

heart health news

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Healing moments

Change is difficult. We get comfortable with our lives, our behaviors and our actions. We become what we practice. If, for your well-being, change is necessary, be open to it. Every moment is an opportunity to start over.

Deep relaxation is the physical feeling most conducive to healing. Central Maine Medical Center's Cardiac Rehab classes now include techniques that will lead you to healing moments. Relaxation exercises like the one that follows will help you recover from heart-related events or procedures.

Inhale through your nose, flex your body and release tightness as you exhale through your mouth.

Focus on a short phrase: "The time to

change is now" or "My mind is at peace."

Ask yourself: What actions do I need to take in order to change? What do I need to let go of? If I continue to do what I've always done, I'll continue to have what I've always had. Think different, have different.

Imagine yourself being open to change. Envision yourself changing.

Focus on the most positive emotions associated with the gift of health—a deep sense of peace and timeless contentment. Inhale and exhale. Retrieve your energy and courage. Release your fear of leaving your comfort zone.

Know that you can be at peace with this situation. You *are* capable of changing for good. ♥



cardioCURRENTS

{ NEWS AND TIPS FOR THE HEART-CONSCIOUS }



Good nutrition important at any age

We should eat right at every stage of life, but this is especially true for older adults. Most don't get all the nutrients they need, which can lead to malnutrition. They could be depressed, have difficulty chewing or take medicines that suppress appetite. Not eating well can lead to digestive and heart problems, muscle weakness, a weakened immune system and a greater chance of infections. If you think a loved one may be malnourished, observe his or her eating habits and look for outward signs of malnutrition (easy bruising, poor wound healing, dental problems, weight loss). Or ask your loved one's doctor to test his or her protein levels, which can help spot malnutrition.

The buzz on energy drinks

Energy drinks are the perfect way to give you some added oomph, right? Not if you have a heart problem. While many of the drinks claim to help your concentration, rev up your metabolism and boost your athletic performance, they may really only deliver a whole lot of sugar and caffeine. Excessive caffeine consumption has been tied to higher heartbeat rates, high blood pressure, anxiety, headaches, sleep problems and dehydration. And although some drinks' labels warn people with heart ailments or those under age 18 to avoid them, not all drinks do. A better energy bet? Trail mix and a glass of low-fat milk or diluted juice.

Roll up your sleeves and donate

Maybe you just never thought about giving blood. Or maybe you wanted to donate but were too busy. Whatever the reason, now is the time to do it. Log on to the American Red Cross' blood donation site at www.givelife.org to find a blood drive near you. Or just head to your local blood bank—most don't require an appointment. Check out www.aabb.org to find a blood bank near you. Need more inspiration? Check out these facts about donating blood, courtesy of America's Blood Centers:

- ▶ Thirty-eight percent of Americans are eligible to donate blood, but fewer than 10 percent actually do every year. To give, you must be at least 16 or 17 years old, weigh at least 110 pounds and be in overall good health. Certain conditions, such as pregnancy, make you ineligible.
- ▶ You can't get AIDS or any other infectious disease by donating blood.
- ▶ Blood can be separated into different parts: red blood cells, plasma, platelets and cryoprecipitate. These life-saving components can help everyone from burn victims to cancer patients.



▶ DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ **Women with metabolic syndrome are three times more likely to die of a heart attack or a stroke and are up to 30 times more likely to develop diabetes than women without the condition.**
- ▶ **Broken heart syndrome is a real condition that mimics a heart attack and occurs after hearing bad news or experiencing stress.**
- ▶ **A short-term illness such as a cold or the flu can affect a cholesterol test's accuracy—wait six weeks after you recover to have the test.**

Weighing in on diabetes

Is weight-loss surgery the answer?

About a third of Americans are obese, and with those extra pounds often comes diabetes. Now, several recent studies suggest that the various forms of weight-loss surgery can not only help overweight people shed weight, but the procedures may also stop diabetes in its tracks.

