

Quality Care **ME** FOR

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

WINTER2012

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Winter Trees

by William Carlos Williams

*All the complicated details
of the attiring and
the disattiring are completed!*

*A liquid moon
moves gently among
the long branches.*

*Thus having prepared their buds
against a sure winter
the wise trees
stand sleeping in the cold.*

SOME THOUGHTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Weather-wise this has been a “typically atypical” winter here in Maine. In the New Year there was little to no snow on the ground and we experienced days that were an unseasonably warm 50 degrees. As I write this, we seem to be settling in to a more traditional weather pattern with cold air returning. Though the weather is often “unexpected” the team at APS Healthcare works hard to be consistent and reliable for MaineCare members, MaineCare providers and DHHS staff who depend on the services we provide.

We do this by maintaining our focus on the goals of our partnership with DHHS. These are:

- Improve Outcomes of Mental Health Services
- Support State of Maine Compliance with Federal and Other Legal Requirements
- Reduce Costs of MaineCare Funded Mental Health Services

These goals are married to our customer service values and beliefs in that none of these goals can be fully attained without providing best in class service to our state partners, providers and members who reach out to APS Healthcare for assistance. Our call center has seen another active year with over 35,000 provider and member calls received. Our clinical team continues to shine having processed over 200,000 requests through CareConnection this year. With 79% of responding providers satisfied or very satisfied with APS customer service, we are pleased to begin our 5th year of service to the State of Maine and its mental health community.

In 2012, we are excited to again offer a statewide conference. Please save the date for the 3rd annual APS Healthcare conference which is March 15, 2012 at the Augusta Civic Center. The theme for the conference is “Behavioral Health Integration in an ACO Environment”. We look forward to gathering industry thought leaders and providing an educational opportunity for all our provider and member partners.

We appreciate our partnership and collaboration with all stakeholders in the MaineCare system, to improve health, support state compliance and to reduce costs. We look forward to our work together in 2012.

Eric Meyer,
LCSW, MBA

SAVE THE DATE



The 2012 APS Maine Conference:

Behavioral Health Integration in an ACO Environment is scheduled for

March 15th in Augusta ME.

Please mark your calendars and do consider joining us for the 3rd Annual Conference!

HEART HEALTHY MONTH

Taking Care of your Heart While Living with Mental Illness



For those of us who live with a mental illness, it has been shown that our lifespan is shortened on the average by 25 years. One of the biggest reasons that we die so young is due to cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular disease is any disease that involves the heart and the blood vessels. Some of the diseases that are included in cardiovascular disease are high blood pressure (hypertension), high blood cholesterol (dyslipidemia), coronary heart disease. Stroke and peripheral artery disease (PAD). More people with mental illness die from cardiovascular disease than from suicide each year. Some of the reasons that people with mental illnesses have a high rate of cardiovascular disease are because we have high occurrences of obesity, diabetes, smoking and substance abuse among persons with severe mental illnesses. Also there is now evidence that people who take

psychotropic drugs are prone to developing risk factors for heart disease. It has also been shown in studies that per-

More people with mental illness die from cardiovascular disease than from suicide each year.

sons with severe and persistent mental illness receive less basic medical care than the general population. The reasons for this vary. Sometimes just having a mental illness makes it harder to go to a doctor. If you are having symptoms of your mental illness it is hard to get motivated to go for an appointment. In some cases when you do find a doctor who will take your insurance they think that your medical symptoms are being caused by your mental illness! What type of insurance you have plays a big

role in the type of healthcare you can afford. Most public insurance does not pay for dental care. Yet, having healthy teeth and gums is an important way to cut down on your risk for cardiovascular disease. If you have a chronic medical condition like diabetes, it needs to be monitored closely by a health care provider. By keeping your diabetes in check you can lower your risk for cardiovascular disease. Smoking is greatly increases your risk for cardiovascular disease. There are a lot of people who have a mental illness that smoke. It is very hard to quit a smoking addiction. You need a lot of support. Some of the smoking cessation tools that may be used are medications, nicotine patches and gums, and support services. Unfortunately, most public health insurance does not cover smoking cessation. The two biggest things that you can do to cut down on your risk for cardiovascular disease are to eat a healthy diet and to exercise. Just by cutting down on fast food and adding more fruits and vegetables to your diet, you can begin to eat healthier. By adding exercise to your daily routine you can begin to lose weight, cut your risk, and feel better. This does not mean that you have to go to a gym. Just by getting out and taking a walk everyday for 30 minutes can help you increase your heart rate and decrease your risk. If you have any of the risk factors for cardiovascular disease, please check with your doctor first before starting an exercise program.

