

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 V December 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. Direct questions to HNE at 800-842-4464 or 413-787-4000, ext. 3553.

BEATING THE HOLIDAY BLUES *by Jay Pomerantz, MD*

Every year I note how busy my psychiatric practice gets in late fall and early winter. Former patients return for visits, current patients seem more upset and new referrals peak. This is not just my experience but that of most mental health professionals. Some of the seasonality may have to do with the approach of winter, diminishing daylight and Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). Most of it, however, seems related to the holiday season and the end of the year.

One might ask why holidays are associated with stress. Especially when holiday time is when there are many gatherings of family and friends. For starters, not everyone enjoys such occasions. Some people have few family and friends, or are alienated from

them. Others have difficult relationships with their families or live at a great distance from them. Even a successful gathering ends and one has to leave, a psychological loss.

There is also the problem of remembering the departed, family members and friends who have died or are currently very sick.

Another whole set of reasons for "holiday blues" is that it comes at the end of the year. Everyone takes stock of what they have accomplished and how things have gone over the past

year. If the year has not been a good one, the natural "accounting" at the end of the year is very unpleasant. In part, this process accounts for why people soothe themselves by making New Year's resolutions, with the idea that although they have failed this year they will do better next year.

(continued on page 2)



BEATING THE HOLIDAY BLUES *(continued from cover)*

One final thought about holiday-related depressive states: the whole business of buying presents for everyone and celebrating gets out of hand for many people. Many folks spend so much energy and money at holiday time that they feel depleted in the end. Spouses may argue about the cost; presents received seem less than what one expects or has given; one drinks and goes to so many parties that exhaustion sets in at the end of the process. It is as if, for some, holidays are full of emptiness and loss, whereas for others, holidays are just too much. Moderation may be helpful for both sets of potential sufferers.

The time to prevent “holiday blues” is in advance, with careful trimming of expectations and knowing where one stands with family and friends, as well as with oneself, all year round. Some help may also come from successful “self-contracting” done throughout the year—which I describe in another article that I have written in this newsletter entitled “Healthy New Year’s Resolutions”.

Upcoming Events!

Look for more information throughout 2002

DIABETES GROCERY STORE TOURS

Walk through the grocery store with a Registered Dietician and learn how to read food labels, count carbohydrates, determine portion sizes, and more!

A CELEBRATION OF WOMEN

In 2002 Health New England is Celebrating Women! Health Information, Guest Speakers, Expert Panels, Lots of Prizes!

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LIVING WELL PROGRAM

The Living Well Program is an exciting new program!

It is an empowering self-management program offered to Health New

England (HNE) members who live with a chronic health condition. Stanford University Medical Center’s Patient Education Research Department developed the program. HNE’s Health Program Staff have all been trained by Stanford to conduct the program and they are very excited to share it with you.

The program consists of small groups, just 10-12 members, and meets once per week for 6 weeks.

During the six weeks you will learn how to:

- ! Make an action plan
- ! Set goals and follow through
- ! Problem solve
- ! Communicate better with your doctors
- ! Manage fatigue effectively
- ! Make daily tasks easier
- ! Lessen your frustration
- ! Deal with negative emotions
- ! Improve your nutrition
- ! Be more physically active
- ! And much more!

The cost is just \$35.00 to cover the class materials which includes a copy of the book *Living A Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions*, and an audiocassette tape entitled *Time for Healing*.

To Register and for more information: **Call Health New England at (413) 787-4000 or 800-842-4464, ext. 3300.** *(See also Health Management Class Schedules on page 8.)*

BREATHE EASY THIS WINTER!

There are certain weather patterns that are known to cause problems for people with asthma. Winter is one of them. Cold air is a major trigger of asthma. Scientists have studied the effects of breathing cold air. People with asthma were made to inhale cold, dry air in a hospital experiment. They developed wheezing and became short of breath.

