

LOOK NORTH

A community and wellness publication from Mather Hospital

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"How screening saved my life"

With regular mammograms at the Fortunato Breast Health Center, one patient found out about her aggressive cancer in time to fight back

Debbie Christ was good about scheduling her mammograms. In 2014, at age 49, she was too busy with the holiday season to arrange her annual screening, but when she finally called the Fortunato Breast Health Center at Mather Hospital in February, “they had just gotten off the phone with someone who cancelled, and they could fit me in first thing the next morning. It was perfect timing,” said the Port Jefferson mother of four.

After her mammogram and a sonogram, Christ was asked to wait in the exam room. “That’s when I got nervous. I didn’t think that was a good sign,” she said. A few minutes later, breast radiologist Michelle Price, MD, and nurse Stephanie Crispino, RN, came into the room and explained to her that they had seen a mass on her images. It looked like it could be malignant, they said — she would need a biopsy.

In good hands

“Dr. Price and Stephanie were very calm and kind and asked me if I wanted to go home and talk to my family before I had the biopsy,” Christ said. “But I’m a ‘let’s get things done now’ kind of person, so I asked if they could perform the biopsy right then. I had Stephanie next to me the whole time, holding my hand.”

She got the diagnosis the next day: aggressive breast cancer. Her first thought was of her children — she wanted to be there in the morning when they left for school, drive them to their activities and cook them meals. “A thought that kept coming to mind was, ‘will I get to see my kids graduate?’ The staff at the Breast Center reassured me the whole time. They kept telling me I would be ok.”

The Breast Center’s navigation program guided Christ through her treatment. “It was like following a recipe. Everything was laid out. I just had to follow the plan,” she said. That treatment plan included three surgeries, chemotherapy, radiation and continuing hormonal therapy, and Christ is thankful for every bit of it. Tests show no sign of disease.

Over 40? Get on a screening schedule



Tanzia Chowdhury, DO

Regular screenings are an important part of medical care, said Tanzia Chowdhury, DO, at Mather Hospital. “People want to live their best lives, and that means catching any problems early when they’re most treatable,” she said. The Fortunato Breast Health Center recommends women begin screening mammography at age 40, unless their physician advises otherwise. A number of other screening tests are important, too — the timing that’s right for you will depend on your medical history and lifestyle, as well as family history, Dr. Chowdhury said. Here are the screenings Dr. Chowdhury recommends for people as they age:

- Colorectal cancer
- Cervical cancer
- Osteoporosis
- Skin cancer
- Blood sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure
- Lung cancer, if you’ve ever been a regular smoker or are higher risk
- Depression and anxiety
- Breast cancer (women)
- Prostate cancer (men)

“My cancer was caught just in time. It was angry, aggressive and on its way to other places,” said Christ. “I think, what if I put off my appointment for another few months? Things could have been a lot worse for me.”

“Just get screened”

Her experience has made her a powerful advocate for early detection. “When I was diagnosed, so many kind women asked how they could help me. My response was always, ‘Go get screened. A casserole is lovely, but what I really need is for

you to go get a mammogram. That would make me feel better.”

She knows that some women get nervous about what the test will find or worry that mammography will be painful. “Please, just go. In the grand scheme of things, a few minutes of being a little uncomfortable every year is worth it for the peace of mind that comes with hearing that you’re OK. Every time I’m told that everything looks good, I say to myself, ‘Deb, you’ve been given more time, now go make it count!’”

Contact the Fortunato Breast Health Center at (631) 250-3997.

Regular mammograms offer the best chance of detecting breast cancer early, when it’s most treatable. If you’re uninsured or underinsured, resources are available for free or discounted screenings at the Fortunato Breast Health Center through the Suffolk County Cancer Services program. Call (631) 548-6320 for more information.

Sex, gender and health

What women
need to know
now



It goes without saying that men and women should be treated equally in all aspects of life — from education and employment to sports and entertainment.

