



Letter From the Director



The new school year is upon us and it's both exciting and inspiring to see the students, faculty, and staff embrace SBU's tradition of excellence, working together to go *Far Beyond*.

Back by popular demand, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) will be returning this fall. Our EAP and nationally-recognized facilitators are looking forward to helping improve your mental health, resiliency, and happiness. For more information, please see Colleen's Corner and the Programs & Events sections below.

In this issue, we interview wellness advocate and senior leader Nicole S. Sampson, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, and Professor of Chemistry. Colleen's Corner offers continued guidance for a "Happier U" with an article on the importance of kindness; the Environmental Health & Safety team discusses the signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion and sunstroke;

the Stony Brook Medicine Nutrition Division sets the record straight on coconut oil; Island Federal Credit Union weighs the pros and cons with regards to the different kinds of credit and borrowing; and the Stony Brook Athletic Performance Program develops "WolfieMetrics".

If you'd like to contribute health and wellness articles to HEALTHIER NUWS, please email me at bryan.weiss@stonybrook.edu. Thank you for reading our newsletter and look for our next issue in the coming months.

Cheers to another academic year as the students and employees further the legacy of this great institution.

Bryan Weiss

Leading the Charge

Nicole S. Sampson

*Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Professor of Chemistry*



Q: How do you unwind after a busy workday?

A: A family dinner. We take turns cooking.

Q: When hosting a summertime BBQ with friends and family, what's on the menu?

A: Grilled salmon. It's easy to prepare and a big favorite at our annual research group BBQ.

Q: How do you fit health and wellness into your busy schedule?

A: I use a training app to follow and log an exercise plan. I manage what I eat similarly.

Q: When reading books or watching movies, what is your preferred genre?

A: Mysteries or biographies. Lately, I tend to watch more comedies (see question 1 above!)

Q: What is an interesting fact about you that many people may not know?

A: A week before I turned sixteen, I boarded a train in Chicago and traveled across the country with my belongings to Southern California, and arrived at college without having ever visited. Hard to believe my parents let me do that!



Colleen's Corner

EAP for a Happier U

By Colleen Stanley, MFT, CEAP
Lead Coordinator
Stony Brook University Employee Assistance Program

Kindness

7 Core Practices for a Happier U

Acceptance

Gratitude

Mindfulness

Self-Care

Kindness

Flow/Creativity

Spiritual Connection/Purpose

This summer I have been taking an online course on the "Science of Well-Being". It is based on a class given at Yale University by Laurie Santos, Ph.D. You can take the course for free at <https://www.coursera.org/learn/the-science-of-well-being>

In the third week, students are challenged to do *7 Random Acts of Kindness*. We were instructed to search out opportunities to be kind in a different way than you normally are. You can do seven kind acts in one day or spread them throughout the week. Doing this has been shown to increase personal happiness. Choosing the option of doing the seven acts of kindness in one day has been shown to have the greatest impact. You can plan some kindness acts and be on the lookout for opportunities for others. I found the challenge, to be kind in different ways than I normally would, to be a lot of fun. So now I'm challenging you.

Stony Brook Community Challenge - Do seven random acts of kindness this week, then email your experiences to colleen.stanley@stonybrook.edu.

Want to know more about how being kind makes you happier? Visit our Kindness & Happiness [page](#).

Our Next Course in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) will take place in September. You can register for one of three free orientations to MBSR [here](#).

Environmental Health and Safety Focus

Signs & Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion & Sunstroke

By Clifford Knee
Safety, Training & Environmental Compliance Manager

When working during hot weather, we may suffer heat exhaustion or sunstroke. The following are some recommendations by the American Red Cross.

Heat exhaustion is a heat-related illness that can develop after exposure to high temperatures and inadequate or unbalanced replacement of fluids. It typically occurs when people exercise heavily or work in a warm, humid place where body fluids are lost through heavy sweating and the sweat does not evaporate as it should.

