



SPEAKING OF HEALTH

YOUR PARTNERS FOR LIVING A HEALTHIER LIFE

Winter 2005

Dear Reader,

We are once again pleased and proud to be Speaking with you Of Health! We only wish we could do so more often. We hope you find some information in this newsletter that is not only interesting, but of real use and benefit to you or a loved one. As you read, please note the many ways the Prevention Center is working to improve health in our communities, and our state. If you have any ideas about how we can do a better job, we would love to hear from you. We all convey our best wishes to you and your families for a healthy and prosperous 2005! David L. Katz MD, MPH, FACPM, FACP

Parental Guidance along the Way to Eat for Health & Weight Control

David L. Katz, MD, MPH, FACPM, FACP

Children growing up in the United States today will suffer more health problems and premature death over their lifetimes from the way they eat than from exposure to tobacco, alcohol, and drugs-combined. Wow.

As loving parents, responsible adults, and concerned citizens-we cannot let this happen.



Healthful eating should be added to the "list" (talking to strangers, sex, drugs, tobacco, etc.) that all responsible parents address with their children. Kids should

learn early that food can taste good, but be harmful, and that it's a shared "family value" to balance the pleasure from tasty food, with the pleasure from taking good care of one's body and health.

Overweight, although so common in our society remains stigmatized. **Children whose parents fuss about their weight are apt to feel ashamed, and their self-esteem is sure to take a beating.** When self-esteem is compromised in adults or children, the capacity to apply good judgment and make good food choices decreases.

Many parents do not have a comfortable relationship with food, or their weight, themselves, and thus are not prepared to provide a good role model for children. "Do as I say, not as I do" has never earned a child's respect, and never will.

Kids model the behavior of those they love.

To Promote Healthy Eating at Home, Here Are Some Tips to Keep in Mind:

- ◆ **Focus on eating well and being active-not on weight per se.** None of us controls our weight directly, but we can control what we eat and whether or not we move.
- ◆ **The emphasis should be on families and eating well together, not just on individuals.**
- ◆ **Attention to healthful living should be non-judgmental, with no criticism, real or implied.**

To support these goals, **parents need the skills and strategies to create a "safe nutritional environment" at home** in which kids can indulge their choices and preferences, while still maintaining excellent nutrition. This is the very goal to which my book, "The Way to Eat," is devoted. (See www.thewaytoeat.net for more information.)



We must protect our children from the hazards of the "toxic" nutritional environment in which they are growing up. To the extent we can change the environment and make it more supportive of health, we should. To the extent certain challenges in the modern nutritional environment are here to stay, we should learn to navigate around them-and take our children by the hand.

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CORNER

Partners Reducing Diabetes
in New Haven

Twenty-one Community Health Advisors (CHAs) from 13 churches in New Haven celebrated their graduation on September 16.

Each CHA participated in a 10-week training program over the summer that included information on **diabetes prevention and management** as well as important skills to teach.

With the goal of preventing diabetes and improving diabetes management, they became key health advisors for their families, friends, neighbors, church members, and the community. Activities over the upcoming year will include group education, individual counseling, support groups, health fairs, and cooking demonstrations.

The training program is part of an initiative funded by the Connecticut Health Foundation that was planned by a team of community partners to reduce the toll of diabetes among African Americans in the Dixwell and Newhallville neighborhoods.

The Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center is committed to developing community-driven health promotion programs based on the latest research. By measuring the effectiveness, we learn new ways to improve current and future programs.

A big congratulations to all who participated in the CHA training program!

For more information about diabetes or this program, call Maurice Williams at (203) 732-1265 x 300.



PREDICT Family Fun Day: L to R: Ruby White, Maurice Williams, Kimberlyn Haynes

What are the Danger Signs and Symptoms of Diabetes?

(Think of **HUT**)

Hunger

Frequent **U**rination

Thirst

Other signs include:

- Rapid weight loss with increased appetite
- Visual disturbance, blurring
- Slow healing of cuts and bruises
- Skin disorders, itching

If you have any of these symptoms, make an appointment with your doctor to be tested.

Who is at the Greatest Risk?

