



# ***Your Health Matters***

***CCMHG – Your Town, County, District, Authority  
Working together for your health***

***Volume 3  
April 2011***

---

***In this issue:***

***April is Stress Awareness  
Month***

***Health Provider Updates***

***The Diabetes Center of  
Cape Cod***

***Wellness News***

***Are You Ready to Kick  
Butts?***

***Hot Topics***

***Food for Thought***

***Good Mood Foods***

***The Last Word***

---

## **April is Stress Awareness Month!**

Stress! Anxiety! Depression! Unfortunately during this difficult time of layoffs and budget cuts these words have worked their way into our everyday life. How are we able to balance work and family with more responsibilities and commitments piling up? While some stress is a normal part of life, excessive stress interferes with our productivity and reduces our physical and emotional health, so it is important for us to find ways to keep it under control.

When stress on the job is impeding your ability to work, care for yourself, or manage your personal life, it is time to take action. Start by paying attention to your physical and emotional health because when your needs are taken care of you are stronger and more resilient to stress. The better you feel, the better equipped you are to manage stress without becoming overwhelmed.

Some things that you can do to improve your mood and lower your stress levels are:

- aerobic exercise
- making smart food choices
- creating a balanced schedule
- not over-committing yourself
- planning regular breaks during the day
- getting plenty of sleep
- avoiding excess alcohol and nicotine

Cutting back on your stress will directly impact your health and that of your family. Spouses and children are usually on the receiving end of bad moods. Do your kids hear you talking about troubles at work or maybe fighting with your spouse about financial matters? As parents we need to watch how we discuss such issues when our kids are near because children will pick up on their parents' anxieties and start to worry themselves.

On page 7 of this issue are ten tips for living a kinder, gentler, and more rewarding life. Slow down, smile more, and stop and smell the roses!

*Sources: HelpGuide.org; KidsHealth.org*



## Parents need to watch their mouths around their children!

Not only what they say, but also what they can spread – cavities. Did you know that very young children can “catch” the bacteria that cause cavities?

Cavities (also called caries) are a bacterial infection. Babies aren’t born with these bacteria in their mouth – it is most often passed along from family members through some form of exchange of saliva from an adult or another child in their lives. It can be through something as harmless as sharing a spoon, ‘cleaning’ the pacifier that fell on the floor in your mouth before returning it to the child, or biting off a piece of apple to share with a child. Once cavity causing bacteria are in a child’s mouth, they are there for life. Caregivers have to be on top of what goes into the child’s mouth.

What can parents do? Taking care of your teeth improves your own oral health, and sets a good example for your child to follow. Make sure you visit your dentist regularly. Take your child for a first check-up at twelve months of age. The dentist will determine the child’s risk of developing dental disease. Follow a healthy diet and be sure to brush after every meal.

Good oral health begins before baby teeth begin to show up. Taking care to reduce the risk of transmitting cavity-causing bacteria to children will better position them to grow up with a healthy smile.

**\*\*\*Open Enrollment Dates: April 11<sup>th</sup> – May13<sup>th</sup>!!\*\*\***

**During Open Enrollment remember that you should ALWAYS contact your Benefits, Payroll, or Human Resource Office for information regarding changing plans or for benefit booklets!!**

**A full list of [Benefit/Health Fairs](#) is on the CCMHG website!**



Questions for **Harvard Pilgrim** during Open Enrollment? Contact their member services department at 1-888-333-4742 or via email at their [member services email page](#). You can also log onto your [member services page](#) to check out your personal benefit questions.

Questions for **Blue Cross Blue Shield** during Open Enrollment? Contact their member services department at the number on the front of your ID card. You can also log onto your [member services page](#) to check out your personal benefit questions.



***SPECIALIZING IN DIABETES CARE - THE DIABETES CENTER OF CAPE COD***

Diabetes is a serious condition which when well managed can result in a long and healthy life. It can, however, lead to serious health problems (referred to as complications) which include blindness, kidney failure, nerve problems (numbness and pain) as well as heart disease, strokes and amputations. While there are two main types of diabetes, type 1 and 2, the complications and recommendations for care are very similar. To prevent the complications, it is important to get regular tests to make sure your treatment program is achieving the results necessary and to monitor for any signs of complications.

