Have a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season from the Transition Team!

The holiday season is here and 2013 is coming to a close. When I reflect on this year, I am very thankful for what a great year it has been! We have celebrated a “young spirited” member’s 100th birthday, started BioCored suspension training in our Pilates and Movement Studio, initiated the development of a cancer exercise program, welcomed new participants into our weight management and bariatric conditioning programs, presented to various support groups and made a number of new friends through all of our programs and classes. Overall, it has been our studio participants who have made 2013 a great environment for our Transition Team to work. We consider all of our participants our “Transition family” and it is a privilege working with each one, whether young or mature in years.

As we move closer to saying goodbye to 2013, as “hardy Michiganders” we are quickly reminded by the changing weather of our blessings tied to such a title. Leaping into winter, we get to enjoy the shorter days, “tropical-like” weather (tongue-in-cheek), and the opportunity to wear extra layers of clothing. As you can imagine it can sometimes cause some regular and potential new exercisers to lose motivation. Whether it’s the cold temperatures, darker days or sloppy roads, the winter blues can creep up and cause people to reduce their activity level, gain weight and reside to staying in their “cabins”. Don’t allow yourself to contract cabin fever! Stay active this month and establish realistic goals to succeed in 2014!

This month’s newsletter will hopefully help you resist the winter blues and provide strategies to help you enjoy holiday season and our beautiful Michigan winter.

The Transition Team and Pilates and Movement Studio staff is here to help you establish your own fitness routine and stay on track to meet your goals. Every worthy goal deserves a well thought out plan, so don’t hesitate to contact our staff to help you navigate the various barriers to exercise that might keep you from winning this winter!

In closing, our entire staff is excited for 2014 and we look forward to helping you succeed. We wish you and your family a happy and healthy holiday!

Sincerely,

Chrissy Parker MS, CSCS
Exercise Physiologist
Transitions Studio

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This Month’s Featured Program: Pilates

The Department of Physical Medicine has been offering Pilates classes for over 10 years and has since expanded to offer Pilates Reformer Classes in it’s Pilates and Movement Studio at 325 East Eisenhower, Suite 11. Pilates is a contemporary approach to the mind-body exercise German athlete Joseph Pilates developed in the 1920’s. An emphasis on movement quality, posture and breathing makes Pilates a safe, challenging and revitalizing workout.

Our highly qualified instructors make an effort to accommodate those with physical limitations through modifications of the movements while maintaining an effective and safe workout.

Benefits of PILATES:
- Greater mind-body awareness
- Increased “core” strength
- Improved flexibility & mobility
- Decreased pain and stiffness
- Improved posture and alignment
- Improved muscular balance
- Longer and leaner muscles
- Improved circulation

Whether you’re finishing physical therapy, already exercising or not Pilates is an excellent way to achieve and maintain optimal fitness and overall well-being!

Read more on our Pilates and Movement studio along with a client testimonial on page 4!
What Exercise Researchers are saying lately....

Hoping to counter all those Thanksgiving calories with extra exercise? A recent study suggests the strategy may not keep off holiday pounds. Researchers followed 48 men and 100 women, 18-65 years old, for the six weeks between the Thanksgiving and New Year's celebrations. Half reported being serious, regular exercisers working out almost five hours each week. The other half admitted to being couch potatoes. Researchers weighed and measured each person to calculate their body mass index (BMI), percentage of body fat and took their blood pressure before and after the holidays. From mid-November to early January, people in the study gained an average of 1.5 pounds. Men gained slightly more, around two pounds each, while women gained a little less, about a pound apiece. A pound or two may not sound so bad, but studies have found that on average, people gain about two pounds each year. It's called weight creep. And studies have found that once most people put it on, they never take it off. After 10 years of small annual increases, that's an additional 20 pounds of fat. That means holiday weight gain could be a more important factor in the obesity epidemic than many people realize, said researcher Jamie Cooper, an assistant professor of nutritional sciences at Texas Tech University. Subjects who were obese at the start of the study had the biggest increases in weight. They also had significant rise in their percentage of body fat. In fact, starting weight was the best predictor of how much weight and body fat a person might gain. Exercise had no significant impact on holiday weight gain. Researchers aren't entirely sure why. Cooper said the results could also mean that people were just eating far more calories than they could burn off, even with all that physical activity. "If you think about going for a run, if you run for 30 minutes and you run three miles during that time, you burn about 300 calories. Well, one piece of pumpkin pie without anything on it is about 300 calories," Cooper said. "So, it's really easy to eat all those calories that you burn during exercise and then some." Exercise also boosts appetite, which can lead to even more overeating. Cooper said that means there really is no substitute for moderation during the holidays, a time when foods are much more likely to be loaded with fat and sugar and hidden calories. Despite the disappointing results, one expert said the study shouldn't be an excuse for people to abandon their workout routines over the next few weeks. *Exercise has numerous benefits beyond just regulation of weight,* said Joy Dubost, a nutritionist and spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The study found that exercisers may have maintained an advantage over non-exercisers: Their blood pressure tended to stay lower through the holiday hustle. Dubost thinks that the problem with the holidays isn't just a big meal here or there, it's a mindset of indulgence that people tend to adopt between now and the end of the year. Typically what happens on Thanksgiving doesn't necessarily just stay for that day. It tends to trickle into an eating pattern that can stay with you through the holiday season," Dubost said. "Then you step on the scale and it's gotten away from you," she added.