When you inhale a blast of cold air, your airways respond by going into bronchospasm. (Bronchospasm is contraction of the airways, which causes them to get narrow.) This is because of the severe temperature difference between the outside air and your airways. Think of what you might feel if you suddenly place your hand into a bucket of freezing cold ice water! Brrr...

People who have exercise-induced asthma should be especially careful about exposure to cold, dry air. Popular outdoor winter sports like hockey, figure skating and skiing require spending a lot of time outdoors. And many runners continue to jog throughout the winter months. Pre-medicate yourself before beginning activities that cause asthma symptoms to worsen. Talk to your doctor about what medication is right for your particular need.

Obviously, you can't change the weather, but you can take steps to avoid exposure to it. Be aware of the pattern of when you experience symptoms. Keep a diary of weather conditions and track asthma flare-ups. Take asthma medication appropriately and visit your doctor for periodic asthma tune-ups.

Take Steps to Avoid Winter Asthma Flare-ups

- WEAR A SCARF OR MASK OVER NOSE AND MOUTH.
- DO NOT DIRECTLY INHALE BLASTS OF COLD AIR.
- EXERCISE INDOORS ON DAYS WHEN THE AIR IS PARTICULARLY COLD, DRY.
- RUN ON AN INDOOR TRACK DURING THE COLDEST WINTER MONTHS.
- PLAY WINTER SPORTS INDOORS – ICE SKATING, HOCKEY.
- USE MEDICATION APPROPRIATELY, AND BEFORE BEGINNING EXERCISE.
- KEEP QUICK-RELIEF RESCUE INHALERS CLOSE BY AND IN A WARM PLACE.
- STAY INDOORS ON ESPECIALLY WINDY WINTER DAYS.



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

by Jay Pomerantz, MD

I would like to suggest some possible New Year's Resolutions regarding health and an action plan. For example, for those of you who still smoke, January 1st is a good time to stop.

Publicity and advertising campaigns are correct about the enormous risk of heart disease, bronchitis, emphysema, asthma, and lung cancer associated with smoking.

Incidentally, it is far easier to stop completely than to slow down. Slowing down is a way of fooling oneself – a justification for doing the wrong thing while trying to maintain self-esteem. For people who drink too much or take illegal drugs, the same logic applies.

Obesity, or being overweight, is another health problem. This condition increases the likelihood of high blood pressure, diabetes, coronary artery disease, stroke, gallbladder disease, arthritis, sleep apnea, and some cancers (e.g. breast, uterus, prostate, and colon).

Obviously, food is a necessary item for all of us, so the new year's resolution must not be to stop eating, but instead to eat properly and exercise routinely.

How to make this year's resolutions stick!

Most of the above is information that everyone already knows. The issue is how to do the right thing. I suggest a method that I call "self-contracting." New Year's Resolutions are actually an example of "self-contracting." What one does is to make a self-promise, not necessarily in writing, that has a contractual format. Like all

contracts (and this is the important thing!), there are penalties involved with not keeping to the terms of the contract. I will provide an example. In order to get myself to mow my lawn regularly (a task I do not like by the time autumn arrives), I contracted with myself that the mowing needed

to be done on Sundays before I could sit in front of the television and guiltlessly watch a football game. The seriousness with which I personally take self-contracting is that one Sunday it started to rain just as I set out to mow, shortly before the 1pm kickoff. I mowed in the rain and remembered the experience. On subsequent weekends, I gave myself more time to mow so as to avoid having to do it in the rain. If one values self-esteem, one will abide

by self-contracts. One cannot fool oneself—there is always a witness! By adopting "self-contracting" and sticking with it, not only will the bad habits come under control, but also self-esteem will rise. Even better than a specific New Year's Resolution, I recommend "self-contracting" for the next year and beyond!

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Wise Health Consumer Month came about in an effort to help healthcare consumers such as yourself to make informed healthcare decisions. It is sponsored by the American Institute for Preventive Medicine. Below you will find information to help you increase your knowledge and ability to make knowledgeable choices about your healthcare.

Renew your commitment to living a healthy life by being a wise health consumer!

