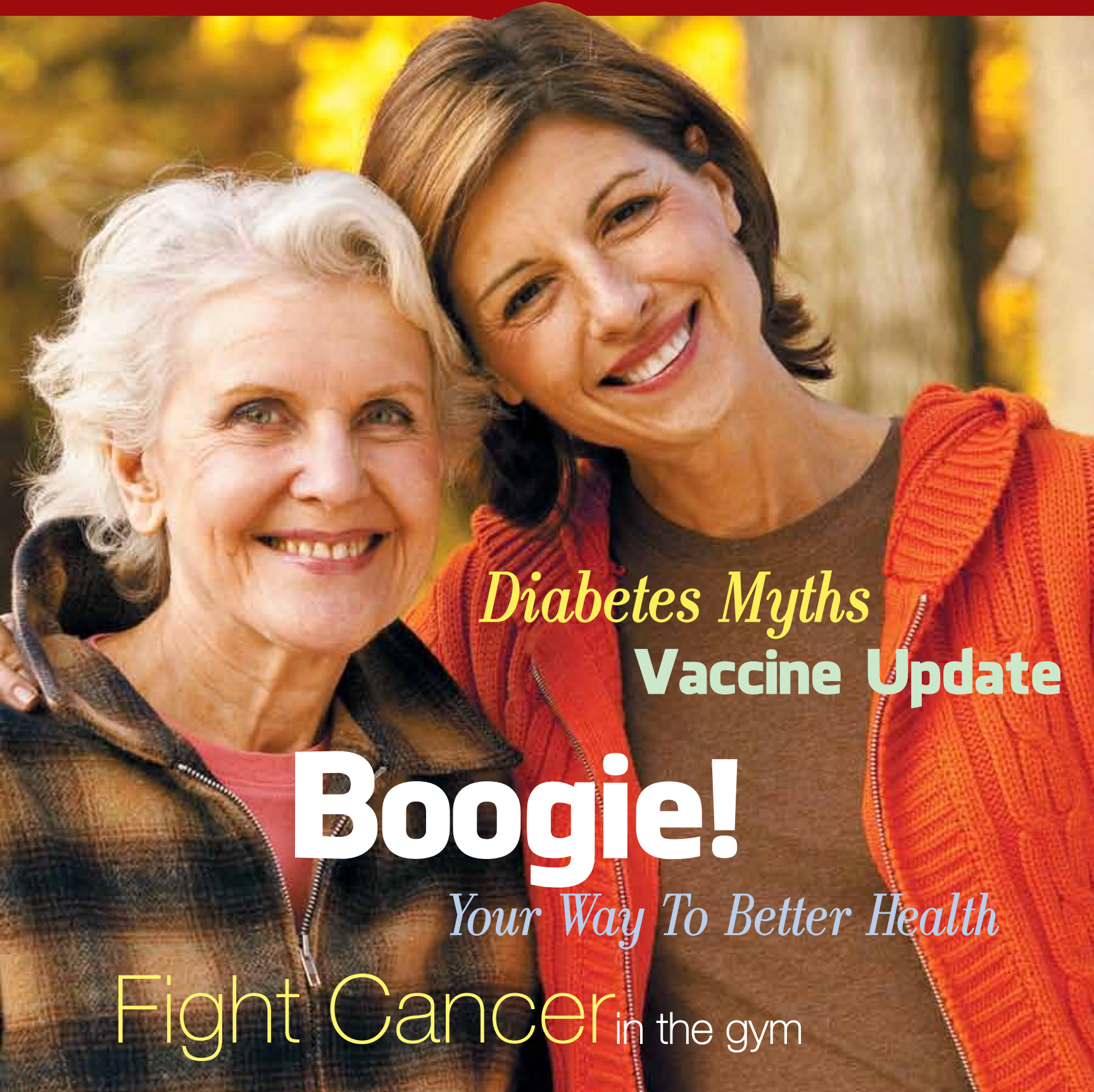


Fall 2011

Inside Circle



Diabetes Myths

Vaccine Update

Boogie!

Your Way To Better Health

Fight Cancer in the gym

Senior Circle Chapters are sponsored by the affiliated hospitals of Community Health Systems.



fall 2011

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Fight Cancer in the gym

Traditionally, people undergoing cancer treatment are instructed to rest to save their strength to fight the disease. Now, a growing number of physicians and researchers believe that people who remain as physically active as possible during treatment are more likely to beat cancer.

In fact, so overwhelming is the evidence for exercise during and after cancer treatment, the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) panel is revising its national guidelines regarding recommended exercise for cancer survivors. The panel concluded that cancer patients and survivors should strive to attain the same amount of exercise recommended for people of normal health – about 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise. Resistance training and stretching are also recommended.

These guidelines clearly delineate that – with the approval of the cancer patient's doctor – exercise is safe and recommended, says oncologist/hematologist Musaberk Goksel, M.D., Kosciusko Community Hospital in Warsaw, Ind. The top benefit, Dr. Goksel explains, is a better chance of survival: regular exercise seems to make the body better able to withstand the harsh effects of such cancer treatments as chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

Other potential exercise benefits for cancer patients and survivors include:

- **Reduced fatigue.** Aerobic activity has been found to decrease the need for drugs to increase production of red blood cells depleted due to chemotherapy damage. The loss of red blood cells is responsible for much of the crippling fatigue that people often feel while undergoing cancer treatment.
- **Reduced loss of muscle and bone mass.** Evidence has found that regular workouts can ease the detrimental effects of both cancer and cancer treatments on muscle and bone mass.
- **Improved quality of life.** People with cancer feel better overall when they exercise. Not only is physical fatigue decreased, but patients also reap the emotional



benefits of a calmer mood and the feeling of a restored sense of control.

"Doctors – particularly oncologists – understand that cancer patients won't always be able to keep up the same level of physical activity as healthy people, but they should be as physically active as they possibly can," Dr. Goksel encourages.

Workout plans should be adjusted to fit the patient's condition, according to the ACSM panel. For example, some types of cancer therapy can make bones more brittle, requiring exercise that places less stress on them. Other cancer patients could be so vulnerable to infection because of their embattled immune systems that they would need to exercise away from other people.

Overall, the new message is clear: If you have cancer, you'll have a more successful fight against the disease – and experience a better recovery – if you exercise as much as possible.

BOOGIE

YOUR WAY TO BETTER HEALTH!



Turn Up the Music!

Rhythmic dances (such as the waltz or foxtrot) can burn approximately 130 calories for a 160-pound person in approximately 30 minutes. However, the amount of calories burned will vary, based on your body, fitness level and how vigorously you dance.

Calories Burned Per Hour:

Line dancing - 162
Swing dancing - 235
Ballroom dancing - 265
Square dancing - 280
Ballet - 300
Belly dancing - 380
Salsa dancing - 420
Aerobic dancing - 540+

Sources:
www.acefitness.org
www.sixwise.com
www.sparkpeople.com

Looking for a creative way to stay fit? Don your dancing shoes and get in touch with your inner Fred Astaire or Ginger Rogers! Dancing promotes cardiovascular fitness, enhances coordination, builds muscle strength and bone density – and best of all, it's fun!

Dancing has been used for celebrations, exercise, and ceremonial purposes for centuries – and now, it's back in the spotlight and gaining new fans, fueled in popularity by reality shows such as "So You Think You Can Dance" and "Dancing with the Stars."

