



Letter From the Director



As we close the door on another successful semester at Stony Brook University and the holiday season upon us, now is an appropriate time to reflect on your efforts and take pride in your accomplishments, both personal and professional. We can also take this time to learn from our challenges and look ahead to the start of a new year and new opportunities for advancement.

I am excited to announce the launch of the Healthier U Wellness Portal, a centralized and fully integrated web-based tool that will serve as the access point for all our health and wellness programs, incentive campaigns, educational workshops and other initiatives. The portal will provide a personalized health and wellness experience for each employee and is designed to change the way the Stony Brook community thinks about lifestyle choices and to embed healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

As one of only eight academic institutions across the country offering this comprehensive platform, Stony Brook leadership is reaffirming its commitment to the health and well-being of its employees and taking the next steps to being an industry leader in the wellness sector. Please visit the Healthier U Wellness Portal [homepage](#) for more information and sign-up details.

In this issue we interview wellness advocate and senior leader Michael A. Bernstein, our new Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Colleen's Corner discusses greeting emotions with mindfulness, our Environmental Health & Safety team talks workplace safety, the Stony Brook Medicine Nutrition team offers tips for a positively healthy holiday and our resident RD provides a new spin on a seasonal classic with a low-fat eggnog recipe.

If you'd like to contribute health and wellness articles to HEALTHIER NUWS, please email me at bryan.weiss@stonybrook.edu. Thank you for reading our newsletter and look for our next issue in the new year.

Wishing all the best to the Stony Brook community this joyous time of year and may you experience brilliant memories that will linger long after the holiday season is over.

Bryan Weiss



Leading the Charge

Michael A. Bernstein

Provost

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Q: How do you personally invest in your health?

A: My health "regimen" involves maintenance of a protein-rich, low-carbohydrate diet - which allows me to maintain an appropriate weight and body mass index. I also exercise at least three mornings a week - focusing my routine on some weight-lifting, sit-ups and a 30-minute cardio-aerobic run.

Q: What is a special holiday tradition that makes you smile?

A: The holiday tradition we enjoy the most in my family is a "Secret Santa" practice (for the adults). Each of us is assigned (by someone selected for the task) one other adult member of the family for whom we purchase a gift. Half the fun, once the gifts are opened, is guessing who your "Secret Santa" was!

Q: How do you unwind after a busy day?

A: After a busy day, what I look forward to the most is sitting down with Patti and talking through both our days, catching up on family news and planning the next day to come.

Q: Do you have a New Year's resolution for 2017?

A: With each new year, rather than focus on "resolutions", I try to reflect on the year past, taking stock of all for which I am most grateful in life (health, family, friends, happiness and love).

Q: Most recent book read or movie seen?

A: The most recent movie I saw was "Moonlight" - a truly extraordinary and powerful film!



Colleen's Corner

EAP for a Happier U

By Colleen Stanley, MFT, CEAP
*Lead Coordinator
Stony Brook University Employee Assistance Program*

Loneliness & Mindfulness

My son, Everest, recently traveled to Thailand for an amazing adventure studying a semester abroad. This is the first time we have been separated by such a great distance. Within the first two days we were FaceTiming and Everest shared that he was surprised to feel so lonely. My motherly instinct went from anxious to full panic (SAVE THE BABY!) and I thought how can I fix this? I relaxed, breathed in deeply, and said "well, that's OK...what a normal response to the situation that you are in". I reminded him that the loneliness was an emotion moving through him and it would pass. Be gentle with yourself and allow yourself to feel the loneliness. What else did he feel? Love and connection to his mother? Yes. Gratitude? Yes. We are amazing beings in our ability to feel different emotions strongly at the same time.

When we leaned into the loneliness, we discovered that connection was the antidote. How do you feel connected? One important connection is with our relationships with friends and family. Other important connections are to ourselves, and to something larger. I feel this connection when I pray, when I am in nature, when I am in water, when I see something beautiful, when I am being creative, and when I focus simply on breathing in and breathing out. We are all on a spiritual journey whether we are conscious of that or not. Everest's time in Thailand is part of his spiritual journey to connect with himself and his own quite-wise inner-voice. When I can be in that place of calm knowing, I am less afraid and relax more.

Mindfulness teaches us that Pain + Resistance = Suffering. We have little control over the pain (loneliness in Everest's case). However, when he was able to lean into it rather than resist it, suffering was reduced and loving feelings blossomed. What are the fears that you face on your journey? Is it possible to lean into them with compassion and openheartedness?

For more resources that can help create positive effects in your life, visit the Employee Assistance Program's Happier U [homepage](#).

Environmental Health and Safety Focus

Preventing Workplace Slips, Trips & Falls

By Clifford Knee, *Safety Training and Environmental Compliance Manager*

It only takes a momentary lapse of inattention or distraction by an activity that ends in a slip, trip or fall. A stumble down a stairway, a trip over an uneven surface or slipping on ice can lead to a variety of regrettable events ranging from a simple bruised shin to an extremely serious injury. Slips, trips and falls account for a large portion of recordable injuries at Stony Brook University and according to the U.S. Department of Labor, slips, trips and falls make up the majority of general industry accidents, which account for:

- 15 percent of all accidental deaths per year, the second-leading cause behind motor vehicles
- About 25 percent of all reported injury claims per fiscal year
- More than 95 million lost work days per year - about 65 percent of all work days lost

In general, slips and trips occur due to a loss of traction between the shoe and the walking surface or an inadvertent contact with a fixed or movable object which may lead to a fall. There are a variety of situations that may cause slips, trips and falls.