KEYS TO BEING A WISE HEALTH CONSUMER

- Know your health insurance benefits, what's covered and what's not. Know the guidelines and rules for obtaining approval for various services that you or your family may need.
- Before trying the latest fad consider if the result is based on hearsay or if it was scientifically tested and proven.
- If it was tested, was there a control group in the study? This gives most studies more value.
- Were the results of the study published in a reputable journal?
- Can you afford it?
- Do the potential benefits outweigh any possible risks?
- Are you willing to go through some discomfort to achieve results?
- Be on the look out for fraudulent claims. If it sounds too good to be true, it may be just that!
- Check with the local Better Business Bureau for information about complaints filed against a company.
- Read and research!
- Ask questions!

KEYS TO GOOD HEALTH

- Visit your health care provider on a regular basis; report changes in your health, improvements and worsening.
- Ask questions about treatments and medications.
- Ask what has been proven to work.
- Eat a nutritionally balanced diet that includes a variety of foods.
- Stay away from foods high in fat, cholesterol and salt/sodium.
- Exercise regularly. Get physically fit and stay fit!
- Lose weight if you are overweight.
- Stop smoking!
- Learn ways to better manage stress.
- Participate in workplace wellness programs.
- Surround yourself with people who are motivated. It rubs off!
- Join a support group.
- Volunteer at a local hospital, nursing home, or clinic.
- Keep a daily journal to provide you with inspiration and feedback as you work towards your healthy living goals.

*Don't be afraid to speak up.
After all, this is your health!*

Good health includes not just physical health but emotional, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. Get connected to people who are supportive and helpful. Help each other to stay motivated and committed to lively a healthy life style.

WHIZ KIDZ

F O R S P E C I A L K I D S

NEW!!!

PEDIATRIC ASTHMA CLASS FOR KIDS

As part of Health New England's pledge to family health, we are pleased to offer asthma education classes for kids. The class will focus on what asthma is and teach kids how to keep it under control. Classes will be interactive and combine learning with fun. The instructor will spend time helping the children talk to each other about how asthma affects them and to share feelings.

While the kids are having fun learning, parents will be learning as well. In an adjacent room, parents will review asthma control, common medications, asthma action plans, and peakflow charting.*

For class dates and times, refer to the Health Management Class Schedules on page 8.

Pediatric Asthma Class for Ages 8-12:
meets for 1 hour, once a week for two weeks.

Pediatric Asthma Class for Ages 13-17:
meets for 1 hour, for one week.



CROSSWORD PUZZLE CLUES

ACROSS

2. When asthma gets worse I feel like I can't get enough ____.
4. Your inhaler works only if you can ____ it.
6. This is bad for your lungs even if you don't have asthma.
7. The way I sometimes feel when I can't breathe.
8. The name of the disease that affects your lungs.
10. Having asthma should not ____ you from having fun and playing.
12. Name of friend of 4 down.

