



Healing Journal

A newsletter from Abbott Northwestern's Institute for Health and Healing

Founded by the George Family Foundation and the Ted and Roberta Mann Foundation

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New Access to Ancient Medicine

With the addition of an Ayurvedic practitioner, the Institute now offers a new integrative medicine option.

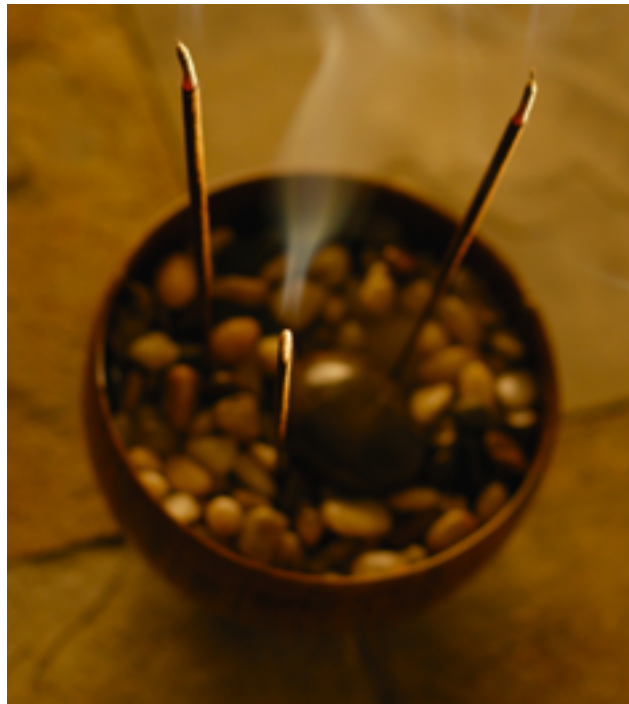
In her 28 years of nursing practice, Marcia Meredith has always been interested in integrative and holistic medicine. In 2004, she decided to pursue her love of Ayurveda and left her position as a nurse practitioner at the Sister Kenny® Rehabilitation Institute to study at the Ayurvedic Institute in Albuquerque, N.M.

“Much of traditional Western medicine is symptomatic treatment,” she commented. “In Ayurveda, it is important to address the cause of the disease. For example, if a client has a headache, in Ayurveda, this is a serious symptom. It is important to ask what a patient is eating, find out if they’re stressed, if they’re digesting their food. Diet and lifestyle recommendations from the Ayurvedic perspective are the primary treatment. Herbal therapy may also be recommended.”

After studying at the Ayurvedic Institute for two years, Meredith returned to establish a practice in the Twin Cities. Phyllis Jaeger, the manager for Outpatient Services at the Institute for Health and Healing, saw this as an opportunity to add a valuable service and individual practitioner. “We have experienced a growing demand for integrative medicine consultations, and Marcia has unique qualifications, being a certified nurse practitioner as well as a certified Ayurvedic practitioner. Adding this ancient practice helps us continue to support our mission of blending the best of conventional therapies with healing therapies that embrace the strengths of a person’s body, mind and spirit.”

Ayurveda originated in the part of the world that is now India, and archeological evidence dates its origins as long as 5,000 to 10,000 years ago. “It’s possibly the world’s oldest system of medicine and certainly has things in common with other ancient systems of medicine as well,” said Meredith.

According to Ayurveda, the five basic elements that are the foundation for everything in our universe—air, fire, water, earth and ether (space with no movement)—are the building blocks for humans as well. “It’s the way we manifest these five elements that determine our bodily constitution,” explains Meredith. “We all have three constitutions, or dosha, in our body. Vata is created by ether and air, pitta is created by fire and water, and kapha is created by water and earth. Usually, one or two are dominant in an individual.”



When a patient consults with an Ayurvedic practitioner, the session begins by determining their constitution. “I take their history, find out the reason they’ve come to see me, what’s happening in their body—but I’m also observing how they walk, move, think and talk,” said

Meredith. “Then I make recommendations for adopting some aspects of an Ayurvedic diet and lifestyle, and I may treat with herbs as well.” One example of a common prescription she makes is her approach to helping people who are struggling with their weight. “In our society, stress is a common phenomenon.

