

MGH **HOTLINE**

A PUBLICATION FOR EMPLOYEES AND STAFF OF THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL

Parkinson disease patients stretch their way to wellness

MGH Parkinson disease patients

recently have made a commitment to a healthier lifestyle with their participation in a new outreach effort for patients with the illness – a tai chi and yoga class designed to provide support through exercise. The class is supported by the National Parkinson Foundation and was developed under the direction of Anne Young, MD, chief of MGH Neurology; John Growdon, MD, director of the Partners Parkinson Center, and Nancy Huggins, NP, also of the Partners Parkinson Center.

The first sessions of the pilot phase began meeting in September. The format of the class – created especially to accommodate the patients' exercise goals – was developed by Theresa Lie-Nemeth, MD, of MGH Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and Camille Kittrell, an MGH fitness consultant. "Patients with Parkinson disease tend to develop muscle and joint stiffness," says Growdon. "Stretching exercises counteract this tendency and allow the prescribed medications to work correctly."

With the pilot phase complete, the second phase of the class will begin this month. For more information or to learn how to enroll, contact Huggins at nhuggins@partners.org or at (617) 726-1884. ●



Stretching exercises help patients stay well.

Seniors get a helping hand with healthy eating

Making healthy eating choices is a challenging task for many people, and a group of seniors recently received some expert guidance on how to make the right choices. On Dec. 15,

staff at the Whole Foods Market – a supermarket specializing in natural and organic foods – in Charles River Plaza hosted a guided tour of the store for participants in the MGH EatWISE, Eat

Smart program. The workshop is a free, six-week nutrition and education series for seniors age 60 years and older. Tour members learned how to buy and prepare nutritious meals while on a budget and also were introduced to a variety of new and exotic foods. At the end of the visit, the group enjoyed a healthy, complimentary lunch prepared by the Whole Foods staff.

The EatWISE, Eat Smart program is a collaboration between MGH Senior HealthWISE and the MGH Department of Nutrition and Food Services. Cheryl Wall, BSN, RN, of MGH Senior HealthWISE, and Dana Brennan, RD, LDN, of MGH Nutrition and Food Services, were the co-leaders of the workshop and taught participants about healthy eating habits through hands-on exercises, group discussions and cooking demonstrations.



Seniors get guidance on buying healthy foods.