

## Message from Dr. Kerlakian



Recently, The American Medical Association has finally declared that obesity is a disease. This will most certainly have a significant impact at every level in the health care community.

First, when physicians see their obese patients they can actually use that diagnosis and justify spending time with patients to counsel them about lifestyle changes. Second, health insurance carriers and employers will have to consider all available therapies for treating patients, including bariatric surgery for the morbidly obese.

We have known for a long time that some of the most drastic bariatric procedures can improve patient survival by more than 50 percent. Some cancer therapies achieve a fraction of this improvement, but yet are universally available. There is no question that socioeconomic and lifestyle habits contribute to the epidemic of obesity. And just as we, as a society, would not deny treatment of a lung cancer patient because he or she used to smoke, we should not deny bariatric treatment to obese patients because of their lifestyles.

## News You Can Use: Make Exercise Fun this Summer

By Rebecca Dam, TriHealth Fitness & Health Pavilion

It's important to keep active during the summer months. Bring out your inner child and visit a local park where you can take part in a variety of activities to keep you fit and healthy. You can take a nature walk, go for a swim, or even take part in some strength training using a bench nearby.

Going to a park is a good way to switch up your daily exercise routine. Having a regular exercise routine is great, but varying your routine will add extra benefits. You want to work your body in unexpected ways to enhance overall fitness. For example, a scenic nature trail can replace a treadmill.

Switching up your exercise routine will also help build and improve muscles. Make sure not to focus on one muscle group exclusively, that way you're getting more muscles involved and the most out of your workout.

GreatParks.Org is an excellent Web site that shows you the various parks in the Cincinnati area. Some parks may have a fee, but it's a great way to incorporate new types of physical activity in your daily routine.



## Looking for other exercise opportunities? Check these out!

### TriHealth Fitness and Health Pavilion

"Exercise is Medicine" classes in Montgomery and Western Hills. Visit [TriHealth.com](http://TriHealth.com) or call 513 985 6722 for more information.

### Silver Sneakers

Exercise and wellness programs for older adults. Visit [silversneakers.com](http://silversneakers.com) or call 888 423 4632 for more information.

### Arthritis Foundation

Water and land exercise programs. Visit [arthritis.org](http://arthritis.org) or call 513 399 8093 to find out where classes are available in your area.

### Zumba

Latin-inspired dance-fitness classes. Visit [zumba.com](http://zumba.com) to find classes in your area.

### Jazzercise

Dance-fitness classes. Visit [jazzercise.com](http://jazzercise.com) to find classes in your area.



## Light Bites

### Chef Meg's Layered Mexican Dip with Baked Lime Chips

Nutritional Information	
Servings	6 (One cup of dip with 2 baked lime chips per serving)
Amount per Serving	
Calories	197.3
Total Fat	5.6 g
Total Carbs	27 g
Protein	11.2 g

#### Ingredients

2 whole-wheat tortillas  
 1/8 teaspoon salt  
 1 lime, zested and cut in half  
 1 (14.5 ounce) can vegetarian or fat-free refried beans  
 1 cup fat-free Greek yogurt  
 1 tablespoon Chef Meg's taco seasoning (3 tsp. chili powder, 1 tsp. ground cumin, 1 tsp. red pepper flakes)  
 1/2 cup black beans, drained and rinsed  
 1/4 cup shredded reduced-fat Mexican-blend cheeses  
 3 green onions, chopped (both white and green parts)  
 1 tablespoon cilantro, washed and chopped  
 1/2 avocado, chopped  
 2 Roma tomatoes, diced  
 1 cup green leaf lettuce, shredded

#### Directions

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Slice each tortilla into six wedges. Place on a baking sheet and spritz with cooking spray. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt. Bake for five minutes, or until crisp. Remove from the oven immediately and squeeze on the juice of half a lime. Combine the taco seasoning and lime zest with the Greek yogurt and mix well. Refrigerate until ready to use. Combine the chopped avocado with the juice of the remaining half of a lime and the chopped cilantro, then set aside. Spread the refried beans into the bottom of a 10-inch pie plate. Layer on the Greek yogurt mixture, the black beans, cheese, and green onions. Top with the tomatoes, lettuce and avocado. Serve immediately or refrigerate until ready to eat.

Courtesy of SparkRecipes.com

## Patient Spotlight

In early January of 2012, 54-year-old Venetia Washington of Hamilton made a statement she'll never forget: "That's it. I'm done."

Why? She had spent nearly a decade following expensive, frustrating dieting programs that yielded little to no success. "I got depressed because the more weight I gained, the more depressed I got," she says. "I didn't want to go anywhere or do anything—and it limited my walking."

While Venetia didn't have any co-morbid conditions, like diabetes or high blood pressure, when the scale tipped to 273 pounds, she knew she needed to get serious about her health. She was also suffering from sleep apnea and severe knee pain that worsened with every additional pound.

After much deliberation, and speaking with a friend who found success through weight-loss surgery several years prior, she felt like surgery was her last option. So she made an appointment with her primary care doctor, who referred her to George Kerlakian, MD, of TriHealth Weight Management.

Within seconds of shaking Dr. Kerlakian's hand, her apprehension subsided. A feeling in her gut gave her the affirmation she needed. "There was a feeling of calm," she says. "I knew he was the guy I could trust."

Venetia underwent roux-en-y gastric bypass surgery on March 29, 2013 – and hasn't looked back since. Thanks to exercise, portion control, and asking her care team at Weight Management lots of questions, she slimmed down faster than she could have ever imagined. "I was bugging them there for a minute—especially Maria!" she laughs. "They took good care of me."

Now, 96 pounds lighter, she's enjoying a self-proclaimed, "newfound life of freedom." She's also been doing a bit of shopping—in her very own closet. "I'd buy stuff and let it hang. I had stuff that had been in there 15 years or more—brand new—that I'd never worn. I've worn everything now!"

As someone who loves food, she admits that adjusting her diet post-surgery wasn't always easy. But, since fully recovering, she still occasionally eats some of her favorites, like fried fish; she just makes sure to watch her portion sizes. "Oh my, it was a [lifestyle] transformation, but I tell you what, I'm glad I did it."



Venetia Washington

## Weight Management Welcomes Volunteer



You may see a new face the next time you come to the Weight Management office. Sashi Mendis will be volunteering in the center, and will spend much of her time helping Maria Adkins, RD, LD. Sashi, who is originally from Sri Lanka, earned her medical degree in 2012 in Belarus and is volunteering at Good Samaritan Hospital while she completes her United States Medical Licensing Exams (USMLE). Welcome, Sashi!