If you have one or more of the following, you are at risk for Type 2 Diabetes:

1. Overweight
2. 45 years old or older
3. Parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
4. Family background is African American, American Indian, Asian American, Hispanic American/Latino, or Pacific Islander
5. Have had diabetes during pregnancy or gave birth to at least one baby weighing more than 9 pounds
6. Blood pressure is 130/85 or higher, or you have been told that you have high blood pressure
7. HDL cholesterol is 35 or lower, or your triglyceride level is 250 or higher
8. Are fairly inactive, or you exercise fewer than three times a week

YALE-GRIFFIN PRC FINDINGS

Living Well While Dying

Anna-leila Williams, PA-C, MPH

Many Americans avoid thinking about death and dying, until they are face to face with a life-threatening crisis. With mounting physical, social, and financial concerns at the end of life, often the emotional and spiritual needs of dying patients get short-changed.

In an effort to find effective means of addressing spiritual needs at the end of life, **the Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center, along with community and academic partners, used funding from the National Institutes of Health to conduct a research study of people with end-stage AIDS.**

Fifty-eight study participants were enrolled from Leeway, Inc. in New Haven, an AIDS dedicated skilled nursing facility. The study participants were divided into 4 groups, receiving either daily massage, daily guided loving-kindness and forgiveness meditation, both the massage and the meditation, or no intervention at all.

The participants were surveyed before, during, and after the interventions with a questionnaire to see if there were any changes in their quality of life, overall and spiritually.

While the study population was too small to make definitive statements about end of life care, **it appears the combination of meditation and massage can have a powerful impact on the physical, functional, and spiritual well-being of people at the end of life.** It's possible that the physical isolation and alienation associated with having a life-threatening illness is addressed by the massage, thereby making patients more receptive to the effects of the loving-kindness and forgiveness meditation.

The Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center plans to continue research into improving quality of life at the end of life so that people can die well. Death is one inescapable human experience we all share. Embracing life fully, including nurturing our spiritual health, may help us find poignancy and beauty in death.



Ask the Integrative Medicine Center...

I'm trying to avoid getting diabetes. Can the Integrative Medicine Center help me?

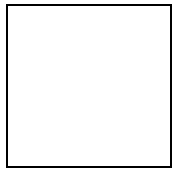
You're smart to be concerned about diabetes - it's a disease that is on the rise in the United States. Many factors contribute to your risk for getting diabetes, including being overweight, eating a poor quality diet, or having a family member with diabetes. While you can't change your gene pool, you can indeed do something about your eating habits and weight. A good place to start is to **have at least 5 fruits and vegetables each day (see ideas below)**. Dietary fiber is another great way to

keep blood sugars steady; you can get fiber from whole grain breads and foods like oats, beans, and lentils - and more of those vegetables!

The IMC clinicians can skillfully guide you over and around the many barriers to a healthy lifestyle. In addition to coaching you on how to find healthy and delicious alternatives to the foods you love, we can get you started on a physical activity program that fits your life. There are also some dietary supplements and herbs that may be helpful in preventing diabetes. We can make recommendations for supplements and herbs, tailored to your specific health needs. **The Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center is presently studying the effects of the dietary supplement Chromium in preventing diabetes. If you'd like to learn more about the Chromium study, contact Michelle at 732-1265, x 218 or Lindsey at 732-1265, x 302.**



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A Few Easy Ways to Increase Physical Activity. . .

Go outside for a mid-day walk when the temperature is warmest on these cold days. Start with 5-10 minutes then work up to 30 minutes. Pick up the pace as you are able from leisurely to brisk.

When watching TV, sit up instead of lying on the sofa;* Stand up while talking on the telephone.

Walk the dog;* Park farther away at the shopping mall and walk the extra distance.

Stretch to reach items in high places and squat or bend to look at items at floor level.

Take the stairs instead of the elevator;* Schedule exercise time on your calendar and treat it as any other

important appointment;* Walk around your building for a break during the work day or during lunch.

adapted from the American Heart Association website

and Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

FRUITS: slice a banana on your cereal, drink a glass of OJ, pack a pear to snack on, munch on dried fruits, toss some berries into your yogurt, slice a wedge of cantaloupe for dessert, bake a few apples to share **YUM!**

VEGGIES: say **YES** to lettuce, tomato, onions, and peppers, on your sandwich, carry carrots or sweet mini tomatoes for snacks, have a salad for lunch and with dinner, roast a bunch of veggies with a bit of olive oil. **YES!**

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