No matter one's age or athletic ability, dancing is good exercise because it is a low-impact, weight-bearing activity. According to the dietary and physical activity guidelines of the U.S. Department of Agriculture – which recommends that adults get at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity daily – dancing is considered a "moderate activity," along with brisk walking, cycling, or aerobics. Health experts say that it may be easier to meet the USDA's 30-minute requirement by finding forms of exercise that are fun – like dancing.

Benefits for Body and Soul

There are numerous health benefits to be gained from dancing, including increased stamina through elevating the heart rate; better endurance, which is the ability of the muscles to work hard for longer periods of time; and better balance and flexibility, by using the full range of motion of all the major muscle groups. Many dances involve moves that require bending and stretching, which tones the hamstrings, hips, thighs, abdominal and gluteal muscles. Dancing also helps to improve posture by strengthening the core muscles that support the spine.

Studies show that dancing is particularly beneficial for seniors because it provides toning without putting stress on delicate joints; and improves bone density; which in turn reduces the risk of osteoporosis, falls and broken bones. The American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation says that dancing is among the types of activities that are associated with a higher-than-average bone density.

Dancing boosts memory skills by increasing blood flow to the brain, which in turn supports healthy nerve cell growth. Memory skills are also improved because participants must remember certain steps and sequence of movements.

A study by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City, funded by the National Institute on Aging and published in the *New English Journal of Medicine* in 2003, found that dancing may help lower dementia in older adults. Researchers followed 469 seniors ages 75 and older over 21 years. During this time, study participants engaged weekly in various mental and physical exercises thought to improve memory: reading, working crossword puzzles, playing cards or musical instruments, bicycling, swimming, tennis, golf, walking for exercise, or dancing. Over the course of the study, 124 subjects developed dementia – but those who participated in ballroom dancing at least twice a week had lower rates of dementia

than study participants who rarely or never danced. Other studies have shown that Alzheimer's patients are able to recall facts and people long forgotten when they dance to familiar music.

Finally, research has shown that dancing improves mood and relieves stress and depression.

A Beat for Everyone

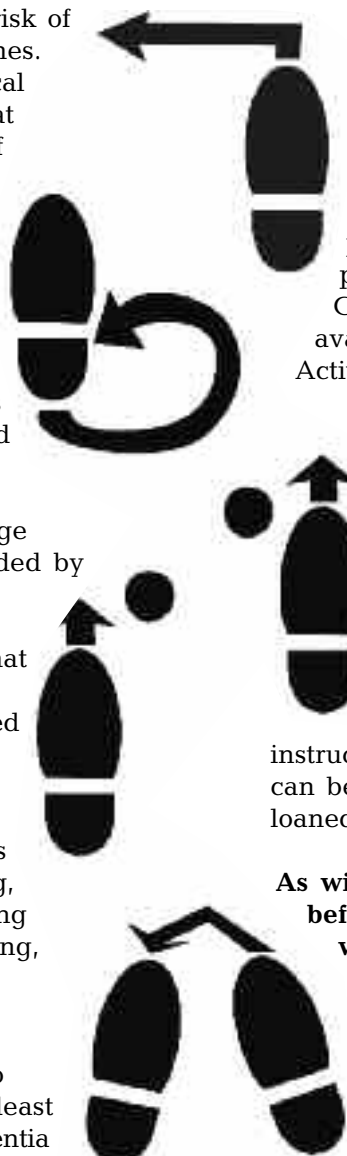
Dancing can be adapted for all ages and abilities. Beginners can start with easier forms of dance and, as their skills advance, add dance moves that are more challenging, for a more vigorous workout. Line dancing, ballroom dancing or tai chi (an exercise that uses slow, dance-like movements) are ideal for seniors who want to start at a slower pace. Jazz, swing, the foxtrot and salsa dancing offer more complex footwork, a faster pace and a more intense workout.

Even people with physical limitations can participate in dancing. Chair dancing is a seated form of dance-based exercise for people with limited mobility, where dance moves are performed without leaving the chair, including polka, tap dancing, country, tango, and the Charleston. Instructional chair dancing DVDs are available from the National Center on Physical Activity and Disability (www.ncpad.org).

Do you have dance fever? You may want to start with dance classes at a local dance school or dance studio, community recreation center, church, local YMCA – or possibly your Senior Circle chapter. Dance-based exercise classes are a growing trend; you're sure to find a class or two close by.

You can also work on your dance skills without ever leaving your own living room, using instructional dance videos or computer games, which can be purchased at a bookstore or DVD retailer, or loaned from your library.

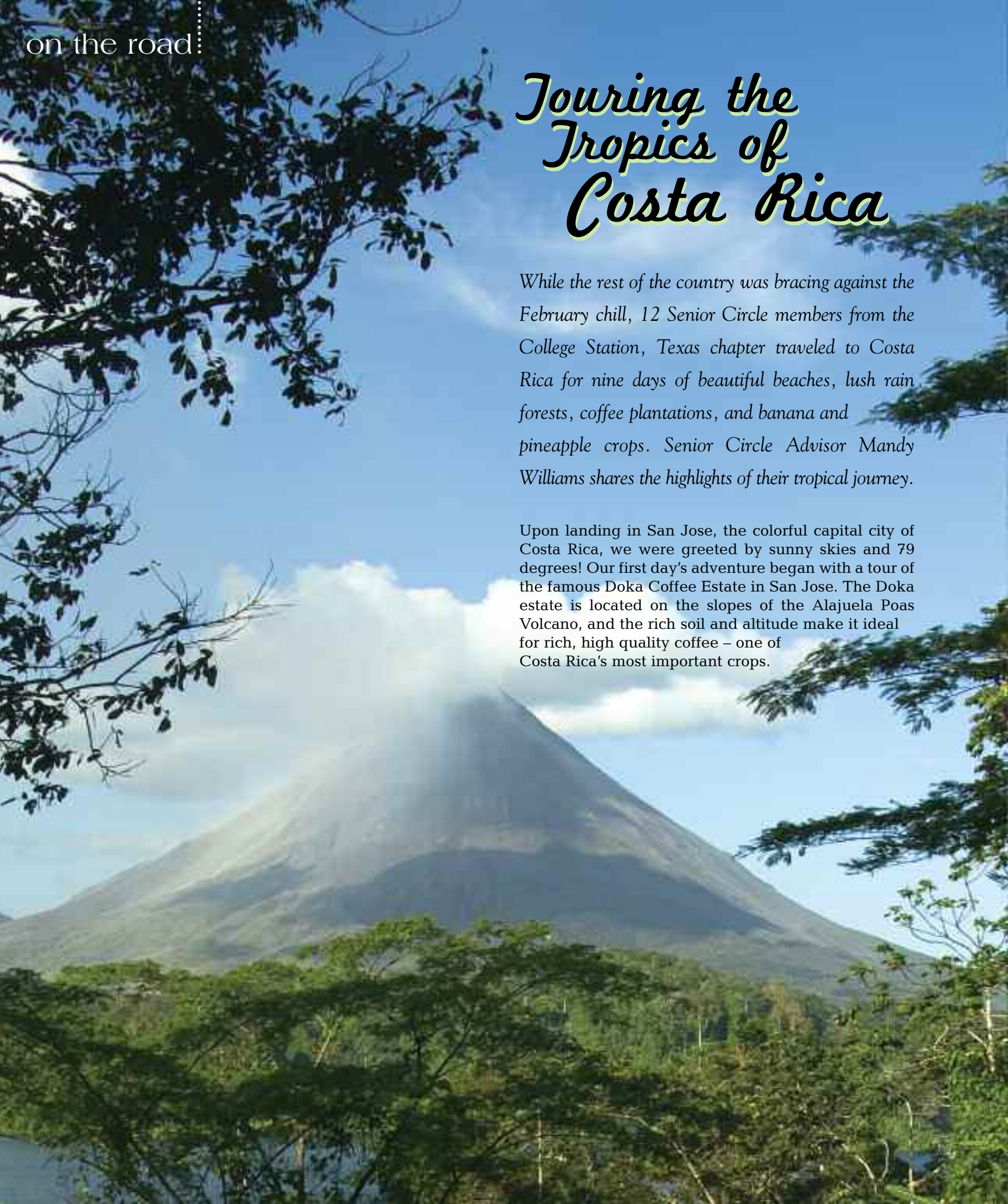
As with any new exercise, check with your doctor before beginning a new routine. Learn more at www.seniorcircle.com. Click on "Health Resources," "Interactive Tools," and take one of 80 quizzes on senior health and fitness, including the Target Heart Rate Calculator, Aging Quiz, Senior Fitness Quiz, and the Activity Quiz.



