
FROM THE DESKS OF
DAVID L MELLMAN MD &
JEANNETTE GUERRASIO MD

Dec 16, 2020

To Our Patients:

I have a little bit of frustrating news. I've been sending out the newsletters in two email batches of 300 to our patients. As a result, I was identified by microsoft as a "spammer" and had all outgoing email blocked last week. I had to get some external computer support to unlock my account, so if email responses were delayed or emails got lost I apologize. For fear of being identified as a "spammer" again, we are now left to find another platform to distribute the newsletters, which saddens me because you will no longer be able to directly reply to me from the emails. I will be testing out other platforms that may **not be secure** for patient information. Instead of replying to the newsletters, you can always email me at Jeannette@coloradocme.com or Dave at David@coloradocme.com. I will be sure to include my email at the end of each newsletter.

On a more positive note, here are some contributions from our patient community:

From our poet

Warmest wishes of the season and a very happy coming year!
Praying for the dreaded Covid bug to disappear!
Hoping for our lives to be filled with more joy and cheer,
And may the upheavals of 2020 be no longer here!

Let our lives return to what they always were;
Bringing us freedom with our friends and family to share;
We will be grateful and appreciate, and we'll be more aware
Of things we never noticed, though they were always there...

May we leave the crazy politics and hatred all behind;
And strive hard some faith, peace and contentment to find.
Let's to ourselves and to each other be more considerate and kind;
Let peace, love and harmony preside in our heart and mind!

From one of our comedians

The Official flag of 2020

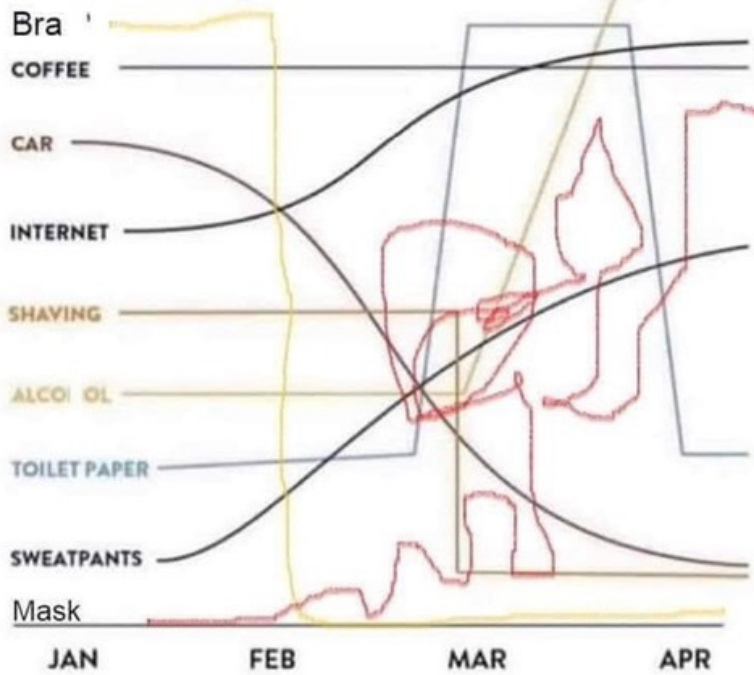


**DEAR 2020, FIRST OF ALL,
I WOULD LIKE TO LET YOU
KNOW I'M TYPING THIS
WITH MY MIDDLE FINGER.**



FUNNY THOUGHTS
AND JOKES

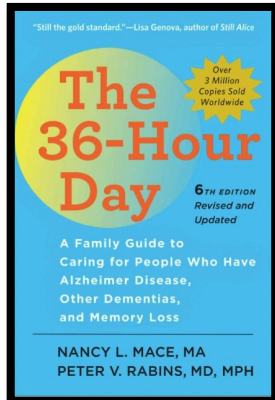
Relative importance in 2020, so far



The most accurate
graph I've seen so far
during this pandemic

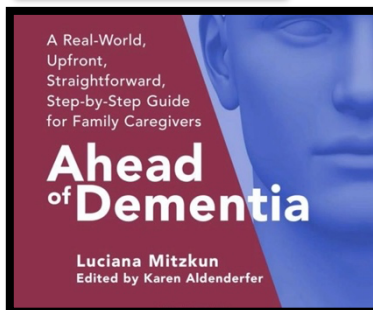


For a change of pace, I thought I would include book reviews this week. All of the books below were written to help people better understand their illness or the illness of their loved ones.



