3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

RESEARCH

Breakthrough PTSD Treatment: From Lab to Drug Development

Kailo Pharma raised 6.5 million NIS to develop a PTSD treatment that neutralizes traumatic memories in mice, based on research by Dr. Iris Reuveni and Prof. Edi Barkai (Department of Neurobiology) with Prof. Haim Gilon of the Hebrew University. Researchers identified a brain mechanism that amplifies fear memories and developed a peptide to block it, designed as a nasal spray for direct delivery to the central nervous system.

Aging in Sync: New Insights into the Body's Internal Communication

A groundbreaking study led by Dr. Judith Somekh (Information Systems), with Shaked Briller, Prof. Gil Atzmon, Dr. Gil Ben David and Yam Amir, published in *Scientific Reports*, found that coordination between key tissues, such as the brain, muscles and fat, declines with age. Aging appears to be a system-wide decline, opening possibilities for early detection of age-related diseases and treatments supporting healthy aging.



Occupational Therapy and Information Systems students at the Hecht Museum (Credit: Keren Shalem Facebook)

Predicting Suicide Risk: A Breakthrough in Bipolar Disorder Research

A simple blood test can identify suicide risk in bipolar disorder. Led by Prof. Shani Stern of the Integrated Brain and Behavior Research Center (IBBRC), researchers developed an AI-based algorithm that analyzes genetic signals in blood cells and predicts elevated risk with over 95% accuracy, a promising tool for early detection and prevention.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

New Partnership: Advancing Research and Rehabilitation

The Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences signed an affiliation agreement with Ziv Medical Center to promote joint research and collaboration, including a shared research fund, joint teaching and training, and clinical guidance for students. Teams will work on advanced treatments such as virtual reality-based neurological rehabilitation, and on protocols for patients with complex rehabilitation needs.

Gatekeepers for Suicide Prevention

Prof. Yossi Levi-Belz, head of the Lior Tsafati Center for Suicide and Mental Pain Research (Faculty of Education), leads the 'Gatekeepers' initiative with the Nova Tribe Community and the Ministries of Welfare and Health, equipping communities to identify and respond to emotional distress. As Prof. Levi-Belz emphasizes, healing after collective trauma is a shared responsibility.

Advancing Care: Supporting Complex Patients in the Community

The Azrieli Center for Advanced Nursing Roles (ADVANCE), headed by Prof. Efrat Shadmi, hosted the semi-annual meeting of nurses and leadership from Clalit's Guided Care and Support program. The program empowers primary care nurses to coordinate care for patients with complex multi-morbidity and runs in 22 clinics nationwide. The meeting included lectures and workshops on health coaching and healthy lifestyle management.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Innovation in Action: Making the Hecht Museum More Accessible

Students from Occupational Therapy and Information Systems worked on improving accessibility at the Hecht Museum for people with intellectual disabilities. As part of the course *Advanced Technologies in Development and Rehabilitation*, partially funded by the Division of Innovation and Sustainability and led by Dr. Alexandra Daniel-Saad and Prof. Tsvi Kuflik, they developed solutions using 3D printing, smart sensors, augmented reality and AI.

Advancing Mental Health: New IMPACT Research Center

Prof. Liat Helpman (School of Therapy, Counseling and Human Development, Faculty of Education) leads the newly established IMPACT Center, which advances mental health promotion across diverse systems. Its projects include a national study on a stepped-care mental health model within *Leumit Health Services*, with researchers from the University of Haifa and Columbia University.

New Generation of Coaches Certified

Seventy new sports coaches and instructors graduated from the University's School for Sports Coaching (External Studies Division), run with the Sports Center under the academic supervision of Prof. Einat Kodesh, Head of Physical Therapy. Graduates were certified in judo, basketball, volleyball and fitness instruction for physiotherapy graduates, among other programs, all recognized and supervised by the Ministry of Sport.

OPERATIONS

Inside the Brain: New Podcast Launched

The University's 'Integrative Brain & Behavior Research Center' launched *INTERBRAIN*, a podcast making neuroscience accessible, produced with the Digital Learning Unit. Researchers discuss attention, memory and addiction. Led by PhD student Rika Shayan-Aviv, with Prof. Inna Gaisler-Salomon and Ms. Dana Zoabi; episodes are on Spotify.

Get Moving: 8Week Training Toward the University Run

Ahead of the University Run on May 20, 2026, the Sports Center and the Physical Therapy Department launched a quiet WhatsApp group with an 8-week guided training program, helping participants complete a 30-minute run at their own pace.

Creating Together: Art, Community & Inspiration

The Hecht Museum hosted a series of meetings with a group from Israel Elwyn, including a clay sculpture workshop in the sculpture garden and a visit to the University of Haifa observatory.