

Unity Fellowship Church Movement

HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

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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.



Happy New Year! Only make the healthy promises you will keep.



WAYS TO AVOID EMOTIONAL EATING

- ✓ Chose to eat something “off plan or off diet.”
- ✓ Don’t beat yourself up.
- ✓ If you are challenged to change the eating habits from the past, make better food choices in the future.
 - ✓ What are the situations that bring you to emotional eating?
 1. Something that someone said.
 2. A certain food you deprived yourself of.
 3. Memories.
 4. Situations at work or home.
 5. Relationships
- ✓ Once you know your trigger of emotional eating, create a plan. What will you do instead?
- ✓ Suggestions as to what may help when you experience an emotional eating situation coming on:
 1. Deep stomach breathing.
 2. Reduce stress and think about other choices.
 3. Drink water. It helps to fill you up and cleanse. Sometimes the feeling of hunger is confused with dehydration, and we eat instead of drink.
 4. Eat something nutrient dense. Salad, fresh fruit, raw vegetables, foods that fill you up.
- ✓ To get through special occasions such as weddings, parties, funerals, or any occasion where food is served, you can avoid emotional eating by having a healthy food plan ready. You can have delicious food that will satisfy the craving without giving up your desire to eat healthy.

CONTROLLING HIGH CHOLESTEROL

- ❖ Choose your fats wisely. It does not mean cutting out all types of fat. Certain types play a role in regulating appetite, helping you feel full, absorbing certain types of vitamins (A, D, E, and K) and storing energy in the body. The type of fat you choose matters. Consuming a lot of foods high in saturated and trans fats, put you at greater risk for high cholesterol. Foods like walnuts, salmon, flaxseeds, and mackerel, and using olive oil are high in omega-3 fatty acids and help to improve cholesterol numbers.
- ❖ Focus less on sugar and more on fiber. This many times means choosing more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. It also may mean cutting back on fried food, alcohol, and sugar, which have been shown to have negative effects on heart health. Taking in daily fiber through foods rather than supplements is recommended. Fiber reduces the absorption of LDL (bad) cholesterol into the blood stream. Fiber rich fruits such as berries and bananas make a great substitute for dessert.
- ❖ Make time to Exercise. Any types of movement such as walking, weight resistant training, swimming, or aerobic exercise, can have a beneficial effect on cholesterol. This can also include spurts of movement throughout the day or dance. Exercise is beneficial to reducing stress which affects cholesterol levels.
- ❖ It is important to note that for women, the body's cholesterol level increases 10-15% during menopause. This change often goes unnoticed with other symptoms that occur during this time. One of the main factors that increase levels of cholesterol is the sudden drop in estrogen levels during menopause. The rise in cholesterol, along with hot flashes and mood changes tends to happen one year before and at the end of the menopause. A healthy diet and exercise are two of the main ways of addressing the increase of cholesterol as we age. Women cannot avoid aging, or genetics but we can counteract the effects. Check cholesterol levels on at least an annual level one year post period, more often if there is a family history.

Recovering from Uterine Cancer

Lynne Summers

August 2nd, it was exactly one year since I had surgery to remove cancer from my womb. Three weeks later I would begin a journey of 6 cycles of chemotherapy treatments and 3 cycles of radiation treatment and let me tell you...it has been a “helluva” ride!!

I have turned the corner now and the road to recovery has been a strange one. For one thing, I’m still fighting severe fatigue, my energy levels are low, and I find myself fighting very hard to get back to the person I was before cancer came into my life. Prior to all this upheaval, I considered myself to be a rather healthy person. Working out 3 to 4 times a week at the gym, eating a clean diet, taking my vitamin supplements, and having a positive attitude!

Most mornings I’m still very tired when I wake up, even after getting 7 hours of sleep! I thought getting a puppy would help me with getting off the couch; and it has. But when your puppy wakes you up 30 – 45 minutes earlier than you set your alarm, that doesn’t make you happy. Combine that with dealing with menopause, let’s just say that while I’m grateful to be on this side, I hate it here!! So dramatic, so whiny, right? WRONG!!! This is a lot to deal with and I have always prided myself on the ability to handle adversity by keeping it moving despite the mountain that has been in my way. It’s one thing to move around a mountain, it’s quite another to deal with fatigue, menopause & grief. I set my intention to be more SELF-FULL and be selfish about my self-care; so that prompted a visit with my primary physician and I made the decision to speak with a therapist to help me go through all of this.

After speaking with her, we decided to get a blood workup and to also check my thyroid to rule out other causes of fatigue so we can see what’s really happening within my body and to my surprise, my folic acid (Iron) is very low. I’ve always been anemic, but not this bad. She also recommended doubling up on my Vitamin D as that was extremely low as well. I must make a concerted effort to go outside and having my Lola helps twofold: I’m getting more natural Vitamin D from the sun and I’m getting some exercise from walking her. I’m also working my way to getting my steps in 3 times a week and I will be working even harder to getting back to working out with weights and getting cardio exercise in. With that I will have to amplify my diet and I’m contemplating making major changes to that as well.