Current recommendations suggest:

- ✓ A1C (a measure of your average blood glucose over the past 2-3 months) every 3 - 6 months, depending on how you are doing
- ✓ Lipid panel (total cholesterol , HDL and LDL, and triglycerides) at least yearly
- ✓ Blood and urine creatinine and urine albumin (to look for any signs of kidney disease) at least yearly
- ✓ Dilated eye exam at least yearly
- ✓ Foot exam with medical visits



**Nathaniel G. Clark, MD, MS, RD**

The ***Diabetes Center of Cape Cod*** was established by Cape Cod Healthcare in 2010 and is directed by Dr. Nathaniel Clark. Dr. Clark, trained in adult and pediatric medicine and endocrinology, has spent most of his career in the diabetes area caring for patients and working for the American Diabetes Association as well as a leading diabetes company prior to coming to Cape Cod. The Center uses a patient-centered, team-based care model involving an endocrinologist and Physician's Assistant as well as both nurse and dietitian Certified Diabetes Educators. Cape Cod Healthcare's Diabetes Education program is recognized by the American Diabetes Association. To make sure that patients are getting the care they need based on the recommendations above, a computer-based diabetes registry is used and care quality is constantly reviewed.

While the Center currently sees mainly adult patients, as Dr. Clark also has experience caring for children with diabetes, services for children will be offered in the future if there is a need. The Center is open 5 days per week with coverage for problems at other times. Ask your Primary Care Provider (PCP) for a referral to the Diabetes Center if you are not meeting your diabetes goals or if you want to explore new therapies for diabetes. The Center staff has extensive experience in the most current treatment options for diabetes, including insulin pump therapy and new oral and injectable medications.

***GOOD NEWS!***

As an employee of a city, town, or other municipal group that participates in the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group (CCMHG) you may be eligible to receive your diabetes medications and supplies for **FREE** (\$0 co-pays) simply by meeting the diabetes recommendations above! The ***Good Health Gateway***® Diabetes Care Rewards Program is sponsored by the CCMHG and is voluntary & confidential. To learn more, call the Good Health Gateway HelpLine @ 800-643-8028 or visit [www.GoodHealthGateway.com](http://www.GoodHealthGateway.com) today! Participating members are saving hundreds of dollars each year on costly diabetes medications and supplies.

**Diabetes Center of Cape Cod \* 40 Quinlan Way, Suite 206 \* Hyannis, MA 02601**  
**Phone: 508-862-7400 \* Fax: 508-790-8879**

## W e l l n e s s N e w s

### Biometric Screenings

What a fantastic start to the New Year this program has been! From January 1<sup>st</sup> through March 25<sup>th</sup> we have visited 12 municipalities and screened 235 employees!! During that time we saw a lot of high blood pressures, a sure sign of these trying times before us. One gentleman was so high that he had to go to the hospital to be tested and monitored! He is currently under his doctor's medical care and is doing great! It is this type of situation that ensures me that this program is extremely important and worthwhile!

At right Nurse Judy is explaining the results of the bone density screening to Margie Luck from Sandwich High School.



Listed below are the remaining screenings scheduled through the end of the fiscal year:

- **Town of Orleans: April 26<sup>th</sup>**
- **Town of Sandwich: April 27<sup>th</sup>**
- **Horace Mann Middle Charter School: April 28<sup>th</sup>**
- **Centerville Elementary: May 5<sup>th</sup>**
- **Forestdale School: May 16<sup>th</sup>**
- **MacArthur Elementary School: May 13<sup>th</sup>**

If your employer is not taking part in this program, please ask if you can participate during FY12!!

### Kick Butts

Although most people understand that smoking harms a person's health, many smokers believe it helps them cope with stress. Since nicotine is a psychoactive (mood altering) drug, tobacco use does seem to make the subjective effects of stress (such as feelings of frustration, anger, and anxiety) less severe. But smoking is a cruel illusion; while people may feel calmer and less stressed when they smoke, their body is experiencing just the opposite reactions. Blood pressure rises, heart rate increases, muscles become tense, blood vessels constrict, and less oxygen is available to the brain and body to facilitate healthy coping. **In short, smoking increases the stress level on the body.** *Source: Cleveland Clinic*

Many will argue that during a stressful time is not a "good time" to quit but it is best not to put it off - what better time than the present! If you are feeling the effects of stress and turning to cigarettes but want to kick this habit let your employers know! We are currently looking for a host to our next Kick Butts Program. Please have your employer contact me. In the meantime there are plenty of resources available to you through your health care providers - [QuitSmart](#) for Harvard Pilgrim members and [Living Healthy Smoke Free](#) for Blue Cross members. Let's make smoking history for CCMHG members!

