

HOPE

HEALTH LETTER

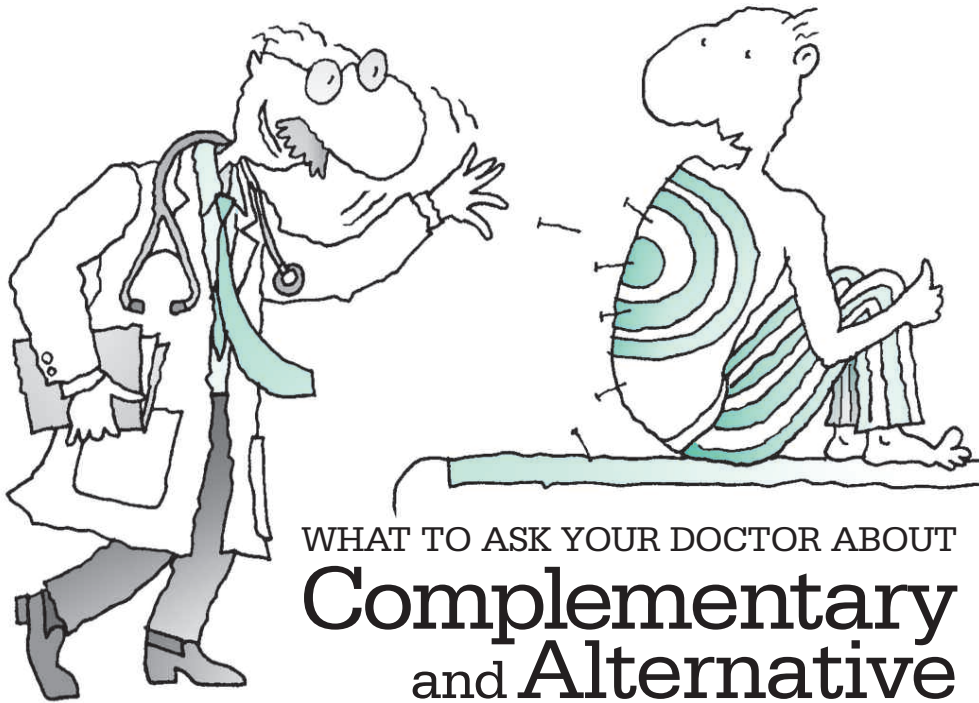


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"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

JUNE 2010

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WHAT TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT

Complementary and Alternative Medicine

Will acupuncture help relieve chronic back pain? Can certain supplements protect against heart disease or help with hot flashes?

If you're considering these or other Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) approaches, start by gathering as much information as possible and share it with your doctor. Reliable sources for CAM research include The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (www.nccam.nih.gov), and the National Cancer Institute guide to evaluating health information on the Web (www.cancer.gov).

Make a list of the things you want to talk about. If you're interested in taking a supplement, for example, explain why you want to take it and how you learned about it. Ask if it will interact with any other medications you are taking. Is it safe and will it be likely to help? Should you try it? If not, why not? Would something else be better?

CAM can be safe and effective for some conditions, but first talk to your doctor so you can make an informed decision.

GOOD NEWS FOR Father's Day

Men who increase their level of physical activity in middle age may be able to lengthen their life spans. In fact, beginning a regular exercise program in your 50s may be as effective as quitting smoking when it comes to reducing your risk for early death.

For recent ex-smokers, regular exercise may also double your chances of remaining smoke-free after 12 months.

