

The Valley Voice

September 15th, 2022

The Ventilator Care Unit at Valley

Did you know Valley Nursing Center is one of only two skilled nursing facilities in North Carolina equipped with a dedicated ventilator unit? Ventilator units like ours at Valley can provide the care needed, whether it's short-term rehab and education to help return home and live independently, or long-term care with activities and care to make the new normal as comfortable and enjoyable as possible.

Our dedicated ventilator unit at Valley includes an interdisciplinary team of dedicated respiratory therapist and nursing staff with decades of experience. Experienced respiratory therapists are available around the clock to provide trach and ventilator care. Our team maintains close relationships with our local hospitals and our own local Pulmonologist (lung doctor), ensuring the highest level of care for our residents.



What does it mean to be on a vent?

The term ventilator (many times referred to as life support) may sound very scary, but a ventilator is a piece of specialty medical equipment used to assist breathing. A person may need the assistance of a ventilator due to a serious illness or injury that affects their ability to breath effectively on their own. This could be anything from car or motorcycle accidents, stroke, brain injury, spinal cord injuries, ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) or progression of chronic illnesses involving the lungs inability to function effectively.

If someone is put on the ventilator to assist with their breathing, the goal is to treat the cause of their breathing issues, rehabilitate, and wean them off the ventilator. Some people require the assistance of a ventilator for the rest of their lives.

When they are unable to come off the ventilator, a tracheostomy or trach (rhymes with "rake") is performed. This is a surgical procedure that creates an opening in the neck with a small cannula inserted to provide a way assist breathing with minimal complications rather than having a tube in their mouth long term. Some patients with a trach do not require the assistance of a ventilator to breath.

Can you have a good quality of life if you need to be on the ventilator?

Absolutely! Many people requiring the help of a ventilator continue to live independent and fulfilling lives. Some live at home with the support and care of family and home health while others make a new home in a place like Valley. People on the ventilator can still get up, go to activities, go on outings, and interact with their family, friends, and fellow residents. Many patients that require the ventilator to breath are still awake, alert, and able to interact with their families, friends, and staff. Some are able to use a special device to help them speak, others mouth words or write messages to communicate. Eating while on the ventilator requires special care although many are able to eat the same foods as you and I while others require a special tube placed in their stomach to provide nutrition.

The Rehab Unit at Valley Nursing Center is helping Racing Legend, Rex White, get stronger so he can return home. Those same characteristics that made Rex a NASCAR champion over 60 years ago are helping him during rehabilitation exercises. His strong dedication and driving determination for success are evident as Rex gets physically and mentally stronger. Rex celebrated his 92nd birthday last month, and he commented, "Growing old is not fun!" A fun fact is all NASCAR publications have Rex's birthday wrong. He was born in 1930.

From 1959 to 1962, Rex White won more races than anyone in NASCAR. He won the Grand National Series Championship in 1960. Standing at 5 feet, 4 inches and weighing 135 pounds, Rex was the smallest man to ever capture the NASCAR championship, a title he still holds. Rex also holds the title of NASCAR's oldest living champion and was inducted into the NASCAR Hall of Fame in January 2015.

How can Valley employees help a NASCAR legend return to independent living? Licensed physical therapists help Rex get stronger each day with walking, transferring and muscle strengthening. Licensed occupational therapists teach Rex new ways to perform daily tasks such as putting on a sock or performing daily hygiene. Our dietary department prepares delicious balanced meals to promote better health and healing. Our nursing staff administers medicines and care to address all of Rex's needs.

Keep working hard Rex White!



Racing into Valley Nursing Center!





Director's Corner: Laughter is Great Medicine

How often do you laugh? Research shows that children laugh about 400 times a day and adults only 15 times per day. We should all make it our goal to laugh more. Researchers from the Mayo Clinic believe that laughter stimulates many organs by increasing the intake of oxygen-rich air. The heart, lungs and muscles are stimulated, and increased endorphins are released by the brain. Laughter relieves stress by decreasing the heart rate and blood pressure and makes it easier to cope with difficult situations. This auditory expression connects people and improves moods. It is easy to smile when you hear a hearty roar of laughter.

