



**Finding Umami
with Jamie Wei**
(@chopsticksmeetfork)

National Webinar Transcript

June 16, 2022

Presented by:



This program was made possible with support by:



**The Cooperative Agreement DP19-1906 from the
Centers of Disease Control and Prevention**

This program was made in partnership with:



Sharsheret in the Kitchen – Finding Umami with Jamie Wei (@chopsticksmeeetfork)

Jessica Jablon:

Welcome everyone. We're so excited to have you join us today, for Sharsheret in the Kitchen's "Finding Umami with Jamie Wei" from @Chopsticksmeeetfork. I'm Jessica Jablon, I'm the California Program Coordinator at Sharsheret. For those of you who don't know about Sharsheret, we help women and families facing breast and ovarian cancer, as well as those who are at elevated genetic risk through free, confidential, and personalized support and resources. We also provide health education throughout the country. One of our goals is to make sure that we are offering healthy living and cancer prevention information to you during this time and giving you what support you need. In addition to our virtual services, that can be found on our website or by emailing us, you can also access prior webinars on a range of cancer related topics, as well as access our calendar of upcoming virtual programs through our website.

Jessica Jablon:

Before we begin, a few housekeeping items. Today's webinar is being recorded and for the first time we're live streaming it on our Facebook account. So, hi to our friends watching on Facebook. Participants faces and names will not be in the recording or be shown as long as you remain muted. It will be posted on Sharsheret's website, along with the transcript in the next week. Now, for those of you on Zoom, if you would like to remain private, you can turn off your video and rename yourself, or you can call into the webinar. Instructions are going in the chat box now for both of those options. And you may have noticed that all participants were muted upon entry, please keep yourself on mute throughout the call. If you have any questions for Jamie, put them in the chat box. To submit a private question, you can click on Sharsheret and send it to me directly, and I'll ask them throughout the program. And we will send out a follow up email with tips and recommendations from today's webinar with the recording in the next week or so.

Jessica Jablon:

We're very excited to continue our Sharsheret in the Kitchen series, an initiative in partnership with Cedars- Sinai here in Los Angeles to empower those of us at risk for breast and ovarian cancer to make healthier diet choices. We've had wonderful guests for this healthier cooking series, and we invite you to check out our prior Sharsheret in the Kitchen webinars on our website at the link in the chat. Now, you should have received the recipes for today's program in advance, but my colleague is going to put the link in the chat box so you can download them and print it or see it on your screen.

Jessica Jablon:

We want to thank today's webinar partners at the Women to Women program at Mount Sinai hospital in New York for their partnership. And we also want to thank our incredible sponsors, Cedars- Sinai, The Cooperative Agreement DP19-1906 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Daiichi Sankyo, GSK, and Merck. It is because of their generous support that we have been able to continue to provide our series of webinars throughout the pandemic.

Jessica Jablon:

Now, I want to share with you one of our favorite programs here at Sharsheret, our Busy Boxes. Busy Boxes are sent for free in the mail to families with young children to help you learn how to guide your children through your cancer or prophylactic surgery. Each Busy Box includes resource materials to educate parents about the impact of breast and ovarian cancer or prophylactic surgery on children. The Busy Box also features a starter kit of games and activities to occupy your children while you're at the

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doctor or resting after surgery or treatment, and our clinical and fulfillment teams work hard to personalize each family's Busy Box. If you would like to order a Busy Box, the information is being put into the chat now. And we also partner with organizations and individuals to do Busy Box toy drives, where you can collect the toys and have them shipped to our New Jersey offices, or we can give you a link to an Amazon wishlist where the toys are sent directly to our offices. If you are interested in finding out more about how to hold a Busy Box toy drive, or donate toys to our Busy Box program, please email us at info@sharsheret.org.

Jessica Jablon:

If you're interested in finding out more about Sharsheret's free, confidential, and personalized services, please email us at clinicalstaff@sharsheret.org, or visit us sharsheret.org.

Jessica Jablon:

Now, before we meet Jamie, I want to introduce one of our amazing California advisory committee members and volunteer, Sharon, who will be sharing her story with us.

Sharon:

Hi everybody. Thank you, Jessica. My story hopefully will be helpful to many others. I won't tell you yet how old I am, but two days before my 37th birthday, I felt a lump under my left arm. And I noticed it before, but it's just one of those things I sort of ignored. But finally it just hit me where I was like, "Wait a minute, this is not okay." And it was on a Friday, so of course all the doctor's offices are closed. And it was my daughter's fifth birthday at the time I have, I have two children. Just, thinking about it all weekend, so it was not really a fun weekend. But on Monday, I made an appointment, went to the OB who took a biopsy. And, of course, the hardest thing is waiting for those results.

Sharon:

And two days later, the longest two days of my life, I was at work. I was a kindergarten teacher at the time, and the word I got was they were atypical cells. So, of course, you hear that and you're like, "Oh my God." So, I ended up going to an oncologist. And one of the things that I remember feeling is, "Well, I don't want to bother anyone. I'll wait two weeks to go." And my husband and some family members who just had connections and were more assertive than I got me appointment the next day. And I have to say, I was very thankful for that help.

Sharon:

I took a genetic test as well, and I was positive for BRCA-1. And I also had a triple negative, which if some of you know, it's estrogen, progesterone, and a HER2 protein. I was negative for all three of those. But I was told we had to be very aggressive because what happened was that I apparently have a three centimeter tumor. And it was apparently stage 3B, which was because of the size, and that they had taken 36 lymph nodes out and 18 were positive. So, it went to my lymph nodes, so that's why it wasn't just contained.

Sharon:

So, I had a bilateral mastectomy and seven months of two different cocktails of chemotherapy followed by radiation. And so, it was a long road, but one of the things that was very helpful after the mastectomy was physical therapy. And I really want to stress that, that was the most such important aspect of my getting better and having full movement of my arms, and just physically feeling good.

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Sharon:

The other thing that I got was a dog. It was one of those things that I've always wanted, and my husband was like, "No, I don't want a dog." But now that I had cancer, he was like, "Get whatever you want." So, I got a dog, and that actually really helped me walk every day, and be able to take care of something else besides myself. And it also helped my children. My children really depended on that dog and it was such a comfort to them.