Sources: British Medical Journal, 338: b688, March 5, 2009

Vacations 101

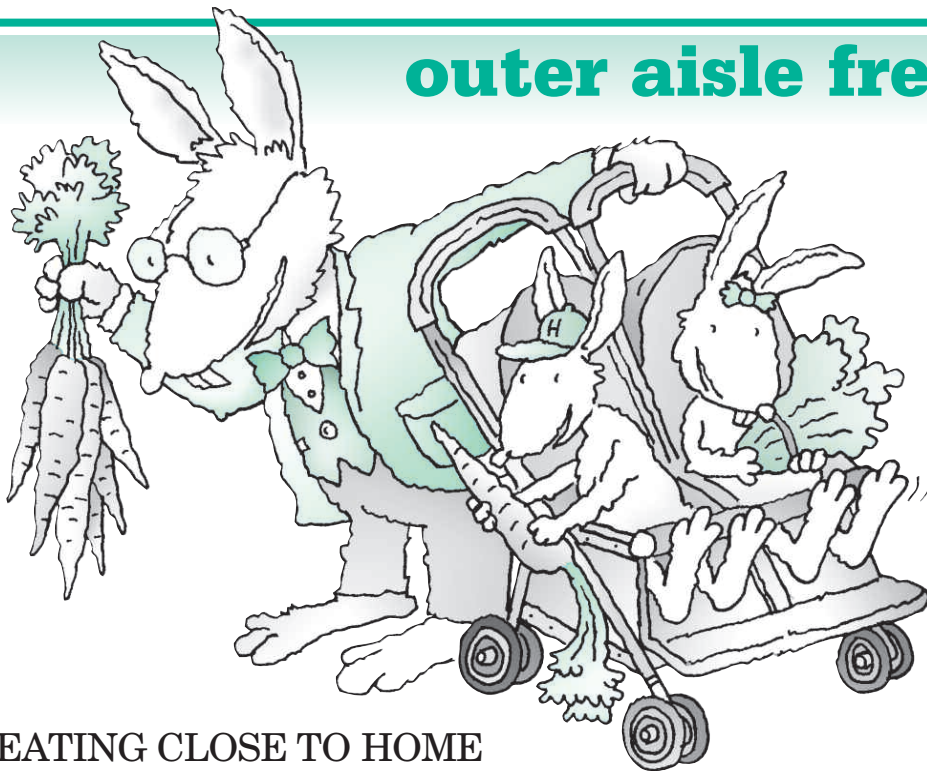
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outer aisle fresh



EATING CLOSE TO HOME

Now is the time to feast on fresh local produce

Whether you shop at your local grocery store or a roadside farmers market, summer is the best time to enjoy fruits and vegetables grown close to home. Since it doesn't need to travel as far, locally grown produce is usually fresher and has been handled less.

Large grocery chains often post "locally grown" signs. The produce manager will be able to tell you where the fruits and vegetables come from, and the tiny labels put on some produce also show where it was grown.

At roadside stands and farmers markets you can usually talk to the growers. If you're looking for a farmers market near you, visit www.localharvest.org.

Rainbow Fruit Salad with Citrus Sauce

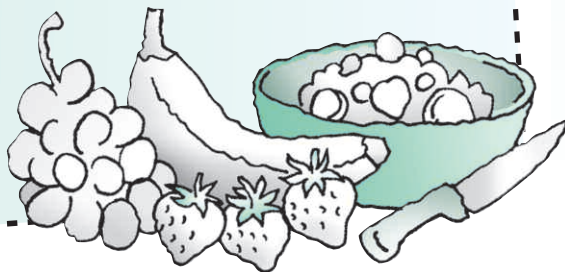
- 1 mango, peeled and diced
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 banana, sliced
- 1 cup strawberries, halved
- 1 cup seedless grapes
- 1 nectarine, diced
- 1 kiwi, peeled and sliced

Citrus sauce

- 3 Tbsp. unsweetened orange juice
- 1 Tbsp. lemon or lime juice
- 1/8 tsp. ground ginger
- Dash nutmeg

Cut and prepare fruit; set aside. In small bowl, combine all ingredients for the citrus sauce. Scoop fruit onto plates and pour sauce over fruit. Serve immediately.

Serves 6. Per 4-oz. serving: 110 calories, 27 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 1 g fat, 3 mg sodium.



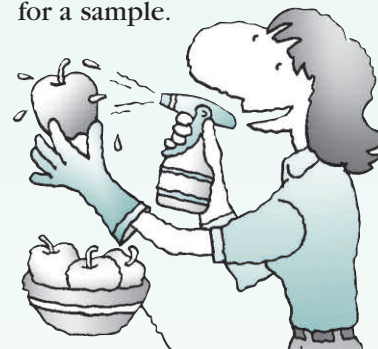
Use your senses to buy the best

Sight: Look closely and check for shape and color as well as cuts, bruises, or signs of decay. The natural white powder you see on grapes and blueberries, for example, is a sign of freshness. Even if you do trim off decay, the produce is likely to spoil more quickly, and the damage can affect nutrient content.

