



Chronic Diseases

Journey Beyond

Fall 2011

Get Better Together

Get Better Together is a worldwide educational self-management program that is focused on people living with chronic disease and their support partners.

The goal of this program is to improve the individual's quality of life and ease the pressures, both physically and emotionally, of living with their condition. It is a 6 week self-improvement program that covers a variety of topics related to people living with chronic disease of all types such as diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, autoimmune diseases, digestive problems, as well as mental disorders. Examples of some of the topics are:

- medications
- daily exercise
- relaxation techniques
- healthcare directives
- proper nutrition
- coping with worsening of the disease
- ways of dealing with stress

Each week the individuals gain personal confidence and knowledge in living with their condition that affects their lives and the people around them. They also gain an understanding of the benefits of knowing their symptoms and the similarities of chronic conditions.

This self-management program was developed at Stanford University. It was initially developed due to the belief that:

1. People with chronic conditions have similar concerns/problems
2. People with chronic conditions must deal not only with their disease but also with the impact they have on their lives/emotions.
3. The process of the way the program is taught is as important, if not more important, than the subject matter that is taught.

A research project found that people who took the program improved their healthful behaviours and health status improved with:

- decreased doctor visits
- increased energy levels
- decreased anxiety and depression
- improved social activities
- reduced progression of their disease
- overall improved quality of life

The sessions are 2 ½ hours long for 6 weeks. Afternoon and evening sessions have been offered. Typically, there is a Fall and Spring session.

I have been involved in Get Better Together for 4 years and have found it very rewarding. I have seen the positive changes that evolve in these individuals lives, physically and emotionally, over the course of the 6 weeks. This program is unique because the co-leader is a person that also lives with a chronic condition. Therefore, the participants can actually see what a difference it can make in their lives by following some of the lessons they have learned each week.

At the end of each program, the feedback that I have experienced is overwhelming in terms of the improvements individuals make in self-managing their disease, in addition to helping others in the program. By the end of the 6 weeks, they not only have taken steps towards achieving incredible goals, but also have developed ongoing support from others in the program!!!

Anyone can register for this program. It is free of charge and can change peoples lives forever! Call Nora Chant at 578-4823 for more information or to register for one of the sessions. So sign up and let's Get Better Together.

See page 2 for upcoming sessions.

Joey Pattle RN, BScN
Heart Program Nurse, Get Better Together Leader

Health e-Plan

Get connected to your health

Being healthy is what we all want for ourselves and our families. Achieving and maintaining good health is easier with the right information and ongoing support. Health e-Plan gives you both and provides added encouragement with a rewards program to help keep you motivated over time.

What is Health e-Plan?

Health e-Plan is a secure, interactive online tool that can help you:

- better understand your current health and
- learn ways to improve your health over time

You start by supplying basic information about yourself, your current health and your lifestyle. Health e-Plan uses this information to identify potential health risks and recommends ways to make improvements to reduce these risks over time.

How does it work?

Health e-Plan involves four easy steps:

- (1) Assess your health
- (2) Set goals
- (3) Take action
- (4) Track your progress

The first step is to create your personal health profile by answering questions about your current health status. Health e-Plan will produce a detailed report to help you learn more about how your current habits and lifestyle choices, your family history and other factors may affect your health in the future.

The health assessment also helps you set goals for improving your health and provides useful information for making changes.

Customized to your needs

In addition to helping you set goals to help improve your health status, Health e-Plan can help you meet those goals with a customized plan.

Rewarding your effort

After completing your health assessment you have an opportunity to participate in our Rewards Program. To participate, you complete an electronic entry ballot. You are then entered into a draw with a chance to win small weekly prizes as well as a grand prize each month.

Get started today!

Visit www.manitoba.ca and enter Health e-Plan in the search box at the top of the page.

Modifying Recipes for Your Health

All of these hints were used in the recipes on page 3

- If using canned ingredients, try salt free or low sodium versions
- Skip the salt
- Use oil instead of margarine and never use hard margarine
- Replace some or all of the all-purpose flour with whole wheat flour
- Replace some or all of the sugar with Splenda™ (sucralose)



WEIGHT MANAGEMENT SERIES

This 8 week series focuses on healthy eating, changing behavior, emotional eating and getting active.

Monday evenings from 6:45—8:15 p.m.

October 3, 17, 24, November 7, 14, 21, 28 and December 5.

Please call 578-2370 to register as space is limited.

GET BETTER TOGETHER!

A program for living better with chronic disease.

*Are you sick and tired of being sick and tired?
Or, are you managing well and want to stay that way?
Get Better Together! is for you.*

A free program for people living with any kind of ongoing health problem. Six weekly sessions will help you learn to manage your condition better and cope with the challenges. Programs are led by an instructor also living with a health condition.

To register, call 578-4800 and for more information call 578-4823.

