

# a HEALTHY TOMORROW

INFORMATION FOR A  
HEALTHY LIFESTYLE TODAY  
SPRING 2026

## HELPING TEENS THRIVE

HOW TO RECOGNIZE  
CHALLENGES AND  
OFFER SUPPORT



LOMA LINDA  
UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH

MENOPAUSE AND  
BRAIN HEALTH

SMART SIPS  
FOR GROWING KIDS

ALL ABOUT ASTHMA  
MEDICATIONS

# ask *the* EXPERT

## What changes can women expect during menopause?

**A:** Women can experience a range of physical, emotional and cognitive changes as estrogen levels decline.

Common symptoms include hot flashes and night sweats (vasomotor symptoms), vaginal dryness, mood changes, sleep disruption and difficulty with focus or memory.


Over time, lower hormone levels are associated with a higher risk of osteoporosis, heart disease, hypertension and stroke. Research also suggests these hormonal shifts may affect brain health. This may help explain why women report memory concerns more often than men.

Estradiol, the most active form of estrogen, supports areas of the brain involved in learning and reasoning. It also promotes healthy blood vessels and nerve growth. As levels decline, some women notice changes in memory or thinking.

Healthy lifestyle habits can help during this transition. A fiber-rich, whole-food, plant-based diet, regular moderate to vigorous physical activity and stress management can support brain function, mood and overall health.

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## How menopause affects your brain health

**L**ower estrogen levels during menopause may be linked to an increased risk for Alzheimer's disease, but there are steps you can take to support your brain health.

### UNDERSTANDING THE CHANGE

During menopause, usually between ages 45 and 55, estrogen and progesterone levels naturally decline. Estrogen plays an important role in brain function by helping nerve cells communicate. When levels fall, it may become harder to concentrate or recall information.

Hormone changes can also affect the cardiovascular system. They may encourage cholesterol buildup and stiffen arterial walls, reducing blood flow. When less oxygen-rich blood reaches the brain, thinking and memory may not feel as sharp.

### IMPACT ON BRAIN HEALTH

Some women may notice increased forgetfulness, or "brain fog," during this

time. These symptoms often improve after menopause. However, studies suggest that declining estrogen may contribute to inflammation and the buildup of certain proteins linked to cognitive decline.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

Although experts are still studying the connection, healthy habits can ease symptoms and support long-term brain health. Here are some strategies to consider:

- **Follow a Mediterranean diet.** Focus on fruits, vegetables, whole grains and healthy fats to support both heart and brain health.
- **Stay active.** Regular movement supports cardiovascular health, improves sleep, boosts mood and strengthens bones.
- **Manage stress.** Try deep breathing, listening to calming music or unwinding with a warm bath.

**fyi**

Stress can worsen symptoms. Even small moments of relaxation can help.

## HEALTH SERVICES SPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR WOMEN

From menopause management and breast health to advanced gynecologic care — including treatment for pelvic pain, female cancers and incontinence — Loma Linda University Health delivers comprehensive, compassionate care through every stage of life. Learn more about our services at [lulh.org/womens-health](https://lulh.org/womens-health).

# SPOT THE SIGNS

## WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SELF-INJURY

If you suspect your child is self-harming, you may feel scared, confused or unsure what to do. Many teens and young adults use this behavior as a way to deal with intense emotions. By learning more about self-harm, you can better recognize early signs and feel more prepared to offer the support your child needs.

### WHY DO TEENS SELF-HARM?

Creating injury to the body causes the brain to release natural painkillers. This rush of chemicals can provide a brief feeling of relief from problems a teen is experiencing.

There is no one reason young people self-harm. For many, it is to cope with overwhelming emotions. Other possible reasons can include:

- Feeling empty, worthless or misunderstood.
- Feeling overwhelmed by school or family.
- Wanting to feel more in control.

### WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF SELF-HARM?

Though cutting may be the most well-known type of self-harm, it can take many forms.

These can include:

- Burning the skin with matches or candles.
- Punching themselves or punching a wall.
- Pulling out their hair.

Self-harm isn't the same as attempting suicide, but it should be taken seriously. Studies show that ongoing self-harm can put teens at higher risk for suicide. If you're worried your teen may be thinking about

suicide, contact the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline by calling or texting 988.

### WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?

Possible warning signs that your teen may be self-harming include:

- Unexplained cuts or scars.
- Low self-esteem or problems with relationships.
- Feelings of worthlessness.
- Sleep problems.

People who self-harm often try to cover up scars with clothing. Or they may lie about the cause of their injuries.

### HOW CAN I HELP?

Start by talking with your teen in a calm, caring and nonjudgmental way. Let them know you're there to listen and support them.

Reach out to your teen's doctor to discuss next steps or to get a referral for mental health support. Treatment often includes therapy to help teens learn healthier ways to manage emotions. In some cases, medication can help relieve anxiety or depression.



### FIND SUPPORT

If you or someone you love needs help, resources for self-harm are available through Loma Linda University Behavioral Health at [LLUBMC.org](http://LLUBMC.org), or by calling 909-558-9275.

