

# healthmatters

Fall 2023

## Workout WINS



Instead of focusing on weight, use one or more of these measures to track how well your workouts are working.

### 1 EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES FEEL BETTER

You might notice it's less of a burden to tote your groceries or lift a child, or that you spring out of bed with less stiffness.

### 2 YOU IMPROVE ON FITNESS TESTS

Choose one or more benchmarks to test monthly, based on your fitness goals.

### 3 EACH EXERCISE IS EASIER

During each workout, rate how hard you're working on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is a very light effort and 10 is your maximum. Over time, you should feel less out of breath during the same activities.

### 4 YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE DROPS

When you go to a medical appointment or check at home, you'll likely notice lower readings after about six months of regular exercise.

### 5 YOUR HEART WORKS SMARTER

Aerobic exercise strengthens your heart, so it pumps more blood with each beat. That means your heart rate, both at rest and during workouts, will be lower.

### 6 YOU FEEL GOOD

Even a single workout can relieve stress and anxiety, and the mood boosts add up when you stick with a regular programme. You'll likely notice your energy levels rise, too.

### Are you a BF&M health insurance customer?

Make the most out of our free wellness programme, LiveWell. Through its engaging online platform and in-person sessions, LiveWell offers:

- ✓ Wellness assessments
- ✓ Personalised advice
- ✓ Nutrition education
- ✓ Healthy living workshops
- ✓ Mental health and lifestyle management support
- ✓ Wellness challenges with prizes

All included as part of your BF&M health insurance so you can live your healthiest life.

**LiveWell with BF&M**

Get started today at [bfm.bm/LiveWell](http://bfm.bm/LiveWell).

# 8 lesser-known signs of ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Learn the signs of Alzheimer's disease and talk with your healthcare provider if you spot them in yourself or a loved one. Some lesser-known symptoms include:



## 1. PERSONALITY CHANGES

These are causes for concern.

## 2. FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

Planning and problem-solving skills might not be as sharp.



## 3. LOSING TRACK OF TIME

Many everyday tasks take longer when a person has cognitive problems. Their perception of time changes, too—they might get confused about the current date.



## 4. SLIPS IN SELF-CARE

Personal hygiene or pet care might fall by the wayside.



## 5. VISION ISSUES

Alzheimer's can cause problems with processing visual information. This can make it seem like the person has poor eyesight—like trouble reading or an inability to distinguish colours.



## 6. MOOD CHANGES

If a change in routine triggers uncharacteristic anxiety or aggression, that's a red flag.



## 7. HAVING ACCIDENTS

Alzheimer's can affect a person's perception of space, leading them to trip or to spill or drop things more often.



## 8. SHIFTS IN SLEEP PATTERNS

Some people with Alzheimer's sleep more during the day and are restless at night. Others may struggle to sleep much at all.

If you have concerns, ask a healthcare provider for a cognitive assessment. That way, you can pinpoint problems early—and take action.

### SERVICES FOR SENIORS

**Seniors and people with disabilities and their caregivers can connect with services and resources to support them at [gov.bm/helpful-resources](http://gov.bm/helpful-resources).**

## How much do you know about memory?

1. Being forgetful is the start of serious memory problems, such as Alzheimer's disease.  True  False

2. You can "train" yourself to improve your memory.  True  False

3. Using certain supplements is proven to improve memory and prevent dementia and Alzheimer's.  True  False

4. Stress can affect your memory.  True  False

5. Learning a foreign language can help memory.  True  False

### ANSWERS

1. **False.** Occasionally forgetting things is natural with age.

2. **True.** Certain strategies can improve your ability to recall information. For instance, use mnemonic strategies to remember information. Make lists and keep a calendar you can refer to throughout the day.

3. **False.** There are currently no supplements, pills, or other products proven to prevent dementia or Alzheimer's. Talk with your healthcare provider before starting any new supplements.

4. **True.** Stress can alter the way the brain works, including your memory and mood. Left unmanaged, it may increase your risk for cognitive problems and Alzheimer's.

