

The Lowdown

Winter 2024/2025 | VOLUME 13 | ISSUE 2

COMPREHENSIVE WEIGHT LOSS CENTER

HURLEY

Inside this issue

Winter Blues.....	1
Focus on Fitness	1
Nutrition Notes	2
Spotlight on Success.....	2
Hip Happenings.....	3
Recipe Round-up	3

Overcoming the Winter Blues

It is no secret that we are currently deep in the trenches of the winter months. During this time of year, it can be easy to catch a case of the winter blues. What is it about the colder, darkening days that gets us down? Moreover, what can we do about it?

Exposing yourself to bright light first thing upon waking is a great place to start. This can be achieved with a light box or braving the colder weather and going for walk outside! This exposure can help the body's production of melatonin and serotonin, positively affecting both mood and energy levels.

Get moving! Motivation to incorporate exercise tends to diminish during the colder months. However, being active is a great way to support mood. Exercise helps to release endorphins and serotonin, otherwise known as the "feel good" hormones in our body.

Stay on top of your nutrition. The winter months tend to lead to cravings towards higher starch and sweeter foods. Properly nourishing your body with adequate vitamins and minerals will help give you the energy you need.

While you may not feel like leaving your cozy and warm house, socializing can also be a great way to help boost your mood. Talking with friends and family or even volunteering helps bring a sense of community and increase the feelings of connection and belonging.

At the end of the day, prioritizing mental health this time of year is important, as it can be easy to catch a case of the winter blues. Be patient with yourself, focus on the positives, and embrace the winter season!



Focus On Fitness

Did you know that 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week could reduce all-cause mortality by 31% compared to a week with no physical activity? According to a new article published by the *Canadian Medical Association*, there is a direct correlation between physical activity later in life with aging well and improvement in cognitive and mental well-being.

The article notes that a lack of physical activity is a risk factor for more than 30 chronic conditions that affect older adults. One of the main points of the article implies that one's age, frailty, or physical impairments should not deter them from incorporating physical activity. Keep in mind, physical activity can look different for everyone! Different

forms of exercise include walking, stationary bike riding, strength training, water aerobics, sport activities such as tennis and golf, group fitness classes, resistance band training, yoga, chair and arm exercises, and so much more! If you are not sure where to start, try reaching out to local community and recreation centers as many offer different group classes for all ages.

At the end of the day, we all want to live longer and improve our quality of life and it is never too late to start incorporating more physical activity! So... what is stopping you?

by Hannah Welter, RDN

One of the best ways to support your 2025 health goals is with a little bit of preparation. We hear time and time again that patients want to start meal prepping however they feel overwhelmed with the process or they don't enjoy eating the same foods each day. When it comes to meal prepping, do not overcomplicate it! By breaking down your meals by components, you will find that meal prepping is easier than you may have thought.

Let us think about what components make up a well-balanced meal. Ideally, a nutritious, well-balanced meal will contain a lean protein source, a complex carbohydrate, fiber (typically through non-starchy veggies), and a healthy fat source. Instead of prepping multiple of the same meals to have on repeat, meal prep these different components to use in multiple different ways. If you keep the seasonings to a minimum (salt, pepper, garlic powder, etc) this will allow you to use these items in multiple different dishes.

Start by picking 2-3 protein sources, 2-3 complex carb sources, and 2-3 veggies to prep for the week. Maybe you choose the following: hard-boiled eggs, nonfat plain Greek yogurt, lean ground beef, chicken breast, sweet potatoes, rice, whole-wheat noodles, fruit, green peppers, broccoli, cucumber, and zucchini. Cook the ground beef and chicken as you please (season lightly with your favorite seasonings). Cut up your raw veggies and fruit of choice. Roast your broccoli, zucchini, and sweet potatoes (season lightly as well). Cook your rice and noodles. Now that cooking is complete, you should have easy

and quick access to multiple different food choices to make meals with throughout the week. You can utilize different sauces and dressing to add variety to your dishes so you do not get bored eating the same things. Remember to look at the sugar content of different dressings and sauces, no more than 5 grams added sugar per serving!

For breakfast, you could have plain nonfat Greek yogurt mixed your favorite protein powder and topped with cut up fruit OR 2-3 hard-boiled eggs and fruit.

For lunch and dinner, you could have chicken breast, rice, and roasted veggies topped with a low-sugar stir-fry sauce OR ground beef, sweet potatoes, and roasted veggies topped with your favorite low-sugar BBQ sauce OR roasted zucchini, ground beef, noodles and a low-sugar marinara sauce.

For a snack, you could have plain nonfat Greek yogurt (mixed with ranch seasoning) and raw veggies OR 1-2 hard-boiled eggs and fruit.