Touch (carefully): Fruits that are too soft may be over-ripe. Vegetables should be firm or crisp, not soft, springy, or mushy.

Smell: Ripe summer fruits, particularly peaches, nectarines, and melons, have a flowery fragrance.

Taste: Don't be shy; ask for a sample.



Washing fruit

A mixture of three parts water and one part white vinegar can be used to make an inexpensive wash for fruits and vegetables.

Use a spray bottle filled with the mixture to clean smooth-surfaced fruits like apples and pears, then rinse under cold water. Clean berries and other delicate fruits in the mixture in a bowl and then rinse gently with cold water.

Wash fruits with inedible skins, such as oranges and melons, before cutting to remove any bacteria.

get moving

LET THE GAMES BEGIN

A pediatrician's No.1 rule for kids and fitness

“Make it seem like fun, not like exercise,” says sports medicine pediatrician Dr. Teri McCambridge. Ideas to get your kids in the habit of regular physical activity can include:

- Bike riding
- Outdoor scavenger hunts
- Leap frog, capture the flag, freeze tag, and other games that require kids to run, skip, hop, and crawl
- Schoolyard favorites like kickball, four square, dodge ball, and jump rope

“There’s too much focus on sports and not enough focus on just moving,” says McCambridge, a spokesperson for the Council on Sports Medicine and Fitness for the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Some experts recommend waiting until kids are age 9 or 10 before signing them up for organized sports. Kids who aren’t as coordinated as their peers may become discouraged and quit early.



YOU CAN DO IT

From the couch to your first 5K

Depending upon your level of fitness, a five-week training program may be enough time to get you ready to walk or run a 5 kilometer (3.1 miles) race. Also called fun runs, these events often help raise awareness for worthy causes. Completing one can give you a sense of accomplishment, as well as a chance to support your community.

WEEK 1

Walk/run at a comfortable pace for 20 to 25 minutes four days per week. Add variety by alternating every other day with 20 to 30 minutes of a cross-training cardiovascular activity such as biking or swimming.

WEEKS 2, 3, 4, 5

Start with a distance you are comfortable with and increase the distance and time by 10 to 15% each week. If you walk for 25 minutes the first week, for example, increase the time to 28 minutes for week two.



5K steps to success

1. **Get your doctor's approval** before you begin training.
2. **Make sure your running shoes fit properly** and have enough support.
3. **A rubber track is the safest running surface.** If you don't have access to a track, asphalt is better than concrete. Dirt or silt alongside the road is even better.
4. **Drink plenty of fluids before and during your run.** Fuel up with a light carbohydrate snack one to 1½ hours ahead of time.
5. **Remember that gradual training is the key to success.** Take one to two days off a week from training to avoid injury and burnout.

Source: American Council on Exercise

POWER TO THE PATIENT

Transitions

It's the season for graduations, which leads me to think about life transitions and how a patient's needs and fit with a physician may change over time. If you have a daughter graduating from high school, for example, this may be a good time to transition from a pediatrician to a family practice or internal medicine doctor who provides Pap tests, pelvic and breast exams, so visits for preventive care can be one-stop shopping. If you are going through menopause and have been using an OB/GYN doctor for primary care, you may want to establish a relationship with a family practice or internal medicine doctor to address health needs that can arise in middle age. Older patients taking many medications may do well to choose a board-certified geriatrician specializing in elder care.

In choosing a physician, consider the following:

1. Current board certification in the specialty for which you are seeking care (see www.abms.org) and no state or federal sanctions (see www.docinfo.org)
2. Unrestricted medical staff privileges at the hospital you want to use
3. Participation in your insurance plan
4. Office hours and appointment wait times that work for you
5. A good fit with your personality, evaluated through a personal interview

When going through life transitions, revisit your choice of doctor(s) to help ensure the best fit with your changing health needs.

William J. Mayer, MD, MPH
Medical Editor

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



Lifetime sun exposure

Contrary to popular belief, the majority of sun damage to your skin does not occur before your 18th birthday.

