

# about health

Winter 2008

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# New Year, New You

Searching around for a resolution or two to tackle in the coming year? If you're a smoker, put kicking the habit at the top of your list. If you're a couch potato, resolve your way to more physical activity. Still have room on your list? Consider making some nutritional changes.

Making small adjustments to your eating patterns can add up to a healthier diet.

- ▶ Eat fish twice a week. New dietary guidelines from the American Heart Association recommend tuna, salmon and other "fatty" fish for their fatty acids, which promote heart health.
- ▶ Add a fruit to breakfast. Berries, raisins or bananas and a glass of orange juice fit in with almost any morning meal.
- ▶ Have a meatless Monday, or Tuesday, or ... cutting down on the saturated fat found in red meat is a heart-smart strategy.
- ▶ Just add water. Start taking water breaks. Your skin will look better, and all of your body's systems will work more efficiently.
- ▶ Don't starve yourself. Resolve to have your meals on a regular schedule.

## Here's to Your Health

For a list of health screenings, classes and programs, visit [rwjhamilton.org](http://rwjhamilton.org) and click HealthConnection or call **(609) 584-5900**.

You'll be glad you did!

## CINJ-H's Comfort in Clothing Program

The Comfort in Clothing program at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey Hamilton (CINJ-H) offers **FREE** comfortable clothing to patients in our care. It is distributed based on patients' needs and size requirements.

This program accommodates fluctuations in weight often experienced by patients undergoing treatment. Providing new clothes allows our patients to be as comfortable as possible, maintain their outward appearance and, most importantly, preserve their pride and dignity.

The Comfort in Clothing program originated with Diane Stratton in memory of her husband, Maynard, a cancer patient at CINJ-H. Knowing that comfortable clothing made a difference for Maynard and that shopping for different-sized clothing can take a lot of time, effort and energy, Diane wanted to offer this program to other patients.

If you are in need of an article of clothing, please call our oncology social workers at **(609) 584-6680** or **(609) 584-2818**. They will make every effort to accommodate your needs.

The Comfort in Clothing program accepts clothing (new, bearing tags) and cash contributions (make checks payable to the CINJ-H Comfort in Clothing program). To support our program, please call CINJ-H at **(609) 631-6960**.



## SAVE A LIFE

You can save lives—just donate blood. Someone in the U.S. needs blood every two seconds.

Helping is simple: At the donation site you'll be asked about your medical history and your blood will be screened to determine your eligibility. Total time, from screening to resting after your donation, takes less than an hour.

Afterward, you'll feel great knowing that you made a difference and may have helped save three lives. Still unsure? For more information, call HealthConnection at **(609) 584-5900** or the RWJ Hamilton Blood Bank at **(609) 548-6562**.



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# 9 Ways to Relax

## Stress-relieving strategies you can count on



**S**tress is an unavoidable fact of modern life. But rather than dwell on all the related health conditions (which you've likely read about 10 times over), we'd prefer to offer advice on keeping stress in check.

Some of the ideas included here are common, and some may surprise you. But all are simple reminders of how you truly do have the power to control this important aspect of your well-being.

### 1. Take care of yourself.

A poor diet and lack of sleep can leave you feeling tired and edgy—while eating right and getting plenty of rest can boost energy and immunity.

### 2. Exercise.

“Regular aerobic exercise taps into the brain's own pharmacy of endorphins,” says Pam Jones, integrative therapy nurse with RWJ Hamilton's Community Education Department. Endorphins are body chemicals that help relieve anxiety.

### 3. Accentuate the positive.

Remember to focus on the things going well in your life instead of dwelling on the negative.

### 4. Have a good laugh—or a good cry.

Laughing can trigger brain chemicals that make you feel better. Heartfelt crying can do the same.

### 5. Remain hopeful.

Having faith, praying or being hopeful all demonstrate the power of the placebo effect, Jones says, referring to health improvements not linked to formal treatment.

### 6. Talk about your troubles with someone you trust.

Even if you don't discover a solution to your problems, blowing off steam can reduce anxiety.

### 7. Spend time outdoors.

Studies have shown that being outside in natural light for just 30 minutes, even on an overcast day, can positively affect your mood.

### 8. Get a massage.

Massage therapy helps reduce stress, Jones says. It increases blood circulation and lymph flow and releases endorphins.

### 9. Meditate, practice yoga or engage in other mindfulness techniques.

Research has proven the benefits of these practices, which can calm the mind and help you better cope—in just 15 minutes a day. ■

## Can Stress Be a Good Thing?

Stress is not always negative. It can be positive when you feel confident about meeting a challenge that lies in front of you, says Pam Jones, integrative therapy nurse with RWJ Hamilton's Community Education Department.

