



CAREGIVER STRESS

Sharon is beginning to show signs of exhaustion due to her situation at home. Her 91 year old mother lives in a suite at the rear of her house. Her mother is showing signs of dementia and is in need of daily help. To further complicate Sharon's life her husband has been diagnosed with cancer and requires constant care. Sharon is in danger of complete burn out and therefore may not be able to help her Mom or husband at all.

Caring for the unwell or the elderly is part of what we do as members of a compassionate community. Whether we care for people in our own home or at other locations, the effect on our life is significant. Hospitals and care facilities have wonderful well trained staff but they don't always have the resources due to funding to provide the kind of care that we would want for our loved ones. The responsibility comes down to family members often to do the tasks which keep people comfortable, clean and safe. Checking on medications, changing bedding, feeding, and comforting a family member is hard work even if it is the work of love. Having a person come to clean once a week may relieve some stress or asking for help through agencies or even friends and support groups is recommended. In some cases funding may be available. Signs that you may be compromising your own health are:

- Feeling tired and irritable
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Gaining or losing weight
- Losing interest in your favorite activities
- Feeling overwhelmed

Sharon may be living next door to any one of us. If she does, it may be nice to pick up her groceries one day or invite her over for a cup of tea and lend her an ear.



ACHING JOINTS?

We just can't seem to avoid stiff, aching joints from time to time. Chronic achiness can sometimes be reduced by a change in lifestyle habits.

Firstly our joints are made up of cartilage, ligaments and tendons. Cartilage helps to keep bones from rubbing against each other.

Cartilage is made up of 65 to 80% water, so dehydration can have a direct affect on joint pain.

Ligaments connect bone to bone and tendons connect muscle to bone.

Eat brightly coloured fruits and vegetables to help connective tissues heal. Take Omega 3 oils to reduce inflammation in the joints. Exercise can help to improve joint health even though many people are fearful of causing more damage it is better to keep moving. Movement helps to strengthen the muscles around the joints and increase strength and energy. Exercise also encourages good sleep and weight loss. Extra pounds add to the load on your joints, every pound you lose takes 4 pounds of pressure off your knees. Don't get discouraged if you are feeling stiff and sore, with a bit of time you should be as good as new.



Recipe

Dr. Weil's

SWEET POTATO BARS



Crust

- 3/3 cup rolled oats
- 1/4 cup brown rice flour
- 1/4 cup shelled unsalted pistachios
- 1/4 cup pecans
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp grated orange zest
- 1/4 tsp sea salt
- 2 tbsps maple syrup
- 2 tbsps extra virgin olive oil

Filling

- 1 pound orange fleshed sweet potatoes, such as yams baked until soft
 - 2 eggs, beaten
 - 1/3 cup plain yogurt
 - 3 tbsps maple syrup
 - 1/2 tsp grated orange zest
 - 1/2 tsp ground cardamom
 - 1/2 tsp ground ginger
 - Freshly grated nutmeg, for dusting
- Pre heat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly oil an 8 inch square baking pan. Pulse the oats flour, pistachios, pecans, cinnamon, orange zest, salt, maple syrup and olive oil in a food processor until crumbly looking. Press firmly into pan and bake for 15 minutes.
- Mash sweet potato in a bowl and put 1 1/2 cups of the sweet potato in a food processor. Add the eggs, yogurt, maple syrup, orange zest, cardamom, and ginger, process until smooth. Pour the filling on top of the crust and smooth with spatula. Sprinkle with nutmeg. Bake for about 25 minutes, until the filling is set and just pulling away from the sides of the pan. Let cool completely on a wire rack, then cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours before slicing into 16 bars.



Holiday Health Tips

This is the season to be jolly but hopefully not in the intoxicated or overly indulgent way! Here are a few reminders to stay healthy.

- Don't let yourself get too hungry. Keep a supply of healthy snacks on hand. When you get overly hungry it is easy to eat fattening foods.
- Eat colourful foods, go ahead fill up your plate with a lot of fruits and vegetables.
- Eat a good breakfast; it will help to keep your energy up throughout the day.
- Make sure that you enjoy some special holiday treats. Choose some foods that you only get during the holidays.
- Dilute your alcohol with club soda or sparkling water and remember that eggnog is really a dessert.
- Schedule in physical activity as a priority. Parties and social gatherings are important but so is your health.
- When it comes to gift giving keep it within the budget. Loving friendships are not based on expensive presents.
- Re-energise with quiet time, give yourself permission to relax.
- Stop trying to be perfect, most people notice the warmth and comfort not the decorations or details. So focus on giving your heart felt feelings and good wishes.

To contribute ideas to the Wellness Newsletter please contact
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The Comox Recreation Department "Steps" up to help with Rehabilitation

Comox Recreation Director Mandy Johns and Lyne L'Heureux Coordinator of Rehabilitation Services for St Joseph's Hospital are pleased to announce the addition of a recumbent "NUSTEP" to the Comox Community Centre's Fitness Studio. NUSTEP's will now be used by both St Joseph's rehabilitation unit and the Comox Recreation Department to work with those patients recovering from injury, surgery or stroke. "The rehabilitation unit was overtaxed and we felt that we were in the position to offer another option to those that needed further rehab outside of St Joseph's. We also have the equipment that can offer a progression in the journey towards healing in a very non-intimidating and inclusive atmosphere" states Johns. The NUSTEP offers stabilization gloves and lower extremities bracing accessories that can be added to offer extra support and ability. The seat swivels 180 degrees to allow easy access when transferring from a wheelchair or when using mobility aides such as a walker or crutches.



Emergency Preparedness



An emergency could happen in an instant. With no warning and with no time to prepare it could be scary. Access to phones, gas, water, sewer, and electrical services may be cut off. You may be on your own for an extended period of time.

Give your family a chance to survive a disaster with less fear and chaos through education. The Comox Fire Hall is offering a Personal Emergency Preparedness Program which is designed to provide the information, training and skills necessary for individuals and families to be self-sufficient after a disaster.

Next class is scheduled for November 28th 10am-12pm
Registration is required.
Call 250-339-2255

continued

The community centre also offers a second cardio/strength option for those with limited lower body function with an upper body ergo meter or "Krankcycle". Both the Krankcycle and the NUSTEP may also be used very effectively by the mainstream population for challenging cardiovascular workouts.