

# Cardiovascular Wellness Program Newsletter

Issue 14

September 2022

## Comments from Linda

Little by little our world seems to be regaining some normality, and every once in awhile it feels just like old times in Folsom Hall – something going in every corner. The 110° weather early in the month kind of squashed that, but now that it's starting to feel like fall, we are all looking forward to seeing more and more of you coming out and joining us. We will have some fun food projects going on and I have written up a whole page of other projects going on.

Wrapping up summer projects proved fruitful. We just submitted our Memory, Music and Maturity write-up for publication and we dug into our files and also submitted the Laughter Yoga project that we did pre-pandemic. You will be the first to hear if these get accepted for publication – we currently are just feeling proud that we worked hard enough to get them submitted. Look for presentations on these later in the fall. We are also still working on the Technology use/Zoom success project we did last spring. We have lots of data there and it is still in the swimming high above our heads category right now. Stay tuned!

Of course other projects always brewing. As alluded, I mentioned some of them later here, and some of them are still being created. We do hope to see more & more of you at our sessions, and do appreciate hearing what's keeping you away as well. Yes, it is a strange new world, but we still all need to work together to stay happy and healthy in that world.

*Linda*

**Audiology Clinic.** There were questions in past semesters about the possibility of CWP clients having an opportunity to take advantage of the Communication Disorders audiology clinic for free hearing tests. I am happy to say that is a very real possibility. The audiology clinic is a training ground for audiologists and now have a community clinic on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Folsom Hall (where UTAPS used to be). This is not an official project for our program, but, if interested, please send them an email and ask if you could get scheduled for a hearing test; the scheduler is named Hillary. The email is [audiology-clinic@csus.edu](mailto:audiology-clinic@csus.edu) and Tim, Marilou or Linda would be very happy to help send a request should you need help. If anyone does succeed in getting tested, please let us know how it went.



### Included in this issue:

Program Coordinator Notes, Linda Paumer, MA  
Audiology Clinic Notice  
Dean's Note – Dianne Hyson, PhD  
Medical Director's Note – Radhika Bukkapatnam, MD  
Fall Semester CWP Projects  
Exercise Reminders, Linda Paumer  
Nutrition Notes, Debbie Lucas, RD  
Recipe Corner  
Universe in Rose Petal, Linda Larsen, RN





**Dianne Hyson, PhD, Dean  
College of Social Sciences  
and Interdisciplinary Studies**

As the fall 2022 semester starts and we see the return of many activities and the energy of students on the campus, I find myself focusing on the theme of #reconnection. Everyone has their own idea of what it means to be

connected to the campus and to each other. But when we chose our professions and signed on to be at Sacramento State rather than an online University, we signaled at some level, our desire to be with and working in a community of people, in all of their “realness”. I am also aware and embrace all of the things we have learned during the past few “pandemic years” about different ways of being and am committed to integrating those lessons into a better way of doing what we do. The Cardiovascular Wellness Program, with the support of all of you, and under the capable leadership of Linda Paumer is a community that can and will exemplify the best of both worlds...a place to connect/reconnect in shared community, while also expanding access and flexibility for a broader community of participants. The program continues to grow in numbers, partnerships, and activities. You are all a shining example for the campus of meaningful community engagement. I look forward to #reconnecting with each of you as the academic year unfolds and to supporting the Cardiovascular Wellness Program in many ways!

Speaking of reconnecting, I hope that you will join me on October 26<sup>th</sup> for a “Meet the Dean” session, where I would like to have a conversation about the connection of the Cardiovascular Wellness Program to Sacramento State and discuss some thoughts and plans for the future. Stay tuned for an invitation.

As this sizzling summer wraps up, I am happy to report to you that Linda Paumer, Linda Larsen, Dr Alex Morrison, Dr Kim Roberts, Shreya and Adithi and I were able to turn in two research papers. You were a big part of both these papers: one on Laughter Yoga ( in the prepandemic era), when we could laugh freely and one during the pandemic era ( Music and Memory).