Under those conditions, you feel stimulated, energized and engaged—like a great artist immersed in work.

“You channel that stress in a way that puts you in control,” Jones says. “It's what challenges us to reach our full potential as individuals.”

## QUIZ YOURSELF

How stressed are you? To take a quiz that measures your stress level, go to [rwjhamilton.org](http://rwjhamilton.org), click [#Health](#) and follow the Mind and Body link. Got a high score? See the integrative therapies section of *HealthCheck* magazine.

# Zucchini Frittata



Recipe from the EatingWell Diabetes Cookbook (The Countryman Press, 2005)

## Ingredients

4 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided  
1 c. diced zucchini  
½ c. chopped onion  
½ c. grape tomatoes or cherry tomatoes, halved  
¼ c. slivered fresh mint leaves  
¼ c. slivered fresh basil leaves  
¼ tsp. salt, divided  
freshly ground pepper to taste  
4 large eggs  
⅓ c. crumbled goat cheese (2 oz.)

## Directions

Heat 2 teaspoons oil in a 10-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add zucchini and onion; cook, stirring often, for 1 minute. Cover and reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally, 3 to 5 minutes. Add tomatoes, mint, basil, ⅛ teaspoon salt and a grinding of pepper; increase heat to medium-high and cook, stirring, until the moisture has evaporated, 30 to 60 seconds.

Whisk eggs, the remaining salt and a grinding of pepper in a large bowl until blended. Add the zucchini mixture and cheese; stir. Wipe out the pan and brush it with the remaining 2 teaspoons of oil; place over medium-low heat. Add frittata mixture and cook, without stirring, until the bottom is light golden, 2 to 4 minutes. As it cooks, lift the edges and tilt the pan so uncooked egg flows to edges.

Place the skillet under the broiler and broil until the frittata is set and the top is golden, 1½ to 2½ minutes. Loosen the edges and slide onto a plate. Cut into wedges and serve.

Makes two servings.

**Nutrition information per serving:** Calories, 376; Fat, 28 g (saturated, 10 g); Carbohydrates, 11 g; Protein, 21 g; Fiber, 3 g; Sodium, 591 mg.

## Naturally Delicious

You've probably noticed the growing popularity of organically grown produce and other organic products. But is organic better?

The American Dietetic Association says "no scientific evidence shows that [organic foods] are healthier or safer than conventionally grown foods." Nor does the U.S. Department of Agriculture make that claim. Still, more consumers—sometimes for environmental or taste reasons alone—are preferring foods grown and processed without pesticides and fertilizers.

For help deciphering labels, refer to this glossary:

**100 percent organic:** Product contains only organic ingredients (with the exception of water and salt).

**Natural or all-natural:** Watch out for this label. Any product can be called either, regardless of legitimacy.

**Organic:** Product contains at least 95 percent organic ingredients. The other 5 percent are ingredients that aren't available in organic form.

**Made with organic ingredients:** Product contains at least 70 percent organic ingredients.

## EATING WELL WITH DIABETES

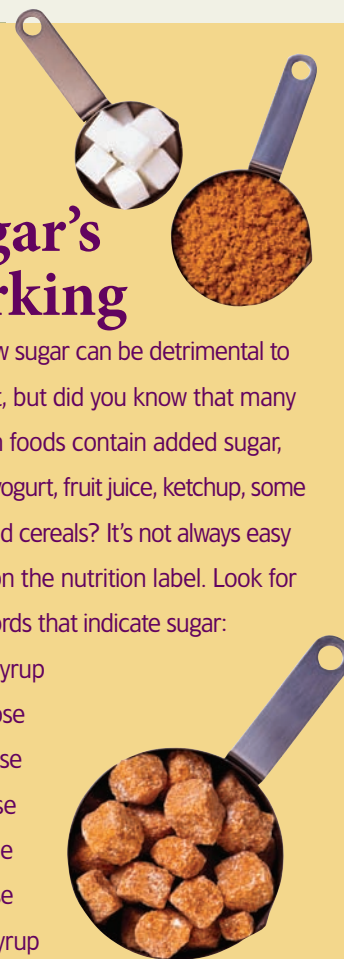
Learn about the nutritional component of managing diabetes.

Join Wendi Silver, RD, on Wednesday, January 9, at 6:30 p.m., in the Healthy Cooking Kitchen at the RWJ Hamilton Center for Health and Wellness. Call HealthConnection to register, (609) 584-5900.

