

LiveWell: Mid-Life

A Resource for Healthy Living

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71 Pounds
Lost and
Loving Life!

LiveWell: Mid-Life

A Resource for Healthy Living



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Protect Yourself: Get a Flu Shot

With winter approaching, it's now time to get your annual flu shot, if you haven't already. Flu symptoms often include fatigue, fever, chills, aches, runny nose, sore throat, coughing and nausea. The single best way to protect yourself against the flu, or to lessen the symptoms, is to get vaccinated each year.

Flu is unpredictable and its severity can vary from one season to the next. Some people are at greater risk for serious complications, or hospitalization, if they get the flu. This includes older people, young children, pregnant women, caregivers and health care workers, and people with certain health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease and people who live in facilities like nursing homes.

Contact your doctor if you're not sure whether a flu shot is right for you. A flu shot is a covered benefit for all HAP members.

CORRECTION

In our Moving Onward article in the last issue, the first bullet point should read:

Allow yourself to grieve: Grieving is normal after experiencing a loss. Consider talking with your doctor if your grief lasts for more than two months or affects your ability to perform daily duties. You may be experiencing a form of depression.

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On the cover:

HAP members
Veronica Hill-Phillips, and
her husband James Phillips

Location:

Detroit Riverwalk

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Socialize with HAP

Are you on Facebook? We'd love to connect with you. Find us at www.facebook.com/hap and "Like" our page. Our expanded Facebook page combines many of our HAP wellness resources, including programs like HAP CareTrack.™ You'll have access to live chats, healthy recipes and seasonal tips. You'll find health information, articles and links that can help you and your friends and family members. You'll also receive important reminders about benefits and resources like Assist America®, and much more. We'll even post special offers from HAP partners and links to events in and around metro Detroit, bringing you timely information on what's going on around town.

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Turn to HAP for Health Care Reform Facts

Health care reform can be confusing. And finding answers to questions about the changes isn't always easy. You may be wondering:

- How will the upcoming health care changes affect me and my family?
- Will health care reform impact my coverage as a retiree?
- What if I'm on Medicare? Will my health benefits remain the same?
- Are preventive services still covered?

To get the facts, visit HAP's Health Care Reform website at haphealthcarereform.org. Find out which changes apply to

you by using the free *Health Care Reform and Me* tool. Start by answering a few anonymous questions. Then your personal summary will guide you through the specifics of reform – with answers that are unique to your circumstances.

The haphealthcarereform.org website also includes reliable information about the health care laws effective now and those to come. Sign up to receive email updates as additional health care reform information becomes available.

Put your mind at ease. Visit HAP's Health Care Reform website to stay informed about the changes that matter most to you and your family.

Veronica's Secret to Success



Veronica
before

HAP member Veronica Hill-Phillips admits she had a love affair with food. Problem was, the fast food she ate didn't love her back.

"I wasn't making good food choices and it affected my health," says Veronica, 56, a retired postal worker from Detroit. "Climbing stairs became harder. Shopping wasn't fun because I was too tired to walk at the mall."

Her wake up call came during an appointment with her doctor. Veronica learned that she had high blood pressure and was pre-diabetic. "I knew then that I needed to change my life, it was time to get healthy," Veronica said. That's when she took advantage of her HAP member discount and joined Weight Watchers®.

Armed with some serious motivation, Veronica never missed a single Weight Watchers® meeting. "I learned the importance of eating more fruits and vegetables, having smaller portions, and planning ahead," Veronica says. "I also began riding an exercise bike and jumping rope. I've lost 71 pounds since January 2011 and have never felt better!"

"I was slowly killing myself with unhealthy habits, but now I'm living, I feel great. I'm doing this for me."

Inspired by her success, Veronica's husband James gave Weight Watchers® a try and he has lost 26 pounds on the plan. Veronica shared some of her secrets for continued weight loss success.

"Eat some fruit or vegetables, like an apple or carrot sticks, before sitting down for a holiday meal or before dining out," she says. "That way you're less likely to overeat." Veronica also recommends putting on your exercise clothes first thing in the morning, or as soon as you get home from work, that way you are dressed and ready to exercise. "No excuses," she says. "I still do this every morning."

