

## The Wellness Issue

SUMMER 2012

Living a healthy lifestyle has many benefits—not all physical. When everything is working together – when your body and your mind are strong—you have more energy and self-confidence and can take more control of your life. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is particularly important for people with mental illness, who are more prone to conditions like heart disease and diabetes. The good news is that there is much you can do to reduce your risk of those and other medical conditions—and gain other health benefits as well.

Sometimes families and individuals living with mental illness become so focused on treating a mental illness that their physical health is neglected. But having a healthy body contributes to emotional recovery.

“Wellness is a mind and body thing. I don’t think you can separate them. If I’m doing well mentally but going to a lot of doctors for other ailments because I’m 60 pounds overweight, that’s not wellness.”

- Jane, 48, bipolar disorder

### But Where Do You Start?

Balance is one of the most important things to remember when you make decisions about your diet, exercise, work and social activities. Too much of anything - even things that are good for you— is not healthy. But when you have each of these things in balance—in the right amounts for you - you will be better able to manage your life.

As the weather warms up, it’s a great time to focus on good health. Maybe your goal is to give up cigarettes, get more exercise, or take advantage of the fresh fruits and vegetables of the season.

Even if you’ve tried without success to make lifestyle

changes, like stopping smoking or losing weight, don’t give up— and don’t be too hard on yourself if you don’t succeed right away. Change happens gradually. Making a major change is hard and can take many tries. But it’s well worth the effort.

### Making The Time to Be Healthy

Planning a regular routine is another important part of your health and wellness program.

Scheduling your activities can help you keep track of your time and reduce stress by giving you more control over your day.

It helps you set and achieve your goals, increasing not only your physical wellbeing but your self-confidence as well. Of course, nothing is perfect. Things often come up that get in the way of your plans. When that happens, a schedule can serve as a guide to help you get back on track and continue to do the things that are good for you. When deciding how to plan your routine, include all aspects of your life.

No matter what you’re trying to achieve, there are several ways you can improve your chances of success. For example, don’t try to make too many changes at once. If you have more than one goal, tackle them one at a time.



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## Eat Your Way to Good Health

Eating well can have a big impact on how you feel day-to-day and how you cope with life's stresses. It affects your mood, your energy level, and your long-term health as well.

Good choices include fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, fish, beans, nuts, eggs, poultry, and low-fat meat. And it's important not to eat large portion sizes.

You can learn a lot about a particular food by looking at the label, if it comes in a package. Check out the nutritional content as well as the amount of fat and sugar. Research has shown that diets containing high amounts of refined sugar are associated with worsening symptoms of schizophrenia and a higher rate of depression. Studies say sugar should be no more than 10 percent of your calorie intake.

Better choices are seafood and starchy root vegetables, like sweet potatoes, which provide energy and are associated with a reduced incidence of depression. Also try to avoid foods that are high in cholesterol and sodium, like fast food, fried food, and junk food which can increase the risk of heart disease and high blood pressure.

For people who are diabetic, it's particularly important to follow a diet without too much sugar or fat (especially saturated fat) and to maintain a healthy weight. Other ways to help control diabetes are to eat plenty of fiber and get regular exercise.

Some people prefer eating a vegetarian or even a vegan diet, which means no animal products, including dairy products or eggs. People who choose that route should take extra care that they get enough calcium, protein, and other important nutrients from other sources.

It's hard to get a complete picture of what you eat on a daily basis unless you write it down: On average, people remember only half of the food they eat during the day. Keeping a food journal can help you monitor your eating habits and get a sense of your total food intake and how healthful it is. To make food journaling easier, *My Fitness Pal* is a website where you can track your food intake online or you can download the smart phone app.

As another resource, the federal government launched the MyPlate initiative last year on to help Americans make better food choices. MyPlate shows the five food groups that are the foundation for a healthy diet. To learn more about building a healthy plate, see page 3. You can also go to [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov) for more on a balanced diet.

Whether you're trying to lose weight, get fit, improve your diet, stop smoking, or attain some other health-related goal, the best time to start is now.