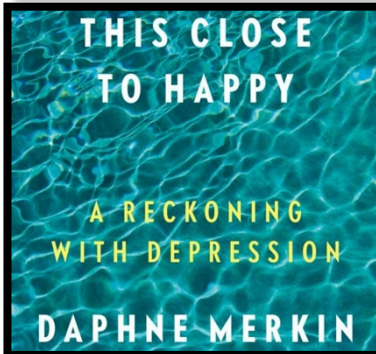
The 36-Hour Day by Nancy Mace and Peter Rabins

This is helpful guide for family members who are living with and taking care of loved ones with Alzheimer's disease or other types of dementia. I read the 6th edition and thought it is a great introductory book on the topic. It is comprehensible, and very relatable for patients and families. Most families have called it a "must" read. Recently, a patient asked me for ideas of what they can do with their mom who has dementia. There is also a book by Judith Levy, called Activities to Do with Your Parent Who Has Alzheimer's Dementia that might help generate a few ideas.



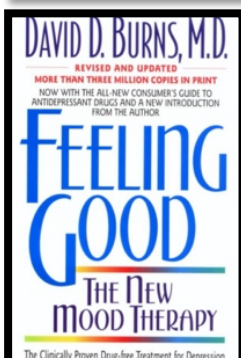
Ahead of Dementia by Luciana Mitzkun

This book is full of very helpful and practical tips. I would definitely recommend it with a few words of caution. In the first two chapter the author uses an unusually broad definition of dementia, including both traditional dementias (like Alzheimer and vascular disease) and cognitive dysfunction caused by brain injuries and other diseases that can affect thinking. Don't let this be distracting. Keep reading... she focuses more on traditional age-related dementias in the remaining chapters. Also, she speaks of only neurologists being able to diagnose dementia and physical therapists being necessary to provide exercise regimens for people with dementia. This may be true for her broad definition of dementia, but please work with Dave and I. We have a lot of experience with dementia and can help!



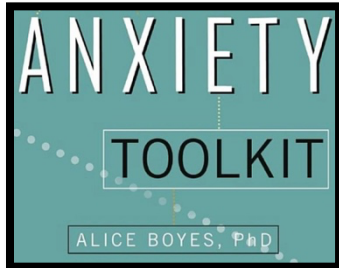
This Close to Happy by Daphne Merkin; **Darkness Visible** by William Styron; **The Noonday Demon** by Andrew Solomon

There are many books on depression and my three favorites are all quite different. *This Close to Happy* by Daphne Merkin, describes the author's experience as a woman and mother living with depression. It is clear that she is a gifted writer. She graciously shares her story, with amazing candor and self-awareness. *Darkness Visible* by William Styron is a classic poetic personal account of his own depression, that was groundbreaking in its self-disclosure in 1992. Lastly, *The Noonday Demon* by Andrew Solomon, truly is an atlas that combines both his battle with depression and a well-researched cultural and biologic exploration of depression and its treatments. Many patients and families have greatly benefited from the brave vulnerability of these individual authors.



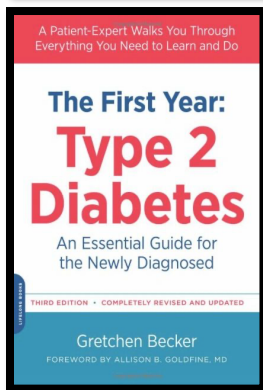
Feeling Good by David D. Burns

This book was recommended by a patient who found it to be very helpful and wanted to share with others. I really appreciated the tools that are offered in the book and believe it to be a great resource for many. My personal philosophical approach to psychiatry is a bit different and I find that sometimes books like this are not the "one-size fits all" that they claim to be. I still think that it is an excellent read that will generate ideas and strategies for feeling better.



