

## **Living a Healthy Life With Chronic Conditions Classes to be Offered April 21 - May 26”**

*By Janet Hackert, Nutrition Specialist*

Once again there will be an opportunity to participate in a class that helps people live a healthy life with chronic conditions.

*Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions* is a six-week series for adults living with a chronic condition and the friends, families or others who support them. The program was developed by researchers at Stanford University to help people gain self-confidence in their ability to manage their own health.

In 2005, an estimated 5 million adults had fibromyalgia. As of 2007, 23.6 million people had diabetes. 25.1 million adults had been diagnosed with heart disease. And who is taking care of all these people dealing with chronic conditions? If a person spends a total of 30 minutes with medical professionals every three months, it leaves the other 129,000 minutes for the individual to be caring for him or herself! This class can help a person do that.

Participants learn how to find solutions to problems caused by their chronic conditions. They learn how to manage fatigue and stress more effectively, use good nutrition to help manage their condition, plan appropriate physical activity, and form an effective partnership with their health care team. They also learn relaxation techniques and other ways to use their minds to relieve symptoms that so often go along with chronic conditions.

Past class participants have positive things to say about it. One participant said this is a “reinforcement of what I know” and will use what she (re)learned to communicate effectively with her doctors. Another summed up the concerns of many who live with chronic conditions when she said, “The fastest way to a normal life is prioritizing your health!” Taking this class helped her and others do just that.

The class will be held at the Harrison County Health Department’s meeting room in Bethany on six Thursdays 10-noon, starting April 21, 2011. Christine Rucker, at the Harrison County Health Department, and myself, Janet Hackert, with University of Missouri Extension, will co-facilitate the class. The class is free but space is limited so please pre-register by calling 660-425-6434 or contact us at [HackertJ@missouri.edu](mailto:HackertJ@missouri.edu) .

For more information on this or any other subject, contact your local University of Missouri Extension office. MU Extension programs are open to all.

*(Written April 8, 2011)*