

# Mended Hearts Houston

Mended Hearts—Houston Chapter 38, CHI Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center

## Luck abounds if you do find a four-leaf clover

Like the discovery of a heads-up penny or the act of tossing spilled salt over your left shoulder, finding a four-leaf clover is considered good luck to those of us with a superstitious bent. But while your chances of stumbling upon the penny are 50-50 and you can toss that salt any old time, what are the odds of finding the four-leaf clover?

About 1 in 10,000.

Dr. John Frett, professor of Landscape Horticulture and Director of the University of Delaware Botanic Gardens, was quoted on marthastewart.com as saying the 1 in 10,000 chance is for a typical group of plants. On the other hand, in 2014, a woman in Sydney, Australia, happened upon 21 of the lucky clovers in her front yard. So there's that.

If you want to buy your luck, don't fall for an imposter 4-leaf clover. Check out clovers.com where they have diagrams to educate the public on genuine versus fake four-leaf clovers.

## Studies: Caring for grandchildren is healthy

For the kids, grandma and grandpa often mean warmth and fun. In return, the little rascals give a lot back.

Using data from a survey of families spanning several generations between 1985 and 2004, a 2016 Boston University study found that when young adults and their elders enjoy close relationships, both display fewer symptoms of depression.

According to a 2014 study from the Journal of the American Gerontological Society, spending quality time with grandchildren while they're very young advanced the mental health of a senior too. The more bonding between their generations, the better.

Susan Newman, a social psychologist and author of "Little Things Mean a Lot: Creating Happy Memories with Your Grandchildren," says grandparents are exceptional at calming kids when they're hurting and exhorting



them when they're well. When there's somebody they trust and know is always on their side, it's a huge emotional plus for the child, Newman says, adding that they have somebody around who's comforting.

Unlike most parents, Newman continues, grandparents have "infinite patience"--and often, more time to spare.

Sharing interests such as sports, baking or flying kites brings happiness to both generations. If kids are having fun, she adds, "you're going to feel good as a grandparent."

Watching grandchildren on a weekly basis may also heighten the brain function and verbal fluency of the grandparent, according to a study published in a 2014 Journal of Marriage and the Family analyzed by data from the Survey of Health, Aging, and Retirement in Europe.

Still another study, published in the Journal of the North American Menopause Society, found the highest cognitive scores among older women who spent one day a week babysitting their grandchildren.

In a December 2016 study published in the journal Evolution and Human Behavior, caring for grandchildren might even lead to longer life.

### Why sleep is good for your arteries

*Medical News Today.  
Catharine Paddock PhD  
Fact checked by Carolyn  
Robertson*

Fresh evidence suggests that sleep regulates a mechanism that can help to protect arteries from hardening. The finding reinforces the notion that good-quality sleep is important for cardiovascular health.

Scientists from Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in Boston, MA, together with colleagues from other research centers, studied the development of atherosclerosis in mice. Atherosclerosis is the process through which plaques, or fatty deposits, build up inside arteries, causing them to narrow and stiffen. It is a common reason for disease.

The researchers found that sleep-disturbed mice developed larger plaques in their arteries than mice that slept well. The sleep-disturbed mice also had higher amounts of circulating, inflammatory cells and produced lower amounts of hypocretin, which is a brain hormone that controls wakefulness. The researchers also saw a reduction in atherosclerosis and inflammatory cells in these mice after they received hypocretin supplementation.

Subject to confirmation in humans, the findings demonstrate that sleep influences cardiovascular health by regulating hypocretin production in the brain.

The journal Nature has recently published a paper about the study. "We've identified a mechanism," says senior study author Filip K. Swirski, Ph.D., who is an associate professor at MGH and