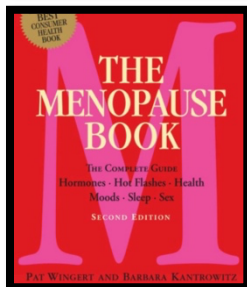
The Anxiety Toolkit by Alice Boyes

I'm on a quest to find my favorite books in each of the common primary care medical topics. This is a fantastic very accessible, practical toolkit for patients who struggle with anxiety. It is easy to read, identifying common behaviors that are associated with anxiety and providing useful strategies for reducing anxiety. Highly recommended, but not meant to replace treatment.



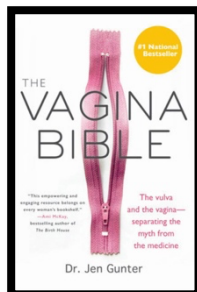
First Year: Type 2 Diabetes by Gretchen Becker

There are many great pearls in this book. On a positive note, it emphasizes that learning about diabetes is a process and that it takes time to understand how to manage it. The author defines every word that you might hear related to diabetes. I find that there is more information included than is necessary. This may seem overwhelming or confusing. There are a few inaccuracies, though overall it's a good place to collect information to discuss with your doctor. I'm still looking for a good Type 2 Diabetes book...



The Menopause Book by Pat Wingert and Barbara Kantrowitz

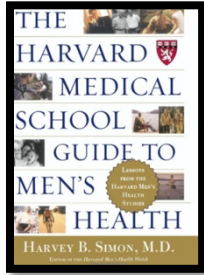
I love this book. It is a fabulous resource for women anticipating or going through perimenopause. Every woman between 40 and 45 years old should read this book... and then use it as a reference from 45-60+! It is even great for those who experience early menopause naturally, surgically or from illness. My poor female friends have all been gifted this book whether they wanted it or not.



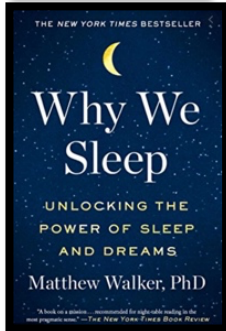
The Vagina Bible by Jen Gunter

Sorry to all of the blushing folks out there... I didn't create the cover. This is a wonderfully informative, up-to-date, accurate book full of helpful information. I didn't find it as entertaining as the Menopause Book. Some might say it is a bit dry... but there is treatment for that. Still recommended.

The Harvard Medical School Guide to Men's Health by Harvey B Simon

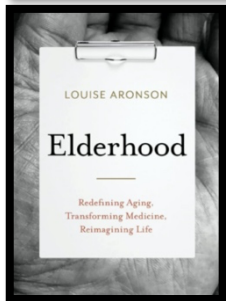


I went in search of a good men's health book and found a lot of books on building muscles. This was the rare book that truly addressed the breadth of men's health and it *would* be a great book, if it weren't so out of date. It makes me sad to see that this book is still for sale and that there isn't a new edition with up to date and more accurate information based on what we currently know in medicine. DON'T waste your money... perhaps I'll have to write an updated version.



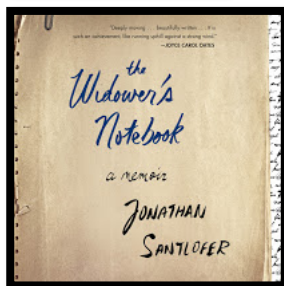
Why We Sleep by Matthew Walker

Fascinating, easy to read, approachable book on sleep by a sleep researcher. It stresses the importance of sleep while explaining the reasons why people suffer from insomnia and providing some tips for improved sleep hygiene. If you are expecting any miracle cures for poor sleep, then you will be disappointed. Otherwise, you will enjoy this read.



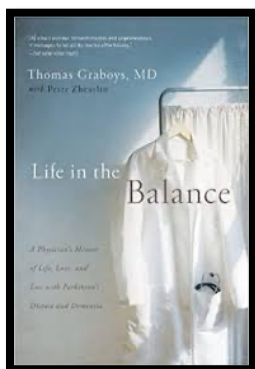
Elderhood by Louise Aronson

This book is heartbreaking, uplifting and heartwarming all at the same time. She tackles 3 large topics: redefining aging, transforming medicine, and reimagining life, from historical, literary, medical, philosophical and sociological perspectives. As a result, it is a bit tangential. That being said, the individual sections and stories are very well written and as long as you are happy to go along, it is a great read. We need more books that present a realistic picture of aging.