The study was published recently in the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

Healthy Recipe: Chocolate Coconut Meringue (Gluten-Free)

**Ingredients** (40 cookies)

- 4 Large egg whites
- 1/4 tsp. cream of tartar
- 1/4 tsp. coconut extract
- 1/4 tsp. almond extract
- 1/4 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 Tbsp. semisweet chocolate chips, finely chopped
- 2 Tbsp. fat-free white chocolate chips, finely chopped

**Preparation**

Position racks in upper and lower 3rd of oven: preheat to 250°F. Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper.

Beat egg whites, cream of tartar, salt, coconut, almond, and vanilla extracts in a large bowl with an electric mixer on medium-high speed. Gradually beat in sugar, 2 Tbsp. at a time. Beat until stiff (6-8 min).

Sift cocoa over mixture and fold in until combined. Fill a gallon-sized back with mixture and cut 1/2in hole at 1 corner. Pipe meringue into 2in circles on baking sheets.

Bake on upper and lower racks for 50 minutes. Turn off heat and let meringues sit with door closed until completely dry (around 1 hr).

Melt semisweet and white chocolate in microwave and drizzle over meringues. Let stand until set and then enjoy!

**Nutrition: Per serving:** 36 calories; 0 g fat (0 g sat. 0 g mono.), 0 mg cholesterol, 8 g carbs, 1 g protein, 0 g fiber, 17 mg sodium, 25 mg potassium.

www.eatingwell.com
8 Steps to Surviving Holiday Weight Gain

You attend holiday gatherings to share festivities with family, friends, colleagues and lots of food. When the holiday season is finally over, the bathroom scale reveals that you’ve gained some unwanted weight. Research studies show that most adults gain about 1 pound over the holiday season. On average people will gain 1-2 lbs in their adulthood each year, so a 1 lb. weight gain over the holidays can explain why some people see a jump in the scale around middle age.

How can you try to maintain a healthy weight during such a tempting time?

1. GET MOVING
One of the most effective ways to maintain or lose body weight is to engage in regular, sustained exercise. To burn off those extra calories, kick up your exercise time or intensity. Here are some pointers to help you get moving.

If you have a stationary bike or treadmill at home, dust it off and put it in front of the TV.

Haven’t been to a gym in a while? Hire a personal trainer to teach you the most effective calorie-burning techniques. Go for a morning or evening walk alone or with a friend.

2. AIM FOR 7-A-DAY
Making sure you eat 7 or more servings of fruit and vegetables each day is a great way to feel gratified and not have too many unwanted calories. When compared to chips, crackers and cookies fruits and vegetables contain fewer calories and tons more nutrients.

3. CONTROL TEMPTATION
Controlling even the slightest chance of coming in contact with ‘tempting’ foods is one way that can effectively reduce your intake. While you won’t be able to control all situations, focus on the ones you can.

4. LIMIT TO ONE-A-DAY
You can’t control every situation, but you can control what you put in your mouth. One way is a one-a-day method. Allow yourself one small serving of a cookie or piece of candy each day during the holiday season. Remember that you may have to compensate for it later in the day by reducing your total calorie intake or by burning a few extra calories during exercise.

5. PLAN AHEAD - NEVER GO TO A PARTY HUNGRY
It may sound crazy, but before you go to a holiday party, eat a healthy snack such as your favorite fruit or health bar. When you arrive at the party, you won’t be craving hors d’oeuvres.

