



## Letter From the Director



With the cold weather upon us, and the semester winding down, let us take time to reflect on our successes and dream of the future. With renewed hope and faith, this is a time to be thankful for what is most important in our lives. A time to value our loved ones who support us in our daily challenges, but also a time to look to new friends for perspectives that will help us grow as individuals and leaders of this world-class institution.

In this issue, we interview wellness advocate and senior leader Mary Truhlar, Dean of the Stony Brook University School of Dental Medicine. Colleen's Corner discusses the *power of gratitude*, the Environmental Health & Safety team offers safe texting tips, the Stony Brook Medicine Nutrition team tackles diabetes, and our partners at Island Federal Credit Union explore your credit score.

If you'd like to contribute health and wellness articles to HEALTHIER NUWS, please email me at [bryan.weiss@stonybrook.edu](mailto:bryan.weiss@stonybrook.edu). Thank you for reading our newsletter and look for our next issue in the coming months.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours,

Bryan Weiss

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## Leading the Charge

Mary Truhlar, DDS

*Dean, School of Dental Medicine*



**Q: How do you unwind after a busy workday?**

**A:** I like to have a cup of tea, go for a walk, tend to my vegetable and flower gardens, but most importantly, try to "turn off work" such as limiting time on email and on the phone.

**Q: What is your favorite fall activity?**

**A:** Walking or hiking in forests in the fall is amazing. The colors, the sunlight and clear blue skies, the crisp air smell, and the leaves to kick around as you walk, leave me feeling invigorated and grateful that I live in such a beautiful part of the country.

**Q: What is an interesting fact about you that many people may not know?**

**A:** Having lived my early life in Australia our family spent a lot of time outdoors - participating in sports, gardening, or camping. When we came to the United States our family spent every summer at a different national park. These experiences led to my enjoyment of painting landscapes and I have signed up for an art class to work on acrylic painting techniques.

**Q: How do you fit physical activity into your busy schedule and what is your preferred type**

of workout?

**A:** I enjoy outdoor activities such as hiking, swimming, and kayaking. Getting these into my schedule is a challenge - so I focus on making the most of the weekends. This year as the daylight gets shorter and the weather less inviting I am planning on adding snowshoeing.

**Q: This Thanksgiving, what will you be most thankful for?**

**A:** I will be thankful for the capacity to recognize and enjoy those everyday opportunities that make life so special and for my friends and family to share those moments.



## Colleen's Corner

### EAP for a Happier U

By Colleen Stanley, MFT, CEAP

*Lead Coordinator*

*Stony Brook University Employee Assistance Program*

#### Gratitude

What do you do when you are bone tired and think you cannot do one more thing?

Dig deeper and do some more? Push yourself a little harder? That's what I typically do, and it's not good. When you are that tired, you are trying to tell yourself to rest. New York is a fast driven analytical place, and rewards that kind of behavior. As a culture, we have lost touch with the rhythm of nature. Moving into late autumn, things begin to slow down and the duration of daylight becomes noticeably shorter. While many of us still keep up the same frenetic pace. My body and mind are calling me to move slower, to do less. Yet I still have the same obligations at work and at home and I ask myself how do I balance those conflicting drives?

Over years of discovering how to better take care of myself, I have learned to ask myself throughout the day with gentleness and openhearted curiosity "What do I need to do to take care of myself right now? I'm pretty good at knowing, it's the follow-through that sometimes falls short. In an effort to give myself more rest, I have looked to see what I can take away, or change? Where is my time being wasted? I have reduced looking at emails, texts, social media, and TV. Try taking a break from electronic life. You are going to miss stuff. You can't keep up. We are missing our real lives.

Going for a walk in nature, taking a bath, or reading a book may give you much needed downtime and help you recalibrate.

The past few weeks I have been asking myself. *What do you want?*

*What do you really, really want?* The more I reflected on this the more I realized, I have everything that I really want and the rest is extra.

