



Summer 2023

Responder Newsletter

**Stony Brook World Trade Center Health and
Wellness Program**



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TOPIC

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Book your annual monitoring exam today!

Call to schedule today (631) 855-1200



Letter from Dr. Luft



Greetings,

I hope you have all been having a wonderful summer. I want to thank all of you that have been patient while our new clinic in Westbury is being built for us. It is going to be beautiful and with great parking. I know for some of you living further South and West, this may have been a longer trip and so we really appreciate your patience. The new clinic in Westbury will be opening within the next couple of months and we will notify you as soon as it is ready.

Our research programs are making great progress. We are continuing our Brain Aging Research study. This is an important study that helps us to better understand how WTC exposure might be linked with brain aging and atrophy. If you are interested in learning more about it, please refer to page 10, and contact Alissa Barber (631) 216-8842.

On September 17th, 2023, there will be a 9/11 Heroes 5K Run/Walk starting in Mill Dam Park, Huntington. On October 15th, Making Strides Against Breast Cancer 5K Walk will take place at Jones Beach State Park. We invite all to join us in these two wonderful events.

In our Member Spotlight, Dominic Coppola, former NYPD, ran with the bulls in Pamplona, Spain! Go Dominic!! What a huge accomplishment! Thank goodness, no injuries to report.

We are also re-launching our Remembering 9/11 Oral History Project. We have already interviewed over 450 responders, survivors, and family members. All of this is being archived at the Library of Congress. If you are interested in participating and sharing your story, please contact Camile Arnone at (631) 638-0323.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to personally remind all of you that if you are going through a tough time, help is available. On page 15 we list numbers for Mental Health Resources as well as Alcohol and Substance Use Treatment Resources. Please don't hesitate to contact any of these agencies for help. Our social workers are also available to assist you should you need guidance.

All of us at the WTC wish you and your families the very best and we hope to see you soon. Stay safe and be well.



Benjamin J. Luft, MD
Director, World Trade Center Health and Wellness Program



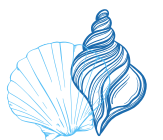
Our New Nassau Clinic

NEW



Westbury Clinic
1600 Stewart Avenue
Suite 220
Westbury, NY 11590

**COMING
SOON**



Make Your Appointment Today!

A major aspect of the World Trade Center Health Program's mission is to help monitor, detect and treat the many physical and mental health conditions that members continue to face.



Any of our dedicated healthcare professionals will tell you the key to comprehensive care is to stay current with your annual monitoring exam.

CALL TODAY

Life gets busy, we put others first, and sometimes we think it's easier to avoid another exam. The truth is these yearly visits are what saves lives.

Our Member Service Specialists will assist you and are happy to answer any questions you may have. We will see you soon.

(631) 855-1200



9.11 World Trade Center Health Program

The World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program provides medical monitoring and treatment of WTC-related health conditions for 9/11 responders and survivors.

Certified Members: How to Get This Year's Flu Vaccine

The WTC Health Program encourages all members to receive the flu vaccine every year.

Each year, research indicates which types of flu (known as strains) will be most common during the upcoming flu season, and a vaccine is developed to protect against those strains.

Why You Should Get a Flu Vaccine

Getting a flu vaccine prevents or reduces the severity of the flu.

The flu vaccine is sometimes not recommended for those with specific health conditions or those receiving certain types of treatment.

Follow the recommendation of your primary care physician or your Program doctor or clinician.



Is There an Out-of-Pocket Cost?

All flu vaccines are covered at no out-of-pocket cost by the WTC Health Program for members with a certified WTC-related health condition at in-network pharmacies.

You do not need a prescription. Simply use your WTC Health Program Express Scripts pharmacy card at any in-network pharmacy.



How to Get Your Flu Vaccine at No Out-Of-Pocket Cost

Members with a certified WTC-related health condition should follow these steps to get a flu vaccine:

- 1. Consider whether you should get the flu vaccine.**
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone six months of age and older should be vaccinated, especially if you are at risk of developing serious flu complications.* If you are unsure, talk with your primary care physician or Program doctor or clinician.
- 2. You do not need a prescription.**
Simply use your WTC Health Program Express Scripts pharmacy card at any in-network pharmacy.