Only about 23% of lifetime sun exposure occurs by age 18. A person's risk for melanoma (the most dangerous type of skin cancer) doubles if he or she has had five or more sunburns at any age.

Regular use of sunscreen is important for people of all ages. Whenever you're out in the sun for more than 15 minutes, wear a sunscreen that blocks both UVA and UVB rays and has an SPF of at least 15.

Source: *The Skin Cancer Foundation*

Summer shoes

Flip-flops may be your favorite summer footwear, but they offer little or no support or protection. Take these steps to help prevent pain or injury:

- Avoid flip-flops that completely bend in half. A flip-flop should bend only slightly at the ball of the foot.
- Make sure that your feet don't extend beyond the edges.
- Toss old, worn-out flip-flops.
- Take care of any sores or irritated skin between the toes.
- Wear sturdier shoes when doing a lot of walking, playing sports, walking in crowds, or working in the yard.

Source: *American Podiatric Medical Association*



Healthy

Timely Wellness News & Ideas

Retirement secrets

The secret to a healthy retirement may be linked to continuing work — at least part time — if you can.

In a study of men and women ages 51 through 61, those who described themselves as “officially retired” but continued to work part time or at temporary jobs were less likely to be diagnosed with heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and other serious conditions. They also showed less mental decline and found it easier to perform activities of everyday living.

Source: *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, Vol. 14, pg. 374



Wear protective eye goggles and closed-toe shoes, and keep children and pets indoors when using a power lawn mower.

Small victories

Looking for an effortless way to burn more calories? Simply turn off the TV.

One study of adults who regularly watched television three or more hours per day found that just by cutting that time in half they burned an average of 120 calories more per day.

“That’s the equivalent of more than a mile a day of walking,” notes researcher Jennifer Otten. Most participants replaced television with light activities such as gardening, housework, or working on projects like organizing photos.

Source: *Archives of Internal Medicine*, Vol. 169, pg. 2109

Snip-its!

5 simple stress busters

1. Say no to unwanted invitations and requests you'll be unable to fulfill, either in your personal or professional life. Saying yes only increases stress.
2. If the evening news makes you anxious, turn off the TV.
3. If you get irritable in traffic jams, use a less traveled route.
4. If you repeatedly argue about the same topics with certain people, cross those topics off your conversation list.
5. When you find yourself in a stressful situation, ask yourself how important it will be in the long run. Will it matter in a month? A year? If the answer is no, let it go.

Source: American Psychological Association

Quick & refreshing

For a high-protein, low-calorie (only 160) smoothie that's loaded with vitamin C, combine 1½ cups cleaned fresh strawberries, 1 cup ice cubes, 2 teaspoons chopped or fresh basil and mint, and 2/3 cup pasteurized liquid egg whites in a blender. Blend on medium speed until smooth. Tip: Add 1 to 2 tsp. brown sugar if berries aren't sweet enough.

Source: *The Best Life Diet*, by Bob Greene, Simon & Schuster

Show your hand

You can use your hand to help judge portion sizes. The palm of your hand is the size of 2 to 3 ounces of meat, poultry, or fish.

The size of your fist is equal to a half-cup serving of rice, pasta, cooked vegetables, or fruit.

Your thumb is about the size of 1½ ounces of hard cheese.

Source: American Dietetic Association

Safe tap water

Draw cold water, not hot, when you use water for drinking and cooking, especially when making baby formula. Hot tap water is more likely to contain higher levels of lead.

If a faucet hasn't been used for more than six hours, always "flush" your water pipes by running cold water until it's as cold as it can get. Most of the lead in household water comes from the plumbing — not the local water supply. For homes served by public water systems, data on lead in tap water may be available on the Internet from your local water authority.

Source: Environmental Protection Agency



Planning a week's meals in advance can help you eat more nutritiously, reduce trips to the grocery store, and save time as well as money.

Confidence builder

Adults who work out regularly report that they feel better about their looks, even if they don't lose weight or build muscle. One of the reasons may be that in addition to its other health benefits, exercise lowers levels of anxiety and depression linked to body image.