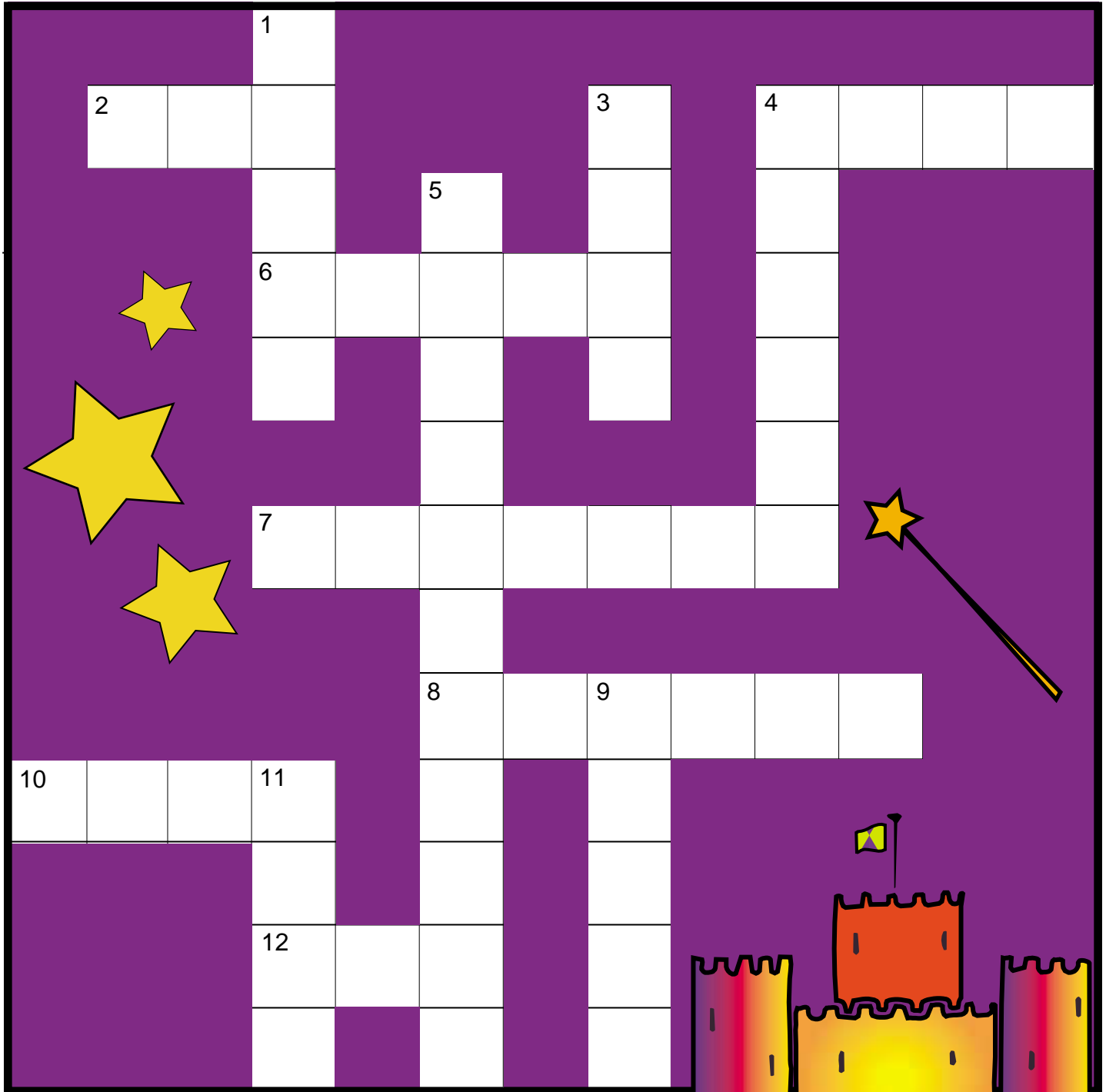
DOWN

1. Some kids (and adults) are allergic to this especially when it's being cut.
3. Knowing how to use your medications properly can help you ____ better faster.
4. The name of the "hairless" cat that is friends with ACE.
5. Bugs that can be an asthma trigger.
9. The way my lungs feel when an asthma attack is coming.
11. Using a ____ flow meter can help predict an asthma attack..

* Children must be accompanied by parent or guardian.
Parent or guardian must be present during all class times.

THE ACE & FURLIS CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ANSWERS PRINTED ON PAGE 10- NO PEEKING!



Be An **A**sthma **C**ontrol **E**xpert!

PEDIATRIC ASTHMA CLASS FOR KIDS

As part of Health New England's pledge to family health, we are pleased to offer asthma education classes for kids. The class will focus on what asthma is and teach kids how to keep it under control. Classes will be interactive and combine learning with fun. The instructor will spend time helping the children talk to each other about how asthma affects them and to share feelings.

While the kids are having fun learning, parents will be learning as well. In an adjacent room, parents will review asthma control, common medications, asthma action plans, and peakflow charting. (Children must be accompanied by parent or guardian. Parent or guardian must be present during all class times.)

