In 2014, nearly 700,000 Utahns visited the Emergency Department (ED) for non-emergency injuries or illnesses. The median charge for those who visited and were released from an ED has increased 4.8 times between 2001 and 2013 (roughly $400 to roughly $1,600 respectively). During this same time period, the median charge for those who visited an ED and were admitted to hospitals increased 2.5 times (roughly $6,000 to roughly $16,000 respectively). In 2014, seriousness of medical condition account for 77% of Emergency Department visits, 12% of the visits were because a doctor’s office was closed, 7% because of a lack of access to other provider (4% did not cite a reason for the ED visit).

In an emergency, go to the emergency room.

Quick list of emergency criteria:
- Bleeding
- Chest pains lasting more than 2 minutes
- Facial numbness, arm, leg or one side of the body
- Severe shortness of breath or dizziness
- Loss of vision or speech
- Head trauma
- Coughing or vomiting blood
- Major injuries—broken bones, partial or total amputation
- Suicidal feelings

If it is not an emergency, try these resources:

MDLive
MD Live is 24/7 access to telehealth doctors for non-emergency conditions not needing to be seen in person by a medical professional.

Using Regence insurance plans, MD Live costs:
Traditional Plan: $10
High Deductible Plan: $43*
*$10 once deductible is met

Regence Advice 24
Women who are pregnant or individuals with chronic conditions can use Advice24 for free if insured. Advice24 is a toll-free, nurse line offering support for everyday health issues and questions.

Urgent Care
Visiting Urgent Care is less expensive than visiting the Emergency Room for non-emergency injuries or illnesses.

How do we find a Primary Care Provider?
We can use the Regence website to find a primary care provider within our area. We can search using our zip code, health care plan and the type of provider we are looking to visit.

Almost 20 percent of full time SLCC employees do not have one person whom they consider their personal physician or health care provider.

References:
Adult flu infections result in about $87 billion in health care costs, projected lost earnings, and loss of life (2007 estimate).

Cold, influenzas, and stomach bugs significantly impact health care costs, absenteeism, and productivity among workers.

There are steps we can take to prevent the spread of disease in our office.

When you cough or sneeze, use a tissue. If tissues are not available, use your upper sleeve (not your hands). After sneezing, coughing or using the restroom, make sure to wash your hands or to use hand sanitizer if soap and water are unavailable. In communal and personal office areas, wipe down counters, desks, telephones, key boards, door knobs, etc. with disinfecting wipes regularly.

In a 2009 study, only 31% of men and 65% of women washed their hands after using a public restroom.

Why do we wash our hands?

Hand washing is one of the best ways to avoid illness and to prevent spreading disease. According to the CDC, hand washing:
- Reduces the number of people who get sick with diarrhea by 31%
- Reduces respiratory illness (i.e. colds) by 21%

How do we wash our hands?
1. Place hands under running water
2. Turn on faucet
3. Apply soap
4. Scrub hands for 20 seconds
5. Turn on faucet and rinse hands
6. Dry hands

How long is 20 seconds?
Roughly judge 20 seconds by singing two rounds of the “Happy Birthday” song in your head (or out loud).

Germs can spread fast. Creating a healthier workplace means healthier employees.

References:

Infographic: Taking a Fitness Break

Chalkboard statistics: 65-75% of the time we spend in the office is seated. In a typical 8 hour day, that means 6 hours. Physical activity and exercise improves mental and intellectual functions along with keeping the cardiovascular, metabolic and musculoskeletal systems healthy. Doing short bouts of vigorous intensity (3 x 20 seconds) along in a 10 minute span of continuous movement and exercise resulted in improved insulin sensitivity and other indices of cardiometabolic health. Is a standing desk better? Simply standing is insufficient according to the research. Sit to do your work but take periodic physical activity breaks instead.

Taking a fitness break throughout the day has many benefits that can not only improve your overall health but lead to improved work performance and gives your brain a breather while you move. When combined with proper ergonomics, regular breaks throughout the day can help prevent those aches and pains you feel from being sedentary. As humans, we are built to move, not sit for hours on end. Below is a simple routine that you can do for 10 minutes, which will help get your blood flowing and muscles moving.

Standing High Knee’s: Stand nice and tall, bracing your core and keeping your belly tucked in. Alternate raising each leg up to your chest in an alternating motion.

Push Ups: A great upper body exercise! Start off doing them leaned against a wall, a stable table or your knees. As you get stronger, you can progress slowly to where you can do it on the ground with your feet out. Keep elbows in, core and glutes squeezed and lower your chest down to the ground and come back up slowly.

