

# island scene

health, fitness, family, and fun for **HMSA** members | spring **2015** | [islandscene.com](http://islandscene.com)

## JOIE DE **MATCHA**

JOY AND DELIGHT  
IN A CUP OF GREEN

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**BRYCEN GO**

**WORKOUTS FOR PEOPLE  
WHO DON'T WANT TO WORK OUT**

**MEN AND DEPRESSION**





A graphic closeup of an oval mushroom coral off of Kahe Point along the Wai'anae coast of O'ahu.

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## He pūko'a kani 'āina.

A coral reef that grows into an island. A person beginning in a small way gains steadily until he becomes firmly established.

*From 'Ōlelo No'eau, Hawaiian Proverbs & Poetical Sayings,*  
by Mary Kawena Pukui, Bishop Museum Press

# aloha members

Every day throughout HMSA, we ask ourselves this question: Are we doing right by our members? On some days, it's relatively easy to answer the question. On other days, especially during times of rapid change in health care when it seems everything is in flux, it can be more difficult to know for sure.

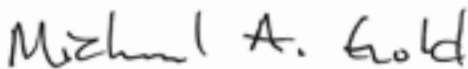
Today, we're going through one of those periods of rapid change. Federal programs, such as the Affordable Care Act, require health plans and their members to keep up with changing regulations. There are major challenges to health care costs, such as the high prices pharmaceutical companies charge for specialty drugs. And consumers expect faster and more personalized service from their health plans.

In this dynamic environment, HMSA is going through one of its most profound transformations since I began working here 41 years ago. We know that we must evolve if we're going to boost the overall well-being of our state and make a real impact on controlling health care costs in Hawai'i.

You're familiar with some of our ongoing transformation, such as the recent launch of Blue Zones Project® in Hawai'i, HMSA's initiative to improve the health of entire communities. You may not be aware of some of our other programs, but you benefit from them when you visit your doctor or spend time in a hospital. These include such innovative programs as our pay-for-quality initiative, which pays physicians based on the outcome of care, and not on how many procedures or tests are completed. We've also launched a major program to place nurses and social workers in hospitals and doctors' offices to provide extra assistance to patients who need the most help.

This is all part of our commitment to better serve you and to make sure we're advancing the health of Hawai'i. By implementing these and other changes, we'll know we're doing right by our members.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Gold  
President and Chief Executive Officer



# happy new year!

Yes, you're right. You don't have to check your calendar. I'm writing this during the first week of January. It sounds like we work on the magazine too far in advance, but this column is actually late.



While many people start anew with their well-being goals on January 1, any time is a good time for a fresh start. Maybe those New Year's resolutions need a little boost. Maybe the warmer weather is calling you to go outside and play.

I hope you'll find lots of inspiration in this issue. Read about Ken Nishimura, who's taking care of his own health and reaching students statewide with his "Not Even Once" murals that urge students to stay away from crystal methamphetamine. See his story by *Island Scene's* Craig DeSilva on page 8.

Hate to workout but know you should? Me, too. Check out Christa Hester's article on page 12. Find out how she fits exercise into her lifestyle and get some great tips.

And for those of you who work jobs that don't fit the traditional 9-to-5 schedule, check out Keely Kalama-Lahey's article on page 28. She talked to HPD's Loke Schreiner, who works the midnight shift to keep Honolulu safe. Find out why shift workers have added health risks and how Loke manages her schedule.

If you live in Mānoa, you probably know who Helen Nakano is. Read about this community leader and hanafuda expert on page 38. Helen is active in Mānoa's Neighborhood Watch Program and Be Ready Mānoa, a disaster preparedness program.

And if you're like me and have a chronic condition, you may need to take a little time to make sure you're taking your medications correctly and making the most of your drug plan benefits. See David Frickman's article on page 41 for tips.

There's lots more in this issue to inspire and inform you and your family. Remember, today's a great day to get started. Have fun!

*Lisa*

Lisa Maneki Baxa  
Publisher and Editor

## island scene

**PUBLISHER/EDITOR** Lisa Maneki Baxa  
**ART DIRECTOR** Jonathan Tanji  
**ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR** Anna Manuel  
**FOOD EDITOR** Marlene Nakamoto  
**COPY EDITOR** Marlene Nakamoto

**STAFF WRITERS** Craig DeSilva  
Danielle Douglass  
David Frickman  
Christa Hester  
Neal Iwamoto  
Marlene Nakamoto  
Floyd K. Takeuchi

**STAFF ARTISTS** Jocelyn Cua-Racoma  
Lawrence Esperanza  
Fannie Niiyama  
Garry Ono

**ADVERTISING** Shere Sasaki

**CIRCULATION** Lisa Chun  
Pamela Yee

**HEALTH INFORMATION REVIEW COMMITTEE** Marc Rosen, M.D.  
John Berthiaume, M.D.  
George Bussey, M.D.  
Mark Mugiishi, M.D.  
Paula Wyatt, M.D.

**NUTRITION ADVISER** C. Alan Titchenal, Ph.D.

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Advertising: (808) 948-6837

Email: [feedback@islandscene.com](mailto:feedback@islandscene.com)

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Craig DeSilva, Managing Editor

**COVER:** Matcha info and great recipes. Article on page 54. Photo by Rae Huo





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# WE'RE BEHIND YOU

For whatever  
lies ahead

Live here. Live healthy. Live fearless.

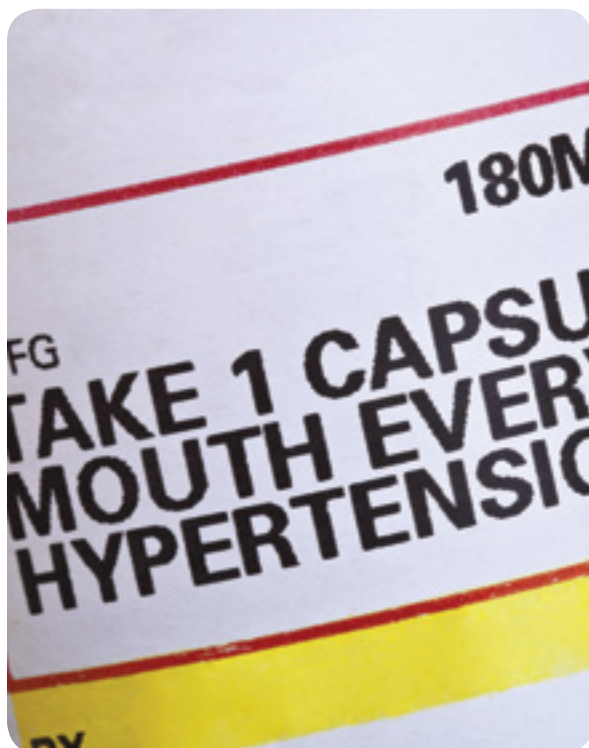


## > *Learn How to Age Healthily*

By 2020, almost 20 percent of Hawai'i's population will be over age 65, which means our state will have the largest percentage of seniors in the U.S. Hawai'i also has the longest-living population, so it's even more important to understand how to maintain your health and well-being as you age.

The JABSOM Mini-Medical School on Healthy Aging at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa can help. The school has a course on healthy aging, as well as online resources at [jabsom.hawaii.edu/minimedschool](http://jabsom.hawaii.edu/minimedschool).

Explore the site and be sure to check out the video series on healthy aging by clicking Mini-Med Talks in the navigation bar at the top of the page. There are videos on the importance of vaccines, how to age without "getting old," cataracts and the aging eye, and more.



## > *New Large-print Prescription Labels Available*

CVS/Caremark, HMSA's mail-order pharmacy vendor, is now offering easier-to-read, large-print prescription labels for patients with vision difficulties.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to request this option for you or a family member. After you've asked for large-print labels once, all future labels will be in large print.

If you haven't used mail order for your prescriptions, give it a try. Mail order saves trips to the pharmacy, makes it easier for you to take your medicines when you're supposed to, and can save you money. You can also ask other pharmacies if they have large-print labels.



## > Good Conversations Lead to Better Health Care



When our HMSA Center employees aren't helping people in our neighborhood centers, they spend some time calling members to find out how we can better support your health and well-being.

You may get a call from an HMSA representative asking you questions about your health, such as:

- Do you have a primary care provider (PCP)?
- Do you have a chronic illness and if so, are you taking steps to manage it?
- Are you keeping up with your annual wellness exams?

If you get a call from us, talk to us! We're here for you!

## > Happy is as Happy Does

At the 2014 Good Life Expo, we asked more than 2,000 seniors what makes them happy. The responses ran the gamut from "A wink" and "Sticking to my diet for a day" to "Being 71 years old" and "Surviving cancer."

Although the responses were varied, the most frequent was "Being around people." Whatever your age, getting out and socializing is great for your well-being. This year, be sure to spend quality time with family and friends, make an effort to make new friends, and volunteer to help others in need.

You'll be happier for it.



# painting pictures of good health

Artist Ken Nishimura reaches Hawai'i's youth through his art.

By Craig DeSilva

Ken Nishimura has found his calling in life. Nishimura paints “Not Even Once” murals in schools statewide to urge students to stay away from crystal methamphetamine. Hawaii Meth Project is a title sponsor in his artistic pursuit to get youngsters to stay away from drugs. Students on campus stop what they’re doing to watch him spray colorful acrylic paint from aerosol cans on high walls. They ask him about his art. Some students reveal how drugs have impacted their lives and their families. These are deep issues for youngsters to deal with and Nishimura hopes his art can make a difference.

“We want to get young people off their smart-phones,” he says. “Murals are a good visual way to reach people with the message and have it sink in.”

Nishimura, 44, has been doing aerosol art since he was a student at Kalani and McKinley high schools. You can see his work on elementary and high school campuses and on the Pow! Wow! Hawaii wall art project in Kaka’ako.

But not too long ago, Nishimura wasn’t a picture of good health. A torn meniscus from playing basketball in his 30s led to years of physical inactivity. He focused more on spending hours at the computer designing clothes for his international hip-hop fashion business. He also overlooked his health while caring for his mother, who died in 2012 after living with Alzheimer’s disease for 10 years.

Nishimura wore size triple-X shirts and had developed pain in his back and legs. His weight gain made it hard for him to paint. He could barely climb up and down scaffolds and ladders to create 10-foot-high murals and he’d be drenched in sweat. The excess weight also contributed to his sleep apnea, which caused him to feel groggy throughout the day.



He knew his health was in jeopardy and he needed to change his lifestyle. Several of his friends had already died from complications of diabetes. So he started doing low-impact exercises at the gym and swimming at Ala Moana Beach Park. But he still wasn’t losing weight.

His life changed when a friend, who’s a dietitian, got him to ditch the plate lunches filled with fried, processed foods for meals with fresh fruits and vegetables. He cut down on carbohydrates, cheese, and sugar. “The hardest one to kick was white rice and shave ice,” he admits. “I had to unlearn all the local foods I grew up with.”


He now cooks much of his meals and bakes bread using chickpea or kalo flour. He grows vegetables in his garden for salads and makes a homemade vinaigrette





with lime juice, herbs, and spices instead of heavy oils and salt. For exercise, he walks around Kapi'olani Park and Diamond Head and swims.

Friends were amazed to notice his weight-loss transformation on social media. He now wears a size large shirt and is working toward a size medium. The weight loss also recharged his energy and creativity. To expand his anti-drug messages in schools, he hopes to paint murals that reflect healthy eating and exercise. And he'll conduct a digital art workshop at Moloka'i High School, where he'll teach students how to create and market their products.

"I tell students that everybody's an artist because everyone has something to say," he says. "Don't be afraid to pick up a pencil and draw to express yourself. No matter what you do in life – it's all about thinking creatively." 

Artist Ken Nishimura of Keep it Flowing paints Not Even Once anti-meth murals for title sponsor Hawaii Meth Project. Talking to students at Kealakehe Elementary School in Kailua-Kona (bottom left); and Moloka'i High School (bottom right), where students used the mural to study Hawai'i's marine life.



*Check out Ken Nishimura's artwork and projects with Hawai'i schools on his website at [keepitflowingmedia.com](http://keepitflowingmedia.com).*

# Visit us at Pearl City Gateway

Our Pearl City center serves members from Aiea, Central Oahu, the North Shore, and the Waianae Coast.

Friendly health plan advisers give you quick and efficient personalized service and information.

At all of our centers, we'll help you:

- Learn about health plans.
- Understand your HMSA bill, benefits, and more.
- Find ways to be healthy and save money.

Stop by and say hi.



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Pearl City Gateway  
1132 Kuala St., Suite 400

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Saturday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
(NEW hours)

## **HMSA Center @ Honolulu**

818 Keeaumoku St.

Monday through Friday  
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Saturday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
(NEW hours)

## **HMSA Center @ Hilo**

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## **Kailua-Kona office**

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Suite 301

## **Kahului office**

33 Lono Ave., Suite 350

## **Lihue office**

4366 Kukui Grove St.,  
Suite 103





# spring into action

Data show progress among Hawai'i residents, with room for the Aloha State to blossom.

By Danielle Douglass

Spring is a good time to reflect on the daily choices you make for your health and well-being. Data from the 2014 Healthways Well-Being Assessment® (WBA) show that the well-being of Hawai'i residents is slightly higher than the national average, while some areas can be spruced up.

In 2012, HMSA partnered with Healthways to offer the assessment to help people make positive changes in their lifestyle and behaviors. The online survey takes a comprehensive look at six major areas that impact overall health and well-being – life evaluation, emotional health, physical health, healthy behavior, work environment, and basic access to food, shelter, clothing, and health care.

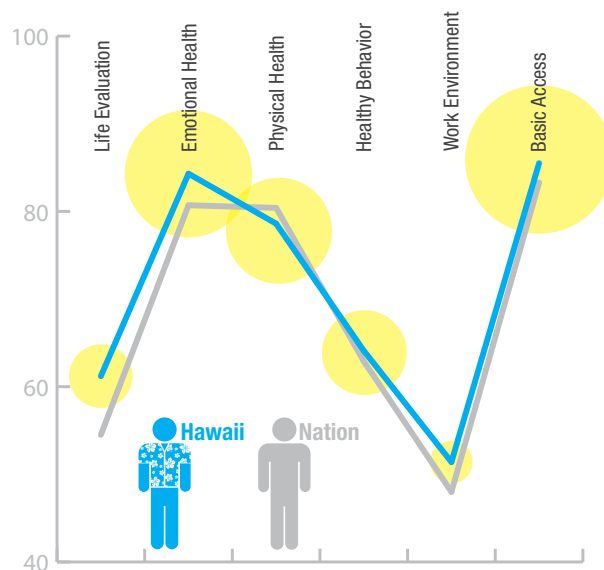
WBA results from over 25,000 Hawai'i residents (HMSA members and nonmembers) reveal some interesting data. Hawai'i is doing slightly better than the rest of the country in five of the six major areas.