What is cardiovascular disease? It is made up of diseases that affect the heart and blood vessels. You can have one of these diseases or more than one.

High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) –

Blood pressure is the force of the blood pushing against the walls of the arteries as the heart pumps blood. If the pressure is high, it can cause damage to the heart and other organs in the body. High Blood Pressure usually has no signs or symptoms. It is important to check your blood pressure regularly. If your blood pressure stays high for long periods it can lead to Stroke, coronary heart disease, and kidney failure. There are effective medications on the market, in generic form that works well to lower blood pressure. Like any medication you must take it as prescribed for it to work well.

High Blood Cholesterol (Dyslipidemia)

– Cholesterol (a fat like substance) occurs naturally in our blood. When we have too much of this cholesterol in our blood it can stick to the walls of our arteries and build up over time. This is what they mean when they say “hardening of the arteries”. The arteries are the blood carriers of oxygen to the major organs in the body. When there is a buildup of cholesterol in the arteries, the oxygen rich blood cannot flow to a major organ like the lungs or the heart. If the heart muscle does not get enough blood and oxygen, it will begin to die. This is what is happening when you suffer chest pains or a mild heart attack. Keeping track of your cholesterol is an important thing to do. How do you check your cholesterol levels? You have to go to a doctor and have a blood test taken.

Coronary Heart Disease – is when the small blood vessels that supply blood and oxygen to the heart narrow due to

the buildup of cholesterol in the blood. There are risk factors for heart disease that you cannot change, age – your risk for heart disease goes up as you age, gender – men have a higher risk for heart disease than women, unless those women have reached menopause than the risk is the same, race – African Americans, Mexican Americans, American Indians, Hawaiians, and some Asian Americans have a higher risk factor, and genes - heart disease is considered hereditary, if a member of your immediate family has had heart disease you may be at greater risk to develop it. If you are having chest pain or any of the risk factors for coronary heart disease, go to your doctor right away.

Stroke – a stroke happens when blood flow to part of the brain is stopped. This can happen in a number of ways. A blood clot can form in an artery that has already been made narrow with cholesterol buildup. A blood clot may also form in another part of the body and travel to the brain. Another way a stroke can occur is if a blood vessel in the brain bursts open and blood leaks into the brain. If you are having a stroke you will have some warning signs. They can include; a headache, changes in hearing and taste, confusion or loss of memory, loss of balance and coordination, difficulty swallowing, lack of control over the bladder or bowels, muscle weakness in the face, arm, leg (usually on one side), numbness or tingling on one side of the body, trouble walking, vision problems, trouble speaking or understanding when someone is speaking to you and if you have changes in your personality, mood or emotions. If you notice any of these symptoms, you should call 911 right away. This is the time when you need to go to the emergency department. Serious damage from strokes can be prevented but only if you get help right away.

Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) – is a disease in which plaque builds up in your arteries and causes them to narrow. Plaque is made up of fat, cholesterol, calcium, tissue, and other substances in the blood. PAD usually affects the blood flow to the legs. It can cause pain and numbness in your legs. It raises your risk of infection because your leg tissue is not getting enough oxygen. If you have pain in your legs when you walk or climb stairs, tell your doctor. They can test you for PAD and there is treatment available.

Although cardiovascular disease is serious, it is preventable and treatable. Persons with mental illness do not have to die 25 years younger than the rest of the population. With some simple changes in diet and exercise, basic medical care, and help with smoking cessation persons with mental illness can live long, productive lives.

References:

- 1) Newcomer, John W. MD, Hennekens, Charles H. MD, Severe Mental Illness and Risk of Cardiovascular Disease: JAMA October 17, 2007- Vol 17 1794 – 1796
- 2) www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/heart-topics/topics/htp
- 3) www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/chol/wynth.htm
- 4) www.nhlbi.nih.gov/pubmed/health/PMH0004449
- 5) www.nhlbi.nih.gov/pubmed/health/PMH00017401
- 6) www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/pad



