



HEALTH wise

FEB. 2012

Remembering the Kindness

Last year over 550 truffles made their way around campus putting smiles on faces and hopefully adding a little sweetness to life. This year over 700 pieces of Endangered Species chocolate and 150 little succulent plants were delivered, for IWU's annual Random Acts of Kindness event.

On behalf of the Wellness staff, we hope these gifts come with the knowing that you are so appreciated for the little things you do that impact others in very profound ways!

Note: If you received a succulent plant or two...you can find care information at many different websites. Here is one site to assist with the care of your lovely little plant(s): http://www.ehow.com/how_5175601_care-succulent-plants.html

Ergonomics 101 Tuesday, February 21 Noon-1:00 p.m. Cartwright Room, Memorial Center

Don't wait for the pain to set in, prevent it. Ergonomics 101 will teach you how to create "neutral posture" with regard to your keyboard, monitor, chair and surrounding work environment. Neutral posture allows you to minimize muscular fatigue and assists with decreasing risk for injury. Take away some simple ideas on how to create a user-friendly workspace that has the potential to be pain free!

To reserve a space, please contact Wellness at x3334 or wellness@iwu.edu

Keyboards are designed to perform thousands of keystrokes without rest. Humans are not — learn how to coexist.

www.iwu.edu/~wellness

Exercise and Bone Health

Many people assume that bone health is a concern for the elderly. After all, it's usually grandma who falls and breaks her hip, not her granddaughter. However, grandma's broken hip may have been prevented had she taken steps throughout her life to increase and maintain her bone density. Because the vast majority of bone density is established from childhood through about the age of 30, it is important to be proactive during this phase of life establishing effective exercise habits, while the skeleton is still actively laying down more bone than it is losing. After that it becomes a matter of maintaining bone density for as long as possible.

Bone health, is effected by many factors including age, genetics, gender, diet and exercise. While each of these is very important, without exercise bones will inevitably become frail and weak. In order for the skeleton to rebuild and remain strong, it requires regular stimulation from physical activity. Exercise and activity places stress on bones, both when muscles pull against them to create movement, and when bones absorb the impact created by movement, such as jogging. During periods of inactivity and disuse, both bone strength and bone mineral density (BMD) are lost, so being active is a must.

While normal daily activities such as walking, climbing stairs and lifting grocery bags will help to maintain bone strength, bones need to be exposed to the greater loads and stresses provided by certain types of exercise in order to actually *increase* density and strength. The types of exercises necessary to achieve bone health depend on the stage of life, whether one is young, middle age or older. **Optimizing peak BMD during youth: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."**

Children should be encouraged to have fun with rambunctious, high impact activities like running, skipping and jumping. Sports like soccer, basketball, gymnastics, and track and field all include high impact activities and are excellent for building bone. If you're no longer a child, but still under the age of about 30,

you too can build bone by acting like a kid! Run, jump, skip and continue to play sports. If the playground no longer calls to you, high intensity weight training, higher impact group fitness classes, jogging and jumping rope are all excellent choices. Participate in these activities a minimum of three days per week for 10-20 minutes per session, as greater intensity exercise of short duration appears to elicit the greatest bone mineral density increases in the growing skeleton.

Maintaining Peak BMD age 30 and beyond.

By age 30 we have reached our peak bone mineral density. So, now the challenge becomes maintaining hard bones for as long as possible. The high-intensity activities needed for building bone through early adulthood can be scaled back slightly, but if you still enjoy these activities by all means continue. In addition, weight-bearing activities such as jogging, stair climbing, moderate to high impact group fitness classes and resistance training should be included. If new to exercise, gradually progress into the moderate to high intensity range by first establishing a solid fitness base with low and moderate intensity exercise. Weight-bearing exercise should be performed 3-5 days per week for 30 minutes. Because there is a direct relationship between the amount of weight lifted and positive changes

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WELLNESS



Recipe of the Month

Chocolate Crunch

Crunchy wheat cereal, pretzels and almonds coated in bittersweet chocolate makes an delicious sweet-salty snack.