Hawai'i scored the highest in basic access. This area measures if people have access to basic needs – food, shelter, clothing, and health care.

In the emotional health, life evaluation, and healthy behavior areas, most respondents said they're optimistic about their life and future. They reported low rates of depression, avoid tobacco, and were ready to make lifestyle changes for their health.

In the work environment area, Hawai'i participants felt they don't use their strengths at work, believe their supervisors aren't open and trusting, and feel unsatisfied with their work.

The one area where we're trailing the national average is physical health.




High disease percentages were reported for diabetes, high cholesterol, and asthma. In terms of vitality, weaker areas include not feeling well rested, not having enough energy, and having a cold.

## How you can help improve Hawai'i's scores

Take the first step to better health and well-being by logging on to [hmsa.com/wbc](http://hmsa.com/wbc) and clicking Well-Being Connect.

After you take the survey, you can review your results and recommended focus areas to concentrate your efforts for improvement. You'll have access to our Well-Being Connect website, which has personalized tools and resources, including trackers for weight, blood pressure readings, food servings, and steps walked each day.

You'll also find recipes and meal plans. And the online resource center gives you access to thousands of articles and videos on topics such as self-care and stress management.

Empower yourself this spring and complete your survey online. Knowing where you stand today can help you set goals for tomorrow. 

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# Learn to Love the Burn

A how-to for people who absolutely, positively hate to exercise.

By **Christa Hester**

**Y**ou know who you are – you’ve tried and tried, but you just can’t get into this whole exercise thing. You may be thinking, “Exercising for the sake of exercising? Who does that?!?” You are not alone, dear reader.

I absolutely *hate* to work out. Squeezing into tight, neon-colored workout clothes that cost an arm and a leg just to get sweaty for an hour in a funky-smelling gym where fit people judge you as you fumble with intricate machines that look like they were invented during the Spanish Inquisition – this is not my idea of fun.

But as much as I loathe exercise, I’m realizing that I need to make it a part of my life if I want to feel good and live long. I’m in my early 20s, just two years out of college and working my first desk job. I went from walking everywhere and participating in intramural sports to sitting at a desk for eight hours every weekday. My lifestyle changed drastically, but I didn’t change my bad habits to stay healthy.

So how do you change your lifestyle? How do you gain the motivation and time to invest in your health every day? How do you become a person who looks forward to a daily workout?



If you figure that out, come find me; I'd really like to know. Until then, work to slowly change your lifestyle to one that helps you feel good, gives you the energy you need, and supports your overall health. You don't have to change everything at once, but you do have to start taking small steps.

Here's what I've been doing to make exercise a part of my lifestyle:

#### **Start in small amounts.**

When you're starting off, forget about time and put aside the "no pain, no gain" mentality. Instead, focus on developing a habit of regular exercise, whether it's running around the block every morning or doing five minutes of pushups and sit-ups every day. Just be consistent and before long, you'll naturally want to push yourself to do more.

#### **Stop trying to change yourself.**

Everyone is motivated by something different. So don't hold yourself to other's standards. Instead of doing what you think you should do, do what feels good. For me, that's yoga. I tried running, lifting weights, and even flirted with Insanity before getting hooked on the stretching and strength training of a good yoga session.


#### **Make it simple.**

Exercising usually means you have to drive to a gym, change, work out, shower, change, drive back, etc. It's a lot of hassle for an hour or so of activity. So make it simple. Work out at home or run in your neighborhood. Just be consistent and don't give yourself an excuse to miss a workout. If you exercise at a gym after work, get your gym bag ready the night before.

#### **Eat healthily and cook at home often.**

Every day, you have the chance to make healthy or unhealthy food choices. Eat healthily to help your body function at peak efficiency. I also try to cook at home because it lets me control the amount of sugar and fat I consume and it saves me money.

#### **Surround yourself with people who have healthy lifestyles.**

My co-workers at HMSA make their health a priority. They exercise daily, exchange healthy recipes, and talk about what exercises are working for them. Being around that mindset has made me more aware of my own health. It's always easier to take steps toward better health if your friends are doing it with you. 

If you're an HMSA member, go to [hmsa.com/wellness-programs](https://hmsa.com/wellness-programs) to check out:

- **Well-Being Connect**

Take an assessment to evaluate your overall health, create a wellness plan with goals and trackers, get support to reach your well-being goals, and more.

- **Health coaching program**

Improve your well-being or manage chronic conditions with help from specially trained health coaches.

- **Health education workshops**

Learn about different aspects of your health with classes like Brain Fitness, Stress Bucket, and more.

- **HMSA365**

Get discounts on health-related products and services, from yoga to LASIK eye surgery.

- **QuitNet®**

This tobacco cessation program gives you the support and knowledge you need to quit smoking.

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# HUNGER AFFECTS 1 IN 5 PEOPLE IN HAWAII.

HUNGER IS PREVENTABLE.  
YOU CAN HELP STOP IT.

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Kahala  
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First Hawaiian Bank.



**Mahalo to HMSA for sponsoring this ad.**

Public Service Announcement

A stylized illustration of a human digestive system, showing the stomach and large intestine in red. The background is light blue and filled with various colorful, cartoonish bacteria and viruses. A large white cloud-like shape is positioned over the lower part of the intestine, containing the title and subtitle.

# GUT CHECK

What's going on behind that belly button?

By Nicole Duarte

**A**t this moment, there's a colony of thousands eating your leftovers. Thousands of species of bacteria, that is.

Our gut is home to these busy microbes. They live in our colon (large intestine) and break down the residual food that wasn't absorbed in our stomach and small intestine. We've known about our microbial cohabitants for a long time, but recently, scientists have been paying closer attention.

"Our understanding of the bacteria in our body and in our gut has really expanded in the last 20 years," says Maria Stewart, Ph.D., a faculty member of the Department of Human Nutrition, Food and Animal Science at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. "It's currently one of the most rapidly developing areas of research. It's changing so quickly that what we say today may not be what we're saying six months from now."

While research on the role of gut bacteria is still young and ongoing, scientists have already linked chronic conditions like Crohn's disease, irritable bowel syndrome, obesity, and type 2 diabetes to low levels of gut bacteria and/or a lack of healthy types of gut bacteria.

"We now know that we need bacteria," Stewart says. "We're germaphobic in the U.S., with our antibacterial soaps, but we know it's important that we get this bacteria whether intentionally [from what we eat or consume] or unintentionally."



## Probiotic Buzz

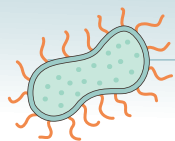
Probiotics are heavily promoted to appeal to your sense of health and well-being. Here's the low down.

**When they're best to use:** After taking oral antibiotics. Antibiotics kill all bacteria — even the beneficial kind that we need. A probiotic can help replenish your gut with healthy bacteria.

**When else:** When you have mild indigestion. “Sometimes we have disturbances in our gut that have unknown causes,” Stewart says. “Adding a probiotic can help shift the makeup back to a healthier balance.”

**Where to find them:** In supplements or fermented dairy (like yogurt and kefir).

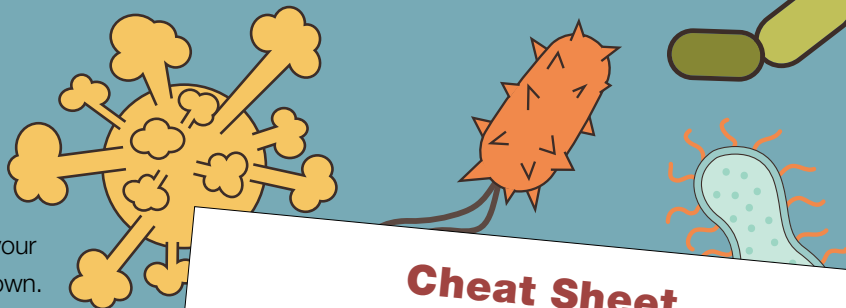
**What to keep in mind:** To recolonize your gut or shift the bacterial balance, you'll need the right kind of bacteria in large enough quantities to have an impact. Probiotic supplements and certain brands of yogurt and kefir have adequate numbers of beneficial bacteria strains, like lactobacillus.



## Is Kimchi the Next Yogurt?

Following in yogurt's probiotic footsteps is kefir, a fermented milk drink that's popular in Eastern Europe and chock-full of beneficial bacteria. Other naturally probiotic, fermented foods of note are kimchi and kombucha (tea kvass).

To date, studies on both have had mixed results. “Whereas yogurt production is very calculated in terms of how much bacteria they use, kimchi production is typically more focused on traditional methods that aren't as precise,” Stewart explains. “And with kombucha, the starters [bacteria cultures that start the fermentation process] can vary from vendor to vendor.” This makes it difficult to assess the potential probiotic power of these foods. However, there's interest in these foods on the research front, so with further study we may know more in the future.



## Cheat Sheet

**Gut microbiota** (also called gastrointestinal flora) is the population of microbes such as bacteria and some yeast.

**Probiotics** are microbes (usually live) that have healthful benefits when consumed in adequate quantities.

**Prebiotics** are indigestible, fermentable plant fibers that promote the growth of beneficial bacteria and/or reduce the growth of harmful bacteria.

**One size doesn't fit all.** About one-third of gut microbiota is the same from person to person, but two-thirds are specific to the individual.

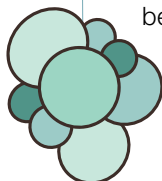
**Happy gut.** Because our understanding of gut microbiota is still developing, medical criteria for a “healthy” gut hasn't been established. From what we know, the state of your gut microbiota largely depends on your diet and environment. Basically, if you eat a well-rounded mix of fiber (from fruits, vegetables, grains, and beans), you'll keep your gut bacteria well-fed and happy.



## To Cleanse or Not to Cleanse

Beware of colon-cleanse products coupled with fasting or deprivation diets. Most of them don't do anything and may even do more harm than good.

“With some of these cleanse products, all you're doing is depriving yourself of nutrients and energy and starving your gut bacteria,” Stewart says. Here, the conventional wisdom stands: The best thing for your colon is fiber. **IS**



# We're Asking for Your Social Security Number

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## You can verify if the request is legitimate.

For your protection, you're correct to not give your Social Security number to people you don't know. So if you get a letter from us asking for your Social Security number, you have good reason to be suspicious. However, we assure you that our request is legitimate and we'll carefully protect your information.

The Affordable Care Act now requires health plans like HMSA to ask their members for their Social Security number. Based on recent events, we understand this may cause concern and know you may not be comfortable giving out this information. But we want to make sure you avoid a \$50 fine from the IRS for not providing this information.

Here are some ways you can check so you know it's OK:

- Call us at 948-6140, option 1, on Oahu or 1 (800) 782-4672, option 1, toll-free on the Neighbor Islands or the number on your HMSA membership card. You can verify these phone numbers on our website at [hmsa.com/contact](http://hmsa.com/contact).
- Verify the HMSA address you're sending your Social Security number to:  
HMSA  
P.O. Box 860  
Honolulu, HI 96808-0860
- Speak to us in person at an HMSA Center or office. Locations and hours are at [hmsa.com/contact](http://hmsa.com/contact).

Just like your personal health information, we carefully guard your Social Security number and use it only to administer your health plan. And as always, please contact us if you have any questions.

**Mahalo for your help.**



# taking small steps toward big changes

Blue Zones Project – Hawaii announces first three communities.

By **Marlene Nakamoto**

*HMSA and Healthways brought Blue Zones Project to Hawai'i to transform our state into an even better place to live, work, and play.*

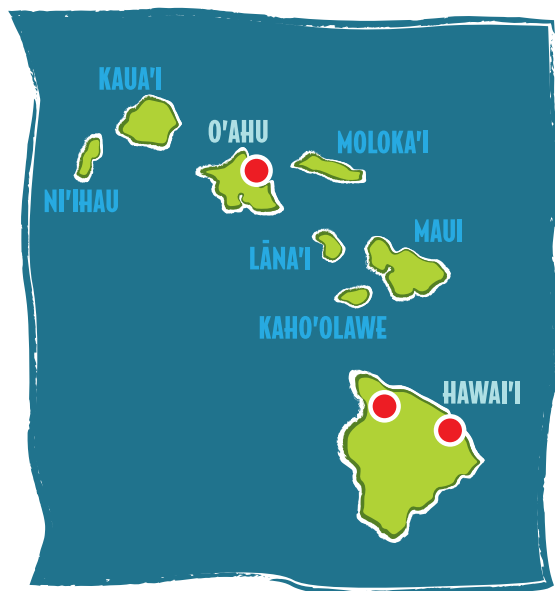
Representatives from HMSA, Healthways, and Blue Zones Project visited several communities statewide in October to introduce them to Blue Zones Project. During the visits, we spoke to leaders and residents about how their communities can make healthier choices easier.

Community leaders who were interested completed applications and were subsequently evaluated. Recently, HMSA, Healthways, and Blue Zones Project announced the selection of three communities: East Hawai'i and North Hawai'i on the Big Island and Ko'olaupoko (Windward O'ahu).

"These communities are trailblazers," said Heidi Kim, Blue Zones Project – Hawaii vice president. "They'll set a positive example for other areas throughout the state." To support the three communities, HMSA, Healthways, and Blue Zones Project will offer tools, resources, and advice. "We're really looking forward to working with these communities," said Elisa Yadao, HMSA's senior vice president of Consumer Experience. "They're eager to transform their communities and improve well-being."

Now that the first three communities have been announced, they'll work toward certification as Blue Zones Communities®. To achieve certification, the entire community must work together – from work-sites and schools to restaurants and grocery stores. Improvements across sectors create healthier, happier places to live, work, and play.

Communities will develop a Blueprint or plan for certification activities and will form committees in each sector. Then the actual work toward certification begins, which includes citizen participation and carrying out Blueprint activities. The local Blue Zones Project team will help the communities with ongoing training to ensure that momentum and enthusiasm are sustained.



