

HOPE

HEALTH LETTER



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“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

SEPTEMBER 2009

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100 steps per minute

Walking 1,000 steps in 10 minutes is a pace regarded as “moderate activity.”

National guidelines recommend that adults get at least 2.5 hours of moderate activity per week. Three brisk 1,000-step walks in a day, five days a week, would meet that goal.

If you use a pedometer to count steps, make sure to check it for accuracy. Another way to keep track: 1,000 steps is a little over three football fields in length.

Source: American Journal of Preventive Medicine, May 2009

Back to school heads-up



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“ASK ME 3”

Understanding medical language

When you don't understand something your doctor or health-care provider tells you, don't be shy about asking questions.

Getting answers to these three simple questions can help you actively participate in your own health care and may improve the outcome and overall satisfaction:

1. What is my main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?

Repeat instructions back to your health-care providers. This will let them know that you heard correctly and give them a chance to clarify anything that needs further explanation.

Source: National Patient Safety Foundation's Partnership for Clear Health Communication

What to look for when buying **fresh fish**

WHOLE FISH:

- Clear, bright (not cloudy) eyes
- Bright red gills; brown or grey means it's not fresh
- Firm flesh that springs back when pressed
- Scales that stick tightly to skin
- No blood or viscera in cavity if cleaned

FILLETS, STEAKS, AND LOINS:

- Bright, consistent coloring, almost translucent
- Ocean-fresh, slight seaweed odor
- Clean-cut edges
- Moist but not slimy

LIVE SHELLFISH:

- Legs move when touched
- Hard shell (unless soft-shelled variety)
- Heavy weight means there is more meat
- Lobster tail curls under when lifted up
- Shells on clams, mussels, etc., should be tightly closed or close when tapped



Why health experts are hooked on eating fish

- **Fish is a lean source of protein** and doesn't have the cholesterol-raising saturated fats found in other meats.
- **The omega-3 oils in fish protect your heart.** That's why the American Heart Association recommends eating fatty fish like salmon, lake trout, herring, and albacore tuna at least twice a week.
- **Shellfish, canned light tuna, farm-raised salmon or catfish, and smaller ocean fish** can be eaten safely by pregnant women and young children. Because of their high mercury content, children and pregnant women should not eat shark, swordfish, tilefish, and king mackerel, and should limit white albacore tuna to only 6 ounces per week.

Sources: American Heart Association, U.S. Food and Drug Administration; American Dietetic Association

Source: *Seafood Twice a Week*,
by Evie Hansen and Cindy Snyder,
MPH, RD, published by
National Seafood Educators

Baked Tilapia with tomatoes & olives

- 6 tilapia fillets
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 sprigs of fresh thyme
- 3 tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and chopped
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped green olives
- 1/4 tsp. dried hot red pepper flakes
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 cup finely chopped red onion
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Lightly oil a shallow baking dish large enough to hold the fillets in one layer. In a bowl stir together the oil, thyme, tomatoes, olives, red pepper flakes, garlic, onion, and lime juice. In the prepared baking dish arrange the fillets, skin side down, season them with salt, and spoon the tomato mixture over them. Bake the fish, uncovered, in the middle of the oven 15 to 20 minutes, or until it just flakes.

Serves 6. Per serving: 224 calories, 23 g protein, 6 g carbohydrate, 1.5 g fiber, 27 g fat (most from "good" unsaturated fat), 512 mg sodium.

Source: American Tilapia Association

Ocean-friendly seafood

A firm, mild white fish, U.S. farmed tilapia is on the list of "Best Choices"

for fish that are grown and caught in ways that are healthier for ocean wildlife and the environment. For a complete guide to sustainable fish choices, visit the Monterey Bay Aquarium Website at www.seafoodwatch.org.



BOOT CAMP

Get back to basics for a complete workout

Based largely on calisthenics used to get new military recruits into shape, “Boot Camp” workouts combine aerobic and strength training moves such as push-ups, sit-ups, squat thrusts, punches, and kicks.

They’re currently one of the most popular classes in gyms and health clubs. Scores of “boot camp” videos are also available, featuring everything from martial arts to “bridal boot camp” regimes for women who want to tone up for their wedding.

The fun workouts are simple and not tied to a single piece of equipment. They’re also a good way to build upper-body strength and endurance. Their biggest advantage, however, may be that they can burn up to 600 calories per hour.

“That’s obviously going to help with weight loss, but you’re also getting the muscle benefit from push-ups, arm curls, and squat thrusts that you wouldn’t get from going out for a walk, a fast jog, or a bike ride,” explains Dr. John Porcari, an exercise scientist from the University of Wisconsin.

