

For Your Benefit

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 **Be smart**
Live well

MNPSBenefits.org

QUESTIONS?

Contact:
Employee Benefit Services
615-259-8464
benefits@mnp.org

March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month



“There were no warning signs.”

In today's world, you rarely have to stray from the comfort of home unless you choose to. Need groceries or takeout? Delivery options abound. Want to watch a movie? Netflix and a variety of cable channels are at your service.

Now, you can even get a lifesaving screening without leaving home. Art Staehling may have done just that.

Art and Julie Staehling were overdue for colonoscopies. Julie, an MNPS art teacher, knew the importance of

getting screened, but life was busy, so she and Art kept putting them off.

“I work a lot and I don't like to miss school,” says Julie. “It should have been a priority and it wasn't.”

Then the couple got a letter in the mail from the MNPS Health Care Centers saying they were eligible for free in-home colon cancer screening kits from Cologuard®. The noninvasive,

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Colon cancer, the second leading cause of cancer deaths in people over 50, is among the most preventable and treatable if found early.

“There were no warning signs.” Continued from page 1

stool-based test can detect blood and DNA associated with colon cancer and pre-cancer, and allows users to submit stool samples taken in their own homes.

So the Staehlings waited for the kits to arrive and sent in their samples.

Julie’s results came back normal. But Art’s showed a problem, even though he’d had a clean colonoscopy several years earlier. He quickly scheduled a follow-up colonoscopy.

Doctors removed a number of polyps during the procedure, but one was

different and not easily removed. A biopsy showed it was benign, but his doctor was concerned the polyp was precancerous and recommended surgery to remove it.

Art recovered from surgery and is doing well. The Staehlings believe the screenings may have saved his life. Years before, he had survived prostate cancer, but that was detected because he hadn’t been feeling well.

“With this, it was different,” Julie says. “There were no warning signs of a problem.”



One in three adults over age 50 is not getting screened for colon cancer.

or overdue

Are you due for colon cancer screening?

Don’t put it off. When caught early, colon cancer is among the most preventable — yes, screening can help keep you from getting cancer in the first place! — and treatable cancers.

Despite this encouraging statistic, many people delay getting screened.

“The best screening tool is the one you’ll actually do.”

As an enrollee in the MNPS retiree health plan, there are no financial barriers. You have several no-cost* screening options available, including a preventive colonoscopy. The advantage of a colonoscopy is your doctor can both find and often remove potentially cancerous polyps during the procedure.

The Cologuard® alternative

Because screening is so important, MNPS is making another option available to you: a noninvasive in-home screening test called Cologuard®. The test allows you to collect a single stool sample in the privacy of your home and ship it to a lab where it’s tested for blood and DNA associated with colon cancer and pre-cancer.

Unlike a colonoscopy, no special bowel prep is required. But the Cologuard option is only for those who have no symptoms (including but not limited to rectal bleeding, unexplained weight loss, change in bowel habits or dark stools) and no family history of colon cancer.

* The Certificated Retiree Health Plan covers an age-appropriate preventive colonoscopy and other screening methods, recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, at 100%. The Cologuard kit is also 100% covered for enrolled retirees and adult dependents who qualify.

So which screening tool is best for you?

Dr. Martha Shepherd, Medical Director for the MNPS Health Care Centers, has an answer: “The best screening tool is the one you’ll actually do.”

Visit [MNPSBenefits.org/crc](https://www.mnpsbenefits.org/crc) to learn more about Cologuard and request a kit.

If you’d like to discuss your screening options with a provider, make an appointment at the MNPS Health Care Centers by calling **615-259-8755**.

“Our providers can help you make a decision that’s right for your situation,” adds Dr. Shepherd.



Benefits spotlight

The Employee Wellness Center (EWC) has added a new integrated medicine procedure to speed relief and healing for many common conditions: dry needling.