CHEWY OATMEAL RAISIN COOKIES

Pg. 7



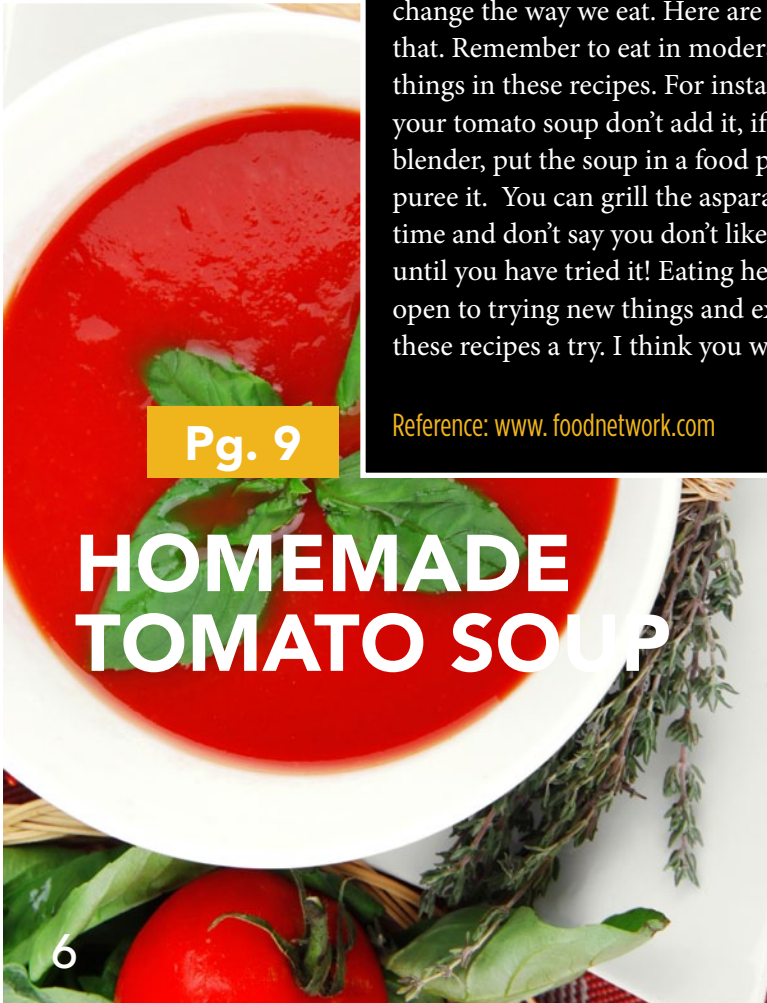
GRILLED ASPARAGUS

Pg. 8

HEART HEALTHY RECIPES

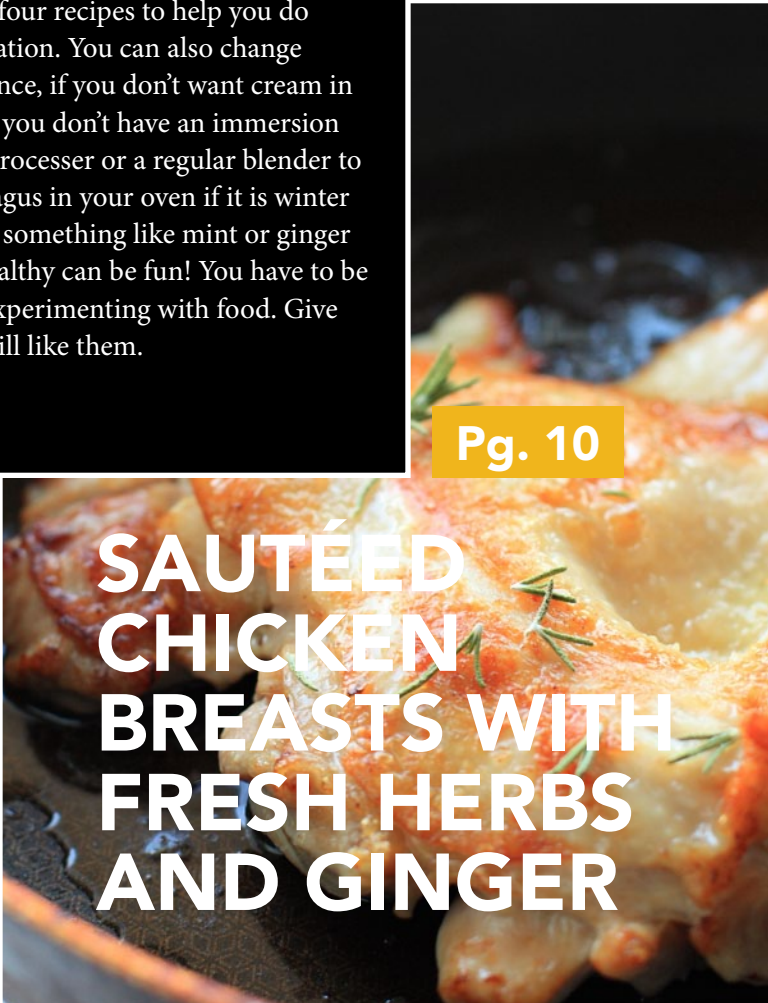
In order to enjoy a healthy lifestyle sometimes we have to change the way we eat. Here are four recipes to help you do that. Remember to eat in moderation. You can also change things in these recipes. For instance, if you don't want cream in your tomato soup don't add it, if you don't have an immersion blender, put the soup in a food processor or a regular blender to puree it. You can grill the asparagus in your oven if it is winter time and don't say you don't like something like mint or ginger until you have tried it! Eating healthy can be fun! You have to be open to trying new things and experimenting with food. Give these recipes a try. I think you will like them.