Members who are not certified should speak to their primary care physician and use their primary health insurance to receive the flu vaccine.

For more information about the flu, and how to prevent it, visit www.cdc.gov/flu

*Source: www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/whoshouldvax.htm

Learn More About the World Trade Center Health Program: www.cdc.gov/wtc or call 1-888-982-4748

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk 2023!



Join Our Team

Footsteps 4 Responders



Scan to Sign Up Today!



Sunday, October 15, 2023
Rolling Start: 7:00 AM-10:30 AM
(Ends at noon)



Jones Beach State Park-Field 5
1 Ocean Parkway
Wantagh, NY

What is CAR-T Therapy?

CAR-T therapy is a type of cancer treatment that is used when cancer treatments have failed, or cancer has relapsed. In CAR-T therapy, a T-cell—a specific type of cell—is taken from a patient's blood and changed in the laboratory so it will attack cancer cells.

CAR-T cell therapy is given to the patient by infusion as a one-time treatment in a hospital setting or CAR-T outpatient center to allow for monitoring of potential side effects.

How are CAR-T therapy services covered?

CAR-T therapy services must be authorized by the WTC Health Program before the patient receives treatment.

The Clinical Center of Excellence or the Nationwide Provider Network Clinical Director may request authorization from the WTC Health Program for CAR-T therapy services if all the criteria below are met:

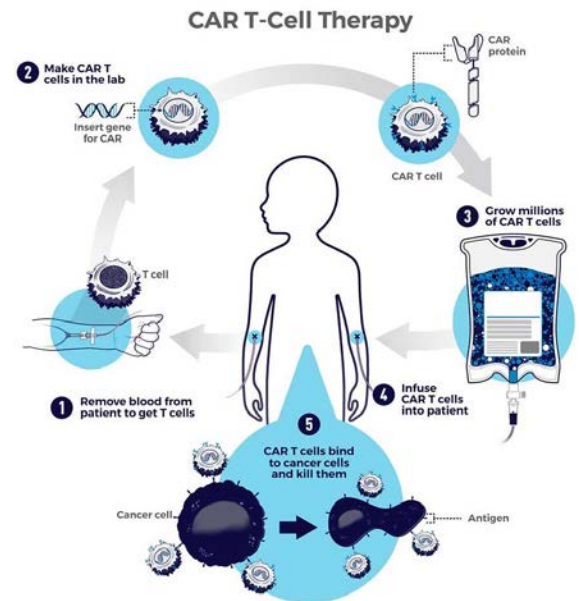
- the member must be under the care of a Program provider,
- the services must be medically necessary to manage, or cure a certified WTC-related cancer, or health condition medically associated with a certified WTC-related cancer,
- the member requires CAR-T therapy due to past failed cancer treatments or if the cancer has returned,
- the services are administered at a facility enrolled in the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies (REMS) compliance program,
- the CAR-T product must be used for an FDA-approved indication
- the treatment plan should align with National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) treatment guidelines



Scan Barcode for more information!

Visit Article at:

www.cdc.gov/wtc/newsCAR-TTherapy



CAR T-cell therapy is a type of treatment in which a patient's T cells are genetically engineered in the laboratory so they will bind to specific proteins (antigens) on cancer cells and kill them. (1) A patient's T cells are removed from their blood. Then, (2) the gene for a special receptor called a chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) is inserted into the T cells in the laboratory. The gene encodes the engineered CAR protein that is expressed on the surface of the patient's T cells, creating a CAR T cell. (3) Millions of CAR T cells are grown in the laboratory. (4) They are then given to the patient by intravenous infusion. (5) The CAR T cells bind to antigens on the cancer cells and kill them.

cancer.gov

What CAR-T services does the WTC Health Program cover?

