

Dear Members,

I'm thrilled to announce that VidaCare will be hosting its first ever *Life Celebration* on **January 22nd**. Since joining the Plan as your CEO in 2006, I've dreamed of this event and I know many of you have too! As the 1980s *Cool and the Gang* song says:



Doug Wirth, CEO

**Its time to come together and celebrate good times, come on ...**

**There's a party goin' on right here - a celebration to last throughout the years.**

**So bring your good times, and your laughter too - we gonna celebrate your party with you!**

As VidaCare begins its 8<sup>th</sup> year, we take this opportunity to thank *you*, our Members, for your faith in us and to “celebrate” your efforts to make healthy choices, get regular care and encourage others to give us try.

VidaCare is now almost 1,500 members strong and growing! This event will include Special Recognition Awards for member leaders who have helped to guide us and to grow. I look forward to seeing you on the January 22<sup>nd</sup> (see page 2 for all the details)!

Sincerely Yours,

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### Upcoming VidaCare Live Your Life Events

**January 22nd 6-9 pm**

**LIFE CELEBRATION (For Members ONLY)**



**Members may bring 1 Guest to events below:**

**February 22nd 3-5pm**

**Reiki/Therapeutic Touch**



Join Rev. Charmaine to wake up your body through movement & therapeutic touch.  
@ Lifeworks Center - 150 W 28th St. Suite 1104

**March 27th 3-5pm**

**Dreams & Feelings**



Make a Dream Catcher & be part of our Talking Circle w/ Ty Tafoya!  
@ VC Office - 248 West 35th St, 7th Floor

**April 6th 3-5pm**

**Accessing Inner Peace / Spiritual Counseling**



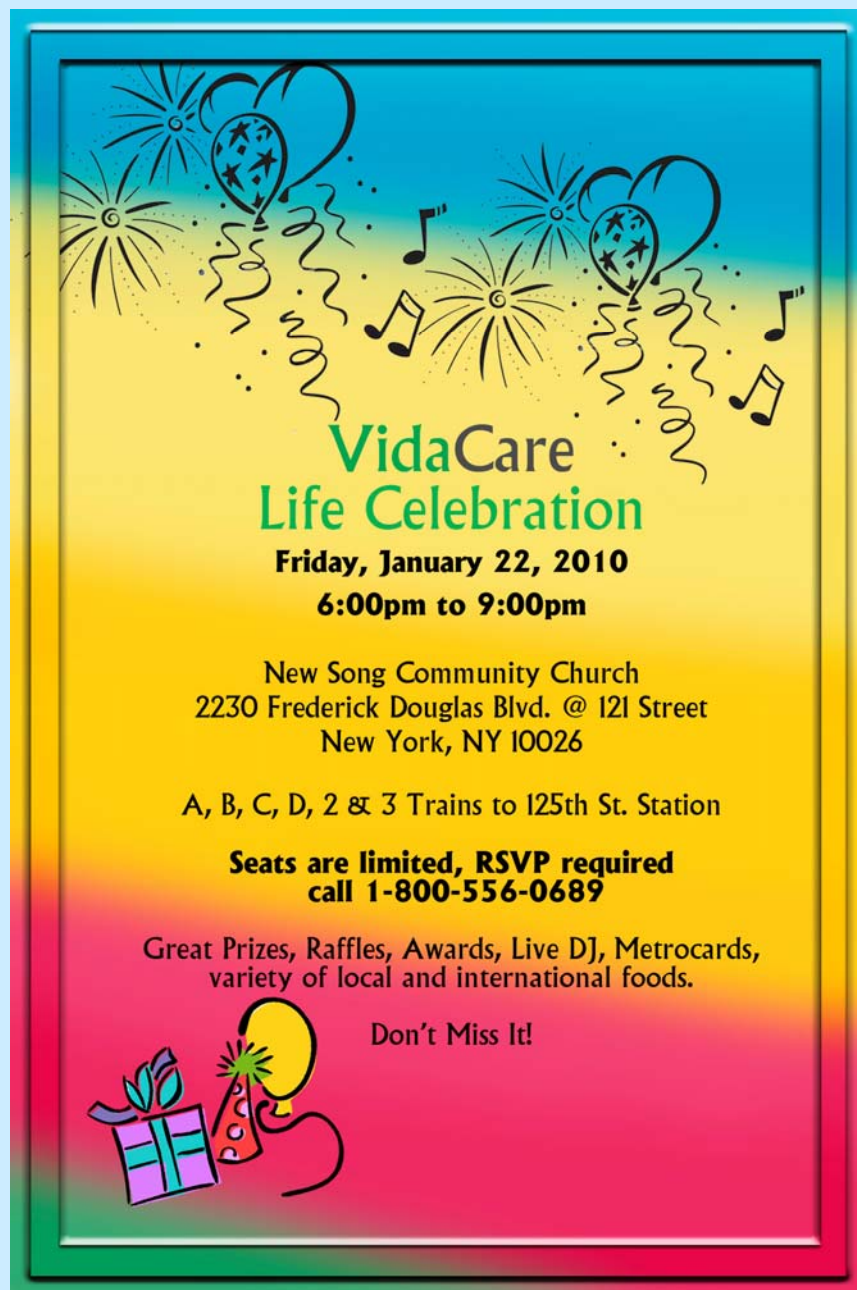
Go inside to find your inner peace w/ Rev. Miranda's support!  
@ Lifeworks Center - 150 W 28th St. Suite 1104

