

## A 40-Year Healthy Lifestyle Journey

“Where are you on the Wellness Continuum?” Arlene Coulter read these words in recent issues of Wellness Matters, and her personal wellness journey replayed in her mind. “I started off as a chubby child until I was in my teens,” she said recalling her early years and the endless teasing from other girls regarding her weight. Arlene, a secretary at Ft. Meade Middle/Senior explained that obesity ran in her family for many generations and she knew the potential outcome, having lost her father to diabetes and grandmother to complications associated with excess body weight.

Things began to change when, as a teenager, Arlene began roller skating, water skiing and dancing to control her weight. “This worked until I was 20 and went on oral contraceptives just before getting married,” she said. With her husband leaving for the Army, Arlene took note of the 40 extra pounds that she had gained. It was then that she decided to take control of her life and her body and started down a new path—one that involved both a sensible diet and exercise.

The results of that U-turn are still evident today, nearly 40 years later. Arlene lost those 40 pounds and manages to keep them off through a lifestyle that she continues to enjoy alongside her husband. Without incurring expenses associated with a gym, Arlene maintains her weight and good health by walking, running and biking. “At the age of 62, I just completed my first half marathon!” Arlene shared. She also participates in classes and walking challenges conducted by the Wellness Team. “Exercise isn’t always intentional,” she commented. Mowing their two acres of land with a push mower certainly has contributed to the amount of physical activity that she receives!

Arlene realizes that what she eats is an important component of her healthy lifestyle. She said, “I try to cook at home as much as possible and have never viewed going out to eat as entertainment.” Similar to the rest of us, Arlene has found that life is hectic and sometimes fast food is the only option. She has found that Subway, Taco Bell and Panera offer menu choices that fit her diet. No matter what the restaurant, Arlene suggests to “pick wisely and don’t snack on bread before a meal.”

Unfortunately, even if we eat the right foods and exercise our bodies regularly, illness and/or injury can occur. Two years ago, Arlene was diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis. “The pain was bad, but I found other exercises that I could do and didn’t give up,” she said. With the help of her physician, Arlene was able to get her RA under control and is now pain free. Her doctor attributes at least a portion of her success to her exercise regime.

Finding out what motivates you can really help to keep you on the right track. For Arlene, that includes living a longer, healthier life without relying on medications. What’s your motivation? Do you find yourself heading towards a future filled with illness and a possible early demise? Put the brakes on now; don’t let your conditions get any worse. Slowly turn yourself around towards a future filled with health and prosperity. For assistance with your journey, contact the Wellness Program at 648-3057.



*Spotlight of the month shines on Arlene Coulter, FMHS*

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## The Silent Killer

Hypertension (or high blood pressure) is the leading cause of heart disease, congestive heart failure, stroke, and kidney disease. Known as “the silent killer,” hypertension often arrives without symptoms. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), one in three adults is hypertensive, which means their blood pressure at rest is over 140/90. Optimal numbers should be under 120/80.

Reasons for hypertension include being overweight, genetics, inactivity, excess sodium and alcohol intake, and not taking medications as prescribed. Compounding the issue of hypertension is its close relationship to type 2 diabetes. Once referred to as “adult onset diabetes,” the prevalence of type 2 diabetes has more than tripled since the 1980s, affecting 25.8 million people including children. Estimates indicate that another 79 million people are pre-diabetic, which means that their fasting blood sugar is elevated—between 100 and 124 mg/DL.

Take control of your hypertension! Be active every day; check your blood pressure weekly at your PCSB worksite; limit salt to less than one teaspoon daily; and, use the D.A.S.H. eating plan as a guide. To learn more about controlling blood pressure, schedule a professional development session at your school or worksite by calling the Wellness Team at 648-3057.



## Healthy Balance in Life

Work is an important part of your life, but it shouldn't be your whole life. For your family's sake, and your own, strike a healthy balance between your career and your personal needs. Here are some tips:

- △ Learn to shut work off. These days you can work practically anywhere, anytime. It can be a trap, so set a firm time of day to stop work and start concentrating on your family and other activities.
- △ Focus on the here and now. When you're working, give it your full attention. And when you stop, don't let worries about work and details about your job occupy your thoughts. This may take some practice, but teach yourself to be in the present at all times.
- △ Find a good non-work activity. If you've got nothing to do after work, you'll have a hard time disengaging when you try to stop. Find a hobby in which to immerse yourself, or just make an effort to devote your full attention to your family's needs. (Even then, make an effort to give yourself some personal time so you don't burn out on responsibility.)
- △ Don't let your job define your identity. When you describe who you are to people, let your job be only one aspect of your self-portrait. That way, a setback in any one area won't be as damaging to your self-image, and you'll be less tempted to ignore other possibilities available to you.



