



# RESPONDER NEWS

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Stony Brook WTC Health and Wellness– Spring 2022



Dear Responders,

Spring is here! Brighter days, warmer weather, fresh markets and flowers... we hope you are enjoying nature's revival as much as we are.

This issue's health and wellness focus is on mindful eating. A lot of people talk about practicing mindfulness these days. Mindful eating practices help us be more aware of food intake decisions we make while managing health conditions. Our nutrition and social work teams talk to us about emotional eating and offer tips on navigating hunger, cravings, and opting for healthy distractions. Read all about that as well as what our pharmacists have to say about balancing GERD medications with lifestyle adjustments to optimize relief from this bothersome condition affecting many WTC Responders. Oh, and don't forget to check out our spring recipe recommendation of the quarter!

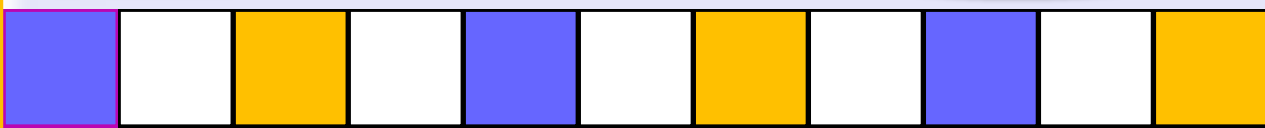
In the meantime, we recall how Long Island's own Walt Whitman noted how *the earth springs a hundred affections*. That certainly seems to be the case this time of year! We wish you every chance to go outside and enjoy them with friends and loved ones.

Warmly,

The Stony Brook WTC Health and Wellness Team



***Let's Talk!***  
**Navigating Hunger,  
 Fullness and Cravings**  
 with SB-WTC Health and Wellness Nutrition  
 and Social Work



Amanda Reichardt, MS, RD, CPT

**HAVE YOU EVER.....**

- ⇒ Eaten a meal and then immediately craved something sweet?
- ⇒ Watched a cooking show on TV and then felt the sudden urge to eat?
- ⇒ Felt stressed about something before opening a pint of ice cream?
- ⇒ Gone all day without eating and then eat a large meal at night?

***Sound familiar? If so, our Nutritionists assure that  
 YOU ARE NOT ALONE!***



Kathryn Hoffman, MS, RD

Experiencing emotional eating, confusion regarding hunger and fullness, or even a mix of both is extremely common. Relationships with food evolve. It's intuitive for infants to eat when hungry and stop when full. As we grow, food serves different purposes. In most cultures, food is synonymous with comfort, love, or celebration.

Food can also help us cope with various emotions such as sadness, stress, or boredom. Adding dietary food restrictions into the mix can create an emotional eating havoc!

Understanding the different "hungers" is key to tapping back into our intuitive eating cues we once had and improving our relationship with food long-term:

- **Biological Hunger:** Not everyone experiences this the same way, but it's typically characterized by a growling stomach and light-headedness/headache. It also typically comes on slowly over time. This occurs when we haven't eaten for a few hours and generally does not pass with time or distraction. It can be satisfied by many different food types.
- **Emotional Hunger:** When we eat to quench uncomfortable feelings such as loneliness, boredom, stress, anger, etc. This is also known as a "craving" and tends to be satisfied by foods that are sweet, salty, or fatty. Cravings occur even if we've already eaten and pass with time or distraction.

We recommend eating enough throughout the day. Focus on balanced meals that contain a protein, starch, healthy fat, and fruit and/or vegetable. Stay hydrated, get rest, and avoid going too long without eating to prevent that ravenous feeling later on at night. Consider scheduling a 1-1 consult to discuss your eating and habits and improve your overall diet!

## Distract yourself from emotional eating with these tips from Mike, SB-WTC Health and Wellness Social Worker

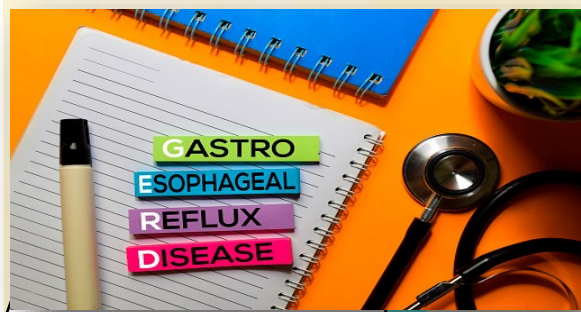
- **Exercise**– any level that you can. Walk the dog! This also includes breathing exercises via yoga, meditation, light stretching, and weight training.
- **Choose hobbies or activities that distract your hands.** Gardening, woodworking, yard and house-work, writing, painting, and illustrating.
- **Immersive hobbies and activities:** Work on puzzles, brain-teasers, crosswords, reading, researching online.
- **Enjoy the outdoors.** Go fishing, or go to the beach, maybe catch that sunset!
- **Take a hot shower or bath.**
- **Call someone.** Talk to a friend / acquaintance/ family member
- **Practice saying “no” to instant gratification and procrastination.** Example: seeing a scrap of paper on the ground at home and saying to yourself you’ll get it later – NO! Force yourself to pick it up *now*. Wanting to eat another cookie – NO!
- **Practice honesty with yourself** — set yourself a limit, “I will only eat 2 cookies tonight”
- **Set yourself up for success** by eliminating foods that you tend to binge-eat. Instead, buy food that you can eat *a lot* of such as carrots, celery, cucumber, popcorn, etc.
- **Practice mindfulness:** identify *why* you’re eating– is it hunger or are you eating because you’re bored or feeling down? Noticing our own habits is half the battle of changing them.



