

Notes from Nancy

by Wild West Extension District FACS Agent Nancy Honig



Back to School Routines

Now that school has started, it is time to get back into the routine of daily prep. Transitioning from a laid-back summer break into a more routine schedule can be hard for everyone involved. After a summer with little to no structure a change of routine can cause stress for everyone. Here are some tips that can help you get back into the swing of school:

Make checklists. With so many things to remember, making checklists of what needs to be done reduces stress and helps everyone stay organized. I am big on using my phone to help with those checklists, and adding alarms to make sure that it happens! Checklists can be

especially helpful for younger children who can use that as a daily reminder to do chores, brush teeth, lay out clothes, etc.

Make a family calendar that everyone can see. You may have your own personal one on a phone, but keep the whole family in the loop with a large family calendar everyone can access. Between school events, extracurricular activities, and everything in between, it can be challenging to keep things straight. A printed calendar, or a dry erase board can work well for this.

Create a designated space for the next days supplies. Use the same space each day to leave backpacks, set parental

sign up slips, leave your purse or wallet. Before heading to bed, you can place backpacks, sports equipment, keys, and anything you or your kids might need before going to school. This will help make mornings more organized and less stressful! I have not had kids in school for years and I use the same system myself for things I need to gather to take to the office, or remind me to pick up.

Establish a nighttime routine. You'll reduce stress in the mornings by making sure lunches are packed, homework is finished, and clothes are laid out. Involve your kids in the preparation process by having them help pick out their outfits

and what they want to eat for lunch the next day. Again, I often do this myself. I check the weather, my calendar of activities and then lay out my clothes so that is one less thing to think about early in the morning.

Make sure everyone is getting enough sleep. It can be difficult to change from the long days of summer and staying up late, to a more established early bedtime. However, getting enough sleep each night is a key component to reducing stress. The National Sleep Foundation suggests children six to 13 years old need nine to 11 hours of sleep each night, while older children ages 14 to 17

need eight to 10 hours of sleep. Also, remember those teens tend to turn into night owls, but they still require a great deal of sleep. Encourage no caffeine in the evenings, and a set "wind down" routine. The best time to stop screen time for kids is at least one hour before bed. For toddlers and younger children, pediatric experts often recommend extending this window to two hours to help their bodies transition smoothly into rest.

Set a Curfew: Turn off all devices at a fixed alarm time every night. Keep Bedrooms Clear: Remove all TVs, phones, and tablets from children's bedrooms overnight. Use Quiet Activities: Replace digital media with reading a physical book, coloring,

or gentle play.

Back to school can be both challenging and exciting. With a little planning, and a little patience it can become a smooth transition into the new normal. Best of luck to all the parents and kiddos this school year!

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The Prairie Doc



“Anatomical Variations: Inherent Challenges in Comprehending Cancer”

By Ethan L. Snow, PhD, MA

Human anatomy is fascinatingly and frustratingly complex. In each body, 600 muscles, 206 bones, and 360 joints provide structural stability and movement; two lungs circulate air through 1,500 miles of airways to 480,000,000 alveoli with every breath; one heart circulates 5-6 liters of blood through 60,000 miles of vessels every 30 seconds; 600 lymph nodes activate the immune system and filter foreign invaders (e.g., bacteria, viruses), cellular debris, and cancer cells coursing through 100,000 miles of lymphatic vessels; and the list continues.

As human anatomy applies to clinical medicine, some concepts are fundamentally more conceivable than others. For example, if an individual breaks a bone, they can often logically identify the etiology, understand the inhibited function, and realize the immediate need for urgent care. A radiologist would then localize and visualize the fracture, and an orthopedic surgeon would reduce and fix the bone. Cancer, however, is generally more arduous to conceptualize.

Cancer develops from a single cell, and comprehending the size of one cell is inherently challenging. There are around 30,000,000,000,000 (30 trillion) cells that compose each human body, and the average cell diameter is about 5 micrometers. For reference, the smallest object an unaided human eye can identify is approximately 100 micrometers (0.1

millimeters, or comparatively about one-tenth the thickness of a standard office staple), so it would take about 8,000 average-size cells arranged in a 20x20x20 cluster to be perceived by the naked eye as a minimally visible "speck."

A single cell becomes cancerous when it acquires a mutation in its genetic code that causes it to grow and divide uncontrollably, ultimately creating many copies of its dysfunctional self. The microscopic scale at which this initially occurs makes it highly implausible to notice, and this is why signs and symptoms of cancer do not present until replication has created enough cellular mass to manifest physical or functional effects. To complicate matters further, while cancer can develop essentially anywhere in the body, cancer cells can relocate (metastasize) throughout the body via the extensive vascular, respiratory, and lymphatic pathways.

