

UPMC

WESTERN MARYLAND

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, stress management and recovery. Sessions are offered in person, via video, or by phone. Call 240-964-8424 for more information.

FITNESS CLASSES

Join a **FREE** fitness class offered in locations around the region.

- **Chair Yoga** Tuesdays at 2:15 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.
- South Cumberland Library **Yoga Classes**, Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m.
- LaVale Library **Yoga Classes**, Fridays at 10:30 a.m.

ONLINE SMART RECOVERY

Tuesdays at 7:30 a.m., Wednesdays at 6:00 a.m. and 7:30 a.m., and 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.

In this Edition...

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- Lightening Your Load: Living by Your Values
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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.*

Real WELL

WINTER 2025

WELLNESS NEWS YOU CAN USE!

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

AS WINTER SETTLES IN AND THE RHYTHM OF THE SEASON BEGINS TO SHIFT, IT'S A TIMELY OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON OUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.

While this season brings moments of quiet and beauty, it also presents unique challenges—from navigating flu season and managing seasonal mood changes to staying active and connected in colder months.

More than ever, healthy lifestyles are not just a personal goal – they're a growing movement. Staying well, aging strong, and making informed choices can help us avoid unnecessary hospital visits and maintain independence as we grow older. Investing in our health today means a better quality of life tomorrow.

This newsletter is designed to support you in that journey. Inside, you'll find wonderful articles from our health coaches, local resources, and thoughtful reminders that your health matters—every day, in every season.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of your wellness journey. Wishing you continued strength, comfort, and good health throughout the winter season.

Stay well,

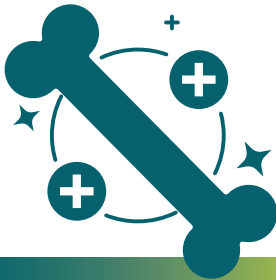
stacey



EFFECTIVE TRAINING FOR OSTEOPOROSIS



Michael Browning, MA, NBC-HWC



As we get older, we naturally lose muscle and some bone density, so it's a good idea to use preventative measures regardless of whether you have been diagnosed with significant bone loss. The good news is you can reverse bone loss at any point of your life. In this article I will share some critical factors to consider when resistance training for bone health and reversal of osteopenia and osteoporosis.

A peer reviewed study by the Journal for Endocrinology and Metabolism states that “Weight-bearing impact exercise such as hopping and jumping, and/or progressive resistance exercise (RE), alone or in combination can improve the bone health in adults. Among them, RE has been highlighted as the most promising intervention to maintain or increase bone mass and density. This is because a variety of muscular loads are applied on the bone during RE, which generate stimuli and promote an osteogenic response of the bone.” So, the most crucial factor in recovering bone density or improving bone density through exercise is that the weight you use must be significant. The best way I can explain “significant weight,” is that it must be “heavy for you.” Obviously heavy is a relative term to each individual, what is heavy to me may or may not be heavy for you.

The simplest example of RE are body weight movements such as push-ups and squats. These two exercises are the best for building upper body strength and lower body strength respectively and can be performed almost anywhere safely. Push-ups at an angle such as off a wall or table may be where you need to begin. Squats can be performed safely over a stable chair. Finally, once you become more advanced you can move on to things such as free weights or dumbbells. This method of resistance training is more difficult but also more effective. Make sure to consult your doctor or a Physical Therapist before starting an RE program.

[Effects of Resistance Exercise on Bone Health - PMC](#)

Lightening Your Load: Living by Your Values



Carey Moffatt, MS, NBC-HWC



We all carry a backpack through life, filled with memories, emotions, and beliefs. Some items are useful tools that guide us, while others feel like heavy rocks. The challenge is not whether the heavy things are there, but how we carry them and which direction we choose to walk.

When people describe the life they want, they often picture possessions and dream locations. But living with meaning goes deeper. Real fulfillment comes from aligning our lives with our values, the things that matter most, rather than chasing “the next shiny thing.”

Reflections: Values are what matter most to you—like family, health, compassion, and growth.

- Everyone carries a “backpack” of past experiences and emotions. What is inside yours right now?
- Some items feel heavy, like shame, guilt, or fear. How do you notice yourself carrying these emotions today?
- What happens when you avoid or hide these feelings? How might compassion lighten the load?
- Alongside the heavy things, there are also strengths. What is one item you carry that gives you strength?
- Values act like a map and compass for our lives. Which values feel most important to guide you now?

What is one step you could take today that feels aligned with your values? For example, if you value growth, you may want to consider learning a new skill.

A lighter life begins not by emptying the backpack, but by trusting your values to guide you toward a more meaningful path.