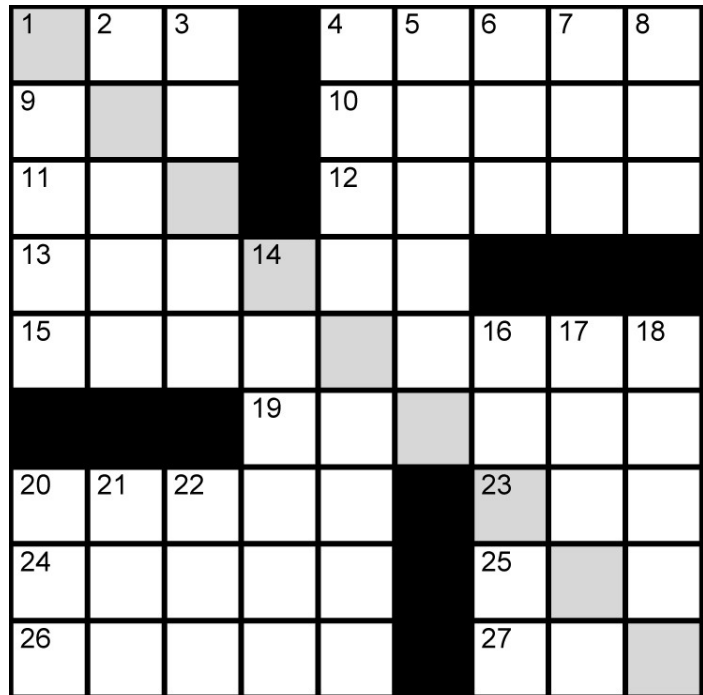
### Quick-baking staple

#### Across

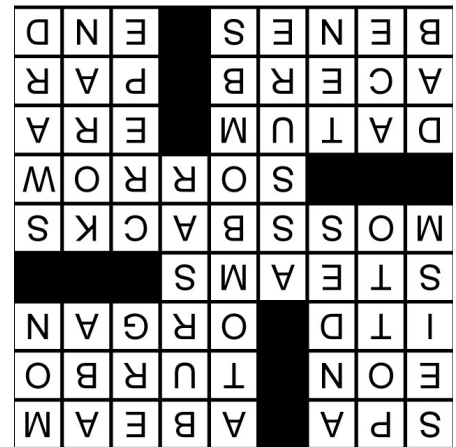
1. Marienbad, for one
4. Crosswise, on deck
9. Long, long time
10. Engine supercharger
11. "\_\_\_ be my pleasure!"
12. Church instrument
13. Does a slow burn
15. Old turtles
19. Regret
20. Fact
23. Time in history
24. Tart
25. Golfer's goal
26. Elaine \_\_\_ ("Seinfeld" role)
27. Conclude

#### Down

1. Earthquake
2. African lemur
3. South American range
4. Manhattan Project project
5. College treasurer
6. .0000001 joule
7. "The \_\_\_ Daba Honeymoon"
8. Back-to-work time: Abbr.
14. Give - confidence to
16. Brunch serving



17. Holy text
18. Grassy area
20. Apply gently
21. Trick taker, often
22. Big \_\_\_ Conference



*The headline is a clue to the answer in the diagonal.*

Harvard Medical School, also in Boston, "by which a brain hormone controls production of inflammatory cells in the bone marrow in a way that helps protect the blood vessels from damage."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that 35 percent of adults in the United States were regularly sleeping less than 7 hours per 24-hour period in 2014.

Studies have linked lack of sleep to long-term health conditions, such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, depression, and heart disease. However, they have not shed much light on the underlying biological mechanisms. So, Dr. Swirski and his

colleagues decided to investigate how sleep might help to protect cardiovascular health by focusing on the development of atherosclerosis.

The plaques that arise in atherosclerosis can take years to form and consist of calcium, fat molecules, cholesterol, and other substances. As they accumulate, they lessen the flow of nutrient- and oxygen-rich blood.

Atherosclerosis can lead to various other conditions, including coronary heart disease, which develops when plaques build up in the arteries that supply blood to the heart.

## 30 Minutes of Exercise Can Counteract a Day of Sitting

New research finds even small amounts of exercise can dramatically improve your health.

The vast majority of Americans spend a good portion of their days tethered to a desk. This type of sedentary lifestyle can take a serious toll on your health and even lead to an early death, research shows.

However, just because you spend most days glued to a chair doesn't necessarily mean you're doomed.

Just 30 minutes of physical activity a day can counteract a day of sitting, according to a new study published this month in the American Journal of Epidemiology.

Researchers from Columbia University Irving Medical Center evaluated 7,999 healthy adults, ages 45 and older, who previously participated in a separate study that required them to wear activity monitors for at least four days between 2009 and 2013.

The research team used the data from the monitors — which recorded the amount and intensity of physical activity they did — and, over the course of five years, tracked the mortalities and health risks the participants experienced.

The study found that substituting 30 minutes of sitting with light physical activity could lower your risks of an early death by about 17 percent.