With strong leadership from citizens, civic organizations, businesses, and public officials, these communities are on track to measurably improve well-being. More importantly, the communities are following in the steps of successful Blue Zones Project demonstration sites such as Albert Lea, Minn.; Muscatine and Waterloo, Iowa; and beach cities in Southern California. Those areas have seen many positive changes in their populations, such as reduced rates of obesity, tobacco use, and worker absenteeism.

"Each one of us has the power to make small changes in our daily habits that can impact our well-being," Yadao said. "And small changes can lead to big benefits for our communities and our state." <sup>15</sup>

## It Starts With You

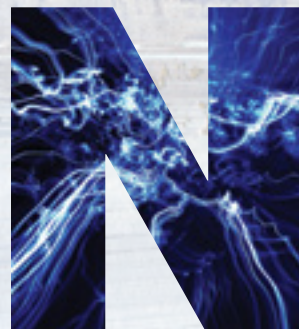
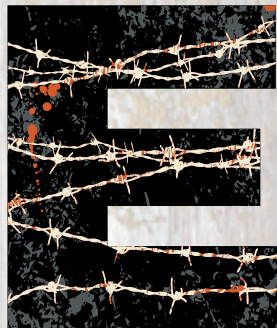
Go to [hawaii.bluezonesproject.com](http://hawaii.bluezonesproject.com) and click Power 9 under Learn About Blue Zones Project. You may find that you're already practicing one or more of the principles, so choose a new one to apply to your life.

## Get Involved

To find out how you can get involved with Blue Zones Project, visit [hawaii.bluezonesproject.com](http://hawaii.bluezonesproject.com).



[MEN] AND





# Learn the symptoms of this often unrecognized illness.

By Keely Kalama-Lahey

**[D]**epression is most commonly known as feelings of sadness and hopelessness. But for many people, sadness is just one part of depression. Others may not be sad at all. Men, in particular, can present different symptoms that don't seem like depression.

We all need to know more. Why? Because when symptoms go unrecognized and people don't understand what they're dealing with, the suffering and the risks get worse. And that's for the person with depression and those who love him.

Depression is a medical illness that can affect people physically and psychologically. Here are a few basic facts:

- Symptoms of depression can vary based on gender, age, and cultural expectations.
- Depression is highly treatable.
- Treatment works faster and more effectively the sooner someone gets help.

Experts estimate that about 10 percent of men will develop a major depression at some point in their lives. While more women than men suffer from depression, men with depression are more likely than women to commit suicide.

Feeling sad and hopeless are symptoms that men don't often express. Anger, irritability, and not being able to sleep or concentrate are more often the case. Men are also more likely to self-medicate with alcohol and drugs and more likely to refuse treatment if they believe depression portrays them as emotionally weak.

## [ Tips to help fight depression ]

According to psychologist Dr. Richard Kappenberg, isolation and inactivity can make depression worse. The more active people are — physically, mentally, and socially — the better they'll feel.

- Exercise: Physician-approved physical activity has powerful mood-boosting effects.
- Connect with others: Getting the support you need plays a big role in lifting the fog of depression.
- Participate in activities: Pursue hobbies or pastimes that bring or used to bring you joy.
- Volunteer: Helping others is one of the best ways to meet people and feel better about yourself.
- Take care of a pet: A pet can keep you company and walking a dog, for example, can be good exercise.
- Learn a new skill: Pick something that you've always wanted to learn or that uses your creativity.
- Create opportunities to laugh: Laughter provides a mood boost.




“With depression, the more common symptoms seem to be some of the hardest for men to admit to. Trouble sleeping? Yes. Not energetic? Yes. How many days have you been feeling sad, crying, or tearful? Zero. Those are not the symptoms to open a discussion with,” says Dr. Kenneth Luke, a psychiatrist and HMSA medical director for Quality Management. “In cultures where men are expected to be strong or the bread winners, it’s going to be harder to expect them to deal with symptoms that could challenge their role.”

There are different types of depression and the diagnosis is based on the duration, frequency, and intensity of symptoms. While experts believe that depression has a genetic element to it, that alone doesn’t mean someone will suffer from it. There are also environmental, biological, and psychological factors. When depression reaches a level considered “major depression,” the nervous system is affected. And that means the illness affects most, if not all, of the body.

Luke explains, “People are more familiar with emotions that aren’t healthy. But the nervous system can suppress functions in all parts of your body. Your thinking isn’t going to be as sharp or as quick. You aren’t going to be able to get off of an unpleasant thought as you otherwise could. You may be more sensitive to perceived slights.

“Your behavior may be different. You’ll have less energy. Your sleep and appetite may change. Things that used to be easy, like taking a shower and getting dressed, now become hard,” he says.

Changes in behavior and thinking may be the only real clues that a man is suffering. And understanding the role that the nervous system plays in depression can be key to getting a man to talk to his doctor. Stomach problems, back pain, and headaches can be caused by depression’s effect on the nervous system. The good news is that depression responds well to treatment, which usually involves medication, psychotherapy, or a combination of both. 

## [ Seniors and Depression ]

Another group whose symptoms of depression are often overlooked is our kupuna. It’s estimated that depression affects more than 6 million of the 40 million Americans over age 65.

Depression symptoms in seniors can include memory problems, confusion, social withdrawal, loss of appetite, irritability, insomnia, and vague complaints of pain. Because there is greater loss and more illness as people age, it’s often assumed that these symptoms are just a part of getting older.

Psychologist Dr. Richard Kappenberg explains, “A lot of times they [seniors] aren’t aware they’re experiencing depression. Consequently, we don’t do anything to get it treated and make things better for them.”

It’s worth a talk with the doctor to find out exactly what’s going on. Family members can encourage loved ones to seek treatment by explaining that depression is a real medical illness and reminding them that their well-being helps the entire family.

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# The App that Saved a Life

HMSA's Online Care connects patient to doctor just in time.

By Christa Hester  
Photos by Earl Yoshii



What would you do if you woke up at 4 a.m. on a Tuesday, coughing and out of breath?

- A. Call your doctor.
- B. Drive to an emergency room or call 911.
- C. Use HMSA's Online Care.

**G**erry Smith, an HMSA member and avid surfer, chose C – and it saved his life.

At 52 years old, Smith doesn't have any known health issues: He doesn't smoke, isn't overweight, and exercises regularly. But over the past two years, he'd felt his stamina decrease. "I'd kite surf, come back to the beach, and lay down for 20 minutes because I was so out of breath," he says. "I thought it was from a lack of exercise, so I started to work out even harder."

With no history of health problems, Smith was even more alarmed by his shortness of breath that morning. He didn't know how to get in touch with his primary care provider (PCP), or even who his PCP was, and didn't know how much he'd have to pay for an impromptu visit to the hospital. So Smith downloaded HMSA's Online Care onto his iPad and selected the first doctor he saw – Dr. Matt Grandstaff, an HMSA participating provider.





Dr. Matt Grandstaff

The two talked face-to-face over the app's video stream. Although Smith insisted he had bronchitis and just needed an antibiotic, Grandstaff wasn't convinced. "He kind of agreed, but he didn't just drop it," Smith says. "He didn't just say 'OK, I'll give you a prescription and off you go.'" After learning that simple acts like walking down stairs and rolling over in bed made Smith out of breath, Grandstaff told him to go to the emergency room (ER) right away. "That's the benefit of Online Care," Grandstaff says. "I was able to see him and talk to him, and even though he was convinced he just had a cold, I could tell something wasn't right."

When Smith arrived at the ER, his resting heart rate was 190 – three times higher than normal. "The attendant was in shock," he says. "She asked me how long I'd been in A-fib and I said, 'What's A-fib?' The next thing I know, there were five people around me, strapping me to a bed."

A-fib, or atrial fibrillation, is an irregular and often rapid heart rate that causes poor blood flow. Symptoms include heart palpitations, shortness of breath, and weakness. Treatments for atrial fibrillation include medications that alter the heart's electrical system and surgeries like catheter ablation, which removes the nodes that send faulty signals to the heart. Unbeknownst to Smith, he'd been slipping in and out of A-fib for years, mistaking an unhealthy heart for being out of shape.

"I was really knocking on the door," Smith says. "They had a mask on my face to do my breathing for me and were battling for a while to get me stable." At one point, his heart and kidneys failed. "I don't remember much about that day or the next," he says. Smith stayed in intensive care for another eight days.

Today, Smith is doing well. After a catheter ablation surgery and with regular checkups, his heart is beating normally. But he hasn't forgotten the doctor who helped him that morning. "I wanted him to know that he saved my life," Smith says. He checked HMSA's Online Care every day for a week until Grandstaff's name popped up so he could thank him face-to-face.

"If Online Care didn't exist, I don't think I would be here today," Smith says. "I wouldn't have gone to the emergency room. I would have been dead that afternoon." 15



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HMSA's Online Care lets you see HMSA participating doctors and other health care providers 24/7/365 on your smartphone or tablet. No appointment needed.

### Use Online Care if you:

- Have ailments like a cold, ear infection, the flu, migraines, and more.
- Can't get an appointment with your doctor in time or are too busy to make an appointment.
- Aren't sure if you need to see a doctor or go to the hospital.

### To enroll on your smartphone or tablet:

- Search for HMSA Online Care on Apple's App Store or Google Play and download the free app.
- Open the app.
- Enter your information as it appears on your HMSA membership card, create a password, and click Done.

Use your email and password next time to log on to your Online Care account.

### To enroll on your computer:

- Go to [hmsa.com](http://hmsa.com) and click Member Login.
- Log into My Account.
- Click Access HMSA's Online Care.

**Need help? Call 1 (866) 939-6013 toll-free.**

*Mobile devices need a front-facing camera and a Wi-Fi or 4G connection. Some mobile devices are not compatible. You must be in Hawai'i to use HMSA's Online Care.*

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- Members' rights and responsibilities
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You can also call HMSA's Customer Relations team at the number on the back of your HMSA membership card for copies of these materials.



1010-1728

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# the memory recorders

Statewide registry puts a face on Hawai'i's neurotrauma injury survivors.

By Tiffany Hill

Valerie Yamada's life changed on November 7, 2004. The 53-year-old licensed practical nurse was working at the Hawai'i State Hospital, a psychiatric facility in Kāne'ohe, when one of her patients knocked her down.

Yamada fell, hitting her head on a support pillar. She suffered a traumatic brain injury, or TBI. "I was in a nursing home in a rehabilitation hospital for about a month," she says. "Then I did outpatient therapy for five weeks, speech and occupational."

Tens of thousands of individuals of all ages in Hawai'i require lifelong support due to neurotrauma injuries. This includes TBIs, spinal cord injuries, and strokes, often the result of falling, car accidents, assault, and concussions. Survivors often have multiple neurotrauma injuries.

To tackle the complex web of issues surrounding neurotrauma injuries in Hawai'i, the state Department of Health (DOH) Developmental Disabilities Division and the Pacific Basin Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (under the University of Hawai'i John A. Burns School of Medicine) are working together to increase awareness and collect data on neurotrauma survivors. The state's long-term plan is to create more survivor support services.

To meet these objectives, the rehabilitation research center launched the Hawai'i Neurotrauma Registry in April 2014. So far, 94 people have joined the registry, says project coordinator Mari Nakamura. Most registrants live on O'ahu and just over half are women.

Neurotrauma injury survivors join the volunteer statewide registry by answering 68 questions in a confidential survey. Participants can fill it out in person (on O'ahu), over the phone, online, or by mail, says Violet Horvath, the center's director. Questions include personal information, injury history, treatment, and employment. Most importantly, it asks respondents what services they need and want.




Valerie Yamada, Mari Nakamura, and Hui Mālama Po'o support group members: Back, from left: Yamada, Lenora Springer, Nakamura, Karen Yokoyama, and Pamela Debebar. Front: Thomas Lum and Shawna Steil.

"A lot of them are interested in getting more education for this type of injury. It changes their lives," says Nakamura. "They want retraining; they'd like to have jobs, but it's very difficult." Nakamura works with participants to refer them to support services. After a patient leaves the hospital, not much exists in the way of lifelong neurotrauma care.

While insurance plans currently aren't required to provide benefits for cognitive rehabilitation, advocates are working to change that. In the meantime, says Aaron Arakaki, the DOH Developmental Disabilities Division health program manager, "HMSA has been proactive in helping individuals with cognitive rehabilitation by providing that benefit."

For Yamada, rehabilitation meant relearning how to walk and talk. She was one of the registry's first participants and attends community health events to help promote the project.

A godsend for her has been the support group, Hui Mālama Po'o. Every Saturday, about 20 people meet to make yarn lei and holiday greeting cards. "We share stories with each other," says Yamada. "Some feel like they're going through this alone, when they're really not." The Hui also participates in outreach on behalf of the registry at community events.

In the future, she hopes the information from the registry will help to create more services to help people get better. Physicians told Yamada that her progress would plateau six years after her initial injury, but she's not giving up. "I still want to improve my walking." 

For more information or to register, visit [manoa.hawaii.edu/pbrtc](http://manoa.hawaii.edu/pbrtc) or call 692-1375 on O'ahu.



# Shift in Priorities Required

Shift workers face increased health risks.

Lauren “Loke” Schreiner loves working the midnight shift as a police officer with the Honolulu Police Department.

When most people are winding down for the night, Schreiner heads out to work. She goes to bed after the sun comes up, as the rest of the world starts its day.

“I remember when I first started working midnights. It was rough getting used to it. I knew some sacrifices had to be made because my mom worked nights at a hospital,” says Schreiner. “She’d tell me that midnights are hard on your body and, if I wanted to stay on that shift, to sleep when I can and keep a good handle on priorities and time management.”

Schreiner’s mom was right: shift work is hard on your body. Medical research is finding that shift work – working outside the traditional 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. workday – can increase the risk of illness such as cancer, diabetes, and heart disease.

How long it takes shift work to influence serious illness and in exactly what way is still being studied. A Canadian study found that women who worked the night shift for 30 or more years doubled their risk of breast cancer. Another study showed shift work can alter blood sugar levels and blood pressure within weeks.

Jamil Sulieman, M.D., an HMSA participating physician and sleep expert, explains, “While the direct mechanisms aren’t clear, what is clear is that there’s an increased incidence in these things. We know that for people on shift work, there are significant body rhythms and hormonal levels that get changed in the process of this disruption.”