Sharon:

So, at that time, which was actually 20 years ago. So, that was 37 then, you could do the math of how old I am now. At that time, it was at the beginning of Sharsheret, actually. Rochelle Shoretz, who was the founder of Sharsheret, she was at a friend's house, and my friend had told me about it. I went with two other friends that I met through having breast cancer, and different friends who just introduced us. And I met more people just going there, and you really feel like you're not alone. And one of the things that Sharsheret really helped me with was, being able to help someone else was really a wonderful way to pay it forward, because I had many people supporting me. And it was very healing for me to be able to pay it forward and to be able to help other people through their chain program, which was me being able to talk to someone else who's going through the same experience.

Sharon:

So, to more recently, I now had, it's called an autologous trans flap. I had it about a few months ago, and I was very happy I have it now. I wasn't happy at the time because it's a very big surgery. But what that is, is when, I had implants initially, and they last... it's been 20 years. So, I then took the fat that I had in my stomach, and then put that where my breasts are. So now I don't have to have any other surgery ever again, because I'm using my own body. So, I'm very glad I did that, and I feel, in a way, whole again, because it's just me. It's not some foreign body living in me anymore.

Sharon:

So, for me, that was a very good decision that I had. And I just want to say that that's really my story, and it's been 20 years and I'm doing well. And I hope this is helpful for everybody out there. So, thank you.

Jessica Jablon:

Thank you, Sharon, for sharing your story and for being such a resource for our Sharsheret callers and our Sharsheret family. We're very lucky to have you, and appreciate that you are here today with us. So, thank you for sharing.

Jessica Jablon:

Now, I am excited to introduce Jamie Wei, also known as Chopsticks Meet Fork on social media. The kitchen is Jamie's comfort place, creating food is her way of meditating. Cooking and baking keeps her grounded and provides her with a sense of peace. Jamie was born and raised in Taiwan, so East Asian flavors are what she grew up eating and making. And she married an American Jew. And as she expanded beyond Taiwanese cuisine and cooking methods, she started working through a lot of cookbooks, mostly Middle Eastern or Jewish.

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Jessica Jablon:

And Jamie was fascinated by the foreign flavors, spices and cooking techniques, and she loves coming up with foods that combine both her husband's and her culture's dishes that can bring back memories, but also have a touch of novelty that create a wow at first bite. This is what motivates and inspires her to create all of her recipes. And if you follow her on Instagram, you know just how beautiful and delicious her recipes look. Please stay tuned to the end of our webinar and fill out our survey for a chance to win one of two bamboo steamers that we're going to be giving out. Welcome to Sharsheret in the Kitchen, Jamie, we are so glad that you're here today, and I'll turn it over to you.

Jamie Wei:

Well, hi Jessica. Hi everyone. I'm very honored and excited to be here. I am going to show you guys three recipe that I created specifically for this event. All of them are very delicious, full of umami, full of flavor, and it's very easy to make.

Jamie Wei:

So, I want to talk about why I feel very honored to be here, because I lost my mom to breast cancer, and I've been trying to find a lot of way to help, in a way, although it's not helping my mom directly, but it's like paying a tribute. So, I feel very honored that I am able to be here.

Jamie Wei:

Okay, let's start. I think a lot of you already have recipes, the first recipe I'm going to make today is my taro congee, because that'll take the longest. So, let's just start from that one. And because of the times I already pre-chop and soak the mushroom, and measure everything already. We're just going to start right away.

Jamie Wei:

First, take a pot that's going to hold at least five quarter of liquid because we have the broth and all the other ingredients. Heat up pot with the oil. And then, once the pot is hot enough... I pre-chop the taro. Basically, you can use taro, I personally really like the flavor of taro. You can find them in almost all the Asian supermarket. And sometimes you can find them at Whole Foods and some organic supermarket, or farmer's market. But if you don't like them, or you cannot find them, sweet potato works too.

Jamie Wei:

So, you chop them into not too small because they're going to melt. I chop them into one inch cubes. And then, put them into the pot. You need to stir them pretty frequently because they have a lot of starch. You don't want them to stick to the bottom. And what we are looking for is we are going to get some color on all the sides. So, I don't know if you can hear, I'm going to have my microphone close to that. You can hear the sizzling. But stir them frequently. Once they are color on all sides and they start seeing some crispy edges, that's when you can remove from the pot.

Jamie Wei:

Going to save the container. You also don't want to stir them constantly, because you want the heat to actually do the work. Because, if you stir them constantly, it's actually hard to have the crispy edge. So, just stir from time to time.

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Jessica Jablon:

It's cool that we can hear the sizzling.

Jamie Wei:

That's great, I really like that. When I look at cooking video on Instagram or Facebook, I love hearing all these chopping sounds or sizzling sound, I find that very therapeutic.

Jamie Wei:

So, if you are following along this, we're just stirring this to get some color on the taro. And I will not recommend to use potato. If you don't want to use sweet potato because they have very distinct flavor than potato. That's why I will recommend using these two root vegetable. And if you don't know how to chop them, when you get them, let me show you how taro look like. They look like this, it's very furry. You just use the fruit peeler, just peel them, and then chop them. That's it. And they will turn if you don't soak them in the water, or if you don't use them immediately. So, what I did earlier, because I pre-chop them, I soak them in the water while I was waiting, so they are not going get dark.

Jessica Jablon:

Did you use cold water or warm water? Does it matter, the temperature of the water that you're soaking it in?

Jamie Wei:

I used cold water. Now you can see actually it start changing color. Let me take one out. The colors are getting darker. What we're looking for is just start having some crispy edges. And once you start having that, just remove them from the pot. It's okay if you have some skin, or like some part of the taro stick in the bottom. It's going to come of later when you are cooking the broth.

Jamie Wei:

Then using the same pot... and you don't have to add more oil because you still have some oil left from when you are stir frying the taro. In this the same pot, without washing it, just add in the thinly sliced shallot. This process only takes probably one to two minutes, depending on how hot your pot is. What you're looking for here is, once the shallots start turning translucent, or if your shallots start having some crispy edges, then you're ready for the next step.