Replace that sedentary time with more moderate to vigorous exercise, like running and biking, and you'll cut the risk of early mortality by 35 percent. Even short 1 to 2-minute bursts of movement were linked to long-term valuable health benefits. risks.

*This article was taken from Healthline.com*



## New day honors Vietnam veterans

March 29 is National Vietnam War Veterans Day, marking the third year the observance is held on the same date nationwide.

Although most states celebrate "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" each year, it hasn't always fallen on the same day, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. Some states observed it on the 29th and some on the 30th.

However, March 29 is the date in 1973 that the last combat troops were withdrawn from Vietnam, the website noted, along with the date that President Nixon chose for the first Vietnam Veterans Day in 1974.

The holiday became official when President Trump signed the "The Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017," which encourages

Americans to display the U.S. flag in honor of Vietnam veterans.

A similar holiday was observed on March 29, 2012, via a proclamation signed by President Obama, according to military.com, which said the year marked the start of a 13-year-long celebration honoring Vietnam War veterans that runs through Veterans Day 2025.

The observance should not be confused with Veterans Day, which is Nov. 11 each year and honors veterans of all wars and conflicts. That holiday was originally established to mark the end of World War I and was referred to as Armistice Day.

## Retirement: Men get bored, studies say

John is a successful family man: Married for 25 years, he supported his family as a truck driver, always on the road. In his last year before retirement, he dreamed of being at home, improving his guitar skills, jamming with his brother.

Then, a retired friend tells him: "Don't be surprised that there is nothing to do. It is so boring."

So this is how retirement is? Boring? Disappointing? Aimless?

For many men, boredom is first and depression is second. According to a 2012 study by University of California, men experience satisfaction the first year followed by a steep decline.

Lindsay Greene, author of "Ready to Retire? What You and Your Spouse Need to Know About the

Reality of Retirement," writes that the happiest retirees have multiple selves -- hobbies and activities that keep them busy.

Some psychologists say the happiest retirees are those who spent the last three years before retirement hating their job. While they inevitably lose their identity as the breadwinner, at least they don't go back to the hated grind. But, for those who love their job, it's probably best to ease into retirement, working parttime before official retirement.

Either way, in retirement men (and women) need social relationships, scheduled activities, and meaning.



## Slow Cooker Thai Chicken Soup

Servings 6

- 2 lb. boneless large chicken breasts (aim for 2 breasts, 1 pound each)
- 14.4 oz. packaged onion and pepper stir-fry mix
- 16 oz. packaged white mushrooms
- 1/2 (13.5-ounce) can lite coconut milk
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken stock
- 2 Tbsp. lime juice
- 1/4 tsp. red hot chile flakes
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
- 10 oz. packaged, frozen peas
- 1/2 cups fresh basil or cilantro leaves
- 4 oz. roughly chopped, broken raw rice vermicelli noodles
- Asian hot sauce like Sriracha, to serve, optional



When about to serve, turn the heat to high if it's on low. Use tongs to transfer chicken to a bowl. Into the slow cooker, stir in lime juice, chile flakes, salt, pepper, peas, basil, and vermicelli noodles, making sure the noodles are mostly submerged in the liquid. Cover slow cooker with lid and cook until noodles have softened, about 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, carefully transfer hot chicken to a cutting board and cut into bite-sized pieces. Stir back into the soup. Ladle soup into bowls and serve with hot sauce, if desired.

**Quick Tips:** Cooking Tip: When using a slow cooker, make sure the ingredient that needs to be cooked the most (like meat) is placed on the bottom, closest to the heat source.

**Keep it Healthy:** While a little harder to find, substitute brown rice vermicelli for the rice vermicelli noodles if you can find them

**Tip:** Buying a container of already-squeezed lemon or lime juice is a more cost-effective way of using citrus juice in recipes versus freshly-squeezed juice.

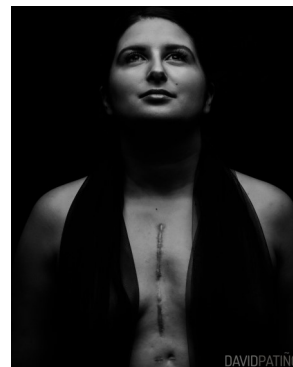
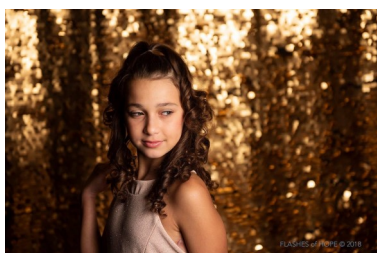
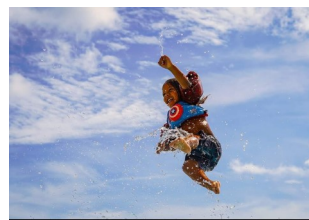
### Directions

Place chicken into the bottom of a large slow cooker. Add stir-fry mix and mushrooms on top of the chicken; pour coconut milk and chicken stock over the entire mixture. Cover with lid and let mixture cook on high heat for 4 hours or on low heat for 8 hours until chicken is tender.

