

Unity Fellowship Church Movement

HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

Rev. Jerri Mitchell Lee – gjerrilee@gmail.com/ Rev. Cheryl A. Bragg, Editor/Layout

UFCM EXTERNAL DEPARTMENT



HEALTH & WELLNESS INITIATIVE

TO SUPPORT THE WHOLISTIC HEALTH OF UNITY FELLOWSHIP CHURCH MOVEMENT AND THE COMMUNITITES THEY SERVE.

UFCM House of Bishops- Beatitude Bishop Zachary G. Jones – Sr. Bishop Jacquelyn D. Holland - Bishop Harris Thomas (Emeritus)

DISCLAIMER: The Unity Fellowship Church Movement's Health Innovative wants our readers to know the views and testimonials shared are that of our writers. Please consult your medical providers with health concerns.

IS THERE A HEALTH ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE UFCM HEALTH & WELLNESS IINIATIVE?
PLEASE SEND IT TO: gjerrilee@gmail.com

WELCOME TO WELLNESS

This is your first step to healthier living. Unity Fellowship Church Movement Health and Wellness Initiative encourages you to move in the direction of self-care, self-love, and wellness.



July 2024 Health Initiative Newsletter

LIVING WELL WITH A CHRONIC ILLNESS

SPECIAL EDITION Part 1

A Word from the Editor...

NEVER FORGET... IF YOU ARE LIVING WITH A CHRONIC ILLNESS

Never forget.....how far you have come.

Never forget.....everything you have gotten through.

Never forget.....all the times you pushed on even when you felt you couldn't.

Never forget.....the mornings you got out of bed, no matter how hard it was.

Never forget.....the times you wanted to give up, but God gave you the strength for the day and made a way when you saw no way.

NEVER FORGET.....THERE IS NO HEALING INSILENCE.

What does it mean to live with a chronic illness? Only you can answer that question. It can mean creating the best quality of life for your individual needs. It can mean being informed about your illness and the treatment is available. It can mean practicing several preventive healthcare measures through diet, stretching, exercise, or meditation. Bottom line is it is up to you and the relationship you have with your healthcare practitioner as to how you live with a chronic illness.

“Our communities, our political climate, and our beliefs, all have an effect on our health.”

Rev. Jerri Lee



What is Kidney Disease?

Rev. Cecelia Caldwell RN MA

The kidneys are a pair of fist-sized organs located at the bottom of the rib cage. There is one kidney on each side of the spine. Kidneys are essential to having a healthy body. They are mainly responsible for filtering waste products, excess water, and other impurities out of the blood. These products are stored in the bladder and then removed during urination. The kidneys also regulate pH, salt, and potassium levels in the body. They produce hormones that regulate blood pressure and control the production of red blood cells. The kidneys even activate a form of vitamin D that helps the body absorb calcium.

Kidney disease affects approximately 37 million American adults. It occurs when your kidneys become damaged and cannot perform their function. Damage may be caused by diabetes, high blood pressure, and various other long-term (chronic) conditions. Kidney disease can lead to other health problems, including weak bones, nerve damage, and malnutrition.

Symptoms

Signs and symptoms of chronic kidney disease develop over time if kidney damage progresses slowly. Loss of kidney function can cause a buildup of fluid or body waste or electrolyte problems. Depending on how severe it is, loss of kidney function can cause:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Loss of appetite
- Fatigue and weakness
- Sleep problems
- Urinating more or less
- Decreased mental sharpness
- Muscle cramps
- Swelling of feet and ankles
- Dry, itchy skin
- High blood pressure (hypertension) that's difficult to control
- Shortness of breath, if fluid builds up in the lungs
- Chest pain, if fluid builds up around the lining of the heart

Causes of Chronic Kidney Disease

Diabetes and high blood pressure are the most common causes of kidney disease. Your health care provider may do tests to find out why you have kidney disease. The cause of your kidney disease may affect the type of treatment you receive. Kidney stones are another common kidney problem. They occur when minerals and other substances in the blood crystallize in the kidneys, forming solid masses (stones). Be careful with over-the-counter drugs. Always follow the dosage instructions for over-the-counter medications. Taking too much aspirin (Bayer) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) can cause kidney damage. Call your doctor if the normal doses of these medications are not managing your pain effectively.

Tests & Diagnosis

Testing may be the only way to know if you have kidney disease. Get checked if you have diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, or a family history of kidney failure. The sooner you know you have kidney disease, the sooner you can get treatment. Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are bacterial infections of any part of the urinary system. Infections in the bladder and urethra are the most common. They are easily treatable and rarely lead to more health problems. However, if left untreated, these infections can spread to the kidneys and cause kidney failure. This means that dialysis may be required to perform the function of the kidneys. Dialysis is a treatment that filters and purifies the blood using a machine. It cannot cure kidney disease, but it can extend your life.

