

# MEDICAL LETTERS

## Food Allergies & Diet

Dr. Friesen addresses food concerns through nutrition education, while also sharing about hobbies he enjoys and why Lane County is a fitting place for him.



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March 13th



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# Purr Like a Kitten

It wouldn't be a year of focusing on wellness without including nutrition and its role in overall health. Wouldn't it be amazing if everyone had equal access to nutritional food, and the community thrived because of it?

Well, this month, articles explore ways to access fresh, nutrient-rich food and how local organizations are partnering to make nutritious meals available to everyone. You'll also find an article exploring the connection between food choices and skin conditions.

## Premium Food as Fuel

Anyone with a high-performance vehicle knows that you get regular performance if you put regular fuel in the tank. Conversely, when you opt for premium fuel, your vehicle seems to "purr like a kitten." Wouldn't we get optimal results if we treated food for our bodies like fuel for our cars?

Yet many in our community have limited access to "premium" level fuel.

And while physicians strive to bridge the gap between community resources and their patients' food instability, they often neglect their own proper nutrition. Most healthcare workers have experienced increased workloads (constantly working through meals), resulting in "grab-and-go" meals, which may not be ideal, nutritionally speaking.

## Community Emphasis on Nutrition

In his article, Dr. Sage highlights the **Willamette Farm & Food Coalition**, and discusses a few options for purchasing food locally to improve nutritional intake while supporting local farmers. He describes ways this simultaneously builds community and helps each other thrive.

It's exciting to learn about local partnerships with **FOOD for Lane County (FFLC)** to reduce food

insecurity for Lane County residents and remove barriers such as access, budget, and transportation.

**PeaceHealth** describes a new way to connect community resources to families in need with a creative meal kit program.

Similarly, **Trillium** aims to provide adequate wholesome, nutritious meals for a wide range of demographics at convenient locations around town – even offering a drive-thru option!

**Positive Community Kitchen (PCK)** provides community members with nutritionally valuable meals while battling life-threatening illnesses – what a relief and a blessing to our neighbors in need.

While the connection between nutrition and skin conditions may not be fully understood, Dr. Vazquez explains how although food choices don't necessarily cause skin issues, they certainly can exacerbate them.

In summary, nutrition affects us all in one way or another. If we work as a community to make "premium" fuel available to everyone, it offers benefits far beyond expectation. Families in need get relief from food insecurity, the community's overall health outcomes improve, healthcare costs decline, local farmers are supported, and the economy thrives.

## Physician Wellness Program Usage Data

Throughout the past 10 years of the Physician Wellness Program (PWP), we often get asked how we gauge the success of the program. Due to the confidential nature of the program, limited data is shared with us, but we know total of new clients, number of follow up sessions, and primary presenting issues. Program usage reports are compiled quarterly and annually.

There have been 308 total sessions

overall, an average of 44 annually which is about between three to four visits/month. (2017 had the highest with 61, and 2020 the lowest at 30 due to the pandemic).

It's also important to note that all donations to the PWP are used for direct services to physicians, and as always, are tax-deductible as it is a 501c (3) entity.

Presenting Issues for the Physician Wellness Program



20 categories total - chart displays the top 6

Coaching services were added to the PWP, offering guidance for physicians aiming to achieve their optimal work-life balance. There have been 863 coaching sessions to date, with categories including leadership development, business management, improving interpersonal skills, and job transitions. Sessions are not separated by categories, as many involved more than one.

LCMS coaching providers also offer Organizational Development and Team Building, aiding in the prevention of conflict and burnout in the workplace.

For more information about the PWP and what our providers offer, visit our website, [lcmesociety.com/pwp](http://lcmesociety.com/pwp).

*Shondra*



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# Chart Notes

“I’m always trying to coach a balance between taking the food allergy seriously, but not taking the food allergy so seriously that it rules your life. At times, families have added foods to their avoidance list that are unnecessary, and this can contribute to poor nutrition.”

– **DR. JASON FRIESEN**  
ON THE IMPORTANCE OF  
NUTRITION EDUCATION  
FOR THOSE WITH FOOD  
ALLERGIES  
FOR MORE, SEE PAGE 16

## Mindful Mobility Yoga Hybrid Event Sunday, March 13th

Join Chelsea Duke at **Glow Yoga in Oakway Center** on **March 13th from 3-4pm** for a special yoga class to support the healthcare workers who take care of our community. This will be a restorative, all-levels class focusing on stress relief, mindfulness, and gentle mobility. Attendees will work on calming breathing techniques, while progressively stretching out parts of the body that can get tight from long working hours (think: hips, hamstrings, shoulders/neck/upper back) and stress. Come relax and unwind with your

fellow physicians, no prior yoga experience is required.

This class is a private event for LCMS members only and will be capped at 16 attendees to allow for 6-foot social distancing. Please bring a yoga mat if you have one. The class will also be recorded for those who prefer to practice at home, and will be available afterward.

To reserve your spot, visit our website, [lcmesociety.com](https://lcmesociety.com), and click on the banner! Space is limited!

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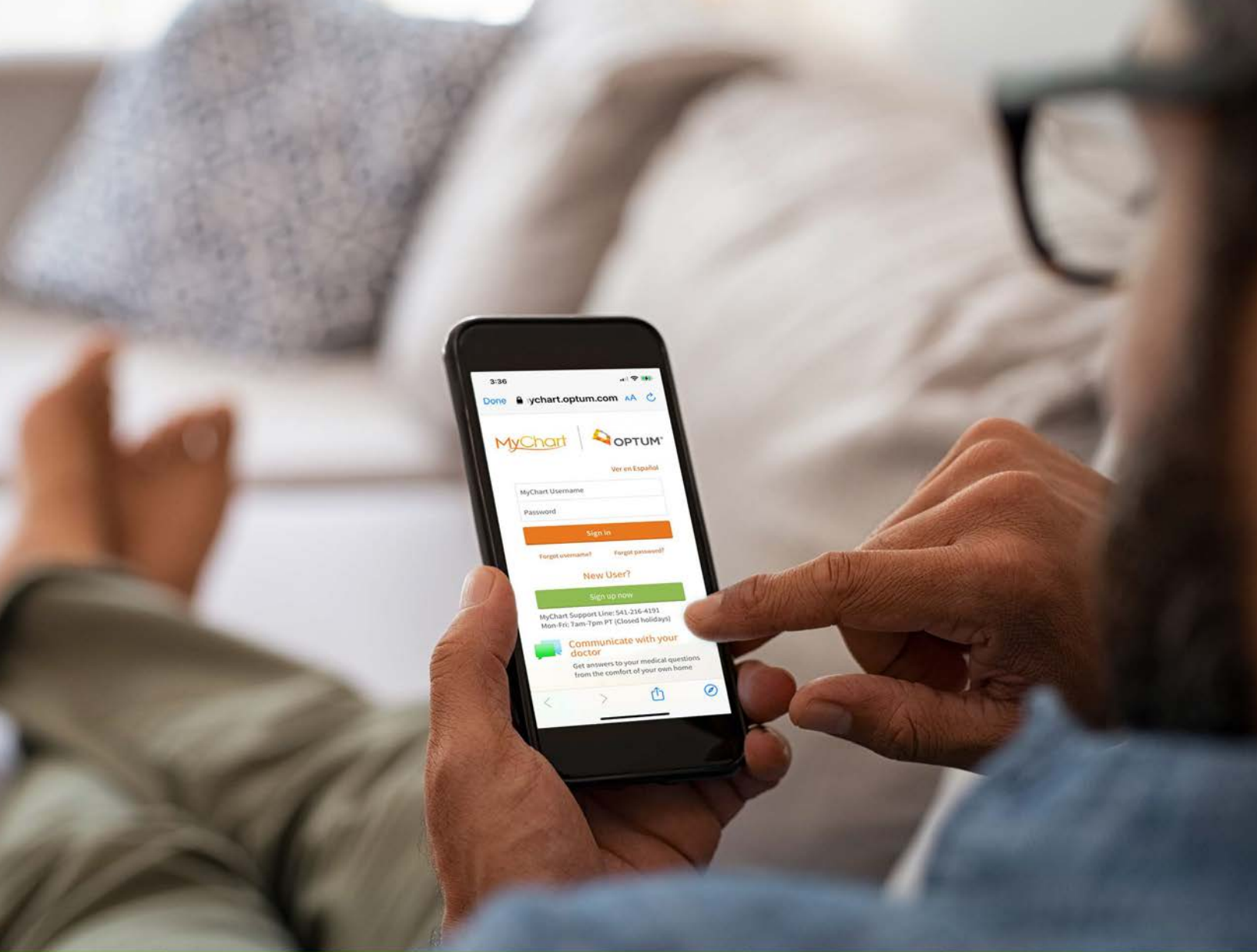
### LCMS Proudly Endorses the Eugene Family YMCA’s Capital Campaign for a New Y