The team atmosphere created when fellow exercisers “survive” the workout together is another motivator.

Source: American Council on Exercise



BACK SAFETY

The right moves for fall yard work

To protect your back when raking leaves, keep your feet moving and hold the rake close to your body instead of standing in one place and reaching for the leaves.

When shoveling, avoid lifting and twisting at the same time. Lift by bending your knees and keeping your back straight and upright. Use your legs to turn your body and keep the shovel close to you.

Yard work is good exercise, but like any activity, it’s important to warm up your muscles before starting. Also, take plenty of rest breaks to avoid muscle fatigue. You’re more prone to injury when your body is tired.

Source: Your Wellness Matters, Elliott Hospital, Manchester, New Hampshire



GO OUT AND PLAY

A tip for staying motivated

Rediscovering your “inner child” is one way to fight boredom in your exercise routine.

Visit a playground and teeter-totter or swing. Toss a Frisbee®. Take a hike. If you loved exploring as a child, try Geocaching, the outdoor exploration game in which you use a GPS system to hunt for hidden treasures. To learn more, visit <http://www.geocaching.com/faq/>.

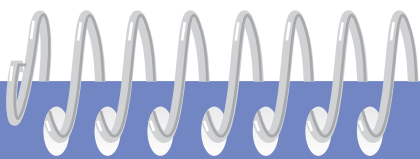
“The power of play for adults lies in simply focusing on the joy of movement, and not taking ourselves too seriously,” says fitness expert and health scientist Dr. Carol E. Togan.

“The key for most adults is simply to give themselves permission to play even for 10 to 15 minutes. Unplug and dance. Life is too short to spend it checking your e-mail.”

Source: American College of Sports Medicine’s 2009 Annual Fitness Summit



You can burn as many calories with 30 to 40 minutes of raking leaves as you can with a 30-minute walk or a five-mile bike ride.



Doc Talk

POWER TO THE PATIENT An Aspirin a Day Keeps the Doctor Away?

It's a public health dream — a drug that prevents heart attack in men and stroke in women and is perfectly safe. Unfortunately, it doesn't exist. But there is one drug that comes close — aspirin. The downside is that aspirin can also cause bleeding in the gut and may increase strokes from bleeding. How do you know if aspirin is right for you?

Don't take aspirin if you:

1. Have had a negative reaction to aspirin.
2. Have upper abdomen pain, a history of ulcer, or bleeding in the gut.
3. Take an NSAID medication such as ibuprofen or naproxen.
4. Take an anticoagulant medication such as Coumadin® (warfarin).
5. Are a man under age 45 or a woman under age 55, since the benefits are not substantial.
6. Are age 80+, since the benefits and risks are uncertain.

If you are not in any of the above groups, you may be a good candidate for aspirin, 81 mg every day. Talk with your doctor about the following:

- Are there any medications you take that shouldn't be used with aspirin?
- Do the heart attack or stroke benefits of aspirin outweigh its risks for you?
- What aspirin side effects should you look out for and what should you do if you find them?

William J. Mayer, MD, MPH
Medical Editor

Do you have a subject you would like the doctor to discuss? E-mail DocTalk@HopeHealth.com.



Breakfast & weight control

People who eat a healthy, low-calorie breakfast tend to weigh less and have a higher-quality diet overall. A balanced breakfast includes foods that are low in calories for a relatively generous portion size, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein.

For example, a 3½-inch glazed donut has 242 calories. For only two calories more, you can eat a slice of whole-wheat toast, an apple, and ¼ cup low-fat cottage cheese. The healthy breakfast will also help control hunger and keep you feeling full longer.

Source: *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, Vol. 88, pg. 1396

Don't worry, be happy

Optimistic, upbeat women stay healthier and live longer, say researchers from the University of Pittsburgh.

Results from the Women's Health Initiative Study — which has followed more than 100,000 women over age 50 since 1994 — found after eight years of tracking that women who expect good things to happen were 14% more likely to be alive than those who were pessimistic. The optimists were also 30% less likely to die from heart disease and less likely to have high blood pressure, diabetes, or smoke cigarettes.

The study speculates that optimists have a larger social network and may be better able to cope with stress.

Sources: *University of Pittsburgh*; 2009 *American Psychosomatic Society Annual Meeting*

Health

Health Briefs for Busy People

Points for pedicures

- To reduce the risk of skin infection, don't shave your legs the day you're getting a pedicure. Any nicks and scratches can give bacteria a chance to enter the skin and result in infections that sometimes cause scarring.
- Make sure the technicians always use sterilized instruments.
- Get your doctor's OK to get treatment at a professional salon if you have diabetes or any condition that affects your circulation. Be sure to tell the technicians about these conditions at the start of your appointment.

