



West County  
Health Centers

Caring for our Communities

**Russian River Health Center**  
16319 Third Street  
Guerneville CA 95446  
Phone: 707-869-2849  
Fax: 707-869-1477

**Sebastopol Community Health Center**  
6800 Palm Avenue, Suite C  
Sebastopol CA 95472  
Phone: 707-824-9999  
Fax: 707-824-9335

**Clinic Hours:**  
Mon—Thu  
8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Fri 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Sat 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Mental Health Appointments**  
RRHC: 707-869-2961  
SCHC: 707-824-3376

**Russian River Dental Clinic**  
16312 Third Street  
Guerneville CA 95446  
Phone: 707-869-2933  
Fax: 707-869-2663

Visit us online at:  
[www.wchealth.org](http://www.wchealth.org)

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# Living Positively

West County Health Centers HIV Services

Issue 13

Spring/Summer 2013



## Out in Our Community: Join WCHC for Sonoma County Pride!

West County Health Centers will be well represented at Sonoma County Pride this year — and you are invited! Walk with us in the parade or visit our festival booth. We will have information about our many services including HIV testing, medical, mental health and dental care. See more photos from last year's Pride celebration on page 3.



## Let's Help Others Get Into Care

By Myra Mayesh, MFT

If you are reading this article, chances are that you are engaged in medical care and that is a good thing for your health as well as for the health of your community.

With regular medical visits with your primary care provider, medication adherence and adequate self-care, HIV disease can be well-managed and your life expectancy is at or near the same as for those without HIV disease. With a suppressed viral load and safeguards against transmission, you are also unlikely to spread the virus to others.

However, even with all of the progress made in

the treatment of HIV, HIV diagnoses are currently on the rise among some groups, particularly young men who have sex with men (MSM) and heterosexual women of color. Racial minorities and people living in poverty are at greater risk of HIV infection and African American men and women remain disproportionately affected by HIV.

In the United States, it is estimated that there are approximately 1 to 1.2 million persons living with HIV, of whom, approximately one quarter (252,000 – 312,000) are unaware of their status and are at risk for transmitting HIV to others. In Sonoma

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## Advanced Directives: Making Your Wishes Known

By Victoria MacDonald, RN

You know how great it feels to check something off your "To Do" list and say, "Done!?" Well, here's your chance to feel that great.

On Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, an attorney and notary from the San Francisco AIDS Legal Referral Panel (ALRP) will come to our Forestville Wellness site to provide a workshop on "Advanced Care Directives." Often called Living Wills or Durable Power

of Attorney for Health Care, these documents provide your own wishes for end-of-life care, or offer you a way to appoint a person to make health care decisions for you when you are no longer able to speak for yourself.

The workshop will begin at 11:30 (might be best to eat your lunch before you arrive; we'll provide desserts and snacks for the afternoon). Bring copies

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## Ask Your Doctor! Answers provided by Steve Bromer, MD



**Q: Why do my T-cells go up and down?**

**A:** CD4+ cells (short for CD4+ T lymphocytes) are some of the most important cells of our immune system and these are the cells that HIV attacks. Early in the epidemic we focused on the absolute number of CD4+ cells as one of the most important indicators of immune suppression. We used that number as a guide for saying someone had AIDS as opposed to HIV or was at risk for infections like PCP or MAC. With ARV medications, most people do not have the low numbers of CD4+ cells that we saw in the early years of the epidemic.

CD4+ cells are only one of many different kinds of lymphocytes in our bodies. The total number of lymphocytes goes up and down significantly depending on the time of day, the infections we might be fighting off or other environmental stresses. These fluctuations are normal. Since CD4+ cells are one kind of lymphocyte, their numbers increase and decrease along with the rest of the lymphocytes.

If someone has a relatively high baseline CD4+ count, it is not uncommon to see CD4+ cells go up and down by more than a hundred points from lab to lab. To help tell the difference between HIV selectively causing CD4+ cells to go down and a normal decrease in CD4+ cells because total lymphocytes are lower, we look at the

CD4+ percentage.

The CD4+ percentage is a ratio of CD4+ cells to other important lymphocytes. If all your lymphocytes are low when a lab is drawn, the total CD4+ count will be lower but the CD4+ percentage will be the same. Think of a pie and the CD4+ cells are one slice of that pie. That slice can get smaller because something takes a bite out of the slice (HIV attacking CD4+ cells) or it can get smaller if you shrink the whole pie (normal fluctuation of total lymphocytes.) As long as your HIV Viral Load is undetectable, fluctuations of even more than a hundred points in the CD4+ count are likely due to normal fluctuations in the total lymphocyte count and not HIV.