“We, as physicians, know the importance of health as well as community, and there is an institution that embodies both—our local YMCA. The physicians at Lane County Medical Society have seen the benefits this institution brings to our community as a pillar of support for families and encouragement toward a healthy lifestyle. Some of us have even used the facilities at the beloved Y right next to our patients. LCMS is happy to endorse the YMCA and support their Capital Campaign for a new building.”

– **Dr. Kevin Modeste, 2022 LCMS Board President**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars for our second annual **LCMS Wellness Challenge** leading up to **Global Wellness Day on June 11th**. Last May, we asked members to track their steps for the month and try to visit one of the seven wonders of Oregon to promote balance and well-being. Our step winner had over 625,000 steps in May 2021! This year, we’re tracking steps again and hoping to improve our counts! We’ll also be encouraging members to explore parts of Lane County, including some of the incredible historic covered bridges we have in the area (there are 20!) to bask in their wonder and enjoy the weather as it gets warmer. The LCMS Wellness Challenge will start a few days earlier this year, on April 29th, to include the dates of the Eugene Marathon. LCMS staff is planning to participate via a run, walk, or volunteer opportunities. More information to come!



## Collaborative Patient Care Just Got Easier: Now Using **MyChart** and **Epic** to Enhance and Coordinate Care



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# Healthy Organizations – A Key to Burnout Prevention

*Each month in 2022, LCMS will feature a message from our Physician Wellness Program providers as a way of celebrating the 10 year anniversary of this program.*

We all know that a high percentage of physicians experience burnout. A recent annual survey by *Medical Economics* found as many as four out of five experience it on some level. The usual remedies suggested are building resiliency, physical exercise, and a balanced diet and lifestyle.

But the larger, less obvious remedy lies within their organization. With more physicians leaving private practice and affiliating with large medical groups, the health of the organization is more important than ever. A new study out of OHSU suggests that reducing burnout requires an organization-level response – creating medical practice cultures that value qualities such as teamwork, open communications, and process improvement.

Much of my practice addresses these principles on a team, department, or organization-wide level.

## **Building Blocks of Healthy Companies**

My work with companies begins by building a strong, cohesive leadership team. This vital unit provides inspiration, direction, focus, and positive reinforcement to the members at large. They achieve this through establishing mutual respect and trust which engenders honesty, commitment, and accountability within the team. They embody these principles and deliver these messages to the rest of the company. I have found that the combination of leadership training supported by individual coaching to be most effective. This can take place with a newly formed leadership team or one that has already been established.

Although physicians are by the very nature of their work, in charge of their support staff providing patient care, many

of the skills necessary to be effective leaders are learned. What they must impart to their staff is a sense of purpose for one's work and how the mission of their company makes a difference in the world. They also exhibit and communicate the core values that dictate acceptable behavior at work, an important cultural component. This, all the while devising the strategy that sets their business apart and ahead of the competition.

For physician partner groups, the acceptance and support of group leaders can be challenging. Transparency, openness, integrity, a clearly devised vision, and humility instill confidence that the leaders have the group's best interest at heart.

Giving members an opportunity to participate in developing the mission, vision, values, and strategy helps garner their support and buy-in. Often those on the front lines have a different and equally useful perspective to achieving a more holistic and integrated approach to the business.

Clear communication is the next essential component of healthy organizations. Employee satisfaction surveys continually score communication systems as insufficient. This is the lifeblood of an organization, the language that draws it all together. One client group reinforced their mission and vision by stating it throughout all their internal forms of communication, even on the break room wall. Another group designed systems that address not only when to communicate, but how. They identified the purpose of each communication, the need for security, and recommended different formats and applications to facilitate the exchange.

## **The Health of an Organization Predicts Its Success.**

Providing a supportive environment allows staff to thrive. Seventy percent of

a team's engagement is influenced by its managers. Three major burnout factors that detract from a staff's effectiveness are lack of job role clarity, continual performance feedback, and autonomy. In addition, there is a lack of training and support to satisfactorily meet the job expectations and continue to grow within the organization.

According to Gallup\*, only half of people even know what is expected of them. Although this sounds fundamental, so many companies overlook these basics and sabotage their success. Stating clearly the expectations of each team member with feedback as to their level of achievement and then allowing them to accomplish these responsibilities in their own way results in greater engagement, effectiveness, and retention. These processes alleviate a lot of typical burnout symptoms.

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My Annual Review to My Ongoing Conversations

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By nurturing and developing a more empowered, cohesive team environment, connecting strategy, operations, culture, leadership, and execution together allows the enterprise to reach new heights and achieve organizational goals. This unleashes greater worker satisfaction and performance. It also eliminates confusion, misalignment, office politics, team dysfunction, and missed opportunities.

*Shannon O'Leary*

*Executive/Life Coach and Organization Development Consultant for the LCMS Physician Wellness Program*

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# Support Community Health by Choosing Local Foods

**BY JOSEPH SAGE, MD**  
PWP PROVIDER FOR  
LANE COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

Hello, folks! It's National Nutrition Month. This year, March finds us celebrating both Fat Tuesday (March 1) and pi day (3.14). While I can't speak to how your households observe these particular days, in our house, we try to clear the larders on Shrove Tuesday and we eat pie on pi day. It's even probable that I have encouraged this type of behavior during my primary care practice.