*For more helpful advice, go to NAMI Hearts & Minds (<http://www.nami.org/heartsandminds>), an online interactive program designed especially to help people with mental illness focus on wellness and take steps to improve their overall health. **Here's to a healthier you!***

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### Find a support network

Sometimes it's easier to accomplish a goal if you share it with friends and relatives. Or you can join a NAMI support group to get help from peers. You may well meet other people who are working on the same goals that you are and you can share your accomplishments and challenges.

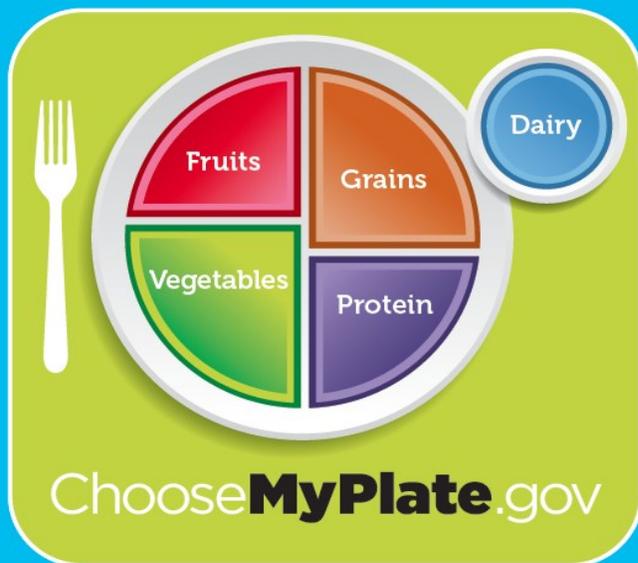
One NAMI member found peer support to be invaluable in her goal of losing weight: "I lost over 100 pounds using peer support on [peertrainer.com](http://peertrainer.com)," she said. "We identified ourselves as living with a mental illness and supported and coached each other to help our daily choices. It made a big difference."

### To help you stay on track:

- Be realistic about what you're trying to achieve and come up with specific goals. For example, you could start getting off the bus one stop earlier to walk more.
- Write down your goals. And maybe put reminders to yourself on your refrigerator or your mirror.
- Keep your goals small and incremental and reward yourself as you accomplish each step. Try to smoke one cigarette fewer each day for the next three weeks.

Though it may seem daunting, don't give up! It might take a few tries.

# What's on your plate?



Before you eat, think about what and how much food goes on your plate or in your cup or bowl. Over the day, include foods from all food groups: vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean protein foods.



**Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.**



**Make at least half your grains whole.**



**Switch to skim or 1% milk.**



**Vary your protein food choices.**

Oct. 26-27, 2012

NAMI Maryland's  
Education  
Conference!

You don't want to miss this opportunity.  
More details coming soon!

Check [www.namimd.org](http://www.namimd.org) for updates.

## SAVE THE DATE! NAMI MARYLAND'S 2012 ANNUAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

**Friday and Saturday, October 26 and 27, 2012  
Sheppard Pratt Conference Center**

There will be workshops offering practical information and resources for individuals with mental illness, family members, community and health providers, and many others!

Workshops to include: specific diagnoses, available resources, best treatments, policy and advocacy trainings, NAMI program leaders and volunteer skills trainings, a track training police and corrections, and more!

## Fitness Can Help Mental Health

Getting exercise is a great way to accomplish lots of things at once: It can improve your mood, reduce stress, and cut your risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, weight gain, and diabetes.

Exercise costs nothing. You don't need to join a gym or buy equipment. Taking a walk or going jogging are excellent ways to get moving and increase your fitness level. You can also check out community centers, YMCA's, parks and recreation, and church programs. Some activities may be free, and some places offer financial assistance for people with low income levels.

If a tight schedule is a problem, there are lots of ways to squeeze exercise into your daily routine. You can take the stairs instead of an elevator, park a distance from your destination and walk the rest of the way, or simply move more quickly when doing routine tasks like cleaning house. Try doing simple exercises during commercial breaks when watching television. Or instead of meeting a friend for coffee, meet for a walk. If certain kinds of movement are uncomfortable -- if you have joint pain or bone disease -- check with your health-



care provider to ask about your level of exercise and modifications you can make to accommodate those problems. Don't avoid exercise because you're afraid of hurting yourself: Instead, check with your health-care provider before increasing your exercise level.