SUCCESS STORIES

► Last year, an Australian study found that three-quarters of patients who underwent laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding, or Lap-Band surgery, a reversible procedure in which the surgeon places a band across the top part of the stomach, creating a pouch the size of a walnut, got their blood sugar levels down to normal and no longer needed insulin or other diabetes medication.

► Another recent study of obese people found that the death rate was lower for people who had weight-loss surgery than for those who didn't. Diabetes-related deaths were reduced by 92 percent among those who chose the surgical route.

► Past research has shown significant improvements in diabetes, blood pressure, cholesterol and sleep apnea for those who underwent weight-loss surgery.

It's still unclear how surgery improves diabetes (it may be more than just the weight loss), and it may not affect the secondary effects of diabetes, like neuropathy (nerve pain) or retinopathy (damage to blood vessels in the retina). In any case, experts aren't calling weight-loss surgery a diabetes cure, so it's wise to be cautious.

IS SURGERY FOR YOU?

Experts generally only recommend surgery for the severely obese—men who are at least 100 pounds overweight and women who are at least 80 pounds overweight. In some cases, healthcare providers recommend surgery for people who don't meet that guideline but have a serious condition like diabetes or heart disease.

Weight-loss surgery isn't a minor procedure. Serious or even fatal complications can occur. And it's not a free pass to eat whatever you want. If you don't change your eating habits and stay active, the weight—and the diabetes—can return.

As researchers continue to study the full impact of weight-loss surgery on diabetes, your best bet is to talk with your healthcare professional if you're considering the surgery. ♥



Could surgery be an option for obese teens with type 2 diabetes as well? Maybe.

Researchers with the National Institutes of Health are currently investigating this. The five-year study will follow 200 adolescents who undergo weight-loss surgery and compare their results to those of 200 adults who do.

Preliminary research suggests it may reverse their diabetes. In a study of 78 teens with type 2 diabetes, 11 underwent Lap-Band surgery. The others were treated using a controlled diet, oral medications and insulin.

Teens who had surgery lost 34 percent of their weight, on average. They also saw improvement in blood pressure, cholesterol and insulin, and their diabetes went into remission. The others lost an average of two pounds and still needed diabetes drugs.

Researchers are optimistic that weight-loss surgery may help prevent long-term diabetes damage and complications in teens. But some experts urge caution, as the surgery doesn't fix the root of the teen obesity problem: bad eating habits and inactive lifestyles.

Central Maine Medical Family

Community Health & Wellness Programs and Events

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Central Maine Medical Center
Call 207-795-2106 or register online at www.cmmc.org.

GARDENING FOR HEALTH

Presented by Jeri Maurer, M.S.W.

► **May 4, 1:30 p.m., or May 7, 6 p.m., conference rooms A, B and C**

ICD SUPPORT GROUP

PATIENT SHARING

Presented by Joe Sala, P.A.

► **April 16, 2:30–4 p.m., Y1 conference room**

ICD SUPPORT GROUP

SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH

Presented by Roy Ullin, M.D.

► **May 21, 2:30–4 p.m., Y1 conference room**

SKIN HEALTH

Presented by Peter Bouman, M.D.

► **June 8, 1:30 p.m., or June 11, 6 p.m.**

CREATIVE WAYS TO MANAGE STRESS

Presented by Monica Dawe, M.S.

► **June 18, 2:30–4 p.m., Y1 conference room**

MENDED HEARTS

Presented by Cheryl Strout, R.N.

► **Meets the second Thursday of each month, 5 p.m., Y1 conference room**

Affiliated with the American Heart Association, this patient-run support group offers support to heart disease patients and their families. Call 207-795-8230 for details.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Bridgton Hospital

EVERY DAY IN A WOMAN'S LIFE HEALTH FAIR

► **June 6, 8:30 a.m.–1 p.m., Bridgton Hospital**
Call 207-647-6055 for details.

