

Winter
2024



Mended Hearts®
of Boise

"It's great to be alive - and to help others!"

President's Message



The winter months can produce a lot of health issues, but you can be ready for them if you stay active, try to get some sun on your face, and eat a healthy diet. You can lose weight by eating more. The key is to eat smarter. The one thing more important than what can I lose, it is what you gain. I know that sounds like a lot of effort but think of the reward. To help you, use the resources on the Mended Hearts web site. They have a lot of health topics and information from professionals to give you the knowledge and direction to stay healthy.

February is heart month, with Heart Failure Awareness Week February 11-17, followed by Heart Valve Awareness Day on February 22. You can also participate in CHD the week of February 7-14, and, if you like, you can enter the Rock Your Scar contest during January 1-31 sponsored by Mended Hearts International. You do not have to have a scar to participate. The contest is open to anyone of any age who was born with a congenital heart defect. This will be followed up with a Share Your Heart photo contest that will run February 1-29. This photo contest is open to anyone who has been affected by heart disease. On February 11 at 7PM we are asking everyone to light a candle in remembrance of all our heart warriors who are gone too soon. All events can be reviewed at www.mendedhearts.org.

Now available to Mended Hearts members (or anyone with health issues) is [Selfihealth](#), which is an online program for patients, caregivers and family to gain meaningful connections with other

(Continued on Page 11)

Save the Dates!

MENDED HEARTS CHAPTER 380 MONTHLY MEETINGS

The meetings will be held at the St. Luke's Lifestyle Medicine location (previously known as the Cardiac Rehab Conference Room), 3525 E Louise Dr., Suite 500, Meridian.

- ♥ MH Chapter Meeting Wednesday, 01/17/2024, 3:00-4:30 PM. Anita Partridge, RN, will talk about Infection Prevention.
- ♥ MH Chapter Meeting Wednesday, 02/21/2024, 3:00-4:30 PM. Dr. Jessica Evert with St. Luke's in Boise, will discuss Palliative and Support Care
- ♥ MH Chapter Meeting Wednesday, 03/20/2024, 3:00-4:30 PM. Tim Bilbrey, President and Founder of [RecoveryPlus.health](#), will explain the [RecoveryPlus.health](#) program.

CARDIAC REHAB EDUCATION SESSIONS:

- ♥ Dennis Shiedlak and Ray Trapp visit once a month at St. Luke's Meridian while Tom & Evalyn Nichols visit St. Luke's Nampa location on the first Wednesday of each month .

ON-LINE VISITOR TRAINING AND REACCREDITATION:

- ♥ Reaccreditation Training and New Visitor Training are held online. Please contact Jack Marr for registration details and/or future dates by phone at 229.269.8161, or by email at jack_marr@hotmail.com).

Friendship with Mended Little Hearts Child, Isaiah Wasson



Feb 16, 2016

When Isaiah Michael Wasson was born on November 16, 2015, he was diagnosed with a rare congenital heart defect (CHD) called Transposition of the Great Arteries (TGA). He has the rare form of this, the levo transposition (L-TGA) or congenitally corrected TGA (cc-tga), which essentially means both his arteries and his ventricles were switched prior to his second open heart surgery, called the Double Switch.

We first met Isaiah and his mother, Carrie Lynn Wasson, February 18, 2016, at a Mended Hearts Fundraiser at Chili's Restaurant in Meridian, ID.

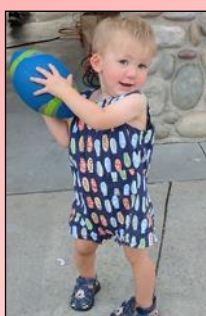
Fast forward to October 2023, Isaiah is progressing well and is 8 years old. The entire journey is documented at their Caring Bridge website.: <https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/babywasson>



Aug 11, 2016 Carrie Lynn and Isaiah attended our picnic in August 2016



Carrie Lynn was our Jan 2017 Chapter Program Speaker, her topic was "Unexpected Expenses of Having a Child with CHD"



Aug 10, 2017 Carrie Lynn and Isaiah attended our picnic in August 2017



Mended Hearts®

Mission Statement

To inspire hope and improve the quality of life of heart patients and their families through ongoing peer-to-peer support, education, and advocacy.

Vision Statement

To be the premier nationwide resource and peer-to-peer support network for all heart patients and their families affected by Heart Disease across the lifespan.

About Mended Hearts

The Mended Hearts program is the nation's premier peer-support program for patients who have cardiovascular disease, their caregivers and their families. Since its humble beginning in 1951, Mended Hearts has served millions by providing support and education, bringing awareness to issues that those living with heart disease face, and advocating to improve quality of life across the lifespan.

The Non-Profit number for Mended Hearts Chapter 380 is 45-4381348



It's great to be alive...
and to help others

Membership in Mended Hearts and Mended *Little Hearts* is about how you can help improve the lives of heart patients and their families, beginning with your own.

