

# LIVING WELL

W I T H C H R O N I C C O N D I T I O N S

VOL I ISSUE IV September 2001

A Newsletter brought to you by Health New England

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*Living Well with Chronic Conditions* is a quarterly newsletter published and distributed by Health New England (HNE). It is also available on line at the HNE website, [www.healthnewengland.com](http://www.healthnewengland.com). Direct questions to HNE at 800-842-4464 or 413-787-4000, ext. 3553.

## LIVING WELL PROGRAM BEGINS THIS FALL

**Learn ways to help relieve symptoms through self-management and take control over chronic illness!**

*Are you living with a chronic illness?*

*Do you want to learn valuable self-management skills that can help you to be in control?*

Health New England will be offering the Living Well Program. The

purpose of this program is to help you to improve your self-management skills so that you will feel more confident in your ability to manage your health.

The Living Well Program is a six-week program. It meets for 2 1/2 hours, once a week for 6 weeks. The program is free of charge to HNE members who have a chronic condition. You pay only \$35.00 for the class materials: A copy of the book "Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions," and a

Progressive Muscle Relaxation audiocassette tape.

***You will learn how to:***

- Make an action plan
- Set goals and follow through
- Problem solve
- Communicate better with your doctor
- Fight fatigue
- Make daily tasks easier
- Lessen your frustration
- Deal with negative emotions
- Improve your nutrition
- Be more physically active

***Why a program focused on Self-Management?***

Research has shown that self-management is a most effective way to gain control over chronic conditions! This program was developed by Stanford University School of Medicine Patient Education Research Center. It is endorsed by doctors and has been scientifically tested and proven to work.

***To Register and for more information:***

Call Health New England at **(413) 787-4000** or **800-842-4464, ext. 3300.**

The National Institute of Health (NIH) has recently announced new guidelines for Cholesterol Management. Talk to your doctor about whether you are due to have your cholesterol levels checked. Also, discuss what you can do to decrease your risk factors for having high cholesterol.

**Factors that may put you at risk for high cholesterol:**

- Having a low HDL ‘good’ cholesterol
- Cigarette Smoking
- Having High Blood Pressure
- Family history of early heart disease
- Age (men 45 or older; women 55 or older)
- Diet high in trans fatty acids and cholesterol

**Having high cholesterol puts you at risk for:**

- Heart Attack
- Coronary Heart Disease
- Stroke

The NIH primarily recommends that you have a complete Lipoprotein Profile performed after fasting for at least 10 hours before having your blood sample drawn. Fasting means not having anything to eat or drink.\* A complete Lipoprotein Profile includes: Total Cholesterol, HDL ‘good’ cholesterol, LDL ‘bad’ cholesterol, and Triglycerides levels.

*\* If you take medication for diabetes, heart disease or some other illness, ask your doctor for special medication instructions while you are fasting.*

**High cholesterol itself does not cause symptoms, so find out what your cholesterol levels are today!**

**How Do Your Numbers Compare?**

		MY TOTALS
<b>TOTAL CHOLESTEROL</b>		
<200	Desirable	
200-239	Borderline High	
>=240	High	
<b>HDL ‘GOOD’ CHOLESTEROL</b>		
<40	Low NOT Desirable	
>=60	High Desirable	
<b>LDL ‘BAD’ CHOLESTEROL</b>		
<100	Optimal (ideal)	
100-129	Near Optimal	
130-159	Borderline High	
160-189	High	
>=190	Very High	
<b>TRIGLYCERIDES</b>		
<150	Normal	
150-199	Borderline High	
200-499	High	
>=500	Very High	

*Making changes in your diet and life style habits is the cornerstone to improving your cholesterol results!*

**Here’s How You Can Take Control of Cholesterol**

- Eat Healthy – everything in moderation
- Add fiber to your diet
- Choose foods low in saturated fats & low in trans fatty acids
- Read Food Labels!
- Quit smoking
- Exercise on a regular basis
- Lose weight if your are overweight
- Get treatment if you already have heart disease

**Cholesterol Lowering Medication**

There are many cholesterol lowering drugs available. Talk to your doctor about what medication is best for you. Always take medication as prescribed.

