and painless, and your physician will receive the results in a matter of days.

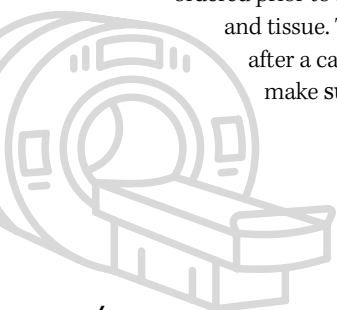


## **Q.** WHAT DOES AN MRI SHOW?

**A.** An MRI uses a large magnet and radio waves to show detailed pictures of the body's interior. It does not produce radiation, so it's a safe test for pregnant women. However, the magnets may make it unsafe for people with certain implants. An MRI might be a better choice than a CT scan to see the detail in a tendon tear, herniated disk or soft tissue damage.

## **Q.** WHEN MIGHT A PHYSICIAN ORDER A CT SCAN?

**A.** A CT scan can help diagnose everything from a ligament injury to a gastrointestinal problem to a tumor. CT scans are also regularly ordered prior to surgery for specific mapping of blood vessels and tissue. They may also be required for follow-ups after a cancer diagnosis or another type of surgery to make sure patients are healing correctly.



## **Q.** HOW DO SCREENING MAMMOGRAMS KEEP TABS ON BREAST CANCER?

**A.** Screening mammograms use a low-dose X-ray to look for possible abnormalities in breast tissue that could be cancerous. These are the types of annual mammograms recommended for most women starting at age 45. A diagnostic mammogram uses a higher level of radiation to get more specific imaging of a part of the breast that was concerning in the first screening.

### **SIMPLE+PRICE PRE-PAY PRICING FOR AFFORDABLE CARE**

*Simple+Price at Forrest City Medical Center offers patients upfront affordable bundled prices. Examples include:*

- abdominal ultrasound as low as \$159
- bone density CT scan as low as \$98
- Chest X-ray as low as \$82
- CT of head as low as \$176
- screening mammography as low as \$165

*Contact our business office advisor at (870) 261-0172 to get a quote for your upcoming test or visit [ForrestCityMedicalCenter.com](http://ForrestCityMedicalCenter.com) for details.*