**Radhika Nandur Bukkapatnam, MD  
Medical Director, CWP**

While a lot of you volunteered willingly, some of you were volunteered by your friends or family. These projects looked at holistic ways to affect heart health and fulfill one of the goals of the CWP program: research focusing on prevention of cardiovascular disease. Friends, we could not have done it without you, and are constantly grateful for your support of this program, and its goals to promote heart health, provide education and do meaningful research. We look forward to future projects as well. Thank you.





## Fall Semester CWP Projects

If you've been paying attention, you might have noticed several things brewing, that are now coming to light as the fall semester gets under way. Projects you might have heard about are mentioned below. You are definitely invited to be included in all of them and of course you are definitely okay to decline participation in all of them. If any of them suit you, please step up though.

**PT Fall Prevention Clinic.** This starts Sept 27<sup>th</sup> and will have a Tuesday afternoon schedule. It will include 4 in-person visits with 2<sup>nd</sup> year PT students & faculty and 4 follow-up Zoom or phone visits.

**Nursing Students/ VS Assessments.** Through Rob's interaction with the nursing school, 1<sup>st</sup> semester nursing students will probably be dropping in, hoping to learn some things about taking vital signs.

**Gero101 Interactions.** I (Linda) am actually the instructor of record for the Gero 101 course this semester and have set up a schedule of interactions, hoping some of you will come over/Zoom in to chat with us regarding topics related to service for older adults. This is Thursdays at 5:30 pm through the semester (last class Dec 15<sup>th</sup>).

**Gero 131 Student Projects.** We have 4 Gero 131 students interns, they all need to complete a capstone project. Ashley is the closest to starting –she has already posted a survey and is hoping to collect inter-generational stories, building upon what Maria did last year. Alex has a food project in mind and Dixie has a stress management project in mind. Stephanie is the newest of these interns, and she is just starting to explore ideas.

**Nutrition/RD Intern Projects.** We have two community nutrition students this semester and during September and October we will also have two RD interns completing community rotations. Ideas for them are all in the works and please pipe in if you've got a burning nutrition question in mind.

**Psychology Interns.** We also have two community psychology interns; looking forward to seeing what kinds of ideas they might have.

**Outcome Assessments/Research Student Projects** I am always striving to keep up our program outcomes, and the biggest one of these that helps is getting as many of you as possible to complete a 6 minute walk test every six months. We have a fair amount of data on this already and we don't want it to fall off. In addition to showing the university all the students we are serving it really helps if we have data to support that we are helping our clients as well. Help as much as you can doing these assessments, please.



# Let Go & Observe Each Moment

By Linda M, Larsen, RN-BC, RYT

September is a good month to consider setting clear mindful intentions for the rest of the year. Consider using these 12 weeks before Thanksgiving to establish a more consistent Mindfulness practice. Our mindfulness class intention

during this time of transition is “Letting go or Let it be.” Letting go is actually one of the nine attitudinal factors or pillars of mindfulness practice, as taught by Jon Kabat-Zinn. Letting go, non-judgmental awareness, patience, beginner’s mind, trust—listening to our own feelings and intuition, non-striving, acceptance, gratitude and generosity can improve our ability to acknowledge and accept our thoughts, feelings, and sensations. To let go and receive the moment doesn’t mean we have to like it, and it doesn’t mean we have to agree with it; it just means we are willing to meet it and open to what’s occurring, moment by moment, whether it’s good or bad.

This intention came to me while at Lake Tahoe last week. No matter how many times I tried to redirect or change the subject, a lady in our Lodges hot tub had nothing to chat about except how her former company of 38 years ruined her life. Another day, when I asked an older Gentleman at a gorgeous park I had biked to (at times gasping for air) how he got along with the altitude, his immediate heated response was “the altitude doesn’t bug me near as much as the government.” Letting go and receiving the present moment throughout the day allowed them to be in their feelings without letting it change my good time there at World Class destination Lake Tahoe. Letting go allows us come out of negative thoughts, regrets about the past, or worries about the future and appreciate life - as it's happening *right now*.