Thanks to HAP's partnership with Weight Watchers®, you can save on a 12-week session. HAP HMO and Alliance plan members pay only \$25 to join. If you attend at least 10 out of 12 meetings, HAP will pay the balance. Members can attend up to four 12-week sessions. That's 48 weeks – almost a full year to learn the Weight Watchers® healthy lifestyle habits.

"I encourage everyone to take advantage of this discount," says Veronica. Weight Watchers® worked for her, and it can work for you, too!

To enroll, call **(888) 3-FLORINE** and mention that you're a HAP member, or go online at **www.8883florine.com** and provide your HAP HMO or Alliance ID number.

Rejoining the Dating Game



Terri
Orbuch, Ph.D.

Maybe you're newly single and thinking about dating again. You might have questions about how to find someone new at this stage of life. Are there enough other single people my age? Is it possible to find love the second time around? Is dating really worth the effort?

The answer to these questions is a resounding "YES!" says Terri Orbuch, Ph.D., research professor at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan and professor of sociology at Oakland University.

"Finding a partner or a companion after age 50 is 100 percent possible," says Orbuch, author of *Finding Love Again: 6 Simple Steps to a New and Happy Relationship* (Sourcebooks). "There are over 100 million singles in the U.S. today, and four out of 10 were previously married. If you're ready to trust and care about another person again, then you're ready to date."

Dr. Orbuch offered these ideas for meeting singles:

- **Join a group activity that meets regularly and often.** "It could be a book club, exercise class or a wine tasting group. It's easier to meet people when you share a common interest."
- **Ask friends and family if they know a single who shares your interests and values.** "This is a nice way to meet someone, because you already share a common bond."
- **Go online.** "It's no longer a stigma to meet people through online dating websites. It's a great way to get your feet wet if you haven't dated in a long time. A popular site among people over 50 is **www.ourtime.com**."

Whether you're seeking love or a close companion, Dr. Orbuch says it's important to keep an upbeat attitude toward dating.

"People tend to find someone special when they are hopeful and positive," she says. "An optimistic approach to dating really does work."



Dating Safety Tips

- Keep first dates brief and meet in a public place, like a coffee shop or restaurant.
- Exchange cell phone numbers with your date instead of home or work numbers.
- Don't disclose personal information about yourself during first dates.
- Ask a friend to call you in the middle of the date to make sure you're okay.
- Trust your intuition and pay attention to any early warning signs that this might not be the right person for you – you're probably right.

Urinary Incontinence: A Common Problem



Muzzamil Ahmed, M.D.

There's no need to feel ashamed about loss of bladder control. In fact, urinary incontinence affects millions of women, says Muzzamil Ahmed, M.D., a urologist with Affiliates in Urology in Westland.

"Loss of bladder function affects about one in every seven women over age 50," he says. "It can range from occasional minor leaks to wetting your clothes frequently."

Urinary incontinence isn't a disease, but it can be part of the aging process. Weakening of the pelvic muscles after childbirth or pelvic prolapse (a downward shift of the pelvic organs) are common causes. Fortunately, there are many ways to prevent and treat the problem.

"Weight loss can help, since excessive weight puts pressure on the bladder," Dr. Ahmed says. "Pelvic floor and muscle exercises can improve the ability to hold urine. Medication, gentle electrical stimulation and a variety of outpatient surgeries are other treatment options."

If an over-active bladder affects your lifestyle, see your doctor to rule out other conditions, like a urinary tract infection.



Male "Menopause" Is Not a Myth

You might think that male menopause isn't real. But the truth is both women and men experience hormone changes as they age.

"Male menopause is sometimes used to describe low testosterone in men," says Muzzamil Ahmed, M.D. "Testosterone begins declining gradually around age 30. It's part of the aging process. But if it declines too quickly and doesn't keep pace with your lifestyle, you should seek treatment."