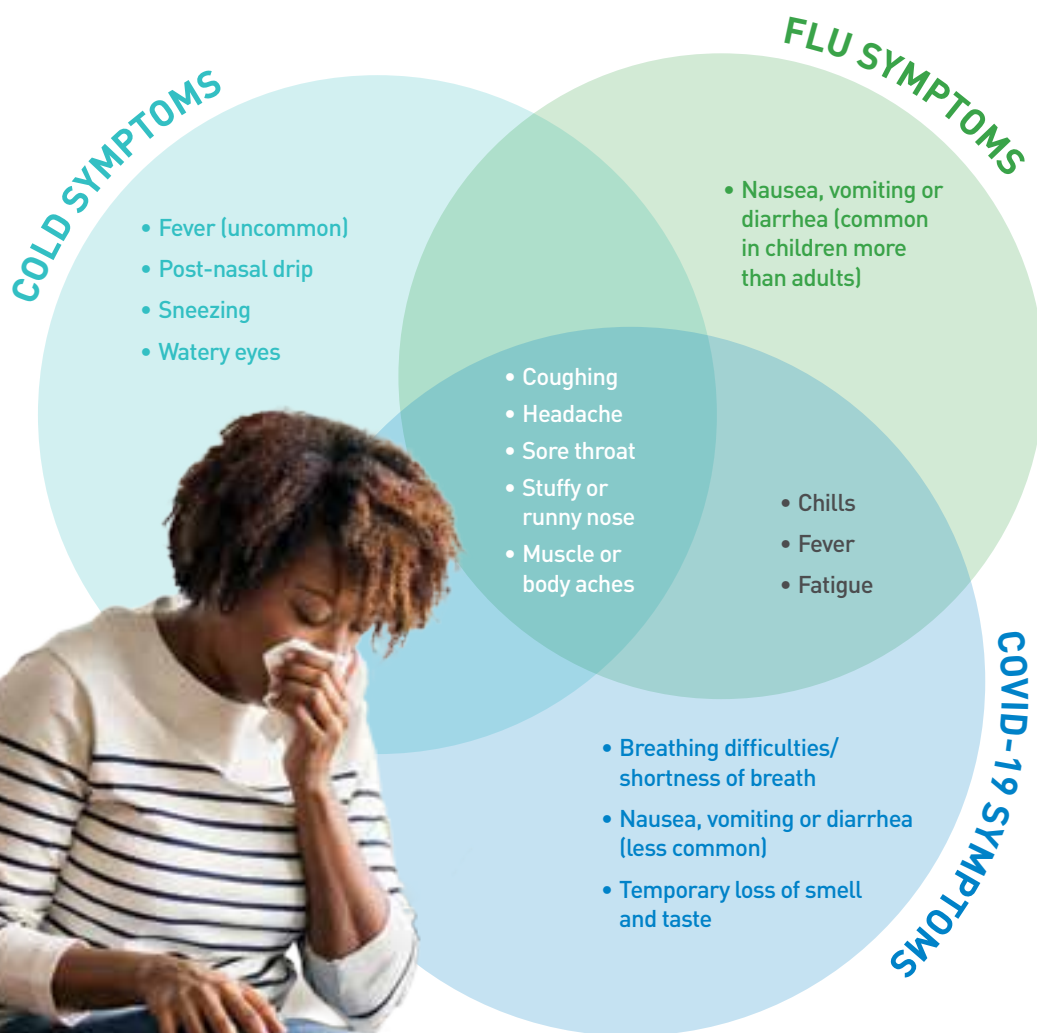


If it's time for your annual mammogram, visit [ForrestCityMedicalCenter.com](http://ForrestCityMedicalCenter.com) or call (870) 261-0152 to schedule. Learn about pre-pay pricing options for imaging tests at [ForrestCityMedicalCenter.com](http://ForrestCityMedicalCenter.com) or call (870) 261-0172 to find out more.

# COLD vs. FLU vs. COVID-19

Staying home when you are sick is more important than ever. Recognize cold, flu and COVID-19 symptoms so you can take the appropriate action.

## COLD VS. FLU VS. COVID-19 SYMPTOMS\*



## HOW MANY DAYS AFTER EXPOSURE DO SYMPTOMS START?

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Cold: 2–3 days						
Flu: 1–4 days						
COVID-19: 2–14 days						

## WHEN AM I CONTAGIOUS?

**COLD:**  
From 1–7 days after symptoms

**FLU:**  
From 1 day before to 7 days after symptoms; most contagious 3–4 days after

**COVID-19:**  
From three days before, to two weeks after symptoms; **most contagious 48 hours before symptoms, according to emerging research**



If your symptoms become severe, don't wait. Our ER is Open, Safe and Ready to diagnose and treat you in a safe and timely fashion. For more information, visit [ForrestCityMedicalCenter.com/ER](https://www.forrestcitymedicalcenter.com/ER).

*We work diligently to have you initially seen by a medical professional within 30 minutes of your arrival in the ER.*

## HOW CAN I PREVENT GETTING OR SPREADING UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS?

- Avoid close contact with others, keeping at least six feet away from people.
- Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue or your arm, dispose of tissues and wash hands immediately after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- Frequently disinfect surfaces, such as tables, doorknobs or your phone.
- Keep away from others who are sick.
- Stay home if you are sick or have been in contact with someone who is sick.
- Try to not touch your face, mouth, nose and eyes with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth in public.

*Fact:*

Staying isolated from other people when you have an upper respiratory infection is essential to prevent spreading the disease.



Forrest City Medical Center  
1601 Newcastle Road  
Forrest City, AR 72335

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Visit [ForrestCityMedicalCenter.com/signup](http://ForrestCityMedicalCenter.com/signup) to receive other health and wellness articles and register for our eNewsletter.

Forrest City Medical Center complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. For more information, see link on our homepage at [ForrestCityMedicalCenter.com](http://ForrestCityMedicalCenter.com). Attention: If you do not speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call (870) 261-0000 (TTY: (800) 285-1131).

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al (870) 261-0000 (TTY: (800) 285-1131).

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số (870) 261-0000 (TTY: (800) 285-1131).

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This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your doctor before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.

## INTRODUCING **SIMPLE + PRICE**

### HEALTHCARE PRICING MADE EASY.

Healthcare pricing can be confusing. We heard your concerns and created a new option for you. To simplify things, we now offer a pre-pay pricing plan called **SIMPLE+PRICE**. No insurance involved. No confusion. No surprises. Just an up-front price for some of the most common imaging and lab tests offered. Simple.

So if you need an X-Ray, Ultrasound, CT, MRI or lab test, just call us and get a **SIMPLE+PRICE** quote. This single price, paid up front, includes hospital and Radiologist reading charges.

You can pay over the phone or in person by stopping by the hospital's Central Scheduling/Registration Office during regular business hours. If your procedure takes place after hours or on the weekend, our registration department can process the payment. We accept credit cards, cash and some personal checks. When you take advantage of **SIMPLE+PRICE**, you'll get a receipt for your payment in full prior to the procedure or test. It's as simple as that.

**CALL 870-261-0172 for  
a SIMPLE+PRICE Quote.**

**FORREST CITY**  
M E D I C A L C E N T E R

### **SIMPLE + PRICE**

#### **MENU:**

- + Chest X-Ray  
as Low as **\$82**
- + Bone Density CT Scan  
as Low as **\$98**
- + Abdominal Ultrasound  
as Low as **\$159**
- + Screening Mammogram  
as Low as **\$165**
- + Head CT Scan  
as Low as **\$176**
- + Many other services.  
Call and ask.

\***SIMPLE+PRICE** may not be used in conjunction with insurance. It also does not include further testing that may be ordered by your physician. All payments must be made prior to testing or procedure.