

PA

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HEALTH

YOUR GUIDE TO FITNESS & WELL-BEING

Grateful to be here

A Danville man's
comeback after a
rare illness

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THROUGH SCHOLARSHIPS
3 ANEURYSMS, 2ND OPINION,
1 SURGERY

WELCOME

On the cover:

A rare infection led to multiple surgeries for Hide Horikoshi of Danville. Now he lives from “a standpoint of gratitude.”

Photo by Robb Malloy

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Better Together

We've been part of the region for more than 100 years – celebrating with you at parades, fairs and sports events and supporting happenings that lift up our communities. Here's the latest on how we're connecting with you and your neighbors.

It's official: Geisinger joins Risan Health • Find out why this is great news for Geisinger patients and members alike! [geisinger.org/risanhealth](https://www.geisinger.org/risanhealth)



Welcoming our new president and CEO • Say hello to Terry Gilliland, MD, Geisinger's new president and CEO! Jaewon Ryu, MD, JD, our former president and CEO, is now leading the newly formed Risan Health.

Empowering women professionally • Northeast PA women came together in April to hear inspiring speakers, pursue new opportunities and find solutions to challenges at EMPOWER, The Leadership Experience, an annual conference sponsored by Geisinger.



Walking (and running) side by side • Hundreds of runners, including many Geisinger employees, completed the Geisinger-sponsored Scranton Half Marathon this year. And with the grand opening of the Bloomsburg Area Recreational Trail, central Pennsylvanians have a safer spot to walk, run and bike.

Teaming up with farmers • Did you read about farm safety in our spring 2024 issue? Visitors to Agricultural Safety Day at the Clinton County Fairgrounds picked up more tips to stay safe on the farm. The April event, sponsored by Geisinger, featured demonstrations, tours and talks.



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By Kimberly Adler-Morelli

Beating the odds

One man's triumph over a rare, deadly infection

Even the fittest among us can be caught off guard by a devastating illness. Hide Horikoshi, a Danville fitness trainer and dance instructor, says taking good care of himself helped him pull through a life-threatening infection.



Mr. Horikoshi, originally from Japan, came to Bloomsburg University to pursue a master's degree in school counseling. There, he met his future wife, Cori, and decided to stay in the area. He opened Resurrection Movement Studio and Komotion Dance Program in 2015, a perfect fit for his love of working with children.

In June 2023, Mr. Horikoshi started feeling dull pain in the left side of his chest. Cardiac testing came back negative for heart problems. However, he continued to feel worse, lapsing in and out of consciousness with increasing pain.

By the next day, the pain had spread to his upper back and become agonizing. He also developed flu-like symptoms, spurring his family to take him back to the ER. Mr. Horikoshi lost consciousness, later waking in the intensive care unit on a ventilator.



A rare diagnosis

Diagnosing Mr. Horikoshi's sudden illness took the expertise of his care team — notably Tae-Sung Kwon, MD, an infectious diseases physician at Geisinger Medical Center. When Dr. Kwon was called in to consult on the case, he immediately recognized the urgency of the situation.

"Hide was lethargic. He couldn't speak, was confused and wasn't with us," Dr. Kwon says. He noted the pain had spread from the left side of Mr. Horikoshi's torso to near his hip. The skin was firm to the touch and very warm.

Dr. Kwon immediately shared his concern about toxic shock syndrome with the ICU and surgical teams. He arranged for the ICU team to begin care and contacted a surgeon. They had no time to waste in removing the infected tissue before the bacteria spread to vital organs and muscle tissue. "We needed all hands on deck," Dr. Kwon says.

Toxic shock syndrome is caused by bacteria that produce poisons (toxins). Symptoms appear suddenly and worsen rapidly. The bacteria that was the culprit in Mr. Horikoshi's case was caused by the same species of bacteria that causes strep throat: group A Streptococcus. In rare cases, the bacteria enters the body through a break in the skin. Instead of causing a sore throat, it gets into the bloodstream and can spread quickly to the bloodstream and soft tissues.

Hide Horikoshi and Cori Gresh-Horikoshi's son Noah has his own Geisinger success story. He was a 2022 Miracle Kid treated at Geisinger Janet Weis Children's Hospital.



The toxins produced by the bacteria can cause necrotizing fasciitis, commonly known as "flesh-eating disease." Necrotizing means causing the death of tissues. Fasciitis is inflammation of the fascia — the tissue under the skin that surrounds muscle, nerves, fat and blood vessels and holds everything in place.