Some men with lower testosterone have no symptoms. Others experience depression, trouble concentrating, trouble sleeping or changes in sexual function. Because many underlying factors can cause these symptoms, a blood test is the only way to diagnose low testosterone.

"There are treatment options to help patients maintain good quality of life," Dr. Ahmed says. "These include testosterone replacement via creams, gels or injections," Dr. Ahmed says. He cautions that, "side effects can include prostate enlargement, heart attack, stroke or high blood pressure." Be sure to thoroughly discuss treatment options and potential side effect concerns with your doctor.

"Testosterone levels can have a big impact on your quality of life. If you experience symptoms or have concerns, see your doctor for an evaluation."

Want to Learn More?

Visit the *HAP Health Library* for more information about low testosterone, urinary incontinence and other health issues. Just log in at hap.org, choose the *My Health & Wellness* tab, link to *Tools and Resources*, then select *Health Library*.

Making the Most of Motivation



Renee Zack

You bought those gym shoes with good intentions, but lately they've been gathering dust in the corner. Or perhaps that new treadmill has become a basement clothes hanger.

It's not always easy to start and maintain an exercise program. But don't get discouraged, says Renee Zack, supervisor of Corporate and Community Wellness for Henry Ford Health System and a certified health coach. There are ways to become motivated and get back on track.

"To start, form a vivid mental picture of what you really want for yourself," Zack says. "Ask yourself how you want to look and feel. Keep that image at the forefront of your thoughts. It will help keep you motivated to reach your overall fitness goal."

Once you're mentally ready to begin working out, Zack recommends writing down specific exercise goals so you can remain focused as you take action.

"Make sure your goals are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely," she says. "Challenge yourself, but don't make your goals so difficult that you can't attain them. It takes about six weeks to begin making a change into a lifestyle habit. If you can do that, you're on the path to success."

Zack says these strategies also work for wellness, financial and career goals. It all starts with a clear mental image of your ideal self.

HAP's *iStriveSM for better health* digital health coaching program can also help keep your exercise program on track. The program uses state-of-the-art technology to create a workout plan tailored just for you. To get started, just log in at hap.org, visit the *My Health and Wellness* tab and click on the *iStrive* link.



Record Your Fitness Goals

Use this form to track your exercise goals. Check your progress each week and adjust your goals if necessary. Always consult your doctor before starting an exercise program.

Overall Fitness Goal (describe in detail how you want to look and feel): _____

Exercise Goal 1 (for example, you might want to lose 15 pounds by a certain date): _____

Action Step 1 (to reach Exercise Goal 1, you might commit to working out for 30 minutes, four days per week): _____

Exercise Goal 2: _____

Action Step 2: _____

Exercise Goal 3: _____

Action Step 3: _____

Mind and Body Medicine



Michael Seidman, M.D.

Millions of Americans are turning to acupuncture, massage and nutritional supplements for ailments like anxiety, back pain and fatigue. About 38 percent of adults use some type of alternative medicine as part of their personal wellness plan. But are these treatments really effective?

“These therapies may be ‘alternative’ in the United States, but they’re common in other countries,” says Michael Seidman, M.D., director of the Henry Ford Health System Center for Integrated Medicine. “It’s a more holistic approach involving mind, body and spirit. These treatments are also less invasive and promote wellness. I encourage people to be open-minded about alternative medicine. Thousands of studies have shown that these therapies work. They’re not hogwash.”

Dr. Seidman says acupuncture can help manage pain when standard treatments aren’t effective.

“Many acupuncture patients no longer need to take pain medication,” Dr. Seidman says. “We also use acupuncture and hypnotherapy to help patients quit smoking.”

Herbal supplements like Echinacea may help boost the immune system, and garlic may help prevent heart disease and cancer. Ginkgo biloba extract may enhance memory. But it’s not clear if nutritional supplements help slow the aging process.

“Having a healthy diet is one of the best ways to extend our lifespan,” Dr. Seidman says. “Many medical problems are caused by poor lifestyle choices. We are the CEOs of our own bodies. We have to do everything we can to live as healthy as possible.”

