



Women's Health in Women's Hands (WHIWH)

Community Health Centre



Winter 2006/2007



# WHIWH Newsletter

## A Message from the Board:

As winter weighs in and the New Year approaches, we all seem to face the dilemma of juggling our time effectively. With the holiday season just around the corner it can be an added challenge in keeping our spirits high, our energy up, and our pocket books in check.

This month's newsletter does its best to give you a few ideas to help alleviate the stress of the season. Whether it is finding inexpensive things to do in and around the city, keeping in shape or

trying to deal with our changing moods as the sun goes into hibernation, we know that any information to keep us in good spirits is a great resource.

As part of our holistic approach and as a Community Health Care targeted to Black Women and Women of Colour, we at Women's Health in Women's Hands try to offer tools, information and resources to help women receive the best care available. We also hope to help you prevent health problems before they occur, to recognize symptoms and

early warning signs and to understand all of the options available for your specific health situations.

**We hope you find this season's newsletter useful and wish you all the best in the New Year.**

"It's so clear that you have to cherish everyone. I think that's what I get from these older black women, that every soul is to be cherished, that every flower is to bloom."

**—Alice Walker**



## THE MOST PORTABLE GYM IN TOWN - YOU!

No space for weights, no transportation to get to the gym and no money for expensive equipment? No problem, because the best gym around is literally right at your finger tips. Did you know that your body can function as your very own state of the art gymnasium?

Portable and available 24 hours a day, you can lift it, lower it, curl it, twist it and bend it in all sorts of ways that are designed to increase your strength.

Leg lifts, lunges, squats, pull ups are just a few of the strength building exercises you can do without the fancy machines.

Resistance training when done correctly offers a number of health benefits. Push ups for example train practically every "pushing" muscle in the upper body: shoulders, triceps, and chest, along with lots of stabilizer muscles from the rest of the body. Older adults and people with disabilities can gain significant benefits with a moderate amount of slightly modified resistance training as well.

With a well-planned and properly followed resistance program, you can burn fat while you rest, fight off disease and improve the quality of your life. So what are you waiting for? Ask yourself for an executive membership and let's get started!



## HOW TO DO A PROPER PUSH-UP:

- ◆ Lie face down on a mat, or towel.
- ◆ Place your hands on either side of your shoulders, aligning your thumbs to the middle of your chest. Place your feet shoulder width apart. If you are a beginner, you can do this movement on your knees.
- ◆ With your hands, push up off of the mat.
- ◆ Pause for a moment at the top.
- ◆ Exhale as you lower your body toward the floor. Your chest should come within about two inches from the floor.
- ◆ Start slowly, and then try increasing by between 2 to 5 pushups every week

**Before engaging in any physical exercise consult you doctor**



# SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER - SAD



**M**ost people find they eat and sleep slightly more in winter and have an aversion to the dark dreary mornings and short days. For some, however, symptoms are severe enough to upset their lives and to cause significant sorrow. These people are suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder, also known as SAD.

The problem stems from the lack of bright light in winter and is believed to be related mostly to daylight, not temperature. Researchers have proved that bright light makes a difference to the brain chemistry, although the exact means by which sufferers are affected is not yet known. SAD is not a psychosomatic or imaginary illness. It is a serious disorder, sometimes triggering dysthymia or clinical depression and could require hospitalization.

## What treatments are there?

As the cause of the illness is traced to the lack of bright light, Light therapy appears to be an effective treatment and has led to around 85% success rates.

The preferred level of light required for treatment is about as bright as a spring morning on a clear day and for most people sitting in front of a light box, allowing the light to reach the eyes, for between 30 and 60 minutes daily seems to be most effective.

If light therapy has little or no effect, medication can be used as an additional treatment when prescribed.

## Should I talk to my doctor?

SAD sufferers should seek the support of their doctor.

