



## Letter From the Director



While it may not feel like it, the "spring" semester is underway at Stony Brook University. As the full student body returns there is an undeniable energy and buzz around campus; an excitement around the endless possibilities for innovation, discovery, and creativity.

In this issue, we interview wellness advocate and senior leader Ernest Baptiste, the new CEO of Stony Brook University Hospital. Colleen's Corner is educating and promoting EAP's new MBSR program; the Environmental Health & Safety team provides critical information about the flu; the Stony Brook Medicine Nutrition Division promotes a heart-healthy Valentine's Day; our partners at Island Federal Credit Union highlight fraud detection; and our newest contributor, the Stony Brook Athletic Performance Program, talks about the popularity of CrossFit-style workouts and provides a foundational program to help you train injury-free.

If you'd like to contribute health and wellness articles to HEALTHIER NUWS, please email me at [bryan.weiss@stonybrook.edu](mailto:bryan.weiss@stonybrook.edu). Thank you for reading our newsletter and look for our next issue in the coming months.

Wishing you the warmest regards in this, what seems like, never-ending winter.

Bryan Weiss

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## Leading the Charge

### Ernest Baptiste

*Chief Executive Officer, Stony Brook University Hospital*



**Q: How do you personally invest in your health?**

**A:** Over the last few years, I've really been making a serious effort to maintain a healthier lifestyle. That means eating healthier and making time to fit some exercise into my schedule. I joined a soccer team at my last job and really enjoyed it. It's not always easy - especially the eating healthy part, because I do have a bit of a sweet tooth - but I really think that it's important to make time to take care of your health because good health is our most important investment.

**Q: What is your favorite healthy lunch?**

**A:** I don't really have a go-to favorite for lunch, but I have been focusing on eating healthier lunches - that means trying to avoid fried foods; more salads and soups. I will say that it's easier to eat healthy at Stony Brook because we have so many great, healthy dining options on campus.

**Q: What, or who, inspired you to pursue a career in healthcare? Who has been one of your greatest influences?**

**A:** I've been fortunate to have a lot of great role models who have guided and nurtured me, my mother

being chief among them. However, in terms of mentoring, the CEO at North General Hospital, early in my healthcare career, was very instrumental in developing my career trajectory. He really provided me with a lot of guidance and support, and offered me the opportunity to explore different areas of healthcare to find my niche, which I discovered was operations. I really learned a lot from him; not only was he very knowledgeable about healthcare, but he also cared about the community around the hospital, about the patients and their families and about the employees. He was a very warm and genuine person and I have tried to model my leadership style based on his example.

**Q: How do unwind after a busy day?**

**A:** I often have long days in the office, so I like to unwind by watching sports. I am a big football fan - go Giants! - but I also like soccer, basketball, and tennis.

**Q: As Stony Brook University Hospital continues to advance and transform healthcare on Long Island, what opportunities do you see on the horizon?**

**A:** One of the reasons I really wanted to come to Stony Brook was because of the tremendous potential for growth. With the recent acquisition of Southampton Hospital, and plans to partner with other healthcare providers on the Island, Stony Brook is well positioned to transform healthcare in this region. As we expand, I think that it's really important to be strategic, to look at what partnerships make sense financially, but more importantly, what will be best for the patients we serve, to provide them with a full continuum of care. I am really excited to be able to build on this hospital's great legacy.

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## Colleen's Corner & "EAP for a Happier U" Present: Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction



**Are you ready to be more active in your own well-being and health?  
Would you like to strengthen your resilience, improve coping with stress, and  
gain a sense of greater ease and balance in your life?**

**Then the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) course might be for you!**

The EAP is thrilled to offer, for the first time, the full 8-week MBSR course developed by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn at the University of Massachusetts' Medical Center that has been featured in countless media segments, hundreds of research studies and is now offered all over the world in hospitals, schools, business, and sports. The program is described in Dr. Kabat-Zinn's best-selling book, **Full Catastrophe Living**, and is featured in the Bill Moyers' PBS documentary **Healing and the Mind**.



It seems that every day new articles are published detailing the benefits of mindfulness meditation. Time magazine and Scientific American devoted two whole issues to mindfulness! But what is mindfulness? And would it be worth your while to learn more about it?