For more information, visit the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine website at www.nccam.nih.gov. Always check with your doctor if you’re considering an alternative therapy or herbal supplement because these may interfere with the effectiveness of prescription medicine. Your doctor may be able to answer your questions or refer you to an alternative medicine specialist. Remember, alternative medicine may not be a covered benefit.



Treatments at a Glance

Here are some of the conditions doctors can treat using a combination of complementary and alternative therapies:

- Anxiety, depression and stress
- Arthritis
- Cancer support
- Chronic fatigue
- Chronic pain (back, neck, hip, shoulder)
- Circulatory problems
- Digestive problems
- Headaches (including migraines)
- Mobility problems
- Respiratory problems
- Wellness – smoking cessation, nutritional support

Time Banks: Paying It Forward



Kim Hodge

When Kim Hodge of Lathrup Village was preparing for her backyard wedding last summer, she didn’t have time to pull weeds from her flower beds. So she used some of her time bank hours to have neighbors do the job, saving time and hundreds of dollars. In fact, Hodge didn’t spend any money to make her yard look gorgeous.

What is a Time Bank?

A time bank is a “pay-it-forward” type of community service using hours as currency instead of cash. For every hour you spend performing a service for a community member, you earn an hour. Then you can spend that hour and have someone do a service for you. It’s that simple.

“Time banks are a wonderful concept,” says Hodge, who founded the Lathrup Village time bank five years ago. She earns hours by offering her skills as a political campaign organizer. “No dollars are exchanged. You just trade hours.”

Time banks follow the concept that everyone has a skill to offer, whether you’re a teenager or a senior citizen. You might mow a lawn, knit a sweater, paint a garage or create a business plan. There is no limit on the types of services offered or requested. Time bank hours are also tax exempt.

“The teen who cooks a meal has an hour equal to the one earned by an attorney who offers legal advice,” Hodge says. “Members record their hours, list their skills and place requests for services online.”

Besides saving money, time banks are a great way to connect with people in your community and make new friends.

Besides saving money, time banks are a great way to connect with people in your community and make new friends.

“These days, we don’t seem to know our neighbors as well as we once did,” Hodge says. “Time banks give members the opportunity to form relationships. It’s a different way of living that’s not based on the almighty dollar. It’s about giving and receiving and living in a meaningful, heartfelt way.”

Where can I find a Time Bank?

Most time banks have between 40 and 60 members. Membership fees range from \$25 to \$50. To learn more about time banks or to find one near you, visit the Michigan Alliance of Time Banks website at www.mitimebanks.org.



Veggie Stuffed Peppers **cook eKitchen**

If you're looking for a vegetarian recipe that will keep you satisfied, try these veggie stuffed peppers. They're super easy to make and less than 300 calories each.

Ingredients

2 cups cooked brown rice
 ½ cup diced zucchini
 1 cup black beans, rinsed and drained
 ¼ cup chopped celery
 ½ cup corn
 ½ cup chopped onion
 2 garlic cloves, minced
 ¾ cup shredded low-fat cheddar cheese
 1 ¾ cups no-salt-added tomato sauce
 1 teaspoon chili powder
 ¼ teaspoon salt
 Cayenne pepper to taste
 4 bell peppers, tops cut off, seeds and pulps removed

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°. In a large bowl, combine rice, zucchini, black beans, celery, corn, onion, garlic, ½ cup of cheddar cheese, ½ cup of tomato sauce, chili powder, salt and cayenne pepper and mix together thoroughly. Spoon mixture into peppers.

In a small casserole dish, spread ¼ cup of the tomato sauce. Place stuffed peppers, standing, in casserole dish. Pour remaining 1 cup tomato sauce on top of stuffed peppers and sprinkle with remaining ¼ cup cheddar cheese. Bake for 45 minutes, covered loosely, until cheese is melted.

Make-ahead tip: The uncooked stuffed peppers will keep, chilled and covered, for up to 24 hours before baking.

