

Wellness Program Newsletter

Wellness Matters

All benefitted and benefit-eligible municipal employees, retirees, and benefit-eligible family members in East Longmeadow, Hampden, HWRS, Longmeadow, LPVEC and Wilbraham may participate in any of the programs and classes listed. Other employees, family members and friends are also invited to participate, however will not be eligible for incentives.

Coordinator's Corner

Here we are again at the start of another school year! While many of us were looking to put the events of 2020 away and begin anew, we get a another dose of reality with the delta variant. My hope and wish for all of you is that you have a peaceful transition to working (at home, in office, or a combination) and schooling (in-person, remote, with/without restrictions/guidelines).

Please do what you can to stay safe and healthy. One vaccine has been approved by the FDA and all three are readily available to protect our health. Let's do what we can to put this virus in our rearview mirror.

Maybe we just concentrate on being in the present; being mindful of what you might need and what others may be going through. It's always a good day to be kind.

Let me know what you might need~

~Lyn

For more information on anything in this newsletter, please contact me at lyn@scantichealth.org. You are invited to "like" us on FB for info on various health topics:

https://www.facebook.com/scanticvalleywellness/

Visit us on the web! www.scantichealth.org

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September is National Cholesterol Education Month

While our bodies need a certain amount of cholesterol to work properly, too much of the "bad" type can be dangerous. Over time, cholesterol and fat can collect in the inner walls of the arteries - including the ones that supply blood to the heart.

This buildup can cause atherosclerosis, a narrowing of the arteries and a major cause of cardiovascular disease. People with high levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL), also called the "bad" cholesterol, are at greater risk for cardiac events.

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that travels through the blood in carrier vehicles called lipoproteins. Cholesterol is in some foods we eat and is also made by the liver. It serves a variety of functions. For example, it helps create the outer coating of our cells and aids the body in making vitamin D and certain hormones.

Excess amounts of dietary fats get absorbed by the body and raise bad cholesterol in the blood.

Saturated and trans fats raise LDL cholesterol levels in the blood, thereby increasing the risk of heart disease. Foods that are high in animal fat (full-fat milk, cheese, meat) and/or prepared with butter, shortening or partially hydrogenated oils and sweets (cookies and cakes) are often the main culprits.

Taken from: High Cholesterol - Overview | CardioSmart - American College of Cardiology



Each September, I enjoy sharing YOUR accomplishments! Here is the run-down from July '20 through June '21:  
**121 SVRHT** members earned money in the *Wellness Works* program **67** participated in the Maintain Campaign  
**~30** employees participated in **20** Pilates classes throughout the year **50** watched the Mediterranean Cooking series  
Yoga classes were enjoyed over **30** times by a devoted group of employees **37** colonoscopies completed  
**25+** of you viewed the *Wellness Concepts* webinars **38** employees watched the HNE webinar series

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**September is Healthy Aging<sup>®</sup> Month**, the national observance month created by the Healthy Aging<sup>®</sup> organization over 25 years ago. Enjoy these 10 Tips:

1. Be realistic. If you feel overwhelmed by some activities (yours and/or your family's), learn to say NO! Eliminate an activity that is not absolutely necessary. You may be taking on more responsibility than you can or should handle. If you meet resistance, give reasons why you're making the changes. Be willing to listen to other's suggestions and be ready to compromise.
2. Shed the "superhero" urge. No one is perfect, so don't expect perfection from yourself or others. Ask yourself, "What really needs to be done? How much can I do? Is the deadline realistic? What adjustments can I make?" Don't hesitate to ask for help if you need it.
3. Take one thing at a time. For people under tension or stress, an ordinary workload can sometimes seem unbearable. The best way to cope with this feeling of being overwhelmed is to take one task at a time. Pick one urgent task and work on it. Once you accomplish that task, choose the next one. The positive feeling of "checking off" tasks is very satisfying. It will motivate you to keep going.
4. Move more, sit less. The first key guideline for adults is to move more and sit less. This recommendation from health.gov is based on new evidence that shows a strong positive relationship between increased sedentary behavior and increased risk of all-cause mortality, heart disease, and high blood pressure. All physical activity, especially moderate-to-vigorous activity, can help offset these risks. Even for inactive adults, replacing sedentary behavior with light-intensity physical activity is likely to produce some health benefits.
5. Aerobic exercise. For substantial health benefits, adults should do at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) to 300 minutes (5 hours) a week of moderate-intensity, or 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) to 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity. Preferably, it would be best if you spread aerobic exercise throughout the week.
6. Muscle strengthening. Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities of moderate or greater intensity, involving all major muscle groups on two or more days a week, as these activities provide additional health benefits.
7. Review your daily diet and make necessary changes. Choose a diet that emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products; includes a variety of protein foods such as seafood, lean meats, and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), soy products, nuts, and seeds.

