



SILVER EDGE

SUPPORT ELDERS NEWSLETTER



For private circulation only

April 2017

From the MD's Desk



Dear Reader,

Shubho Noboborsho to all of you! We wish you peace, health and happiness in the year to come. This poila boishakh brings with it the second issue of our newsletter and also some great news.

As the Support Elders family is growing in leaps and bounds, we are happy to announce that our new office has been inaugurated at New Town. We are also planning to hold TSC sessions at Swapno Bhor in New Town.

This newsletter provides an excellent forum for us to connect and to learn what our members and partners have to say. Please send in anything you might want to share through the newsletter. Your stories and suggestions are valuable to us.

*Happy reading!
Apratim Chattopadhyay*



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News of the Month



New office at New Town

Our National Alarm Centre is now a larger, state-of-art in-house Alarm Centre with dedicated fibre connection just for Support Elders. With our very in-house NAC we have taken a huge step forward in the development and growth of the organisation. You are welcome to visit us here as well. We assure you that our new office shall greet you with the very same Support Elders culture and ethos.

Address: Support Elders Pvt. Ltd., Utility Building, Action Area III, Baliguri, Shirish Bagan, New Town, Kolkata – 700 156.

Location: HIDCO e-Health Center at Utility Building, Action Area-III.

Phone number: 24x7 Infoline 033-6638 8888. **Please note this is our new number.**

Our latest offering: Active Ageing

Support Elders and 60+ Clinic bring you Active Ageing to offer healthcare services at home along with our earlier offering of MEAS and IFS services.

Announcement



An introductory The Silver Circle session will be held at Swapno Bhor (Seniors' Park) in New Town at 5.30 p.m. on 23rd April, 2017.

This will include a talk by Dr Indrani Chakravarty, Secretary, CMIG.

A session on Active Ageing will be held at Swapno Bhor (Seniors' Park) in New Town at 6 p.m. on 7th May, 2017.

Health

How to deal with Osteoporosis?

Rimjihim Bhattacharjee gives you the lowdown on this.



If you are suffering from a recalcitrant backache or notice a stoop in your physical posture, you might want to consult a doctor as these are possible signs of osteoporosis. Women are more susceptible to osteoporosis than men.

“Osteoporosis is a condition that leads to fragile bones. If you have osteoporosis you have an increased risk for fractured bones,” explains Eileen Canday, Chief Dietician, Breach Candy Hospital Trust, Mumbai¹. Our bones are being renewed constantly. When

we are young, our body has the capacity to make new bone faster than the rate of breakdown old bone. This leads to increased bone mass. Most people attain highest bone mass when they are in their early 30s. Bone mass decreases as people age. This weakens the bones.

The Treatment

Your doctor will thoroughly go through your medical history and might ask you to undertake a Bone Mineral Density (BMD) test. Several types of BMD tests are available, but the most popularly recommended is DEXA (dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry.) The test is easy and painless.

If you are diagnosed with osteoporosis, your doctor will prescribe necessary medication, along with vitamin and calcium supplements, depending on your age. The doctor might also prescribe certain lifestyle changes and an exercise regimen as per your needs.

Treating your osteoporosis as advised by your doctor helps protect you from fractures and allows you to live an active and independent life. But as osteoporosis treatment is often a prolonged process, it is important that you continue treatment and not stop midway. Jaya Dutta, our member, says, “My Osteoporosis condition was identified in the year 2005 and I was on regular calcium dosage but recently I had a fall and a resultant fracture. People who have osteoporosis need to take all necessary precautions to avoid any fall. I continue to do physiotherapy and exercises as a part of my recovery process and for any work I have to do outside the house, the team from Support Elders is there by my side.”

Tips

- ✓ If the doctor has advised you to take regular pills for osteoporosis, try to schedule it at the same time each day, week or month. Use a diary to remind yourself of your medicines or put a reminder somewhere you will notice easily.
- ✓ In case your daily schedule is disturbed, for instance if you are taking a holiday, be prepared and chalk out a plan that will allow you to take your medicines regularly.
- ✓ If you experience any difficulty in keeping up treatment, talk to your doctor or your support group about it. They will be able to advise you on managing your osteoporosis medication schedule and may be able to guide you to other treatment options.