We offering **free membership**. This was created so that money will not be a barrier to engaging with Mended Hearts, Young Mended Hearts, and Mended *Little Hearts* and receiving access to resources and information. When you join at the associate level, you become part of something bigger, and you help us give voice to the many issues heart patients face throughout their lifespan. You also learn about the many educational opportunities Mended Hearts, Young Mended Hearts, and Mended *Little Hearts* provide. Finally, you join the ***nation's largest cardiovascular disease peer-to-peer support network*** and help us support even more people.

Mended Hearts, Young Mended Hearts, and Mended *Little Hearts* provide educational programs, peer-to-peer support programs, heart disease awareness campaigns, and we advocate for heart patients big and small every opportunity we can. We need your support to do this.

To join Mended Hearts or Mended *Little Hearts* go online to: <https://mendedhearts.org/connect/member-enrollment/>.

Winter Foods**Sweet and Sour Pork Fried Rice**

Treat your taste buds to this tempting Asian dish bathed in a traditional Chinese flavor combo. The secret to delicious fried rice is making the rice and refrigerating it a day ahead. This allows the rice grains to firm up, decreasing the chances of the fried rice turning out mushy.

**Marinade Ingredients**

- ♥ 1 tablespoon soy sauce (lowest sodium available)
- ♥ 1 tablespoon plain rice vinegar OR 1 tablespoon dry sherry
- ♥ 1 teaspoon cornstarch

Sauce Ingredients

- ♥ 1/2 cup fat-free, low-sodium chicken broth
- ♥ 1/2 cup all-fruit apricot spread
- ♥ 2 tablespoons plain rice vinegar OR 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- ♥ 1 tablespoon soy sauce (lowest sodium available)

Servings 4Serving Size 1 1/2 cups**Ingredients**

- 1 pound pork tenderloin, all visible fat discarded, cut into 3/4-inch cubes
- Cooking spray
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten with a fork
- 1 teaspoon canola or corn oil
- 2 to 3 teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 medium red bell pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 medium carrot, diced
- 3 cups cooked brown rice (cold preferred)
- 1 8-ounce can pineapple chunks in their own juice, drained
- 1 cup frozen green peas, thawed
- 4 medium green onions, sliced

Nutrition Facts	
Calories	490
Total Fat	8.0 g
Saturated Fat	2.0 g
Trans Fat	0.0 g
Polyunsaturated Fat	2.0 g
Monounsaturated Fat	3.0 g
Cholesterol	153 mg
Sodium	355 mg
Total Carbohydrate	71 g
Dietary Fiber	6 g
Sugars	28 g
Added sugars	0.00 H
Protein	31 g

Directions

- ♥ In a large glass dish, whisk together the marinade ingredients. Add the pork, turning to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 10 minutes to 8 hours, turning occasionally.
- ♥ Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk together the sauce ingredients. Set aside.
- ♥ When the pork is done marinating, heat a wok or large skillet over medium-high heat. Remove from the heat and lightly spray with cooking spray (being careful not to spray near a gas flame). Cook the eggs for 1 to 2 minutes, stirring frequently, until scrambled. Break up into pieces. Transfer to a plate.
- ♥ Carefully wipe the wok with paper towels. Heat the oil over high heat, swirling to coat the bottom. Cook the pork with the marinade and the red pepper flakes for 5 minutes, or until the pork is no longer pink on the outside and tender, stirring frequently. Cook the bell pepper and carrots for 2 to 3 minutes, or until tender-crisp, stirring frequently.
- ♥ Stir in the rice, pineapple, peas, green onions, reserved broth mixture and reserved egg pieces. Reduce the heat to medium. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes, or until the mixture is warmed through, stirring occasionally to break up the rice.

Reprinted with permission from the American Heart Association:
<https://recipes.heart.org/en/recipes/sweet-and-sour-pork-fried-rice>

“Never put off till tomorrow what may be done the day after tomorrow just as well.”
Mark Twain

Topic: Pulmonary Hypertension as Relates to Heart Transplant/VAD

November 15, 2023

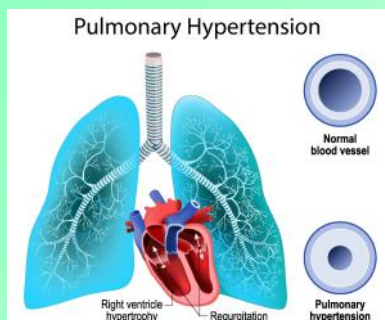
PH FACTS: PH stands for pulmonary hypertension (high blood pressure in the lungs). In "regular" hypertension the pressure in the arteries throughout the body is higher than it should be. This can be measured with a blood pressure cuff. In PH, the blood vessels specifically in the lungs are affected.

- ♥ PH can affect anyone regardless of race or ethnic background, age or sex, although it is more common in females.
- ♥ Although anyone can get PH, there are risk factors that make some people more likely to develop the disease.
- ♥ The symptoms of PH can be mistaken for other diseases.
- ♥ The most common symptoms of PH also can be caused by other more common medical problems, such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- ♥ Not all PH is the same.