What's that you ask? Shouldn't the lifestyle medicine doctor be recommending a plant strong, whole foods diet packed with fiber and antioxidants?<sup>1</sup> Shouldn't he be taking this opportunity to remind people that certain diets and lifestyles actually suck cholesterol out of arteries and help people live without disease?<sup>2</sup> What about the fact that following a healthy lifestyle reduces depression? The horror when he mentions how much he enjoys making

“People need five things to thrive: positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, meaning, and accomplishment.<sup>3</sup> Since people make behavior changes in the context of relationships, people thrive in the context of their community.”

cheese-laden pizza.

Here's the crazy thing. If you had not requested that information from me, you would resist the information I had to share. So, though I would love to share with you all kinds of information, you need to be ready to receive it first. Consider how many times you have given a patient an unwanted lecture that was actually - unintentionally - provoking internal resistance.

*Primum non nocere.*

Let's review. People resist unwanted advice. Doctors are trained to give advice to patients, and we are held responsible for population health metrics. Doctors then give patients unwanted lectures, provoking resistance, while having their own performance measured and salary based on the outcomes of patient behavior. This is inherently stressful.

What would happen to our stress if our focus changed from population health to community health and flourishing? People need five things to

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1) [www.lifestylemedicine.org](http://www.lifestylemedicine.org), [www.pcrn.org](http://www.pcrn.org), and [eugeneplantbasedproviders.com](http://eugeneplantbasedproviders.com).

2) The Ornish Lifestyle

3) Flourish, Martin Seligman, a life-changing and practice changing book



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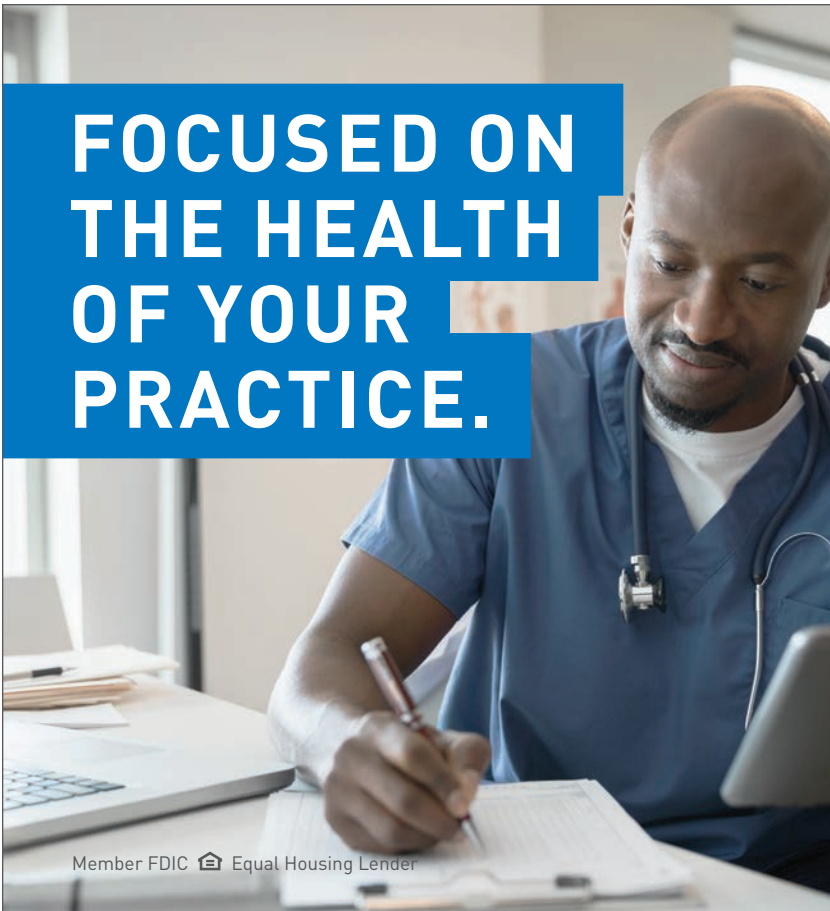
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thrive: positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, meaning, and accomplishment.<sup>3</sup> Since people make behavior changes in the context of relationships, people thrive in the context of their community.

Would you consider exploring with me how food choices can build community?

Growing up in Northwest Indiana, we were near a lot of farms. However, we bought all our food at a chain grocery store. I gave no thought to its origins or handling.

Imagine my surprise when I attended my first “That’s My Farmer” event in Eugene.<sup>4</sup> I was walking around a fellowship hall at church talking to a bunch of local farmers about their farms and their products. Here, right in front of me, were the people who were growing food and wanted to feed my family.

Many local farmers offer Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares.<sup>5</sup> The

concept is that farmers have to borrow money early in the season and don’t make the money back until late in the season. To help reduce debt, farmers sell CSA shares to consumers. Consumers purchase a CSA share, and then, throughout the season, the farmer gives the shareholder a portion of the farm’s produce.

I heard one farmer describe it as, “This food basket is the product of our relationship.” From that perspective, the farmer’s health and well-being and the health of her land are also products of that relationship. In other words, my food choices can support the health of my community.

When I’m staring at a pint of tomatoes at the supermarket, I don’t know how they were grown, how the land was treated and if the people harvesting the tomatoes have a living wage, health insurance, and safe working conditions. If I make a purchase from a local person, it is often

easier for me to discern if we share the same values. Also, if the tomato is local, its carbon footprint is smaller than a tomato from California.

While I don’t know everything about all the food I eat, I do enjoy it when I know the people who produce my food. We are then in a relationship, and I want to behave in a way that supports them. They want to support me. We are intentionally building our community and helping each other to thrive.

If you want more information regarding the local food community, check out the Willamette Food and Farm Coalition. They facilitate and support the development of secure, sustainable and inclusive food systems.<sup>6</sup> If you’d like to have a deeper discussion about how thriving communities, social justice, and better medical practices go together, reach out! ♦

4) <https://www.facebook.com/ThatsMyFarmerOR>

5) <https://www.magazooms.com/HTML5/Willamette-Farm-Food-Coalition-Locally-Grown-Directory-2021> on page 32

6) <https://www.willamettefarmandfood.org>



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# Trillium and FOOD For Lane County Create a Partnership for Better Health

**BY JEANNE SAVAGE, MD**  
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER  
TRILLIUM COMMUNITY HEALTH PLAN

The lasting effects of COVID have created economic hardship for some families in our communities making it difficult to afford basic needs. These families are struggling to stay in housing and maintain transportation, with little left over. Healthy food, like fresh fruit and vegetables, is often something families do without, even though data proves that healthy eating prevents chronic disease, improves school success and elevates job performance.

There are many barriers to consuming healthy, nutrient dense food, including access and cost. Trillium Community Health Plan and FOOD For Lane County (FFLC) are addressing these challenges by providing easy to access, no-cost solutions for families in need.

