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Age of his arteries, which required immediate surgery. The surgery at St. John Hospital was successful and Dempster remained on his cardiac rehabilitation program at the Livonia Family YMCA. However, Dempster experienced another scare on Dec. 23, 2001. He had an emergency catheterization performed over the holiday season and it was determined he had a 57 percent blockage again. With a change in his medication, he has been doing well.

"We (The Livonia Family YMCA staff) were concerned about him," said Teresa Maguran, a personal trainer at the YMCA. "Tom is such a nice guy and works out very consistently, so we see him all the time."

It is not easy for someone like Dempster. He has a family history of high cholesterol. His liver produces too much of it. With a well balanced diet, doctor-recommended exercise, and the proper prescribed medication, Dempster has done his part to maintain a



Tom Dempster

healthy lifestyle. He eats lean meats like chicken, a few vegetables and five fruits a day. He also exercises on a regular basis.

### The battle begins

Three years ago, never having joined a health and fitness facility before, Dempster decided to battle his family's medical history and join the Livonia Family YMCA. He has since lost 70 pounds, made friends and found a place where he feels comfortable.

"The support I've received from the staff and the friends I've made at the (Livonia Family) Y has really encouraged me

to accomplish what I've done so far," he said. "I was determined to run in this race." And that he did with the support of his family, who was waiting for him at the finish line.

Dempster, a divorced father of two daughters, Autumn, 21, and Kathleen, 15, had been the only family member belonging to the YMCA. Now his daughters also belong.

After his surgery in 2001, Dempster was monitored for three months, exercising once a week.

"I started out with one-pound weights and walking on the treadmill," he said. "I slowly gained strength and endurance so now I can bench press 160 pounds and do three-to-four miles of cardiovascular exercise. I do more cardio and leg light on the weights."

Dempster varies his cardiovascular program with walking, running, the stairclimber and the elliptical machine, and a lot of stretching. With his doctor's

permission, he increased his mileage in order to train for the YMCA St. Pat's Fun Run. It certainly proved successful.

"Tom deserves recognition for his hard work. It is not easy coming back from heart surgery and training to run in a race. He shows that it takes a positive attitude and determination to maintain a healthy lifestyle," Maguran said.

Dempster is extremely appreciative to the people who helped him achieve his accomplishment.

"I took my St. Pat's Fun Run T-shirt that I received from entering the race and gave it to my doctor. She was very excited for me. It means a lot, too, how supportive the staff and my friends have been at the Livonia (Family) YMCA."

Jennifer Kennedy is Membership Marketing Director at the Livonia Y; (734) 261-2161, jkennedy@ymcametrodetroit.org

## MEDICAL DATEBOOK

### APRIL

#### KIDS HEALTH DAY

The Farmington Family YMCA will present "Healthy Kids Day" from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, April 14. Check-in begins 11:30 a.m. Activities include the presidential fitness test, obstacle course, healthy cooking, finger printing and spinal testing. Registration required. Call (248) 653-4020, ext. 122.

#### BREAST CANCER

"Focus on Healing," a therapeutic dance-exercise program for women recovering from breast cancer, will be offered 1-2 p.m. Monday and Thursday, April 15-May 2 at Metro Dance, 451 S. Mill Street, Plymouth. To register, call (734) 728-0807.

#### HEALTH CAREERS

Henry Ford Community College will sponsor a "Health Careers and Nursing Open House" 6-7 p.m. Tuesday, April 16, in the Health Careers Education Center on the main campus, 5101 Ever-

green Road, Dearborn. Participants will tour state-of-the-art labs in 13 different career areas and speak with experts in emergency medical services, fire science, health information technology, nursing, pharmacy technology, physical therapy and more. Call the Health Career Division at (313) 845-9577 or visit [www.hfccc.net/healthopenhouse](http://www.hfccc.net/healthopenhouse).