Journing the Tropics of Costa Rica

While the rest of the country was bracing against the February chill, 12 Senior Circle members from the College Station, Texas chapter traveled to Costa Rica for nine days of beautiful beaches, lush rain forests, coffee plantations, and banana and pineapple crops. Senior Circle Advisor Mandy Williams shares the highlights of their tropical journey.

Upon landing in San Jose, the colorful capital city of Costa Rica, we were greeted by sunny skies and 79 degrees! Our first day's adventure began with a tour of the famous Doka Coffee Estate in San Jose. The Doka estate is located on the slopes of the Alajuela Poas Volcano, and the rich soil and altitude make it ideal for rich, high quality coffee – one of Costa Rica's most important crops.



We learned about the process of making some of the world's best coffee, including the growing, harvesting, processing and roasting the coffee beans. Lunch featured native cuisine: plantains (a type of banana), black beans, rice, stewed meats and fresh pineapple. At one of our rest stops, we encountered several Macaws (beautiful birds that look like parrots).

Tamarindo Beach, our next stop, is a two-mile stretch of white sand and crystal-clear, blue water, surrounded by national parks and mountains. We arrived in time for an amazing sunset and the next day, enjoyed time on the beach, sightseeing and shopping. Some members of our group sampled the famous "Crazy Nachos" at a well-known local restaurant, and others took a sunset cruise, spotting whales along the way.



Sandra Williams and Karen Freeman.

The next day's escapade took us to Monteverde Cloud Forest where we took a nature walk. One of only four such ecosystems in the world, Monteverde Cloud Forest is located 4,662 feet above sea level with the clouds created when the air from the forest below the mountain mixes with the moist, hot air of the rainforest. The result is a blanket of misty, low-hanging clouds that make it feel as if it is continually raining – and creates a diverse environment of exotic plants and birds. It is home to the world's largest population of the famous,



Monteverde Cloud Forest

but rare, quetzal, an endangered tropical bird, known for its beautiful, jewel-toned feathers.



Barbara Williams at Doka Coffee Plantation.

We also walked the hanging bridges in the Montverde Cloud Forest – some up to 984 feet long – and toured a butterfly garden. Many members zip-lined through the forest, suspended by a cable and pulley system and propelled across the treetops, thousands of feet in the air. Zip-lining is not for the faint of heart!

Lake Arenal, the largest lake in Costa Rica, afforded us the opportunity to view the Arenal Volcano from the water. The volcano has been producing lava for the past 30 years! Because it is still active, we had to keep a good distance.

Other memorable sights included Cano Negro, a 20,000-acre nature preserve, which we traveled to via panga (covered canoe) and saw



Barbara Williams and Karen and Ralph Freeman.

wildlife such as howler monkeys, sloths and small alligators. We also stopped at La Fortuna, the picturesque gateway town to the Arenal Volcano, to visit the town square and shop.

The Poas Volcano was not to be missed either. This active volcano with a crater 1,050 feet deep and a mile wide, makes it the largest active crater in the world – and home to two crater lakes. We hiked to the top of an overhang and were able to view the crater from above – a powerful sight.

Throughout our trip we ate typical Costa Rican cuisine: fresh pineapple, black beans, rice and plantains, and a meat or fish dish. Every meal was accompanied by very strong coffee.



Loving life!

Our Costa Rican adventure was fantastic. The flora, fauna and food were only a small part of what made it so memorable. Exploring this exotic destination with both old and new friends made this a spectacular vacation and one we won't soon forget!

Top 10 Diabetes MYTHS

Whether you've been recently diagnosed with diabetes, are caring for a loved one with diabetes, or want to learn more about diabetes prevention and healthy living, it's important to talk with your doctor and learn the facts – and fiction – surrounding the disease.

Diabetes is one of the country's most widespread health epidemics, with links to heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, nerve damage and even blindness. It affects people of all ages and ethnic backgrounds. And, despite the health care community's efforts at public education and prevention, new cases of diabetes continue to grow.

While diabetes is very prevalent, much information about the disease remains shrouded in myths. Endocrinologist Jocelyn A. Myers, M.D., of Carolinas Hospital System in Florence, South Carolina helps dispel some of the common myths surrounding diabetes.



1 People with diabetes shouldn't eat anything sweet.

Diabetes is not a problem with sugar. Instead, the problem lies in how the body processes carbohydrates. Foods high in sugar or high in simple carbohydrates (i.e., white bread, white rice, etc.), will raise your blood sugar very quickly. Try to stick to complex carbohydrates – such as whole-wheat bread, brown rice, and

whole-grain pasta – which help keep your blood sugar levels more consistent. Can't pass up dessert? Just make sure your meal is balanced with lean protein, vegetables and complex carbohydrates – and split dessert with a friend.

2 Eating too much sugar causes diabetes.

According to current medical research, diabetes is thought to be caused by a combination of genetic and lifestyle factors – not by eating too many sweets. However, being overweight and not exercising regularly can increase the risk for developing type 2 diabetes. If you have a family history of diabetes – or you already have diabetes – eating healthfully and exercising regularly is highly recommended to keep your weight in check.

3 People with diabetes must eat a special diet.

A balanced meal plan includes whole-grain foods, lean protein, vegetables and fruit, in the proper portions. A meat portion is usually about 3 ounces (the size of a deck of cards), and the carbohydrate portion and vegetable portion should be about 1/2 cup each. Recommended portion sizes for dried fruit and nuts are usually small because of the high sugar and fat content respectively, so check the label of these snack items for appropriate serving sizes or ask your doctor. The advertised diabetic foods do not offer significant benefits. Skip the specially designed foods and instead, shop for fresh fruits and vegetables in the grocery store produce aisle.

4 There's only one dangerous kind of diabetes.

Diabetes refers to a group of diseases (see sidebar p. 8) – all of which require serious attention. The common factor in all of these diseases is the body's inability to convert glucose (sugar) from food into energy, which leads to a high level of sugar in the blood. Managing any form of diabetes requires balancing diet, physical activity and, if needed, medication. People with type 1 diabetes must take insulin every day for life, but type 2 diabetes also requires diligent monitoring, because ignoring it could lead to major health complications such as blindness, heart attack, and stroke.

