

Unity Fellowship Church Movement

HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

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UFCM EXTERNAL DEPARTMENT



HEALTH & WELLNESS INITIATIVE

TO SUPPORT THE WHOLISTIC HEALTH OF UNITY FELLOWSHIP
CHURCH MOVEMENT AND THE COMMUNITITES THEY SERVE.

UFCM House of Bishops - Beatitude Zachary G. Jones - Sr. Bishop Jacquelyn D. Holland - Bishop Harris Thomas (Emeritus)
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DISCLAIMER: The Unity Fellowship Church Movement's Health Innovative wants our readers to know the views and testimonials shared are that of our writers. Please consult your medical providers with health concerns.

IS THERE A HEALTH ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE ADDRESSED
THROUGH THE UFCM HEALTH & WELLNESS IINITIATIVE?
PLEASE SEND IT TO: gjerrilee@gmail.com

WELCOME TO WELLNESS

This is your first step to healthier living. Unity Fellowship Church Movement Health and Wellness Initiative encourages you to move in the direction of self-care, self-love, and wellness.



MAY 2025 HEALTH INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER

DEDICATED TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE FULFILLED THE ROLE OF MOTHER



EDITOR'S NOTE

**This issue is dedicated to Approach Your Health Wholistically
A tribute to all the Mothers and Mother figures in our lives.**

For hundreds of years our mothers, aunts, grandmothers and those with feminine spirit have been using non-traditional methods to maintain wellness. While holistic and wholistic are often interchangeable, there is a slight difference in how they are practiced. HOLISTIC tends to emphasize the interconnectedness and independence of parts within a system, while WHOLISTIC emphasizes the whole and complete structure of something. As we celebrate Mother's Day let's remember the many ways our mothers and mother figures in our lives made us feel better when we were sick, without going to the drug store, but by using ingredients that were in their kitchen. This issue is dedicated to them.

A PIECE OF HEALTH HISTORY: Prescriptions of Root Doctors by Zora Neal Hurston 1935

Folk medicine is practiced by a great number of persons. On the "jobs" that is in the sawmill camps, the turpentine stills, mining camps and among the lowly generally, doctors are not generally called to prescribe for illnesses, certainly nor for the social diseases. Nearly all of the conjure doctors practice "roots," but some of the root doctors are not hoodoo doctors. One of these later at Bogaloosa, Louisiana, and one at Bartlow, Florida, enjoy huge patronage. They make medicine only, and white and colored swarm about them claiming cures.

Some Examples are:

- ❖ Sick at Stomach- Make a tea of parched rice and bay leaves(six). Give a cup at a time. Drink no other water.
- ❖ Medicine to Purge- Jack of War tea, one tablespoon to a cup of water with a pinch of soda after it is ready to drink.
- ❖ Rheumatism- Take Mullen leaves (five or six) and steep in one quart of water. Drink three to four wine glasses a day.

WAIST BEADS

Jessica Washington

Hi, I'm Jessica Washington, the founder of Yoni House LLC. As a Yoni Steam Practitioner, a form of ancient self-care, my work is rooted in holistic feminine wellness. I blend ancestral wisdom with natural healing practices to support womb health, fertility, and overall reproductive well-being.

One of the signature offerings I am most passionate about is waist beads. These aren't just beautiful adornments- they are sacred tools used across African traditions for intention-setting, sensuality, spiritual connection, and energetic protection.

Waist beads carry deep cultural, spiritual, and healing significance. For generations, wombmen in West Africa have worn them as symbols of fertility, protection, sensuality, cultural identity, and rites of passage. They are a physical reminder of our spiritual connection to womanhood- or as I say "wombanhood."

In African spirituality, wellness is a holistic journey- nurturing the physical, emotional, and spiritual self. Waist beads gently rest across the womb space, encouraging body awareness and helping us stay attuned to our cycles, sensuality, and inner rhythms.

Each strand of waist beads can be infused with purpose. Specific colors, crystals, and stones are chosen to align with different womb energies. Whether worn during moon rituals, charged with affirmations or used in sacred baths or YONI STEAMS, they amplify energy and intention. Some women wear them to track natural body changes- when the beads shift, it invites mindfulness rather than judgement.