Central to this issue is the body’s circadian rhythm and its release of a hormone called melatonin. Melatonin, in simple terms, prepares the body for sleep.

By **Keely Kalama-Lakey**  
Artwork by **Garry Ono**

Sulieman says, “The circadian rhythm times our cycles of events. Our bodies respond to triggers to go to sleep or wake up. Primarily, that trigger is light. Light goes into our eyes, then that message goes to a part of our brain that controls our sleep/wake cycles, our body temperature, our appetite, and our mood. From a sleep standpoint, it affects the production of melatonin. Melatonin goes down when there’s bright light and goes up when there’s no light. This process regulates within a clock-like mechanism whether we’re asleep or awake.

“Shift work goes against that normal process. We want to be awake when we should be asleep and we tell ourselves to go to sleep when everything in our natural structure wants us to be awake. Our rhythms get out of phase between our circadian rhythm and life rhythm, and we develop times of excess sleepiness and times of insomnia. When you disrupt sleep, you disrupt a lot of cycles.”

Schreiner says, “There are days when I don’t feel like working out, but exercise is a priority for me so I make time for it. I’m lucky enough to have a trainer and I dance hula. Eating healthy is a little more time consuming and more expensive, but like everything else, it’s about making it a habit,” she says.

While everyone should work closely with their doctors, it’s especially crucial for shift workers with a family history of serious illness. Shift workers need to make health screenings and regular checkups a priority.

For sleep, Sulieman recommends:

- Get at least four hours. Researchers believe the first four or five hours of sleep are probably the most important. You can nap before work, but not too long, just an hour or two.
- If it’s sunny at the end of your work day, wear dark glasses on your way home to reduce sun exposure.
- Go to bed at the same time every day and get up at the same time.
- Create a sleep environment that’s dark, cool, and quiet.
- Exercise several hours before your regular bedtime.



“There are days when I don’t feel like working out, but exercise is a priority for me so I make time for it.”


— Loke Schreiner



It’s the disruption of those cycles that have serious health consequences for shift workers. Sulieman says people on rotating shifts have it the hardest, because it’s almost impossible for the body to keep up with the constant disruption.

The best way to manage the risks associated with shift work is to take a proactive approach to health that makes sleep, exercise, and healthy eating a priority.

Ultimately, if you have sleep problems that are disrupting your life, you need to talk to your doctor. There are times that specialists may recommend medication and therapy, but it’s important to work with your primary doctor.

“Dedicate part of your days off to rest and quality time with family, and definitely have your priorities figured out,” advises Schreiner. “I love what I do and love working midnights. I just have to make more of a conscious effort to take care of myself.” 



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# so many benefits of yoga

Releasing anxiety and gaining more than expected.

By **Spencer Lathrop**

At age 53, I went to see my doctor for help with some anxiety issues that were starting to interfere with my quality of life. I also have a history of heart disease on my dad's side. My doctor examined me and recommended a number of things, including a trip to a cardiologist. After a round of X-rays, it was determined that I had a 70 percent blockage in my left coronary artery. I was admitted to the hospital the next day, had two stents implanted, and went home feeling extremely lucky.

With two preteen children, I thought I was too young to have heart disease. I was suddenly very open to suggestions about how to improve my health. That's how I got started with yoga.

At first, it just felt like good exercise. I didn't know what a *chaturanga* was (a combination pushup and stretch). I joined a yoga center that specializes in Bikram (hot yoga). I tried that four or five times and experimented with other styles. I enjoyed the variety of poses and music of Vinyasa. I also enjoyed *ashtanga* yoga. I took sculpt classes, which use yoga poses (or *asanas*) and weights to elevate the heartbeat and build strength. Today, I go to all styles of classes.

One of the reasons I kept returning to classes was the teachers, who are very encouraging. "It's yoga practice, not yoga perfect" is the mantra I often hear in class. The teachers go out of their way to learn your name, help with hands-on assists, and encourage students. All yoga instructors discourage comparing yourself to others in the room, and the sense of community is very strong.

When I started yoga, I couldn't even fake a headstand. Headstands are all about core (midsection) strength, and I didn't have it. I didn't even try it for two months. But one day I decided that I didn't want to be the lone man out during "inversions," and I committed myself to trying.



I used a wall and kicked hard to get my feet up. Slowly, I got better, first by not relying on a wall and then finding the proper form to get upside down. I'm now working on a tripod headstand (two hands and head), and I have a handstand goal in my future. Headstands are one of the *asanas* most recommended for helping with anxiety, and I'm happy to report that my anxiety has decreased dramatically.

It's very important to note that yoga isn't like taking an aspirin. It requires dedication and commitment. I think this may be the hardest part for students. Many instructors say that students sometimes start coming to yoga to get a beach body. But serious students generally find that regular practice not only helps with muscle tone, but also breathing, concentration, and a positive world view.

At the end of the day, I've spent an hour or two practicing yoga – not eating, not stressing about bills, and not vegging in front of my computer. I think this is going to help me live a longer, better life. **IS**



# Rainbow Recovery

With a little help from my friends.

By Deborah Parker • Photo by Earl Yoshii

**I**n the past year, rainbows have become more important to me than I ever could have imagined.

Hawai'i has a tradition of being a healing place, but this aspect of the state wasn't something that I truly understood – not until my third recurrence of lymphoma in April 2013.

My oncologist pulled no punches about the treatment I needed: four chemotherapy treatments and a stem cell transplant. I had resisted a transplant after my second recurrence in 2010 because of the brutal chemo regimen. I didn't have a choice this time.

My husband, Mark, and I live in Virginia. We've been visiting Hawai'i regularly for more than a decade and spent time there after my first and second treatments. With my third treatment, my desire to go to Hawai'i was especially intense.

Before this recurrence of lymphoma, Mark and I signed a contract to write a book that would tie in with Dan Brown's new thriller, *Inferno*. On April 1, 2013, we signed the publisher's contract. Just 10 days later, a CT scan revealed the recurrence of lymphoma. But we never considered abandoning the book project. Getting through the transplant was something I had to do. Writing the book was something I wanted to do.

We completed our book in seven months, roughly a third of it while I was in chemo. We submitted the final proofs on July 6, two days before I entered the hospital for my stem cell transplant.

Friends became crucial to my healing process. Two friends who live in Pearl City, Bruce Behnke, a nature photographer, and his partner, Steven Leong, asked if I'd like them to send me *Reiki*. I didn't know much about this Japanese technique, but accepted their offer gratefully. Reiki practitioners channel energy through slow breathing and the laying on of hands to reduce stress, improve relaxation, and promote healing.

Steven also suggested a meditation practice, one that begins with envisioning the seven colors of the rainbow – red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, and violet. You then imagine your ideal “workshop,” a place that'll serve as your own special realm of treatment. Next, you visualize your decline, gradual improvement, and final ascent into a sphere of white light. You finish the visualization by recalling the colors of the rainbow

in reverse order.

For my workshop, I didn't have to make up a serene place. I already knew one – the home of two friends, Patty La Force and Jack Gibbons, in Lanikai. Their lānai has stunning views of the Mokulua Islands, over-

looking treetops and the ocean. Over and over, I visualized my workshop in Lanikai – when the side effects of the chemo were especially rough, before going to sleep, and whenever my 19-day hospital stay seemed overwhelming. The technique was almost always calming.

Two other friends, Laura Lyons and John Zuern, professors in the English department at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, invited us to give a presentation of our new book for the Center for Biographical Research. The two experiences of writing the book and going through the transplant were deeply intertwined for us, but we didn't know how to talk about it.



On December 10, 116 days after my transplant, Mark and I flew to Honolulu. On the eighth day, we saw eight rainbows while walking on Kailua Beach. We considered this the most auspicious of signs.


Shortly after we arrived, Bruce asked, “Would you like to learn how to do reiki while you're here?” His Reiki teacher guided us through the meditations and techniques over two days at Bruce's home. And because the Reiki teacher is a nurse who'd worked with chemo patients, this strengthened our bond.

We did Reiki in Bruce's living room, which looked out onto a beautiful garden. At the end of the final session, the teacher, Bruce, Steven, and Mark administered Reiki to me – the most people the teacher had ever gathered to give Reiki to one person. Industrial-strength Reiki.

On the day of our book presentation, we decided to tell the audience what we went through while writing the book. Speaking about these two experiences was unexpectedly easy – and liberating. Hawai'i had become central to my recovery from chemo, and central to my self-recovery.



On our last day on O'ahu, we saw the sunrise at Hanauma Bay and went to the Honolulu Museum of Art, another of our favorite places. While perusing the museum's permanent collection, Robert

Delaunay's *The Rainbow* caught my eye. It was the perfect ending to our stay on O'ahu and a luminous reminder of how rainbows and dear friends had helped sustain me during dark moments. 

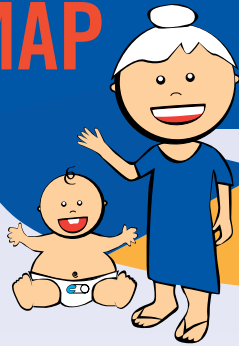
*The purpose of this article is to share one person's experiences in Hawai'i after treatment for lymphoma. Island Scene doesn't endorse all practices contained in the magazine and doesn't replace the advice of health care professionals. Readers should consult their physician for their personal needs and before making any lifestyle changes.*





# ROADMAP FOR A CHILD'S SUCCESS

**Age 0  
CHILD IS BORN**



**Ages 0-2  
WELL-BABY CHECKUPS**



**Ages 2-5  
EARLY CHILDHOOD  
DEVELOPMENTAL  
HEALTH SCREENINGS**



**Age 5  
CHILD ENTERING  
KINDERGARTEN PREPARED  
AND READY TO LEARN**

## Why Early Developmental Screening is So Important

Early identification of vision, hearing or developmental issues of young children is an important first step in preparing your child for kindergarten. Aloha United Way funded programs have screened more than 10,000 children. 2,900 were identified as needing additional treatment. Make developmental screening a part of your child's regular healthcare visits. Call Aloha United Way's 2-1-1 for more information.



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# spending time with loved ones

Tips to help the elderly or ill relax and feel better.

By Keely Kalama-Lahey

When a close friend or loved one is elderly or ill, we don't know exactly how to help. Hale Nani Rehabilitation and Nursing Center has some ideas that can help family members and friends.

Hale Nani started using these techniques five years ago in what they call their Namaste Room – a peaceful area where residents in the final stages of dementia (with little or no ability to engage with others) were brought regularly to engage their senses.

"These residents weren't able to participate in the normal activity programs we have, says Nicetas P. Liongson, R.N., Hale Nani's assistant director of nursing. "We read the book, *The End-Of-Life Namaste Care Program for People with Dementia* by Joyce Simard, and it started from there. It grew because of good results." Now, the program has been expanded to include all residents who can benefit from it.

The success of the Namaste Room is impressive, with the most widespread improvement shown in skin health. Skin care is a high priority for the elderly, because skin thins and becomes fragile and dry. Gentle massage brings relaxation and much-needed skin improvement for residents.

For some residents, the emotional and communication results were even greater. "They started to talk; they weren't talking before, and their long-term memory comes back. If you show them different fruits, they can remember in the old days how much it cost," explains Liongson.

Fely Pula, R.N., Hale Nani's director of nursing, says, "When we started this program, we had a high number of residents on psychotropic medications because of agitation and restlessness. With the implementation of Namaste, our use of antipsychotics has decreased."



Of course, it's always a good idea to check with your loved one's physician before implementing new activities. Not everyone will see the kind of results they've had at Hale Nani, but their relaxation tips can help. 15

## Relaxation Tips

- **Lighting:** Dim the lights for a calming environment.
- **Massage:** Cleanse hands and feet with warm towels then gently massage extremities with oils and lotions. "Just a gentle massage, like you're putting lotion on yourself," says Pula.
- **Music:** Play calming classical music or your loved one's favorites.
- **Visual stimulation:** Show DVDs of calming nature scenes; some residents request old Westerns and other classic movies. Old photo albums bring comfort as well.
- **Aroma therapy:** Smell familiar scents such as cinnamon, coffee, and chocolate. Favorite flowers and other scents work well, too.
- **Food:** Even those who have difficulty eating can taste small bits of pineapple or other favorites, such as ice cream, lollipops, popsicles, and oranges.
- **Singing:** Sing classic oldies and familiar songs or even simple tunes from childhood.
- **Reading:** Read favorite books and share stories.

## dem bones

Keep your bones strong and healthy.

By **Marlene Nakamoto**

Bones. We need our bones. Without bones, we'd have a hard time sitting, standing, walking, chasing grandkids, or sending text messages.

Bone is living tissue – an organ – that can regenerate and heal itself. It's made of minerals (mostly calcium phosphate), protein (collagen), and much-smaller amounts of carbohydrates. Minerals make bones hard; protein makes them strong. In childhood, good nutrition and physical activity help build strong bones. Now that you're an adult, you need to take extra care of your bones.

### Poor bones

What causes weak bones? Some factors are within our control, some aren't:

- Inadequate intake of calcium and vitamin D during bone-building years.
- Reduced hormone levels (estrogen in women, testosterone in men).
- Prescription medications such as steroids and anti-depressants.
- Bone diseases, such as osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis is the most common bone disease; it causes bones to thin and weaken. Osteoporosis isn't painful at the onset and has no other symptoms.

Many people don't know they have the disease until they actually break a bone. Have you ever seen a termite-eaten chest of drawers? It looks solid on the outside, but it's full of big holes on the inside.

Ask your doctor if you should get a bone density test to determine your risk for osteoporosis. And remember to check your health plan benefits before the test.

### Never too late

By your 30th birthday party, your bones will be as dense as they'll ever be. From then on, they'll slowly lose mass. You can't replace lost bone mass, but it's never too late to take care of what you have. Here's what you can do now:

- Eat a balanced diet with foods that are good for healthy bones (see box for tips).
- Get enough calcium (about 1,200 mg per day) and vitamin D.
- Stay active – walk, dance, work in your garden, lift weights, or practice tai chi or yoga.
- Don't smoke.
- Limit alcohol to two drinks per day.
- Limit caffeine to 300 mg (about 24 fluid ounces of coffee) per day.






