

PA

ISSUE 9, Summer 2021

HEALTH

YOUR GUIDE TO FITNESS & WELL-BEING

The Adventure Edition

READY, SET — SUMMERTIME.



RIDE THE RUSH AT KNOEBELS

BRING THE HEAT TO THE COOKOUT

MAP OUT YOUR NEXT PA ROAD TRIP

Find us online:
geisinger.org/PAHealth

WELCOME

Have an amazing health story to share? We'd love to hear it. And maybe we'll feature it in an upcoming edition. Send us a note:

PAHealth@geisinger.edu



Picnics, parties and cookouts are finally back, so grab your friends and family and enjoy. We can pack two summers' worth of fun into 2021 if we get started now. After last year's low-key summer, we all deserve it! Though we still need to stay cautious and be smart, we can return to many of the activities we all know and love that typically come with summer.

Need a few ideas? Welcome to the "Adventure Edition" of PA Health. From thrill rides that get your heart pounding to exploring the wilderness to eating the hottest peppers, you'll find everything you need right here in PA — with more to discover online.

Maybe your summer adventures involve a little friendly competition? Loosen up with some of the stretches our physical therapists and sports medicine providers use on the field with the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders. A warmup routine that's perfect for professionals, semi-professionals and weekend warriors alike.

I wish you and your family a safe and healthy summer — filled with adventure, laughter and fun.

Jaewon Ryu, MD, JD
President and CEO
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Calling all adventurers!



When your next adventure leads to a little scrape, we've got you covered with bandages and antiseptic.

Stop by Knoebels Guest Services during the month of July and pick up a free mini first aid kit courtesy of Geisinger.* (And sign up for our free magazine, too.)



**While supplies last.
Limit one kit per customer.*

Get pumped!

Knoebels has rides that'll make your heart pound.

By Paula Franken

A pure surge of adrenaline brings on a heightened state of physical and mental alertness. It's a healthy response to stress (the main component in your body's fight-or-flight response) and, according to Geisinger sports medicine specialist Ryan Roza, MD, if it's short-lived it can even be good for you.

Read the full story
geisinger.org/knoebels



Phoenix

- How fast? 45 mph
- How high? 78 feet
- How long? 2 minutes



“Adrenaline makes your heart beat faster, prompts you to breathe more quickly and helps your blood vessels contract... This combination enhances strength!”

– Ryan Roza, MD



Impulse

- How fast? Over 55 mph
- How high? 98 feet
- How long? 1 minute, 10 seconds



StratosFEAR

- How fast? Over 47 mph
- How high? 148 feet
- How long? 1 minute, 30 seconds



Twister

- How fast? Over 51 mph
- How high? 101.6 feet
- How long? 2 minutes, 10 seconds

It's more than just s'mores

By Beth Kaszuba

Maybe you tie a hammock between two trees, snuggle under a scratchy wool blanket and stare up at the stars.

Or maybe your idea of roughing it is settling for 300-thread-count Egyptian cotton sheets instead of 1,000 and a concierge-fed campfire that crackles softly outside your apartment-sized tent.

No matter what your style, camping (or, yes, glamping) is good for body, mind and soul.



The sense of awe that nature inspires. Unplugging from screens. Breathing fresh air. And connecting with your crew, free of distractions. It's all beneficial.

As we continue to be cautious about crowds, camping with your closest friends and family is our No. 1 pick for a safe, healthy vacation adventure this summer.

Looking for an option between total exposure to the elements and getting your glamp on?

Many of Pennsylvania's state parks rent out cabins and yurts that put nature at your doorstep, without the hassle of pitching a tent. (You'll probably also have electricity and a fridge, although the bathroom might be primitive and a short walk away.)

Launch your adventure:
dcnr.pa.gov

Victory is theirs.

Camping really can help heal what ails us.

Just ask the Geisinger staff who share their time and talents at Camp Victory in Millville, Columbia County.

The camp, founded in 1986, gives kids with special needs and serious illnesses — including cancer, spina bifida and seizure disorders — a chance to make new friends while taking part in activities like archery, zip lining or swimming.

"The diseases they have are truly life-altering," says pediatric hospitalist Paul Bellino, MD, who's volunteered for more than 20 years. "Often, outside of camp, they lack a peer group that understands their lives and circumstances."