Source: Dr. Richard Bouche, *The Sports Medicine Clinic, Northwest Hospital*



Vegetables that keep longer in the refrigerator include broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, and carrots.

A simple way to lower sodium in your diet

Choose fresh foods over canned, packaged, or processed foods whenever possible.

Nearly three-quarters of the sodium in American diets comes from ingredients and seasonings added to processed foods, while table salt is responsible for only about 15%.

To help prevent high blood pressure and lower your risk for heart disease from high blood pressure, the American Heart Association recommends limiting sodium to 2.3 grams (2,300 mg) per day. Most Americans eat between 9 and 12 grams every day.

Source: *American Heart Association*

Memory aids

If you need help remembering to take daily medications, use a pill box, an alarm clock, or an e-mail or voice message to remind you to take your pills.

Keeping your medications where you'll see them will also help jog your memory.

Food for thought

Calories still count. Americans may think they are eating healthier when they buy foods with added omega-3 oils or probiotics, but they can still be high in calories, advises Harry Balzer, author of The NPD Group's 23rd Annual Report on Eating Patterns in America.

"A 1,200-calorie burrito, even if it is made with free-range chicken and hormone-free sour cream, is still a 1,200-calorie burrito."

Source: The NPD Group's 23rd Annual Report on Eating Patterns in America

How to choose the right hospital

Consumers can research and compare the quality of care at hospitals by going to www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov.

Developed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Website tracks and scores how well hospitals use the guidelines for the best practices for treatment of certain conditions (like heart attack or other emergencies) and surgical procedures.

You'll also find a "hospital checklist" with questions to ask your doctor and insurance company that will help in your decision.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

FISCAL FITNESS

Getting organized

Taking the time to get organized is the first step to becoming "financially fit."

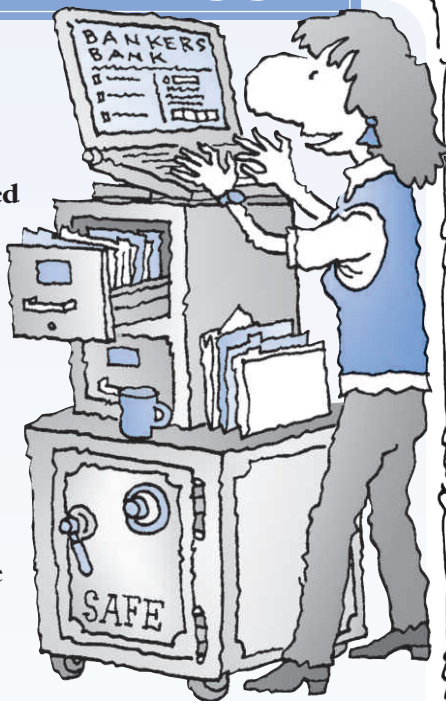
Make financial planning part of your regular routine and schedule time to manage your money, just as you would schedule trips to the grocery store or time for regular exercise.

A reasonable starting goal would be to commit to between 30 and 60 minutes a week to work on your finances. If you have a spouse or partner, talk about working on the plan together.

Where to start:

1. **Collect all your financial documents and create a filing system** so that you can quickly find information when you need it. To manage the volume of paperwork, get rid of monthly bank statements that are more than six months old. Receiving them electronically will also cut down on paperwork.
2. **Keep most financial papers stored at home in a fireproof box.** Documents to store at home include: bank statements, credit card information, investment records, insurance policies, tax returns, copies of wills, and other legal papers, like powers of attorney.
3. **Some documents should be stored in a safe deposit box at a bank or credit union,** including: birth certificates, death certificates, marriage licenses, divorce papers, military discharge papers, and wills. You may also want to have your lawyer keep a copy of wills.

Source: National Endowment for Financial Education



When someone is grieving

Take the initiative to help. Instead of saying "call me if there's anything you need," be specific with offers of support.

Suggest something like, "I'd like to take you shopping the first time you go out. Would next Saturday at 10 work for you?"

You might also offer to mow the lawn, do yard work, or help with housework.

Thoughtful gestures give something of yourself and keep the grieving person from having to reach out for assistance.

The information in this publication is meant to complement the advice of your health-care providers, not to replace it. Before making any major changes in your medications, diet, or exercise, talk to your doctor.