Serves 4. Nutrition information for one serving:

Calories: 287	Total Fat: 3g	Saturated Fat: 1g	Fiber: 10g
Cholesterol: 6mg	Sodium: 575mg	Carbohydrates: 55g	Protein: 15g

Find this and many more recipes at hap.org/cookekitchen.



Is Gluten-Free the Way to Be?



Carl Lauter, M.D.

From grocery stores and bakeries to ballparks and restaurants, gluten-free food products are becoming more popular. In 2010, the market for gluten-free items reached \$2.6 billion, a 30 percent increase since 2006.

What is Gluten?

Gluten is a protein found in barley, wheat and rye. It's a natural ingredient in items like bread, beer and cereal. It's also in hundreds of processed foods as an artificial ingredient.

Gluten-free diets are often promoted as a way to boost energy, lose weight, relieve headaches and prevent many diseases. But is gluten really bad for you? Or are gluten-free diets just another food fad?

"Gluten doesn't affect the vast majority of people," says Carl Lauter, M.D., director of adult allergy and immunology at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak. "However, some people are allergic to gluten as others are to nuts, shrimp or pollen. There are also people who are gluten-sensitive. That can lead to celiac disease, which affects about three million Americans."

What is Celiac Disease?

Celiac disease is an inflammatory disorder that affects the small intestine. It occurs when the body's immune system overreacts in response to gluten. Some of the symptoms include bloating, intermittent diarrhea and abdominal pain. It can affect anyone at any age, but frequently occurs in mid-life.

"This disease can make you very uncomfortable," Dr. Lauter says. "Many people self-diagnose and start a gluten-free diet. But ideally, you need to see a doctor for a firm diagnosis. Blood tests can confirm celiac disease, but changing your diet beforehand can affect the test results. We can also perform a biopsy of the intestine wall to make a diagnosis."

Doctors treat celiac disease by changing their patients' diet. "People with the disease need to avoid eating gluten for the rest of their lives," Dr. Lauter says. "The irritated and inflamed membranes will heal, and the symptoms will improve."

Consult your doctor if you think you may be sensitive to gluten or have celiac disease symptoms. For more information, visit the Gluten Intolerance Group website at www.gluten.net and the Celiac Disease Foundation at www.celiac.org.

Try Mixing Up Your Menu

In the last issue we reviewed MyPlate – did you notice that most of the plate is reserved for plant-based foods? Eating more vegetables, legumes, fruits and whole grains is a great way to improve your nutrition.