INGREDIENTS

1 cup Wheat Chex cereal, (2 ounces)	1/4 cup salted roasted almonds, (2 1/2 ounces)
1 cup pretzel sticks broken in half, (2 ounces)	3 tablespoons bittersweet chocolate chips, melted

Combine Chex, pretzels and almonds in a medium bowl. Drizzle with melted chocolate; stir to combine. Spread the mixture on a wax paper-lined baking sheet and refrigerate until

the chocolate is set, about 30 minutes.

Make Ahead Tip: Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

Tip: To melt chocolate: Microwave on Medium for 1 minute. Stir, then continue microwaving on Medium in 20-second intervals until melted, stirring after each interval. Or place in the top of a double boiler over hot, but not boiling, water. Stir until melted.

Source: *Eating Well*, January/February 2009

HEALTH STUFF & MORE!

- Forget about whole-body vibration machines as a way to reduce bone loss. These devices, which involve standing on an oscillating platform, have been touted as a therapy for osteoporosis, based on positive finding in animals. They are used in some medical clinics and gyms, and can be purchased for home use. But in November a Canadian study in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* involving 2020 postmenopausal women with low bone density found that a year of vibration therapy had no effect on bone density or structure. The therapy also caused pain, numbness and weakness in the legs and nausea in some women. Also in November, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality reviewed all the research and concluded that there is no good evidence to support the use of such devices for bone health.

Source: *University of California, Berkeley Wellness Letter*, February 2012

- If you're 50 or over and have not been vaccinated against pneumococcal disease, talk with your doctor about getting the improved pneumococcal vaccine (Prevnar), which the FDA recently approved for this age group. Pneumococcal infection—by the bacteria *Streptococcus pneumoniae*—is a common cause of pneumonia (especially for older adults) as well as meningitis, blood infections and middle-ear infections. Americans 65 and older, along with younger people with certain chronic disease, have long been advised to get an older type of pneumococcal vaccine (Pneumovax). The newer vaccine gives longer-lasting immunity. Already used in adults in Europe, it has been given to children in the U.S. and Canada for several years.

Source: *University of California, Berkeley Wellness Letter*, March 2012

EXERCISE AND BONE HEALTH — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in BMD, total body resistance training in the 8-10 repetition maximum range should be performed 2-3 days per week. It is possible to gain BMD at this point, however it appears that in order to elicit significant increases, exercise must be a long-term commitment.

Exercise prescription for 50 and older.

Exercising for bone health over the age of 50 will be heavily dependent on current bone density. Active individuals with BMD in the normal range should continue the 30 and beyond exercise prescription with perhaps a bit more emphasis placed on balance training. Note, however, that as age increases and hormonal levels change in favor of bone absorption, exercise intensity must increase as well because one is essentially “swimming up stream” against the current of bone loss.

Older adults diagnosed with **osteopenia**, should shift focus from bone loading (higher impact activities) to muscle loading (resistance training). Further bone loss may be prevented through moderate resistance training of 12-15 repetitions, 2-3 days per week, and weight bearing endurance activities such as walking at a moderate to high intensity. Depending on the severity of the bone loss, a greater benefit would likely be achieved with a gradual progression to higher intensity walking and distances of at least one mile. Alternatively, it is possible that instead of walking at a greater pace, resistance in the form of a weighted vest may increase bone loading to the point of positive change.

It is important to note that some individuals diagnosed with osteopenia may not have bone loss. They may naturally have a lower bone density sufficient for them to be more aggressive with their exercise. Though this is not an official recommendation, it would seem prudent to have bone density measured at least once during the years of peak BMD in order to establish a baseline to determine if bone loss is occurring and to what extent.