Reference: www.foodnetwork.com



Pg. 9

HOMEMADE TOMATO SOUP



Pg. 10

SAUTÉED CHICKEN BREASTS WITH FRESH HERBS AND GINGER



CHEWY OATMEAL RAISIN COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/4 cups rolled oats
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 stick unsalted butter, softened
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons molasses
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup raisins

DIRECTIONS

Combine the oats, flour, cinnamon, baking powder and salt in a large bowl. Beat the butter, sugar and molasses in a large bowl with a mixer on medium-high speed until fluffy, about 5 minutes. Beat in the egg and vanilla until smooth, about 2 more minutes. Reduce the mixer speed to low, add the flour mixture and beat until combined. Stir in the raisins by hand. For the best flavor and texture, cover the dough and chill at least 4 hours, or overnight.

Position racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven; preheat to 350 degrees F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Form the dough into 12 balls, about 2 tablespoonfuls each, and arrange 3 inches apart on the prepared baking sheets. Flatten with the back of a fork. Bake until the cookies are golden, 15 to 17 minutes. Let cool 5 minutes on the baking sheets, then transfer to racks to cool completely.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds asparagus, trimmed
- 1 tablespoon chopped garlic
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Extra-virgin olive oil

DIRECTIONS

Set up grill for direct cooking over medium heat and oil the grates.

Place the trimmed asparagus on a baking sheet. Add the chopped garlic and season with salt and pepper. Drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil and toss to coat.

Place on the grill directly or in a grill basket. Grill until just tender and lightly charred, about 5 minutes.





HOMEMADE TOMATO SOUP

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (14-ounce) can chopped tomatoes
- 3/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 stalk celery, diced
- 1 small carrot, diced
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh basil leaves
- 1/2 cup heavy cream, optional

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F.

Strain the chopped canned tomatoes, reserving the juices, and spread onto a baking sheet, season with salt and pepper, to taste, drizzle with 1/4 cup of the olive oil and roast until caramelized, about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a saucepan, heat remaining olive oil over medium-low heat. Add the celery, carrot, onion and garlic, cook until softened, about 10 minutes. Add the roasted chopped canned tomatoes, reserved tomato juices, chicken broth, bay leaf and butter. Simmer until vegetables are very tender, about 15 to 20 minutes. Add basil and cream, if using. Puree with a hand held immersion blender until smooth.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil, like soy or peanut
- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves, about 6 ounces each
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Juice of 1/2 lime (about 1 tablespoon)
- 3 tablespoons chicken broth, homemade or low-sodium canned
- 2 teaspoons finely grated ginger
- 1/4 cup packed fresh basil leaves, torn
- 2 tablespoons packed fresh mint leaves, torn

DIRECTIONS

Heat the oil in a medium skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Season both sides of the chicken breasts with salt and pepper, and place them skin side down in the pan. Cook, turning once, until firm to the touch, about 5 minutes per side. Transfer the chicken breasts to a plate.

Add the lime juice to the skillet, and scrape up any browned bits that cling to the pan with a wooden spoon. Add the chicken broth and ginger, and bring to a boil. Off the heat, add the basil and mint to the pan and swirl the pan to combine.

Divide the chicken between the 2 plates and spoon the herb sauce over the chicken. Serve.

Per Serving: Calories: 316; Fat: 16g (Saturated Fat: 1.5 grams); Protein: 40g; Carbohydrates: 2g; Sugar: 0g Fiber: 0g; Cholesterol: 99mg; Sodium: 238mg



SAUTÉED CHICKEN BREASTS WITH FRESH HERBS AND GINGER