But when it comes to medical care, it's essential for doctors and patients alike to recognize that men and women are not identical, said Northwell Health cardiologist Stacey E. Rosen, MD, senior vice president of women's health at the Katz Institute for Women's Health. For instance, biological differences mean that women have a higher risk of developing certain diseases. Women may also experience different symptoms than do men with the same condition and may need different tests or treatments.

Simply being aware that sex and gender can influence health and disease is a start, Dr. Rosen said. It's also important for women to advocate for themselves, just as they would for a friend or loved one. "If your child or parent was sick and was being 'pooh-poohed' by their doctor, you'd be a warrior princess," she said. "Take that same approach to your own care."

Here are a few conditions that can impact women differently, and some steps that can help you feel your best.

HEART DISEASE

Though still widely thought of as a man's disease, heart disease is the leading cause of death for women around the world. Yet studies show that it often takes longer for doctors to realize that a woman is having a heart attack. One reason is that she may not feel the crushing chest pain depicted in movies — instead, she may experience symptoms like extreme fatigue and pain in the jaw or neck.

Women are also more likely than men to delay going for medical help. And even when properly diagnosed with heart disease, they are less likely to be treated with life-saving medications and procedures.

Good to know: A special exam called an angiogram is commonly used to check for blockages in the major arteries of the heart — but women are more likely than men to have narrowing of the heart's small vessels as an explanation for their cardiac symptoms. If you continue to have symptoms despite a normal stress test or angiogram, you may benefit from a different diagnostic approach, Dr. Rosen said. See a doctor who specializes in women with heart disease.

AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES

These conditions, in which the immune system mistakenly attacks the body, are much more common in women than men. In fact, about 80 percent of those affected by these disorders are female. Some of the most common autoimmune diseases in women are rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, lupus and thyroid disorders — including hyperthyroidism (Graves' disease), in which the body makes too much thyroid hormone, and hypothyroidism (Hashimoto's thyroiditis), in which production of thyroid hormone drops too low.

The Katz Institute for Women's Health has developed a network of more than 300 highly trained clinicians who use a female-specific lens to address the health care needs of women across all stages of life and are certified members of the Katz Institute.

Good to know: Autoimmune disorders can be challenging to diagnose, because in many cases there isn't a simple diagnostic test. So it's important to speak up when you experience new symptoms. It's also key to tell your doctor about your family history — if you have a close relative with an autoimmune disorder, you're at increased risk not just for that disease but for other autoimmune conditions, as well.

DIABETES

Untreated or poorly treated diabetes can have serious consequences for anyone, but the toll may be heavier for women. For one thing, diabetes quadruples a woman's risk of heart disease, while it merely doubles the risk for men. It is also more likely to lead to kidney disease or blindness in women. And it makes it harder to conceive and have a healthy pregnancy.

Good to know: Women who experience gestational diabetes are at higher lifetime risk to develop chronic diabetes and should be monitored more carefully. And for any woman with diabetes, hormonal changes during menopause can make blood sugar harder to manage. Talk with your doctor about menopausal symptoms and whether you need to adjust diabetes medication, if you're taking any. Since diabetes and menopause both increase heart disease risk, it's also important to focus on a heart-healthy diet and lifestyle.



When every second counts

Mather Hospital's new cardiac catheterization lab makes critical heart care available close to home



Shazam Ghany of Middle Island was just helping his cousin do a little yardwork last May, but as he dug holes to plant a few trees and bushes, he found himself breathing heavily and sweating. The 53-year-old warehouse manager and father of two is an active guy. But that afternoon, despite slowing down and drinking a glass of water, Ghany felt like he was running a marathon.

Then the chest pains began. “I knew I was in trouble then,” he recalled. His relative took him to the closest hospital, which turned out to be Mather Hospital. “I’m so happy that turned out to be my option,” he said.

Proximity wasn’t the only benefit of Mather; Ghany’s timing was also perfect. The hospital had just opened a new cardiac catheterization lab on May 18, and he was its first patient.

How a “cath” saves lives

Cardiac catheterization (sometimes shortened to “cath”) is a procedure in which a thin, hollow tube called a catheter is inserted into a blood vessel and snaked up toward the heart in order to check how well blood is flowing, open a blockage, or provide other help.