Science has ensured that there are plenty of medication and lifestyle options available to enable you to manage your osteoporosis. These can ensure that you are not compelled to compromise your quality of life. As our member, Arati Dutta, says, “A decade back, the doctor informed me that I have osteoporosis and it was a huge setback for me as I love travelling and visiting new places. Over the years, I have followed a strict routine of daily exercises; since calcium tablets were not helping me, I decided to have curd in all my meals. This regime has helped me to continue with my daily chores and I feel blessed that the team from Support Elders is always there to assist me with any work that I have to do outside the house. They also provide me with opportunity to travel in the frequent outings organised by them.”

¹Remedios, Trina, ‘Osteoporosis prevention and treatment,’ The Times of India (Life), Feb 21, 2013, web, April 2, 2017, <<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/health-fitness/health-news/Osteoporosis-prevention-and-treatment/articleshow/18030508.cms?from=mdr>>

Memories

Memories of a Kolkata Past

Our member Dipak Banerjee takes us back to the Kolkata of 1949.



I was an excited twelve-year-old accompanying my mother to Nagpur where my father was posted. We were travelling from Patna with a stopover at Kolkata (then Calcutta). Our overnight train was running late and I heaved a sigh of happiness when I was finally shown the tip of the Howrah Bridge.

Our point of entry into Calcutta was the Howrah Station. It was much cleaner than what it is today. Many big cars were waiting outside in a queue. I learnt later that these cars, which looked like limousines to my dreamy twelve-year-old eyes, were actually taxis. They were not yellow in colour like the present-day taxis; instead they were decked in various shiny hues—grey, green and blue. Several horse-drawn coaches, called Buggies, were also available for hire.

Few drives have been as pleasant as the drive on Howrah Bridge that day in 1949. The Hooghly, with its then clear waters rippled away below us and a cool breeze caressed my hair. We had to travel to north Kolkata as our stay was to be at my maternal uncle’s house at Shyambazar. Central Avenue (now Chittaranjan Avenue) and popularly identified then as ‘Natun Rasta’ was wide, majestic and smooth.

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Memories of a Kolkata Past

It wouldn't be possible to see all of Calcutta during our short stay of three days and we had to choose the sites we wanted to see. On the first day, we decided to visit the famous zoological garden, 'Alipore Chiriakhana' as it was popularly known, and Dalhousie Square (now BBD Bag). A trip to Dalhousie Square would provide us with the opportunity to ride the famous Calcutta tram. We decided to visit Dhakuria Lake next. This trip provided the enticement of a probable ride on the two-storied bus operating only along this route. Along the way, we caught glimpses of the Governor's house (now Raj Bhavan), the Victoria Memorial, a large Bell at Bishop's house and of course, the Maidan. At the end of the journey we reached the lake. I could see a few rowing boats; otherwise it was a body of clear water surrounded by greenery. I wish it was same today- clean and green - a haven in the middle of the city.

While returning to Shyambazar, we did not want to miss the chance of a ride on the upper deck of the double-decker bus. The route of the return trip was via Dalhousie Square, passing the important buildings of Calcutta - the GPO, Writers Building, Great Eastern Hotel (prestigious in those days), the Government House (today's Raj Bhavan) etc. All these buildings appeared very regal and imposing.

The days passed quickly and we soon found ourselves getting ready to continue our journey to Nagpur. Our pet parrot, Gangaram, had travelled with us from Patna in a metal cage. We decided to leave the bird with our grandmother because the two seemed to have developed a bond in that short span of time.

Driving back to Howrah station, we had an extra piece of luggage - a basket of fruits and sweets. Grandfather ensured we carry plenty of water-rich fruits like jamrul to sustain the heat (incidentally, the first - class compartment was not air conditioned. AC was introduced much later in the Indian Railways). The steam engine whistled and chugged out of the Howrah Station taking us away from Calcutta but forging forever in my impressionable mind a pleasant memory of our short stay. 

Recipe



Picture by Dirk Ingo Franke - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0

Mother's recipe

Our member, Mrs Shopna Ghosh shares with us her mother's recipe of a quick-fix mishti.

"This is a secret recipe which my mother had hidden away. Every time she made this dessert, people would keep asking for more and beg my mother for the recipe. Of course, it's no longer a secret now." says Mrs Ghosh with a happy laugh.