TO REGISTER AND FOR CLASS LOCATIONS,
CALL 413-787-4000
OR 800-842-4464 EXT. 3391.

Ages 8-12 Pediatric Asthma Class – meets twice (6:30-7:30pm)

Wednesdays, Jan 9 & 16, 2002

Wednesdays, Feb 6 & 13

Wednesdays, Mar 6 & 13

Tuesdays, Jun 4 & 11

Tuesdays, Sept 10 & 17

Wednesdays, Dec 4 & 11



Ages 13-17 Pediatric Asthma Class – meets once (6:30-8:00pm)

Wednesday, Feb 27, 2002

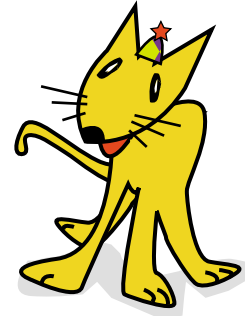
Wednesday, Mar 20

Wednesday, Apr 10

Tuesday, Jun 18

Tuesday, Sept 24

Tuesday, Dec 10



LIVING WELL PROGRAM

The Living Well Program is an empowering six-week program offered to HNE members who have a chronic condition. It meets for 2 1/2 hours, once a week for 6 weeks. The cost for class materials is \$35.00 and includes a copy of the book *Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions*, and an audiocassette tape entitled, *Time for Healing*.

By participating in the Living Well Program you will learn how to: make an action plan, set goals and follow through, problem solve, communicate better with your doctors, manage fatigue, make daily tasks easier, lessen your frustration, deal with negative emotions, improve your nutrition, be more physically active, and more!

TO REGISTER AND FOR CLASS LOCATIONS,
CALL 413-787-4000
OR 800-842-4464 EXT. 3300.

*Meets for six weeks (6:00-8:30pm)**

Tuesdays: Jan 8, 15, 22, 29, Feb 5, 12, 2002

Mondays: Mar 4, 11, 18, 25, Apr 1, 8

Tuesdays: Apr 23, 30, May 7, 14, 21, 28

Thursdays: Sept 12, 19, 26, Oct 3, 10, 17

Mondays: Oct 21, 28, Nov 4, 11, 18, 25

** Daytime and additional evening Living Well Programs may become available as needed.*

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.

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

Adult Asthma Education Class (6:30-8:30 pm)

Wednesday, Mar 27, 2002

Monday, Jun 3

Wednesday, Sept 11

Wednesday, Nov 20

SMOKING CESSATION PROGRAM

HNE will reimburse 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.

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

These classes are **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 (6:30-8:30 pm)

Wednesday, Mar 27, 2002

Wednesday, May 15

Wednesday, Sept 25

Wednesday, Oct 23

Diabetes Nutrition & Meal Planning Workshop (6:30-8:30 pm)

Tuesday, Mar 26, 2002

Tuesday, May 14

Tuesday, Sept 24

Tuesday, Oct 22

PROGRAMS OFFERED BY BAYSTATE MEDICAL CENTER



CARDIAC REHAB PROGRAMS

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

HNE members receive a 10% discount

Phase II

Time: 8 am *(arrive 7:45 am)*

11 am *(arrive 10:45 am)*

2 pm *(arrive 1:45 am)*

Phase III

Time: 7 am - 12 pm

2 pm - 7 pm

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

CHAIR AEROBICS:
Wednesdays 4-5 pm

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

MASSAGE THERAPY:
Every Other Thursday 5-7pm
15-minute chair massage. Cost \$15
**TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT
CALL 413-794-7024**

MINDFUL WELLNESS:
HNE members receive a 10% discount
A six week Stress Management program.
**TO REGISTER CALL
413-794-7024**

**HEART CONNECTIONS
SUPPORT GROUP**

Presentations on various topics related to cardiac issues.

