



Winter Happenings

HEALTH AND WELLNESS COACHING

FREE one-on-one personalized health and wellness planning for long-term behavior changes to improve well-being and health. Board-certified coaches can help with weight management, fitness planning, lifestyle changes, and stress management. Sessions can be done in person, via video, or by phone. Call 240-964-8424 for more information.

FITNESS CLASSES

Join a **FREE** fitness class offered in locations

- **Body & Band Resistance Classes** at the Frostburg Library, Mondays at 1:30 p.m.
- Contact us at 240-964-8424 to find out about times and locations for **Bingocize**.
- South Cumberland Library **Yoga Classes**, Wednesdays at 11 a.m.
- LaVale Library **Yoga Classes**, Fridays at 10:30 a.m.
- **Chair Yoga**, Mondays at 2:30 p.m., at the Gilchrist Museum of the Arts, 104 Washington Street, Cumberland, MD 21502. The last Chair Yoga session to be held at the Gilchrist will be Monday, December 16. The next Chair Yoga session will be held on January 6, 2025, at 2:30 p.m., at the South Cumberland Library. To register for the in-person or online class via ZOOM, contact Christina Collins-Smith at collinssmithcd@upmc.edu or call 410-967-9112.

ONLINE SMART RECOVERY

Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 7:30 a.m., Thursdays at noon. Free self-help support group assists in recovering from all types of addictions and addictive behaviors. For more information, contact Carey Moffatt at moffattcl@upmc.edu or call 240-964-8418.



Stacey Blank, MS, BTPS, RRT
Manager, UPMC Community Health and Wellness

AS THE DAYS GROW SHORTER AND THE AIR TURNS CRISP, WE FIND OURSELVES IN A SEASON THAT INVITES REFLECTION, WARMTH, AND SELF-CARE. Winter is a time to slow down, cozy up, and focus on nurturing our minds, bodies, and spirits.

In this edition, we're excited to bring you a variety of tips and insights to help you stay healthy and vibrant throughout the colder months. Make your health a priority and a habit. Choose one thing you'd like to change this winter on your journey to a healthier you!

Let's embrace the beauty of winter together, and make this season one of wellness and joy.

Stay warm and well,

stacey ❄️ ❄️

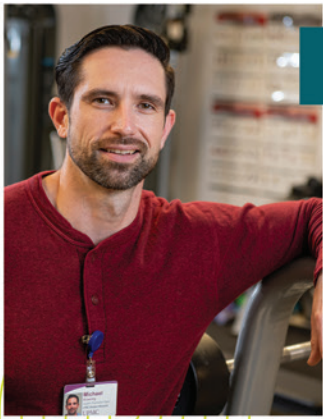
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Visit our **UPMC Western Maryland Community Health and Wellness Coaching Website** at UPMCWesternMaryland.com/Wellness

Find us on Facebook at **Get Healthy Allegany**.

SETTING UP AN EXERCISE SPACE AT HOME



Michael Browning, MA, NBC-HWC

Each season brings changes to our daily routines, and in life's constant juggling act, it's easy to drop the ball on good habits. Winter can be especially difficult in keeping up with a well-developed exercise plan. Weather plays the primary culprit, keeping you off the trail for those much-needed walks or out of the fitness center. The holidays are another wintertime distraction that may interrupt your physical activity. Let's be honest – you may even throw in an excuse or two, like *I really needed a day off anyway*. So, let's nip these excuses and barriers in the bud by setting up a simple and enjoyable indoor exercise atmosphere.

Less light and poor weather decrease motivation for exercise and most of us have little motivation for physical activity to begin with. So, mistake #1 when choosing a home workout environment is setting up in the dungeon of despair. You know what I mean, the dark, damp, and cold basement. Of course, you don't want to exercise there; you don't want to be there in the first place. Below are my top tips for creating an effective and inviting place to exercise at home.

- Research suggests starting with 10 minutes of exercise and slowly building yourself up to 30 minutes.
- 30 minutes can be broken down into three separate 10-minute bouts of moderate-intensity exercise.
- Schedule your planned exercise days into your calendar each week, and set an alarm on your phone.
- House chores count as long as they are more than 10 minutes and maintain a sustained elevated heart rate for that duration. Fast-paced music is a great help.
- Involve the kids and pets. Go for walks, hikes, and bike rides.
- Get away from the kids! Go for walks, hikes, and bike rides.
- Call a Health Coach at UPMC who will guide you through the exercise process at 240-964-8420.

NIBBLE ON THIS ♥♥♥

Pam Jan, NBC-HWC

When you hear the word “snack,” what do you think of? I don't know about you, but when I hear “snack,” I think of food, and my mouth starts to salivate. Perhaps some of your favorites are nuts, cookies, chips, pretzels, crackers, & cheese, or one of the many colors found in the candy aisle.