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Institute for Health and Healing

Remodeling Your Body for Life

Living better than ever with life-long skills from the Take Action Program

Complaining about being on a diet is a frequent topic of conversation these days. But Lynda Enright, a registered dietitian at the Institute for Health and Healing's LiveWell Fitness Center, has overheard very different comments from participants in the center's 12-week Take Action Program offered at Abbott Northwestern Hospital. "I find that my clients often say, 'This isn't hard. I feel good, satisfied—not restricted or deprived,'" said Enright. In part, this sentiment rises from the structure of the class, which is designed to encourage participants to make long-term lifestyle changes.

Take Action was first offered in January 2006 and offers key support both to people as individuals as well as to the class as a group. "Each participant goes through a full fitness profile evaluation at the center before the class starts," said Susan Masemer, manager of the LiveWell Fitness Center. "That way, we can base their goals on their current level of fitness and body composition." After teaching the weekly nutrition class for more than a year and seeing how lives have changed, Enright feels that the body composition measurements are key.


"By measuring everyone's body composition at the beginning, at the halfway point and then after 12 weeks in the program, people are motivated to keep going. At six weeks, people often can see a two percent loss of body fat, but this might not show up on a scale since they have nutrition and exercise changing their body. So they might lose five pounds of fat but gain five pounds of muscle. So people have said, 'If all I had was a scale, I would have quit by now.'"

"Participants enjoy learning about the science of weight management, as they find out how their bodies do or don't respond to conventional dieting concepts. They are surprised to find out that even a 100-calorie variance in a day can mean

a 10-pound difference in a year," said Masemer. "They then appreciate why they need to really understand what their calorie needs are, and why we measure resting metabolism. The majority of weight-loss programs simply estimate this. Some people laugh, because on occasion we have to tell them to eat more and exercise less—but they might need to adjust to how their metabolism works and improve the quality of what they're eating to make a difference"

The Take Action classes meet once a week, focusing on nutrition and behavior modification. There is also a weekly Fundamentals of Fitness class as part of the program, with a workout focusing on cardio and strength exercises. "The fitness class could incorporate anything from balls to balance work to different rhythmic and cardiovascular patterns, and is designed to merge different fitness levels. You would never feel intimidated, and whatever level of fitness you're at, you'll get a good workout," said Masemer.


Individuals meet with the LiveWell training staff, first for a comprehensive fitness evaluation and then to design a personal training session. Exercise specialists also attend the weekly sessions and cover fitness topics as part of the class. "Since we incorporate fitness expertise along with dietary advice, people really learn from the more comprehensive approach of our classes, plus it's such a positive, healthy atmosphere," said Enright. "We try to encourage people to believe that small changes are signs of success. You might not lose 30 pounds right away, but if, for instance, you finally started eating breakfast every day, well, that's a success right there that will set the stage for more and more successes along the journey."

The LiveWell Fitness Center Take Action Weight Management Program starts its next 12-week program the week of Jan. 21. See class schedule or call 612-863-5178 for more information. 

Take Action Success Story: Joy Throm

For Joy Throm, the end of breast cancer treatment was just the beginning of a new phase of medical challenges. Within months, she was diagnosed with lymphedema, had life-threatening infections and underwent multiple surgeries. Despite the depression, fatigue and pain that came with her medical conditions, Throm decided to participate in Take Action, wanting to work with the exercise physiologists and trainers in an environment that she was familiar with.

Starting with a fitness profile to establish a baseline, Throm and her trainer devised a program to accommodate her

arthritic shoulder and other pre-existing conditions. Within six weeks, she had lost 11 pounds of fat, and gained nine pounds of muscle. Her success over the 12 weeks was so encouraging, in fact, that she continued nutritional counseling and has lost more than 25 pounds of fat. In addition, she feels that she has the stamina to be active. She says, "Now, on a bad day, I have confidence that 'this too, shall pass.' I exercise every day, even on 'fatigue days' when I only walk my dog around the block. But that is more than I could do most days for the past five years!" 

Working side by side for the benefit of the patient

A truly integrated approach to health care for hospitalized patients at Abbott Northwestern

Through the Institute for Health and Healing, Abbott Northwestern Hospital offers patients the unique opportunity to receive integrative medicine services during their hospital stay.