Michael Leuci, LMSW



For more tips about managing a healthy lifestyle, please call  
 Stony Brook WTC Health and Wellness  
 631-855-1200  
 (ask for Nutrition or speak to your Social Worker)



## The American College of Gastroenterology has provided updated guidelines showing important advances in medication management and lifestyle to treat GERD (1).

By Candace Smith, PharmD

**GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease)** is a digestive disorder in which acidic stomach contents flow back up from the stomach into the esophagus. It affects millions of people every day. Typical symptoms include heart burn and regurgitation. Some atypical symptoms include asthma, non-cardiac chest pain, sore throat, dry cough, and hoarseness.

### Diet and Lifestyle Modifications

There are several lifestyle recommendations to improve many of GERD symptoms.

People in a smoking cessation study who quit smoking for one year were shown to have a 44% reduction in GERD symptoms (2). Various foods are associated with worsening GERD symptoms. Large amounts (6 servings/day) of coffee, tea and soda can worsen GERD symptoms; while substitution with 2 servings of water with 2 servings of coffee, tea or soda can decrease GERD symptoms (3).

Avoid fatty foods, trigger foods and eat smaller meals. Weight gain, even in people who are not obese, is linked to the development or worsening GERD symptoms (4).

Weight loss (BMI reduction of 3.5) has shown a significant reduction (40%) in the frequency of GERD symptoms (4).

Recommendations to reduce symptoms in people with nocturnal GERD include:

1. **elevating the head of the bed**
2. **sleeping with a wedge**
3. **lying on the left side**
4. **avoiding late night meals and bedtime snacks (within 2-3 hours of bedtime).**

### Common Medications to Treat GERD :

- **Antacids** are only for on-demand symptom relief. Relief is within 30-60 minutes but only lasts about 4 hours.
- **Proton Pump inhibitors (PPI)** show to be the most effective for GERD symptoms. Peak relief occurs in 8-12 weeks. They work by blocking active stomach acid pumps. It is important to take a proton pump inhibitor at least 30-60 minutes before breakfast or first meal of the day. Nonerosive or noncomplicated GERD may be managed with on-demand therapy. On-demand therapy is when PPI are taken only when symptoms occur and discontinued when relieved (5,6).
- **Histamine-2 Receptor Antagonists (H2RA).** H2RA therapy is often prescribed for people experiencing less-erosive GERD symptoms (5,6). The addition of H2RA may also be effective for patients who are receiving PPI and have persistent nocturnal symptoms. Night time H2RA should be used on an as-needed basis for nocturnal symptoms because continued use can lead to H2RA becoming less effective (7).

### References

1. Katz, P, Dunbar K, Schnoll-Sussman F et al. ACG clinical guideline for the diagnosis and management of gastroesophageal reflux disease. *Am J Gastroenterology* 2022; 117:27-56
2. Kohata F, Watanabe W, Kobayashi T et al. Correction: long-term benefits of smoking cessation on gastroesophageal reflux disease and health-related quality of life. *PLoS:One* 2016 Mar 1(11(3))
3. Mehta R, Song M, Staller K et al. Association between beverage intake and incidence of gastroesophageal reflux symptoms. *Clin Gastroenterol Hepatol* 2020 Sep;18(10)2222-2233
4. Jacobson B, Somers S, Fuchs C. et al Body-mass index and symptoms of gastroesophageal reflux in women. *N Eng J Med* 2006 Jun 1;354(22):2340-8
5. Pace F, Tonini M, Pallotta S, et al Systematic review: maintenance treatment of gastro-esophageal reflux disease with proton pump inhibitors taken "on-demand". *Aliment Pharmacol Thera* 2007 Jul 15;26(2):195-204
6. Inadomi, J, Jamal R, Murata G et al Step-down management of gastroesophageal reflux disease. *Gastroenterology* 2001 Nov;121(5):1095-1100
7. Fackler W, Ours, T, Vaezi M. Long-term effect of H2RA therapy on nocturnal gastric acid breakthrough *Gastroenterology* 2002; Mar;122(3) 625-32