Not all patients who come into the cath lab are in the midst of a crisis, but for those who are, like Ghany, every second that can be saved is crucial. Before the lab opened, patients at Mather who needed catheterization had to be sent elsewhere, said Nicole Hoefler, BSN, RN, CVN, nursing director at Mather’s Cardiac Catheterization Lab. “Being able to help patients like Shazam is very meaningful, and the need is clear,” she said. “In just the first three months, we performed 142 procedures.”

In addition to detecting and treating blockages, the team at the lab can:

- Check pressure in the heart and lungs
- Implant a temporary pacemaker
- Perform an ablation, a procedure for restoring normal heart rhythm

The Cardiac Catheterization Lab is comprised of two units: One for coronary diagnostic and intervention procedures and another that handles electrophysiology studies, which assess the heart’s electrical system in order to diagnose and treat arrhythmias, or abnormal heart rhythm. (Electrophysiology services will be available in early 2022.)

A heart in trouble

For Ghany, the cath lab proved vital. A blockage in one of his coronary arteries was keeping oxygen-rich blood from reaching his heart muscle, causing a heart attack. He needed quick action to clear the blockage before precious heart tissue died.

Ghany doesn’t remember many details from the moment he got into his relative’s car to the moment he woke up in the Cardiac Catheterization Lab, but he does recall that the cardiologist at Mather explained everything that was going on, the purpose of each procedure and what he could expect.

Easing past shock

“That’s how I knew I was in good hands and that they would take care of me,” he said. “Once I got over the shock of being in that situation, I appreciated feeling like I was in the best possible place for care.”

The Mather Cath Lab team is still there for him: Ghany checks in with them regularly as he recovers. He gets a little better and is able to do more every day. Eventually, with his doctor’s approval, he may even get back to his family’s yardwork.

To learn more about Mather Hospital’s Cardiac Catheterization Lab, visit matherhospital.org/yourheart.



A is for Anxiety

Is your child worried about the “new normal” post-COVID? Here’s how to help.

The abrupt shutdown in the spring of 2020 hit kids and families hard. No in-person school. Few opportunities to see friends. Closed parks, movie theaters, bowling alleys. Cancelled sporting events and birthday parties. Even for those children who attended school part- or full-time last academic year, things weren’t “normal.” Not surprisingly, the anxiety, worry and fear these changes brought took a sometimes substantial toll on children’s behavior and outlook. An estimated one in four children experienced poor mental health when schools went online, according to a March 2021 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) survey.

At the height of the pandemic, said Vera Feuer, MD, director of pediatric emergency psychiatric care at Cohen Children’s Medical Center (CCMC) and head of Northwell’s school-based mental health program, there were more emergency department visits at CCMC for behavioral health problems than medical issues. And, she added, “We continue to see an increase in children experiencing severe depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation.”

But now most kids have returned to school — after a summer in which many activities also came roaring back. So can parents breathe easier about their children's emotional health? Not necessarily, said Dr. Feuer.

Even if your child is outwardly looking forward to getting back to normal, they may well be quietly suffering from what is best described as reentry anxiety. "It's understandable that children have fears about what school will be like when they go back, and those can persist for some time." Fortunately, **parents can reset and reframe to ease reentry. Try these steps:**

Take your child's concerns seriously

If your child expresses school resistance, refrain from offering a hyper-positive response ("But you love school! It's fun! Everything will be fine!"). Instead, validate their feelings ("Many kids have a hard time with this" or "I understand that this can be difficult"), ask clarifying questions and really listen to the answers. Is your child worried about the virus? "You can explain the steps the school is taking to keep them safe," said Dr. Feuer. A chat with the school principal or teacher may also put your child's mind at ease. Is she worried her friendships have changed since the shutdown? See about setting up some safe play dates or phone or FaceTime calls with pals.