## Hot Topics

### Did You Know?

Vitamin D guidelines have risen from 200 IU to 600 IU but lately doctors are questioning if that really is enough for our bodies. "It's a step in the right direction," says Michael F. Holick, Ph.D., M.D., director of the Vitamin D, Skin, and Bone Research Laboratory at the Boston University School of Medicine. "But essentially every tissue in your body needs vitamin D; 600 IU is just too low." The nutrient affects some 2,000 genes and could amp up your immunity to fight off everything from depression to cancer. Based on new research, you should get 1,000 to 2,000 IU a day.

### 1.9 million

*The number of adults (ages 20 and over) that were newly diagnosed with diabetes (Types 1 and 2) in the United States during 2010. The highest diagnosed in this group were between ages 45-64. It is also estimated that 79 million Americans adults are pre-diabetic.*

*Source: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases*

### 100% Juice v. Whole Fruit?

Drinking 100 percent fruit juice is associated with a reduced risk for several chronic diseases, including cancer, heart disease, and cognitive decline, according to research presented at the 2011 Experimental Biology meeting. The study is notable because there isn't a clear consensus about drinking fruit juice versus eating whole fruits; it's generally considered better to eat whole fruits, which contain digestion-friendly fiber.

Among the fruit juices included in the review, benefits were seen with apple, citrus, cranberry, grape, and pomegranate juices. These benefits ranged from reductions in urinary tract infections (cranberry) to improvements in age-related cognitive decline (grape and apple) to reduced risk of prostate (pomegranate) and respiratory and digestive (orange, grapefruit) cancers.

So while it's still important to eat whole fruits, drinking 100 percent juice is also a great way to reap the benefits of produce. *Source: Everyday Health*

### QUICK FACT:

**Running:** *The University of Georgia Department of Exercise induced anxiety (with caffeine pills) on subjects and then tested their physiological and mood symptoms after either resting for an hour or exercising for that hour. The exercise was three times more effective at reducing anxiety. Running is even used by mental health experts to help treat clinical depression and other psychological disorders such as drug and alcohol addiction.*

*Source: Women's Health*

Don't  
Forget  
The  
Sunblock!!

**Children suffer from Stress too!** As providers and caretakers, adults tend to view the world of children as happy and carefree. After all, kids don't have jobs to keep or bills to pay, so what could they possibly have to worry about? Plenty! Even very young children have worries and feel stress to some degree. In preschoolers, separation from parents can cause anxiety. As kids get older, academic and social pressures (especially the quest to fit in) create stress. Many kids are too busy to have time to play creatively or relax after school. Kids who complain about the number of activities they're involved in or refuse to go to them may be signaling that they're overscheduled.

Talk with your kids about how they feel about extracurricular activities. If they complain, discuss the pros and cons of quitting one activity. If quitting isn't an option, explore ways to help manage your child's time and responsibilities so that they don't create so much anxiety. While it's not always easy to recognize when kids are stressed-out, short-term behavioral changes such as mood swings, acting out, changes in sleep patterns, or bedwetting can be indications. Some kids experience physical effects, including stomachaches and headaches. Others have trouble concentrating or completing schoolwork. Still others become withdrawn or spend a lot of time alone. The best medicine is to make time for your children. For more information check out [KidsHealth.org](http://KidsHealth.org)

## Food for thought.....

### Good Mood Foods

*Adapted from wholeliving.com*

*There is no such thing as a "chill-pill" but some foods contain body-boosting nutrients that help soothe stressed-out nerves.*



- Vitamin B6:** Avocados, baked potatoes (with skin) bananas, chickpeas, yellow-fin tuna, steamed green beans. Why? Stress depletes B6, which helps produce serotonin, a calming neurotransmitter.
- Vitamin B12:** Clams, milk (fat-free), plain yogurt (fat-free), salmon, sardines, chicken. Why? Along with other B vitamins, B12 helps form GABA, a calming neurotransmitter.
- Folate (Folic Acid):** Asparagus, chickpease, lentiles, oatmeal, orange juice, dark leafy greens. Why? Folic acid helps make dopamine, a neurotransmitter associated with pleasure.
- Magnesium:** Almonds, amaranth, spinach, sunflower seeds, tofu, wild rice. Why? Stress depletes magnesium which stimulates the production of GABA and helps make dopamine.
- Vitamin C:** broccoli, Brussels sprouts, orange juice, red and green peppers, strawberries. Why? Vitamin C boosts your immune system and fights brain-cell damage resulting from constant exposure to cortisol.