Managing Chronic Kidney Disease

You can take steps to protect your kidneys. The most important step you can take to treat kidney disease is to control your blood pressure. Healthy habits can also help you manage your kidney disease. Work with a dietitian to create a meal plan that includes foods that you enjoy eating while maintaining your kidney health. If you have risk factors, get tested for kidney disease and protect your kidneys by making healthy food choices, being more active, aiming for a healthy weight, and managing health conditions that cause kidney damage.

On a Mission to Keep the Movement Safe

Cecelia Caldwell RN MA

REFLECTIONS

Reverend Elder Dyan “ Akousa” McCray

AMERICA'S DOWNWARD SPIRAL

I read the NY Times every morning on my way to Georgetown University Hospital. I think most of you will agree that America is extremely divided now unlike anything witnessed in my 74 years of living. Most of my friends from my generation believe life was a lot simpler, and they seemed to get along much better with their neighbors in the past; when we lived by the mantra of "right is right, and wrong is wrong." As I became a teenager, I anticipated living in better economic conditions than my parents and grandparents. In elementary, Jr. High and Senior High school I remember saying the Lord's prayer and The Pledge of Allegiance (even if I hear those words differently as an adult) daily; now those things are forbidden in schools. Television was entertaining and for most part morally clean (Leave it to Beaver; I Love Lucy; Dragnet; The Lone Ranger (who at that time was a fair complexioned African American man (a little Black History outside of February for you).

Things have drastically changed for us as a people of faith, Intellect, power & survival as we consider the new world climate (not speaking about temperature). There is a void in so many places that we, as a people, need to address. I am sure I need not name any of the needs as we are all privy of the changes that are taking place.

Let us as a people take our places (in conference rooms, sitting at our desks, working from our homes, or "by any means necessary" to hold our power, plan our strategies and execute (carry out or put into action a plan moving forward) that will secure our lives and bring peace and joy to each of us and for the generations coming behind us.

I challenge you to sit with the question "what can I do to make this world a better place?" Write it down if you choose, and pray over it. Together we can make a better world!

There is something in every one of you that waits and listens for the sound of the genuine in yourself, It is the only true guide you will ever have. And if you cannot hear it, you will all of your life spend your days on the ends of strings that somebody else pulls. (Howard Thurman)

THE EYES HAVE IT



They say “the eyes are the window to the soul. That is why it is important to keep them clear and healthy. When we are reminded to get our annual health check-ups, the eye exam is not always listed. Just as our bodies change as we grow older, so do our eyes. When we are younger our eyesight is sharp and clear. Barring any genetic or accidental occurrences corrective lens are not needed. The age of technology has introduced another reason to monitor eye health. Spending hours at the computer requires extra eye care. Monitoring the number of hours spent at the computer or glasses specifically made for extended computer work.

Don't take your eyes for granted. Eat well. Good eye health starts with the food on your plate. Nutrients like omega-3, fatty acids, zinc, and vitamins C and E can help in delaying age-related vision problems. Green leafy vegetables like spinach, kale and collards. Salmon, tuna, and other oily fish. Eggs, nuts, beans, and other nonmeat protein sources, Oranges and other citrus fruits or juices. Oysters and pork. A well-balanced diet also helps you to lower your odds of diabetes and obesity, which can put you at higher risk of poor eye health.

Wear Sunglasses. The right pair of shades will help protect your eyes from the sun's ultraviolet rays. Too much UV exposure can increase the chances of cataracts. Choose a pair that blocks 99 to 100% of UVA and UVB rays. Wraparound lenses help protect your eyes from the side. Polarized lenses reduce glare while you drive, but do not necessarily offer added protection. Contact lenses offer some UV protection. Its suggested that sunglasses still be worn.

Use safety eyewear. If you use hazardous or airborne materials on the job or at home, wear safety glasses or protective goggles.

Look away from the computer or phone screen periodically. Staring at the screen for too long can cause eyestrain, blurry vision, or trouble focusing at a distance. Too much screen time can also result in neck, back or shoulder pain. To avoid eye strain, make sure your glasses or contact prescription is up to date and is appropriate for looking at a computer screen. Talk to your doctor about computer glasses. Move the screen so your eyes are level with the top of the monitor. Choose a supportive chair. Rest your eyes every 20 minutes and move out of your chair at least every 2 hours. Visiting your eye doctor once a year helps protect your sight and be aware of any eye issues early on. Even young children.