Those with **osteoporosis**, must be far more cautious with exercise and activities of daily living. Higher impact activities and higher intensity resistance training needed to build bone may now pose too great a risk of fracture to be performed. In fact, according to some sources, once a person has osteoporosis in the spine they should avoid bending forward, backwards, or twisting at the waist, seriously limiting mobility. All is not lost, however, for those with osteoporosis, as exercise still plays a vital roll in improving the condition and in preventing fractures.

Exercise may need to focus on fall prevention and balance training (Tai Chi is outstanding for this) along with conservative muscle strengthening (8-10 exercises of 15 reps performed 1-2 days per week), and aerobic exercise that includes walking. As with osteopenia, the greater the intensity of the walking, the better, as long as you stay within your limits. If you choose to attempt to stabilize or increase bone density with exercise, it is important to work closely with a physician and a qualified exercise specialist or physical therapist.

The inclusion of bone building exercise throughout life can help ensure strong healthy bones throughout the aging process. While it's never too late to get started moving, in the case of bone health, better to start young and keep moving!

Resources available at www.iwu.edu/~wellness

The “Other” Dark Chocolate

By Laurine Brown

We love chocolate. The very word conjures feelings of pleasure, sensuality, innocence and richness in life. Indeed the scientific name for the tree that produces cocoa beans comes from two heavenly Greek words *theos* (gods) and *broma* (foods). Or literally, “*food of the Gods.*”

Sweet News

Scientific research continues to unravel plenty of savory news about the health and mood perks of chocolate, specifically “dark” chocolate which maximizes the cocoa and leaves out much of the added sugar and butterfat. The indescribable flavor of chocolate is an exotic blend of some 1,200 chemicals, unable to be mimicked in a lab. Chocolate’s fat, *cocoa butter*, literally melts in your mouth creating a velvety “mouth feel” as it releases the exotic flavor-complex. Chocolate also contains powerful *antioxidants* like *polyphenols* that may protect heart health by reducing stickiness of platelets, inhibiting blood clotting, lowering blood pressure and protecting from tissue damage (similar to red wine or tea). Despite being high in saturated fat, cocoa butter contains mostly oleic and stearic acid which do not appear to raise blood cholesterol. And chocolate is packed with mood enhancers. Caffeine-like *theobromide* may explain our fascination and addiction to chocolate. *Anandamide* binds with the same site in the brain as marijuana, invoking “peaceful bliss.” *Phenethylamine* triggers pleasurable endorphins and potentiates the action of dopamine which is associated with “sexual arousal and pleasure.” Chocolate also boosts brain serotonin, which may explain why people with low serotonin levels (common in depression or for women menstruating) may crave chocolate. Sweet. Pass the chocolate, please. Dark chocolate, that is.

Bitter News

But there’s another dark side to chocolate. Child labor, trafficking, and even slavery. It’s shocking, and unthinkable. Most of the world’s cocoa that is purchased by big chocolate companies, like Mars and Hershey, is grown on small family farms in the developing world. Over 70 percent comes from West Africa, especially the Ivory Coast (Republic of Côte d’Ivoire) and Ghana where many people are dependent on cocoa for their livelihood, and to a lesser degree Cameroon and Nigeria. Cocoa farmers receive only about a penny for a candy bar selling for 60 cents. The difficulty in making a living at cocoa farming has spawned an increase in child and even slave labor drawn from poor neighboring countries such as Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin and Togo. Children and other workers spend long days with low (or no) wages in hazardous tasks using machetes or applying pesticides without basic protective gear. Many are working against their will, separated from their families. And they’ve never even tasted chocolate.

