



Still-Well NEWSLETTER

ATSU

A.T. STILL
UNIVERSITY

WINTER 2008-09

Published quarterly by the Still-Well Committee for students and employees of A.T. Still University.

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HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

“Here’s lookin’ ‘ACHOO,’ kid!”

*by Art Matthews, M.A., LPC
Assistant Director, Counseling—Arizona Campus*



The major changes in this year’s influenza advisement from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) include adding all school-aged children age five to 18 to the list of

people who should be routinely vaccinated against the flu. U.S. public health officials now recommend almost 261 million people receive the vaccine, approximately 85 percent of the U.S. population. Historically, far fewer are ever actually vaccinated.

The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases says the changes are supported by evidence suggesting the flu vaccine is safe and effective for this age group and the flu is a significant cause of health-related school absences, increased doctors’ visits, increased use of antibiotics, and decreased work productivity by parents who must care for their sick children. Schools and day cares have been referred to as a “hotbed” of influenza transmission. The recommendation comes in part, according to the CDC website, on the expectation pharmaceutical companies will have more than adequate supplies with close to 146 million doses expected to be manufactured. Last year, nearly 27 million doses of flu vaccine of the 132 million manufactured went unused.

Although anyone who wants to reduce the risk of getting the flu can be vaccinated, the CDC and the ACIP highly recommend the following groups get vaccinated every year:

- Children aged six months to 18 years
- Pregnant women
- People age 50 and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- People living in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People living with or caring for those at high risk for complications from flu, including:
 - Health care workers
 - Household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu
 - Household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than six months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated)

Typically, the flu season reaches its peak in the U.S. in January or February; therefore, recommendations include getting the flu vaccine early. The effectiveness of the vaccine varies each year depending on the match between the viruses on which the vaccine was based and flu viruses actually circulating within the community. The vaccine contains inactive flu viruses and will not actually cause anyone to develop the flu, although some uncomfortable side effects may occur. Even though a flu vaccine may not contain the exact strain that is currently endemic, a less-than-ideal match may still prevent or at least lessen the severity of the illness.

The flu vaccine is available in a shot or nasal spray called FluMist. Both are equally effective, but each has different side effects. People who receive a flu shot might expect some redness, soreness and stiffness around the injection site along with a low grade fever and body aches. FluMist has the potential for causing runny nose, wheezing, headache, vomiting, muscle aches, and fever in children and runny nose, headache, sore throat, and cough in adults.

continued on page 4

In this Issue:

Emotional Wellness Awareness Week	2	National Health Observances	3
Home for the Holidays	2	Questions to the Editorial Board	4
A Survival Guide to Holiday Eating	3	The “Jar of Life”	4

Emotional Wellness Awareness Week

By Lynda Konecny, M.S., D.H.Ed.
Associate Director, Admissions
and Still-Well Emotional Team Leader

Stress, and an imbalance in emotional wellness, can adversely impact many of the other wellness dimensions. Research shows the immune system can be enhanced by happiness, and depressed by emotional depression. According to Dr. Charles W. Mayo, "worry and stress affects the circulation, the heart, the glands, the whole nervous system, and profoundly affects heart action."



The primary objective of the Still-Well Emotional Team is to assist students in dealing with the plethora of emotions they will see, feel, and experience both as students and as professionals. To help students deal with stress and work to increase emotional wellness, the Emotional Team will hold an "Emotional Wellness Awareness Week" January 12–16, 2009.

During the Emotional Wellness Awareness Week there will be a presentation concerning the physiology of stress, and Truman State University's Sal Costa will be on campus to provide information on how hypnosis can be an effective tool for students to aid in studying and stress reduction. We will also have fun activities scheduled such as "tie-dye" and stress ball making. In addition, we will highlight how emotional and physical wellness can be linked by inviting all to a lunch time Yoga session.

Watch for more details as the Emotional Wellness Awareness Week approaches, but for now, mark your calendar!

Home For The Holidays



When we hear the word "holidays" a number of images may spring to mind: blazing fireplaces and tables swelling with food, close times with family, or lying on the beach at Cabo San Lucas. For some of us, however, the images may be a shade darker: a sense of loneliness, the pinch of limited finances, changes and losses in our relationships, or juggling competing social demands. The gap between our expectations and our actual experience is often quite jarring. Even in the best families, we must adjust to a different rhythm of life and stubborn expectations which may no longer fit who we are. For those who feel distant from their families, this can be a time of opening old wounds and emotional pain. Other feelings which commonly arise during the holidays include: guilt, stress, boredom, resentment, and homesickness for your life at college.

Keeping the following ideas in mind might help you not only to survive the holidays, but to appreciate them for what they are and can be.