## Sugar's Lurking

You know sugar can be detrimental to your diet, but did you know that many common foods contain added sugar, such as yogurt, fruit juice, ketchup, some soups and cereals? It's not always easy to spot on the nutrition label. Look for these words that indicate sugar:

- ▶ Corn syrup
- ▶ Dextrose
- ▶ Fructose
- ▶ Glucose
- ▶ Lactose
- ▶ Maltose
- ▶ Malt syrup



# The Balance Center at RWJ Hamilton

Restoring function and quality of life for people affected by balance disorders



**D**o you feel off-balance or live with a fear of falling? The state-of-the-art Balance Center, run by the RWJ Hamilton Rehabilitation Services Department and located at the RWJ Hamilton Center for Health & Wellness (CHW), is designed to help anyone who is affected by balance disorders.

Sense of balance is often taken for granted. When balance is affected, however, the simplest things become difficult, if not impossible—walking, shopping, traveling, even socializing.

“Losing your balance can be unnerving,” says Michael Long, PT, MS, MBA, and executive director of Ambulatory Care at RWJ Hamilton. “Our goal at the Balance Center is to treat patients in the most comprehensive manner possible and restore their confidence so they can return to a daily routine.”

## How the Balance System Works

The balance system is composed of special nerve endings in the eyes, muscles, joints and inner ear that send

impulses to the brain. The brain interprets these impulses to maintain steadiness and balance. If one component of the balance system is not functioning correctly, it can cause:

- ▶ Chronic unsteadiness
- ▶ Dizziness
- ▶ Impaired balance
- ▶ Vertigo



Michael Long,  
PT, MS, MBA

## What the Balance Center Can Do for You

The Balance Center uses a multidisciplinary program to diagnose and treat the symptoms that impact balance. Do these symptoms apply to you?

- ▶ Head trauma
- ▶ History of falls
- ▶ Inner ear disturbance
- ▶ Meniere’s disease
- ▶ Stroke

## Individualized Treatment Plans

A series of comfortable, noninvasive tests, including videonystagmography (VNG), which monitors inner ear and eye movement, and computerized dynamic posturography (CDP), which records body movement, are used to evaluate balance concerns.

Once a patient’s exact condition is diagnosed, a team of physicians, physical therapists, occupational therapists and audiologists will develop a customized plan of treatment. Therapy may include:

- ▶ Education in fall prevention
- ▶ Exercise programs
- ▶ Training in functional activities
- ▶ Vestibular (inner ear) therapy

While balance problems are not life-threatening, they can greatly hinder a person’s quality of life and undermine confidence. “We are committed to helping people return to their best quality of life,” says Steve Demkowicz, DPT, Rehab manager. “If you are experiencing dizziness, lightheadedness, unsteadiness, and/or vertigo, please talk to your physician or call us at (609) 584-6640 to learn more about our program.” ■

**OPENING  
SPRING 2008!**

Another RWJ Hamilton Balance Center:  
One Sheffield Drive, Suite 1,  
Mansfield Commons  
Columbus, NJ 08022

# New Beginnings

Cardiac rehabilitation  
is a key component  
of recovery from a  
heart attack



## HEART SMARTS

Want to know more about RWJ Hamilton's excellent cardiac rehab services? Follow the cardiology link on the RWJ Hamilton website's main page: [rwjhamilton.org](http://rwjhamilton.org).

**B**ack in the 1950s, patients would lie in a hospital bed for three weeks after having a heart attack. When it was first suggested that they sit up in a chair one day after the emergency, many doctors considered the practice “barbaric,” says Steve Demkowicz, DPT, Rehab manager at RWJ Hamilton.

Today, it’s common practice to get patients up and moving just days after a cardiac event or a surgical procedure such as bypass or angioplasty. And experts agree that the next step in recovery should be cardiac rehabilitation—a multidisciplinary approach to getting well and preventing recurring cardiovascular problems.

“Research has shown unequivocally that people who get involved in an exercise-based cardiac rehabilitation program lower their risk factors, have a reduced death rate and improve the quality of their life,” Demkowicz says. “The vast majority of people with heart problems, other than those who are clinically unstable, are candidates for this type of program.”

Part of rehab is coaching for lifestyle changes that benefit the heart—such as smoking cessation support or dietary counseling. Other components include exercise training and medical therapy to help patients follow their medication schedule. Because many people experience depression after a heart attack or cardiac surgery, patients’ psychological well-being also is evaluated and treated if necessary. In its totality, rehabilitation supports all aspects of a healthier lifestyle.

### What to Expect

Cardiac rehab is typically performed in three stages. The first begins while the patient is in the hospital and focuses heavily on education, behavioral changes and how to take medications, usually under the guidance of nurses, social workers and dietitians.