CANCER AND ONCOLOGY

All programs are free and open to cancer patients, survivors and caregivers. Unless noted, please call The Patrick Dempsey Center for Cancer Hope & Healing at 207-795-8250 or 1-877-336-7287 for more information or to register. Preregistration is required to ensure adequate space and refreshments.

RELAXATION

Presented by Marcy Covey

► **April 7, 1:30–3 p.m., Patrick Dempsey Center**

Learn how to meet life's challenges in a gentle fashion.

CREATING ORIGAMI ART: A BEGINNER'S WORKSHOP

Presented by Whitney Elle Stone

► **April 8, 1:30–3 p.m., conference room I**

Learn about the ancient art of Japanese paper folding and create unique art through geometric folds and crease patterns.

MAINE BUDDY PROGRAM TRAINING SESSION

► **May 2, 8:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m., Patrick Dempsey Center**

Hosted by the Patrick Dempsey Center and offered by The Cancer Community Center, this program will train you to help people in Maine whose lives have been affected by cancer. Lunch will be provided. For more information or to register, contact Jani Druck at 207-774-2200 or e-mail jani@CancerCommunityCenter.org.

FOOD FOR LIFE—EATING RIGHT FOR CANCER SURVIVORSHIP

Presented by Catherine DiCocoa

► **April 20, 1:30–3 p.m., conference room H, CMMC**
► **April 22, 1:30–3 p.m., large boardroom, Bridgton Hospital**
► **April 23, 1:30–3 p.m., room 357, Rumford Hospital**

Have fun learning about low-fat, plant-based foods that can help to nourish your body and strengthen your immune system.

FINDING RELIABLE CANCER INFORMATION

Presented by Maureen Fournier, M.L.S., CMMC Health Sciences Librarian

► **April 20, 1:30–3 p.m., conference room I, CMMC**
Learn how to sort through and find the most recent, reliable, oncologist-approved information.

YOUR CREATIVE COMPASS

► **Meets Tuesdays, May 5–June 9, 4–6 p.m., conference room I, CMMC**
Presented by Cindy Visbaras, R.N., Health Educator at Bates College
During this six-week expressive arts class, access your inner wisdom and express your true colors through collage, image making, journaling and more. All supplies are provided, and no experience is necessary.

FREE BRA FITTINGS AND PROSTHETIC DEMONSTRATIONS

► **May 5, 9 a.m.–3 p.m., Sam & Jennie Bennett Breast Care Center**
Call 207-795-2100 to schedule a time.

WATERCOLOR PAINTING

Presented by Donna Kantor

► **May 6, 1:30–3 p.m., cafeteria conference room, Bridgton Hospital**
Learn easy-to-master watercolor techniques and principles. All materials provided or bring your own.

MANAGING CANCER-RELATED PAIN

Presented by Patricia Perry, oncology nurse, and Emily Ecker, LCSW
► **May 7, 1:30–3 p.m., room 357, Rumford Hospital**
This presentation, developed as an

American Cancer Society "I CAN COPE" module, provides an overview of pain, medical treatments to control pain and nonmedical strategies to help empower and help you build a repertoire of self-care techniques.

CHEMOTHERAPY-RELATED MEMORY AND ATTENTION PROBLEMS: WHAT ARE THEY AND WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Presented by Dr. Robert Ferguson, clinical psychologist with Behavioral Medicine and the Rehabilitation Service of Eastern Maine Medical Center

► **May 13, 1:30–3 p.m., conference room I, CMMC**

This discussion will summarize current knowledge of chemotherapy-related memory problems, the latest thinking about how to treat problems and practical steps survivors and families can take to cope with cognitive problems associated with cancer treatment.

CANCER WELLNESS & SUPPORT GROUP

► **Wednesdays, 1:30–3 p.m., conference room I, CMMC**
► **Thursdays, 1:30–3 p.m., room 357, Rumford Hospital**

Learn skills to enhance wellness and healing.