There are five different types of PH; the treatment depends on the cause. These groups are defined by the World Health Organization and are referred to as PH WHO Groups. The five groups are:

- ♥ Group 1: Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (PAH). A disorder that causes arteries in the lungs to narrow and create high blood pressure in the lungs. This pressure in the lungs causes the right side of the heart to work harder than normal to get blood into the lungs. Over time, this increased blood pressure in the lungs will damage the heart.
- ♥ Group 2: Pulmonary Hypertension Due to Left Heart Disease. When the left side of the heart is diseased it cannot pump blood effectively. If there is systolic dysfunction, the weakened heart muscle cannot squeeze as well and, thus less blood is leaving the heart. This causes fluid to back up in the lungs and increase pressure in the pulmonary arteries. If there is diastolic dysfunction, less blood fills the heart and the stiff muscle cannot relax normally. Left heart disease is the most common type of PH, comprising 68% of the cases.
- ♥ Group 3: Pulmonary Hypertension Due to Chronic Lung Disease such as, for example, COPD, obstructive sleep apnea.
- ♥ Group 4: Pulmonary Hypertension Due to Blood Clots. This is known as CTEPH (Chronic Thromboembolic Pulmonary Hypertension) and is a disease caused by blockage in the blood vessels that deliver blood from the heart to the lungs. This blockage is typically due to old blood clots in the lungs, a rare complication for the patient who has experienced a previous pulmonary embolism (PE).
- ♥ Group 5: Pulmonary Hypertension Due to Unknown Causes (Idiopathic)



How is PH diagnosed?

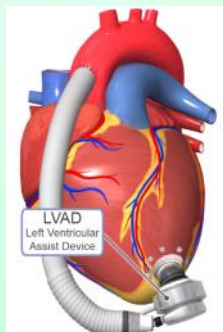
- ♥ Right Heart Catheterization
- ♥ Echo
- ♥ CT Scan
- ♥ Lung perfusion study
- ♥ Pulmonary function tests
- ♥ CXR (Chest X-Ray)
- ♥ Blood tests to evaluate for CTD (Connective Tissue Disease)

General facts

- ♥ With hypertension, blood flow is restricted and the heart has to work harder to push blood flow. In time, this extra effort can weaken the heart muscle and make pumping action ineffective. Over time, there can be a back-up or back flow of blood and fluids which build up in the trunk and extremities. Normally the right side of the heart is called the "delicate dancer" because it doesn't have to work hard to get blood into the lungs, and the left heart is called the "body builder" because it contracts to push blood into the body. The PH described above changes the work balance and effectiveness in both the right and left heart chambers.

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- ♥ Treatments can involve medications to enlarge or open blood vessels, heart strengthening medications, management of diet, activities and stress (adrenaline surges from stress can overwhelm the heart), surgical removal of old blood clots, placement of a cardio MEMS (a butterfly device planted in the pulmonary artery which monitors fluid status in the lungs and sends alerts to make adjustments in water pills before there are signs of fluid build-up and breathing difficulties). If the pressures don't come down with medicine a pump can be used to unload the heart. This is called an LVAD (Left Ventricular Assist Device).
- ♥ The Transplant Cardiologist does not want a heart transplant to have to strain against high-pressures so they lower the pressure before surgery. High pulmonary pressures can be prohibitive to heart transplant. They try first with medications but, if medications are not enough, an LVAD can be implanted to mechanically unload the heart.

A huge THANK YOU to Dr. Airhart for taking time from her busy schedule to educate us about pulmonary hypertension. We learned a lot about the balance between the heart and the lungs and what happens when that balance is off.

Contributed by Pat Toshcoff

Avocado Salsa

Instead of the usual guacamole, try this rich dip that teams creamy avocado with tender black beans and crunchy chopped veggies. We even include homemade tortilla chips!

Servings 16

16 6-inch corn tortillas, each cut into 6 wedges
1/8 tsp salt and 1/8 tsp salt and 1/4 tsp salt (divided use)
1/2 can no-salt-added black beans (rinsed, drained)
1 medium cucumber (peeled, seeded, finely chopped)



1 small green bell pepper (finely chopped)
1 medium rib of celery (finely chopped)
2-3 tablespoon snipped, fresh cilantro
2 tablespoon fresh lime juice
1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
2 medium avocados (diced)

Ingredients Directions

- ♥ Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- ♥ On a large baking sheet, arrange half the tortilla wedges in a single layer. Bake for 10 minutes, or until lightly golden. Sprinkle with 1/8 teaspoon salt. Transfer to a serving bowl. Repeat with the remaining tortilla wedges and the remaining 1/8 teaspoon salt.
- ♥ Meanwhile, in a medium serving bowl, stir together the beans, cucumber, bell pepper, celery, cilantro, lime juice, the final 1/4 teaspoon salt and red pepper flakes. Using a rubber scraper, gently fold in the avocados. Serve with the tortilla wedges.

