

the pursuit of WELLNESS



With COVID-19 and economic challenges upon us, finding ways to relieve stress and maintain good health are more important than ever.

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ALL STORIES BY PAM GEORGE



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Even before the coronavirus started dominating news headlines this spring, wellness and self-care were more than 21st-century buzzwords. People of all ages have long been seeking healthy ways to reach an optimum weight, reduce stress and ward off or combat chronic illness.

The need is evident. In 2018, more than 40 percent of U.S. adults were obese, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (You are obese if you have a body mass index of 30 or higher.) Being overweight increases the risk of diabetes, certain cancers and cardiovascular disease. Research has shown that obesity — and these related maladies — increases the chance of developing complications from COVID-19, the illness caused by the coronavirus.

Stress, meanwhile, was prevalent before the virus hit. Concern about the disease and the economy during COVID has only exacerbated the issue. Chronic stress can affect your immune, digestive, cardiovascular, sleep and reproductive systems, reports the National Institute of Mental Health.

Coastal Delaware’s location along Delaware Bay and the Atlantic Ocean have long made it a magnet for people who want a healthier lifestyle with less stress. The beaches — along with low property taxes and no sales tax — attract vacationers and retirees wishing to relax. In response, there is a growing range of area services, practices and products catering to the wellness movement.

Admittedly, “wellness” is a broad category that includes yoga and meditation, diet, tourism, mental health, personal care and beauty, and spa services. The Global Wellness Institute reports that it’s now a \$4.2 trillion industry worldwide. In this issue of *Delaware Beach Life*, we take a look at a few of the many services and products available, from the conventional — such as women’s health care — to alternative ones such as CBD and essential oils. We hope you can glean some information that will promote good health during these challenging times.

Be safe and be well. 

Kayaking or
paddleboarding
Alissa Rosentein



We thought it would be fun to ask some of our contributors:

“What activity do you do to de-stress?”

Listen to ambient downtempo music from Hearts of Space, and wine on the porch
Chris Beakey



Binge-watch Siesta Key
Pam George



My two golden retrievers taking me for a walk
Kris Legates



Pickleball
Terry Plowman



Escape to Urban Float
Tessa Lingo





Female Focus

Women's health services expand in coastal Delaware

Oncologist Dr. M. Lisa Attebery, a board-certified general surgeon, uses cutting-edge medical techniques in her new Comprehensive Breast Center.



“My goal is to build a women’s center with gynecology, internal medicine, family practice and psychology.”

In coastal Sussex County, providers and health care systems are taking women’s care to the next level. In 2019, for instance, Dr. M. Lisa Attebery opened the Comprehensive Breast Center on Plantation Road in the Lewes-Rehoboth area.

The board-certified general surgeon — Delaware’s only fellowship breast surgery oncologist — is on a mission. “My goal is to build a women’s center with gynecology, internal medicine, family practice and psychology,” she says.

In-office ultrasounds and biopsies shorten the time between an abnormal mammogram and diagnosis and treatment. Also, Attebery says she is the first East Coast physician to use the Sentimag system. After implanting a tiny stainless-steel seed in the cancerous area, she uses a magnetic sensing probe to pinpoint and remove the cancer, leaving healthy tissue behind.

Plantation Road is becoming a hub. In 2017, Beebe Women’s Healthcare, an obstetrics and gynecology practice, opened with five female physicians.

To the south, Atlantic General Women’s Health in Selbyville is part of Berlin, Md.-based Atlantic General Hospital. Patients have access to diagnostic imaging services, including

3D mammography, at the hospital’s Eunice Q. Sorin Women’s Diagnostic Center, a “Breast Imaging Center of Excellence” located a 15-minute drive from the Selbyville office.

Women’s health covers more than oncology, of course. The third floor of the Bayhealth Hospital Sussex Campus, near Milford, is occupied by the Center for Women and Infants, which has an obstetrics emergency department and labor, delivery, recovery and postpartum rooms.

Bayhealth’s center is one of 200 hospitals and birth centers to receive the Baby-Friendly birth facility designation, which indicates an optimal level of care for breastfeeding mothers and their babies.

Beebe Healthcare was the state’s first hospital to receive the designation, which is bestowed by Baby-Friendly USA Inc., the approving body in the United States for the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative. (The World Health Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund sponsor BFHI.)

“It’s about customer service through the eyes of the baby,” explains Bridget Buckaloo MSN, RN, executive director of Women’s and Children’s Services at Beebe Healthcare.