5. **True.** Keeping your mind active with challenging activities can positively affect memory.



## Beat the BLOAT

Bloating happens when your gastrointestinal tract fills with air or gas. The cause could be simple or serious.

If your bloating bothers you, changes suddenly, or is accompanied by symptoms like blood in your stool, unintentional weight loss, worsening heartburn, or fever, talk with your provider. For bloating that could be caused by a medical condition, they may recommend certain tests and treatments.

For everyday bloating:

- Stick to noncarbonated beverages.
- Stay away from foods linked to extra gas, such as beans.
- Eat slowly.
- Avoid chewing gum, sucking hard candy, or using straws, which all can cause you to swallow air.
- Ask your provider about medicines and supplements. Over-the-counter meds include simethicone, charcoal caps, and probiotics. Herbal ingredients such as anise, caraway, fennel, and peppermint may also ease swelling.

Follow up with your provider if you still have symptoms even after trying these suggestions. They are used to talking about gut troubles and other sensitive topics, and treatment can bring you relief.

# Heed these signs of ovarian cancer

Ovarian cancer often does not cause symptoms in the early stages. Even when it does, the symptoms could also be linked to other, less serious problems. As a result, only about one-fifth of ovarian cancer cases are identified early on, when treatment is most successful. But doctors are now finding out it does have some warning signs, even in the initial stages.

Talk with your healthcare provider if you have any of the following signs, especially if they last longer than a few weeks:

- Bloating
- Frequent or sudden urge to urinate
- Pain or swelling in your abdomen or pelvis
- Having trouble eating or feeling full quickly

Your provider can use several methods to diagnose or rule out cancer. These may include an ultrasound or CT scan, blood tests, a biopsy, or a pelvic exam. Work with your provider to decide on the best testing method for you.



## Get ready for your MAMMOGRAM

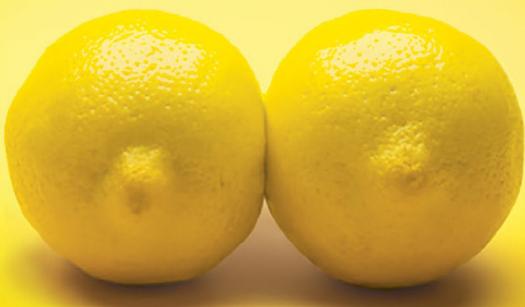
Mammograms are an important tool for finding breast cancer early, when it's easiest to treat. Talk with your healthcare provider about when to start getting mammograms and how often to have them.

Before your mammogram, you'll undress above the waist. You will be given a gown or wrap to wear. During the procedure, a special X-ray machine will push each breast between two panels before taking a picture. You will feel some pressure and maybe discomfort, but it lasts for only a few seconds.

Take these steps before your mammogram:

- If you're still menstruating, try not to schedule your screening for the week just before your period.
- Don't wear lotion, powder, perfume, or deodorant under your arms or on your breasts the day of the exam. These products can show up as white spots on the X-rays.
- Bring a list of places and dates of mammograms, biopsies, or other breast-related procedures you've had before.
- Tell the X-ray technician if you are breastfeeding or might be pregnant.

## The 27<sup>th</sup> Annual BF&M Breast Cancer Awareness Walk



Wednesday,  
October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Barr's Bay Park,  
at 6:00pm

Register at  
[racedayworld.com](http://racedayworld.com)

 Bermuda Cancer and Health Centre  
BERMUDA REGISTERED CHARITY #070

All funds raised support the Breast Cancer and Health Centre's Equal Access Fund and their Prevention and Early Detection Programmes. [www.chc.bm](http://www.chc.bm)

**BF&M**

**WHAT'S RECOMMENDED?**  
Learn about Bermuda's breast cancer screening recommendations at [cancer.bm/cancer-information/screening-for-breast-cancer](http://cancer.bm/cancer-information/screening-for-breast-cancer).

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