Don't forget to warm up and cool down. The warm-up should increase your body temperature and warm your muscles up for exercise. Every exercise session should also be followed by a cool-down that gradually decreases your heart rate.

To keep yourself motivated, keep track of your progress in a journal and note your accomplishments. Vary your routine. Get an exercise partner.

Above all, do something you enjoy, like walking the dog, dancing, swimming, playing basketball, bike riding, bowling, or playing volleyball. Participate in an activity where you can get exercise and meet new friends. You'll be more likely to stick with an exercise routine if you're enjoying it. For more exercise information go to NAMI Hearts and Minds: [www.nami.org/heartsandminds](http://www.nami.org/heartsandminds)

**This recipe by *EatingWell* can help you achieve the goal of making half your plate fruits and vegetables. Find more ideas at [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov)**

### Spaghetti with Quick Meat Sauce

Instead of opening a jar of sauce with all its added sugar and preservatives, try this easy spaghetti with meat sauce on a weeknight. The recipe makes enough for 8 servings. If you're serving less for dinner, cook enough pasta and freeze the leftover sauce.

#### Ingredients (makes 8 servings)

- 1 pound whole-wheat spaghetti
- 2 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 large carrot, finely chopped
- 1 stalk celery, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp Italian seasoning
- 1 pound lean (90% or leaner) ground beef
- 1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes

- ¼ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

#### Preparation

Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain. Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion, carrot, and celery and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is beginning to brown. Stir in garlic and Italian seasoning; cook about 30 seconds. Add beef and cook, stirring and breaking up with a spoon, until no longer pink, 3-5 minutes. Increase heat to high. Stir in tomatoes and cook until thickened, 4-6 minutes. Stir in parsley and salt. Serve the sauce over the pasta, sprinkled with cheese.

**Nutrition Facts per serving**- 389 calories; 9g fat (3g saturated, 3g mono-unsaturated); 48mg cholesterol; 53g carbohydrate; 28g protein; 9g fiber; 416mg sodium

## How to Get a Good Night's Sleep: from the NAMI Peer to Peer Program

*Reprinted with permission. Copyrighted. Kathryn McNulty, NAMI Peer to Peer Recovery Education Course.*

One thing that nearly all people with mental illness experience is some sort of sleep disturbance. Sleeping too much, too little, sleeping too lightly, frequent awakening, a chronic feeling of exhaustion, inability to get a “good” night’s sleep, inability to get out of bed, a feeling of being “revved” after remarkably little sleep and no need for sleep whatsoever are some of the most common things people with mental illness say about their sleep.

### How to get a good night's sleep:

- Go to bed at the same time every night and get up at the same time every morning every day of the week.
- Do not get attached to late night TV no matter how excellent the shows are, and even if you have cable TV.
- Do not give in to the temptation to change your sleep schedule on the weekends. Yes, we know this is cruel but it is crucial.
- Do not sleep during the day to make up for a bad night's sleep the night before. Tough it out, and let your body clock reset itself naturally.

### Tips to help you fall asleep:

- ⇒ Take your night time medications, as prescribed, enough time before you want to sleep so your meds work for you.
- ⇒ Limit your intake of caffeinated beverages during the day. It is a really good idea to stop taking caffeine in the middle of the day.
- ⇒ Make sure the room you sleep in is cool enough if you like to sleep in the cold, hot enough if you like to sleep in heat, or whatever temperature you find desirable. Some folks find they sleep better with a window cracked open slightly, even in the winter months, to let fresh air into the room.
- ⇒ Some folks find that reading puts them to sleep. Some folks fall asleep listening to music. Some folks find that arranging her/his body into the position they sleep in lulls them to sleep (the body remembers).
- ⇒ If you have the luxury of space in your home, reserve the bedroom for sleeping. The more out of the habit

of watching TV, or studying, or engaging in hobbies in the bedroom we become, the more likely we are to associate our beds with rest.

- ⇒ Don't forget to set the alarm!