NATIONAL DEPRESSION SCREENING DAY  
OCTOBER 11, 2001

FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL  
DEPRESSION SCREENING

is available year round through  
Screening for Mental Health, Inc.  
For more information, call Screening for  
Mental Health at 800-573-4433.

You can also arrange for an evaluation  
through your primary care doctor or obtain  
a referral directly from Health New England  
by calling the mental health line at  
(413) 787-4000 ext. 5020.

Web sites that offer depression screening tests:

[www.depressiontest.com](http://www.depressiontest.com)  
[www.mentalhealthscreening.org](http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org)  
[www.depression-screening.org](http://www.depression-screening.org)  
[www.copewithlife.com](http://www.copewithlife.com)

Is today a **BAD AIR DAY**?

How is the **GROUND-LEVEL OZONE**  
pollution today?

To get these answers, call the  
**AIR QUALITY HOTLINE**  
at  
**1-800-882-1497**

*Sponsored by the Massachusetts Department  
of Environmental Protection  
and the American Lung Association*

For more information log on to :  
[www.state.ma.us/dep](http://www.state.ma.us/dep)

DEPRESSION SCREENING TEST

Please answer yes or no to the questions below.

- |  | YES   | NO    |
|--|-------|-------|
| 1. I feel sad most of the time.                                    | _____ | _____ |
| 2. I have trouble doing or<br>enjoying the things<br>I used to do. | _____ | _____ |
| 3. I sleep too little or too much.                                 | _____ | _____ |
| 4. I notice I am losing weight<br>and/or my appetite.              | _____ | _____ |
| 5. I can't make decisions.   | _____ | _____ |
| 6. I feel hopeless and/or<br>worthless.                            | _____ | _____ |
| 7. I get tired for no reason.                                      | _____ | _____ |
| 8. I think about killing myself.                                   | _____ | _____ |

If you answered yes to 5 or more of these  
questions, and you have felt this way everyday  
for several weeks, you may be suffering from  
clinical depression and should consult a health  
care professional.

If you answered **yes** to **question 8**, seek help  
immediately, regardless of your answer to any  
of the other questions.

*This test was developed by the National Depression  
Screening Day Executive Director, Douglas G. Jacobs,  
M.D. It is not designed to provide an actual diagnosis  
of depression. For that, you will need a com-  
plete evaluation by your doctor.*

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO PREVENT DIABETES COMPLICATIONS

- How many times a day do you check your blood glucose?
- Have you had your glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c) checked?
- When was your last dilated retinal eye exam?
- Does heart disease run in your family?
- How many times a week do you perform physical activity/exercise?
- Do you smoke?
- Have you been told that you have any of the following problems due to diabetes:
  - Eye problems
  - Nerve problems
  - Kidney problems

People with diabetes have more and/or develop earlier heart disease, kidney disease, eye problems, and nerve damage than people without diabetes. Smoking tobacco causes more and earlier problems with circulation and the heart.

Keeping your glucose level under control day after day and year after year can help prevent diabetes complications.

## WHAT ARE DIABETES COMPLICATIONS?

*Diseases that occur from years of having high blood glucose levels:*

- Heart Disease: you are more likely to develop heart disease and get it earlier in life. High blood pressure often occurs with heart disease.
- Eye Disease (retinopathy): diabetes can damage the retina of the eye, which can lead to blindness. You are also more likely to develop cataracts and glaucoma.
- Kidney Disease (nephropathy): high blood glucose and excess protein can cause a narrowing in the kidney's filtering system.

Over many years, this can cause kidney failure. High blood pressure often occurs with kidney disease.

- Nerve Disease (neuropathy): high blood glucose can cause damage to nerves in several areas – legs, feet, stomach, and sexual organs.