For about 10 years now, I have practiced beginning each day reviewing what I am grateful for. Peter my husband, our marriage, and love. My son, Everest. Our dog, Ike. Our health, our home. Safety in chaotic times. Each morning I go over the list before I get out of bed, sometimes adding new things and sometimes falling back asleep because I am so comforted by feeling the love for what I hold dear. These days I wonder, can I allow myself to be content?

Did you know that November is Gratitude Awareness Month? EAP invites you to complete a brief survey to share things for which you are grateful. All responses are confidential and anonymous, but we will compile a list of some of the top responses and share them on our webpage. [Click here](#) for more details.

To learn more about the *power of gratitude* go the Happier U section of the EAP website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/eap/happieru/gratitude.html>

#### SBU EAP Supports a Financially Healthier U

As a reminder, a representative from a non-profit organization, Debt Counseling Corporation, is on site monthly to provide Stony Brook employees with free debt counseling. Call the EAP @ 632-6085 to schedule your 1-1 confidential appointment.

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## Environmental Health and Safety Focus

# Safe Texting Tips

By Clifford Knee  
*Safety Training and Environmental Compliance Manager*



During a Leadership Workshop last month hosted by the Stony Brook SAIL Institute, the instructor asked a simple question. If you are walking to the bathroom and you get halfway there and realize you forgot your cell phone, would you turn around and go back to get it?

Most people, need to stay connected even when they are not sitting down or in a static state, sometimes our jobs just require this. Walking and texting is a very common thing to do, and can be dangerous if you aren't careful. The reason is simply that it takes away your ability to be alert. There are serious consequences and potential injuries that may take place if you are not careful. Many people have gotten hurt, even died simply because of not handling their texting obsession and trying to do other tasks at the same time.

Some safe texting tips:

- Never drive and text.
- Never walk while texting in a high traffic area or around hazards
- If texting, move out of the way of others and stop on the sidewalk
- Never cross the street while using an electronic device
- Do not walk with headphones on
- Be aware of the surroundings
- Always walk on the sidewalk if one is available; if you walk on the street, face oncoming traffic
- Look left, right, then left again before crossing the street
- Cross only at crosswalks

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## Core Nutrition

### The Down-Low on Diabetes

By Kathryn Hughes and Byrd Schas  
*Dietetic Interns, Department of Family, Population and Preventive Medicine, Stony Brook Medicine*

Did you know that November is National Diabetes Awareness Month? Diabetes Mellitus (DM) is a disease in which the body's ability to metabolize carbohydrates and control blood sugar is impaired. As a result, an individual with diabetes may experience blood sugar levels that are higher than normal, which can lead to many negative health effects. Early detection and treatment can decrease the risk of developing associated complications.

#### **Difference between Type 1 & Type 2 DM**

Type 1 diabetes, which is generally diagnosed in children and young adults, is an autoimmune disease which causes the pancreas to not produce insulin, the hormone that ultimately controls blood sugar in the body. This type of diabetes accounts for about 5% of all diabetes cases. Type 2 diabetes, the most common form, results when the body makes insulin, but does not use it properly. Over time, this causes blood sugars to rise, which can result in detrimental health consequences if left untreated. The earliest symptoms of chronically high blood sugar levels may include excessive thirst, urination, and fatigue.

#### **Risk Factors**

The single best predictors of type 2 diabetes are overweight and obesity. In fact, 50% of men and 70% of women who have it are obese. Lifestyle factors that lead to weight gain include poor diet choices, such as excessive intake of dietary fats and carbohydrates, and physical inactivity. The good news is that it is possible to control blood sugar with healthy eating and adequate exercise. Even a 7% weight loss can help reduce one's risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Potential risks of diabetes include:

- heart disease
- kidney and nerve damage
- foot and vision damage
- Alzheimer's Disease
- skin conditions

## Prevention & Recommendations

A healthy meal plan for people with diabetes is generally the same as a healthy eating plan for anyone - low in sugar, low in saturated and trans-fats, moderate in salt, with meals based on lean protein, non-starchy vegetables, whole grains, and healthy fats. Sugar-sweetened beverages, including natural sources such as fruit juice, should be avoided.

