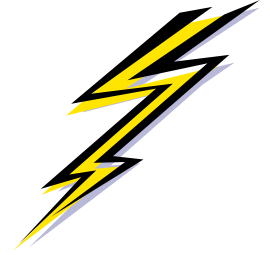




HOT FLASHES



Newsletter of the Women's Mid-Life Health Centre of Saskatchewan

June 2010 Edition

Services and Programs Enhance Lives of Saskatchewan Women

By Heather Macdonald

Executive Director, Women's Mid-Life Health Centre

Women often heave a sigh of relief upon discovering the Women's Mid-Life Health Centre of Saskatchewan. Their boost comes from realizing they're not alone in experiencing challenges during peri-menopause and menopause.

"It's wonderful to have someplace to go," says Michelle Bankowski, who recalls struggling with mood swings, lack of sleep and a foggy head. "I was not myself at all. I just wasn't functioning at home or at work. It was harming my relationships with others."



Photo courtesy of CAAWS—
Mariann Domonkos Photography

Hot flashes, night sweats, insomnia, nausea, anxiety, heart palpitations, mood swings and an inability to concentrate devastated Char Wilson, who rarely missed work until these changes hit. "I thought I was losing my mind."

"Probably the most concerning to me was the mood swings and the menstrual irregularity. Things were changing. I felt different. I couldn't figure it out," says Carleen Desautels

"One of the most therapeutic things was filling in the initial assessment" she says. The question "Have you ever felt like hitting someone," touched close to home.

All three women felt much, much better after obtaining a doctor's referral to the Centre's clinic. They met with nurse Sarah Nixon-Jackle and Medical Director Dr. Vicki Holmes, who educated them about hormone therapy and other ways to feel better physically and emotionally.

"It was huge in reassuring me that my experiences were shared. There was tremendous relief in that. . . . just having the opportunity to be heard and be understood," says Carleen.

"It normalized my experience. Now it's a passage rather than a life sentence," she adds.

"Dr. Holmes and Sarah made me feel at ease enough to talk about personal stuff. They were reassuring," says Char. "It really helped me a lot."

Education and treatment at the clinic was also invaluable to Michelle, who also appreciates the informative Hot Flashes newsletter. "Unfortunately, I don't think we talk about menopause and the impact. I had no idea."

Talking about her experiences at the Hot and Bothered Discussion Group was great for Char. "It was so helpful speaking with other women, realizing we're not alone," says Char, who also enjoyed learning from experts in sleep, fun and laughter, and relaxing exercise.

After visiting the clinic, Carleen took a good look at her supplements and increased her calcium. Her experience was so positive that she drove to Saskatoon from southern Saskatchewan for the April educational forum *Hormone Therapy: Science or Celebrity*. "That was amazing. The information was so helpful. The Centre is a solid trustworthy place to go, with good science."

At that same forum, Char reaffirmed she's on track with hormone therapy. "I recommend the Centre and the website (www.menopausecentre.org) to many of my friends."

Michelle and Carleen also share the word that the Centre is the place to go for help. You can also pass the word by sharing this article with other women.

Investing In Our Future Health by Preventing Falls

By: Robynne Smith, Physical Therapist, Off Broadway Physiotherapy & Dizziness Clinic, Saskatoon May 24, 2010

We are all aging. I am sorry to break the news to you like that, but time does not stop and our bodies continue to grow old. I believe we all want to live out our lives as healthy and functioning individuals, not with poor health or poor mobility. So it is never too early to start investing in wise choices at age 40, 50, or 60 to live our best life!

As we age, changes to our bodies can affect all areas – our muscles, joints, nerves, brain, and so on. In addition, if we suffer any diseases, injuries or other factors, our ability to remain strong and active is reduced and can lead to falling. Falling can not only cause serious injury, it can result in a fear of falling, which then limits activity, creating greater risk for falling and health concerns. Falls don't just happen to seniors. Falls occur at all ages and can be devastating.

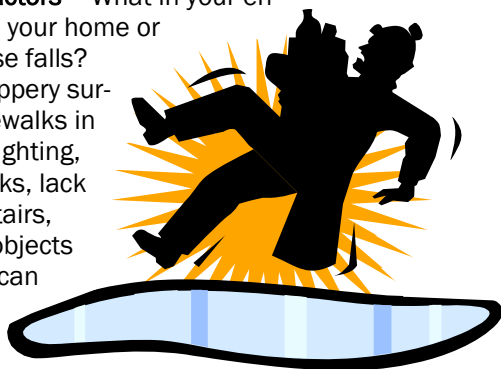
The four main categories of fall risk factors are:

Biological/Intrinsic Factors – Factors within our bodies include muscle weakness, joint stiffness, chronic illnesses and disabilities, visual impairment, loss of inner ear function, and neurological conditions.