After all prior authorization requirements have been met, the Program will cover only one round of CAR-T treatment. One round of CAR-T therapy includes the following services:

- 1. Cell Collection and Alteration:**
 - White blood cells are removed from the blood, then T-cells are separated and sent to the laboratory so that the cells can be changed to attack cancer cells.
- 2. Administration of CAR-T:**
 - CAR-T therapy is administered by infusion as a one-time regimen in a hospital setting or CAR-T outpatient center to monitor potential side effects.
- 3. Treatment of Potential Side Effects:**
 - CAR-T therapy may result in serious side effects including two potentially dangerous syndromes: Cytokine Release Syndrome (CRS) and Immune Cell-Associated Neurotoxicity Syndrome (ICANS). Treatment of these and other potential side effects as a result of CAR-T therapy will be covered under the approved CAR-T therapy when they meet the definition of a medically associated health condition.
- 4. Acute Recovery Period:**
 - After the CAR-T Treatment, the patient is in the Acute Recovery Period for 30 days for monitoring. If the Acute Recovery Period is extended for a patient because additional monitoring and/or treatment is required, a new authorization must be submitted.

The WTC Health Program has updated the coverage policy for dental services.

Who is Now Eligible for Limited Dental Coverage?

The WTC Health Program now covers limited pre-treatment dental services for members:

- with a certified WTC-related head/neck cancer; and/or
- who will receive treatment for any certified WTC-related cancer; and/or
- with a planned WTC-related organ transplant.

The Program previously covered limited medically necessary dental care to restore function for members with certified WTC-related head/neck cancer only.

What Dental Services Are Covered?

Covered dental services are limited. They are only available prior to cancer treatment and/or organ transplant, with one exception. Members certified with WTC-related head/neck cancer may receive post-treatment dental care if medically necessary and needed because of the WTC-related treatment.

Covered dental services prior to treatment for any certified WTC-related cancer and/or prior to a planned WTC-related organ transplant include:

- once-per-lifetime dental exam for eligible members based on the criteria above, potentially including a cleaning and all appropriate x-rays; and
- based on the exam results, follow-up medically necessary dental care (such as deep cleaning, fillings, and extractions) before an organ transplant and/or the start of chemotherapy or radiation.



Dental care is not covered if a member with a certified cancer has already received their one dental exam and the cancer returns following initial treatment. Dental care is also not covered when an eligible member has already received their once-per-lifetime dental exam and the cancer returns following initial treatment or becomes metastatic. Metastatic disease is when a cancer has spread to other parts of the body.

Additional dental care is available based on medical need for members with certified head/neck cancer.

Medically necessary dental care related to other certified WTC-related health conditions may be considered on a limited case-by-case basis.

Who Can Authorize Dental Services in the Program?

The Clinical Center of Excellence or Nationwide Provider Network Clinical Director can authorize the one-time dental exam prior to an organ transplant or start of chemotherapy/radiation.

Most follow-up dental care, such as deep cleaning, root canals, and fillings, require additional authorization from the WTC Health Program.

The Program will work with the Clinical Center of Excellence or Nationwide Provider Network to ensure a dental treatment plan is developed and that all other criteria for coverage are met.



Scan here for additional information!

www.cdc.gov/wtc/dental_mgus_20230317.html

Member Spotlight

Dominic Coppola

On September 2001, I was a member of the NYPD for eleven years, I had been a sergeant for almost three years. I was assigned to an Investigations Unit located in One Police Plaza for seven months and on a daily basis we would frequently visit "The Trade Center" for coffee. I was a first responder on September 11, 2001.

In 2020, a former colleague (thank you Steven W.), convinced me to join Stony Brook World Trade Center Health and Wellness Program. At my monitoring visit, I met Amanda Reichardt, a Certified Dietitian. She has been a strong supporter in the weight loss journey. She has taught me how to have a overall healthy lifestyle. I have learned to better understand a healthy diet. I prepare my own meals now even though I still prefer eating to cooking! In an effort to improve my overall health I took up Pilates, which I refer to as the Fountain of Youth. I also started boxing and strength training. Amanda R. played a big role in assisting with my lifestyle changes and weight loss and continues to play a huge role in.

In 2021, I devoted myself to the running. My goal was to run with the Bulls.