Neuroscience tells us that you have a choice in how you interpret events such as a glass half-full or half-empty, as long as you put a conscious effort into it. Research shows the hardest thing for the brain to do is to let go of thoughts – one helpful analogy is that the brain is like Velcro for negative thoughts and Teflon for positive thoughts. If letting go is difficult for you, consider a practice of thinking exactly the opposite; in other words, focus on the good in your life. Yogis discontinue negative ways of thinking through the discipline of “cultivating the opposite.” Kevin Ochsner who studies the neuroscience of reappraisal at Columbia University puts it this way: “Our emotional responses ultimately flow out of our appraisals of the world, and if we can shift those appraisals, we shift our emotional responses.” This month, as you enjoy the last days of summer and watch as the leaves begin to change color, try intentionally choosing how you take in each moment.

“If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself, but to your estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.” *-Marcus Aurelius*

**For more in depth on Mindfulness in Positive Reappraisal and Kevin Ochsner:**

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2719560/>

<https://psychology.columbia.edu/content/kevin-ochsner>

<https://www.psychiatry.wisc.edu/courses/Nitschke/seminar/ochsner-gross%202005%20tics.pdf>



# Exercise Reminders *from Linda Paumer*



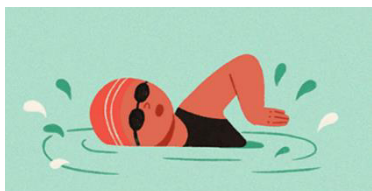
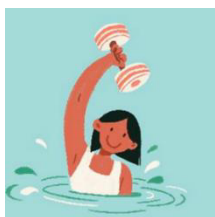
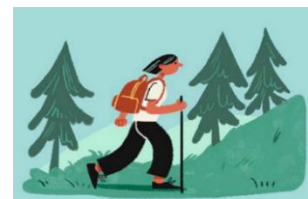
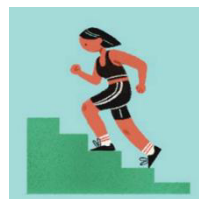
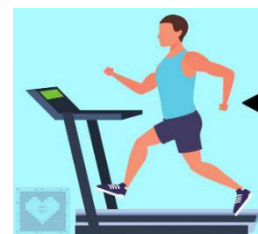
I do spend a fair amount of time encouraging stretching for flexibility and various calisthenics/resistance exercises for strength and balance. I think those things are very important and I am very proud of you who do circuits with me and the activities we can manage. Those sessions, however, should not be keeping you from also getting regular cardiovascular training—maintaining your cardiovascular fitness is the cornerstone of maximizing your fitness and minimizing your risk of health issues.

You should be aware of the goal of doing at least 30 minutes of cardiovascular activities most days of the week, striving for at least 150 minutes/week. Those of you exercising in Folsom Hall have great routines going – completing at least 30 minutes, often 45 or even 60 minutes each time you come in. If you make it all three days (Tues/Thurs/Fri), you are easily getting those 150 minutes. If you aren't attending 3 days/week, the encouragement is that you have other activities away from us (e.g. walking/gardening/pickle ball) that are contributing to your fitness.

A good workout would include five or 10 minutes of light aerobic activity to raise your heart rate and get you warmed up, then an extended duration (30+ minutes) of activity at moderate intensity, and a few minutes of cooling down to allow your heart to return to its resting pace. The 30+ minutes can be in a variety of activities, or one continuous activity.

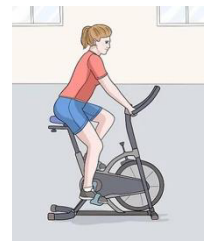
## Top Cardiovascular Exercises for Older Adults

**#1. Walking.** Walking can take place outside or on a treadmill. One of the advantages of using a treadmill is that you can adjust the pace and incline. Some older adults can also benefit from having the handrails on a treadmill for safety. Jogging is an option for individuals who are more advanced but has more orthopedic demands/limitations of which to be mindful. Adding some stair or hill climbing while walking obviously has a HR boosting component and also adds a nice quad strengthening component to your walk and is somewhat less orthopedically demanding than jogging.