**Call 1-800-556-0689 to reserve your seat, meal and gift bag. Please reconfirm the event location.**

## VidaCare's 1st Ever - Life Celebration Event (1/22/10)

On Friday, January 22nd VidaCare will honor its members with a Life Celebration from 6-9 pm. This joyous event will take place in the very beautiful New Song Community Church in Central Harlem. We hope as many members as possible will join us for a wonderful evening of music, dancing, good food, awards, prizes and more! But space is limited to the first 250 Members who RSVP! Please note:

- ◆ CALL NOW to reserve your seat because only the first 250 members who RSVP are guaranteed admittance.
- ◆ Members who aren't among the 1st 250 to RSVP - will have to wait in line and will be admitted only if there is available space.
- ◆ The event is for MEMBERS ONLY (no guests will not be admitted) so please bring your VidaCare ID card and dancing shoes!
- ◆ Metro Cards, dinner and gift bags will be provided.



The flyer features a vibrant, multi-colored background transitioning from blue at the top to yellow, then orange, and finally red at the bottom. At the top, there are illustrations of two heart-shaped balloons with stars, musical notes, and fireworks. The text is centered and reads: "VidaCare Life Celebration" in green, "Friday, January 22, 2010" in black, and "6:00pm to 9:00pm" in black. Below this, the address "New Song Community Church, 2230 Frederick Douglas Blvd. @ 121 Street, New York, NY 10026" is listed. Further down, it says "A, B, C, D, 2 & 3 Trains to 125th St. Station". A bolded section states "Seats are limited, RSVP required call 1-800-556-0689". At the bottom, it lists "Great Prizes, Raffles, Awards, Live DJ, Metrocards, variety of local and international foods." and "Don't Miss It!". In the bottom left corner, there is a small illustration of a gift box and a party popper.

**VidaCare  
Life Celebration**  
**Friday, January 22, 2010**  
**6:00pm to 9:00pm**

New Song Community Church  
2230 Frederick Douglas Blvd. @ 121 Street  
New York, NY 10026

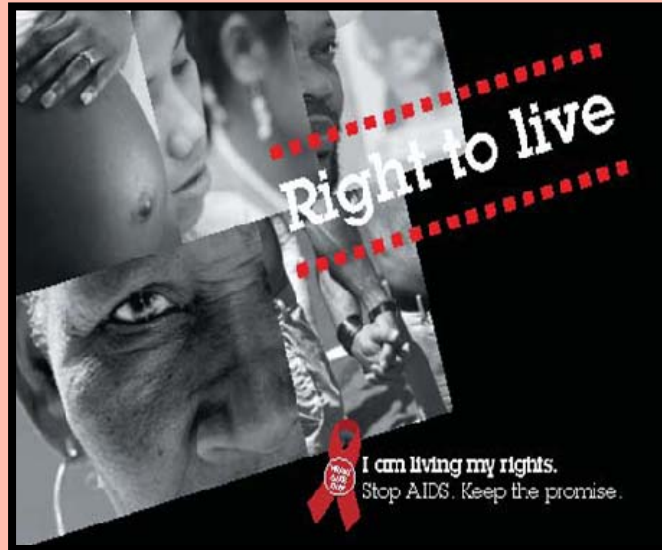
A, B, C, D, 2 & 3 Trains to 125th St. Station

**Seats are limited, RSVP required  
call 1-800-556-0689**

Great Prizes, Raffles, Awards, Live DJ, Metrocards,  
variety of local and international foods.