There were few people I could find who had actually completed the run. Every indicator made it clear that "Running of the Bulls" at the San Fermin festival in Pamplona Spain is a very dangerous endeavor.

On the Internet, I had images of people injured, fallen on the route, being tossed around by the bulls like ragdolls. Every day of the festival people are injured during the run.





July 2023

Dominic Running with the Bulls in Pamplona, Spain

Prior to retiring in 2020, I was assigned to the Police Academy. Many of my colleagues there were avid marathon runners in their peak physical form. I have never been built for running, definitely not for twenty-six plus miles. I once joked that a group of us should travel to Pamplona Spain and Run with the Bulls at the San Fermin festival, it is less than a three-mile run; nobody committed to my idea.

On Wednesday, July 12, 2023, my son and I successfully (no injuries or falls) Ran with the Bulls and words cannot adequately describe the feeling of exhilaration and accomplishment!



When you hear the rockets announcing the start of the run, to hearing the cowbells as the bull's race past you, to the sounds of the sellout crowd at the bullfighting arena at the conclusion of the run, nothing prepares you for the incredible high of having successfully completed this incredible feat. My son and I are now, "Encierros!"



"I cannot emphasize enough the value of the Stony Brook World Trade Center Health and Wellness Program, specifically their Wellness staff and my friend Amanda R. I humbly encourage you to set a goal and stick to it. I did not, nor do I have a, "bucket list" of thrill-seeking events. I do have a goal of getting/ staying healthy and living a long happy life. Go visit your WTCHP location and tell them you too want to prepare for the Running of the Bulls in Pamplona Spain! Viva San Fermin! Best of luck, be well, be safe. " -Dominic

Brain Aging Research

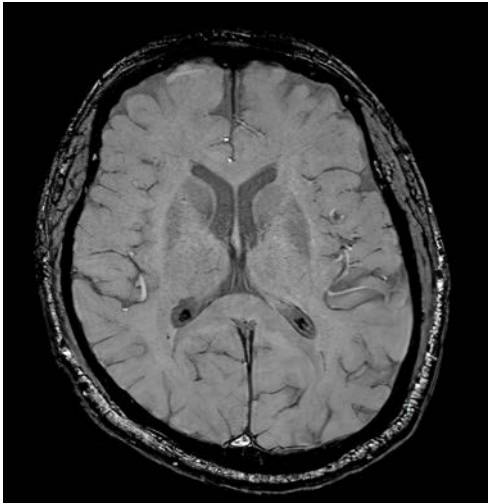
at Stony Brook’s World Trade Center Health and Wellness Program

As we get older, it is important to get regular checkups for your body and brain. Every time you come in for a monitoring visit, we use tools like the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA) to monitor your brain health.

Our research team studies the results of these tests performed during your visit, so we can better understand how World Trade Center exposures might be linked with brain aging and atrophy.

We have already published some of our findings including a study about the presence of atrophy in impaired responders, and about associations between WTC toxic exposures and neuroinflammation among others.

One goal of ours is also to better understand how exposures to dust and other toxins might interact with WTC-related PTSD in changing how the brain works.



A big part of our study involves using brain imaging techniques that let us build high-definition pictures of participants’ brains.

The scanners we use take a series of “PET” and “MRI” pictures, which we can use to build a 3D picture of a person’s brain.

MRI scans take beautiful pictures of the anatomy of a person’s brain, so that we know how healthy a person’s brain is overall.

The PET scan uses an injected tracer to help us map where damaging proteins are found in the brain. These proteins are found in most neurodegenerative diseases, like Alzheimer’s disease. We picked these ligands (molecules that bind to another) because they were found in the blood of responders with cognitive impairment.



If you're interested in learning more, contact:

Alissa Barber at (631)-216-8842 or Alissa.Barber@stonybrookmedicine.edu

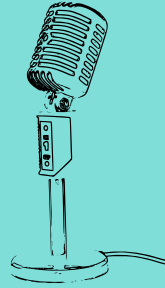


Re-Launching Remembering 9/11

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Ensure that your story is not lost to time.

Document your role as a 9/11 responder, survivor or family member.