Beyond their physical beauty, waist bands are energy workers. They serve as spiritual tools for grounding, healing, manifestation, and honoring our divine creative center. They are also used in ancestral veneration, worn as offerings or sacred adornment to honor those who came before us.

At Yoni House, I also offer sound therapy sessions - using healing frequencies to release emotional blockages and align energy, especially around the womb space. Everything I share is in the service of reconnecting women to their sacred power and inner wisdom.

Waist beads, yoni steaming, and sound healing are all part of a larger journey- remembering who we are and reclaiming our wellness.

I would love to support you on your journey.

Love and Light

Jessica Washington, CEO/Founder

Instagram: @yonihouse_ - Tik Tok: Yonihouse - www.yonihouse.com - 646-828-6518

“Inspired by Nature, made with Love



A GIFT FOR EVERY MOTHER
Reverend Sonja Lee, Executive Director
Lionel Lee Jr. Center for Wellness

(Note to the readers: In this article, any reference to “mother” and “mom” includes all mother figures)

A concern for every mother and mother figure is the health and wellness of their child. How do mothers cope when their child tells them they have a debilitating, even deadly, disease?
Introduction

A few weeks ago, a client met with our staff seeking guidance around health and wellness concerns. During the session, the client shared that her adult child had been diagnosed with a serious disease, one that can cause long-term progressive deterioration of his health.

The treatment of the disease is draining and painful; and even with treatment the disease often ends in death, especially for African American males.

Mom explained that when she heard the words from her son, she was stunned into silence. How can this be? He's only 37 years old. Surely, he can't be going through something like this while I'm perfectly healthy. Dear God, what's happening? Why are you allowing this? The heavy emotional burden was nearly as debilitating for the mother as it was for her son. Mom described how they just looked at each other in dismay for moments that seemed to stretch into eternity. He broke the silence to inform mom about his discussion with the doctor. She saw his lips moving, but the words were unintelligible. Finally, after a few long moments, she was able to speak. "I love you son. You're going to be alright."

The words were spoken without conviction. Why? Because the statistics and the lived experience of people of color says otherwise.

The Statistics

We hear a lot these days about health disparities that impact people of color, LGBTIQ communities and low-income communities. In many major areas of health in the United States, African Americans experience the highest rates of morbidity and mortality. Let's take a quick look at three areas – diabetes; cancer; and HIV.

Did you know:

- According to the CDC, 37.3 million people in the U.S. have diabetes 11.3%. 28.7 million people are diagnosed. 8.5 million people with diabetes are undiagnosed.
- According to the Office of Minority Health, Black/African Americans men have lower 5-year cancer survival rates for most cancer sites, as compared to non-Hispanic white men. Black/African American men are twice as likely to die from prostate cancer, as compared to non-Hispanic white men. From 2014-2018, Black/African American women were just as likely to have been diagnosed with breast cancer, however, they were almost 40 percent more likely to die from breast cancer, as compared to non-Hispanic white women.
- According to Gilead, the rate of new HIV infections declined 73% between 1984 and 2019. In some ways, however, progress has stalled; too many people remain unaware of their HIV status. In 2019, an estimated 1 in 8 people living with HIV in the US did not know they had it. In 2019, Black Americans had the highest rate of new HIV

- diagnoses at 45 diagnoses per 100,000 people, which was more than 8.5 times the rate for White Americans

While there are many factors that contribute to the disparities, systemic discrimination or exclusion are among the most impactful root causes. This includes social drivers like racism, sexism, ableism, classism, homophobia, and transphobia to name a few.

Add to these the fact that personal choices such as smoking, excessive use of drugs and alcohol, poor dietary habits, and lack of exercise play a huge part in determining health outcomes. Not all of our issues can be blamed on “the system.” In keeping with our UFCM mid-year theme, let’s hold ourselves accountable. We can and must continue to lead the charge to address the disparities in our community.

As we celebrate Mother’s Day this month, let’s present Mom with the gift of our best selves.