A long journey back to health

Treatment for necrotizing fasciitis involves antibiotics to kill the bacteria and surgery to remove infected tissue and prevent bacterial spread. Mr. Horikoshi had 12 such surgeries before his infection was completely gone. And because that meant removing a large area of skin, he also needed skin grafts. Other organ systems were severely affected, too.

As he healed, scarring led to tightness and loss of mobility on Mr. Horikoshi's left side. So he still visits Geisinger Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital once a week, where physical therapist Becky Betz works with him on regaining range of motion and flexibility. "She respects me, listens and collaborates with me on my therapy," he says.





Hide Horikoshi with participants in his youth athlete training program.

Now, in the wake of such a serious health issue, Mr. Horikoshi continues to adjust his routine based on what his body can do. He can't dance like he used to, and he's mindful of how he moves and what his body needs.

But it's more than physical recovery. He's also recovering from the toll the illness took on his mental health. On days he's in a dark place mentally, Mr. Horikoshi tries to shift his mindset.

"When you operate from a standpoint of gratitude, everything changes," he says. He's grateful for everything — family, friends, work, being part of the community — because, as he says, "it all could have been gone."

A cautionary tale

Dr. Kwon, who lives down the street from Mr. Hirokoshi, still sees him from time to time in the neighborhood. He attributes his patient's relatively quick recovery to starting out healthy and fit, which gave him an advantage when the infection set in.

Necrotizing fasciitis is very rare, Dr. Kwon stresses, but it's smart to know the signs and seek immediate medical care for them. Early symptoms include:

- Red, warm or swollen area of skin that spreads rapidly
- Severe pain in the affected skin and other areas
- Fever

Later symptoms that can develop are:

- Blisters or ulcers on the skin
- Changes in skin color
- Pus or oozing
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Nausea

Nearly a year since his hospitalization, Mr. Horikoshi encourages everyone to make time to take care of themselves. "If it means you have the ability to survive these situations, it's worth it," he said. "I'm grateful to be here."



Watch Hide Horikoshi tell his story in his own words: geisinger.org/hidehorikoshi

By Beth Kaszuba



Hear ye, hear ye!

It's time to start a better conversation about hearing, say Geisinger otolaryngologist William Azeredo, MD, and his colleague, audiologist Jared Owens, AuD.

"Parents tell you not to stare at the sun and to wear a bike helmet, but they don't tell you to wear ear protection at a Who concert," says Dr. Azeredo.

Adds Dr. Owens, "A lot of my patients say, 'If only I'd known...'"

So listen up to a few things they wish all their patients knew.

When to cover your ears.

Protect against noises above about 80 decibels. That means anything as loud as or louder than a lawn mower.

A sound that makes your ears ring or causes short-term hearing loss has done some long-term damage.

So keep your guard up. For example, if you take off your hearing protection at a shooting range and someone fires a gun, your ears take the hit.

We're getting better at work — but worse at play.

Workplaces are doing more to protect employees' hearing. But play can damage our ears.

One culprit? Earbuds, which funnel sound directly into the ear canal.

Unlike headsets that sit outside the ear, earbuds "create a seal, and there's

no way for the sound to escape," says Dr. Owens. "Parents, if you can hear the music your kids are listening to, it's too loud."

Hearing protection is more than just ear plugs.

Lots of ear plugs will do a decent job, screening out up to about 25 decibels. Just read the packaging to see how much sound is being blocked.

Meanwhile, technology has come a long way. For example, at a concert, some protection mutes bass more than higher-pitched sounds for a better experience. And certain hunting gear only muzzles sound when a gun is fired.

Trust your friends and family.

If people tell you they think you're not hearing well, get screened.

Some patients believe their hearing is fine because conversations are still loud enough. They just can't make out all the words. That's still evidence of damage to the ear's cochlea, which helps with clarity.

"If you're asking what people are saying, or responding in ways that are kind of funny because you're not hearing words correctly, that indicates hearing loss," says Dr. Azeredo.

All about screenings.

Your family doctor can perform a fairly reliable hearing screening. But an audiogram by a specialist is much more involved and accurate.

"If another test shows loss, come in for a more formal hearing test," says Dr. Owens. Then you're on the providers' radar and more likely to get the help you need if loss progresses.

Ringings in the ears, or tinnitus, is "a canary in the coal mine" that should also prompt you to get checked, adds Dr. Azeredo. "The vast majority of times, tinnitus is a product of hearing loss."