Heat Exhaustion Symptoms

- Cool, moist, pale, ashen or flushed skin
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Weakness or exhaustion
- Heavy sweating

If you think you have heat exhaustion, get out of the heat quickly. Rest in a cool, shady place and drink small amounts of cool water or other replenishing fluids. Loosen or remove clothing and apply wet cloths. Have someone call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number if your condition does not improve, you are unable to drink water or you start vomiting.

Sunstroke (heat stroke) is the least common, but most severe heat-related illness. It results from the total failure of the body's heat regulation system. This occurs when the body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating system fails and the body cannot cool down. Heat stroke is a medical emergency. It can cause permanent disability or even death.

Sunstroke Symptoms

- Red skin that can either be dry or moist
- Changes in consciousness
- Rapid, weak pulse
- Rapid, shallow breathing

Sunstroke is a life-threatening condition. If you think someone might have heat stroke, have someone call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number right away. Move the person to a cool, shady place. Loosen or remove any unnecessary clothing and help cool him or her down. Apply wet cloths and fan the person. If the person is conscious, give them small amounts of cool water to drink (about 4 ounces every 15 minutes). Refusing water, vomiting and changes in consciousness mean that the person's condition is getting worse. Call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number immediately, if you haven't already done so.

For more tips and resources, visit the Environmental Health and Safety homepage at stonybrook.edu/ehs/.

Core Nutrition

Debunking the Coconut Oil Myth

By Angela H. Cho
Stony Brook Nutrition Division Intern

The Hype on Coconut Oil

Coconut oil has consistently remained a trendy and hot topic in the modern fitness world. There are many claims saying that coconut oil supposedly helps to lower the risk of heart disease and fitness gurus praising it for giving their bodies' quick energy for intensive exercise routines. Aside from the more traditional benefits of using coconut oil externally for moisturizing dry hair and skin, what is the truth about this health craze and debate? We will be exploring that in this post.

What is Coconut Oil Made of?

In order to explore, we need to begin with studying the scientific profile. Coconut oil is made up of medium chain fatty acids (MCTs) with lauric acid, a type of saturated fat. Usually, these are the types of fats that stay solid at room temperature and are deemed unhealthy as they are believed to clog up arteries.

Coconut oil gained a spike in attention when claims arose a few years ago saying that MCTs have a molecular structure that our bodies process differently compared to other saturated fats. Some of those claims came from research stating that coconut oil had fat burning properties that aids in weight loss.

Sounds pretty awesome, and also too good to be true.

What Does the Science Say?

A more careful review of those research studies showed that many were done on animals, and ones done on humans were only short-term and showed modest health effects. An overview of 12 intervention studies showed that the group that consumed coconut oil had higher total cholesterol profiles, both LDL (the bad) and HDL (the good) cholesterol. In comparison though, the group that consumed oils with unsaturated fats had lower LDL cholesterol which implied that it was more beneficial for reducing the risk of heart disease.

The conclusion from those studies? Coconut oil is actually not that much different than other saturated fats

found in animal byproducts like butter in terms of how it impacts heart health.

The Showdown: Coconut Oil vs. Olive Oil

If you are not convinced yet, we can take a look at the nutrition food labels of olive oil and coconut oil side by side:

Nutritional Facts	
Serving Size: 1 Tbsp (15mL)	
Servings/container: 25	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 120	Fat Cal 120
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 14g	22%
Saturated Fat 2g	10%
Polyunsaturated Fat 1g	
Monounsaturated Fat 10g	
Trans Fat 0g	
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carb 0g	0%
Protein 0g	
Not a significant source of cholesterol, dietary fiber, sugars, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium and iron	
* Percent Daily Value are based on a 2000 calorie diet	

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size: 1 Tbsp (15mL)	
Servings Per Container About 107	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 130	Calories from Fat 130
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 14g	22%
Saturated Fat 13g	65%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat <0.5g	
Monounsaturated Fat <1g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 0mg	0%
Protein	0%
Not a significant source of dietary fiber, sugar, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium or iron.	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet.	