For the past four years, complementary inpatient services have included acupuncture, therapeutic massage, aromatherapy, music therapy, Korean Hand Therapy, reflexology, mind-body therapies, relaxation exercises, biofeedback, education and integrative nursing consultations. In addition, the Institute has inpatient clinical care teams in the following specialties: obstetrics/gynecology, neuroscience/rehabilitation, cardiovascular/heart, medical/surgical services, oncology and orthopaedics/spine. Patients can request the services before or during their stay at Abbott Northwestern.

In addition to requesting services, the nursing staff, physicians and other health care providers are able to request an inpatient consultation from the Institute's team of practitioners. The Institute's practitioners are licensed or certified in the therapies they provide and cross-trained in a variety of skills and services. Each referral and request for consult is reviewed daily by the Institute's treatment team.

The main focus of the Institute's inpatient services is reducing pain, anxiety and nausea, along with educating patients to understand a variety of self-care skills to enhance their recovery and improve their health outside of the hospital. For many patients, it is the first time that they have been introduced to complementary therapies. It is a new opportunity for patients to get directly involved in their health care and be proactive in their recovery process.

As the Institute enters its fifth year, it will continue to expand its emphasis on research and outcome studies on the effectiveness of providing complementary therapies in the hospital. The Institute is the largest inpatient integrative medicine program in the country that provides services at the bedside as part of the patient's plan of care. It has an incredible opportunity to transform the way health care is delivered and experienced across the nation and beyond.

For more information or to request specific therapies within the Institute for Health and Healing during a hospitalization, call 612-863-6122. 🌸

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This may result in a vata imbalance due to overexertion and lack of self-care. Many people try to balance the exhausted feeling with heavy, fast, oily foods to make them feel grounded."

To re-balance, Meredith suggests dietary changes. "I suggest that they make soups and stews focusing on healthy fats. Not only do the homemade, whole-grain, whole-vegetable foods nourish and ground you, but it also is very healing to prepare your own food." In addition, Meredith often recommends a regular exercise regimen. "This is very important, even if it's just mild exercise like walking. Yoga, a sister science of Ayurveda, is also immensely healing. Moving your limbs with conscious awareness brings calmness to the mind and body."

Since Ayurveda is a very individualized medicine, each patient is treated differently. "This system brings a whole

new dimension to the idea of integrated medicine, because it approaches healing from a constitutional perspective. Some people resonate with this way of practicing medicine because it's a way to shift imbalances and stop problems early, before a full-blown disease develops."



For more information about Ayurveda, please call the Institute for Health and Healing's Outpatient Clinic at 612-863-3333. 🌸



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From the Institute for Health and Healing

The Institute for Health and Healing is supported by the financial generosity of the community. To make a donation to the Institute, call the Abbott Northwestern Hospital Foundation at 612-863-4126.

LiveWell Fitness Center Classes

Take Action 12-Week Weight Management Program

Winter session begins week of Jan. 21
Tuesday, 4-5 p.m. or
Thursday, noon-1 p.m.

Take Action is a highly successful program of action for people who want to lose weight and keep it off. The 12-week Take Action Program was developed around extensive research on permanent weight loss. Participants learn the skills they need to manage their weight, including a regular program of exercise, healthy nutrition and lifestyle modification. Healthy habits are developed and reinforced through group support and weekly sessions covering nutrition and behavioral changes. This program also includes an individualized fitness profile, personal training session and nutrition consultation.

Call 612-863-5178 to register.

Fee: \$299 Member
\$349 Non-member

W.O.W. (Working Out with Weights)

W.O.W. is perfect for individuals who are new to strength training or anyone looking for more variety in their training program. Classes will focus on proper technique, safety and keys to successful program design. W.O.W. class includes four one-hour, small group sessions, program exercise booklet, skinfold body composition measurement, and an introduction to free weights, BOSU, body bar, balance board, machines, tubing, stability ball and proper stretching.

Classes offered at a variety of times.

Call 612-863-5178 for more information.

Fee: \$50 Member
\$70 Non-member

LiveWell Fitness Center's Programs and Services

The LiveWell Fitness Center offers a wide array of special programs and services. Nutrition counseling, personal training, comprehensive fitness assessments, metabolism testing, body composition analysis and group fitness classes are just a few of the offerings. A more complete description and fee schedule is available at the center's reception desk or call 612-863-5178 for more information.