“If you asked the baby, ‘What would you want?’” Buckaloo adds, “the response would be ‘Don’t separate me from my mother. Put me skin-to-skin with my mother. Provide support so she can make the best feeding choices for me. Educate my mother so that she’s successful.’”

The health care system has received a plethora of honors. It is a Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue Distinction Center+ for Maternity Care. “Our C-section rate is well below the national average,” Buckaloo notes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention puts the U.S. cesarean deliveries average at 31.9 percent.

Beebe, a Center of Excellence for Gynecologic Surgery (a designation from the American Institute of Minimally Invasive Surgery), plans to open a Specialty Surgical Hospital, now under construction at the intersection of Route 24 and Warrington Road. The building will house the Center for Robotic Surgery, providing a minimally invasive procedure that results in quicker recoveries with less post-operative discomfort. The surgical hospital is scheduled to open in 2022. ■

Concierge Care



New practice models allow doctors to cater to patients' needs

When most people hear the word “concierge,” they picture a hotel employee who makes dinner reservations, secures theater tickets and arranges excursions. But it’s also a type of medical practice. And it’s not the only new model in the beach area. You also may have noticed advertisements for direct primary care providers.

What’s the difference? A concierge practice typically charges a membership fee. Consider doctors in the MDVIP network, for instance. Each MDVIP physician cares for only a portion of the number of patients in a traditional family care practice, which means patients are guaranteed quick appointments, 24/7 access and plenty of one-on-one time during office visits. Patients still need to pay a fee for most services, and the practices accept insurance.

Dr. Christine Degnon is a direct primary care physician in the Lewes area. She charges her patients a monthly fee that varies depending on age. There is also a family fee. (Insurance rarely reimburses the monthly

payment, though some health-share plans may cover it.)

Her practice, Coastal Direct Primary Care, has a contract with the patient but not with insurance companies or hospitals. “I only bill my patients,” she explains. However, she does have contracts with labs. “I can tell patients what the price is, and it’s usually significantly discounted, I don’t mark it up,” she says. “If they use insurance, they will pay what the insurance company has contracted with the lab.”

Both models give patients improved access to their doctors. Texting, email and phone calls are common. Indeed, even before COVID-19 made social distancing standard practice, doctors in both models were already adept at telemedicine and other remote services.

Time is the most significant advantage for patients and doctors. “I can get to the root of the problem instead of just prescribing medication,” Degnon says. “I help them understand how to make small changes to improve the quality of their lives.” ■

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Veg Out!

Plant-based options are growing at the beach



At age 19, Dustin Klimek became a vegan partly to protest how animals are raised for consumption. His diet — he eats no animal products, including dairy — had an extra benefit. “I had some acne, and my skin was definitely better,” says the Ocean View resident. The plant-based foods have also boosted his immune system.

Since making that dietary change in 2009, he’s seen more vegan-friendly products on the shelves. “At first, there was one little section in the grocery store with soy milk and almond milk,” he recalls. “Now there are rows and rows of dairy-free milk — oat milk, rice, hemp, coconut. There’s been an expansion of newer companies making mock meats and cheeses. It’s become really popular.”

Tara Sheldon has witnessed the heightened interest firsthand. She is the president of VegRehoboth, which organizes the seven-year-old VegFest (canceled this year due to coronavirus concerns) and VegWinterFest. VegFest’s Facebook page has nearly 2,400 followers, and Sheldon’s post about the opening of Seed Eatery, a restaurant on Route 1 near Midway, reached more than 1,000 people.

Seed is a fast-casual concept similar to Subway



or Chipotle. Customers select ingredients for build-your-own bowls. While meat and seafood are options, most items are plant-based. Consider Japanese kale, Dijon Brussels sprouts, vegan cheese and pesto chickpeas.

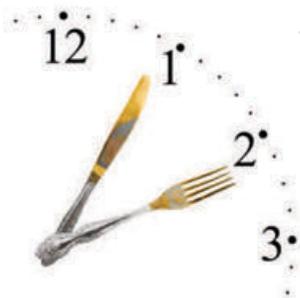
Dmitry Gorin, co-owner of Seed Eatery, prepares a dish that includes vegan egg salad, vegetables and brown rice. Gorin has seen an uptick in customers looking for vegetarian options.



Something For Everyone

Today’s diverse diets match individual needs

Many people follow a diet as a lifestyle choice. Others eat or avoid certain foods due to a medical condition. Here are a few diets that are making the news.



1 Intermittent fasting
Followers eat within an eight-hour window and avoid food for the remaining 16 hours. Or, they follow a 500-calorie diet two days a week and eat normally on the other days.

