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**WEEKLY MEETING BHLC:
NEXT MEETING JANUARY 6, 2005**

EDITORIAL: Happy Holidays, Best wishes for the New Year, and May God Bless. For new years resolutions let's not only make our personal resolutions but let's each of us ask a fellow cohort member to attend the SDC. Below is an article about optimism. 2005 can be a positive year, as I have quoted in the past SUCCESS is a journey... not a destination. Great job on Stress Management adherence last week.

Optimists Live Longer, Study Finds
November 1, 2004

CHICAGO (American Medical Association) -- Patients who described themselves as highly optimistic had lower risks of all-cause death, and lower rates of cardiovascular death than those with high levels of pessimism, according to an article in the November issue of *The Archives of General Psychiatry*, one of the *JAMA/Archives* journals.

According to the article, major depression is a known risk factor for cardiovascular death. However, the relationship between optimism and death has not received as much attention.

Erik J. Giltay, M.D., Ph.D., of Psychiatric Center GGZ Delfland, Delft, the Netherlands, and colleagues analyzed data from the Arnhem Elderly Study to test whether participants who are optimistic live longer than patients who are pessimistic.

Clarksburg WV

Participants were aged 65 to 85 years (999 men and women) and completed a 30-item questionnaire on health, self-respect, morale, optimism and relationships. Of the participants, 941 (466 men, 475 women) had complete information on questions regarding optimism, and these patients were divided into four groups based on their level of optimism.

Over the follow up period of 9.1 years (1991 to 2001), there were 397 deaths. Compared to participants who reported a high level of pessimism, participants reporting high levels of optimism had a 55 percent lower risk of death from all causes, and a 23 percent lower risk of cardiovascular death. The researchers also found an inverse relationship between level of optimism and risk of death, with a stronger protective effect of optimism in men than women for all-cause mortality, but not cardiovascular mortality.

"In conclusion, we found that the trait of optimism was an important long-term determinant of all-cause and cardiovascular mortality in elderly subjects independent of sociodemographic characteristics and cardiovascular risk factors," the authors write.

"A predisposition toward optimism seemed to provide a survival benefit in elderly subjects with relatively short life expectancies otherwise."

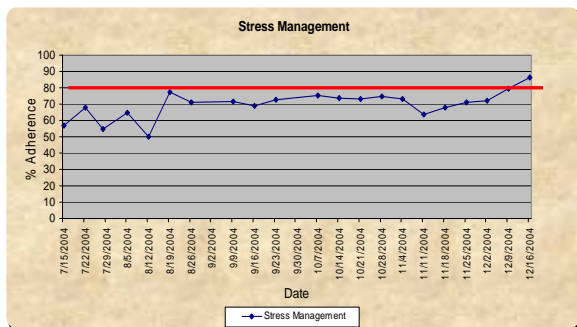
"Our results, combined with the finding that hopelessness was associated with an increased incidence or progression of disease,

suggest that dispositional optimism affects the progression of cardiovascular disease," the researchers state. "Although optimism reduces the risk of cardiovascular death through mechanisms largely unaffected by baseline values of physical activity, obesity, smoking, hypertension, and lipid profile, pessimistic subjects may be more prone to changes across time in risk factors that affect the progression of cardiovascular disease (e.g., the development of smoking habits, obesity, or hypertension) than optimistic subjects.

"Dispositional optimism may also be associated with better coping strategies that are adhered to throughout life."

Source: <http://www.intelihealth.com/IH/ih/IH/EMIHC254/333/8896/403861.html?d=dmtICNNews>

SDC: We will not be meeting this week during the Holidays, but our spirit is always there. Below is our modality results chart for last week. This is the highest Stress Management results I have recorded since we have started the electronic program. Everyone worked hard to achieve these results, and we are helping ourselves reverse heart disease.



MODALITY	RESULTS
Exercise	89.1
Diet	84.5
Stress Management	86.4
Group Support	85.8
Outside Group Support	87.5
Not Attending Group	16
Number of Inputs	16

RECIPES: If you missed any of the recipes we had for the Holiday dinner at UHC one is listed below. These are great holiday recipes, that are easy to make and taste great.

Shells Stuffed with Spinach and Tofu

Yield: 4 servings (5 shells each)

Cooking Spray

1 ½ cups chopped onions

6 cloves garlic, minced

1 package (10 ounces) spinach leaves, torn

¾ cup finely chopped spinach

1 ½ tsp. dried basil leaves

1 ½ package (14-ounce size) firm tofu, finely chopped

1 ½ cups fat-free mozzarella cheese

2 Tbsp. grated fat-free Parmesan cheese

20 jumbo pasta shells (6 ounces), cooked until al dente

Ornish friendly tomato sauce

Spray skillet with cooking spray; heat over medium heat until hot. Sauté onions and garlic until transparent, 3 to 5 minutes.

Wash spinach; add to skillet with eater clinging to leaves. Add parsley and basil and cook, covered, over medium heat until spinach is wilted, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Stir in tofu and cheese.

Stuff each shell with about 3 Tbsp. tofu-cheese mixture. Arrange shells in baking pan and spoon tomato sauce over. Bake at 350 degrees, loosely covered, until hot through, 20 to 25 minutes.

Adapted from 1,001 Low-fat Vegetarian Recipes, Sue Spitler, p.353