Source: [smartrecovery.org](https://www.smartrecovery.org)

Winter Nourishment

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



Inviting us into stillness, winter quietly restores the earth above and beneath the surface. In our fast-paced world, it's tempting to resist this slowing, yet choosing to honor it can be a profound act of self-care.

As a yoga health coach grounded in mind-body medicine, I see this season as an invitation to rest, reflect, and replenish. Gentle, mindful movements such as yin-style child's pose and forward folds synced with deep inhales and full exhales of breath offer the body and mind a way to release stress and restore energy.

Enjoy the soups and hearty root vegetables of the season along with warming spices like ginger, cinnamon, and turmeric to nourish and support digestion and inner balance. Pair this with intentional rest, journaling, meditation, or quiet evenings to encourage reflection and renewal.

But winter does not mean complete stillness. Keep your inner fire alive with crisp walks outdoors, dry brushing to stimulate circulation, focused deep breathing, and spontaneous joyful movement - like dancing in your living room. These small rituals awaken vitality and remind us that rest and activity can coexist in harmony.

In a world that glorifies productivity, choosing rest is a radical act. Winter wellness may look like getting more sleep, saying “no” to unnecessary busyness, eating warm foods, and moving with quiet gentleness. These are not small things. They are powerful choices that align you with the wisdom of winter's stillness and deeply restorative gift of nourishment.





Brittany Friend, MS, NBC-HWC

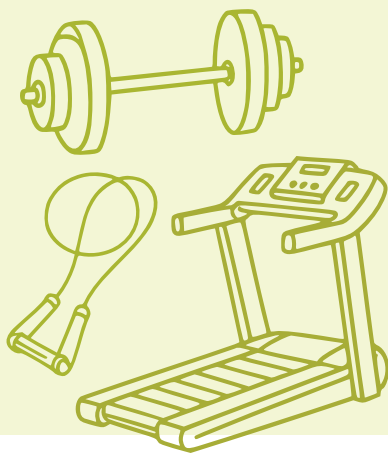
Exercise Benefits During Menopause

One challenge every woman will face is navigating menopause and its various stages. Many women in this stage of life want support for weight loss, increasing muscle strength, and increasing bone density.

Lastly, don't skip the impact exercises and cardio! This can be both low and high-impact activities depending on your preference and abilities. Walking, playing tennis, running, jumping jacks, HIIT (high intensity interval training) – all of these things put stress on your bones. When stress is applied, the bones respond by increasing their density to accommodate that stress. Cardio still helps to strengthen the heart and lungs. There is evidence to suggest that HIIT can be beneficial to help lose belly fat, as well as lower the risk of other conditions. It is also usually done in a shorter amount of time, which can be better for busy lives!

Don't throw in the towel! Adjust your routine and do the things that will benefit your body the most!

<https://www.uclahealth.org/news/article/best-way-work-out-after-menopause>



It is natural to lose muscle mass as we age. However, during menopause women experience a drop in estrogen making this loss of muscle composition worse. Muscle diminishes faster and fat can increase. Therefore, it becomes more important for menopausal and post-menopausal women to add strength training to their routine. Lifting weights, using resistance bands, and incorporating body weight exercises are all ways to increase muscle strength and composition. Strength training can also increase your metabolism due to increased muscle mass. The more muscle mass you have, the higher your metabolism. When your metabolism is higher, this means that you will burn more calories during exercise and even at rest.

SPIRITUAL WELLNESS

LIGHTS FOR THE WINTER SEASON



Pastor Bruce and Judy McBride

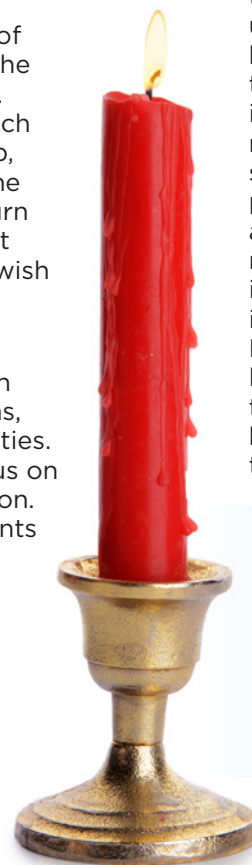
Rev. Bruce McBride, M.A., M.Div.
Director of Pastoral Care, UPMC Western Maryland

Chanukah (also spelled Hanukkah) is an 8-day Jewish festival marking the miraculous victory of the Maccabees, Jewish freedom fighters, over the Seleucidian Greek occupiers in the year 139 BC. After recapturing Jerusalem's Holy Temple, which had been converted into a place of idol worship, they searched for pure oil with which to light the Temple menorah. They found just enough to burn for one day, but miraculously it burned for eight days until more oil could be brought. For all Jewish people this festival begins on December 14 and continues for 8 days.