The Widower's Notebook by Jonathan Santlofer

I respect that not everyone grieves the same. If you have lost a spouse and need a chance to feel understood and to have a wonderful cathartic cry, please read this book. It is beautifully and honestly written. He reflects on his experiences, his struggles, his relationship with his daughter and his attempts at rebuilding a new life after the death of his wife. The book has been recommended by numerous patients in our practice.



Life in the Balance by Thomas Graboys

This book is a shockingly realistic description of what it is like to live with Parkinson's Disease. While I don't suffer from Parkinson's, I thought this book gave me the best possible chance of understanding what it is like to live in his shoes without actually having the disease. Family and friends of those with Parkinson's will likely find this book to be sad and at times heartbreaking, but it will also help you understand how to be a supportive family member and friend.

Questions for Dave and I

- 1. I have just been notified that someone in our condo building has been diagnosed with COVID. We've been told that the person, who wants to remain anonymous, has mainly been confined to their condo. Is there any advice you would give me now that someone has COVID in the building?**

Get tested if you develop symptoms. Otherwise continue taking your usual precautions. Your chance of getting it from this person is very, very low.

- 2. What is the role of Vitamin C with COVID-19?**

A large study showed that taking 1gram of Vitamin C per day did not prevent upper respiratory tract infections like COVID 19, but may shorten the duration of illness by 8%. The effects are extremely modest. Since having the virus depletes Vitamin C levels, there is an ongoing study looking at whether IV Vitamin C in very sick patients affects outcomes.

- 3. What about oil of oregano or linoleic acid for COVID 19?**

There is one scientific paper that talks about the laboratory properties of oil of oregano on COVID 19. In the lab, the oregano can destroy the lipid capsule around the virus. There is no data to suggest that taking oregano would not be digested before it was able to work on the virus in our bodies. We also don't know that if ingested it would make its way to the virus in our respiratory tract in suitable form or quantity to be effective. There are no known human studies on its effectiveness.

Linoleic acid was tested in patients in a nebulized inhaled formula to prevent COVID 19 and to treat mild symptoms. The only study with humans that I could find involved 2 patients. Again, most of the studies have been in the lab only. The same is true for grape seed oil, primrose oil, sunflower oil, and melatonin in fighting COVID 19. I fear that the doctors spreading this information may have motivations of secondary gain.

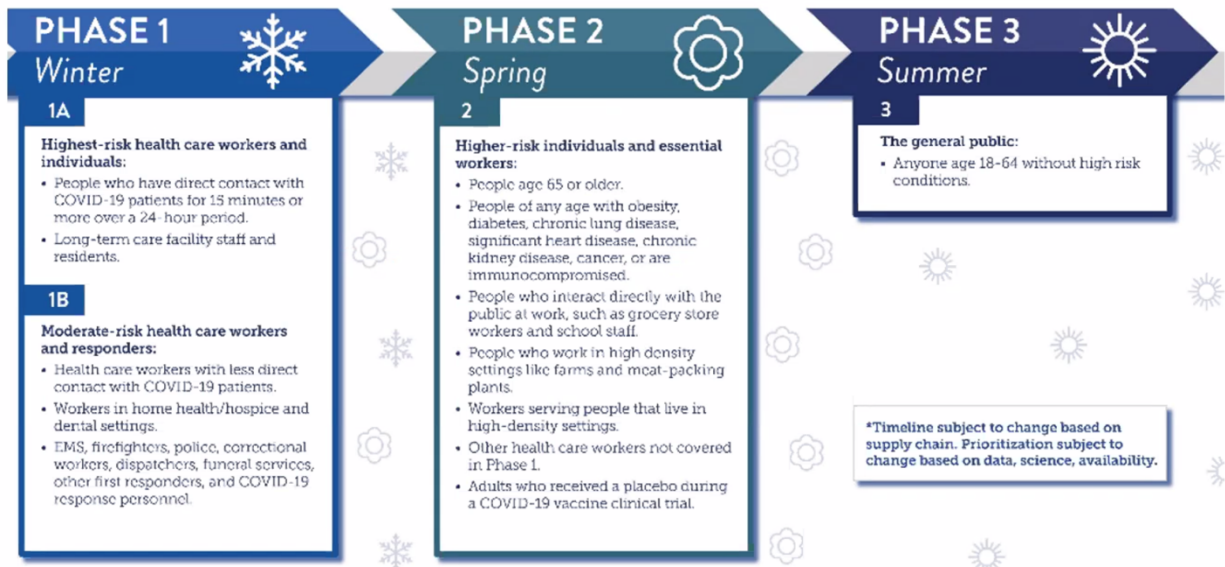
- 4. When can I schedule my COVID vaccine?**