Source: *Journal of Health Psychology*, Vol. 14, pg. 780

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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June Health Observances

Men's Health Week JUNE 14 – 20

The men in your life may need a gentle nudge to get health screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, and cancer of the colon and rectum.

Men typically learn about health information from their wives, girlfriends, and mothers. Working-aged men are also less likely to have regular doctors than women. Most say they would get the recommended screenings if reminded by a loving spouse or partner, however.

Screening recommendations for your age, gender, and risk are available at <http://epss.ahrq.gov/ePSS/search.jsp>. Talk to your doctor about what schedule would be appropriate for you. Recommendations can vary depending upon your age, family history, and overall health.

Headache Awareness

Maintaining a regular sleep schedule can help prevent "weekend" headaches. Plan to get up and go to bed at the same time every day, including Saturday and Sunday. Not getting enough sleep, or sleeping in too long, can trigger migraines. Heavy coffee drinkers may also experience "weekend" or "holiday" headaches caused by caffeine withdrawal.

Source: *The National Headache Foundation*, www.headaches.org

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the whole you

VACATIONS 101

Tips for a safe and hassle-free trip

1. **Use your leg muscles** and bend at the knees, not the waist, when lifting heavy luggage.
2. **Keep daily medications and a change of clothes** in a carry-on bag.
3. **On long flights, move your feet frequently while sitting** and avoid crossing your legs to reduce the risk for blood clots. Get up and walk around the plane when possible. Limit alcoholic drinks and drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.
4. **Keep boarding passes, passports, and other documents** in one place.
5. **When driving long distances, stop every two hours to rest and stretch your legs.** Sit properly — slouching can cause lower back pain. To avoid neck strain, keep your head up, not resting against the headrest, and your shoulders back.
6. **Know where you're going to stay** the first night.
7. **Limit the number of activities you plan for each day** and schedule some free days.
8. **Consider traveling beyond the big cities** and tourist attractions.
9. **Carry a bottle of alcohol-based hand sanitizer.**
10. **Be sure your kids and travel companions have your cell phone number** in case you get separated.
11. **If you're a solo traveler,** ask the local tourism office about any safety concerns.
12. **Stop mail and newspapers** and shut off all water sources before you leave home.

CAREGIVING

Why pain is worse at night

As a caregiver, have you ever noticed that your loved one's pain may be more intense at three in the morning than three in the afternoon?

Skipped doses of pain medication, lack of distractions, and breathing problems caused by lying down are some of the factors that can make pain worse at night. Things you can do to help keep your loved one more comfortable:

- **Check with your doctor** to make sure you're doing everything you can to keep the person's body in tip-top shape and that any underlying medical conditions are being treated.
- **Stay on top of the pain** by giving medications on time. Setting an alarm clock to stay on schedule may disrupt sleep, but not nearly as much as being awakened by pain.
- **Create distractions** that will help someone get back to sleep. A few ideas: bedside lamps that are easy to reach, soothing music that is easy to turn on and turn off, comforting scents, prayer beads, knitting, crocheting, afghans, framed pictures, or get-well cards on the nightstand.

Source: *The Caregiver Club Blog*, by Vicki Rackner, MD, www.thecaregiverclub.com

DIABETES

Take care from head to toe

In addition to controlling blood sugar and blood pressure levels with diet, exercise, and medication if needed, people with diabetes need to give their eyes and feet special attention.