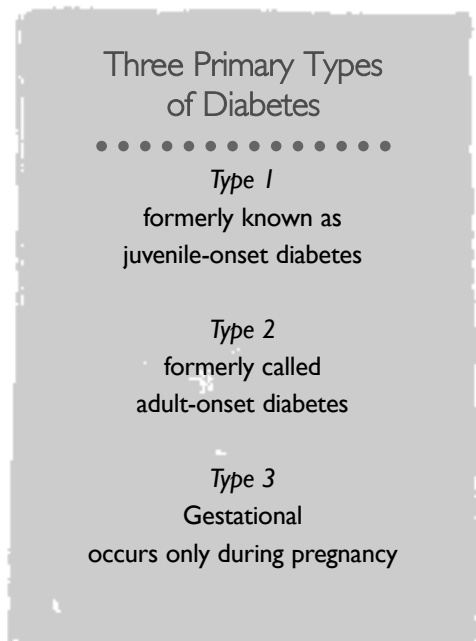
5 Only diabetics need insulin.

Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreas that allows the body to convert food into energy. People who don't have diabetes make and use the right amount of insulin. Diabetics, however, either don't make enough insulin to support the body's needs, or their bodies can't properly use the insulin that their bodies produce. For people with type 2 diabetes, it's

critical to balance food, exercise, and in some cases, medications, which may include insulin injections or an insulin pump, in order to receive this vital hormone.

6 Diabetes complications are unavoidable.

Numerous studies show that diabetes-related complications (i.e., blindness, nerve damage, or kidney failure) can be delayed or prevented with regular medical check-ups and a self-care treatment regimen that keeps blood sugar levels under control. Since many people with diabetes also have high blood pressure and high cholesterol, strictly monitoring these conditions can also go a long way toward warding off complications.



7 Only overweight people get diabetes.

Diabetes does not discriminate. While it is true that many people who have type 2 diabetes are overweight, not all diabetics are. In fact, unexplained weight loss is a sign of high blood sugar and may be an early sign of diabetes.

8 People with diabetes shouldn't exercise.

Quite the opposite – exercise is a vital part of any diabetes treatment plan. Regular exercise helps diabetics better use insulin

and lose weight – or maintain a healthy body weight. If you or the diabetic you care for haven't been active for a long time – or there are mobility issues, talk with your doctor about creating an exercise plan with your needs in mind. Your exercise routine doesn't have to be complicated – even simple walks are beneficial.

9 People who follow their treatment plan never have high blood sugar readings.

Unfortunately, even diabetes patients who follow their doctor's orders vigilantly may still have a high blood sugar reading every now and then. Diabetes isn't an easy disease to manage. As we age, our bodies are constantly changing, along with our reaction to stress, infections, illness, medications, exercise, and diet. All of these factors can impact a blood sugar reading. Try not to be discouraged by the occasional high reading. Stay on track with your treatment plan and work with your doctor on areas of concern.

10 People diagnosed with diabetes are doomed.

While it's true that diabetes is a long-term disease without a cure and that people who have the disease might experience some negative complications if their blood sugar levels are not monitored and remain elevated, there are ways to cope. Many diabetics lead active, busy lives while managing their disease. A diabetes diagnosis does not rule out travel, playing with grandchildren, and enjoying hobbies or sports. The key is to follow your doctor's treatment regimen, plan ahead, and take extra precautions when necessary, such as checking blood sugar more frequently when traveling.

There is no reason to give up enjoyable activities. By seeking appropriate diabetes treatment and making recommended lifestyle changes, many diabetics are able to delay or prevent the onset of diabetes-related complications – leading full lives while caring for their condition.



U.S. Prevalence of Diabetes

- 25.8 million children and adults (8.3% of the population)
- Age 65 or older 10.9 million
- Diagnosed 18.8 million people
- Undiagnosed 7.0 million people
- Prediabetes 79 million people

Roll Up Your Sleeve

Vaccines are important at every age



Most of us remember back-to-school season and the obligatory visit to our family doctor to receive the necessary shots. Although all grown up now, you never outgrow the need for preventive health care.

Many seniors are not receiving important vaccines and preventive health services – and, even more troubling, a large percentage of older Americans are not aware of the proper vaccines they need to stay healthy. The 2010 National Immunization Survey, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), found that there is a “kids-only” perception among the general public about the importance of vaccines, (i.e., American adults are not aware of recommended vaccines and the benefits).

Bottom line: Adults should still receive certain vaccinations to guard against illness and disease. Arm yourself for the cold and flu season – and protect yourself year-round – by knowing the vaccines recommended by CDC:

Vaccinations for ages 50+

Influenza (flu)

One dose annually, fall or winter. The flu vaccination is now not only recommended for individuals with higher risk levels (such as pregnant women, children and health care workers), but also for healthy people of all ages, from 6 months through senior adults. An annual vaccine can either decrease the likelihood of getting sick, or prevent the onset of disease altogether.

Pneumococcal

One dose for individuals up to age 64, and a second dose at age 65, if: 1) more than 5 years have elapsed since your first dose, 2) you smoke, have asthma, have had an organ transplant, or are taking a drug/treatment that lowers the body's resistance to infection (long-term steroids, certain cancer drugs or radiation therapy), or 3) you suffer from certain chronic medical conditions, such as Hodgkin's disease; lymphoma or leukemia; kidney failure; or a compromised immune system (from sickle cell anemia, HIV infection or AIDS, or a damaged spleen). For individuals age 65 or older who have never been vaccinated, only one dose is recommended.

Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough)

One dose if you are a health care worker, have contact with an infant, or simply want protection from whooping cough; and one booster every 10 years after initial vaccination. Talk with your doctor

if you haven't had at least three tetanus or diphtheria shots over your lifetime, or if you have recently received a deep or dirty wound.

Hepatitis B

Three doses, given over six months, if you have risk factors for hepatitis B virus infection (past injected drug use, past evaluation and/or treatment for a sexually transmitted disease, current/former health care workers and others exposed to infected blood or body fluids) or if you simply want protection from this disease.

Hepatitis A

Two doses, usually administered 6 to 18 months apart, if you have risk factors for hepatitis A virus infection (past injected drug use, or travel/work in research environments or other areas with potential exposure to virus) or if you simply want protection from this disease.

Varicella (chickenpox)

If you've never had chickenpox or were vaccinated but only received one dose – or don't recall – talk to

your doctor to find out if you need this vaccine.

Meningococcal

One dose, if you have one of several medical conditions (such as an immune system disorder or a damaged spleen). Sometimes your doctor may recommend additional booster doses, based on your individual health history and risk level.

Zoster (shingles)

One-time vaccination, recommended for adults age 60 and older.

If you travel outside the United States, you may need additional vaccines. Visit the CDC's website, www.cdc.gov/travel or call (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636), consult a travel agency, or talk with your doctor.

Visit www.seniorcircle.com for more information. Click on "Health Resources" and "Interactive Tools" to take the "Adult Immunizations Quiz."

Crushing your medication



Individuals of all ages can have difficulty swallowing pills. Though crushing, chewing or splitting your medication may make it easier to swallow, it can also change its effectiveness, according to the Institute for Safe Medication Practices.