Overhead Back Bend: Stand nice and tall, bring your arms above your head and push your hands towards the ceiling. Keep them pushed up as you proceed to slowly bend backwards, holding for 3-5 seconds then returning to starting position. Feel free to do the same bending towards each side.

Plank: The plank is one of the best ways to work your core (abs, lower back, obliques). Start with your body in a push up position on the ground. Keep your arms locked aligned with your shoulder. Squeezing your abs and glutes, try to imagine there is a straight line that goes from your shoulders, to your hips, to your ankles and maintain that. You can also do this exercise on your forearms.

Sit to Stand Squats: These are a great bodyweight exercise to do for your legs. You can use anything that is stable enough to sit on for this exercise. Start off standing with your feet pointed forward and at shoulder width. Proceed by slowly lowering your buttocks down to your seat and then stand back up, tightening your leg and glute muscles as you do.

Chest Opener: The name says it all! While standing, proceed to bringing your arms nice and wide. Squeeze your shoulder blades together as you keep your arms out and look up towards the ceiling as you stretch.

Do each exercise for 30s-1min, progressing the duration of it as you get stronger. Try to complete each exercise back to back and give yourself a 1 minute break after completing the circuit. Be intuitive and pay attention to your body. If you are feeling stiff or tired, get up and take a fitness break. It will wake
you and your mind up. Set a reminder for yourself on your phone or Outlook calendar!
Exercise and physical activity should be a fun experience. There are many ways to exercise and above is only an example of what you can do to get your muscles pumping. Do what resonates with you, not because you HAVE to do it, but because you WANT to do it. Let’s move more!

References:
Fact Sheet: Safety in the Outdoors, Guide to Hiking
A day in a forest or along a mountain trail is a good source of exercise and a great way to rejuvenate. It also allows you to keep an eye on animal tracks and plant life. Proper preparation is essential for hiking and can make the difference between a satisfying success and a disabling disaster. Stay safe and healthy by following these guidelines.

10 Essentials: Experts call the “10 essentials” items that you should take on any hike. 
1. Appropriate Footwear  
2. Compass/GPS/Map  
3. Extra Food/Water  
4. Extra Clothing  
5. Sunglasses/Sunscreen  
6. First Aid Supplies  
7. Flashlight/headlamp  
8. Knife/multi-purpose tool  
9. Matches/fire-starter  
10. Daypack/backpack

Pack at least 2 quarts of water per person or a method of purifying water. Bring high-energy snacks (nuts, trail mix, high protein bars, fruit, etc.) along with any meals that you plan on eating at the top.

Clothing: Proper clothing while hiking is important, especially during long outings. Wearable layers can help you keep temperatures comfortable for you and protect you from the elements.

- Shirt, what to look for: Lightweight, breathable, quick-drying fabric, built-in ventilation panel, UPF sun protection. Hat. Jacket, what to look for: Lightweight, waterproof breathable shell (e.g. Gore-tex or HyVent), fully seam-sealed construction, adjustable hood, pit zips. Hiking boots, what to look for: Cushioned midsole and footbed, all-terrain outsole (e.g. Vibram), gusseted tongue. Convertible pants, what to look for: quick-drying, durable fabric (e.g. nylon), extra pockets for storage, gusseted crotch for mobility.

Planning Your Hike: Plan your route. Know where you are and where you will be going. Use a map or a guidebook to learn more about the trail before going. Do not bite off more than you can chew. Check the weather report ahead of time and plan accordingly. If rain is predicted, be sure to take rain gear and be aware of thunderstorms. Start your hike earlier in the day so that you have more hours of sunlight to spend time in. If you are going out later, be sure to have a working flashlight/headlamp and extra batteries in case you have to walk in the dark. Know the type of terrain you will be in. Smooth, well-marked trails are easier than rough, unmarked trails. Elevation gain can make the same distance hike more strenuous and time consuming. Don’t forget to take breaks and have lunch! Communication is key. Always let someone know where you are going and what time you plan on coming back. If you are out in the mountains and have signal, it wouldn’t hurt to give someone a call/text letting them know that you just want to check in.

Ready Check: Hiking can be as strenuous as you make it. Make sure you don’t have any underlying conditions that can be effected by elevation or heat. According to the National Park Service, the most common factors in lost/injured hikers in Utah were insufficient information, errors in judgement, insufficient equipment and physical conditioning. Get in shape before you head out on your hike. Try walking around your neighborhood with your pack loaded with 5 pounds more gear than you’ll need on your hike. If that goes well, plan a short hike to test your abilities on the trail. Check out www.alltrails.com/us/utah for more info on trails (difficulty, trail map, miles, comments from people who have hiked, etc.)
Safety Check
Check the weather and trail conditions the morning before you go out. Look over your pack and make sure you have everything you need. Tell someone where you are going and you’ll be back. Utah’s mountains are a beautiful place to spend hiking and exploring. Remember these tips next time you go out and make sure to have a great time.