# LIVE IT

Quick tips to keep you healthy!

For more simple ways you can  
live healthier, longer, visit  
[LiveItLomaLinda.org](http://LiveItLomaLinda.org).



## Magnesium matters for strong bones

Magnesium is essential for building strong bones. Higher magnesium intake is linked to a lower risk for fractures and osteoporosis, yet many people still fall short. A few small swaps each week can help. Try adding more magnesium-rich foods to your meals, like raisins, sweet potatoes, spinach, black beans and avocados. Mix spinach into eggs, add beans to salads, or top toast with avocado to boost your intake.

## Smart sips for growing kids

The smartest drinks for kids are also the simplest: water and plain milk. They keep kids hydrated, support healthy growth and avoid the extra sugar found in juice boxes, sodas, sports drinks and flavored milks. Experts say these sugary favorites can contribute to cavities, weight gain and poor sleep. Try replacing them by making water more appealing — chill it in the fridge, add fruit slices or let your child choose a fun bottle. Offer water with meals and between snacks to help kids stay hydrated throughout the day.





## How building strength helps your metabolism

Your metabolism shifts over time, and one major reason is the gradual loss of muscle mass that can begin in your 30s. Because smaller muscles burn fewer calories, eating the same way you always have may suddenly lead to extra pounds. One way to help is to build strength. Everyday activities like yoga, body-weight exercises or even gardening help rebuild muscle and support a healthier, more efficient metabolism.

**Looking for ways to get started?** Discover your perfect workout at the Drayson Center at Loma Linda University, featuring state-of-the-art equipment, a variety of classes and plenty of ways to stay active. Learn more at [drayson.llu.edu](http://drayson.llu.edu).

## Adding weight to your workout

Weighted vests are showing up everywhere — from gyms to sidewalks to social media. While a few studies suggest the added weight of a vest brings small benefits in bone health, others show no difference. But that doesn't mean weighted vests aren't worth it. They help build strength, improve posture, and increase the intensity of walking or weight lifting. If you're new to them, experts suggest starting with a 5-pound vest and adding more weight gradually as you feel comfortable. Be sure the vest fits snugly and doesn't change your walking form or balance.



### recipe of the month

## PAN-GRILLED ZUCCHINI

### INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup cherry tomatoes
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 tbsp. shallots, minced
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 2 tbsp. freshly grated Parmesan
- 2 tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. freshly ground pepper
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2 medium-sized green zucchinis



### DIRECTIONS

1. Wash and dry the zucchini. Remove the flower end, but leave as much of the stem as possible. Slice in half lengthwise, then score a crosshatch pattern into the flat side.
2. Sprinkle with the first salt and let stand for 10 minutes. Rinse and pat dry with paper towels.
3. Heat a skillet to medium high heat and add the olive oil.
5. Sprinkle zucchini with second salt and pepper. Lay the zucchini flat side down in the pan. Cook until evenly browned.
6. Turn the zucchini cut side up and reduce heat to medium.
7. Add the butter, garlic, shallot and tomato and sauté about two minutes. Remove from heat.
8. Arrange the zucchini, cut side up, on a serving dish. Spoon the tomato mixture over the top.
9. Top the dish with fresh parmesan and serve immediately.



**CLICK THIS CODE TO FIND MORE HEART-HEALTHY RECIPES ONLINE!**

# A SIMPLE GUIDE TO ASTHMA MEDICATIONS

**Medication can provide relief during a flare-up.**

**A**sthma makes your airways swollen and sensitive to “triggers” in the environment. When you’re exposed to a trigger, the swelling increases and breathing becomes harder. Medications can help manage symptoms and lower the chances of flare-ups. Here’s a quick guide to the three main types of asthma medications.

## 1 CONTROLLER MEDICATIONS

These are taken daily to help prevent asthma attacks. They include:

- Anticholinergic inhalers (help with airway inflammation).
- Corticosteroid inhalers (lessen airway inflammation and help relax the airways).
- Corticosteroid/long-acting beta agonist (LABA) combination inhalers.

- Oral medications called leukotriene modifiers (prevent airway tightening and inflammation).

## 2 QUICK-RELIEF (RESCUE) MEDICATIONS

These provide fast relief during a flare-up. They include:

- Inhaled short-acting beta agonists.
- Oral and IV corticosteroids.

## 3 BIOLOGIC MEDICATIONS

These are for people with severe asthma who require a higher level of therapy. Biologics block the root cause of the inflammation that leads to asthma symptoms. They can be given as an injection or infusion.

Your provider may recommend one type of medication or a combination, depending on how often you have symptoms or how severe they are.

## PERSONALIZED TREATMENT

While there isn’t a cure for asthma, your healthcare provider will help identify the best medication to help control your symptoms. Follow their instructions carefully. With the right plan in place, you can enjoy an active, healthy life.