Carrie Copeland, FFLC Education and Programs Director shares that “Trillium Produce Plus (TPP) helps meet families where they are, reducing barriers like lack

of transportation or time, to connect them to the healthy foods that will support wellness. The program also helps people connect to other important services that are provided alongside the food – so is a great tool to help partners address other social determinants of health through the trust-based relationships they have with their communities. TPP is an important asset and makes a huge difference in improving community health.”

The Trillium Produce Plus Program brings free, high-quality fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income individuals and families at convenient community and neighborhood locations – including some medical clinics in Lane County. Current sites include: Orchid Health in Oakridge (Fern Ridge clinic coming soon), 4J Wraparound Services which now include additional food items with a Latinx, immigrant focus, Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians, Oakridge Family Resource Center serving rural families with children, PeaceHealth Senior Health and Wellness Center aimed at senior adults, TransPonder serving Transgender

and LGBTQ+, UO Student Sustainability Center for students but also serving a wide range of demographics and Kalapuya High School in the Bethel School District with a drive through service for individuals, including seniors and families.

In 2021, despite losing some Produce Plus site partners due to restrictions related to COVID, distribution increased at other sites with partners who were able to find new ways to provide access. 59,122 individuals and 19,084 households accessed food assistance and 317,939 pounds of food were distributed, averaging 5.4 pounds per person, or 16.7 pounds per household per visit.

Trillium efforts to prevent chronic disease and provide access to healthy food for our members align closely with the priorities of FFLC. The organization is a private, 501(c)(3), nonprofit food bank dedicated to alleviating hunger by creating access to food. FFLC solicits, collects, rescues, grows, prepares, and packages food for distribution through a network of more than 165 partner agencies and distribution sites. Via their campaigns to increase public awareness, education, and community advocacy, and through programs like Trillium Produce Plus, FFLC improves access for individuals who struggle to maintain an adequate supply of wholesome, nutritious food.

Trillium and FFLC understand that working together to combat hunger and prevent chronic disease through programs that create access to fresh, nutrient-dense produce for families in need, is key to decreasing food insecurity and improving health outcomes in our local communities. ♦

“We got our annual fish distribution for Tribal members. When members would come in to get fish, we had other food items available for them. Many of the members said, ‘This is great. Now, I have something to go with my fish.’ We were able to provide a complete meal for families.”

—CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF SILETZ INDIANS

**On the cover:** Dr. Friesen stands in front of a wooden replica of the Millennium Falcon that he made himself. You might also see a replica of Hans Solo's gun (that he also made) peaking out from behind his right arm.

**In this photo:** Friesen shows one of the photos he's taken while enjoying his hobby of nature photography.



# Food Allergies & Diet

Dr. Friesen talks about ensuring proper nutrition and reducing anxiety.

BY ALAN SYLVESTRE  
FOR LANE COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

Oftentimes, the path to choosing a career can be driven through exposure to a field by a close family member.

For Dr. Jason Friesen, who is board certified in pediatrics and allergy and immunology with Oregon Allergy Associates, his journey into medicine starts with an experience he shared with his uncle.

“I have an uncle who is a radiologist, and when I was young I visited him in Canada. I saw an x-ray of a woman with triplets and I just thought that was so mesmerizing,” Friesen says.

Originally from Canada, but raised in Seattle, he did the bulk of his medical training on the east coast. But he always knew he would return to the west coast to be closer to his family.

Having now practiced as an allergist in the area since 2008, Friesen says he enjoys working in this region as an allergist because of the connections he makes through his practice.

“I enjoy being an allergist/immunologist because of the long lasting relationships we have with our patients,” Friesen says. “We can also make a big difference in their disease states as we have access to medications and therapies that can really help.”

## Adjusting to Food Allergies

As an allergist, Friesen says the most common food allergies he treats include dairy, eggs, and peanut.

“But outside of those we also treat shellfish, tree nuts, wheat and soy allergies along with less common foods,” Friesen says.

And while you may not have a food allergy, they are more common than one might think. According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, “about 32 million people have a food allergy in the U.S.” And of those, approximately 26 million are adults, and 5.6 million are children.

When Friesen sees a patient who might have a food allergy, he says the first step is to confirm the allergy.

“We want to make sure they are allergic, and not intolerant,” Friesen says. “An intolerance to a food is different from an allergy. They will often present with GI symptoms.”

According to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, a food intolerance occurs in the digestive system where a person’s body can’t properly break down the food. An allergic reaction to food occurs when a person’s immune system overreacts and produces antibodies called Immunoglobulin E (IgE).

A food allergy can be life-threatening, and common side effects could be hives on the skin, vomiting, diarrhea, and in severe case anaphylaxis which requires epinephrine for treatment.

“Of course, the Eugene area is such a fitting place for me to work because of the high grass allergies.”

“Treatment, in general, is avoidance,” Friesen says. “Then, we want to create a plan for what to do when there is an accidental exposure. For example, having the patient carry an Epi-pen.”

And with the advancement of modern medicine, Friesen says they can now “desensitize” people from their allergies.

“What we do with this is try to put a patient in a state where they can tolerate their allergen,” Friesen says. “We have them eat what they’re allergic to every day, building up from a very small amount. This depletes their bodies ability to mount an allergic response.”

So what happens if someone has a food allergy and can’t intake a food group like dairy – especially in children?

The American Association of Pediatrics recommends whole milk for babies because it contains calcium and Vitamin D, which promote healthy brain development.

“From a nutrition perspective, a dairy allergy for a growing toddler is challenging to replace those nutrients in a satisfactory manner,” Friesen says. “Dairy is one of the main sources of calcium in the American diet. You also have Vitamin D and the fat content of milk, which are not easily replaced.”

Friesen says they can recommend things like soy milk and nut-based milks. But, Friesen says, unless they’re fortified, they don’t have calcium and Vitamin D.

“We do have some families who get very restrictive with what their children can eat and that can be nutritionally depleting,” Friesen says. “I’m always trying to coach a balance between taking the food allergy seriously, but not taking the food allergy so seriously that it rules your life. At times, families have added foods to their avoidance list that are unnecessary, and this can contribute to poor nutrition.”

## Preventing Anxiety Around Foods

Have you ever read a menu at a restaurant and saw a warning for items

“We want to make sure [patients] are allergic, and not intolerant. An intolerance to food is different from an allergy. They will often present with GI symptoms.”

that may have cross-contamination with peanuts? Have you ever seen a food allergy warning on a product that it may have been manufactured with other peanut products?

Friesen says for those with serious food allergies, oftentimes it can lead to anxiety and a disruption in their daily life because of a constant worry about coming into contact with their allergen.

“A food allergy for patients, and parents, can cause a great deal of psychological stress and anxiety,” Friesen says.

Friesen notes that occasionally he will have to refer his allergy patients to a counselor to help with increased anxiety and psychological stress, but if the allergy is caught at an earlier age, it’s easier to desensitize them to this fear.