Fall Sessions

- Thursdays, October 6 to November 10 from 1:00-3:30 p.m. at Knox United Church
- Wednesdays, November 2 to December 7 from 1:30-4:00 p.m. at 7th Street Health Access Centre



RECIPES



Tomato-Bean Chowder

This comforting soup is hearty enough for a cool fall day, yet light enough for a summer supper.

- 4 small onions, finely chopped
- 2 tsp chili powder
- 1 green pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 can (28 oz/796 ml) tomatoes, undrained
- 900-1000 ml beef or vegetable broth, reduced sodium
- 1 can (19 oz/540 ml) red kidney beans, drained, no salt added
- 1 can (19 oz/540 ml) chickpeas, drained, no salt added
- freshly ground pepper
- Garnish:
- 1/2 cup finely chopped fresh parsley

In a large, heavy saucepan, combine onions, chili powder, green pepper, tomatoes and broth; bring to boil, reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes.

Break up tomatoes with back of spoon. Add drained beans and peas; simmer for 10 minutes. Add pepper to taste.

Garnish each serving with a sprinkling of parsley. Makes 10 servings (1 cup each).

Nutrition Facts:

Per 1 cup	
Calories	131
Fat	0.6g
Cholesterol	0mg
Sodium	296mg
Carbohydrate	24g
Fibre	5.6g
Protein	7.7g

Note: If this recipe is made with regular broth, kidney beans and chickpeas, sodium content would be much higher.

Source recipes: Adapted from Smart Cooking by Anne Lindsay, 1986

Cocoa Branana Muffins

Get your chocolate fix with these yummy muffins that are a source of dietary fibre.

- 2 medium ripe bananas
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup whole wheat flour
- 1/2 cup Splenda™ (sucralose)
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1 cup Kellogg's™ All-Bran cereal
- 1 cup skim milk
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup oil

Peel bananas; mash one and slice one; set aside.

Stir together flour, sugar, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda; set aside.

Combine cereal and milk in a large bowl. Let stand 2-3 minutes until cereal is softened. Add egg, oil and mashed banana; beat well. Stir in sliced banana. Add flour mixture, stirring just until combined.

Spoon batter evenly into 12 lightly-greased or paper-lined muffin cups. Bake at 400 F for 20-22 minutes or until top springs back when touched.

Nutrition Facts:

Per muffin	
Calories	150
Fat	5.8g
Cholesterol	17mg
Sodium	168mg
Carbohydrate	21.5g
Fibre	3.5g
Protein	4.0g

Source recipes: Adapted from family recipe

ASK THE EXPERT

Question: *My friend said she couldn't go to work last week because of her depression. She doesn't look sick – is depression really a chronic illness?*

Answer:

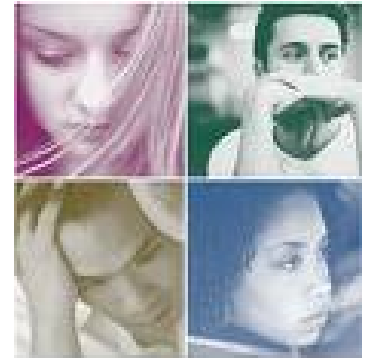
Yes, mental illnesses (including depression) are chronic illnesses which can have very serious symptoms and outcomes. Symptoms can affect both the body and the mind, giving the person both physical and emotional symptoms. There are different kinds of depressive mood disorders, including bipolar disorder (manic-depressive illness), post-partum depression and psychosis, but clinical depression is the most common.

There is not a single cause for mood disorders such as depression; it is thought that many different genes may act together and in combination with other factors to cause a mood disorder. There are also higher rates of depression among women, and among people with other chronic illnesses.

Depression is often very well treated with anti-depressant medication and/or counseling or therapy. Support from family, friends, and self-help groups can also make a big difference.

Some signs of depression can include:

- feeling worthless, helpless or hopeless
- sleeping more or less than usual
- eating more or less than usual, or gain or loss of weight
- having trouble concentrating, thinking clearly, or making decisions
- anxiety, restlessness, irritability
- lack of motivation
- loss of interest or pleasure in usually-enjoyed activities
- decreased sex drive
- muscle & joint pain, frequent headaches, constipation or other bowel problems
- avoiding other people, including friends and family
- overwhelming feelings of sadness or grief
- feeling unreasonably guilty
- loss of energy, feeling very tired
- thoughts of death, self-harm, or suicide



If you or someone you know has had at least five of these symptoms for more than two or three weeks, talk to your health care provider or mental health professional about it.

[Sheryl Campbell](#)
Nurse Practitioner, 7th Street Health Access Center

Chronic Diseases Journey Beyond is a newsletter for people with chronic illness providing information on lifestyle management. Chronic Diseases Journey Beyond is published in the fall, winter and spring. We would welcome any suggestions for further items. Send your thoughts or comments to:

Chronic Disease Journey Beyond
C/O Diabetes and Heart Health Promotion
Unit A5-800 Rosser Ave.
Brandon, MB R7A 6N5
Phone: 578-2370
Let us know if you would like to receive future newsletters via email.



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