- **Frustration is built into the system.** Wherever our expectations of love and

understanding are the highest, so will be our sense of hurt, disappointment, and betrayal.

- **No expectations – no disappointment.** Having few or no expectations is the best preparation for being satisfied with whatever happens. The Taoist discipline of becoming like water and "going with the flow" can help us from getting stuck, even when others are.
- **It is okay to attend to your emotional needs, even if this means disappointing others.** Unfortunately, taking care of oneself is often interpreted as selfishness by others. Only you can decide where the balance lies.
- **Instead of thinking about what gifts you would like to receive,** you might ask yourself the question: "What three qualities or experiences do I want to have more of this holiday?" Time to relax, good communication, intimate conversations, a chance to explore a hobby or creative project – answers may vary widely. The main point is to keep these three things in mind and actually put them into practice.
- If last year's holidays were not a good experience for you, **allow yourself to re-evaluate how and where you would like to spend the break this year.** If you feel constrained in your choice, can you at least realize your wishes in part? Think ahead, and don't simply assume your needs will be met if you don't attend to them.
- Finally, **a sense of humor can also be helpful.** For instance, psychologist James Hillman extols extended family gatherings as the one place where we get to meet people with whom we have so little in common.

Written by Mark Evans, Ph.D.
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Counseling Center Reprinted with permission.

"All men seek one goal: success or happiness. The only way to achieve true success is to express yourself completely in service to society. First, have a definite, clear, practical ideal—a goal, an objective. Second, have the necessary means to achieve your ends—wisdom, money, material and methods. Third, adjust all your means to that end."

Aristotle

A Survival Guide to Holiday Eating

Here's some scary food for thought: to gain five pounds from now to the end of January, all you have to do is eat an average of 200 calories per day more than you need – an ounce of fudge here, an ounce of gravy there, and some pecan pie. If you need to 'get a grip' on eating splurges, the winter holiday months are key to your long range planning. The holidays typically encourage people to indulge in high-fat, high-calorie foods which are low in nutrients, and this is also the time we're most likely to make excuses for skipping exercise.

One of the most significant diet dangers revolves around sugar consumption. Problems arise from riding on a sugar roller coaster. When you binge on sugar, you crave more and more and your body slows down. Along with sunlight deprivation, sugar binges cause a drop in serotonin, a chemical in the brain that regulates sleep and appetite. A lack of serotonin is often associated with depression. When you're deprived of serotonin, you won't feel calm and in control.

To help boost your serotonin level naturally, eat small but frequent meals including complex, starchy veggies. You can also help control blood sugar levels by eating small quantities of protein three times a day. For example, eat two egg whites in the morning, some turkey at lunch and a small portion of grilled fish at night.

You should keep up your regular exercise during the holidays and accept no excuses. When endorphins are high, you'll cope better with stress, and regular exercise boosts endorphins.

Here are some other holiday survival tips:

- Exercise an hour a day during the holidays. Exercise to burn calories, relieve stress, and elevate your endorphins and mood such as a brisk walk, run, or bike-ride.
- Avoid eating no fat. Eating moderate amounts of fat during the holidays will satiate the appetite and prevent overeating of carbs (about 35-65 grams per day will be sufficient for most people).
- Don't skip meals. Hunger and low blood sugar lead to overeating.
- Don't pass up favorite foods or deprive yourself completely. Moderate consumption is the key.
- Don't tempt yourself by keeping trigger foods or comfort foods around the house. If you have them, it certainly increases the likelihood you will overeat.
- Plan meals by keeping in mind the demands you'll have on your schedule each day.
- Don't go to a party starving. Before you leave home, eat something light or drink a protein shake. Also, drink a great deal of water the day of the party.
- When you attend holiday festivities, don't station yourself near the buffet table. Make a clear-cut decision to distance yourself from all goodies.
- Alcoholic beverages pack on the calories so if you're drinking alcohol, stick to light beer or a champagne spritzer.
- If you do find yourself feeling depressed, soothe your spirit with a massage, manicure, pedicure, or facial. Men can enjoy this, too!
- When you shop, eat before you leave home so you won't resort to cookie breaks.