Serves: 8

Preparation time: 3-4 hours

Ingredients

Condensed milk: 1 tin

Fresh cream

Cashew nuts

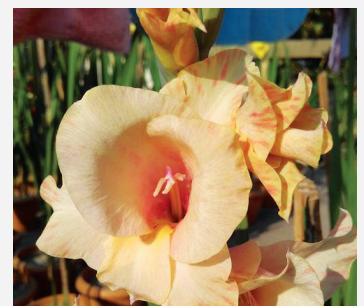
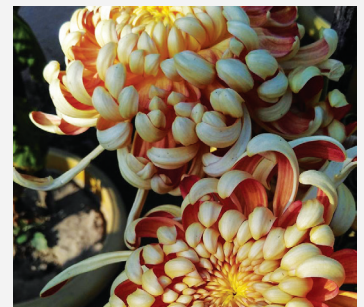
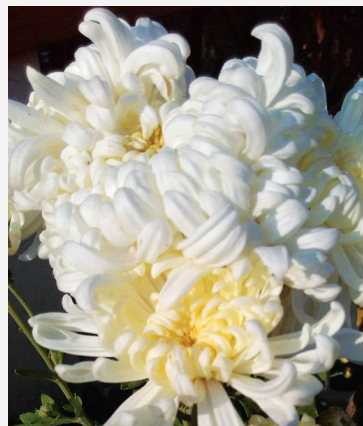
Method

- Take a tin of condensed milk.
- Put the sealed tin of condensed milk in a deep pan, cover it with water and put it to boil.
- Allow it to boil for about 3-4 hours. If you use a pressure cooker, the time required would be 2-3 hours.
- Remember, the tin should be wholly immersed and never be exposed above water. So, keep topping up the water when it reduces.
- After about 3-4 hours, remove the tin and allow it to cool.
- Once it has cooled, cut both ends of the tin and just push out the squishy condensed milk, which has now changed colour from white to brown.
- Now cut it in slices. On the slice, add a dollop of fresh cream and garnish with cashew nuts.

Your easy-to-make, delicious dessert is ready to be served. 

Picture gallery

The joy and pride of our member, Mr Dipankar Chattopadhyay. He spends hours gardening and lavishing love and care on his little creations.



Partner speak

U3A- the university with a difference

Dr Indrani Chakravarty, Secretary, Calcutta Metropolitan Institute of Gerontology (CMIG), and Advisor, Support Elders, enlightens us about the concept of U3A—the University of Third Age.

It is indeed a great paradox that though longevity is the triumph of the 20th century, it is rarely greeted with much enthusiasm. This is probably because it comes with myriad challenges: financial, healthcare and behavioural. Redefining life vis-à-vis retirement; managing leisure time; and empty nest syndrome are some postmodern developments. Retirement is a crucial phase in one's life with certain roles changing almost overnight. Very few people are prepared to accept these situations gracefully. Again, empty nest is considered to be frequently concomitant with elderly women's loneliness, followed by depression.

One third of the seniors in India is economically stable and belongs to higher socio-economic status but time hangs heavy on them. Unutilised leisure time often makes them feel that they are non-productive, surplus members of the society, which in turn adversely affects their self-esteem. U3A or lifelong learning may help this target group to overcome these problems.

What is U3A?

The University of the Third Age is an international movement, whose aims are the education and stimulation of mainly retired members of the community who are in their third age of life. Anybody in their third age can join U3A and this includes people who are working part-time as well. The basic idea of U3A is to make senior citizens strive for a better quality of life. This is achieved by enhancing their knowledge and in turn handing down knowledge for the benefit of the subsequent generation.

Main Principles of U3A

The U3A Movement is non-religious and non-political and has three main principles:

The Third Age Principle

- Membership of the U3A is open to all in their third age, which is defined not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full-time employment has ceased.
- Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to the U3A.
- Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join the U3A can do so.

The Self-help Learning Principle

- Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire; a practice better known as 'by the members, for the members'.
- No qualifications are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with enjoyment being the prime motive, not qualifications or awards.
- There is no distinction between the learners and the teachers; they are all U3A members.

The Mutual Aid Principle

- Each U3A is a mutual-aid organisation, operationally independent but a member of The Third Age Trust, which requires adherence to the guiding principles of the U3A Movement.
- No payments are made to members for services rendered to any U3A.
- Each U3A is self-funded with membership subscriptions and costs kept as low as possible.
- External financial assistance should only be sought if it does not imperil the integrity of the U3A movement.
- In India, in the eastern zone, the U3A club, better known as 'The Silver Circle', has been set up jointly by Support Elders and CMIG. Members are participating in different classes—starting from computer and spoken English classes to Performing Art Therapy. It is indeed a pleasure to see how eagerly the senior members are keen to learn their subjects of interest and make new, lifelong friends.

Medical Emergency Alert Service

Wellbeing

Assistance for Independent Functioning in Society

The Silver Circle - U3A Eastern Zone

Counselling Service

Travel & Lifestyle