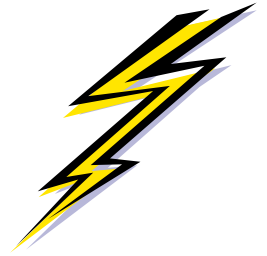




HOT FLASHES



Newsletter of the Women's Mid-Life Health Program, Women's Health Centre

Winter 2011 Edition

We Have Moved!

By Sarah Nixon-Jackle, RN

Women's Mid-Life Health has moved! On September 1, 2011 our office left its original home at St. Paul's Hospital former nurses' residence to join the Women's Health Centre at Saskatoon City Hospital on the main floor.

More good news—we are now a funded program of the Saskatoon Health Region! This is great progress for a program that is much needed by women of Saskatchewan. We are available to serve women all over the province.

Our services remain the same: our Referral Clinic is now running on Wednesday afternoons and Thursday mornings; our Newsletter and Public Forums will continue be provided throughout each year (however the cost of these programs still require us to fundraise); our Website will continue to provide information at www.menopausecentre.org. There you will find news about programs we are running and any upcoming events. We continue to give presentations in other health regions and women's groups around the province...if we can get there, we will come!

You may have noticed that we missed a summer edition of the newsletter and a fall public forum. Getting ready for the move and preparing for the Art and Adventure Dinner and Auction took a lot of our time, so... this newsletter is several pages longer than our usual since we know that you look forward to the variety of articles and recipes.

Watch for a spring public forum, topic yet to be decided. Any suggestions? Let us know at info@menopausecentre.org

Thank You

Thank you to St Paul's Hospital Ambulatory Care for so graciously sharing clinic space with us and being top notch colleagues!

We thank our many contributors, funders, and many volunteers for the donation of money, grants, time, support, and encouragement that have kept us running since 2003. Bravo, to you who have shared our vision to Inform, Support and Inspire women!

New Contact Information

Women's Mid-Life Health Program
Women's Health Centre, Saskatoon City Hospital
701 Queen Street, Saskatoon, S7K 0M7

Phone: 306-655-7681 (Sarah, nurse)
Appointments: 306-655-7682 (Kathy, Office Assistant)
Fax: 306-655-8915
Email: info@menopausecentre.org
www.menopausecentre.org

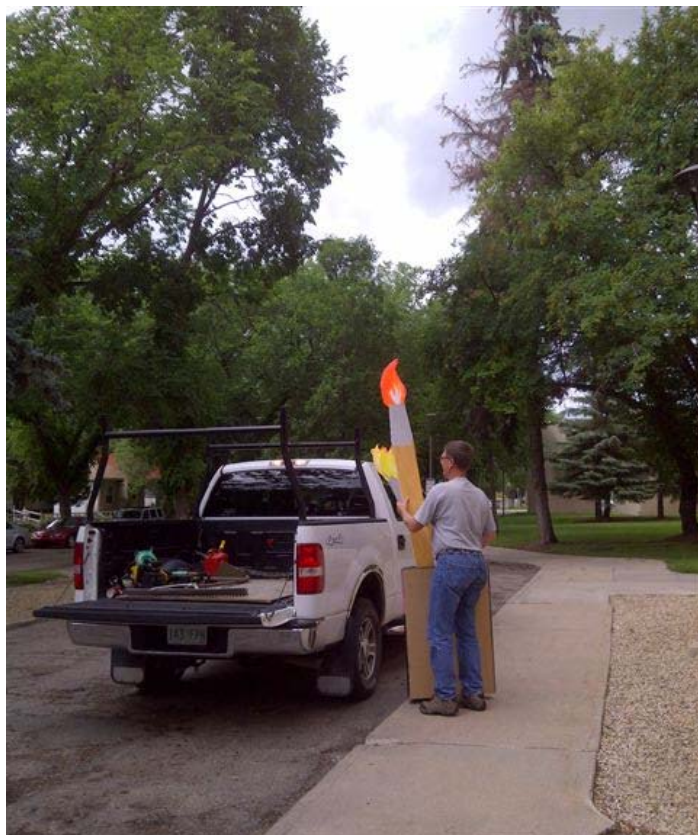
Welcome Women's Mid-Life Health Program!