Behavioural Factors – What do you do that increases your risk of falling? People who are risk takers will do more adventurous activities that can predispose them to falling. Other behavioural factors include certain medications that suppress the nervous system, excessive alcohol intake, lack of exercise, poor nutrition or hydration, or lack of sleep (to name a few).

Social & Economic Factors – Lower levels of income and education, as well as fewer social support services can affect our health, putting us at additional risk for health concerns and increasing our risk of sustaining falls.

Environmental Factors – What in your environment, within your home or outside, can cause falls? Throw rugs on slippery surfaces, ice on sidewalks in the winter, poor lighting, cracks in sidewalks, lack of handrails on stairs, curbs or ramps, objects on the floor, etc. can cause us to slip or trip and possibly fall.



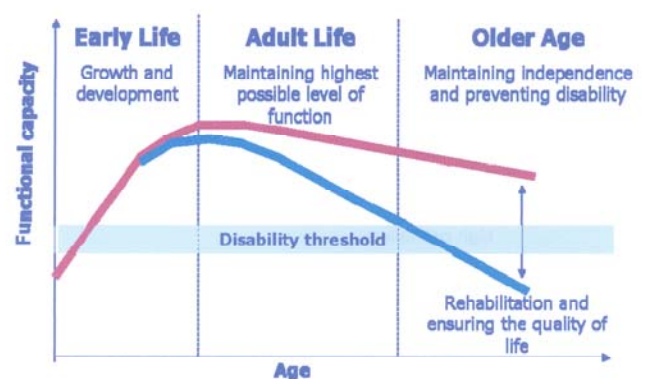
Preventing falls and injuries from falls is one area of health care which can be reduced to a significant degree simply by using preventative measures. We all need to accept this as true and do whatever we can to reduce the changes that are forthcoming. Please take a look at

the four categories listed above and see what you might be able to change.

The table below speaks very clearly about our disability and aging. The table from the World Health Organization's life course perspective on aging shows how our personal choices along with all the external circumstances throughout life will impact our ability to remain disability free into the end of our life.

At any stage in life, changes can be made to improve your functional abilities. The higher level of function you

A LIFE COURSE APPROACH TO DETERMINANTS OF HEALTHY AGEING⁴



can achieve at earlier stages in your life, the higher the level of function you will maintain with advancing age. If you are over 65 and already have multiple risk factors, identify which ones can be changed and which ones cannot. You may need to see your physician or other health professionals for advice and direction.

One way to look at the chart is to view it as an investment - what we put into the account now will better sustain us over the long term. Good choices in healthy living now is your investment and this can include eating healthy foods, quitting smoking, reducing or quitting alcohol, exercising on a regular basis, drinking plenty of water, seeing your physician on a regular basis for maintenance, and consciously choosing to take better care of yourself.

Your investment of time, energy, money and effort into your life now will reap high saving in the later stages of life. You will have fewer medical costs, less need for support services, less need for nursing care, less need for specialized equipment, less reliance on canes and walkers, and less pain and suffering.

You are the only one who can make the choice for your future, so please invest wisely.

Why Wait? Try Weights for Beautiful Strong Arms!

By Laura Harris, The Studio at Oshun House

Here's an easy exercise you can do at home to help you develop your upper body strength by building your triceps, which are located at the back of your upper arms.

Tricep Extensions:

1. Sitting on a chair or bench with your dumbbell in hand, extend your right arm overhead. Keep this arm close to your ear and lightly support with your opposite hand to maintain the placement of your upper arm.
2. Slowly and with control, lower the dumbbell behind your back between your shoulder blades. Pause briefly (count 1-Mississippi)
3. Extend your arm, returning to starting position with dumbbell over head. Repeat for 8-12 reps, both sides.

TIPS: Keep your core engaged by "knitting" your lower ribs together and drawing your navel inward. You'll get better results with slow and controlled movements, without momentum. Start with a 2 or 3 lb dumbbell. I like the rubber covered kind which cost about \$3.00 each.



Introducing a new WMLHC Initiative - our MetSyn Project!



We are offering a free 1-year nutrition and fitness intervention that uses a new technology to motivate individuals to maintain healthy lifestyles. The program is aimed at reducing the development of type II diabetes in women who are at risk.