Jamie Wei:

This part you actually have to stir constantly. You don't want them to burn. Okay, and then once it's ready, add in your chopped celery and ginger. You can add more ginger if you want, it's really to taste. I usually use one to two inch-long ginger, and then finally chop them. But if you like very gingery stuff, you can add more. So here, you just stir fry until you start smelling the aroma from the ginger, probably one minute, top. And add in the mushroom. So, this is dry shiitake mushroom. You soak them in broth or water for at least one hour to make them softer, and then thinly slice them.

Jamie Wei:

So, add them in, stir to combine everything. And then, I use white rice. If you like brown rice, or other grain, you can use that too. But you will need to cook the congee longer because you don't want them to be too hard. So, this is white rice. I rinsed it in advance. So, adding the white rice, and then this is my

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kombu broth. Add in the broth. Kombu is Japanese for kelp, it's a kind of seaweed. And I use that to create a umami, you can use vegetable broth or chicken broth. I'm making this vegetarian, that's why I'm not using chicken broth. Otherwise you can definitely use chicken broth. Oh, and then add in the half tablespoon of salt.

Jamie Wei:

So, basically what I'm looking for in all three of my recipe here is, I want to show you guys how to use natural ingredient to create umami, create flavors, without adding too much salt, too much oil. I just want to look for some healthy recipe, but still it's not bland, it's not boring. It's still very delicious. So, I'm using kombu, in my recipe I show you how to do it. You cook the kombu for 10 minutes, that's it. And then you have the very umami-heavy broth ready to be used and it's vegetarian. It's vegan actually.

Jamie Wei:

So, we add in the salt and the rice and the broth. Let's just bring it to a boil.

Jessica Jablon:

Jamie, somebody asked, what does taro taste like? Does it-

Jamie Wei:

Taro taste like... it's like sweet potato, but, how do I describe it? Taro is something that we use a lot in is East Asian cuisine, both savory and sweet. They are great for savory dish, also great for dessert. And they have a very soft flavor, I don't actually know how to describe it. For us, it's a source for carbs. And because they're very easy to grow, it's just like sweet potato. That's why we eat it a lot, and it's cheap. So, it's kind of like sweet potato, but a little bit different. Also the color is different, taro is light purple. Does that answer your question? Sorry, I don't know how to describe the flavor. Taro, try it out.

Jessica Jablon:

It gives us all the motivation to go out and buy some, and try it ourselves.

Jamie Wei:

Yes. And also you can find taro dessert in Asian bakeries, or all the Boba tea place, they definitely have taro drinks. Although, I will say, those are very sweet and very artificial. If you use natural taro to make dessert, it's not as sweet. And I prefer making my own, just because I like the natural flavor more.

Jessica Jablon:

And someone says that you can make taro chips, like potato chips?

Jamie Wei:

Yes. Oh, actually, if you go to Trader Joe's, or in Walgreens, they sell taro chips too. Whole foods, too. They have taro chips.

Jamie Wei:

Okay, I can hear it start to bubble. And then, in my recipe, I originally forgot to add that you need to return the taro back to the pot. This is where you return the taro back to the pot. And then, I think Jessica is going to send out a final version later after the webinar. You will have the final version, which

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will have this step. I'm so sorry, I forgot that. Just after you bring this pot, once it start simmering, add the taro back. You don't want to add it back in too early, because they will melt into the broth. If you want them to melt, you can add them in early. But I personally prefer to still have some taro left when I am eating the congee later. So, I usually add them last. So now, just bring it back to a boil, and once we start boiling, we can move on to the next recipe. Do we have more questions? I can answer some now.

Jessica Jablon:

No, right now we look good. If you have questions, please put them in the chat and we will ask them.

Jamie Wei:

And, what else? I think someone sent question yesterday in advance, asking about...

Jessica Jablon:

There were a couple of questions that came in. One was about the different flavors. If they want to do some Asian cooking at home, what kinds of ingredients do you recommend?

Jamie Wei:

Oh, yes. What I always have is toasted sesame oil. I have rice vinegar, and then I also always have soy sauce. There are actually a lot of different kind of soy sauce out there, and Eater, they have an amazing soy sauce article telling you how to use different kind of soy sauce. Pause for a second. Now this is boiling, what we are going to do is we're going move it to the side, and then maintain a soft simmer.

Jamie Wei:

I'm going to cover it. Total, we are going to cook for 25 minutes, but we are going to stir every 8 to 10 minutes so the bottom is not going to burn, and the ingredients not going to stick to the bottom. And because I'm doing different dishes at the same time, usually I will just use a timer to remind myself so I'm not going to forget. So, this is a eight-minute timer.

Jamie Wei:

So, soy sauce. I think a lot of people just, by default, buy Japanese soy sauce, but actually Japanese soy sauce is totally different, how they make it, and how they taste, and the consistency are very different than Chinese soy sauce. And Chinese soy sauce, they have light, they have dark, they have steamed fish soy sauce, there are a lot of different soy sauce. What I always keep in my cabinet is the light soy sauce. And then, I use Taiwanese one because I grew up using this.

Jamie Wei:

So, soy sauce, sesame oil, rice vinegar, and I also have rice liquor. So, this is a cooking liquor made of rice. I use it a lot. These are my main flavor, but that's for Chinese cooking. But if you do Southeast cuisine, then fish sauce is also something that I use a lot. And, besides that, I use a lot of chili, a lot of ginger, a lot of garlic. That's the basic profile for taste. Spices, oh I just saw that spices.

Jamie Wei:

So, spices, we use a lot of white pepper. I'm going to use white pepper for the congee later, and we use chili crisp. And mostly are the dressing. I know in Middle Eastern cuisine, there are a lot of different spices, which I'm very fascinated of. But in Chinese cuisine, we use like herbs. We use Chinese cinnamon

and a lot of different Chinese herbs when we braise meat and stuff. But for stir fry and stuff, we don't usually use a lot of spices. Because, when we use spice, it's for slow cooking.

Jamie Wei:

So now, we are going to move on to the next dish. The next dish I'm going to make the sesame spinach tofu salad. First, I'm going to bring a pot of water to boil. And then, we're going to stir fry some spinach. And I have heard a lot of complaints from people when they say, oh, they don't like stir fry spinach because it's so soggy and watery. And the reason of that being soggy and watery is because those spinach are overcooked. When the leaves are burned by the heat, they tend to release water. And that means you're actually overcooking them, and that's why they become soggy and water and look very gross.