Chose a diet low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars and stay within your daily calorie needs

If you need some free help, try the Start Simple with MyPlate app. This app is easy-to-use and helps you pick simple daily food goals, see real-time progress, and earn badges along the way. After you log in your age, sex, height, weight and physical activity, you receive an instant, customized food plan.

8. Volunteer. Change the world by volunteering. Become a United Nations Volunteer. The UN Volunteers website currently lists over 150 ideas from around the world. Here are a few examples: volunteer to make a field hockey website for kids in Sierra Leone, Africa; write up UN volunteer stories from the Asia Pacific; teach elementary students via Skype in southern India once a week. Or you can volunteer to translate, proofread and develop websites.
9. Dream and then get to it. Visit the U.S. National Parks in Google Earth which brings the national parks to you in a Google Earth guided tour through 31 different parks around the country.
10. Launch your next career. Capitalize on your career experience and start a new one. Yes, enjoy a brief "retirement." Travel, spend more time with family and friends. Develop new hobbies. And, then become an entrepreneur. Statistics show people who retire and do nothing are more likely to die within 3 years.

Taken from [10 Tips for September is Healthy Aging<sup>®</sup> Month | Healthy Aging<sup>®</sup>](#)

## MEMBER UPDATES

**BCBS:** Effective 7/1/2021, BCBSMA is enhancing the covered services within the Fitness Program to include **“Virtual Fitness.”** This will include virtual/online fitness memberships, subscriptions, programs, or classes that provide cardiovascular and strength-training using a digital platform. This does not include equipment or bikes.

**Coverage Newsletter** We know health care is complicated. Blue Cross built *Coverage* to deliver fact-based, straightforward news reports on the health issues residents of Massachusetts face. Every article features local clinicians (your wellness coordinator was recently featured in an article!) and the voices of local patients, community leaders and others. Every story is written in a clear, engaging voice accessible to any reader. *Coverage* is a not-for-profit news service of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, a not-for-profit, community-focused health plan. We’re dedicated to clear, engaging news reporting on important health issues, including health inequities.

The health field is filled with vital, inspiring human stories. We tell those stories through in-depth features, videos and incisive reports on the issues consumers face and the policy debates that will determine the future of our health care system. We identify trends by listening to the concerns of our network of 2.8 million Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts members, who represent 40% of the insured residents of our state.

We believe fact-based, straight-forward health reporting can help our readers make informed decisions about complex health care problems. Our mission is to provide that crucial reporting. And we want physicians, patients, lawmakers, community leaders and everyone else to have free access to our stories. That’s why we offer timely articles and analysis that are of interest to local and national readers.

*Coverage* has a lot of good health related articles and information about COVID. Here is a link to the *Coverage* sight. There is a box to click and subscribe at the bottom of the page. <https://coverage.bluecrossma.com/>

**MyBlue Registration** MyBlue is a great resource for members to view claims, find doctors, estimate cost, or obtain a digital ID card. Here is a link to register for MyBlue online. There is a video at the bottom of the page that shows members how to create an account for the MyBlue member app as well. <https://www.bluecrossma.org/myblue/myblue-app>

### *Learn to Live Challenge coming in October!*

Next month, you can tend to your mental health and have a chance to win a gift card! Participate in the **Learn to Live, All You Challenge!** This offer is available to **all BCBS, HNE and Tufts subscribers through SVRHT.**



Enroll in any of their proven online programs - or complete an online lesson - and you'll be automatically entered to win an Amazon.com gift card for up to \$50. More details coming in next month’s newsletter and email communications.

You don’t have to wait until next month—get started today if you need help with anxiety and worry, depression, substance use, stress, or insomnia [www.learntolive.com/partners](http://www.learntolive.com/partners) (use code: SCANTIC)

You are also invited to join in for a live webinar, ***Staying refreshed and preventing burnout.*** In this webinar, their clinical team will share the powerful impact of discovering and living by your values. They’ll offer practical insights about how to get past barriers that leave many of us feeling unfulfilled and drained. This live webinar is being offered at three different times. Register for any live session at [www.learntolive.com/webinars](http://www.learntolive.com/webinars). Enter code **SCANTIC** when prompted. At this landing page, you will also find a wide variety of recorded videos to watch that you may find helpful!