When a pill is crushed, chewed or split, its drug may be released all at once, which interferes with the gradual process – or slow release – required of some medications, which may change how the drug works and might increase side effects.

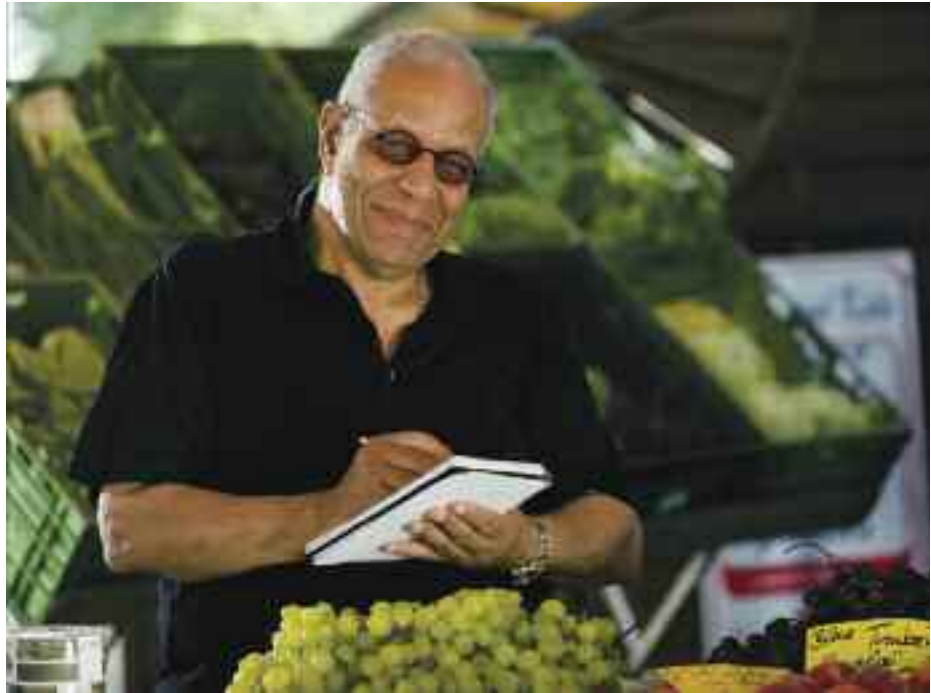
Since each medication is different, it is best to check the information leaflet that is provided by your pharmacist or simply ask your pharmacist before crushing, chewing, or splitting your pills.

Pen Mightier Than Keyboard for Memory

Want to remember something important? Write yourself a good old-fashioned note. As computer keyboards increasingly replace pens, new research suggests that critical brain activity is tied to the act of handwriting.

Several recent studies demonstrate that writing is a very different sensory experience than typing, each activating distinct parts of the brain.

"We are ... geared toward using physical objects – be it a book, a keyboard or a pen – to perform certain tasks," said study co-author Anne Mangen, associate professor at the University of Stavanger Reading Centre in Norway. Studies show that the movements in handwriting leave an imprint in the part of the brain called the sensorimotor that helps us recognize letters and words –



suggesting that the two seemingly separate acts of reading and writing are linked.

Brain scans also revealed that learning by handwriting prompted activity in a part of the brain known as Broca's area, but learning

by typing prompted little or no such activity. Another reason, researchers theorized, that writing may facilitate learning more readily than typing: handwriting simply takes more time.

Research observations were reported in the journal, Advances in Haptics.

Early birds may weigh less

People who are generally late to sleep and late to rise in the morning tend to gain more weight than people who go to bed early and wake up early, according to a study in the journal *Obesity*.

Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine researchers monitored 51 adults: 23 adults were considered late sleepers who, on average, went to sleep at 3:45 a.m. and woke up at 10:45 a.m.; the remainder went to sleep by 12:30 a.m. and woke up by 8:30 a.m.

The late sleepers consumed four meals per day – breakfast around noon, lunch around 2:30 p.m., dinner around 8:15 and another meal at 10 p.m. – and consumed an average of 248 more calories than the normal sleepers, who ate three meals and a snack. The late sleepers ate half as many vegetables as normal sleepers, twice as much fast food and more non-diet soda.



Hospitalists Provide Personalized Care

Medical specialty promotes communication and continuity

If you've had an overnight stay in the hospital recently, you probably received care from a diverse team of health care professionals: a surgeon or specialist, nurses, lab technicians, and perhaps a physical therapist or dietitian.

There's a growing specialty of doctors on staff at many hospitals specifically to enhance your personal care. These doctors, known as hospitalists, serve as your personal physician during your hospital stay, working hand-in-hand with your regular physician to coordinate all aspects of your care while you are in the hospital.

One of the fastest-growing medical specialties, the number of hospitalists across the United States has tripled over the past decade. Hospitalists are improving medical care by increasing the amount of direct contact patients have with a doctor while in the hospital.

What is a Hospitalist?

"Like a primary care doctor, a hospitalist is trained in internal medicine or certain specialties, such as pulmonary medicine," explains Tracy W. Pulliam, M.D., hospitalist at Crestwood Medical Center in Huntsville, Ala. "A hospitalist undergoes the same medical training as a physician who maintains a private practice, and is generally board certified and subject to the same credentialing requirements as your primary care physician."

The key difference is that a hospitalist focuses exclusively on caring for hospital patients, instead of splitting time between seeing patients in the hospital and maintaining a medical practice. "Because a hospitalist does not have this balancing act, they can focus all their time and attention on hospital patients," says Dr. Pulliam.

During your stay in the hospital, you'll still receive regular visits from your primary care physician. He or she will establish your treatment plan, and

the hospitalist ensures that your physician's directions for care are carried out.

Benefits for patients

Think of a hospitalist as your personal care coordinator: a combination of an attending physician, consultant, concierge, and patient advocate.

When you are admitted to the hospital, the hospitalist and your regular physician will function as a team. A hospitalist may perform some or all of the following duties:

- Assist you and your family with the admissions process, from paperwork to your personal health history.
- Oversee your recovery, monitoring your condition and communicating any changes to your physician.
- Coordinate lab work and diagnostic tests.
- Answer any family's questions or concerns.

"Because hospitalists are generally onsite 24 hours a day, seven days a week, you will be visited by the hospitalist at least once a day – and often more frequently – to check on you and make sure your physician's orders are being followed," explains Dr. Pulliam.

If your condition changes your hospitalist will immediately communicate this to your personal physician, and together, they will make adjustments to your treatment plan.

Once you are ready to leave the hospital, the hospitalist will send a final medical report of your inpatient treatment to your primary care physician, so that you and your doctor can build a future treatment plan.

With enhanced communication, more efficient delivery of care, and more time at the bedside, hospitalist care offers many benefits. The extra personal touch of a hospitalist can make the difference between a good hospital experience, and a great hospital experience.



Peace on Earth

Keep things simple – and real – for less stressful family holidays

During the holidays, family togetherness can be a great source of joy – as well as stress. A holiday gathering can become a melting pot of high expectations, clashing family traditions, personality conflicts, taboo topics and renewed grudges. The host or hostess must fill many roles, ranging from cook and event planner to diplomat.