Jamie Wei:

So, what we are going to do today, I'm going to show you how I usually cook my spinach. You heat this frying pan, add the oil. I always use sunflower oil. You can use any oil that's good for high heat and stir fry. I never use olive oil, because olive oil get burned. They are not meant for high heat cooking. If you go to, say, Whole Foods, or you Google online, they will always show you what kind of oil is for what kind of temperature, what kind of cooking. I always go for sunflower oil, some people use grapeseed oil, but that's so expensive, so I use sunflower oil.

Jamie Wei:

So, you heat it. Once it's hot, make sure it's hot, then we can put the spinach in. Once you put the spinach in, turn the heat off after 5 to 10 seconds. And then, you are using the remaining heat from the pot to cook the rest of the leaves. They will still be cooked, but they will not be watery, you'll see.

Jessica Jablon:

Do you ever use avocado oil?

Jamie Wei:

I don't use avocado oil. I know it's very trendy right now, but I've never used them. I stir fry a lot, I always use sunflower oil. And then, for salad and stuff, I use olive oil, and I also use sesame oil a lot for flavor.

Jamie Wei:

Okay, so now the pot is hot enough. I already wash and chop the spinach to a desired length. You can just chop them into however long you want. I just want to chop them because I know, for some people, if you are going through a special diet, fiber is really not your friend. So, I try to not have fiber that the length is too long, and just chop them. So, you add them in. Did you hear that? I love that sound.

Jessica Jablon:

That was a great sound.

Jamie Wei:

So, turn the heat of. And then you use the remaining heat to cook the spinach. You don't have to use chopsticks to cook the spinach, just use spatula or tongs.

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Jessica Jablon:

Jamie, I see a lot of questions about the tofu in the chat. There are people who don't like tofu, although I love one comment who says, "I used to think I didn't like it until I learned the right way to prepare it." But there's a few people asking for a tofu substitute. Do you have anything in mind that you might use instead for this?

Jamie Wei:

I've heard a lot of people that didn't grow up eating tofu, not liking tofu. I think tofu is one of the very underrated ingredient, just because... I agree, the comment saying that, "Oh, because we don't really know how to properly prepare it." There are so many different way to prepare it. There are so many different kind of tofu. I'm using silken or soft tofu here, there are firm tofu, there extra-firm tofu, there are frozen tofu. They are all different texture. And if you want to use a substitute, let me think. Oh, you can use potato. Really, this salad recipe is very versatile. You can pair it however you want. If you don't like spinach, use another kind of greens. Or, if you don't like tofu, use another kind of starch, or ingredient that you want to pair with your greens.

Jamie Wei:

And then, the dressing actually is very perfect for a lot of different food. So, go wild. Or, I know a lot of people really love potato. Potato will go very well with this. Or, if you make some cold noodles, and then you put in the center, and then you mix with the sesame dressing that we're going to make soon, it's going to taste so good. Sesame noodle is one of my favorite for summer. And to go with this vegetable and the dressing, it's just going to be perfect. So if you don't like tofu, it's fine. You can use whatever you want. Does that answer your question?

Jessica Jablon:

Someone asked if you could maybe use beans instead.

Jamie Wei:

I probably would not use beans, only because beans has a very distinct flavor on its own, which, the flavor is very pretty. And I would not say it would go very well with the sesame dressing. Try to have some ingredient that doesn't have very distinct flavor.

Jessica Jablon:

Great. And I guess if you wanted to try the beans, then let us know how it tastes. We're always curious to hear if you tried the recipes and modify them at all.

Jamie Wei:

Yes.

Jessica Jablon:

And going back to the congee, there were a couple of questions about substitutions for mushrooms, and whether or not you can use fresh shiitake mushrooms.

Jamie Wei:

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So, in East Asian cuisine, in Korean, Japanese, Chinese dishes, we use a lot of dry shiitake mushroom because the umami is so condensed. The flavor and the aroma is very different than the fresh ones. And you can find them very cheap in Chinatown, in Korean supermarket, in Japanese supermarket. Well, I will say, Korean and Japanese supermarket will be pricier, but in Chinatown you can find a lot of them, it's pretty cheap. And then, the reason why I use mushroom, and this is going to answer one of the questions that I got in advance, that mushroom is one of the umami flavor source we use in Asian cuisine. It's all natural, they're packed with a lot of the very amazing flavor. So, if you don't want to use mushroom... you can always use fresh one, that's for sure. But the flavor will be less intense.

Jamie Wei:

Okay, the spinach is ready, and then I'm just transfer them into a serving platter. And then, what we're going to do is to make a well here, because later we're going to put a tofu in the center. The reason why I chose tofu here is because tofu is a great source for protein. And I know protein is very important for a lot of different diets. Depending on your treatment, you might lose a lot of protein, and then this is a great source for you to absorb it. And if you're looking for vegetarian or vegan, tofu is a great source.

Jamie Wei:

And I want to also mention why I am stir frying and cooking the tofu here. Because, back in the day, when my mom was getting all her cancer treatment, she didn't eat raw food for a lot of different reasons. And we usually blanch or steam her ingredient, but I also know that here, a lot of people think that blanching or steaming vegetables, for example, you will lose a lot of nutrition along the way. That's why I stir fry the spinach instead of blanching it. But you can always blanch your vegetable if that's not one of your concerns, if that's easier for you. And that's also why I'm not serving raw salad, because I try to prepare everything that's cooked for you guys.

Jamie Wei:

Now, like I said earlier, there are so many different kind of tofu. You can use whatever kind of tofu you want, or not tofu if you want to use other ingredient. Beans, potatoes, noodles, whatever you want. And we just cook them. I'll cook them for two to three minutes, and I'm going to remove them, and then cut them into small cubes, and then place on the plate.

Jamie Wei:

Aww, yeah, I just saw that, "Just want to say tofu is awesome." I agree. There are just so many different ways, you can braise the tofu, you can pan fry the tofu, you can deep fry the tofu. If you don't like frying, mapo tofu is amazing. You can make it vegan, you can make it with meat. It goes so well with rice, I love rice. You can eat it with rice, with noodle, with a lot of different things.