### Sticks and stones

Protecting your bones also means preventing falls, which are more dangerous as we get older. In addition to staying strong and healthy, making your home safer can help prevent most falls:

- Clear clutter from walkways.
- Remove small rugs.
- Don't use step stools – keep commonly used items within easy reach.
- Add lighting where it's dark and use higher-wattage light bulbs.
- Install handrails in hallways, next to the toilet, and in the bathtub and shower.
- Wear well-fitting, non-slip footwear.

You may also want to ask your doctor to review all the medications you're taking, including over-the-counter medicines and supplements. Medicines may interact with each other and cause drowsiness or lightheadedness, which could lead to falls. You should also stay up-to-date with your vision and physical checkups.

### Gonna walk around

Take extra care of your bones – eat nutritious foods, cut down on the bad stuff, and stay active – and they'll keep you walking around. 

### Feed Your Bones

A well-balanced diet is important for bone health and your overall health, too. Ask your doctor if you should take a multivitamin or other supplement. Here's a short list of bone-healthy foods:

- Low-fat dairy products, such as milk, yogurt, and cheese.
- Canned sardines and salmon with bones.
- Dark green, leafy vegetables, such as kale, spinach, and collard greens.
- Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and sweet potatoes.
- Tomato products and red and green bell peppers.
- Papaya, pineapple, orange, and strawberries.

After nearly 30 years abroad, Helen Nakano returned to the Mānoa neighborhood she grew up in and found it a different place.

Nakano lived in Japan, Thailand, England, and parts of the U.S. Mainland with her husband, a colonel in the U.S. Air Force, and their three children, during his overseas assignments.

While she was away, historic homes were torn down to make way for bigger, modern ones. The stream that she once waded barefoot in during her childhood is now polluted with leptospirosis and eroding from overgrown albezia and macaranga trees. She lost touch with a lot of her longtime friends she made while attending Maryknoll School and the University of Hawai'i.

To reconnect with her community, she ran for a seat and was elected to serve on the Neighborhood Board. She became acquainted with the issues of the area and a core group of longtime residents who shared her passion for community involvement.

#### TAKING CARE

Fearing that the area was losing its unique charm, she joined preservationist Mary Cooke to spearhead Mālama Mānoa in 1992. The nonprofit organization preserves, protects, and enhances Mānoa's historic qualities with programs such as plant giveaways, stream clean-ups, and walking tours of historic homes. But more than just preserving the area's

# LADY OF THE

Helen Nakano holds an 'ulu plant in her Mānoa neighborhood to promote the breadfruit's nutritional values. As one of her many community projects, "Aunty 'Ulu" encourages Mānoa residents to plant a tree in their yard.



beauty, Nakano “was interested in building community and bringing people together.”

Her community involvement grew into working with state Rep. Isaac Choy to revive Mānoa’s Neighborhood Watch Program and organizing Be Ready Mānoa, a disaster preparedness program that trains residents to respond to hurricanes, floods, and other disasters. They organized a disaster preparedness fair last year and are recruiting volunteers for the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). “There are more skilled and capable people than me,” says Nakano, 77. “But they’re not always available to get involved. I feel that someone’s got to do it. So I just jump in.”

Nakano has a knack for preserving traditions for a new generation to enjoy. She’s best known for creating Hanafuda Hawai’i, which has helped revive and promote the traditional Japanese card game. Not one to be stuck in the past, she looks for ways to get people excited about the game. Her next product will feature Hawaiian plants on the cards.

“My mission is to bring generations together to benefit from each other,” she says. One of her toughest opponents remains her 11-year-old granddaughter. “We play hanafuda whenever we get together. I treasure these moments of connection the game provides us.”

#### LIFE CHANGES

Nakano is cutting back on some of her activities. Last year, she stopped teaching yoga classes for seniors at the Women’s Centers at Kapi’olani and Pali Momi, which

she’d done for eight years. She got her teaching certificate from the Bikram Yoga College in Los Angeles after recovering from breast cancer. “I didn’t plan on teaching,” she says. “I just wanted to prove to myself that I was healed from the cancer and that I’ve come back to a state of fitness.” Still, she continues to practice yoga, an activity she started at age 60.

Nakano exercises her mind and spiritual well-being, too. She’s been studying Buddhist teachings and practicing meditation at the Mu Ryang Sa Temple in Pālolo Valley. It’s helped her deal with losing many friends in recent years.

“Growing old isn’t for sissies,” she says. “It’s a time of transition and loss. I see illness and death getting closer. How you deal with it is a challenge of getting older. Lots of people worry about getting old and dying. But it’s not wise to avoid thinking about the inevitable. Knowing the process and spiritual aspects, you can welcome it and say, ‘I’m ready, it’s time to go.’”

As part of her meditation, she says a prayer every morning: “May I live my life with skill, compassion, and wisdom.”

To fulfill those goals, Nakano keeps an active body and mind and stays engaged in the people and things she loves. **is**

# VALLEY

*Mānoa community leader Helen Nakano lives with a sense of purpose.*

By Craig DeSilva  
Photo by Lew Harrington

“GROWING  
OLD  
ISN’T  
FOR  
SISSIES.”





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# take your meds

Why it's important to your treatment plan.

By David Frickman

here's a common scenario: A physician examines a patient, diagnoses a condition, and determines the best course of treatment. That treatment may include medication that the patient must take at home. The patient follows all of the doctor's instructions, including taking the medication, and returns to optimal health.

Too often, however, the story stops after the medication is prescribed. For a variety of reasons, the patient never takes the medication or stops taking it too soon. It's a costly problem.

"It's one thing to be prescribed medication, but to get the best results, members have to stick to their medication regimen," says Kristine Onaga, R.Ph., HMSA's senior director of pharmacy management. "For many medical conditions, drugs are the first line of therapy. So when we're looking at taking care of our members, medication adherence is a big part of their treatment plan."

To make sure you take your medication properly, follow these tips:

**Talk with your physician:** Let your doctor know if there are side effects that make it difficult for you to stay on your medications, or financial concerns that may stop you from even picking them up at the pharmacy. Your physician may have alternatives. Also, make sure you know how long to take the medication and if you'll need a refill.

**Develop a routine:** Always keep your medications in the same place and associate them with something you do every day, such as eating meals or brushing your teeth. Don't keep your medications in the bathroom, where moisture could break down the medication. A good place might be a kitchen cabinet or bedroom drawer (out of reach of children and pets).

**Get support from others:** Ask family or friends to help you stay on track.



**Use technology:** If you have a smartphone or tablet, get an app that reminds you to take your meds. Search for "medication reminder" in the App Store or Android Market.

**Work closely with your pharmacist:** Pharmacies have many ways to help patients, such as calling or texting patients to remind them to refill prescriptions. Automatic refills also help, when available. Receiving medications through mail order provides convenience and can save you money, too.

If you take several medications, ask your pharmacist to synchronize the schedule so all of your medications are refilled at the same time. Also ask if the pharmacy offers compliance packaging, where your medications will be divided into the times of day you're scheduled to take them.

"For example, if I have eight medications, the pharmacy will package them into morning, noon, and night," says Onaga. "They've had this packaging in long-term care facilities, but I'm seeing pharmacies offer it more and more for patients at home so they don't have to do it themselves."

When patients take their medications as they should, studies show that improved health and cost savings are a result. And there's plenty of help out there. In the end, though, Onaga says it's up to you.

"This is very important for HMSA as part of our members' overall well-being. Your medications don't do very much good in your medicine cabinet; they have to go into your body." **IS**





A BOY'S

# PASSION TO SAVE LIVES



# He wants you to know CPR – call, push, and respond.

By Danielle Douglass

Photo by Earl Yoshii

**T**welve-year old Brycen Go has a simple vision of his future. He explains he'd be content living in a one-bedroom apartment with enough food to eat and a job with emergency medical services (EMS).

He notes that although EMS workers get paid a lot, he would honestly do it for free. To him, wealth comes from the ability to save lives.

"Saving a life far outweighs money," says the Jarrett Middle School seventh grader, Boy Scout, and certified American Heart Association (AHA) CPR/AED instructor.

In 2012, Brycen earned his AHA certification and became one of the youngest instructors in the state. Since then, he's taught more than 10,000 people how to do hands-only CPR and use automated external defibrillators (AEDs). He volunteers with the Hawaii Heart Foundation (HHF), a nonprofit organization, which is solely volunteer-run. The mission of HHF is to improve cardiac arrest survival rates in Hawai'i.

Toward this goal, HHF teaches free CPR/AED training classes to businesses, students, and community organizations throughout the state. The classes include an educational briefing and hands-on practice on adult- and infant-sized dummies.

## The beginnings of HHF

On the day *Island Scene* caught up with Brycen, he was training about 35 teachers at Island Pacific Academy with HHF Program Director Pamela Foster. Sharon Maekawa was also there; she's the mother of Kristin Maekawa Claudi, who was the inspiration for HHF.

Claudi died in 2009 – unexpectedly and tragically – at work where she taught preschool. An autopsy revealed the cause of her death was sudden cardiac arrest. She was 28 years old.

"No one should have to die in a school," Maekawa says. She explains that HHF wants all schools to be "heart-safe" and teach CPR as part of the curriculum and make AEDs required school equipment.

## Hooked at age 10

Brycen met "Ms. Pam" about two years ago while attending a class she was teaching at Wilson Elementary School. He found it so interesting that he convinced his mom to ask Foster to teach a class for his Cub Scout den. When she arrived for the class, the fifth grader eagerly asked if he could teach with her. "Of course I said yes," says Foster.

"After that day, I was hooked!" recounts Brycen. "I believe my calling in life is to become an emergency medical technician and eventually a mobile intensive care technician. I want to be that person who comes to your rescue when you're having the worst day of your life."

Brycen is one of several youth who volunteer with the HHF. The first two child volunteers were Claudi's nephew and niece, Bailey and Kolu Chan. They were 10 and 8 years old, respectively, when they began teaching adults and children to give CPR and use AEDs.

## CPR: Call, Push, Respond

The most important thing that Brycen teaches people (ranging from young children to seniors) is



Brycen and his late grandfather, Paul Kojima, taking a glider ride.



With his parents, Tracey Kojima-Go and Russ Go, at Cars Land, California Adventure Park.



With his family and Pamela Foster at the Parent Heart Watch awards banquet.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE GO FAMILY

to call, push, and respond if someone collapses. To remember, just think C-P-R:

- **CALL** 911 for an ambulance.
- **PUSH** hard and fast on the person's chest. Tell someone to get an AED and attach it to the person who collapsed.
- By **RESPONDING**, you've increased the victim's chance of survival. Follow the AED's instructions and continue chest compressions until help arrives.

Foster says there's less than a 10 percent survival rate for those experiencing sudden cardiac arrest. But if a team of people comes together to help, it can double, triple, or even quadruple the survival rate. Chest compressions ensure that blood continues to get to the brain and an AED checks the heart's rhythm and can potentially restore it to normal.

"Doing CPR is simple and you can't hurt anyone. It's far better to do something than nothing. Call, push, respond, just do it," says Foster. "The power to save a life is in the hands of a bystander, family member, or friend."

## Sudden cardiac arrest

A sudden cardiac arrest happens when the heart stops beating normally. In the U.S., about 350,000 people die annually from it. Perhaps the scariest fact about this condition is that it can happen to anyone at any time, at any age. The American Heart Association reports that there are as many as 14,200 pediatric cardiac arrests each year.

During the class at Island Pacific Academy, Brycen told the crowd, "It takes EMS at least five minutes to arrive following a call, sometimes 10 minutes." He explains that if CPR is being done on an individual during that critical time, they'll have a much better chance of surviving.

## National and local hero

Brycen recently received the Heroes for Young Hearts Advocacy Champion award from Parent Heart Watch ([parentheartwatch.org](http://parentheartwatch.org)). This national recognition was awarded to him for commitment to raise awareness of sudden cardiac arrest in youth. His parents and Foster travelled with him in January to Scottsdale, Ariz., to accept the award.



Brycen with Sharon Maekawa (left) and Pamela Foster at the Island Pacific Academy training.



## AEDs Donated to School Athletic Departments

In 2006, HMSA donated 95 automated external defibrillators (AEDs), along with the training to use them, to the Hawaii High School Athletic Association (HHSAA). The donation, which was part of the HMSA Kaimana Awards & Scholarship Program, supplied AEDs to athletics departments of Hawai'i's public and independent schools. AEDs cost an average of \$2,000 each.

"When I found out about Brycen receiving this award, I became very emotional," says his mom, Tracey Kojima-Go. "My husband and I were so proud of him when he was nominated and selected to receive the CYD Heroes award here in the state of Hawai'i but Brycen receiving a national award in Arizona honestly left me speechless. It took a while to absorb everything as I kept thinking – he's only 12 years old!"

The award Kojima-Go is referring to was presented to Brycen last October. He received the 2014 Children and Youth Day (CYD) hero for his work in the community. At a special luncheon for CYD heroes, he was presented with the Wyland Medallion and received a proclamation from the governor and lieutenant governor.


In addition to the CYD honor, Brycen has submitted written and verbal testimony to the Hawai'i State Senate to place AEDs in all schools and sporting events. In May 2013, he crossed over to become a Boy Scout while being named an outstanding Cub Scout. He excels in school as well, where he's earned quarterly awards including "most improved" and "excellent student."

Brycen's parents often attend his classes to watch him teach. They believe that his volunteer experiences with HHF have given him the priceless gift of believing in himself and knowing that no matter how young you are, you can make a difference.

"We are so proud of Brycen – not only for his achievements, but for his empathy towards others and his desire to do whatever he can to help save lives," said Kojima-Go.

### Importance of CPR training

Maekawa says it's her hope that Hawai'i residents continue to become trained in CPR. "Learn CPR, because you can never tell who it will happen to and at what age," she urges. She has found strength in the difficulties of her life and looks forward to a well-informed public that will make deaths from sudden cardiac arrest a thing of the past.

Brycen definitely plays a big role in Maekawa's wish, contributing to every life that he and HHF touch through training sessions. Brycen is confident in his abilities and teaching and says, "I know what to do and I know I'm not going to hesitate." 



# THE NEED FOR BLOOD DOESN'T TAKE A VACATION

“

*I wouldn't have a daddy  
without you.”*



*Tom. Blood Recipient. With daughter Maria.*



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# better breastfeeding

Moms In Hawaii members share their advice.

Compiled by **Marlene Nakamoto**

**b**reastfeeding provides many benefits for your baby – ideal nutrition and antibodies in an easily digested form along with lots of hugs.