Because some campers might need treatments like dialysis or chemotherapy, volunteers like Dr. Bellino are available around the clock, which benefits the providers, too. "It's a chance to get to know the kids we treat better, outside of an office," Dr. Bellino says.

He adds, "There was one boy — he got almost panicky on the first day. It turns out he'd never used his wheelchair on grass before. He was almost crying with excitement. I said, 'Hey, buddy, we've got a lot of grass here. Get out there and roll all over it.'"

Helping kids be kids

CampVictory.org



Campfire cooking should start with great ingredients. Check out how to source local produce on pp. 12–13, then visit geisinger.org/HoboPack for an easy-to-cook camping recipe!

Get out! (It's good for you.)

By Paula Franken

Why does it feel so good to get outside after being cooped up indoors?

Whether it's for a jog or just a few minutes of birdsong and breeze, being outdoors is healthy. "Outdoor recreation is a gateway to better health," says orthopaedic surgeon Michael Suk, MD, JD, who also happens to be a former special assistant to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

"With exposure to nature, hemoglobin numbers drop in the prefrontal cortex of your brain."

What does that mean in plain English? He breaks it down for us: "You relax and decision-making switches off, feelings of pleasure and gratitude increase, your body's immune system is given a healthy boost — and you just feel good."

Elk ahead. A herd of more than a thousand elk roam the Pennsylvania wilds. Benezette, on Route 555 in the aptly named Elk County, is a prime place to spot these majestic creatures.



Watch your step. Deep within the 165,000-acre Tioga State Forest is nestled the Pine Creek Gorge, a.k.a. the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon. Hike, bike or camp with spectacular views.

**"Outdoor recreation is a gateway to better health."
— Michael Suk, MD, JD**

Let's take a road trip.

Northern Pennsylvania is wilder than you think. Get the details on these destinations and start planning your summer adventure: [geisinger.org/RoadTrip](https://www.geisinger.org/RoadTrip)



Drink in the Milky Way. Some of the darkest skies in PA offer amazing nighttime views at Cherry Springs State Park. Bring your telescope or binoculars and be starstruck.



Do we have to axe twice? Find your inner lumberjack at Cherry Springs State Park's annual Woodsmen Show. From log rolling to axe throwing, these August days are action-packed.

WEEKEND WARRIOR?

Warm up like a RailRider.

By Beth Kaszuba

Some people's big-league dreams are played out in packed stadiums. The rest of us might just shine on the local tennis court, softball field — or behind a push mower in a lovingly maintained backyard.

For us weekend warriors, warmups and stretches are crucial to staying safe. So, we asked Geisinger physical therapist Brandon Tunis, who works with the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders, to share a few moves.

Geisinger is the official sports medicine provider for the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders.

Chest stretch

This exercise targets tight pectoral muscles in athletes who repeatedly throw, like pitchers. "Weekend warriors can get similar tightness from sitting at our computers or being on our cell phones," Mr. Tunis notes, adding that the stretch is also good after activities like gardening or weeding that cause us to hunch over.

1. Stand facing into a corner, elbows bent into an L at shoulder height, forearms flat against each wall.
2. Move in toward the corner, feeling a stretch in the front of your chest.



Wrist flexor stretch

Mr. Tunis says pitchers often deal with tight forearm muscles — and the same can be true for amateur athletes, like golfers. This exercise stretches the muscles that attach near the elbow.

1. Hold your arm out straight, palm up, wrist extended.
2. Keeping your elbow straight, use your other hand to pull your extended hand down, feeling for a stretch in your wrist. Repeat on the other arm.



Mid-back rotation

"Tightness in the mid-back can lead to neck pain and shoulder inflammation," Mr. Tunis says, explaining that this exercise helps pitchers avoid injuries related to throwing motions.

1. Get down on all fours.
2. Put one hand behind your head.
3. Rotate through your upper back, looking over your shoulder.
4. Return to starting position and repeat on the other side.



Take that stretch a little farther!
More warmups (and photos of how to do them):
[geisinger.org/warmup](https://www.geisinger.org/warmup)

Farmers markets and CSAs put the guesswork in grocery shopping.

And that's a fun thing.

By Beth Kaszuba

Sure, there's a certain comfort in knowing you can always get your usual brand of beans in supermarket aisle six.

Nothing wrong with that.