Jamie Wei:

There's just so many different tofu recipe out there. And if you don't like that soft texture, extra-firm tofu is totally different than soft tofu or silken tofu. Or, in Asian supermarket, you can find fish tofu, you can find frozen tofu, it has has very interesting texture that's good with soup. There are so many different tofu recipe out there. It's just very versatile and delicious.

Jamie Wei:

So here, this is in the pot for two minutes now. I'm going to remove it and then place it on my cutting board here. Just be careful.

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Jessica Jablon:

Jamie, there's a couple of questions about whether or not the tofu needs to be pressed.

Jamie Wei:

Oh, so pressing the tofu is to release the water inside. That's why you're pressing the tofu. So, you can press it. Once you press it, because when you buy the tofu block is actually soaking the water. And then, when you take them out, if you place them in a bowl, over time you will see they start releasing water. But to save you time, you can just have paper towel on top, and then have a bowl or a plate on top. And then, that will squeeze a lot of the water out. And it's not necessary, but you can do it. Especially if you say a lot of people, when they're pan fry the tofu, you are making tofu steak, getting rid of a lot of the moist is very helpful. So, it's a very useful technique, but you don't have to do it.

Jamie Wei:

Should I move it here? Let move it here. So, once these are cool enough to handle, just cut them into cubes. And then, take that plate with the spinach that you have a well in the center, place the tofu on the plate. Then now, we're going to cover it with, I use wax wrap, you can use plastic wrap. Just cover it. And I'm going to leave it in the fridge while we prepare for other ingredients.

Jessica Jablon:

Somebody asked why you cooked the tofu.

Jamie Wei:

Why I cooked the tofu? I don't serve raw food, that's why. You don't have to cook it. A lot of people, when you make tofu salad, you don't cook the tofu. It's just because, when I create this recipe, what I have in mind is what I will serve my mom when she was going through treatment. And then, raw food is just a huge no for her. That's why all my food here are cooked, stir fry, or blanched.

Jamie Wei:

So, this is another eight minutes, I'm going to stir it. And then, I cook for 25 minutes for the white rice, because that's the consistency and the texture of the rice I like. Some people, like my sister, she doesn't really like to have the texture of rice, so she will cook for longer until all the rice is almost melted in the broth. And to do that, you'll need to add more broth along the way. But it really is your personal preference how well cooked you want the rice to be.

Jessica Jablon:

So just to back-step one bit, Jamie, that wax wrap that you put on the bowl, do you have a brand that you like? That was pretty cool. I got some messages about, "Oh, what brand is that? Where do I find that?"

Jamie Wei:

Oh, it's a Norwegian brand. I can send you the link later. I really like cute stuff, and floral stuff. That's why I really like their stuff, because they're all very florally, it's very cute. And that made me happy. I will send you the link, don't worry, you guys will know where to get it.

Jessica Jablon:

Perfect. We'll add it to our list of recommendations we'll send out with the recording.

Jamie Wei:

Yes. So, after we are done with the tofu and the spinach, now we're going to make the dressing. I'm going to make it on the board. All my dressing ingredient, I usually don't mix everything all at once. I find it easier to mix the tahini and the peanut butter. Here, I'm using the all-natural peanut butter, so there's no sugar. It's just peanuts and oil. Add the water first, make sure they are well combined. This way, you can get a smoother dressing easier. So you put in the tahini and the peanut butter with the water, and mix them. It will look very weird in the beginning, but don't worry. Trust me, they will look and taste very great later.

Jessica Jablon:

Someone was curious, what is generally involved when you develop recipes and how you go about creating them?

Jamie Wei:

Mm-hmm. So, my comfort zone is Taiwanese or Chinese cuisine just because I grew up with them. But, after I met my husband, I start cooking for high holidays, and all the different Jewish holiday. And I find it very fascinating. All the flavor is just so different, all the spices are different. And so, when I start creating my own, which my goal was to create something that, say, during high holiday, when I eat it I can still taste a bit of home.

Jamie Wei:

And then, my husband's family and friends can still taste their traditional flavor. And I think it's a win-win situation, and it's also very fun to do that. So, with that in mind, I always try to keep the tradition, but with some different twist, or flavor, or ingredient from my culture, when I am creating, say, Jewish Asian recipe. And besides that, it's also in-season ingredient, because I buy my ingredient from farmer's market a lot. So now, I'm going to adding the rest of the ingredient. In the farmer's market, everything's in season. And I usually get inspired by what I can get from the farmer's market, and then start from there, what I can do with those ingredients and then develop recipe from there.

Jessica Jablon:

And if you aren't following Jamie on her social media, I highly recommend it. Especially during Passover. Some of the amazing Jewish Asian fusion recipes really looked delicious. So, what did you just add in?

Jamie Wei:

I add in rice vinegar, sesame oil, soy sauce, and maple syrup. So, I want some sweetness, but I also don't want to use processed sugar. I used maple syrup here. And salt, I used one eighth teaspoon of salt. It's just little tiny bit of salt. That's it. And those are all the flavor that I said before that I always keep in my pantry, because a lot of my recipe use those ingredients.

Jamie Wei:

Okay, so they're now all mixed. And then, we're just going to set them aside while we make our final dish. So, the first two are all vegetarian. The final dish that I'm going to make is with salmon. So this is a steam egg dish, it's very easy to make, and is very versatile as well. You can make it with so many

different ingredient, really depends on what you feel like at that moment. I have two room temperature eggs. Why room temperature? Because, when the eggs are very cold, it's very hard to whisk them apart. It's great if you are trying to separate a egg yolk and egg white, but when you are trying to whisk them, it's better to have them at room temperature.

Jamie Wei:

So, this is what I'm going to do. First, you put in the egg. Then I'm adding in a quarter teaspoon of salt. Salt also help to deconstruct the eggs. I learned it from a bakery that this is how they do to save time when they need to whisk a lot of eggs, they add in some of the salt. So, if you're a baker, in a baking recipe you'll see salt, and some people will mix the salt with dry ingredient. But some bakery, they actually mix the salt with the wet ingredient because that will save them some time in their day when they are whisking a lot of eggs.

Jamie Wei:

After you have the egg and the salt, add in the mushroom kombu broth. Basically, I soaked the mushroom in the kombu broth, and then that's how I got the umami from the mushroom with the kombu. And that's how I use in my steam eggs. If you don't keep kosher, you can use chicken broth or you can use vegetable broth. The reason why I don't use vegetable broth in the congee and the steam eggs is because... Now the congee is ready. Let me see.

