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Winter Edition 2015

Does Happiness Contribute to Health?

Yes! Although happiness is not a magic bullet, according to a study in the journal *Applied Psychology, Health and Well-Being*, there is a comprehensive review of the evidence linking happiness to health and longevity. The good news is that generating a state of happiness is something we can all do regardless of our environment or genetics.

Last year, New West Physicians' Winter Edition E-Newsletter dedicated the issue to Whole Person Wellness as a way of emphasizing that health goes beyond just physical well-being. In this issue, we want to encourage our patients, friends and families to continue in the pursuit of wellness in body, mind, and spirit.

So, how do we live happier lives?

While there are so many possibilities to discuss in this article, we have selected our top favorites as a way of inspiring you to continue to make positive changes in your life.

Before proceeding, it is worth mentioning that this article was inspired by a "Live Big Challenge" that Kim Bicket, Practice Manager at our Arapahoe Internal Medicine office, initiated with staff. She held a contest where staff would 'earn' points to make changes in their physical, mental, and spiritual lives. She provided examples of various tasks in each area, but the emphasis was on encouraging people to make positive changes in their lives – whatever that might be for them.

While there were first, second and third place prizes awarded, the most extraordinary part were the stories of how this effort changed the lives of many who participated. She told stories of people reaching beyond their comfort zone, travelling somewhere that has been on their wish list, eating more fruit and vegetables (and enjoying them), taking more time to play with family and friends, and heartfelt stories of recovery.

Happiness....

1. Build Your Social Network and Spend Time with Happy People

Happiness is contagious while loneliness can lead to higher rates of depression and health problems. It is important to choose people who you enjoy being around – someone who feeds your mind and spirit (not the Facebook kind). Choose your friends wisely, and when you socialize, make it worth your while by

choosing activities that you enjoy.

2. Gratitude

Throughout history, philosophers and religious leaders have extolled gratitude as an important part of health and well-being. Since our mind tends to cling to the negative, it is important that we 'retrain' it by intentionally focusing on the good parts of our day – the wonderful person you met, the gracious cashier, the driver who stopped to help you (or someone else), the food you ate, the friend you talked to, the family member you spent time with. Focusing on what we are grateful for can make us feel better instantly! Each day think of something you are grateful for – when you wake, just before you sleep, or anytime in between.

3. Smile! Laugh! Play! It's Good Medicine

Most of us have noticed how much better we feel after we laugh or even when we smile. The benefits of smiling, laughter, and play relax the whole body and have been found to be an antidote to stress, pain, and conflict. What great news because humor connects us to others, lightens burdens, is free, and is contagious! Consider watching a funny movie, share a joke with a friend, play with a pet, play a childhood game with your kids, or go to a comedy club. Try to see if you can have a good laugh every day.

4. Volunteer Service/Compassion

I suspect many are familiar with the Pay It Forward movement; however, literature reflects that giving your time to someone else can boost your own sense of well-being. Even with our large 'to do' lists, those who have taken the time to give to another person or animal, would report increased feelings of happiness and social connection. No matter what our circumstances are, there is always someone that could benefit from a gift – a smile, a thank you, spare change, donation, a hug, or service work for a local non-profit.



5. Reflection, Meditation, Prayer

With the onslaught of daily stimulus of emails, phones, computer games, new phone apps, and all sorts of entertainment – quiet reflection and the inner stillness that lies beneath it - is at a premium. It has been said that quiet is a gateway to tranquility, healing, and restoration and can help to relax muscles, lower anxiety and pain, as well as enhance one's overall sense of well-being. Here are a few ideas:

- Spend time in quiet reflection – breathing, calming your mind, praying.
- Body Scan Meditation: Consider spending just a few minutes—every day, if you can—to notice your own physicality. Not to judge your body or worry about it or push it harder at the gym, but to be in it. Try the body scan meditation from *Mindful* magazine.
- Pick up a copy of the "Miracle of Mindfulness" by Thich Nhat Hanh who writes about how we can 'BE' in the present moment more often while doing ordinary daily activities.