“With our oral immunotherapy protocols, the younger you get them, the better it works from a treatment standpoint,” Friesen says. “But we also deal less with the anxiety and the psychological stress of being told your whole life you can’t come in contact with your allergen.”

## Why Lane County

Since working and living in the area for the last 13 years, Friesen says one of the things that keeps him in the area is the access to the outdoors.

"I'm a nature lover. You're an hour and a half from the ocean. You're an hour and a half from the mountains," Friesen says. "The northwest is a great place for people who love the outdoors."

And part of that love for nature is not just witnessing it, but capturing it. Friesen says he is known by his colleagues for his photography.

"The northwest is just rife with places to go to do nature photography," Friesen says.

Outside spending time in nature, one of Friesen's recent hobbies led him to build a wooden replica of the Millennium Falcon, the famous ship of Hans Solo in the Star Wars series.

"The Millennium Falcon (cover photo) took over a year to build. It has over a thousand hand-made pieces and was merely a labor of love. The journey was

as rewarding as the final product which serves no purpose other than to hang on

"The northwest is a great place for people who love the outdoors...[its] just rife with places to go to do nature photography."

my wall as art," Friesen says. "I made it without any plans and used only pictures available on the internet to decide how to best put it together."

Back in the practice, Friesen says he's stayed in the area so long because of the high need for allergy experts.

"Of course, the Eugene area is such a fitting place for me to work because of the high grass allergies," Friesen says. A byproduct of the Willamette Valley being the "Grass Seed Capital of the World."

Within the local medical community, Friesen says one of the things that draws him to LCMS is the ability to form relationships with other physicians.

"It's always nice when you have a face that goes with a referral," Friesen says. "The more relationships you can have like that, I think the more fulfilled you are because you're not only helping the patient, but you feel you know the doctor you're attempting to come alongside." ♦

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# Food & Skin

BY BENJAMIN VAZQUEZ, MD  
LCMS BOARD VICE PRESIDENT

The relationship between food and skin disease is complex. We know that IgE mediated cutaneous reactions like urticaria, or angioedema occur. These are well-established reactions sensitized individuals have that are immediate and sometimes life threatening. There are also well characterized immunologic reactions to food such as dermatitis herpetiformis. However, for the vast majority of skin diseases food is not the cause, but we are beginning to understand there may be a more complex relationship with food and disease than previously thought. Some foods may increase inflammation leading to worsening of diseases whereas others may moderate the inflammatory process. This is a complex topic that consumes a wide body of dermatologic and non-dermatologic literature. It would be impossible to cover everything in this short article, but I wanted to highlight a few skin diseases and what we know about their relationship to food.

Perhaps the most common skin disease that patients associate with foods is atopic dermatitis (AD). AD is caused by a milieu of genetics, environmental factors, barrier dysfunction, and other immunologic factors we do not yet fully understand. Approximately one third of patients with AD do have verifiable food allergies, but food allergies do not cause AD. Food allergies can manifest as urticaria, which can certainly exacerbate AD. Urticaria is very pruritic leading to increased scratching and subsequent worsening of AD. If relevant, I recommend IgE serum testing and prick testing, but I strongly advise against elimination diets as studies have shown most patients with AD do not benefit from them. They also present a significant risk for malnutrition for young patients. In rare cases, closely monitored selective elimination diets warranted. Interestingly, it may be the case that AD increases risk for sensitization to certain foods leading to delayed type, T-cell

mediated, hypersensitivity reactions likely due to the proinflammatory state of the disease in the setting of underlying barrier dysfunction. There are some foods and supplements that may be beneficial for patients with AD, including multiple small studies suggesting probiotics may be of benefit. Larger studies have not yet bore this out, but it is an area of current investigation. One small study showed oolong tea was associated with improvement in 63% of patients with recalcitrant AD after 1-2 weeks. This was sustained for 53% of patients after 6 months. L-histidine was equivalent to mid potency steroids in one study.

“...the relationship between skin disease and food is complex. Food is generally not the cause of skin disease, but it can play a role.”

Vitamin D and E and hempseed oil have all three also show benefit in small studies. Generally, there is also support for anti-inflammatory diets, but there are no standardized recommendations thus far. Studies on paleo diets in AD patients did not demonstrate any benefit.

The connections between rosacea and dietary exacerbations have long been well-established. These include hot beverages, alcohol, capsaicin, cinnamaldehyde-containing foods (cinnamon, tomatoes, citrus, chocolate). One study demonstrated that the GI flora of patients with rosacea is similar to that of patients with alcoholism. I strongly encourage my patients to reduce alcohol intake, and I also encourage probiotics to help modify GI flora in these patients.

As for acne, many people have heard the anecdotal claims of chocolate worsening it. Studies performed as early as the 60's did not demonstrate any association between acne and chocolate, but more recent studies have shown that sugar and high glycemic index diets are, in fact, associated with more severe acne. Oily foods, whey, and dairy have also been implicated. Antioxidant fruits and vegetables as well as omega-3 fatty acids may improve acne. Dietary research into hidradenitis suppurativa, a closely related disease, has demonstrated similar findings.

Psoriasis has no direct dietary link to food that we know of, but it is closely associated with other disease states that benefit from dietary modifications. Patients with psoriasis are more likely to have cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and metabolic syndrome, thus it is important for them eat healthy and perhaps work with a dietician. I typically recommend a Mediterranean or DASH diet. We do know that diet and weight loss can lead to improvement in cutaneous psoriasis.

When it comes to aging and nonmelanoma skin cancers and food, it seems antioxidants are important. My general response to this question from my patients is, “Your parents were right all along. Eat your fruits and veggies.”

To briefly summarize, the relationship between skin disease and foods is complex. Food is generally not the cause of skin disease, but it can play a role. For instance, a new study shows that taking Vitamin D with or without omega-3 fatty acids significantly decreases the risk of developing autoimmune diseases, and diets high in fiber improve outcomes in patients taking immune checkpoint inhibitors to treat melanoma. We are only just now starting to understand the role diets play when it comes to the health of their skin, and we must be able to navigate these questions with our patients as best we can. My hope is that one day soon we will be able to offer better guidance supported by good science. ♦

# Meal Kits Help Combat Food Insecurity

BY VANESSA SALVIA  
FOR LANE COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

Dr. Serena Black, a pediatric hospitalist and the medical director of PeaceHealth Children's Service Line, says their offices have been screening families for food insecurity for a couple of years. But the only help they had to offer was referrals to resources in the community. "The food banks, some of the community programs, things that the schools were offering," says Black. "But we were just sending them off somewhere else with no real help to navigate the resources in the community. No way to address transportation issues or other barriers that might come up."

PeaceHealth's primary care doctors wanted to provide more substantive resources. Through the Children's Service Line, PeaceHealth is also developing a curriculum for primary care providers to engage families in more structured teaching about nutrition and movement. "We recognize that it is difficult to talk with people about healthy eating when they might not have access to food at all," Black says. "We wanted to create a positive opportunity for providers to introduce topics like balanced nutrition, cooking together, and cooking on a budget with families who may also experience food insecurity."