Jamie Wei:

The reason why I don't use vegetable broth is because I want the color of the congee and the steam eggs to stay as pure as possible. And I personally don't like the color from the vegetable broth. That's why I didn't use that, I choose to make my own kombu broth. So here, let me show you what the congee looks like right now. So congee is something we eat a lot. Growing up, whenever I'm sick, or when I need comfort food, this is the go-to. So here, they look like this.

Jessica Jablon:

Nice.

Jamie Wei:

So, that is done. I'm going to keep it cover so it stay warm.

Jessica Jablon:

And someone said, "That looks delish."

Jamie Wei:

It is very delish. It's so comforting. Whenever me and my sister want comfort food, if you ask us separately, we will both give you the same answer, which is congee. Well, but we'll want different consistency. She'll want something that looks very melted all together.

Jamie Wei:

So now we are going to whisk it. There are three tips for my steam eggs. This is the first one, which is you need to take your time to whisk the egg. The more the you whisk the egg, the smoother texture

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later after you steam the egg. So, you need to try to break down the egg as much as possible. I would say continue to whisk for 20, 30 minutes.

Jamie Wei:

I use forks, because I find fork is my favorite tool when it comes to whisking eggs.

Jessica Jablon:

Jamie, just going back to the congee for a moment, could you make it without mushrooms?

Jamie Wei:

Yes. So, basically, there are so many different kind of congee. We also actually make Kaji just with rice and water, or rice with broth, without anything else. We have a lot of side dishes that we will eat, kind of like oatmeal. So, you can make plain congee, you can add fish, ground beef, whatever ingredient you want to add in. They're all congee, it's just here I use mushroom for the umami, and then the vegetables. Mushroom is not a must. The must is the water or broth with the rice. That's it.

Jessica Jablon:

And what kind of container are you using right there? Is that just-

Jamie Wei:

This is actually what you use to make cocktail, I just use it to whisk eggs.

Jessica Jablon:

I love that. And then, you said you're supposed to whisk for 20 to 30 minutes. Was that-

Jamie Wei:

Did I say minute? Yeah, second.

Jessica Jablon:

That makes more sense.

Jamie Wei:

Yeah, sorry.

Jessica Jablon:

I think everybody was going, "20 or 30 minutes?"

Jamie Wei:

Oh, no. I'm so sorry, seconds. So now they look very good.

Jessica Jablon:

Yeah, we can see.

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Jamie Wei:

So, now what we are going to do is have two ramekin. You don't have to use this. I like how they look in the ramekin, you can use like any kind of bowls that can sustain heat. Two ramekin, and then two salmon, place them in the ramekin.

Jessica Jablon:

They're so cute.

Jamie Wei:

Yeah, they're very nice. And then, this is the shiitake mushroom that I already soak, and they are now soft, and I slice them. Just place them around the salmon.

Jessica Jablon:

And I know we're just about at an hour, so I just want to remind everybody that we are recording this, we will be sending this out if you have to go. We will be sending out the follow up and everything next week. How big were the salmon pieces, someone had asked.

Jamie Wei:

So, that total is 50 gram, and then I separate them. So each about 25. And then, here is the soy sauce, I forgot to add it into the egg. Yeah, it's less than 30, just because I really like balanced portion. But if you're a huge salmon fan, you can go wild, have 50 gram, each bowl is fine.

Jamie Wei:

So, the second tip for this steam eggs is use the fine sieve. This will give you a smooth texture later. You pour the egg through the fine sieve. And then, the third tip later is to use plastic wrap. And it's very important to check your packaging, that plastic wrap need to be microwave safe because you want to make sure you are using a plastic wrap that's safe for heat.

Jamie Wei:

So, that's that. And we're going to set this here. And then, on the packaging, you can always see, if they are microwave safe they will say it here. Why are we using plastic wrap is because when you are steaming the egg, there are a lot of water that would drip. And in order for you to have a glossy surface, you don't want the water to drop on the surface while it's being cooked. So, this plastic wrap is going to prevent that to happen, which is why we are using it. You don't have to use it, if you don't mind. If glossy is not something you are looking for, then it's totally fine. It's not a must.

Jessica Jablon:

Jamie, do you ever use liquid aminos? Someone said that supposedly they can be a substitute per soy sauce and they're not as salty.

Jamie Wei:

So, again, when people tell me that soy sauce is salty, I think it's maybe because you're using either dark soy sauce or Japanese soy sauce. Because a lot of the soy sauce, like light soy sauce, or steam soy that's for steaming, they are not as savory. I would not describe them as so salty. So, I've never used that, but I'm going to Google it. It's very interesting. I always use soy sauce. If you go to Chinese supermarket, you

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will see a whole aisle of different soy sauce. They all taste different, and they all have different usage for different recipe and flavor.

Jamie Wei:

So, if you think the soy sauce you have in your kitchen is very salty, try get a lighter one, light soy sauce. They are like... how should I put it? Like beer. Beer has different color based on how they are made, and then the process are all different and result in different flavor, and different taste, and different color. Same thing for soy sauce. They have different color, and then they have different flavor.

Jamie Wei:

So, what I just did is I put in some water in my wok, or if you don't have wok, you can use pan too. This is where I'm going to put my steam basket for steaming. While we are waiting for the water, is there more question?

Jessica Jablon:

There aren't right this second, but I would say that we are going to be giving out a couple of bamboo steamers to people who fill out our evaluation at the end. So, make sure to stay tuned for that.

Jamie Wei:

I remember there's another question that got sent to me yesterday, which is, if you are um-

Jessica Jablon:

Oh, was it about the-

Jamie Wei:

... sodium.

Jessica Jablon:

Yeah. So, someone wanted to know about enjoying Asian food without having too much sodium.

Jamie Wei:

Yeah. So, a lot of the food I grew up with are not salty at all. I will say when I was a kid, we would say, "Oh, Western food is very over seasoned, very salty." That's how I was brought up, the image. And later on I learned that's not true. Same thing for Asian food. I think a lot of the, say, Chinese restaurant here, they tailor to whatever flavor that sell the most. And then they season very heavily for all of their dishes, but that's actually not the representative of the cuisine itself. So, for example, all the food I made today are very iconic Chinese dishes, but none of them are super salty. And for the person who emailed me the question about, don't want to use too much salt, in Asian cuisine, we use a lot of MSG.