## CAN I PREVENT DIABETES COMPLICATIONS?

*Yes! Follow these suggestions:*

- Keep your blood glucose on your target range to help prevent complications.
- Check your blood glucose at different times each day to find out how it changes.
- Take medication as prescribed by your doctor – insulin and/or diabetes pills.
- See your doctor regularly and ask what tests you should have done.
- Have a dilated retinal eye exam yearly.
- Get your glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c) level checked every 3-4 months. This shows your overall blood glucose control. Discuss the results and trends with your doctor.
- Have your blood pressure checked each time you visit your doctor.
- Have your blood cholesterol (Lipoprotein Profile) checked at least once a year. Take cholesterol-lowering medication as prescribed.
- Have your urine checked for protein at least once a year.
- Keep active! Exercise at least 3 times a week.

## WHAT SHOULD I EAT?

*Use your meal plan to help you keep your blood glucose in your target range and maintain a healthy weight.*

- Eat less fat by choosing lean meats, fish, and skinless poultry.
- Choose foods that are baked, poached, grilled, or steamed, instead of fried.
- Use low-fat milk and yogurt, and fat-free or

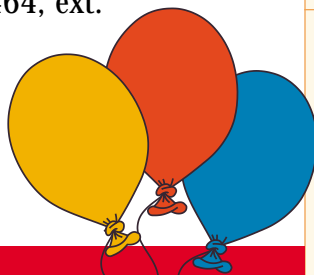
- reduced-calorie margarine, spreads, and dressings.
- Eat plenty of grains and cereals, fruits, and vegetables.
- Eat less protein by using 2 to 3 oz. portions of meat, poultry, fish, and cheese (3 oz. is about the size of a deck of cards).
- Have meatless meals a couple of times a week. Eating less protein (animal protein) can put less stress on the kidneys.
- Decrease salt intake by seasoning foods with herbs and spices instead of salt.
- Use fresh, frozen, or no-salt-added canned vegetables.

### WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

Maintain a healthy lifestyle and educate yourself about diabetes. Managing your diabetes will take time, effort, and courage. Set goals for your self and make one healthy change at a time. By taking control of your diabetes, you can improve the quality of your life. By working with your health care team and educating yourself about your diabetes, you can take charge of your health – not only for today, but also for the years ahead.

You can live a long, healthy life and prevent complications by taking control of your diabetes!

For a complete listing of classes and local support groups, or for more information about Health New England's Diabetes Management Program, call 787-4000 or (800) 842-4464, ext. 3381 or visit our website at [www.healthnewengland.com](http://www.healthnewengland.com) (Health Management Section).



*Mark Your Calendar!*

**HNE DIABETES CARE DAY**  
**Saturday, November 3, 2001**

*See page 8 for details!*

## AUTUMN ASTHMA TRIGGERS

As autumn approaches, outdoor asthma triggers rise. And as we begin to spend more time indoors we find that there are triggers lurking there as well. Review the chart below to find out how you can take control of both indoor and outdoor asthma triggers. If your symptoms get worse, visit your doctor for an asthma tune-up.

*Take your Asthma medications as prescribed by your doctor. Never stop just because you feel better! The medication is what makes you feel better. So, keep up the good work!*

### OUTDOOR TRIGGERS

**COLD WEATHER & SUDDEN DROPS IN TEMPERATURE**

**RAGWEED POLLEN**

**MOLD FROM DECAYING LEAVES**

**WOOD BURNING STOVES & FIREPLACES**

### INDOOR TRIGGERS

**DUST**

**PET DANDER**

**COLDS, FLU & RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS**

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

Cover nose & mouth with a scarf, and dress warmly.

Close windows during early morning hours when levels are highest.

Do NOT play in leaves or stir them up.

Close windows in the evenings when most people use these.



Dust with a dampened cloth. Use dust proof covers on mattress & pillows.

Do NOT allow pets in bedrooms. Keep pet hair well groomed and short.

Get proper nutrition. It is vital in fighting infections. Stay away from people with colds.