Paleo

Devotees eat foods that hunters and gatherers consumed in the Paleolithic era (roughly 2.5 million to 10,000 years ago), such as lean meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds. Dairy products, legumes and grains are no-nos.



Whole 30

This 30-day disrupter nixes sugar, grains, beans, dairy, soy and processed foods. Veggies and lean meats are OK. Many fans follow it after holiday excess.

“We chose the ingredients for flavor and to cover all diets,” says Dmitry Gorin, who with partner Yauhen Yurhelevich hatched the idea. “I love vegan and vegetarian food.” Gorin follows a modified vegan diet to “cleanse” his system. (He still drinks milk.) The restaurant has been doing a brisk take-out business as the economy reopens.

Conventional restaurants also have stepped up to the plant-based plate. At The Backyard in Milton, sales of the veggie patty went up 36 percent in a year. Many restaurants feature the Beyond Meat burger. Fork & Flask near Rehoboth, an active participant in VegFest events, is known for its Meatless Monday specials.

But remember that the processed vegan or vegetarian foods sold in supermarkets are often high in salt or sugar or contain processed soy. In a restaurant, a bean burrito might seem like a healthy option until you top it with a mound of sour cream and guacamole. Calorie-dense nut butters also can pack on pounds. “You don’t think it’s all having an effect on you, but it really does,” says Cassidy Kellagher of Milton.

A vegetarian for nearly nine years, she often reached for processed items heavy in gluten, oil and salt. In summer 2019,

she suffered a flare-up of Crohn’s disease, a chronic condition that can cause abdominal pain, fatigue, diarrhea and anemia. She now starts her day with celery juice, followed in a half-hour by a smoothie. A meal might include tofu scramble, vegetable soup or bell peppers stuffed with rice, a combination that she makes herself.

People with other medical conditions have benefited from a plant-based diet. Beebe Healthcare is the only Delaware provider of Ornish Lifestyle Medicine. The vegan program, designed for people with cardiovascular disease, is a low-fat diet focused on whole foods. (Whole foods are plant foods that are unprocessed and unrefined or minimally processed.)

With the increased interest has come more acceptance. Considering that Klimek’s mother, Dana Banks, owns The Parkway Restaurant in Bethany Beach, Klimek gets few taunts from family and friends. If anything, he’s been a positive influence. “Because of me changing my lifestyle, my mom has added vegan-friendly dishes to the menu,” he notes. “You can go in and get a full meal.”

For vegans and vegetarians at the beach, that’s becoming the norm and not the exception. ■



4

Keto

The goal is ketosis, during which the body turns to fat — not glucose — for energy. (Ketosis is your body’s defense mechanism against famine.) Followers must get about 75 percent of calories from fat (and only 5 to 10 percent from carbs), compared to the usual 20 to 30 percent. Foods to eat include steak, bacon, fatty fish such as salmon, and unprocessed cheese.



5

DASH

Short for “dietary approaches to stop hypertension,” this diet espouses produce, whole grains, low-fat dairy and lean proteins.



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You Think, Therefore You Feel

Cope with stress by controlling the mind-body connection



Picture a lizard sunbathing on a rock. “She’s breathing deeply, she’s digesting well — there’s just a nice calmness in her nervous system,” says Kim Furtado, a doctor of naturopathic medicine with a Lewes-area practice.

Suddenly, a bird casts a shadow over the rock. The lizard’s blood pressure escalates, it breathes hard, and its digestion grows sluggish. A reptile doesn’t ponder whether the bird is a viable threat; it immediately reacts and scurries into a crevice.

Too many people exist in a crack, Furtado says. Stress — whether real or perceived — is keeping their body on high alert. “They wonder why they don’t poop right, sleep right or why their injuries don’t heal,” she explains. “They have pain — a lot of pain.”

The mind-body connection is real, experts agree. However, you can learn to control your response to stress.

Fight or flight

Like the lizard, humans are hard-wired to fight or flee when faced with danger. That basic instinct benefited prehistoric people, who had to worry about man-eating predators. Triggers today include news headlines about the coronavirus, the economy and politics. A divorce, death or layoff can also activate the sympathetic nervous system, but not all stressors are negative occurrences: Having a baby, for example, can make parents fret about finances.

Put simply, just worrying about a threat — such as contracting the virus — can affect your stress level, says

Kimberly Blanch, a nurse and the head of Beebe Healthcare’s Population Health Department.