Nutrition Facts	
Calories	108
Total Fat	4.5 g
Saturated Fat	0.5 g
Trans Fat	0.0 g
Polyunsaturated Fat	1.0 g
Monounsaturated Fat	2.5 g
Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	88 mg
Total Carbohydrate	16 g
Dietary Fiber	4 g
Sugars	1 g
Protein	3g

Reprinted with permission from the American Heart Association:
<https://recipes.heart.org/en/recipes/avocado-salsa>

Honey-Roasted Carrots

Ingredients for 3 servings

6 whole carrots, or chopped (if you prefer bite-sized pieces), peeled with tips and ends cut off
2 tablespoons butter, melted
2 tablespoons honey
Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation

- 1 Preheat oven to 400°F
- 2 In a medium casserole dish, coat the carrots evenly in butter, honey, salt, and pepper.
- 3 Bake for about 25-30 minutes until done to desired softness.

Warnings - and Hope - from new Heart Disease Treatment Guidelines

By Michael Merschel, American Heart Association News

New guidelines detailing how to care for people with heart disease come with some easy-to-grasp warnings for patients.

- ♥ The chronic coronary disease guidelines from the American Heart Association and American College of Cardiology, published in the AHA journal *Circulation*, are no incremental update, said Dr. Salim Virani, chairperson of the expert panel that rewrote them. "It's actually a new guideline in that everything that needed to be evaluated in terms of evidence was reviewed, and all the recommendations were rewritten," said Virani, vice provost of research and a professor of medicine at Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan.
- ♥ Coronary disease includes various conditions that trace back to the buildup of plaque in artery walls that limits blood flow to the heart. That includes coronary artery disease, angina, heart attack and care after a procedure to open a blocked heart artery. The guidelines cover topics ranging from exercise to cholesterol management to bypass surgery. "This is pulling everything together as a one-stop shop for providers who take care of these kinds of patients," said Dr. Kristin Newby, the writing panel's vice chairperson.
- ♥ From that "one-stop shop," here are six warnings for people with coronary disease – plus an overall message to embrace.



Avoid trans fat

- ♥ "Trans fats aren't good for anybody," said Newby, a professor of medicine and cardiology at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. But people with coronary disease need to be extra careful.
- ♥ Of all the fats and oils used in cooking, Newby said, trans fats are the most likely to cause plaque in the arteries. In people with existing disease, trans fat has been linked to higher risk of heart attack and stroke, higher death rates from those problems, and higher risk of premature death.
- ♥ Artificial trans fats are liquid oils that have been turned into a solid. Margarine and shortening are common examples. The Food and Drug Administration has banned food manufacturers from using a once-common source of trans fat: partially hydrogenated vegetable oils. But in some places, trans fats still show up in restaurant deep-fat fryers and elsewhere.
- ♥ Trans fats also occur naturally in beef, lamb and butterfat, but the guidelines say these pose less risk than artificial trans fats. Companies are allowed to say a food is free of trans fats even if they have as much as half a gram. To avoid trans fats, check nutrition labels and skip fried food, processed baked goods and refrigerated dough. And look for terms such as "partially hydrogenated oils" in the ingredients list.

Beware of secondhand smoke

- ♥ Smoking is a well-known cause of heart disease. But even if you're not smoking, you need to be careful. "Every effort should be made to avoid secondhand smoke, because it carries many of the same chemicals and irritants that we think lead to coronary disease," Newby said.
- ♥ It's a matter of accumulating risk, Virani said. "If you have heart disease, and then you add secondhand smoke on top of everything else that's going on, the risk really goes up." For people who have had a heart attack, that includes a higher risk of having another one.
- ♥ Avoiding secondhand smoke can be tough if you work at a place where smoking is allowed. But if you have a family member who smokes, Virani said, "at a minimum" you should ask them to smoke outside.

Be careful with common drugs, including ibuprofen

- ♥ "A lot of times we all have this misperception that if something is available over the counter, it is safe," Virani said. "Patients who have heart disease should be very mindful, even if it's vitamins." The guidelines offer a specific warning about nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, also known as NSAIDs. These drugs include ibuprofen and naproxen sodium. "What we're talking about here is not kind of a one-time use because your muscles are sore after working out," Newby said. "What we're talking about is using them every day."
- ♥ NSAIDs pose two issues for people with coronary disease, Virani said. First, extended use has been linked to cardiovascular problems, including having a second heart attack. Second, NSAIDs can cause bleeding in the stomach and intestines. A heart patient may be on one or even two blood-thinning medications, Virani said. Combine those with NSAIDs, and "your risk of bleeding goes up tremendously."
- ♥ Occasional use is not a problem, he said. But he and Newby recommend

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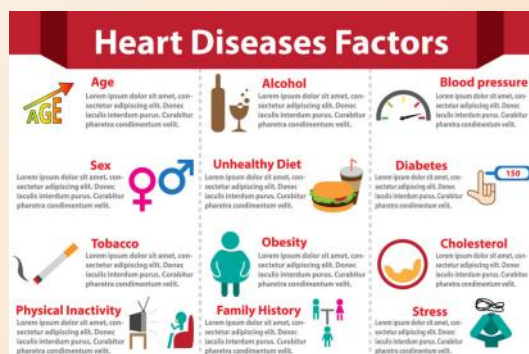
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acetaminophen as an alternative.