First Step – Regular Screenings

Screenings are done during routine exams, when people are not necessarily experiencing any symptoms. Such screenings include mammograms, colonoscopies, pap smears, prostate exams, blood panels to detect levels of glucose, cholesterol, etc. Health screenings help identify if you are at risk or have any conditions that you don’t know about. It’s important that you know your numbers! Early detection of diseases results in better management and treatment of the disease. Keep in mind that all screenings come with some risk, so be sure to discuss the pros and cons of every screening prior to the procedures.

Check out this video discussion about the importance of screenings:

[Health & Wellness: Importance of Screenings - YouTube](#)

Gifts on Mother’s Day are customary and appreciated. The cards, flowers, jewelry and new outfits are meant to show mom just how special she is and how much the giver of the gifts honor her. Along with these gifts, challenge yourself to present her with gifts that can’t be wrapped. The greatest gifts include your presence and your health. As you shop for mom this year, be sure to schedule your health screenings as part of your gift to mom and to yourself.

WOMEN'S HEALTH AND WELLNESS

CDC (Centers of Disease Control) have agreed that women typically need Pap smears, or cervical cancer screenings from ages 21-65. If a woman has had regular normal screenings and no history of cervical cancer or precancer screenings may be discontinued.

The question is do these guidelines take into consideration if a woman is sexually active past the age of 65, or have a family history (not an individual history) of cervical cancer?

It is important to discuss this with your healthcare provider to determine the best option for you. WebMD has suggested cervical cancer is most commonly diagnosed in women between 35 and 44, with an average age of 50. Over 20% of cervical cancer diagnoses occur in women over 65. It is crucial for women over 50 to continue regular screenings. Even after menopause women should continue to get regular cervical cancer screenings, as cervical cancer can still occur in older women. Early detection of cervical cancer through regular screenings is crucial for successful treatment and improved outcomes. Medicare part B covers Pap smears and pelvic exams once every 24 months for all women regardless of age.

LOOK FOR A SPECIAL ARTICLE IN THE JUNE 2025 ISSUE

“LET’S GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT”

**HIV/AIDS... STOP THE STIGMA ...GO GET TESTED...INCREASE
EDUCATION AND THE PRACTICE OF SAFER SEX.**

New cases increase every day.

**SPECIAL INTERVIEW WITH PASTOR ROBERT ARRINGTON
UFC Charleston, S.C.**

JUNE ISSUE WILL INCLUDE A SHOUT OUT TO OUR BROTHERS

“A community effort to keep them well.”

NUTRITION CORNER

LENTILS VS. BEANS: WHICH PLANT-BASED PROTEIN IS HEALTHIER FOR YOU?

Beans and lentils are seeds found in pods. They come in many varieties, including black beans, pinto beans, kidney beans, green lentils, red lentils, and black lentils. Beans and lentils are rich in carbohydrates, protein, and fiber and contain minimal fat. They also have B vitamins and minerals such as magnesium, zinc, iron, selenium and potassium. Both can improve cholesterol, blood sugar, digestion, and heart health. The question may be which is healthier?

Beans and lentils have similar nutrients. One is not better than the other. One type may have more protein, but another may have more fiber, vitamins, minerals or beneficial compounds. Home cooked or canned beans and lentils also have different nutritional profiles. Homecooked tend to have more protein, amino acids, fiber, vitamins and minerals depending on the bean or lentil. They both provide a variety of nutritional values. It is recommended to mix both beans and lentils. Beans can also replace eggs as a protein source. Pressure cooking cooks beans faster while lentils are easily boiled in a regular pot. A complete meal may include beans and rice and vegetables, or 16 bean soup.

HYDRATION AND HEALTHY EATING GO HAND IN HAND

Water plays a crucial role in digestion, metabolism, and overall health. Even the healthiest foods cannot provide their full benefits if the body is dehydrated. Many people mistake thirst for hunger and end up over eating. Drinking enough water throughout the day helps control appetite, improves digestion, and keeps your body functioning efficiently.

Maintaining hydration along with healthy eating is the best way to maintain optimal health.