6. BE IN CHARGE OF PARTY CHOICES
- Small Plate - a small portion of healthy appetizers may help you from overeating at dinner.
- Avoid the sauce - avoid sauces made from cream or half and half. For salads, use vinaigrette or low-fat dressings.
- What about desserts? The best low-calorie choices are fruit, Jell-O, pudding, shortbread cookies, ginger snaps or angel food cake.
- Watch the drinks - Instead of high-fat eggnog, have a light beer or wine. After that, stick with calorie-free drinks such as water, unsweetened tea or coffee.

7. SAY “NO” POLITELY
You may feel forced to eat foods because people keep putting them in front of you. Learn to say no politely.

8. FOCUS ON SOCIALIZING
Don’t stand around the food table when you are at the party – focus your energies on making conversation with others instead of focusing on foods.

Kory Strong - Fall 2013 Intern

Kory Strong is a Master’s of Exercise Degree candidate at Oakland University. He is completing his internship in the Transitions Studio in addition to assisting with research in the Physical Activity Lab.

Kory says: Nothing can slow down your exercise routine more quickly than an injury and during the holiday season slip and fall injuries can be common. To prevent a tragic fall to the ground and a resulting fall in exercise time at the gym consider these helpful tips!

1) Remove and Beware of Slip and Trip Hazards: Be sure to check around your house for things that might cause you to trip and fall or slip and fall. Some common offenders of slipping can be wearing socks on wood or tile floors or walking over a patch of ice. Beware of trip hazards such as electrical cords, loose rugs, coffee tables, clothes or other objects left on the floor. Also, be sure that you home is well lit in order to prevent tripping over something in the dark.

2) Use Assistive Devices: Do not be afraid to use banisters or railings on stairways and hallways to maintain your balance. Use a walker or a cane if needed, and don’t be afraid to ask for a helping hand if you think you need one in order to get where you going safely.

3) Exercise and Stay Active: Exercise to build up strength and endurance in your lower body as well as your upper body. Lower body strength and endurance can greatly improve you ability to maintain you balance during a long walk up the stairs or to your parked car and upper body strength is necessary in order to help you get up from a fall if you are not injured and are not able to call for help if you’ve fallen.

4) Check with you Doctor: Meet with your doctor if you experience dizziness or you believe you are at risk for falling due to health conditions, medications you are taking, or a previous history of falling.
News from the Pilates & Movement Studio

The end of classes this week gives us time to reflect on what we have accomplished since summer and what we can look forward to in the spring (besides warm weather).

In addition to the current Pilates mat and reformer classes taught by our talented instructors, we began offering two more specialized classes. Lynnette Rasmussen’s class in Core Barre has proved to be very popular - the next session is already full. Core Barre is high energy, low impact, fat burning workout, that incorporates current biomechanics principles of Pilates, ballet and general fitness that are applicable to all fitness levels. If you want to safely change your appearance and have fun doing it, talk to Lynnette. Mid-term Linn began teaching a basic Pilates class for members of the Transition Studio. After talking with several members and learning about their fitness backgrounds and present limitations and abilities, Linn designed a class with these very special people in mind. You know who you are: women with great body awareness and the motivation to keep to moving in the best possible way. This class will be offered again in January. Thanks Erika, Maggie, Micky and Sara! If you are interested in joining, ask Linn. Men welcome! New in January - Linn is teaching our first group Biocored class. You may have read about Biocored in our first issue of Transition Times. It is a form of exercise that uses a system of suspended bungees and slings to improve sensory motor integration and functional movement. The bungees allow a great range of variation in resistance without significant stress on joints. Want to know more? Contact Linn Sandberg at 734-395-5035.

Exercise of the Month: Standing Wall Push-Ups

Stand about 3-4 feet away from a wall and place your hands on the wall about shoulder width apart so that your upper body is leaning past your feet as shown on the far left picture. Push your body away from the wall by straightening your arms until they are fully extended as shown on the near left picture and then slowly allow your body to return to the starting position.

Keep your legs straight during the exercise, and do not forget to breath out when pushing away from in wall and breath in when moving toward the wall. You can increase the difficulty of the exercise by placing your feet further away from the wall upon starting, but be certain that this distance is not too far away in that it could lead to a fall. Start with 8-12 repetitions and progress as you get stronger.

Member Testimonial: Maggie Anderson

Many of the people we work with thank us personally. We are happy to present someone who put it in writing: "Before I began my Pilates sessions with Linn I walked like a duck! Now when I walk my feet are straight, my knees don’t ache (nearly so much), and I have more body awareness of what works and how my core strength has increased. My sway back is beginning to straighten. I’m signing up for another twelve weeks.” - Maggie Anderson

You can perform this exercise wherever you can find a stable wall and good footing!