Jamie Wei:

And I think MSG has a very bad reputation in Western world, but I actually Google on the US Government's nutrition website, MSG actually has 12% less sodium than table salt. And there are so many other benefit that, if you go on the government's website, they will tell you what other benefit you can have using MSG if too much salt, or too much sodium is a concern. MSG, which we use a lot growing up, is a good alternative. And besides that, a lot of flavor, like I said, we use are not from salt.

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Salt actually is something that we add in the last, for a little bit seasoning. Most of the flavor are come from mushroom, the seaweed, or vegetables, or we use a lot of bone, or bone broth. So, most of the flavor are actually not from salt.

Jamie Wei:

So now, this is start boiling. I'm going to put my steam basket on, and then carefully put your ramekin into the container, close it. And then we are going to steam for eight minutes. Now, when it's time, don't open the lid. Turn off the heat, and then let it sit for another three minutes before you take it out. And then, the egg will be fully cooked, and we will be able to enjoy it. While we are waiting for the eggs, we're going to take the spinach tofu out. We're going to start plating.

Jamie Wei:

This is the tofu, they're all cold now. And what we are going to do is, this is the dressing we just made. Just stir a little bit so everything's mixed. And then, just directly drizzle on the dressing. I know you cannot see right now, I will show you.

Jessica Jablon:

Is there a substitute to eggs? For the-

Jamie Wei:

Oh, for the steam eggs?

Jessica Jablon:

Yeah.

Jamie Wei:

I don't know. I know for baking, there are substitute for eggs, but if you want to make a steam eggs without eggs, I have never try it, so I'm not really sure. I can look into it, but at this moment, I don't really know.

Jessica Jablon:

Thanks.

Jamie Wei:

So, I have some toasted white sesame seeds. I usually would toast the seeds or nuts before I use them, that actually brought up more aroma from it. So, I toast the white sesame seed, and then to garnish, you just sprinkle them on freely after you pour on the dressing. And then, that's it. Here.

Jessica Jablon:

Looks so good.

Jamie Wei:

And then, for the congee, just take a serving ball, or whichever container you want to enjoy your congee in. And then, just serve the congee in the bowl. The congee, you can keep them in a airtight container

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after they are cool. And then, when you want to reheat them, just add some more water or broth, and then just bring them back to a boil, and you can eat them. They will keep in a fridge for two, three days. And it's very easy to make them and then reheat them. So, that's also another reason why I really like it.

Jamie Wei:

So, once you put them in the bowl, this is optional, I also blanch some snap pea. And I finely chopped them, like that. Just because, right now, this entire thing looks beige. And then, when I serve food, I really like a pop of color, and also a different texture. Sometimes I use cilantro, but, like I said, I want everything to be cooked. So, I use blanched snap pea here. So here, I think they look cuter this way. You don't have to, this is optional. So, this is how you serve the congee.

Jamie Wei:

And then, we have four more minutes for the steam eggs. Is there more question?

Jessica Jablon:

Somebody said that they love all of these tips, and my colleague has been taking all of the notes during the webinar. And so, we will make sure to include those with the recording that we send out next week. And, I guess let me just give a plug while we're waiting for the next webinar that we have coming up. It is on Tuesday, June 28th, at 8:00 PM Eastern, 5:00 PM Pacific, for an exclusive webinar, eyebrow and eyelash application tutorial with Beauty Bus. This program is for women in the Embrace Community for those diagnosed with advanced breast and ovarian cancer.

Jessica Jablon:

And you can also access all of our recordings and transcripts of past webinars on our website. And, I just want to remind everybody that Sharsheret social workers and genetic counselor are here for you and your loved ones. And Sharsheret provides emotional support, mental health counseling, and other programs designed to help you navigate through the counselor experience. All are free, completely private, one on one. Our number's 866-474-2774. And you can also email us at clinicalstaff@sharsheret.org.

Jessica Jablon:

So, there were a couple of questions that came in while I was talking about that. Somebody wanted to know how you pick your wok, if you have any tips for that.

Jamie Wei:

Oh, so my wok, I actually got them in Taiwan. So, one thing, I will say wok is very heavy. So, the weight is very important because, eventually, if it's too heavy for you, it's going to hurt your wrist. So, pick a lighter, or a way that you can comfortably use it, is very important. And then, there are steel wok, or cast iron walk out there. Cast iron is a lot more heavier. Mine is steel, and I personally love it. For me, really the main thing is the weight.

Jamie Wei:

And then, there are also a lot of articles online you can see about how to maintain and take care of your wok, because a wok literally you can use for your entire life. You don't have to buy a new wok. It's cast iron, you can pass it down to the next generation if you take good care of it.

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Jessica Jablon:

I see somebody asked, when you poured the dressing over the salad, did you just pour it on the spinach, or did you pour it just on the tofu, or over the whole thing?

Jamie Wei:

Over the whole thing. But, if you don't want it to be like covered the entire plate too much, you can just pour it on top of the tofu. And then, when you are serving it, your guest, or if you're just eating by yourself, you can just mix it as you go. Or, it really depends on you, because that dish is meant to be enjoyed together, the dressing, the tofu, and the spinach. But, in terms of presentation, you don't have to cover the entire thing with dressing because then you lost the color and the texture of the tofu and the spinach. So I tend to drizzle some on the spinach, but mainly focus on the tofu.

Jessica Jablon:

And what other kinds of food can you cook in the steamer? Would you-

Jamie Wei:

Oh, there are a lot of different kind of food you can cook in the steamer. You can steam rice, so that's how, say you make sushi rice, you make in the steamer. Or fish, a lot of our fish are steam in the steam basket. Or, if you like dim sum, you will see a lot of different dishes. Dim sum dishes are steam in the steamer. And bao, which is Asian bread you cook in the steamer.