**Why do I need to keep having the CD4+ lab done then?**

We probably do not need to get the CD4+ count as often as we do. Because of how important that number was earlier in the epidemic it is hard for both providers and patients to not want to know the CD4+ cell count. If you are stable on your medications and your CD4+ count has been above 300, we only need to check it twice a year. If you are not on ARV medications or have a CD4 count less than 200, it is important to check it more like 4 times a year. These days the Viral Load is probably the most important number to track and if you are on ARVs, we expect it to be undetectable.

## Nutrition News: Fuel Up For Exercise!

by Nina Redman, RD

**S**tarting an exercise program? Getting ready for a hard work-out? Here are the latest guidelines for optimizing your nutrition before, during, and after exercise.

### Sports Drinks: Do I need one?

You don't need an exercise drink unless you exercise for more than an hour. If you work out in the heat, you might need an exercise beverage a little sooner, otherwise just use water. Exercise drinks contain sodium to replace what might be lost through sweating, as well as potassium and carbohydrates.

Coconut water which has recently become very popular has potassium and carbohydrates, but not much sodium. If you're out in the heat or sweating a lot from a long work-out (more than an hour) you'd be better off with another sports beverage. G2 is low calorie if that's a concern for you.

### Eating before and after Exercise

Ideally, you'll eat a small snack before exercising. The ideal snack contains some carbohydrates as well as some protein. This will help sustain you through the exercise period, and it will also help your body burn food energy, instead of breaking down your body muscle for energy. Here are some sample small meals:

- Whole-grain cereal, berries, and skim or low-fat milk
- Oatmeal with skim milk, sprinkled with crushed flaxseed
- 1/2 whole-grain bagel with peanut butter and banana slices
- Smoothie made with low-fat yogurt, fresh fruit & orange juice
- Poached egg on whole-wheat toast with 1/2 grapefruit
- Salad with mandarin orange slices, slivered almonds, and veggies,

drizzled with olive oil

- Yogurt parfait with low-fat granola
- Apple or celery slices with peanut butter and raisins
- Brown rice and steamed veggies sprinkled with a little cheese

In general, I don't recommend protein bars. Nutritionally, they are not all that much different from candy bars. Read the ingredients some time! Then read the label of a Snicker's bar. As fuel, think of either as something to eat in a pinch, but not something to rely on.

After exercising, you'll have the best recovery if you eat some carbohydrates and some protein within 15 minutes ideally, and not more than 2 hours post-exercise. While we exercise, we deplete glycogen (stored energy) in our livers. This is not easy to replace. When we eat right after a hard workout, our bodies recover better and we're able to do another intense work-out soon. A carton of yogurt, a banana with peanut butter, or any of the snacks above make great post-workout snacks.

### Building Muscle

If your goal is to build muscle, you have to do two things: get adequate protein and do strength training. In order to calculate the amount of protein you need daily in order to build muscle take your body weight (in pounds) and multiply it by 55%. This gives you the number of grams of protein you need each day to build muscle. But remember, adding protein without doing any strength training won't increase your muscle mass. Working out with weights 2-3 times per week is ideal for strength training. Make sure to have a rest day in between workouts.

Please call Nina Redman at 707-303-8900 x 737 to ask a nutrition question or to schedule an appointment to develop an individualized nutrition plan.



# SONOMA COUNTY GAY PRIDE 2013

# SUNDAY, JUNE 2 GUERNEVILLE



## MA and HIV Outreach Specialist Sean Lyons

**S**ean knows Guerneville. And he loves it. “My ties to the community are really important. I grew up around here and I enjoy raising my kids here. It’s such a diverse community.” Guerneville is not only home to Sean, his wife and their three children, it is also where he works as a Medical Assistant and more recently, as an HIV Outreach Specialist. He has been with the RRHC HIV Team since 2007, but this was not his first experience working with HIV.

Before coming to WCHC, Sean did in-home care with mostly HIV/AIDS patients. Over the course of twelve years he came to really know how to care for this population. “I was the guy they would send in after the patient had fired the four previous in-home caregivers.”

He applies these years of accumulated knowledge, experience and understanding in his work at the health center. He particularly enjoys the outreach project which includes offering rapid HIV testing and counseling at the clinic as well as other West County locations. He likes being “in the field,” meeting people where they reside or are hanging out: on the streets, in the shelters or at the park.

Sean is currently taking courses at SRJC to get his Bachelor’s degree in Nursing and license as an RN. His long-term goal is to eventually become a nurse practitioner.