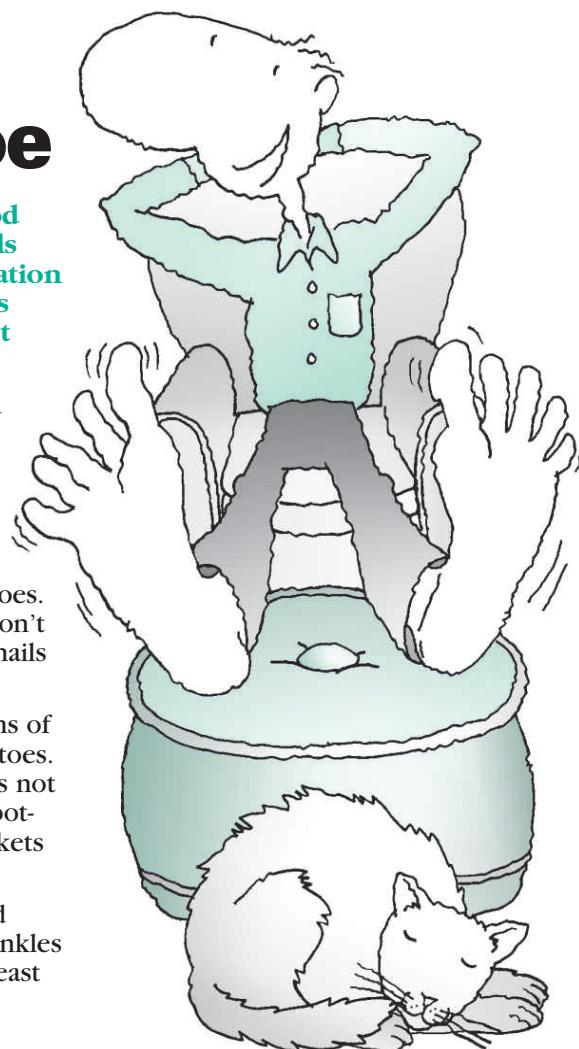
The American Diabetes Association recommends a yearly eye exam with eyes dilated.

Foot care should include daily washing to check for any cuts, bruises, or sores. Avoid going barefoot, and wear comfortable shoes. Trim toenails straight across, but don't try to cut calluses or ingrown toenails on your own — see a foot doctor.

Use lotion on the tops and bottoms of your feet, but not in between the toes. Always test water to make sure it's not too hot, and don't use hot water bottles, heating pads, or electric blankets on your feet.

Elevate your feet when sitting, and wiggle your toes and move your ankles up and down for five minutes at least twice a day.

Source: *American Diabetes Association*



fiscal fitness

PASSAGES

Financial advice for the newly single

If you're recently widowed or divorced, most experts will advise you to postpone major financial decisions until you heal emotionally.

In the meantime, these steps can help you move toward financial stability:

- 1. Put enough money to cover your estimated expenses for the next six to 12 months in an easily accessible account.** If you're divorcing, open an account and credit card in your own name. If your spouse died, keep funds from savings in a safe account until you are ready to make long-term investments.
- 2. Organize your financial documents to begin planning for future expenses.** Gather information from bank statements, credit card bills, retirement and pension plans, tax returns, and other financial records.
- 3. If you're a widow or widower, check with an attorney about how to probate your deceased spouse's will.** You may need to go to court to be named as the executor to begin carrying out your spouse's wishes.
- 4. Request several copies of the death certificate** so you'll have it to send to banks, Social Security, life insurance companies, etc.
- 5. Don't let anyone pressure you into making long-term investments, and take a family member or trusted friend with you to meetings** with financial advisers and attorneys. They can take notes and help you follow up with action plans.

Source: National Endowment for Financial Education, www.smartaboutmoney.org

HEALTH CARE

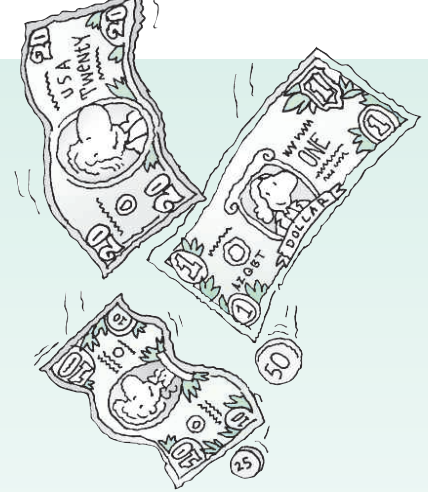
How to lower your out-of-pocket costs

- **If your insurance plan has a high deductible,** tell your doctor and ask if there are any ways to save money.
- **Ask ahead of time about the costs of tests.** If an expensive procedure is ordered, ask how the results will change the doctor's treatment plan, or if a treatment decision can be made without the test.
- **If one is available, research the benefits and risks** of taking a less expensive option.
- **If surgery is recommended,** it's always a good idea to get another opinion.
- **Become an informed consumer.** Reliable Websites you can visit for medical information include:

www.ahrq.gov — The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

www.patientinform.org — Free, reliable information about the latest research and treatment for specific diseases.

www.healthgrades.com — This is not a free site, but it can provide important information about quality of care and average costs for surgeries, length of hospital stays, and other considerations.