Don't combine erectile dysfunction drugs with nitrates

- ♥ Nitrates – including nitroglycerin – are prescribed for angina, or chest pain. Phosphodiesterase type 5 inhibitors – including sildenafil and tadalafil – are used for erectile dysfunction. Mixing them can cause a potentially life-threatening drop in blood pressure. "It's not about not using them," Newby said. "It's just about being careful."
- ♥ Tadalafil, for example, can stay in the system up to 48 hours, and some nitrates are long-acting as well. Men should talk to their doctor about how long the drugs last in the system, and look for alternatives if necessary, the experts said.



Don't use these weight loss drugs

- ♥ Sympathomimetic weight loss drugs such as phentermine and benzphetamine work by suppressing appetite. They also raise your heart rate and blood pressure, which can strain a heart already suffering from compromised blood flow, Virani said. The drugs might lead to irregular heartbeats as well, he said.
- ♥ One drug in this class, sibutramine, was taken off the U.S. market in 2010 but might be available outside the country or sold illegally.
- ♥ Avoid them all, Virani said. "We have much, much better and safer weight loss medications."

Be careful with postmenopausal hormone therapy

- ♥ Estrogen and progestin are given to women to help with postmenopausal symptoms such as hot flashes. In the context of heart disease, it has issues.
- ♥ First, Newby said, although hormones have been extensively studied in hopes of showing they protect against heart disease, intensive research found no benefit. But hormone therapy does raise the risk of venous thromboembolism, a blood clot in a deep vein or a lung.
- ♥ "What we are suggesting to patients with chronic coronary disease is to actually have that conversation with their treating clinician to see what other alternatives exist," Virani said. Given their already-elevated risk, "they've got to be very careful."

And now the good news ...

- ♥ Managing chronic coronary disease can seem like a list of limitations. Virani said it should also be seen as a wealth of opportunities.
- ♥ "You know, 30 to 40 years ago, having chronic coronary disease was really just like, 'OK, you're just going to have another heart attack one of these days, and you may or may not survive,'" he said. But even in the past four to five years, new treatments have made it more manageable than ever if people work with their health care professionals and take their medications.
- ♥ "So, there's a lot of hope as well," he said. "It's not a death sentence anymore. You can have a pretty normal life span and good quality of life if you actually follow the recommendations."

Reprinted with permission from the American Heart Association:
<https://www.heart.org/en/news/2023/07/26/warnings-and-hope-from-new-heart-disease-treatment-guidelines>

"To be old and wise, you need to first be young and stupid."

Innovative Procedure to Remove Pacemaker Leads

New Technology by Adam Grimaldi, MD

Innovative procedure makes it easier and safer to remove pacemaker leads Saint Alphonsus Completes First Laser Lead Extraction in Idaho

- ♥ Since pacemakers and implantable cardiac defibrillators (ICDs) were invented 50 years ago, these devices have improved the quality of life and extended the longevity of many patients, often beyond the expected lifespan of the device itself. Recent years have brought tremendous growth in the utilization of pacemakers and ICDs. As more patients live longer, the issue of managing these implanted devices has become a greater concern.
- ♥ Pacemakers use wires, called leads, to connect the device to the heart. While intended to be permanent, occasionally these leads become compromised and need to be removed. There may also be a need to remove and replace the pacemaker or ICD due to an infection, malfunction, or upgrade. Abandoned and capped leads stand in the way of good health. Physicians are making great strides in the development of guidelines and protocols for lead extraction.
- ♥ Removing the leads used to involve an invasive procedure, where the wires were physically cut away from the walls of the heart. However, there is now a better and safer way to remove these leads. Saint Alphonsus is proud to be the first in Idaho to introduce this new procedure.
- ♥ Our Electrophysiology team is using **Philips' new laser lead extraction technology** that makes the procedure safer and more effective. The laser is more efficient than the mechanical cutting of the tissue from the lead. The cool laser ablates (removes tissue) at a width that is less than a human hair and it creates residual waste that is smaller than a blood cell so it is cleared from the body. This allows for the safe removal of the wires.
- ♥ Before Saint Alphonsus offered this technology, patients had to travel to Salt Lake City or Seattle for this advanced procedure. The first patient to have the laser lead extraction, a 67-year-old Eagle resident, spent one night in the hospital after having his pacemaker removed and replaced with another device, a cardiac resynchronization therapy defibrillator to improve the efficiency of his heartbeat. He's doing well and appreciates that he could get his procedure done without leaving the Treasure Valley.



