



Benefits of Positive Lifestyle Behaviors

Quick recap

This was a young stroke survivors support group meeting where Dr. Jeffrey Damaschke, chair and associate professor of Lifestyle Medicine at Rosalind Franklin University, presented an introduction to lifestyle medicine and its six pillars for preventing and treating chronic diseases. Dr. Damaschke explained the difference between sick care and healthcare approaches, covering topics like nutrition, physical activity, stress management, and connectedness, while emphasizing that small lifestyle changes can have significant health benefits. Several group members shared their personal weight loss journeys, including Kellee who lost 100 pounds, Cheri who lost 120 pounds and maintained for over a year, and Susan who lost 20 pounds through monthly doctor visits. The conversation ended with plans for Crystal to present on stress management in the following week's session.

Summary

Disability Accommodation in Remote Roles

Susan and Chelsea discussed Chelsea's recent employment as a hospital case manager and her current challenges due to limited use of her left arm and leg. Chelsea expressed interest in exploring remote editing or proofreading roles and mentioned the potential use of speech-to-text software like Dragon. Susan emphasized the importance of employers accommodating employees with disabilities and introduced Chelsea to the JAN (Job Accommodation Network) website, which provides resources for employers and employees.

Stroke Recovery and Support Discussion



Chelsea discussed her recent stroke, which occurred a year ago, and her ongoing recovery process. She mentioned having type 2 diabetes and experiencing shoulder pain, which she attributed to possibly tearing something during her stroke. Susan suggested looking into the Cleveland Clinic for information on exercises for her hand and arm. Dinithi, who leads a teen stroke group, introduced herself and shared her background in neuroimaging informatics. The group discussed upcoming meetings and events, including a call with a contact in California and a gathering on Thursday.

Lifestyle Medicine Presentation Introduction

The meeting began with introductions and casual conversation among attendees. Chirag discussed his recent health appointments and recovery progress following his stroke in October. Susan inquired about Chirag's return to work, and he expressed a growing desire to resume his duties. The group also engaged in light conversation about personal appearances, including Kellee's new haircut and wreath. As the meeting neared its scheduled start time, Jeffrey Damaschke, the chair of the Lifestyle Medicine Department at Rosalind Franklin University, prepared to deliver a presentation on lifestyle behaviors and chronic disease prevention.

Lifestyle Medicine: Preventing Chronic Diseases

Dr. Jeffrey Damaschke, a licensed physical therapist and former Navy officer, introduced lifestyle medicine as an approach focused on preventing chronic diseases through healthy lifestyle choices rather than solely treating illness. He outlined the six pillars of lifestyle medicine: nutrition, physical activity, stress management, avoiding risky behaviors, sleep, and social connection, emphasizing their importance in addressing the "big 4" chronic diseases: cardiovascular disease, cancer, respiratory diseases, and type 2 diabetes. The session aimed to explore participants' strengths in these areas and encourage a shift from a sick-care system to a healthcare-focused approach.



Lifestyle Medicine: Preventing Chronic Diseases

Jeffrey Damaschke discussed various approaches to healthcare, including conventional medicine, complementary and alternative medicine, integrative healthcare, functional medicine, mind-body medicine, and lifestyle medicine. He emphasized that lifestyle medicine, which focuses on the root causes of chronic diseases through evidence-based lifestyle interventions, is a foundational approach that can prevent and treat these conditions. Damaschke highlighted the importance of small, manageable changes in diet, physical activity, sleep, and stress management to improve overall health and well-being. He also mentioned the stages of behavior change and the challenges people face when trying to adopt healthier lifestyles.

Lifestyle Medicine and Behavior Change

Jeffrey Damaschke presented on lifestyle medicine, discussing healthy behaviors including eating habits, physical activity, social connectedness, and stress management. He outlined a framework for behavior change, explaining maintenance as consistently practicing new healthy behaviors and termination as achieving lasting change without relapse. Kellee shared her personal weight loss journey, noting she had lost 100 pounds and was working toward maintaining a healthy weight.

Physical Activity Guidelines Discussion

The discussion focused on physical activity guidelines, where Jeffrey explained that the recommended weekly target is 150 minutes of moderate exercise, spread across 5 days with 30 minutes per session, plus additional days for strengthening activities. Shelli inquired about specific recommendations for movement, and Jeffrey confirmed that balance exercises are included for older individuals or those with balance issues. Susan shared her experience of losing



20 pounds through monthly doctor visits that cost \$75, while Cheri mentioned losing 120 pounds. Jeffrey Wells concluded by sharing his doctor's advice about preventing secondary strokes through regular medical care and adherence to treatment plans.

Lifestyle Medicine Success Stories

The group discussed lifestyle medicine and weight loss, with several members sharing their success stories including Cheri who lost 120 pounds and maintained it for 1.5 years, and Crystal who is trained in motivational interviewing and therapy. Kimia announced a new Slack channel called Monthly Challenge for members to share their health and fitness progress. The conversation ended with Crystal confirming she would present on stress management next week, and Kellee mentioning she would compete in a pageant on Saturday.