References:
Air pollution is a big environmental problem. Reducing air pollution can lower the burden of disease, especially for individuals more susceptible to its effects. Everyone is affected by air pollution but people with lung or heart issues, young children and older adults are more sensitive to it.

Which air pollutant is most harmful?
Particulate Matter (PM), ozone, nitrogen dioxide, and sulfur dioxide are each harmful pollutants but particulate matter affects people more than any other pollutant. Smaller particles, such as PM 2.5 are the most dangerous. PM 2.5 can get deep into the lungs and remain embedded for long periods.

What can we do to reduce air pollution while traveling?
- Reduce or combine trips
- Carpool
- No idling in our
- Use public transportation
- Maintain our vehicles (oil change, smog check, etc.)
- Purchase fuel efficient cars
- Travel Wise trip analysis

Inversion in Utah
Inversion occurs strongest in the winter months, especially December through February. It happens when normal conditions become inverted. Cool air and pollutants become trapped under warm air.

What is Particulate Matter?
Particulate matter is a mixture of inorganic and organic solids and liquids. PM is composed of sulfate, nitrates, ammonia, sodium chloride, black carbon, mineral dust and water. Particulates with the greatest health risks to us are those that are 10 microns or less, i.e. PM 2.5 and PM10.

When inversion occurs, these sources affect the air quality:
Vehicles: 57%
Area Sources: 32%
Industry Point Sources: 11%
*Area sources emit less than 10 tons per year of a single air toxic, or less than 25 tons per year of a combination of air toxics. Homes and small businesses are examples of area sources. (Area sources are a concern in densely populated regions.)

Know before you go:
The Utah Department of Environmental Quality publishes current air quality conditions—including PM 2.5 and Ozone levels—and updates these conditions hourly. Much like temperature, air quality can vary throughout the day.
Travel Wise: Rethink Your Trip
West Jordan to Taylorsville

Bike: 0lbs CO2 – 5.0 mi, 266 calories – 28 min
Walk: 0lbs CO2 – 4.0 mi, 629 calories—1 hr 23 min
UTA: 2lbs CO2 –4.0 mi, 19 min
Car: 3lb CO2 -- $2.26, 4.0 mi – 9 min

References

Fact Sheet: The Importance of Hydration

If you are feeling thirsty, then you are already dehydrated. Staying hydrated has many benefits including improved cognitive function, increased physical performance, thermoregulation, digestion and optimal function of the organs such as the kidneys and heart.

Myth: We all might think that we are forever dehydrated because we did not drink our 8 cups of water per day. This is a common, outdated misconception that was made back in 1945 by the Food and Nutrition board. They stated that a person should consume 1mL of water per calorie consumed. Since the average daily calories consumed was 1,900 calories, that would mean 1,900 mL which equates to roughly 64 ounces.

Fact: The reality is that most people actually consume plenty of water each day, just not in the form of pure water. When considering total water intake, all forms of common beverages – such as water, coffee, tea, soda and juice – help keep us very well-hydrated. Also, the moisture content in the foods we consume contributes significantly to our daily total water intake.

Recommendations for total water intake: male figure, 3.7 liters 125 ounces, female figure, 2.7 liters, 91 ounces.

Sources of water: images of fruits, vegetables, coffee, water cup, and meat

Recognize the signs of dehydration: Water plays a large part in your normal functions, such as lubricating your joints and eyes, keeping your cardiovascular system working smoothly, and facilitating proper digestion. The brain is made up of %75 water so when you are dehydrated, it has a dramatic impact on brain function. Once the water in your body is reduced, it needs to be replaced because an imbalance between the salts and sugar in your body can affect the way you will perform.

Urine Test: Urine color is a simple way to see your hydration. Remember though that pigments and other compounds in foods and medications may change the color of your urine. Check with your provider to find more info if your urine is an odd color. Brown color is dangerously dehydrated (water immediately). Tan color is seriously dehydrated (drink water now to feel better). Yellow color is moderately dehydrated (sip water throughout the day). Light yellow color is properly hydrated (keep staying hydrated). Clear color is hydrated (drink a little less water. Experiment to find the amount of water that feels comfortable to you).

Good reminder to drink water is to take a sip of water every 20 minutes or set a reminder on your calendar/smartphone/FitBit.

References: