

Cardiovascular Wellness Program Newsletter

Issue 17
March 2023

Comments from Linda

If you've been paying any attention, you are aware things are humming along quite well in our facility. We have a fun schedule and good involvement in many areas. We've had some great educational sessions and the students are doing some fun projects in which I hope you have been able to participate. April will be bringing in even more of these. The weather has kept many of you away but despite the wind and rain there are things to do. If you're not up to braving the elements, please do stay involved with us virtually. If doing an activity session doesn't work for you, hopefully you can at least participate in some of our surveys, as input there is always valued. Our approach of having choices, choices, choices of things to do with us continues.

We continue to see new clients, thanks to continued partnerships with the UC Davis Cardiac Rehab program. We have outreach efforts going on to appeal to Renaissance Society members as well. Some people are even finding us just because they are doing Google searches of wellness (makes me feel good about our website—thank you Marilou!). Luckily, our growth proceeds at a gradual rate, as that does allow us to not feel overwhelmed. As we grow, it is fun to see our diversity, both in age and culture, grow as well.

I do hope to see you soon!

Linda

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CWP Newsletter

This newsletter is created quarterly with a primary intent of reaching those we have not seen lately. If you would like to receive a hard copy in the mail, please let me know. Call and leave a message (916-278-4402) or send an email:

csuscwvwellness@gmail.com

Prior issues are archived on our webpage

<https://cardiovascularwellnessprogram.org/newsletter>

CWP Projects (notes from Linda)

We continue to do an excellent job fulfilling our mission of serving students. Our student involvement is great and I am forever grateful for everyone's involvement in making these interactions successful. Every semester we have new and returning students and your continued involvement with them is again requested and greatly appreciated.

Highlights of the Spring 2023 semester:

1) Gero 101 Interactions. Involving our program in the gerontology curriculum is one of the feats of which I am particularly proud. Our program providing service learning to introductory gero students is huge and experiences like this are expanding our value to the academic environment. I am learning a lot myself and really enjoy seeing the growth and development of the undergrads enrolled. I am the instructor of record for this class this spring and will be in the fall as well. I appreciate those of you that come to our Zoom sessions and I also appreciate those of you who interact with these students in the gym. Your patience in answering many of the same questions over and over again is really appreciated!

2) We have two activities in April coming up with physical therapy (PT) students. On April 13th, which is a Thursday, they have offered to do "annual PT checks", meaning they want to interact one-on-one with clients (with a faculty advisor) and address any orthopedic/musculoskeletal questions or issues. There is a sign-up sheet to have one of these slots – please call in or send an email if you'd like to sign up and won't physically be coming in (you would have to come in for the assessment on April 13th – they are 45 minute slots starting at 12:45 pm going to 2:45 pm).

PT students are also on our schedule for April 27th, another Thursday. They will be bringing up posters to share with us during the morning and then at 11:45 am will do a live/Zoom presentation. The topics for their posters revolve around health and wellness.

3) Several of you interacted with PT students last fall in their Otago fall prevention program and got lots of good, professional help. We now have a balance training course led by the PT students on Monday afternoons, which is a wonderful addition to our offerings. Likely this program will expand. Be sure to check the monthly calendar for the time.

4) We have three new gero 130/131 students, who all learned about us through their involvement in Gero 101 – Angel, Maya, and Nazya. There are all working on projects to complete.

5) We continue to have student involvement with research students (ID201) and I have charged them this semester with two different projects—continued outcome data collection with the 6-minute walk and a new longevity survey. If you haven't done these yet, don't fret – I'll make sure they come after you!

6) We also have community nutrition and psychology students. The nutrition students have a survey coming out and are seeking to gain knowledge about eating habits with respect to a couple of interesting nutrients.

7) We also have a project brewing with Kim Roberts and other psychology students. Be on the lookout for that!





Exercise Reminders *from Linda Paumer*

The encouragement is always out there that you do regular cardiovascular training activities and strive to get at least 30 minutes in most days of the week. It's almost enough if you are doing Zoom workouts with me 4 days a week. If I'm not seeing you, are you getting some activity in? Days are getting longer and warmer, so hopefully you are finding some time to get outdoors a bit and get some vitamin D as well as a little physical activity. And if you work a little gardening in, so much the better.



Debbie & I have both written in the past about the value of gardening, to stay green in your eating and environmental management and to add to your activity patterns. Beyond its caloric benefits (both in & out), gardening helps maintain dexterity and strength, muscle mass, aerobic endurance, and functional movement. Digging in the dirt can help enhance bone density and is also very therapeutic. There are many mindful, stress reducing aspects of gardening that we all value.

Gardening incorporates all four types of fitness: endurance, strength, flexibility, and balance. It can be done in both mild and vigorous manners. Approach it as a whole body exercise, working all of the major muscle groups--legs, buttocks, back, abdomen, neck, arms, and shoulders. I have included a handout with specific strength/flexibility exercise for gardeners.

Plant-based eating on a budget

By Debbie Lucas, MS, RD, CDCES

My latest cookbook purchase is *Plant-based on a Budget, Quick & Easy* by local author Toni Okamoto. I have followed her for years and use her previous cookbook as well as listen to her podcast. Her recipes are generally simple and tasty, but she is often more liberal with fats than we like to be – but easily modifiable. I get a lot of frugal ideas from her. I thought I would share her general tips for saving money while eating plant-based here.



Meal Planning

This isn't just planning what recipes you want to work on this week, but also what ingredients you can batch cook to reuse during the week and how to recycle your leftovers. For instance, if you cook up a pot of barley and a pot of pinto beans, how can you use them this week? Barley pilaf with dinner, leftover barley in place of your oatmeal at breakfast, season up the barley with Mexican spices and have it in your bean burrito. You can also make a bowl meal using the beans, barley, greens (because of course you chopped up several bunches of greens to have ready to go) and add some of your left over vegetables from other meals during the week.

Grocery list

Having a meal plan leads to a grocery list. Knowing what you need that week will help you decide which store you might want to shop at if you know where the deals are. It will also help your budget and if you stick with the list, you will avoid impulse buys. I usually shop at Winco, Walmart, Raley's or Sprouts. I particularly like Winco or Walmart for less expensive pantry items and Winco for bulk items. Sprouts usually has great deals on produce and Raley's often does too. Look at the weekly ads for the stores to determine which is the best spot to shop for this week's menu. For the batch cooking above, I'm going to hit Winco for the bins. You don't have to shop at multiple stores, but that is often the best way to save if you have the time and inclination.

Well-stocked pantry

Stocking up on certain items for the freezer or pantry can save time and money. When you see the frozen veggies or canned beans on sale, pick up extras to keep on hand. I always have condiments, vegetable broth, canned and dried beans, canned tomatoes, multiple grains stored in glass jars, nutritional yeast and oatmeal. Isn't it great when you find a new recipe and you have all the things you need?? I suggest making a list of about 5 go-to meals – meals that are quick and easy to throw together and the ingredients are always on hand. Mine are veggie chili, tacos, vegetable bean/lentil soup, various Buddha bowls and grilled tofu with veggies. Before I go to the store, I always check to see if these items are on hand at home. But, just because I have these recipes as my go-to's, I always try a new recipe every week. My pot of grains, pot of beans and bowl of mixed greens can always work their way into my favorite recipes.

Food storage and preparation

When you get home from the store, you might want to prep the veggies for what you plan to make that week. This saves time during the week. If I'm going to make grilled veggies, I slice up what I will be putting in the grill basket, so it is ready to go. If you purchase herbs, they go well in a glass of water with a baggie over the top and stored in the frig. For greens, I rinse and dry them and then chop them up together and place into a big bowl. I keep the bowl in the frig to pull from for my recipes, meals and bowls during the week. They last at least a week, and since it is ready to go, I eat a lot more greens during the week.

Cut down on waste

In America, we waste ~ 40% of available food. This is tragic from a cost and environmental perspective. To reduce waste, buy only what you need (or what will last a while). Recycle your foods into other dishes (like we did above with the barley). Store your foods properly in containers in the refrigerator or freezer. Date the foods so that you know what is oldest. Follow the first in, first out rule – for example, if you had pasta on Sunday, tacos on Monday, chili on Tuesday and now you can't decide what leftovers to have on Wednesday – choose the pasta – it will go bad the soonest. Freeze foods if you won't be eating them in 3-4 days. Most soups/stews freeze very well. And then add those frozen meals to your weekly line-up of meals.

So often I hear that plant-based eating is expensive. If we make a meal plan, make smart choices when we shop and store food properly, that isn't true. I will admit that buying faux meats or cheeses does add up, which is why I don't use those!! So I encourage you to make that plan and list and save some money!!

Spinach and Artichoke Pizza

We tried this mixture on top of -premade pizza dough. It was delicious!

Ingredients

- 1 medium onion, chopped fine
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 12-16 ounces baby spinach)
- 1 pound extra-firm tofu
- 2 tbsp. nutritional yeast
- 1 tsp. salt, or to taste
- 2 tsp. dried oregano
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. minced Kalamata olives
- pinch cayenne
- ¼ tsp. ground cumin
- black pepper, to taste
- 1 14-ounce can quartered artichokes, coarsely chopped
- ¼ cup slivered almonds, slightly crushed (or toasted pinenuts)
- Pizza dough



Directions

1. Sauté the onion and garlic in a large, deep non-stick skillet for 3 minutes. Add the spinach and 2 tablespoons water, stir, and cover the skillet. (If you couldn't fit all of the spinach in, wait a minute for the spinach to shrink and add more.) Cook until the spinach is completely wilted and shrunken. Set aside.
2. While the spinach is cooking, mash the tofu and stir in the nutritional yeast and all the seasonings, including the olives. Add the artichokes, almonds, and the spinach mixture, and mix well.
3. Preheat the oven to 375 F°. Spread dough on parchment paper lined or lightly oiled baking sheet. Cover with spinach mixture. Bake 30-35 minutes, until crust is done and top is lightly browned.

Adapted from: <https://blog.fatfreevegan.com/2006/04/spinach-and-artichoke-pie.html>

Foundations for Mindfulness

By Linda M, Larsen, RN-BC, RYT



This month we began a review of the 8 Week Program -- Foundations for Mindfulness Practice at my in-person/Zoom class. These foundations are: *Non-Judgmental* - an impartial witness to your experience, *Patience* - acceptance that things must unfold in their own time, *Beginner's Mind* – willingness to see everything as if for the first time, *Trust* - trust in yourself and your intuition and wisdom, *Non-Striving* – going with the flow, *Acceptance* – acknowledging things as they actually are, *Letting it be/letting it go* - observing-moment-to-moment things as they are, *Self-Compassion* – being gentle, kind and compassionate to oneself. You can find the 4 handouts on the CWP website (link below) that discuss these 8 foundations further and a suggested process to develop mindfulness as a lifestyle. My course is based on the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, Ph.D. MBSR was originally designed for stress management, but after more than 25,000 people have completed training and years of research, MBSR is now used to treat a variety of illnesses. Jon Kabat-Zinn says “It is important to remember that as long as you are breathing, there is always more right with you than wrong, no matter how ill or hopeless you feel.” The foundations support improving the mind-body connection and help increase awareness and focus during the daily hustle and bustle. With these tools, you’ll develop an increased ability to respond instead of reacting under stress. Paying attention to and pouring energy into what is going right for you will help to re-establish mind-body balance. The 8-week plan gives structure to regularly explore the mind-body connection and perhaps allow you to move towards your own consistent practice and greater well-being.

My commitment to a regular practice is not always easy or convenient but I do it anyway because I truly appreciate the effects of my practice. Increased ability to be “more in the moment” has allowed me ease and the ability to move from my values when life’s events start to overwhelm me. Mindfulness is something you train for similarly to athletes in training who practice daily whether they feel like it or not. Sticking to the practice and including mindful self-compassion can decrease stress and depression as well as improve well-being, self-confidence, gratitude, and happiness. You are encouraged to find a reason that could motivate you to practice mindfulness on a regular basis. Can you think of one?

Handouts and for more in depth MBSR classes, local and online:

<https://cardiovascularwellnessprogram.org/linda-larsen-rn-bc%2C-ryt> -

<https://www.sutterhealth.org/services/holistic-integrative-medicine/mindfulness-based-stress-reduction>








<https://thrive.kaiserpermanente.org/care-near-you/northern-california/santarosa/health-resources/classes/stress-reduction-classes/mindfulness-based-stress-reduction/>

<https://www.ummhealth.org/umass-memorial-medical-center/services-treatments/center-for-mindfulness/mindfulness-classes>

Gardener's Workout

Gardening is good exercise and here are some exercises that might help you gain strength, endurance, and flexibility in areas of your body that get the most use from gardening. The result should be a more beautiful garden because you have trained specifically for the sport of gardening. Staying fit gives you energy to withstand hours in your yard, digging, lifting, hoeing and shoveling. Try incorporating some of these into your routine.

As with any weight training routine, begin with 1-2 sets of 8-15 reps, and work up to 2-3 sets of 15. When 15 reps is easy, switch to a higher weight. Stretches you want to hold for 15-30 seconds and do 1-2 times, switching sides if applicable.

<p>Squats Place feet shoulder width apart, toes forward. Weight on your heels, squat down as if you were about to sit in a chair. Go as far as down as you can without bending knees beyond 90 degrees</p>		<p>One Arm Rows With one leg forward as in a lunge, rest your same sided arm on the flexed leg. With your free hand lift a weight to your hip, with shoulders squared, then lower the weight to the starting position</p>	
<p>Hip Stretch Holding on to a stationary object, cross one leg over the other. Then sit on the standing leg and hold. Do again for other leg. NOTE: Can also be done laying on your back, bring knees to chest, as like a Number 4.</p>		<p>Upper Back Strength Builder With feet shoulder width apart, squat down a bit with abs tight. Angle forward, chest facing the earth, with arms hanging down. Squeeze your shoulder blades together, bringing arms up parallel to ground. Lower back to the starting position.</p>	
<p>Wrist Curls Palms Inward): Hold a small dumbbell in each hand, fists facing each other. Using only your forearm, rotate the dumbbells up & down. Variation (Palms Down): Start with palms facing down, using your forearm, tilt your wrist up, so your knuckles face the sky.</p>		<p>Grandfather Stretch Stand up and support your lower back with the palms of your hand. Lift your chest toward the sky, arching your back with chin up.</p>	
<p>Chest Stretch Place one arm from elbow to hand against a wall. Turn body away from the wall. You should feel your chest stretch in front of your shoulder.</p>		<p>Shoulder Shrugs Stand with arms straight at sides, dumbbell in each hand. Lift shoulders up toward ears, in shrug motion. Variation: with arms hanging straight down, squeeze shoulder blades together, rotating shoulders toward back.</p>	