Lastly, it is important to maintain good physical health with good eating habits, exercise, and quality sleep.

New West Physicians' wish for all our patients, family, and friends is to try some new things that will increase your happiness and your health for 2015.

"When patterns are broken new worlds emerge."

— Tuli Kupferburg

Patients Most Likely To Pay a Higher Price at Hospital-Owned Practices

There are many reasons that New West Physicians continues to forge a path as a 'privately owned' physician group; however, the primary reason is to always maintain the ability to do the right thing for our patients – free of outside influence that might affect patient quality and efficiency of care.

Recent trends of hospital systems acquiring medical practices in an effort to reduce costs, improve quality and integrate care are worthy goals; however, recent studies show a different result. According to a recent article in the Medical Practice Insider, "The results, published in the Journal of American Medical Association, showed that hospital-owned physician practices had total spending on average at least 10 percent higher than independent practices, across professional, hospital, laboratory, pharmaceutical and ancillary services." In multi-hospital systems spending is 20 percent higher. In 2012, the physician owned practices had an average expenditure of \$3066 per patient. The hospital owned practice was \$1246 higher and the multi-hospital system was \$1710 higher than the physician owned practices. Hospitals add a hospital fee to services provided, which in many cases is an unnecessary fee. For patients participating in high deductible health plans, they will see this extra charge in their medical expenses. Often times this charge could have been avoided if the patient was able to have services provided outside of the hospital system.



Nicole Dorotik, MD
Arvada Family Practice
Finance Chairman

HIGHLIGHTS

Introducing Our New Providers



Chandra Houpt, PA-C, MPAS
Ascent Family Medicine



Kelli Perry (Eberhardt), PA-C, MMS
Lakewood Internal Medicine

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www.youtube.com/channel/UC3epi18z2HnRVgHIID1L57A

DID YOU KNOW?

They Don't Have a McDonalds? Perfect, Let's Go!

A travel story by Ken Cohen, MD, F.A.C.P., CMO

Have you ever noticed that many places in America have begun to look alike? Same malls, restaurants, shopping centers – you get the picture. Most of the world has been "westernized" and is beginning to look the same.

My wife, Andrea, and I love to travel to parts of the world where we can interact with cultures that have been preserved since antiquity. Our first requirement for travel is that there are no McDonald's; which eliminates about 85% of the planet! From there we look to find tiny corners of our world that are off the beaten path. What unites most of these cultures is that they are closely tied to their family and community. Without the internet (or electricity for that matter) people interact with one another and with visitors on a much more intense and personal level.



Recent travels have taken us to some wonderfully unique places. For instance, boarding an old rickety house boat, we travelled to the upper reaches of the Amazon where we swam in the river with dolphins (and piranhas), searched the jungle for insects the size of rodents, and stopped by a village built on stilts along the river. The river was everything to people - the kitchen sink, shower, highway and grocery store. We played soccer with the village kids who instantly welcomed us, and soundly beat us! Trekking in Bhutan, we witnessed families braving the Himalayan winters with homes, clothing, utensils, pottery, and tools all built from what surrounded them. Life is simple and pure. Hiking through the jungles of Borneo we realized that we were surrounded by the "original supermarket" and our next meal was simply a matter of learning what is edible and harvesting it. Our most recent trip to Myanmar brought us to a population frozen in time for 60 years by a brutal dictatorship; however, with political reform, they have recently entered the 21st century as a democracy. The villagers work the rice paddies and sesame fields with water buffalo pulling wooden ploughs. The farm animals are their partners in toil and treated as family, and are bathed daily in the ponds. The people, predominantly devout Buddhists, live in the present moment praying, and meditating to build merit to carry them to their next reincarnation. You can walk up to any door in any village in the country and be welcomed with open arms, fed, housed, and treated as family.

There is one constant in these travels, and that is the realization that we are all fundamentally the same. What brings contentment and security to these cultures is not found on smart phones or in material possessions. It is found in their ability to provide food and shelter, and to foster the bond generated by close knit families and communities that support one another through whatever the world throws their way. In America, we tend to be taught about horizons that are often narrow. We sometimes forget that the most meaningful things are the same for us as they are for the people in these other cultures in the far corners of the world.