Contrary to popular belief, diabetics do not have to avoid carbohydrate-containing foods, such as bread, rice, starchy vegetables, fruits, and desserts. Some of these foods, especially whole fruits and whole grains, are rich sources of fiber, which plays a vital role in blood sugar control and heart health. The key is to eat mostly unprocessed carbohydrate-containing foods with lean proteins and healthy fats in quantities that facilitate weight loss and blood sugar control.

Sticking to these principles can help individuals reduce their risk of developing diabetes, or further progression of the disease. A healthy diet paired with regular physical activity can improve blood sugar control and lead to weight loss. Exercising consistently has also been associated with increased energy levels, improved sleep patterns, and reduced stress. Moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise for 150 minutes/week is recommended to achieve these benefits. Make an appointment with a nutrition intern at Employee Health in the hospital to learn more, 631-444-7767.

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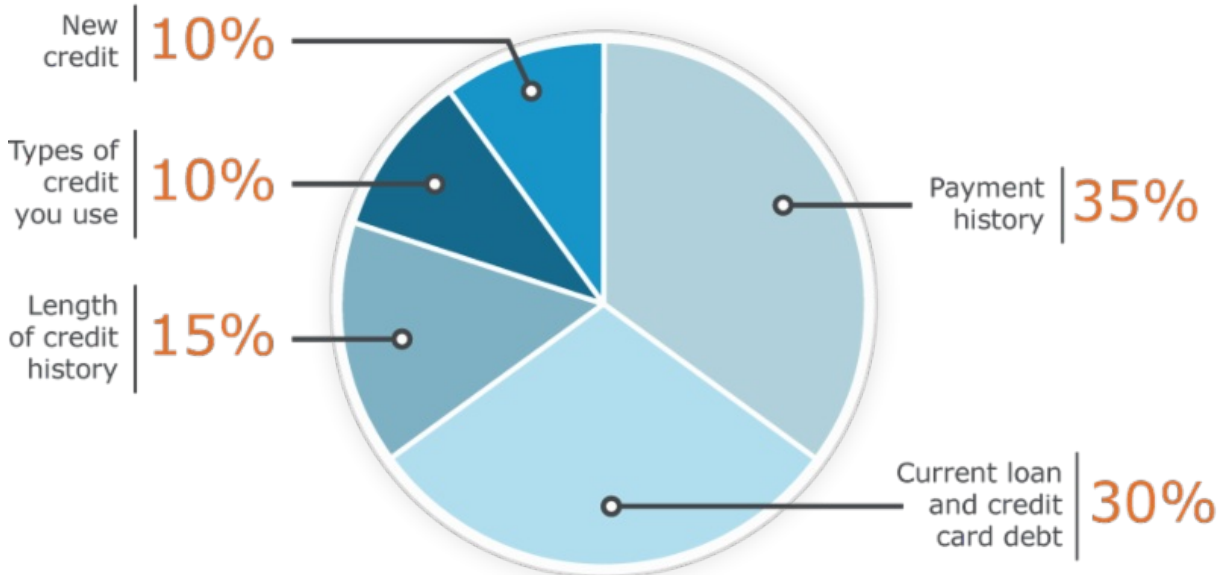
## Healthy Money

### Let's Look at Your Credit Score

By John McGregor  
VP Retail Delivery, Island Federal Credit Union

#### What makes up your credit score?

FICO® Scores take into consideration five main categories of information in your credit report.



As you examine this information, keep in mind that:

- FICO® Scores take into consideration all of these categories, not just one or two.
- The importance of any factor (piece of information) depends on the information in your entire credit report.
- FICO® Scores look only at the credit-related information on your credit report.
- FICO® Scores consider both positive and negative information on your credit report.