In the second stage, which generally lasts six to 12 weeks, patients begin a closely supervised exercise program.

“A lot of people are concerned about exercising after something has happened to their heart,” Demkowicz says. “But moderate exercise is quite beneficial as long as the patient slowly increases activity as prescribed and doesn’t overdo it.”

Throughout this stage of cardiac rehab, patients are monitored frequently, which can include simple blood pressure and heart-rate testing. They continue to receive counseling on lifestyle improvements and compliance with their prescribed medication plan.

“People who have never had to take medicine before may now have to take four different medications every day,” Demkowicz says. “We help them understand that these drugs can work magic, but the medication has to be taken properly.”

### Lifelong Changes

The final phase is long-term maintenance. Patients are encouraged and



Steve Demkowicz, DPT

supported in their efforts to keep up their exercise program and healthy lifestyle changes for the rest of their lives.

To help with this, many hospitals provide facilities with exercise equipment, where people

participate in group activities and support groups. This helps relieve isolation and depression, which can predispose people to higher rates of recurrent cardiac problems. Plus, seeing other people doing well after a cardiac emergency can be some of the best motivation there is.

“What you’re doing for yourself 16 waking hours a day, seven days a week is probably more important than the role your doctor or hospital plays,” Demkowicz says. “To a large extent, people control their own destiny when it comes to heart disease—and it provides a real boost when you can see that other people have succeeded and that you can, too.” ■

## RWJ Hamilton Observes National Heart Health Month

**WHAT:** Heart Fitness and Stroke Prevention for Women and Men: A Panel Presentation

**WHEN:** Tuesday, February 19; 6:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** RWJ Hamilton Center for Health & Wellness, Conference Room B

In honor of National Heart Health Month, our distinguished panel of experts will present the latest information on heart health and stroke research, disease prevention, physiology and treatment, as well as the newest interventional cardiology techniques, including our new CT angiography.

Learn heart-healthy nutritional guidelines and a cardiac exercise plan for both prevention and rehabilitation. Dinner and refreshments included. Fee: \$5

Speakers include:

- ▶ Sangeeta Garg, MD, board certified interventional cardiologist
- ▶ S. Rao Pasupuleti, MD, board certified in neurology and clinical neurophysiology, and RWJ chief of Neurology and director of RWJ Stroke Program
- ▶ John St. George, BS, MS, exercise physiologist
- ▶ Wendi Silver, RD

To register or learn more about this and other heart-related programs, call HealthConnection at (609) 584-5900 or visit [rwjhamilton.org](http://rwjhamilton.org) and click the HealthConnection link.

## Immune Boosters

Fend off colds this season with these steps from the American Lung Association:

- 1** Avoid close contact with people who have a cold.
- 2** Wash your hands often.
- 3** Keep your fingers away from your nose and your eyes to avoid infecting yourself with germs.
- 4** Get plenty of rest, as well as nutrients, to boost your immune system.

## Flu, Me?

Should you get a flu vaccine? If you're 50 or older, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says yes. You might want the vaccination if you're a healthcare worker, live with someone who's highly susceptible to flu complications, are pregnant or have HIV. Consider it if you're traveling in an organized travel group to the Southern Hemisphere from April to September or to the tropics anytime. Finally, the CDC encourages the vaccination for children ages 6 months to 23 months old.

Seniors also should get a pneumococcal vaccine at age 65. Unlike the flu shot, this vaccine is administered just once.

### Make the HealthConnection!

For the latest news about upcoming health screenings, programs and classes at RWJ Hamilton, refer to *HealthCheck* magazine, go to [rwjhamilton.org](http://rwjhamilton.org) and click HealthConnection or call (609) 584-5900.



## Posture: Straight Up

Bad posture puts extra strain on your muscles and joints and can even stress the organs in your abdomen.

Get aligned from these tips from the RWJ Hamilton Rehab Services Department:

### Stand Up Straight

- ▶ Your chin, shoulders and hips should be level with the floor. Look in the mirror and imagine a series of parallel, horizontal lines.
- ▶ Kneecaps should face straight out.
- ▶ When walking, keep your toes pointed in the direction you're going.

### Sit Up Straight

- ▶ Keep your back against the back of the chair.
- ▶ Keep both feet flat on the floor, with your knees slightly higher than your hips.
- ▶ Keep your head up; don't lean forward.

## TAKE OUR ARTHRITIS QUIZ

Test your knowledge. Visit [rwjhamilton.org](http://rwjhamilton.org) and click [iHealth](#). Go to "Interactive Tools/Resources" and click "Arthritis Quiz."

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