Our travels have taught us to appreciate not only diversity, but also the bonds that unite us all.



Diabetes & Nutrition

Do you have a New Year's resolution to lose weight? Consider joining our "New You Wellness and Weight Loss Program." This is an interactive, 10-week weight loss program to provide support and strategies for weight loss, and the support you will need along the way.

Two classes begin in January. Visit our Website to learn more or call (303) 716-8039 for class times.

Financial Policy

New West Physicians Financial Policy has several reminders about what to bring with you each time you visit your provider, and it outlines New West Physicians' policy about co-pays, high deductible plans and self-pay options.

To review the policy, visit
www.nwphysicians.com/About-Us/FAQ

Understanding Your Insurance Plan

As insurance benefits shift and change, it is important to know your plan and what is covered before your appointment with your provider.

In an effort to assist our patients, New West Physicians Website lists the insurance plans we accept, indicates whether the accepted plan has products on the Health Exchange, and provides easy access links to get you to your insurance plan's website. To view, visit www.nwphysicians.com/Patients/Health-Insurance

Once on your insurance plan's website, log in or register and then look for helpful features such as Coverage Review, Deductible Trackers, Provider and Service Availability, Procedure Estimators, and Claims Management. Look for the link to our Quick Features Reference Guide. We encourage you to access your individual policy, and identify what your specific plan will cover. Please note that, while many wellness and preventative services may now be covered 100% by your plan, specific benefits will vary according to your policy benefits.

It is imperative that patients review and understand their financial responsibility and portion of the services that are provided to them. Please contact your insurance carrier or your company's Human Resources Manager for specific details of your plan.



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MyHealthConnection is a state-of-the art, secure health management tool you can use anywhere you have access to the Internet. All messages are encrypted to ensure security and your health record is password protected. You will be able to correspond with your providers on non-urgent health issues, request appointments, and much more!

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For questions, send our support team an email at
myhealthconnection@nwphysicians.com.



It's Wintertime In Colorado! The Perils of Snow Shoveling

There are a few things in Colorado more wonderful than awakening to a tranquil, fresh blanket of snow...until you realize that you need to shovel out!

Health concerns associated with shoveling fall into two categories:

The less common but potentially more dangerous involves the individual with underlying heart or lung disease. Both the cold and the altitude increase the physical stress of snow shoveling. People with these conditions need to be careful that the exertion they apply to shoveling doesn't exceed that of their normal daily activities. Asking your doctor whether it is safe to shovel is important. If you need oxygen to exercise, be certain to wear it while shoveling. Maintain a pace that does not cause shortness of breath, and stop and call your physician if you experience any new chest symptoms or difficulty breathing.

For the rest of us, the major stress of shoveling falls on our back, shoulders, and elbows. The repetitive twisting and lifting is particularly hard on the low back. Techniques to reduce potential injuries are important, especially with heavy wet snow. Some tips to consider: decrease the load per shovel to avoid strain, switch sides regularly, avoid abrupt twisting and throwing motions as they can result in shoulder tendonitis and tennis elbow pains, and consider an ergonomic shovel to reduce back strain.

Ice any sore spots after shoveling and, if pain develops, stop and recruit someone willing to help.

Ken Cohen, MD, F.A.C.P.
Evergreen Internal Medicine
Chief Medical Officer



It's Wintertime In Colorado! Short Winter Days and Vitamin D

There has been a recent, exciting explosion of knowledge surrounding Vitamin D. It had been thought that the function of Vitamin D was largely related to maintaining healthy bones; however, new research indicates that Vitamin D helps control important areas of multiple body systems. A deficiency in Vitamin D has been linked to:

- Increased rates of cancer involving the breast, ovary, colon, pancreas, prostate, and lymph system.
- Increased rates of diabetes, multiple sclerosis, asthma, hypertension, and other important medical conditions.