**If you believe you are suffering from SAD call to make an appointment with one of our health care providers.**



## AROUND TOWN ON A BUDGET:



*There is no question about it, taking in many of the things that Toronto and its surrounding areas have to offer can put a dent into your wallet, but that doesn't mean that inexpensive or free activities don't exist. The following are a small number of things you can do to take the chill out of winter without leaving a gaping hole in your pocket book.*

### ◆ **Skate for free at Nathan Phillips Square's famous outdoor ice rink.**

Weather permitting the rink is usually open daily from 10 am to 10 pm by mid-November. For those who don't have access to ice skates, inexpensive skate rentals and indoor change rooms are available to visitors.

### ◆ **Get Cultural!**

Housing over 36,000 works of art in its collection, the Art Gallery of Ontario is an excellent gallery worth visiting. You can do so for free every Wednesday evening between six and nine o'clock pm, when the museum drops its admission fee.

The ROM also offers free admission into the museum's exhibits, except the specially ticketed ones, on Friday nights, from 4:30 - 9:30 pm

### ◆ **Take a stroll down to St. Lawrence market!**

Now a bustling marketplace filled with vendors of delectable foods, the Victorian building that hosts the St. Lawrence Market was once home to Toronto's City Hall. The gallery on the second floor, hosts periodically changing exhibits of paintings, artifacts and furnishings that display the history and culture of the area. Admission to the market and the gallery are free.

### ◆ **Check out the grounds at Allen Gardens!**

The lovely Victorian style greenhouses of this conservatory house a unique botanical garden, free to the public. The conservatory provides a warm and beautiful break from the winter cold or a peaceful escape from the bustle of the city at any time of year.



# Test your Knowledge about Women's Health:

*We often think when it comes to our health we know a lot but often sometimes misinformation can lead us in the wrong direction. Why not test your knowledge with a few simple true or false questions.*

**Birth defects and disabilities cannot be prevented.**

**False.**

Some birth defects and disabilities can be prevented. There are steps that a woman can take to increase her chance of having a healthy baby.

**If you are pregnant or suspect you are pregnant talk to your doctor about your health and what you need to consider for a safe and healthy pregnancy.**

**Pregnant women should be screened for the bacteria group B streptococcus (group B strep) late in pregnancy to reduce the risk of passing it to their newborn.**

**True.**

Group B streptococcus (group B strep) is a type of bacterium that causes illness in newborn babies, pregnant women, the elderly, and adults with other illnesses, such as diabetes or liver disease. Group B strep is the most common cause of life-threatening infections in newborns, but in most cases it can be prevented. The test is simple and does not hurt. Pregnant women who carry group B strep should be given antibiotics through the vein at the time of labor or when their water breaks to prevent group B strep bacteria from being passed to their newborn.

**Birth Cervical cancer is associated with a sexually transmitted infection.**

**True.**

Genital human papillomavirus infection is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) that is caused by certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV). Although only a small proportion of women have persistent . Infection, persistent infection with "high-risk" types of HPV over many years is the main risk factor for cervical cancer.

A Pap test can detect pre-cancerous and cancerous cells on the cervix. Regular Pap testing and careful medical follow-up (with treatment if necessary) can help ensure that pre-cancerous changes in the cervix do not develop into life-threatening cervical cancer. Women should begin getting a Pap test within 3 years of the onset of sexual activity, but no later than at age 21.

**Breast cancer is the leading cause of death in women.**

**False.**

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in women. You can lower your risk for heart disease by getting regular exercise, eating healthy, maintaining a healthy weight, and being smoke-free.

**See your health care provider to determine risks and to develop a plan to treat existing heart disease.**

**Female workers are at greater risk for musculoskeletal disorders than are male workers.**

**True.**

Sprains and strains, carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, and other musculoskeletal disorders. Account for more than half (52%) of the injuries and illnesses suffered by female workers, as compared to 45% for male workers. Periodic rest breaks through out the work shift can help reduce musculoskeletal discomfort. Ergonomics interventions that fit workplace conditions and job demands to the capabilities of workers can help prevent work-related musculoskeletal disorders.