By Joan Santoro, Manager of Nursing, Women's Health Centre

On behalf of the Women's Health Centre at Saskatoon City Hospital we would like to welcome the Women's Mid-Life Health Program to our team. We are very excited to work with and learn from the expert Mid-life Health staff. We believe that by integrating the Women's Mid-Life Program into the Women's Health Centre we have taken significant steps forward toward achieving a common goal of transforming the care experience for women in an ambulatory setting. Together by sharing the same vision we can provide exceptional care.

I would also take the opportunity to welcome any questions regarding the Women's Health Centre and the service we provide to please call my office at 655-0817.

Thank you.



Moving Day!

Seasonal Mood Changes

By Audrey Kinzel, Ph.D., Registered Doctoral Psychologist

Winter? Do you dread it or embrace it? What about the Holiday season? Is it a time of seeking the perfect gift, preparing the perfect meal, and striving to make everyone happy or a time to enjoy the company of family and friends? How you approach both seasons, winter and festive, will impact your mood, energy, thoughts and actions.

Winter in Saskatchewan, with its characteristic cold temperatures and long nights, together with the holiday/festive season, combine to create a season many individuals experience as stressful and depressing. In addition, dealing with a loss including death or divorce, existing stressors including financial or health concerns, on top of the numerous demands placed on women in the weeks preceding the holidays, results in many women feeling overwhelmed during the holidays. These feelings may continue on into the New Year when the cold and darkness seem to never end.

If you find yourself feeling sad, tired, dreading the holidays, and stressed out you are not alone. In my clinical practice I have seen female clients who begin to notice the impact of winter on their mood long before the season officially arrives while other women begin to dread the upcoming holiday season in October and still others experience a double whammy when they are negatively impacted by both the onset of winter *and* the festive season.

Fortunately, low mood and stress, regardless of the source (winter or holiday season) may be assisted by starting and stopping (specific behaviours and thoughts). Here are some suggestions:

STOP:

Thinking you need to do it all (all the cleaning, shopping, organizing, cooking, and preparing). Instead ask for, expect, and allow others to help you. This may require you to change your standards to allow the other person to do the task in their own way.

Trying to tough it out and push through. Instead do something different in order to get a different result. For example, rather than thinking you need to just tough it out and make the festive meal because others expect you to do it, try something different such as having a potluck meal where everyone contributes.

START:

Setting limits. Consider having the grandchildren visit for an afternoon rather than the weekend even though your son/daughter would like you to take care of

them for the weekend. Or, consider helping others on your time-line so you can schedule self-care into the day.

Getting into the light either by going outside to experience natural sunlight or replacing regular light bulbs with full spectrum light bulbs (available at health food stores). Alternatively, turn on several lights in the morning to help yourself get energized for the day.

Taking time for yourself by going for a walk, having a bath, exercising, getting fresh air, or by taking a break by simply sitting to watch the birds.

However, not all moods are managed by starting or stopping thoughts or behaviours. If your mood has persisted for a period of time, or is impacting your day to day functioning, or if you are stuck in struggle mode, or having thoughts of suicide then seek professional help from a psychologist or qualified counsellor. Talk to your family physician who will help you find a professional mental health provider. If you are unable to schedule an appointment in the near future or require immediate assistance then 24-hour help lines are available including Saskatoon Crisis Intervention Service 933-6200, or the Saskatoon Sexual Assault and Information Centre at 244-2224. Finally, winter and the holiday season need not be depressing seasons.

Doing one thing different than usual may result in significant change in your mood.



Exercise and the Neuroplasticity of the Brain

By Linda Jean Remmer, B.A., B.S.W., R.S.W., M.A., R.T.C.

I recently trained in Chicago to teach a “Delay the Disease” exercise program specifically for those with Parkinson’s disease (PD). This disease remains, for the most part, a mystery of medical science. For reasons unknown, certain brain cells stop producing Dopamine and they die. The lack of Dopamine affects our movement, strength and balance.

Experiencing the diagnosis of PD is a life-altering event. It is not a condition you would desire, but PD does cause you to reassess your priorities and make lifestyle choices that can affect the course of this disease. An exercise agenda may offer stimulation to the various neurologic pathways, increasing the capacity to counteract the progression of symptoms or reverse them.

A regular exerciser for the past 20 years, I started to run in my 50’s, coming first in my age category in 10 K races. But gradually in 2009 my left side tightened up and I could no longer lift weights using my left arm. My gait shortened up and my balance deteriorated so I could no longer run, even on a treadmill. I could hardly walk up stairs and had to pull myself using my right arm holding on to the banister. When I was finally diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease it was a relief to know what was wrong with me. Once I was on the medication (which only masks the symptoms), I intuitively started yoga to stretch out my muscles, as I had the rigidity type of PD. I returned to the gym to gradually increase my weight training and cardio.