In the past, most Vitamin D came from exposure to sunlight; however, due to increase use of sunscreen and a decrease in outdoor activity many, if not most, people are Vitamin D deficient. There are a few foods that contain significant amounts of Vitamin D such as fatty fishes like salmon, while fortified foods and milk products contribute only a small amount. In contrast, 10 minutes of sun exposure on the arms and legs provides about five times the amount of Vitamin D as a serving of salmon. In Colorado, nearly 35% of healthy adults, 50% of children, over 50% of post-menopausal women, and the majority of seniors are deficient in Vitamin D.

The optimal daily dose of vitamin D is at least 800-1000 IU's of Vitamin D3 daily. It is important to check the type of Vitamin D that is being taken, since Vitamin D2 is not as active as D3. Make certain to account for the Vitamin D from all daily sources since it may be added to such products as calcium supplements and various joint health products, in addition to the 400 IU's typically found in a multivitamin.



Remember, skiing for the day with only the tip of your nose showing between your gaiter and your goggles doesn't count as adequate sun exposure!

To learn more, visit **Your Health Guide** on our website today!

Ken Cohen, MD, F.A.C.P.
Evergreen Internal Medicine
Chief Medical Officer

Recipe Contest Winner!

Thank you to those who submitted a recipe for our recipe contest. We are happy to announce that Kelly from Golden, with her submission of a breakfast idea, is the winner. Congratulations!



The recipe was adapted from a pizza restaurant that Kelly and her daughter frequent.

"We're especially fond of a thin crust pizza that starts with a mild white sauce and then layers on fresh spinach, fresh tomatoes, thick bacon, sriracha sauce and one sunny side up egg. We love to break the yoke over the pizza and dig in with fresh grated parmesan as well. When we began to crave this pizza a little 'too much' we decided to create a healthy version that would satisfy our cravings. The idea was to create something that my 11 year old could make that would be a healthier version of our favorite pizza. So, we created a breakfast dish with similar ingredients that replaced a white flour crust with whole wheat bread and has no bacon and no cheese. The flavor of the egg, sriracha, pan roasted spinach and hearty bread make for an excellent, healthy substitute that my 11 year old loves."

Breakfast Delight

- 1/4 tsp real butter (can substitute olive oil)
- 1 egg
- Handful of fresh spinach
- 1 piece of whole grain or sprouted bread
- Sriracha sauce
- Mandarin orange slices or other fresh fruit

Directions:

Start by melting butter in a small non-stick skillet. When the butter begins to bubble a little bit, add the spinach and cook until it begins to wilt. While cooking the spinach, toast your bread. Once the spinach is wilted, place it on top of your hot piece of toast. Crack your egg into the hot skillet and cook it sunny side up or over easy (or really any way to prefer your eggs, but we like to be able to break open the yolk over the toast). Place the egg on top of the spinach and toast. Add a small amount of sriracha (start small and add more as desired). Break the egg yolk over the bread and add a small amount of grated parmesan cheese if desired. Serve mandarin orange slices or other fresh fruit on the side to help cut the heat of the sriracha sauce!

Enjoy!

Marrakesh Vegetable Curry



- 1 sweet potato, peeled and cubed
- 1 medium eggplant, cubed
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 2 tablespoons curry powder
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¾ tablespoon sea salt
- ¾ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 (15 ounce) can garbanzo beans, drained
- ¼ cup blanched almonds
- 1 zucchini, sliced
- 2 tablespoons raisins
- 1 cup orange juice
- 10 ounces spinach

Directions:

In a large Dutch oven place sweet potato, eggplant, peppers, carrots, onions, and three tablespoons oil. Sauté over medium heat for 5 minutes.

In a medium saucepan place 3 tablespoons olive oil, garlic, turmeric, curry powder, cinnamon, salt and pepper and sauté over medium heat for 3 minutes. Pour garlic and spice mixture into the Dutch oven with vegetables in it. Add the garbanzo beans, almonds, zucchini, raisins, and orange juice. Simmer 20 minutes, covered. Add spinach to pot and cook for 5 more minutes. Serve over quinoa or brown rice.

Makes 6 servings

Calories per serving-330, Total fat-18g, Sodium-874 mg, Carbs-39g



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