THE DIFFERENCE IN PHYSICAL AND MENTAL FATIGUE

A study has shown that 40% of adults on most days wake up tired. Some indications of physical exhaustion might be difficulty in focusing on the middle of the workday or lying awake in bed for 20 minutes in the morning instead of stretching or getting up. There are some differences in physical and mental fatigue but often one can cause the other.

PHYSICAL FATIGUE: Example of Causes. Over training, under eating, lack of sufficient sleep, extended physical stress, sleep deprivation. Symptoms may include muscle aches, headache, decreased appetite and low energy.

MENTAL FATIGUE: Example of Causes: mental tasks that require self-motivation, or internal cues that reduce day to day efficiency. A stressful day at work or home can exhaust mental fuel. Symptoms may include difficulty performing daily tasks, difficulty making routine decisions, feeling irritable or short tempered, becoming easily distracted or poor-quality sleep.

Do not hesitate to consult with your primary physician with persistent symptoms. Do not self-diagnose but self-evaluate.

1. Are you getting enough sleep?
2. How is your diet? Are you consuming high amounts of sugar or caffeine?
3. Are you moving around enough throughout the day? Sitting all day and not taking time for movement can cause listlessness.

4. Stress can impact your energy levels and sleep, bringing on fatigue.
5. Are people in your life bringing you down? Negative people or isolation can make you feel mentally exhausted.

WHEN YOU CHARGE YOUR PHONE AT NIGHT, ARE YOU ALSO CHARGING YOURSELF SO THAT YOU HAVE 100% BATTERY POWER?



LIVING WITH A CANCER DIAGNOSIS

A cancer diagnosis is not the end, it is the beginning of a journey. The most common forms of cancer are Breast Cancer, Colorectal Cancer, Lung Cancer, Prostate Cancer, and Skin Cancer.

One of the uncommon forms of cancer is stomach cancer, for which there is no screening process. Cancer starts when cells begin to grow out of control. It affects 1 in 3 people in the United States. We are made up of trillions of cells that over your lifetime normally grow and divide as needed. When cells are abnormal or get old, they usually die. Cancer starts when something goes wrong in this process when the old cells do not die when they should. As cancer cells grow out of control, they crowd out normal cells, making it hard for your body to work the way it should.

EARLY DETECTION is the key to successful cancer treatment as well as self-advocacy and gathering information about treatment alternatives and choices. For example, cancer diagnosed in stages 1 or 2 means it has not spread from where it started. Cancer diagnosed in stages 3 or 4 can mean it has begun to spread. Everyone's body responds differently. There are several reasons why cancer forms in the body such as multiple changes in genes, lifestyle habits, genes from your parents or being exposed to cancer-causing agents in the environment. Many times, there is no obvious cause. Once diagnosed, treatment can take place in different forms. Surgery, Chemotherapy, Radiation and alternative treatments to be discussed with your oncologist.

Mentally and emotionally initially a diagnosis of cancer can be stressful. It is important to build your support team which should include family, friends and professionals. Do not be afraid to ask questions. Foods can be healing. Research special recipes offered by the American Cancer Society, as well as information on foods that help heal and build your body up, especially your immune system, to fight whatever is in store. Antioxidants are at the top of the list. They work to enhance the health of cells. Sometimes living with cancer can be more of a mental wellness challenge than a physical challenge.

NUTRITION AND CHRONIC ILLNESS

For those dealing with a chronic illness, food becomes very important. Good nutritional support is required to maintain body strength to prevent body tissue from breaking down, rebuild tissue and fight infection and fatigue. At the same time, the side effects of treatment can have a big impact on the consumption of food and eating habits. Treatment and lifestyle can also affect absorption, digestion, and the body's use of food. Good nutritional support helps in lessening side effects and plays a large part in survival rates.

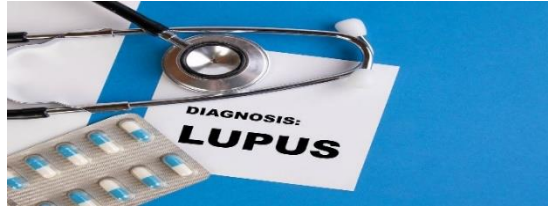
The idea that certain foods can be healing and healthy is not new. More than 4,000 years ago the ancient Egyptians and Greeks used honey for burns, sores and wounds. Hippocrates believed "Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food." Emphasizing the importance of using fresh plants and herbs in the diet, which are excellent antioxidants. Some can be found in berries, grapes, olive oil, and tea, avocados, grains and cereals. Foods that contain Vitamins C and E are also known for high antioxidants levels.

A chronic illness can cause the appetite to fluctuate. It is important to embrace the times when feeling the need for nutrition. Some people will eat better at certain times of the day, embrace it. Small portions and mini meals are encouraged, no matter what the illness. With the exception of those on dialysis from kidney disease(who need to be mindful of fluid intake), maintain a good body fluid level. Keep healthy snacks.



