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Getting Back to Life with Great Strides

By Jennifer Sulin-Stair, M.S.

With her shy-trusting smile, kind-gentle eyes, and soft-understanding voice, it is easy to immediately feel connected to Denise Herring. At age 56, Denise is a classy woman with impeccable style. She has a loving husband, 3 grown children and a beautiful 3 year old granddaughter. Denise is also a stroke survivor.

Before her stroke, Denise was a waitress at a popular local diner. Even though her job was fast paced and always busy, Denise always had time for a quick visit with her regulars. “I loved waitressing and talking with all the people; learning about them” remembers Denise. In addition to waitressing, Denise was an avid aerobics exerciser and walker.

Then two years ago, Denise suffered a stroke. This unexpected life changing event devastated her. Many parts of her life changed overnight. A once social, fun-loving person, Denise was now afraid to leave her house due to dis-

ability and fear. “I felt like a prisoner in my own home” says Denise.



With a support network of family and friends, Denise completed traditional physical and occupational therapies and was looking for other rehabilitation options to help her walking. Then, out of the blue, her husband received a flier from a friend about the stroke rehabilitation treadmill research at the Baltimore Veteran’s Affairs Medical Center (BVAMC) and the University of Maryland Baltimore (UMB). Just weeks later, Denise was enrolled into the research program.

Since enrolling, De-

nise has made great strides in the program. In the beginning, Denise was walking on the treadmill for only 15 minutes at .7 mph. By the end of 6 months, Denise was walking for 50 minutes at 1.7 mph up a 3% hill.

“It is exciting to see these types of individual improvements” says Dr. Fred Ivey, a principal investigator for the treadmill study. “It is our goal to achieve higher degrees of improvement in

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RESEARCH PAGE: The studies listed below are actively looking for participants. For more information about our studies, please visit the UM-OAIC Web site at: <http://peppercenter.umaryland.edu>.

Seeking Overweight Postmenopausal Women

Reduce stress and improve health! Participate in research studies at the University of Maryland Baltimore / Baltimore VA You will receive: health and fitness evaluations, 3 months of yoga training, optional exercise or weight loss program following yoga training. You must be under age 60 and in good health (No anti-depressants, cholesterol-lowering, blood pressure, or diabetes medications) 410-605-7179 Mention code: NEMO

Supervised Exercise Program for Older Adults at the University of Maryland, Baltimore:

Healthy, non-smoking men & women 50-75 years old needed to participate in an exercise research study at the University of Maryland / Baltimore VA Medical Center. Work with Doctors and Exercise Physiologists to safely get fit. Participation involves tests to measure your fitness and function. You will receive free medical and fitness evaluations, 6 months of supervised exercise sessions, free parking, and compensation for your time. Call 410-605-7179. Mention code: STX

Medically Structured Weight Loss/Exercise Study: Overweight, non-smoking, men and women ages 45-80 needed to participate in a diet or exercise research study. Work with Doctors, Dieticians and Exercise Physiologists to safely change your diet and physical activity to help you lose weight or get fit. Free cardiac, diabetes, and blood pressure risk evaluation. No diet drugs. Call if you are ready to make a commitment to losing weight or exercising and improving your health. Contact, U. of MD-BVAMC 410-605-7179, mention CODE-Ryan

COMING IN 2009

FALLS PREVENTION STUDY

This upcoming study will focus on balance, falls and muscle strength/weakness.

Stroke Survivors Needed

Do you know someone who has had a stroke and has arm or leg weakness? A study is being conducted investigating the benefits of exercise after stroke. Please call 410-605-7179 for information.

PEOPLE ENCOURAGING PEOPLE (PEP)

The PEP Club meetings are reunions for our study participants and their family members. The club meetings also include a stroke education component and research updates. For details about the PEP Club, please call 410-605-7000 extension 4151. The next meeting will be held **December 11, 2008**.

Participation is free.

VEGETABLE & CHICKEN STIR FRY

Recipe Summary:

Preparation Time: 15 min.