The “world” has known about these atrocities for some time. Ten years ago, in response to public outcry, chocolate companies signed an international agreement (Harkin-Engel Protocol) to stop the “worst forms of child labor” in cocoa production. Some progress, though slow, was made. But, unfortunately, a 2011 report by Tulane University commissioned by the U.S. government found that hundreds of thousands of children in West Africa were



still forcibly involved in growing cocoa, and the industry’s actions had not been sufficient. With the use of hidden cameras, a 2010 documentary “The Dark Side of Chocolate” by Danish journalists exposed the brutal, ongoing child trafficking in the Ivory Coast. The bitter reality is that we have a long way to go to achieve “slave-free” chocolate. Efforts are under way to establish an industry-wide voluntary certification process for cocoa produced without the use of child labor. But nothing is certain. And currently, only a few small independent firms are claiming to produce chocolate without the use of child labor or human trafficking.

Sweetening the Dark Side

No-one wants chocolate tainted with forced child labor. What’s a responsible chocoholic to do? Here are three things:

1. Buy and gift “Fair Trade Certified” chocolate which guarantees a decent price to growers, enough to support their families with dignity. Subsequently, it guarantees a decent wage to workers and ensures that no child or forced labor is used. (Note: to also support sustainable forest and farmer friendly methods, also look for “organic” and “shade-grown” [or “bird friendly”] under labels on Fair Trade products.) Check local health or specialty stores. Or search online at www.globalexchange.org and www.SERRV.org. Examples:

Dagoba Organic Chocolate, www.dagobachocolate.com
Endangered Species Chocolate Company, www.chocolate-bar.com (*chocolate used for IWU’s Random Acts of Kindness event*)

Green & Black’s Maya Gold Organic Chocolate, www.greenandblacks.com

La Siembra Co-op Cocoa Camino, www.lasiembra.com

Newmans Own Organics, www.newmansownorganics.com

Rapunzel Pure Organics, http://www.rapunzel.de/uk/p_schokolade.html

2. Write the big chocolate companies, like Hershey, Mars, and Nestle asking them to purchase their cocoa from Fair Trade Certified sources. Join actions like the “**Raise the Bar Hershey Campaign**” www.raisethebarhershey.org/ and the Valentine’s Day initiative “**Have a Heart Hershey: Stop Forced Child Labor**” <http://www.globalexchange.org/fairtrade/cocoa/vday>.

3. Educate yourself and others about child labor, trafficking and slavery, and consider donating to, or joining some of the following: **Free the Slaves** www.freetheslaves.net/; **The Child Labor Coalition** www.stopchildlabor.org; **Anti-Slavery** www.antislavery.org. Consider **hosting a screening** of the very affordable film with a discussion toolkit “**The Dark Side of Chocolate**” <http://www.globalexchange.org/fairtrade/cocoa/darkside>.

4. Pass the chocolate? Make that dark, fair trade, slave-free chocolate. You’ll still get a boost of heart healthy, mood enhancing nourishment. But a struggling cocoa farmer will get a more dignified bite of your candy. And you’ll help a child in a poor country reclaim a chance for a better life.

WELLNESS TIDBITS



The Expo's FREE-4-All

Don't throw it away! Give it away!

In the tradition of Ecology Action Center's semi-annual FREE-4-ALL, we will be creating an opportunity to give away your unwanted stuff and to take what you like — FOR FREE! Last year's FREE-4-ALL was a big success. So let's do it again! Here's what you need to know to participate:

FREE-4-ALL Household Items Giveaway

Please Bring:

- Knick-knacks, lamps, vases, paintings, prints etc. Items must be clean and in good condition.
- No large furniture

Men & Women's Clothing

Once again, we are going to give away gently used clothing.

- Adult men & women's clothing only.
- Clothes must be clean and in good shape.

And for the Kids! FREE-4-ALL Toy Giveaway!

Bring in your gently used toys to give away to others!

- Toys must be in good shape (all parts and pieces etc.) and clean.

Please bring household items, adult clothing and/or toys that deserve a second life to the IWU Wellness Office by April 6. Please contact us with questions or if you need help with pick-up, x3334 or wellness@iwu.edu.

Donated items will be available at the Illinois Sustainable Living & Wellness Expo Saturday, April 14, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., at the Shirk Center

For more information about the Expo go to: www.islwe.org