Don't Miss It!

## WORLD AIDS DAY



**WORLD AIDS DAY** was started on December 1<sup>st</sup> 1988, as a way of raising money, increasing awareness, fighting prejudice and improving education. Each year a different theme is picked out to remind people of the issues. The World AIDS theme for 2009 is *"Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise - Universal Access and Human Rights."* World AIDS Day is an important way to remind people that HIV has not gone away, and that there are many things still to be done.

More than 25 years into the AIDS epidemic, HIV infection continues to take its toll. 33 million persons worldwide are living with HIV/AIDS.\* Over a million people in the United States are living with the disease. \*\* In New York State, we have over 120,000 persons with HIV/AIDS; \*\*\* 102,000 of them are living within New York City. \*\*\*\* HIV today is a threat to men, women and children on all continents around the world. Universal access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care are fundamental human rights that belong to all.

Source, \*UNAIDS Epidemiology Data, \*\* CDC Statistics and Surveillance Data, \*\*\* NYSDOH Bureau of HIV/AIDS Epidemiology Data, \*\*\*\* NYCDOHMH HIV Epidemiology Surveillance Statistics

### Drug Addiction - Answers to your questions

#### **Is drug addiction a disease?**

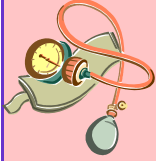
**Yes.** Addiction is a chronic disease that affects the brain and causes compulsive drug seeking and use despite harmful consequences.

**How is addiction a disease?** Addiction is considered a brain disease because drugs change the brain— in structure and in function. For most people, the initial decision to take drugs is voluntary. Over time, however, drug abuse can cause changes to the brain that wear down a person's self control and send intense impulses to take drugs.

**What is its course?** Drug addiction is a chronic, relapsing disease – like diabetes, asthma, or heart disease – and it can be managed successfully. Treatment helps people to fight against addiction's effects and regain control of their lives. Relapses do happen and do not mean failure. Relapse indicates that treatment should be restarted or adjusted to help the addict fully recover.



*(continued on pg 4)*



## High Blood Pressure



About 1 out of every 3 adults has high blood pressure or hypertension. High blood pressure is often called the “silent killer” because a person usually does not have any warning signs. The best way to find out if you have high blood pressure is to have your blood pressure checked. High blood pressure can lead to heart disease, stroke, kidney disease and other serious conditions. PLWHA have an increased risk of heart disease. This increased risk appears to be related to HIV infection and not necessarily the meds used to treat it. The good news is that treatment received by your health care provider and simple changes can help control blood pressure and lower your risk of heart disease. Here are a few tips:

- ◆ Eat a healthy diet that includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy
- ◆ Lower the amount of salt in your diet, look at the amount of salt in foods, some soups and frozen dinners may have too much salt; do not add extra salt to your food
- ◆ If you quit smoking you can help lower your blood pressure and lower your risk for heart disease
- ◆ Control your weight, if you are overweight, losing as little as 5 pounds has been shown to help lower blood pressure
- ◆ Speak with your health care provider about physical activity or exercise that is right for you
- ◆ Find ways to relax; increased stress can cause blood pressure to be higher than usual
- ◆ Have your blood pressure checked regularly - your doctor or nurse can help you keep it under control; it is also possible to check your own blood pressure at home

Working with your health care provider and following healthy habits is the best way to keep your blood pressure under control and lower your risk of heart disease.

Source: CDC – Center for Disease Control and Prevention

### **(Drug Addiction - Answers to your questions continued from pg. 3)**

**How do drugs work in the brain?** Drugs tap into the brain's communication system and disrupt the way nerve cells normally send, receive, and process information. Drugs act in a way that “fools” the brain and nerve cells to send abnormal messages including an over-stimulation of the brains’ reward system by flooding the circuit with dopamine, a chemical that creates feelings of pleasure.

### **What happens to your brain if you keep taking drugs?**

**The brain adapts.** The brain adjusts by decreasing the number of chemical receptors available. This diminishes the function of the reward circuit. Therefore, drug addicts require larger amounts to achieve the initial high. This is known as building tolerance.

**Changes in brain function.** Long-term abuse causes changes in other parts of the brain including the ability to think and learn, judgment, decision making, learning and memory, and behavior control.