Changes in one ear? See a specialist.

Your ears are a team. So if only one develops a problem, like tinnitus or a pulsing sound, see a specialist as soon as possible. "Those symptoms warrant evaluation," says Dr. Azeredo.

Use available resources.

Seek out information like how loud your model of lawn mower is, says Dr. Owens.

"A quick search can show you sounds that are dangerous. Some apps will also evaluate decibels right where you are."

By Lyndsey Frey

Powering the future of medicine in Pennsylvania

Philanthropy can cultivate health professionals right here at home.

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine was created to train great doctors who will practice right here, helping alleviate Pennsylvania's physician shortage.

But not every outstanding student with a calling to serve can afford medical school. That's when scholarships and student assistance programs can mean the difference between lost potential and a dream fulfilled.

Meet three Geisinger Commonwealth students in different stages of their budding medical careers who have benefited from scholarships and aid programs generously supported by donors who believe in the school's mission and the incredible potential of its students.

Want to give? [geisinger.org/becauseofyou](https://www.geisinger.org/becauseofyou)



Anthony Soto Ramos

Program coordinator and former participant in REACH-HEI Pathway Programs

When he was an eighth grader, waking early on Saturday to go to school wasn't ideal. But then Anthony Soto Ramos of Hazleton had the opportunity to join REACH-HEI (Regional Education Academy for Careers in Health – Higher Education Initiative). The Geisinger College of Health Sciences programs offer free health sciences education, mentoring and advising to underserved students, guiding them toward possible healthcare careers.

To Mr. Ramos, it was a wakeup call. "I knew I wanted to be in a career that helped people, and I enjoyed chemistry and learning about the human body," he says. "No one in my family went to college or had a medical career, and this program allowed me to see and meet people who have done it. Getting up on Saturdays to travel to Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine got easier because the program was so interesting."

Mr. Ramos, 26, credits his nine years with REACH-HEI with opening doors for him.

"This program inspired me and fed into my love of medicine. And now I can give back to a program that's given me so much," says Mr. Ramos, who's returned to work as a REACH-HEI program coordinator after graduating from The University of Scranton and earning a Master of Biomedical Sciences from Geisinger College of Health Sciences. "I now have an expansive network that went from mentors to friends as I prepare my application for medical school and work toward my goal of opening a family medicine clinic in my hometown."

Because of you

REACH-HEI participants have benefited from many philanthropic sources over the years. Since 2022, Sanofi has awarded \$60,000 each year for Geisinger College of Health Sciences to continue the REACH-HEI Pathway Programs.



Theresa Koch
Geisinger Commonwealth School
of Medicine Class of 2025

Donald B. & Dorothy L. Stabler
Foundation Endowed Scholar

Ever since she can remember, Theresa Koch of Lehigh Valley dreamed of becoming a doctor. Growing up, she saw how her grandparents' health problems affected their quality of life. She decided she'd help people like them live better by reaching their best possible health.

Ms. Koch's dream may not have been possible without the generous support of the Donald B. & Dorothy L. Stabler Foundation Endowed Scholarship.

Because of you

The Donald B. & Dorothy L. Stabler Foundation is funding Ms. Koch's four-year education with \$15,000 per year.

"Medicine has always been my goal, so I'm thankful this scholarship committee sees value in investing in medical students like me and in the community's

future," she says. "This scholarship has taken the financial burden off my plate and is setting me up for a stronger future. I now have more wiggle room to pursue interests in research and further medical education and don't have to consider the financial repercussions as much."

As a third-year medical student at Geisinger Commonwealth, Ms. Koch is applying for and hopes to land a residency in neurology next summer. Because her husband serves in the military and they've witnessed several neurological injuries, she hopes to focus her studies on helping patients with brain injuries, chronic headaches and other neurologic conditions.



Laura Barna, MD
Geisinger Commonwealth School
of Medicine Class of 2019

Northeastern Pennsylvania
Health Care Foundation Scholar

There was never a doubt Laura Barna, MD, of Mountain Top would attend medical school after being exposed to healthcare her entire life. Her mom was an audiologist-turned-healthcare administrator, and her dad was an oculoplastic surgeon. From an early age, she saw how happy her parents were, working in medicine — and she wanted to stick to that path.

As one of Northeastern Pennsylvania Health Care Foundation's first scholars, Dr. Barna is thankful for the support in pursuing her dream.