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EASY DOES IT Wearing and loading backpacks

Overloaded and improperly worn backpacks can cause back, shoulder, and neck problems, along with numbness and tingling in the arms. These tips for backpack safety can protect against possible problems:

- Choose a lightweight backpack that has two well-padded shoulder straps and a padded back, to avoid being poked by sharp objects.
- Children should never carry more than 15% of their body weight — including the backpack and its contents. That means a loaded backpack for a 100-pound child should weigh no more than 15 pounds.
- Load the heaviest items close to the child's back, and explore options for lightweight school supplies.
- Bend at the knees and hold the backpack with both hands when lifting it onto the shoulders. The bottom of the pack should rest in the curve of the lower back and not drop more than four inches below the waistline.
- Wear straps over both shoulders rather than hanging the backpack off of one.
- Organize children's homework and what they need to take to school so that only essential items need to be carried.

Source: American Occupational Therapy Association

“Don't learn safety by accident.”

— Unknown

LIFE LESSONS

6 great things you can learn from your pet



1. Live in the present and celebrate every day.

Dogs don't regret the past or worry about the future. For dogs, every day is the best day, every walk the best walk, and every meal the best meal.

2. Trust your instincts.

Animals don't care about words. They recognize what's going on beneath the surface by paying attention to body language, tone of voice, and energy.

3. Communicate clearly.

Any relationship, whether it's with pets or people, depends upon direct, concise, and consistent communication.

4. Listen carefully.

Lend an ear to those you love, but don't try to fix their problems or take them personally.

5. Resolve disagreements and then move on.

Animals don't hold grudges or hang on to negative feelings.

6. Live with purpose.

When dogs are bored, they can develop anxiety or aggression. These issues can be resolved when they are given a way to contribute to the pack's well-being. Ask yourself how you can make the world a better place, whether it's at home, at work, or in the community.

Source: Cesar Millan, author of "A Member of the Family," and host of the National Geographic Channel's "Dog Whisperer"

E-MAILS & TEXT MESSAGES

When it's better to communicate in person

If you receive a message from someone that sounds snippy, pick up the phone and say, "Let's talk about this," instead of responding in kind, advises social psychologist and author Susan B. Newman, PhD.

"E-mails and abbreviated texts may be convenient and quick, but they offer few clues about how a person is feeling and are not a substitute for real communication that keeps people connected," adds Newman. You can ignore messages, you don't have to answer questions you don't like, and you never have to see how much you're hurting someone's feelings.

A misread message can trigger a knee-jerk reaction that quickly gets out of hand.

With in-person communication you also avoid the risk of your personal e-mail being forwarded to others.

take care

FOR CAREGIVERS

Nine warning signs of poor nutrition

You can assess if someone is at risk for poor nutrition by using the letters in the word “determine.”

Disease
Eating poorly
Tooth loss or mouth pain
Economic hardship
Reduced social contact
Many medicines
Involuntary weight loss or gain
Needs assistance in self-care
Elder years, above age 80



If three to five factors apply, a person is at moderate nutritional risk. Six or more factors is a high nutritional risk.

Source: American Dietetic Association

BACK TO SCHOOL

A heads-up for everyone

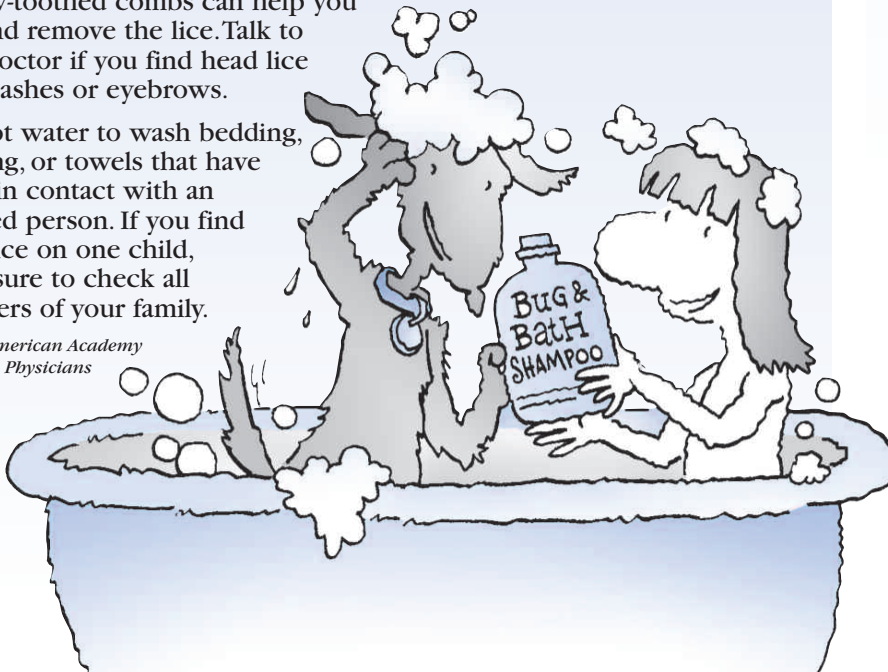
Although many people believe that being dirty causes head lice, the reality is that anyone can get head lice because they are so highly contagious.