**#2. Swimming.** Not only is swimming easy on the joints, but there are many different levels of water aerobics. Basic swimming is the most common, but you can also add water resistance exercises, stretching, and relaxation training. Water aerobics is a popular cardio workout types for older adults and it is low impact exercise with a low risk of injury. You can target all the muscle groups in the body and improve heart health, all while in the pool. Of course, you have to get wet and likely deal with chlorine.

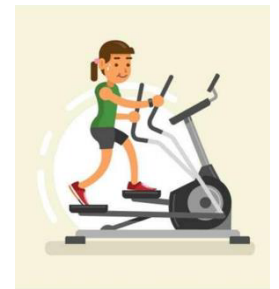
**#3. Cycling.** When it comes to cycling there are plenty of options available. If able, older adults can ride a regular bike outside. Street recumbent bikes are also popular. In many cases, recumbent bikes may be a safer way to bike because they are closer to the ground and more stable. Stationary bikes are also popular, both upright and recumbent. You can have at home or utilize those in the gyms. Cycling does have the boon that is very “quad specific”, meaning while you are exercising your heart you are also strengthening your legs.



**#4. Rowing.** Most of you are aware I am a big fan of rowing. It is an exercise that has both arm and leg components; you need a strong back and strong abs also, making rowing an activity that targets almost the entire body. It does not put a lot of pressure on joints and produces results and is a safe and effective exercise choice. There is a skill component involved with rowing, meaning learning proper technique is important to help you stay injury free and gain more from the activity. Ask for help there if needed.



**#5. Elliptical Cross-Trainer** The elliptical is another great way to use many muscles and get a good cardiovascular workout, with little demand on joints so it is better tolerated for those who have ankle, knee or hips issues aggravated by walking.



### Staying Active and Improving Heart Health

Very important to stay moving, whether it be in the gym or outdoors. Aerobics, cycling, gardening, rowing, and walking are all great activities and you are encouraged to keep doing them as long as you can. Switching around and doing different things on different days does help share the load on joints. Personal training is also an option and group fitness classes help some people stay motivated and do provide a valued connection.





# Eating for your health

By Debbie Lucas, MS, RD, CDCES

I know that I almost always talk about eating for health, so this seems redundant, but I thought I'd change it up a bit and talk about eating for specific diseases. Clients often tell me of their frustration with choosing the right diet for themselves because they all contradict each other. One diet says to eat carbs, another vilifies carbs.



**Spoiler alert – the diet is basically the same for every health issue.** It's not about a specific diet, but more about the lifestyle. Diet implies there will be an end to it – healthy eating never ends!! Whatever eating lifestyle you choose, it needs to be something you can do for the rest of your life. At the Cardiovascular Wellness Program, we promote a whole food, plant-based eating style because it is the only eating style that has been shown to reverse diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure as well as prevent dementia and reduce risk of most cancers. If you are not ready for that, then just start with wherever you are. The basics for all health issues (and just basic healthy eating) include:

**Eat your veggies** – these are high in fiber, low in calories and carbohydrates and high in nutrients. Fill half your plate with veggies. Focus on veggies at most meals, lots of color and don't forget your greens. Starchy veggies, such as corn, potatoes, and peas, are higher in carbohydrates, but still can be included in meals for those with diabetes. Eaten in their whole form (i.e. baked potato with skin vs. mashed potatoes,) they are slow to raise blood sugars.

**Enjoy lots of fruit**– even if you have diabetes, whole fruits are fine! They are slower to raise blood sugars than juice or canned fruit in heavy syrup because they are higher in fiber. Plus they contain many more nutrients than calories. Berries are particularly associated with health benefits because of their high antioxidant quantity. If you have diabetes, you can check your blood sugar to see the effect of fruits on your blood.

**Include whole unprocessed grains** – these are intact grains that are more like they grow in nature, such as barley, millet, wheat berries, brown rice, oats, sorghum, quinoa. They are high in fiber and very slow to turn into sugar. Since unprocessed, they are usually low in salt – important for those with heart disease or high blood pressure or kidney disease. Whole grains have been associated with reduced risk of heart disease and diabetes.