Today, I'm inviting you to try snacks of a different variety – a heart-healthy type. People who are lonely are 50% more likely to die earlier and 30% more likely to suffer from a heart attack or stroke. In fact, Dr. Vivek Murthy, U.S. Surgeon General, states, “Social isolation's effects on mortality are equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes every day.” Loneliness epidemic: Surgeon General warns it's hurting US health | Vox

In his book *Feel Better in 5: Your Daily Plan to Feel Great for Life*, Dr. Rangan Chatterjee details a heart snack menu we can all enjoy. Each 5-minute snack nourishes our hearts, and the menu includes connection, forgiveness, and celebrations. To start, he suggests:

- ♥ **Connection snacks** include asking someone how their day is going, writing five things you love about someone close to you, stopping to sit with a friend for five minutes (easily done virtually these days), or performing an act of kindness.
- ♥ **Forgiveness snacks** can be invaluable as negative emotions quietly eat away at us and are corrosive to our health. They can also be difficult, so starting small and practicing will make it easier. However, as Chatterjee notes, if you've experienced significant trauma, please seek out a qualified professional to help you process your emotions.
- ♥ **Celebration snacks** can program your brain to look for the positives in life! One easy way is to practice gratitude. Try making dinner conversations fun by having everyone share what they've done to make someone else happy, what someone did to make them happy, and what they've done to make themselves happy today.

Go ahead, INDULGE; you won't even gain a pound.

OVERCOMING BURNOUT



Carey Moffatt, MS, NBC-HWC

Burnout is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion that leaves individuals feeling helpless, overwhelmed, and detached. Symptoms include persistent fatigue, a lack of motivation, irritability, and feeling stretched beyond one's limits. Burnout signals that something in one's life may be out of balance or unsustainable. It suggests that the current situation cannot continue without health consequences and highlights the need for change. Often, it reveals that the expectations one sets for oneself may be unrealistic.

To address burnout, it is essential to practice self-compassion. One way to approach this is by reflecting on how you would support a loved one facing similar challenges and applying the same empathy and understanding to yourself. Remember, you do not need to know everything or handle every situation perfectly.

Self-awareness is crucial in overcoming burnout. Assess where your energy is being spent and identify any “energy leaks” in your life. These are people or activities that leave you feeling drained. Focus on what you can control, and work on setting healthy boundaries, including saying no. Understanding and managing the “human giver syndrome,” where one excessively prioritizes others' needs over their own, can also be instrumental in preventing and alleviating burnout.

If you are unsure whether you are experiencing burnout or something more serious, or if you need extra support, consider calling UPMC Outpatient Behavioral Health at 240-964-8585 for guidance.

Source: [The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle](#) by Emily and Amelia Nagoski



IMMUNE SYSTEM, ASSEMBLE!

Brittany Friend, MS, NBC-HWC

During the cold weather months, we see significant increases in viruses. Our kids love to share their germs with each other and bring them home to their families. Why did we have to tell them, "Sharing is caring"? Here are some things you can do in the winter to keep your immune system in tip-top shape:

1. Wash your hands – a lot! Washing our hands prevents germs from entering our mouths or noses and reduces transferring them to surfaces, such as doorknobs or light switches.
2. Exercise contributes to our overall health and stimulates our cellular immunity by increasing the circulation of immune cells throughout our bodies. Try to engage in moderate-intensity exercise for at least 150 minutes a week.
3. Not getting enough sleep has been linked to many disorders, which can increase health risks and lower our body's immune-fighting ability.
4. Yogurt provides probiotics for good gut health and is full of protein. Choose low-sugar options when possible.
5. Eat these immune-boosting foods:
 - a. Fruits: Citrus fruits are packed full of vitamin C. Berries are full of antioxidants and vitamins. Apples have fiber and vitamin C.
 - b. Vegetables: Carrots are high in beta-carotene. Green veggies are like little superheroes with vegetable capes. Bell peppers are high in vitamin C.
 - c. Protein: Chicken, fish, eggs, and other proteins can help build and repair tissues.
 - d. Whole grains: Packed full of healthy vitamins and minerals.
 - e. Nuts and seeds: Healthy fats full of vitamin E, omega-3 fatty acids, and fiber.
6. Rest when you are sick, and stay away from others!

[Sanford Health: Foods to boost your child's immunity](#)



COZY UP WITH WINTER SELF-CARE

Christina Collins-Smith, MLA, E-RYT 500, LMT, YACEP, Yoga Health & Wellness Coach



As winter beckons us to cozy up, it invites transition from the busyness of everyday life into moments of calm reflection. This shift in seasons offers a perfect opportunity to embrace self-care, slowing down to nurture both body and mind. With its cooler temperatures and shorter days, winter naturally encourages a quieter, more introspective pace of life, making it ideal for self-care routines that promote mental and physical well-being.

One way to embrace self-care during the winter months is by making time for reflection. Whether through journaling, meditation, or simply sitting in stillness, these practices allow you to reconnect with yourself, helping to alleviate stress and recharge mental vitality. Physical self-care is equally important, from indulging in afternoon tea to staying active through gentle movement like yoga or stretching indoors. These mindful actions help the body adjust to the season's slower rhythm while supporting overall well-being.

Join me for free UPMC Western Maryland Community Exercise Yoga classes.

SPIRITUAL WELLNESS

THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL

Rev. Bruce McBride, M.A., M.Div., Director of Pastoral Care, UPMC Western Maryland

Many remember, over the years, the search for the perfect gift for Christmas.