Don't over-indulge fears

Even as you validate your child's worries, it's important to make it clear that even if school looks and feels a little different this year, it's still important. Said Dr. Feuer, your child shouldn't get the impression that if she's worried enough, she can just stay home. "Parents should set the expectation that their child will be attending class right along with their peers — just as they did before the pandemic."

Address academic worries early

Some children may have entered this school year feeling apprehensive about what they missed over the months of the shutdown, or fear that they'll never be able to catch up. In younger kids, tantrums or resistance to schoolwork or homework can reflect a defeatist attitude, said Dr. Feuer. "You might hear more comments like, 'I can't do this' or 'I'll never get this.'" Establish contact with teachers early and keep the lines of communication open (check in weekly or ask for progress reports) so you can head off potential problems. And remind your child that after the disruption of COVID, their classmates may also be struggling. Promise that you will help support them whatever difficulties may come.

Signs your child needs help

Chances are most kids, including yours, will do just fine — but as a parent you're wise to be on the alert for signs of mental health struggles. If your child does need help, the fact that schools are open and functional is great news, said Dr. Feuer, because that gives you greater access to counselors, social workers and psychologists. "The federal government has released more funds to improve access to pediatric mental health care services, including more convenient teletherapy sessions," she said. "This should make it easier for children to get the services they need." Consider seeking help if your child:

- Appears more moody or irritable than usual
- Complains often of headaches or stomach cramps
- Doesn't want to hang out with friends
- Makes comments about disappearing, running away or not being missed if they weren't around
- Quits activities they once loved
- Self-harms by cutting skin or pulling hair
- Sleeps either significantly more or significantly less than normal
- Stops eating or eats too much



Weight, lifted

In Mather Hospital's
Comprehensive Medical
Weight Management
Program, patients
build healthy habits
for a lifetime

Annette Johnson of Medford had tried many diets in her lifetime and, like many people, was successful at losing weight. And, like many people, she always found the pounds creeping back on. That's why, earlier this year, she began researching weight loss surgery.

"I've always been overweight, and as I've gotten older, losing it has been harder," she said. Now 62, she thought surgery was the only option left. But at a seminar on the subject she attended that was given by Mather Hospital, she found out about a new option: medical weight management. Led by registered dietitians and physicians, the program focuses on nutrition education, behavior modification and team support.

"I know weight-loss surgery works well for some people, and I actually started this process in part to support my sister, who was getting a procedure," she said. "But when I found out about the Comprehensive Medical Weight Loss Program, I knew it was a better way for me to get results without surgery."

"The program begins with a comprehensive medical and nutritional evaluation," said registered dietitian Nicole Drepaniotis, MS, RDN. That's followed by counseling and weekly classes to introduce participants to lifestyle changes that they can realistically stick with longterm. (The meetings are typically in person but have switched to a virtual platform during the pandemic.) This intensive phase lasts 12 weeks; afterward, participants segue into a four-month maintenance program.

Small changes

"We emphasize that weight management is more complex than just what we eat," said Drepaniotis. "We're trying to build awareness around why we make certain choices, how our environment impacts food and how we can take control over what we eat."

The principle is that you can build healthy habits through very small changes — by starting to replace fries with steamed vegetables at lunch, for example, or eating in response to hunger rather than just because it's meal time.

About 800 people have been through the program since 2014. The support and respect that participants experience is part of what makes many successful, said Ms. Drepaniotis. There are no public weigh-ins, and the team is focused on motivation.

"The biggest thing we emphasize is that this is a safe environment for weight loss," she said. "It's not about being negative in terms of what you've been eating, it's about helping you put everything together for positive, meaningful behavior change."

Big results

For Johnson, those little tweaks have added up to a big shift. Not only has she lost 24 pounds, but she's changed the way she cooks and what she orders when she goes out. "I'm a big foodie, but now I'm much more mindful about what I use instead of cooking the way I always have," she said. For example, she'll make extra vegetables instead of pasta for a side dish or use yogurt instead of ricotta cheese in her eggplant parmesan. Her egg salad now contains mashed avocado — a delicious, healthy fat — rather than mayonnaise.

