Healthy Living Newsletter

May 2015

New Year, New You Challenge Winners!

Our 10 week New Year, New You Challenge that started in February wrapped up on April 15th! I’d like to congratulate all of those that participated and completed the challenge. 23 employees & students registered with 12 of those completing the 10 week challenge.

The focus of the challenge was to teach participants healthy lifestyle strategies to achieve permanent weight loss. Participants had a chance to attend weekly wellness workshops to learn about nutrition, exercise, and weight loss. Participants also received weekly handouts, tips, recipes, and workouts.

Those completing the challenge collectively lost over 18 inches and 6 participants lowered their Body Mass Index (BMI) by 1 point or more.

First place winners won a gift card to the bookstore & a Fall Semester Rec Exercise Class Pass. The 2nd place winners won a water bottle & Fall Semester Rec Exercise Class Pass.

Congratulations & thank you to all of our participants!

I, Kelly Darbonne, am available in my office at anytime to help you reach your weight loss goals. Just give me a call (5277) or send an email to schedule an appointment.

Look for a new wellness challenge in June!

Participants from 12 different departments on campus participated in the challenge!

The winners are:
Greatest percentage of body weight lost:
1st place: Amber Hale, Biology, 3.4%
2nd place: Catrina Boenig, Registrar’s Office, 2.72%

Greatest Amount of Inches Lost (Bicep, Waist, Thigh Measurements):
1st place: Tracy Standley, Mass Comm, 5 inches
2nd place: Victoria Roach, Internal Auditor, 3 1/8 inches

New 2015 Summer Exercise Classes will start June 8th!

Zumba
Yoga
Circuits
Water Fitness
Body Sculpting
Cardio Blast

Schedules will be out soon!

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Upcoming Events:

• May 1st—40 miles in 4 weeks walking challenge ends
• May 4th—Wellness to Go in Hardtner Hall Lobby, 2-3pm—Mini-Stress Fair
• May 4th-7th—Turn in trackers & evaluation forms for walking challenge & receive a water bottle
• May 8th—Exercise classes coming to an end; circuit class will continue on MW at 12:15 on the Rec’s track.
• Tuesday, May 12th—New Year Challenge Maintenance Program weigh-ins start (Every Tuesday through the summer).
• Free carotid artery screening on June 18th, 11-1pm, an appointment is needed. Contact Kelly for details.
• June—Look for an upcoming Summer Wellness Challenge
• June—Summer exercise classes will start on June 8th!
Carotid artery disease causes more than half of the strokes that occur in the United States. Carotid artery disease is a disease in which a waxy substance called plaque builds up inside the carotid arteries which are located in your neck. Lifestyle changes, medicines, and medical procedures can help prevent or treat carotid artery disease and may reduce the risk of stroke.

Who is a risk for carotid artery disease?
The major risk factors for carotid artery disease, listed below, also are the major risk factors for heart disease:

- High cholesterol levels
- High blood pressure
- Smoking
- Insulin resistance
- Diabetes
- Being overweight
- Lack of physical activity
- Unhealthy diet
- Older age
- Family history of heart or carotid disease

Having any of these risk factors doesn’t guarantee that you’ll develop carotid artery disease. However, if you know that you have one or more risk factors, you can take steps to help prevent or delay the disease.

If you have a few of the risk factors above, this non-invasive screening may benefit you.

Screenings will be provided by Joan Gatte, APRN, FNP-BC with Christus Family Medicine by Appointment Only. The exam will consist of a medical history and a physical exam by listening to your carotid arteries with a stethoscope.

To Schedule Your Appointment: Contact Kelly Darbonne (475-5277) by June 12th

Date of Screening: Thursday, June 18th
Time: 11am-1pm
Location: LaJeunesse Room (Old Ranch)

There are often no symptoms of carotid artery disease until you have a TIA or stroke. That’s why it’s important to see your doctor regularly for physical examinations and have wellness screenings done regularly.

