

HOSPITAL COVID SPIKE RETURNS

Thanks to all those who don't want the vaccine for COVID-19, Concord Hospital has to delay colonoscopies, carpal tunnel surgery and other non-emergency procedures.

As of October 30 half of the ICU patients were being treated for COVID-19. Overall in the Concord Hospital system 37 patients were in for such care. **None of them had been vaccinated.**

MATH SCORES DROP DUE TO COVID LEARNING LOSS

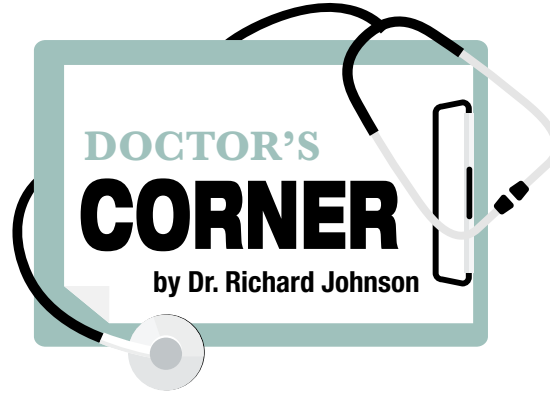
New Hampshire students' math proficiency scores dropped an average of 16 points from 48 to 32 over the two year COVID period. For area schools the scores for math proficiency were:

MATH	2018-19	2020-21	
Bow	56	44	-12
Concord	48	27	-21
Dunbarton	70	50	-20
Hopkinton	61	45	-16

Reading scores took less of a hit because of remote learning and classroom interruptions:

READING	2018-19	2020-21	
Bow	68	65	-3
Concord	60	47	-13
Dunbarton	73	65	-8
Hopkinton	72	65	-7

Bow students had the smallest drop in reading proficiency (-3) and math (-12).



ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

November is "National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month." Many other conditions and events (such as Thanksgiving) are observed in November, but I want to call your attention to Alzheimer's disease because it is the most common cause of dementia (memory loss and mental dysfunction that interferes with daily living). In 1906 Dr. Alois Alzheimer first described a disease of profound memory loss that had microscopic changes in the brain. It is estimated that more than 6 million Americans (most over 65 years of age) have Alzheimer's disease. By age 85 your risk of Alzheimer's is about 50%, however, those who develop the disease at this late age usually have less aggressive progression of dementia. Dementia can occur from other sources: vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia, frontal-temporal disorders and combinations of the above. But let's focus on Alzheimer's disease.

Some pathological findings in the brain of an Alzheimer patient are the production of two proteins: beta amyloid which forms plaques that disrupt cell-to-cell communication, and tau which forms tangled bundles of fibers which also disrupt normal brain cell function. There is a loss of connection between the neurons. This progresses, and the brain begins to shrink. The destruction seems to begin in the hippocampus where learning and memory take place. These changes in the brain begin years before the onset of symptoms. Decreased blood supply to the brain, chronic inflammation, and possible bacterial and genetic factors are all being studied to try to find a treatable cause for this disease. There's ongoing research testing the infectious hypothesis of Alzheimer's disease by looking at different viruses, bacteria and spirochetes that are known to cross the blood brain barrier. Several of these infectious agents have been present in patients with Alzheimer's disease, but association does not prove causation; so the research goes on.