A 2008 survey by the American Psychological Association found that 8 out of 10 people experience holiday stress. Women are more likely than men to report heightened stress during the holiday season – and, they're less likely to take time to relax or manage that stress in healthy ways. So, given the various demands of holiday hosting, how do you plan and execute the perfect family gathering – without pulling out your hair and raising your blood pressure in the process? Read on ...

Set realistic expectations. Every family has a history of relationships. Families tend to have rituals of communication and interaction – both good and bad. Typically, family members will revisit old grudges or differences in opinion when they are together. Acknowledge that some loved ones will act as they've always acted. Look for the positive, instead of focusing

on annoying habits. Accept your family as they are, rather than aspiring to be something you (and they) are not, and set differences aside for this short time together.

Lay the groundwork. If your holiday event involves family members who live far away or who you don't see or talk to regularly, e-mail those relatives to jump-start the conversation and reconnect before your visit. You'll have more to talk about and conversation will flow more easily when you're reunited in person.

Plan ahead. If you're hosting a large group for a holiday meal (or more than one meal), decide what to cook ahead of time and purchase all the ingredients you need. Also, make anything that can be prepared in advance – such as cakes or pies – early.

Keep it simple. Your house doesn't have to be spotless and your dinner table doesn't need to rival Martha Stewart-like perfection. Consider forgoing a sit-down meal – especially if you're serving a crowd – and instead, do a buffet. The atmosphere will be less formal and your guests will feel more comfortable. Cut back on the number of side items in your meal. Supplement the main course with store-bought side



items or baked goods. Focus on the most important part of the celebration: being together.

Ask for help. Remember that you don't have to pull off the feat of hosting the gathering alone. Most women – and some men – enjoy helping prepare a meal; in fact, one of the best bonding times for many family members and guests is working together in the kitchen. Ask everyone to bring a favorite recipe.

Don't overcommit. "All things in moderation," applies not only to a holiday meal, but also to the flurry of activities that often accompany a family visit. The purpose of the gathering is to enjoy each other. Family members don't expect to attend every holiday parade or concert; see every neighborhood light show; or have a whirlwind tour of the city. Your loved ones will also enjoy board or card games, popcorn and movies, or simple family time together. Ask family members what they would like to do. And don't forget to schedule downtime.



Stay on schedule. According to the Mayo Clinic, it's particularly important during the holidays to stick to your regular sleep, meal, and exercise schedule for good stress management. Avoid the temptation to overeat, and limit alcohol consumption. Taking care of yourself will help you deal with stressful situations during the holidays.

Take a break. A family visit doesn't have to involve continual togetherness. Family visits can be tiring for everyone – the hosts and the guests. After a certain amount of time together, families begin to experience stress – and this is perfectly normal. Allow family members some "alone" time to relax and recharge.

For more ideas, visit www.seniorcircle.com; click on "Health Resources", "Interactive Tools," and take the "Stress Trigger Assessment" or see "Health Tips," to learn more about "How to Keep Your Holidays Healthy."

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This is not insurance.

Men... Have another cup or two of coffee

Coffee is good for men, according to research recently released from the Harvard School of Public Health. The 12-year study of almost 48,000 male health professionals found that those who drank the most coffee had the least risk for prostate cancer, especially the deadliest forms of the disease.

Prostate cancer

The most frequently diagnosed form of cancer and the second leading cause of cancer death among U.S. men, affecting 1 in 6 men during their lifetime.

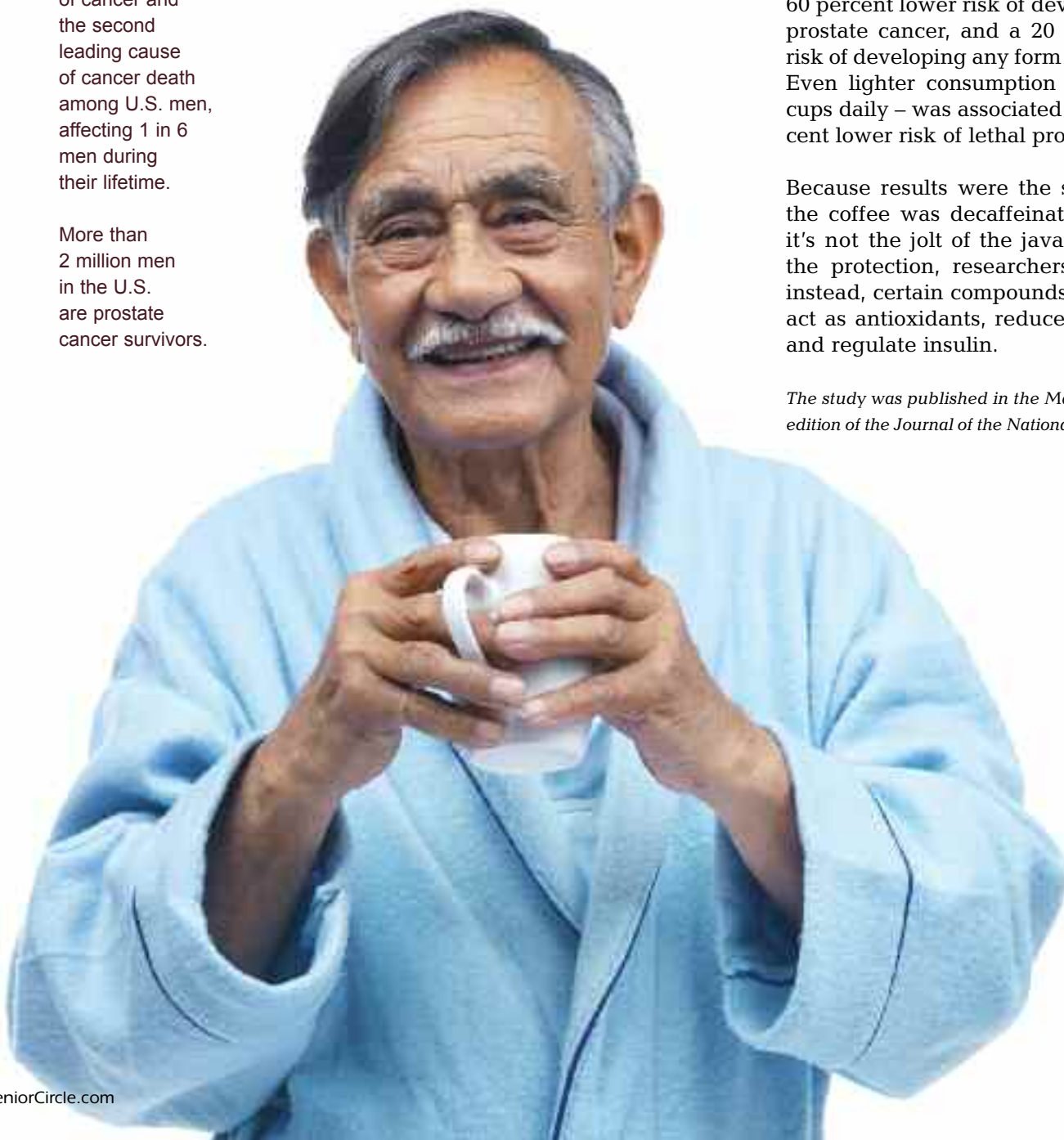
More than 2 million men in the U.S. are prostate cancer survivors.

The findings debunk a separate study, conducted 30 years ago, that concluded that coffee increased the risk of pancreatic cancer in men and women.