- Wet or greasy floors
- Dry floors with wood dust or powder
- Uneven walking surfaces
- Polished or freshly waxed floors
- Loose flooring, carpeting or mats
- Transition from one floor type to another
- Missing or uneven floor tiles and bricks
- Damaged or irregular steps; no handrails
- Sloped walking surfaces
- Shoes with wet, muddy, greasy or oily soles
- Clutter
- Electrical cords or cables
- Open desk or file cabinet drawers
- Damaged ladder steps
- Ramps and gang planks without skid-resistant surfaces
- Metal surfaces - dock plates, construction plates
- Weather hazards - rain, sleet, ice, snow, hail, frost
- Wet leaves or pine needles

Here are six guidelines to help you create a safer working environment for you and your employees.

1. Create good housekeeping practices
2. Reduce wet or slippery surfaces
3. Avoid creating obstacles in aisles and walkways
4. Create and maintain proper lighting
5. Wear proper shoes
6. Control individual behavior

For more tips and resources to help keep your workplace safe, visit the Environmental Health and Safety homepage at stonybrook.edu/ehs/.

Core Nutrition

A Positively Healthy Holiday

By Caitlin Cassidy, *Dietetic Intern, Nutrition Division, Department of Family Population and Preventive Medicine, Stony Brook Medicine*

It's that time of year again, and nothing is more infamous for stomping on our healthful habits like the holiday season. As we enter this period each year vowing to keep our portions small and our trips to the gym frequent, it isn't long before the holiday cheer begins to build, free time wanes, and our regular healthy habits are replaced with holiday cookies and eggnog. So let's try something new this year. Instead of focusing on what we can't have this holiday, let's try introducing a few positive changes to help us wrap up the holiday season feeling relaxed, refreshed, and ready to take on the new year.

- **Eat mindfully** - While watching a television show or having a conversation, have you ever suddenly eaten through the whole bag of chips without even noticing? Eating amongst distractions allows us to ignore our internal signals of hunger and fullness. Eating becomes mindless and before you know it, you're full to the point of discomfort. Instead of continually grazing at holiday parties, try this method: Take a walk around the buffet and evaluate. Take notice of your favorite foods, and foods that you can live without. Now, make yourself a plate. Take

a seat, and take your time to enjoy your meal, paying special attention to the rich smells and flavors, and chewing each bite completely. Between bites, or while conversing with your neighbor, put your fork down until you are ready to mindfully take another bite. Taking your time and paying careful attention to each bite will allow you to continually assess how you're feeling, and determine when you've had enough before it's too late.

- **Stay balanced** - It often feels natural on a day leading up to a big meal or holiday party to "save calories" and hold off on eating until the big event. By fasting all day, not only will you be ravenous by meal time, losing inhibitions and likely eating far more than you normally would, you've also already tricked your body into thinking it is starving. This causes your metabolism to slow down and burn less energy. On the big day, consume your balanced meals like usual. Include lean protein, tons of fiber in the form of non-starchy vegetables, and healthy fats like olive oil, avocado and nut butters. This will prevent the party-time binge and the guilt that follows.
- **Pile on the veggies** - Non-starchy vegetables are the key to a healthy diet. Extremely low in calories but high in fiber, these powerhouses fill you up without contributing to weight gain. Make it a habit to fill half your plate with a variety of these at all meals and snacks. This trick helps while eating mindfully because you can easily fill up on fibrous foods leaving little room for the higher calorie options. Your typical holiday meal doesn't have much of these? Get creative and incorporate some veggie-based side dishes. Remember, increasing healthful foods doesn't mean eliminating your favorite sides. Get creative and pick a new recipe to add to the rotation, you never know - it could earn its own permanent spot on the roster!
- **Freeze or gift leftover desserts** - Hosting a holiday is stressful, and avoiding the post-party leftovers is even worse. Prepare yourself with disposable containers and large zip lock bags to send your guests home with treats! Still have some left? Pack them up and store them in the freezer for the next family gathering or special occasion.
- **Engage in some form of exercise, and like it!** - The holidays are a time to be thankful, and what more to be thankful for than the ability to use our bodies? Make the most of this! Try a new workout class with your family members visiting from out of town, or ask for a month-long membership to a gym or fitness facility you've been interested in checking out. Stop making exercise a chore and start looking at it as a privilege that not everyone is fortunate enough to enjoy. To top it off, regular exercise is proven to help with weight maintenance, improve self-esteem and may even eliminate some guilt over those cinnamon buns!



Healthy Eats

Low-Fat Eggnog

By Stephanie May, *Campus Dining Registered Dietitian*

Serving Size: 1/2 cup

Makes: 6 servings

Ingredients

2 cups nonfat milk
1 teaspoon orange and/or lemon zest
3 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 large eggs plus 1 egg yolk
1/3 cup sugar
1 teaspoon cornstarch
Freshly grated nutmeg, for garnish (1/2 teaspoon)

Directions

1. Combine 1 ½ C milk and the citrus zest in a medium-sized saucepan.
2. Add the vanilla extract to the saucepan and bring to a simmer over medium heat.
3. Whisk the eggs, egg yolk, sugar, and cornstarch in a medium bowl until it turns a light yellow.
4. Gradually pour the hot milk mixture into the egg mixture, whisking constantly, then pour back into the saucepan. Place over medium heat and stir constantly with a wooden spoon until the eggnog begins to thicken. This should take about 8 minutes.
5. Remove the saucepan from the heat and immediately stir in the remaining ½ cup of milk to stop the cooking.
6. Transfer the eggnog into a large bowl and place over a large bowl filled with ice to cool, then chill.
7. Remove the zest and garnish with nutmeg before serving.

Nutrition

Per serving size:

Calories: 108, Fat: 2 g, Saturated Fat: 1 g

Cholesterol: 99 mg, Sodium: 61 mg, Carbohydrates: 15 g, Fiber: 0 g, Sugar 15 g, Protein: 6 g



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