The Remembering 9/11 Oral History Project has interviewed over 450 9/11 responders, survivors and family members.

We want to hear your perspective.

We need your help to document one of the most significant events in American history, and its consequences.

We have partnered with the Library of Congress, so the story of 9/11, told by those who were there, is preserved for future generations.

Not only are we looking for the unique recollections of first responders, we also deem it important to include the perspective of family members of 9/11 first responders & survivors.

If you are or a family member is interested in learning more, contact:

Camile Arnone, Communications Coordinator
(631) 638-0323 or Camile.Arnone@stonybrookmedicine.edu

Pharmacy

Semaglutide

WHAT IS SEMAGLUTIDE USED FOR?

Semaglutide, sold under the brand names Ozempic, Wegovy, and Rybelsus, is an antidiabetic medication used in the treatment of Type 2 diabetes to lower blood sugar and also used for weight loss in specific people for weight management. Semaglutide is not used for Type 1 diabetes.

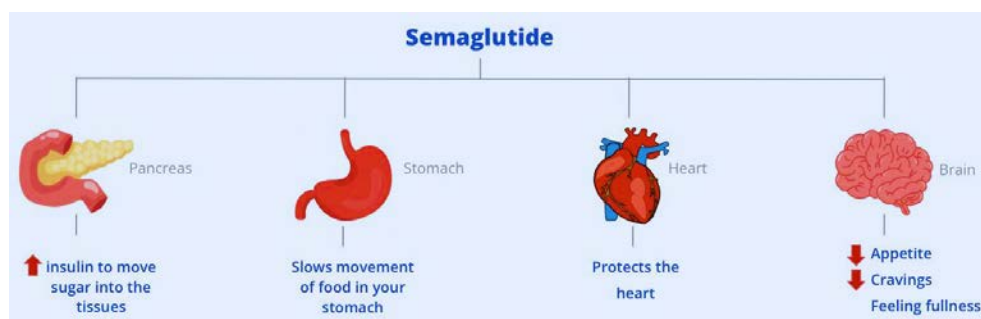
WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OZEMPIC, WEGOVY AND RYBELSUS?

Ozempic and Wegovy are injectable prescription drugs, and Rybelsus is an oral medication, containing the same active ingredient, semaglutide. The main difference is the amount of semaglutide in each pen, and what they are used for. Ozempic and Rybelsus are used for controlling blood sugar in adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus and Wegovy is used for weight loss in people 18 years of age.



HOW DOES SEMAGLUTIDE WORK?

It works on the pancreas, stomach, heart, and brain.



WHAT ARE COMMON SIDE EFFECTS?

It can cause a disorder that slows or stops the movement of food from your stomach to your small intestine, abdominal pain (6%-20%), constipation (6%), diarrhea (10%), nausea/vomiting (8%).

HOW SHOULD THIS MEDICINE BE USED?

Ozempic and Wegovy are prefilled dosing pens to inject under the skin, once a week. Never reuse needles and never share needles or pens. Inject in your upper arm, thigh, or stomach area and change (rotate) the injection site. Rybelsus is an oral medication, taken at least 30 minutes before the first meal of the day.

REFERENCE

Semaglutide [package insert] Denmark, NJ: Novo Nordisk A/S; 2017

Created by: Kaitlyn N Lee

Pharmacy

DUPIXent (dupilumab)

What Dupixent is Used for:

In adults, Dupixent is used alone or with other medications to treat:

- Uncontrolled moderate-to-severe eczema
- Uncontrolled moderate-to-severe asthma
 - Not for acute asthma attack
- Uncontrolled chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps
- Eosinophilic esophagitis (inflammation of the esophagus caused by a specific white blood cell)
- Prurigo nodularis (a chronic skin disorder characterized by the presence of hard, extremely itchy bumps)

Common Side Effects of Dupixent:

- Injection site reactions including pain, itching, swelling or redness around the site of injection
- Eye and eyelid inflammation including redness, swelling, and itching, sometimes with blurred vision
- Cold sores in your mouth or on your lips
- Body aches and pains
- Trouble sleeping

How Dupixent should be stored:

Dupixent should be refrigerated. If necessary, Dupixent may be kept at room temperature for up to 14 days.