A meal kit example.

A new partnership between PeaceHealth and FOOD For Lane County is helping to bridge that gap. Since November, families with food insecurities are now being offered a meal kit containing non-perishable food. Each box includes all the ingredients to feed a family of four, with recipe cards in English and Spanish. Families with more than four family members can take home more

**“For our doctors, it’s a nice opportunity to give people a resource and engage the family and the child in a discussion centered on nutrition and cooking together.”**

than one box. Families are also provided information about distribution sites for more sustainable access to grocery items. The Family Meal Kit project was funded with a \$25,000 grant from PeaceHealth community benefits.

Once the families take home the meal kit, a newly developed position for a pediatric-care manager will follow up with those families to see how they're doing and help them navigate access to other resources. "So we're giving them food for today because we don't want people to go home hungry, and also putting resources into place to help them navigate food for tomorrow with real care management resources," says Black. "In the long term, our hope is to make this a

more dynamic program that also provides access to fresh fruits and vegetables. We hope to have some on-site food pantries where people could get perishable things or create a mobile unit with perishable items that could go to different neighborhoods each week."

The healthy and balanced recipes were created with a dietitian. One is a beans and rice option, another is a vegan lentil and mashed potato pie, and another is a chicken chili recipe using canned chicken. Another is a noodle casserole that can be made with either chicken or tuna. Yet another is a mandarin couscous with chicken and almonds. Black says this meal kit program hopefully lets families enjoy a shared cooking experience, try some new flavors, and organize resources so they can benefit into the future. Families who choose to take home the meal kits (not all do) have been appreciative of opportunities to try new recipes.

"We've gotten feedback so far that families have selected meal kits that wouldn't be in their usual repertoire and they've been excited to be trying something new and different," says Black. "For our doctors, it's a nice opportunity to give people a resource and engage the family and the child in a discussion centered on nutrition and cooking together."

Black says FOOD for Lane County has been a wonderful partner on this project, and there is a lot more potential to grow it to reach more families and in more substantive ways.

"We know that our efforts are just one piece of this much bigger community effort around helping families address food insecurity," she says. "There is a lot of great work happening on many fronts out there in this community, and we're grateful for all of those resources, and that we can be part of it." ♦



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# Nutrition & the YMCA's Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program

BY BETH CASPER

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS  
DIRECTOR FOR EUGENE FAMILY YMCA

When Dr. Paula Ciesielski's patients had an elevated blood pressure reading, she knew she needed more information.

"There are no symptoms of high blood pressure and yet it is a serious condition over time," says Paula, who retired in 2017. "I needed to know my patients' typical blood pressure reading to know if exercise, diet and nutrition was the appropriate intervention or if I needed to prescribe medication."

She instructed her patients to visit a local pharmacy or use an outpatient blood pressure machine to keep track for a week or so. Even then, the data set was limited.

"It is better to do home monitoring over a period of time," she says. "Alcohol, salt intake and intense exercise can all affect blood pressure."

So it is welcome news for doctors and their patients that the Eugene Family YMCA is launching a brand new health initiative this month to combat high blood pressure!

The YMCA's Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program is designed to help participants with hypertension lower their blood pressure by following an evidence-based program that combines blood pressure self-monitoring, nutrition education seminars, and personalized support.

"The Y is proud to launch the Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring program," said Kim Miller, the Y's Health & Wellness Director. "This program is yet another example of our work to improve health outcomes in our community. The blood pressure program completes an array of offerings that includes diabetes prevention, cancer survivorship, arthritis management and adaptive fitness. The Y is the leading community-based organization dedicated to improving

the nation's health and this program is a great example of putting that commitment into action."

The Y developed this program to help individuals better manage hypertension and improve their overall health. According to the American Heart Association, more than 80 million Americans have high blood pressure, but less than half have it under control. More than 26 percent of Lane County residents have hypertension, according to the county's 2019 Community Health Status Assessment.

"The Y is known for its ability to bridge the gap between the community and medical care," said Eugene Y CEO Brian Steffen. "We are thrilled to help doctors with their need for more comprehensive blood pressure data for their patients as well as support patients' journeys toward improved health. We look forward to enrolling as many people as needed to drive our hypertension rates downward!"

Research shows that the simple process of checking and recording blood pressure at least twice a month over four months may lower blood pressure in some people with hypertension. In addition, evidence shows that proper nutrition, particularly with a reduction in sodium intake, may help reduce both systolic and diastolic blood pressures.

As part of the Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring program, participants will measure their blood pressure at least two times a month for four consecutive months—a minimum of eight times—and record their blood pressure readings in a self-selected tracking tool. A nutrition education component will encourage participants to practice healthier eating habits.

The program is facilitated by Healthy Heart Ambassadors, appointed and trained by the Y, who will show participants how to use a blood pressure monitor, encourage self-monitoring

and facilitate monthly nutrition education seminars. ♦

## Participants must meet the following criteria to participate in the program:

- Must be at least 18 years old
  - Must be diagnosed with high blood pressure
  - Must not have experienced a recent cardiac event
  - Must not have atrial fibrillation or other arrhythmias
  - Must not be at risk for lymphedema
- "I've struggled with high blood pressure," said a Lane County resident. "I am thrilled to work on this problem myself with support from knowledgeable, friendly staff and my doctor."
- What: Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program
  - When: 4-month program, rolling start
  - Where: Initial appointment (10-15 minutes) and check-ins at any of the following locations:
    - » The Eugene Family YMCA, 2055 Patterson Street, Eugene
    - » Cornerstone Community Housing
      - \* West Town (265 West 8th Avenue, Eugene)
      - \* Willakenzie Crossing (3057 Willakenzie Road, Eugene)
      - \* Homes for Good's Market District Commons (560 Oak Street, Eugene)
  - How: Email [bpsm@eugeneymca.org](mailto:bpsm@eugeneymca.org)
  - Cost: \$20 for Y members / \$25 for community members a month for the 4-month program, \$35 for a blood pressure monitor. Financial assistance is available.
  - For more information, visit [www.eugeneymca.org/programs/health-wellness/bpsm](http://www.eugeneymca.org/programs/health-wellness/bpsm)

# Nutrition from the Inside

## Ripples Out

**BY MEGAN RICHTER**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
POSITIVE COMMUNITY KITCHEN

It's been a longer than expected shift. What's worse is that the feeling of sadness in that patient's eyes has stuck with me all day.

Are we making a difference for this one?

What is available right now for a positive outcome?

Not extra hands. That's for sure.

How many cases did we turn away today?

Breathe.

Keep breathing.

I made it to "lunch" at 8pm. I'm hungry. I'm drained. Am I taking care of myself? Whew. I used to be able to crank days like this out and go for a 25-mile ride. Unimaginable. I've been running a marathon for months.

As I make my way to the staff room to refill my water bottle before heading out, I am struck by a beautiful arrangement.

