

# Choose Health!

Pitt Partners For Health Lifestyle Medicine Newsletter



## Falling Back to the Beginning

by Stefanie Cabaniss

On a clear and warm June evening, I sit on Tony and Delia Parker’s back porch to share time and a glimpse into the day in March when a miracle occurred.

“Runner Down!” When Delia looked... it was Tony. He was face up, but she could see he had busted his head because it was bleeding. Her first thought was that his knee had failed but when she got to his side, his eyes were open, but he was gasping for air. Not able to find a pulse, so she immediately started CPR.

In this two-part series, we will journey with this couple into that day, their lives, and what Tony calls, “Falling Back to the Beginning.”

### PART ONE: The Backstory

Tony’s lifestyle was far from healthy fourteen years ago when he was around 46. He smoked three packs of cigarettes a day and drank more than is considered social. After a couple of ‘aha’ moments, he decided to change his life. He quit smoking and drinking, and he began running. He would run mailbox to mailbox, then light pole to light pole and later, he was able to run seven-tenths of a mile. His first 5K race – he arrived sick to his stomach from nerves and toward the end was passed by a nana while she pushed a baby carriage. His first marathon (26.2 miles) was at Medoc Mountain State Park which took him seven hours. That was only the beginning, as the list of his accomplishments range from marathons, triathlons to trail runs and 50-milers.

In the beginning stages of training for these events, he met a few others who also wanted to change their lives and improve their health. With his passion and his friend’s planning, the Pitt County’s Couch to 5K Program (C25K) was birthed with the goal of helping the community. The C25K is also where Tony and Delia met. Now, let me share how I met this sweet couple and my first experiences with Tony.

I was dating my now husband Jeff and, he was cycling with a group. This group would ride longer, faster rides during the week, but on Saturday mornings it was “all distances & skill levels welcome”. If you wanted to try cycling on the roads but also wanted to feel safe, this group provided camaraderie and safety. I had cycled

Continued Page 2

## This Issue:

Falling Back to the Beginning: Part One .. 1

What Is Lifestyle Medicine? ..... 3

One Step To Success ..... 3

Recipe of the Month: Grilled Peach and Blueberry Pasta Salad.. 4

Recipe of the Month: Mini Peach Tarts ..... 4



Pitt Partners for Health

[www.facebook.com/PittPartnersForHealth](https://www.facebook.com/PittPartnersForHealth)

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

up to 10 miles years back, but had always wanted to do it more seriously, and though very nervous, I went one Saturday morning. Tony told me they would only do about 8-10 miles, which to me was a stretch, but I wanted to try. He was greeting everyone, making jokes, and taking a ton of pictures. By the time it was over, we had ridden close to 15 miles and my legs were shaking. I'm not sure if Tony lied on purpose, but had I known how long we would ride, I wouldn't have gone.

"You need to join us in a couple weeks for a longer ride in the country! "It'll be beautiful, and we'll have a great time!" Tony's description of the ride was enticing, and I wanted to impress Jeff with my willingness. "How long?" I asked. "Oh, we'll probably only do the 30-miler, and you did 15, so you can do 30!" Only 30 miles? Apparently, I did not learn my lesson because I went. It was incredibly hard, and I was mad at myself for agreeing. Delia was encouraging and helped by talking to me during most of the ride. Truth be told, I was mad at Jeff and Tony for making it sound like it was no big deal. But, again, I did it.

---

**At the end of the year,** updates will be provided on all those featured in success stories. Please share your successes and help someone else who may be going through what you have. Your story may be what someone needs to keep pushing.

There are local resources available. All those listed below would love to help you improve your health and change your life:

- Lifestyle Medicine at Vidant Wellness Center (Brenda Leigh 252-343-9221)
- Running programs: Fleet Feet, Greenville (252-353-3338)
- Cardiac Rehab: Vidant Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation (252-847-6603)
- Online support for heart patients wanting to return to their sports: [www.cardiacathletes.com](http://www.cardiacathletes.com)
- Heart Attack vs. Cardiac Arrest & Signs and Symptoms: attachment included with newsletter.

Tony is one of those people who experiences life "out loud" with joy and excitement (and a lot of picture-taking). In his own words, 'I don't do anything small'. He'll talk you into activities you wouldn't normally agree to because he has such contagious enthusiasm. He and Delia are consummate encouragers, natural coaches, if you will. They love people and love helping them achieve seemingly unattainable goals. Apparently, I am one of those people too. The 15-miler was my first bike ride after my best friend had died and I hadn't been on a bike in almost 10 years. The 30-miler was a personal best that I was proud of (afterwards) and the knowledge that I was capable has changed my trajectory in these pursuits. You'll soon find that I'm not the only one.



*Delia and Tony*

**PPH**

Choose Health!

# What is Lifestyle Medicine?

Lifestyle Medicine is an evidence-based approach shown to prevent and treat disease. It treats the underlying cause of disease rather than its symptoms that are too often addressed with ever increasing quantities of pills and procedures. Because it treats cause and not just symptoms, only through Lifestyle Medicine can we alter the course of spiraling health care costs.