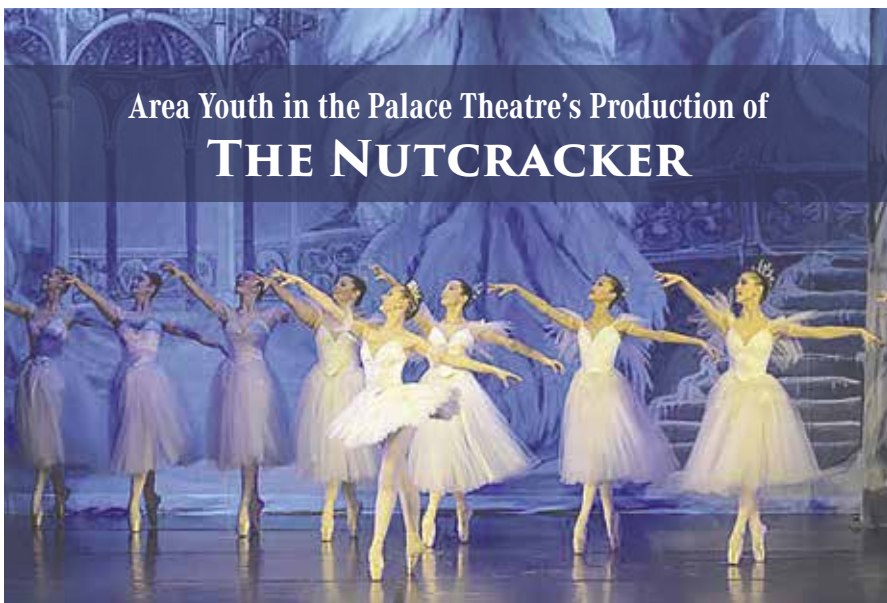
To date no specific gene has been discovered that causes Alzheimer's. There is no treatment that cures Alzheimer's or alters the disease process in the brain. Not uncommonly, dehydration, malnutrition and infection result in the patient's death.

Some of the risk factors for developing Alzheimer's include increasing age, family history, Downs Syndrome, head trauma, excessive alcohol consumption, air pollution, poor sleep patterns and general health issues (lack of exercise, smoking, obesity, elevated blood pressure and poorly controlled type 2 diabetes).

Alzheimer's is not considered 'preventable', but you might lower your risk by eating a healthy diet, exercise regularly, managing any underlying disease, and stopping smoking. There also appears to be a reduced risk of Alzheimer's for those who keep themselves involved in stimulating mental and social activities.

In recent years more attention has been given to the toll that caring for the Alzheimer's patient takes on the loving caregiver. When you learn that you will become a caregiver of someone with Alzheimer's you will probably experience moods of grief, anger or depression. After months of caregiving, one can become exhausted, irritable and socially withdrawn. When you first become aware that a loved one has Alzheimer's disease it is important to reach out for support and advice to organizations like the Alzheimer's Association (<https://www.alz.org>), Alzheimer's Foundation of America (<https://alzfdn.org>), and alzheimers.net (<https://www.alzheimers.net>).

Area Youth in the Palace Theatre's Production of THE NUTCRACKER



Aiva Berrigan of Bow will perform along with a cast of professional guest artists and other area youth in the annual production of the timeless classic, The Nutcracker, in six magical performances from Friday, November 19th through Sunday, November 21, 2021 at the Palace Theatre.

Seventeen-year-old Aiva Berrigan attends Bow HS and will perform the coveted role of Snow Queen and Arabian Soloist in this year's production. Aiva has been dancing for ten years and has trained with Eastern Ballet Institute, Boston Ballet and has spent the last year training with Southern NH Dance Theater. "As I got older, I fell in love with ballet. I love expressing my feelings through movement in this beautiful art form," stated Aiva.

She will be performing alongside seventeen-year-old **Sydney Ferland** of Bow who will be performing the roles of Mirliton, Snowflake in the Snow Scene, Spanish and in the Waltz of the Flowers. Fifteen-year-old Hopkinton resident, **Adia Madden** will perform the roles of Elf, Mouse, and Arabian.

Joey Richardson age thirteen of Hopkinton will perform as Fritz, Candy Cane, and Party Boy and performing as a Baby Mouse and Angel is ten-year old **Athena Santini** of Hopkinton.

The Palace Theatre will continue to follow all safety guidelines and are taking every precaution necessary to keep everyone safe this holiday season. The 21st annual production of The Nutcracker will be performed Friday, **November 19th through Sunday, November 21st**. For show times and ticket information call the Palace Theatre Box Office at 603.668.5588 or visit www.palacetheatre.org. Call for your tickets today!