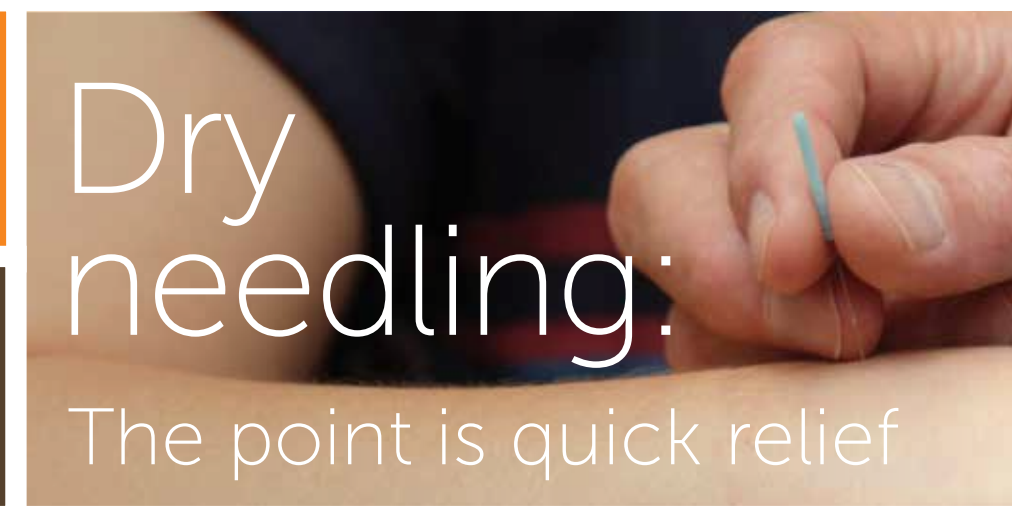
Physical therapist Bobby Russell performs dry needling, a therapy that involves inserting fine, monofilament needles into certain trigger points in knotted muscles. The technique can help with neck pain, tension-type headaches, back pain, some kinds of tendonitis, sciatica and other conditions.

Once the knotted trigger points have been located by touch, the needles are used to make targeted muscles begin gently twitching until they eventually relax.

“That’s what we are going for, that release,” Bobby says. “You can make a pretty significant change.”

To practice the therapy, physical therapists are required to take 50 hours of coursework involving anatomy, trigger points and pain mechanisms. They also need 24 hours of dry-needling-specific training, although Bobby has 50 hours in this category, too.

Needle insertion is often imperceptible, although patients may sometimes feel a slight pinch or burn. Typical 10-15 minute sessions are not stand-alone procedures. Rather, the quick



relief achieved by dry needling allows the physical therapist to more swiftly address the root cause of the problem so traditional physical therapy techniques, like exercises and stretching, can also be applied.

“I refer to dry needling as control-alt-delete (reset) for the muscles,” says Bobby. “It provides an opportunity to get to the real meat-and-potatoes strengthening.”



“I refer to dry needling as control-alt-delete for the muscles. A reset.”

Bobby Russell, Physical Therapist, MNPS Employee Wellness Center

While similar to acupuncture, dry needling is considered different in that it has very specific trigger points and applications. Acupuncture is more broadly aimed at restoring the body’s energy pathways to address a broad array of conditions.

Bobby, who joined the EWC last June, is board-certified in orthopedics. A former East Tennessee resident, he

got his undergraduate degree at Tennessee Tech University in exercise science, physical education and wellness. He earned a doctor of physical therapy degree at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. After a two-year residency with Benchmark Rehab Institute in Athens, Tennessee, he graduated from Bellin College’s fellowship program in manual physical therapy. He is an active

member of the American Physical Therapy Association, American Academy of Manual Physical Therapists and Tennessee Physical Therapy Association.

He says he greatly admires the MNPS Health Care Centers’ focus on treating the whole patient and its one-on-one level of personal care.

Services provided at the Employee Wellness Center are no cost for those enrolled in the Certificated Retiree Health Plan, with one exception: Medicare rules require that Cigna-HealthSpring members pay their regular copay amounts when using the MNPS Health Care Centers. They may use the fitness center in the Employee Wellness Center at no charge.



Anywhere.
Anytime.

Your EAP is online

Where do you turn when you're faced with a highly sensitive or emotional concern and need information fast?

Your ComPsych Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is always just a phone call away — and available 24/7 — if you want one-on-one assistance. If you're not quite ready to talk to someone about your concern but need information, your EAP is also online.