The new study concluded that men who drank the most coffee – six cups or more daily, caffeinated or decaffeinated – had a 60 percent lower risk of developing lethal prostate cancer, and a 20 percent lower risk of developing any form of the disease. Even lighter consumption – up to three cups daily – was associated with a 30 percent lower risk of lethal prostate cancer.

Because results were the same whether the coffee was decaffeinated or regular, it's not the jolt of the java that provides the protection, researchers believe, but instead, certain compounds in coffee that act as antioxidants, reduce inflammation and regulate insulin.

The study was published in the May 17, 2011 online edition of the Journal of the National Cancer Institute.



Nutrition After Fifty

Turning 50, 60 or even 70 isn't what it used to be. Americans are living longer than ever; however, the one desire as we live longer, is to feel good and stay healthy.

A new brochure from the American Institute for Cancer Research outlines how good nutrition and a healthy lifestyle can add vitality to your years and help you reduce the risk of cancer and other diseases. It contains tips, recipes, suggested meal plans, common questions and answers, and practical strategies for people of any age who would like to lower their risk for chronic illness and feel their best.

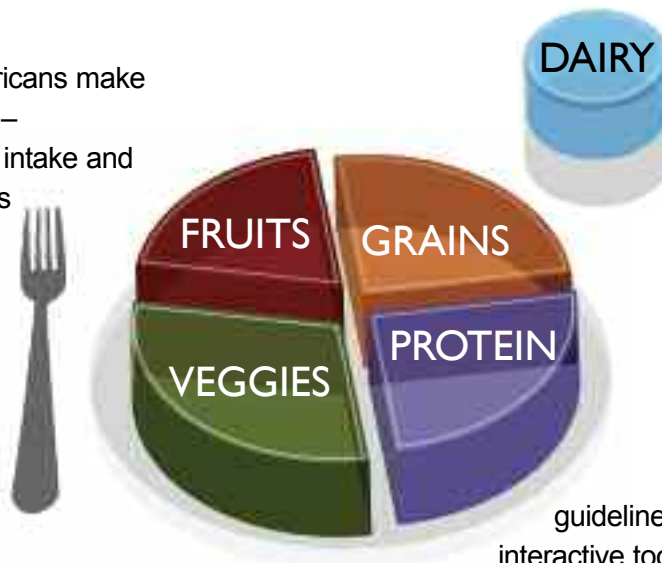
To order a copy of "Nutrition after 50: Tips and Recipes – Healthy Living for Cancer Prevention," visit http://www.aicr.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pub_nutrition_af. You can download and print a PDF or order up to six free brochures.



What's on Your plate?

USDA introduces new food "pyramid"

In an attempt to help Americans make healthy nutritional choices – better balancing their food intake and avoiding oversized portions – the United States Department of Agriculture has recently scrapped the old food pyramid and introduced a new, easier-to-interpret food pyramid – only now it's shaped like a plate.



As most of us eat off of plates, the plate icon is simple to interpret: a circle divided into roughly four quarters with half reserved for fruits and vegetables and the other two quadrants for grains and protein. A tangential small side dish represents dairy products.

To learn more about dietary guidelines and healthy diet tips, as well as interactive tools, visit www.choosemyplate.gov.

Between 1980 and 2000, obesity rates doubled among adults.
About 60 million U.S. adults are now obese.

The primary behaviors causing the obesity epidemic are physical inactivity and unhealthy diet.

Only about 25% of U.S. adults (and less than 25% of adolescents) eat the recommended five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

Confederate Belle Mary Louise Nosser

tells the story of the South



Mary Louise Nosser of the River Region Chapter in Vicksburg, Miss., loves the South and all things Southern – especially her home state. A native of historic Vicksburg, she shares the rich culture of the area with others as a tour guide for the Vicksburg National Military Park and the Mississippi Governor’s Mansion in Jackson. For those who want to learn about life below the Mason-Dixon Line, Mary Louise is a treasure trove of information, relayed with a charming Southern lilt, a gracious manner and a hint of Confederate pride.



"I can't remember a time I didn't love history," she says. "My favorite movies were always Civil War movies, and my heroes were always Confederates," she exclaims. "People all over the world are interested in our Civil War. There are even reenactment groups in Europe!"

Vicksburg is a river city steeped in Southern history, as a stronghold in the Civil War and the site of famous battles including the Siege of Vicksburg between the Union and Confederate Armies. The Vicksburg National Military Park is considered one of America's most beautiful national memorials.

The Governor's Mansion is a stately antebellum home and is the second oldest executive residence in the United States. It was the Governor's Mansion – and specifically, then-Gov. Kirk Fordice's inauguration in 1991 – that coaxed Mary Louise into becoming a storyteller of Southern history. Mary Louise had returned to Vicksburg after a 22-year career as an executive secretary for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as at three U.S. Air Force bases throughout the South. Her cousin served as the caterer for the inauguration and Mary Louise helped.

"It's such a beautiful place – one of only four antebellum governor's mansions in existence," she declares. "I asked if they could use any extra tour guides, and it turned out they could. They gave me a test about the house and the history. It was the first test I ever scored a 95 on," she smiles. Mary Louise assumed her role as a tour guide in 1992, and has been charming visitors to the executive residence ever since. She drives the 45-minute commute to Jackson to serve as a tour guide one day each week.

Bit with the storytelling bug, she later became involved in antebellum home tours and Elderhostel tours – travel programs for senior adults – even serving as an in-town host for five years.

In 2003, she decided to become a tour guide for the Vicksburg National Military Park. The tour guide test might have been daunting to some, but not to Mary Louise. Though she describes the test as a "humdinger," she says, "Fortunately, I'd been through the park 22 times previously, and had taken good notes."

She provides tours of the park one day a week and more, as needed, fielding questions with grace and good humor. "I have a variety of tidbits I share on the tour," she says.

In her spare time, she is involved with her church, sings in the choir, and is also a member of the Vicksburg Chamber Choir. "I can carry a respectable tune. You know what they say; the only way to get out of the church choir is to die," she smiles.

Mary Louise joined the River Region Senior Circle chapter last spring, and says coyly, "I'll admit to being 50." She's already taken fellow members on a tour of the Vicksburg National Military Park.

A good tour guide, Mary Louise says, must be knowledgeable, personable, and make people feel comfortable. "I don't like to rush people through the tour. Chances are the people visiting are only going to be here once. But the most important part is to be proud of your history and what you're representing."



The Mississippi Governor's Mansion.

A 19th century Civil War engraving of The Siege of Vicksburg by General Ulysses S. Grant and the Union Army of the Tennessee.

The Vicksburg National Monument with tombstones of the fallen Union and Confederate armed forces.

Are you getting the *right* amount of sleep?

Good Sleep Raises Quality of Life, Lowers Depression

People who get six to nine hours of sleep each night rate their quality of life higher and are less likely to feel depressed than those who sleep less, according to a new study. But, sleeping more than nine hours each night is ill-advised, researchers found.

For two years, the study examined 10,654 patients with an average age of 52. After accounting for age, gender, race, and marital status differences, researchers gathered information on the participants' quality of life, feelings of depression, and sleep duration.



Nighty -Night

Although sleep needs vary, most people require seven to eight hours of sleep each night to feel alert and well rested during the day.