"I'm testing things, using different ingredients and really playing," she said. That's a difference from past attempts at weight-loss when she was tracking her food closely, but was counting points instead of learning about nutrition. Now, she knows about healthy fats, carbohydrates and protein, she said.

In the Comprehensive Medical Weight Loss Program, participants learn a variety of skills, including how to:

- Read food labels
- Understand portions
- Break down recipes and use healthy substitutions
- Make smart choices at restaurants
- Create realistic, achievable goals
- Understand how stress plays a role in eating
- Be more mindful when they eat
- Recognize hunger signals

Johnson also loves how her healthier approach is rubbing off on her family. Her grandchildren help her prep meals and she talks to them about healthy choices with their snacks. She jokes that now they know to ask for fruits and vegetables at grandma's house.

Not just slimmer — healthier, too

It's not all about the food, though. The program has helped Johnson get on a healthier path in general. Before going on the program, she learned that she was prediabetic. She was determined to avoid the fate of all four of her sisters, who deal with diabetes. Her recent bloodwork showed that she's no longer in the prediabetic range. Her doctor gave her a high five. "This program is life-changing," she said.

Achieve and maintain your best personal body weight with a program customized to your needs. Learn more at matherhospital.org/weightloss or call (631) 502-5042.

The no-fail exercise plan

Got a case of the workout blahs? Instead of giving up, try one of these smart swaps

When the pandemic shuttered gyms and other facilities, you may have found that more than just your favorite workout classes and equipment were out of reach. Chances are your motivation also took a hiatus. Even if you found new ways to stay active, you may have hit other obstacles, like an overuse injury, or maybe a TV show that seemed more compelling than your treadmill. But whether boredom, lack of visible results or just the siren call of your comfy couch has you calling it quits, shaking things up can help. Here are five swaps that just might turn those fitness fails into wins.

1

FITNESS FAIL #1

You were happy to get back to your kickboxing/Zumba/BodyPump class but lately you're exhausted by it.

The problem: You're overdoing it.

The fix: A great workout should leave you spent but invigorated. If all you feel is achy and beat up, you may not be allowing enough time between classes to recover. (Those breaks are especially important if you were less active during the height of the pandemic.) Instead of quitting altogether, alternate high-energy classes with activities that focus on a different aspect of fitness, such as flexibility and strength. Yoga or Pilates are good alternatives.

2

FITNESS FAIL #2

You're pumping iron faithfully, but your biceps still look meh.

The problem: You're not challenging yourself.

The fix: When you keep lifting the same weights for the same number of reps, your muscles quickly adapt to the work, and improvement grinds to a halt. You have a couple of options if you want to see results. You can up the weights you're lifting (a rule of thumb: the last couple of repetitions should feel almost too hard to do). You can also vary your routine; periodically use resistance bands or machines instead of free weights, for instance. Both these tactics will challenge your muscles again, so you'll ultimately see results.



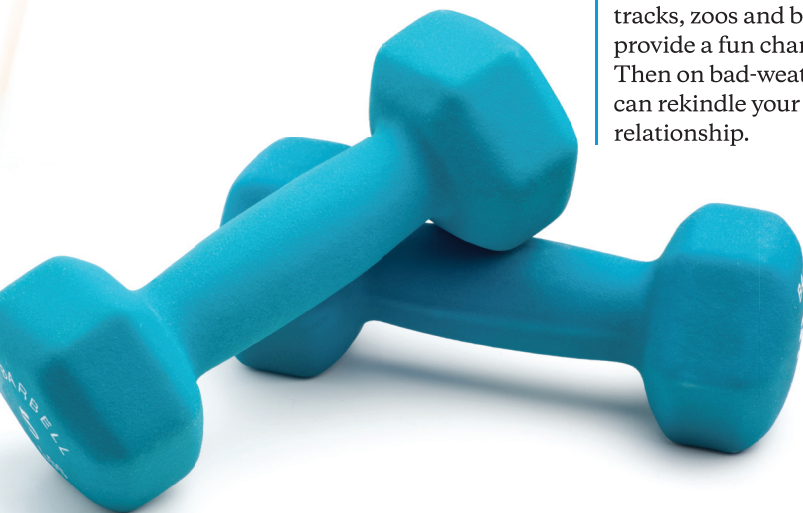
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FITNESS FAIL #3

Your treadmill is gathering dust.