**Thanks to  
EVERYONE  
who made the  
February 26th &  
April 30th  
Health Fairs a  
TREMENDOUS  
Success!**

### A Big Thank You to Our Sponsors!



**BlueCross BlueShield  
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An Independent Licensee of the  
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## Reduce Financial Stress

Are you stressed over money? According to a study by the American Psychological Association, approximately 76% of Americans list money as a top concern in their daily life. Fortunately, there are many ways to help you save money during these tight financial times. Couponing is one way to cut financial stress in your life. You can find coupons in your local Sunday newspaper, online, and at your local grocery store. The Wellness Program understands the intricate relationship of financial responsibility and physical well-being. That's why Wellness is coordinating coupon and financial classes such as Money Matters—Making More with Less, Saving for Seniors (for retirees), and Investing 101. To find out more about the free financial Wellness classes and coupon tips, please visit our site <http://www.polk-fl.net/staff/employeeinfo/wellness/financialmanagement.htm> or contact the Wellness Program at 863-648-3057 to find out more.



## Keep You Cool Recipes

Here are some quick and easy, guilt-free recipes to help you keep your cool this summer...heart healthy too!

### Breakfast Smoothie

3-4 frozen strawberries  
1 frozen banana  
2 tbs. ground flax seed  
1 container Greek yogurt  
1/2 cup skim milk  
Splenda to taste

Process all ingredients in blender adding additional milk to reach desired consistency. Add a half packet of Splenda or sweetener if the Greek yogurt gives it too much of a "bite" for you. Enjoy!



### "Pink Stuff"

1 lb. low fat cottage cheese  
1 sm. lite Cool Whip  
2 (3 oz.) pkgs. sugar free Jello (cherry or raspberry)  
2 cups frozen or chilled raspberries or strawberries  
Shredded coconut (optional)  
Put cottage cheese in a bowl and sprinkle with Jello. Add fruit, stir until combined. Fold in Cool Whip and coconut. Chill and serve.

### Cauliflower Salad

1/2 head of cauliflower  
1 red pepper  
1 stalk celery  
1 carrot  
4 Tbsp. chives  
12 cherry tomatoes  
Cut cauliflower into small pieces. Quarter tomatoes, grate carrots and dice chives, celery, bell pepper. Mix together. For more color, add 1/2 cup shredded red or purple cabbage. Wonderful with Italian Dressing.

## Oral Hygiene Important

Some may think taking good care of one's teeth is simply for cosmetic reasons. But did you know that gum disease is linked to heart disease, poorly controlled diabetes, and preterm birth? The bacteria in the mouth can cause inflammation throughout the body, including one's arteries. This inflammation of the arteries causes an increase in plaque formation (atherosclerosis) which increases the risk of a heart attack or stroke! If a pregnant woman has an oral infection it can potentially trigger premature labor and birth. The oral infection causes the mother to produce labor-triggering substances too quickly. There are plenty of reasons why it is important to practice good oral hygiene. Here are a few tips to stay on track:

- ☺ Brush your teeth at least twice a day. It is a good idea to brush your teeth after each meal.
- ☺ Floss at least once a day! This helps remove plaque. A build up of plaque can cause gum problems and cavities.
- ☺ Design a daily oral-health routine to help you stay on track. Don't forget to brush and floss!
- ☺ If you use tobacco, quit! Tobacco has cosmetic side effects such as stained teeth and bad breath, but also increases your risk for oral cancer, gingivitis, periodontitis and tooth decay.
- ☺ Limit simple sugars and eat a balanced diet. If sugar is left on the teeth for 20 minutes, a cavity can start to form! After snacks, brush your teeth or chew sugarless gum.
- ☺ Examine your mouth regularly. Check for swollen gums, sores/lesions, inflamed gums, or chipped teeth. This is especially important for tobacco users who are at an increased risk for developing oral cancer.
- ☺ Go see your friend—the dentist! A good rule of thumb is to see the DDS twice a year.