# WHIZ KIDZ

F O R S P E C I A L K I D S A G E S 5 - 1 3

## BREATH GAMES FOR CHILDREN WITH ASTHMA

*Seventh Annual Breath Games*

**Sunday, October 14, 2001**

**from 10:30am to 2:30pm**

**Springfield College outdoor athletic track  
on Alden Street in Springfield**

*Breath Games* is an athletic event for children with asthma, ages 5 to 13. Children participate in as few or as many events as they choose. It is not competitive as they compete against their own times.

## EVENTS

High jump

50 yard dash

100 yard dash

Obstacle course

Water balloon toss

Football throw and kick

Softball throw and hit

And much more! 15 events in all!

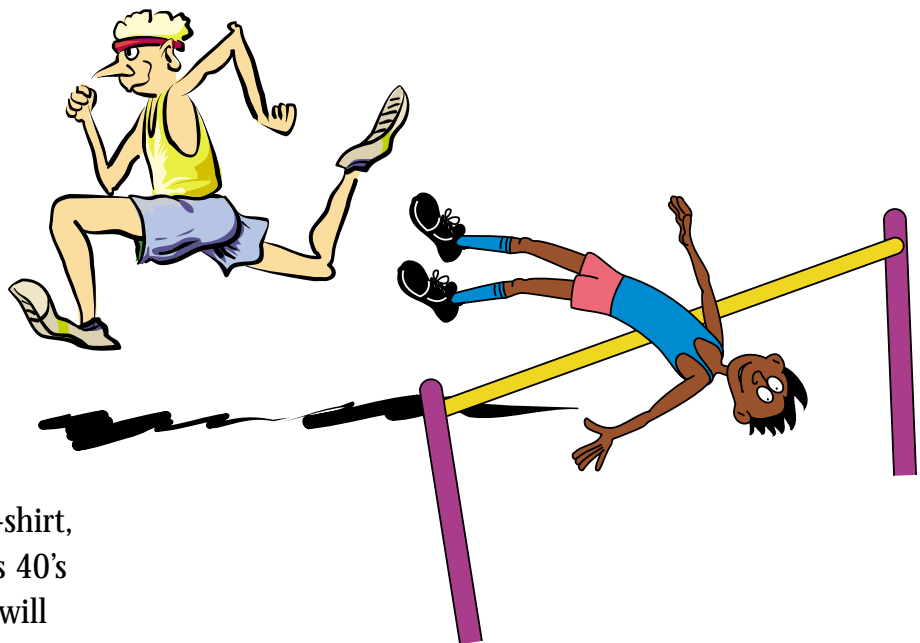
Participants receive a *Breath Games* T-shirt, a certificate and medal. News 40's Ray Hershel and Beth Ward will present the awards.

Asthma Education sessions will be held throughout the day by Dr. Paul Salva, pediatric pulmonologist and asthma expert.

The *Breath Games* are hosted by the American Lung Association (ALA) of Western Massachusetts and by Springfield College, and sponsored by Merck Pharmaceuticals and Health New England.

## REGISTRATION

Registration for *Breath Games* is \$5.00 and will be waived for families in need. Please call the American Lung Association (413) 737-3506 or 1-800-LUNG-USA to register or for more information.



# THE ACE & FURLIS ASTHMA WORD PUZZLE



ANSWERS PRINTED ON PAGE 8 - NO PEEKING!

CIRCLE AS MANY WORDS AS YOU CAN FROM THE LIST BELOW.  
WORDS CAN BE FOUND UP AND DOWN OR ACROSS (SEE EXAMPLE)

AIR  
ASTHMA  
~~BREATHE~~  
COUGH  
DOCTOR  
DUST

FEELINGS  
GRASS  
INHALER  
LUNGS  
MEDICINE  
MOLD

RELAX  
SIGNS  
TRIGGERS  
WHEEZING  
WINDPIPE



*Mark Your Calendar!*

## HNE DIABETES CARE DAY

### Saturday, November 3, 2001

#### FREE HEALTH SCREENINGS ALL UNDER ONE ROOF!

- Cholesterol
- Blood Glucose
- Foot Exam
- Blood Pressure
- Depression Screen
- Body Composition Analysis, and more!