- To satisfy your sweet tooth, set limits. For example, you might allow yourself two desserts per week at 250 calories each.
- Just because it is the holidays doesn't mean you should give yourself the license to eat everything before you. Factor the little extras into your daily intake.
- Help out by saving fat and calories when it's feasting time. Make or buy wild-rice stuffing, baked sweet potatoes, whole-grain rolls and angel-food cake with fruit.
- If you are staying with family or friends ask them if you can have a space in the refrigerator and keep foods on hand to snack on like lean deli meats, cottage cheese, nonfat cheese sticks, etc.
- If you tend to overeat during family gatherings, plan and visualize what and how much you will eat before you go.
- If you want to really keep yourself honest (the same size) during the holiday season, wear your most form-fitting blue jeans. Another trick is to tie a string or ribbon around your waist (under your shirt) which will not budge with the bulge.
- If you are at the mercy of the dinner host, eat modest amounts of the foods offered and fill up on foods with more fiber and fewer calories. Make a small plate and skip the seconds.
- Eat whatever you want on the main holiday feast. If you overdo it, just go back to your regular plan the next day.
- Take a meditative moment at least 1 time everyday to breathe deeply, and clear your mind of all the clutter.
- Enjoy the season, not just the food

*Written by Gay Riley, M.S., RD, CCN
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National Health Observances

December

December 1

World AIDS Day
www.unaids.org

International Aids Awareness Month
www.aidsalliance.org/

National Drunk and Drugged
Driving Prevention (3D) Month
www.nhtsa.dot.gov

Safe Toys and Gifts Month/
Prevent Blindness America
www.preventblindness.org

January

Cervical Health Awareness Month
www.nccc-online.org

National Birth Defects Prevention Month
www.marchofdimmes.com

National Blood Donor Month
www.aabb.org

National Glaucoma Awareness Month
www.glaucoma.org

January 5-11

National Folic Acid Awareness Week
www.folicacidinfo.org

January 18 - 24

Healthy Weight Week
www.healthyweightnetwork.com

January 19

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
www.mlkday.gov

January 19-25

National Certified Registered Nurses Week
www.aana.com

Questions to the Editorial Board:

Q “Which is better for you, butter or margarine?”

A If this was asked five years ago, the answer would have been different. In the past, margarine was loaded with trans fat, which may be more harmful than saturated fat. Trans fats raise “bad” LDL cholesterol. Let’s look at the fat content of both butter and margarine. Butter is an animal fat so it contains saturated fats and cholesterol, which both increase blood cholesterol. Recently, food manufacturers have created non-hydrogenated margarine, which contains no trans fat. Instead of hydrogenating liquid vegetable oil, manufacturers now add a tiny amount of palm and palm kernel oil to enhance the spreadability of margarine. But be careful, not all margarines are created

equal. The American Heart Association recommends the use of non-hydrogenated soft margarine as a substitute for butter. Check the labels carefully and choose one with zero trans fat and not more than two grams of saturated fats per tablespoon and with liquid vegetable oil as the first ingredient. The following are some brands of soft margarine and cholesterol-lowering spread meeting this criteria: Becel, Benecol, Blue Bonnet Soft Spread, Canola Harvest Non-Hydrogenated, I Can’t Believe It’s Not Butter, Promise, and Smart Balance Light. Some brands of margarine, such as Benecol, contain phytochemicals called sterols which may reduce high cholesterol levels when used regularly.

Q “How many glasses of water should an individual drink a day?”

A Start by taking your body weight in pounds and divide the number by two. The resulting number should be how many ounces of water you need to drink in a day. (e.g. If you weigh 150 lbs, then take $150 / 2 = 75$ ounces per day) The average water glass is about eight ounces. (e.g. $75 \text{ ounces} / 8 =$ a little over nine glasses of water per day)

Q “Why is healthy eating important?”

A When combined with exercise, a healthy diet can help you lose weight, lower your cholesterol level and improve the way your body functions throughout the day. The USDA recommends an adult daily diet include three ounces of whole grains, and six ounces of grains total, two cups of fruit, two and a half cups of vegetables, and three cups fat-free or low fat dairy.

The “Jar of Life”

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, he wordlessly picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous, “Yes.”

The professor then produced two glasses of wine from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

“Now,” said the professor as the laughter subsided, “I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things---your family, your children, your health, your friends and your favorite passions---and if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.”

The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house and your car.

The sand is everything else---the small stuff. “If you put the sand into the jar first,” he continued, “there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff you will never have room for the things that are important to you.”

‘Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Spend time with your children. Spend time with your parents. Visit with grandparents. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your spouse out to dinner. Play another 18. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first---the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand.’

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the wine represented. The professor smiled and said, “I’m glad you asked. The wine just shows you that no matter how full your life may seem, there’s always room for a couple of glasses of wine with a friend.”

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough – remember the “Jar of Life.”

continued from page 1

Some everyday behaviors can also reduce the likelihood of spreading the flu. The CDC lists the following:

1. Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too.
2. Stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
3. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
4. Clean your hands. Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.
5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
6. Practice other good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Looking for a clinic where you can get your flu shot? Find a clinic near you at www.flucliniclocator.org/.

To download flu related printable materials, go to: www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/flugallery/index.htm or www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-flu.pdf