Make sure that your children know not to share their combs, brushes, or hair decorations. Ask them not to wear or try on other kids' hats.

Signs of head lice include small red bumps around the face, neck, or shoulders and constant scratching, which can lead to infection. Over-the-counter and prescription shampoos and lotions can kill head lice, but must be used carefully since they may contain pesticides. Special narrow-toothed combs can help you find and remove the lice. Talk to your doctor if you find head lice in eyelashes or eyebrows.

Use hot water to wash bedding, clothing, or towels that have come in contact with an infected person. If you find head lice on one child, make sure to check all members of your family.

Source: American Academy of Family Physicians



September Health Observances

Cholesterol education

To lower your risk for heart disease, aim for a total cholesterol level of less than 200; LDL (“bad” cholesterol) below 100; and HDL (“good” cholesterol) between 40-59 mg.

You can improve your numbers by not smoking, getting 30 minutes of brisk activity at least five days a week, cooking with unsaturated fats like olive or canola oil, and eating plenty of foods high in soluble fiber, like oats, apples, and beans. Limit saturated fats like those found in red meat, butter, and whole-fat dairy products, and eat as few trans fats as possible. Go to the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute Website to learn more: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/>.

Emergency preparedness

Make it a point to learn about the emergency preparedness plan at your workplace. Know multiple ways to exit your building, and participate in workplace evacuation drills.

Just as you do at home, prepare an emergency kit for the office, with supplies such as bottled water, high-energy food bars, a flashlight or 12-hour light sticks, a first-aid kit, an AM/FM portable radio, medications, medical information, and other personal items.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security



Remember that living a healthy lifestyle involves doing things differently, not perfectly.

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HOPE HEALTH LETTER

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weight control

Little things mean a lot

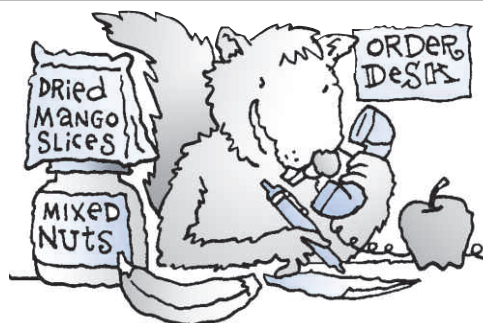
Even a small change like eliminating one sugary drink a day can help you maintain a healthy weight.

People tend to eat the same amount of food no matter what they drink, and liquid calories don't satisfy your appetite or help control hunger.

One reason for this is that the body is able to self-regulate its intake of food, experts say. If you eat a big lunch of solid food, you're more likely to eat less at dinner, but the same is not true for liquid calories. Part of the satisfaction of eating comes from the feeling and texture of food.

Sugar-sweetened drinks account for more than one-third of the beverages consumed by Americans. An 8-oz. glass of regular soda has 100 calories, while 8 oz. of sweetened fruit drinks can contain anywhere from 110 to 200 calories.

Sources: *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, April 1, 2009; *American Dietetic Association*



WHEN YOU NEED A LIFT 7 easy energy boosters

1. **Keep your work area well lit.** If possible, step away from your desk and get out into the sunlight for a few minutes.
2. **Handle challenging tasks first** to make the rest of the day easier.
3. **Use good posture** and take frequent breaks to stretch or stand.
4. **Volunteer** to help another co-worker.
5. **Plan something** to look forward to each day.
6. **Give yourself credit for what you've accomplished** instead of worrying that you have too much to do.
7. **Stock your desk with high-energy snacks** like apples, nuts, and dried fruit.

Source: *50 Ways to Boost Your Energy Without Caffeine*, *Nursing Online Education Database*

body, mind, & soul

“The best car safety device is a rear-view mirror with a cop in it.”

— Dudley Moore

“It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends.”

— J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter series

“If the sky's the limit, why are there footprints on the moon?”

— Anonymous

“Don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It's already tomorrow in Australia.”

— Charles Schulz

“Everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occur while you're climbing it.”

— Andy Rooney