We'll send the results of some screenings to your primary care doctor.

#### FREE STUFF

- Free educational information!
- Receive a free glucometer and learn how to use it!
- The first 100 people to arrive will receive a free gift!

#### RAFFLE

Complete certain health screenings and you will be entered into a raffle to win great prizes including:

- Cash
- Travel Gift Certificate
- Weekend Get-a-Way
- Symphony Hall Tickets
- Stage West Tickets
- Tanglewood Tickets, and many more!

#### EXPERT GUEST SPEAKERS

*Registered Dietician Nancy Dell* of TV channel 22 Food For Thought will talk about diabetes nutrition management. And, you will be able to speak personally with Nancy Dell throughout the day and get answers to your nutrition management questions.

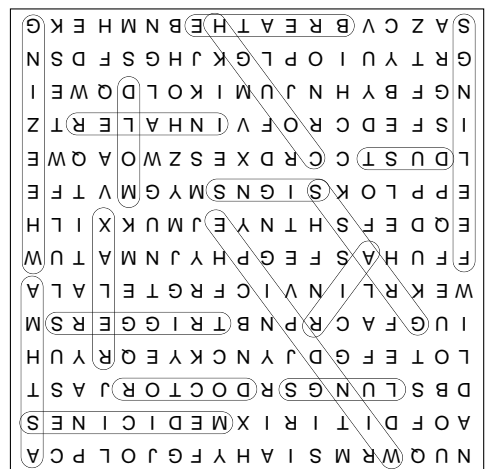
*Dr. Stuart L. Chipkin, Endocrinologist* and diabetes expert will help take the mystery out of diabetes self-management. Learn about the importance of keeping your diabetes in control, and what you can do to prevent diabetes complications.

*Cardiovascular specialist Dr. Reed Snider* is Director of the Change of Heart Program at Baystate Health System. Dr. Snider will share the innovative lifestyle changes approach used in the program, changes that can help you reduce stress and reduce your risk for heart disease.

*Psychiatric specialist Dr. Jay M. Pomerantz* will talk about how to beat the blues and manage depression symptoms. Dr. Pomerantz will be onsite all day and can perform a private depression screening with you.

Diabetes Care Day is an all day event open to HNE members who have been diagnosed with diabetes. Health Screenings will be performed on HNE members only. Invitations will be sent out closer to the date.

To register now or for more information, call HNE at 800-842-4464, ext. 3300.



## ADULT ASTHMA EDUCATION CLASSES

Learn how to control and avoid asthma triggers, recognize asthma symptoms, measure peak flow and much more. This class is **FREE** to Health New England members who have been diagnosed with asthma. You may bring a guest.

Space is limited. To register, call Health New England at 413-787-4000 or 800-842-4464 ext. 3553.

**Adult Asthma  
Education Class**  
*(Wednesdays - 6:30-8:30 pm)*  
**September 12, 2001**  
Call for future class dates

## DIABETES EDUCATION CLASSES

### INDIVIDUAL DIABETES EDUCATION

If you have been diagnosed with diabetes, you can meet individually with a diabetes educator and/or a diabetes nutrition specialist. To obtain a referral, call Health New England at 413-787-4000 or 800-842-4464 ext. 3381.

### GROUP DIABETES EDUCATION

This class is **FREE** to Health New England members who have been diagnosed with diabetes, and their guest. Both insulin using and non-insulin using persons with diabetes may attend. To register for a class, call 413-787-4000 or 800-842-4464 ext. 3381

**Diabetes Education**  
*(Thursdays - 6:30-8:30 pm)*  
**September 20, 2001**  
**October 18, 2001**

**Diabetes Nutrition &  
Meal Planning Workshop**  
*(Tuesdays - 6:30-8:30 pm)*  
**September 18, 2001**  
**October 16, 2001**

## SMOKING CESSATION PROGRAM

HNE will pay up to \$50.00 for you to attend a smoking cessation program. This offer is for HNE members with asthma, diabetes, and/or who are pregnant. To activate this benefit, and to obtain information about programs available near you, call HNE at 413-787-4000 or 800-842-4464, ext. 3391.