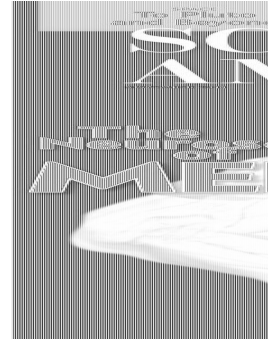
**Mind-ful-ness.** It means to pay attention, to be aware. To notice our experience without judging it. The concept is simple enough, but it turns out that staying with our experience in the present moment can be challenging. Our attention is constantly fleeing away from the moment. We may be watching a movie, listening to a friend, or driving and pretty soon we are gone! Caught up in obsessive thoughts about something that may have happened in the past, perhaps what someone said or we may be thinking about a mistake we may

have made or we are shot into the future, worrying about something that may or may never happen. And so we miss the moment. And of course, rumination and worry can spiral into depression and anxiety and

burnout and ill health. When we are mindful, our mind is fully attending to what is happening, while it is happening, without being overly reactive or overwhelmed by what is going on around us. Mindfulness is not foreign or exotic. It is an innate human ability we all have and that can be cultivated, developed, and strengthened.

**What is Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)?** MBSR is a structured 8-week course that helps cultivate, develop, and strengthen one's ability to be mindful. Rather than mindlessly running from task to task, we learn to pay attention and gain access to our own innate capacity to meet the challenges and demands of our lives. Instead of reacting to stress in habitual ways, we can learn to respond to stress with new and constructive solutions and we learn to take better care of ourselves so that we can live healthier, more adaptive lives.

Research over the past 35 years has consistently shown that people who complete the MBSR course and develop a mindfulness practice experience emotional and physical health benefits. These include improved immune and cardiovascular function, decreased blood pressure and migraine frequency, decreased systemic inflammation, and improved coping with illness and pain. Other benefits include quick recovery from stressful events, decreased anxiety and depression, improved sleep, and enhanced ability to relax. Practicing mindfulness decreased rates of burnout, improved concentration, and attention, and thus work performance, and increased a sense of balance, self-esteem, and enthusiasm for life!



**What is the format of the MBSR course?** There are 8 weekly 2 ½ hour classes and one 7-hour practice day. MBSR groups are supportive and experiential. Classes include instruction in a variety of mindfulness practices and group discussions enhance the experiential component. Consistent class attendance and a commitment to daily practice and weekly practice assignments are an essential component of the course, helping participants develop mindfulness skills and bring mindfulness into everyday life. Participants receive a course manual, guided meditations on CD's (or downloads), and weekly handouts. An extended retreat day mid-way through the program provides the opportunity to synthesize and deepen the mindfulness practice.

**Who is the class for?** The course is for *anyone* who is ready to be more active in their health and well-being, who wants to improve their ability to cope with stress, and who wants to increase their sense of ease and peace of mind.

#### **Want to know more?**

Then register for one of the **free orientation sessions** where you will meet the instructors, learn about research, and get a first-hand experience with mindfulness so you can decide whether the MBSR course is right for you. Advance registration is required for both the orientation and MBSR course.

- **Orientation Dates**

- Friday, 2/16
  - Wang Center (12:00 - 1:15pm)
  - HSC (3:30 - 4:45pm)
- Friday, 3/2
  - HSC (1:00 - 2:15pm)
  - Wang Center (4:00 - 5:15pm)

- **MBSR Course Dates**

- Fridays, 3/16, 23, 4/6, 13, 20, 27, 5/4, 11 (2:30 - 5:00pm)
- Retreat Day: Sunday, 4/29 (9:30am - 4:30pm)



**The instructors.** The upcoming course is offered by Gabrielle R. Chiamonte, Ph.D. and Cheryl Kurash, Ph.D., clinical psychologists with extensive experience teaching MBSR. Both have completed the highest level of professional training through the Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts' Medical Center, under the auspices of Jon Kabat-Zinn.

**Please note,** class size is limited. For more information and to register visit: [www.stonybrook.edu/eap](http://www.stonybrook.edu/eap) or call Colleen Stanley, Stony Brook EAP, at 631-632-6085.

# How to Avoid the Flu

By Clifford Knee  
*Safety Training and Environmental Compliance Manager*



Flu season occurs in the fall and winter, peaking between late November and early March, and it's an epidemic every year. The makeup of flu viruses can change from year to year, making it difficult to predict.

People over age 65 and small children are the most vulnerable. Children from birth to age 4 represented the second-highest hospitalization rate. In 2014-2015, the number of people over age 65 hospitalized for flu was the most since the CDC began recording those numbers in 2005.

Flu spreads through droplets when people sneeze or cough, on surfaces. People are contagious one day before symptoms appear and up to a week after. When you don't feel well, it's best to take care of yourself and co-workers by staying home. Also, don't go back to work (or school) for at least 24 hours after a fever is gone.

If you are overcome with a fever, headache, fatigue, dry cough, sore throat, stuffy nose, nausea: you may have been bitten by the flu bug.