The problem: You're bored — a classic reason many of us quit working out when we were stuck at home.

The fix: It's not the exercise that's failed you; it's the venue. Instead of tossing your sneakers in the closet, take them someplace new! Venture outside your home or the gym to find routes for walking or jogging. Apps like MapMyWalk can help you track your results over time and keep things interesting. Beat boredom by teaming up with a friend or listening to music, audiobooks or podcasts. Parks, school tracks, zoos and botanic gardens provide a fun change of scenery. Then on bad-weather days, you can rekindle your treadmill relationship.



4

FITNESS FAIL #4

The couch is calling you.

The problem: You've misplaced your inspiration.

The fix: Instead of thinking of exercise as a task, reframe it as a means to an end. What do you want to accomplish? Feeling stronger? Sleeping better? Spending time with like-minded friends? Focus on those pay-offs instead. Set a goal, such as a local 5K event. Schedule bike rides with the kids. Take some time to think about what you liked as a child or teen, and search for an adult version — such as a flag football league, swim lessons or dance class.

5

FITNESS FAIL #5

You abandoned exercise after an injury (a tweaked knee, a sore shoulder).

The problem: You aren't sure how to work out safely.

The fix: We'll assume you've gotten the OK from your doctor or physical therapist to exercise, but fear is keeping you from getting back to your routine. It's time to pivot! Let's say you've hurt a wrist or shoulder playing tennis. Try suggesting a walk or hike with your tennis buddies. If you sprained an ankle, take a load off your feet by swimming laps. You may find a new fitness fave!



Stopping the spin

If you're feeling woozy for no good reason, vestibular rehabilitation therapy can help improve balance and reduce vertigo and dizziness

Imagine feeling like you're on an amusement park tilt-a-whirl when you're sitting still in a chair. Now imagine getting that sensation often, for no discernible reason. Feeling lightheaded or a bit dizzy now and then is normal — but if it happens on a frequent basis, you might have a condition called vertigo. Characterized by balance issues, feeling faint and unsteady, nausea and the sensation of spinning, vertigo

can also trigger headaches, double vision or a fast pulse.

Vertigo is often caused by a glitch in the vestibular system in the inner ear — the system that works with the brain to keep track of where your body is in space and help you feel stable as you move around. Mather Hospital offers a program called vestibular rehabilitation therapy (VRT) that can help vertigo sufferers

get that system back in sync and start feeling more normal again.

VRT is an exercise-based program that was developed specifically for vertigo and dizziness. You might be referred to the program if you have:

- Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo
- Vestibular neuritis
- Labyrinthitis
- Neck-related dizziness (cervicogenic dizziness)
- Migraines

The goal is to alleviate symptoms with training that may include better ways to balance, move your head, walk, stretch and stand. A typical session includes manual therapy techniques for soft tissue and the spine, repositioning maneuvers and exercises related to your specific symptoms, according to Kristen Krawczyk, DPT, assistant director of physical therapy at Mather Hospital. Every patient plan is unique, but the goals are to improve balance and stabilize the head and neck in a way that minimizes dizziness.

A patient is ready to “graduate” when symptoms are either resolved or diminished, and no longer interfere as much with daily life, said Krawczyk. Many patients are given a home exercise program to manage symptoms on their own.

Although these types of disorders sometimes require medication or surgery, VRT is a good treatment strategy to try first, particularly because it can give you the skills and knowledge to handle flare-ups on your own.

“With our experience and specialized training, physical therapists here at Mather will work with you one-on-one and really make it your own unique program,” she said. “We’re here to get you through this.”

Feeling dizzy? Contact Mather’s Physical Therapy/Rehabilitation Services for more information. Call (631) 430-6450.