Jamie Wei:

So, I just turned off the heat, now we are waiting for three minutes before you open the lid. So, steamer is very versatile. You steam vegetable, but I know a lot of people don't like steaming vegetable. But we use steamer for steaming vegetable a lot. So, from meat, to vegetable, to grains, steamer is a very useful tool that basically everyone I know back home has them. And steamer also is something that you can use for the rest of your life. My grandma's steamer, she used her entire life. She got it as a gift when she got married. When I grow up, she was still using the same steamer. So, steamer, if you maintain it well, it's also a very long lasting tool to keep in your kitchen.

Jessica Jablon:

Is there a special way that you wash it?

Jamie Wei:

You don't wash it. Steamer, you don't have to wash it, same thing as wok. Or, if you have cast iron, you don't use soap. You use water, and for steamer you just use a damp cloth, and then wipe them. Basically, we directly put food on the steamer. What my grandma did is, back in the day, she used old t-shirt or cloth, and then you use it as a liner. And, for now, I don't use cloth, I use either cheese cloth, or there are specific steam basket cloth, or there are steam basket paper, which is like parchment paper, but they have hold in the center. So if you cannot find them, you use parchment paper, and you can poke some hold in the center so this steam can come up. So, basically your food doesn't... oh my God, I just opened this.

Jamie Wei:

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So, you can just have a liner in the bottom before you put a food on. That's what we usually do. And, in that way, you don't actually have to wash the steamer, you just wipe it. And then, I don't know if there are any humid area in United States, because back home it's very humid in Taiwan. So, after we use it, before we put it away, we make sure they're all dry, and then we put newspaper inside, so it will absorb the moisture so it will not get moldy. But I think, at least in New York, I don't have that problem. It's pretty dry here. So if where you are is very humid, put some newspaper in the middle, when you store them away, that will help preventing it get moldy.

Jessica Jablon:

And we are going to be giving away two bamboo steamers, and I think my colleague, if you wouldn't mind putting the link in the chat. Oh, she just did. Thank you. And so, you can click on that and fill it out, and you can still hear what's going on as long as you don't close out of the Zoom.

Jamie Wei:

So, here is our steam egg. It's very hot, so I have this handy tool that I also brought back from Taiwan. I don't know if you can... I can try to find it on Amazon or something, and then I can send you guys the link. But, if you don't have a, use a kitchen mitten or anything, don't use your hand, it's very, very hot. And then, just put them aside, and then here. They look like this, I'm going garnish them.

Jamie Wei:

So, remove the plastic wrap. They have all the water here. Those water, if you don't have the plastic wrap, will go into the egg. And then, let me show you what it look like when I say glossy top. I don't know if you can see, it literally reflects the light. It's very glossy. On top, I blanched some snap pea, and I thinly sliced them to garnish. You don't have to do it, again, this is just for garnish, for a pop of color. You can just enjoy the steam eggs as is, and basically that's it.

Jessica Jablon:

Oh, that's amazing. I'm going to just ask a couple of questions about the steamer before we say goodbye. If you don't have a steamer, what can you use? And can you use the microwave? And if so, for how long?

Jamie Wei:

So, I don't use microwave much in general. I know there's a good microwave steam eggs recipe, New York Times Cooking. That's amazing, it's very popular recently. You can Google that. And if you don't have a steamer, it's totally fine. If you have a rack, let's say you have a flat bottom pot, and then just have a rack in the bottom. Same thing, you have some boiling water in the bottom, and then you have a rack to lift the ramekin or the bowl up, it's not soaking in the water, and then you cover it. That pot need to have a lid. And then you cover it, same cooking time. And the same method, you're still steaming it. You just are not using a steam basket. And that way you can also steam the egg, if that's helpful. In terms of microwave, I don't really know. But I know there's a very good recipe on New York Times.

Jessica Jablon:

We will try and find that to put in our tips and tricks that we send out. Well, thank you so much, Jamie. This was great. There's a lot of people in the class who are commenting on how much they loved it. Really, check out Jamie on social media, check out her website which just launched, right?

Jamie Wei:

Yes.

Jessica Jablon:

And looks so beautiful. Also, want to thank Sharon again for sharing her story with us. Please, if you didn't already, take a moment to fill out our evaluation survey. You get your chance to win one of two bamboo steamers, and evaluations really do inform our future programming, so we really appreciate it if you just take a moment to fill that out. Sharsheret is here for you. Please check out our website for our recordings and transcripts of all our past webinars. And thank you so much for being here. We hope that we'll see you at one of our webinars soon. Thank you.

Jamie Wei:

Thank you.

About Sharsheret

Sharsheret, Hebrew for “chain”, is a national non-profit organization, improves the lives of Jewish women and families living with or at increased genetic risk for breast or ovarian cancer through personalized support and saves lives through educational outreach.

With four offices (California, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey), Sharsheret serves 150,000 women, families, health care professionals, community leaders, and students, in all 50 states. Sharsheret creates a safe community for women facing breast cancer and ovarian cancer and their families at every stage of life and at every stage of cancer - from before diagnosis, during treatment and into the survivorship years. While our expertise is focused on young women and Jewish families, more than 15% of those we serve are not Jewish. All Sharsheret programs serve all women and men.

As a premier organization for psychosocial support, Sharsheret's Executive Director chairs the Federal Advisory Committee on Breast Cancer in Young Women, Sharsheret works closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and participates in psychosocial research studies and evaluations with major cancer centers, including Georgetown University Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. Sharsheret is accredited by the Better Business Bureau and has earned a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator for four consecutive years.

Sharsheret offers the following national programs:

The Link Program

Peer Support Network, connecting women newly diagnosed or at high risk of developing breast cancer one-on-one with others who share similar diagnoses and experiences

- Embrace™, supporting women living with advanced breast cancer
- Genetics for Life®, addressing hereditary breast and ovarian cancer
- Thriving Again®, providing individualized support, education, and survivorship plans for young breast cancer survivors
- Busy Box®, for young parents facing breast cancer
- Best Face Forward®, addressing the cosmetic side effects of treatment

- Family Focus®, providing resources and support for caregivers and family members
- Ovarian Cancer Program, tailored resources and support for young Jewish women and families facing ovarian cancer
- Sharsheret Supports™, developing local support groups and programs

Education and Outreach Programs

- Health Care Symposia, on issues unique to younger women facing breast cancer
- Sharsheret on Campus, outreach and education to students on campus
- Sharsheret Educational Resource Booklet Series, culturally-relevant publications for Jewish women and their families and healthcare Professionals

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