## CARDIAC REHAB PROGRAMS

**CARDIAC REHAB PATIENTS:  
PHASES II AND III CLASSES:**  
*(Monday-Friday)*

HNE members receive a 10% discount

### Phase II

**Time: 9:00 am, 11:00 am  
and 2:00 pm**

### Phase III

**Time: 7:00 - 10:00 am  
11:00 am - Noon  
2:00 - 6:30 pm**

**TO REGISTER CALL  
413-794-7024**

### MINDFUL WELLNESS:

HNE members receive a 10% discount  
A six week Stress Management program.

**TO REGISTER CALL  
413-794-7024**

### MASSAGE THERAPY: *(Fridays 10am-1pm)*

15-minute chair massage.  
Cost \$15.00

**TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT  
CALL 413-794-7024**

**MONTHLY CARDIAC  
LECTURE SERIES:**

FREE ADMISSION

Various topics and guest speakers

FOR INFORMATION CALL

413-794-7026

**LIPID MANAGEMENT**Program designed to maximize cholesterol control. *Physician**Referral required.*

TO REGISTER CALL

413-794-7253

**CHOLESTEROL SCREENING***(2nd, 3rd & 4th Wednesday  
of each month)**A 12-hour fast is required prior  
to screening.*

Time: 7:30 - 10:30 am

Cost: \$5.00

TO REGISTER CALL  
THE PROFESSIONALS  
AT 413-794-2295**TAI CHI***(Mondays & Fridays)*

HNE members receive a 10% discount

Time: 1:00 - 2:00 pm

Cost: \$3.00 per class

TO REGISTER CALL  
413-794-7024**PULMONARY REHAB  
PROGRAMS****PULMONARY REHAB PHASE II**

Provides individualized education and support. Requires prior approval by HNE and a referral.

FOR INFORMATION CALL

HNE AT 413-787-4000

**PULMONARY REHAB PHASE III**

Exercise maintenance program

HNE members receive a 10% discount

FOR INFORMATION AND

TO REGISTER CALL

413-794-7026

**BETTER BREATHERS****SUPPORT GROUP**

FREE ADMISSION

Starting in September 2001!

FOR INFORMATION CALL

413-794-7026

**FREEDOM FROM SMOKING**

A six-session program that will guide you through the process of quitting \$50.00 (HNE will reimburse for HNE members meeting certain criteria – see “Smoking Cessation Program” on page 9.)

TO REGISTER CALL  
THE PROFESSIONALS  
AT 413-794-2255**MONTHLY PULMONARY  
LECTURE SERIES:**

FREE ADMISSION

Various topics and guest speakers

FOR INFORMATION CALL

413-794-7026

**GREAT AMERICAN  
SMOKEOUT!***Thursday, November 15, 2001*

The American Cancer Society has sponsored the Great American Smokeout for the past 25 years. It is an annual, nationally recognized day when smokers are asked to put down their cigarettes, cigars, spit tobacco, and all other tobacco products. Smoking has been known to cause cancer. Smoking also causes complications in asthma, diabetes, and heart disease.

*On Thursday November 15th put down all your tobacco products.* Prove that you can live a day without cigarettes. And if you don't smoke, help a family member, friend, or co-worker to quit for the day. It's the first step to being tobacco free!

Health New England will reimburse the expense of a smoking cessation program for HNE members who have diabetes, asthma, and/or who are pregnant. (See “Smoking Cessation Program” on page 9.)

Do you have a *Living Well With Chronic Conditions Success Story* that you are willing to share? If you do, this is your opportunity. Your story may help others who are trying to manage chronic conditions and inspire them to take control!

*Living with diabetes?* Tell us how you balance your diet, exercise and medication to keep your blood sugar levels in the proper range.

*Controlling high blood pressure?* Tell us what behaviors you have changed to lower your blood pressure.