Laughter reminds me of my grandparents, because their home was filled with laughter. My grandfather always shared riddles and jokes. He was a farmer and claimed to all that he had a "Santa Claus Garden". All he ever did was hoe, hoe, hoe! His joy was sharing laughter with his family and friends.

It is true that kids say the darndest things and help us to laugh more. I remember when my daughter was young, she wanted to be an animal doctor. I told her the title was a veterinarian. Later, someone asked her what she wanted to be when she grew up. Her reply was a vegetarian. Almost 40 years later, I still chuckle at this!

Laughing is contagious. Spread it around and brighten someone's day. Stay healthy and laugh more!

- **Natalie Reeves/Medical Records Director**

What's Cooking

As the weather starts to cool off, that means it's time to turn on those ovens to bake cookies. You can't go wrong with a good cookie. Here is a chocolate chip cookie recipe—with a little twist!

Chocolate Butterscotch Cookie

Ingredients

3 1/4 c. All-purpose Flour
1 1/2 tsp. Baking Powder
1 tsp. Baking Soda
1 tsp. Sea Salt
1 c. Unsalted Butter, At Room Temperature
1 1/2 c. Packed Brown Sugar
1/2 c. Granulated Sugar
2 Large Eggs
2 tsp. Pure Vanilla Extract
1 c. Butterscotch Chips
1 c. Chocolate Chunks
Sea Salt, For Sprinkling on Cookies

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a large baking sheet with a piece of wax paper or parchment paper and set aside.

In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and sea salt. Set aside. Using a stand mixer, cream butter and sugars together for about 3 minutes. Add eggs and vanilla and mix until combined. With the mixer on low, slowly add dry ingredients. Stir in butterscotch chips and chocolate chunks.

Form the cookie dough into balls, about 2 tablespoons of dough. Place on prepared baking sheet, about 2 inches apart. Sprinkle with sea salt, if desired.

Bake cookies for 10–12 minutes or until edges are slightly golden brown. Remove from oven and let cookies cool on the baking sheet for 2–3 minutes. Transfer to a wire cooling rack and cool completely.

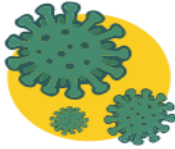
Enjoy ,
Heather Butler, CDM, CFPP

YOUR BEST PROTECTION AGAINST FLU

Millions of people get flu every year, hundreds of thousands of people are hospitalized and thousands or tens of thousands of people die.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), public health professionals, and our practice recommend that everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine every year. Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent serious flu complications that can result in hospitalization and even death.^{1,2} A flu vaccine is the best way to help prevent flu and its potentially serious complications. Remember that flu vaccine not only protects you, but it also can help protect those around you.

FLU VACCINE REDUCES YOUR RISK OF FLU



CDC estimates that flu has resulted in 9 million – 41 million illnesses, 140,000 – 710,000 hospitalizations and 12,000 – 52,000 deaths annually between 2010 and 2020.³

40-60%

Recent studies show that flu vaccination reduces the risk of flu illness by between 40% and 60% among the overall population during seasons when most circulating flu viruses are well-matched to the flu vaccine.



Since 2004, when pediatric flu deaths became nationally notifiable, the number of pediatric flu deaths reported to CDC each year prior to the COVID-19 pandemic ranged from 37 (2011-2012 season) to 199 deaths (2019-2020 season.)

While some people who get a flu vaccine still get sick, vaccination can make their illness less severe. Two recent studies among hospitalized flu patients showed that flu vaccination reduced intensive care unit admissions and duration of hospitalization.⁵

Remember that a flu vaccine not only protects you, but it also can help protect those around you, including people who are at higher risk for serious flu illness, like babies, young children, older adults, pregnant people, and people with certain chronic health conditions.

FLU VACCINATION ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR SOME

Flu vaccination is especially important for people who are at higher risk of developing serious complications from flu, including children younger than 5, pregnant people, adults 65 and older, and people with certain chronic health conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease, and asthma.

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