### Tips to help you stay asleep:

- ⇒ For clock watchers, turning the lighted dial on the alarm clock around – facing away from them – solves the problem.
- ⇒ Don't smoke in the middle of the night! Those who smoke are likely to awaken themselves quite fully in order to smoke safely, and this can make it very hard to return to sleep. Forego the middle-of-the-night smoke.
- ⇒ The next best thing to sleep is rest. If you can't actually sleep, try to keep yourself quietly in bed and at rest.
- ⇒ If it is utterly impossible to stay in bed and/or sleep, get up and do something boring and repetitive. Ironing, sewing buttons, watching infomercials, and playing solitaire, are some examples. Try not to do anything mentally stimulating, and check every hour or so to see if you can rest or sleep.

### Tips to help you wake up:

- ⇒ When the alarm goes off, get up! Some people find putting the alarm clock across the room – making it so they have to get out of bed to shut it off – helps.
- ⇒ Leave the blinds or curtains open so that the brain is awakened gently by the sun coming into the room, before the alarm goes off.
- ⇒ Setting aside a special reward, or having something to look forward to, can help to accomplish the goal of getting up in the morning.
- ⇒ Something else that may help is to remember that while it may be agony to get up a good bit earlier than we want, the process of resetting the body's clock takes only 2-3 weeks ... and as we get on a more regular schedule, this will not be so difficult!

Staying well rested is a key ingredient in the recipe for health, and this is especially true for people with mental illness.

## NAMI MARYLAND ADVOCACY — 2012 END OF SESSION WRAP-UP



The 429th Session of the Maryland General Assembly came to a close at midnight on April 9, 2012. Due to disputes related to expansion of slots, the House and the Senate did not come to an agreement regarding revenue measures and the “doomsday budget” which makes across the board cuts with no revenue increases was passed. However, a special session was called on May 14- 16 to restore severe budget cuts by passing increases in revenue

measures including an increased income tax on individuals making more than \$100,000.

The supplemental budget items related to mental health services proposed during the regular session were able to be restored. During the regular session, NAMI Maryland and other mental health advocates were very successful in convincing the Governor to propose a supplemental budget that would significantly reduce the \$30 million cost containment measures that were proposed in the initial budget.

This was achieved by NAMI Maryland members and other advocate organizations in inundating Governor O’Malley and legislative committee members - with emails and calls in opposition to cuts and urging the Governor to submit a supplemental budget. As a result, the Governor’s supplemental budget was introduced including \$10.5 million for mental health services (\$9 million after amendment). This restored some of the cuts that were initially proposed and support necessary funding for crisis services and for the uninsured. The result was the following:

### **\$9 million for mental health services through a supplemental budget appropriation:**

- \$5 million deficiency appropriation to provide funds for prior year claims on the public mental health system, addressing a portion of the \$27.5 million overall MHA rolling deficit
- \$1.5 million (state general and federal funds) to restore funding to provide psychiatric rehabilitation payments to Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
- \$1.5 million to provide additional funding for psychiatric rehabilitation for the uninsured

- \$1 million to provide funds for expansion of Community Crisis Response services

### **\$2.25 million in additional funding as a result of 2011 alcohol tax legislation: \$3 million to increase rates for mental health providers (0.88% inflationary adjustment)**

- \$1 million to the Mental Hygiene Administration (MHA) for transitional housing assistance targeted at individuals with very low incomes to help provide housing support
- \$750,000 for the planning, design and implementation of a Chronic Behavioral Health Home initiative
- \$500,000 to MHA to assist in securing identification for the homeless

### **Reduction of \$2.9 million in proposed legislative cuts to \$1.15 million:**

- Reduction of proposed \$2.1 million cut to purchase of care beds to \$1 million
- Rejection of accelerated closure of Assisted Living Units at Springfield and Spring Grove hospitals, which would have resulted in a loss of nearly \$650,000
- No change in proposed \$150,000 in reduction of funds for MHA contractual employment

### **Highlights of Passed Legislation:**

**SB 167** extends the termination date of the Qualifying Employees with Disabilities Tax Credit which allows employers who hire a qualified individual with disabilities to claim a tax credit in the first two years of employment. This has increased employment opportunities for individuals living with mental illnesses and other disabilities.