#### Who looks at your credit score?

Many different people or companies that you might not realize. Prospective employers, landlords, and insurance companies to name a few. How you maintain your credit tells them a lot about you financially.

- Do you pay on time? Or do you pay late?
- Do you keep trying to get credit?

- Do you use it responsibly?
- Are you maxing out your credit cards?

Based on how you use, pay, and maintain your credit will determine what you will be charged. For instance, someone with great credit would pay less for insurance than someone with poor credit. When have you looked at your credit last? It is important to review it annually to make sure everything is reported correctly and that everything on your credit report belongs to you. Don't pay to get your score. It's more important to make sure that everything is reported properly. A great resource is [annualcreditreport.com](http://annualcreditreport.com).

Questions about your credit report? How to read it? Or fix mistakes? Feel free to [email me](mailto:me) and I would be happy to help.

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## Upcoming Programs & Events

### Run for the Warriors

Run For The Warriors is a unique race dedicated to the men and women injured in Iraq and Afghanistan, their families, and families of the fallen. The Run For The Warriors race series provides wounded service members encouragement and the opportunity to pursue the sport of running, walking, or cycling to assist in their physical and emotional rehabilitation.

- Date: Sunday, November 19
- Time: 9:00am
- Location: Stony Brook University, South P Lot

The 5K and 1-mile walk/run is open to all and the event is all adaptive equipment friendly. For more information and to register, please [click here](#). Stony Brook students receive the discounted registration fee of \$10.

### Emergency Preparedness Workshop

With severe weather becoming more frequent and extreme, it is more important than ever to be prepared for disasters. The New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), together with Stony Brook University, is holding a training course that will give you the knowledge and tools to prepare for emergencies and disasters, respond accordingly, and recover as quickly as possible.

- Date: Wednesday, December 6
- Time: 1-2pm
- Location: Charles B. Wang Center Chapel

All participants will receive:

- FREE travel first aid kit and flashlight\* compliments of the Stony Brook University Employee Assistance Program
- Training completion certificate
- Wallet-sized z-card with emergency preparedness information
- Complimentary pizza and water

All participants will also be entered into a raffle to win one of three [NYS Disaster Preparedness Kits](#) as well as other Healthier U merchandise. Visit the Healthier U Events [webpage](#) for more information and to register for this free event.

### Ombuds Workshops at the Health Sciences Center

#### Test Your Knowledge About Conflict - Take the Conflict Awareness Quiz

There are many myths about conflict. Some of them relate to our experiences as children witnessing how relationships worked or did not work and how conflict was resolved or not resolved. These early experiences shaped how we handle conflict as adults. This workshop challenges our understanding about conflict. Together we will dispel the myths about conflicts.

- Date: Wednesday, December 6
- Time: 12-1pm
- Location: Level 2, Room 160

#### What's Your Communication Style?

Learning about your preferred communication style can give you a good assessment of both your strengths and where to make meaningful improvements in your communication skills. You will learn how your style affects your daily behavior and your interactions with others. (Style Inventory to be completed prior to workshop).

- Date: Tuesday, December 12
- Time: 12-1pm
- Location: Level 2, Room 154

### **Managing Difficult Conversations: A Training for Supervisors**

As a supervisor, it is your responsibility to not only oversee the work of your employees, but also to teach, support and counsel your employees. This means meeting with your employees about their job performance, including performance goals, progress and behavior. Your job and your relationship with your employees are made much easier when you have the knowledge, skills and confidence to manage difficult conversations. This workshop is divided into 4 sections: Difficult Conversations, Conflict Communication Skills, Active Listening Skills, and Role Play Scenarios.

- Date: Thursday, December 14
- Time: 12-2pm
- Location: Level 2, Room 158

The Ombuds Office provides confidential, and impartial assistance for staff, faculty, and students by listening to their concerns, facilitating communication and conflict resolution and offering information and referral. For more information on any of these workshops and to sign up, please [click here](#) or contact the Office of the University Ombudsman at 631-632-9200.



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