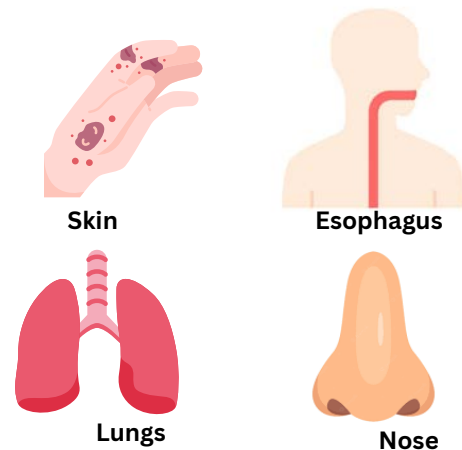
- Do not expose Dupixent to heat or direct sunlight.

References:

- Dupixent.com
- MayoClinic.org
- Medlineplus.gov

How Dupixent Works:

Dupixent helps block a protein that is a key source of inflammation caused by a condition related to these organs:



Dupixent calms an overreactive immune system but does not suppress the immune system.

How to use Dupixent:

Figure 1:

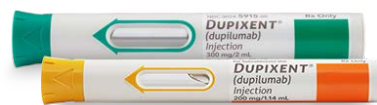


Figure 2:

Dupixent is available as a prefilled pen (Figure 1) or syringe (Figure 2). It is given as a shot into the fatty part of the skin on the top of the thigh, belly area, or upper arm. Use a different body area each time a shot is given. Do not inject into areas that are tender, damaged, bruised, or scarred.

How often is the shot given?

Adult:

- Eczema: Every other week
- Asthma: Every other week
- Rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps: Every other week
- Eosinophilic esophagitis: Every week
- Prurigo nodularis: Every other week



Going Through a Tough Time?

Help is Available.



Mental Health Resources

National Suicide Prevention Hotline
NYS Crisis Text Line

1- 800-273-8255
Text GOT5 to 741741

National Domestic Violence Hotline
Family Service League-DASH Hotline 24/7

1-800-799-7233
631-952-3333

Alcohol and Substance Use Treatment Resources

Long Island Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence 24/7 Hotline 631-979-1700

Nassau County Alcoholics Anonymous 24/7 Hotline
Suffolk County Alcoholics Anonymous 24/7 Hotline

516-292-3040
631-654-1150

If You Are Having a Crisis, Please Dial 9-8-8.

***988 is the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Available 24/7**



Nutrition Feature: Recipe of the Season



CRISP APPLE SALAD

Serves 4

- 1 crisp tart apple, sliced
- 8 cups mixed greens (butter or Bibb lettuce, arugula, etc.)
- 1/4 cup toasted or raw pecans
- 1/4 cup goat cheese or feta cheese crumbles
- 1/4 cup pomegranate seeds or dried cranberries
- 6 Tbsp Maple Vinaigrette dressing

MAPLE VINAIGRETTE

Add all ingredients to a dressing bottle or mason jar & shake to combine

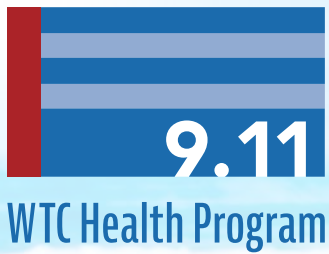
- 2 Tbsp maple syrup
- 2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1/4 tsp kosher salt
- 6 Tbsp olive oil
- Fresh ground black pepper (optional)



