

# Will Power

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE PIONEERS ASSISTANCE FUND

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 6 • JUNE 2015



## DOCTOR'S ORDER FOR BETTER EATING

**Q: My husband is trying to control his Type 2 diabetes through diet and exercise. Does any insurance cover professional help with nutrition?**

**A:** Start with your doctor. Diabetes care includes access to the services of a Registered Dietitian (RD) covered by insurance. Medicare Part B covers "Medical Nutrition Therapy" when ordered by your doctor and provided by someone with the appropriate credential.

The Commission on Dietetic Registration (<http://www.cdrnet.org/>) is the organization that oversees U.S. credentialing programs for registered dietitians. RDs are licensed in most states, but a license is not required. The amount and type of education is the threshold for RDs because dietetics is the practical science of nutrition, where physiology, healthy eating, and shopping / cooking intersect.

RDs make suggestions based on diagnosis (i.e., diabetes, kidney disease, heart disease, pregnancy, obesity) and lifestyle, such as cooking skills and food preferences. RDs teach you how to maintain proper nutrition while balancing medical conditions and aging. Another advantage is that the RD meets with the patient to find out what grocers are nearby and what cooking facilities are available.

Putting together a diet plan for someone who has diabetes, for example, requires the RD to understand the target range of blood sugars, the level of physical activity, and pattern of blood sugars during the day and night. This is difficult to do on your own and takes time to figure out, so most dietitians will meet with clients over the course of a month or two, or sporadically throughout the year.

RDs can also help clients expand their culinary repertoire by adding flavorings to food and suggesting alternatives never before considered. They also act as a support for the changes clients are trying to make. Some RDs lead support groups where they teach approaches like mindful eating.

Good for you for taking charge of your diet and making positive, and mindful, changes in your nutritional health!

### Sources:

Medicare Benefits Handbook, available at: <http://www.medicare.gov/coverage/nutrition-therapy-services.html>

"About Us" at [www.eatrightpro.org/resources/about-us](http://www.eatrightpro.org/resources/about-us) offers a very interesting history of the profession and offers a national database of providers.

"Why Hungry Seniors Aren't Getting Enough to Eat" <http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2014/08/14/340137124/why-hungry-seniors-arent-getting-enough-to-eat>

## JOKE OF THE MONTH

*What did the Buddhist say to the hot dog vendor?*

*- Make me one with everything.*

## WILL CALL

*Do you or someone you know need our assistance? Call toll-free (888) 994-3863 or [wrpioneers.org](http://wrpioneers.org)*



## N.E.W.s

(N) Nutrition. (E) Exercise. (W) Wellness. Our theme for 2015, mindfulness, includes thinking about nutrition, exercise and wellness as a holistic approach to overall health. This month we look at wellness.

Indeed, what does it mean? Is it even a word? Is it the opposite of sickness?

Wellness represents a shift in Western medicine, which has been focused on treating illness, rather than preventing it. Several decades ago, prevention became a buzzword. Jogging, fad diets, gym memberships sprouted up everywhere as Americans became aware of the ravages of old age and tried to reverse the clock. They weren't wrong.

Now that the Baby Boomers are aging, and Americans are seeing the strain of chronic health conditions on our medical system, hospitals, and families, it is increasingly important to avoid illness and injury. The way to do that is to practice wellness.

Wellness is a holistic approach to your overall health and well-being. It is, by definition, mindful because you need to actively think about it or it doesn't happen. A leading thinker on wellness, Dr. Andrew Weil, promotes wellness as the mindful optimization of health. That means taking stock of your physical, mental and emotional health in some of the following ways:

1. Examine your diet
2. Review your physical fitness
3. Explore your emotional health
4. Reduce your stress
5. Build social connections

We are proud to say that all of these topics have been covered in previous issues of Will Power and the Pioneers Assistance Fund wants to help you tackle this list. There are other organizations interested in your well-being, too. Most major health plans, such as Kaiser Permanente ([www.kp.org](http://www.kp.org)) offer wellness programs. Medicare covers a free (no co-pay) annual wellness check with your doctor and AARP has tips in their magazine every month and an entire section on their website devoted to wellness ([aarp.org](http://aarp.org))

Our social workers can send you a copy of our Self-Care Assessment which highlights different ways to be mindful about wellness. Call today!

### Sources:

"Dr. Weil's Head-to-Toe Wellness Guide by Andrew Weil, MD, available at [www.drweil.com](http://www.drweil.com).

Contact your health insurance provider or Medicare at <http://www.medicare.gov>, 1-800-MEDICARE, to understand your wellness benefit.

## “ QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*When in doubt, tell a funny 'till you see what the other fellow is going to do. ~Will Rogers*