Am I in the right place? I feel like crying. I am crying. The note with this presentation reads: "The food here was prepared by volunteers, mostly high school students, who learn how to cook each week preparing meals for people experiencing stress due to life-threatening illnesses: patients and their care teams/families, including you.

There is no doubt the Positive Community Kitchen "criteria for service" includes our health care teams, who in addition to experiencing the external stresses of our world today, are generously and genuinely giving more for all our families and friends through daily work.

The intention today is that when you settle in at home after this day of service

and you take a moment to heat up this lovingly prepared meal, you feel that love of an entire community of support. You take that moment of self-care to give your body a boost from the inside out.

In October 2021, Positive Community Kitchen (PCK) was approached by a generous community member hoping to provide a few meals for local hospital workers. This initial call planted a seed of inspiration that grew into a 12-week production of meals delivered to the entire PeaceHealth care team – a 33% weekly increase for PCK. We won't bore you with the details of the logistics behind the scenes to make this kind of magic happen, but will share that it did – still in two days of cooking organic gluten-free meals, still with huge hearts, and still safely.

Honored to have fed the people helping our families every single day through this difficult reality, and inspired by our own ability to meet your needs, this pace has remained consistent since.

Meal delivery has shifted from hospital units to a monthly homemade meal for Eugene and Springfield youth who are unhoused in partnership with 15th Night (Youth4Youth) and supporting a pilot study with post-partum families through Nurturely – all while maintaining the traditional free, healthy meal program for every single person who has needed it when it is most helpful.

Is it us, or after all that, does October feel like five years ago? The Physicians Foundation 2021 Survey of American Physicians COVID Impact report indicated that it's not just us. Feelings of burnout increased in physicians from 40% to 61% this year. Unfortunately, none are immune to this new contagious variant, but thankfully this community of support through Lane County Medical Society and

PCK can provide support.

Manager of Nutrition Education, Britton Anderson offers this restorative, "When we eat 'in season' foods from our immediate environment, we are providing information to our body, allowing it to stay in-rhythm with the larger ecosystem.

Foods harvested at their peak ripeness in their season, means they have the highest density of vitamins and minerals.

Spring foods like radish, bitter greens, arugula, and dandelion are some of the first to show up and munching on these stimulate the body to make bile. This helps 'wake-up' the liver after a winter of heavy and rich foods. The body then feels more energized and ready for movement as the weather warms."

It's as if nature is calling us to be wholly well in rooting us in the bountiful Willamette Valley. "If the foods that we eat are grown in nutrient dense and organic soils, the produce harvested is also more nutrient dense. If you grow your own crops or start visiting the farmers market, start to ask about and explore the concepts of regenerative farming and permaculture," Anderson adds. "These practices help replenish the soil without artificial or synthetic 'add ins' and maintain a healthy soil biome, which in turn help support our own internal biome." ♦

*Confidence in culinary not yet ripened? Join Nourish: Food for Life to level up your skills & menu at home.*

*Allergic to your stovetop? Try Meal4Meal: 1 PCK package for you AND one for a patient in need!*

*Stretched & ready to run? Get set, go! To: Minutes2Meals – April 4 – 15th, Annual Teen-Lead Move-a-thon*

*Hungry to geek our over nutrition: Chef@positivecommunitykitchen.org*

# Fattoush Salad

Servings: 4 people

*Traditionally made with day-old pita chips as a way of utilizing leftover bread, this Lebanese vegetable salad is full of complex flavors including sumac, a spice not normally used in Western cooking. For its nutritional properties and interesting flavor profile, we recommend searching for the spice, but if you can't find sumac at your market, you can substitute paprika. We cut out the crunchy pita, but you could easily incorporate it into the last step of assembly for a more traditional salad.*

## Ingredients:

- 3 Tbsp olive oil (optional - another spoonful)
- 1 1/4 lb delicata or butternut squash (one medium)
- 1/2 lb brussel sprouts cut in half
- 1 head cauliflower cut into bite-sized florets
- 2 scallions thinly sliced
- 1 Tbsp mint leaves finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp fresh flat-leaf parsley or cilantro finely chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Ground sumac or paprika to finish

## Dressing:

- 2 tsp ground sumac or paprika
- 2 tsp warm water
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 small garlic clove minced
- 1 tsp white wine vinegar
- 4 Tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

## Instructions:

1. Prepare vegetables: Heat oven to 400F. Coat two baking sheets with a tablespoon or so of olive oil each.
2. Cut ends off delicata squash and scrape out seeds with a spoon. If substituting butternut squash, peel the skin off the squash. Slice squash into 1/2-inch rings, then cut each ring into 1 to 2-inch chunks. Spread on first baking sheet in one layer; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast for 20 to 25 minutes, until bronzed underneath, then flip and roast for another 10 to 13 minutes, until browned at the edges and tender in the center. Set aside to cool slightly.
3. Meanwhile, trim ends and any discolored leaves from brussels sprouts and halve them lengthwise. Spread cut-side-down Brussels sprouts and cauliflower florets on second baking sheet; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast for 15 minutes, then flip sprouts and roast them for another 5 to 10 minutes, until toasty and crisp. Set aside to cool slightly.
4. Make dressing: Soak sumac in water for 5 minutes, then whisk in remaining dressing ingredients. Adjust seasonings to taste; you may find you need more lemon juice or vinegar.
5. Assemble salad: In a medium-large bowl, combine warm roasted vegetables and scallions. Toss with 1/2 to 2/3 dressing, or to taste. Stir in chopped herbs, add more dressing and adjust salt and pepper levels if needed. Sprinkle with sumac to finish, and serve.

## NUTRITIONAL NOTES

**SUMAC:** Used for centuries as a medicinal cure for a variety of ailments, today sumac is studied for its anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial benefits. It can help in reducing fever and can help treat arthritis, skin inflammation and respiratory problems. Sumac is also full of Vitamin C and Omega 3 fatty acids helping to protect against cardiovascular disease and strokes.

**WINTER SQUASH:** High in Vitamin A, winter squash, like butternut or delicata, is an important food source for antioxidants like carotenoids that help to fight cancer. Although high in carbohydrates, the carbs in winter squash have antioxidant anti-inflammatory and anti-diabetic properties.

**BRUSSELS SPROUTS:** Considered part of the cruciferous vegetable family, Brussels sprouts provide unique support in DNA protection. They also support three systems of the body important in cancer prevention: 1. the body's detox system, 2. antioxidant system, 3. anti-inflammatory system.

*For more recipes, visit [www.positivecommunitykitchen.org/recipe-index](http://www.positivecommunitykitchen.org/recipe-index)*





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# Announcements

## Events

**ParentingNow is hosting a hybrid Night of Hope gala March 4th** at The Graduate Hotel. There will be both in-person and virtual opportunities. For more information, visit [parentingnow.org/nightofhopegala](http://parentingnow.org/nightofhopegala).