Therapy has been one of the best decisions I’ve made in a very long time! We Black women are taught to do all and be all to everyone but ourselves! We need a safe space to tell our truths the most!! Being taught from birth to put ourselves last takes a real toll MENTALLY & PHYSICALLY. We can’t heal if we can’t feel. I was stuck in a place of numbness since December 18, 2018. It’s 2023!! To get to my healing, I had to release all that I was holding in if I wanted to live. I was holding in a lot. That phrase, “Thank God I don’t look like what

I've been through" is not it! "Fake it 'til you make it" is not it! All those things we tell ourselves while we're in the midst of our suffering is not we should be saying. We must give ourselves enough grace to say, "I have to take care of me now" AND FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THE PROMISE WE MADE TO OURSELVES! I'm following through...will you?

NUTRIENTS YOUR BODY CRAVES

The list of nutrients is not limited to the following three, but they are key for your immune system, sleep, brain function and more.

- ❖ **MAGNESIUM:** Helps with sleep and minimizes pain. It helps muscles to relax and with muscular aches. It can have a calming effect on the brain and relieve mild anxiety as well as a preventive measure off migraines. Magnesium is found in high fiber foods such as vegetables and brown rice, seeds, and nuts. Some of the ways to feed your body magnesium is in salad, with a handful of fresh spinach, black beans and avocado. For a snack pumpkin seeds with banana slices and chopped dark chocolate.
- ❖ **B VITAMINS:** help to boost brainpower and protect your heart. B12 and folate are the most well-known. B12 helps your body convert food into energy and provide myelin as insulation that covers the nerves and helps neurons in the brain communicate with one another. Folate helps lower levels of amino acid that can contribute to the risk of heart disease and stroke. B12 is one of the nutrients that is not found in plants. It can be found in foods such as eggs, cheese, fish, milk, yogurt, legumes and red meat. Folate is plentiful in greens such as asparagus and spinach.
- ❖ **VITAMIN D:** Also called the sunshine vitamin, and important for the bones and immune system. It is important to the body's ability to absorb calcium, used in maintaining healthy bones. It helps to regulate the immune function. Most of the vitamin D in your body is present in the tissues and cells in response to sunlight. It is not always easy to find in food. Vitamin D can be found in whole eggs, oily fish, fortified milks, orange juice and cereals. Always consult with your doctor before taking vitamin D supplements.



HOW PRAYER AFFECTS THE BRAIN

For centuries prayer has been used as a part of the healing process. Only recently has it been recognized as a necessary part of a healthy life. Prayer has been known to lower blood pressure, fight chronic disease, decrease pain, and increase mental wellness.

Prayer is highly effective in lowering reaction to traumatic and negative events. Prayer can increase activity in the language, visualization, emotional and motor centers. Prayer helps to focus our thoughts on something outside of ourselves.

- ❖ Engaging in 12 minutes of prayer and personal reflection each day, makes a profound impact on the brain.
- ❖ Prayer calms the cardiovascular system and reduces stress.
- ❖ The brain controls basic body functions such as heart rate, blood pressure and the immune system. Prayer can change the healing effect on the body.
- ❖ Prayer as part of a belief system can help with healing.
- ❖ Research has shown that prayer can trigger the release of “feel-good chemicals in the brain.
- ❖ Praying involves the deeper parts of the brain (the mid-front, and back portions).
- ❖ When the reflective part of the brain is activated during prayer, the part of the brain dealing with taking action is inactivated. This could account for why prayer helps people struggle with addictive urges.
- ❖ Prayer can take you away from the fight or flight mode. While praying you can't lash out or kick in walls. For the purpose of self-care prayer can be useful when challenged with the ability to cope.
- ❖ Praying is saying: “I am really hurting about X. I am really hoping for Y. I am looking for support from Z. The act of prayer may be a way of being real with yourself, and locating where you are right now, what you're feelings are and being able to identify your needs.



TRANSGENDER HEALTH CORNER

Safe Gender Affirming Hormone Treatment

Tracy Africa Norman

In 1976 a woman in Roanoke, Virginia received a prescription for two drugs, estrogen, and progestin. Twelve months later, a local reporter noted Rhoda's soft skin and visible breasts, making her female. This was the point. The University of Virginia Medical Center had been prescribing hormones and performing surgeries for years. It is what today we call gender reassignment or gender affirming care.

Dr. Milton Edgerton cared for transgenders at John Hopkins University in the early 1960s, establishing the nation's first university-based gender identity clinic in 1966. Gender affirming hormone therapy has existed in the United States for over 50 years. It has only been within the last ten to fifteen years that hormone therapy has been made available to a larger transgender population.