Lights are a big part of the Jewish and Christian celebrations in the winter. Here in the mountains, we are intrigued by lights all over our communities. During the cold season we need lights to lead us on our journey. Darkness is part of the winter season. But don't let darkness permeate your life. Patients and families need to know the LIGHT that God offers to us all during this season of life.

The Christian faith remembers the birth of Jesus Christ on Christmas and celebrates with services, songs and celebrations all over the month of December. We recall the announcement to the virgin Mary that she shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name JESUS, for He shall save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21) What will you do with the light God gives you? Jesus says, "I am the light

of the world..." (John 8:12). Accepting that light in your life is key to understanding the real meaning of Christmas. Many use candles in homes and lights on their homes and on trees. Too often we miss the real meaning of Christmas and like the innkeeper in the Bethlehem Hotel, who had no room for the young family looking for somewhere for Mary to give birth to her precious baby boy. We are so busy doing all the things that cause us to miss the real message of Christmas, that light has come into the darkness. Our country is looking in so many places for peace and purpose. Knowing God personally can change our lives and we will discover the true light that gives meaning for each of us. Have a blessed Christmas season and celebrate the coming of our Lord to save us.



**"And she will have a son,
and you are to name him
Jesus, for he will save his
people from their sins."
(Matthew 1:21)**

Have a Blessed Season,
Pastor Bruce





IN THE KITCHEN with RACHEL

Rachel Sproat, RDN, LDN

Winter Minestrone

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound uncooked Italian or pork sausage links, cut into ¾-inch slices
- 2 ½ cups peeled winter squash, such as butternut squash, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 ½ cups cubed potatoes
- 2 medium fennel bulbs, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 (15 ounce) can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- ½ teaspoon dried sage, crushed
- 4 cups chicken broth or vegetable broth
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 4 cups chopped kale or fresh spinach

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large skillet, cook the sausage until browned; drain well.
2. In a 5- to 6-quart slow cooker, place squash, potatoes, fennel, onion, garlic, beans and sage. Top with sausage. Pour broth and wine over all.
3. Cover and cook on Low for 8 to 10 hours or on High for 4 to 5 hours. Stir in kale (or spinach). Cover and cook 5 minutes more.

[Winter Minestrone](#)

Spicy Vegetable and Chicken Soup

INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium poblano peppers
- 2 teaspoons neutral oil, such as canola or avocado
- 12 ounces boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 ½ cups chopped onion (1 large)
- 1 ½ cups chopped red or green bell pepper (1 large)
- 1 ½ cups green beans, cut into ¼-inch pieces, or frozen, thawed
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons ground cumin
- 6 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 (15 ounce) can black beans or pinto beans, rinsed
- 1 (14 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 4 cups chopped chard or spinach
- 1 ½ cups corn kernels, fresh or frozen
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- ½ cup fresh lime juice, plus lime wedges for serving

DIRECTIONS

1. To roast poblanos: Position oven rack about 5 inches from the heat source; preheat broiler. Line the broiler pan with foil. Broil whole poblanos, turning once, until starting to blacken, 8 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a paper bag and let steam to loosen skins, about 10 minutes. When the poblanos are cool enough to handle, peel, seed, stem and coarsely chop; set aside.
2. Meanwhile, heat oil in a large soup pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook, turning occasionally, until lightly browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate and set aside.
3. Reduce the heat to medium and add onion, bell pepper, green beans and garlic. Cook, stirring, until begins to soften, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in chili powder and cumin and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in broth, beans, tomatoes and the chopped poblanos; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to maintain a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender, about 15 minutes.
4. Add the reserved chicken and juices, chard (or spinach) and corn; return to a simmer and cook for 15 minutes more to heat through and blend flavors.
5. Top each portion with 1 tablespoon each cilantro and lime juice; serve with lime wedges.

[Spicy Vegetable & Chicken Soup](#)



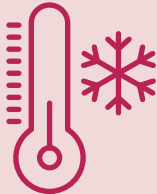
SAFETY FIRST



Susan Lee,
Admin Assistant

Snow, sleet and ice storms come and go during the winter season, but once the cold air settles in, we can experience extended, dangerous cold spells. Extreme cold can cause frostbite and/or hypothermia in a matter of minutes if you are not properly dressed in cold weather gear. Layers, coats, hats, gloves, boots and scarves are practical ways to dress for extreme cold. Dress for the weather even if you think you won't be outside that long. And, don't forget to bring your pets inside when the temperatures drop.

For more information visit
[Cold Weather Safety](#)



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



LAUGHTER
IS
THE BEST
MEDICINE



What did the lunch box say to the refrigerator?
Don't hate me because I'm a little cooler.

I found a book called "How to Solve 50%
of Your Problems." So, I bought two.

From [www.countryliving.com](#)