#### MASSAGE-A-THON

Irene's Myomassage Institute will host its 4th annual Massage-A-Thon April 19-21 at 18911 West 10 Mile Road in Southfield. The 48-hour event will offer free one-hour massages by appointment. All donations received will benefit Lighthouse PATH, a shelter that provides homeless women and children with transitional housing, education and job training. The non-stop event will begin on Friday, April 19, at 7 p.m. and end Sunday, April 21, at 7 p.m.

#### MENOPAUSE

Dr. Jerrold Weinberg from the

Birmingham Menopause Institute will present "Natural Approach to Menopause" 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 17, at MSU Management Education Center, 811 W. Square Lake Road, Troy. Discussion will include hormone replacement therapy, acupuncture, alternative treatments, heart disease, and osteoporosis. Free admission. Call (248) 267-6002.

#### BREAST CANCER

Sharing and Caring of Beaumont Hospital will present "Research in Breast Cancer Vaccine and Immunotherapy" with Dr. Weizen Wei, Karmanos Cancer Center, 7-9 p.m. Thursday, April 18. The presentation will be in the hospital's 1st Floor Conference Room, Beaumont Cancer Center, 3577 W. 13 Mile Road, Royal Oak. Call (248) 551-8585.

#### COLON CANCER

The Oakwood Cancer Center will offer a free educational program on colorectal cancer 1-2 p.m. Friday, April 19, at the

Kalman Auditorium at the hospital's medical center in Dearborn. Doctors representing gastroenterology, pathology and oncology will present the program. Call (800) 643-9355.

#### COSMETIC SURGERY

Dr. Charles Boyd of the U-M Center for Facial Cosmetic Surgery will discuss the latest techniques in facial plastic surgery 7-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 24 at the center, 19900 Haggerty Road, Suite 111, Livonia. Registration limited to 10 people. Call (800) 943-3223 or (734) 432-7651.

#### STUTTERING

Teens Who Stutter Network (TWIST), a support group for teens to share coping skills and practice speaking fluently with their peers, will meet 6-8:30 p.m. Thursday, April 25 at Beaumont Hospital, Administration Building, Private Dining Room, 3601 W. Thirteen Mile Road, Royal Oak. Call (248) 551-2107.

## Tai Chi around town

■ On-going, drop-in classes are offered at the Total Rehabilitation Athletic Conditioning Center (TRACC), 39750 Grand River Ave., Novi, (248) 473-5600. TRACC also has specialized Tai Chi exercises for seniors and those with special needs. Visit [www.botsforddaysystem.org/TRACC](http://www.botsforddaysystem.org/TRACC).

■ Free demonstration will be given 11 a.m. Tuesday, April 23 at the Wayne Senior Activity Center, 35000 Sims Ave., Wayne. Call center director Nancy Wojewski-Noel at (734) 721-7460.

■ Sessions underway since April 5 at the Redford Senior Center, 12121 Hemingway,

Redford, with instructor Bob Correll. Call center director Dorothy Morris at (313) 387-2788.

■ Sessions underway since April 3 at the Taoist Tai Chi Society, 38121 Ann Arbor Road, Livonia, with instructor Sally Rich. Call (248) 332-1281.

■ Classes available in September at The Summit, 46000 Summit Parkway, Canton, with instructor Eileen Sands. Call (734) 394-5485.

■ For more information on research regarding the health benefits of Tai Chi, visit [www.krapu4.com/taiChi/research/](http://www.krapu4.com/taiChi/research/).

## Tai chi from page C5

tion function in patients who had coronary bypass surgery. "Tai Chi makes the heart rate go up to aerobic levels providing an excellent cardiovascular workout. The rhythmic movement shifts the body weight which helps to pump the blood from head to toe," said Rich.

Dr. Elliot Kravitz, a specialist in geriatric medicine and advisor to the society, said Tai Chi has numerous advantages over other methods. "It is evenly balanced, self-regulated and does not subject the body to the sudden shearing and tearing forces that so commonly lead to injury."