Thorough surface examinations (e.g., skin observation, breast/testicle self-exams, digital rectal exam, colonoscopy) are important routine screening procedures, and specialized imaging techniques (e.g., CT, MRI, PET, US) can confirm the presence and location of suspicious lesions (abnormal tissues). A biopsy of an alleged cancer tissue is normally collected to allow a pathologist to observe the associated cells, much like how a radiologist views bones in radiographs. A histologist slices the

tissue thinly (~5 micrometers thick) and applies pigmented stains so each cell in the plane can be easily examined. A pathologist then inspects the tissue using a microscope to determine if cancer cells are present and what characteristics they exhibit.

Based on the diagnostic findings, an oncologist can establish the best treatment plan with the patient. Unfortunately, as cancer originates as part of the body's tissues, treatment via surgical resection, chemotherapy, or radiation often also destroys healthy tissue as it is difficult to confidently target all and only the microscopic cancerous cells.

Ethan L. Snow, PhD, MA is a Clinical Anatomist and Associate Professor at South Dakota State University in Brookings, South Dakota. Dr. Snow leads the Snow Lab Research Team – a collaborative and interdisciplinary team of undergraduate students, professional students, faculty, and clinicians who analyze rare and unique clinical cases involving anatomical variations. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok. Prairie Doc Programming includes On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show (most Thursdays at 7pm, on SDPB, YouTube and streaming on Facebook), 2 podcasts, and a Radio program (on SDPB, Sundays at 6am and 1pm).).

Loving leftovers

Much of what I learned about cooking came from watching my mom and grandmother prepare meals on a daily basis. It was a matter of necessity in those days. There weren't enough restaurants in my small town to go for more than a couple of days without having to eat at the same place.

The menu at home was only slightly more varied and consisted of the standard meat, potatoes and a vegetable of some kind. Of all the meal prep, watching my mom and grandmother peel potatoes is probably the one most anchored in my mind.

A feature of nearly every dinner, each of them had plenty of practice sliding a paring knife just under the peel, removing only a small sliver of the skin. It's a skill I've never learned. I still have to use a peeler to avoid taking thick hunks out of the spud.

I also have never been able to recreate the steak gravy the way my grandmother made it. She had some technique that didn't get passed on to keep some small lumps of toasted flour in the thick concoction that was laddled over pan-fried minute steaks and mounds of mashed potatoes.

I can make a roux and get close to the taste of her gravy, but the flour is always well incorporated by the time I'm done whisking everything together. I also manage to dirty just about every dish in the kitchen when making a gravy, which is one reason it's usually reserved for a weekend meal.

One of the biggest realizations of being an adult is just how much time and effort went into keeping me fed throughout my childhood. I'm competent in the kitchen today but sometimes I'm too willing to delegate

the work to someone else.

Planning, purchasing, preparing and then cleaning up afterward are all big reasons going to a restaurant sounds good. Getting all that plus food delivered to your table is much more appealing after a day at work.

Outsourcing all the work also carries a cost, which I was reminded of recently when I looked over the menu at one of my favorite establishments to see most of the burgers were listed just under \$20, meaning that with tip they'd crossed the line from budget-friendly to expensive entrée.

It's still tasty enough to be worth it, but costly enough it's not at the top of the list when considering whether or not to cook. I can't make a better burger at home, but I can certainly make one cheaper when the rent, prep and cleaning are al-

ready accounted for and available.

The bigger issue isn't the time involved in cooking, rather it's the motivation to add yet another task at the end of the day. It's especially trying this time of year with my wife returning to teaching, altering our normal routine.

Once again, I lean on my mother and grandmother for some time-saving advice. I can't wield the paring knife to peel potatoes like they could, but I can make enough to have for lunch the next day. Turns out the secret is to cook more and learn to love leftovers.

"Insight" is a weekly column published by Kansas Farm Bureau, the state's largest farm organization whose mission is to strengthen agriculture and the lives of Kansans through advocacy, education and service.
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Insight

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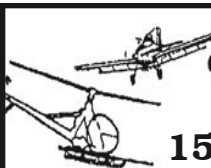
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PUBLIC NOTICE

(First published in The Hugoton Hermes, Thursday, August 20, 2026)

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF STEVENS COUNTY, KANSAS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF CHERYL J. FREED, Deceased

Case No. SV-2026-PR-000018

NOTICE OF HEARING

STATE OF KANSAS, TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

You are hereby notified that a Petition has been filed in this court by Timothy Gale Freed, as an heir of Cheryl J. Freed, deceased, praying for the determination of the descent of all of the property described in the Petition and all other property, both real and personal, owned by decedent in

Kansas at the time of death, along with Approval of a Valid Family Settlement Agreement; and you are hereby required to file your written defenses thereto on or before, September 21, 2026 at 9:00 a.m., of said day, in said court, in the City of Hugoton, in Stevens County, Kansas, at which time and place said cause will be heard. Should you fail therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon said Petition.

Timothy Gale Freed
Petitioner

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