Number of Servings: 6

Ingredients:

Stir Fry Sauce

3 Tbsp low-sodium soy sauce

1 Tbsp rice vinegar or cider vinegar

2 tsp sesame oil

2 tsp cornstarch

Sauce

3/4 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut in thin strips

2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tsp vegetable oil
10 cups fresh or frozen vegetables of your choice such as broccoli florets, snow peas, shredded cabbage, chopped bell pepper, chopped jicama, chopped onion, sliced mushrooms

Directions:

Stir Fry Sauce

In a small bowl, mix sauce ingredients together.

Sauce

In a large skillet or wok, stir-fry chicken and garlic in hot

oil until browned. Add vegetables, covered and cook 5 minutes (longer if vegetables are still frozen), stirring occasionally. Cook until vegetables are tender but still crisp. Stir in sauce; cook until sauce thickens. Serve over warm rice.

Nutrition Facts:

Serving size: 1/6 of recipe, Calories 270, Total Fat 5g, Saturated Fat 1 g, Trans Fat 0g, Cholesterol 35 mg, Sodium 360 mg, Total Carbohydrate 38 g, Dietary Fiber 5 g, Sugars 6 g, Protein 18 g

Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov,
Produce for Better Health

Continued from page 1: Perseverance and Small Sacrifices for Large Rewards



Denise during a treadmill exercise session.

function and metabolism than conventional therapies. Our results to date are encouraging, showing significant increases in both of these areas.”

Through collaboration, the BVAMC and UMB,

offer approximately 8 stroke rehabilitation studies. The research team has studies targeting arm, wrist, shoulder and leg function, balance, and walking ability. Some of these research studies involve small robotic devices to help with rehabilitation of the arm, hand, shoulder, and ankle movement. There is also a research study for those recently discharged from the hospital after having a stroke. This study offers stroke education or home therapy to improve walking and daily activities.

Denise’s face brightens when she talks about the progress she has made in the treadmill research

program and how it has impacted her life. “I’m able to walk without a cane and I’m not afraid to go outside and get the mail,” says Denise. “This study has helped me do that.” Denise is also taking more trips into the community. “Now, I go to the movies on Sundays with my husband and three weeks ago, I even went to my first dance after the stroke and danced! It has really helped me get my life back.”

Interested in learning more about our research programs?

Give us a call at 410-605-7179. We are happy to do educational-community presentations.

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10 North Greene St., GRECC (BT/18/GR)
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Stronger Bones through Physical Activity

By Gregory Steinbrenner, M.S.

As we age, fractures of the hip and other bones become more common. Individuals who experience a hip fracture often have decreased muscular strength and increased difficulty with routine daily activities. Dr. Jay Magaziner, Professor and Chair, University of Maryland Baltimore, Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, has reported that, half of those individuals who were able to walk independently before their fracture will require assistance up to one year after a hip fracture.

This decrease in independence is of great concern for hip fracture survivors and their caregivers. To address this issue, Ram Miller, MDCM, MSc, an Assistant Professor from the University of Maryland, Department of Epidemiology

and Preventative Medicine, is currently leading a pilot study within the University of Maryland Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center to examine the feasibility of a home-based exercise-training program beginning after completion of traditional hip fracture rehabilitation.

Initially, Dr. Miller's study participants participate in baseline testing to examine their health and functional levels. Then, the participants receive 2 to 3 60-minute home visits per week from a physical therapist over a 16-week period. Each visit includes activities designed to improve endurance and function, including walking, standing from a chair, or stair climbing, resistive training to improve muscular strength and ac-

tivities to improve balance.

After completing the home-visit sessions, the participants conclude with follow-up testing to determine if there were improvements in their health and functional levels. To date, Dr. Miller has seen positive improvements in both leg and hip strength. There have also been modest improvements in aerobic fitness and endurance. He is optimistic that as he continues to gather data through this study, the results will indicate that a home-based exercise-training program is a safe and feasible addition to traditional exercise rehabilitation programs for hip fracture. For those who are interested in learning more about the pilot study, please contact us at 410-605-7179.