## **What Can You do to Stay Healthy?**

The CDC recommends everyone older than 6 months get an annual flu vaccine as soon as the vaccine becomes available; October is the ideal time to get vaccinated, but it's never too late. Some other tips:

- If you don't like needles, ask your doctor if a nasal flu spray is available
- Avoid being around sick people if possible
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer
- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, preferably with the inside of your arm rather than your hand
- Avoid touching your face
- Disinfect surfaces that may be contaminated

## **Suffolk County Offering Free Influenza Immunizations**

For those individuals who are unable to access the flu immunization at local pharmacies, pediatricians' or health care providers' offices, the Suffolk County Department of Health Services will be providing free flu immunizations to all residents age six months and over on:

- Thursday, 2/15 (5:00 - 7:00pm)
- Location: H. Lee Dennison Building Plaza, 100 Veterans Memorial Building in Hauppauge

Residents are asked to call 631-787-2200 from 9:00am - 5:00pm in advance to set up an appointment for their shot.

Healthier U will continue to monitor the Suffolk County Government [website](#) and provide updates as to future free flu clinics when available. Can't wait for the next free clinic? Use the [Flu Vaccine Finder](#) to find out where you can get a flu vaccine near you.

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## **Core Nutrition**

### **A Heart Healthy Valentine's Day**

By Steven Biamonte  
*Dietetic Intern, Department of Family, Population and Preventive Medicine, Stony Brook Medicine*

As February is American Heart Health Month, it is important to remember some tips and ideas on making this Valentine's Day the most heartwarming and heart-healthy holiday for you and your loved ones.

According to the National Retail Federation, American consumers will spend on average \$136.57 this Valentine's Day generating a whopping \$18.2 billion dollars nationally. With 36% of consumers celebrating the special occasion at a favorite or romantic restaurant, more than 70 million Americans will be dining out on February 14th, making it one of the most popular days for the food industry in the United

States, second only to Mother's Day; With an additional 48% of consumers spending money on candy for their loved ones, Valentine's Day stacks up as one of the most expensive and calorically dense days of the year. As restaurant foods are known to be higher in sodium, fat and calories, and chocolates and candies are high in added sugar and low in heart health-promoting nutrients like fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants, many Americans may be looking for a more heart and budget-friendly option.

As the prevalence of Heart disease continues to be on the rise, it is, therefore, becoming increasingly important to be aware of heart health and facilitate heart-friendly habits into daily living. So much so that the American Heart Association (AHA) has compiled a list of its own Heart-Health Valentine's Day tips in recognition of the excessive and typically unhealthy food habits this holiday perpetuates. Their list includes ideas such as going for a long romantic walk, practicing moderation with chocolates or swapping them out for a fresh fruit basket, and making an evening in by lighting some candles and preparing healthy recipes with a loved one.

Tips for spending the night at home are to look for recipes that incorporate lower fat options that focus on healthy mono- and polyunsaturated fats, such as avocado and walnuts, while limiting saturated, trans-fats and sodium. Saturated fats are found in animal products like whole milk and high-fat red meat. Trans fats, commonly seen on ingredients lists as hydrogenated-oil, can be found in non-natural peanut butters, processed foods, and dessert items, such as packaged cookies, cakes, and snacks.

Important nutrients that support heart health include fiber and antioxidants. Fiber, which helps with feeling fuller longer and can aid in improving cholesterol levels, is found in heart-healthy foods such as whole grain starches, beans, legumes, and vegetables. Antioxidants, which can prevent damage to blood vessels and heart tissue from dangerous free radicals, are found in a wide array of fruits and vegetables. Making it particularly important to try and incorporate a variety of items from these food groups. Low-fat dairy, fish, nuts, and olive oil are also heart-healthy AHA approved foods that can be incorporated as part of a heart-healthy diet. This Valentine's Day keep your heart health in mind for you and your loved ones and opt for a healthier way to celebrate.

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## Healthy Money

### Don't Be the Next Victim of Fraud

By Catherine Roger  
*Director - S.B. Business Unit, Island Federal Credit Union*

*The best protection against fraud is knowledge. There are many different types of fraud and different ways fraudsters can try to get your personal information or your money. Listed below are some things to be aware of.*

You should be concerned if:

- You receive a check or money order in response to something you sold online.
- You have any reason to suspect that a check or money order you receive is not valid.
- The check is drawn on an account that is different from the person buying your item.
- The amount of the check or money order is more than the item's selling price.
- The check or money order is connected to someone you only communicated with by email.
- You are informed that you were the winner of a lottery that you did not enter.
- You receive commission for facilitating money transfers through your account.
- You are asked to open an account as a result of a job offer you received online.

#### Don't Be a Victim

- If the check or money order is later returned, you will be held liable for the bad check.
- We are not able to tell you when a check or money order you deposit will clear.
- Even when we lift a "hold" on funds from a deposited check or money order, that does not mean the item has cleared.
- If funds are to be held by a third party, or escrowed, be sure it is a party you can trust.
- Remember: always exercise extreme caution when conducting business with strangers.