**Women who smoke are at an increased risk for reproductive health problems.**

**True.**

Women also face other unique health problems from smoking. For example, women who smoke have increased risks for conception delay and for both primary and secondary infertility. They may have a modest increase in risks for ectopic pregnancy and spontaneous abortion. Smoking during pregnancy causes health problems for both mothers and babies, such as pregnancy complications, premature birth, low-birth-weight infants, stillbirth, and infant death. Women who smoke are younger at natural menopause than non-smokers and may experience more menopausal symptoms.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL 416-593-7655

**Women's Health and Women's Hand will be holding their Annual General Meeting on January 8th, 2007**

**Anonymous HIV Testing  
Every Thursday beginning on January 11th, 2007**

**Diabetes 101  
Starts January 11 to February 1, 2007  
Every Thursday 3:00-5:00pm**

**Yoga  
Classes resume January 15, 2007 to 4:00—5:00pm**



# FOR FUN...

## WHIWH'S WORD FIND

N	N	U	S	E	C	E	R	V	I	C	A	L	B	J
I	O	B	O	S	V	C	O	T	I	B	N	O	W	N
B	I	O	J	V	D	I	L	U	H	Y	W	C	G	N
D	S	N	M	M	J	I	S	T	V	Y	E	I	E	N
Y	S	T	Y	G	G	T	N	N	N	D	R	C	C	E
N	E	M	U	H	T	E	T	S	E	L	S	A	T	T
N	R	A	T	J	M	H	D	P	G	P	A	N	L	K
Z	P	G	K	T	W	U	E	A	N	O	X	C	S	J
P	E	C	A	H	S	U	P	R	S	U	K	E	E	U
C	D	E	U	I	P	X	S	V	A	X	V	R	N	T
A	R	M	C	Y	N	C	P	B	A	P	Q	V	V	I
T	X	V	B	C	U	K	U	G	R	Q	Y	O	A	Z
E	W	X	L	Y	I	F	F	O	B	N	G	D	P	Q
E	V	I	T	C	U	D	O	R	P	E	R	B	H	R
V	K	R	K	J	S	G	L	Z	D	N	K	E	L	D



- CANCER
- CERVICAL
- DEPRESSION
- INEXPENSIVE
- LIGHT
- REPRODUCTIVE
- SAD
- THERAPY
- TREATMENT



## WHIWH'S SUDOKU

5				2				1
		7				6		
9				7	6			2
		2				7		
1		3				2		6
		8				4		
	8		2		4			6
		1				3		
3				8				2

**Instructions:** The digits 1 through 9 will appear exactly once in each row, each column, and each zone. (A zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine of these zones in the puzzle.)

**Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same 3x3 zone, or in the same row across the puzzle, or column down the puzzle.**

## About Us

### Who We Are?

We are a team of health professionals who work from an inclusive, feminist, anti-racist, anti-oppression framework to provide community, mental and clinical health promotion support to Black Women and Women of Colour from the Caribbean,

African, Latin American and South Asian communities in Toronto and surrounding municipalities.

Our holistic services are fully accessible and designed to address the barriers that prevent us from being healthy.

*We believe that women have the right to receive quality health care and to make informed choices about their health.*

### Women's Health in Women's Hands Community Health Centre

2 Carlton Street, Suite 500  
Toronto, Ontario, M5B 1J3

**Telephone:** 416-593-7655

**TTY:** (416) 593 - 5838

**Fax:** 416-593-5867

**Website:** www.whiwh.com

### Centre Hours:

**Monday – Thursday :** 9:00 – 8:00

**Fridays:** 9:00 – 5:00pm

**3rd Saturday of the month:**

10:00 – 4:00pm



### Our Health Care Team

- Doctors
- Nurses/Nurse Practitioners
- Health Educators/Promoters
- Community Outreach Worker
- Social Workers
- Nutritionist/Community Dietitian
- Psychotherapists
- Chiroprapist

### We Provide

- Individual / Group Counselling
- Advocacy Assistance
- Nutritional Health Promotion
- Clinical Health Promotion
- Healthy Living Programmes
- Health Education Workshops & Presentations
- Mother and Baby Care
- Well Woman Care
- Resource Information

### Our Specialty Services include

- HIV/AIDS
- Foot Care
- Pre and Post Natal Care
- Reproductive Health Care
- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Mental Health
- Research on the Health Care of Black Women and Women of Color