When these moms decided to breastfeed their babies, they may not have realized there was a steep learning curve. Here are their experiences and tips.

**My firstborn had latch-on problems and I was really struggling. He was losing weight and crying all the time, but I was determined to stay the course. I called Hawaii Mothers' Milk and a consultant visited me in my hospital room. She helped me to see that it would be OK to pump my milk and bottle feed my son until he and I "got it." I was really worried that bottle feeding would derail my efforts, but those wise women from Hawaii Mothers' Milk knew what they were talking about. I supplemented my own milk with formula for two weeks. But eventually we had successful latching-on and I switched completely to nursing and breast milk. I went on to breastfeed two more of my kids.** | Cindy Spreg

Don't give up! I had such a hard time nursing my first daughter! I spent four long months trying to get it all figured out. Ironically, the one thing that kept me going was someone close to me who kept saying it was OK to stop. I guess I have a rebellious side, because I took that as a challenge. There was no way I was going to give up after that. | Michele Okimoto

**Ask for help! I called Hawaii Mothers' Milk all the time and went in to see them at least three times. They were such a great resource! They celebrated my efforts and really made me feel like a good mom. They had lots of great advice, new positions to try, and good support products.** | M.O.



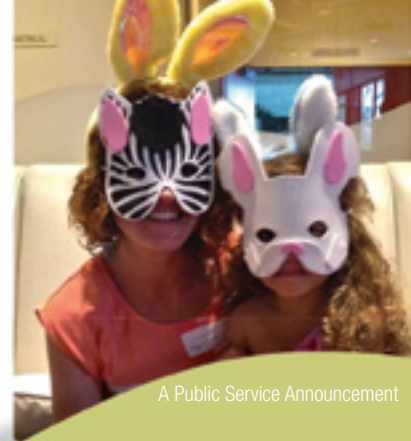
I was amazed by how thirsty and hopelessly immobile I felt when I started breastfeeding. Before my husband left for work in the morning, he'd fill water bottles and leave glasses of water in all the places I would likely be feeding our daughter. I could quench my thirst and feel loved and supported all day even though he wasn't around. | Vivian Best

**From the start with my firstborn, I was very anxious about succeeding. I think that's why he and I had problems. His latch wasn't the best and my anxiety to feed him while he was jaundiced made it difficult. Every day I wanted to give up. Every day I didn't. As time went on and with the help of Hawaii Mothers' Milk, my son and I succeeded! Talking to other mommy friends and my pediatrician was also helpful.** | Nicole Okamura

Be patient with yourself and your baby. Drink lots of water, and most importantly, believe in yourself. Breastfeeding was such a rewarding experience and I'm so happy that I stuck with it. | N.O. 15

The mission of Hawaii Mothers' Milk is to promote, encourage, and advocate breastfeeding as the best source of nutrition for infants. Call them at 947-6920 on O'ahu or email [HMMI@kapiolani.org](mailto:HMMI@kapiolani.org) for more information. You can also visit their website at [HIMothersMilk.org](http://HIMothersMilk.org). Hawaii Mothers' Milk is a nonprofit Aloha United Way agency.





A Public Service Announcement

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moms empowering moms



# your mouth may be your problem

Why good dental health (and good dental insurance) is key to good overall health.

By David Frickman

So you brush and floss your teeth every day, but are too busy to see your dentist twice a year. If a problem comes up, you'll head to the dentist and all of your problems will be taken care of in the chair, right?

Think again.

Dental health affects more than just your mouth. There's a relationship between a healthy mouth and your overall good health. Problems that start with your teeth and gums can contribute to conditions such as diabetes, coronary artery disease, and oral cancer, as well as premature, low-birth-weight babies. The good news is that your dentist can detect and treat these problems before they become much more serious.

A simple routine cleaning, X-rays, and a checkup twice a year allow your dentist to examine your current dental health and track it over a period of time. When problems are found early, your dentist can provide treatment before pain sets in or infection occurs.

These checkups are important, and so is your dental plan. Taking these preventive measures just twice a year can save you from emergency toothaches that can result in significant financial burdens. Serious problems result in higher out-of-pocket expenses, especially if you don't have a dental plan that can save you hundreds or even thousands of dollars.

## Oral Health for Total Health

Studies show that more than 75 percent of people 35 years of age and older will be affected by some form of gum disease, with advanced gum disease affecting up to 12 percent of adults. Poor oral health can make diabetes harder to control, resulting in infections that lead to higher blood-sugar levels; those with untreated gum disease will have up to a two-fold increased risk for heart disease; and pregnant women with gum disease may be seven times more likely to deliver premature, low-birth-weight babies.

This is why HMSA offers Oral Health for Total Health, a program that provides oral health education and benefits to members, providers, and employers. The program helps identify members with diabetes, heart disease, oral cancer, or those who are pregnant so they can receive education tailored to their needs. Since we offer both medical and dental plans, we can analyze claims information and identify members who can benefit from focused attention and additional dental education. We even work with members who are not actively maintaining their oral health and encourage them to see their dentist.


## Our Oral Health for Total Health program includes:

|  | Diabetes | Coronary Artery Disease | Pregnancy | Oral Cancer** |
|--|----------|-------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Cleaning or periodontal maintenance visit every 3 months | X        | X                       | X         | X             |
| Periodontal scaling once per quadrant every 24 months*   | X        | X                       | X         |               |
| Prediagnostic oral cancer screening every 6 months       |          |                         |           | X             |
| Fluoride treatment every 3 months                        |          |                         |           | X             |

\* Periodontal maintenance and scaling available with plans that offer periodontal benefits.

\*\* Oral cancer benefit available for members who have had a previous diagnosis of oral cancer.

We also offer **Enhanced Dental Benefits**, a program that provides at-risk members with dental benefits (beyond their regular benefits) that are specific to their needs.

In addition, HMSA offers other dental benefits to qualifying members at no additional cost. HMSA is committed to our community and the overall health of its members. That's why we support this multifaceted approach to optimum oral care. Visit [hmsa.com/oralhealth](http://hmsa.com/oralhealth) for more information on Oral Health for Total Health. 



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Graham T. Fedorak  
Andrew J. Fisher  
Matthew J. Fleishman  
Kenneth W. Fogelberg

Moana K. Gaspar  
Cheryl R. Gesik  
Umesh H. Gheewala  
Philippe Guedj  
Cristina L. Guerra  
Libby K. Guilnet  
Kirsten A. Halsan  
Teresa D. Harter  
Teresa D. Harter  
Emily R. Hew  
Melissa Hogan  
Timothy S. Holt  
Malia K. Howard  
Jill Inouye  
Joanne K. Ishikawa  
Arksarapuk Jittirat  
Adam K. Johnnidis  
Jaimie Johnson  
Micheal B. Johnson  
Brian D. Jones  
SungYup Jung  
Shayna M. Kapaona  
Jennifer K. Katres  
Derrick T. Kida  
Richard J. Kim  
Christopher T. Koke  
Laura S. Kong  
Natalie K. Kong  
Bradley J. Kuo  
Katerina Kurteeva

Dannette L. Lammert  
Lynette J. Lee  
Daniel Lev  
Richard P. Levy  
Gene-Fu F. Liu  
Nathan J. Lowry  
Sherelle Lum  
Patricia L. Lynn  
Timothy D. Mack  
Kathy A. Maemori  
Nisha Malhotra  
Rheam Mansour  
Mary V. Mantooth  
Patricia M. Mayer  
Jennifer L. Mcfarland  
Christopher G. McLaughlin  
Theresa E. Miller  
Janice M. Montgomery-Suber  
Liane L. Murai  
Seiichi Nakamura  
Lesli I. Nicolay  
Alice H. Ogawa  
Ryoichi Ogawa  
Shaw M. Okawara  
Tyler J. Patrick  
Julie E. Pelletier  
Kauinohea C. Prusinski  
Giezel M. Rivera  
Roxsann L. Roberts  
Julia K. Rocca

Tiara Rolle  
Erik L. Russell  
Raul T. Sabat  
Julie A. Sabin  
Tiffany Sandoval De Lopez  
Michael D. Sapozink  
Jenny M. Satterberg  
Krystal M. Scherrer  
Samuel A. Scutchfield  
Julie C. Shafer  
Kimberly M. Shiraishi  
Sonja M. Spratte  
Karen R. Stone  
Jami M. Strapple  
Jason A. Tan  
Ken Tsubata  
Donna K. Vallejo  
Jay N. Van Fleet  
Joseph C. Varcadipane  
Erika M. Vargas  
Maria R. Ver  
Chelsea M. Watercutter  
Duane C. Whitaker  
Marla R. Wojtanowicz  
Marguerite P. Wolter  
Bryan H. Wong  
Natalie M. Yamada  
Tiffany Anne K. Yamamoto  
Lea U. Young

For contact information and plans accepted, go to [hmsa.com](http://hmsa.com) and click Find a Doctor.

*These providers joined HMSA's network September 19 – December 26, 2014.*





# make BLUE the new YOU

LOMA LINDA  
CALIFORNIA

SARDINIA  
ITALY

IKARIA  
GREECE

NICOYA  
COSTA RICA

Try these Blue Zones recipes for good taste and good health.

**W**ould you eat differently if your food choices could help you live longer and healthier?

Many people in different parts of the world live into their 90s and even past 100. On the Greek island of Ikaria, one in three people lives past 90. And they're not only living longer, they're also living better. The rates of many chronic health conditions, such as dementia, cancer, and heart disease, are lower than in the U.S.

There are similar stories about people living longer than average in other Blue Zones® areas around the world, including Okinawa, Japan; Sardinia, Italy; and Loma Linda, Calif.

What's their secret? These people live simply. They're not stressed and constantly checking their smart-phones. They walk instead of relying on cars. And they grow and cook their own food instead of getting take-out from convenience stores or fast-food

restaurants. Instead of eating in front of the TV or computer screen, they share meals with family and friends. Time is spent laughing in the company of others, which can lower blood pressure, improve your mood, and promote a happier outlook on life.

We can learn a lot from the lifestyles of people living in these original Blue Zones without traveling to far-away places. As part of Blue Zones Project by Healthways, HMSA is reaching out to local community, government, and business leaders to see if they'd like to adopt Blue Zones concepts to bring healthier changes to their areas.

Although community-wide change takes time, there are things you can do now. Start with these recipes adapted from the original Blue Zones. They're simple, delicious, and perfect for sharing with family and friends. 

By **Craig DeSilva**  
Photography by **Lew Harrington**  
Food styling by **Karen Jones**



**Clockwise from top:** Miso-Glazed Tofu,  
Papaya with Raspberry Yogurt Sauce,  
Cilantro-Walnut Pesto, Black Bean Soup



## Miso-Glazed Tofu

*Serve on a bed of sautéed kale or spinach and accompany with brown rice.*

|                              |                                      |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1/3 cup miso                 | 3 Tbsp. sesame oil                   |
| 3 Tbsp. rice vinegar         | 14-oz. block firm or extra-firm tofu |
| 3 Tbsp. unsweetened soy milk | Cooking spray                        |
| 1 tsp. minced ginger         | 1 Tbsp. sesame seeds                 |
| 2 garlic cloves, minced      | Chopped green onion                  |

Place miso, vinegar, soy milk, ginger, and garlic in food processor. Pulse and add oil slowly until mixture is smooth. Pour into a dish. Slice tofu lengthwise and dip into miso mixture until coated, reserving some of the mixture. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil and spray with cooking spray. Lay tofu on baking sheet and broil 10 minutes. Turn slices and coat with remaining miso mixture. Broil about 5 minutes. To serve, garnish with sesame seeds and chopped green onion. Makes 4 servings.

**Per serving:** Calories 210, protein 11 g, carbohydrates 9 g, total fat 16 g, saturated fat 3 g, sodium 860 mg, fiber 2 g, total sugar 2 g

## Papaya with Raspberry Yogurt Sauce

*Perfect for breakfast or dessert.*

1 ripe papaya  
1 cup frozen unsweetened raspberries  
1/2 cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt  
1 Tbsp. honey  
Fresh raspberries and mint

Slice papaya in quarters lengthwise and remove seeds. In a bowl, mash raspberries with a fork and stir in yogurt and honey. Place papaya quarters on a dish and spoon yogurt sauce on top. Garnish with whole raspberries and fresh mint. Makes 4 servings.

**Per serving:** Calories 110, protein 5 g, carbohydrates 23 g, total fat 1 g, cholesterol 1 mg, sodium 10 mg, fiber 4 g, total sugar 19 g

## Cilantro-Walnut Pesto

*Cilantro takes center stage in this pesto.*

|                                  |                         |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2 cups cilantro leaves           | 1/2 cup walnuts         |
| 1 cup baby spinach               | 1 garlic clove, chopped |
| 3 Tbsp. shredded Parmesan cheese | 2-3 Tbsp. olive oil     |

Place all ingredients in a food processor and pulse until smooth, using enough olive oil to achieve the desired consistency. Spread on toasted whole-wheat bread. Makes about 1 cup.

**Per serving** (2 tablespoons): Calories 110, protein 2 g, carbohydrates 1 g, total fat 10 g, saturated fat 2 g, cholesterol 2 mg, sodium 30 mg, fiber 1 g

## Black Bean Soup

*A hearty meal perfect for a chilly night.*

|                                      |                         |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 lb. dried black beans              | 8 garlic cloves, minced |
| 3 quarts water                       | 1 Tbsp. ground cumin    |
| 2 bay leaves                         | 2 Tbsp. dried oregano   |
| 2 Tbsp. olive oil                    | 2 tsp. sugar            |
| 2 red bell peppers, seeded and diced | 2 tsp. salt             |
| 2 shallots, minced                   | Chopped green onion     |
| 1 onion, chopped                     | 8 oz. nonfat sour cream |

Wash and pick over beans. Place in a pot and cover with water. Add bay leaves and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 2 1/2 to 3 hours, stirring occasionally. Add more water, if necessary, to keep beans covered. Meanwhile, heat oil in a skillet. Sauté bell peppers, shallots, and onion over medium heat until onion is translucent, about 10 minutes. Add garlic, cumin, and oregano and sauté 2 minutes. Remove from heat. When beans are almost tender, add vegetable mixture, sugar, and salt and cook until tender, about 20 to 30 minutes. Garnish with green onion and a dollop of sour cream. Makes 12 servings.