CARING CARDS STAMPING SESSIONS

► **Meets the third Thursday of each month, 6–7:30 p.m., Patrick Dempsey Center**

Create uplifting notecards for cancer patients. Sessions are free and notecards and some stamps and materials will be provided. Attendees are welcome to bring their own supplies as well.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

► **Mondays, 6–7:30 p.m., Patrick Dempsey Center**

Support and education for adults with loved ones facing cancer, facilitated by a licensed clinical oncology social worker.

GUIDANCE THROUGH GRIEF SERIES

► **Meets Tuesdays, May 5–June 23, 6–7:30 p.m., CMMC**

An eight-week education and

support group for grieving adults jointly offered by CMMC and Androscoggin Home Care & Hospice. For more information or to register, contact Jim Douglas at **207-777-7740**.

KNITTING CIRCLE

► **Wednesdays, 6:30–8:30 p.m., Patrick Dempsey Center**

Join our weekly knitting circle. You may bring your own projects, and we will also be working on creating hats, lap blankets, bra inserts, etc., that will be donated to cancer patients. Light refreshments will be provided.

LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER

► **Meets the third Wednesday of the month, 10 a.m.–noon, Sam & Jennie Bennett Breast Care Center**

This American Cancer Society program helps patients cope with changes in appearance related to cancer and treatment. Participants are provided a free makeup kit and taught how to use the cosmetics to look and feel their best. Please note that sessions and wigs are available to all cancer patients, not just those with breast cancer.

MASSAGE THERAPY SERVICES

Therapeutic massage therapy services are provided to CMMC cancer patients, survivors and caregivers every Tuesday and Thursday. Contact the center to learn more or to schedule an appointment.

PROSTATE SUPPORT GROUP

► **Meets the last Wednesday of the month, 6–7:30 p.m., conference room C, CMMC**

Education and support for men and families living with prostate cancer. Group facilitator is Sarah Lawson-Link, R.N., O.C.N. Call **207-795-2440** for more information.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ONCOLOGY NETWORKING GROUP

► **Meets the second Monday of each month, 8–9 a.m., Patrick Dempsey Center**

An opportunity for clinical and medical social workers, counselors and chaplains who work with cancer patients to share resources regarding challenging cases.

YOGA FOR LIFE

► **Meets Thursdays, April 2–June 11, 11 a.m.–noon, CMMC Wellness Center**

Gentle yoga classes for people of all fitness levels. Classes are free for cancer patients, survivors and caregivers.

TELECONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Join us in the Patrick Dempsey Center for free telephone education workshops for people living with cancer, presented by national experts and offered by Cancer-Care, Inc. Register in advance by calling **207-795-8250**.

You may also listen at home by registering through Cancer-Care, Inc., **1-800-813-4673** or www.cancercare.org.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES IN CANCER TREATMENT

► **April 1, 1:30–2:30 p.m.**

MEDICAL UPDATE ON COLON CANCER: WHAT'S NEW?

► **April 2, 1:30–2:30 p.m.**

TREATMENT UPDATE ON GLIOBLASTOMA

► **April 23, 1:30–2:30 p.m.**

DENTAL HEALTH DURING CANCER TREATMENTS

► **April 24, 1:30–2:30 p.m.**

BREAST CANCER AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN

► **April 29, 1:30–2:30 p.m.**

The Seventh Annual Cancer Survivorship Series: Living With, Through and Beyond Cancer

MANAGING THE STRESS OF SURVIVORSHIP*

► **April 14, 1:30–2:30 p.m.**

*Attend a group listening session at Rumford Hospital, conference room

THE IMPORTANCE OF NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

► **May 19, 1:30–2:30 p.m.**

SURVIVORS TOO: FAMILY, FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES—MANAGING THE FATIGUE OF CAREGIVING

► **June 23, 1:30–2:30 p.m.**



TRUE OR FALSE

If you want to be heart healthy, you have to be heart smart. Test your knowledge by answering true or false to the following statements (answers below).

