

Walking Club Hits the Road with Daily Exercise



Commonwealth Care Alliance member Richard Marks (center) with fellow walking club members Elaine Owens and Peg Hayes

It's easy to make a difference in someone else's life. Richard Marks recently discovered this when he started his own walking club at the Somerville assisted living facility where he resides.

Richard completed the Stanford Chronic Disease Self Management Program conducted by Commonwealth Care Alliance, *My Life My Health*, and says it is the best thing he has ever done. As part of the program, during a problem-solving session, Richard shared that his neighbor suffered from dizziness and that he did not like her taking walks alone in case she fell. He

decided to ask her if he could join her. "Now we walk together most days after breakfast. We talk about the birds and trees on our way and before you know it we've gone around the building."

Richard found out that another neighbor also enjoyed taking walks but did not have anyone to walk with. Richard knocked on her door, invited her to take a stroll, and now enjoys a second walk in the afternoon. "We don't rush, we walk at our own pace and if we get tired, we tell each other to take a seat, rest, and enjoy nature." Sometimes they even walk to the VNA Community Garden that

is nestled behind the assisted living facility.

Richard became a Commonwealth Care Alliance Senior Care Options member last year. "I never realized how nice and caring people can be."

"With Commonwealth Care Alliance, you're not just a number, you're a real person and that makes a difference."

He says he misses not being physically able to do what he used to do, like running errands; depending on somebody else is hard to get used to. Keeping his ability to walk independently is therefore very important to him, and Richard says the group helps each other to stay motivated and active.



The walking club enjoy their daily exercise

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recipe



Stuffed Cucumbers

A refreshing recipe for a hot summer day.

Ingredients

1 seedless cucumbers, chilled and peeled
½ cup crumbled feta cheese
1 tablespoon mayonnaise
8 drops Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon minced parsley

Instructions

Cut cucumbers in half lengthwise and with a teaspoon scrape out the centers containing the seeds. In a small bowl, blend the feta, mayonnaise, and Worcestershire sauce into a smooth mixture. Fill the centers of the cucumbers with the cheese mixture. Sprinkle the cucumbers with parsley and chill them for at least 20 minutes. Before serving, slice the cucumbers crosswise into bite-sized pieces.

Serves 6.

Your Feedback is Important

Have you ever been to one of our local consumer meetings? If you have—thank you very much. The feedback we receive during these meeting helps us to better care for you. What have we done in response to your feedback? Lots of things! Below are some examples.

You told us:

- That you'd like more information on seasonal and H1N1 flu shots

And we:

- Created educational flyers and published vaccine information in our member newsletter

You told us:

- That you'd like the Evidence of Coverage errata sheet translated into your language

And we:

- Translated the sheet into Spanish, Russian, Portuguese and then mailed it to members who speak these languages

Questions? Call our Member Services team at 1-866-610-2273. ♦

Program Keeps Improving Life, Health

Another group of Senior Care Options members recently completed the Stanford Chronic Disease Self-Management program, *My Life, My Health*, sponsored by Commonwealth Care Alliance, experiencing positive changes to their lives and health.



CDSMP Graduates: (L-R) Ruth Ryder, Elizabeth Gibson, Eleanor Thomas, Richard Marks, and Anthony Calvagno

“The biggest thing I got out of this training is that I can improve my health with little steps.”

“We have become a family. This is the best thing that happened to me.”

“Since I started attending this workshop, I have more discipline and I take responsibility for making good choices.”

If you're interested in participating in an upcoming workshop please call Rosa at the number below.

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

Care for Your Feet this Summer

It's warm outside, and a barefoot stroll along the beach may seem like a good idea. But before you kick your shoes off, remember, if you have diabetes this could be dangerous. Here are a few summer foot care tips that will keep your feet happy:

1. Wear shoes when walking

Never walk barefoot. Not even at the beach or pool. Not even in the water. Wear sandals at the beach, and swimming shoes in the water.

2. Check inside your shoes before wearing them

Make sure the lining is smooth and there are no objects inside. Something may have fallen (or crawled!) into them and you may not feel it. Throw away shoes when they show signs of wear.

3. Wear comfortable socks

Change your socks every day. Make sure they are smooth and don't wrinkle when you put them on. Avoid socks with big seams.

4. Check your feet every day

Check the top, bottom, sides, and between the toes of each foot. If you notice any red spots, wounds, bruises, rashes or injuries, call your doctor right away. Trim your toenails straight across and file the edges with an emery board or nail file. Do not try to remove corns or calluses yourself.

5. Wash your feet every day

Wash them gently, but thoroughly, with clean water, soap, and a washcloth. Put moisturizing lotion on the tops and bottoms of your feet (not between the toes).

6. Keep the blood flowing to your feet

Put your feet up when sitting. Wiggle your toes and move your ankles up and down for 5 minutes a few times a day. Don't cross your legs for long periods of time. Don't smoke.

Questions? Talk to your nurse or another member of your primary care team. ♦

Source: *California Podiatric Medical Association, www.podiatrists.org*

Walking Club

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"I really enjoy walking," says a smiling, rosy-cheeked Richard. "And it gives all of us a chance to get out in the fresh air."

Studies have proven that walking has many benefits; it helps reduce blood pressure and improves heart functions, it has a positive impact on weight and age-related illnesses, it helps build muscle strength and endurance, and maintains healthier bones and joints. It is also a great opportunity to socialize with others, as Richard does. "I am doing something for others in my building, and I can't describe how great that feels! Plus it is great exercise for me too!" ♦

Story by Diana Zegarra

Coming Attractions!

Soon we will be launching new marketing materials featuring some of our very own Senior Care Options members.

The brochures, posters, and ads will be used in Boston and Springfield to tell people about our programs.

Stay tuned for more information and profiles of the members starring in these materials.

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

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



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