If you have three or more of the following symptoms you may benefit from this program:

- Abdominal obesity (waist circumference more than 80 cm)
- High blood pressure (more than 130/85) or being treated for hypertension
- Impaired fasting blood sugar (fasting blood glucose more than 5.6 mmol/L)
- Low HDL cholesterol (less than 1.3 mmol/L)
- Elevated triglycerides (more than 1.7 mmol/L)



The intervention involves nutrition and fitness consultations with dietitians and exercise therapists in the Saskatoon Health Region, as well as group support sessions throughout the 1-year initiative.

Recruitment of eligible participants starts in June! Contact Wendy at metsynproject@gmail.com or phone 716-5248 for information on how you can become involved.

Get Ready to Learn

Do you suffer from headaches? Have you noticed your skin looks a little different in the past few years?



If so, save the evening of Thursday, September 30. That's when the Centre plans an educational forum about headaches and skin issues at Saskatoon's Elim Tabernacle from 7 to 9 p.m.

For more information about your next opportunity to learn about challenges related to aging, watch the Centre's website (www.menopausecentre.org).

Forums held twice a year are designed to support, inform and inspire women to improve their health during mid-life and beyond.

At the last event held in April, more than 200 people learned from speakers at the Hormone Therapy: Science or Celebrity Forum.

Melancauli Baby *(Curried cauliflower soup with Swiss cheese and wild rice)* Makes 8 servings.

When you're feeling down in the dumps, raise your spirits with this outstanding combination of ingredients that's so tasty it'll bring tears of joy to your eyes!

- 1 tbsp butter or olive oil
- 2 cups thinly sliced leeks
(about 2 large)
- 2 tsp minced garlic
- 4 cups small cauliflower florets
- 1 ½ cups peeled, cubed sweet potato
- 1 ½ tsp curry powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 4 cups chicken or vegetable broth
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup cooked brown and wild rice blend
(see cooking tip)
- 1 cup evaporated 2% milk
- ½ cup packed shredded light Swiss cheese
(2 oz/57 g)

- Heat butter in a large, non-stick soup pot over medium heat. Add leeks and garlic. Cook and stir until leeks begin to soften, about 3 minutes.
- Stir in cauliflower, sweet potato, curry, and cumin. Cook and stir for 1 more minute. Add broth, salt and pepper. Bring mixture to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 12 to 15 minutes, until vegetables are tender.
- Transfer half the soup to a blender and puree until smooth. Return pureed soup to pot with remaining soup and mix well. Stir in cooked rice, milk, and Swiss cheese. Heat soup for 1 more minute. Serve hot.

Cooking tip

Rather than using plain ol' (boring!) long-grain white rice in this recipe, you can bump up the nutritional value and flavour by using an interesting variety of brown and wild rices. Look for a blend made up of brown, wild and red rices if you can find it. It looks and tastes great. Or you can make your own blend by combining brown basmati rice with wild rice in a 2:1 ratio, respectively. Make this soup a complete meal by stirring in some chopped, cooked chicken breast or turkey breast in the final step. Like most soups, this one tastes even better the next day!

*This recipe from **Eat, Shrink and Be Merry** by Janet and Greta Podleski was published with permission. You'll find recipes and more at www.eatshrinkandbemerry.com.*

On the Road Again

Medical Director Dr. Vicki Holmes and nurse Sarah Nixon-Jackle have recently given educational talks:

- in Swift Current;
- for Okanese, File Hills Tribal Council;
- across the province via Telehealth; and
- for employees of Royal University Hospital, Saskatoon City Hospital, and St. Paul's Hospital.

To invite them to speak to your group, please call Sarah at (306) 978-3886.

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Watching the Website

The Centre's website (www.menopausecentre.org) is updated regularly.

Among the recent additions is a new blog link: www.letyourspiritfly.com. Dr. Jenni Yoon provides information on breast cancer and other relevant women's health issues.



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

What do Aging, Ovaries, Hormones and Bones have in Common?

Ovarian Imaging Study

Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences

We need to enroll 20 women in a study to characterize ovarian function, hormones and musculoskeletal health.

Study includes:

- consultation
- blood draws
- transvaginal ultrasonography
- 2 bone density scans
- hand grip strength test

Eligible women must:

- be between the ages of 45-55
- variation in menstrual cycle length is allowed (1 period at least every 60 days)
- have not taken hormonal therapy within 2 months of participating in the study

Honorarium provided

For more information, please contact:

Heidi Vanden Brink (966-7851 or heidi.vandenbrink@usask.ca)

or

Dr. Angela Baerwald (966-8073 or angela.baerwald@usask.ca)

Hot Flashes Now Available Electronically

Like other charities, the Women's Mid-Life Health Centre works to keep up with the times on a limited budget. We're combining both in our offer to send your copy of the Hot Flashes newsletter via email.



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Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Women's Mid-Life Health Centre of Saskatchewan.

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