



Physical Fitness for Healthy Aging

EMPOWERING CAREGIVERS

September 2009

It is difficult for many of us to find the motivation to exercise, there are many reasons we can come up with to avoid it! For seniors, the need for exercise is increased since the risk of lost mobility and disease is greater. The great news is that the positive benefits of exercise are realized more quickly for seniors. The toughest part is just getting started. Too often, the recommendations for the amount of exercise one *should* be doing are daunting at best. Now, research shows that any amount of exercise is better than none at all - just get started.

Here are some suggestions:

Work exercise into your daily routine – park a little further away when you go to the store (if able), do upper body movements if you are unable to stand for long periods of time, even household chores can count as exercise

Use the buddy system. Arrange to have a friend meet you – it's harder to say no to exercise if you are meeting a friend

Walk, swim, bicycle, dance, fish, whatever you enjoy

Join a walking group or visit your local Y, recreation center, park, church or senior center (see resources page for ideas)

Find an activity you like and stick with it.

Most importantly – have fun with it and be gentle on yourself.

Resource: www.healthvaging.net



This newsletters is to help caregivers who are caring for loved ones who are participating in the

Family Caregiver Support Program. This newsletter will be sent monthly, to cover a variety of health and care giving topics. If you have any suggestions for topics, comments or questions about the newsletter please email us at caremanagement@ursulineseniors.org.

SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL HEALTHY AGING MONTH

Most of us are familiar with advice about how to maintain our health: eat right, exercise, get enough sleep, reduce stress, etc. This advice applies to all of us, no matter our age! In the spirit of National Healthy Aging Month we are going to focus a little on each health topic and provide some information specific to older adults. Our hope is that you learn something new in all of this to maintain your health for many years to come.

Information About the Flu (Including the new H1N1 virus) for People with Certain Medical Conditions

As this year's flu season approaches, discussion of the new virus "2009 H1N1" has increased. Many people are concerned about how this virus will affect them and their families. People with certain health conditions may have some complications from the flu in general and also from the H1N1 virus. Flu-like symptoms (including H1N1) include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have also reported nausea and vomiting. The CDC recommends yearly flu vaccination and the current flu vaccination is the seasonal flu vaccine. The vaccine for the H1N1 virus is still in production at the time of this writing and will be available as an option for people at risk for developing serious complications from the virus.

Common-sense precautions include covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze and proper hand washing technique. When washing your hands, be sure to rub your hands together for the length of time it would take you to say the entire alphabet twice. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also very effective if you can't get to a sink.

If you do become sick – talk to your doctor about options for you. Anti-viral medications are most effective when used as soon as possible after symptoms begin and can be of great benefit to those with other health conditions that place them at higher risk for complications. If you do have flu symptoms, the CDC recommends that you stay at home at least 24 hours AFTER your fever is gone (your fever should be gone WITHOUT using fever-reducing medications). A fever is defined as 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius. This recommendation should be followed even if you are taking an anti-viral medication. If you are taking medications for a health condition, continue to take your medications as prescribed unless your doctor advises otherwise.

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Free Flu Shots* for the Homebound Seniors In Allegheny & Surrounding Counties

The Flu Shot Hotline is open from October 1–December 1

To qualify for the flu shot, you must be 60 years old, homebound and meet some simple health criteria.

Call the Flu Shot Hotline at Ursuline Senior Services (412) 683-0400, ext. 264 and leave a message. We will return your call to complete your referral and provide additional information.

This program is made possible by a grant from Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, in cooperation with Ursuline Senior Services.

*Remember—the seasonal flu shot does not protect you from the H1N1 flu strain.

Useful Items to Have on Hand During Flu Season Two Week Supply List

- ◆ Over the counter medications
- ◆ Alcohol-based hand cleaners
- ◆ Tissues
- ◆ Prescription medications that are taken regularly
- ◆ Canned soups, hydration fluids, etc.
- ◆ Facemasks (for use by the ill person—if able—when around other people)

Resource: Center for Disease Control



Gratitude

Mental wellness is an important part of healthy aging and with so much going on in our world today it can be difficult to feel thankful at times. Yet "practicing thankfulness is one of the most powerful ways of thinking to bring about a change in our circumstances," says Mary J. Lore, author of the award-winning book Managing Thought: How Do Your Thoughts Rule Your World?

Founder and President of Managing Thought (www.managingthought.com), Lore conducts workshops across North America to help individuals and organizations develop self-awareness and change how they think to attain long-lasting success.

"During difficult times, we may find ourselves struggling with thoughts of fear, self-doubt, anger, frustration, anxiety, depression, and despair. These kinds of thoughts do not inspire you nor do they move you in a direction that serves your purpose – in fact, they make matters worse." Lore theorizes that when we are in a state of

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You Gotta Have Friends

Social Health – An Active Social Life May Reduce Dementia

Researchers at the Harvard School for Public Health (HSPH) found evidence that adults in the United States who have an active social life may have a slower memory decline. The study appears in the June 2008 issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*. Memory loss is a strong factor for dementia, which is estimated to affect 10% of the U.S. population age 65 or older. The study used data gathered from 1998 to 2004 from the Health and Retirement Study of adults in the U.S. age 50 or older. Memory was tested using a list of nouns and then asking participants to recall as many words as possible immediately and then after a 5 minute delay. Social integration was assessed by marital status, family connections, volunteer activities and contact with friends and neighbors. The study showed that participants with the highest social integration had the smallest memory decline over the 6 year study. The findings were independent of socio-economic factors (age, gender, race etc.) and health status. Previous studies have shown a connection between higher social integration and lower mortality rates and with this new information it shows that connection is truly the key to a long, happy and healthy life.