### MANAGING ASTHMA

If you have trouble breathing, chest tightness, wheezing or a chronic cough, these may be signs of asthma. Ask your primary care provider for a referral to the Advanced Lung Disease Center. Learn more at [lluh.org/advanced-lung-disease-center](http://lluh.org/advanced-lung-disease-center).

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH

SPRING 2026



## CLASSES & PROGRAMS

### ALWAYS IN MY HEART

A bereavement support group for parents who have lost a baby from miscarriage, stillbirth or in infancy. We are sorry we are unable to accommodate children. For information, call 909-558-7261 or visit [lluh.org/bereavement](http://lluh.org/bereavement).

### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OUTPATIENT PROGRAMS

Partial hospitalization and intensive outpatient therapy programs are available for youth and adults facing mental health and substance use challenges. To learn more, call 909-558-9275 or visit at [llubmc.org](http://llubmc.org).

### BIG HEARTS FOR LITTLE HEARTS GUILDS

Loma Linda University Children's Hospital volunteer guilds host events and activities to help meet the healthcare needs of community children. Call 909-651-9849 for more information.

### BIRTH AND BEYOND

Covering everything from the childbirth process to what you need to know about a NICU stay, we offer classes, tours and support groups to help you prepare for your family's newest addition. Learn more at [lluch.org/classes](http://lluch.org/classes).

### CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

• **Every Wednesday, 5 p.m.**  
11265 Mountain View Ave., Suite 12, Loma Linda, CA 92354  
If you have questions, email [creyesdelapaz@llu.edu](mailto:creyesdelapaz@llu.edu) or call 909-558-7756.



### COMPREHENSIVE WELLNESS EVALUATIONS

Make an appointment with our Preventive Medicine providers at the Center for Health Promotion for your annual wellness visit, followed by targeted interventions. Call 909-559-4594 for information.

### DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT EDUCATION CLASS

Call 909-558-3022 to register. This four-session program is recognized by the American Diabetes Association.

### DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

Diabetes experts provide educational and resource information. For more information, call 909-558-3022.

### GRIEF RECOVERY GROUP

A six-week grief recovery class for those who have experienced a loss due to death. For dates and to register, call 909-558-4367.

### HEALTH 180

To request more information about this 10-session virtual group program that helps you turn your health around, email [health180@llu.edu](mailto:health180@llu.edu).

### HOPEFUL JOURNEY

A support group for moms who are pregnant after experiencing the loss of a baby. For information, call 909-558-7261.

### INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE SUPPORT GROUP

• **Second Thursday of each month, 6 to 7 p.m.**  
For information, call the Digestive Disease Center at 909-651-4996.

### INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL CLINIC

• **Wednesdays, 1:30 to 4 p.m.**  
Walk-in vaccination clinic. Please call 909-558-4594 prior to coming in on Wednesday afternoon.

### KIDNEY AND PANCREAS SUPPORT GROUP

• **Second Tuesday of each month, 1:30 to 3 p.m.**  
For more information, call 909-558-3636.

### LIVER SUPPORT GROUP

• **First Friday of each month, noon to 1:30 p.m.**  
Call 800-548-3790.

### LUPUS AND AUTOIMMUNE SUPPORT GROUP

• **Third Thursday of each month, 5 to 6 p.m., Faculty Medical Offices, Room 3925**  
For patients, caregivers, friends and family who would like more information on autoimmune conditions. Call 909-645-1457.

### METABOLIC OBESITY CLINIC

Provider visits for long-term weight management. Call the Center for Health Promotion at 909-558-4594.

### WOMEN'S HEALTH VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUP

• **First Tuesday of each month, 7 to 8 p.m.** Learn more about women's health topics and support one another through the phases of life. To register or for more information, email [womenshealth@llu.edu](mailto:womenshealth@llu.edu).

### PARKINSON'S DISEASE EXERCISE GROUP

• **Thursdays, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.**  
For people with PD who have participated in the LSVT BIG therapy program and want to continue group exercise. \$15/day.

### STROKE/ANEURYSM SUPPORT GROUP

• **Third Tuesday of each month, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.**  
Led by Dr. Promod Pillai (Department of Neurosurgery). For more information, contact Olivia Portugal at [oportugal@llu.edu](mailto:oportugal@llu.edu) or 909-558-4726.

### BARIATRIC ONLINE SUPPORT GROUP

• **Second Monday of each month, 6 to 7 p.m.**  
For more information, call 909-651-7091 or email [bariatrics@llu.edu](mailto:bariatrics@llu.edu).

## RESOURCES

### PHYSICIAN REFERRAL LINE

• Loma Linda University Health  
800-872-1212



For more information on all classes and programs, call 877-558-6248.



# a **HEALTHY** **TOMORROW**

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## Celebrating Our Staff During Hospital Week, Nurses Week, and **ALL YEAR LONG.**

We take pride in serving our community and could not provide high-quality healthcare without our dedicated employees. Every member of the Loma Linda University Health team is committed to healing those we serve through compassionate, whole person care.



**Inspired by Faith. Empowered by Purpose.**

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