#### Remember...

- If an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Never provide your online banking credentials to anyone.
- Trust your gut feelings - when you have a bad feeling about an offer or a company.
- If someone asks you to deposit a check or money order and then wire them funds, this is

definitely a scam.

To further learn how to avoid scams, protect yourself from Internet hackers and more, visit [www.onguardonline.gov](http://www.onguardonline.gov).

Keeping our Members' accounts safe and secure is a top priority at Island. If you have questions or concerns please feel free to [email](mailto:) me or stop in one of our Stony Brook branches for information.

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## Athletic Performance

### Safely Progressing Foundational Exercises (Part 1)

By George J. Greene III

*Assistant Athletics Director for Athletic Performance, Stony Brook University Department of Athletics*

With the popularity of CrossFit and similar training facilities, there has been a shift in focus and people are being exposed to compound exercises like squats, deadlifts, and Olympic movements. At the college level, these are exercises we use every day to improve strength and power. However, when an athlete walks in as a freshman they still go through the process of learning how to do these exercises safely and effectively before we load them up with weight. Whether you are an athlete, or weekend warrior learning how to do these exercises right the first time will set you up for success long term and allow you to train injury free.

My philosophy on this topic stems from world-renowned strength coach Dan John and achieving mastery in five basic movement patterns/categories. Below is a look at the first two of the five exercises. But before I go into details, two notes:

1. Everyone progress at different rates. Do not be afraid to stay for longer than 3-weeks at a given exercise
2. Be prepared to regress yourself throughout the course of the year. During periods of training layoffs or injuries, be prepared to take a step back to reset each pattern.

#### **Movement 1:**

**Squat:** The squat is known as the king of all exercises for a reason. It gives you the most bang for your buck. While the back squat is the most popular version, there are steps you should take before putting a bar on your back. This pattern is extremely important to get right the first time in order to put yourself in the best and safest position possible. It will also help you create good habits and avoid injuries that usually result from poor technique. Below is 12-week progression for the Squat.

*Weeks 1-3:*

**Goblet Squat:** Hold a dumbbell or kettlebell at chest height. Emphasis is on depth, which is critical to set your foundation.

*Weeks: 4-6:*

**Kettle Bell Front Squat:** Hold the kettlebells in the front rack position. Emphasis should be on keeping the chest up. This exercise challenges the core more than the goblet squat so people tend to want to lean forward.

*Weeks: 7-9:*

**Front squat:** This exercise could be done using 2-3 fingers or weight lifting straps with the bar set just above the clavicle. What I like best about this exercise is it keeps you honest. If you lean forward the bar will fall out of your hands. (With the back squat, an athlete will compensate with a rounded back.)

*Weeks 10-12:*

**Back squat:** After you feel like you've developed mastery with the other three patterns, you can perform the back squat. I teach and recommend the high bar variation with feet set just outside of shoulder width. The high bar variation calls for the bar to rest up on the traps and helps emphasize a better upright posture than the low bar variation (often used by powerlifters).

#### **Movement 2:**

**Hinge:** The hinge pattern is a posterior chain dominant movement that is extremely important for both performance and injury prevention. Hamstring strength has been shown in numerous studies to reduce the likelihood of injury, including ACL tears. Similar to the squat, if poor technique is used during the hinge you could set yourself up for an injury. Therefore it is important to emphasize proper movement from day one. Below is a 12-week progression for the hinge. It is also important to note that Olympic lifts

such as power cleans and snatches begin with the hinge pattern, therefore, it is critical to gain mastery in this pattern before beginning an Olympic lifting program.

*Weeks 1-3:*

**Dumbbell or Kettlebell RDL to Box (just below knee):** The box decreases the range of motion and allows you to work on keeping your chest up and shooting your hips back. Take a slight bend in your knees at the start of the movement but avoid turning this into a squat. You should feel this exercise in your hamstrings and glutes.

*Weeks 4-6:*

**Dumbbell or Kettlebell RDL to mid shin:** For the second variation, remove the box let yourself gain a few inches of range of motion. Continue to work on maintaining a flat back as you progress further down.

*Weeks 7-9:*

**Barbell RDL:** The barbell allows you to add a bit more resistance to the movement. Maintain the same cues as the dumbbell variations. The bar should maintain contact with the body at all times. The further it comes away, the more pressure there is on the lower back.

*Weeks 10-12:*

**Clean grip deadlift:** During this movement, you start with the bar resting on the ground. Due to the increased range of motion, the knees will be bent slightly more than the RDL at the start. I coach and emphasize the clean grip variation to maintain structural balance and avoid the mixed grip for athletes.

Stay tuned for the next article where I take you through the next three movement patterns!

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