Being a Care Giver can be isolating, it is important to take care of yourself. Maintaining or fostering your social connections is important to your well-being. Sometimes it can be difficult to get out to do things with friends and family or to even get to a support group. There are many options available to help you, from respite care to on-line support groups – feel free to discuss any concerns with your care manager.

With so much dieting advice out there and so many various dietary needs, we chose to focus this month on one healthy (and budget-friendly) food. The bean!

Beans are considered by some to be an almost perfect food. Beans are one of the most nutritionally complete foods available. In fact, no other food comes close to beans in providing protein, iron, magnesium, zinc, potassium and soluble fiber together in high amounts. There are so many varieties out there, you are sure to find a favorite.

RECIPES

Red, White and Bean Minestrone

INGREDIENTS :

2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
 2 tablespoons and 2 teaspoons Italian turkey sausage, in small pieces
 1 tablespoon and 1 teaspoon tomato paste
 2/3 cup chopped onion
 2/3 cup chopped celery
 1 tablespoon and 1 teaspoon minced garlic
 2/3 cup chopped carrots
 3/4 teaspoon dried oregano
 2/3 (16 ounce) can chopped canned tomatoes
 3-1/3 cups chicken stock
 2/3 (15.5 ounce) can Cannellini Beans, with liquid
 1/3 (16 ounce) Red Kidney Beans, drained
 1-1/3 cups zucchini cut into 1/2-inch pieces
 1-1/3 cups baby spinach
 1 cup cooked bowtie pasta
 1 tablespoon and 1 teaspoon pre-packaged pesto
 1 tablespoon and 1 teaspoon fresh grated Parmesan cheese

DIRECTIONS :

Heat olive oil over medium heat in a medium sauté pan. Add sausage; brown well.

Add tomato paste, cook 5 minutes until brown.

Add onions, celery, garlic, carrots and oregano. Cook until garlic is aromatic, approximately 5 minutes.

Pour into a 4-quart slow cooker. Add tomatoes and chicken stock.

Cook on low setting for 6 to 7 hours or until the vegetables are tender.

Stir in beans, zucchini, spinach and cooked pasta. Cook on high setting for 8 minutes or until beans and pasta are warmed through and spinach has wilted.

To Serve: Pour the soup into a bowl. Top with a little pesto and fresh grated parmesan cheese.

Created for BUSH'S(R) Beans by Connie Guttersen, R.D., Ph.D., nutrition instructor at The Culinary Institute of America, mom and author of 'The Sonoma Diet.'



Three Bean Mexican Skillet

This recipe is so incredibly simple but so delicious

1 can (15.5 – 16 oz) black beans (undrained)

1 can (15.5 -16 oz) Chili beans in sauce (undrained)

1 can (15.5 – 16 oz) of Northern white beans or chick peas (your choice – drained)

1 cup of chunky-style salsa

Mix all of the ingredients together and heat. Serve with your favorite cornbread.

Adapted from Betty Crocker Vegetarian Cooking: Easy Meatless Main Dishes Your Family will Love!

Exercise Your Mind

Just as physical activity keeps your body strong, mental activity keeps your mind sharp and agile. One way to do this is by continuing to learn new skills. If you continue to challenge yourself, your brain continues to grow—literally. An active brain continues to produce new nerve connections that allow cells to communicate with one another.

How can you challenge yourself:

- ◆ Learning to play a musical instrument
- ◆ Playing Scrabble or doing crossword puzzles
- ◆ Interacting with others
- ◆ Switching careers or starting a new one
- ◆ Starting a new hobby, such as painting
- ◆ Volunteering
- ◆ Reading

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anxiety or despair our brain “shuts down” making it difficult to remember tasks or learn new skills. This function can create more anxiety as we begin to worry that we are forgetting things! She goes on to say that thankfulness, on the other hand, raises our consciousness and enables us to see possibilities that we could not see and realize a vision for the future. Practicing thankfulness over time can decrease this anxiety and improve our mental health and overall outlook on life.

The “10 Keys” to Healthy Aging

**from the Center for Healthy Aging,
University of Pittsburgh**

- Key 1. Lower Systolic Blood Pressure
- Key 2. Stop Smoking
- Key 3. Participate in Cancer Screenings
- Key 4. Get Immunized Regularly
- Key 5. Regulate Blood Glucose
- Key 6. Lower LDL Cholesterol
- Key 7. Be Physically Active
- Key 8. Prevent Bone Loss & Muscle Weakness
- Key 9. Maintain Social Contact
- Key 10. Combat Depression

Local Events

Take a Wise Walk: Healthy Aging and Walking Program

Monday, October 5, 2009, 11:00am—12:00 pm

Do you want to age healthfully?
Do you enjoy learning new things?
Are you an involved and active 50+ adult?
Then join us for a ten-week walking and health program. Participants receive a complimentary pedometer, walking guide, t-shirt and more! Join us weekly to discover great resources, report your steps and enjoy a healthy-aging program and snack. Sponsor: ACLA, AARP, Center for Healthy Aging, PALS

Contact: 412-422-9650

Location: Squirrel Hill



**4749 Baum Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15213**

Phone: 412-683-0400
Toll Free: 888-881-4749
TDD: 412-683-1023