Dr. Adam Grimaldi, MD is the medical director of the Cardiac Electrophysiology program at Saint Alphonsus Heart Institute.

Extracted with permission from a blog on the Saint Alphonsus web page: <https://www.saintalphonsus.org/blog/>

“To succeed in life, you need three things: a wishbone, a backbone, and a funny bone.” – Reba McEntire

Fred Meyer Donation Reward Program

You can help Mended Hearts Chapter 380 earn donations just by shopping with your Fred Meyer Rewards Card!

Is your Fred Meyer Rewards Card linked to Mended Hearts? The re-enrollment period for customers who did not relink their card with a nonprofit ended in June and they were dropped from the Community Rewards System. Please visit the [Fred Meyer](#)

[Community Rewards](#) website to link your Rewards Card with Mended Hearts Chapter 380!

Fred Meyer is donating \$2.5 million per year to non-profits in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington based on where their customers tell them to give. Here's how the program works:

Sign up for the Community Rewards Program by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to Mended Hearts Chapter 380 on the Fred Meyer Community Rewards website. You can search for us by name or our non-profit number, MJ804.



Then, every time you shop and use your Rewards Card, you are helping Mended Hearts earn a donation!

You still earn your Rewards Points, Fuel Points and Rebates, just as you do today.

If you do not have a Rewards Card, they are available at the Customer Service desk of any Fred Meyer store.

For more information, please visit the [Fred Meyer Community Rewards](#)

Mended Hearts member

Topic: Heart Transplant Journey

November 15, 2023

- ♥ In 1984, heart transplants were experimental. There are 250 heart transplant hospitals in the United States. Not all transplant hospitals can transplant all organs. The University of Utah has this capability. You also have to pass lots of tests, not just blood type, to receive a heart transplant.



- ♥ UNOS (United Network for Organ Sharing) decides who gets an organ next. You are put on a ranked waiting list. Originally, the list had three categories 1A, 1B, & 2. People complained and the new list now has seven: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Entrance to the list is largely dependent on a patient's health condition or status. You can be moved up and down the list as well. Gender is not a factor in matching, but the size of the patient and corresponding size of the donor organ and blood types are.



Ray Trapp with John Dzwilewski

- ♥ On January 30, 2018, at 56 years of age, John Dzwilewski had 98% blockage of the lower ascending artery. He was treated with medications and various therapies, but his body did not respond. He experienced multiple heart attacks. Eventually he had an LVAD (Left Ventricular Assist Device) implanted to keep him going, because his heart was not pumping enough blood to his body; his ejection fraction was below 15%. This can be a bridge to a heart transplant, which was the next step for John.
- ♥ He spent 30 days in Salt Lake waiting for transplant but did not get one at that time. On February 3, 2020, he got the call and had six hours to get to Salt Lake for the procedure. The weather in SLC was snowing so no flights were available. Instead, a friend drove him there, arriving around 2:30-3:00 am, in under 5 hours of travel time.
- ♥ The hospital bridged John on a Vitamin K IV (intravenous) drip, to which he had a reaction. They could not do the transplant until this cleared up. He was placed on an ECMO (Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation machine) and RVAD (Right Ventricular Assist Device), which required staying in hospital because of the size of these machines. Now they no longer give Vitamin K intravenously but use an oral dose instead. His heart came from a male ten days shy of his 20th birthday. John has a relationship with the sister of his donor.
- ♥ John also mentioned that Russell Nelson, head of the LDS Church, invented the heart/lung machine used. The University of Utah is among the founding groups of transplant centers.
- ♥ John talked about developing "bubble brain" afterwards — not remembering a lot. He must have his blood checked every three months. He also has a suppressed immune system which requires taking medication. Most people's immune system functions at 100%, but John's functions at 12%.
- ♥ John's experience was, and still is, a definite journey. He is doing well and feels thankful every day. We all have a story to tell and this one was his.



We all want to thank John for his witty, off the cuff tale, of what must have been a very harrowing experience!

Contributed by Dee Hartman

Talk to a Mended Hearts Volunteer about your Heart Questions!

You can schedule a telephone visit or a video chat visit with a trained volunteer who is a heart patient, caregiver, or a parent of a child with a heart condition just like you.

To speak to someone right now, please call our toll-free number:

HEARTLINE at 1-844-HEART87 (1-844-432-7887)

The Visiting Center is open between **10AM and 6PM** Eastern Monday through Friday and **Noon to 3:00PM** Eastern on Saturday.

If you do not get someone, please leave a message and we will get back to you.