LUPUS

Lupus is a chronic autoimmune disease that causes inflammation in various parts of the body. It can range from mild to life-threatening. Most of the lupus diagnosis occurs in women between the ages of 15 and 44 years, but lupus also occurs in men, older people, and children. The symptoms of lupus vary from person to person and can often be difficult to diagnose. It can also duplicate symptoms of other illnesses.



The exact causes of lupus are not known but it has been suggested that genetics (hereditary), hormones and environmental factors play a role. Categories of lupus are:

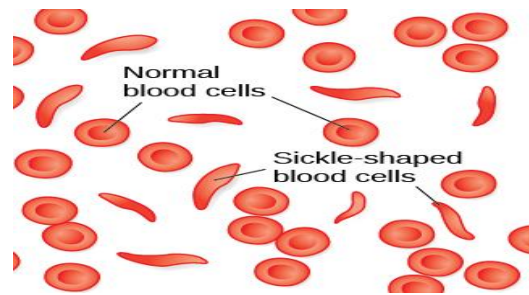
- ❖ Systemic Lupus- causes inflammation in the joints, kidneys, skin, brain heart, lungs and blood vessels. Most common form.
- ❖ Cutaneous lupus- limited to the skin. Rashes shaped like disks.
- ❖ Antiphospholipid Syndrome- blood clotting disorder.
- ❖ Drug Induced Lupus- caused by certain prescription drugs for hypertension, or irregular heartbeats. Once stopped symptoms go away.
- ❖ Neonatal Lupus- can affect infants of women who have lupus.

A lupus flare up can be caused by ultraviolet rays from the sun or artificial light, certain drugs such as penicillin, antibiotics, and anything that causes stress to the body (infection, surgery and accident, pregnancy, or a viral illness.)

There is no one test for lupus, so the blood would have to undergo a variety of tests. Symptoms of lupus can vary and come and go, so treatment is based on an individual basis. Family health history and personal health history play an important role in the diagnosis of lupus. A referral by your primary care physician to a specialist who has experience with the disease is strongly recommended. Early diagnosis is important in preventing damage to vital organs.

Living well with lupus means balancing activities with rest and trying to avoid stress. You can listen to your body and not give up your goals and dreams. Make sure to get extra rest and regular exercise when possible. Always ask questions about your health status. Be proactive and understand what is going on with your body. There is no cure for lupus, but early diagnosis and proper medical treatment can help to manage the disease. Preventive healthcare through scheduled medical exams and annual physical checkups plays a large role in early diagnosis.

Sickle Cell Facts



- ❖ Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is an inherited blood disorder that occurs commonly in the African American community. About 1 in 500 African Americans are born with the disease and 1 in 1,400 Latinos are born with it each year. SCD is inherited the same way physical traits like eye and hair colors are inherited. SCD causes red blood cells to be damaged and stiffen forming a jagged sickle shape.
- ❖ Medical problems associated with SCD are caused by red blood cells being distorted and blocking small blood vessels. Chronic symptoms that may appear are pain in arms, legs, chest or abdomen, stroke, infections, anemia or lung tissue damage.
- ❖ Children and adults with SCD are at high risk of vision impairment, difficulty in breathing, chest pain and fever.
- ❖ Research is ongoing to find a cure for SCD. Such treatments as OXBRYTA and LYFGENIA, a gene therapy using a patient's own cells, and red blood cell transfusions are available. These treatments may not work for everyone.
- ❖ As of 1979, in many states, all newborns are screened at birth for Sickle Cell. Also, anyone interested in their sickle cell status can request a screening with their healthcare provider. Approximately 8-10% of African Americans are carriers of the sickle cell gene. People of Latin and Caribbean descent may also be carriers. This is an important status to know before having children.
- ❖ African American blood donors are the best source for compatible, antigen-matched blood for those living with sickle cell.

**UNITY FELLOWSHIP CHURCH MOVEMENT HEALTH INITIATIVE
PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE HEALTH FAIR
At the 2024 UFCM Convocation**

**FIND OUT MORE:
Namewellness2023@gmail.com or 862-405-7612**

“Wellness is an Energy: Healing is a Process”

Unity Fellowship Health Initiative Newsletter is looking for informative health articles and anyone interested in working on the newsletter monthly. We need writers and researchers.

Please contact Rev. Jerri Mitchell-Lee or Rev. Cheryl Bragg.

- Rev. Jerri Mitchell-Lee- gjerrilee@gmail.com or (201) 289-6941
- Rev. Cheryl Bragg- whosoevermusic59@gmail.com or (732) 259-3782