Today my regimen is to go to the gym and work with a trainer three times a week, alternating with two to three yoga sessions. I am running again and when I share the trainer with Dr. Vicki Holmes, I am able to do the same program as she does and she will con-

firm my balance is now better than hers! I also have a dance lesson with my husband once a week. The Chicago training program was with a group of healthy physical therapists and trainers. I kept up with them all for four hours and no one could tell I had Parkinson’s. So how is this possible with such a degenerative neurologic disease? I am living proof of the concept of synaptic plasticity, or the neuroplasticity of the brain.

For most of the twentieth century, scientists held that the brain was hardwired once fully developed in adolescence, meaning we’re born with all the neurons we’re going to get. We were told that once brain cells die, for example with alcohol abuse, they never grow back.

But guess what? They do grow back - by the thousands. Not until scientists became handy with advance imaging tools that enabled them to peer into the brain did they find conclusive evidence, which was published in a seminal 1998 paper.

Basically, neurons are born as blank-slate stem cells. They go through a developmental process in which they need to find something to do in order to survive.

Most of them don’t. In order

for a cell to survive and integrate, it has to fire its axon. Exercise spawns neurons and the stimulation of environmental enrichment helps those cells survive.

Learning the asanas of yoga, the positions of ballet, the skills of gymnastics, the contortions of Pilates, and the forms of karate all engage nerve cells throughout the brain.

(continued on page 5)



Exercise and the Neuroplasticity of the Brain (continued)

Any motor skill more complicated than walking has to be learned, and thus it challenges the brain. Add in the fun and social aspects, and you're activating the brain and muscles all the way down through the system.

It's about growth versus decay, activity versus inactivity. The body was designed to be pushed, and in

pushing our bodies we push our brains too.
It is your choice.

~ Linda Jean Remmer, B.A., B.S.W., R.S.W., M.A., R.T.C.

(If you have Parkinson's or know of someone with Parkinson's and are interested in the "Delay the Disease" exercise program call Linda Jean @ 249-5620)

Unraveling the Mysteries of Menopause

By Vicki Holmes, MD

It is fascinating to observe the evolving discoveries that research is producing in the area of mid-life women's health. On one hand, you cannot believe how complex our bodies are; on the other, that good health can be simplified by sticking to good ol' common sense.

We are learning a lot about "pro-inflammatory" states that lead to diabetes and heart disease. Two new categories of high risk for developing heart disease have been added for women. The first category is two types of arthritis - rheumatoid and lupus. The second is related to obstetrics - a history of hypertension, gestational diabetes, preeclampsia and polycystic ovaries. The typical risk measurement, The Framingham Risk Score, takes into account your age, gender, total cholesterol, HDL, smoking history and systolic blood pressure. However in women this does not tell the whole story, so to get a more accurate picture we must calculate your body's inflammation levels by doing an "hsCRP" blood test and add the results to the Reynold's Risk score that determines your risk of heart disease.

It is now looking like women who have more vasomotor symptoms (hot flashes and night sweats) have worse cardiovascular risk, higher blood pressure and cholesterol, increased heart rate and cortisol levels and, on top of all that, more verbal memory dysfunction.

The Metabolic Syndrome is an increased inflammatory state in your body that leads to diabetes and heart disease and is three times more common in menopause.

The research supporting pro-inflammatory effects is mounting at astronomical rates. **This is the good and simple part, because we can combat inflammation!** But how can we do it?

1. **Exercise daily.** Movement creates the environment in our muscles that allows sugar to be taken up with a normal amount of insulin therefore preserving our pancreas. It also promotes good heart health.
 2. **Maintain a healthy weight.** Putting fat around your internal organs is a major factor in **creating** the pro-inflammatory state.
 3. **Eat a diet that avoids pro-inflammatory foods.** You know it!! Fast foods, foods with trans fats, processed foods, food additives, foods high in omega 6 all cause inflammation in your body. For more information read Leslie Becks book "Foods that Fight Disease".
 4. If you have severe hot flashes and night sweats, your body actually **needs hormones to stay healthy!**
- See – it's complex, yet simple!**

Put Life Back In Your Life!

