



## DID YOU KNOW...

THE MEMBER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CAN HELP WITH YOUR FINANCIAL MATTERS SUCH AS TAX PLANNING AND PREPARATION? VISIT THEIR WEBSITE [LYTLEEAP.COM](http://LYTLEEAP.COM) TODAY!

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# LIVE WELL

*Better Health, Greater Opportunity*

*A Newsletter dedicated to the Health and Wellness of the Iron Workers of Western Pennsylvania and their families.*

## The Results Are In

**Congratulations** to all those who participated in the free Healthy Life Screenings offered to you in 2015. The Trustees have approved these potentially life saving screenings again for 2016. You will receive additional information later this year regarding when and where the screenings will be held.

As for the results of the screenings, each participant received their personal results confidentially on the spot. The Plan received the aggregate findings for the cardiovascular screenings that were performed on our participants.

There were a total of 111 participants screened. All of the results came back normal with the exception of blood pressure. From the screenings performed, there were 10 incidental findings.

**Three of those incidental findings were critical.** With all critical findings, further evaluation is highly recommended. Two of the critical incidental findings were in relation to the ascending aorta. The third finding was in relation to the thyroid.

The ascending aorta begins at the hearts left ventricle and extends to the aortic arch. The average size of the ascending aorta is 3.5cm.

The two critical incidental findings measured 3.79cm and 4.0cm.

Aneurysms occur because of tissue changes in the walls of the aorta. Ascending aortic aneurysms are normally found in people in their 60's and 70's. They are dangerous because they can overstretch the aorta causing it to burst and spill blood outside of the aorta.

The body's main supplier of blood is the aorta making a ruptured aneurysm potentially life threatening bleeding.

### Risk Factors Include:

- Age
- History of blood pressure
- Connective tissue disorders
- Heart murmurs

Most people do not have symptoms but some may experience:

- Dull, vague chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Hoarseness
- Dry cough

If your doctor suspects an ascending or aorta arch aneurysm, further testing will be ordered such as a chest x-ray or echocardiogram to confirm. Identifying proper treatment depends on the size of the aneurysm which requires additional testing including CT scans, MRI scans or an angiogram.

# The Results Are In *(continued)*

Treatments include aortic aneurysm repair and stenting.

## Aortic aneurysm repair

- Surgery removing the portion of the aorta that contains the aneurysm and replacing it with a mesh graft.
- Aortic valve may also be affected and need to be reconstructed, replaced, or repaired.

## Stenting

- Inserting a stent-graft which is a polyester tube covered by a tubular metal web through a small incision in the upper thigh into the aorta.
- X-ray helps guide the stent-graft through the aorta to the aneurysm site.
- Once in place, blood flows through the stent-graft instead of into the aneurysm, eliminating the chance of rupture.

*Rethink  
what you  
pack in  
your lunch  
everyday!*

*Try adding  
more fresh  
fruit and  
vegetables!*

The third incidental critical find was that the left thyroid nodule was measuring 4.4x5.1x5.6mm.

A **thyroid nodule** is simply a lump or mass in the thyroid gland. Thyroid nodules are relatively common; 6% of adult women and 2% of adult men in the U.S. have a thyroid nodule that can be felt on examination. Close inspection of the thyroid by sonographic imaging shows that as many as one-third of women and one-fifth of men have small nodules in their glands.

The thyroid may contain just one nodule or several of them. Thyroid nodules can be solid if they are comprised of thyroid or other cells or an accumulation of stored thyroid hormone called colloid. When nodules contain fluid, they are called cystic nodules. These can be completely fluid filled (*simple cysts*), or partly solid and partly fluid, (*complex cysts*).

Thyroid nodules vary greatly in size. Many are large enough to see and feel (*palpable nodules*). Some multinodular goiters can become enormous, bulging

out of the neck and over the collar bones or extending down into the chest behind the breastbone, a condition called *substernal goiter*. At the other end of the spectrum, the majority of thyroid nodules are too small to see or feel at all, and are called *nonpalpable nodules*.

Such small nodules are found when a person has a medical imaging procedure performed for some other reason, such as a sonogram of the carotid arteries; a CAT or MRI scan of their neck, head, or chest; or a PET scan. These very small, incidentally detected thyroid nodules are called thyroid *incidentalomas*.

Finally, of course, thyroid nodules can also be classified as benign or malignant depending on whether the cells of which they are comprised have the potential to spread beyond the thyroid gland into adjacent tissues or distant parts of the body. More than 90% of thyroid nodules are not cancerous. However, malignancy should be considered in every affected person.