**Per serving** (about 1 cup): Calories 170, protein 9 g, carbohydrates 29 g, total fat 3 g, sodium 400 mg, fiber 7 g, total sugar 3 g





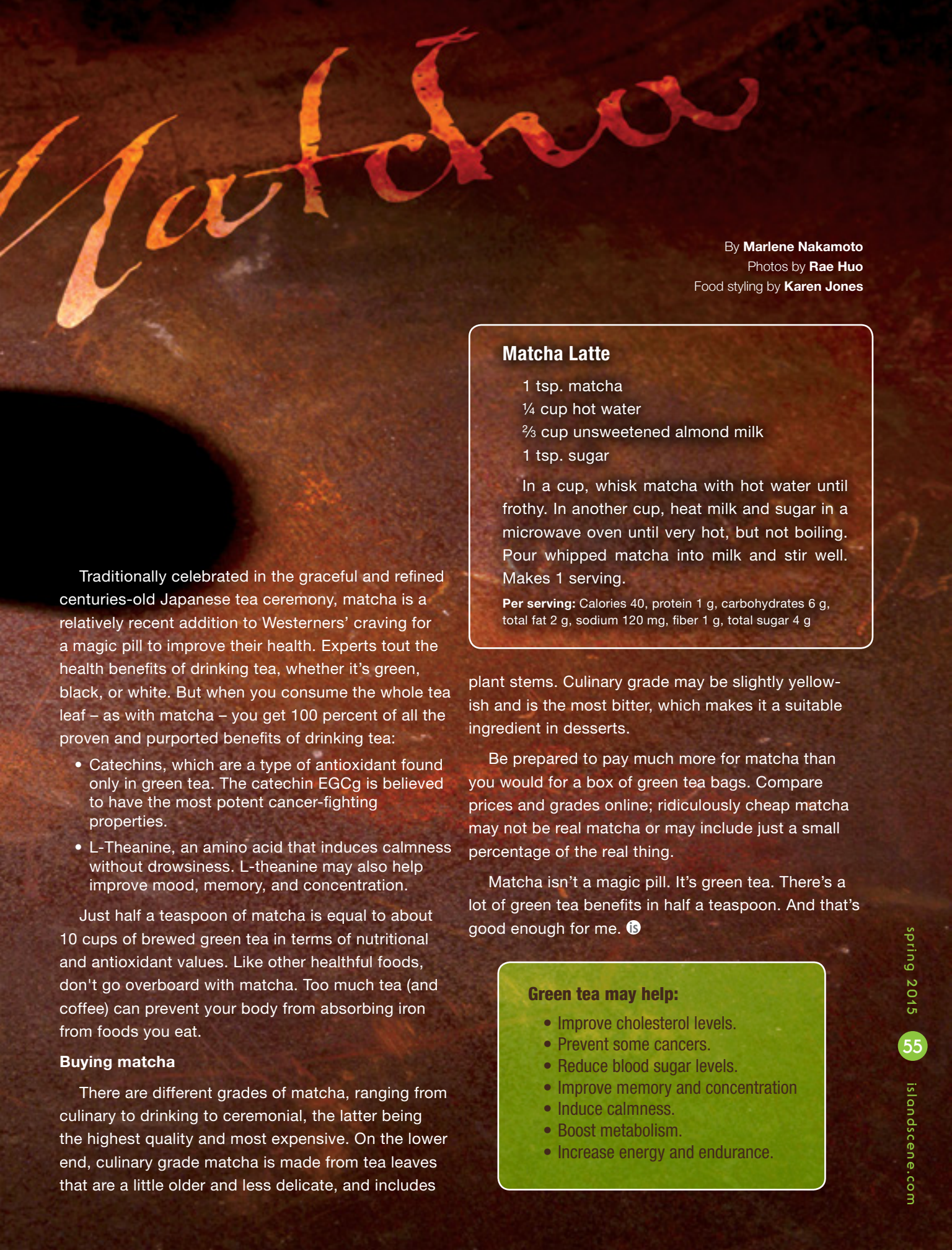
**Joy and delight  
in a cup of green.**

*This* morning, I had a matcha latte. I made it with a little hot water, a teaspoon of matcha, and unsweetened almond milk. After one sip, I stirred in a tiny bit of sugar to temper the slight bitterness. It was perfect.

I lingered over my special drink, taking the time to note its slight frothiness and nearly alarming bright green color. It was as if mindlessly gulping a beverage steeped (sorry) in history and painstaking ritual would show that I'm some sort of uncivilized cur. I was "in the moment" and felt uncommonly cultured and sophisticated. But that's just me.

Matcha is a Japanese word that translates to "fine powdered tea." While any green tea may be ground into a powder, not all green tea is matcha. Matcha is made from the *Camellia sinensis* plant, which can be made into different teas, and the plant must be specially cultivated and processed to become matcha. Matcha is grown in the shade, which stimulates levels of chlorophyll. Only the youngest, tender leaves are hand-picked, steamed, air-dried, sorted, and then stone-ground into a fine powder.





By **Marlene Nakamoto**

Photos by **Rae Huo**

Food styling by **Karen Jones**

Traditionally celebrated in the graceful and refined centuries-old Japanese tea ceremony, matcha is a relatively recent addition to Westerners' craving for a magic pill to improve their health. Experts tout the health benefits of drinking tea, whether it's green, black, or white. But when you consume the whole tea leaf – as with matcha – you get 100 percent of all the proven and purported benefits of drinking tea:

- Catechins, which are a type of antioxidant found only in green tea. The catechin EGCG is believed to have the most potent cancer-fighting properties.
- L-Theanine, an amino acid that induces calmness without drowsiness. L-theanine may also help improve mood, memory, and concentration.


Just half a teaspoon of matcha is equal to about 10 cups of brewed green tea in terms of nutritional and antioxidant values. Like other healthful foods, don't go overboard with matcha. Too much tea (and coffee) can prevent your body from absorbing iron from foods you eat.

### Buying matcha

There are different grades of matcha, ranging from culinary to drinking to ceremonial, the latter being the highest quality and most expensive. On the lower end, culinary grade matcha is made from tea leaves that are a little older and less delicate, and includes

plant stems. Culinary grade may be slightly yellowish and is the most bitter, which makes it a suitable ingredient in desserts.

Be prepared to pay much more for matcha than you would for a box of green tea bags. Compare prices and grades online; ridiculously cheap matcha may not be real matcha or may include just a small percentage of the real thing.

Matcha isn't a magic pill. It's green tea. There's a lot of green tea benefits in half a teaspoon. And that's good enough for me. 

### Matcha Latte

- 1 tsp. matcha
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup hot water
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1 tsp. sugar

In a cup, whisk matcha with hot water until frothy. In another cup, heat milk and sugar in a microwave oven until very hot, but not boiling. Pour whipped matcha into milk and stir well. Makes 1 serving.

**Per serving:** Calories 40, protein 1 g, carbohydrates 6 g, total fat 2 g, sodium 120 mg, fiber 1 g, total sugar 4 g

### Green tea may help:

- Improve cholesterol levels.
- Prevent some cancers.
- Reduce blood sugar levels.
- Improve memory and concentration
- Induce calmness.
- Boost metabolism.
- Increase energy and endurance.





## Matcha and Chocolate Swirl Cupcakes

½ cup semisweet chocolate chips  
2 tsp. unsweetened cocoa powder  
2 tsp. lowfat (1%) milk  
½ cup unsalted butter, melted  
and cooled  
3 eggs  
¾ cup sugar  
¾ cup all-purpose flour plus  
more for muffin tins  
1 tsp. baking powder  
½ tsp. salt  
1 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. matcha  
Cooking spray

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place chocolate chips in a small bowl and microwave at 50 percent power at 20-second intervals, stirring until melted. Add cocoa powder and milk and set aside to cool. In another bowl, combine melted butter, eggs, and sugar. Stir in flour, baking powder, and salt, mixing well. Spoon half of the batter into another bowl and stir in matcha. Add melted chocolate mixture to the remaining batter and mix well. Prepare a muffin tin with cooking spray and flour or with eight foil cupcake liners. Spoon chocolate batter into each tin, then spoon matcha batter on top. Swirl mixture with a butter knife or small spoon to create a marble effect. Bake 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center of a cupcake comes out clean. Makes 8 servings.

**Per serving:** Calories 300, protein 4 g, carbohydrates 35 g, total fat 17 g, saturated fat 10 g, cholesterol 100 mg, sodium 220 mg, fiber 1 g, total sugar 25 g





## Matcha Yogurt

- ¾ cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1 tsp. matcha
- 1 tsp. honey, maple syrup, or agave
- 2 tsp. chia seeds
- Fresh berries of your choice

In a small bowl, thoroughly mix yogurt, matcha, sweetener, and chia seeds. Garnish with berries. Makes 1 serving.

**Per serving** (excluding berries): Calories 140, protein 18 g, carbohydrates 13 g, total fat 2 g, cholesterol 10 mg, sodium 60 mg, fiber 1 g, total sugar 11 g

## Matcha Nantu

- Okinawan mochi get a dose of green.

- 3 cups sugar
- 3 cups water, divided
- 4 tsp. matcha
- 1 lb. mochiko (sweet rice flour)
- Kinako (roasted soybean powder)

To prepare syrup, place sugar and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup water in medium saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and boil gently 15 minutes. Allow to cool at least 15 minutes, then stir in matcha. Set aside. In a medium bowl, combine mochiko with remaining  $2\frac{1}{4}$  cups water. Mix well. Place mixture in a clean, damp dishcloth and steam 1 hour over boiling water, making sure that the water doesn't touch the dishcloth. Take mochi out and transfer into a mixing bowl. Add syrup, mixing quickly and thoroughly. Pour into a 13-by-9-inch baking pan prepared with cooking spray. Cover with plastic wrap and let stand 24 hours. Cut into 2-by-1-inch pieces with a plastic knife and dredge in kinako. Makes about 48 pieces.

**Per piece:** Calories 80, protein 1 g, carbohydrates 20 g, sodium 2 mg, total sugar 13 g

## Matcha Energy Balls

- ½ cup pitted Medjool dates
- ½ cup raw almonds
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 Tbsp. matcha plus more for dusting
- 1 Tbsp. unsweetened almond milk

In a food processor, pulse dates and almonds until mixture forms a ball. Break up the ball and add remaining ingredients. Pulse mixture until combined and forms into a ball again. Roll into balls about an inch in diameter and dust with matcha. Makes about 10.

**Per serving:** Calories 100, protein 2 g, carbohydrates 17 g, total fat 4 g, fiber 3 g, total sugar 13 g

## EVENTS FOR APRIL THROUGH JUNE

### WELL-BEING WORKSHOPS

All workshops listed are open to HMSA members at no cost. Visit [hmsa.com](http://hmsa.com) for the current workshop schedule or call 1 (855) 329-5461 toll-free to register. Please register three days before the workshop.

#### Brain Fitness

Tune up your brain for good physical health in this interactive workshop.

- 4/17, 4:30–5:30 p.m.  
HMSA Center @ Honolulu.
- 5/9, 9:30–10:30 a.m.  
Kaimuki Plaza, Kaimana Room.
- 6/18, 10–11 a.m.  
HMSA Center @ Pearl City.
- 6/20, 9:30–10:30 a.m.  
Kaimuki Plaza, Kaimana Room.

#### Goodbye Diet! Hello Health! 2!

Reach your weight-loss goals with good nutrition, regular exercise, and other healthy behaviors.

- 5/1, 4:30–5:30 p.m.  
HMSA Center @ Honolulu.

#### Meatless Alternatives

Explore common elements of various foods and learn how to get the necessary nutrients for a healthy lifestyle without eating meat.

- 4/14, 10–11 a.m.  
HMSA Center @ Hilo.
- 5/5, 10–11 a.m.  
HMSA Kailua-Kona Office.
- 6/23, 10–11 a.m.  
HMSA Maui Office.

#### Meditation

Learn simple meditation techniques to boost your emotional health and overall well-being.

- 4/11, 9:30–10:30 a.m.  
Kaimuki Plaza, Kaimana Room.

#### Senior Fitness

Maintain and improve your strength and mobility.

- 4/25, 9:30–10:30 a.m.  
Kaimuki Plaza, Kaimana Room.
- 4/30, 10–11 a.m.  
HMSA Center @ Pearl City.
- 6/4, 9:30–10:30 a.m.  
Kaimuki Plaza, Kaimana Room.

#### Stress Bucket

Learn practical ways to lower your stress to help prevent high blood pressure, anxiety, and other health problems.

- 4/28, 1–2 p.m.  
HMSA Kailua-Kona Office.
- 5/9, 10–11 a.m.  
HMSA Center @ Hilo.
- 5/16, 9:30–10:30 a.m.  
Kaimuki Plaza, Kaimana Room.
- 5/21, 10–11 a.m.  
HMSA Center @ Pearl City.
- 6/13, 10–11 a.m.  
Kauai Healthways Office, Līhu'e.
- 6/27, 9:30–10:30 a.m.  
HMSA Center @ Honolulu.

#### Successful Aging Begins with You

Discover the secret to extended longevity, fully engaged living, and well-being from the world's centenarian populations.

- 5/20, 12:30–1:30 p.m.  
Kalihi YMCA.

#### Sweet Dreams:

##### The Benefits of Sleep

Learn how much sleep you need and how to get more (and better) sleep.

- 4/15, 12:30–1:30 p.m.  
Kalihi YMCA.
- 4/22, 9–10 a.m.  
Nu'uanu YMCA.

### COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Activities are free to the public, unless otherwise noted, and are subject to change. Please call the numbers listed for more information.

#### HAWAII ISLAND

##### Every Third Friday Snorkel Day for People with Disabilities

Join us for a day at the beach. No experience necessary. Instruction, equipment, and lunch provided. 10 a.m.–2 p.m.,

Kahalu'u Beach Park, five miles south of downtown Kona. Register at [deepandbeyond.org](http://deepandbeyond.org) or call 326-4400, ext. 4017. Volunteers needed.

#### Every Sunday

##### Walk with a Doc on Hawaii Island

Walk includes a brief warm-up/stretch and an informative talk from a community doctor or medical student. First-time walkers get a free T-shirt and pedometer. Meets rain or shine. 8 a.m., Lili'uokalani Gardens, Hilo. For more information, see [wwadbigisland.org](http://wwadbigisland.org).