I promise we will let you know! Approximately 46,000 vaccines are being shipped to Colorado this year. Healthcare workers get them first. There are 61,000 nurses in Colorado and 7,300 physicians, plus physician assistants, nurse practitioners, paramedics, emergency medical technicians, medical assistants... etc. Please be patient. We are following the updates minute by minute.

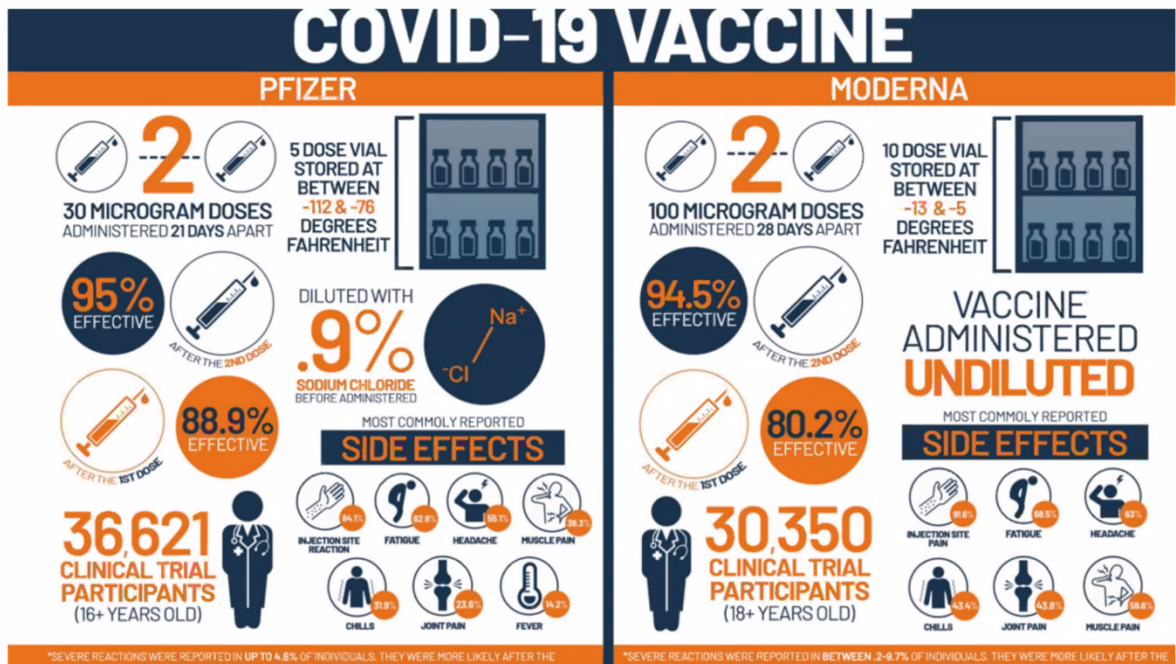
At the most recent presentation I attended, this was the projected timeline...

Phased Implementation

<https://covid19.colorado.gov/for-coloradans/vaccine/vaccine-for-coloradans>



5. Tell me more about the vaccines:



News 10 ABC: <https://www.news10.com/news/pfizer-vs-moderna-covid-19-vaccine-whats-the-difference/>

I know many of you are readers. If you have read a book on health or medicine that you

found particularly helpful, please send me the title and/or author! I would love to add it to my list of books reviewed. Remember you can no longer reply to this email. Instead, email me at Jeannette@coloradocme.com

Stay warm and hopeful,

Jeannette and Dave

David L Mellman MD & Jeannette Guerrasio MD

David L Mellman MD, PLLC

P.S. The next topic will be on chronic fatigue as I promised a patient a review of the latest literature!