Cleveland Clinic Sleep Disorders Center

They found that those with a "normal" night's sleep of six to nine hours reported high scores for quality of life and lower scores for depression severity, compared to those who slept fewer than six hours and those who slept more than nine hours.

"People may already expect that their quality of life could be decreased when they do not get enough sleep, but they may not realize that sleeping too much can also have a negative impact," said the study's principal investigator, Dr. Charles Bae, neurologist at the Cleveland Clinic Sleep Disorders Center in Ohio.

Sufficient shut-eye could stave off colorectal cancer

People who average fewer than six hours of sleep nightly may have an increased risk for colorectal adenomas, a dangerous type of polyp on the colon or rectum that can progress to cancerous tumors, a study published in the October 2010 issue of the journal *Cancer*, suggests.

According to Case Western Reserve University researchers, polyps became cancerous tumors in about 10 percent of 1,240 men and women followed for the study. Based on a series of lab tests and a detailed behavioral survey of patients who were scheduled for routine colonoscopies, the study found that 29 percent of patients who averaged fewer than six hours of sleep nightly developed the polyps, compared with 22 percent of those who had seven or more hours of sleep.

The results suggest that sleep may be a risk factor for colorectal cancer; however, the researchers note that additional research is necessary to confirm the findings.



ARKANSAS

Harris Chapter, Newport

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Austin (left) and Mr. and Mrs. J. C. McMinn enjoy monthly supper club at El Puente.



ILLINOIS

Gateway Regional Chapter, Granite City

Luan Briner and Corrine Dawson enjoy shopping during a tour of Anheuser-Busch Brewery in St. Louis.



Siloam Springs Chapter, Siloam Springs

Easter was celebrated with a potluck, bingo, and a visit from the Easter Bunny! (Seated) Rhelda Butler and Patsy Ballard; (Standing) Georgia Reed with the Easter Bunny.

Red Bud Chapter, Red Bud

Ruby and Norbert Liefer celebrated their 59th wedding anniversary at a Cinco de Mayo party.



Fannin Chapter, Blue Ridge

Sarah Lanning and Barbara Smith beat the Atlanta heat with a rose-covered umbrella during a visit to historic Oakland Cemetery, resting place of Gone with the Wind author Margaret Mitchell.



Union County Chapter, Anna

Alma Osterholm and Pat Williams decked out in St. Louis Cardinals red to root for their favorite baseball team.



FLORIDA
North Okaloosa Chapter, Crestview

To honor the U.S. Armed Forces, the chapter's 12th anniversary celebration featured a red, white and blue theme.

Vista Chapter, Waukegan

L-R: Maria Lavigna, Gerri Pederson and Rose Gonya at Lake of the Torches Casino.



KENTUCKY

Three Rivers Chapter, Louisa

Lynette Chaffin and Johnnie Lee show off their tulips won at the chapter's 12th anniversary party.



PENNSYLVANIA

Jennersville Chapter, West Grove

Ed and Stella O'Donnell got into the spirit of St. Patrick's Day during the chapter's Lunch Bunch.



MISSISSIPPI

River Region, Vicksburg

Lisa and Barbara enjoy the chapter's "Dinner Before Dark" outing.

Phoenixville Chapter, Phoenixville

A new holiday craft class had 25 members at the first meeting. Dave Katz proudly shows off his July 4th decoration.



NEW MEXICO

Eastern New Mexico Chapter, Roswell

During the chapter's cruise, cat lover Inge McElrath (owner of three cats) found a few felines to pet on the Greek Isle of Santorini.



Sunbury Chapter, Sunbury

The crafty sewing group recently made blankets from donated material for Sunbury Community Hospital's skilled nursing care unit. L-R: Rita Adams, Virginia Hollenbach, Doris Smith and Takako Jester.



Mimbres Chapter, Deming

Hiking Club members Peggy Pethtel, Bob McLean, Donna Furryk, and Rose Favorito enjoy an outing in Pinos Altos ("tall pines"), N.M.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Carolinas Chapter, Florence

Last October, the chapter traveled to Helen, Ga. Between scenic stops in the quaint alpine village, the group visited the Cabbage Patch Kids Hospital. L-R: Dot Plummer, Jean Hobson and Jean Clark.



TENNESSEE

Henderson County Chapter, Lexington

Relay For Life Fundraiser/Rook Tournament winners Larry Russell and Lloyd Latham.



Hill Chapter, Hillsboro

Members and Hill Regional Hospital volunteers Joyce Brown and Vickie Mitchell got a surprise visit from the Easter Bunnies (a.k.a. Chris Fitch and Beau Bailey).



Jackson Chapter, Jackson

L-R: Gay Deaton, Mary Lipe and Fitts Lipe get a workout at senior water aerobics.

Longview Chapter, Longview

More than 200 members attended the chapter's anniversary celebration, themed "Salute to Swing – the 30's and 40's Remembered." Pictured: M.C. and Janie Akin.



SkyRidge Chapter, Cleveland

Anne and Charles Cloud, Linda Cook and Beulah Grisham board the SS Natchez steamboat for a cruise on the Mississippi River during a New Orleans tour.



Navarro Chapter, Corsicana

Clara Wilson and Patsy Paschall outside the nation's capitol in Washington, D.C.



TEXAS

Cedar Park Chapter, Cedar Park

Three generations of poodle power arrive at the chapter's anniversary party! L-R: Deborah Mathison and Tekla Ronnbeck, are mother and grandmother, respectively, to Healthy Woman Advisor Dana Raykovich.



South Texas Chapter, Jourdanon

Jenny Schievelbein and Dot Vrana learned about wine making and tasting on a Texas Wine Country tour.

Cleveland Regional Chapter, Cleveland

Ambassadors Faye Carter (left) and Cliff Dunn (right) thank Cleveland Regional Medical Center Staff Educator Crystal Holloway (center), for her excellent presentation.



Weatherford Chapter, Weatherford

Easter hat contest winners Judy Gibson, Eveline Truex and Joyce Jackson.



*Your submission is permission to reprint. We cannot guarantee photos will be returned.

Senior Circle Chapters are sponsored by the affiliated hospitals of Community Health Systems.

Exercise May Protect the Brain From 'Silent Strokes'

Jogging, swimming, biking or other moderate to intense physical activity may protect the brain from "silent strokes," or small brain lesions that can lead to mental decline and increase the chances of a future stroke, a new study suggests.

"These silent strokes are more significant than the name implies because they have been associated with an increased risk of falls and impaired mobility, memory

problems and even dementia, as well as stroke," explained study author Dr. Joshua Z. Willey of Columbia University.

The researchers compiled information on the exercise habits of 1,238 people who had never had a stroke. About 43 percent said they did no regular exercise; 36 percent reported light physical activity, such as golf or walking; and 21 percent said they did moderate to intense exercise, such as tennis, swimming, racquetball, hiking or jogging on a regular basis.

About six years later, researchers scanned the brains of the participants, who by then averaged 70 years old. The scans revealed that 16 percent had experienced silent strokes. They found that those who reported engaging in moderate to intense activity were 40 percent less likely to have developed small brain lesions than those who got no regular exercise. There was no difference in the likelihood of brain lesions between those who engaged in light exercise and those who got no regular physical activity.

"Of course, light exercise has many other beneficial effects, and these results should not discourage people from doing light exercise," Dr. Willey noted.

The findings were reported online June 8, 2011 in the journal Neurology.