The ComPsych website is chock full of information that can help you research problems dealing with:

- Stress, anxiety, depression, anger, grief
- Marriage and relationships
- Substance use
- Smoking cessation
- Financial and estate planning
- Sexuality and gender identity
- And much more

Download the mobile app for instant EAP access.

The website offers:

- Articles, podcasts, videos and slideshows, as well as on-demand training on many topics to help you address problems and build practical life-management skills
- Ask a GuidanceConsultantSM, which provides personal responses to your questions
- A robust search tool that lets you enter your topic of choice, revealing a variety of resources

You can also download the mobile app for instant EAP access anywhere, anytime. Then, when you're ready to speak with an EAP counselor, just call **1-888-297-9028** anytime, day or night.

ComPsych website: guidanceresources.com

The company web ID is MNPS. Simply follow the prompts to logon or create an account.



“When you're struggling, that's when we want to help you. We offer a no-judgment environment.”

—Kim Gill, Health Coach

Bobbi Nickel, Health Coach

Doubling down on better health Employee Wellness Center now has two health coaches!

Health coaching services through the MNPS Health Care Centers have always been popular — maybe a little too popular. Demand often exceeded available appointments. Now, with a second health coach coming onboard at the Employee Wellness Center, more one-on-one sessions are available!

Registered nurse Kim Gill has joined long-time health coach Bobbi Nickel, who is also a nurse. Together, the two will help MNPS employees and retirees with their toughest health challenges, namely, preventing or managing chronic conditions such as diabetes or heart disease. They'll also work with those who just want to improve their lifestyles through better nutrition, physical activity, stress management, better sleep and more.

“We look at the whole person, not just a disease process,” Kim says. “It's really up

to the individual to identify what they want to work on.”

With Kim's help, of course.

Kim previously worked in public health, specifically in critical care and lung transplant care, where she saw firsthand the toll chronic disease can take. That experience inspired her to help patients get in front of health problems and become empowered.

She notes that teachers can especially benefit from health coaching, because they tend to neglect their own needs to take care of others.

“They will definitely have empty tanks,” she says.

Kim learned something else while sitting in on Bobbi's sessions: People tend to follow an all-or-nothing narrative, she says. If they're reaching

their goals, they're happy to come in. But if they slip up on their diet or fall off the exercise wagon, they tend to stay away in embarrassment.

“When you're struggling, that's when we want to help you,” she says. “We offer a no-judgment environment.”

Interested in one-on-one health coaching?

You must first attend an orientation session, where you get to know the coaches and learn what to expect. This two-hour group session is held twice a month at the Employee Wellness Center. Call **615-259-8755** to reserve your spot. Once completed, you can schedule one-on-one coaching with Kim or Bobbi.

Have you connected with Karla?

Your retiree health plan provides an extra layer of support through a unique behavioral telehealth program, called Connect with Karla®. When you download the app, you get free over-the-phone counseling with the same licensed counselor at every session. Day and evening appointments are available. This program is completely confidential; nobody at MNPS can see or hear what you discuss with your counselor. Check it out at sync.health/mnps.



Convenient care across Davidson County

The Vanderbilt Health at MNPS Employee & Family Health Care Centers provide a wide range of primary and acute care services for you and your family members:

- Minor illnesses and injuries
- Annual and sports physicals
- Health coaching
- Lab tests and blood work
- Women's and men's health
- Chronic condition management
- Immunizations, including flu shots
- Child/adolescent health
- Behavioral health screenings

CENTRAL	NORTHEAST	NORTH	SOUTHEAST	WEST
Employee Wellness Center at Berry Hill 2694 Fessey Court, Nashville	Two Rivers Middle 2995 McGavock Pike, Nashville	Taylor Stratton Elementary 306 West Old Hickory Blvd., Madison	Mt. View Elementary 3812 Murfreesboro Road, Antioch	Bellevue Middle 651 Colice Jeanne Road, Nashville
M-F 7 a.m.-7 p.m. Sat. 8 a.m.-2 p.m.	M-F 8 a.m.-6 p.m.	M-F 7 a.m.-6 p.m.	M-F 7 a.m.-5 p.m.	M-F 8 a.m.-6 p.m.

