

March 2009

# Delta Health Watch



Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated  
Philadelphia Alumnae Chapter  
**Physical and Mental Health Committee**

## What have you done for YOU lately?!

*"You have to secure your own oxygen mask before assisting others."*  
Renee Woodburn, MD/MPH Candidate

### Inside this issue:

Self-Care Awareness 1  
Healthy Recipe and  
Exercise Tip 2

### Previous topics:

January: Reflect,  
Renew, Revitalize,  
Restore & Respond

February: Having a  
Healthy Heart

### Upcoming topics:

April: Nutrition

How many of you would say that you love yourselves? Like, really love yourselves? Did you know that to love yourself also means to take care of yourself? As women, black women specifically, we are infamous and take pride in being known as hardworking, long-suffering, efficient, productive, maternal, accomplished, diligent, industrious, tireless, persevering, busy, etc. As great as all these adjectives are, how much time are we taking for ourselves? There are only 24 hours in each day and almost all of them are dedicated to something or someone else before you wake up in the morning- your kids, your partner, your boss, your job, your schoolwork- the list goes on. It is no wonder that a recent study reported that women sacrifice sleep to accomplish all of their "to do's" and "to care for's", to the detriment of their long-term physical and mental health. Studies show that self-care decreases stress and can decrease one's risk of disease. So this month, and from here on we want you to take some time for yourself.

#### Self Care is NOT:

The same as comfort, which may include comfort foods, TV, pedicures, or shopping sprees. Although these are all great, an excess of these can actually elevate one's stress level.

#### Self Care IS:

-**Eating right**, getting proper nutrition, and drinking enough

water. Just a 2% dip in body hydration can cause fatigue, headaches, and depression, as well as a 20% loss in energy!

-**Getting enough sleep.** Lack of sleep can negatively impact your ability to handle stress, be productive, and function properly. Enjoying some form of physical activity every day. A morning (or evening) walk is all it takes. It also helps your body release endorphins, which increase your feelings of overall wellbeing.

-**Pamper yourself.** Taking care of your body on the outside—with a spa treatment, for example, can work wonders for your internal state. Don't overlook the importance of pampering yourself on a regular basis, to feel great about yourself and feel ready to take on the world.

-**Find Hobbies.** Having some "down time" is important, and hobbies can provide a nice distraction from stress and help you stay 'in the moment', which is also a great way to relieve tension. Keep your mind sharp. If you maintain the attitude that stress is a challenge—rather than a threat, you are better able to handle it. And by keeping your mind sharp, you are more equipped to solve the problems and take on the "challenges" that life presents.

-**Knowing one's limits;** it is important to know how much one is able to effectively do in a day or a week without becoming over exhausted, over emotional, or overwhelmed.

-**Being self aware** of internal pain and using it as an impetus for

growth. Rather than attempting to ignore it or anesthetizing it with food, TV, more work etc. Addressing the pain is very self-nurturing. Keeping your emotions bottled up usually leads to an emotional explosion later on. It's generally healthier to listen to your feelings, process them and try to understand them.

-**Get friends.** Not allowing oneself to become cut off from others, but being in consistent healthy relationships with like-minded women (like your sorors!). Social support can keep you healthier and happier, creating a buffer against stress. Friends can pick you up when you're sad; provide insights when you're confused, and help you have fun when you need to blow off steam. However, spending enough alone time to recuperate and recollect one's thoughts is also very important.

-**Maintain a spiritual practice.** Research shows that a lifestyle including religion or spirituality is generally a healthier lifestyle. Many people, especially seniors, use prayer as a major stress reliever and strategy for emotional health. You can use prayer to enhance your spiritual side, or use meditation if you don't feel comfortable with prayer. Spiritual practice is deeply personal, and whatever your practice, it should nurture your soul.

**Go forth and invest in yourself!**

(Adapted from  
<http://www.feminist.com>,  
<http://womenshealth.suite101.com>,  
[www.about.com](http://www.about.com))

## **Take Care of Yourself with a Healthy Dessert!**

### **Ingredients:**

3 Valencia oranges

3 tangerines

2 pomelos, or ruby red grapefruits

1/4 cup sugar

Pinch gray salt

1 cup Muscat



### **Directions:**

Cut ends from all of the fruit, and then cut off the skin and bitter white pith with a paring knife. Cut the citrus segments out from the membrane and carefully put the segments in a shallow bowl, taking care to keep them whole. Squeeze the leftover peels and membranes over another bowl to get out any remaining juice.

Gently stir sugar and salt into juice, pour over fruit, and divide into soup plates. Cover and refrigerate until chilled, about 1 to 2 hours.

To serve, pour 1/4 cup Muscat over each serving.

*This recipe from foodnetwork.com serves/makes 4*

## **Take Care of Yourself with EXERCISE!!**



Exercise of the week → WALKING.

Directions: Put one foot in front of the other and GO!! Repeat for at least 30 min, 3 times a week. ☺