Continued hyperactivity of the sympathetic nervous system can cause an increase in heart rate, respirations and blood pressure. It floods the body with cortisol, the primary stress hormone, which affects your digestion and can increase inflammation.

Kim Furtado, a naturopathic doctor, walks in her backyard labyrinth to counteract stress. She says being in the “fight or flight” mode for sustained periods is detrimental to health.

What does this image have to do with wellness? Turn to page 96 to find out.



Medications may treat the symptoms, but “you can’t treat the conditions if you don’t treat what’s causing the sympathetic overdrive,” Furtado notes.

Safe and secure

The goal is to be the happy lizard on the rock, she says. “The body will then do what you tell it to do. You can rest, repair and digest — the body will restore itself.” This state is characteristic of the parasympathetic nervous system, which slows the heart rate, increases intestinal and glandular activity, and relaxes sphincter muscles in the gastrointestinal tract.

A conventional doctor may prescribe medication. Go off the pill, however, and the symptoms may return, says Furtado, who often prescribes herbs in a capsule form. “I believe in building lifestyle changes and lifelong change. That includes a healthy diet, restorative sleep and avoiding toxins, such as caffeine, alcohol and cigarettes.”

Blanch’s motto is “better out than in,” which means talking to a trusted adviser about the stress and symptoms. Turn to a primary care doctor, mental health provider, or faith-based counselor.

She is a fan of “breathwork,” the practice of monitoring and controlling your breath, which you can do with movement — such as yoga or tai chi — or while sitting still. Why focus on the breath? “You can only go three or four minutes without” breathing, Blanch notes. “To me, that indicates the importance of it.”

Breathwork and meditation require no special clothing or equipment. However, some people benefit from apps such as Calm. Blanch advises supplementing the breathwork with movement, such as walking, which helps the autonomic nervous system do its job. Furtado is a fan of walking a labyrinth, a calming, meditative exercise that helps people empty the mind. But you can also do walking meditations in nature. Focus on the breath and the beauty.

Practice may not make perfect, but it can provide an effective coping mechanism. “Life is always offering us opportunities to manage [stress] in the most effective way for our health,” Blanch says. “The way we handle it has a direct impact on our immune system, as well as our nervous system.” ■

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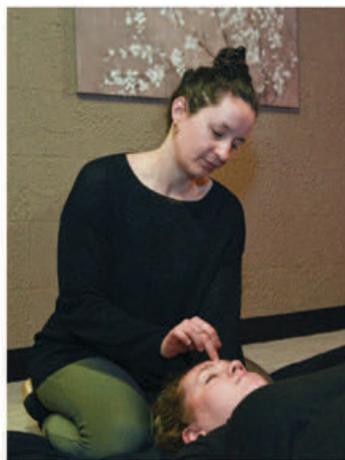
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{Living Well}



Gut Instincts

Your digestive system, in partnership with your brain, is a pathway to good health

When you “trust your gut” about a person, place or situation, you’re following your intuition. But when it comes to your health, that phrase takes on a new significance.

“The gut is touted as the second brain,” says Dr. Uday Jani, a Milton-area internal medicine specialist. “A lot of what happens in the body is because of what’s happening in the gut.” Credit the “microbiome,” a collection of bacteria, protozoa, viruses, fungi and other microorganisms that reside within us.

Your microbiome is as distinct as your fingerprint — there is no “normal,” Jani says. The balance between good and bad bacteria makes the difference.

Beneficial bacteria aid digestion and promote the production of vitamins B and K. (Vitamin B plays a role in mood and other brain functions; K is integral to blood clotting and bone health.) Good bacteria also signal the gut to make the antibodies that control harmful bacteria.

While more research is needed, an imbalance may increase the risk of high cholesterol, heart disease, mood disorders, autoimmune disease, kidney disease and other medical conditions.

