When the sun's warmth and brightness wanes, many of us are adversely affected. It becomes a daily struggle for many to find and maintain any fully balanced perspective and sense of well being. We fall into grumpy, moody, angry, depressed sad and irritable states on a regular basis during the winter. We are more subject to ill health. These changes, including the infamous Seasonal Affective Disorder, are well documented. The annual recurrence of these difficulties increases stress and adds a sense of dread that takes away the resiliency we may find in the warmer, lighter months. All of us in this region are fundamentally challenged by the winter season.

Yet, the natural rhythm of the seasonal change is inherent to our lives, a primal flow to which we are intimately connected. Our ancestors created rituals and ceremonies around their awe of the seasons and these times have evolved to us as holidays, or holy days. The major number of holidays occur in the darker season of winter, and were intended to rouse and stimulate the human capacity to embrace the dark and cold. Finding support to draw forth, honor and deepen our inner qualities can burn off anxieties, depression and sadness.

The Simonds-Hurd Complementary Care Center at HealthAlliance Hospital provides such support for nourishing your inner qualities, promoting lightness, deep refreshment and healing during the long winter months and the pressure of activities at this time. Yoga classes by Julie and other instructors are available at the Center for the members of the surrounding communities and to all those in need. In addition, Julie offers 1:1 therapeutic yoga (and semi-private) at the Center for those who want to bring peace, relaxation and balance into their lives, no matter what their personal situation may be. Yoga teaches peace and flexibility in body, mind and spirit.

In addition, through a generous and thoughtful grant from Angie’s Spa, the gentle, holistic healing work of Julie Pepper, RYT is available in the Simonds-Simon Regional Cancer Center Free of charge on Tuesdays for those receiving care and caregivers. Julie is passionate in her unique grasp of therapeutic yoga. Patients and caregivers alike find solace, inspiration and a reconnection with self through their work with Julie.

Julie, who graduated from and now teaches at Frog Pond Yoga Centre in Princeton, MA, carries a conviction in the capacity of yoga to create miracles in our lives by bringing us back to our true nature in harmony with ourselves and what is around us. Through her instruction Julie offers classes, guided meditation, gentle restorative yoga postures, and breathing techniques.

The ingredients for Julie’s Recipe for Happiness are simple, time tested, direct and come right out of the ancient wisdom of Yoga. In her classes and 1:1 therapy, she suggests two qualities to cultivate this season: 1) Sweetness (Sukha in Sanscrit) and 2) Strength (Shiha in Sanscrit). Through her experienced yogic support and encouragement, these innate qualities can naturally arise and over-ride, wash away anxieties, stress, worries and sadness. From the harmony of balancing these two qualities, the heart is refreshed, replenished and kindness becomes more active and present in our lives. “What could be more of a gift to ourself and to others this holiday than natural kindness?” asks Julie. May you be present and in harmony with your wholesome natural qualities during in 2014.

Personalized Yoga Instruction
Cost:  (4) 1-hour sessions - $200

Please call Julie directly at 774-641-2813 to schedule your series of 1:1 appointments or inquire about semi-private sessions at a reduced rate, great for couples or friends.

Eating Right, Continued from Page 1

7. Be prepared with healthy snacks
If you know you’ll be in the car for a long commute or out of the house running errands all day, bring some crackers and low fat cheese, a small (handful) portion of nuts or trail mix, piece of fruit, or granola bar. It will help you to avoid the 2pm snack drive through Wendy’s or Burger King for a calorie-dense and nutrient-depleted milkshake or fries.

8. Drink more water!
Sometimes when you feel hungry, you are actually thirsty. Drink a glass of cold water before a meal as well as during to help curb your appetite AND hydrate you! Staying hydrated helps with your energy levels, skin health, and bowel regularity.

9. Dine out without the guilt
You can still go out to eat without ditching your New Year’s health goals. When your meal is delivered, ask for a takeout box – then portion out ½ to take home and eat the other half at the restaurant. Skip the bread before dinner and drink water instead. Instead of dessert, take a walk after dinner. Many restaurants are also great about highlighting heart-healthy and diet-friendly entrees.

10. Cook more at home
As easy as it is to just get takeout, it can be even more fun to cook yourself at home. If you have kids or a significant other, get them involved in the cooking as well. Make it a priority to cook with your loved ones. It can be more cost effective, healthy, and rewarding.

11. Eat more fruits and vegetables
Something we’ve all heard at one point or another, but as dietitians we can’t say it enough. Fruits and vegetables are low in calories and high in vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Want to live longer? Aim for at least 5 servings a day of a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables. Each color has a different nutrient to offer you.

12. Go lean with protein
Protein is important for our muscle health as well as keeping us fuller longer. Choose lower fat and therefore lower calorie versions including baked or broiled fish, chicken (with the skin off), or ground turkey.

13. Get enough ZZZ’s
If we don’t get enough sleep, not only are our emotions not happy but neither are the hunger hormones in our bodies called leptin, the satiety hormone aka “I’ve had enough” and ghrelin, the hunger hormone aka “give me more”. When your gas tank is running low on sleep, leptin is low and ghrelin is high meaning you are hungry without the help of leptin to keep you feeling full.

14. Choose your caffeine wisely
Make half your caffeinated beverages Green Tea. For example, if you normally drink 4 cups of coffee a day, have 2 cups of your normal coffee, and make your other two caffeinated drinks of the Green Tea variety – it’s hydrating and contains antioxidants which can help prevent cancer.

