

Katie Johnson: Good morning and welcome to Apple a Day, Lake Region Healthcare's Health and Wellness segment where we feature news and information you can use to live a healthier life. I'm Katie Johnson, your host, and my guest today is Dr. Jo Ellen Kohlman. She is a cardiologist at Lake Region Healthcare, and she is, I would say, the founder of our Shop With A Doc program, which she's here to talk with us about today. Good morning, Jo Ellen.

Jo Ellen K.: Good morning.

Katie Johnson: So you may have heard or seen our promotions for the January Living Well session, which is going to be a special event. We hold these Living Well sessions the second Monday of every month. But in January it's a special event in the sense that we're holding two of them and we're going off-site with our partners at Service Food to host Shop With A Doc. Tell me first of all, how did you come up with this idea to start a program like this at Lake Region Healthcare?

Jo Ellen K.: Well, as my job as a cardiologist, each time I see patients in clinic we talk about lifestyle changes that they can make to help prevent future problems with their heart, and diet is a huge component of that and it's often very overwhelming to people when they're told by their physicians that they need to eat healthy.

Katie Johnson: So when I think about going to the grocery store and I think about trying to make healthier choices, it is a little bit overwhelming. Tell me, what does someone who attends Shop With A Doc, what can they expect to learn?

Jo Ellen K.: You're absolutely right, it's so overwhelming and intimidating to shop because there are so many choices and there's a lot of mixed messages out there. So if someone were to come to Shop To The Doc, one thing is, I don't have all the answers and the other physicians don't have all the answers to how shop healthy, but we will generate a discussion and we will learn from you and you will learn from us, and we'll give you some pointers, and most importantly we'll go around the grocery store and we'll look at labels on foods and we'll learn how to read these labels.

Katie Johnson: Those labels have so many tricky components, from what I've learned, from serving size to recommended daily allowance, to sodium and sugar with all kinds of different names. Are those the kinds of things that you'll be talking about with people who attend?

Jo Ellen K.: Absolutely. So we're going to practice. We're going to grab a few things off the shelves, we're going to compare labels. As you said, we're going to look at serving sizes, we're going to look at the amount of sodium that's in the products, we're going to look at the amount of sugar that's in the products, and look at other things like, what are all these additives that we don't even know what these words are, what are these preservatives? So we're going to practice together.

Katie Johnson: What great hands-on learning to be able to do. You mentioned there are some other doctors who are doing this with you. How did you convince your colleagues and how difficult was it to convince them that this was an important thing to do?

Jo Ellen K.: I think that they feel the same way and that it's something so important for them as providers to be able to work with their patients to learn on how to cook healthier and shop healthier, but they also want to learn themselves. So it was not a very hard sell to get them to be involved in this program.

Katie Johnson: I love that you say that, that it's a joint learning opportunity. I think every time each one of us goes to the grocery store and digs in a little deeper on any particular item we're going to learn something new about what's good about that product or what might a reason to avoid that product. Is there some really simple tips or advice you can give to people who maybe can't attend the Shop With A Doc event, that can just get them on the path to healthier choices in the grocery store?

Jo Ellen K.: Well, one, don't go to the grocery store hungry, because you're more likely to impulse buy some of those unhealthier foods if you're very hungry. Two, come to the grocery store with a plan, so have a list of the things that you want to buy, and then you're less likely to stray off into other areas that might not be as healthy. Then my third recommendation is, try to stay to the periphery of the grocery store because that's where you'll find all the fresh fruit, produce, veggies, go to the deli and pick up your fish, your lean meats. A lot of the things that are in the inside of the grocery store are often the processed and packaged foods.

Katie Johnson: When you mentioned that, I think a perception I've heard is that shopping healthier is more expensive. Do you have anything to, I think longterm we can prove that's not the case, but any other tips to refute that idea?

Jo Ellen K.: Well, I think one is, you do want to make an investment in your body and I don't think it's a bad thing to spend money on good quality foods. You have to think of food as fuel for your body. But two, the prices are coming down nationwide on organic products and healthier products, and sometimes you just have to be a little bit smart in the way that you shop and look for coupons and sales and shop around.

Katie Johnson: And spending that extra time can certainly be worth it. I have to say that Service Food has been a great partner in this as well, and they really have indicated they're looking to us to help them in strategies to help make healthier choices more affordable, easier to make at their grocery store as well.

Jo Ellen K.: Correct. We've been working with Service Foods with plans of rearranging the way that they're shelving their food, so the healthier items will be at eye level instead of high on the shelves or low on the shelves, working with them and creating some healthy options for people to stop by and grab a lunch on the go,

like salads. So they are definitely making an effort and we are working with them.

Katie Johnson: So again, this coming Monday, January 8th, two sessions of Shop With A Doc for our Living Well January series, one at 11:30 and the other at 5 o'clock. Can you give us just a brief rundown of what people can expect for those two hours?

Jo Ellen K.: Sure. So we're first going to meet, I'm going to give a little brief presentation on how to eat healthy, just a few general tips, and then we're going to actually offer some food to folks, some healthy options that they can come, so we will feed you, it's free, and then we'll give you the recipe as well. Then we'll head over the Service Foods, break into small groups and walk through the grocery store, and like I said, just practice.

Katie Johnson: Great. Jo Ellen Kohlman, again, one of the doctors that will be leading the Shop With A Doc groups along with other Lake Region Healthcare doctors: Dr. Colt Edin, Dr. Josh Overgaard, and Dr. Mark Vukonich. So we want to thank them and thank you, Jo Ellen, for getting this Shop With A Doc program started. As I understand, we hope to offer this ongoing in the future.

Jo Ellen K.: That's correct. We hope to offer it maybe a few times a year in the Spring and in the Fall for folks.

Katie Johnson: Great. But your first opportunity, again, is this Monday, January 8th. Two different sessions, 11:30 or 5 o'clock. We do ask for an RSVP though. We are limiting the group sizes, and of course we need to plan for that food. So if you would like to attend, please either email: [livingwell@lrhc.org](mailto:livingwell@lrhc.org), or give a phone call to 736-8451 to reserve your spot for Living Well January series Shop With A Doc: Learning To Shop For Healthier Everyday Eating. I should mention this is also the day that we will kick off the 2018 Community Health Challenge, which will be a bigger and broader perspective of health and wellness. So stay tuned for more information about that on next week's Apple a Day and next Monday as we kick off the January Living Well Series and our Community Health Challenge. Dr. Jo Ellen Kohlman, thank you for your time today.

Jo Ellen K.: Thank you.

Katie Johnson: Jo Ellen Kohlman, cardiologist at Lake Region Healthcare, and Katie Johnson, reminding you there is so much to do here, stay healthy for it. Have a great day.