**Limited processed foods** – these are foods that have been created in a plant (even though they may have come from a plant) and are not much like their original form. Such as crackers, white bread, Rice-a-Roni. In the processing, fiber and nutrients are lost and salt is often added for taste and as a preservative. Most of these will quickly increase blood sugar and are associated with higher blood sugars and high blood pressure.

**Plant proteins, such as beans, tofu or other soy products** – Animal proteins, especially those high in saturated fat or are ultra-processed, have been associated with heart disease, diabetes and

Alzheimer's disease and some cancers, so plants are preferred. If you would still like to include animal foods, limit the amounts (<4 ounces a day) and choose skinless chicken, fish or egg whites.

**Small amounts of nuts and seeds** – these will provide your healthy fats. Fats are necessary for our body's health, but the typical American diet includes large amounts, and are often the unhealthy saturated fat variety. Nuts and seeds are fats, too, but healthier because they are in their most natural form and contain less saturated fat. Excess fats tend to clog our arteries increasing risk of atherosclerosis and clog our cells, blocking the ability of our body to use the insulin we make, contributing to high blood sugars. Choose raw, unsalted nuts when you can.

### **Bottom line:**

Eating whole, real plant foods will help reduce risk of diseases as well as treat disease. No matter your current health, this way of eating will help you improve on it. The eating style you choose will depend on what you think you can do for the rest of your life and whatever your 'Why' is (the reason you are eating the way you do). For example, I eat this way because I have high blood pressure and want to lower it as well as reduce my risk of having a stroke. The Cardiovascular Wellness Program is a great place to hang out with like-minded people who can offer you support, ideas, set an excellent example for you and have fun!!

### **Putting it all together:**

- Aim for a fruit and/or veggie at each meal and snack
- Fill half your plate with veggies
- Have a whole grain at each meal
- Include a source of protein at each meal (remember that grains, veggies, nuts and seeds, have protein, too)
- Have snacks if you are hungry between meals, or it will be a long time until your next meal.

#### **Breakfast ideas:**

- Oatmeal + berries + soy milk
- Whole grain toast + peanut butter + fruit
- Scrambled tofu + spinach + fruit

#### **Lunch and dinner ideas:**

- Bean burrito on whole grain tortilla filled with beans and veggies
- Pasta with red sauce made with lentils and veggies
- Sandwich on whole grain bread with hummus, veggies and fruit on the side
- Vegetable and bean soup

#### **Snacks:**

- Veggies and hummus
- Apple and peanut butter
- Air-popped popcorn (see recipe)
- Nuts with fruit





# Maple Pumpkin Popcorn



## Ingredients

- 1/3 cup popcorn kernels
- 2 Tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 Tablespoon pureed pumpkin
- 1/4 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. salt (optional)

**Directions:** Pop the kernels in your microwave or whatever way you usually air pop it. (Debbie has a microwave popcorn bowl from Target.) Mix together syrup, pumpkin, cinnamon and salt (if using). May help to heat it up a bit. Drizzle over hot popcorn, and toss.

## Pumpkin Breakfast Muffins

Fall does bring out the pumpkin ideas. These Pumpkin Breakfast Muffins are vegan, gluten free, refined sugar free, oil free and whole-foods, plant-based compliant! They are also easy to make and delicious.

<https://plantyou.com/wfpb-pumpkin-breakfast-muffins-gluten-free-vegan-refined-sugar-free/>

## Ingredients

- 1 banana mashed
- 2 cups pureed pumpkin
- 3 tbsp maple syrup
- 2 cups oat flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground ginger
- 1 cup organic vegan chocolate chips

Servings 12



**Directions** Preheat oven to 375°F. In a large bowl, combine mashed banana, pumpkin puree, and maple syrup. In a small bowl, combine oat flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and ginger. Combine the wet and dry ingredients. Fold in chocolate chips. Spoon batter into lined muffin cups and bake for 20 minutes or until the muffins are lightly browned. Remove muffins from the oven and let cool for 5 minutes. Store muffins in an airtight container.