By prepping different "ingredients" rather than full meals you will give yourself more variety at meal times. It will be easier to stick to your health goals if you already have nutrient-dense options readily available to you! Dedicate one hour per week to meal prep, your 2025 self-will thank you!

Spotlight on Success



Victoria Before & After Sleeve Gastrectomy

Hi everyone, my name is Victoria! I am 55 years old and I live in Genesee County. Before my auto accident, I weighed 150 pounds.

I had a huge social and dating life. I was healthy and in shape, playing ice hockey, volleyball, and going to the gym. After my auto accident and three back surgeries, I gained 90 pounds. This put a huge toll on me both physically and mentally. I was sleeping on the couch for five years because it hurt too much to walk upstairs. I became severely depressed and was on 13 different medications for all kinds of different health issues like pre-diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, depression, and more.

"There is no reason to wait for a healthier you."

After six years of trying everything to lose weight on my own, I came and spoke with Dr. Wong and Hurley. I am now 14 months out from my surgery and I currently weigh 140 pounds. I am down a total of 100 pounds and weigh

even less than what I did in my "after" photo! I am off all of my medications except for my asthma medication and I use my inhaler maybe one time per week when working out. All of my health numbers are normal I am actually healthier now than I was before my auto accident. Oh! I also started dating again after 10 years of hiding from a social life!

I want to tell everyone... do not wait to have surgery! There is no reason to wait for a healthier you. It was a very easy healing process, but it does take work and commitment to get there, but you can do it!

Thank you to Dr. Wong and his staff, they are all amazing. I truly could not have done this without you.

Recipe Round-up



Stuffed Spaghetti Squash

Yield: 4-6 servings
Serving Size: 1 cup

Ingredients:

2 small spaghetti squash, cut in half and seeds removed
3 Tbs olive oil
2 tsp kosher salt
1 tsp black pepper
1 lb. ground turkey
1 packet taco seasoning
1 can black beans, drained
1 cup frozen corn
1 cup salsa
2 cup shredded Mexican cheese
1 cup fresh cilantro, chopped

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400F.
2. Place squash on a baking sheet, cut side up. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt & pepper. Flip the squash cut side down and baked until fork tender (approximately 45 minutes).
3. In a large skillet, heat the remaining olive oil over medium heat. Add the turkey and cook through. Add taco seasoning (follow instructions on packet).
4. Once combined, add the beans, corn, salsa, 1 cup cheese, & 3/4 cup cilantro.
5. Use a fork to loosen the flesh of the squash to form spaghetti-like strands.
6. Divide the turkey mixture between the squash halves and mix gently. Sprinkle the halves with the remaining cheese and bake until bubbly.
7. Serve with avocado, salsa, and cilantro. Enjoy!

Nutrition information per serving (Stuffed Spaghetti Squash):

482 calories, 35g pro, 42g carb, 22g fat



Personal Sausage Casseroles

Yield: 18 Servings
Size: 1 muffin cup

Ingredients:

1 lb. turkey breakfast sausage
1 whole medium onion, diced small
15 whole large eggs
Dash of salt
1/4 tsp black pepper
1/4 tsp chili powder
1 whole medium green bell pepper, diced small
1 cup low-fat cottage cheese

Directions:

1. Pre-heat oven to 350F and grease a muffin tin.
2. Crumble and cook sausage in a large skillet over medium high heat.
3. Add the onion and reduce the heat to medium-low. Cook until onion is soft.
4. In a separate bowl, crack the eggs and add the salt, pepper, and chili powder. Whisk until well combined.
5. Add the cottage cheese, bell pepper, and sausage to the egg mixture. Stir until well combined.
6. Add the egg mixture to the greased muffin cups. Baked for 20-22 minutes. Enjoy!

Nutrition information per serving (Personal Sausage Casseroles):

124 calories, 13g pro, 2g carb, 7g fat

** Tip: Meal prep and store in the fridge or freezer for an easy on the go breakfast! **

Hip Happenings

Available: The Post-Op Refresher Course!

During this 1 hour class you will receive nutrition education from one of our Registered Dietitians regarding meal choices, serving sizes, and general post-op recommendations. This class is designed for Hurley Comprehensive Weight Loss patients that are at least 1 year post-op. It is great if you need help getting back on track or if you want a refresher in general! The cost is just \$10 to attend. Call to schedule now as spots are limited.

We have a new name!

The former "Hurley Bariatric Center" is now the "Hurley Comprehensive Weight Loss Center". This allows us to better encompass all of the services we offer at the clinic.

Support Group:

Join us for our monthly support group! This is open to both pre- and post- surgery patients!

The support group meets the 1st Monday of every month from 5:30-6:30PM at the Hurley Comprehensive Weight Loss Center (with exception of inclement weather/holidays). No need to pre-register— just come! Call 810-262-2330 for details.