Fresh fruits and vegetables like cucumbers, oranges and watermelon, also contribute to your daily water intake. Stay mindful of your hydration levels and complement it with a nutritious diet. When you nourish your body with water and wholesome foods, you perform and feel better every day. Also, hydration is not seasonal. You still need to be hydrated in the winter as well as the summer.

FARMER'S MARKET PASTA SALAD

An Easy Nutritious Meal

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups baby tomatoes, (halved),
2 small zucchinis, (thinly sliced into half-moons),
1 small red bell pepper (cut into strips),
1 cup fresh corn kernels,
½ cup green onions (thinly sliced),
2 8 oz. packages penne pasta,
2 cups chicken breasts cooked and shredded (OPTIONAL), dressing of choice.

DIRECTIONS:

Step 1- Toss the tomatoes, zucchini, bell pepper, corn, green onions, together in a large bowl. Add dressing of choice.
Step 2- let the mixture stand for 10 minutes.
Step 3- Prepare the penne to al dente according to package directions
Step 4- Drain the pasta and add it, while hot to the mixture.
Step 5- OPTIONAL- add the chicken to the mixture and toss until everything is coated
Step 6- serve and enjoy.

REMEMBER FOOD CAN BE HEALING.

LEG CRAMPS: PREVENTIVE CARE

Possible causes of leg cramps (charley horses) are too much or too little exercise, dehydration, low electrolyte levels and certain health concerns. A leg cramp is sharp, sudden contraction or tightening of the muscle in the calf. It can last a few seconds to a few minutes. It can feel debilitating whether you are lying in bed or running. Leg cramps can be more of a problem if they persist and prevent you from your regular exercise or sleep routine. Some causes of leg cramps are:

- ❖ Dehydration: Leg cramps are more common in the summer months due to increase in outdoor activity, exercise and not drinking enough water. You lose more fluid through sweat. The reason dehydration causes cramping may be that fluid depletion causes nerve endings to become sensitized. This triggers contractions.

- ❖ **Exercise Intensity:** Strenuous exercise can cause leg cramps because your muscles are not automatically used to new intensity and movement. Whenever cramps occur by starting or restarting an exercise it is usually an indication of “too much too soon.” Your muscles do not act in the same way when you walk, run or sprint.
- ❖ **Fatigue:** You can be prone to leg cramps when you are overtired. This happens when you might be lax in your diet or forget to hydrate effectively. When the muscle is fatigued it is not in sync with using nutrients properly. A tired muscle loses more nutrients than it uses and is not functioning at peak levels.
- ❖ **Sitting or Standing:** Muscles are made to move, contract, and rest. Sitting or standing for long periods of time can cause leg cramps by causing muscles to malfunction.
- ❖ **Medications:** Diuretics which lower blood pressure may trigger cramps because they can deplete the body of fluids and salts. Talk to your health care provider if you experience leg cramps when taking your medications. It is important to see a healthcare provider to rule out underlying concerns if leg cramps persist.

HOW PLANTS AFFECT YOUR HEALTH

From “Drinking from The Cup of Wellness” By Jerri Lee

For centuries plants have been used for healing and to promote calm. They have been used to heal everything from headaches to heart aches. Plants help to express feelings, and by taking care of them can calm our feelings. Plants help support our feelings physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Modern day medications in one form or another have been derived from plants. For example, aspirin is derived from willow bark.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- ❖ Growing plants in your house can accelerate healing.
- ❖ Taking care of a plant, which is a living thing, encourages a sense of self-worth and contentment.

- ❖ Having a deeper connection to nature can help heal mind, body and spirit.
- ❖ When working with nature outside of us with plants, it works with nature inside of us.
- ❖ Plants can bring calm and contentment that comes with nature. This benefit
- ❖ Plant colors beautify a room.
- ❖ House plants can improve productivity, lower stress, and increase concentration and creativity.
- ❖ Plants clean pollutants from the air. Peace lilies, ivy, and spider plants are good for filtering the air.
- ❖ Having a plant in the bedroom encourages sleep. (lavender).
- ❖ Herbal plants boost everything from the immune system to the healing of wounds and lessening depression.
- ❖ Plants provide nourishment through vegetables and fruits.
- ❖ When you address the fact that change and renewal are possible, you can help something grow.
- ❖ Planting seeds and seeing them grow from start to finish can give contentment, knowing you played a part in helping it grow.
- ❖ Plants can bring calm and contentment that comes with nature. Plants benefit the giver and receiver.
- ❖ Plants can push away anxiety and stress.
- ❖ Plants can improve mental wellness.
- ❖ Plants instead of flowers in a hospital can promote healing.
- ❖ Plants improve neighborhood pride and upkeep.
- ❖ Plants are therapeutic.