Gender affirming hormone therapy is designed to replace hormones the body produces less of. When receiving affirming hormone therapy, it is important to establish a primary Care physician as well as a medical provider who familiar with transgender health care.

Transgender health care is no longer in the closet. There was a time when identifying as transgender was considered a mental illness or disability. However, hormone therapy is only part of maintaining total health care. It is also important make sure hormones are administered safely and with a qualified medical person. Complete medical care should include annual blood work (or more often if needed), scheduled colonoscopy, dental visit, and eye exam just to name a few health screenings. Also keep in mind that if you have not surgically transitioned, to maintain organs you were born with.

Hormone therapy can be administered by tablet, patch, or injection. The best method for an individual should be determined by conversation with the medical provider and the patient.

AS THE AGING PROCESS TAKES PLACE, 55 AND OLDER, CONTINUING TO TAKE HORMONES CAN PUT YOU AT HIGHER RISK OF STROKE. Be sure to have a conversation with your physician concerning continuing affirming hormone treatment and when it should be discontinued.

Trans-Masculine: Female to Male. Methods of gender re-assignment include:

- ❖ Metoidioplasty, a normally enlarged clitoris.

- ❖ Phalloplasty, gentile reconstruction.
- ❖ Penile Prosthesis- (final stage of surgery).

Possible Effects of Hormone Therapy Testosterone:

- ❖ Increased acne, oily skin
- ❖ After three months increase in facial hair
- ❖ Change in body fat
- ❖ Deep voice
- ❖ Decrease in vaginal size.
- ❖ Enlarged clitoris.
- ❖ Increase in muscle strength.

The transition process can take two to five years to complete depending on how much of the process is chosen.

Trans Female: Male to Female- Hormone Therapy- Estrogen, Progesterone.

Method of Gender re-assignment:

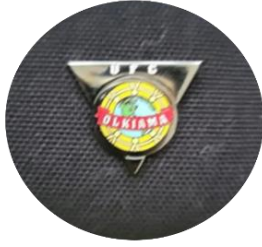
- ❖ Orchiectomy- surgical removal of testicles to decrease hormone requirements.
- ❖ Vaginoplasty- surgical removal of penile and testicular tissues and construction of vagina.

Possible Effects of Estrogen:

- ❖ Fatigue
- ❖ Less muscle mass.
- ❖ Breast development
- ❖ Moodiness
- ❖ Hair loss
- ❖ Weight gain
- ❖ Depression

The transition process can take two to four years to complete depending on how much of the process is chosen. It is important that a mental health provider (therapist) be included on the gender re-assignment team. It is also important to remember that as the body ages hormone therapy needs to be adjusted to prevent higher risk of stroke and other health issues that may occur during the aging process. Make sure the gender re-assignment process is wholistic. Schedule the regular health screenings such as colonoscopy, pap smear (if you still have female organs) mammogram, prostate exam, cholesterol, dental, eye exam, and dental.

MAKE SURE YOU ARE TRANS HEALTHY.



The Olkiama (Circle of Elders) Corner

Health News for those 50 and Older

PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE: LOWERING STRESS OVER THE AGE OF 50

Black Women's Health Guide

People often talk about stress as though it is outside of us. They blame the external factors and say stress is triggered by other people or situations. The truth is on an emotional and chemical level, stress lives within our bodies. It is a physiological reaction to a perceived threat and plays an important role in our survival but can get out of control.

Unfortunately, stress is an overlooked issue for Black women. Living with stress can promote the development of certain health conditions. This type of stress is called weathering. It can leave you open to a variety of illnesses. It is especially important for women over 50 to learn how to manage stress. Letting stress go unchecked can affect your mental health and your ability to fight inflammation, infection, and disease.

The two major types of stress are:

ACUTE STRESS- it is short lived, and you feel agitation in the presence of a sudden threat. It creates a survival response that sends your body into a fight or flight mode, making it produce stress hormones. Your breathing may become shallow, or your blood pressure may go up. Long term damage is minimal to your immune system if your stress level returns to normal immediately after.

CHRONIC STRESS- occurs on a regular basis. It can be triggered by anything from a difficult commute to a frustrating job or medical issues. It can debilitate you, especially when it sends the body in to fight or flight mode on a continuous basis. This makes it harder to regain equilibrium. Chronic stress throws off mental and physical function across the board. It can cause you to overproduce stress hormones. As a result, your body can't produce enough "feel good" chemicals to balance them out. Over time this can damage the immune system.