"Hearing the news was very humbling, and it made things a lot easier because I knew I wanted to be in a competitive specialty," Dr. Barna says. "I'm grateful to see the community investing in itself and young physicians like me. This scholarship further validated what I wanted to pursue in medicine: to go to medical school and come back home to practice alongside my dad."

In 2019, Dr. Barna graduated from Geisinger Commonwealth. And last year, she completed her residency in ophthalmology at the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai. Now in a one-year fellowship in glaucoma at Massachusetts Eye and Ear teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School, she's gaining intensive surgical experience and advanced training in glaucoma care. This fall, she'll return home to join her father's practice, expanding glaucoma services and care to those in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Because of you

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Health Care Foundation's supported Dr. Barna's four-year education with \$40,000 per year.

Three aneurysms, one procedure

Jim Schintz is thankful he got a second opinion at Geisinger.

For Jim Schintz, it was just another routine checkup. Everything changed when he complained about urinating often at

night and his family doctor ordered an ultrasound. That's when the 64-year-old insurance salesman from Emmaus with a history of heart disease learned he was carrying around a potential time bomb.

Mr. Schintz's ultrasound results revealed an abdominal aortic aneurysm — a swelling or bulging in the lower part of the major vessel that delivers blood to his body. The tests also showed two more aneurysms in the walls of a group of arteries in Mr. Schintz's pelvis. Aneurysms typically don't have symptoms, but they could cause life-threatening bleeding if they were to rupture.

"Aneurysmal disease is a silent killer," says Evan Ryer, MD, a vascular surgeon at Geisinger. "It's the 13th leading cause of death in men over age 65, and most people don't know they have it. So Jim was very lucky that his were identified before they ruptured."

Deciding on a different approach

A specialist in Allentown recommended three separate stenting procedures, one for each aneurysm. But Mr. Schintz wanted to avoid that, if possible.

He decided the nearly two-hour drive to Geisinger for a second opinion was worth it. He didn't have that "warm, fuzzy feeling" about the provider in Allentown, and he liked the high

level of coordination and communication at Geisinger. Mr. Schintz did his research and felt Geisinger was the right choice.

"When Dr. Ryer said he could do it in one step, that was very appealing to me," says Mr. Schintz. "The more I spoke to the staff in Danville, the more comfortable I became with them being the folks I wanted to handle the situation."

Because of the multiple aneurysms, the surgery was complex, but Geisinger routinely treats such tricky vascular cases safely and effectively.

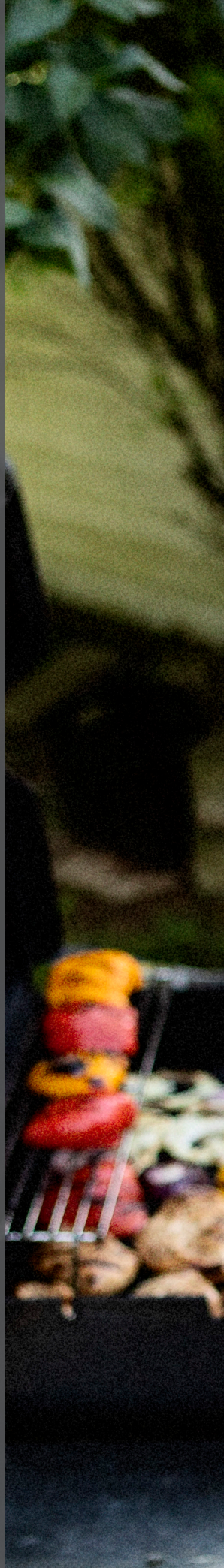
"We see a lot of patients who are denied care elsewhere because they're deemed too complex," says Dr. Ryer. "But this is a big part of what we do here at Geisinger. We perform several of these operations per week. We pride ourselves on being up to date with the newest technology and providing world-class care to people who live in central Pennsylvania."

Successful surgery and great care

Mr. Schintz's surgery was a success and he was back home the next day. He jokes he was happy to cut the lawn for the first time in months. And he's thankful Geisinger took away his excuse not to.

He says he might have gone to Philadelphia or Cleveland for the surgery — Philadelphia is closer to his home — but he's happy he came to Geisinger.

"The whole operation from start to finish, I was impressed by it," Mr. Schintz says. "My wife was impressed by it, too. The guys at Geisinger were on top of what I was dealing with. There was such a comfort level, and I didn't have to go to a major metropolitan area for top-notch care. It was here in my own backyard."