**HB 286/SB 484** increases transparency in the process by which Medicaid Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) report their Medical Loss Ratios (MLRs). MCOs are required to meet an 85% MLR. That means that for every dollar they spend, 85 cents must be spent on medical expenses as opposed to profit, administrative or other costs. This bill requires the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) to post this information on their website for easy public access in order to hold accountable these entities charged with managing medical care for vulnerable individuals.

**HB 443/SB 238** expands the operating structure of the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange. It also establishes a process for selecting the benchmark plan that will serve as the standard for the essential health benefits for plans offered in the small group and individual markets, both inside and outside the ex-

*Continued on the next page*

change. NAMI supported this legislation with amendments to ensure consumers, particularly those in need of behavioral health services, can access care after purchasing insurance. Specific amendments (1) require qualified health plans to demonstrate parity compliance to the insurance commissioner annually, and (2) add a mental health representative to the essential health benefit plan selection committee.

**HB 439/ SB 234** establishes a process for the designation of Health Enterprise Zones (HEZs) to target State resources to reduce health disparities, improve health outcomes, and reduce health costs and hospital readmissions in specific areas of the State and was amended to include a mental health representative to serve on the workgroup.

**HB 699/SB 566** requires the State to fund only evidence-based and promising home visiting programs for improving parent and child outcomes and requires regular reporting and monitoring of home visiting programs.

**HB 1149/SB 781** requires insurers and Medicaid to cover and reimburse for health care services delivered via telemedicine. Given the shortage of mental health providers in rural areas, and the record growth in numbers of individuals in need of public mental health care, there is urgent need for creative strategies to assist in filling the service gap in rural communities. Due to the expense, the Medicaid requirement was amended out. However, the final bill requires a Medicaid fiscal impact analysis and a

review of the appropriate use of telemedicine for mental health.

**HB 1193/SB 314** requires Executive Branch agencies to obtain mental health support services for any employee of a State facility affected by a traumatic event at the facility that results in a death. The services must be provided within 48 hours. These bills received unanimous support.

#### Task Forces and Workgroups

**HB 252/SB18** creates a Task Force on Military Service Members and the Courts. The task force will study military service-related mental health issues and substance abuse problems.

**HB 618** establishes the Task Force to Study Access of Individuals with Mental Illness to Regulated Firearms. NAMI Maryland is a named member of the taskforce. Amendments were added to require the task Force to take into account the civil rights of individuals with mental illness while conducting their review.

**HB 1455/SB 1077** extended the termination date of specified provisions of law requiring the Mortality and Quality Review Committee to make specified reports and recommendations regarding incidents of injury and requiring the Office of Health Care Quality to provide specified data to the Committee. MHA Director Dr. Brian Hepburn has agreed to meet with mental health advocates during the interim to address the issue.

#### Local NAMI Maryland Affiliates

NAMI Anne Arundel.....	443-569-3498
NAMI Carroll.....	410-857-3650
NAMI Cecil.....	443-955-4963
NAMI Frederick.....	240-379-6186
NAMI Harford.....	410-879-8570
NAMI Howard.....	410-772-9300
NAMI Lower Shore.....	443-229-2744
NAMI Metro Baltimore.....	410-435-2600
NAMI Montgomery.....	301-949-5852
NAMI Prince George's.....	301-429-0970
NAMI Southern MD.....	301-737-1988
NAMI Washington.....	301-824-7725

Make sure you get notices of NAMI Maryland's new educational teleconferences. The topics should be of interest to YOU!

Email your contact information to [info@namimd.org](mailto:info@namimd.org) and put "NAMI Maryland email list" in the subject line, and tell us how you heard about NAMI.

#### Donate to NAMI MD through your workplace giving campaign:

**4186:** The Maryland Charity Campaign & Central Maryland—Private Sector

**80114:** CFC of the Chesapeake Bay Area and National Capital Area

**8568:** The United Way

**Other Campaigns?** Call our office.

**Does your employer have a grant or matching gift program? Let us know!**

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I want to make a difference by:

Volunteering (Skills/Interests \_\_\_\_\_)

Making a contribution (circle one) \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$35  
other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Making a monthly contribution (we will contact you with details)

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