

COMO CLINIC HEALTH CLUB NEWSLETTER



MARCH 2020

Whether you think March Madness is a basketball tournament or a good descriptor of how we're all feeling as we wait for spring, the **Como Clinic Health Club** has something to help keep your stress at bay and your body moving. In addition to our regular yoga classes, we are now offering three beginning Tai Chi classes! Both exercises are strengthening for body and mind. We also have our ongoing meditation sessions, Lifelines poetry discussion group, and a Craft Your Stress Away event happening this month. And if you've been feeling stressed (or distressed) about politics lately – you're not alone. We hope you can join us for a special community workshop on Dealing with Political Stress. Keep reading for more details~

WHAT'S NEW THIS MONTH?

Come **Craft Your Stress Away** with us on **Thursday, March 12, from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.!** Crafting and having hobbies are associated with lower blood pressure, better sleep, less stress, improved mood, and more creative problem-solving abilities. They're also associated with having fun! Bring any kind of art or craft, or a hobby/project to work on; we have big tables you can spread things out on. We also have coloring pages and markers, so you don't even have to bring your own craft! Enjoy hot tea and cocoa, and fun conversation. RSVPs are appreciated but not required: ComoHealthClub@HealthPartners.com



On **Thursday, March 19, at 7:00 p.m.** we're hosting "**Lifelines**," a poetry discussion group led by **Como Clinic Health Club** member Dr. Richard Rose. We'll be reading and discussing "undetectable" and "i'm going back to Minnesota where sadness makes sense," by Danez Smith. Please email us; we'll send you the poems:

ComoHealthClub@HealthPartners.com

We are excited to be offering **FREE Introduction to Tai Chi** classes this winter! The benefits of Tai Chi include improved muscle tone, better balance, increased flexibility, reduced stress, and lower blood pressure. Taught by **Como Clinic Health Club** member

and Tai Chi instructor Rick Lorenzen, these beginner-level, drop-in classes will cover the basics in a relaxed, fun setting. Classes meet on **Monday evenings from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.** in Conference Room A on the 2nd floor. **March 23, March 30, and April 6.** Please wear comfortable clothes you can move in! RSVPs are appreciated but not required: ComoHealthClub@HealthPartners.com.

A lot of people are experiencing stress in our highly polarized political environment and want to find better ways to cope personally and as community members. If this describes you, come to our **Dealing with Political Stress Workshop** on **Tuesday, March 24, from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. in Conference Room A**, on the 2nd floor. Through conversation and a presentation, you'll gain more understanding of political stress reactions, and you'll learn ways to cope that are healthy, consistent with your values, and that can repair (and not further erode) our civic bonds. The workshop will be led by Bill Doherty, Ph.D., family therapist, University of Minnesota professor, co-founder of Better Angels and member of the **Como Clinic Health Club**. RSVPs are appreciated but not required: ComoHealthClub@HealthPartners.com.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Free **YOGA** classes meet on **Saturday mornings from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.**, in Conference Room A/B on the second floor of the clinic. Classes are taught by **Como Clinic Health Club** member Ann Schlender, a Certified Yoga Instructor and Senior Fitness Specialist. The benefits of yoga include: Increased flexibility, stronger



muscles, reduced stress, lower blood pressure, better balance and improved posture. Please wear comfortable clothes you can move in, and bring a yoga mat if you have one. Classes run from **January 11 – March 28**. **Note: There will be no class on February 15.*



Practicing mindfulness meditation can help relieve stress, improve sleep, reduce chronic pain, lower blood pressure, and lessen symptoms of anxiety and depression. It can also contribute to a more satisfying life! Would you like support for your practice and a group to meditate with on a regular basis? The **Como Clinic Health Club** has an **Ongoing Meditation Group!** We meet on the **first and third Tuesdays of the month at 7:00 p.m.** on the 2nd floor of the clinic; participate as many/few times as you like.

Health Coaching at Como Clinic: The choices we make around food, physical activity, sleep, and how we take care of ourselves in general can profoundly affect our energy, mood, and overall health. Health coaching can help you make healthy changes to your lifestyle. Make an appointment with Jennette Turner, M.P.H., Como Clinic's Certified Health Coach by calling **651-641-6200**. NOTE: *There are **no** co-pays or other costs to you for health coaching.*

Our Pediatrics lobby has **books for families** to read while waiting in the lobby, and *children may choose one book to take home with them!*

Reading to children supports brain development and contributes to children's overall health and well-being.

Como Clinic Health Club members collect books to keep the lobby shelves stocked. *If you have gently used books you'd like to donate to our pediatrics lobby, please email us at ComoHealthClub@HealthPartners.com.



SAVE THE DATE!

Interested in improving your diet, but not sure how to make healthful food affordable and delicious? Come to our hands-on cooking class, **In the Kitchen with Cooks of Hope** at The Good Acre (on Larpenteur Avenue) on **Thursday, April 9, from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.** You'll learn about whole grains, healthy fats, Wellness Wednesdays, and a variety of simple techniques to add excitement and flavor to heart-healthy fare. *We'll be making:*

- Grain Bowl with Herb Dressing
- African-Style Collard Greens with Smoked Fish
- Kicking Trail Mix

This fun and informative class will be taught by Chef James Johnson, founder of Cooks of Hope. There is a \$30 fee for the class. **Financial assistance is available.* For registration information, please email

ComoHealthClub@HealthPartners.com.