*Coping with asthma?* Tell us how you control asthma triggers and manage your symptoms.

*You get the idea!*

***You may include in your Success Story:***

- How you learned to cope with your condition(s).
- What made you decide to take control.
- What you did that worked well for you.
- Whether there is a family member, friend or healthcare provider who helped you make a positive change.
- Whether there is someone who supported you and motivated you to stay in control, and as a result, how your quality of life improved.

**SUCCESS STORY CONTEST DETAILS**

***When you share your story with us you will receive a gift and be entered into a raffle for several great prizes!*** Write your *Living Well With Chronic Conditions Success Story* and submit it along with the enclosed *Release and Consent*, on page 6 by November 15, 2001. Your story may be published in this newsletter or in other Health New England publications.

***Winners will be announced in the March 2002 issue of Living Well with Chronic Conditions.*** Success Stories will be published throughout the year. All entries may be published, not only the winning entries.

**RAFFLE PRIZES**

- **1st Place:** Two-Night Weekend Get-a-Way at the Red Lion Inn in the Berkshires for you and a guest including breakfast and dinner!
- **2nd Place:** Tanglewood Tickets or Symphony Hall Tickets for you and a guest to a show of your choice during the year 2002!
- **3rd Place:** \$50.00 Gift Certificate to a Pharmacy or Drug Store of your choice - use this to pay prescription drug copays, or for whatever you choose!

**MAIL YOUR SUCCESS STORY TO:**

**Health Promotions Dept., Health New England  
One Monarch Place, Suite 1500  
Springfield, MA 01144-1500**

**SUCCESS STORY CONTEST RULES:**

- 200 words or less, typed, double spaced (or *neatly* hand written)
- Include your name, address and daytime telephone number (anonymous entries will not be accepted)
- Read, sign, date and return the *Release and Consent*, on page 6 with your story (entries will not be accepted without a signed *Release and Consent*)
- If you do not want your name to appear in print with your story, indicate this on the *Release and Consent*
- You must be a current Health New England member
- You must be at least eighteen years of age
- Deadline: entries must be received by November 15, 2001
- All entries become the property of Health New England
- Winners will be notified by telephone, and gifts and raffle prizes will be sent by mail
- Raffle prizes do not have cash value

## RELEASE AND CONSENT

## Living Well With Chronic Conditions Success Story

In consideration for a gift provided to me by Health New England, Inc. (HNE), and other good and valuable consideration, I agree to allow HNE and anyone acting with HNE's authority or permission, the absolute right to use my *Living Well With Chronic Conditions Success Story*. I understand that such use includes, but is not limited to: use, publication or republication in HNE's newsletters, advertisements, brochures, billboards or other advertising or promotional materials. I further understand that my *Living Well With Chronic Conditions Success Story* may be edited by HNE as HNE, in its discretion, deems appropriate, and I waive any right that I may have to inspect or approve the finished product or products and the advertising copy or other matter that may be used in connection with such products.

This Release and Consent is unrestricted except for any exceptions or limitations noted below.

Please check one of the following:

- I agree** to allow HNE to use my name, my photograph (or any other form of my representation or likeness) for such purposes, and in such manner, as HNE may, in its discretion, consider desirable or appropriate.
- I do not agree** to allow HNE to use my name or photograph (or any other form of my representation or likeness) in its newsletters, advertisements, brochures, billboards or other advertising or promotional material.

I release, discharge and agree to hold harmless HNE and all persons acting with HNE's authority or permission from any liability resulting from any blurring, distortion, alteration, optical illusion, or use in composite form, whether intentional or otherwise, that may occur or be produced in the taking, processing, or publication of said picture, including without limitation any claims for libel or invasion of privacy.

I warrant that I am at least eighteen years of age and have the right to contract in my own name. I have read the above release and consent prior to signing, and I am fully familiar with its contents. This release shall be binding upon me and my heirs, legal representatives, and assigns.

---

HNE Member (print name)

---

HNE Member (signature)

---

Date