By Roberta Hoiness, BScPT, Health Educator, LiveWell with Chronic Conditions, Saskatoon Health Region

"I was tired. I hurt all the time. It felt like my health problems were telling me what I could or couldn't do. **LiveWell with Chronic Conditions** workshops put me back in charge. Now I have the energy to do the things that matter. I put life back in my life."

Do you have a long-term health condition such as asthma, diabetes, arthritis, depression, lung disease, heart conditions, cancer, M.S., osteoporosis, or others? **LiveWell with Chronic Conditions** workshops provide practical suggestions and support to help build your confidence in coping with the everyday challenges of a chronic condition.

LiveWell with Chronic Conditions workshops are **free**, fun, interactive and informative. You and 12 to 14 people meet in the community for 2.5 hours once each week for 6 weeks with two trained peer leaders who live with a chronic condition themselves. You also receive a **free** resource text entitled "Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions" by Kate Lorig RN, DrPH.

Some of the topics covered in the workshops include:

- Coping with pain and fatigue
- Managing stress, frustration, anxiety and other difficult emotions
- Healthy eating and exercise
- Communicating with healthcare providers, family and friends
- Setting effective goals and action plans.

If you or someone you care for lives with a chronic condition, **LiveWell with Chronic Conditions** can help you better manage your health and maintain an active and fulfilling life. The workshops are **free**, and you don't need a doctor's referral to attend. Simply call to register.

For more information or to register call:

- In Saskatoon 655-LIVE or 655-5483.
- For classes throughout Saskatchewan call 1-877-548-3898

Geocaching

By Mary Scheidl

Geocaching? What's that?" Three years and 2,452 found geocaches later, my husband and I can tell you, because it has become a huge part of our lives.

Geocaching is a real-world outdoor treasure hunting game. A popular description of geocaching is using your GPS and multi-million dollar satellite systems to find Tupperware in the bush! This isn't far from the truth except that the containers range from inexpensive containers such as Lock n' Lock, ammo cans, peanut butter jars, and just about anything creative and child-friendly that can hold a logbook for geocachers to sign with their established code name when they find the cache.

This international activity is made up of people of all ages who enjoy a bit of adventure. You can geocache as much or as little as you want, when you want, alone or with others, in urban and rural settings. We've been to places in Saskatoon that we never knew existed and have seen more of rural Saskatchewan than we ever have. Our camping trips to the Rockies have taken us on hiking trails that we would have otherwise ignored. Geocaching has provided us with hours of entertainment, exercise, fresh air, and new friendships.

Anyone can access the geocaching website at

www.geocaching.com. Signing up is free, or for \$30 US a year you can become a premium member. Everyone who signs up gives themselves a geocaching name; ours is Prairie Chicken.

Saskatoon's geocaching community is growing larger every year. We have met wonderful people through this group. There is now a Saskatoon Geocachers Association; check out their website at <http://saskatoongeocachers.weebly.com/>

So if you see someone poking around a shrub, inspecting a spruce tree, or showing a lot of interest in a power pole, it's likely a geocacher!



Making Seasonal Baking Healthier (while keeping the taste)

By Donnelly Sellers, Registered Dietitian

It's that time of year again. The holidays are here and that means holiday parties, big family dinners and lots of delicious baking. While it can be hard to resist the temptation of all of these holiday goodies, when it comes to your baking, here are a few tips to help make your holiday baking a little bit healthier.

- Try reducing the fat and sugar in a recipe by a few tablespoons. Often a recipe may contain more fat and sugar than is actually needed, and you can decrease it without even noticing the difference!
- If a recipe calls for a liquid fat such as oil, unsweetened fruit purees like apple-sauce, pear, prune or pumpkin, and low-fat dairy products such as sour cream, plain yogurt or buttermilk can be used to replace up to 75% of the fat in a recipe.
 - Often the fruit puree will add a bit of sweetness as well. This provides an opportunity to decrease the sugar by a few tablespoons.
- If you are really adventurous, try using sweet potato or squash puree!
- Replace up to 50% of all-purpose flour with whole wheat flour for added fibre and nutrients.
 - If you are finding that the whole wheat flour is making your baking too tough or gummy, try to find some whole wheat cake or pastry flour instead.