Watch his story
in his own words:
geisinger.org/jimschintz



Better health? It's in the cards.



ZING543210 is the fun way to be healthy, active and happy. We've even set goals for laughter!

Now, we've expanded on the fun — with a game. Our ZING543210 Connect cards help you learn more about yourself, your friends and family and explore what living healthy means to you.

Come play with us! How would you answer the questions on the ZING543210 Connect cards on this page? Share your answers with us (and any great question ideas, if you'd like!) and we'll send you a small gift. Email your answers to pahealth@geisinger.edu. Or mail them to ZING Cards, M.C. 40-20, 100 N. Academy Ave., Danville, PA 17822.

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recreational
screen time

1
hour of
outdoor
activity

0
sugar-
sweetened
beverages



By Kimberly Adler-Morelli

Wild about berries



Looking for a snack that packs a healthy punch? Berries are delicious little nutritional powerhouses. They're rich in antioxidants, which can prevent cell damage and are good for eye health. And they're high in soluble fiber, which slows your digestion, so you feel fuller longer.

"Be sure to include fiber in your snacks and meals to reap its many health benefits," says Amy Pinkham, clinical dietitian and certified culinary medicine specialist. "One benefit is its cholesterol-lowering effect, which is great for heart health."

Summertime means berries are everywhere. You'll find them in the produce section of your favorite grocery store and at local pick-your-own fruit farms. Want a side of exercise with your nutrition? Explore one of the many state forests and parks in PA that feature berry trails. Keep snacking safe by using a guided trail where the berries are identified for you by signs or a knowledgeable guide.

Berry season in Pennsylvania runs through June, July and August. Some well-known berries grow right here in our state:



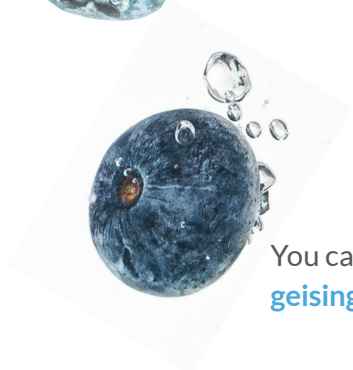
Blackberry

These sweet and slightly tart gems grow on prickly-stemmed bushes. They aren't technically a berry, but a collection of tiny fruits fused together. Blackberries are a source of iron, vitamin C and antioxidants and lend themselves to preserves and baked goods.



Strawberry

This low-growing fruit plant is actually a member of the rose family (Rosaceae). They're widely grown all over the world. Strawberries contain lots of vitamin C. They work well in desserts like pies and strawberry shortcake.



You can drink your fruit, too:
[geisinger.org/berrysmoothie](https://www.geisinger.org/berrysmoothie)



Raspberry

Another member of the Rosaceae family, raspberries are rich in iron, vitamin C and antioxidants.

The spiny plants can grow over six feet high. These berries are ideal for jam, jelly and as pastry filling — and even flavor some liqueurs.



Blueberry

Termed a “superfood,” blueberries are a great source of fiber, vitamin C, vitamin K, manganese, antioxidants and iron. Blueberries are closely related to cranberries. Their sweetness makes them perfect for adding to baked goods.

When you’re enjoying the beauty of a Pennsylvania summer, grab a handful of delicious, nutritious berries — and enjoy the fruits of nature.



Blueberry crisp

Serves 6.

This recipe is best baked in six small bowls, but can also be made in one larger pan. Try adding mint, cinnamon or lemon.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups blueberries, frozen
- 1 tablespoon corn starch
- 1 lime, zested
- ¾ cup rolled oats
- ½ cup pecans, unsalted, chopped
- 1 tablespoon applesauce, unsweetened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. In a medium bowl, combine the blueberries and corn starch. Mix until corn starch coats the blueberries. Mix in the lime zest and set aside.
3. In a separate medium bowl, combine the oats, pecans, maple syrup, coconut oil, applesauce, vanilla extract and salt. Mix until the ingredients are completely combined, then set aside.
4. Divide the blueberry mixture evenly between six small oven-safe bowls (ceramic soufflé cups work well), about ⅓ cup of blueberries per bowl. Top each bowl with 3 tablespoons of the oat and nut mixture.
5. Bake in the oven for 15 to 20 minutes, until the oats are golden brown and the blueberries are bubbling around the edges.

Adapted from [culinarymedicine.org](https://www.culinarymedicine.org)

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