Tip: Serving size 2 cups

## Rock Your Scar 2019 Winners

This year almost 1000 people submitted and shared their beautiful photographs with an incredible 193,283 people taking the time to vote! Thank you to the warriors who participated in this campaign to help raise awareness of congenital heart defects!



# Mended Hearts, Inc. – Chapter #38 – Houston, TX

## Membership Application



It's great to be alive,  
and to help others.

### Contact Information

Name (Mr./Mrs./Ms.)	
Street Address	
City ST ZIP Code	
Home Phone	
Email Address	
Birthdate	

### Confidential Medical Information for the Mended Hearts National Database

*Check all procedures or treatments that are applicable.*

<input type="checkbox"/> Pacemaker	<input type="checkbox"/> Aneurysm	<input type="checkbox"/> MI	<input type="checkbox"/> Congestive Heart Failure
<input type="checkbox"/> Defibrillator	<input type="checkbox"/> Bypass	<input type="checkbox"/> PTCA	<input type="checkbox"/> Transplant
<input type="checkbox"/> Artrial Septal Defect	<input type="checkbox"/> Valve	<input type="checkbox"/> Stent	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Date(s) of Procedures(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Surgeon: \_\_\_\_\_ Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you agree to allow Mended Hearts to publish your name and procedure anniversary in the Chapter Newsletter? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Are you retired? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Name of Spouse (if family membership) \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in: Committee work \_\_\_; Hospital Visiting \_\_\_; Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Dues (National and Chapter)

Term:	Individual:	Family:
First year only	___ \$25 (\$20 National + \$5 Chapter)	___ \$38 (\$30 National + \$8 Chapter)
Renewal (billed by National)	___ \$25 (\$20 National + \$5 Chapter)	___ \$38 (\$30 National + \$8 Chapter)
Lifetime Membership	___ \$200 (\$150 National + \$50 Chapter)	___ \$285 (\$210 National + \$75 Chapter)

Please make checks payable to: Mended Hearts, Inc. and mail to:

**Membership Chair**  
**Mended Hearts, Inc., Chapter #38**  
**6720 Bertner Ave., 1-132**  
**Houston, TX 77030**

For more information, please visit  
[MendedHearts38.org](http://MendedHearts38.org)



# Satellite Sites

speakers of interest to heart patients, families and caregivers  
members, guests and spouses welcomed  
free and open to the public

## **BAYSHORE**

Bayshore Medical Center  
4000 Spencer Highway  
Pasadena, Texas

*Cardiac Rehab Classroom,  
Lower Level  
10 a.m., second Wednesday  
Cecil Ghormley, 713.253.8263*

## **CLEAR LAKE**

Clear Lake Regional Medical  
Center 495 Medical Center Blvd.  
Webster, Texas

*Towers Auditorium,  
Clear Lake Heart  
6:30 p.m., second Monday  
Barbara Vermillion, 281.538.4648*

## **SUGARLAND**

*Verle Petri  
281.242.8767  
verle.petri@gmail.com*

## **THE WOODLANDS**

*Susan Rivera  
281.363.2084  
suesljd@sbcglobal.net*

## **HEIGHTS**

Memorial Hermann  
Greater Heights Hospital  
1635 North Loop West  
Houston, Texas

*South Tower, classrooms B & E  
6 p.m., second Tuesday  
Jeanne Miller, 713.686.8926*

## **MEMORIAL CITY**

Memorial Hermann  
Memorial City Hospital  
921 Gessner Road  
Houston, Texas

*Main Conference Room  
6 p.m., fourth Tuesday  
Earl Vanzant, 713.782.8006*

## **CONROE**

*Kathleen Berringer  
936.597.4019  
katberr@consolidated.net*

**Houston**  
**832.355.4160**

**national**  
**mendedhearts.org 1.888.432.7899**