Olive Oil left, Coconut Oil right

For every 1 tablespoon (one serving size), we can see that both oils have 14 grams (g) of total fats, but coconut oil has a whopping 13g of saturated fats (for comparison, butter has 10g) while olive oil only contains 2g. Out of the 14g of total fats in olive oil, 11g of it comes from unsaturated fats while coconut oil only contains 1.5g. We can see in these numbers a stark difference in the fat composition of olive oil and coconut oil.

For ages, there has been numerous reputable studies and research done to show that consuming unsaturated fats have significant long-term benefits for our bodies, notably in heart health. Considering all of the evidence, coconut oil, unfortunately, does not live up to its hype of health benefits.

What is the Final Verdict?

For optimal health outcomes, oils with unsaturated fats like olive oil should be preferred and used more frequently than coconut oil. A common concern is that olive oil is not good for cooking in high heat. However, its chemical structure actually allows olive oil to remain stable due to its high monounsaturated fat and antioxidant content.

Despite our verdict on coconut oil, it does not mean that everyone should avoid it completely. For its unique flavor, coconut oil may be necessary for ethnic cuisines such as Thai dishes or even baked goods. Rather than incorporating coconut oil for everyday cooking or consuming it in spoonfuls, try using it more as a treat. If you have a tub of coconut oil sitting in your cabinet and are not sure about what to do with it anymore, you can't go wrong with making some nourishing homemade hair masks!

Healthy Money

Compare Loans Before You Borrow

By Catherine Roger
Director - S.B. Business Unit, Island Federal Credit Union

*What are your credit options and what do they mean?
Before you borrow, learn about your options and how each one can affect your financial health.*

Least Costly Options

- Auto Loans - Shop around for the best rate, if you



already have a bank or credit union begin there. Some financial institutions will offer discounts for special groups or for certain stipulations like automatic payments. You don't always get the best deal from the dealer.

- Home Equity Loans - If you own a home taking a loan against it-a home equity loan can be an inexpensive option. Again check around for the best rate and terms that work with you. Be sure before you sign that you understand the financial commitment, if you can't make the payments for some reason you risk losing your home. Remember the loan is guaranteed by your home's value.

Slightly More Costly Options

- Retirement Loans - If you've been putting money into your employer's retirement plan, usually a 401(k), you may be eligible to tap into that account. While the money you've been setting aside is technically yours, many withdrawal rules and potential penalties apply because it is a retirement fund and not a checking or savings account. Specifically, if you can't pay back the loan in full and on time, you may have to pay penalties and taxes on the amount borrowed. You also run the risk of damaging, or entirely depleting, your retirement savings.
- Credit Cards - Credit cards can be a convenient way to loan yourself money. If you plan to use a credit card look for the lowest interest rate you can find, no annual fee, and a grace period where interest isn't charged as long as you pay by the due date. If you know you can't trust yourself not to spend money you don't have or don't have a plan for paying off the purchase, it's best to avoid using this credit option

Most Costly Options

- Payday Loans - Interest rates on these can be astronomical and the fees can also add up quickly. It is best to avoid this type of loan completely. These loans are usually short-term loans that sometimes have to be paid back in as little as two weeks. Many people slip into a cycle of debt with these loans that are difficult to recover from.

Most people don't know that if you have equity in your vehicle, based upon the year, you can refinance the current loan to get a better rate, or even to get some cash out based upon the value and year of your vehicle. You usually get a lower rate and since the loan is secured by your vehicle, you have a better chance of getting approved as opposed to an unsecured loan.

Borrowing is necessary for many people to navigate through life, many times borrowing is necessary for housing and transportation. You just need to do it with as much information as possible so you know and understand how it will affect our financial health.

At Island we dedicated are to our member's financial well-being. We want to help you make informed choices about borrowing. If there is any way I can assist in providing you with information please free to [email me](#) or stop in one of our Stony Brook branches for information.