#### MAUI

##### 4/8, 5/13, & 6/10

##### Diabetes Support Group

Open to people with diabetes and their friends and family. 6:30–7:30 p.m., Marion Hanlon Conference Room, Maui Memorial Medical Center, Wailuku. Free valet parking. Call 422-5773 for information.

#### O'AHU

##### 4/9

##### Hawai'i Sjögren's and Lupus Lecture Series

Join guest speaker Dr. Deryll Ambrocio (rheumatology) for an informative presentation and discussion. 5:30–7:30 p.m., Queen's Conference Center, The Queen's Medical Center, Honolulu. To sign up, email [melaca@alwaysbehealthynhappy.org](mailto:melaca@alwaysbehealthynhappy.org). See [alwaysbehealthyandhappy.org](http://alwaysbehealthyandhappy.org) for more information.

##### 4/10, 5/8, & 6/12

##### COPD Support Group

Find support and information on medication, breathing techniques, exercise, and more. 10 a.m.–noon, Kaiser Permanente, Room 2E, Honolulu. To register, call Valerie Chang at 699-9839, email [Valerie@hawaiiicpd.org](mailto:Valerie@hawaiiicpd.org), or visit [hawaiiicpd.org](http://hawaiiicpd.org).

##### 4/14, 5/21, & 6/9

##### COPD Support Group

Find support and information on medication, breathing techniques, exercise, and more. 10 a.m.–noon, Pali Momi Women's Center at Pearlridge, ground floor conference room, 'Aiea. To register, call Valerie Chang at 699-9839, email [Valerie@hawaiiicpd.org](mailto:Valerie@hawaiiicpd.org), or visit [hawaiiicpd.org](http://hawaiiicpd.org).



4/23, 5/28, 6/25

### Eat Well for Life Cooking Classes

6–7:15 p.m. Wellness & Lifestyle Medicine Auditorium, Castle Medical Center, Kailua. \$10 per person. To register, visit [castlemed.org](http://castlemed.org) or call 263-5050.

- 4/23: “Trending Now: The Hot Foods of the Plant World” with Eileen Towata, Ph.D.
- 5/28: “Veganize Your Favorite Foods” with Joanne Holmberg.
- 6/26: “Cauliflower & Cousins” with Eileen Towata, Ph.D.

4/29

### HMSA's Annual Membership Meeting

Annual meeting to present HMSA's financial and annual report and elect directors and an auditor. Proof of HMSA membership required. Business attire. Noon. Ala Moana Hotel, Hibiscus Ballroom, 410 Atkinson Drive, Honolulu. 948-5263 to register.

Every Friday

### Farmers Market at HMSA

Enjoy fresh, island-grown produce and ready-to-eat local food. 11 a.m.–2 p.m., HMSA Center @ Honolulu. For information on vendors, call HMSA at 948-6521.

### Kids and Teens Lupus Group

Meet your peers and learn more about lupus at this fun, interactive meeting. Date, location, and time to be determined. For information, email [melaca@alwaysbhealthyhappy.org](mailto:melaca@alwaysbhealthyhappy.org).

### Queen's Women's Health Center Classroom

The Queen's Medical Center, Honolulu.

- **Adult Fitness:** Learn Pilates, Bollywood dance, kickboxing, Jazzercise, and more. Six classes for \$66. Call 691-7117 for details and to register.

- **Genetics Class:** Learn about prenatal genetic screening and tests to check the health of your baby. Call 691-7633 for times and information. Free.
- **Lymphedema/Breast Cancer Clinic:** Learn exercises to prevent lymphedema (swelling of the arms). First and third Thursdays, 1:30 p.m. Free.
- **Mammogram and Cervical Cancer Screening:** Every other Friday, 8 a.m.–noon. Free for women ages 50–64 who are uninsured, underinsured, or low income. Call 691-7726 for times and eligibility information.

To submit information for future calendar listings, please email [Lisa\\_Baxa@hmsa.com](mailto:Lisa_Baxa@hmsa.com). Include event name, date, location, cost, and a brief description. Only free or low-cost health and family events will be considered.

A Public Service Announcement

# WALK to CURE ARTHRITIS®

Join us **Sunday, May 3, 2015** at the  
**Hawaii Walk to Cure Arthritis | Honolulu Zoo**

**SIGN UP TODAY!**

[www.HIArthritisWalk.org](http://www.HIArthritisWalk.org)

Call 808-596-2900 for more information.



Walk to Cure Arthritis® National Sponsors

Nationally Presented by



# in love with hawai'i

## FIRST WONDERS OF LIFE IN HAWAI'I

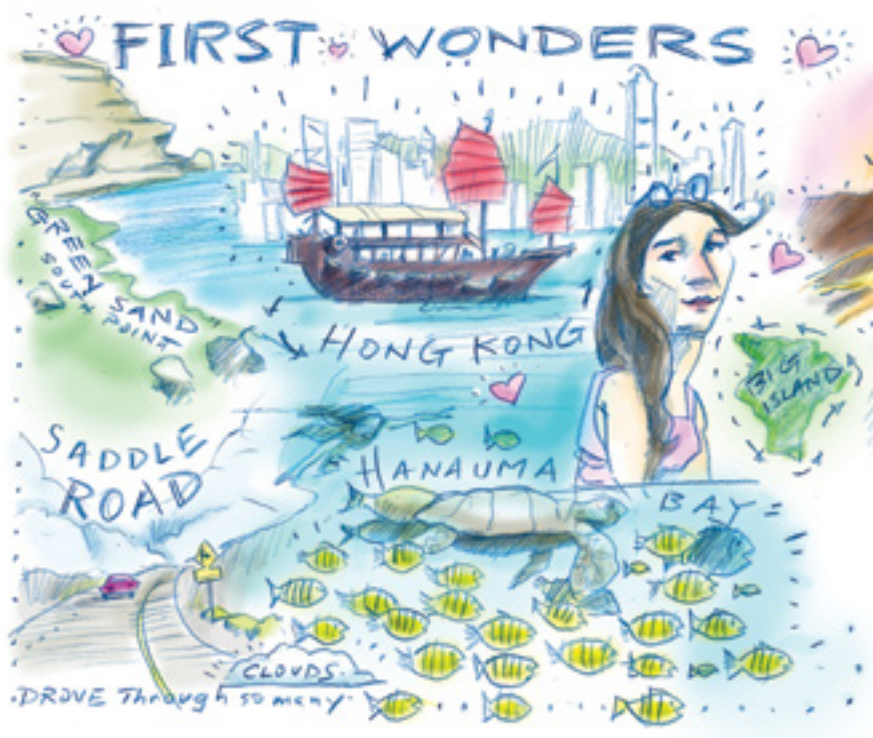
Born and raised in Hong Kong, I moved to the Big Isle by myself when I was 19 years old to attend college. I've now lived here about 25 years and I'm still amazed by all the wonders in our beautiful state.

These timeless wonders are free of charge and they look as beautiful as they did when I first arrived. Here are some "the first time I ...":

- Walked on a green sand beach that sparkled like crystals and jade (South Point).
- Drove through so many clouds that I knew I was one with heaven (Saddle Road).
- Could see, hear, and feel land-in-the-making when Pele ordered Kīlauea to erupt.
- Saw a double rainbow (Mānoa Valley).
- Saw a sunset so beautiful that I couldn't stop crying (Waikīki).
- Saw so many fish and corals in clear blue water that I thought I was at the aquarium in San Diego (Hanauma Bay).

Living here is like having butterflies in your stomach on a first date, like first kisses in high school, and like falling in love over and over again, every day.

Czarina Lam  
Honolulu, O'ahu



## KAMA'ĀINA ALWAYS

My father left Korea and arrived in Honolulu in the early 1900s. He married my mother, who was a picture bride. In 1933, my parents and seven children moved to Lāna'i, where the Dole Pineapple Company provided free housing and health care. The Caucasians were managers, and the Filipinos, Japanese, and Koreans were workers. A few Hawaiians were ranchers. We learned about, utilized, and appreciated each other's food and culture.

My memories are happy and enriching ones. By radio, Mrs. Kahananui gave us music lessons. (Later, she was my music professor at UH.) The cafeteria served nutritious food, even curry stew and Hungarian goulash. To help with the war effort, we knitted, rolled bandages, and maintained victory gardens. In the spirit of patriotism, older students wore uniforms – white tops and blue bottoms – and learned to march like soldiers.

In 1942, we left Lāna'i to join our separated family in Honolulu. Two brothers were soldiers and two other brothers were civilian workers at Pearl Harbor and Hickam Airforce Base. I'll always be a heartfelt kama'āina.

Kyung-Ok Lee Kwak  
Los Angeles, California





## RICHES OF ALOHA

Only in Hawai'i can a garage sale be a combination of treasure hunting, finding something you'd swear was yours 35 years ago, and bumping into old friends from another planet. It's also a challenge to meet the seller and try to sweet-talk them into lowering the price of a one-of-a-kind item.

In the 45 years that I've lived between the islands of Kaua'i and the Big Island, I've enjoyed turning garage sales into fundraisers. My friends hire me to do their personal garage sales. After sorting, pricing, and setting it all up, they walk around and take a handful of stuff back, claiming they can't bear to let it go.

At one sale, a man asked me how much "the truck" was selling for, pointing to an old red truck by the garage. I asked my friend about it and she laughed and said, "Nobody will buy that!" That was my cue.

An hour later, the gentleman drove it off the property, leaving \$500 in my hand. Only in Hawai'i can you enjoy the riches of aloha wrapped in a smile.

Lynise Tarring  
Hilo, Hawai'i Island

## LIVING LOCAL

I've been living on O'ahu for 12 years. I'm often told that I look and seem local, even though I'm a California transplant. It's taken some time for me to adjust to island life, but living local has led me to appreciate the hidden charms of Hawai'i and the nostalgia of living on a balmy island where the more things change, the more they don't.

Perhaps that's the lure of the islands. It's a chance to come and start anew, rejuvenate without distractions. Or maybe it's my daily drive past the Ko'olaus and over the Pali, or the curve of winding roads where sidewalks don't exist. Or because I marvel at houses on stilts or find comfort in seeing generations of close-knit families stick together through the years.

Perhaps it's the yearly mochi-pound-ing rituals for good luck or the surprise showers on a sunny day. Or the trips to the shave ice shop with my kids, the crunch of hurricane popcorn, or the bareness of wearing slippers and listening to the whisper of palm and lychee trees at the cool dusk of evening.

In 2009, when we visited Rev. Higa at Liliha Hongwanji for our annual blessing with the children, he told me, "You belong in Hawai'i. This is where the mana is."

Little by little, I'm beginning to understand and feel the mana when I gaze out at the deep blue sea or watch my kids splash in puddles after a rain, dip their toes in the waters of Ka'a'awa Beach, or chase sand crabs on the sands of Kualoa Beach Park. This is our Hawaiian mana.

Nancy J. Usui  
Kahalu'u, O'ahu

# KEEP THOSE STORIES COMING

*Island Scene* welcomes your stories about growing up or living in Hawai'i. Tell us about events, people, places, songs, traditions, or anything else that brings back memories of Hawai'i's past.

Stories should be no longer than 250 words. All stories must include the writer's legal name, address, and phone number for verification. Double-spaced, typewritten stories are preferred.

Please send your stories to Marlene Nakamoto at:

*Island Scene*  
I Remember When  
P.O. Box 3850  
Honolulu, HI 96812-3850

Email:  
marlene\_nakamoto@hmsa.com  
Fax: 948-6860 on O'ahu

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# reader service page

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The Reader Service page will be discontinued after this issue. We're always happy to help you by phone or email — please see our contact information on page 2.

## mahalo



# surfing at (almost) 40

A lifetime of learning helps on the water.

By Alia Pan

Becoming a surfer has been a decades-long process for me. While I may have lost the knees and daring of my youth, I have gained the community, strength, and judgment I need to get in the water.

The image of a lone surfer on a wave implies that surfing is a solo sport. But I never would have learned to surf without support from my friends and family.

I spent my 20s and 30s learning how to be a friend and how to ask for help. The relationships I cultivated outside of the water made it possible for me to get into the surf. I bought my board from my friend Martha Cheng, a fearless surfer. My patient, big-hearted big brother, Weston Yap, spent his weekends patching the board's dings. He also gave me my first leash, wax, and cover. My surf sister, Michi Atkinson, texts every Thursday night to remind me of our standing Friday morning surf date. And my supportive husband willingly drives the kids to school.

When I load my board onto the car in the early morning darkness, I still fear being overwhelmed by endless sets of waves. However, years spent practicing yoga, lifting weights, and running help silence these anxieties. At 38, I now have the strength to paddle past the break. When I do get caught on the inside, I use muscles built with kettle bell swings to cut through the swells and foam. Hours of yoga spent in tree pose help me find my stomach and back muscles as I pop up, find my feet, and slide down the face of a wave. And thanks to running, I have the endurance to stay out and catch just one more.

Learning to surf as an adult means wiping out often, and through surfing I'm learning to make friends with failure. Falling off my board, paddling madly only to miss a wave, or triumphantly standing up to find my bathing suit bottom around my knees become exercises in critical analysis. Each disaster



prompts me to ask, were my feet correctly positioned? Was I in the wrong place to catch the wave? Did I buy this bikini because it was cute rather than functional? I'm trying to think more, rather than chase every wave.

"The key to surfing," explains pioneer big wave surfer Peter Cole, "is wave judgment." Cole won the 1958 Makaha International Surf Contest and led big wave surfing in the '50s and '60s. He stopped surfing Sunset Beach, his beloved break, four years ago at age 76.

Wave judgment comes from spending time in the water and studying the surf. "Watch the waves," says Cole. "Look for the peak, its highest point. That's where you want to be."

When I'm on a wave and feel it move beneath my feet, it's awesome. And when I miss it, I'm still grateful to be on the water off Diamond Head, reading swells, and watching the sun rise as it illuminates the flat expanse of Moloka'i and the slopes of Haleakalā. **15**





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## Laulaha ka 'ai a ke 'ahi.

The 'ahi fish takes the hook in swarms. Said when the sea is full of canoes fishing for 'ahi. Also said of a successful business – customers come in swarms.

*From 'Ōlelo No'eau, Hawaiian Proverbs & Poetical Sayings,  
by Mary Kawena Pukui, Bishop Museum Press*

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