**Mindful Mobility Yoga for LCMS Physicians will be hosted at Glow Yoga with Chelsea Duke on Sunday, March 13th at 3pm.** This class is intended for all levels, no prior yoga experience required. Space is limited to 16 members to ensure proper social distancing. To reserve your spot, visit our website, [lcmesociety.com](http://lcmesociety.com).

**Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting their Economic Summit: Meet the Moment Thursday, March 17th from 8am-12:30pm via Zoom.** For more information and other events, visit [www.eugenechamber.com/programs--events](http://www.eugenechamber.com/programs--events).

**Save the date for HIV Alliance's Big Night in Blossom, a hybrid fundraising gala, May 21st from 4:30-6:30pm.** For more information, visit [www.hivalliance.org/event/big-night](http://www.hivalliance.org/event/big-night).

## Notes

**2022 Directories will be on their way soon! Pre-order forms are on our website at [www.lcmesociety.com](http://www.lcmesociety.com)/Directory.** Order yours

now for prompt delivery once they arrive.

**If you, a colleague, or your organization are doing great things in our community and would like to share about an award, acknowledgement, or event, please email us at [info@lcmesociety.com](mailto:info@lcmesociety.com)** so we can share with the rest of our members via social media and the magazine. We have seen so many of our members speaking at events and getting involved in local organizations. We'd like to celebrate you and your efforts!

**Upcoming magazine themes include arts & music, outdoor activities, and**

**immunization awareness.** If you would like to share with the Society, know a colleague who fits into one of these themes, or have recommendations for future issues, email [kianna@lcmesociety.com](mailto:kianna@lcmesociety.com).

**Thank you all for your patience and flexibility with our events schedule.** As we begin to bring back smaller in-person events, please be respectful of capacity limitations. We have many ideas and much in the works. We hope to see you all at some point this year, and we thank you for your tireless efforts throughout the pandemic!

## Classified Advertising

### CUSTOM SUNRIVER HOME:

3 BR, 3 BA, den with Q futon + sleep/play loft. Sleeps 8-10. 4 flat screen TVs, 2 DVD players, Wi-Fi, new gas cooktop, gas barbecue, fireplace, bikes, 2 car garage, hot tub, private setting by Nat'l forest. \$240 + cleaning. No smoking. Call Carol Berkman – cell: 541-953-5430.

## LCMS Physician Wellness Program

Lane County physicians are provided up to eight free and confidential sessions annually. Schedule an appointment today with one of our providers:

**Confidential Counseling**  
*Cascade Health* or  
24-hour support line  
541-345-2800

**Stress Reduction Workshops**  
*Amy Trezona, RN*  
541-912-0216

**Executive/Life Coaching**  
*Shannon O'Leary*  
541-255-2669  
*Karen McGovern*  
920-903-0323

**Lifestyle Medicine**  
*Joseph Sage, MD*  
541-600-2492



This program is sustained through generous donations from our community and providers. Please consider using this QR code to donate securely through our website.





## Oregon Surgical Wellness High-Risk Breast Clinic



We have teamed up with Ambry Genetics® to identify women at increased risk for breast cancer earlier.

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Winnie Henderson MD, PhD, FACS | Christine Kollmorgen MD, FACS



Learn more about the OSW Breast Cancer Surgery Program and High Risk Breast Clinic

[oregonsurgicalwellness.com](http://oregonsurgicalwellness.com)



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Springfield, Oregon 97477  
phone: 541.735.3778  
[info@oregonsurgicalwellness.com](mailto:info@oregonsurgicalwellness.com)

# MEDICAL MATTERS

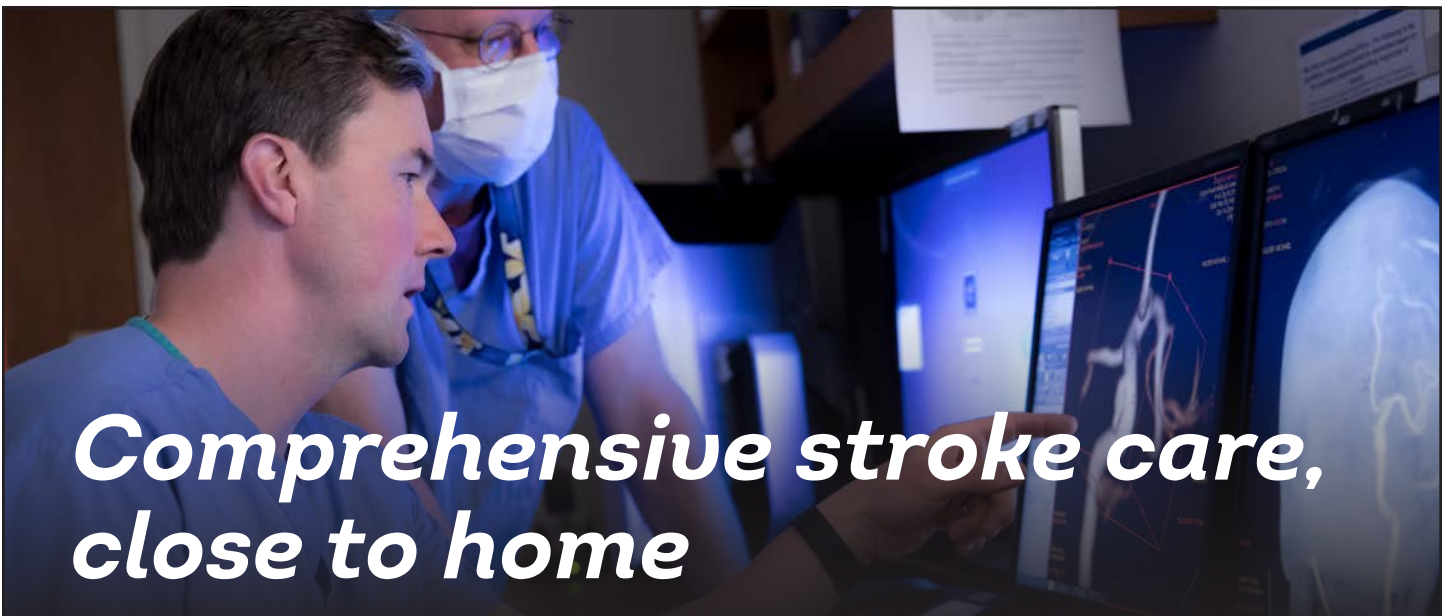
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## *Comprehensive stroke care, close to home*

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The PeaceHealth Stroke Center features a team of specialists from a range of medical disciplines including neurosurgeons, neurohospitalists, neurointensivists, neurointerventionalists, neuroradiologists and emergency medicine. Our experts provide comprehensive stroke services including cutting-edge endovascular large vessel clot-removal which is available at only a handful of hospitals in Oregon and Northern California.

Specializing in stroke evaluation, treatment, care, prevention, education and support, the stroke center exceeds achievement and quality measures set by the American Stroke Association.

In addition, we offer rehabilitative services including extended inpatient services and outpatient therapy at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center, University District.



[PeaceHealth.org/stroke](https://www.peacehealth.org/stroke)  
or call for a referral 541-329-7450