HOUSEPLANTS THAT IMPROVE HEALTH

(this is not a complete listing, just a sample)

1. Spider plants, remove formaldehyde
2. Aloe Vera, helps to heal wounds
3. Lavender, stress relief
4. English Ivy, helps prevent mold
5. Snake Plant, improves indoor air quality
6. Rosemary, improves concentration
7. Peace Lilly, absorbed ammonia and formaldehyde
8. Boston Fern, natural humidifier

TAKE TIME TO RESEARCH THE BENEFITS OF PLANTS BEYOND THIS INFORMATION.

HOW YOGA CAN BENEFIT YOU



“Yoga is a way of life that starts in your mind and follows you on a journey through your body over and over again.” Namaste

STRESS RELIEF

Yoga daily practice can help relieve stress in your life. It helps you to focus on your breathing and create calm. Breathing and posing in yoga allows you to relax and naturally lower stress levels.

INCREASED STRENGTH

The more you practice yoga, the stronger you will become. Increased strength with decreased stress on joints. Practicing three times a week can increase strength over time.

INCREASED FLEXIBILITY

The longer you stay in a pose the more flexible you become.

WEIGHT CONTROL

Yoga relieves stress and lowers your cortisol. Cortisol works as a key player in the body's stress response and is secreted by the adrenal glands. It also controls weight gain and retention.

IMPROVED DIGESTION

The twisting and crunching in yoga wring out your intestines and helps in digestion. This is done by encouraging the intestines to move things along and increase circulation for better digestion flow.

IMPROVED CIRCULATION

Daily yoga practice improves circulation by getting blood pumping and creating movement in the system.

MORE RESTFUL SLEEP

Yoga in line with stress relief, promoting calm also allows for a more restful sleep. If you still feel restless use longer hold yoga style.

IMPROVED BALANCE

Yoga helps to improve coordination and balance.

LUPUS

Lupus is a disease that occurs when your body's immune system attacks your own tissues and organs (autoimmune disease). Inflammation caused by lupus can affect many different body systems, including the joints, skin, kidney's blood cells, heart and lungs. Lupus can be difficult to diagnose because its signs and symptoms often mimic other health issues. A majority of cases are diagnosed in African American women. Lupus can develop in anyone, male or female and of any age. Many men are surprised to learn they have it because of the belief that it only occurs in women.

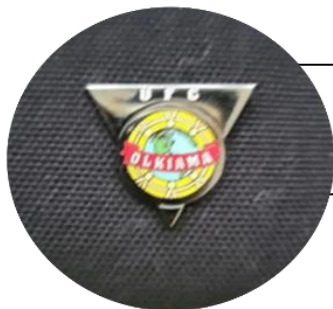
As an autoimmune disease, lupus occurs when your immune system attacks healthy tissue in your body. Lupus may occur as a result of your genetics and your environment. Many people with an inherited predisposition for lupus may develop the disease when they encounter something in the environment that triggers it. There is little known about the actual cause of lupus, but some potential triggers could be exposure to the sun for extended periods of time, infections, and medications. Possible risk factors could be your sex. Lupus is more common in women and diagnoses can be hindered with symptoms of perimenopause. . Age, although lupus affects people of all ages, it is mainly diagnosed between the ages of 15 and 45. Race, lupus is more common in African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans. Always have a conversation with your primary care physician if you suspect any indication of lupus.

Unity Fellowship Church NewArk

Food insecurity is a health issue in many communities across the United States.

The UFC NewArk family is joining a community effort to fight against hunger. It takes a community to provide nourishing foods. And volunteers to make it work. "HUNGER DOESN'T SLEEP" Gather your faith community to fight food insecurity.