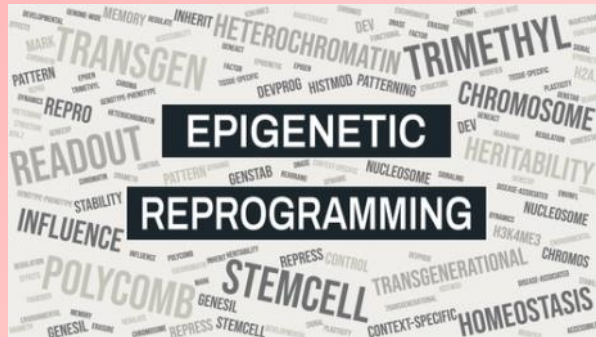
If you would like to speak to someone from our local chapter, call (208) 706-7056 and leave a message.



Mended Hearts®
of Boise

Social determinants of health linked to faster genetic aging

- ♥ Scientists already knew that cardiovascular health can be affected by social determinants of health that include a person's neighborhood, education, access to healthy foods and economic stability. But new research offers a clue as to why: accelerated biological aging.
- ♥ For the new study, researchers considered epigenetic age acceleration. Epigenetics research looks at how the environment can affect the way DNA is read and offers a potential explanation for how one's lived experience can alter the way their genes work. Unlike chronological age, epigenetic age is a measure of those changes in cells, tissues and organ systems.
- ♥ Researchers analyzed the health data of 2,932 Black and white adults in the Coronary Artery Risk Development in Young Adults study, or CARDIA, which began in the mid-1980s. The participants were 45 years old on average and had enrolled in CARDIA in their late teens or 20s.
- ♥ To measure cardiovascular risk, researchers examined an individual's coronary artery calcium level – the amount of plaque in the vessels that supply blood to the heart – and the left ventricular mass index, a measurement of the thickness and efficiency of the heart's left pumping chamber.
- ♥ During their seventh year of participation, the individuals were measured for certain social determinants of health: residential racial segregation, neighborhood poverty levels, food insecurity, difficulty paying for basic necessities or health care, and the education level of participants or their parents.
- ♥ Researchers found that by the 25th year of participation, all of the measured social determinants were associated with thicker ventricle muscles in the heart. Food insecurity and difficulty paying for basic necessities and health care also were associated with higher coronary artery calcium levels.
- ♥ Next, researchers examined DNA in blood samples for epigenetic changes, or whether social factors may be associated with the age acceleration of genes. Several factors were found to have a notable impact: 32% of the relationship between education and heart muscle thickness could be explained statistically by epigenetic aging. For residential racial segregation, the relationship was 24%, and for neighborhood poverty, 21%.
- ♥ The findings suggest epigenetic changes may partly explain why social factors affect heart muscle thickness, lead researcher Havisha Pedamallu said.



- ♥ "Showing that epigenetic age acceleration accounts for over 30% of the relationship between education and worsened cardiovascular health is a pretty important finding," said Pedamallu, a medical and public health student at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago. "We're beginning to show that there might be direct biological changes that are a result of social disadvantages."
- ♥ The findings were presented in November, 2023, at the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions conference in Philadelphia and are considered preliminary until full results are published in a peer-reviewed journal.
- ♥ Pedamallu said the results pave the way for future DNA research to explore changes to the genome that worsen heart disease.
- ♥ "Being able to identify the mechanism that goes on in our bodies would be incredibly important for finding novel ways of detection, treatment and early intervention," she said. "I really hope that more studies can push our medical system, our government and our society to better acknowledge social determinants of health and to put more effort into making them a priority in health care."
- ♥ Pedamallu said the study was limited because it didn't show cause and effect, and it also looked at a limited number of social determinants of health. Because the field of epigenetics continues to evolve, more accurate test methods may be developed in the future, she said.

(Continued on page11)

(Continued from Page 1—Presidents Message)

individuals who match your needs and background. It is a great method to be inspired, motivated, and engaged with other MHI members or non members who share heart or other health issues. Check it out at www.selfihealth.com

Remember all these resources are free and you only need to become a MHI member to enjoy and stay informed about your heart health. Please come to one of our local meetings and have some fun with the rest of us. They are on the third Wednesday of each month at the St. Luke's Lifestyle Medicine location (previously known as the Cardiac Rehab Conference Rm), 3525 E Louise Dr., Suite 500, Meridian, ID. We can also use volunteers on our board of directors, events, and patient follow-up. All these opportunities to volunteer are less formal and are still very rewarding.

Ray Trapp, President

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(Continued from Page 10 - Social determinants of health linked to faster genetic aging)

- ♥ Dr. Mario Sims, a professor of social medicine, population and public health at the University of California, Riverside School of Medicine, called the research "a fascinating study of things that aren't diagnosed in a regular office visit, things going on underneath the skin that can have a cascading effect on cardiovascular health downstream."
- ♥ "I think it shows that clinicians, providers and public health practitioners need to develop ways where these social risk variables are included in their diagnoses," said Sims, who was not involved in the research. "We have to diagnose a person with heart disease from a holistic standpoint (which includes social determinants), not just from a behavioral or clinical risk standpoint."