*An emphasis on the above foods will help your body mellow existing anxiety and set you on the right path for overall health. (Talk to your doctor about proper dosages if you take supplements, since it is possible to get too much of a good thing.) Read more at [Wholeliving.com](http://Wholeliving.com)*

## Asian Sesame Salad with Blackened Shrimp

### **What you will need to serve 4:**

- 24 uncooked deveined peeled large shrimp (1 lb.)
- 1-1/2 tsp. Cajun seasoning
- 1 pkg. (6 oz.) baby spinach leaves
- 1 cup shredded red cabbage
- 1 cup shredded green cabbage
- 1 cup match like carrot sticks
- 1 cup fresh snow peas cut lengthwise into thin strips
- 4 green onions, diagonally sliced
- 1/2 cup chopped cilantro
- 1/2 cup KRAFT Asian Toasted Sesame Dressing



**To prepare:** HEAT greased grill to medium-high heat. THREAD shrimp onto 8 skewers; sprinkle with seasoning, turning skewers to evenly coat both sides of each shrimp. Grill 3 min. on each side or until shrimp turn pink. COVER 4 large plates with spinach; top with next 6 ingredients. DRIZZLE with dressing; top with shrimp.

**Nutritional information per serving:** Calories 250; Total fat 7g ; Saturated fat 1g; Cholesterol 220 mg; Sodium 870 mg; Carbohydrate 18g; Dietary fiber 4g ; Sugars 11g ; Protein 28g.

*Recipe Source: Kraft Foods Healthy Living*

## *As stressful as life can be...*

By Adam Liss, Cape Center for Stress Reduction and Optimal Health

As stressful as life can be there are still wonderful interludes, lingering moments and quiet respites that show up in our lives. Would that we could multiply those to be here more often! What does it take to do just that?

Here are some basic pointers for living a kinder, gentler, more rewarding life:

- ☺ **Take a breather.** Literally, stop what you are doing for 60 seconds and breathe deeply with your eyes closed. Make it a habit to stop once an hour for a silent 60 second break.
- ☺ **Do one thing at a time.** Stop multi-tasking for a half hour each day and simply focus on the task at hand. Defer the other things that come up until that time has passed.
- ☺ **Move that body!** Do some kind of exercise every day even if it is only for 5 to 10 minutes. Go for a short walk, up and down the stairs a few times, or just turn on some music and dance. Think of it as preventative maintenance.
- ☺ **Feed yourself a healthy diet.** This is more than just the food you eat. Be aware of what you listen to, read, and watch. Pay attention to how these things affect you and choose what is healthiest for you. And give yourself a break if you slip, binge or get a bit overwhelmed.
- ☺ **Pay attention.** Pay attention to the person you are with right now. Listen carefully to what that person is saying. And then respond respectfully, honestly and sincerely.
- ☺ **Find the love.** Find the love in what this person is saying and take a moment to appreciate it. Let go of the parts of the conversations and attitude that are difficult or challenging.
- ☺ **Spend some time doing something you love.** Whether it is a hobby, an excursion or a get-together, make time to regularly do that special something that revitalizes your life and feeds your soul.
- ☺ **Give to a worthy cause.** The cause is yours to choose. Pick something that rings true in your heart: an organization or a person, global or local, popular or unnoticed. How much and what you give likewise comes from the heart. Service, experience or prayer, there are many ways to give. Sharing with others makes us feel good.
- ☺ **Smile.** If you are looking for a good time start right here. Share a smile. Studies show that smiling triggers happiness by evoking a cascade of neurotransmitters in the body that register good feelings. Smiles are contagious and each one encourages another.
- ☺ **Know.** Know that you are perfect the way you are and the world begins anew in each moment. Whatever is in your world right now... let it be here the way it is... it's already that way. Then choose how you want it to be in the next moment and find a way, get help, do whatever it takes to create your world the way you want it.



### *Live a fulfilling life!*

May you see it as filled with a multitude of fresh new moments...  
 Opportunities to simply connect with people right now...  
 and may so many of them be happy.

*Your Health Matters is a quarterly publication for municipal employees and family members of the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group. All questions and correspondence should be directed to Deanna L. Desroches at [dldesroches@comcast.net](mailto:dldesroches@comcast.net) or 508-362-6106.*