The American College and Sports Medicine Health and Fitness Journal reports a 47.5 percent decrease in falls of patients over 70 years old. Tai Chi increases the self-confidence by giving them a better sense of balance.

Eileen Sands teaches Tai Chi

at The Summit in Canton. "Tai Chi can benefit any age group," she said. "It is a no-impact exercise that makes it easy on the joints for those who suffer with osteoarthritis. Tai Chi is a weight-bearing exercise that helps build bone density and prevent osteoporosis."

Tai Chi has been described as "meditation in motion," she said. "Our class helps seniors to have better balance by teaching them how to distribute their weight evenly. The exercises help to gently stretch the spine, which increases mobility and provides greater flexibility."

Sands' class has become so popular, there's a waiting list. So, come on, baby Boomers, get off that couch, stand up and get moving again. Tai Chi may not be the X-treme sport for the X-Generation, but it's just what the doctor ordered for you.

Got an idea for a story? E-mail us at [sdargay@oe.homecomm.net](mailto:sdargay@oe.homecomm.net)

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#### OSTEOPOROSIS

When you think of osteoporosis, you may think of a moment of sudden pain associated with a compression fracture in the back or a bone break in leg. The event is the culmination of bone that over time slowly lost substance, eventually becoming so fragile that a trivial turn or stumble causes that bone to break.

There is another side to osteoporosis. The osteoporotic bone does not break, but it aches all the time you are up and moving. Staying active is the best way to deal with the discomfort. However, whenever you are standing or walking the ache returns. The discomfort usually centers in the lower back from the first lumbar vertebra to the tailbone.

The problem with this form of osteoporosis is its persistence. It continues for years. Worse yet, it becomes a little worse each year. You may undertake repeated x-rays or MRI scans, with no evidence for vertebrae out of place or nerve impingement. You or your doctors may conclude you have "back strain."

Recognition that the pain is osteoporosis is important since treatment exists. Therapy does not consist of exercises to strengthen your back or massage to relieve your tight muscles. Rather, appropriate treatment focuses on reversing the osteoporosis. In most instances that means use of estrogen type medications where appropriate or initiation of fosamax, actonel, or misakinol (depending on the preference of your doctor).

[www.drjjweiss.yourmd.com](http://www.drjjweiss.yourmd.com)

### SPOTLIGHT ON

## Orthodontics

by Josephine Finazza, D.M.D.

### GUARDING YOUR BRACES

Mouthguards are important for all athletes playing contact sports, especially those who wear braces. Mouthguards prevent brackets and wires from penetrating cheeks and lips in the event of a blow to the mouth. Many athletes who do not wear braces make use of the tightly-fitting, heat-formed mouthguards that are widely available in pharmacies. These are worn on the upper jaw only. These will not work for athletes with braces, however, because in heat-formed plastic will get stuck in the brackets and wires and can prevent braces from doing their job. Mouthguards for athletes with braces must be loose-fitting to allow tooth movement and must cover the brackets on both the upper and lower teeth to prevent soft-tissue damage.

Early detection can be extremely helpful when it comes to orthodontic treatment in children. If you have questions about your child's teeth, contact us at THE ORTHODONTIC GROUP. We would be happy to make an appointment for you just call our friendly staff at 442-8885. Day and evening appointments are available, and no referral is necessary. Located at 19850 Middlebelt, we are available to discuss payment plans and athletes with braces must be loose-fitting to allow tooth movement.

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Our Web site.

[www.med.umich.edu/mott](http://www.med.umich.edu/mott)

Now it's easier than ever to learn about the University of Michigan C. S. Mott Children's Hospital—regarded around the world as having excellent clinical, educational and research programs. Mott's new Web site contains:

- a Patient and Visitor guide
- education information
- a Kids to Kids page
- medical and support service offerings

C. S. Mott Children's Hospital is part of the University of Michigan Health System and was recently named one of the top 10 hospitals in the U.S. by *U.S. News & World Report*. Visit [www.med.umich.edu/mott](http://www.med.umich.edu/mott) to see what Mott can offer your children.

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