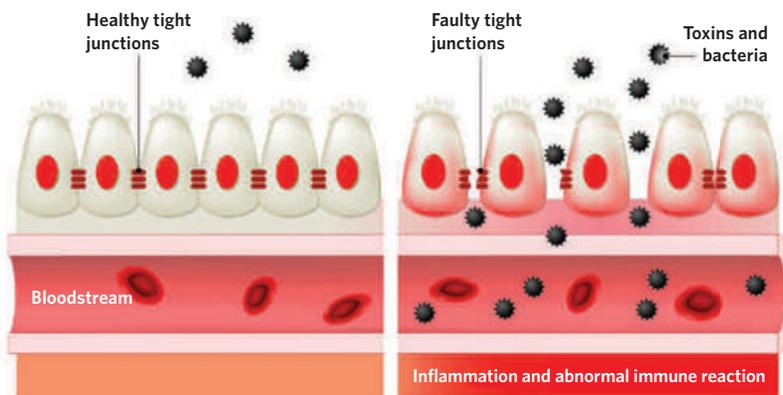


The reason: Our gut lining is made up of interlocking cells with tiny holes that allow nutrients into the bloodstream. When there is an imbalance, these holes widen, explains Dr. Gautamy Dhadham with Bayhealth Gastroenterology, which has a Milford office. Toxins and bacteria then slip through the openings and trigger the immune system. The result is known as leaky gut syndrome.

“Not only can that cause some issues locally in the mucosa lining — which can create gastrointestinal issues — but there’s been extensive research to see if it also has implications for chronic disease like diabetes and neurological diseases like Alzheimer’s,” Dhadham says.

Leaky gut may also contribute to irritable bowel syndrome, Crohn’s disease and celiac disease. Symptoms include chronic upset stomach, fatigue, low energy levels and diarrhea.

See a doctor if your symptoms last for more than a month, Dhadham says. But seek immediate attention if you have bloody stools or persistent nausea or vomiting. There’s no lab test for leaky gut syndrome; doctors must first rule out



Dr. Uday Jani says a diet rich in probiotics, such as yogurt and fermented foods, and prebiotics, including fiber-rich vegetables, can help balance the bacteria in the gut. An imbalance may lead to chronic disease.

other conditions. (Note that some physicians are skeptical that leaky gut even exists.)

Gut health also involves the brain, which receives information about the microbiome's status via the vagus nerve. This long conduit stimulates the heart muscles and the contractions in the digestive tract that move food from the esophagus to the intestines. It also lets you feel sensations on your skin and in your muscles and organs.

When we're stressed, the information highway flows in the other direction, which can result in upset stomach or diarrhea. Managing stress is one way to keep symptoms in check. Admittedly, that's a challenge during a pandemic, but doctors recommend regular exercise and meditation.

Also important is to limit the use of antibiotics, which can wipe out healthy bacteria along with the troublesome ones making you sick. Health care providers also recommend a diet rich in probiotics and prebiotics to encourage the growth of good bacteria. Probiotic foods include yogurt, fermented yogurt, kimchi, sauerkraut, sour cream and miso — in short, products that are fermented or have live cultures. Prebiotics have fiber. Think eggplant, dandelion greens, bananas, leeks and legumes.

Avoid foods high in sugar and fat along with processed items, which reduce the good bacteria and cause inflammation. For some, gluten can cause a reaction that affects the small intestine's lining, triggering a host of unpleasant symptoms.

Be consistent, Jani advises: "If you change your diet, you may get better. But if you don't keep it up, you'll go back to an imbalance."

When it comes to a healthy gut, wisely chosen food is medicine. ■

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MIDWAY AREA

Comprehensive Breast Center, 19409 Plantation Road, Ste. 3, comprehensivebreastcenter.net, (302) 444-0194. The center consists of M. Lisa Attebery, DO, FACOS, and Michele Domenick, MD, FACS, who will be coming soon to the practice. See the doctors' specialized services below.

Michele Domenick, MD, FACS, Comprehensive Breast Center, 19409 Plantation Road, Ste. 3, (302) 444-0194, comprehensivebreastcenter.net. Coming soon to the center, Dr. Domenick specializes in services including female and male breast care (benign and malignant), in-office ultrasound and biopsy, and general surgery. She also does wound care, colonoscopy, endoscopy and thyroid evaluations.

M. Lisa Attebery, DO, FACOS, Comprehensive Breast Center, 19409 Plantation Road, Ste. 3, comprehensivebreastcenter.net, (302) 444-0194. Dr. Attebery specializes in the following services: female and male breast care (benign and malignant), in-office ultrasound and biopsy, cosmetic and reconstructive breast surgery, and general surgery. Dr. Attebery also does Botox (cosmetic and therapeutic) and Juvéderm.

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LEWES AREA

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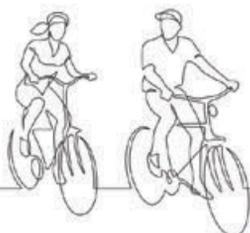


Out and About

These outdoor activities will set you on the right path

6

Ride along the 6-mile Junction and Breakwater Trail connecting Rehoboth Beach and Lewes.