Reprinted with permission from the American Heart Association:
<https://www.heart.org/en/news/2023/11/29/social-determinants-of-health-linked-to-faster-genetic-aging>

Use good-for-you ginger in bread or tea

- ♥ If you've puzzled over uses for those knotty-looking ginger roots in the produce department, just put one into your shopping cart. Then check your cookbook for recipes that begin with the word "ginger."
- ♥ Ginger has been revered around the world for more than 7,000 years. It has slightly pungent natural taste that adds a touch of its flavor and enhances all other flavors in a recipe. Ground ginger has a different flavor and is not usually interchangeable with fresh ginger.
- ♥ In China and many other parts of the world, ginger is well-known for its power to calm an upset stomach. Common anti-nausea medications work through the central nervous system, causing drowsiness. Ginger acts directly on the digestive tract. In one study, people who took one gram of ginger before surgery had less nausea afterward. It is useful for chemotherapy patients and for pregnant women having morning sickness because it will not harm the fetus. Ginger's reputation as a remedy for motion sickness and seasickness is well documented by a famous Danish study. Ginger extract is available in health-food stores.
- ♥ Next time you're feeling a little queasy, brew a cup of ginger tea. Slice some ginger root. Put it in a tea ball and place in a teapot. Pour boiling water over the tea ball and let it sit for 10 minutes. Sweeten with honey.



Gingerbread

- ♥ In a pan, melt 1/2 cup butter, 2/3 cup brown sugar, and 1/3 cup molasses. Cool slightly, then beat in 1 egg.
- ♥ In a bowl, sift together almost one cup of white and almost one cup of whole wheat flour, 1 teaspoon ground ginger, and 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon. Stir into the melted mix.
- ♥ Mix 2/3 cup warm milk with 1 teaspoon baking soda and add to the mix. Stir in 1/2 cup dried fruit.
- ♥ Bake in a pan lined with wax paper for 1 hour at 300 degrees. Cool, remove from the pan, and discard the wax paper.



For best flavor, store in an airtight tin a week before serving.

PagesMag 12/23

MENDED HEARTS CHAPTER 380 INFORMATION

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Mended Hearts Web Pages: Local – www.MHBoise.org

VISITOR CORNER

We are now visiting patients at St. Luke's in Boise, Meridian, & Nampa; at Saint Alphonsus in Boise; and at the St. Luke's Cardiac Rehab Clinics in Meridian & Nampa. In 2023, we added well over 300 new associate members and talked to over 500 heart patients. At the end of 2023, Mended Hearts International shows our Chapter has 549 members.

We currently serve the facilities noted above and are looking for additional volunteers to help out. **If you are interested in becoming an accredited visitor, please call or email Jack Marr, the training coordinator of our visiting program.** He can be reached at 229.269.8161 or by email to jack_marr@hotmail.com. Additionally, you may call or email our chapter president, Ray Trapp, at 208.939.0300, email: raymh380@outlook.com.

Accredited Visitors:

Kerry Burgo	Tom & Evalyn Nichols
Nancy Eimer	Bruce Parks
Odee Gordon	Dennis & Adrienne Shiedlak
Cynthia Guarino	Rich Talbert
Dave Huber	Pat Toshcoff
Jack Marr	Ray & Wini Trapp
Becky Newberry	

To New Heart Patients

We hope that your recovery is progressing well and would like to invite you and your family to visit our monthly meetings. We have speakers and programs designed to be of interest to heart patients. As heart patients we know what you are experiencing and are available to answer non-medical questions.

For more information check out our web site:
www.MHBoise.org or call: (208) 706-7056

Please NOTE: During the COVID pandemic, we met virtually via Zoom technology. We're now meeting in person again (subject to change for community health risks). We welcome you to any of our next meetings! In the meantime, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact any of our members listed on this page by phone or email, or leave a message at (208) 706-7056 and someone will get back to you.



We welcome new visitors who want to find out more about becoming a Mended Hearts, Young Mended Hearts, or Mended Little Hearts member. Our volunteers make a difference in providing cardiac patients & caregivers, peer to peer support, education, and most of all hope as we have all experienced a cardiac event.

Have you or someone in your family had a recent heart surgery or another heart event during the last few months? If so, Mended Hearts, a support group for heart patients and **their families is available to provide support and encouragement.** Mended Hearts members are patients like you who have recovered from a heart event and have chosen to give back. Most of the members in our chapter have had a heart event of some type or are caregivers. If you just want to talk, give us a call and leave a message on our voice mail, 208-706-7056 and we will get together. If you have a question about Mended Hearts or would like to speak to a member, please leave your name, phone number and a brief message. A member from this chapter will call you as soon as possible.

Newsletter by email Renewal Policy

Mended Hearts Chapter 380 will email the newsletter to subscribers for two (2) years. Those wishing to continue may request to do so by emailing mendedheartsofboise@gmail.com. This is a free subscription and subscribers may *unsubscribe* at any time. NO response from a subscriber after the 2-year limit has passed signifies cancellation.