***Wellness Works starts next month!! Some new programming, some familiar; increased incentives and a new healthy eating/weight loss program! Something for everyone!***

## Upcoming Class Opportunities

**Mindful Movers:** You will practice vinyasa yoga, mindfulness, breathing techniques, and meditation. Wednesdays 3:30-4:30 PM at Center School Gym, Longmeadow, starting Sept. 15. Wear comfortable clothing, bring a yoga mat, and a water bottle. \$50 (attend 4 - 5 sessions and receive a certificate for a \$10 Amazon gift card!) Drop-ins welcome at \$12 per class. Please register with Lyn.

**Pilates Classes:** A new session of Pilates in Wilbraham with Arice is starting **Tuesday, August 31 for 5 weeks**. There are openings in the **5:30 PM (studio OR Zoom) class**. She also has 3 openings for **9:00 AM mat class on Mondays starting 9/13**. Please contact me to register and contact her ([arice@coreandmore.net](mailto:arice@coreandmore.net)), if you have any questions and to make payment. Core and More Pilates Studio, 2141 Boston Road. \$55 for 5 weeks (discount for SVRHT). Those who attend 4 - 5 sessions receive a certificate for a \$10 Amazon gift card! You can mix & match in-person and Zoom classes. Next 5-week session starts October 1.

**Zoom Pilates Classes:** Janet Burke-Allen is offering classes in-person & on-line through Zoom. You can mix and match from the following options: **Wednesdays, 9:00 AM weights/mat class, Thursdays, 3:45 PM mat class (in-studio option) and Friday 9:00 AM mat/stability ball class**. 6 classes for \$75 (discount for SVRHT) or 10 classes for \$125 (discount for SVRHT) Payment goes to Janet. Please email Janet for more information and to request the link. If you are interested in attending in-studio classes, please let Janet know ahead of time [pilates-centerofwmass@gmail.com](mailto:pilates-centerofwmass@gmail.com)

**Zoom Pilates Offer for HEROES!™:** The Pilates Studio in South Hadley has offered all employees a discounted membership to their online Pilates classes! **For \$50/month**, you can access all of their **live-streaming classes** (approximately 25/week) plus all of their **recorded classes** (about 350 classes at 3 different levels, based on your experience). You also have the option of **\$16.10/month** for unlimited recorded classes! AND...**the 2weeks are FREE!** For more information & to register, click here <https://fitstreams.club/>

**Big Y Living Well Eating Smart:** Virtual Events: <https://www.bigy.com/LivingWell/GetSocial> As always, their 3 dietitians are available for FREE nutrition coaching sessions and you can [register here](#).

## East Longmeadow Recreation Department Classes

**Cardio Strength:** Test your cardio-strength with our certified instructors! Sign-up now and start your path to better health. Ages 18+ welcome! Tuesdays, September 7 - October 26 Time: 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Cost: \$30.00 resident/\$50.00 non-resident/Senior Discount: \$25.00/person Location: TBA

**Virtual Yoga:** Our yoga class will test your mind and body as you gain greater balance, strength and peace in a supportive environment. For ages 18 and up. Saturdays, September 18 - November 20 Time: 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Cost: \$35.00 resident/\$50.00 non-resident/Senior Discount: \$30.00/person

Contact Donna Prather [donna.prather@eastlongmeadowma.gov](mailto:donna.prather@eastlongmeadowma.gov) to register and receive 40% employee discount!

## Longmeadow Parks & Recreation Classes

**Karate - Shotokan Style:** Ages 14+ Tuesdays 7:30 - 8:50 PM, Thursdays 6:30 - 7:50 PM Old Town Hall. Session #1: September 7 - October 30. Session #2: November 2 - December 21 Fee: \$85 Shotokan Karate-Do (SKIF System) is a traditional Japanese martial art that includes kihon (basics), kata (forms) and kumite (sparring). **Tai Chi - Yang Style:** Ages 14+ Times: Tuesdays, 6:30 - 7:30 PM or Wednesdays, 8:30 - 9:30 AM Olde Town Hall

Dates: Session #1: September 7 - October 20 Session #2: November 2 - December 15 Fee: \$70 Tai Chi is a gentle form of exercise with an emphasis on deep breathing, slow movements, and chi (energy) development. It can help improve muscle strength, flexibility, balance, and fitness, and could be the perfect activity for the rest of your life. The class involves traditional warm-ups and gentle stretching, breathing exercises, stances, and an introduction into the traditional Yang Style Form.

**Intermediate – advanced Karate and Tai Chi** classes can be found here:

<https://www.longmeadow.org/1216/Intermediate---Advanced-Karate-Tai-Chi>