In 1983, everyone had to have a Cabbage Patch Doll. In 1985, we just had to have a \$18 Pound Puppy. In 1989, American households scrambled to get a new Game Boy, followed by the 1995 Beanie Baby craze and the 1996 Tickle Me Elmo frenzy. In the ensuing years, American consumers knocked themselves out to buy the following top yearly must-have Christmas gifts: a new iPod (2002), a Wii (2006), a Kindle (2010), the Angry Birds Board Game (2011), the Doc McStuffins Doll (2013), and the Frozen Sing Along Elsa Doll (2015).

We know that in the winter, we celebrate many religious festivals and ideals around the world. Christmas has always been a time to give love and lavish kindness to our families and friends. Think about God wrapping a gift for you. How would HE wrap this special GIFT? What would it provide for your life?

"And she brought forth her firstborn Son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn" (LUKE 2:7). Wrapped in cloths, not linen or silk or special robes, just farm cloths. No room for baby Jesus. The Bethlehem hotel was full. No room for a clean place to give birth. So, this precious couple quietly beholds the miracle birth of their special little boy. HE is the ultimate GIFT for all mankind, providing salvation and hope.

"Thank God for this GIFT too wonderful for words!" (2 Corinthians 9:15)

As we celebrate the Christmas season this year, remember that HE is the GIFT that was given to save us, offering peace in a dark world and the hope of eternal life. May HIS love richly fill our hearts and homes and guide us to share heavenly joy with everyone around us. Merry Christmas!



Pastor Bruce and Judy McBride





IN THE KITCHEN with RACHEL

Rachel Sproat, RDN, LDN

Creamy White Chicken Chili with Cream Cheese

Escape the winter chill by getting back into your kitchen. Dive into soup season with this fiber-packed recipe, guaranteed to satisfy your family after a day of snowman-building or sledding.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (15 ounce) cans of no-salt-added great northern beans, rinsed, divided
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed and cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 ½ cups chopped yellow onion (1 medium)
- ¾ cup chopped celery (2 medium stalks)
- 5 cloves garlic, chopped (2 tablespoons)
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 3 cups unsalted chicken stock
- 1 (4 ounce) can chopped green chiles
- 4 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese
- ½ cup loosely packed fresh cilantro leaves



DIRECTIONS

- Mash 1 cup beans in a small bowl with a whisk or potato masher.
- Heat oil in a large, heavy pot over high heat. Add chicken; cook, turning occasionally, until browned, 4 to 5 minutes. Add onion, celery, garlic, cumin, and salt. Cook until the onion is translucent and tender, 4 to 5 minutes.
- Add the remaining whole beans, mashed beans, stock, and chiles. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and simmer until the chicken is cooked through about 3 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in cream cheese until melted. Serve topped with cilantro.

[Creamy White Chicken Chili with Cream Cheese \(eatingwell.com\)](http://eatingwell.com)



Polar Bear Toast

Snowed in? Get the kids in the kitchen with this snowy snack.



INGREDIENTS

- Sliced bread
- Whipped cream cheese, nut butter or seed butter of choice
- Banana
- Blueberries

[Bear Toast Recipe - Have A Plant \(fruitsandveggies.org\)](http://fruitsandveggies.org)

DIRECTIONS

- Toast a piece of bread.
- Spread on whipped cream cheese, nut butter or seed butter.
- Cut up 3 pieces of banana. Place 2 at the top of the toast as the ears. Place one in the center of the toast for the nose.
- Place 2 blueberries as the eyes and 1 on top of the center banana.



LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

Why are frogs good at baseball?
They know how to catch fly balls.

What do you call it when a cow grows facial hair?
A moo-stache.



SAFETY FIRST - WINTER WEATHER SAFETY

Susan Lee, Admin Assistant

Winter storms can create many hazardous conditions – icy or impassable roads, power outages, communication disruptions, and risks of hypothermia or injuries from overexertion or slips on ice-covered walkways. Don't wait until the storm is here to run to the grocery store or get a prescription filled. Plan ahead so you and your family can stay safe when winter weather turns severe.

- Don't drive.** If you absolutely must drive, SLOW DOWN. Let others know the route you plan to take (so if you break down or get stuck, they will have some idea of where to send help).
- Keep your cell phones and devices charged.** If communications are disrupted, you may still be able to text if you can't get a call to go through.
- Dress appropriately for the weather;** boots, gloves, a hat, and a scarf are important accessories for your winter coat and can protect you from frostbite.
- Never run a generator in the home or garage.** Generators and fuel should be used outdoors, at least 20 feet away from windows, doors, and attached garages.
- Stock up on supplies now.** Water, non-perishable food, batteries for radios, and flashlights ... and don't forget your pets!

For more winter weather safety tips and information, visit Ready.gov/winter-weather.

BE FAST

When You Spot Stroke Warning Signs

UPMC
LIFE CHANGING MEDICINE

Balance: Loss of coordination or balance



Eyes: Sudden double vision or vision loss



Face: Facial drooping on one side



Arms: One arm becomes weak or numb



Speech: Slurred speech



Time: BE FAST. Call 911