But if you're ready to add a dash of daring to your culinary life, our region's farmers markets and farm-based CSAs — short for community-supported agriculture — might just offer the summer adventure you've been craving as much as a freshly picked tomato.

How can you challenge yourself *at a market*?

It's easy.

Commit to filling your (reusable) bag with only in-season, local produce.

Not pumpkin-picking time? No squash-based pie this week.

But maybe there's some vibrant, tangy rhubarb waiting to lure your imagination down a fresh new pastry path.

Want to take the game up a notch?

Join a CSA, where you can sign up for a share of the harvest, which usually means you get a weekly grab-bag of whatever's ripe and ready to pick.

If basing the week's menu on a mystery box of ingredients sounds too daunting, many CSAs, like Fullers Overlook Farm in Waverly, tuck in suggestions and recipes.

"Each week, we have a newsletter," explains farm founder Liz Fuller, who says most shares do include "a few oddball" ingredients. "We offer storage tips and recipes for everything in the share. We also love talking to members at pickup, swapping recipes and tips."

Along with helping you get creative in the kitchen, a CSA membership might kindle a new love for an old fruit or veggie.

"We encourage everyone to try things, even if they've had it before and not liked it," Ms. Fuller adds. "Between harvesting at peak freshness and growing varieties that taste really good, we often surprise people. They discover they actually like a certain vegetable they swore they hated."

Talk about starting a healthy relationship.



Unpack a CSA basket

Could you build a meal with these typical midsummer ingredients?

- Cherry tomatoes
- Heirloom tomatoes
- Sweet peppers
- Greens (salad mix, kale or chard)
- Beans
- Fresh onions
- Zucchini
- Potatoes
- Basil

(Hint: See the bonus hobo pack recipe at geisinger.org/HoboPack.)

FIRE & ICE cucumber salad

This dish will take your culinary adventure further in two ways — with Asian-inspired flavors and a kick of heat. Fiery food on a sweltering summer day? Are you kidding?

Nope. Think about the strong spices in many foods from southeast Asia and the American Southwest. One possible explanation for what seems like a culinary paradox: Flaming-hot foods can make you sweat, which actually cools you down.

So, we're piling on the peppers, balanced by chilled cucumbers, which are about 90% healthy, hydrating water. (Not to mention overloading garden trellises about now.)

It's cold. Hot. Light and fresh-picked. Kind of the perfect summer dish.

Ingredients

Salad:

- 2 cucumbers, thinly sliced
- 2 carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 sweet red pepper, julienned
- Half a red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 green onions, sliced
- Half a seeded, diced hot pepper, like serrano, jalapeño... or ghost pepper, anyone?

Marinade:

- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup rice vinegar
- 1/3 cup water
- 1 teaspoon each salt, garlic powder and pepper
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

Optional toppings: fresh cilantro, chopped peanuts and sliced green onion

Toss the veggies and marinade in a bowl that won't burst into flame when the peppers hit, refrigerate for at least 2 hours and enjoy.

The lowdown on local

The veggies in this salad can all be grown in your backyard or picked up at a farmers market. And freshly picked means nutrient-packed. Vitamins like A, B, C and E start to deteriorate when fruits and vegetables are shipped in from long distances. Another health benefit: The less produce is handled, the less chance there is for contamination. That's a great reason to get growing right at home!

Scoville scale

The more Scoville heat units there are, the hotter the pepper.



855000-1041427
Ghost pepper



100000-350000
Habanero



30000-50000
Cayenne pepper



10000-23000
Serrano



2500-5000
Jalapeño



1000-1500
Poblano



0
Bell pepper

Sprain or strain? Orthopaedic urgent care is here for you.



Adventuring a little too hard? If you or your child injured a bone, muscle or joint in the past 72 hours (and it's not an emergency), stop into an **orthopaedic urgent care** location. No appointment necessary.

Here you'll get targeted care: We evaluate and treat injuries, do X-rays, apply splints and casts, give pre-approved injections and provide documentation for workers' compensation for:

- Strains
- Sprains
- Simple fractures

Rather stay home? Visit us through telemedicine. We'll tell you how to treat your injury at home — or if you should seek in-person care.

Get back on your feet: [geisinger.org/UrgentOrtho](https://www.geisinger.org/UrgentOrtho)

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We're taking every precaution to keep you safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more: [geisinger.org/safe](https://www.geisinger.org/safe)



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