*This and more information can be found at  
<http://endocrine.surgery.ucsf.edu>  
[www.cedars-sinai.edu](http://www.cedars-sinai.edu)  
[www.upmc.com](http://www.upmc.com)*

# What's in Your Lunch?

The sandwich is probably the most popular food item packed in a lunch box. Have you ever thought about what you are actually putting on your sandwich? Lunch meats are filled with sodium nitrate, a preservative that is used in some processed meats, including bacon, jerky and lunch meats.

This preservative may increase your risk of heart disease. Sodium nitrate may damage your blood vessels making your arteries more likely to harden and narrow, leading to heart disease. Nitrates may also lead to diabetes by affecting the way your body uses sugar.

Processed meats are also very high in sodium and some are also high in saturated fats which, as we know, can lead to heart disease.

It is best to limit your processed meat intake.

Try choosing lean fresh meat and poultry and also add more fish to your diet. Also packing more fresh fruit and veggies in your lunch bucket will make your heart happy!



## Dental Health

When mouth care is neglected, bacteria in your mouth can lead to infections such as gum disease and tooth decay. Neglecting your oral health may contribute to other diseases and conditions including:

**Endocarditis:** Which is an infection of the inner lining of your heart. This occurs when bacteria or other germs from another part of your body like your mouth, spread through your blood stream and attach to damaged areas in your heart.

**Cardiovascular Disease:** Some research suggests that heart disease, clogged arteries and stroke might be linked to the inflammation and infections that oral bacteria can cause.

**Osteoporosis:** Brittle and weak bones might be linked with periodontal bone and tooth loss.

**Periodontitis:** Plaque can spread/grow below the gum line.

According to the American Academy of Periodontology, the toxins stimulate a chronic inflammatory response where the body in essence turns on itself, and the tissues and bone that support the teeth are broken down and destroyed. As the disease progresses, the pockets deepen and more gum tissue and bone are destroyed.

The key to preventing gum disease is to brush and floss daily and to follow through with routine dental checkups. You owe it to your health to take care of your teeth!

Oral Health = Overall Health



This article can be found at [www.lytleear.com](http://www.lytleear.com).

## Here's What's Cooking...

### Quinoa Chili

Try this vegetarian Chili that is packed with protein!

1 cup quinoa  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1 onion, diced  
2 (14.5-ounce) cans diced tomatoes  
1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce  
1 (4.5-ounce) can diced green chiles  
1-1/2 tablespoons chili powder, or more, to taste  
2 teaspoons ground cumin

1-1/2 teaspoons paprika  
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper,  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
1 (15-ounce) can kidney beans, drained and rinsed  
1 (15-ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed  
1-1/2 cups corn kernels, frozen, canned or roasted  
3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro leaves  
Juice of 1 lime, optional  
1 avocado, halved, seeded, peeled and diced.

In a large saucepan of 2 cups water, cook quinoa according to package instructions; set aside. Heat olive oil in a Dutch oven or large pot over medium high heat. Add garlic and onion, and cook, stirring frequently, until onions have become translucent, about 2-3 minutes. Stir in quinoa, diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, green chiles, chili powder, cumin, paprika, cayenne pepper and 1-2 cups water, making sure to cover most of the ingredients; season



with salt and pepper, to taste. Reduce heat to low; simmer, covered, until thickened, about 30 minutes. Stir in beans, corn, cilantro and lime juice, if using, until heated through, about 2 minutes. Serve immediately with avocado. (Damndelicious.net)



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Look for your next  
issue in April!

# LIVE WELL

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## 2015 Wellness Winner!

### **Congratulations**

to Joseph Hunter! He is the big winner of the 2015 Wellness drawing of \$7,500!

It really does pay to take the steps to become healthier! Who will win in 2016? It could be you!

When you complete one of the approved Wellness Incentives, not only will you earn \$50 in your Value Bank, but your name will be entered in the 2016 drawing of \$7,500!

### **Wellness Incentives include:**

- Member or spouse having a colorectal cancer screening.
- Member or spouse having a prostate exam.
- Member or spouse having a mammogram.
- Member or spouse having a gynecological exam.
- Member or spouse completes the Personal Health Coaching Program.
- Member or spouse completes Health Coaching for Disease Management.

If you or your eligible spouse complete the Personal Health Program or Health Coaching for Disease Management, Highmark will notify us. You do not need to submit any paperwork. However, if you complete any of the other Incentives offered, you must complete an Incentive Request form and return it to the Plan Office with the sufficient supporting documentation within three months of completion. Request forms can be printed from our website [www.ironben.com](http://www.ironben.com).