What do you do when a cut won't heal?

When an injury just won't get better, a wound treatment center can help

Anne Edmonson of Middle Island is a fighter. But then, she's had to be: She's kept her type 2 insulin-dependent diabetes in check for years, battled lung cancer since 2018 and lives with three autoimmune conditions. One of them, scleroderma, causes hardening of the skin and connective tissue in her body, and, for some time, Edmonson has dealt with limited mobility in her finger as a result.

In April 2020, Edmonson hit her pinky finger on a door handle in her home. It wasn't a big deal, but then a second blow to the same finger caused a deep cut. Edmonson tried to treat the injury on her own for some months for fear of going to a hospital emergency room during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the wound didn't close up — both diabetes and scleroderma are known to interfere with healing. "I was in agony with the open cut, trying to wash my hands and use hand sanitizer all the time with the pandemic. July was my breaking point. The wound had become infected with the bone almost visible. I knew I needed help," she said.

At a visit with her oncologist, David Chu, MD, she asked what she could do about her pinky. Edmonson said she didn't want to go to an



emergency room or be admitted to a hospital, but she also feared that she would lose her finger. Both diabetes and scleroderma raise the risk of amputation because they can restrict blood flow and cause severe skin sores that worsen quickly. Dr. Chu told her to go to Mather's Wound Treatment Center and that's just what she did.

Edmonson's treatment at Mather's Port Jefferson Wound Treatment Center began in July 2020. At the Wound Treatment Center, a team of different medical specialists evaluates wounds that haven't responded to normal medical care within 30 days. Then the team provides comprehensive treatment for better healing results. For Edmonson, treatment included medicated soaks at the center and at home, along with dressing changes.

In addition to her care at the Wound Treatment Center, Edmonson also underwent 20 treatments in Mather's Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) Unit. With increased air pressure in the HBOT chamber, the lungs take in more oxygen that blood then carries throughout the body, which accelerates healing. "The first time I went into the HBOT chamber, I had a little anxiety because you're in this enclosed tube, but you can talk to the

nurses and staff on the outside of the chamber and I quickly got used to it," she said. "I eventually started falling asleep during my treatments."

After two months, Edmonson finished her HBOT and wound treatment program. Her finger is fully healed and no longer painful or sensitive to touch. And she's regained some mobility long lost to scleroderma. "Even before I hit my finger, it was bent at a 90-degree angle and I only had very limited mobility in it. That's just what scleroderma does. But the treatments healed the wound and kept me from undergoing an amputation. I just have to be extra careful not to hit it again," said Edmonson.

"When I was first diagnosed with scleroderma the doctor back then told me I had maybe five years to live. I've been living with it now for 39 years. I have a husband, kids and grandkids that need me — I have to be around for the people I love."

Now Edmonson is back to life as usual. "I am so grateful to everyone who helped me," she said. "Without them I would have lost my finger. It was nothing short of a miracle. Although my finger will never look perfect — to me, my husband, and kids, it looks beautiful."

If you suffer from a chronic wound, don't delay your care.
Contact our Wound Treatment Center at (631) 818-2368.

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Getting a handle on environmental exposure

Do you have pesticides and other chemicals in your body and blood?
A study offers a chance to find out.

Interested in learning about your exposure to environmental chemicals? The New York State Department of Health is recruiting Long Islanders to participate in its Biomonitoring NY project — and if you're invited to take part, you can learn about your levels of a range of environmental chemicals, at no cost to you.

In this first phase of a five-year project, the department will recruit 500 Long Island residents, aged 20 and older, for blood and urine tests. Later phases will gather information on exposure among

residents of other areas of the state: the Mid-Hudson and Capital District areas; Northern New York and the Southern Tier; and the Finger Lakes and Western New York.

The study will measure levels of about 40 environmental chemicals, such as pesticides, heavy metals and more, and will provide important information about the range of these sorts of substances in New Yorkers' bodies. Participants will get their own results at no cost to them. All results will be confidential.

Find out more at www.health.ny.gov/BiomonitoringNY.