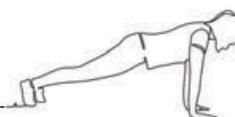
384

At least 384 yoga classes have taken place on the beaches of Lewes, Rehoboth, Dewey and Bethany throughout the summer.



60

The 60-minute bootcamp workouts on the beach in downtown Bethany combine body weight training, core training, flexibility work and more.





Plant Therapy

Essential oils and CBD have gone mainstream

“My kids recovered faster [from the flu] than friends who had the same thing at that time.”

In 2017, when two of Whitney Russell’s three young children got the flu, a friend gave her some essential oils, which are compounds extracted from plants. “I wasn’t sure what in the world they were,” confesses the Ocean View resident, who applied the oil to the children’s spines, necks, chests and feet. “They recovered faster than friends who had the same thing at that time.”

Essential oils also eased her oldest son’s migraines. “We’d done everything — MRIs, tests, multiple medications — nothing had worked,” she says.

Today, Russell is a distributor for Young Living Essential Oils, which also sells products with CBD. Short for cannabidiol, CBD is a non-psychoactive chemical compound from the marijuana plant. Both products are widely available in convenience stores, spas and online shops. Buyer beware, though: quality counts.

Certain oils may help ease anxiety, depression, insomnia and other conditions. But there’s not enough research to prove that essential oils are remedies. Still, unless you are allergic to the ingredients, there’s no harm in trying them. (When in doubt, ask your doctor.)

Some brands have fillers and synthetics, which “defeats the purpose of a pure essential oil,” Russell says. If you want the real deal, avoid “fragrance oils” or “aromatherapy oils.”

CBD sensations

There are no standards or quality controls for essential oil or CBD, which you can buy without a medical cannabis license. Derived from the hemp plant, CBD does not cause a “high.”

Does it possess health benefits? Michael Maybroda thinks so. In 2017, he was frustrated by the number of drugs doctors had prescribed for back pain and anxiety. He purchased a topical CBD cream in a Colorado dispensary that helped with both conditions. Now he sells CBD products at Stephan & Co., the Rehoboth-area salon he owns with his husband, Stephan Maybroda.

Janie Maedler used cannabinoids to help treat daughter Rylie’s giant cell granuloma, a rare bone disease. Rylie, then 7, began having fewer seizures and her teeth, which she’d lost due to mandible tumors, began growing. The Maedlers founded Rylie’s Sunshine to offer quality botanical oils at a reasonable price, Rylie says. It’s sold online and at Bad Hair Day in Rehoboth.

“There are a lot of companies that throw in random ingredients and don’t test their oils,” the teenager explains. “... But there are also a lot of companies that know where the ingredients are sourced.” The Maedlers, who live in the Rehoboth area, grow hemp on Virginia farmland.

Closer to home, Salisbury, Md.-based Baywater Farms — which supplies produce to coastal Delaware restaurants — is now selling CBD hemp extract at Good Earth Market in the Rehoboth area and Ocean View.

Maybroda, who only buys products from vendors he’s met, holds CBD seminars at the salon. So far, more than 200 people have attended. “They come back and say: ‘CBD is working for me,’” he says. ■



When they had the flu, Whitney Russell of Ocean View used essential oils on her children, as she demonstrates here with her son Rylan.

Heady scents

Essential oils are made from plant leaves, flowers, bark and rind. You can inhale them in a diffuser or apply some to the skin. (Oils such as peppermint may be irritating.) Either way, the scent stimulates the part of your brain linked to

One elbow can inspire a generation.

An elbow injury stopped Katie Piotti's BMX season. But it couldn't stop Katie.

Katie Piotti is a rising star in the sport of BMX racing and an inspiration to young women across the country. In fact, Katie has used her growing fame in this male-dominated sport to encourage the next generation of female athletes to pursue their dreams.

“Around the age of 14 to 16 girls start to drop out of sports in pretty high numbers,” Katie

This past year, Katie was having her best season yet. She was nationally ranked and a lock to make the finals. But just one week before the championship race, Katie had an accident on the course, which resulted in a serious elbow injury. Her hopes of claiming her first BMX title were dashed.

Never one to give up, Katie looked to Bayhealth for treatment. Bayhealth has the

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explains. “That’s why I love to work with young women in this age group. I enjoy coaching them and mentoring them and showing them that being an athlete is as cool for girls as it is for boys.”

only specialized surgeons in the region who could diagnose, plan, and perform her surgery successfully. And here, Katie was able to get the care she needed to get back on the track.



KATIE PIOTTI
BMX Racer
Complex Elbow Fracture