**FOR INFORMATION 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
FOR INFORMATION CALL
413-794-7026**

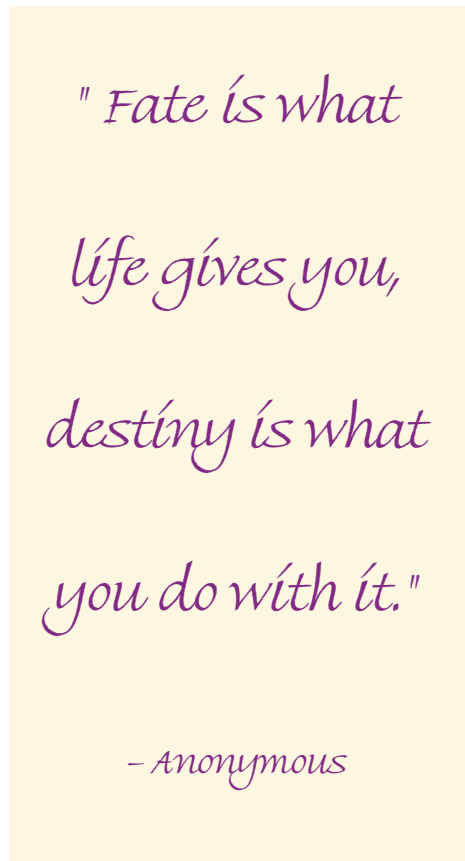
FREEDOM FROM SMOKING

A six-session behavior modification program. Cost \$50.00 (*HNE will reimburse for HNE members meeting certain criteria – see “Smoking Cessation Program” on page 9.*)

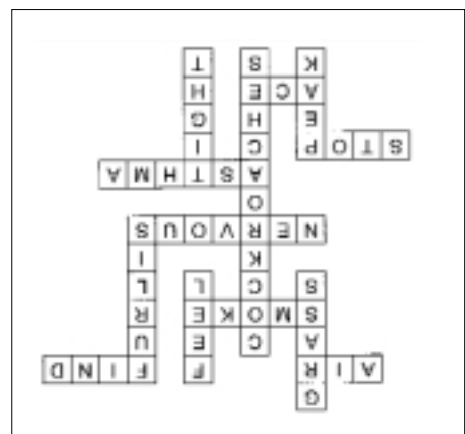
**TO REGISTER CALL
AT 413-794-7026**

**MONTHLY PULMONARY
LECTURE SERIES:**

FREE ADMISSION
Various topics and guest speakers
**FOR INFORMATION CALL
413-794-7026**



ANSWER TO PUZZLE ON PAGE 7.



by Kimberly Slepchuk

Having diabetes can limit our food choices but that does not mean that we can not enjoy the holidays. It is important for us to make the right choices and to budget for the items that may cause blood sugar to rise.

Diabetes is a disease that prevents the body from using the sugars and starches in food for energy. You may have been unaware that diabetes actually prevents our bodies from using food we ingest for energy. "Sugars and starches" are also called simple and complex carbohydrates. Sugar is not the only culprit we need to be aware of; we also need to take a look at the entire carbohydrate food group when determining daily dietary intake. Remember that carbohydrates are found in practically every food so we must budget for this. It is extremely important to combine the food groups at every meal including snacks to slow down the absorption of those carbohydrates. That means combining a protein and fat along with carbohydrates. Below are some sample meals, perfect for the holiday season. Give them a try and enjoy!



Tomato Bouillon

1 cup chopped celery
1 cup chopped onions
2 cups fat-free chicken broth
3 cups fat-free beef broth
3 cups tomato juice
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1/2 teaspoon basil
Whisper of black pepper

Place celery, onions, and chicken broth in saucepan. Cover and simmer 30 minutes. Drain well. Discard vegetables and return broth to saucepan. Add beef broth, tomato juice, and simmer for about 5 minutes. Taste for seasoning and add more, if necessary. Serve 3/4 cup of hot or cold bouillon per serving.