## Springtime Wellness Recommended Recipe of the Quarter

*Courtesy of our SB-WTC Health and Wellness Registered Dietitians who strongly recommend pesto as a fresh alternative— especially if you have a condition that makes tomato sauce less tolerable*

### Spring Pesto Bowl

**Equipment:** baking sheet, blender, oven grill  
**Prep Time:** 15 minutes

**Yield:** 3-4 Servings  
**Cook Time:** 45 Minutes

#### Ingredients:

- Pesto:**  
2 cups of baby spinach  
¼ cup of basil leaves  
3 cloves of garlic  
1/3 cup of pine nuts  
1/8 tsp of black pepper  
¼ cup of parmesan cheese  
¼ tsp of red pepper
- Directions:**
- 1) Preheat oven to 400F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper. Spread vegetables onto baking sheet and toss with 2 tbsp olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.
  - 2) Roast vegetables in the oven for 20-25 minutes until tender.
  - 3) Grill or bake your protein of choice
  - 4) Assemble bowl (2/3 cup base, vegetables, 3 oz protein), toss with pesto and (optional) squeeze fresh lemon juice on top, a pinch of feta cheese & enjoy!

\*Blend all the ingredients using a blender  
\*\*Add water to thin out if needed.

**Vegetables** (grilled or baked):  
Sweet Vidalia onion—1 medium  
Red Onion—1 medium  
Asparagus - 1 bunch  
Heirloom carrots—5-6 carrots

**Proteins (pick one):**  
12 oz Salmon, Chicken, Shrimp, Scallops,  
Tempeh, or Tofu





**ENJOY THE SPRING!**

**Meet our Stony Brook WTC Health and Wellness team members !**



**Claudia Correa  
Member Services Specialist**

**“I have tremendous gratitude when speaking to our center’s members. It makes my job as a member services specialist very rewarding.”**

Working in healthcare for more than 10 years, Claudia says coming to this program is what really makes it all worthwhile. Her hobbies are all things fashion– enjoying the confidence and creativity it inspires.

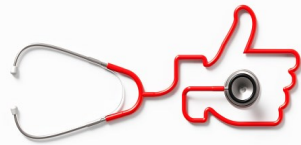


**Dakota Arocho, MS  
Care Coordinator**

**“I am happy to keep getting to know members and colleagues at the SB-WTC Health and Wellness Program.”**

Dakota earned his MS in human services and leadership, and has been coordinating care for members of our center for over a year now. His interests and hobbies include hiking and camping during the spring and summer, especially in upstate New York. He also enjoys cooking new recipes and trying new restaurants.

## Important Reminders



Overdue for your annual monitoring visit with your Stony Brook WTC Health and Wellness provider? Give us a call for scheduling today!  
631-855-1200

The SB Patient Portal gives quick access to your WTC clinic records, results, and communications.

**Make Sure You Are Registered!**

[www.stonybrookmedicine.edu/MyHealthLife](http://www.stonybrookmedicine.edu/MyHealthLife)

Trouble registering? Call Stony Brook Tech Support:  
877-621-8014

Please do not forget that all of your clinical visit paperwork must be completed electronically, prior to your visit!

If you have any issues then please give us a call:  
631-855-1200

Starting in late spring 2022, Express Scripts will replace Managed Care Advisors (MCA) and Optum as the WTC Health Program Pharmacy Benefits Manager (PBM).

The WTC Health Program is working with both vendors to ensure a smooth transition for Program members.

Learn more about the transition on the [WTC Health Program PBM Transition Page](http://www.cdc.gov/wtc/pbmtransition.html) ([www.cdc.gov/wtc/pbmtransition.html](http://www.cdc.gov/wtc/pbmtransition.html)).

Learn more about [Express Scripts](http://www.express-scripts.com) at their website ([www.express-scripts.com](http://www.express-scripts.com))

You can also call us at SB-WTC Health and Wellness: 631-855-1200  
(ask for Pharmacy)

### Our Tip!

Running low on medication? Perhaps Contact OptumRx now for additional refills.  
[wtchomedelivery.optum.com](http://wtchomedelivery.optum.com)

Make sure you have enough medicine through the transition!



Please speak to one of our Stony Brook WTC Health and Wellness providers at your next visit about whether you may be eligible for important cancer screenings. You can also visit [cdc.gov/wtc/conditions.html#Cancers](http://cdc.gov/wtc/conditions.html#Cancers) for more information from the WTCHP website.



## WTC Health Program

Long Island Clinical Center of Excellence at Stony Brook Medicine  
500 Commack Road, Suite 160  
Commack, NY 11725

Visit us at: [stonybrookmedicine.edu/wtc](http://stonybrookmedicine.edu/wtc)  
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500 Commack Road, Suite 160  
Commack, NY 11725



173 Mineola Boulevard, Suite 302  
Mineola, NY 11501