STRESS EFFECTS:

- ❖ **Digestion-** when stressed, food is not digested well. Stress diverts blood to the muscles instead of the stomach, which hinders digestion. Stress also reduces the body's ability to absorb nutrients. When stressed we tend to eat unhealthy foods. (comfort foods)

- ❖ EQUILBRIUM- chronic stress causes inflammation causing the body to turn against itself. Over an extended period, it can keep the body from fighting off disease.
- ❖ HEALING- Stress causes the body to be open to illness and lowers the ability to recover. Wounds do not heal well and recovery time is slowed.

Suggestions of How to Get a Handle on Stress:

- ❖ Eat nutritious meals. Fruits, vegetables, fish , low fat high protein meats.
- ❖ Mindfulness- being present in the moment instead of thinking about what could be. Take time to notice your surroundings and focus on removing yourself from stressful situations.
- ❖ Breath work. Can lower blood pressure, promote better sleep and alertness. Deep breathing relaxes the nervous system.
- ❖ Exercise- it releases endorphins, boosts mood and can alleviate physical tension.
- ❖ Therapy- can lighten your emotional load and provide alternative ways to reduce stress.

STRETCH AND KEEP YOUR BODY FLEXIBLE

Stretching can help you stay active longer and reduce your risk of age-related health issues such as sprains and strains. Flexibility exercises like stretching and range of motion movements are a great way to remain active. Too often people ignore the importance of flexibility or do not use the correct exercise form, or exercise at the wrong time. For example, stretching before exercise and on a regular basis is important to improve flexibility.

The loss of flexibility can be prevented or partially restored by stretching. A long-term stretching program can assist with and increase in range of motion. Good flexibility keeps muscles and joints strong and makes it easier to perform everyday tasks with less effort. Some of the actions that require flexibility are walking, climbing stairs, getting out

of bed or a chair, or vehicle, getting in and out of a bathtub and carrying groceries, tying your shoes or looking over your shoulder, just to name a few.

Flexibility decreases with age. Usually, fifty is the age at which people begin to notice they are less flexible. Loss of flexibility is part of the aging process, but stretching can keep it under control. Some of the small signs might be difficulty in bending or twisting, pulling off or putting on a sweater, or experiencing muscle strains and joint sprains more often. Joint motion may become more restricted, and flexibility decreases because of change in tendons and ligaments.

Parts of your body are like a rubber band. If it is in good shape, it snaps back. As it gets older it loses elasticity and cannot stretch as far. Your body muscles are similar. After years of poor body motion, they become worn out. Much of the decline in flexibility comes from inactivity. Stretching can improve flexibility in middle age and older adults. It can also improve posture and reduce risks for injury. Combining stretching with cardiovascular and strength training exercise can help to improve overall fitness.

Cholesterol Healthy Shopping List

Foods high in fiber, raw vegetables,
Fish- salmon, blue fish, tuna, sardines
Chicken breasts (no skin),
Breakfast foods- oatmeal, egg whites,
grits, red potatoes
Fruits- bananas, oranges, apples,
mangoes, strawberries, raspberries
Vegetables- carrots, beets, broccoli,
collard greens, spinach, (all dark green
leafy vegetables), sweet potatoes
Beans, Nuts, green tea, water

Foods That Boost Energy

Water
Peanut Butter
Bananas
Nuts
Eggs
Salmon
Asparagus
Kiwi
Peas

One-Pot Pasta with Tomatoes and Spinach

1lb uncooked linguine	3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 small yellow onion chopped.	4 cups water
2 cups cherry tomatoes halved	4 cups loosely packed spinach.
1 tsp. black pepper	Parmesan cheese, grated
½ tsp crushed red pepper	

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine uncooked fettuccine, onion, garlic, tomatoes, black pepper, crushed red pepper, and olive oil in a large pot. Add 3 cups of water, adding more as needed until pasta is submerged, up to 4 cups. Stir to combine.
 2. Bring mixture to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium. Boil, stirring frequently so pasta does not stick, until water is nearly absorbed and pasta is slightly al dente, 8-10 minutes.
 3. Remove pasta from heat. Add spinach until leaves are slightly wilted. Season as desired. add parmesan as desired.
- Serves 4-6 people.

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR IN CHIEF

Reverend Jerri Mitchell-Lee

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.

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- Rev. Cheryl Bragg- whosoevermusic59@gmail.com or (732) 259-3782

Change Your
N.A.M.E.

Nutrition. Activity. Mental Health. Encouragement.

JANUARY 2024



UFCM



UPCOMING EVENTS

JAN 13TH
2:00PM

Youth Revival
Planning
Committee Meeting

(Meeting info Provided to Participants)

JAN 20TH
2:00PM

UFCM Preventive
Healthcare
Training



JAN 27TH
2:00PM

Conflict Resolution
w/Presenter
Pastor Rodney Jackson



For more information, please contact
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Meeting ID for open meetings: 860 0555 7590
Passcode: 494065