In a rut at dinner time? Want to eat well, but can't seem to make it happen? The success of a goal is all in the plan, and when it comes to healthy eating, it's planning what to cook. Join us **April 28, from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.** for a **Meal Planning Workshop** led by clinic dietitian Liz Zaremba. Benefits of meal planning include: improved health, saving money, saving time, reducing food waste, and better meals!

TAKE A HIKE!

Do you like to discover scenic places while being physically active? Are you thinking about travel to new destinations closer to home this year? Do you like reward motivations to challenge you to walk beyond the same old paths? Do you like having more bragging rights? **Como Clinic Health Club** member Sandy F. is here to let fellow members know about the fun challenges of the MN DNR State Parks & Trails Hiking Club and Passport Club. The clubs offer the opportunity of an outing, a treasure hunt, and enjoyment of this beautiful state.



The Hiking Club invites you to explore more than 175 miles of trails of varying length at 68 parks. The trails lead you to the main attraction of each park, including overlooks, waterfalls, historic sites, and geological wonders. The marked trails include a unique password on a sign about halfway through your hike to use for your log.

The Passport Club entices you to check out unfamiliar parks and recreation areas from



Afton State Park to Zippel Bay State Park; from Lake Louise to Garden Island; from Blue Mounds to Grand Portage. Before long, you're reaching milestones and earning club rewards like patches or pins, and free nights of camping.

Buy your Hiking Club book or Passport Club kit to join the clubs. For more information on getting started and tracking your progress, check out the club website:

https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/clubs.html. Enjoy nature, increase your physical activity, and start checking off your milestones at Minnesota's state parks and trails! --Sandy.

CLINIC CORNER

Did you know?... Como Clinic has **Cholesterol for a Healthy Heart** classes! Our next one is **Monday, March 10, from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.**, and will be taught by clinic dietitian Liz Zaremba. Learn to make lifestyle changes to improve your cholesterol numbers and lower your risk for heart disease. We'll cover how to read a food label, understanding different kinds of fats, guidelines on increasing activity and managing stress, and more. There is a \$20 fee for the class, but you are allowed to bring a guest for no additional charge. To register, please call **952-967-7616**.

GEMS FROM THE COMO CLINIC HEALTH CLUB

During our **More ZZZs, Please!** email program, participants tracked their sleep for 4 weeks, made changes to their sleep habits, and reported back on how it went. Overall, the biggest learning for people was around exercise. When people exercised more, they slept longer and had better quality sleep. Exercising outdoors or at higher intensity indoors had the strongest effect. Many people also found that using Facebook, watching television (especially the news!), and drinking alcohol late in the evening kept them up too late and impaired their sleep. Other observations from the challenge:

- *"I cleaned up my room, put black polar fleece over my windows (the curtains were too thin) and started using earplugs. I'm sleeping much better now."*
- *"The most surprising thing I learned was that it's easier for me to sleep if I take time to relax and wind down in the evening."*
- *"Quitting caffeine after 9 am made a big difference for my sleep – I didn't realize coffee could stay in my system so long, but I'm here to tell you it can!"*



SPOTLIGHT ON... SWEET POTATOES!

This month's Spotlight comes from **Como Clinic Health Club** member **Linda C.**: This dish is easy to make and tastes wonderful! A few notes: Try not to overcook the sweet potatoes – they should not be soft when you add them in Step 2. For a piquant flavor, sprinkle orange zest with the walnuts, and add a few orange wedges to each serving. If the recipe seems a bit dry, add some orange juice.

Curried Sweet Potato Cous Cous

(Recipe adapted from 1,001 Low-Fat Vegetarian Recipes, by Sue Spitler; makes 4 servings.)

- ¼ c. sliced onion
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1-2 T. olive oil
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, cooked, diced
- 1 – 1 ½ tsp. curry powder
- ¼ c. raisins
- 1 c. reduced-sodium vegetable broth
- 2/3 c. couscous
- 1 c. thinly sliced kale
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 4 T. chopped walnuts



1. Saute onion and garlic in olive oil in a large saucepan until tender, 2-3 minutes.
2. Stir in sweet potatoes, cook over medium heat until slightly browned, about 5 minutes.
3. Stir in curry powder, raisins, and broth; heat to boiling.
4. Add couscous and kale, stirring with a fork.
5. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, until couscous is tender and broth is absorbed, about 5 minutes.
6. Season to taste, with salt and pepper. Sprinkle each serving with walnuts.

If you'd like to provide a **Spotlight On** a healthful ingredient or other health-related topic, please email ComoHealthClub@HealthPartners.com.

Be well,

Jennette Turner, M.P.H.

Como Como Clinic Health Club

We're on Facebook! Join the
Como Health Club GROUP.



The **Como Clinic Health Club** is a group of patients and staff at the HealthPartners Como Clinic who connect with and support each other in improving our own health and the health of the clinic community. We have regular activities and events that all patients and staff can participate in. If you'd like to receive this newsletter via email, please email ComoHealthClub@HealthPartners.com.