STATEMENTS

1. Depression affects about 10 percent of people who've had a heart attack. T F
2. The American Heart Association certifies foods it considers heart healthy. T F
3. The best type of exercise for your heart is lifting weights. T F
4. Stress is directly linked to long-term high blood pressure, or hypertension. T F

ANSWERS

1. FALSE: Up to 65 percent of heart attack survivors suffer from depression—and that increases their risk of dying. Why? Depressed heart patients may be less likely to follow recommendations for diet, exercise and medication. Depression may also affect your heart rate and encourage clots. That's why the American Heart Association recommends all heart patients be screened for depression.

2. TRUE: The AHA has created a convenient logo that's displayed on a wide variety of foods that meet its standards. Look for a heart checkmark symbol and the words "Meets American Heart Association food criteria for saturated fat and cholesterol for healthy people over age 2."

3. FALSE: Strength training can certainly tone muscles, build strength and lay the groundwork for healthy bones, but it's aerobic exercise that gets the heart pumping and raises your heart rate. Try walking, jogging, swimming or biking.

4. FALSE: This hasn't been proven. That's because other behaviors linked to stress, such as overeating and smoking, send blood pressure soaring, too. But stress can briefly elevate blood pressure. These spikes, if they happen enough, can damage your blood vessels, heart and kidneys.

At the heart of arrhythmias



Did your heart just skip a beat? You may have an arrhythmia.

An arrhythmia is a change in the way your heart beats. Arrhythmias usually occur because there's something wrong with the heart's electrical system. But stress, anxiety, excessive caffeine or nicotine, medications or illegal drugs can also cause arrhythmias. So can high blood pressure, heart failure and other conditions. You may have no symptoms or you may experience:

- ▶ palpitations or a feeling that your heart's skipped a beat or is beating too hard
- ▶ a slow heartbeat or pauses between heartbeats
- ▶ tiredness or light-headedness
- ▶ loss of consciousness or feeling faint
- ▶ shortness of breath
- ▶ chest pain
- ▶ excessive sweating
- ▶ anxiety

THE MANY FORMS OF ARRHYTHMIA

Atrial fibrillation: Your heart beats too fast and irregularly in the upper chambers. This can increase your risk of stroke. It requires treatment.

Bradycardia: Your heart beats too slowly. This can be a sign of another health problem, such as an underactive thyroid or a

potassium imbalance. It can also be the result of having a heart attack or taking medication such as beta-blockers.

Tachycardia: Your heart beats fast. Common types include:
▶ **Paroxysmal atrial tachycardia (PAT),** a fast heartbeat that starts and ends suddenly. It's more common in young people and may occur during exercise. It often causes no problems.

▶ **Ventricular tachycardia,** also a fast heartbeat. If it lasts too long, it can turn into a deadly ventricular fibrillation.

Ventricular fibrillation: The heart quivers instead of pumping, leading to loss of consciousness—and even death—within seconds if not treated immediately with a shock to the heart.

Ectopic beats: Your heart has an extra beat or beats. Seek treatment if you have a heart condition or you experience too many extra beats in a row.

IS IT SERIOUS?

Your provider can test your heartbeat to see whether you have an arrhythmia. If you do, you may not need treatment—but you should adopt a healthier lifestyle. Or you may need medicine, surgery or a pacemaker to correct it. In any case, err on the side of caution and see your healthcare provider. ♥

Grape news!

The secret ingredient for a healthy heart?

Have you heard about resveratrol? It's a substance found in the skin and seeds of grapes that may help prevent dangerous clots from forming in the arteries. It may also help ward off obesity and diabetes, and red wine may be its best source. That's because it's fermented with grape skins for longer periods than white wine is, so it has more resveratrol.