# ABCs of Diabetes

The *ABCs of Diabetes* is a proactive course through the Wellness Program that provides educations, screenings, and discounts for diabetes supplies and prescriptions. Here are a few of the benefits ABCs of Diabetes participants enjoy:

### Benefits:

- Free eye and foot exams
- Free lipid, HbA1c, kidney function, and blood pressure screenings—two times each year
- Free glucose monitor

### Reduced Rx Copayments:

- Generic tier copay \$4\* retail or mail order
  - Preferred tier copay \$37.50\* mail order
  - Non-preferred tier copay \$62.50\* mail order
- \*90-day supply

**Save \$600 per year!**

### Education/Lakeland:

- Medical Issues in Diabetes 05/05/11
- Nutrition & Exercise 05/12/11
- Advanced Diet Planning 05/19/11
- Hypertension & Heart Disease 05/26/11

Classes will be held in the Cypress Room of the Jim Miles Center, 5204 US Highway 98 S, Lakeland. All classes start at 4:30 PM, and registration is required.

### Diabetes Screening:

The next diabetes screening will be held May 21, 2011 at Phillips, Salomon & Parrish, 4337 South Florida Avenue, Lakeland. Appointments are required.

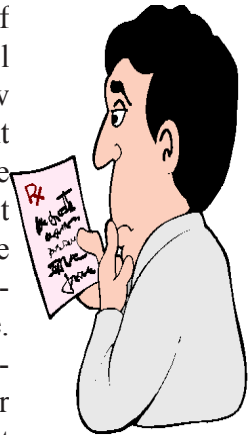
Please email [allison.sullins@polk-fl.net](mailto:allison.sullins@polk-fl.net) or call Allison Sullins, RD, LD/N at 648-3057 for more information or to schedule a diabetes screening appointment.

## Switch to Generic

Prescription drugs are costly, especially for those who suffer from chronic illnesses. You can save money on out-of-pocket costs by switching to generic drugs. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved generics have the same effect on the body as brand-name medications, and must meet the same strict FDA standards for quality, strength, purity, stability and safety. However, generic drugs typically cost 30 to 80 percent less than their brand-name counterparts.

The PCSB pharmacy benefit plan charges an \$8 co-payment for 30 or 90 day generic prescriptions. Even though your doctor may prescribe a brand-name drug, your pharmacist can fill with a generic equivalent, as long as the doctor has not checked the “dispense as written” box on the prescription.

The rising cost of healthcare impacts the School Board. Generics are now among the most important factors in keeping down the cost of the pharmacy benefit provided to employees. Please do your part to keep the pharmacy benefit more affordable. Next time you have your prescription filled, ask Medco or your local pharmacist to fill it using a generic.



## Cancer Screenings Can SAVE Your Life!

On-site cancer and osteoporosis screenings are provided to you by the Polk County School Board (PCSB) Wellness Program in conjunction with Lakeland Regional Cancer Center (LRCC). This **FREE** benefit is available to all employees and spouses who have PCSB Blue Cross/Blue Shield health insurance. For an appointment, please contact the Cancer Screening Coordinator at each location at least two weeks prior to the screening date. There are no age restrictions for cancer and osteoporosis screenings on the LRCC screening bus.

### May 2011

- 5/4 HAINES CITY SR
- 5/5 HAINES CITY SR
- 5/6 EAGLE LAKE EL
- 5/10 WESTWOOD MID
- 5/11 BOONE MID
- 5/12 LK MARION CREEK
- 5/13 FT. MEADE MID/SR
- 5/16 SCOTT LK EL
- 5/17 SCOTT LK EL
- 5/18 WEST AREA ADULT

- 5/19 MCLAUGHLIN MID
- 5/20 MCLAUGHLIN MID
- 5/24 DIXIELAND EL
- 5/25 LAUREL EL
- 5/26 CRYSTAL LAKE EL.
- 5/31 SOUTHWEST EL

### June 2011

- 6/2 WINSTON EL
- 6/3 TRAVIS CC
- 6/10 LAKELAND TRANS
- 6/13 BARTOW TRANS

- 6/14 BARTOW TRANS
- 6/15 LAKE WALES TRANS
- 6/21 DISTRICT OFFICE
- 6/22 DISTRICT OFFICE
- 6/23 DISTRICT OFFICE
- 6/28 DISTRICT OFFICE
- 6/29 DISTRICT OFFICE
- 6/30 DISTRICT OFFICE

Get On The Bus!