Paying with pain

You'll be more likely to spend less if you use cash to pay for purchases rather than a credit, debit, or gift card.

Using cash makes you more aware of the "pain" associated with paying for something because you actually "can feel the outflow of money," say researchers at the University of New York.

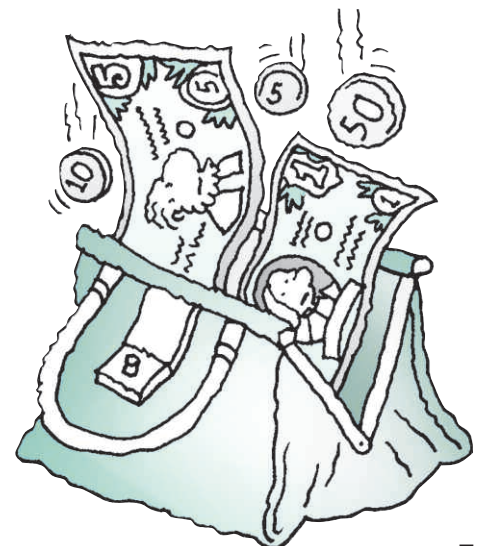
Carrying large bills may also help you spend less. Shoppers are less likely to break \$20 or \$50 bills than they are to pay for items with \$5 or \$10 bills.

Source: *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, Vol. 14, pg. 213

Stop burning cash to stay cool

To save on air conditioning costs, set thermostats no lower than 78°F. Each degree lower increases cooling costs by 6%.

Source: Con Edison Power Company



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HOPE HEALTH LETTER

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weight control

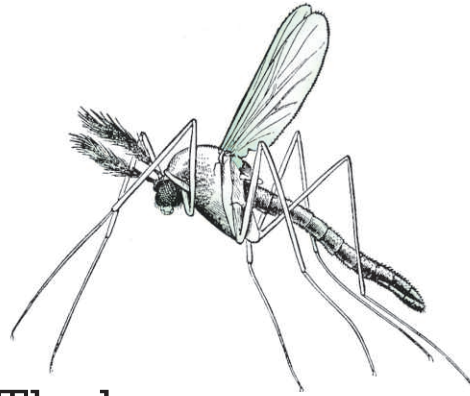
Men's issues

Women may be under more pressure to stay thin, but the health risks of being overweight are the same for both men and women.

Men are more likely to gain weight around their midsection, however, and “belly fat” is more harmful than fat stored in other parts of the body. Abdominal fat cells produce hormones and inflammatory agents that can contribute to diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure. A waist size of 40 inches or more (35 inches for women) significantly increases the risk for these conditions.

Is it easier for men to lose weight? Men may lose pounds more quickly because they tend to have more muscle, which speeds up their metabolism. However, most experts agree that in the long run, the challenges of losing weight and keeping it off are the same for men as they are for women.

Sources: American Heart Association; Harvard Health Letter



The buzz on mosquitoes

Control mosquitoes around your home and yard by keeping all containers and surfaces free of standing water. That includes: flat roofs, wading pools, rain barrels, saucers under potted plants, watering cans, old tires, wagons, and other toys.

To help ward off mosquito bites, use an insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, or oil of eucalyptus. Avoid spraying repellent directly on your face. Instead, spray your hands and run them carefully over the face, avoiding eyes and mouth. For safe use on babies and children, use DEET products with a concentration of no more than 30%. Avoid DEET products on infants under 2 months of age, and do not use oil of eucalyptus on children under the age of 3.

Sources: Washington Toxics Coalition, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

body, mind, & soul

“What if the hokey pokey really *is* what it's all about?”

— Unknown

“Do not condemn the judgment of another because it differs from your own. You may both be wrong.”

— Dandemis

“Experience is a good teacher, but she sends in terrific bills.”

— Minna Antrim

“People who are wrapped up in themselves make small packages.”

— Ben Franklin

“You can't wait for inspiration. You have to go after it with a club.”

— Jack London