THE RESEARCH ON RESVERATROL

Alcohol has been found to raise good cholesterol, prevent blood clots and help prevent damage caused by bad cholesterol. In 2000, a large Danish study found that drinking moderate amounts of red wine cut the risk of dying from heart disease in half. But other studies found that red wine wasn't any better than other alcoholic drinks, such as beer and liquor. Still, some experts believe red wine contains something special that seems to improve heart health. And they think that something is resveratrol.

DRINKER BEWARE

Despite the potential benefits, experts are wary of encouraging everyone to drink up, as some people are more apt to become addicted to drinking. Plus, excessive alcohol consumption has been

linked to high blood pressure, cancer, stroke, obesity, heart failure, arrhythmias, pancreas inflammation, liver disease and elevated triglycerides. And many resveratrol studies were done on mice, not humans, using incredibly large amounts of resveratrol. To get the same dose, you'd have to drink cases of red wine—something no healthcare provider would recommend.

HEART-HEALTHY HABITS

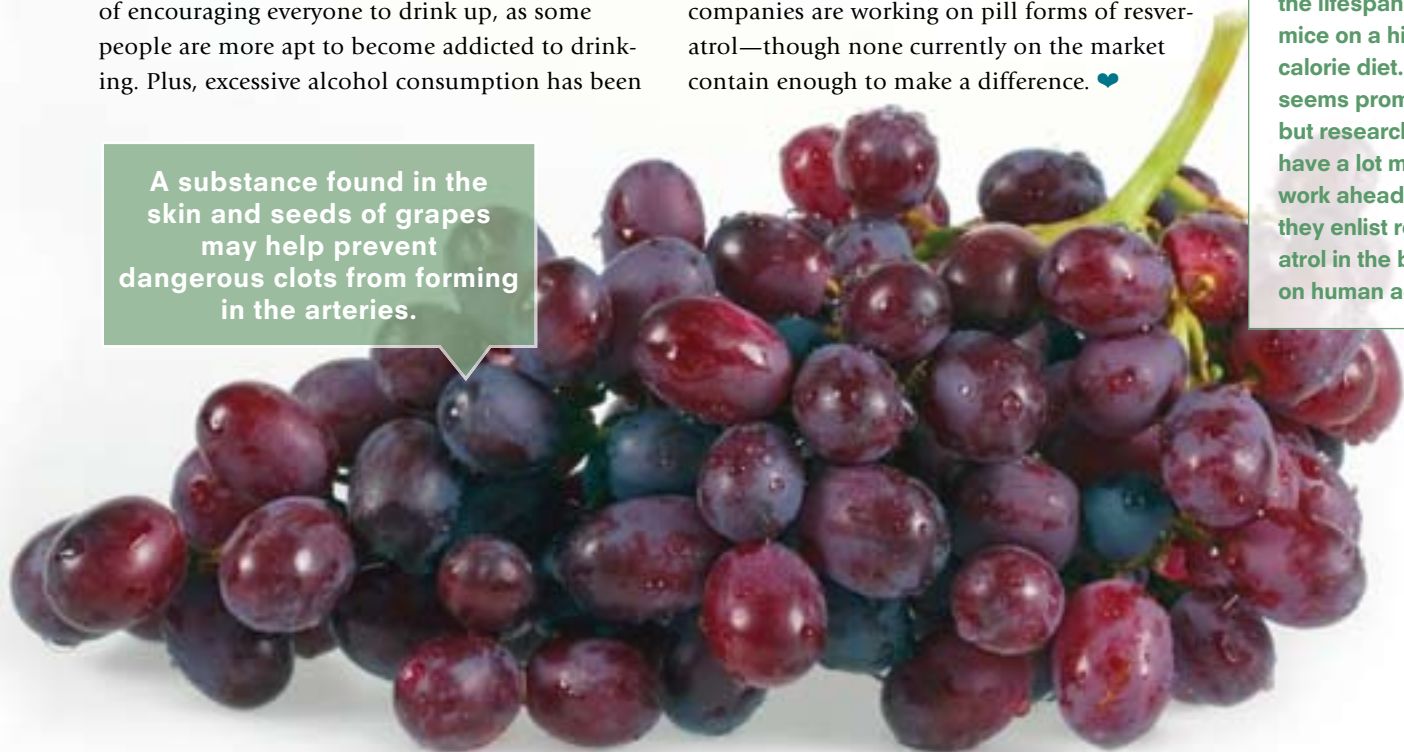
The American Heart Association doesn't recommend drinking red wine for your heart. Instead, the group strongly suggests the tried-and-true path: Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains; exercise; stop smoking; if you drink, do so in moderation (one drink a day for women, two for men); control your blood pressure and cholesterol; and maintain a healthy weight.