When it comes to replacing the sugar in a recipe, there really is no caloric benefit to using ingredients like honey or syrup instead. These ingredients, when used instead of sugar, can affect the texture and flavor of your baking as they are generally sweeter than granulated sugar and are liquid, so they will not have the same structure as items baked with sugar. When using artificial sweeteners or natural sweeteners like stevia instead of sugar, make sure to following the manufacturer's substitution instructions as these products tend to be sweeter than sugar so you may not need to use as much.

NOTE: When modifying a recipe to reduce fat or sugar, avoid over mixing the batter. Also, you may find that it requires a shorter baking time, so watch carefully!

Double Chocolate Brownies

1½ cups canned black beans, drained, rinsed and pureed
¾ cup whole-wheat flour
½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
3 large eggs
1 cup granulated sugar
¼ cup unsweetened applesauce
3 tbsp canola oil
2 tsp vanilla
¼ cup miniature semi-sweet chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line an 8-inch (20 cm) square metal baking pan with foil or parchment paper, leaving a 2-inch (5 cm) overhang at opposite ends. Lightly spray foil or parchment with non-stick cooking spray.

In a large bowl, combine beans, flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt. With a wooden spoon, stir in eggs, sugar, applesauce, oil and vanilla until well blended. Stir in chocolate chips. Pour batter into prepared pan.

Bake for 30-35 minutes, or until just a few moist crumbs cling to a tester inserted in the centre. Do not over-bake. Let cool in pan on a wire rack. Using overhangs as handles, remove from pan and transfer brownies to a cutting board. Cut into squares.

Makes 16 squares

Nutritional Information per Serving:

Calories	160
Protein	4 g
Fat	5 g
Carbohydrate	26 g
Fibre	4 g
Sodium	105 mg

Recipe adapted from: Bake It Up! Developed and distributed by the Nutrition Resource Centre, Ontario Public Health Association.



Eggnog Sugar Cookies

¼ cup butter, softened
1 tbsp canola oil
¾ cup granulated sugar
1 large egg
1 tsp vanilla
1 tsp rum extract
1 ⅔ cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp cinnamon
½ tsp nutmeg
¼ tsp salt

In a large bowl, beat the butter, oil and sugar with an electric mixer until well combined. Add the egg, vanilla and rum extract and beat for a minute, until smooth and light.

In a small bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt. Add to the sugar mixture and stir by hand until you have soft dough. Shape the dough into a disc, wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for an hour or until well chilled.

When you're ready to bake, preheat the oven to 350°F. Roll out the dough between two sheets of wax paper – or on a surface very lightly dusted with a combination of flour and sugar – until it's ⅛ - ¼ inch thick. Cut out the cookies using a 2-3 inch cookie cutter or glass rim. Re-roll the scraps once to get as many cookies as possible.

Place the cookies an inch apart on a cookie sheet sprayed with non-stick spray. Bake for 10-12 minutes, until pale golden around the edges. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.

Makes 2 dozen cookies

Nutritional Information per Cookie:

Calories	82
Protein	1.2 g
Fat	2.8 g
Carbohydrate	13 g
Fibre	0.3 g

Recipe from: One Smart Cookie by Julie Van Rosendaal, © 2000. Published by Whitecap Books.



The Women's Mid-Life Health Centre's Romantic Art and Adventure Auction was a great success!

Thank-you to all of the artists, sponsors, and adventure donors who gave generously to our event. Thanks also to our many incredible volunteers who put in many hours of work and helped make our event run seamlessly! Without the support of so many wonderful people, mid-life women in Saskatchewan would not have a clinic to call their own.

Wendy Verity
Co-chair, Art and Adventure Committee

Sponsors:

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Cherry Insurance	Renaissance Investments
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Les and Irene Dubé	Star Phoenix
	Vertex Management/Ob & Gyne Consultants



Web Links

- Sexual Health & Menopause www.menopause.org
New, free online resource for mid-life women from the North American Menopause Society. This online resource helps women get a handle on how menopause can affect your sex life, explores changes, treatments and partners counselling. It is divided into sections by topic. An excellent resource.
- The Heart Truth newsletter@thehearttruth.ca is a newsletter that drops into your email with a helpful heart health tip and motivation to "Achieve a heart-healthy lifestyle - one beat at a time".

This newsletter is made possible through financial support by Merck.

Hot Flashes Now Available Electronically

Like other charities, the Women's Mid-Life Health Program works to keep up with the times on a limited budget.

We're combining both in our offer to send your copy of the Hot Flashes newsletter via email. Please contact us at info@menopausecentre.org if you prefer this delivery option.



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