

HEALTH

Subscribe! 503-288-0033
Fill Out & Send To:

The Portland Observer

Attn: Subscriptions, PO Box 3137, Portland OR 97208
\$60.00 for 6 months • \$110.00 for 1 year • \$200.00 for 2 years
(please include check with this subscription form)

NAME: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

or email subscriptions@portlandobserver.com

Eating Right and Exercising

For Your Health



BY LARRY LUCAS

There's something about that first warm, sunny day of spring that motivates us out of our homes and into nature, whether that means a walk around the neighborhood, a trip to the local park or just stepping into the back yard with a glass of iced tea.

This is a great time of year, but for many of us trying to squeeze into last summer's clothes, it's a reminder of what we haven't been doing all winter long – eating right and exercising. More troubling is that this isn't just a seasonal issue. Too many in our community allow their escalating weight to go unchecked year after year, leading to more than just a new pair of pants

Unfortunately, obesity is one of the most common contributing factors to Type 2 diabetes, and African Americans are 1.5 times more likely to be obese than their non-Hispanic white counterparts, according to the Department of Health and Human Services.

The American Diabetes Association estimates that 25.8 million Americans have diabetes—and another 79 million are on the verge. Even scarier? The ADA also estimates that 7 million people don't even know they have it.

Regrettably, it's particularly com-

mon within the African American community. Nearly 18.7 percent of all non-Hispanic blacks aged 20 and older have diabetes, according to the National Institutes of Health's National Diabetes Education Program.

Diabetes affects the way our bodies process food and convert it into energy. Specifically, diabetes prevents people from breaking down sugars into glucose, which can then fuel our bodies. This leads to dangerously high blood sugar levels. Left untreated, diabetes can lead to other serious health complications including blindness, kidney disease and the need for foot or leg amputation.

There are two major types of diabetes: Type 1, which inhibits people from producing insulin at all, and Type 2, which allows people to produce insulin, but prevents their cells from responding to it. Type 2 is the type affected by a person's lifestyle—how much one weighs, how much exercise one gets, etc. – and it's far more common.

But diabetes does not have to be an inevitable fate: For many, diabetes can be prevented and managed through diet and exercise.

Eating a healthy, low-sodium and low-fat diet is an immediate way to reduce one's chances of contract-

ing the disease. It's also incredibly important to get regular exercise to achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

Every person's risk factors are a bit different, so taking the ADA's Diabetes Risk Test, available at diabetes.org, is great way to determine your own risk based on your age, family history, weight and other factors. Please also keep your kids in mind; your child's weight and blood pressure can indicate whether they may be at risk as well.

Thankfully, if you are diagnosed with diabetes, there are a number of great medications available to treat the illness and more are in development.

Patients who need help accessing these life-changing prescriptions should take advantage of the Partnership for Prescription Assistance, a industry backed patient assistance program that can provide free or nearly-free medicines. If you'd like more information, visit the website parx.org or call 1-888-4PPA-NOW.

This spring is a great time to get into the healthy habits that will lower the risk of this brutal and chronic disease. But when cold weather rolls around months from now, let's not let ourselves fall back into the winter funk. This disease can be prevented, but only if healthy habits become part of our daily routine—in every season.

Larry Lucas is a retired vice president for the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA).



Dentures Worth Smiling About!

- Professional Services • Affordable Prices
- Payment Plans: OAC • Over 20 years experience
- Full & Partial Dentures • Natural Appearance
- Full Service Lab • Accepting Oregon Health Plan

Melanie Block, L.D.

DENTURIST

503-230-0207

200 NE 20th Ave., Suite 100

Portland OR 97232

Free parking

Chiropractic Auto Injury Clinic, PC

Zchon R. Jones, DC

333 NE Russell St., #200, Portland, OR. 97212

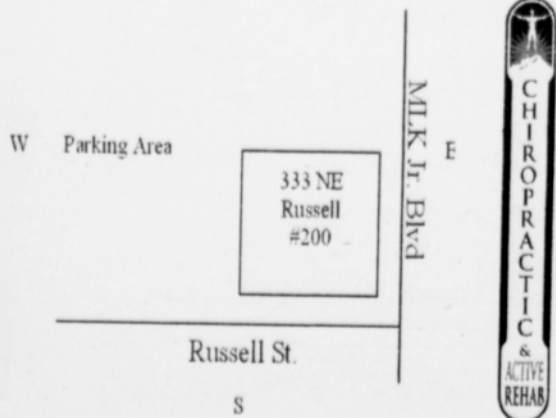
(503) 284-7838

Truly making a difference in the lives of Auto Accident victims and Injured Workers for nearly 20 years.

If you or someone you know has been in an accident, call us so we can help you with your needs. (503) 284-7838



We are located on the corner of MLK and Russell Street, on the second floor above the coffee shop.



Fresh Produce Policy Adopted

Tastes change at senior meal sites

the meal sites to focus on preparing fresh rather than frozen product for diners coming in for lunch.

Loaves and Fishes Centers are replacing prepackaged and frozen fruits and vegetables in its 34 dining rooms with all fresh produce. The change was prompted by requests from the diners as well as a change in how Meals-On-Wheels meals are prepared.

Fresh vegetables will be grilled, steamed or stir fried, depending on the menu of the day. Seasonal fruit will replace canned fruits in salads and desserts. In addition, entrée salads will be added as an option in all dining rooms.

Cost for fresh produce, rather than frozen or prepackaged, is about the same.

Traditionally, the hot portion of home-delivered meals was sent in bulk to neighborhood meal sites where it was portioned into Styrofoam trays. The organization recently switched to a pre-plated meal system using a compostable tray made from corn. Meals are now prepared and packaged at the organization's Central Kitchen and delivered to meal sites ready for heating. The pre-plate system has freed up the kitchen coordinators at

“Our seniors have requested this change,” said Food Service Director Tom Maier. “Baby boomers, who are just now entering their 60s, are more accustomed to eating fresh produce rather than frozen or canned. We’ve been able to negotiate some great prices because our volume is so high. Our goal is to incorporate the fresh produce into the Meals-On-Wheels program as well by the end of the year.”