Working full-time, going to school, and raising a family does not leave Sean with a lot of free time, but he has managed to stay involved in the annual Renaissance Faire where he goes to join other aficionados of medieval history in the character of a peasant. Why does he not go as royalty or a knight? “Peasants have more fun,” he explains.



## Help Others

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County, these numbers break down to approximately 2000 HIV infected individuals, 500 of whom do not know that they are infected. High risk sexual behaviors are significantly higher in HIV+ people who do not know their infection status, making them more likely to spread the virus to others. It is estimated that half of all new HIV infections are transmitted by people in this group.

So our challenge is to reach those who are at high-risk of infection as well as those who are HIV+, but out of care, so that they can get the life-saving treatment they need.

If you have a friend or know of someone who is at risk or out of care, bring them to the health center to talk to one of our Care Team staff (in complete confidence) or ask if we can speak by phone. Together, we can end the spread of HIV and help those with the virus to live long, healthy lives.

## Advanced Directives

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of any Advanced Directives you may have completed or started in the past AND the contact information (phone, address, email, consent) of those people you want to make health care decisions for you.

By the end of the workshop you will be able to leave with your own completed, signed and notarized Advanced Care Directive and also



## A 4-Meeting Workshop in Patient Self-Management

Facilitated by Steve Bromer, MD and Rachel Gardner, PsyD

The Next **Positively D.I.Y.\*** Workshop Series will be offered in Fall 2013.

Future Series Topics: Women and HIV, HIV and Aging, Young and Positive . . . Let us know what topics you would like to cover!

Call Rachel Gardner at 887-1647 or Myra Mayesh at 874-2273, ext. 2215 for info or to offer your ideas.

\* **Do-It-Yourself** with a lot of support and guidance



able to check that off your "To Do" list and proudly say, "Done!" A copy of your completed Advanced Care Directive should be kept in your medical record.

For more information and to register (space is limited) call Victoria MacDonald: 707-869-2849 ext 2230.

## Calendar

Day/Date	Time	Event & Location
<b>MAY</b>		
Monday 20	11 a.m.	HIV + Gay Men's Support Group, Russian River Health Center
Wednesday 22	12 p.m.	Cooking Class with Nina Redman, Food for Thought
Wednesday 22	1:30 p.m.	L.I.F.E. Program, Center for Spiritual Living
Wednesday 29	1:30 p.m.	L.I.F.E. Program, Center for Spiritual Living
Wednesday 29	5:30p.m.	Positively D.IY. Health Self-Management, Food for Thought
<b>JUNE</b>		
Monday 3	11 a.m.	HIV + Gay Men's Support Group, Russian River Health Center
Wednesday 5	12 p.m.	Cooking Class with Nina Redman, Food for Thought
Wednesday 5	11:30 a.m.	AIDS Legal Referral Panel: Advanced Directives, Forestville Wellness Center
Monday 10	11 a.m.	HIV + Gay Men's Support Group, Russian River Health Center
Wednesday 12	1:30 p.m.	L.I.F.E. Program, Center for Spiritual Living
Wednesday 12	5:30p.m.	Positively D.IY. Health Self-Management, Food for Thought
Monday 17	11 a.m.	HIV + Gay Men's Support Group, Russian River Health Center
Wednesday 19	12 p.m.	Cooking Class with Nina Redman, Food for Thought
Wednesday 19	1:30 p.m.	L.I.F.E. Program, Center for Spiritual Living
Monday 24	11 a.m.	HIV + Gay Men's Support Group, Russian River Health Center
Wednesday 26	1:30 p.m.	L.I.F.E. Program, Center for Spiritual Living
<b>JULY</b>		
Wednesday 3	12 p.m.	Cooking Class with Nina Redman, Food for Thought
Wednesday 3	1:30 p.m.	L.I.F.E. Program, Center for Spiritual Living
Wednesday 10	12 p.m.	Cooking Class with Nina Redman, Food for Thought
Wednesday 10	1:30 p.m.	L.I.F.E. Program, Center for Spiritual Living
Monday 15	11 a.m.	HIV + Gay Men's Support Group, Russian River Health Center
Wednesday 17	1:30 p.m.	L.I.F.E. Program, Center for Spiritual Living
Monday 22	11 a.m.	HIV + Gay Men's Support Group, Russian River Health Center
Wednesday 22	12 p.m.	Cooking Class with Nina Redman, Food for Thought
Monday 29	11 a.m.	HIV + Gay Men's Support Group, Russian River Health Center