Athletic Performance

Stony Brook Athletics Teams with Computer Science to Launch WolfieMetrics



Stony Brook Athletics has partnered with the Department of Computer Science to design Wolfiemetrics - an exciting new application that will revolutionize the workouts of Stony Brook student-athletes inside the Dubin Family Student-Athlete Performance center. Designed by four Stony Brook students, Wolfiemetrics will capture and track data that will enable the strength and conditioning staff to maximize the performance of each student-athlete throughout their careers on campus.

"The launch of WolfieMetrics marks a significant achievement in our quest to maximize student-athlete athletic performance," said Director of Athletics Shawn Heilbron. "Our partnership with the Department of Computer Science allowed us to tap in to some of the brightest minds at Stony Brook, and the finished product far exceeded my expectations."

Danielle Ali, Andrew Broden, Edmund Liang and Andy Liang along with Professor Scarlatos created the capture/data visualization application. On the front end, WolfieMetrics features a tablet for recording data such as a student-athlete's height and weight, but also performance data such as speed and strength testing. The user interface allows a coach to find a record for a student-athlete, and then update the record with new data, photos, and video.

On the back end, WolfieMetrics allows a strength and conditioning coach to browse athletes' records on the web and to compare performance data over time. The application is a virtual clipboard and a camera on a tablet out in the field, connected to a database with a web browser to visualize the data back in the office.

"I want to thank Professor Scarlatos, Danielle Ali, Andrew Broden, Edmund Liang and Andy Liang for the time, energy, and detail that they've put into this project," said George Greene, the Assistant Athletics Director for Athletic Performance at Stony Brook. "This application will allow our staff to track, manage, and interpret data more efficiently over an athlete's 4-year career at Stony Brook. With this app we will be able to blend technology and real world application to better develop our athletes and continue to grow our Athletic Performance Department."

The tablet interface can accept a variety of inputs, such as text, speech, and video. The database can export records in common formats such as Excel spreadsheets and comma- and tab-delimited files.

The app will be implemented as pilot with selected teams this summer with full rollout anticipated for the fall.

Programs & Events

Target Fitness: Professional Nutrition Therapy Program

Are you ready to lose weight permanently? This 10-week nutrition education, wellness, and lifestyle program led by Registered Dietitians will help you reach your target weight! The team of nutrition experts provides participants with:

- Sustainable, customized nutrition program you can follow for life
- Body composition analysis (the measure of body fat and muscle) Intensive education on research-based strategies for permanent weight loss
- Personalized short and long-term weight goals
- An introduction to stress reduction, mindful eating, and behavioral change techniques
- Training on innovative tools that will change your relationship with food
- Guidelines on reading food labels and a supermarket tour!

To provide greater flexibility, Target Fitness will now be offering evening and afternoon opportunities! See program details below:

- Evening Series
 - When: Tuesdays, 9/11 - 11/13
 - Time: 5:45 - 6:45pm
 - Location: 181 Belle Mead Road, East Setauket.
- Afternoon Series
 - When: Thursdays, 9/13 - 11/15
 - Time: 12:30 - 1:30pm
 - Location: Main/West Campus, Student Activities Center
- Cost: \$190/person for either 10-week series

Target Fitness is offered by Stony Brook University Hospital Department of Family, Population & Preventative Medicine (Nutrition Division) and sponsored by Healthier U.

For more information, and/or to register, please call Health Connect at 631-444-4000. Space is extremely limited; don't delay, sign up today!

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction to Improve Health & Well-Being

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is happy to announce that the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction 8-week course will be offered again this fall starting Friday, 10/5 at the Wang Center! Increase resilience and restore balance. Find out if MBSR is right for you by attending one of the free orientations:

- Friday, 9/14 (3:30 - 5:30pm) - Wang Center 301 (Main/West Campus)
- Friday, 9/21 (3:30 - 5:30pm) - HST Level 2, CR272B (Hospital/East Campus)
- Friday, 9/28 (3:30 - 5:30pm) - Wang Center 301 (Main/West Campus)

Class size is limited and you must register in advance. For more information and to register, visit the [EAP homepage](#), or contact [Colleen Stanley](#) in the SBU Employee Assistance Program at 631-632-6085.

Don't delay, sign up today!



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