Most importantly, have a Happy and healthy New Year! For more information, contact our Registered Dietitian at 978-343-5369. Source: http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6442474069

HynpoBirthing® (Linda Donalds)
Expectant moms and birthing partner learn simple breathing, relaxation and guided imagery techniques to help release tension and fears, and increase comfort throughout pregnancy and birth.

Cost: $200/couple (Includes five 2hr classes, CDs, and materials)

Class Location: Bergevin Conference Room in the Simonds-Simon Cancer Center in Fitchburg.

Session I:
January 6, 13, 20, 27 and February 3 (Snow date February 10)
Session II:
March 3, 10, 24, 31 and April 7 (Snow date April 14)
Free Smoking Cessation Classes
HealthAlliance will be offering FREE Smoking Cessation Support Classes on the following Wednesdays from 6:00 to 7:30pm:

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All classes are FREE and participants may choose to attend all or specific classes. Please no children.

To register or for more information, please call 978-343-5048.

Classes will be held at:
HealthAlliance Hospital – Burbank Campus
Simonds-Simon Regional Cancer Center
Brian Bergevin Conference Room
275 Nichols Road
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Empowering Wellness
A Quarterly Newsletter about Health & Healing

Volume 15
January, 2014

Eat Right for 2014 and Beyond!
By Alexis Penney MS, RD, LDN Oncology Dietitian, Simonds-Simon Regional Cancer Center

14 realistic health tips for a new year and a new you:

1. Start your day with breakfast.
   Eating breakfast can help curb your appetite throughout the day and avoid overeating at night. Start by adding something easy for breakfast, whether it be a piece of fruit, a yogurt, or slice of toast. Gradually aim for a more balanced meal that includes lean protein, whole grains, and fruits or vegetables. Try a whole grain Bagel Thin (100 calories) with peanut butter and a banana or 2 hard boiled eggs with a few slices of turkey bacon and an apple.

2. Be as physically active as possible.
   This doesn’t mean you have to join an expensive health club or sell your soul to a program like Insanity or P90x. Aim for 30 minutes a day for 5 days a week, but again start easy by taking a walk after dinner or playing catch – take the stairs instead of the elevator, or park your car far away in the parking lot. You will be more apt to exercise if it’s something you ENJOY! Try a fun dance exercise class like Zumba or hip hop, ride your bike, or swim laps in a pool.

3. Watch portion sizes.
   You don’t have to skip your own birthday cake, just take half the amount you normally would – you will be saving calories and along with other lifestyle changes like this, you may have a trimmer waist line by your next birthday! Some other tips for controlling calories include eating off of smaller dishes, eating slowly and taking time to savor your food, don’t eat out of a bag or a box – portion out the snack into a small bowl.

4. Make half your grains whole.
   Some of us love traditional, classic, white bread products whereas others have jumped on the whole grain bandwagon. If you haven’t tried whole grain bread products, start with some whole grain pasta with pesto and tomatoes or a slice of whole wheat bread with peanut butter. Brown is better – it has more fiber and nutrients that are “stripped” in the refining process of making white products.

5. Try smoothies or juicing for a quick nutrient punch.
   Have a blender? Throw some frozen fruit, yogurt, protein powder, coconut water/almond milk or other liquid into it and you’ve just created a glass loaded with vitamins, minerals, and protein! Juicing is another great way to get a TON of nutrients into your system in a quick and easy way. Check out www.rebootwithjojo.com for recipes and instructions on how to start juicing your fruits and vegetables.

6. Consult with an RD
   If you ever have questions about controlling your weight, blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, or other medical issues with your diet ask your doctor to see a Registered Dietitian (RD). RD’s are the food and nutrition experts – when you need information based on fact or need to know how a healthy diet improves or fights disease, rely on RD’s as qualified professionals in the field.

Table of Contents

- Eat Right for 2014 and Beyond …………………… 1 & 7
- Yoga – Recipe for True Happiness ………………… 2
- Class Calendar (Jan-Mar) ………………………… 3-5
- Special Winter 2014 Insert ………………………… 6
- Smoking Cessation/Service providers …………… 8

Services by Appointment

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Muscle Release Technique™ & Lymphedema Mgmt Services

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Note: Gift Certificates are Always Available!
Our gift certificates can be applied toward services, such as a relaxing massage or balancing acupuncture, or any of the class series offered at the Center. Certificates are available at the following locations:

- Good Intentions Gift Shop at HealthAlliance Hospital in Leominster
- Simonds-Hurd Complementary Care Center at Burbank in Fitchburg
- By phone with a credit card by calling 978-665-5800.

Services by Appointment:

- Acupuncture
- Massage
- Rosemary Nolan / 774-200-0639
- Dawn Girard / 978-973-3135
- Lynn Rochefort / 508-816-3994
- Muscle Release Technique™ & Lymphedema Mgmt
- Reflexology
- Reiki
- Lynn Gerts / 978-665-5800
- Kim McCummings / 978-665-5800
- Julie Pepper / 774-641-2813

Discount does not apply to gift certificate purchases.

HealthAlliance Employees and volunteers, ask about your discount on one-hour services!

Must present badge at time of service to receive discount.

Discount does not apply to gift certificate purchases.

Visit us on www.healthalliance.com and www.facebook.com/simondshurd for current news!