The Olkiama (Circle of Elders) Corner

Health News for those 50 and Older

THE WONDERFUL 70s (not the year)

Embracing your once-in-a-lifetime soul

Reaching your 70s is a milestone. But what if you are not just aging but also doing things that make you stand out? Keeping in mind all the powerful people who have shattered glass ceilings we associate with age. They did not allow the number on their birthday cake to define their journey. It's not the big accomplishments but the little things that count. The actions that reflect a spirit are still full of life, curiosity, and resilience.

Some of the indications that you are not just any 70 something year old, but a once-in-a-lifetime soul are:

- ❖ You are still curious and eager to learn. After living seven decades your thirst for knowledge hasn't dried up. Your age might suggest wisdom, but you understand that learning is a lifelong process. You are constantly evolving, constantly growing. It's about staying relevant and engaged with the world around you.
- ❖ You are not afraid of change. You embrace change instead of shying away from it. You are open to discovering new places, meeting new people and experiencing a completely different way of life. You find yourself welcoming change rather than resisting it.
- ❖ You understand the value of connection. Connection is not just about staying in touch with your loved ones or making new friends. It is about truly understanding the importance of human relationships, and nurturing them with love, respect, and kindness. You appreciate the joy of shared laughter, the comfort of a sympathetic ear, and the strength drawn from collective resilience. You try to reach out to others. Being self-reliant is important, but you know that it is our bonds with others that enrich our lives.
- ❖ You practice gratitude daily. In your 70s you are not just aware of it, but you live it. You understand that life is a series of ups and downs, but you chose to focus on the positive.
- ❖ You are still looking forward to new experiences. Life is an endless journey, and should not be one to sit it out. Your zest for life has not waned. You do not let age become a barrier to experiencing the many flavors of life.
- ❖ You are not held back by the fear of failure. You are still willing to take risks. You go after what you want without the fear of failure holding you back. You understand that mistakes and setbacks are not a sign of defeat, but steppingstones to success.

- ❖ You are living life on your own terms. You embrace your individuality, and you are not afraid to live it out loud. You have lived long enough to know that you do not have to conform to societal norms or expectations. You are content with being yourself.

**UNITY FELLOWSHIP CHURCH MOVEMENT HEALTH &
WELLNESS INITIATIVE**

AND

**LIONEL LEE JR. CENTER FOR WELLNESS
COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR**

**Date: June 7, 2025
Time: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Location: Reedy Creek Park,
Shelter 1
2900 Rocky River Rd, Charlotte, NC**



Free Services:



**Get Moving - Fitness Activities
BP & Glucose Screen
Breast Cancer Awareness
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Managing Chronic Illnesses
Swag! Raffles! Prizes!
Children's Table & Activity
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Contact us at: info@llcwellness.org
or phone 704-719-0848





NOW YOU CAN ADVERTISE IN THE NEWSLETTER!

The Unity Fellowship Church Movement: UFCM HEALTH & WELLNESS INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER is published monthly and is widely distributed to all of the congregations of the UFCM, Inc. population, as well as health and wellness spaces and social media groups. This is a great opportunity to place your small business before a broader audience and to support our critical work to get our membership to consistently consider their well-being.

As we move towards our 5th Year of publication, we are opening up for ads, targeting health agencies, mental wellness counselors, and medical staff. Holistic Practitioners. Nonprofits. If you provide health services to the community and have reliable information to share about health and wellness, you can reach our audience now.

ALL ADS WILL BE PRODUCED IN FULL COLOR

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UNITY FELLOWSHIP CHURCH MOVEMENT HEALTH INITIATIVE PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE

FIND OUT MORE:

Namewellness2023@gmail.com or 862-405-7612

“Wellness is an Energy: Healing is a Process”



Unity Fellowship Health Initiative Newsletter is looking for informative health articles and anyone interested in working on the newsletter monthly. We need writers and researchers.

Please contact Rev. Jerri Mitchell-Lee or Rev. Cheryl Bragg.

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- Rev. Cheryl Bragg- whosoevermusic59@gmail.com or (732) 259-3782

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