

## ***Iliuliuk Clinic....Setting the “PACE” for the promotion of health and well-being***

*By Wendy Hladick, RN PA-C*

I'd like to let you in on a little secret.

I mean, if someone told you that they have a secret for a longer, healthier, happier life wouldn't you want to know what it was?

Last Saturday, the entire staff of our community health clinic learned the secret from our San Diego presenter in a mandatory daylong training session called “PACE”.

Why was the training mandatory? Because the secret is one the entire clinic staff had to hear so we can effectively tell all our patients the message that they are the center of our focus, and the focus is on setting the “PACE” for a healthier community.

The secret?

Most of us knew when we sat down to listen to our presenter, that physical activity is good for general health. However, many of us did not know that 200,00 deaths per year in the US are related to a life that lacks physical activity. Inactivity is second only to smoking as a preventable cause of death!

Most people will be interested in learning something new if there is something in it for them. Take note, you can extend your lifespan by a proven 2 years just by beginning to become active. I have no doubt that in the future, studies will reveal a longer period than that, but all the statistics we heard were based on proven scientific research and to date, 2 years is what the studies have shown.

- If we simply get moving, regardless of all the other bad habits we might have, we can reduce our chances by 50% of developing heart disease.
- Activity can prevent or reduce high blood pressure
- Moving protects against bone loss
- Physical activity can reduce colon cancer and other types of cancer
- Moving assists in the prevention and management of non-insulin diabetes
- Physical activity improves mood, reduces tension, anxiety and depression
- Physical activity is essential to healthy weight loss and management

The training emphasized that these statistics are too compelling to be ignored, and that as clinic staff, we are in a unique position to encourage physical activity in all our patients and in turn, reduce the risk of disease.

Your community clinic is choosing to take a progressive approach in first assessing with you, our patients, how much activity is a part of your everyday life.

And now I have addressed every letter in the “PACE” program. PATIENT centered ASSESSMENT COUNSELING for EXERCISE. We will be asking you to complete a short form that takes 1-2 minutes in our waiting room that will help us assess how ready you are to get out of your chair, plan the first step or keep a pace that will set you on a healthier course. The beauty of PACE is, once this information is known, your health care provider can address this with you quickly and efficiently, and give you the information that you are ready or (not ready) to hear.

Before I close, I would like to give you one example that unfortunately illustrates where most Americans are in regards to physical activity.

Example: Mrs. Smith, I understand you are not interested in any kind of physical activity right now, but you are overweight and have high blood pressure and activity can help both of these conditions. I recommend you begin some type of activity program. When and if you decide you’d like to begin, come back and see me and I’ll help you get started.

Someone ought to let Mrs. Smith in on a little secret.