Learn more at MNPSHealth.org • For an appointment, call **615-259-8755**



Vanderbilt Health
at Metro Nashville Public Schools
Employee & Family Health Care Centers

Benefit reminders

Remember the 60-day rule

If you wish to add a dependent(s) to your MNPS retiree coverage because you have an eligible change in status, you **MUST** do so within 60 calendar days of the event. If you miss this deadline, you can never add the dependent at a later date, even during Annual Transfer in the fall.

Examples of eligible status changes include marriage, divorce, death, birth, adoption or custody of a child, and a spouse or dependent losing insurance coverage or a job. Call Employee Benefit Services at **615-259-8464** or **615-259-8648** to make coverage changes.

Keep your mailing address current

Don't miss important information about your MNPS retiree benefits. If you move, you must submit your address change in writing to Employee Benefit Services. Email benefits@mnps.org or fax **615-214-8665**. We will then submit the change to Cigna.

Note: You cannot update your address over the phone. If your mailing address on file is a PO box, you must also provide your physical address. This is a Medicare requirement that could impact your plan enrollment.

Want to receive benefit alerts by email?

Follow this link to opt in for email alerts: www.MNPSBenefits.org/optin
We will continue to mail important information to your home, and you can opt out of email alerts at any time.



A message from the Metropolitan Nashville Retired Teachers Association

Looking around, we see many retired educators who have stepped away from their professional jobs but still serve their families, churches and communities. Teachers have always been a giving and committed group with a strong determination to make the world a better place.

When we see a need, we fill it.

Many volunteer in classrooms and fill the gap as substitute teachers. You might see us collecting school supplies for students or giving our time to many wonderful organizations, including the Frist Center, Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville Zoo, Adventure Science Center, Cheekwood, Juvenile Court Foster Care Review Boards, and the MNPS Insurance Trust and Retirement Committee, as well as at hospitals, churches and with civic organizations. And, yes, you will see and hear us contacting our legislative representatives to share our opinions regarding educational issues. In fact, on Monday, March 16, we will join

other educators at the State Capitol for the Rally for Our Schools, where we will fight for funding that is desperately needed.

Retired teachers can be seen at the MNPS Employee Wellness Center working to stay healthy. They can also be found fellowshipping and learning with other retirees at the MNEA Headquarters during our quarterly MNRTA meetings.

As retired educators, we are still striving to make positive differences for current and future educators while enjoying each other's company.

We invite you to join our MNRTA fellowship and learning sessions at 9:30 a.m. on:

- March 19**
- May 21**
- July 16**
- September 17**
- November 19**

We'll save you a seat!

Al, Barbara, Charles, Clarence, Clementine, Deborah, Doris, Evelyn, Faye, George, Rosa



Vision plan network changes

Effective February 1, 2020, Sears Optical, JC Penney Optical and Stanton Optical will no longer be in-network EyeMed providers. EyeMed still offers the industry's largest national network, and continues to add new locations to give its members exceptional choice and convenience.

Find the latest list of network providers at eyemed.com (select Find an Eye Doctor, then choose the Insight network from the dropdown menu). For more details about MNPS's vision plan, visit MNPSBenefits.org/vision.

Did you know...

In addition to great coverage, EyeMed also gives you 40% off additional pairs of glasses, 20% off non-prescription sunglasses and 15% off Lasik. Visit eyemed.com or download the EyeMed Members app.

FOOD

DRINK

THE DAILY GRIND

Monday-Friday, 6 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Located on the second floor in the Employee Wellness Center



METROPOLITAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF
NASHVILLE DAVIDSON COUNTY
2601 BRANSFORD AVENUE
NASHVILLE, TN 37204-2811

EMPLOYEE BENEFIT SERVICES

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▶ Have questions about your
MNPS retiree benefits?

Contact Employee Benefit Services

Phone: 615-259-8464 or 615-259-8648

Email: benefits@mnps.org

Office hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

 **Be smart**
Live well

The drive to make a difference

Sometimes being a hero is as easy as getting behind the wheel. The American Red Cross is looking for volunteers to deliver life-saving blood products to hospitals.

All it takes is two four-hour shifts a month to make sure hospitals have the blood supplies they need for patient emergencies and treating serious medical conditions like cancer.

To find out more — and truly make a difference in someone's life — contact [**marlene.sweda@redcross.org**](mailto:marlene.sweda@redcross.org).

