

FALL 2023

HEIGHTS AND HILLS • at home •



DEAR FRIENDS OF HEIGHTS AND HILLS,

We all know that exercise is important. Can we even go a month without hearing about another report praising its benefits? It is recommended that adults 50 and older get 150 minutes of moderate exercise each week, or 30 minutes per day for five days. From a physical health perspective, exercise helps older adults prevent bone loss, lessen the pain and stiffness of arthritis, prevent chronic disease, and boost immunity. And the benefits don't just end there. Exercise improves brain function and supports cellular growth which can help people respond to changes and setbacks in all aspects of life. It's also a huge mood booster, helps us regulate our emotions, and strengthens the mind-body connection.

We all know that we should exercise. However, in this case, knowing is not half the battle. We all find excuses to avoid exercise – from finding the time to overcoming a fear that we will get injured or that we won't be good at the activity – there are infinite ways to talk ourselves out of moving our bodies. This summer, AARP released a report that shows that only one-third of those surveyed are aware of the weekly exercise recommendation. Even fewer are achieving that threshold.

Regardless of age, before starting any exercise regimen, it's important to talk with your doctor to learn which options are right for your health and activity level. Once you are cleared to exercise, we hope that you will find a way to move your body.

One of the best ways to get into an exercise habit is to do it with others. It helps us stay motivated when others are counting on us to be there with them. Additionally, it's a great way to get and stay social, which helps to combat the risks of loneliness. Oh, and in case you never tried it, exercising with friends makes it more fun!

For all of these reasons, we host a number of exercise and dance classes each week at the Park Slope Center for Successful Aging. This fall we have brought back three dance classes: Movement Speaks, Restorative Movement with Mark Morris Dance Group, and Restorative Dances for Seniors. We also have Tai Chi for Arthritis, a new walking group in Prospect Park, Qigong, Creative Movement, and Bodies in Motion. And did we mention that all our classes are free?! Many of these classes are available virtually if you want to join via smart phone, tablet, or computer. The full schedule is available on our website www.heightsandhills.org.

Many thanks,

Carrie Zwiebel Bloss
Executive Director

**Even if you can't exercise with us,
we hope you'll find another way
to stay active!**



HEIGHTS AND HILLS 2023 VIRTUAL 5K WALK/RUN

Rain or shine, we did it! Thank you so much to our donors and fundraisers for supporting and participating in this year's Virtual 5K Fun Run/Walk. **Thanks to your generosity, we were able to raise \$16,304 over the weekend of September 29 – October 1.** Your donations allow us to support older adults and their caregivers with service enhancements such as our shopping and tech squads.

WE WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THOSE WHO WALKED OR RAN IN SUPPORT OF OUR WORK:

Adam Sachs	Deborah	Sandra West
Alice Chen	Juantorena	Sean Thomas
Amanda Chessa	Donna Lee	Shana Wertheimer
Annamarie Haaser	Kim Reed	Shannese Sutton
Andre Estwick	Margo Flug	Sherry Frankel
Carrie Bloss	Michael Murphy	Stephanie Lazarus
Charles Jiang	Quentin Dunn	Triva John



PROSPECT PARK FITNESS WALKS

In September, we partnered with Prospect Park Alliance to host four free group walks in Prospect Park for older adults. Joined by our Center Director, Matt Abrams, we explored the park while discussing the importance of exercise and movement, particularly for people experiencing arthritis. Walks were on the park's paved walkways at a slow to moderate pace. Participants received guidance on developing their own personal walking and exercise programs.



CLIENT STORY

Ms. C is a 75-year-old woman with Parkinson's disease. She first engaged with Heights and Hills through the Park Slope Center for Successful Aging in 2017. She was an active member. She attended exercise classes regularly and enjoyed the community at the center. Her Parkinson's disease has progressed, and she is no longer able to get out as she did previously. She was referred to the Case Management program by the PSCSA staff as they saw her decline. She now gets home delivered meals and works with one of our Case Managers. She found a specialty rehab center in Long Island where she

would have a two week stay, during which time, she would get physical and occupational therapy specific to her condition. However, her insurance would not pay for the ambulette service to get to the facility and she could not afford the trip on her own. Her Case Manager arranged for her to be able to use supplemental funds for this service.

Ms. C's case is an example of the continuum of care that our services offer older adults and how we can be key in helping older adults to successfully age in place.



NATIONAL FALL PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH

September was National Fall Prevention Awareness Month. **Falls are a leading cause of injury for people ages 65 and better, but they are not an inevitable part of aging.** There are proven ways to prevent them. This year, we hosted a Fall Prevention presentation and yoga class at the PSCSA with the Department of Orthopedics at NY Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. We also partnered with a corporate group at JP Morgan to put together and distribute fall prevention kits to clients at the PSCSA. Kits included tips for preventing falls, anti-slip stickers for the tub and shower, and a nightlight.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT FALLS

- Be physically active - exercise that strengthens your muscles and improves balance lowers your risk of falling. Talk to your doctor about what activity is best for you
- Ask your doctor to review your medications. As you age, medications may affect you differently. Some meds or combination of meds might make you dizzy or sleepy and cause you to fall
- Have your vision checked - poor vision can increase your risk of falls, so be sure to visit your eye doctor once a year
- Keep rooms free of clutter, especially on floors
- Wear low-heeled shoes
- Do not walk in socks, stockings, or slippers unless they have non-stick skids
- Be sure stairs are well lit and have rails on both sides
- Put grab bars on bathroom walls near tub, shower, and toilet
- Keep a flashlight next to your bed and add more lights in rooms



HEIGHTS AND HILLS

supporting brooklyn's older adults

81 Willoughby Street, Suite 302

Brooklyn, NY 11201

718-596-8789 • www.heightsandhills.org

TAI CHI FOR ARTHRITIS



The Park Slope Center for Successful Aging began to offer a Tai Chi for Arthritis program from August through October. Held at the Center and on Zoom, classes were led by Ann E. Reibel-Coyne who is a TCA certified and experienced instructor. This evidence-based, 16-session program uses twelve standard movements to assist participants in improving movement, balance, strength, flexibility, and relaxation. Tai Chi has been found to help reduce pain and falls and may benefit adults with or without arthritis.

For weekly class schedules and more information, please visit heightsandhills.org or call Matt Abrams, Center Director at (718) 832-3726.

HEIGHTS AND HILLS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Shana Wertheimer
PRESIDENT

Ellen Goodman
VICE PRESIDENT

Alice Chen
SECRETARY

Ravi Ramchandani
TREASURER

Gwenn Cagann

Amanda Chessa

Kurt Fields

Michelle Grasparil

Anne Marie Gussman

Triva John-Thomas

Sean Thomas

Stephanie Lazarus
McCormick

Kim Reed

Shannese Sutton

Aristaia Vasilakis

Anne Zhu