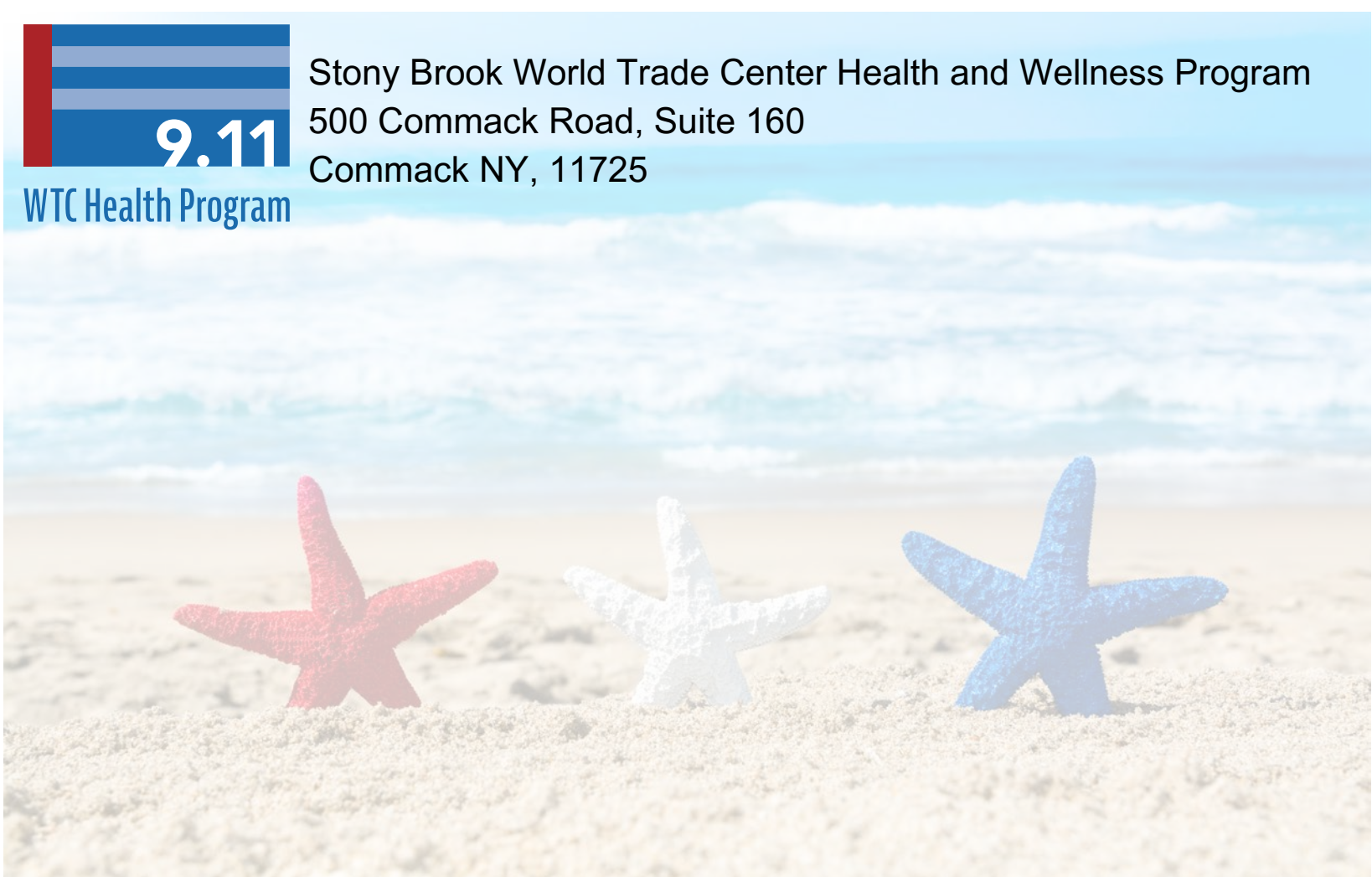
Nutrition Facts: For 1/4 salad and 1/4 dressing

350 calories, 30g fat (6g saturated fat), 16g carb, 3g fiber, 12g sugar, 6g protein

We recommend adding 3-4 oz grilled chicken or 1/2 cup chickpeas to boost protein for a balanced, WTC Nutrition-Approved Meal!



Stony Brook World Trade Center Health and Wellness Program
500 Commack Road, Suite 160
Commack NY, 11725



Locations:

Commack Clinic

500 Commack Road, Suite 160
Commack, NY
P: (631) 855-1200

Westbury Clinic

1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 220
Westbury, NY



www.stonybrookmedicine.edu/WTCcdc.gov/wtc