**Why is this so important?** Chronic disease is the leading cause of death and disability in the U.S. Rates of chronic disease have never been higher, with cost of chronic conditions eating up 86% of all healthcare dollars spent. Chronic disease is so common that more than half of U.S. adults have at least one condition, accounting for 90% of healthcare spending.

According to the World Health Organization, 80% of heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes and 40% of cancer could be prevented, primarily with improvements to diet and lifestyle.

The U.S. spends \$3.35 trillion on healthcare a year. This is 18% of our total annual economy. This number will continue to rise if chronic diseases are not controlled through healthy lifestyle changes.

If we don't reverse this trend, we are headed for bankruptcy as a country.

**For more details:**

<https://www.slideshare.net/LeslieCasey/lifestyle-medicine-defined>



**1 STEP**  
to *success!*

Changing your lifestyle can be overwhelming in many ways. To make the transition easier – do ONE THING thing this month that will result in long-lasting change. Clear your mind of 'all or nothing' and the extreme changes which only bring about the yo-yo effect.

**Your One Step to Success for July is:**

**Add in one fruit and one vegetable each day for the next 31 days.  
If you are already doing this – just increase the quantity by one each.**

**HEALTH AND NUTRITION NEWS: February 28, 2017**

*Taken from the Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine*

[Fight Early Death with 10 Servings of Fruits and Vegetables Daily \(pcrm.org\)](http://pcrm.org)

Increased fruit and vegetable consumption decreases the risk for cardiovascular disease, cancer, and premature mortality, according to a new review published in the International Journal of Epidemiology. After reviewing 95 studies, researchers concluded that eating just 2.5 servings of fruits and vegetables combined per day could reduce one's risk for heart disease, stroke, all-cause mortality, and cancer by 8, 16, 8, and 10 percent, respectively.

Eating 7.5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day offered the greatest protection against cancer, while eating 10 servings offered the greatest protection against heart disease, stroke, and premature death from any cause. These amounts are well above the common recommendation of 5 servings per day.

Reference: Aune D, Giovannucci E, Boffetta P, et al. Fruit and vegetable intake and the risk of cardiovascular disease, total cancer and all-cause mortality—a systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis of prospective studies. *Int J Epidemiol*. Published online February 22, 2017.

**PPH**



Choose Health!

## Recipe of the Month:

### *Grilled Peach and Blueberry Pasta Salad*

Grilled summer peaches and blueberries in a pasta salad? Yes, please! The caramelized sweetness of the peaches contrasts nicely with the peppery bite of arugula. To prevent the peaches from sticking to the grill rack, be sure to preheat the grill for at least 20 minutes.

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups dried multigrain penne pasta
- 4 firm, ripe peaches, halved and pitted
- 3 lemons
- 4 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 teaspoons pure maple syrup



#### DIRECTIONS:

- Cook pasta according to package directions; drain. Rinse with cold water; drain again. Chill until needed.
- Place four peach halves, cut sides down, on grill rack. Grill, covered, over medium-high 8 minutes or until grill marks appear; cool. Cut remaining four peach halves into ½-inch pieces.
- For dressing, remove 1 tsp. zest and squeeze ½ cup juice from lemons. In a large bowl whisk together lemon zest and juice, mustard, and garlic. Remove half of the dressing; set aside. Add pasta, chopped peaches, arugula, and blueberries to bowl; toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper.
- Top servings with grilled peach halves and drizzle with maple syrup. Pass the reserved dressing.

## Recipe of the Month:

### *Mini Peach Tarts*

Thickened with—surprise—sweet potato and a bit of agar powder, the filling in these summery peach tarts is delightfully light and fresh.

#### INGREDIENTS:

- Cup rolled oats
- Cup sorghum flour
- Cup pecans
- Dash sea salt
- ½ tablespoon lemon juice
- ¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon pure maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon plus 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 small white sweet potato, peeled and cut into large chunks
- ½ teaspoon agar powder or 1 teaspoon agar flakes
- 1 medium peach, peeled and cut into large chunks
- 12 small fresh mint leaves (optional)

#### DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 350°F. For crust, in a food processor combine oats, flour, pecans, and salt. Cover and process until finely ground. Add the ¼ cup maple syrup and 1 tsp. vanilla; cover and pulse until mixture starts to cling together. (Mixture will be slightly crumbly, but you should be able to press it together.)
- Using twelve 2½-inch nonstick mini tart pans, drop 2 tsp. of the oat mixture into each pan. Press onto bottoms and fluted sides of pans. If pastry is too sticky to handle, dust hands lightly with additional flour. Bake 18 to 20 minutes or until light brown; cool tart shells.
- For filling, place sweet potato chunks in a steamer basket in a small saucepan. Add water to saucepan to just below the basket. Bring to boiling. Steam, covered, 15 minutes; cool.
- Meanwhile, in another small saucepan combine ¼ cup water and the agar powder. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer 5 to 7 minutes or until agar is dissolved and mixture is reduced to 2 Tbsp., stirring frequently.
- Wash and dry food processor. In processor combine sweet potato, peach, the remaining 1 Tbsp. maple syrup, the remaining 1 Tbsp. vanilla, and the lemon juice. Cover and process until smooth. Add agar mixture; cover and process until combined. Cool 10 minutes.
- Fill tart shells with filling. Top with additional peaches and, if desired, fresh mint.