And red wine may not be the only game in town. You may be able to get the same heart-healthy benefits by eating grapes or drinking red or purple grape juice. Peanuts, blueberries and cranberries also contain some resveratrol. Several companies are working on pill forms of resveratrol—though none currently on the market contain enough to make a difference. ♥

THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH?

Recent research has found that resveratrol may help slow age- and obesity-related heart problems—at least in mice. A National Institutes of Health study noted that resveratrol reduced total cholesterol, controlled heart inflammation, improved the functioning of the aorta and mimicked the effects of heart-healthy calorie restriction. Resveratrol even increased the lifespan of the mice on a high-calorie diet. It seems promising, but researchers have a lot more work ahead before they enlist resveratrol in the battle on human aging.

A substance found in the skin and seeds of grapes may help prevent dangerous clots from forming in the arteries.



For more information, call
207-753-3910 or write to

Central Maine Heart and Vascular
Institute, 300 Main Street, Lewiston,
Maine 04240 or

visit us online at www.cmhvi.org.

The mission of the Central Maine Heart and Vascular Institute is to develop a comprehensive, integrated program providing cardiovascular services from prevention and screening to treatment and rehabilitation that are high quality, efficient and patient/family-focused.



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The class offerings and current schedules vary depending on the season and instructor availability. Classes are subject to cancellation due to lack of participation. For more information, call **207-795-2473** or visit our Web Site at www.cmmc.org and click "Wellness Solutions."

♥ Sessions begin April 13.

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>DAY(S)</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>COST</u>
Ballroom Review	F	7:45–8:35 p.m.	\$40/person for 6-week series
Belly Dancing (all levels)	W	7:15–8:15 p.m.	\$60 for 6-week series
Fit-n-Fun	T,TH	9:30–10:30 a.m.	\$25/month
Flexible Body, Flexible Life	W	5:30–6:30 p.m.	\$48 for 6-week series
Functional Fitness	M,W,F	noon–12:30 p.m.	Call for cost
Happy Hearts	M,W,F	8–9 a.m., 9–10:30 a.m. 10:30–11:30 a.m., 1–2:30 p.m.	\$35/month
Hypnotherapy for Weight Loss	W	6:30–7:45 p.m.	\$45 for 4-week series
Personal Fitness	T,TH	8–9 a.m., 9:30–10:30 a.m., 10:45–11:45 a.m.	\$25/month
Pilates	TH	4:30–5:30 p.m.	Call for cost
Power Plus	T, TH	5:30–6:30 a.m.	Call for cost
Rumba & Cha Cha	F	6:30–7:30 p.m.	\$40/person for 6-week series
Step Aerobics	M,W,F	3:45–4:45 p.m.	Call for cost
T'ai Chi (all levels)	T	6:30–7:30 p.m.	\$55 for 6-week series
Yoga	T	4–5:30 p.m. or 6:30–8 p.m.	\$35 for 6-week series, 1 day/ week or \$60 for 2 days/week
Zumba	M	5–6 p.m.	\$48 for 6-week series, 1 day/ week or \$84 for 2 days/week
	Sa.	10–11 a.m.	