Yields 2 quarts = 10 servings

Food exchange per serving: 1 vegetable

Chicken or Turkey Loaf

2 lbs. ground raw chicken or turkey
1 cup dry breadcrumbs
2 large egg whites
2 chicken bouillon cubes dissolved in 1/2 cup water
1 tbs. Worcestershire sauce or
1/2 tsp. Rubbed sage or thyme
1 tbs. Chopped parsley
Dash of white pepper
1/2 cup finely chopped onions

It is best to grind the meat yourself since the ground chicken & turkey you buy generally has the skin and some fat in it. If your market will grind it for you without the skin and fat you are in luck; but if not, figure that you will need about 3lbs raw chicken or turkey for each pound of ground meat. Remove all skin & visible fat with a sharp knife. Bone the chicken or turkey, and then grind it in a meat



grinder or chop it in a food processor. (Freeze the bones, wings, & neck to use to make broth later.) Refrigerate until needed. The ground poultry can also be used to make chicken or turkey patties.

Place the remaining ingredients in mixing bowl. Mix well. Add ground chicken or turkey and mix lightly but thoroughly. Form into a loaf and place in a 9" X 5" X 3" loaf pan that has been greased with margarine. Bake at 325° F about 1 1/2 hours or until firm and lightly browned. Remove from oven and let set for 15 minutes. Slice into 12 equal slices and serve 1 slice per serving.

Yields 1 loaf = 12 slices/servings

Food exchanges per serving: 2 lean meat,

1/2 starch

(continued on page 12)

Recipes

ENJOYING HOLIDAY EATING WITH
DIABETES (continued from page 11)

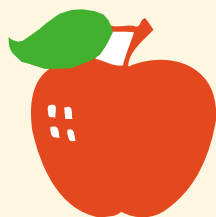
Apple Salad

Diabetic lemon gelatin to prepare
2 cups gelatin
1 3/4 cups water
1/2 cup low-fat cottage cheese
2 small (4 to the pound) tart apples
1/2 cup chopped nuts

Prepare gelatin according to the directions, using 1 1/4 cups water instead of 2 cups. Refrigerate until it begins to thicken. Drain cottage cheese well and mash with the back of a large spoon. Fold into slightly thickened gelatin. Wash and core apples but do not peel them. Cut into small pieces and stir into the gelatin. Stir nuts into gelatin and pour into a 9-inch square pan that has been rinsed with cold water. Chill until firm. Cut 3X4 into 12 equal portions. Serve 1 portion on a lettuce leaf per serving.

*Yields one 9-inch square pan = 12 servings
Food exchanges per serving: 1/4 fruit, 1/2 fat*

Kimberly Slepchuk is a Health Educator and Diabetes Nutrition Instructor. Recipes are from The New Diabetic Cookbook by Mabel Cavaiani.



BIG
SUCCESS!



HNE's first ever Diabetes Care Day was held on Saturday November 3rd. If you were there, you know what an exciting event it was! The day was filled with free educational materials, free health screenings, free glucose meters, special Guest speakers, \$2000.00 in raffle prizes and more!

Here's what some people who attended Diabetes Care Day 2001 had to say:

"I thought the screening tests, particularly the hemoglobin A1c, were very helpful. And the lectures were very enlightening. I definitely recommend Diabetes Care Day, especially for new diabetics."

—George Wilson

"Diabetes Care Day was enjoyable and helpful. I look forward to next year. Thank you Health New England."

— Sharon Owskiak

"Diabetes Care Day provided me with a significant and timely opportunity to obtain current, accurate, and useful information that enabled me to better manage my diabetes. Thank you, Thank you!"

—Michael Weltman

"I was recently diagnosed with diabetes and felt hopeless, depressed and overwhelmed. Attending Diabetes Care Day totally lifted my spirits and understanding about the disease. Now I feel that my life can be manageable."

—Anonymous

JOIN US IN 2002 FOR ANOTHER DIABETES CARE DAY.
INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE IN FUTURE ISSUES
OF THIS NEWSLETTER.