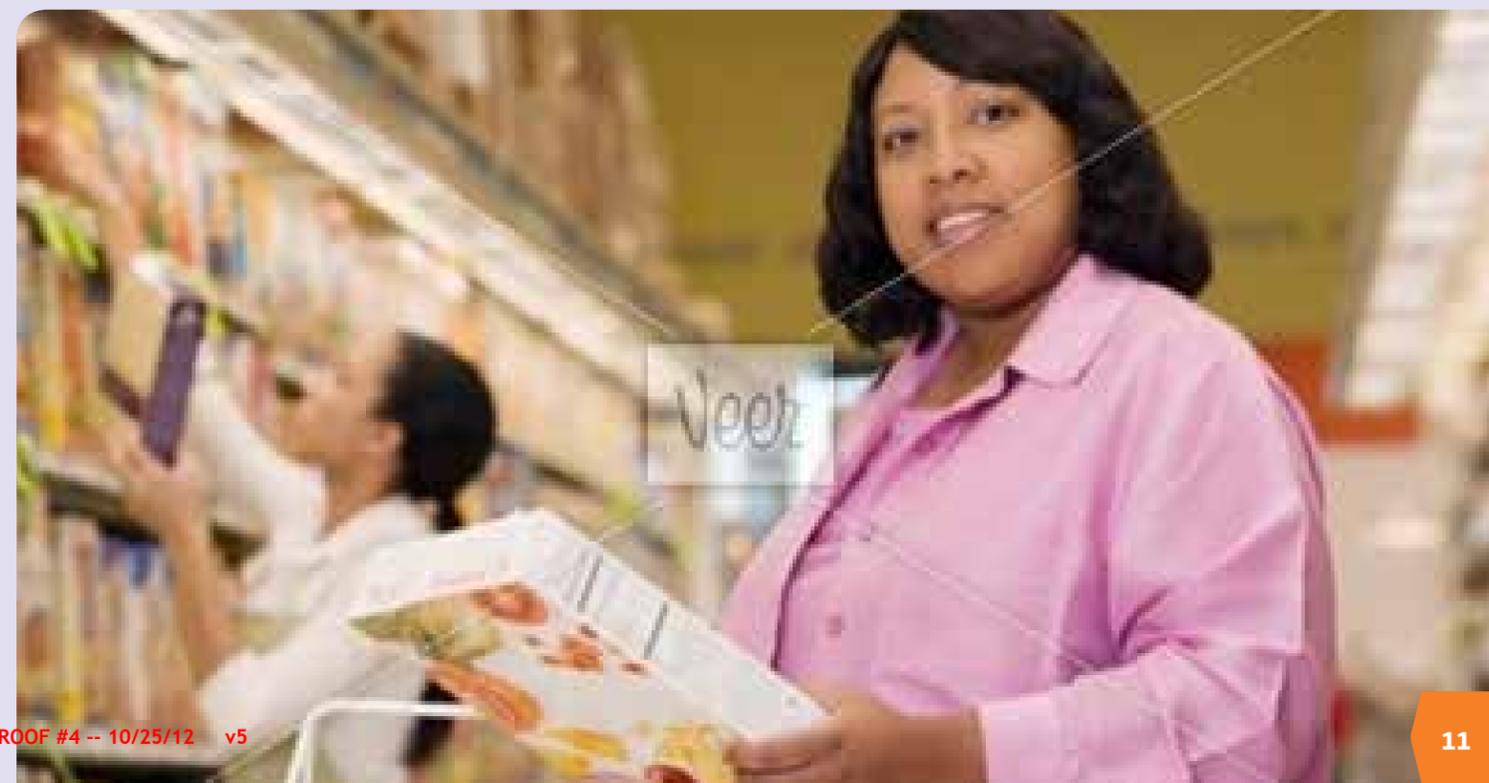
Why plant based?

Many studies show that a diet rich in whole grains, vegetables, fruits and nuts can reduce the risk of high cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Plant-based foods generally have very little saturated fat and cholesterol and help you increase intake of artery clearing, colon cleaning fiber and disease-fighting antioxidants.

Some healthy, plant-based protein sources besides beans include peas, lentils, unsalted nuts, whole grains and seeds. These items are cholesterol-free and they provide essential nutrients and can keep you from feeling hungry.

Simple ways to step into a more plant-based lifestyle:

1. Enjoy spaghetti with lots of sautéed peppers, mushrooms, onions and broccoli in tomato sauce. Add a little parmesan cheese and up the yum factor!
2. Scale back the meat in chili; bump up the beans until it is all veggie.
3. Get friendly with lentils. They require no soaking and cook in less than an hour.
4. Enjoy black and pinto bean burritos with slices of avocado and a great fresh salsa.
5. Sauté broccoli, zucchini, shredded cabbage, garlic and tofu together for a delicious stir-fry. Or use whatever vegetables you have on hand. Serve over brown rice or quinoa.
6. If completely plant-based isn't your style, learn to become a fish cooking expert! (Without frying!)





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Snack Light

Looking for ways to snack sensibly? Try these 10 ideas to keep your calorie budget in check. Most of these items add up to roughly 100 calories.

- 15 chocolate-covered raisins
- ½ cup of fat-free ice cream
- Half an apple cut into slices with 2 teaspoons of peanut butter
- 10 dry roasted cashews or 12 to 15 almonds
- 26 grapes
- An 8-ounce, low-fat yogurt or a fat-free chocolate pudding cup
- 1 hard-boiled egg
- 4 Hershey's kisses
- 1 cup of fresh blueberries
- 1 packet of instant oatmeal



GOT FEEDBACK?

Story ideas? Suggestions?

We would love to hear from you.

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