



## A Walk in the Park



A recent event for Commonwealth Care Alliance members and family caregivers was a great success. On a warm afternoon, a small group gathered at Larz Anderson park in Brookline to talk about strategies for reducing stress in family caregivers and the importance of maintaining good health. The group then headed around the park for a 30 minute walk, demonstrating an important element of good health—exercise!

"I like walking. Thanks for having us this afternoon," said one member.

Wearing yellow t-shirts, the members and caregivers counted their steps with new pedometers. To recover and rehydrate, the group enjoyed watermelon and lemonade once they had finished their walk, and browsed through a packet containing local resources for caregivers.

"I sensed a lot pride among the walkers. They knew they were being proactive and doing something good for their bodies," said a participant.



Commonwealth Care Alliance's Health Education and Caregiver Training Department plans to host more walking events and other activities that encourage physical and social activity in the future.

**Questions?** Call Courtney Mulroy, Health Education & Caregiver Training, at 866-610-2273 ext. 1386.

## New Logo

Commonwealth Care Alliance has been working to make itself better known in the community. We offer high quality care to our members and we want as many people to receive it as possible.

As part of this work, we've given our company logo a fresh new look:



As we make new member materials, we will update them with our new logo. However, there is no need to replace current member materials. If you have a member ID card or a handbook with the "old" logo, don't worry! Your care and benefits will not be affected.



Watch out for mail from Commonwealth Care Alliance. These important member materials will be sent to you soon:

- Summary of Benefits 2014
- Annual Notice of Change 2014
- Formulary (List of Drugs) 2014
- Provider Directory
- Pharmacy Directory
- Multi language insert



# recipe



## Corn & Blueberry Salad

- 6 fresh sweet corn, husked
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 1 cucumber, sliced
- ¼ cup finely chopped red onion
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon honey
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin

Bring a large saucepan of water to boil. Add corn. Cook, covered, 5 minutes, or until tender. When cool enough to handle, cut corn from cobs.

In a serving bowl combine corn, blueberries, cucumber, red onion, cilantro, and jalapeno. For dressing, combine lime juice, oil, honey, cumin, and ½ tsp salt and mix well. Add to salad; toss. Cover and refrigerate overnight (up to 24 hours). Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Source: *Better Homes and Gardens*.  
Photo by Katie Carrico, used with permission.

## Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP offers nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, low-income individuals and families and provides economic benefits to communities. SNAP is the largest program in the domestic hunger safety net.

**FACT: Older adults' participation in SNAP is very low.**

About 2.85 million older adults are enrolled in SNAP in the United States. Yet this figure only represents one third of the eligible population; approximately 2 out of 3 seniors who qualify to receive SNAP are missing out on benefits—that is about 5.7 million people!

**FACT: The average SNAP benefit for older adults is not \$16/month.**

There is a myth that older adults who qualify for SNAP only receive \$16 per month in benefits. This is largely untrue—\$16 is the minimum monthly benefit a senior can receive. 80% of elderly SNAP participants receive more than the minimum.

**FACT: Isolation is a key factor in the lives of many older adult SNAP participants.**

Roughly 80% of older adults who receive SNAP benefits live alone. More than half of these seniors have little to no income and depend entirely on general assistance, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or other benefits. For these individuals, the \$1,464 in average annual SNAP benefits can mean the difference between having food and going without.

**FACT: SNAP is good for the local economy.**

SNAP benefits are spent at community grocery stores and markets, thereby infusing money into the local economy.

**FACT: Older adults enrolled in other benefits may still be missing SNAP.**

NCOA's online benefits screening tool revealed that of those who may qualify, but are not enrolled in, SNAP:

- 41% are enrolled in the Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidy
- 46% receive Supplemental Security Income benefits
- 53% participate in the Medicare Savings Programs
- 43% get Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program benefits

**FACT: Addressing hunger is an important issue for the aging network.**

Adequate food and nutrition is essential for older adults to stick to their medication regimen, manage chronic conditions, and avoid injury. There are many opportunities for aging organizations to partner with the anti-hunger community, such as food banks, to better serve seniors at risk of hunger.

**Questions?** Talk to your care manager or another member of your primary care team.

Source: *National Council on Aging, www.NCOA.org*

Member Services Team 866-610-2273 (TTY 711) 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week

## Are You Protected From the Flu?

It's flu season once again—have you protected yourself with a flu shot yet? Feel like you've heard this information before? Why don't you test your flu season knowledge to see how much you really know!

**True or False? I could get the flu from the vaccination itself.**

False. The seasonal flu shot is made from a killed or inactivated virus so it is not possible to get the flu from the shot itself.

**True or False? Each year, flu causes illness, hospital stays, and even deaths.**

True. In a typical year, the number of flu-related deaths range from 3,300 to 48,600 (average 23,600). During a regular flu season, about 90 percent of deaths occur in people 65 years and older.

**True or False? People aged 65 and older have developed immunity to the flu.**

False. People aged 65 and older are at greater risk of serious complications from the flu than younger adults. This is because human immune defenses become weaker with age.

**Questions?** Talk to your doctor, your nurse, or another member of your primary care team, or call our Member Services Team at 866-610-2273.

Source: *www.cdc.gov*



## New Blog

Commonwealth Care Alliance has launched its official blog! Our blog, "Dually Noted," will feature interesting articles on health reform, patient-centered care, a day in the life of our nurses, and much more. Find it on the web at this address:  
**[commonwealthcarealliance.wordpress.com](http://commonwealthcarealliance.wordpress.com)**



**Local Member Meetings are held in your communities.**

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

**Questions? Call Diana Zegarra 866-610-2273 ext. 1247**



Commonwealth Care Alliance [www.commonwealthcarealliance.org](http://www.commonwealthcarealliance.org)

# Stress Management for Family Caregivers

Being a family caregiver can be very rewarding and bring you closer to your loved one. At the same time, it can be demanding and stressful. Here are just a few tips to help you deal with those difficult moments:

## Take Care of Yourself First

Eat well, exercise, get enough sleep, and go to the doctor regularly. You need to take care of yourself first or you won't be able to help others.

## Take a Break

Ask family, friends, or professional caregivers to fill in for you, and take a day off or even a week's vacation.

## Understand and Express Your Emotions

Feelings of anger, frustration, guilt, or grief for your loved one are normal. Talk to your family or friends about your emotions.

Commonwealth Care Alliance's initiative *Strengthening Care Together* provides support to its family caregivers. Stay tuned for news on upcoming events and educational workshops.

**Questions?** Call Courtney Mulroy, Health Education & Caregiver Training, at 866-610-2273 ext. 1386.

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

**commonwealthcarealliance.org**



Call our Member Services Team, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week

**866-610-2273**

To share your own recipes or stories, or if you have an idea for the newsletter, contact Nerissa J. Fry at 866-610-2273 ext. 1244 or e-mail [nfry@commonwealthcare.org](mailto:nfry@commonwealthcare.org)



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**Health and Wellness or  
Prevention Information**