



Spiritual health

Carol was in a hurry. It was 5:30 a.m. and time for her morning run—which she needed to do so she could get to work on time so she could leave before too late to make it to her church meeting.

The run was a chore—another thing to check off her list. She came around the side of the house and stopped in surprise.

Just a few weeks ago, the flower bed had appeared dormant and empty. Now, peeking out of the ground, were several stalks of bleeding hearts, their pink flowers swaying in the breeze. Carol loved flowers of all kinds, but bleeding hearts brought back special memories of her parents' home in Oregon.

She found herself transported back to the rhododendron-covered hillsides, the smell of fresh mulch in the garden, and the beautiful cherry and dogwood blossoms. Suddenly, she could smell the

Mental health

April is National Alcohol Awareness Month—a time to consider the disease of alcoholism and its impact on individuals and families throughout the United States. It's ironic how two legal drugs—alcohol and tobacco—cause more health-related costs, damage, negative consequences, and deaths through addiction than any illegal drug.

But alcohol and tobacco aren't the only culprits. There are a myriad of substances people become addicted to today. Prescription medications, over-the-counter remedies like cough syrup, and common household items (such as the propellant in canned whipped cream) can be misused and abused.

If we add to these substances addictive behaviors (gambling, pornography/sex, and the Internet), it truly seems we as humans have a propensity to become addicted. On some level, these behaviors

daphne and see the family of deer coming to get their daily feast of pansies.

She could hear the water cascading down the rock waterfall that Dad and her brother had built. She thought about walking up the front walkway and being welcomed home.

Carol rested. For three or four minutes, she was transported away from the deadlines and pressures she faced. She took a three-minute vacation and felt renewed.

Jesus knew the value of rest. When the disciples were being pressed on all sides, he encouraged them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place. You need to get some rest" (*Mark 6:31*).

So whether it be a day-long retreat, or a quiet hour, or a three-minute vacation, do yourself a favor—and rest!

Kathy McMillan, MA, director

Employee spiritual care & wholeness, LLUMC

are addictive because they exploit our essential humanness by giving pleasure in unnatural, exaggerated amounts.

All addictions, whether chemical or behavioral, grow and thrive when kept secret. Stigma and shame, coupled with a humiliating loss of control, are often associated with all addictions.

An addict, his or her friends, family, and associates try to avoid the shame and stigma by forcing the addiction into the dark by denying its presence and impact, but this only makes it more powerful.

Addictions don't do well when they are exposed. When they are accepted as diseases and dealt with like other health concerns, they lose their power.

In Alcoholics Anonymous, there is a saying: "You're only as sick as your secrets." Addictions become more manageable when people admit their presence, recognize the degree to which



Physical health

It is estimated that 30 percent of the U.S. adult population has pre-diabetes. That's nearly one third of us.

But only a quarter of the population with this condition knows about it. If pre-diabetes is not addressed, those dealing with it have an increased risk for heart disease, and will most likely develop diabetes.

Risk factors for pre-diabetes

- Overweight or obese
- Inactive
- Over the age of 45

Continued on back

they are powerless over their addictions, and start to take meaningful steps to address them.

Addictions treatment has come a long way in the past 20 years. The good news is recovery is possible.

All of us can benefit from taking time during this month to learn more about alcoholism and other addictions. We need to dispel the myths commonly associated with addictions and learn about treatment resources available to those suffering from these diseases.

Randall Walker, MS, MFT, director

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Physical health, continued

- Family history of diabetes
- Inadequate sleep

How do you know if you have pre-diabetes? First, look at the risk factors listed above. If you have even one of these risks, but especially if you have two or more, have your doctor check your fasting blood sugar.

If this number is higher than 100 but

Nutritional health

Many people are interested in losing extra pounds by changing their food intake in order to reach their goals. Food is a great place to start and, along with exercise, dietary changes can be a powerful influence on your weight and your health overall.

However, when examining their food intake, many people overlook the calories they receive from their beverages.

In some cases the amount of “liquid calories” that individuals intake may be sabotaging their weight loss goals.

Health concerns regarding soft drinks — “liquid candy” — have been around for many years. In 1942, the American Medical Association mentioned soft drinks specifically in a strong recommendation to limit intake of added sugar.

At that time, annual U.S. production of carbonated soft drinks was 90 8-oz (240-mL) servings per person. By 2000, this number had risen to more than 600 servings. For some, soft drinks are their main source of liquid intake and are the primary way they are hydrated.

Soft drinks come with very little accompanying nutrition, are high in sugar, and have been shown to displace other nutrient sources from the diet.

They have also been linked to a variety of health issues from diabetes to pancre-

less than 125, you have pre-diabetes. A number higher than 125 means that you’re already a diabetic.

There is strong evidence that changing your lifestyle is the best treatment for pre-diabetes. The diabetes prevention trial showed that a healthy lifestyle decreased the risk of progression from pre-diabetes to diabetes by 58 percent. Healthy lifestyles were twice as powerful as medications!

atic cancer. However, many still do not realize the impact these drinks may be having on their health. The calories alone may surprise you.

| Cola: Amount | Calories | Walking time to burn calories |
|---|----------|---------------------------------|
| 12-oz can | 143 | 40 minutes |
| Large fountain drink (average fast food) | 310 | 87 minutes |
| 12-oz can per day for a week | 1,050 | 291 minutes (nearly 5 hours) |

If your soft drink intake has gotten out of control or is sabotaging your health goals, it may be time to rethink your drink. Water is the ultimate source of hydration. However, if you struggle with drinking water, try to make it fun and interesting. Try adding lemon, lime, or cucumber slices to your cup or water bottle. For more panache, add berries or other fruit to your water. Once these items sit in water for a while, their flavors are infused and create a nice flavor.

If you are ready to start down a healthier path, you may want to start looking at your drinks. Your body will thank you for it!

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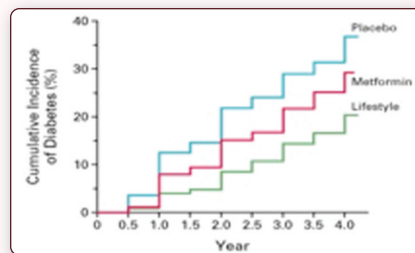
Mango and wild rice salad

Calories 173.3; total fat 0.9 g; saturated fat 0 g; sodium 3.4 mg; cholesterol 0 mg; fiber 2.9 g

- 2 cups cooked wild rice
- 3 mangoes, cubed
- ¼ cup green onion, chopped
- ¼ cup red onion, chopped

- ½ cup finely diced red pepper
- Juice of 1 orange
- Juice of 2 limes

Mix everything up in a bowl and chill for at least a couple of hours (overnight is even better).



What does changing your lifestyle look like? Becoming more active is part of it, as is getting more rest. But the most important thing is to lose weight. The best way to lose weight is to decrease calories in your diet—best accomplished by eating fewer processed foods and more whole foods.

The majority of people with pre-diabetes are unaware of the health risks, and therefore do not attempt to improve their lifestyle. But small lifestyle changes can make a big difference in your risk of developing more serious diseases. Let’s be in the group of people who know our risks, and choose to do something healthy about them.

Wayne Dysinger, MD, chair
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Wellness bulletin

- If you would like to join the **Living Whole “Paging My Health”** program and receive short health messages (up to once a week) to your 2-way pager, please call extension 49721.
- **Would you like to stop smoking?** Call the Living Whole Employee Wellness Program at extension 49721 to find out about the BREATHE program. It is a confidential 4-week one-on-one tobacco dependency treatment program that is FREE to all benefit-eligible employees. Quitting may be one of the most important things you do for your health – and we would like to help!



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