What can you do to help prevent or treat this disease?
- Follow a healthy diet rich in lean meat like chicken & fish, fruits, vegetables, & whole grains
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Exercise for at least 30 minutes most days of the week
- Get regular checkups and wellness screenings
- Don’t smoke or quit smoking & using tobacco products
- Know your risk factors & family history

Join our “4 weeks to wellness” summer challenge!
Earn points for living well (exercising, drinking water, eating fruits & vegetables...)
Registration: June 8th-12th
Program runs June 15th-10th
Employee Wellness Spotlight

I have been seeing this month’s employee spotlight nominee walking at lunch time on the track for quite a while. One of her co-workers nominated her for this month’s employee spotlight and she has quite an inspirational and empowering story! Contact Kelly Darbonne if you would like to nominate a fellow co-worker for living well.

Name:  Debet Hebert          Department:  Purchasing

Why did you decide to make a change?

I kept trying to lose weight because I knew I was way overweight and I was uncomfortable and miserable. I had been successful several years ago, but for some reason I could not take any weight off this time, no matter what I did. In fact, I was gaining.

On June 14th of last year, I was at the doctor for a thyroid condition when he told me something else was going on and he was pretty sure it was insulin resistance. After doing blood tests to confirm it he referred me to their Dietician. From that point on I was determined to improve my health and do whatever I had to keep from developing Diabetes. Plus I also wanted to get off of some of the blood pressure medicines I was currently on. Every time I went to see my primary care physician I had to bring my prescriptions with me and I didn’t like the amount I had. It seemed every time I went to the doctor I was adding another one. At that time I weighed 240 pounds and my health was deteriorating. Physically as well as mentally, I did not feel good.

What type of changes did you make?

Talking to the Dietician helped me learn what insulin resistance is and how certain foods high in carbohydrates affect my body. Then she helped me develop a specialized diet and exercise plan. It consists of a high protein and low carb diet. Even though I had been walking two miles four or five times a week for the last twenty years of my life, I was encouraged to do more. I began walking an extra two miles and climbing four flights of stairs two times on some of those days. I read labels and learned the amount of carbohydrates in all the foods I eat on a daily basis. The key was spreading them out throughout the day. I make sure I eat three meals a day. I study the menu when going out to eat. There is almost always something good to eat if I asked them to substitute a high carb food for a low carb food. Most places are always willing to accommodate. It got to the point that I didn’t really miss the carbs.

What improvements have you seen in your health since making these changes?

I was able to lose 60 pounds and I have more energy than I have had in a long time. I am no longer insulin resistant and I was able to cut back on some of the blood pressure medicines. I know I am very susceptible to developing diabetes so every time I am tempted with the wrong kind of foods, I think about what it is doing to my body. I feel great and people tell me I even look younger. At 55 that is a boost for my ego.

I know that you exercise and walk pretty consistently. Do you have any tips to share on how to stay consistent with an exercise program?

Well there were times when I didn’t feel like walking or exercising. It was hard to put one foot in front of the other. But I kept telling myself it is for my health; sometimes with each step. I also resorted to asking God to help me through that moment. Now I find that the more I do, the more I want to do. I love being able to keep up with my four adult children, my nieces and nephews, and my seven grandchildren. They no not to leave me out of their activities. When they ask me if I want to do something, I can say yes without hesitation.

What advice would you give to someone trying to improve their health?

Prayer first and foremost. We can not do it alone. We need inner strength and we can find that strength in ourselves through God’s power. I asked a priest one time how to overcome a fault and he told me persistent prayer. Also, exercise and a healthy diet must become part of our everyday routine. The journey won’t be perfect or easy, but if you falter, pick yourself up and keep going.

“Education is very important when it comes to our health. Knowing more about any diagnosis and how certain foods can affect us is so helpful. So is learning how exercise can benefit us in the long run. Knowledge is empowerment.”

-- Debet Hebert
Calcium Score Scan

Do you have a family history of heart disease or several risk factors for heart disease such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol? If so, the Calcium Score Scan may benefit you.

The scan is non-invasive and will predict your 10 year risk for a heart attack in just minutes. The scan is now being offered for $75 (normally a $130 value). For more details contact Kelly Darbonne or call our Christus Worksite Wellness Nurse Navigator to schedule an appointment (431-7881).