**Drug abuse can create memories that trigger cravings.** Certain people or places become associated with the drug experience and can trigger cravings.

### **Can addiction be treated successfully?**

**Yes.** Research shows that combining addiction treatment medications with behavioral therapy (counseling) is the best way to ensure success for most patients. Treatment that is designed to address the individual’s drug abuse patterns and other related problems can lead to long term recovery and a life without drug abuse. **Addiction does need not be a life sentence.**

Source: <http://www.nida.nih.gov/tib/soa.html>

## HIV and H1N1 Flu

### **Why do I need to know about H1N1 flu?**

Persons living with HIV, especially those with low CD4 cell counts or AIDS can experience more severe complications of flu including pneumonia.

### **What are the symptoms of H1N1 virus?**

Cough, Sore throat, Runny nose,  
Fever (not everyone will get a fever),  
Headache, Muscle aches, and  
maybe Vomiting and Diarrhea.



### **What should I do if I think I may have the flu or I know I've been exposed to someone with the flu?**

Contact your PCP right away. If you need help to reach your provider, call VidaCare @ 1-800-556-0689.

### **Is there treatment for H1N1?**

Yes, antiviral treatment should be started as soon as possible, with best results when started within 48 hours of getting sick.

### **How can I prevent H1N1?**

Remember to wash hands frequently and avoid contact with sick people. .

Contact your PCP to find out about the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine. It's not too late to get a flu shot, flu season in the northeast peaks between January and March.

source: [http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance\\_hiv.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_hiv.htm)

## **Warm Winter Recipe: Beefy Corn and Black Bean Chili**

### **Ingredients**

- 1 pound lean hamburger meat
- 2 teaspoons chili powder blend
- 1 (14-ounce) package frozen seasoned corn and black beans (such as Pictsweet)
- 1 (14-ounce) can low fat, low sodium beef broth
- 1 (15-ounce) can seasoned tomato sauce for chili

Low-fat sour cream (optional)

### **Preparation**

1. Combine beef and chili powder blend in a large heavy pot or skillet. Cook 6 minutes over medium-high heat or until beef is browned, stirring to crumble. Drain and return to pan.
2. Stir in frozen corn mixture, broth, and tomato sauce; bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 10 minutes. Uncover and simmer 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Ladle chili into bowls. Top each serving with low fat sour cream and onions, if desired.



Source: [www.cookinglight.com](http://www.cookinglight.com)



## VIDACARE Rewards Program for TAKING CARE OF YOU!

Members can earn up to \$50 / year in health related rewards - just for going to your PCP for HIV monitoring visits or your annual health check-up!

Bring this page to your next appointment to make sure you get all the rewards you can!  
Call us at 800-556-0689 for help with making appointments or if you have any questions!

*VidaCare Health Plan  
Care Coordination*



### PROMOTING MEMBER HEALTH PROGRAM Report Card

#### Section 1: Member Information

Name:	CIN#:
Street Address:	City: State: NY Zip:
Primary Phone:	Other Phone:

#### Section 2: HIV Primary Care Provider/Site Information

PCP Name:	Site/Facility:
Provider Phone:	Fax:

#### Section 3: Primary Care Visit Information

The VidaCare member named above was seen by the above named HIV PCP on \_\_\_\_\_ (m/d/yr) and completed viral monitoring and/or a comprehensive health assessment.

***Please check all completed activities below and attach copies of the actual Lab Results.***

- CD4 Test Result: \_\_\_\_\_  Viral Load Test Result: \_\_\_\_\_
- Mental Health Screen  Substance Abuse Screen
- GYN Exam  PAP Smear  STD Screening
- Follow-up PCP visit scheduled for: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Section 4: Member Rewards *(Please check one program/member incentive below)*

- Initial Visit ***Healthy Starts*** (\$10)
- Quarterly PCP Visit/Follow-up ***Health Promotion*** (\$10) *Specify Quarter:* 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>
- Re-engagement ***Getting Reconnected*** (\$10)
- Annual GYN Visit including PAP ***Women's Rose Program*** (\$25)

***Please send this VidaCare member the reward noted above for completing a Health Promotion Program activity.***

\_\_\_\_\_  
*PCP Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

Please mail or fax (646-786-1837) this Report Card to:  
VidaCare Health Services Dept, 248 W. 35th St., 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10001