

## Keeping the Brain and Body Healthy By Dancing

**Commonwealth Care Alliance member Monserrate Rodriguez dances to promote health and fun.**

The Riverview Senior Center in Springfield has helped Monserrate Rodriguez to feel better. After finishing our chronic disease self-management program, *My Life, My Health*, Monserrate made a long-term action plan to do something in her community. She heard about the Riverview Senior Center and decided to go and see what it had to offer her.

Soon after she joined the center, Monserrate became part of the Riverview Senior Dancers, the center's dance group. The group performs traditional dances,



*Monserrate Rodriguez*



*The Riverview Senior Dancers perform traditional Puerto Rican dances for peers at Riverview Senior Center*

including Bomba, which is an Afro-Puerto Rican dance that dates back to the end of the 17th century. The dancers have a simple goal — to stay or get healthy and have fun.

Regular exercise such as dancing can help your body stay healthy as you age. Dancing also makes you remember dance steps, which improves memory skills. A recent study found that ballroom dancing at least twice a week makes people less likely to develop dementia. Dancing gives you a great body *and* mind workout!

Health benefits linked to dancing include more energy, weight loss,

control of high blood pressure and diabetes, lower cholesterol, stress management, reduced risk of heart disease, stronger bones and muscles, better posture and balance, greater flexibility, and improved confidence.

“This experience has been like a blessing from God. I have always wanted to do something for other seniors,” says Monserrate. “Our teacher is an amazing dancer who always encourages us. This makes the group enjoy dancing even more.”

The Riverview Seniors Dancers bring joy to people wherever they go.

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# recipe



## Chipotle Coleslaw

### Ingredients

- 1/3 cup fat-free mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/8 teaspoon ground chipotle chile pepper
- 3 cups shredded green cabbage
- 3/4 cup whole kernel corn
- 3/4 cup chopped sweet red pepper
- 1/3 cup sweet thinly sliced red onion
- 1/3 cup chopped cilantro

### Directions

In a small bowl stir together mayonnaise, lime juice, honey, cumin, and chipotle chile pepper. In a large bowl combine cabbage, corn, sweet pepper, onion, and cilantro. Pour mayonnaise mixture over cabbage mixture. Toss lightly to coat. Serve immediately or cover and chill up to 24 hours.

[www.hearthealthyonline.com](http://www.hearthealthyonline.com)

## Happy Feet for Spring!

If you have diabetes, it is important to have your feet checked often by your doctor or nurse. High blood sugar can damage the nerves in your feet and cause blood flow problems. The damage can make it hard for you to tell if you hurt your feet. Follow these rules to keep your feet healthy:

- Check your feet every day for cracks, blisters or dry skin
- Wash your feet every day with soap and warm water
- Don't soak your feet too long!
- Dry your feet well
- Use lotion or cream on the tops and bottom of your feet (not between your toes!)
- Trim your nails using an emery board or nail file — only a doctor or nurse should cut your nails
- Check your shoes before putting them on
- Never walk barefoot, not even indoors

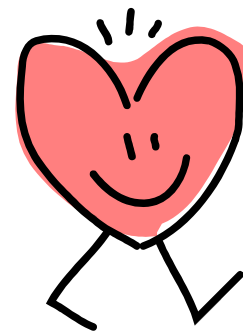


**Questions?** Talk with your doctor, your nurse or care manager, or call our Member Services team. ♦

## Happy Heart for Spring!

Too much salt in your diet can be harmful to your heart. Salt makes your body hold onto water and your heart must work harder. Here are some tips to eat less salt:

- Choose plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. They contain only small amounts of salt
- Choose foods that are low in salt, such as fresh meats, poultry, fish, legumes, eggs, milk, and yogurt. Plain rice, pasta, and oatmeal are good low-sodium choices. Remember, don't use salt when you make these foods
- Season with herbs, spices, herbed vinegar, and fruit juices
- Read food labels before you buy packaged foods. Check the label for sodium content per serving and try to pick foods with less than 350 milligrams of sodium per serving. If salt or sodium is listed in the first five ingredients, it is too high in sodium



**Questions?** Talk with your doctor, your nurse or care manager, or call our Member Services team. ♦

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“When we dance for people, we make them happy. We are always warmly welcomed.”

The Riverview Senior Center holds dance classes every Tuesday and Thursday at 10:30 a.m.

The *My Life, My Health* program can help you get motivated to live a healthier and happier life. For more information, please call Rosa Palacios at the number below.

**Questions?** Call Rosa Palacios, Department of Health Education and Caregiver Training at 1-866-610-2273 ext. 226. ♦



## Local Member Meetings are held in your communities.

Look for your invitation in the near future. Families and caregivers welcome!

**Questions?** Call Rosa at 1-866-610-2273 ext. 226

### Have you moved? Changed your name? Changed telephone number?

Don't forget to tell us if your contact details change. Call our Member Services team at 1-866-610-2273

### Facts About the First Day of Spring (March 20, 2010)

- In spring, the Earth's axis is tilted toward the sun, increasing the number of daylight hours and bringing warmer weather that causes plants to bring forth new growth
- The two equinoxes are the only times during the year when the sun rises due east and sets due west



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Visit the Commonwealth Care Alliance web site for the latest in member information

[www.commonwealthcare.org](http://www.commonwealthcare.org)



Call our Member Services Team, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**1-866-610-2273**

To share your own recipes or stories, or if you have an idea for the newsletter,  
contact Nerissa J. Fry at 1-866-610-2273 ext. 244  
or e-mail [nfry@commonwealthcare.org](mailto:nfry@commonwealthcare.org)



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